

25/00550/VAR Mahjong 27A High Street

Neighbour comments received by the Parish Council:

Please may I suggest you review Application 25/00550/VAR and at least issue immediately a letter to all concerned parties clearly identifying the changes between 25/00550/VAR and Approved 23/00871/FUL and extending the comment period beyond Aug 11th. You may need to withdraw the VAR version completely and issue a new Application with a change record. Transparency will help both the Applicant and commentators.

Your letter says 25/00550/VAR is "To Vary Conditions.....of previously approved 23/00871/FUL.....Erection of a 3 bedroom detached bungalow.....". The Approved 23/00871/FUL was indeed for a 3-bedroom bungalow at the position then called Plot 2, with a height 4.3m to the roofline. However, in 25/00550/VAR this plot has been renamed Plot 3, and the proposed building is a completely different two-storey house, of 6.5m height to the roofline, with second floor windows in the north side elevation and roof facing the adjacent property 2 Wild Acres, and doors on the west elevation.

I would be surprised if on your closer examination this was allowable as a "Variation" under planning procedures. It is a very different proposal. Your letter was misleading to the extent that neighbours to the site I have asked were unaware of the proposed change of this building. It is necessary that the neighbours, local councillors and other consultees who may not have picked this up are made aware, so they can make informed comment on acceptability.

The approval of 23/00871/FUL was made after many rounds of proposals, changes, and provision of drawings with sightlines, and details of windows, fences etc, which led to some agreement with neighbouring residents on the issues of overlooking and shadowing. The new architects may be unaware of these important previous stages.

In your file for Approved 23/00871/FUL you will see that ECDC Planning were then informed by the site neighbour at [REDACTED] of "grave concerns that the developer could deviate from the plans as shown especially as regards the height of the plot 2 bungalow..... One would hope that the planning department at the council will watch any further development very closely."

By contrast the changes to the modifications proposed to the existing bungalow Mahjong have been given a new FUL application number - which makes 25/00550/VAR very puzzling.

I hereby register my objection to some of the revised proposals as follows:-

1. It was my understanding that the original approval was only granted when a suitably sized single storey property was proposed for what is now called plot 3 (Previously known as Plot 2). This was to ensure that the new building would not be out of proportion with some of the existing bungalows surrounding to the site. All previous attempts by the developer to obtain permission for a two-storey house were either refused or withdrawn. It is clear that the new proposal raises the same issues of loss of privacy, loss of light, over development and being out of character as the previous unacceptable proposals.
2. The wording of the title in the notification letter is very misleading. At first reading it appears that the revision is about landscaping and tree protection. It is only by studying all of the attached documents that it becomes apparent it includes a completely different building on Plot 2. Previous changes of this nature have always been dealt with as a new application not a variation.
3. The timing of the notification to neighbours and consultation period is a cause for concern. Burwell Parish Council met on the 29 July when this revision to the previously approved application was an agenda item. On all previous occasions over the last two years when this development has been discussed neighbours have been in attendance to put their views to the Parish Council. On this occasion there was no attendance of neighbours. The simple reason for this is that the posted notification to neighbours did not arrive until after the Parish Council meeting. My copy arrived on the 30th July. It is clear that the notification to Burwell Parish Council was sent some time earlier. If the neighbours had been represented at the Council meeting I am confident that they would not have responded in the manner that they

have. I request that you lengthen the consultation period so that we can put our views forward at the next Parish Council meeting.

We have a number of significant objections to the proposed “variations”:

1. The neighbour letter we received was headlined: ‘To Vary Condition 1 (Approved Plans) 10 (soft landscaping) 15 (tree protection measures) 16 (tree protection scheme) of previously approved 23/00871/FUL, dated 9 February 2024 for demolition of an existing block wall and double garage. Erection of a 3 bedroom detached bungalow and a 4 bedroom detached house with associated works.’ Presumably this title was merely lifted from the applicant’s own wording, but it is very misleading. It all sounds fairly innocuous, and certainly did not flag up that it required our urgent attention (deliberately?). But it masked some serious changes that go well beyond the title. We would have thought such major changes as proposed would have needed a fresh application rather than being classed as a ‘variation’?

2. In particular, this heading makes no reference to the proposed changes to the Plot 3 dwelling. On the approved application, this is a bungalow, whereas, in this set of plans, it has morphed into a house, with a considerable subsequent increase in height. It is very difficult to tell precisely, as the plans contain no measurements. However, having spoken to an architect, he suggests that this supposed ‘variation’ would increase the height of this dwelling from the 4.4m which we all accepted previously, to over 7m; the proposed new roof pitch would be over 45 degrees. This would make it very similar to a previous application that was refused planning permission. Thus this proposal would again raise the same privacy problems for the neighbours; also, loss of light, in particular for the properties to the north of Plot 3. It should be noted that this plot stands on a slight ridge, with land falling away to the north and south and west of it, meaning that the impact of any dwelling built here is exacerbated.

For points 3-9, below, please refer to [Tree_Protection_Scheme-1524301.pdf](#), dated 4/11/23, from a 2024 application (supplied by Ligna), which we attach for your reference

3. Comparison with previous application plans and actual current tree positions would seem to indicate that the proposed Plot 3 house would be sited so far to the west that its western elevation would impinge on the area of garden to the rear of 10 and 12 Spring Close and therefore would not be completely within the confines of the Mahjong development site. We appreciate that the boundaries shown on the tree plan are ‘illustrative only’, but they and the trees should be correctly marked in relation to one another. Please note that several of the earlier applications involved this area of garden, as the applicant took out a development option on it. This lapsed in March 2025, however, and therefore this patch of land reverted to the previous owner of 12 Spring Close. See also point 7-9, below.

4. The large window in the proposed dining room of Plot 3 would look straight into this area of garden at the rear of 10 and 12 Spring Close. As well as the trees along this boundary, there is also a fence which has become somewhat dilapidated, in part due to the activities of the developer. This was put up by the late mother of the current owner and will need replacing with something more substantial, to maintain privacy and exclude muntjac deer; this fence would be just inches from this large window, severely restricting light into this dining room. The earlier plan had a sensible walkway between this elevation and the boundary, with room for a heat pump.

5. The most recent Ligna reports include several factual inaccuracies and omissions, which must somewhat undermine the credibility of these reports. This suggests that they are basically just desktop revisions based on the earlier reports, themselves based on much earlier site visits, relating to previous applications.

6. The Ligna (Additional Information 1700004 point 3.2) proposal to raise the canopy of an *Aesculus hippocastanum* (T11) by 3.5 m sounds reasonable, but this species does not exist on the Mahjong site. The only tree of that species belongs to 6 Spring Close; whilst the developers are clearly within their rights to cut back any overhang, this equally clearly only applies on the Mahjong side. Removing these lower branches would also reduce privacy for the residents of 6 Spring Close in relation to the proposed development. The true location of this tree can clearly be seen in the plan at the end of their document mentioned above.

7. Ligna mentions the removal of T21, a large ivy-covered sycamore. In the Ligna Additional Information 1700004, Appendix 1 Photo 4 this tree can clearly be seen (on the right-hand side of the photograph). It can equally clearly be seen that this tree is BEYOND the fence, ie in the land behind 10/12 Spring Close and NOT therefore (since the lapsing of the development option) part of the Mahjong property - and the developers, therefore, have NO right to remove it. This tree is absent from the earlier plan PDF 1699330, as it is not within the Mahjong development site; on the more recent plan 1699329 it is marked, but incorrectly, as though it has 'jumped' onto the Mahjong site. We can assure you that this is not the case and that it is still growing in the location demonstrated by Ligna's own photograph referenced above, as well as their earlier Tree_Protection_Scheme-1524301.pdf.

8. Similarly, Ligna, mentions cutting back T13, another sycamore. Again, this is not 'their' tree, despite it again being 'moved' to a new, incorrect location on the recent plan 1699329. This tree in fact is located in the hedgeline between the gardens of 10 and 12 Spring Close and the garden at the rear of 10 /12 Spring Close. The main trunk of this tree does hang over the corner of Mahjong, and another bough overhangs the garden of 6 Spring Close. Again, this tree itself is not part of the Mahjong site. Its precise trunk origin can be seen on plan PDF 1699330, from a previous planning application but resubmitted as part of this current application.

