

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2020

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A reminder that information about South Cambs response to coronavirus can be found on the regularly updated coronavirus pages on the SCDC website: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

NORTHSTOWE PHASE 3A AND 3B DISTRICT COUNCILLOR RESPONSE

Below is our response to the planning applications for Northstowe Phase 3A and 3B. In short, we have objected to Phase 3A, in line with the very comprehensive set of objections from Oakington Parish Council and have approved 3B with appropriate conditions.

We'd like to thank those residents who put their views forward on the planning website and for wading through what we know are a huge number of confusing planning documents.

It will go to planning committee later on in the year, we shall be attending this committee and residents are also able to attend this to speak at the committee. We will update as and when a date for committee is confirmed.

We would like to thank Homes England for the extensive consultation work they have done with the community on the overall concept and design of Phase 3A. We are pleased to see many of the suggestions from residents, including maintaining the airfield characteristics and the historic link along Mill Lane from Oakington to Longstanton, have all been included in the design. We are also pleased to see significantly more green space included than policy dictates.

However, comments and objections made by from Oakington residents and the Oakington Parish Council reflect the concerns of the village about this outline planning application. We would like to thank Oakington Parish Council and their working group, which included members of the Oakington Traffic Action Group, Environmental Action Group and Flood Mitigation group, for the incredible hard work and diligence in reviewing this outline planning application on behalf of residents and their comprehensive comments and objections.

As the elected representatives for this ward, we wish to object to the overall development based on the following specific issues.

1. Insufficient green separation between Oakington and the Northstowe

It has always been understood that the individual village character of Longstanton and Oakington should be preserved as part of the Northstowe development. One of the primary methods to do this is via enough green separation between the village frameworks and the build-up area of Northstowe.

The suggested separation in this planning application narrows down to 60 metres at some points and is not sufficient to provide this separation, especially as much of it will be in use by Northstowe residents in the form of allotments, greenways, cycle paths and a pocket park. A number of Oakington residents and the Parish Council have raised objections that the boundary of Northstowe will now directly back on to the gardens of existing properties, affecting their privacy. We support these objections.

2. Inappropriate housing to the South of the site, including excessive housing height

We support objections raised by the Parish Council and Oakington to residents to the proposed housing types along the Southern edge of the development and argue that these do not comply with aims for Northstowe to be contained almost wholly from views in Oakington, as stated in the original Northstowe Area Action Plan.

Concerns are raised about the proposal to locate a large parcel of housing to the South East of the site, in close proximity to existing properties in Church View and Mill Road. This includes a three-storey block of housing, that will rise above the existing line of the trees. We are particularly concerned about the proximity of this housing to the historic Anglo-Saxon heart of the village of Oakington. These proposals were presented at a public consultation event in January 2020 where strong objections were raised by Oakington residents.

We are also concerned about the addition of housing to the South West of the site, bordering Lowbury Crescent and Longstanton Road. The addition of this housing has further narrowed the green separation. We object to the location of this parcel of housing and suggest that building should stop at the perimeter road.

We are concerned about excessive building heights along this Oakington Edge. The Northstowe Area Action Plan proposed height restrictions of 2 storeys here so that buildings would be located behind the substantial natural buffers afforded by the existing tree belt. Unfortunately, this application proposes three storey housing bordering Church View and Mill Road. Housing proposed bordering Lowbury Crescent and Longstanton Road is three storey. Housing that faces Oakington village should be at a maximum 2 storey height.

3. Excessive increase in traffic through the villages of Oakington and Westwick

The data provided in the Traffic Assessment report in this planning application indicates significant increases in traffic in peak hours in Dry Drayton Road, Water Lane, Station Road and Cambridge Road, with all junctions in the vicinity of the development over capacity.

We are particularly concerned about the potential for increased traffic along Water Lane, where Oakington Village Primary school is located on this road. This would pose a potential increased risk to children travelling to school and lead to an increase in air pollution in the vicinity of the primary school.

4. The proposed design and location of the Southern Access Road East

We note and agree with concerns raised by residents and Oakington Parish Council on the Southern Access Road East and agree that this should ideally feed into the existing roundabout at the Dry Drayton interchange and the local access road but understand that this has been rejected by Highways

England as part of the A14 design work. We would urge Homes England to look for a solution to this issue.

We also note the concern raised by Oakington residents and the Parish Council regarding the proposal for a roundabout linking the SARE to Dry Road. This would potentially encourage vehicles to turn into the village, increasing traffic through the village. This issue could be partially mitigated by preventing traffic from turning left out of the SARE.

