

Commenting on Policy S/GF: Land adjacent to A11 and A1307 at Grange Farm

Policy reference: S/GF

Policy title: Land adjacent to A11 and A1307 at Grange Farm

Name : Mark Logan, Chair Hildersham Parish Council

Overall Policy Position

Hildersham Parish Council wish to comment on Policy S/GF because this is a significant change to the local area and is highly likely to have detrimental impacts on our local environment and daily life. Hildersham PC is not against housing development per se but the size and location of this development is extremely concerning. Combined with the proposed development of the UK's largest solar farm which abuts this proposed site, we envisage this area will be an enormous building site for 10 plus years!

1. Uses

The way the policy proposes to use the land with the mix of premise types is not a major concern. However, the deliverability of that mix is a major concern. There are examples elsewhere where this mix has not been fulfilled - no shops in Northstowe for example and key facilities such as schools and medical centres being built too late thus putting pressure on already stretched existing village facilities. The impacts on Addenbrooks needs be properly assessed as well if the phasing of the mix does not happen as planned. Serious consideration should be given to the timing of these facilities within the development plan.

2. Context

The ancient Roman Road, which borders the north of Grange Farm and the south of the proposed Kingsway solar farm, is a 31-acre linear biological Site of Special Scientific Interest and is a designated Scheduled Monument, estimated to have been constructed around the first century. From the Roman Road you can see Ely Cathedral, and the majority of Cambridge stretched out below you. The houses at the top of the Grange Farm site will have magnificent views over the whole of the landscape, whilst walkers and visitors to Wandlebury Country Park, Cambridge and Ely will have uninterrupted views of the major development. The views from the Roman Road will be decimated and along with the solar farm to the right and a new town to the left, it will feel like a narrow corridor in the middle of a manmade landscape. How the existing views from this ancient site will be protected is a major concern to the local communities. The proposed 70-100m gap between the development and the Roman Road may, for example, be sufficient if all the buildings at the north end of the site are single story. This is something that will need careful consideration once the more detailed plans for the site are revealed.

With the continued expansion of Granta Park, Babraham Institute, Wellcome Trust, the Bio Medical Campus, along with the new travel hub, the Kingsway solar farm and proposed Grange Farm development, this area of South Cambridgeshire will cease to be a series of rural villages in an agricultural landscape.

Date : 15th January 2026

3. Built Form

The mix of residential property types is appropriate although the Parish Council feel many homes will be used as a commuter base for those working in London and the “low cost” housing will still be out of reach of many local young people. Our main concern is the density of the development and, like Trumpington and Eddington, in order to fulfil the housing requirements on the site it will require 3-plus storey homes which would be entirely inappropriate for this rural setting. The vernacular of 3-storey homes is not commonplace in any of the surrounding villages.

4. Public Space

Hildersham Parish Council has no particular issues with what is proposed in the outline plan.

5. Nature

There needs to be a significant buffer between the Grange Farm site and Little Abington, along the A1307. Without such a buffer, the village of Little Abington will feel like it has become part of one large conurbation. As discussed earlier how the Roman Road landscape and views will be protected is of major concern and needs serious consideration.

What is also not clear is the impact this development may have on the Granta chalk stream, particularly in terms of rain water run-off from the site, waste water from sewage on the site and general impact on the water supply to the area. We appreciate the linkage to the water supply from the reservoir in 2032. We would like to see how the sites impact on the chalk stream and the general water supply has been assessed.

6. Movement

The A1307 and Fourwentways roundabout is already under significant pressure from increased traffic. In our opinion the road cannot accommodate any further increase in traffic. Getting out of Abington or Hildersham at peak times is a nightmare today, let alone with 6000 extra homes plus cars. The queues at the roundabout during peak times in and out of Cambridge are significant. While the new park and ride site and bus route into Cambridge is supported, human behaviour more often means people choose to use their own transport more frequently than any model would predict. How the cars from the site join the A1307 needs very careful consideration, perhaps a separate access onto the A11 nearer Worsted Lodge could be investigated?

7. Resources

The impacts on the local water supply and the protection of the chalk stream have already been mentioned. How sewage and the odour from the site is dealt with is unclear to the Parish Council and it would like further detailed clarification.

Hildersham Parish Council (and a significant number of the residents) cannot help but feel that the site near Cambridge North would be a much better choice for this development!