7. and 8. The 'historic pollarding' mentioned in the report for T13 and T21 (Additional_Information-1700004.pdf, Appendix 1, Tree Survey: Schedule of Trees) was carried out by the late previous owner of 12 Spring Close, as the trees were within her garden (and NOT part of the Mahjong site).

9. Ligna, on this occasion, do not mention the dead elm (likely bat roost) within this same treeline; this has a 3 m live sucker at its base. They also do not mention the even larger sycamore next to it, regrowing from the earlier 'work' carried out on behalf of the developer (it should be noted that, when they acquired the Mahjong site, their immediate first step was to start cutting down many of the trees on the site, until a concerned neighbour called out the ECDC Tree Officer, and other trees have since been cut down; further tree work was carried out along this boundary and elsewhere during the period of the development option). These trees, again, are on the 'garden to the rear of 10/12 Spring Close' side of the boundary, which presumably explains this omission. However, the new proposed western elevation of the Plot 3 dwelling would be so close to these trees that some form of tree protection mitigation would be required. For a tree specialist with all those years of experience, not noticing such trees seems amazing – and somewhat convenient given that they just happen to be inconveniently close to where the developers plan to build the west elevation of the Plot 3 house.

Summary

The fact that the application 'headline' makes no reference to the major proposed changes to the Plot 3 dwelling meant that it did not flag up to any of the relevant neighbours, nor to the Parish Council, that, yet again, there are serious issues with this development. On previous occasions, the issues have been clearer from the start and a number of us have made the time and had the opportunity, therefore, to check out the application documents in time to attend the relevant Parish Council meeting. On this occasion, this was not the case. Due to the fortnightly cycle of the Parish Council meetings, it meant that we only had a very few days at best between receipt of the letter and their planning meeting. At that time, [REDACTED] in hospital with complications following emergency surgery, hence spending the necessary several hours looking through the new documents, comparing with previous applications, and checking Parish Council meeting agendas was clearly not possible within those few days. And the Parish Councillors themselves, as unqualified volunteers, inevitably rely on concerned neighbours to highlight potential problems. We certainly would not expect them to be able to devote the necessary minimum of 2 hours that we do, to get to grips with each new application, especially when the wording is as innocuous- sounding as this. Please, therefore, do NOT read anything into the fact that Burwell Parish Council did not raise any objections.

Given the scale of the proposed changes, the complex nature of the site and the somewhat opaque nature of some of the information within this application, we would strongly suggest:

1. the applicant should, surely, be submitting this as a new application rather than merely a 'variation'

2. there should be an extension on time allowed, to enable Burwell Parish Council to reconsider this (as we were not able to alert them in time to the renewed threat to both privacy and light of neighbours implicit in these revised plans)

3. you should carry out a site visit, to fully understand the impact of the topography, correct boundaries, etc.

4. we would like the opportunity to discuss this application and its ramifications with you.

5. Comparison between plan PDF 1699330 (from a previous planning application but resubmitted as part of this current application) and the plan at the end of the current Ligna report gives an idea of the tree removal and reduction already carried out on the site. Some of these removed trees can be seen in the photographs, clearly historic, included in the current Ligna report. And that is without taking into account the cutting down of trees mentioned at point 9, above. We are not aware of current legislation regarding biodiversity requirements, but this may need consideration.

6. We do not have a principle objection to much of the proposed tree work, but are very concerned that it is carried out with reference to the correct property owners and accurate boundaries. It must be established, though, that these boundaries remain those which have always been in existence (as evidenced by the photograph and plans supplied by the developers themselves at various stages of the application process) – they cannot be moved by, presumably, accidental misrepresentation of the location of relevant trees.

7. Due consideration should be given to the biodiversity implications of these proposals, and this should be in relation to the situation as was, when the site was first acquired by the developers, rather than merely in relation to the approved plans. The developers have been degrading the biodiversity of this site since first acquired (we cannot remember this date; presumably the ECDC Tree Officer will have a record, but we do know that the initial plans were submitted in November 2022). BNG legislation may or may not still apply, but bat protection presumably still does.

The wording of this application

'To Vary Condition 1 (Approved Plans) 10 (soft landscaping) 15 (tree protection measures) 16 (tree protection scheme) of previously approved 23/00871/FUL, dated 9 February 2024 for demolition of an existing block wall and double garage. Erection of a 3 bedroom detached bungalow and a 4 bedroom detached house with associated works.'

At first sight appears to be innocuous and mainly relating to soft landscaping and tree protection.

However the development of a 3/4 bedroom bungalow named as Plot 3 involves major adaptations to the previous application which was granted. These include

1. The new proposed footprint is larger than the permitted bungalow's footprint
2. The addition of an upper floor involves an increased roof height level to over 7 metres, 3 metres taller than for the permitted bungalow.
3. The new proposed roof pitch is over 45 degrees
4. The extent of hard landscaping around plot 3 has increased so decreasing the soft landscaping and biodiversity of the permitted site plan.
5. Taking these factors into account this proposal appears to be for a house or dormer/ bungalow not a bungalow

My objections are that

1. Due to the number of changes to plot 3 this should have been submitted as a new planning application not variations.
2. The time scale and delays in receiving the letter of notification for such important variations was inadequate, due to the need to refer back to the approved planning application for detailed analysis. A very time consuming process referring to previous plans where the layouts of the plans orientated differently.
3. The proposals for plot 3 will cut out light to the properties and impinge on the privacy of the surrounding properties particularly on the northern boundary and the building line on the western boundary now appearing with double windows on the boundary line which appears to have moved from the previous plans.

4. The construction is not in keeping with the surrounding building styles particularly as the elevation drawings give no information or mention of proposed materials.
5. The newly proposed plot 3 house/ dormer bungalow will reduce the soft landscaping and biodiversity of the whole site which has been deteriorating since 2022 when the first application was lodged.
- 6 There are also inconsistencies within the Lligna Report about site boundaries and again the mysterious movement of some of the trees.

I would therefore ask

1. That a time extension could be granted to allow the parish council to consult on this matter considering the complexity of the issues, due to the innocuous nature of the wording of the application and the time scale which did not allow us the opportunity to make our observations and comments at their meeting.

or

2. This application is rejected and if the developer wishes to make changes to Plot 3 these are submitted as a planning application, Any initial plans are initially scrutinised by a professional with the skills and knowledge needed rather than relying neighbours and the unpaid members of the parish council to point out such major issues.

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of Public
-----------------	------------------

Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
---------	--

Reasons for comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Loss of privacy- Loss of public amenity- Noise sensitive- Over bearing- Over looking- Over shadowing- Visual amenity
----------------------	--

Comments:	<p>Dear Mr Harmeet Minhas</p> <p>I would like to object to various aspects on this current planning application. The plot 3 bungalow has had an additional storey added to the property making it virtually into a house. This raises the height from approx 4.3 metres to 6.5 metres. This will mean that it will have a vast reduction in light and privacy to our property especially made worse by the rising nature of the land (not shown) between the two properties. It will certainly cut out sunlight particularly at certain times of the year. The dimensions of the plans are inaccurate in many aspects, for example [REDACTED] includes a south facing conservatory (not shown) which is very close to the boundary fence. This of course effects the lighting, privacy and noise level.</p>
-----------	---



(/default.aspx)

Renewable Energy Developments in and around Burwell

What is the position of Burwell Parish Council?

Burwell Parish Council supports the transition to low carbon energy production and accepts that due to the national importance of the local sub-station a large cluster of solar farms and battery storage units will be built in the area. We do, however, have serious concerns about the associated fire risk, noise pollution, visual impact and other environmental consequences that may arise during the construction phase and, later, from day to day operation. The Parish Council is committed to engaging with all the parties involved, including governmental, private and regulatory, with the aim of achieving the best possible outcome for the residents of Burwell.

Burwell Parish Council have put the following information together to help inform residents. Please note we are not able to verify information in all of the links but would encourage residents to conduct their own research and contact the relevant planning authorities or companies should they want further information or to ensure information is up to date. Please contact the Parish Council if you would like us to hear your views and consider them when we are formulating our responses to planning applications.

What are Solar Farms?

Solar farms are large-scale solar installations where photovoltaic (PV) panels, commonly known as solar panels, are used to convert sunlight into electricity. They are a form of renewable energy source which, together with wind turbines, make a significant contribution to the UK's energy mix.

