Your

Address

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Date

For the Attention of:
Planning Policy
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

Ref: Preferred Options Local Draft Plan to 2046 consultation closing 10th June 2026

Proposal:
Reserving land as a “Strategic Reserve Site” for future development between Huntingdon and Abbots Ripton of up to 7,000 homes with associated infrastructure to be called “Sapley Park Garden Village”.

Dear Sir/Madam,

OBJECTION to the Proposal referred to as “Sapley Park Garden Village”
I am writing to formally object to the above proposal to declare the above land as a Strategic Reserve Site for up to a 7,000-home development between Huntingdon and Abbots Ripton.

I am in full support of the detail objections/comments raised by my local Parish Council and the District Councillors for the Sawtry Ward

Yours faithfully

Name

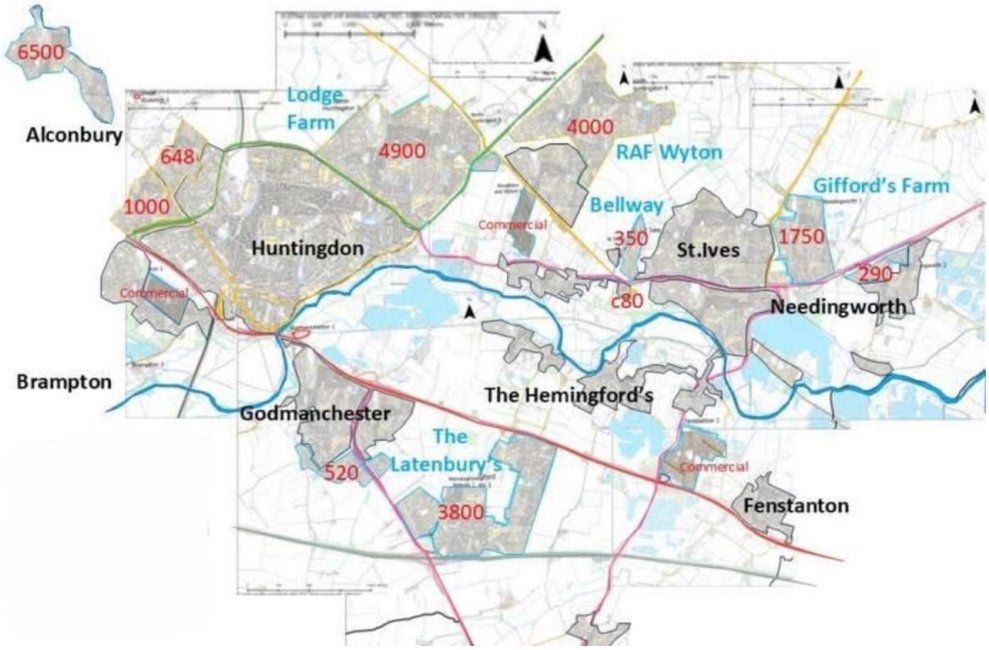
Preliminary analysis of flood risks to Kings Ripton and Broughton

December 2025. Kings Ripton Parish council

(with thanks to the Alconbury Brook Flood Group for assistance)

The analysis creates great concern for flood issues within the Bury brook catchment which will cause serious flooding in Broughton and also likely within Kings Ripton due to the proposed draft local plan.

We have been unable to find any flood modelling associated with the 2046 draft plan. The map below outlines the overview of new developments proposed for the Huntingdon and St.Ives area and appendices give more detailed information and maps.



Background:

The 2046 plan as proposed is a development to triple the number of houses adding 35000 houses to the region causing potential loss of the local environment, traffic congestion and poor transport links and potential loss of property, livelihood and potentially risk to people due to the inevitable flooding on the watercourses. The plan represents vast growth but it does not appears to align with the wishes of exiting residents following reports of great concern. This document will study surface water drainage and the possible effects on the Bury Brook villages.

The north of Huntingdon includes a watershed known as the Bury Brook of 7067Ha (70km^2) which drains into the north into Bury, under the main street of Ramsey (the Great Whyte) and into the Bedford river which is controlled by the drainage boards. A map includes detailed points of importance in the north Huntingdon area showing the 3 main basins:

Alconbury Brook of 8232Ha

Bury Brook 7067Ha

Marley Gap Brook/RAF Wyton (2300Ha).

