

HORSEHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Comments on draft Local Plan January 2026

Overall

We agree with the aim of having a vibrant economy that also significantly reduces impacts on the environment and climate. We would like to see a defined aim to increase biodiversity as we understand this is intimately linked with mitigating climate change and environmental degradation. We support a higher level of biodiversity gain to be required for new development than the current national requirement.

All development must be sustainable; we strongly support this basic tenet of the plan.

We agree with the order of preference and approach to future land use for housing. We support the retention and enhancement of the Cambridge green belt.

We note the proposed new pipelines to alleviate the shortage of drinking water and the proposal to reduce extraction from the aquifer and particularly chalk streams, both of which we strongly endorse. However it is our understanding that there is a delay in the availability of water from Lincolnshire using the new pipeline until after 2030. How will this gap be managed and what is the impact of this on the plan period?

We wholly support an emphasis on active travel as well as enhanced cultural opportunities.

We are concerned by the proposal to build a new community at Grange Farm. To our mind this should be green belt land; the historical importance of the landscape means the open character should be preserved for future generations.

We support the proposed overall policy for minimal development in small villages in rural South Cambridgeshire in preference for larger new centres that are already being established.

Specific Areas (where a policy is not listed we have no comment)

Policy S/DS – As stated we are gravely concerned about the proposal to develop Grange Farm. Worsted Street is most likely a bronze age or earlier route and the previous roman settlement at Worsted Lodge indicates that this again was also used in the Bronze Age. There is also a large bronze age barrow at Four Went Ways so we know the whole site has archaeological significance. The views down towards the A1307 and back up from the A1307 are thus historically hugely important and should be preserved in line with policy GP/HE. We appreciate there is a need to find other sites for 6000 homes if Grange Farm is rejected but we feel further expansion of the new towns would be preferable to the loss of this highly significant site.

We support the development of the A11 travel hub. No other comment.

Policy CC/SD – while we support this approach we are concerned as to how it might be enforced. We fear these proposals will be ineffective without specific penalties for non-compliance.

Policy CC/NZ – 15-20 kwh/sqm is an 80% reduction on current requirements. How can this be mandated and monitored? It is likely to reduce the number of developers willing to build. Having said that, if these issues can be resolved we would strongly support the policy.

Policy CC/WE – again, how might this dramatic deep in water usage be policed and monitored? It will likely require grey water recycling for every home – how can developers be encouraged to pay for this facility?

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Policy BG/EO – this is fine. But how will the plan ensure that the proposed accessible green space quantity standard is met in areas devoid of green space who are not seeing new developments under this plan?

Overall comments

We have found it difficult to provide detailed comments. This is because in general we feel the policies are described in overview without specifics. In general we support the direction of travel, but it is very difficult to fully endorse this document when in so many areas there are few details about the process of implementation and particularly the measures that will be put in place to detect and deal with non-compliance.

John Howard

Chair, Horseheath Parish Council