As of 2024, the most recent data from the National Grid (released in 2022) indicated that 'zero carbon sources' generated around 50% of the electricity produced in the UK; this has increased from 20% in 2010.

Source: Electricity Generation Sources UK (2025)

A typical UK solar farm will currently generate around 50 MW of electricity.

A good source of information about electrical power can be found here: **What is Megawatt and how many homes can it power? (<https://pknergypower.com/what-is-megawatt-and-how-many-homes-can-it-power/>)**

In simple terms, with current technology, producing 1 MW of power requires 3,000 – 4,000 solar panels. This would occupy about 4 acres of land (about 16,000 square metres/1.6 hectares) and the energy produced will power about 1,000 homes for an hour.

Why in the UK are so many solar farms around 50 MW in capacity?

Projects with a generating capacity of 50 MW or less are considered under the provisions of the **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>)** - whereas larger projects face greater planning hurdles. The current government (July 2025) is looking at changing the planning laws to allow for larger scale projects to be considered under the Town and Country Act 1990

Consents and planning applications for national energy infrastructure projects - GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consents-and-planning-applications-for-national-energy-infrastructure-projects#electricity-development-consents>)

To give some context to this, the Sunnica facility will be 500 MW and the world's largest solar plant is 5 GW – 100 times the capacity of the sites currently being deployed in Burwell.

What are Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)?

A BESS is an array of large batteries that collect and store energy from renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, as well from the National Grid. This energy is then released when required, helping to maintain stable supplies and enabling a higher proportion of the electricity we use to come from low carbon, renewable sources. A typical large scale battery storage facility will store 50 MW of power.

The reason for solar farm planning applications now routinely including battery storage dates back to the 2019-2022 period when the planning regulations were relaxed. The then Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, Kwasi Kwarteng, said:

"The key to capturing the full value of renewables is in ensuring homes and businesses can still be powered by green energy even when the sun is not shining, or the wind has stopped blowing. Removing barriers in the planning system will help us build bigger and more powerful batteries, creating more green-collar jobs and a smarter electricity network."

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/battery-storage-boost-to-power-greener-electricity-grid>

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/battery-storage-boost-to-power-greener-electricity-grid>)

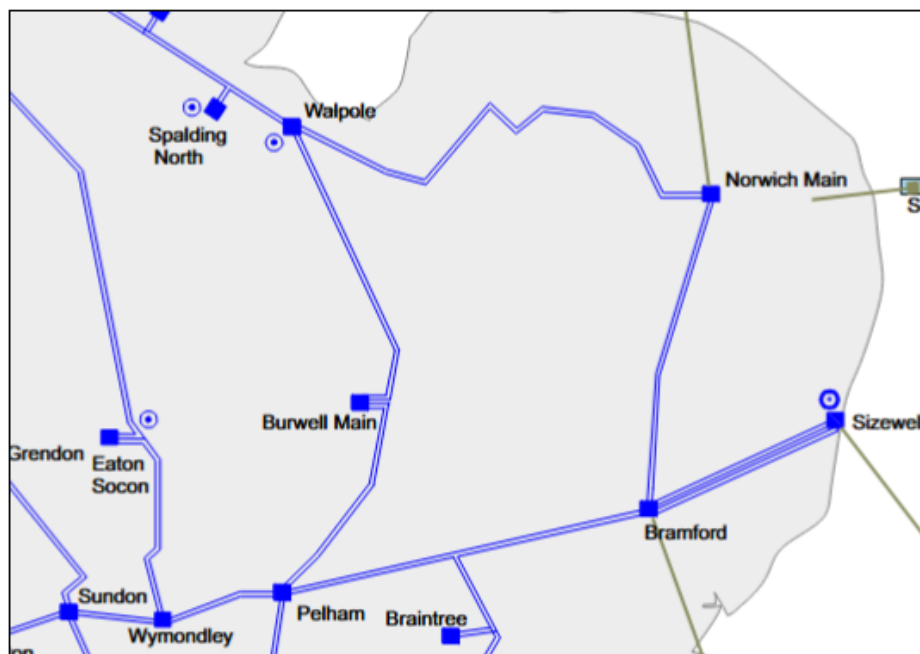
How does this impact on Burwell?

Why Burwell?

There are multiple renewable energy development projects either live or being considered in or near Burwell; a common theme is the need to access the National Grid - and here Burwell is key.

According to the National Grid (<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/network-route-maps>) there are actually two electrical sub stations in Burwell, BURW1 is 132kV while BURW4 is 400kV.

The purpose of an electrical sub station is to enable access to the National Grid and to transform the very high capacity inputs down to the 220V that we use in our homes. Because the main 400kV substation is in Burwell (at Weirs Drove) we can expect demand for solar farms and associated facilities to grow locally.



For example, the National Grid state in their document **Connections: what we've delivered in 2024 | National Grid** : (<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/connections-what-weve-delivered-2024>)

Connecting solar in Cambridgeshire

In May we connected the second solar farm in as many years to our Burwell 400kV substation near Cambridge, making the region among the highest generators of solar power at transmission level. Our engineers plugged in Octopus's Breach Solar Farm, whose clean electricity now flows into the grid at Burwell along with an EDF Renewables UK solar project we connected last year.

Regardless of what Burwell Residents want, it is likely that more solar farms will be located in or near our village.

What's in it for Farmers?

One of the concerns often made about solar farms is that the country is losing valuable agricultural land which may threaten our food supply. Other concerns are food security and the lower farming standards permitted overseas.

There are numerous brokers available to encourage and support farmers who are considering turning some of their land over to solar. As Farmers Weekly puts it: "As extreme weather and volatile input prices challenge profitability on UK farms, the guarantee of a fixed annual income from land makes renewable energy an attractive option for some landowners. If a farm can meet the principal critical test of being located less than 10 miles from an electricity substation, it has potential as a solar farm, advises George Hall, of Conrad Energy." **Source: Farmers Weekly** (<https://www.fwi.co.uk/business/alternative-land-uses-leasing-land-for-solar-key-points>)

This year (2025) has seen the **driest spring in 69 years** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ea-steps-up-dry-weather-prep-after-driest-spring-start-since-1956>) and Burwell's main sub station is less than 10 miles away from most of our local farms.

Typically the farmers lease their land for 40 years. The fixed income is very attractive, as shown in this illustration from **Savills (2022)** (https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/335077-0)

Comparing land uses per hectare

	Solar PV	Farm business tenancy	In-hand farming
Annual Income	£2,100	£310	£450
Income over 25 years	£52,500	£7,750	£11,250
After income tax	£31,500	£4,650	£6,750
Potential IHT cost	£16,800	£0	£0
Final income over 25 years	£14,700	£4,650	£6,750
Final annual income	£588	£186	£270

Recent changes to inheritance tax (<https://ilos-energy.co.uk/2024/12/02/how-solar-projects-can-help-uk-farmers-reduce-inheritance-tax-liabilities/>) will tip the scales even more in favour of solar.

In addition to simple solar farms, there is an increased interest in agrivoltaics (combining agriculture and photovoltaics), where solar farms are installed in ways that coexist with farming activities, such as using raised ground-mounted solar panels that allow grazing animals to pass underneath, spacing out panels to grow crops around them or using solar panels as fencing.

What is the Government's policy on Solar Energy?

Reaching the government's targets on solar energy require big increases in solar deployment. The current government signed off on the locally controversial Sunnica solar farm proposals soon after coming to office in July 2024.

The government says that achieving these targets will include both ground-mounted solar farms and rooftop installations. (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-02/HL6510>)

The government have published the following: **full report detailing planning policy for solar farms in England and the devolved administrations and commentary on the use of agricultural land for solar farms (<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7434/#:~:text=Solar%20farms%20usually%20%E2%80%80require>)**

The government's recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives "significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future" when determining planning applications. The update removes a controversial provision that previously allowed local authorities to block solar farms over food production concerns. **"Both the National Farmers Union and Energy Secretary Ed Miliband dismissed such fears." (<https://renewableenergyinstaller.co.uk/2024/12/solar-industry-welcomes-english-planning-reforms/>)**

A site with maps of solar farms in the UK is available here: **Solar Farms Map UK (Solar Farms Near Me) (<https://energyguide.org.uk/solar-farms-uk-map/>)**



Developments in/impacting Burwell

Sunnica

Planning documents (<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010106>)

Status: Approved

Overview

The installation of solar photovoltaic generating panels and electrical battery storage technology on Sunnica East and Sunnica West, and associated infrastructure for connection to the national grid, including an extension to the Burwell National Grid Substation. The Scheme would allow for the delivery of over 50 megawatts of renewable energy.

