

14th January, 2008

Mr Oliver Johnson
Strutt and Parker
11 Museum Street
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Dear Mr Johnson

East House, George Street, Hadleigh – Planning Brief

1. The Society has recently seen a copy of the Planning Brief for this important site. There are two fundamental issues which the Society considers needs urgent attention if the process of securing a future for East House is not to be badly and perhaps permanently derailed.
2. Firstly, on a general point it is critical that in looking at the future of the building and it appears the site, that the community is positively engaged and is a part of the process of making decisions on the building's future. Consultation on such a major and sensitive issue is, in itself, not sufficient. Already there are signs of major differences of opinion between the community and the council regarding the site. Most of this is down to the strategic and fundamental failure, in the Society's view, to establish and agree with the community from the outset the processes and procedures to examine the building's future. If this is not addressed immediately, the way in which the Council is dealing with the future of East House, will cause further resentment and division in the community and fundamentally and permanently sour the relationship between the Hadleigh Community and the Council.

3. The Society therefore suggests that a working party is established immediately with community representatives, council and consultants, all having an equal say and voice to look at a way of taking this issue forward. While a delay now will be a concern to some, the Society suggests that securing the support of the community and regaining their trust is a small price to pay. In addition, it will be more than possible to regain any lost time as the working party takes matters forward with consensus and resources and time does not have to be wasted resolving differences often in the public domain. The Society offers to help in that process and play a positive role.

4. Secondly, and in respect of a critical detailed point in the Planning Brief, is the fact that under heading *4 – Site Analysis* and *5 Opportunities – Planning Concepts* there is a failure to acknowledge the need for and impact of a new vehicular service road to facilitate any new development. Such a road will have a profound impact on trees, the wider setting of East House and the Meadow. It surely is impossible to service the new development as the brief states by “*the existing access will need to be utilised*”. Surely this statement relates to the conversion of East House itself.

5. At risk, when the development (Enabling Development?), car parking areas and the service road are considered all together, is the peace and tranquillity of the East House/George Street Meadow area. It is a critical quiet area in an urban setting, enjoyed as it is by many. Any development, car parking and service road will impact on the areas beyond the development and this is not made clear in the brief.

6. The Society asks for the above to be given urgent consideration. It looks forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

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Director
Cc John Ette, English Heritage
Cc Hadleigh Town Council
Cc Chief Executive, Babergh District Council

Cc Media consultants
Cc Hadleigh Community News