

# Mepal Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2031



## Consultation Statement September 2023



# Mepal Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2031

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Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Regulation 15 of Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012



The Parish Council received professional planning support from NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK during the production of this Neighbourhood Plan.



NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK

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Telephone: 01353 741066  
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Website Contact Form: <https://www.mepalparish.org/contact/#>

For consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan contact:  
Email: [mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org)

<https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>

# Mepal Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2031



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# Introduction

1. This Statement has been prepared to accompany the Mepal Neighbourhood Development Plan (“the Neighbourhood Plan”) under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”). The relevant local planning authority is East Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. The policies described in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area only. The document sets out the period of the Neighbourhood Plan which is from 2019 to 2036.
3. This Consultation Statement (hereafter ‘the report’) complies with Regulation 15(1)(b) of the Regulations. The report includes the following information as required by Regulation 15(2)(a)-(d):
  - a) Details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
  - b) an explanation of how they were consulted;
  - c) a summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
  - d) a description of how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

## Consultation with the Local Community

4. The Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by public participation and consultation on a Mepal Community Led Plan (CLP) that was undertaken between 2017 and 2020. Since the designation of Mepal as a neighbourhood area in 2022, various elements of consultation have been undertaken regarding the future planning of the parish.
5. For consultation the Parish Council will provide updates and material on the Parish Council [website](#)<sup>1</sup>.

## Consultation on Designation

6. A formal [application](#)<sup>2</sup> was made by Mepal Parish Council as a ‘relevant body’ under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the designation of a neighbourhood area in order to develop a neighbourhood plan. The area of the Neighbourhood Plan is based upon the parish boundary, which was seen as appropriate as this area is recognised as the distinct community of Mepal. The request was that the Parish be recognised as a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of producing a neighbourhood plan, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
7. The Parish was [designated](#)<sup>3</sup> a Neighbourhood Area on the 28 February 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/neighbourhood-planning>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Mepal%20NA%20Map%20A4%20prtr.pdf>

# Early Consultation

8. Following designation, the Parish Council appointed a consultant to assist them to take the Neighbourhood Plan forward and a steering group was formed of key councillors to lead on consultation. Discussions took place with East Cambridgeshire District Council during 2022 regarding procedural matters. Mepal Matters, the Parish [Newsletter](#)<sup>4</sup> has publicised the Neighbourhood Plan and kept local residents informed.
9. Early informal public participation and consultation was undertaken in September 2022, it was publicised in the September [edition](#)<sup>5</sup> of Mepal Matters through use of a questionnaire and invited general comments from residents. The Newsletter is delivered to every house, which is approximately 470 houses. The questionnaire was also publicised via the Parish Council [website](#)<sup>6</sup> and was available to be completed as a Survey Monkey [link](#)<sup>7</sup> or as a [download](#)<sup>8</sup> to complete and return.
10. A simple questionnaire was used by the Parish Council to help those interested to express their views in a structured manner. Feedback was sought under topic headings of: Leisure, Community & Green Spaces; Transport & Infrastructure; New Housing; and Highways. Records indicate that 38 households responded.
11. Early themes arose out of this early consultation including the desire to protect the rural character of the existing village; that community facilities were valued although some additional facilities would be appreciated; support for green space; and a range of things people would like to see safeguarded in the village.
12. The November 2022 [edition](#)<sup>9</sup> of Mepal Matters summarised the feedback received as: *“The shop, pub, village hall and recreation field were regarded as the four most valued local community facilities, and you would like these safeguarding. There was concern about over development (housing) in the village and a feeling that the village could not support any large housing developments or estates. The youth club, Mepal Makers, Mepal Markets and footpaths in the village should be safeguarded, and conservation and accessibility of Parish Council owned land and property could be better. There was also a plea that Mepal Neighbourhood Watch should be retained and that a return of football was to be encouraged but at no cost to the other villagers (a challenging request). Finally we received many comments regarding having safe spaces to exercise dogs off lead but also highlighting the dog fouling problems.”*
13. Protection of the existing rural character of the existing village is achieved through Policy 1 - Settlement Boundary (Update to Development Envelope), Policy 7 - Views and Vistas and Policy 8 - Boundary Treatment, Hedgerows, Trees and Public Realm. Community Assets are protected and supported through Policy 2 - Community Assets and Policy 3 - Allotments.
14. Policy 6 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets also protects the existing built environment of the village whilst green space is addressed by Policy 9 - Local Green Space. In these regards the draft Neighbourhood Plan has developed to respond positively to the early consultation.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/newsletter/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Mepal-Matters-Sept-Oct-web.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/nhp/> (Note this link was as it was at the time of early consultation, subsequently the website has been restructured to <https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XPXMRRV>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Mepal-NHP-Online-Questionnaire.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/November-December-2022-Issue-FOR-WEB.pdf>