Company information (<https://sunnica.co.uk/>)

Other links/Information

Say no to Sunnica (<https://www.saynotosunnica.com/>)

Kingsway

Planning documents (<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010165>)

Status: Pre-application (Aug 2025)

Overview

Kingsway Solar is a proposed solar farm and battery storage project to be located on parcels of land around the areas of Balsham, West Wratting, Weston Colville, and Weston Green in Cambridgeshire. Kingsway Solar would have the potential to supply around 500 Megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national grid.

It will also include an approximate 14km Grid Connection to National Grid's planned Burwell South substation, to be located to the south of the existing substation at Burwell.

Company information (<https://kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk/>)

Other links/Information

Kingsway Solar Community Action (<https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/>)

Greenergy

Planning documents (<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SY08WUGGKR600>)

Status: Pending Consideration (Aug 2025)

Overview

Greenergy is proposing to build a 90MW Battery Energy Storage System at Hightown Drove, Burwell,

Company information (<https://greenergy.eu/en-uk/projects/hightown-drove/>)

Weirs Drove

Planning documents (<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>)

Status: Approved

Overview

The owner of this site is Voltwise. Ethical Power are responsible for the operations and maintenance of the first site. The second site is yet to be built but planning has been approved for construction of a 30MW battery energy storage system facility and associated access, landscaping and other infrastructure works.

Company information

Voltwise (<https://www.voltwisepower.com/about>)

Ethical Power (<https://ethical-power.com/>)

Anchor Lane

Planning documents

Battery Energy Storage: **24/00160/ESF** (<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>)

Status: Approved

Agrivoltaic scheme (capacity 49.95MW) plus associated infrastructure, access roads and landscaping **25/00393/FUM** (<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=SU3HC4GGG000&activeTab=summary>)

Status: Under Consultation (Aug 2025)

Overview

Application for an Agrivoltaic scheme (capacity 49.95MW) plus associated infrastructure, access roads and landscaping.

Battery storage scheme already approved.

Company information (<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/16111902>)

Goose Hall Farm

Planning documents (<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>)

Status: Operational

Overview

Goosehall Solar PV Park is a 39.48MW solar PV power project. The project entered into commercial operation in August 2020.

Company information

The project is co-owned by BP and Lightsource BP Renewable Energy Investments, with their respective ownership stake of 50% each.

How does Burwell Parish Council respond to new developments?

Under planning law, the Parish Council is just one of many consultees. We have the right to register our opinions but we are not the decision making authority. Fortunately, there are many other ways for the Council to engage with stakeholders and to influence decision-makers.

The planning process nominally covers all the issues that Burwell residents are concerned about, but whether the process will be well conducted and truly consultative is another matter. The sections that follow consider the pre-planning, planning, construction and operational phases, highlighting the opportunities for Parish Council involvement and action.

Pre-planning

1) Gaining early knowledge of project plans:

Specialist consultants and investors are constantly searching for suitable land on which to install solar farms and battery storage systems. The financial rewards for landowners are substantial and so the flow of planning applications for renewable energy projects is likely to continue some time. In the past, solar and battery storage applications have arrived out of the blue. That is likely to remain the case, given the commercial sensitivity of the issues, particularly any negotiations to buy up parcels of land and secure the necessary rights of way. Nevertheless, we need to be alert and ready to act on information that comes our way.

2) Engaging with other stakeholders:

By developing closer relationships with East Cambridgeshire Planning, local farmers, energy companies, National Grid, nearby parish councils, our District and County Councillors and our MP, the Council will be better prepared to respond to future applications.

Responding to new planning applications

Burwell Parish Council wants to be as involved as possible in all stages of the processing of these planning applications.

1) Public Engagement

We want developers to consult widely, reaching the public through social media and posters, and by arranging public meetings.

2) Local government engagement

The parish, district and county councils should be fully consulted, with meetings held as required. Burwell Parish Council will also seek to engage directly with developers.

3) Safety

Burwell Parish Council, Burwell residents, and the surrounding villages need assurance that all aspects of the development will be safe. In particular, we need confirmation that the emergency services and regulatory bodies are satisfied with the developer's answers to the following questions:

a) Alarms, monitoring, emergency procedures and fire-fighting:

Does the local Fire Service fully understand the hazards and does it have the necessary resources, including hardware and water supplies, to deal with potential battery storage fires?

b) Air pollution caused by battery storage fires:

How would the public be warned and, if necessary evacuated in the event of a fire? What would be the range of the exclusion zones (depending on wind strength/direction)?

c) Handling of large volumes of contaminated water (or other substances) used to control the fire:

How will the used water be safely contained on site and subsequently taken away for responsible disposal?

d) Protection of watercourses and groundwater:

In the event contaminated water leaking from the site how will these vital resources will be protected and, if necessary, remediated?

4) Environmental Impact:

Local environmental concerns, including the effects on wildlife, plants, and ecosystems should be addressed. Biodiversity Net Gain proposals should be flexible, and must take account of local concerns and preferences.

5) Community benefits:

Currently, there is no legal requirement for low carbon energy projects to provide community benefits. Despite that, many projects do include community benefits either out of philanthropy, or in the hope of averting the lengthy and costly delays frequently caused by well organised local action groups. It would be inappropriate for a Council to allow its support or opposition to a planning application to be influenced by such offers. The Council may, however, indicate the type of community support that would welcomed were the proposal to go ahead. Once the project has been granted planning approval the Parish Council will fully engage with the developer to secure the best possible benefits for the village.

6) Visual Impact:

The impact of the site on the landscape should be minimised. We are concerned that the cumulative effect of so many large installations will, step by step, destroy the rural environment around the village.

7) Noise pollution:

Noise from battery storage units can be very intrusive. Modelling should include the cumulative impact of multiple battery storage facilities i.e. noise arising from both the proposed and existing sites.

Construction and operational phases

1) Contact information:

We need to know who to contact (with back-up contacts) during the construction phase regarding traffic, noise, dust, safety etc.

When the facility is completed and in normal operation we need to know who to contact if an alarm sounds or if a safety issue needs to be reported.

2) Monitoring:

How will the predicted noise levels be monitored for compliance?

3) Procedures:

We need to know the procedures that will be followed in the event of an alarm sounding, a noise level being exceeded, or a safety issue being reported.

4) Transparency:

We wish to be notified, as soon as possible, of safety incidents, complaints received, and inspections carried out.

Privacy Statement (/Sites/2784/ UserFiles/Files/BPC%20Privacy%20Statement.pdf)

© Burwell Parish Council. All Rights Reserved. Design by **Vision ICT Ltd (<http://www.VisionICT.com/>) - Accessibility Statement (/Accessibility_Statement_34617.aspx)** .

Burwell Parish Council
Quarterly Finance Report
1st April 2025 to 30th June 2025

Burwell Parish Council	Bank Reconciliation at 30th June 2025.				
Bank Balance at					
31.03.2025					
Unity Bank	£252,638.87				
Less Unpresented 30.06.2025	£0.00				
Plus in transit 30.06.25	£0.00				
	£252,638.87				
Plus income	£306,207.51				
Less Expenditure	£84,503.75				
	£474,342.63				
Balance at 30.6.2025					
Unity Bank	£474,342.63				
Plus income in transit	£0.00				
Balance	£474,342.63				
Please note that these figures do not include the funds in the CCLA Account					
which at 30.06.2025 total £115,142.86					
Fund Allocation					
Total Funds					
Unity Trust			£474,342.63		
CCLA			£115,142.86		
Total Funds			£589,485.49		
Earmarked Reserves					
20/21 Capital Trees			£1,000.00		
Pauline's Swamp			£14,200.64		
Recreation Ground/Pavilion Sinking Fund			£30,459.38		
Gardiner Memorial Hall			£15,000.00		
25/26 LHI Flash. Speed Signs Bunting Path and Causeway			£8,404.49		
CIL Funding			£173,284.06		
Newmarket Road Sports Hub			£4,000.00		
Climate Change			£4,422.00		
Community Garden			£1,921.31		
Spring Close Signs			£264.00		
Spring Close Chalk Stream Project			£2,000.00		
Repair/Swish Café			£1,425.63		
Westhorpe Play Area			£2,267.27		
Solar/Storage Donations			£10,000.00		
Lighting MH (Solar/Storage)			£10,000.00		
Balance of Earmarked Reserves			£278,648.78		
			£278,648.78		
Summary					
Total Funds			£589,485.49		
Earmarked Reserves			£278,648.78		
Balance of Funds Available			£310,836.71		

