

HOUSING SITES IN HITCHIN

NHDC has produced a further study of potential housing sites following the consultations in 2013 to be used in preparing their forthcoming Draft Local Plan: (search for 'SHLAA' on www.north.herts.gov.uk). The very large site for 7,000 homes south and west of the town has been reduced, but there are still a range of sites at Grays Lane and Highover Farm about which residents may want to write to Councillors.

However, the Steering Group of *Hitchin Town Action Group*¹ think that the site for 1,000 homes on Green Belt land between Park Way and Maydencroft will be of most concern to Hitchin as a whole:

1. Outer Priory Park and the landscape north of Maydencroft Manor are of major historic and aesthetic value and their loss would affect the setting and special character of Hitchin.
2. Development on the higher land and into the valley would have very significant impact on short and long distance views both out from the town and from the high quality landscape to the west.



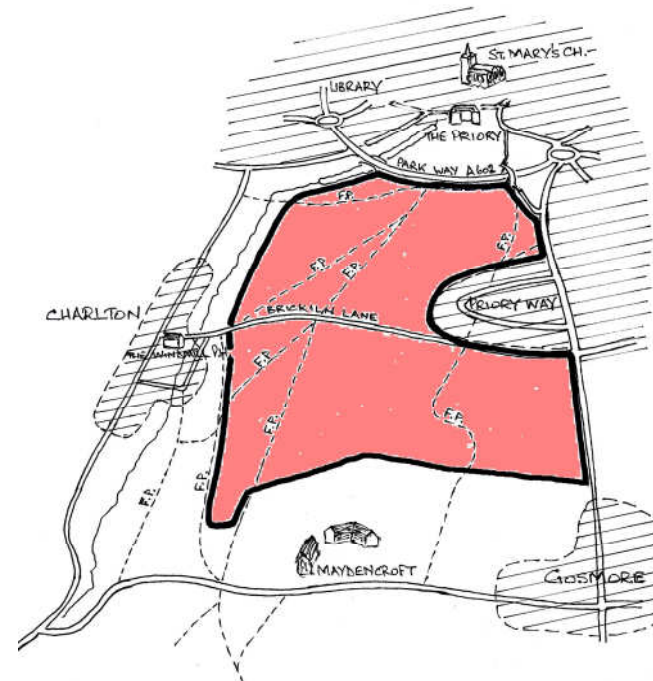
3. The area has an unusually extensive network of footpaths and quiet lanes, giving easy access to nature for Hitchin and other local residents which would be lost - with negative effects on well being and quality of life.
4. The hamlet of Charlton would lose its separate identity (with housing on the ridge above it) and the last gap between Hitchin and Gosmore would also be closed.

If you agree that this area of Green Belt is very special and needs to be preserved then please consider writing to your Councillor now (see HTAG links: "housing between Park Way & Maydencroft" at hitchinform.org.uk; hitchinsociety.org.uk; hitchinhistoricals.org.uk for names and contact details and a copy of our joint letter to Councillors).

And join us on **Sunday 27th July** for a beating of the bounds of the area affected. We will meet by the bridge near the Three Moorhens pub car

park at 11.00 for a guided walk highlighting the significance of the area ending up back at the pub (for a drink) by 12.30.

We need to act now: if we wait until the Draft Local Plan is produced later in the year it will be very difficult indeed to get the site excluded from the Plan.



¹ Hitchin Forum, Hitchin Society, Hitchin Historical Society and Hitchin Initiative who have jointly produced this leaflet.