The Bury Brook basin, of greatest importance to Kings Ripton, includes areas up to the north Huntingdon A141 road, 85% of the surface water from Alconbury Weald, a line diagonally across the proposed area of Sapley Village and also around 30% of RAF Wyton through the airfield storm drainage channel at the roundabout of the B1090 and A141.

The following points outline the concerns:

1. Flooding is a major issue in the region and is almost guaranteed to become extremely more so because there is not yet a scheme for controlling the surface water discharge rates caused by tripling the paved and roofed land area of the main watersheds of the Ouse, Bury Brook & Alconbury Brook. The most greatly affected will be the Bury Brook which drains 85% of Alconbury Weald, the new industrial areas in Huntingdon to the A141, the majority of Lodge Farm and up to 35% of RAF Wyton through the existing storm drain under the A141. All these will runoff through Kings Ripton, Broughton, Bury and Ramsey.
2. The building of Alconbury Weald has likely contributed to floods at 100-year levels 3 times in the last year within Broughton village, even though it has only started with only 1/6th of the 6500 permitted houses have been built. Modelling, investigation and increasing balance ponds is required even within the next 2-3 years to compensate for the earlier shortfall in provision.
3. A further 8900 houses and further industrial areas add to Alconbury Weald's contribution to give a total of 750Ha of development to the Bury Brook which will increase peak flow by 25,000 tons per hour of water (see appendix peak flows) to a brook only capable of taking this amount in total.
4. Surface water modelling (see appendix surface water storage) suggests a 200-year event storm floods will increase water by around 700,000 tons. A rough estimate suggests a peak flood depth of 2m within Broughton and 1m in Kings Ripton is very plausible at a 100-year flood. 11% of the watershed will have 50% of its water retention removed. A 2m flood will make total loss of property and possible loss of life likely. Of course, 200-year flood levels may become annual events as climate change occurs even during the next 20 years.
5. Sewage treatment for the region is a key area. Treatment capacity increases lag housebuilding by 5-10 years because water authorities must bid for funding after houses are built. This assures there is a constant lag in capacity. If there is an increase in population by 10,000 people every 5 years, as proposed, then this is also the ongoing shortfall of capacity. The new sewage is also directed to the Bury Brook where few plants are in place. To clarify the argument the current population of Huntingdon may be added before new plant will be built – so it appears inevitable that watercourses will be contaminated.

In summary the 2046 update plan is a high risk to put the environment, community members and their livelihoods, houses and businesses in peril without extensive mitigation of such a large growth.

It is encouraged that the council would not make themselves liable by permitting development at this scale due to government pressure knowing that it will put people in the area at a foreseeable risk. The region does not have the geography to be able to cope with this plan without prior investment in sewage, large scale active flood retention at 200-year levels.

The Kings Ripton parish council obviously objects to the prospect of the village being regularly flooded and having personally had our listed farmhouse flooded every few years or so it is a worse prospect to potentially have sewage included with flood water if development does not stipulate that flood

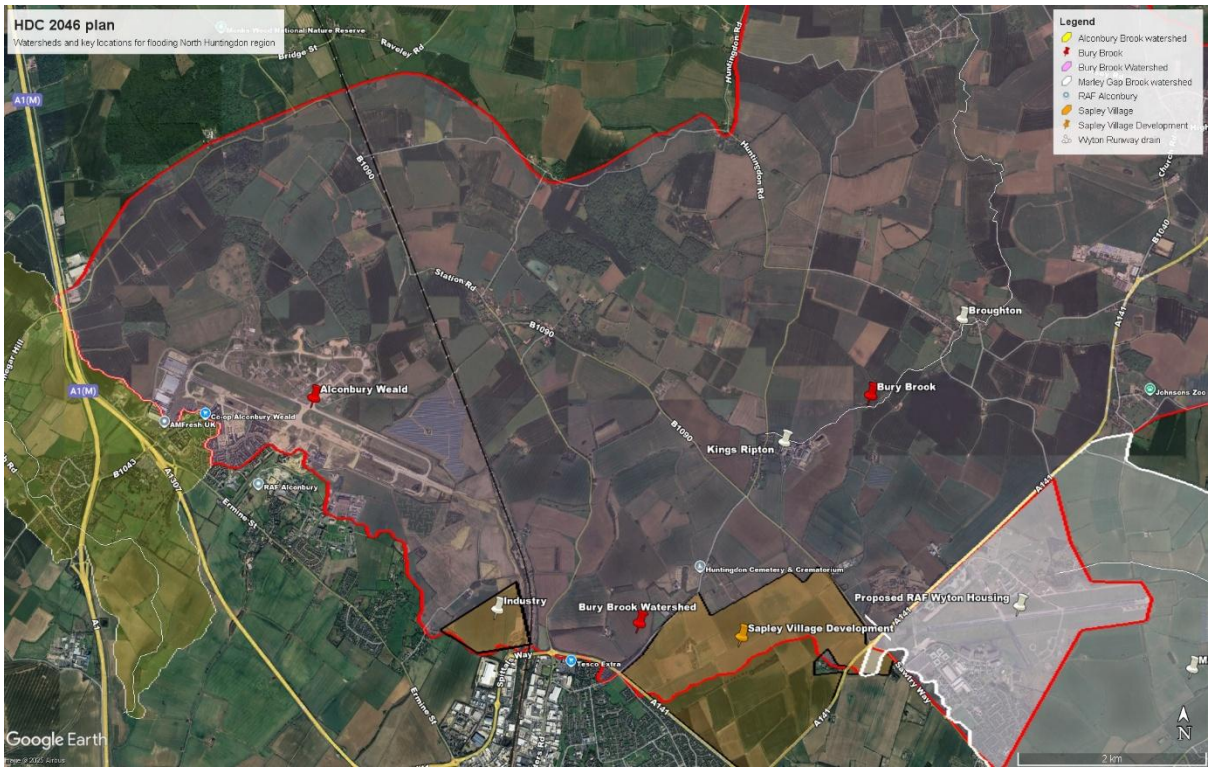
tolerant sewage treatment must be in place prior to any building. We also have greater concern for Broughton and the residents' houses flooding already and loss of business along the brook.