5. Inadequacies in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

We have had significant issues with enforcement of planning conditions related to construction on the Northstowe site causing significant disruption to residents living on or near to the site. It is therefore essential that robust, enforceable conditions are contained in any CEMP approved as part of this application. As Oakington Parish Council note residents will be living with Northstowe construction in excess of ten years. We feel there are inadequacies in the existing CEMP and that it should be rejected in its current format. It should be resubmitted with accurate, measurable and enforceable conditions, to cover:

- Development work timings – strict limits on times of construction
- Specific requirements on noise and dust monitoring, mitigation and issue resolution
- Limits of construction vehicle movement with no construction vehicle access via Oakington village

Flood attenuation is also essential to Oakington village, much of which is located on a flood plain. The village has suffered several recent flood events. Concerns regarding flood attenuation were recognised with £400,000 allocated in the Phase 2 planning application for the building of attenuation ponds to control the flow through Oakington Brook. Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council that no reference is made in this application to commitments made by Homes England to the implementation of flood mitigation work.

Should permission be granted, firm conditions and commitments are sought from Homes England to sufficiently mitigate the flood risk to Oakington village to at least a 1 in 200-year event standard (plus a 40% climate change allowance). Existing works from the Dry Drayton Ponds agreement have yet to be put into action and we request that no occupations are permitted on 3a until this is actioned.

Should permission be granted we would also request a specific environmental management plan for the Military Lake and for this to be fully reviewed by SCDC ecologist.

District Councillors response to Northstowe Phase 3B Planning application 20/02142/OUT

We broadly support this application and welcome the work done on the Northstowe Co-ordination Statement between Homes England, Endurance Estates and Digital Park estates to ensure the co-ordinated development between all three developments for a cohesive and consistent development. Where possible we would request formal commitments to be sought so that this document is not merely an ideal state but something all three developers could commit to.

We would request that to maintain separate identities of Longstanton village and Northstowe that the edge houses visible from the northern end of Longstanton be no higher than 2-storeys – these are the houses along the B1050 and running diagonally along the length of Phase 3b to the west.

We note concerns on potential air pollution around the school site and request that air monitoring could be provided along here as well as research for adequate arboreal mitigation of air pollution.

Should permission be granted we wish to request specific enforceable conditions be laid down by the Council in the Construction Management Plan to include (but not limited to):

- Strict, enforceable limits on construction times
- Specific and proactive measures to monitor dust and noise and measures to mitigate and resolve issues
- Construction vehicle access only from the B1050 and A14 and not via Longstanton or Willingham villages or Northstowe itself.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR LONGSTANTON OAKINGTON AND NORTHSTOWE

A series of drop-in events have been taking place this past week and into next week, the full set of dates are below.

Oakington	Longstanton	Northstowe
<p>Monday 7 September 10.30am to 12.30pm Gazebo on Oakington Recreation Ground, Queens Way, CB24 3AW</p>	<p>Monday 7 September 2.30pm to 4.30pm Gazebo on Longstanton Recreation Ground, Over Road, CB24 3GP</p>	<p>Monday 7 September 6pm to 8pm Community Wing, outside area, next to Pathfinder School, CB24 1AA</p>
<p>Saturday 5 September 2pm to 4pm Gazebo on Oakington Recreation Ground, Queens Way, CB24 3AW</p>	<p>Saturday 12 September 10.30am to 12.30pm Gazebo on Village Green, Nelson Avenue, CB24 3BT</p>	<p>Saturday 12 September 2.30pm to 4.30pm Community Wing, outside area, next to Pathfinder School, CB24 1AA</p>

There has been some confusion raised over the green separation between Oakington and Northstowe we hope this clarifies:

All three Options show a proposed boundary between Oakington and Northstowe that takes a significant amount of the green separation with Northstowe within the Oakington and Westwick Civil Parish boundary, however, this would not necessarily confer any rights or responsibilities regarding management and maintenance, as this land is owned by Homes England and they are still in the

process of working out how community assets, the public realm and open spaces are to be managed for the long term, including the approach that would be applied for this land in question. This is what Homes England have said:

“As a new town, Northstowe will deliver a range of high-quality public assets and communal areas. A key part of the vision for Northstowe is to ensure that these assets are managed in perpetuity, continuing to reflect this high quality, and benefit the community. As such, it will be important to have appropriate management and maintenance arrangements in place, to support the identity of the town and enhance resident experience. To inform this process, and identify an effective approach, Homes England have commissioned a long-term stewardship toolkit. This toolkit includes an options appraisal of the main stewardship models, outlining their relative advantages and disadvantages, and the role and responsibilities of key partners involved. Once complete, the toolkit will support decision-making on how the preferred model should be structured, financed and governed to deliver the optimum stewardship arrangement for Northstowe.”

