

Existing Village

The proposed 6,000-home development at Grange Farm would significantly affect existing residents of Abington by permanently altering the area's rural character and increasing pressure on local infrastructure, including roads, schools and health services. Construction activity and a substantial rise in traffic and population will lead to noise, congestion and reduced tranquility, which would undoubtedly affect quality of life and wellbeing. While new facilities could bring some benefits, the development will have a major impact on the current residents. The severity of disruption will depend on the pace of development and whether supporting services and transport improvements are delivered in step with the new housing.

Local Ecology

The development at Grange Farm would represent a major change to the local landscape, with likely ecological effects including the loss and fragmentation of existing farmland habitats that currently support farmland birds, bats, small mammals and invertebrates. Increased lighting, noise and human activity will disturb wildlife, while new roads and built areas may disrupt established movement corridors. Although planning policy requires biodiversity net gain through green infrastructure, habitat creation and buffers along watercourses, the ecological outcome will depend heavily on detailed design, protection of sensitive features such as chalk grassland and streams, and long-term management to ensure that new habitats genuinely compensate for those lost.

Kingsway Solar

The concern that should Kingsway Solar Farm get the go ahead from Government, the combined burden on the local area of two incredibly large developments will be devastating. Any planned mitigation for either development would be cancelled out by the presence of the other.

Local Road Network.

Though commendable, the council's ambitious plan to create a community of this size that is less dependent on the car may be slightly naive. Assuming if only one third of the homes have just a single vehicle, it still amounts to 2000 additional cars accessing an already over utilized road network. Not to mention the additional buses and service vehicles. All still needing to access the main roundabout on the A11/A1307.

With no westward access from the A11 to the A14, additional stress will fall on the west bound A505 route through to the M11. This stretch of the A505 is already at a standstill at peak times. The A1037 also suffers considerable delays and tailbacks between Linton and the A11 roundabout. With the heavy delays on the main roads, through traffic may be enticed onto minor roads to bypass pinch points. This in turn would cause issues in the surrounding smaller villages.

The council seems to be putting much store in the fact that the new residents would be employed locally. This may not be the case for everyone and with the Grange Farm developments proposed location, it may be attractive for those working further afield. Access to the local train stations at Audley End, Whittlesford and Chesterford would only reinforce those congestion issues along with the lack of parking at those locations.

Education

The proposal mentions the provision of new primary and secondary schools being accessible from early in the development. Are we correct in assuming that this is to also include pre-school and nursery provision for those seeking childcare. And as the development hopes to entice healthcare professionals, will this reflect the need for childcare outside the normal working day.

Social Activities

Is there sufficient provision for out of hours social activities be they sport, handicrafts, youth clubs and opportunity eat out, shop and socialize in general? If one of the aims is to limit private car ownership & use, these must be available on site, and from the outset.

Healthcare

Whilst the proposal mentions the early provision of education, there is no such clause regarding healthcare. Rapid population increase may strain local services if new infrastructure lags behind housing delivery.