We are not able to model the increase to the Ouse valley basin yet but Alconbury Brook group may be able to assist. The tools are free and easily available and it takes a matter of hours for someone of technical expertise to learn how to use them.

A final suggestion is that while building Huntingdonshire as a potential county/unitary authority that the public also are lobbied if they want this level of development – it appears there is no appetite from the community given the comments received.

Appendices:

1. Catchment map of Bury Brook



Google Earth view of area to north of Huntingdon including Bury Brook catchment in red, Alconbury Brook (yellow), Marley Gap Brook white.

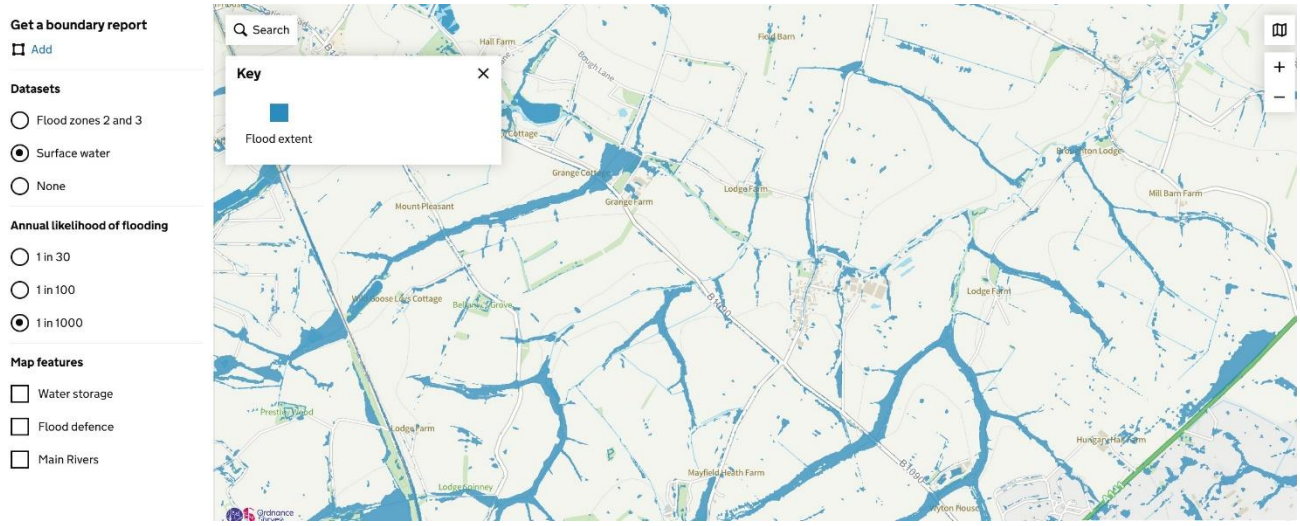
The Bury Brook watershed will have developments – with areas shown flowing only to the brook:

- 178Ha from Sapley village ~50% of total area
    - Flow enters ditches crossing B1090 and arrives between Kings Ripton and Broughton
- 65Ha (est) from RAF Wyton ~30% of total area
    - Flows through runway storm drain into ditches near MBR acres and then down to Bury Brook between King Ripton and Broughton. Ditches already flood substantially during storms
- 400Ha from Alconbury Weald ~ 85% of total area drains to Bury Brook 15% to Alconbury Brook
    - Flows through to NW of Abbots Ripton into head of Bury Brook and from south to between Abbots Ripton and Kings Ripton

- 60Ha from Industrial development in North Huntingdon flowing to Bury Brook
    - Flows into Bury Brook before Kings Ripton

Total area is estimated as 700-750Ha of the 7067Ha catchment.

The flows to the Bury Brook.



Surface water from EA mapping tool.

NB. surface water map does not show Broughton floods sufficiently in comparison with experience but does show large amounts of flooding along ditches and water channels from proposed development sites. Ditches are showing significant erosion and channel widening over previous years due to high flows.

2. Peak flows from development areas

Included is the peak flows calculation using HRWallingford online estimation tools and rainfall patterns.

Soil absorption index is chosen as 4 giving an increase of peak flow during a 200-year storm of 7-8m^3 per second or up to 29,000 tons per hour by the Greenfield runoff rate estimation model for 750Ha of development.

The Bury Brook cross section is approximately 3m wide and 2.5m through Broughton and Kings Ripton deep allowing a 1m/s flow to fill the entire water channel with around 6m^3/s flow, which is less than the increase of peak flow caused by 750Ha of development.

The surface water storage model gives the required storage at 700,000 m^3 of retention ponds when around 200Ha of roofs and 100Ha of roadways are coupled with 450Ha of green space. Urban creep was set to +15% and climate change allowance as +40% to align with similar models. It suggests the absolute minimum retention ponds required is 70Ha of 1m deep of 35Ha of 2m deep. To achieve this retention the ponds must be actively controlled to empty when flows are low and fill in storm periods and not left full or unmaintained so they are permitted to fill up.

The models can be found at https://www.uksuds.com/tools/members/surface-water-storage-volume-estimation-members and the outputs are given in the attached pdfs.

Abbots Ripton Parish Council
C/O Samantha Sharp – Clerk
The Old Vine
59 The Row
Sutton
Cambridgeshire
CB6 2PB

Tuesday 26th May 2026

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I am in full support of the detail objections/comments raised by my local Parish Council and the District Councillors for the Sawtry Ward.

I am writing on behalf of Abbots Ripton Parish Council to register our strong objection to the inclusion of Reserve Site A – Sapley Garden Village in the draft local plan across both the proposed Phase 1 & Phase 2.

Designating this land as suitable for a major integrated housing and commercial development runs counter to the interests and environment of the villages of Abbots Ripton and Wennington and does not seem consistent with wider issues.

The scale of the potential development is that of a small town, similar in size to Alconbury Weald with little consideration given to what would be taken away from the existing community, the environment in general and the burden of already stretched infrastructure and services

1. The entire area proposed is currently green field grade 2 farmland under cultivation for over 200 years with preserved copses and field margins providing extensive wildlife habitat. Conversion to an urban conurbation is entirely counter to national food security and ecological/environmental considerations. Brown field locations should be prioritised for housing development.

2. Abbots Ripton is a conservation village – so designated to preserve it's character and manage modest development to keep it's structure and historical identity intact. A proposal to build up to the boundaries of the village is entirely inconsistent with the concept of a Conservation Area.

3. Local service infrastucure in the village, drainage, sewage management, and roads are stretched at best from developments over the past 10 years. In particular water run off (potentially impacted by the Alconbury Weald development) has created flood incidents that have never been seen before. Our pumped sewage management has failed on several occasions. We have little or no confidence that this infrastructure would be managed to be adequate for even modest development, let alone a New Town.

4. The surrounding road network is already so poor the village has become a rat run for traffic exiting the A1 at Sawtry for destinations South and East avoiding as much of the A141 as possible. The new Alconbury Weald junction with A141 will no doubt make this even worse when fully operational. The Sapley Garden Village reserve plan would put unimaginable burden on the A141 and require significant upgrading of the road of the road from Abbots Ripton to the Tesco roundabout making it an even more attractive rat run.