We anticipate that Homes England will be involving stakeholders in discussions about management and maintenance options as they work through this issue with the assistance of the toolkit developed (which itself is awaiting sign-off from within Homes England) and are happy to chase if these discussions do not take place in a timely manner.

A reminder it is still possible to view and comment on the three options being proposed as part of the second phase of the CGR consultation and the deadline is 15th September. Full details and maps can be found here <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cgr-lown>

LONGSTANTON FLY-TIPPING

The fly tipping witnessed at Longstanton Cemetery – update, the fixed penalty notice has not been paid, so South Cambs are moving to prosecute.

SURGERY DEMAND

We have had concerns raised about the difficulty of doctors' appointments and Northstowe being the cause of this. This is the response from the Longstanton & Willingham surgery that an increase in wait times are not caused by Northstowe. As a reminder the money in the NHS follows the patient, if there are more patients in a surgery, they get more money, it's not less of a pie, so to speak. If you continue to experience issues let us know.

I agree that the wait times have gone up at both Willingham and Longstanton but Northstowe is not the reason.

We changed our appointment system as we were not able to meet the demand for "urgent on the day appointments" with the amount of routine appointment slots that we were leaving available.

In order to see all patients that request to be dealt with as urgent we had to decrease the amount of routine appointments available. We trialed this system at the beginning of last winter and found it to be much more manageable, so we have continued with this new system.

The Practice has grown in size but we have also increased the amount of doctors that are working at the Practice, so the size of the Practice (and taking new patients from Northstowe) has no effect on the change in the time you would wait for a routine appointment. As explained above it is the new appointment system and the overall reduction in routine appointments available. We discuss the appointments regularly and change it according to the demand for "urgent on the day appointments". Therefore should the demand decrease we would increase the amount of routine appointments, such as in the summer months (except for the fact that we are now not working normally as most work being done by doctors is via telephone - due to Covid-19).

The Practice will continue to update the system as necessary.

NORTHSTOWE ALLOTMENTS

We have been really pleased to see how much progress has been made on the allotments and well done to the Northstowe Horticultural Association for all their hard work getting up and running.

We are especially pleased that on our insistence, the agreement for the Horticultural society allowed Longstanton residents to have a plot in Northstowe provided they were active members of the association - and has allowed both Northstowe and Longstanton residents to come together and build the association, plan their plots and with more exciting plans to come forward for the community orchard and community garden. We love that the communities are literally growing together!

For more information please get in touch directly with the Northstowe Horticultural Association here: northstoweallotments@gmail.com

NORTHSTOWE PIONEER PARK

We have chased L&Q for updates on when Pioneer Park will be open to the community – they have risk assessment work to do and were unwilling to be pinned down to a date but indicated an end of September timeframe.

NORTHSTOWE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There have been reports of anti-social behaviour at Northstowe and potential damage to the play park, we have encouraged residents to ensure it is all reported to the Police to ensure this data is logged and flagged to the local PCSO's, who have increased their presence in Northstowe lately.

NORTHSTOWE POST-BOX

Due to a tremendous backlog of work from Lockdown it will take a couple of months for the post box to be installed, but it will probably be a 'pillar' style, located near the notice board on The Green.

NORTHSTOWE PHASE 2 HOUSEBUILDING UNDERWAY

Urban Splash have begun work on Phase 2a, with the building of Inholm the new 'urban village', including 81 Council homes, being created using the latest modern methods of construction. Houses are being released for sale on 13th September.

Read more at www.scamb.gov.uk/work-starts-on-northstowes-newest-neighbourhood/

DISTRICT WIDE UPDATES

BRIEF COVID UPDATE

Brief Covid-19 update for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, 26 August 2020

Confirmed Covid-19 cases – overall and in care homes

63 new lab-confirmed Covid-19 cases were detected in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in the latest reporting period, 17-23 August (as at 26 August). This is 9 less than the previous week.

The cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population in Peterborough (782.7) remain statistically significantly higher than the national rate (504.8); the rates are statistically similar in Fenland (501.7) and Huntingdonshire (532.1) (data at 26 August).

The 7-day rolling average of confirmed cases for Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, and each of the Cambridgeshire districts, shows a declining trend in Covid-19 cases since the peaks in late April, and a lower, more stable trend in recent weeks. However, confirmed cases have increased in South Cambridgeshire (+1) and Peterborough (+5) in the most recent reporting week.

