

Issue No.	14. Vision 2031 Strategic Site "Hanchett End" (Haverhill Research Park)
Area or Properties Under Review	The review will look at whether or not existing parish governance arrangements should be amended in respect of new homes and/or employment land included in the strategic growth site. If amendments are needed, this could be through changes to existing parish boundaries or wards and/or the creation of new parish(es).
Parishes	Haverhill Withersfield
Borough Ward	Haverhill West Withersfield
County Divisions	Clare Haverhill Cangle
Method of Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Parish and Town Councils • Emails to elected representatives (Borough, County and MP) • Email to Residents' and Community Associations (if applicable) • Letters to existing electors/businesses within growth site • Letters/emails to other stakeholders (see Appendix C) • Online questionnaire available for respondents to use
Projected electorate, warding arrangements and consequential impacts	<p>The Autumn 2015 electorates of Withersfield and Haverhill Parishes were 448 and 18,202 respectively. The site is designated as a business park, but including it within Haverhill would also require the incorporation of existing residential properties.</p> <p>See Issue 26 for commentary and advice on dealing with consequential impacts. On the basis of the approach suggested under Issue 26 for dealing with parish electoral arrangements:</p> <p>(a) If the growth site is included in Haverhill Parish it could be <i>temporarily</i> added to one of the existing town council wards (Haverhill West). A new ward structure/council size for the Town Council will then be put in place as part of the following electoral review of the Borough Council, and implemented before any elections in 2019;</p> <p>(b) If the growth site remains in Withersfield, no change would be likely to be required; or</p> <p>(c) The site is likely to be too small to consider as a new parish.</p>
Analysis	The Parish Council has reserved its position, but will obviously see from the consultation that a majority of the existing electors wish to stay in Withersfield. The Town Council favours the incorporation of Hanchett End within its boundary, as does the owner of the Research Park. So there is no consensus. The Working Party will therefore need to carefully assess the evidence submitted to date in terms of forming a recommendation for phase 2.

Summary of comments received during Phase 1

A. Response of Withersfield Parish Council

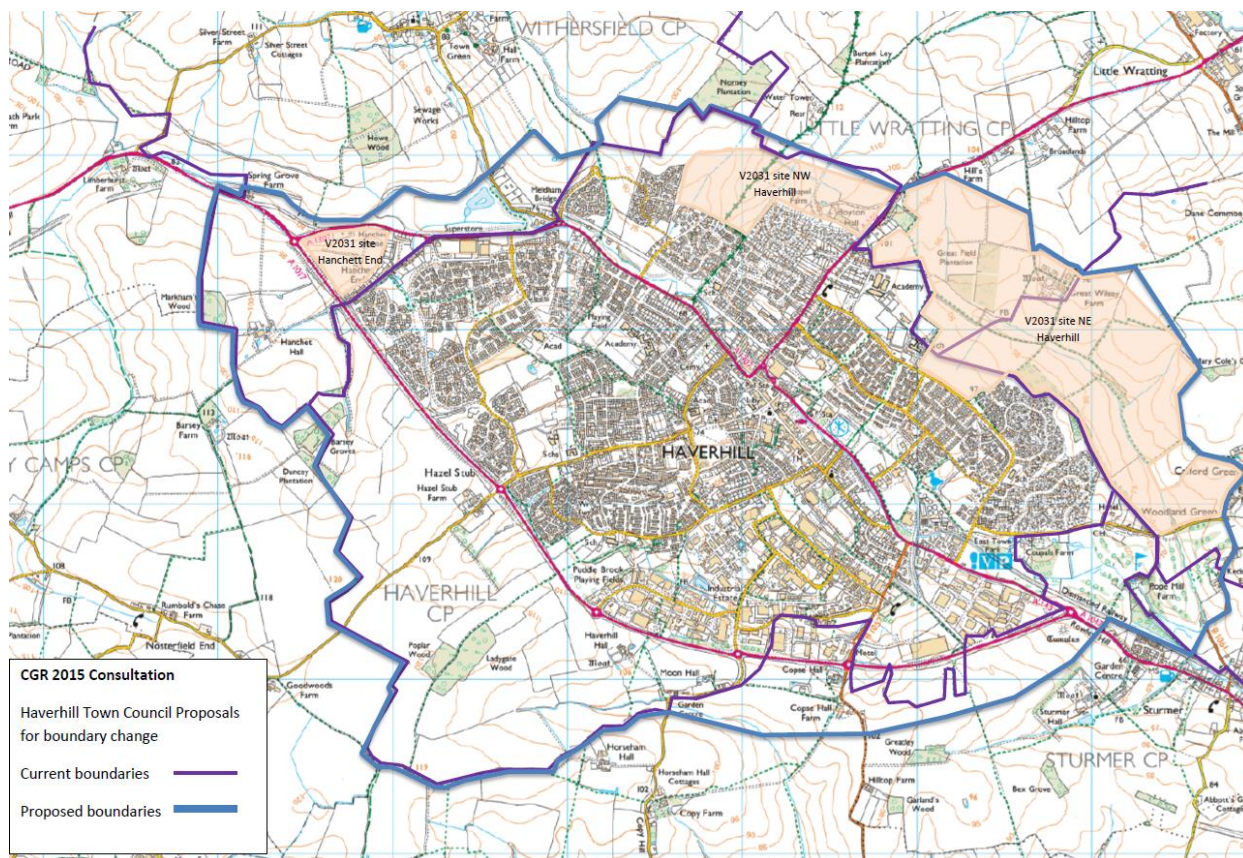
"It was agreed that the PC should take no formal view at this particular point in time but should address the full consultation in due course. In the meantime, parishioners are being encouraged to respond individually to the current online survey. This has been done through an insert which was placed in the September edition of Withersfield News; the insert was written by the Chairman immediately following the meeting and the newsletter

