

**Minutes of an extraordinary Withersfield Parish Council meeting held on Monday,
11 December 2017 at 7.55 pm at St Mary's Church, Withersfield**

Present: Cllrs Terry Rich (Chairman), Frank Eve, Ian Kinloch; Hilary Thomas, Russell Wallington; Borough Cllr Jane Midwood

- 1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs Geoff Hayward and Rosie Wenham.
- 2 **Consideration of the Parish Council's response to planning application DC/17/2429/VAR - Variation of condition 8 of DC/14/2087/OUT to remove useclass restrictions for Construction of research/business park (Class B1) and hotel (Class C1), Haverhill Research Park, Hanchett End, Haverhill, Suffolk**

Cllr Rich summarised the outcome of the public meeting and the strength of feeling and unanimous objections of local residents expressed for a wide range of reasons.

The Parish Council acknowledged that it had heard that the application addressed a difference between the planning consent and the published local plan. Councillors had also heard about the substantial efforts to market the sites over the past 5 years.

Despite these factors it was proposed by Cllr Kinloch, seconded by Cllr Rich, that the Parish Council should raise an objection to the application on the following grounds:

- 1) The existing restriction on use class B1c as being ancillary to B1a and b use was considered to be a reasonable and valuable safeguard to the type of development permitted and ensured that any such development would be compatible with its position adjacent to and sharing access with a residential development;
- 2) Two of the 4 development sites were accessed solely via the housing estate access road, and the addition of vehicles associated with predominantly light industrial usage would be incompatible and lead to a danger for families resident in the area;
- 3) A change of use would lead to a significant change in the character of the research park and The Arboretum development which had been marketed as providing a high quality environment;
- 4) The change of use, if permitted, would have a detrimental impact on the concept of the research park which formed a gateway to Haverhill. It could significantly undermine the future of the Town.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.