All cause and Covid-19 deaths – all settings and in care homes

4 Covid-19 related deaths occurred in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in ONS reporting week 33, up from 2 in week 32 (2 Huntingdonshire, 2 Peterborough).

All-cause deaths numbers increased by 19, to a total of 124 deaths, for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in week 33 (plus 19 deaths in Cambridgeshire).

At a district level, Cambridge (+8), East Cambridgeshire (+3), Huntingdonshire (+9) and South Cambridgeshire (+10) had an increase in all-cause deaths between the last two reporting weeks.

Cambridgeshire has had 2 notifications of a Covid-19 related death in a care home since 10th August. The last notification for Peterborough was 8th July (data at 25 August).

The number of all-cause deaths is above the 2014-18 average in Cambridgeshire and the districts except Fenland. Numbers in Peterborough are below the 5-year average and are similar in Fenland.

The number of all-cause deaths in care homes are above the 2014-18 average in Cambridgeshire. It is below the 5-year average in Peterborough and Fenland, and similar in South Cambridgeshire.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVOLUTION

DISTRICT COUNCIL NETWORK (DCN) DEVOLUTION REPORT

There has been a lot in the press recently about devolution and local government reorganisation, and we thought you may be interested in the District Council Network (a cross party network of all District Councils nationwide) report which was published in advance of the forthcoming government White Paper on the matter. It makes 7 recommendations for the White Paper to:

Deliver genuine devolution that moves quickly to drive local growth

1. Retain and build on the local capacity to deliver
2. Empower real-world economies
3. Continue to anchor local government in local communities
4. Reject false arguments that bigger local government is better or cheaper local government
5. Support strategic leadership across wider functional economic areas
6. Introduce an upper limit for the size of new unitary councils, in line with the principle of electoral equality

The report can be found here: <https://districtcouncils.info/news-coverage/power-in-place-devolution-and-districts-driving-our-recovery/>

The government are surprisingly busy with things unrelated to Covid 19 at the moment and a move to massive local government reorganisation is one distraction we really do not need. A white paper in October appears to indicate the dissolution of district councils and the creation of massive unitary councils representing up to 800,000 residents (South Cambs has about 130,000). The impact on democratic processes will be considerable. Buckinghamshire has recently become one of these huge councils and there are 196 councillors in their council meetings now (45 at South Cambs for comparison) so how anyone raises local issues is anyone's guess.

TEST & TRACE – UNTRUE RUMOURS

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council have been made aware of a rumour circulating on social media that suggests children in school who begin to display COVID symptoms will be taken to a government testing centre, and parents will be denied access to their child. The rumour suggests any parent arriving at the school may face being removed by the police.

This information is entirely untrue. If a child in a Cambridgeshire or Peterborough school begins to display COVID symptoms, parents will be contacted, and they will be asked to take the child home and to arrange a test. This is to protect the welfare of the child and those within his/her social bubble. Ensuring the safety, welfare and protection of our children is the number one priority of each and every school in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our schools have a clear and agreed Test & Trace process in place, backed by the Local Authority and Public Health England. This involves supporting any child who may require testing and offering clear next steps for the family involved.

SOLAR ENERGY

Interested in saving money on your energy bills by switching to solar?

This is an opportunity with #SolarTogether scheme to use bulk buying power to purchase solar panels for private house owners. South Cambs is working with Cambs County Council to bring this scheme to a roof near you. Register your interest before 6 October 2020 to be part of the scheme.

Read more about it and register here: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/climate-change/solar-together-cambridgeshire/>

MOVE OF WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Following a request by the Liberal Democrat councillors who represent the affected areas, Anglian Water have agreed to a further four weeks for the public to have their say on the initial proposals to move the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant from its current site south of Milton. All those living in the villages to the north and east of Cambridge are encouraged to take a look at the proposals and register their views before the new deadline of 14th September. All info can be found on Anglian Water's dedicated website <http://cwwtpr.com/>

PLANNING

The Government has published a White Paper on Planning Reform that is causing some consternation amongst planning authorities. Although there are some serious issues with current legislation and things could be made slicker and better from the customer point of view generally Councils do a good job of protecting the places that need to be protected including the Green Belts, Conservation Areas, Heritage Assets and rural areas. The Government blames local authorities for restricting the speed of housing delivery but in fact it is caused by developers who will only build houses as fast as they can sell them. The new proposal is that areas will be designated for 'growth' and that very few application processes will need to be got through for building to commence. Councils such as South Cambs are gravely concerned that ensuring housing is built to high standards and is located close to jobs and facilities will be stopped, and the planning system reduced to a random race to the bottom. There is a wide ranging consultation underway and we expect that the final legislation will look quite different from what is currently proposed - at least we hope it will.

