

Mr TJ & Mrs SL Wright 9 Wensum Road, Great Ashby Stevenage Herts SG1 3XX
(Objects)

We write further to Object to the Planning Application Ref 25/03080/HYA - Hybrid application for a residential-led development comprising residential (Use Class C3), educational use (Use Class F1), a community hub (Use Class F2/ Use Class E) with associated new internal roads, access, parking, cycling infrastructure.

Great Ashby – was built without sufficient parking or access routes to important services like hospitals, supermarkets, senior schools to name a few. It is now struggling with no medical services (Dr or Dentist) or Senior School and therefore suffers from increased traffic and a need to use a vehicle to get to these things. NHS Primary Care Practises are already full, with many now refusing to take on additional patients, and yet there are no provisions in either of the GA1 or GA2 Planning applications putting even more pressure on an already overloaded system. This is an example of poor planning and highlights the need for vehicle travel.

1. Documentation – Many documents remain outstanding in this Planning Application including a Strategic Masterplan, details of the proposed Monitor & Manage scheme, and a Flood Risk\Drainage Strategy which currently objects.
2. S106 Agreement – There remains no evidence of the S106 Agreement as this has not been submitted by the Applicant. It has recently been reported by NHC that 5 sites of 963 units still have no S106 Agreement in place, largely because the Developer challenges contributions to reduce the amount due to viability. A reduction of S106 contributions will lead to an unsustainable structure long term, including that of the ‘Management and Monitor’ proposals.
3. Data – The data used throughout this application is old, inaccurate and out of date making for a flawed application before even the first brick is laid.
4. Displacement of vehicles – There remains no solution in the Technical Note to the many displaced vehicles of existing residents. Nor are there provisions for the disabled, elderly or those with mobility needs who reside along the main roads proposed as access points to the sites. Furthermore, young adults who initially moved to GA as children now drive themselves to work and home. These youngsters are staying at home for longer because they can ill afford a home of their own thus increasing the need for more Affordable homes. Unfortunately, this also means there are additional vehicles on the roads and more parking required.

5. Back Lane/Calder Way/Orwell Avenue – We believe the Crash map data provided in the Traffic Assessment is inaccurate or at the very least incomplete. Traffic has increased considerably since we moved to GA in 2006, not just during peak periods, but throughout the day. This has resulted in traffic jams, a rat run of speeding vehicles, lorries over 5 tons using Calder Way and near misses and accidents on the junction of Calder Way/Orwell Avenue and Orwell Avenue/Great Ashby Way. There have been three accidents in the recent months where people were hospitalised. Calder Way is totally unsuitable as a means of thoroughfare traffic, as previously reported. It is also very noisy for existing residents who live close to the road, removes the enjoyment of using our outside green space and now has increased air pollution. It is very congested on many occasions with vehicles heard reversing up the road. Furthermore, Calder Way has no pedestrian footpath from end to end and therefore is a danger to any pedestrian forced to use it. If this proposal were to go ahead the speed restrictions should be lowered to 20mph with higher speed bumps as currently the speed bumps are all varying heights. Better displayed road signs/markings are also required. With reduced S106 Contributions, the Monitor & Manage approach is more likely to have insufficient funds to make any changes should they be required, making for an unsustainable structure long term.
6. Schools – There is no mention in the Planning Application of Barclays Academy School being the closest for the GA2 site. There is no safe way to cycle to any of the Senior Schools mentioned in the Planning Application, and this should be a strong consideration when discussing this application further. With a very unreliable bus service and a limited means of travel, this only heightens the need for people to use their vehicles in place of walking or cycling. Furthermore, there is a reduction in Junior and Infant School children so the proposed School should be a Senior School. However, with less S106 funding due to the viability of GA1, a school is less likely due to financial cutbacks.
7. Bus service – As from end of August '26 the SB7 bus service will provide a greatly reduced service for those residents of Great Ashby, with the frequency reduced to every 45 minutes on weekdays, and some early morning and late evening services withdrawn completely. The Planning application for GA1 and GA2 proposes an extended bus to service for the new homes. Considering this cost cutting exercise, it suggests there will not be an extended service to serve these new homes. This bus service is very unreliable, and residents are more likely to use their vehicles because of their families need to get to and from school and for social events in the evening. The new timetable proposed is: First bus Saturday 7.30am and last bus is 21.48pm; Sunday service 10.08am last bus 18.08pm; Weekday 6.12am to 21.48pm. It should

be noted that the SB7 bus does not provide a Sunday morning service for a person who starts work early and therefore a different means of transport will be required. The same applies for the return journey all week.

8. Affordable Housing – The initial plan was that GA1 would provide 40% of the 281 homes would be for affordable housing in line with NHC Policy HS2. It is now proposed that the reduced percentage will be 20% and therefore the S106 contributions will also reduce by more than half per unit to £20,000. This reduced percentage no longer holds the weight in the Local Plan that it did, and no longer falls in accordance with HS1, HS2, HS3 and GA1 or GA2 Local Plan Policies whereby they clearly say 40% housing should be built on sites of 25 or more dwellings.
9. We currently have multiple large developments in and around Stevenage and Great Ashby which are not being taken up due to their cost. I notice the traffic data from these sites are not included in this planning application making for an inadequate road infrastructure with the region's road network being poorly built, badly maintained, or too small to support safe and efficient travel.
10. If this Planning Application for GA1 and GA2 were to be accepted by the Council, NHC would clearly be putting the profit of the Developer in front of the much-needed Affordable Housing for the 2,500 households registered on the NHC Housing Register. It is for this reason, those comments mentioned above and our previous comments, we ask the Council to refuse this application.