# Consultation on Pre-Submission Draft (Regulation 14)

15. Consultation with statutory and other consultees took place over the statutory 6-week period as required by the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)<sup>10</sup>. The consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan took place from Wednesday 1st March 2023 to Wednesday 12th April 2023. Statutory consultation was undertaken utilising information available including any consultee details that needed to be obtained from East Cambridgeshire District Council. Consultation was also undertaken with local residents and businesses, including neighbouring Parish Councils as the Regulations require.
16. The Parish Council used the Parish Council [website](#)<sup>11</sup> to host the consultation material and to provide updates for the local community. It also used the Parish Newsletter<sup>12</sup> to disseminate information.
17. This stage complied with Regulation 14 of the Regulations, which is set out below:  
*“Before submitting a plan proposal to the local planning authority, a qualifying body must—*
  - (a) publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area—*
    - (i) details of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan;*
    - (ii) details of where and when the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan may be inspected;*
    - (iii) details of how to make representations; and*
    - (iv) the date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised;*
  - (b) consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan; and*
  - (c) send a copy of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority.”*
18. Public participation and consultation was undertaken in May and April 2023, it was publicised in the March edition of Mepal Matters which included a copy of the summary leaflet and feedback form which invited general comments from residents. The Newsletter is delivered to every house, which is approximately 470 houses. The questionnaire was also publicised via the dedicated Neighbourhood Plan section of the Parish Council website. The website included an electronic submission form that could be completed and submitted online.
19. The response form was also available to download to complete and return. The response form was also available in hard copy at the drop-in sessions and could be completed and be handed in at the Post Office Stores or could be posted to the Mepal Parish Council Clerk. Responses were received via both the online methods and the hard copy methods.
20. In addition to aid local publicity a total of seven drop-in sessions were arranged at the village hall and the community pavilion. The drop-in times at the village hall coincided with the Warm Hub sessions run. A record of verbal feedback given at the drop-in sessions

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mepalparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/23-03-Mepal-Matters-March-2023.pdf>

## ***Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement***

was made and the Parish Council has taken that into account alongside the formal representations made.

21. Copies of the consultation material is set out in Appendix 2. A summary of the responses from the statutory and other consultees is set out in Appendix 3. A total of 21 formal representations were received from the Regulation 14 consultation as follows:

	<b>Statutory Consultees</b>	<b>Landowners &amp; Developers</b>	<b>Local Residents</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Representation</b>	11	0	10	21
<i>(Proportion)</i>	<i>(52.4%)</i>	<i>(0%)</i>	<i>(47.6%)</i>	

22. In order to be absolutely certain as to whether the three statutory environmental bodies had any specific views on the SEA Screening, East Cambridgeshire District Council suggested that we specifically re-ask the statutory environmental bodies to confirm if they have any comments or not on the SEA Screening which was done in June and July 2023. This is detailed in the SEA Screening and HRA Screening documents.



***Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement***

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# Appendix 1 - Early Consultation Material



## Neighbourhood Plan

The launch event for the current Mepal Community Led Plan (CLP) took place in October 2017 and the final report was distributed to all households in Mepal in February 2019. A number of projects and plans were identified in the CLP but the planned 2020 Community drop had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

We received number of requests from Parishioners over the last 12 months, particularly in regards to how the Parish Council can protect the village from large housing developments in future after successfully opposing the Brick Lane development of 55 houses. The Parish Council therefore applied for grant funding and have engaged a consultant and have started a project to publish a Mepal Neighbourhood Plan before the end of this financial year. This will be very challenging and we would request help form the community to make sure that our plan is as good as possible to help protect and improve our lovely village.

