

Dr Anna Gannon

11 December 2021

To: Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

c/o Cambridge City Council,

PO Box 700,

Cambridge CB1 0JH

and

c/o South Cambridgeshire District Council,

South Cambridgeshire Hall,

Cambourne Business Park,

Cambourne,

Cambridge CB23 6EA

Ref: Consultation Response - Draft Local Plan

Dear Sirs,

I strongly object to the level of growth proposed in the new Draft Local Plan around Shelford on the following grounds: lack of protection of our local chalk stream system, inadequate water availability and water waste capability, effect on national food security, failure to keep into account climate change, pollution and carbon emissions resulting from construction and additional motorised traffic, and the damage to our green spaces and ecosystems.

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire already have an unsustainable supply of potable water. As a supporter of Friends of the CAM, I am well aware that on the 1st of July 2021 DEFRA announced that chalk streams would be given enhanced environmental protection, and published the Environment Agency document titled "Water stressed areas – final classification 2021" which included the fact that the supply areas of Cambridge Water and Anglian Water are areas of serious water stress, p. 6. The current proposal is to pump water from North Lincolnshire, which is also classified by the Environment Agency in the above report as a water stressed area.

The local sewage system is currently inadequate, as evidenced by the number of sewage spills by smaller Anglian Water sewage works into the Cam Valley. Signs were up in Cambridge this summer warning about the polluted quality of the River Cam (which has already lost half its flow), and the dangers of swimming in it. I sent a photo of a sign to our local MP, Anthony Browne, who is a strong

advocate of the health of chalk streams (particularly Nine Wells, under siege from close-by developments) – and he replied expressing concern. He is well-aware of the water problems in this area.

At a time when the UK is said to be importing between 40 and 80% of its food, it is perverse to bury agricultural land under cement and housing. A breach to our Green Belt will see more and more developments. Buildings and roads lead to a decrease in water in the environment and to a decrease in the amount of land that can absorb rainwater and recharge our aquifers. The irrigation needs of agriculture must be considered and prioritised in the area.

Shelford and Stapleford share a village-sized road system, already under much stress. We are the incubus of the proposed EWR and guided bus, again on the Green Belt, both of which not only will bring NO benefit to us, but also add to the congestion and disruption brought about by the construction work (if they do go ahead despite the as yet unknown, long-term effects on employment and travel behaviours of the COVID pandemic).

With COVID, we are all more aware of the health benefits of our precious natural environment. We are all aware that ‘planting trees’ doesn’t offset the damage done to established ecosystem. Shelford is a rural area, with established wildlife, already stressed and hemmed in.

We are also more aware of what really matters, and what we would like our rural villages to be for us and future generations.

I strongly advocate that the Cambridge Local Plan adopts the principles of *The Economics of Biodiversity*,¹ Prof. Dasgupta’s definition of sustainability, which describes wealth as the sum of natural, human and economic capitals and yields, and sustainability as the condition where this sum is either stable or increasing. Economic growth at the expense of natural capital and yields is unsustainable and immoral.

I hope these points will be taken into account

Best wishes

Anna Gannon

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-economics-of-biodiversity-the-dasgupta-review>