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**WEST STEVENAGE CONSORTIUM WELCOMES  
EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN PANEL REPORT**

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The West Stevenage Consortium welcomes the East of England Plan Panel's recommendation that a minimum of 5,000 homes be provided at West Stevenage in the period up to 2021. The Panel's recommendation provides yet another endorsement of West Stevenage as a sustainable location for new housing development that will support the provision of essential local infrastructure.

In October last year, the Secretary of State announced that he was minded to approve the Consortium's application for 3,600 homes subject to the submission of a reformulated planning obligation. At the same time the Consortium's application for 5,000 homes was turned down on the grounds of prematurity in relation to the emerging East of England Plan.

The Consortium continues to work with Stevenage Borough Council, North Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire County Council on a reformulated planning obligation in relation to the application for 3,600 homes. Significant progress has been made towards this and the deadline for the submission of the reformulated planning obligation has recently been extended to 20 September in an attempt to reach an agreement between all parties.

If planning consent is granted for the 3,600 application, it will allow development at West Stevenage to get underway and ensure the early delivery of much-needed new housing, including nearly 1000 affordable new homes.

Andrew Dutton, the Project Director for the West Stevenage Consortium, commented:

"We are pleased that the Independent Panel examining the East of England Plan concurs with the adopted Structure Plan's view that West Stevenage is an appropriate location for greater housing growth. We hope that the application for 3,600 homes proceeds as quickly as possible to enable the Consortium to make a start on the development and the delivery of much-needed new homes."

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Notes:

The Examination in Public in to the East of England Plan was held between November 2005 and March 2006. This was conducted by an Independent Panel appointed by the Secretary of State.

The Independent Panel report in to the East of England Plan was published on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2006 and recommends that a minimum of 5,000 homes be provided at West Stevenage in the period up to 2021. It also calls for a strategic review of the Green Belt in order to allow for the continued growth of Stevenage beyond 2021.

Development at West Stevenage has also been endorsed in the adopted Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, the Stevenage Local Plan and by the Inspector's report on the Consortium's planning applications.

The West Stevenage Consortium is made up of Taylor Woodrow Plc, Persimmon Plc, and the Garden Village Partnership. English Partnerships, the Government's national regeneration agency, has an advisory role to the Consortium and owns part of the West Stevenage application site.

West Stevenage is designed to be a 'leading edge' mixed use urban extension to Britain's first planned New Town, meeting high standards of sustainability, urban design and affordability. West Stevenage will comprise three attractive and interlinked urban villages each with its own facilities and all set within a landscape framework that will minimise impact on the wider area.

The Consortium's website highlights West Stevenage's compliance with central Government policy, including:

- HOUSING DELIVERY - the ability of the site to deliver on the Government's commitment to a step-change in the delivery of new housing in the East of England through its Sustainable Communities Plan. The site's potential to deliver 1,375 affordable homes for people in housing need in the East of England, such as those on housing waiting lists, the elderly, those with special needs and key workers.
- SUSTAINABILITY - core sustainability objectives and targets that respond directly to the Sustainable Communities Plan.
- INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY – the West Stevenage plans will deliver the required infrastructure to support the development; transport and highways, community facilities and services.
- URBAN REGENERATION - the delivery of wider urban regeneration objectives for Stevenage town centre

The website can be viewed at [www.weststevenage.co.uk](http://www.weststevenage.co.uk).

For further information, please contact Emma Jordan on 020 7529 1733 or 07740 651 507.