This page will be updated as we progress through the process – the first step is the Questionnaire that is within the September/October issue of the Mepal Matters Newsletter and is now also be available online. Please try to fill this in as your first act of assistance in the development of the plan.

Click on the image below if you would like to fill the survey in online through Survey Monkey.



If you would rather fill in a pdf copy to email to us then the [Mepal NHP Online Questionnaire](#) can be accessed via this link and when completed you can email [mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org). Completed paper forms can be taken to the village shop and dropped off in the black collection bin available in the shop.

## MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL



Mepal Parish Council is developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Mepal to highlight what will make our village a better place to live and work in. A Neighbourhood Plan gives local people a say in the future of the village.

We need to hear from you. Capturing views from across the local community is essential- so that we can develop a plan that represents everyone.

All we need is a few minutes of your time- by filling in our short questionnaire below. This is just one stage in the process- there will be further opportunities to comment on our Neighbourhood Plan work in the future. We look forward to hearing from you.

### 1. ABOUT YOU

(a) Your Age (tick)    12-17    18-24    25-34    35-44    45-54    55-64    65-74    75+

(b) Enter the total number of children and adults in your household in the below boxes

Children (pre-school)	<input type="text"/>
Children (school)	<input type="text"/>
Adults	<input type="text"/>
Adults (retired)	<input type="text"/>

(c) Please tick to indicate the area where you live

Sutton Road & Rectory Fields	<input type="radio"/>	Brick Lane	<input type="radio"/>	Witcham Road	<input type="radio"/>	Chestnut Way	<input type="radio"/>
High Street & Wilton Gardens	<input type="radio"/>	Laurel Close	<input type="radio"/>	New Road	<input type="radio"/>	Bridge Road	<input type="radio"/>
School Lane	<input type="radio"/>	St Marys Close	<input type="radio"/>	Brangehill Lane	<input type="radio"/>	River Close	<input type="radio"/>
Other (eg The Willows, Low Bank Farm, Paradise Cottage, Walnut-tree Cottage, The Gate House)							<input type="radio"/>

(d) How Many people in your household work from home at least 2 days a week now or expect to in future?

Already working from home	<input type="text"/>
Likely to do in next 5 years	<input type="text"/>
Don't expect to work from home	<input type="text"/>

### 2. VIEWS ON LEISURE, COMMUNITY & GREEN SPACES

(a) Do you think Mepal has good leisure and community facilities for

Young People	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Unsure	<input type="radio"/>
Couples	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Unsure	<input type="radio"/>
Families	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Unsure	<input type="radio"/>
Older Residents	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Unsure	<input type="radio"/>

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(b) Tick if you use the following green spaces (please tick all that apply)

Recreation Field       Play Park on edge of Recreation Field (entrance in Laurel Close)   
Play Park in Meadow Way       Footpath through field at the back of the school   
Footpath through the churchyard and field from Church to School Lane   
Brangehill Drove Byway and Lilibet Woods       Laurel Close Greens       Village Green

(c) How would you rate the green spaces in Mepal?

Excellent       Good       Satisfactory       Poor

(d) How would you like the current green spaces in Mepal enhanced?

(e) What would you like to see more of?

Structured play equipment       Parks       Dog Walking       Dog exercising (off lead)   
Sports areas       Wildlife       Conservation areas       Cycle trails   
Exercise areas (outdoor fitness equipment)   
Other (please specify)

(f) Do you use the Recreation Field Yes / No (circle your answer)

(g) What do you use it for?

(h) In your view how strong is the sense of community where you live in Mepal

Excellent       Good       Satisfactory       Poor

(i) What other local facilities or services should be considered to enhance life in Mepal?

(j) Which of the following social and leisure facilities are important to you?  
(please circle, 1 = not at all important 5 = very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Village Hall	<input type="radio"/>				
Recreation Field	<input type="radio"/>				
Village Pub	<input type="radio"/>				
Village Shop	<input type="radio"/>				
Village Church	<input type="radio"/>				
Pre-School	<input type="radio"/>				
School	<input type="radio"/>				
Youth Club	<input type="radio"/>				

(k) What is the one additional amenity / change you would like to see in the village?

