

Hastings Alliance
Court Lodge Oast
Udimore
Rye
East Sussex
TN31 6BB

7th April 2009

Dear Editor

Greg Barker and Climate Change

In your article headed 'MP tops the local expenses table' (Bexhill Observer, April 3rd), you note that as Shadow Climate Change Minister, Mr Barker has just attended a meeting in Washington of the International Climate and Energy Security Commission in preparation for next December's crucial summit on climate change.

We note with considerable irony that the MP also supports the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR), which will add at least 6,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere each year after construction, while at the same time facilitating patterns of development that will increase reliance on carbon emitting transport and create pressure for more roads. Incredibly, we read in his biography that he was a key author of the Conservative Party's 'Low Carbon Economy' Green paper.

Any claims that Mr Barker is an effective custodian of the environment for future generations are further undermined by his failure to attend any meetings of the 2007-8 Parliamentary Audit Committee meetings reporting on 'Halting Biodiversity Loss' (1) despite his being a member of that committee. The report highlights habitat and species loss and recommends urgent action. Even promoters of the BHLR recognise that there will be significant damage to protected habitats (including ancient woodland) and biodiversity in Combe Haven Valley, most of which sits in Mr Barker's constituency. The MP's commitment to taking steps to reverse losses to wildlife for future generations clearly has to be questioned while he supports the destructive road scheme.

Sincerely

Nick Bingham
(Chairman, Hastings Alliance for Sustainable Transport Solutions)

1 – House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee 'Halting biodiversity loss' HC 743
20.11.08

Local Group Campaign for Better Transport

Address line 1

Addresss line 2