

District and County Councillor's Report – November 2023

Possible Solar Farm Application

We were alerted to a proposal from a solar energy company of a possible planning application in our area for a new, very large, solar farm. There is very little detail at the moment but we do know that the potential area amounts to several hundred hectares. The current 'search area' for land is from the east of Balsham down to the north of Linton the over to the east of Fulbourn. If this whole area were to be turned into a solar farm, which is unlikely in our view, it would be the largest solar farm in Europe, by some way. Watch this space!

A1307 Works

The usual A1307 update from us:-

After the work to the roundabout at Linton is complete, the final elements of the upgrades to the road will be the remodelling of the Dean Road junction, which is currently underway and then the completion of the 'Greenway' around Abington and joining up with the crossing over the A11. The work for this will start in November time on Newmarket Road, Abington.

For more up to date information go to the Greater Cambridge Partnership website - <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/public-transport-schemes/cambridge-south-east-transport/cambridge-south-east-transport-phase-1-background/cambridge-south-east-transport-phase-1-current-schemes>

Anaerobic Digestion Plant Proposals

In our area we have not one, but two live planning applications submitted to the relevant local authorities for bio energy digestion plants. These are plants that breakdown agricultural materials and turn them into energy. For reference there is one on the A505 between Royston and Baldock.

1. The first application is located just over the Suffolk border outside of Haverhill and off the A1307. The site runs up the Cambridgeshire border and ends at the edge of West Wickham/Weston Colville. You may have seen signs for the anti-lobbying group 'Muck Off Acorn' – this refers to this application. As the application is in Suffolk it will be Suffolk County Council that will make the decision on this but whilst the time for public comments has closed, you can still look at the plans and write to the case office dealing with the application – andy.rutter@suffolk.gov.uk

<http://suffolk.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display?applicationNumber=SCC%2F0045%2F23SE&fbclid=IwAR0aj4d4JMd9Yr3cP-Etp9rxdr4kKDwvzX0wMyHkfOomG45fCq0khXRbyrE>

2. The second application is in the parish of Streetly End, West Wickham. This site is smaller than the first and as it is in Cambridgeshire will be decided by Cambridgeshire County Council. The council are taking public comments now and this can be done via the website - <https://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=S0BB1JDYKNQ00>

LHI Bids

This years round of Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bids are now open for parish councils to submit a proposal for funding for a small highway improvement project in our area. Our parishes have been successful in the past and funding has enabled some small, albeit much needed, improvements to the highway network that wouldn't usually form a part of the Highway budget. Full detail and application forms can be seen here - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-the-local-highway/local-highway-improvement-funding>

19 Bus Service Continues

We have previously reported that the number 19 bus service, which runs through some of our smaller villages, such as The Camps and Bartlow, was in danger of having funding pulled for it earlier this year. Luckily, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have agreed to continue to fund the service, at least for another year. However, as ridership of this service is quite low, any encouragement that can be given to people to use it will go a long way to show it's a vital service that should be permanently retained.

Mobile food hub

There is a mobile food hub that visits Linton Village Hall on Coles Lane every Tuesday between 1pm and 2pm. There is no registration required just turn up on the day. If any more information on the scheme, this can be found on the Hope CIC (the charity running the scheme) website - <https://hopeagainst.org/hope-cic-mobile-food-hub> or on 07474725477.

Statement of Community Engagement

The District Council will be consulting on its 'Statement of Community Involvement' between October 18th and November 29th. This is a document that details how the planning service engages with various elements of the community during the planning process. This is quite important and planning is one of the authorities most public-facing services that affects everyone. More information on the current statement can be found here - <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/>

Free Electric Blankets

South Cambs District Council are offering a free electric blanket to those most in need, in the run up to the winter months. Those that qualify for these will need to be claiming Council Tax Support and also one of the following criteria:

- Attendance allowance
- Personal independence Payment
- Disability Living Allowance

Full detail of the scheme can be found here - <https://www.scams.gov.uk/free-electric-blankets-will-help-residents-most-in-need-this-winter/>

Councillors Henry and John Batchelor

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