CIL FUNDING					
CIL Receipts		Use by	History of Earmarked CIL Funding		
2016/2017	£7,894.64	2020/2021	GMH Seed Funding		£35,000.00
2017/2018	£32,649.94	2021/2022	GMH Stockdale Costs		£2,100.00
2018/2019	£75,650.08	2022/2023	LHII School Signs		£5,000.00
2019/2020	£41,791.17	2023/2024	GMH		£115,000.00
2019/2020	£28,309.67	2024/2025	Recreation Ground Car Park		£35,000.00
2020/2021	£1,983.96	2024/2025	Westhorpe		£46,302.00
2021/2022	£4,771.87	2024/2025	Westhorpe		£1,677.31
2021/2022	£15,658.63	2025/2026	Unallocated		£173,284.06
2022/2023	£9,080.43	2025/2026			
2022/2023	£16,461.77	2026/2027			
2023/2024 April	£4,150.00	2026/2027			
2023/2024 Oct	£1,677.15	2027/2028			
2024/2025 April	£764.35	2029/2030			
2024/2025	£54,563.67	2029/2030			
2025/2026 April	£117,956.04	2030/2031			
	£413,363.37				£413,363.37

Burwell Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Summary - Cost Centres Only (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

Cost Centre	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
Gardiner Memorial Hall	19,000.00	5,334.29	-13,665.71 (-71%)	14,300.00	3,606.11	10,693.89 (74%)	-2,971.82
Jubilee Reading Room			0.00 (N/A)	5,475.00	1,391.25	4,083.75 (74%)	4,083.75
Mandeville Hall	24,000.00	5,418.45	-18,581.55 (-77%)	18,200.00	4,183.78	14,016.22 (77%)	-4,565.33
Cemetery	10,000.00	4,060.00	-5,940.00 (-59%)	3,500.00	850.12	2,649.88 (75%)	-3,290.12
The Pavilion			0.00 (N/A)	10,250.00	2,484.47	7,765.53 (75%)	7,765.53
Spring Close			0.00 (N/A)	6,000.00	600.00	5,400.00 (90%)	5,400.00
Margaret Field		3,200.00	3,200.00 (32000%)	6,500.00	3,629.00	2,871.00 (44%)	6,071.00
Jubilee Green			0.00 (N/A)	150.00		150.00 (100%)	150.00
Allotments	4,950.00	67.20	-4,882.80 (-98%)	2,500.00	232.09	2,267.91 (90%)	-2,614.89
The Recreation Ground	9,500.00	10,497.78	997.78 (10%)	27,500.00	5,461.33	22,038.67 (80%)	23,036.45
Pauline's Swamp			0.00 (N/A)	1,500.00	1,229.51	270.49 (18%)	270.49
Priory Meadow and Orchard			0.00 (N/A)	100.00		100.00 (100%)	100.00
Lock Up			0.00 (N/A)	20.00		20.00 (100%)	20.00
Street Lighting			0.00 (N/A)	1,100.00	139.98	960.02 (87%)	960.02
Public Areas			0.00 (N/A)	13,400.00	2,884.32	10,515.68 (78%)	10,515.68
Play Equipment			0.00 (N/A)	4,000.00	25.00	3,975.00 (99%)	3,975.00
Administration	100.00	26,000.00	25,900.00 (25900%)	37,600.00	15,344.66	22,255.34 (59%)	48,155.34
Staff			0.00 (N/A)	141,700.00	34,908.08	106,791.92 (75%)	106,791.92
Agency Grass Cutting	1,900.00		-1,900.00 (-100%)	2,000.00		2,000.00 (100%)	100.00
Donations			0.00 (N/A)	2,050.00		2,050.00 (100%)	2,050.00
Other			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Precept	256,575.00	128,518.30	-128,056.70 (-49%)			0.00 (N/A)	-128,056.70
CIL Funding		117,956.04	117,956.04 (117956%)			0.00 (N/A)	117,956.04
Grant Funding			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Deposits		575.00	575.00 (57500%)		550.00	-550.00 (-55000%)	25.00
Void			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
VAT		2,507.89	2,507.89 (250789%)			0.00 (N/A)	2,507.89
Capital Budget			0.00 (N/A)	31,500.00	1,046.73	30,453.27 (96%)	30,453.27
Climate Change			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Repair Cafe			0.00 (N/A)		1,271.86	-1,271.86 (-127186%)	-1,271.86
Other			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
NET TOTAL	326,025.00	304,134.95	-21,890.05 (-6%)	329,345.00	79,838.29	249,506.71 (75%)	227,616.66

Total for ALL Cost Centres	304,134.95	79,838.29
V.A.T.	2,072.56	4,665.46
GROSS TOTAL	306,207.51	84,503.75

Burwell Parish Council
Net Position by Cost Centre and Code (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

Cost Centre Name

<u>Gardiner Memorial Hall</u>		<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>	
<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
6	Heat and Light				8,000.00	2,011.71	5,988.29
7	Rates				3,500.00	907.43	2,592.57
8	Repairs, Renewals, Sanitar				1,750.00	124.90	1,625.10
9	Performing Rights				500.00	320.07	179.93
10	Fire				300.00	45.00	255.00
11	Misc				250.00	180.00	70.00
12	Cleaning Contract					17.00	-17.00
13	Income from Hirers		19,000.00	5,334.29			-13,665.71
99	Refurbishment						
153	Income from Solar Panels						
			19,000.00	£5,334.29	14,300.00	£3,606.11	-2,971.82

<u>Jubilee Reading Room</u>			<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
14	Heat and Light				3,500.00	1,064.23	2,435.77
15	Rates				900.00	215.02	684.98
16	Repairs, Renewals				1,000.00	95.00	905.00
17	Cleaning Contract					17.00	-17.00
18	Misc				75.00		75.00
					<u>5,475.00</u>	<u>£1,391.25</u>	<u>4,083.75</u>

<u>Mandeville Hall</u>		<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>	
<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
47	Repairs, Renewals, Sanitar				2,000.00	242.00	1,758.00
48	Heat and Light				6,000.00	1,350.71	4,649.29
49	Performing Rights				1,000.00		1,000.00
50	Rates				9,000.00	2,454.07	6,545.93
51	Fire Precautions				200.00	120.00	80.00
52	Cleaning Contract					17.00	-17.00
108	Income from Hirers		24,000.00	5,028.45			-18,971.55
144	SWISH Cafe Income			390.00			390.00
154	Other						
			24,000.00	£5,418.45	18,200.00	£4,183.78	-4,565.33

Cemetery			Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title	Bal. B/Fwd.	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
19	Electricity and Rates				2,500.00	571.12	1,928.88
20	Maintenance				1,000.00	45.00	955.00
22	Cleaning Contract					17.00	-17.00
23	Cemetery Fees		10,000.00	4,060.00		217.00	-6,157.00
			10,000.00	£4,060.00	3,500.00	£850.12	-3,290.12

The Pavilion			Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title	Bal. B/Fwd.	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
30	Electricity				6,000.00	1,466.68	4,533.32
31	Rates				750.00	42.02	707.98
32	Cleaning Contract						
33	Repairs, Renewals				1,000.00	975.77	24.23
34	Sinking Fund				2,500.00		2,500.00
					10,250.00	£2,484.47	7,765.53

Spring Close			Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title	Bal. B/Fwd.	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
1	Grass and Hay Cutting				4,000.00		4,000.00
2	Maintenance/Tree Work				2,000.00	600.00	1,400.00

Current Balance = Balance B/Fwd - (Receipt Budget - Actual Receipt) + (Payment Budget - Actual Payments)

Burwell Parish Council
Net Position by Cost Centre and Code (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

Cost Centre Name

6,000.00 £600.00 5,400.00

Margaret Field

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
3	Grass Cutting				5,000.00	390.00	4,610.00
4	Misc				1,500.00	3,239.00	-1,739.00
103	Income			3,200.00			3,200.00
				£3,200.00	6,500.00	£3,629.00	6,071.00