**3. VIEWS ON TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE**

(a) How many people in your household travel to work from Mepal, enter the number of people in the boxes

Work in Mepal	
By Car or motorcycle	
By Bus	
On Foot	
By Cycle	

(b) Think about your and your household's use of public transport into and out of the village. Which of these statements best reflects your position?

The bus doesn't run when I need to get to work	<input type="radio"/>
I don't use the bus because it doesn't run to the railway station	<input type="radio"/>
I don't use the bus because it doesn't go to the places I need	<input type="radio"/>
I use the bus to go shopping in Ely/Chatteris	<input type="radio"/>
I would not use the bus whatever the service	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	

**4. VIEWS ON NEW HOUSING**

(a) Do you think any future housing developments should be located within the current boundaries of Mepal or in the surrounding areas?

Inside       Surrounding Areas       Unsure

**5. HIGHWAYS**

We are aware of transport issues that the parish faces, speeding and on-street parking being two of them. Some steps have been taken, including a speed awareness camera and a proposal to bid for LHI funding in relation to the speed limit along Bridge Road. We are keen to understand your views on this important topic.

(a) To what extent are the following of concern to you? (1 = no concern, 5 = cause of great concern)

	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic volume	<input type="radio"/>				
Traffic speed	<input type="radio"/>				
Traffic noise	<input type="radio"/>				
Car parking	<input type="radio"/>				
Pedestrian safety	<input type="radio"/>				

(b) Please elaborate on the points regarding highways that cause you the most concern. Be as specific as possible (e.g. speed of traffic crossing the bridge entering the village, noise of HGVs on Main Street, people parking outside my home on xxx Road).

And finally...

What are the three best things about Mepal and that you would like the plan to safeguard

1

2

3

What three things could be better in Mepal that the plan could help address

1

2

3

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE MEPAL PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SURVEY!**

If you're interested in contributing to developing the Neighbourhood Plan, please send an email to: [mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org)  
There's a lot of work to do, and the more involvement we get from our community, the better the plan will reflect your views!

**PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY BY 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022**



# Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal

September/October 2022

Please complete the Mepal Parish  
Neighbourhood plan survey  
on pages 5-8  
Make your voice heard!

[www.mepalparish.org](http://www.mepalparish.org)

## St Mary's Parish Church

For enquiries regarding funerals, baptisms and weddings please contact the Churchwardens: Elizabeth Stazicker on 01353 778129 or Lesley Sculthorpe on 01353 777367.

### Services

Our services are at 11.30am every Sunday. On the 4th Sunday of every month, we have Holy Communion at 9.30am and a Family Service at 11.30am. Sunday September 11th is the Patronal Festival when we celebrate the birth of St Mary, our patron saint, and Sunday October 9th is Harvest Festival. Our team of flower arrangers will be decorating the church for both these special services – even if you can't attend the service do come and see the flowers; the church is always open on Sunday afternoons and on Thursdays for private prayer or a time of quiet reflection.

Please see notices at the church and at Mepal Stores for more details. You are all very welcome at all our services and events.

### Events

#### Safari Lunch - Sunday August 21st at 1.30pm at The Willows, Low Bank.

Entrance is by reservation in advance only; to book your place contact Jo on 01353 778871 or by email [jo.hamilton@outlook.com](mailto:jo.hamilton@outlook.com) by August 18th please. The cost is £12 pp.

#### Ride & Stride Day - Saturday September 10th

Please see the poster at Mepal Stores for details of this sponsored fundraising activity.

#### Tea at the Church - Sunday 11th September at 3pm

Harvest Supper - Friday 14th October – look out for details on October notices.



Photo Credit: Mepal and District Camera Club

## Mepal Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Survey

We're asking for your help to shape the future for Mepal through the proposed Neighbourhood Plan by completing the (anonymous) survey in this issue. There are many ingredients that make a village a great place to live: its rural setting, the amenities, and facilities available, and the approach that is taken to housing development. By responding to this survey, you'll be making your voice heard in decisions on these important topics.

Please go to the survey from pages 5 to 8 and fill it in. You can return your completed surveys to the shop or email to [mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org).