We believe the entire proposal to be ill considered and unsound. We are not requesting modification of the Reserve Plan within the Local Plan, we are requesting that it be removed.

Yours faithfully

Samantha Sharp

On Behalf of Abbots Ripton Parish Council

I wish to register a strong objection to the inclusion of Reserve Site A: Sapley Park Garden Village within the draft Local Plan in its current form.

While I recognise the requirement under the NPPF for local authorities to maintain flexibility in housing land supply and to identify potential reserve sites, I do not believe that the proposal demonstrates the necessary infrastructure, transport mitigation, public services, or community facilities can be delivered in a realistic, timely, or enforceable manner.

The scale of development proposed is extraordinary. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 would deliver approximately 7,000 homes, major employment areas, local centres, transport infrastructure and associated facilities across a vast area north of Huntingdon. This is effectively the creation of an entirely new settlement. However, the consultation document relies heavily on aspirational language around future infrastructure without providing sufficient certainty regarding funding, delivery mechanisms, timing, governance, or enforceability.

My principal concern is that the proposal risks repeating mistakes already experienced elsewhere in Huntingdonshire and the wider region, where large-scale housing growth has substantially outpaced the delivery of supporting infrastructure.

A particularly important example is Sawtry, where a promised primary school associated with major housing growth has failed to materialise within the timescales originally presented to residents and decision-makers. The community was assured that educational infrastructure would accompany growth, yet delivery has been significantly delayed and remains well behind the pace of housing occupation. This has placed considerable strain on existing schools, transport networks and local services. Residents have understandably lost confidence in assurances that infrastructure will "follow later".

This experience demonstrates a fundamental planning concern: infrastructure promises attached to strategic growth are often not delivered at the point communities actually need them. The same risk is clearly present here, but on a far larger scale.

The proposal acknowledges that substantial transport improvements would be required, including upgrades to the A141, active travel routes, mobility hubs, public transport infrastructure and potential support for a future railway station at Alconbury Weald. However, there is no certainty whatsoever that these measures will be delivered before significant housing occupation occurs.

The existing highway network around Huntingdon, the A141 corridor, Brampton Road, Hartford Road, the ring road network and surrounding junctions already experience congestion and peak-time pressure. The Impact through villages like Abbots Ripton and Kings Ripton will be significant on roads not designed to cope with such traffic. Residents are increasingly concerned about cumulative impacts arising from multiple developments already committed or under construction. The addition of potentially 7,000 further homes would generate substantial additional vehicle movements and pressure on strategic and local roads.

The proposal places considerable emphasis on active travel and public transport aspirations, but these alone are unlikely to offset the transport impacts associated with development at this scale, particularly given the existing travel patterns and employment geography of Huntingdonshire. Reliance on a potential future railway station at Alconbury Weald is especially concerning because the station itself remains uncertain in terms of funding, timing and delivery.

Furthermore, the proposal fails to adequately demonstrate how health infrastructure, GP capacity, secondary school provision, SEND provision, utilities, wastewater treatment capacity and emergency services infrastructure would cope with development of this magnitude. While the document references educational and community facilities "appropriate to the scale of development", there remains insufficient detail regarding timing, phasing, funding and binding delivery triggers.

The Local Plan should not rely on vague future commitments where there is no robust evidence that delivery partners can provide the necessary infrastructure in parallel with housing growth.

I am also concerned that the reserve site mechanism itself introduces significant uncertainty. The criteria for release include circumstances such as increased housing need figures or delays elsewhere in the plan. While flexibility is understandable, there is a danger that substantial strategic development could be activated reactively without the level of scrutiny and infrastructure planning that a standalone settlement proposal of this scale would ordinarily require.

The cumulative environmental and landscape impacts must also not be underestimated. Although the proposal references landscaping, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain, the scale of urban expansion proposed north of Huntingdon would fundamentally alter the rural setting of nearby villages including Abbots Ripton and Kings Ripton and could erode settlement separation and countryside character despite mitigation measures.

In planning terms, I do not consider the proposal currently satisfies the tests of soundness, particularly in relation to whether the plan is:

- ***Positively prepared** with realistic infrastructure planning;*
- ***Justified** by proportionate evidence demonstrating deliverability;*
- ***Effective** in terms of infrastructure delivery and transport mitigation; and*
- ***Consistent with national policy**, particularly the requirement for sustainable development supported by adequate infrastructure.*

I cannot support the inclusion of Sapley Park Garden Village as a reserve site within the Local Plan.