has now been distributed, with extra copies being delivered to residents of The Arboretum estate. Once firm proposals have been received, the Parish Council will hold an open meeting to which all parishioners will be invited.”

B. Response of Haverhill Town Council

Haverhill Town Council has submitted one response to all of the issues affecting its parish. As it would be hard to separate out the text between all issues, and to avoid repetition, it is included in full under issue 12 and not reprinted here (other than the map below for ease of reference). However, the Council’s submission must be read to gain an understanding of the full evidence base for this issue.

In summary, the Town Council supports moving its boundary to encompass this growth site.



C. Local Electors

This issue has attracted a strong response from electors due to publicity from the parish council, but also the fact that the site is already occupied by electors who were written to under the agreed approach to consultation in phase 1. 50 responses were received by post or online.

(a) Those favouring no change to the current boundary

In total, 35 electors used the consultation to support no change in the boundaries. 30 of these responses came in writing (due to their existing homes being within the V2031 site). 5 of the 16 electors who responded online also stated a preference for no change to the current parish/town council boundaries. The reasons given for these preferences were:

- 17 felt it would create a strong sense of community identity.
- 16 felt it would generate interest in town/parish affairs and improve participation in elections, local organisations and community activities.
- 14 felt it would improve the capacity of the parish council to deliver better services

and to represent the community's interests effectively.

- 14 felt it would give easy access to good quality local services for new and existing residents.
- 12 felt it would reflect patterns of everyday life for those living and working in the area, building upon what new and existing communities have in common.

Those responding, made the following comments:

- *I have been advised that if my current property changes from Withersfield to Haverhill parish, it will have a negative effect on the resale value, which I do not want.*
- *It is my understanding that if my current property is changed from Withersfield to Haverhill parish, it will have a negative affect on its value, which clearly I do not want.*
- *Since moving into Hanchett End in 2007 we have been very involved with the people and activities in Withersfield. Our social life revolves around the village - there are no other social facilities/activities in this area. If the boundary was moved we would not identify in anyway with Haverhill socially. We want to stay within the parish of Withersfield.*
- *I wish to inform you that the Science Park has been made into a Housing Estate not a Science Park as were my wishes on the initial plans. So that is why I wish to stay in Withersfield parish.*
- *I wish to stay in the Withersfield Parish Council, as the V2031 plan is being made into a Housing Estate - not was planned.*
- *I would have assumed that all the [CGR options] would have been considered and an appropriate decision made on all occasions when a truthful decision is necessary as seems to have been appropriately made already and any problems resolved.*
- *I have always been part of a village community and like the feel of it. People in villages know each other and I wish this to be the same for the foreseeable future.*
- *We purchased our house at Haverhill Research Park in November 2013 and moved in in July 2014; this was under the understanding that the house was part of Withersfield parish, as our 'official' address supports. After working very hard and saving for many years to finally purchase a house and get on the property ladder, we would be very concerned if our house's official locality were to be changed and be classed as solely 'Haverhill' as we fear this would de-value our house.*
- *Additional to my previous answers: Because the village of Withersfield holds some precedence and reputation that we wish to continue to be included in.*