Jubilee Green

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
5	Misc				150.00		150.00
					150.00		150.00

Allotments

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
24	Rates				1,000.00	108.53	891.47
25	Electricity				500.00	123.56	376.44
26	Maintenance				1,000.00		1,000.00
27	Income Lettings		4,950.00	67.20			-4,882.80
			4,950.00	£67.20	2,500.00	£232.09	-2,614.89

The Recreation Ground

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
35	Grass Cutting				7,500.00	1,200.00	6,300.00
36	misc and Maintenance (Noi				500.00	203.33	296.67
37	Pitch Maintenance Contrac			8,266.00	17,000.00	4,050.00	21,216.00
38	Income from Hirers		7,500.00	1,147.04			-6,352.96
117	Tennis Court Maintenance				2,500.00		2,500.00
118	Tennis Court Income		2,000.00	1,084.74		8.00	-923.26
			9,500.00	£10,497.78	27,500.00	£5,461.33	23,036.45

Pauline's Swamp

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
82	Pauline's Swamp				1,500.00	544.51	955.49
136	Pauline's Swamp CCTV G					685.00	-685.00
142	Safer Community Fund						
					1,500.00	£1,229.51	270.49

Prilory Meadow and Orchard

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
53	Misc				100.00		100.00
					100.00		100.00

Lock Up

<u>Code</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
			<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
28	Repairs, Renewals				20.00		20.00
					20.00		20.00

Burwell Parish Council
Net Position by Cost Centre and Code (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

Cost Centre Name

Street Lighting		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
39	Electricity				600.00	139.98	460.02
40	Maintenance						100.00
41	Church Flood Lights				500.00		500.00
					1,100.00	£139.98	960.02

Public Areas		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
42	Bus Shelters				1,000.00	469.32	530.68
43	Street Furniture Maintenance				100.00		100.00
44	Christmas Tree and Lights				300.00		300.00
45	Hedge Cutting				2,000.00		2,000.00
46	Trees				6,000.00		6,000.00
83	Grass Cutting				4,000.00	2,415.00	1,585.00
					13,400.00	£2,884.32	10,515.68

Play Equipment		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
55	Bark				500.00		500.00
56	Maintenance				1,500.00	25.00	1,475.00
57	Skate Park				2,000.00		2,000.00
					4,000.00	£25.00	3,975.00

Administration		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
62	Supplies				3,000.00	457.91	2,542.09
63	Telephone and Internet				2,000.00	669.28	1,330.72
64	Photocopier				1,000.00	230.54	769.46
65	ICT and Software				3,500.00	2,117.76	1,382.24
66	Fire Precautions (All proper						
67	Election Costs						
68	Photocopier Income						
69	Insurance Premium				9,000.00	8,046.48	953.52
70	Mileage (Not Handyman)				1,000.00	341.75	658.25
71	Audit Fees				2,500.00		2,500.00
72	CAPALC + Other Members				1,500.00	90.00	1,410.00
73	Conferences and Training				1,000.00	551.00	449.00
74	Lloyd Cards Misc Items				300.00	18.00	282.00
75	Annual Report				800.00		800.00
76	Other Income		100.00				-100.00
77	Other and PR			26,000.00	1,000.00	223.45	26,776.55
78	Handyman Capital Expendi				2,500.00	411.34	2,088.66
79	Handyman General Expen				6,500.00	2,113.89	4,386.11
80	Website				500.00		500.00
81	Public Toilet				1,500.00	73.26	1,426.74
			100.00	£26,000.00	37,600.00	£15,344.66	48,155.34

Staff		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
58	Facilities Supervisors				34,700.00	8,327.01	26,372.99
59	Assistant to Clerk				17,800.00	4,270.89	13,529.11
60	Handyman				35,100.00	8,481.69	26,618.31
61	Clerk				44,800.00	11,400.38	33,399.62
146	Finance Officer				9,300.00	2,428.11	6,871.89
					141,700.00	£34,908.08	106,791.92

Current Balance = Balance B/Fwd - (Receipt Budget - Actual Receipt) + (Payment Budget - Actual Payments)

Burwell Parish Council
Net Position by Cost Centre and Code (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

Cost Centre Name

Agency Grass Cutting		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
86	Agency Grass Cutting - CC		1,900.00		2,000.00		100.00
			1,900.00		2,000.00		100.00

Donations		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
87	General Donations				1,000.00		1,000.00
88	Youth Donations including I				1,000.00		1,000.00
90	Neighbourhood Watch				50.00		50.00
					2,050.00		2,050.00

Precept		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
91	Precept		256,575.00	128,518.30			-128,056.70
			256,575.00	£128,518.30			-128,056.70

CIL Funding		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
92	CIL Income			117,956.04			117,956.04
				£117,956.04			117,956.04

Grant Funding		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
123	Gardiner Memorial Hall						
135	Pauline's Swamp CCTV Fu						
137	UK Power Networks						
138	Improve Westhorpe						
139	Community Garden (Pride						
140	Westhorpe Play Area						
152	LGPS CPF Finance						

Deposits		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
112	allotment Deposit			25.00			25.00
113	Hall Deposit			550.00		550.00	
				£575.00		£550.00	25.00

VAT		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
114	VAT Refund			2,507.89			2,507.89
				£2,507.89			2,507.89

Capital Budget		Bal. B/Fwd.	Receipts		Payments		Current Balance
Code	Title		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
128	Westhorpe Play Area						
131	Recreation Ground						
132	Climate Change						
134	Safety Campaign						
141	community garden					46.73	-46.73

Current Balance = Balance B/Fwd - (Receipt Budget - Actual Receipt) + (Payment Budget - Actual Payments)

Burwell Parish Council
Net Position by Cost Centre and Code (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/06/2025)

