The Planning Inspectorate

The Stevenage Local Plan 2011-2031 Partial Update Examination

Examination Inspector:
L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC
Programme Officer:
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Examination Website:
https://www.hwa.uk.com/projects/stevenage-local-plan-partial-update

27 November 2025

PROVISIONAL EXAMINATION HEARING PROGRAMME

The Hearings are scheduled to take place in accordance with the following provisional programme. They will all take place in **the Autun Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage Borough Council** on the following days:

WEEK 1 **Tues-Thurs 2-4 December 2025,**

WEEK 2 **Tues-Weds 9-10 December 2025, with Thurs 11 in reserve**

HEARING DAY 1: TUESDAY 2 December 2025 (WEEK 1)

Morning Session: 0930 to 1300

Matter 1 – Scope, Legal and Procedural Requirements

1. Introduction and Inspectors opening announcements.

2. Opening statement on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council.

3. Matter 1 Issue 1 - The National Planning Policy Framework Transitional arrangements and whether the scope and role of the Plan are sufficiently clear to be effective?

4. Matter 1, Issue 2 - Whether the Council has complied with the duty to co-operate in the preparation of the Plan?

5. Matter 1, Issue 3 - Whether the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) complies with the requirements of the 2004 Act, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (SEA Directive) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations)?

6. Matter 1, Issue 4 - Whether the Plan is supported by a robust approach to Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)?

7. Matter 1, Issue 5 - Whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with other legal requirements?

Participants

Cllr Rob Broom	Portfolio Holder Environment, Stevenage Borough Council (Opening Statement only)
Alex Robinson	Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation, Stevenage Borough Council (Opening Statement only)
Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Sally Talbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

Afternoon Session: 1400 to 1700

Matter 4 - Employment, Town Centres and Opportunity Areas

1. Matter 4, Issue 1 - Whether the updates to policies and justification text related to employment are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

2. Matter 4, Issue 2 - Whether the updates to policies and justification text related to Town Centres are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

3. Matter 4, Issue 3 - Whether the approach to the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area and other opportunity areas is legally compliant, justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Sally Talbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

HEARING DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY, 3 December 2025 (WEEK 2)

Morning Session: 0930 to 1300

Matter 2 - Climate Change and Sustainable Development

1. Matter 2, Issue 1 - Whether new and replacement policies on Sustainable Development and Climate Change are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Sarah Martins	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Ben Aspinall	Managing Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Matthew Olive	Associate Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Fabian Oyarzun	Head of Climate Action, Stevenage Borough Council
Veronica Chan	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Jennifer Bratchell	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Mark Behrendt	Regional Planning Manager – SE and E, HBF
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

Afternoon Session: 1400 to 1700

Matter 2 - Climate Change and Sustainable Development

1. Matter 2, Issue 1 continued.

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Sarah Martins	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Ben Aspinall	Managing Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Matthew Olive	Associate Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Fabian Oyarzun	Head of Climate Action, Stevenage Borough Council

Veronica Chan	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Jennifer Bratchell	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Mark Behrendt	Regional Planning Manager – SE and E, HBF
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

HEARING DAY 3 – THURSDAY, 4 December 2025 (WEEK 1)

Morning Session: 0930 to 1300

Matter 3 – Housing and Design

1. Matter 3, Issues 1 - Whether the updates proposed to the adopted Plan housing and design policies and new policies on housing and design are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Sarah Martins	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
SallyTalbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Ben Aspinall	Managing Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Matthew Olive	Associate Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Mark Behrendt	Regional Planning Manager – SE and E, Home Builders Federation
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

Afternoon Session: 1400 to 1700

Matter 3 – Housing and Design

1. Matter 3, Issue 1 continued.

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Sarah Martins	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
SallyTalbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Ben Aspinall	Managing Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Matthew Olive	Associate Director, AspinallVerdi, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Mark Behrendt	Regional Planning Manager – SE and E, Home Builders Federation
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

HEARING DAY 4 – TUESDAY, 9 December 2025 (WEEK 2)

Morning Session: 0930 to 1300

Matter 5 – Infrastructure, Transport, Flood Risk, Drainage and Trees

1. Matter 5, Issue 1 – Whether the updates to policies and justification text related to the Infrastructure, Transport, Flood Risk, Drainage and Trees are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared??

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Sally Talbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

Afternoon Session: 1400 to 1700

Matter 5 – Infrastructure, Transport, Flood Risk, Drainage and Trees

1. Matter 5, Issue 1 continued.

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Sally Talbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

HEARING DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY, 10 December 2025 (WEEK 2)

Morning Session: 0930 to 1300

Matter 6 – Monitoring and Review

1. Matter 6, Issue 1 – Whether the updates to the adopted Plan would be able to be monitored effectively?

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
SallyTalbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Fabian Oyarzun	Head of Climate Action, Stevenage Borough Council
Veronica Chan	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Jennifer Bratchell	Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Stevenage Borough Council
Simon Bird KC	Francis Taylor Building, on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council
Rachael Rooney	Interim Strategic Planning Manager, North Herts Council
Debbie Coates	Planning Policy Team Leader, North Herts Council

Afternoon Session: 1400 to 1700

1. Mop Up Session - Review list of actions and Inspector briefly outlines next steps as appropriate and able to do so.

Participants

Lewis Claridge	Head of Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
James Chettleburgh	Head of Planning and Enforcement, Stevenage Borough Council
Thomas Frankland-Wells	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
SallyTalbot	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council
Sarah Martins	Team Leader Planning Policy, Stevenage Borough Council