

G.A.S.P. – Letter Writing

Thank you for offering to help fight plans to build on the green belt around Graveley and Great Ashby. While the plans are only draft at the moment and have still to be voted on by North Herts Cabinet and Stevenage Executive, it is important that we have as much influence as possible before the initial decisions are made.

If the plans are accepted by the two councils, they will go out to public consultation later in the year, so we will have another (official) chance to have our say.

We haven't produced a standard letter, as these tend not to be as influential as individual letters. Below are some of the key issues; some suggestions about what you might include (but you will have your own ideas too) and a list of people who could be worth writing to.

Thank you again for your help.

Jack Rigg, Chair G.A.S.P
Sal Jarvis, District Councillor

Key Features of the plans:

- 1500 houses between North Road, Stevenage and Graveley village, coming to within a quarter of a field's width from the village
- 5000 houses to the North of Great Ashby, either side of the site of the proposed secondary school at Tilekiln
- Green space between the two – a Forster Country Park.
- Three gypsy and traveller sites, (one at junction 8 of the A1(M), one at Friends Green and one just north east of Chesfield
- A link road running from the North Road junction to the new development, between Graveley and Chesfield. This may be a dual carriageway

Why you might object:

- Neighbouring villages and hamlets (Graveley, Chesfield, Warren's Green) are almost swallowed up into Stevenage. (The planners' word is coalescence and one original objective was to avoid coalescence with Stevenage).
- The number of houses includes more than is required by the Regional Planning Panel for 2021 – it makes a provision for what might be required by 2031 too, so it is bigger than it needs to be.
- The total number of houses required by the Regional Planning Panel is for the land north and west of Stevenage and in Stevenage itself. There is no need for all these houses to be in this particular area.
- The development will cause significant environmental damage – they include areas of ancient woodland and wildlife habitats – there are some rare butterflies and also dormice living in some of the area.
- Some of the development is actually closer to Baldock than to Stevenage Town Centre – we are in danger of creating an urban sprawl
- The development does not respect natural boundaries – for example it will run down the hill towards Graveley rather than stopping behind the brow – in the West of Stevenage plans not breaching the brow of the hill was considered very important. Why doesn't it matter now?
- Inadequate thought has gone into the infrastructure, for example: how will the A1(M) and junction 8 cope with all the extra traffic from the link road; what about the danger of flooding?– Graveley has already flooded due to run off water from the hill and an increase in tarmac will make this much worse; what about water and sewage capacity?
- North Herts has decided to build all its Gypsy and Travellers' facilities in the same part of the District. The target for provision is 2011, but any development will be years off at that time, so the site will be in the middle of nowhere. Stevenage's proposed site (at junction 8) seems to be at the top of the hill.

Who you might write to:

MPs and Parliamentary Candidates:

Hitchin and Harpenden (Graveley and Great Ashby's constituency)

Peter Lilley MP (Con) The House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA

feedback@peterlilley.co.uk

Nigel Quinton (Lib Dem) Bridge House, 29 Lemsford Village, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 7TN

nigel.quinton@btinternet.com

Oliver de Botton (Lab) olidebotton@gmail.com

North East Herts (Weston's constituency)

Oliver Heald MP (Con) The House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

healdo@parliament.uk

David Kirkman (Lab) c/o 45 Kneesworth Street, Royston, Herts. SG8 5AB

david.kirkman@nehertslabour.org.uk

Hugh Annand (Lib Dem) 6B Leys Avenue, Letchworth Garden City SG6 3EU

hugh@hughannand.com

Stevenage

Stephen McPartland MP (Con) The House of Commons, Westminster, London . SW1A 0AA

stephen@stephenmcpartland.com

Sharon Taylor (Labour's leader on the council) 4, Popple Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 3TG

sharon.taylor@stevenage.gov.uk

Julia Davies (Lib Dem) c/o 8 Cameron Close Stevenage SG2 0HG

JuliaDavies890@btinternet.com

North Herts Councillors

Write to them at: Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF, or email at the addresses below.

F. John Smith (con, leader of the council). John is standing down in May

fjsmithroyston@btinternet.com

Tom Brindley (con, cabinet member for Planning and Transport)

nhdc@todeka.co.uk

Tricia Cowley (con, portfolio holder for Community engagement and rural affairs)

patriciagibbs249@btinternet.com

David Barnard (con, chair of Southern Rural Committee

david.barnard@north-herts.gov.uk

Steve Jarvis (Lib Dem; leader of the opposition, Weston and Sandon Councillor)

Steve.jarvis@north-herts.gov.uk

Martin Steers-Handscomb (Labour group leader)

martin.blanche@phonecoop.coop

Sal Jarvis (Lib Dem, Chesfield councillor)

Sal.jarvis@north-herts.gov.uk

Lee Downie (Lib Dem, Chesfield councillor)

Lee.downie@north-herts.gov.uk

North Herts Cabinet councillors not listed above:

Terry Hone, Ian Knighton, Bernard Lovewell, Linda Needham, Claire Strong

Stevenage Councillors

Write to them at: Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 1HN or email at the addresses below.

Sharon Taylor (Lab, leader of the council)

sharon.taylor@stevenage.gov.uk

John Gardner (Lab, executive member for environment and regeneration)

john.gardner@stevenage.gov.uk

Ann Webb (Lab, Executive member for Housing)

ann.webb@stevenage.gov.uk

Graham Clark (Conservative, leader of the opposition, Woodfield ward)

graham.clark@stevenage.gov.uk

Margaret Notley (Con, Woodfield ward)

margaret.notley@stevenage.gov.uk

Robin Parker (Lib Dem leader)

robin.parker@stevenage.gov.uk

Stevenage Executive councilors not listed above:

Michael Downing, Howard Burrell, Richard Henry, Joan Lloyd, Simon Speller

You could also write to the local, or national press