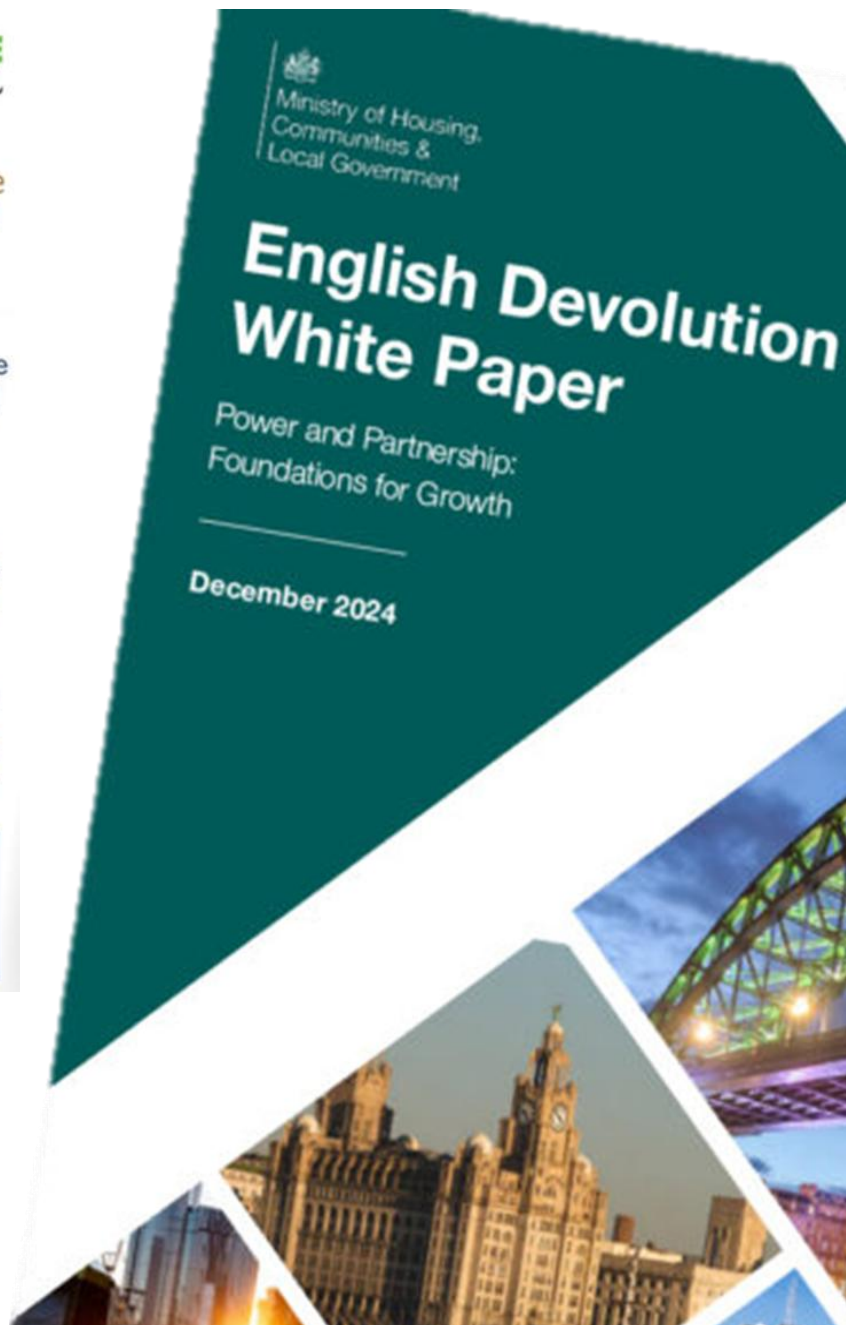
Cost Centre Name

147 Jubilee Green Play Surface	10,000.00		10,000.00
148 Cemetery Hedge	7,000.00		7,000.00
149 Gardiner Memorial Hall Ph	5,000.00		5,000.00
150 Newmarket Road Sports Hi	6,000.00	1,000.00	5,000.00
151 ICT Equipment	3,500.00		3,500.00
	31,500.00	£1,046.73	30,453.27

Repair Cafe

<u>Code</u> <u>Title</u>	<u>Bal. B/Fwd.</u>	<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>		<u>Current Balance</u>
		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
124 Repair Cafe Administration						
125 Repair Cafe Income						
126 Repair Cafe Expenditure					1,271.86	-1,271.86
					£1,271.86	-1,271.86

NET TOTAL		326,025.00	£304,134.95	329,345.00	£79,838.29	227,616.66
------------------	--	-------------------	--------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-------------------



MP Briefing

An update on Local Government Reorganisation on behalf of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough councils

23 July 2025 (updated 5 August 2025)

Purpose and reason for the briefing

To provide MPs with an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and the possible options for new unitary councils being considered by Council leaders and councillors from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Context

On 16 December 2024, [English Devolution White Paper](#) (HM Government) was published outlining extensive reforms to the local government framework across England. These changes include increased devolution from central Government to strategic authorities and local government reorganisation in two-tier areas, and in some adjoining Unitary Authority areas.

As the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area already has devolved powers through the Combined Authority, this report specifically addresses the local government reorganisation aspects of the White Paper.

The Government intends to implement local government reorganisation in all two-tier areas and in some adjoining unitary authority areas. All councils in an area are expected to collaborate on unitary proposals that serve the best interests of the region.

Government criteria

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) issued guidance on 5 February 2025. This sets out detailed criteria for the creation of new unitary authorities, which the Government will use to assess proposals it receives. Criteria for unitary local government includes:

- A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.
- Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.
- Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.
- New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.

New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

Generally, the Government expects new unitary authorities will serve populations of 500,000 people but has indicated it will consider proposals for new unitary councils serving populations as low as 300,000. In all cases where proposals are for smaller or greater population sizes than the indicated 500,000, then the justification for this has to be made clear as part of the proposal.

Existing situation in Cambridgeshire

There are approximately 894,535 residents (ONS mid-year estimates; 2023) in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: 145,685 in Cambridge; 87,755 in East Cambridgeshire; 102,475 in Fenland; 180,815 in Huntingdonshire; and 162,145 in South Cambridgeshire – making a total of 678,875 in the county council area; plus 215,660 people in Peterborough, which is already a single tier unitary authority.

Based on conservative assumptions the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is expected to grow to over 1,060,000 over the next 15 years. That forecast does not include, for example, the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (covering Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire) for around 50,000 homes or 120,000 people, or any population increases arising from plans to be developed by the Government led Cambridge Growth Company.

Progress to date

All councils in an area are expected to work together in the best interests of the whole area to develop and submit proposals by 28 November 2025. However, Government recognises that there will be some cases where agreement on a single proposal will not be possible despite best efforts. A leaders and a chief executives' LGR group has met regularly since the invitation from Government to develop proposals collaboratively. Early agreement was reached in ensuring that the core data underpinning any of the business cases would be jointly commissioned and used in the proposals.

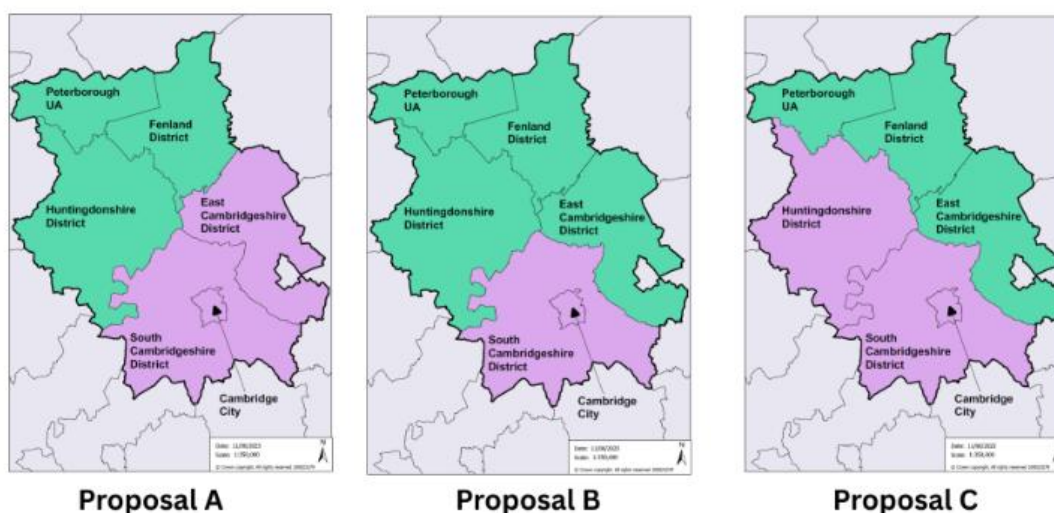
A joint response from six of the seven affected councils was sent to Government by the March deadline providing [initial feedback on the LGR process](#). Fenland District Council responded separately with a [letter to Jim McMahon](#).

Chief executives have commissioned chief finance officers and data teams from each authority to develop a budget and expenditure financial model to evaluate different unitary options. This is being supplemented by analysis from Pixel, a leading local government financial advisor. The modelling is being updated with the latest information from Government on the fair funding review.

Leaders considered the implications of several options for the geography of new unitary councils based on available evidence. Some options were excluded as they did not meet criteria set by the Government; either because the financial analysis showed they were less financially viable or because they didn't meet the requirements of our Combined Authority geography, which must include at least two unitary authorities. Leaders consider that three unitary authorities would be less likely to meet the Government's financial resilience criteria and would cause greater disruption and fragmentation of services.

On 11 June 2025, [council leaders announced they had identified three preferred options](#) to establish new unitary councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Each of these options would lead to the creation of two unitary councils. In future, these councils would be responsible for providing all local government services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area and replace all seven existing local authorities.

The three options set out below are all based on existing authority boundaries.



Proposal	Unitary 1	Unitary 2
Proposal A: North-West / South-East	Peterborough City, Fenland District, Huntingdonshire District and County Council functions (510,000 pop)	Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire District, South Cambridgeshire District and County Council functions (410,000 pop)

Proposal B: North / South	Peterborough City, East Cambridgeshire District, Fenland District, Huntingdonshire District and County Council functions (601,000 pop)	Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire District and County Council functions (319,000 pop)
Proposal C: East / West	Peterborough City, East Cambridgeshire District, Fenland District and County Council functions (415,000 pop)	Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire District, South Cambridgeshire District and County Council functions (505,000 pop)

The three options are being further developed and may all be submitted as proposals to Government by 28 November 2025. Each option has different strengths and different implications for services, local communities, and businesses.

Proposal A business case development lead – Cambridgeshire County Council

Proposal B business case development lead - Cambridge City Council

Proposal C business case development lead – Huntingdonshire District Council

Separate to the above process a further proposal has been developed by [Peterborough City Council](#).