(b) Those favouring moving the Haverhill Parish Boundary to include the Business Park

One local elector emailed the Council to comment:

"As a resident of Haverhill I believe that to be just and fair the parish Boundary for Haverhill should be expanded to include all areas where new developments are taking place, or about to take place or planned to take place. In fact it would be much fairer on the villages that border Haverhill for them to be brought into an expanded Haverhill as they would then have a say in all things concerning our town."

10 of the 16 electors who responded online (including one town councillor) supported moving the town council boundary outwards so all of the new properties are in the Haverhill parish (i.e. Haverhill Town Council). 3 of the existing electors (out of 33 who responded) also favoured this option. The reasons given were

- 9 felt it would reflect patterns of everyday life for those living and working in the area, building upon what new and existing communities have in common.

- 6 felt it would improve the capacity of the town council to deliver better services and to represent the community's interests effectively.
- 5 felt it would create a strong sense of community identity.
- 5 felt it would generate interest in town affairs and improve participation in elections, local organisations and community activities.
- 1 felt it would give easy access to good quality local services for new and existing residents.

In support of their preferences, the following comments were made:

- *Although we are in Withersfield parish we do not feel part of the village because the A1307 splits us from it. We feel more as if we are in Haverhill.*
- *The 'natural' boundary is the A1307. Shopping and leisure facilities for the residents in this area are centred in Haverhill and the residents should be able to influence decisions made in the Town. Haverhill has the capacity to absorb the growing numbers of residents, whereas a significant number of additional residents could overwhelm the Withersfield community.*
- *The lines created by the A1307 and A1017 where they converge at the Gateway roundabout create a natural border for the Haverhill Town Council administrative area. The area is attached to existing developed areas and to all intents and purposes are an extension of Haverhill, yet the residents in this area neither contribute nor have a say in how the town is run.*
- *We are closer to Haverhill than the village of Withersfield. Road signs make it confusing for couriers and visiting persons.*
- *The village of Withersfield and the area around the new research park have very different needs and issues that need to be tackled. To have both within the same parish boundary will dilute any resources available making it more difficult to resolve matters.*

D. Owners of Haverhill Research Park

The owners of site V2031 'Haverhill Research Park' have confirmed that they "most identify with Haverhill Town Council and would be very happy if we found ourselves within its boundaries. We have worked closely with the Town Council to bring Haverhill Research Park to fruition and will continue to do so with all future projects on site."

E. Cllr Mary Evans (Clare Division)

I support Withersfield Parish Council

F. Cllr Jason Crooks (Haverhill South Ward)

Councillor Crooks supported moving the town council boundary outwards so all of the new properties are in the Haverhill parish (i.e. Haverhill Town Council) on the basis that this would:

- reflect patterns of everyday life for those living and working in the area, building upon what new and existing communities have in common.
- generate interest in town affairs and improve participation in elections, local organisations and community activities.
- Improve the capacity of the town council to deliver better services and to represent the community's interests effectively.

He commented: "I have no problem in moving the parish boundary so that existing properties of Hanchett End and Barsey Close are in Haverhill parish rather than Withersfield. Hanchett End has historically always has its very own identity and moving the boundary will not alter that in this case. Creating a new electoral ward for Haverhill called 'Hanchett end' may help reinforce the identity.

Map Overleaf

The map below shows the growth site in relation to the current boundaries. A new boundary proposal was offered by the Town Council (see earlier map). The alternative would be simply to follow the road line if a change was supported. Otherwise the boundary could stay as it is.

