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To: Cambridge City Council and
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Our Ref: DCO/CWWTPR24
PINS Ref: WW010003
Date: 06/02/2025

To whom it may concern,

PLANNING ACT 2008 AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES 2010

APPLICATION BY ANGLIAN WATER (“THE APPLICANT”) FOR AN ORDER GRANTING DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR THE PROPOSED CAMBRIDGE WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT RELOCATION PROJECT (“THE APPLICATION”).

FURTHER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DIRECTED AT CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

In their near-identical representations dated 31 January 2025, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge District Council (‘the Councils’) addressed the implications of the amendments to the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) adopted on 12 December 2024.

In relation to the amendments to paragraph 62 of the NPPF, the Councils noted that *“The corresponding calculations for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils’ housing need, using the revised housing need methodology serve to increase the combined annual housing target for the area from 1,726 to 2,309 homes per annum across the area.”*

In its [representation dated 03 February 2025](#), Save Honey Hill Group (‘SHHG’) contends that the update to paragraph 62 of the NPPF will require the Councils to revise their previous housing needs assessments downwards, replacing those included in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (‘GCLP’) First Proposals and the Development Strategy Update (DSU) of January 2023.

SHHG provides a table (Table 1) comparing the housing needs assessments for Greater Cambridge for the local plan period to 2041. From that table, and taking into account NPPF para 78(a) and the housing built since 2020, SHHG contends that the emerging GCLP will need to identify sites for 48,425 houses for the comparable period 2020 – 2041, 415 fewer than in the First Proposals. SHHG then contends that its evidence given at the DCO Examination demonstrated that the housing need of Greater Cambridge as assessed in the First Proposals could be met through existing allocations and permissions without the need to relocate the existing WWTP or redevelop the core parts of the existing site.

In its representation dated 03 February 2025, SHHG further contends that permitted or proposed development in North East Cambridge including at Brookgate Land, Merlin Place, St John's Innovation Park, and by the Applicant undermine the original vision in NECAAP for North East Cambridge.

The Councils are invited to respond to the following specific questions.

1. Do you agree with SHHG's calculations in Table 1? If not, please explain.
2. Do you agree that, taking into account NPPF para 78(a) and the housing built since 2020, the GCLP will need to identify sites for 48,425 houses for the period 2020 – 2041? If not, please explain.
3. Do you agree with SHHG's assessment that, if the WWTP relocation is not approved, the GCLP will need to identify alternative sites to deliver 2135 houses in order to meet the assessed need for the period 2020 - 2041? If not, please explain.
4. Do you agree with SHHG's assessment that some assessed housing need could be met during the plan period outside South Cambridgeshire? If not, please explain.
5. Do you agree, in light of the HDT results published in December 2024, that NPPF para 78(c) does not apply to the assessment of the Councils' housing needs? If not, please explain.
6. In light of all of the above, and having regard to the evidence considered during the Examination, do you maintain the position advanced in the Councils' LIRs that, if the WWTP relocation is not approved, the Councils will need to identify and allocate other strategic scale sites within Greater Cambridge to meet the area's need for housing and employment and that this would likely involve the allocation of Edge of Cambridge Green Belt sites or new settlements. Please explain your answer.
7. Do you agree that the permitted or proposed development in North East Cambridge identified by SHHG undermines the original vision in the NECAAP and will be practically difficult, if not impossible, to resolve in a revised NECAAP? Please explain your answer.

DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES

Responses to the requested information should be submitted by email only to: CambridgeWWTPR@planninginspectorate.gov.uk by 23.59 on 20 February 2025.

Responses will be published on the Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant Relocation page of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as possible after 20 February 2025.

This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of whether to grant or withhold development consent for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation or any part of the project. Nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what the eventual decision might be or what final conclusions the Secretary of State may reach on any particular issue which is relevant to the determination of the application.

Yours sincerely

Water Infrastructure Planning & Delivery Unit

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.