BUSINESS RECOVERY

South Cambs has distributed over £25million of government grants to businesses. The flow of money has now stopped but the Council now has appointed a team of 4 experts whose job it is to support local businesses in any way they wish - help with a planning application or a trading license or advice on business recovery and diversification and so on. The aim is to create a One Stop Shop at the council for all businesses regardless of size, and to give all business owners a single point of contact in terms of real person with whom they can communicate. If you are a local business please do sign up for the newsletter which contains updates on just about everything you could ever want to know as a business owner in South Cambs.

WASTE RECYCLING

South Cambs was asked by the Telegraph about what happens to recycling here. Less than 2% of South Cambs recycling is sent to energy from waste because it is too low quality for re-processors and/or there is no market for it. Currently this includes thin plastic film. However, depending on demand, it can be recycled and that is why you are asked to include it in your recycling bin. The overwhelming majority of items residents put in their recycling bins get re-processed and re-used.

Out of the 2,376 tonnes of recycling presented by residents in June this year about 35 tonnes of low grade and contaminated plastic film had to be sent to energy recovery (ie incineration).

ZERO CARBON COMMUNITY GRANTS

Round 2 of the Zero Carbon Communities Grant is now open. This year the grant is focusing on three main themes- cycling, community buildings and tree planting and other 'nature-based solutions'. Applications are invited from parish councils and community groups and closes on September 30th. The fund is worth £100k with individual grants between £1,000 - £15,000.

NEW POLICE INITIATIVE

Noise pollution is a concern for many people living in our villages so you may be interested to know that using funds from the Proceeds of Crime Act Cambridgeshire Constabulary has purchased two state-of-the-art sound monitoring equipment kits which will alert officers at the roadside if an exhaust is too loud. The legal limit for cars is 80 decibels and it is illegal to modify an exhaust to be louder than this. Motorists could be given a £50 Fixed Penalty Notice for either failure to maintain the system or use of a vehicle with an altered system or excessive noise.

NEW SYSTEM AT ADDENBROOKES

There is now a new pilot triage system at Addenbrooke's Hospital launched to help make sure patients get the right care in the right place. From 9am to 9pm, anybody who attends Emergency Department (ED) without a referral from a medical professional, who hasn't been brought in by an ambulance, or hasn't called NHS 111 in advance will be reviewed by a senior clinician.

They will assess the patient's symptoms and decide whether emergency is the most appropriate place for their issue. If the patient does not require care from the ED, they will be directed to call NHS 111 or to visit their GP or a local pharmacy.

This pilot also supports the new national NHS 111 First initiative that encourages people to contact NHS 111 before going to an Emergency Department in order to ensure they get the right help at the right time.

HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS

Cambridge University Hospitals says: "During the pandemic, we had to make some difficult decisions such as postponing non-emergency operations, outpatient appointments and diagnostic investigations. We want to reassure all patients who are waiting that they have not been forgotten and that we will schedule their appointment or treatment as soon as possible. It is important that patients know that if their health changes or their symptoms become much worse while they are waiting, they need to let us know so that we can re-assess their condition. If you or a loved one are waiting for your first outpatient appointment and have not yet been seen by anyone at CUH, please contact your GP to let them know if your symptoms have become much worse. If you have already been seen by someone at CUH for the condition you have been referred in for, please contact the hospital team which is are leading your current care. You may also have new questions about risks and precautions or about coming to hospital at this time. It's fine to raise these questions and discuss any concerns. Similarly, if you are unwell, it is important that you still use the appropriate NHS services to get medical help if you need it. Further details on accessing NHS services during the pandemic can be found on the NHS website."

EAST WEST RAIL

East West Rail have re-started the consultation about the chosen Route E which runs to Cambourne and then through parishes in South Cambs to join one of the London lines. There are significant concerns about this route not least the impact on the Astronomy site at Barton and the proposed location of Cambourne to the south of the town, rather than on the A428. A local group has been set up – Cambridge Approaches – to pursue the best solution for South Cambs residents who will see a very dramatic change in their environment.

COUNCILLOR UPDATES

- Monthly email newsletter - with updates on local news as well as wider district issues which will impact us all. To sign up please go to: https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/email_signup_longstanton
(Note to help us manage GDPR it is easier for us to host from the LibDems webpage, but we absolutely promise this link will NOT subscribe you to LibDem news)
- For all the latest news & updates so far please go to:
https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/longstanton_news
- For those on social media we have a very active Facebook group covering the whole ward here:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/>

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these, or any other matters.

Alex Malyon and Sarah Cheung Johnson

District Councillors for Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe

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