Actions and Views of Individual Councils

The following provides a summary of the positions and actions taken to date by each constituent council in relation to Local Government Reorganisation.

Approaches to date have varied across councils, reflecting differences in local political leadership and administration priorities.

Cambridge City Council

Preferred option: TBC

A report on local government reorganisation was discussed at Cambridge City Council's Full Council meeting on 24 July. The Council approved a motion which set out its position stating it believes a unitary authority based on the current boundaries of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, alongside viable arrangements for the rest of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is likely to be the best option for the residents of Cambridge. Additionally, it resolved to work with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on a proposal for the whole area that can be submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025.

Cambridgeshire County Council

Preferred option: A

The County Council's Administration supports the development of the Option A business case as a preferred option. However, the County Council is also committed to ensuring a clear evidence base supports any decisions that it takes and will be undertaking further engagement with residents and stakeholders to inform the Council's decision making.

Whilst leading the development of Option A, the County Council remains committed to working with and informing the other options being developed. This includes the provision of data, professional officer input and advice, where appropriate, and continued engagement through the various joint working forums.

To ensure clear democratic leadership and oversight of this work, the County Council took a formal report to the Full Council meeting in March 2025 and established an Elected Member LGR working group, which is both geographically and politically balanced. The membership of this Group was refreshed following the County Council Elections in May 2025. The County Council is currently proposing to take a further report to the Full Council meeting in October, where Councillors will decide upon their preferred submission to Government.

East Cambridgeshire District Council

Preferred option: TBC

The Council administration is supporting the development of the Option B business case. Although remains engaged and supporting data collection/coordination for Option A and C. A full council meeting will be held in November to discuss and consider the final proposals. To provide democratic oversight and input to the development of Option B an informal member working group has been established, with proportionate representation of the Council.

Fenland District Council

Preferred option: TBC

A report on local government reorganisation was discussed at Fenland District Council's Full Council meeting on Monday 21 July. At that meeting, members considered the three proposals and provided feedback. A Cabinet meeting was held later the same day for Cabinet members to note the feedback from Full Council and provide a steer to the Leader to support ongoing dialogue within the local government reorganisation process.

Whilst there was some preference for Option C, Cabinet maintained that they would not be able to fully support any of the options until the businesses cases for each option were available.

Additionally, Cabinet noted that there was strong feedback from Full Council that the identity of Fenland needs to be preserved as much as is possible in any of the options.

Huntingdonshire District Council

Preferred option: TBC

Huntingdonshire District Council continues to work in partnership with the other councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as part of the local government reorganisation process, seeking to agree data sets, assumptions and engagement on workstreams such as finance. We are actively working with others on areas where there is likely commonality across all business cases (such as risk and governance), and communications. The council is supporting the coordination of data collection to inform the Option B business case (and will also engage with Option A as required), while also undertaking its own analysis of the viability of Option C. Timelines for formal decision-making are being worked through, in anticipation of an Extraordinary Council meeting in November to discuss and consider the final proposals.

Peterborough City Council

Preferred option: TBC

Peterborough MPs are in favour of the development of a fourth option which would be the development of a Greater Peterborough business case. This will be reflected upon at future leaders' meetings.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Preferred option: TBC

A report on local government reorganisation was discussed at South Cambridgeshire District Council's Full Council meeting on Thursday 17 July. At that meeting, councillors agreed to consider the three proposals above and provide feedback to Cabinet to support ongoing dialogue within the local government reorganisation process. Councillors also agreed to hold an Extraordinary Council meeting to discuss the final proposals – likely to be in November. They also agreed to establish a programme of member engagement workshops and task and finish groups to support the process of business case development.

Additionally, the Council Leader, Cllr Bridget Smith, told the Full Council meeting that both she and the administration will be supporting a new Greater Cambridge unitary council (option B above).

Implications

There are a range of potential **benefits** of creating new unitary councils, including:

- **Reducing complexity and increasing democratic accountability** by giving councillors responsibility for all local government services in their area
- **Public service reform** and more joined up provision of services delivering better outcomes and better value for money for residents
- Ensuring that local government is more **financially sustainable** through the integration of service provision, streamlining of back-office costs and assets, and economies of scale
- **Clarity for residents** about who is responsible for services they receive
- A **stronger and more cohesive voice** for an area in discussions with central government and key partners to amplify the issues of most concern to residents
- Boundaries that better reflect the **economic geography and housing** markets so that new councils can support sustainable and inclusive economic growth

Local government reorganisation also presents **risks**. Key risks include:

- **Establishing new unitary councils will incur significant one-off transition and implementation costs**, which will need to be met from existing budgets. The payback period for any associated costs of change will also need to be factored into the proposals for any new unitary councils. The Government has provided a grant of £318,000 to councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to develop proposals and supports the use of capital receipts to fund transition costs and service transformation
- **Financial pressures.** All councils are struggling with forecast budget gaps in future years due to national pressures being experienced in demand for services. Any reorganisation proposal must adequately address financial liabilities and pressures and needs to ensure sustainability for the new councils. There are also costs associated with equalising Council Tax rates so that all residents are treated fairly. This can be phased to mitigate increases in bills should the new authorities decide to harmonise upwards. Councils also need to take account of financial pressures from rising social care and SEND demands.

- **Reorganisation may have a negative impact on staff capacity** during the transition period, and in the short-term uncertainty could negatively affect retention and recruitment. (NOTE: Beyond reducing duplication, local government reorganisation does not necessarily imply or require large scale redundancies. The overwhelming majority of employees will transfer automatically to one of the new authorities. Senior officers are more likely to be at risk of redundancy as the separate services from different authorities are integrated. Reorganisation will also create new opportunities and career development for staff)
- **New unitary councils will have responsibility for adult social care, children’s services, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), and homelessness where increasing demand could create financial pressures.** Proposals need to ensure any new unitary councils are able to meet current and future demand through available resources, such as Council Tax, Business Rates, Government grants, fees and charges, and income generation. On behalf of all the Councils, Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City have commissioned Newton, a leading national consultancy that specialises in advising upon these services, to provide a detailed assessment of future demand, costs and implications of disaggregating these services into the proposed unitary councils.
- **Unitary authorities will be larger, have fewer councillors, and could feel more ‘remote’ from residents.** Proposals will need to ensure the number of councillors balances efficient and effective decision-making with local representation and manageable workloads

Consultation, engagement and communication

The Government expects councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way and to evidence that in their proposals.

Cambridge City Council engaged residents about the ‘[Future of Local Government for Cambridge](#)’ in summer 2024. A report detailing the council’s findings is [available here](#).

East Cambridgeshire District Council also engaged residents in the early spring of 2025. A press release detailing the council’s findings is [available here](#).

A joint survey by all Cambridgeshire and Peterborough councils was carried out from 19 June to 20 July 2025. It asked residents and businesses for views on the future of local government for

the whole area. The engagement focused on the connections people have to different areas, including where they work, socialise or receive healthcare, and their priorities for the new unitary councils. The survey is being supplemented by focus groups in each local authority area.

Views on a preferred geography for a new unitary authority for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area were not sought as part of that engagement, however, many respondents offered suggestions.

Results from this engagement work are now being gathered and analysed by the data company procured to support this process – and will be shared in the next MP update.

Next steps

- Feedback from the survey and the focus groups will be used to help develop detailed business cases for each of the preferred options
- It seems likely at this stage that three or four competing business cases for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be submitted to Government in November. The Government will then consult on some, or all the proposals, prior to a final decision being made
- Each Council intends to consider or endorse their preferred option in October / November 2025 prior to submission
- By submitting a final proposal or proposals in November, powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 will be triggered. This will give the Deputy Prime Minister / Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government the final decision on any proposed unitary structures and does not require the affected councils to give formal consent to the Secretary of State's preferred approach.
- Ministers will then decide which proposal(s) will be subject to a statutory consultation in 2026, after which Ministers will make a final determination on the proposal they intend to implement
- Government is currently expected will consult on the proposals from January to April 2026, with a view to deciding by August 2026
- Legislation is expected to be prepared and laid between August and December 2026
- Elections for the shadow authorities are expected to take place between May and December 2027, during which time transitional legislation will be prepared and laid
- The new unitaries are expected to go live from 1 April 2028