

Widdington Parish Council

Response to the Newport Quendon Rickling Neighbourhood Plan

Regulation 14 Consultation

Proposal for 300 houses to the East of the B1383

On behalf of the Parish of Widdington, I would like to highlight the following impediments to the proposed development which need to be resolved before the plan is fully implemented.

1. **SEWAGE** - As evidenced within the Newport Neighbourhood Plan, the Newport (Sewage and Water Recycling Centre) is at full capacity and frequently cannot cope with the existing flows with sewage spills a common occurrence. Unfortunately, the tank floods because it cannot process the volumes of sewage and contaminated water fast enough. Anglian Water state that the sewage works will cope with a forecast population of 3,338 by the year 2035, and 3,616 by the year 2050 (Anglian Water DWMP technical Report 2022 pp118) which is somewhat questionable, given it currently serves a population of over 4,000 which will likely rise to 4,700 upon completion of this development.

In their response to planning application UTT/21/2137/FUL for 4 dwellings in Widdington, made in 2021, Anglian Water stated that the Newport Water Recycling Centre doesn't have the capacity to treat the flows from this development without updating the infrastructure. In which case, how can it possibly cope with an additional 300 houses?

Owing to the lack of spare capacity in Newport, Widdington has during the increasing periods of heavy rainfall seen issues of overspill from the Pumping Station on Spring Hill. In part, this is due to the diameter of the sewage pipe down to Newport Water Recycling Plant which needs replacing with a larger bore pipe. However, they cannot implement a replacement because Newport Water Recycling Plant wouldn't be able to cope with the increased volume / flow. Given the increased demand on the sewage processing facilities in Newport more frequent and larger spills can be expected in Spring Hill if capacity is not addressed.



I note that there have been delays to proposed developments in Buckinghamshire at Maids Moreton and in Oxford owing to similar issues, with the former currently at Judicial Review

and the latter objected to by the Environment Agency owing to the need to upgrade capacity at the Oxford Sewage Works. This has delayed the start of building works on up to 10,000 homes to 2027.

2. **TRAFFIC** – The KMC Transport appraisal appears inadequate as it doesn't take enough account of the following :

Currently the Chalk Pit has permission for 120 heavy goods vehicle movements in and out, only using the road between the entrance of the Chalk Pit and the B1383 (no left turn leaving the site) and 40 movements on a Saturday. The report claims that this will improve once the 200 houses that will use this exit are built. However, it fails to note that these vehicles all turn right upon exit down to the B1383 junction. Assuming 2 cars per household, so overall 400 cars, if they were to see movements in and out to work/school during the day, the minimum number of movements would be **800** potentially going in either direction along this narrow country lane. How can that possibly be better than 120 movements in one direction?

In the terms of accidents, whilst there have been no fatalities yet, there are a few accidents each year that seem to have gone unreported, in all probability to avoid rising insurance premiums.

The railway bridge acts as a bottleneck in the approach to the B1383. This will not be helped by the potential addition of between 200 and 400 more vehicles in busy morning and evening rush hours. In fact, the Widdington Road has become increasingly busy with the development of the east side of Saffron Walden as it is a cut through which also serves the nearby villages of Debden, Wimbish and Radwinter. Added to this is the fact that Wide Loads and Large HGV's cannot go over the railway bridge on the Debden Rd, so they come via this route quite frequently causing significant traffic congestion. No account is taken of the poor condition of the road.

Entering the B1383 from Widdington Rd is becoming an increasingly lengthy and risky affair at busy times as the traffic volume frequency from Newport has increased with the new housing developments in Newport and Great Chesterford. I would estimate that the 90,000 vehicle movements recorded through Newport in September 2017 will have increased substantially. With the additional traffic load that Newport East will bring, a roundabout on the B1383 may become a necessity. Enough vehicles on the B1383 are turning right into Widdington Rd at these times to probably make a roundabout viable.

The B1383, is frequently an alternative or diversionary route from the M11 as the motorway narrows from 3 lanes to 2 at Bishops Stortford which often causes the concertinaing of traffic resulting in accidents/road closures. When this occurs the B1383 grinds to a halt.

In light of all the aforementioned, we would urgently request that traffic surveys are conducted on the B1383 North of the junction with Widdington Rd and also on Widdington Road east of the railway bridge and the proposed Chalk Pit junction. The information from this survey will properly inform the decision makers regarding this development. These should be conducted out of the school holidays.

Finally to protect Widdington from any development creep a buffer zone South of the Chalk pit should be created preventing the merger with Newport.

Clerk Widdington Parish Council