There is also an online version that can be completed on the website: [www.mepalparish.org](http://www.mepalparish.org)

## MEPAL AND DISTRICT CAMERA CLUB

A SMALL AND FRIENDLY GROUP WITH THE SAME INTERESTS, FROM BEGINNERS TO THE EXPERIENCED PHOTOGRAPHER USING ANYTHING THAT WILL TAKE AN IMAGE!

Meetings are held in Mepal Village Hall, School Lane CB6 2AJ once per month on Friday evenings. Dates are published on our Facebook page. Scan this QR Code or simply search Mepal & District Camera Club. Alternatively email: [mepaldcc@gmail.com](mailto:mepaldcc@gmail.com)



# Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal

November/December 2022



**Your Vote Needed to Save the Newsletter**

Read on Page 6, how to let the Council know whether this is something you wish for us to keep producing.

[www.mepalparish.org](http://www.mepalparish.org)

**Mepal Neighbourhood Plan survey**

The survey was distributed in the last newsletter as well as a digital document and online survey, so thank you for those who filled this in to let us know your views. This will help us shape the official Neighbourhood plan, that will replace the two areas originally included in the Sutton neighbourhood plan made on 30/05/19, despite the boundary changes having been made on 14/07/18. ECDC have suggested their preferred plan to make these amendments and our intention is to complete this work in this financial year.

**So, what did you tell us (briefly)?**

The shop, pub, village hall and recreation field were regarded as the four most valued local community facilities, and you would like these safeguarding. There was concern about over development (housing) in the village and a feeling that the village could not support any large housing developments or estates. The youth club, Mepal Makers, Mepal Markets and footpaths in the village should be safeguarded, and conservation and accessibility of Parish Council owned land and property could be better. There was also a plea that Mepal Neighbourhood Watch should be retained and that a return of football was to be encouraged but at no cost to the other villagers (a challenging request). Finally we received many comments regarding having safe spaces to exercise dogs off lead but also highlighting the dog fouling problems and we would ask dog owners to read the article on page 6 and take note.

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**Summary of Questionnaires**

Total returned surveys – 38 (sent to 470 houses)

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Returns</b>
25-34	2 returns
35-44	9 returns
45-54	3 returns
55-64	11 returns
65-74	8 returns
75 +	5 returns

(8 surveys returned included children in the household)

**Village Location**

New Road	2
Brangehill Lane	2
Laurel Close	6
River Close	3

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Witcham Road	3
Bridge Road	2
Brick Lane	1
High Street WG	5
Sutton Road RF	2
School Lane	1
Meadow Way	4
Other	1
Chestnut Way	6

### **Working from home or future**

Yes	14
No	19
Retired	5

### **Leisure**

Does Mepal have good leisure and community facilities?

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
Young People	12	15	11
Couples	9	15	14
Families	9	15	14
Older Residents	13	12	13

### **Rating Green Spaces in Mepal**

Excellent	7
Good	19
Satisfactory	8
Poor	3
No answer given	1

### **Green Spaces used**

Recreation Field	22
Laurel Close Play park	9
Meadow Way Play Park	8
Footpath (back of school)	17
Footpath through Churchyard	20
Brangehill Drove	11
Laurel Close Green	7
Village Green	5
Didn't Answer	3

### **What would you like to see ore off?**

Structured Play Equipment	7
Parks	7
Dog Walking	6

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Off lead Dog Exercising	6
Sports Areas	9
Wildlife	20
Conservation Areas	14
Cycle Trail	9
Exercise Areas (outdoor)	10
Other comments	Concrete Ping pong, Goal Post, Bollards Laurel Close Greens, cycle lane improvement, wildlife area in field corner near pond, more benches

### **Most important social and leisure facilities**

#### Top rated (very important)

Village Hall	11
Recreational Field	12
Pub	13
Shop	28
Church	9
Pre-school	9
School	10
Youth Club	5

### **One amenity change like to see**

Support the shop  
Community Spirit and positivity and events  
Bollards Laurel Close x2  
Open pub and footpath  
Social Club  
Dog Park  
Coffee shop/café  
Development of Rec for other uses  
Benches x3  
Transport x 3  
Dog Walking Spaces  
Pavilion used for the community and not football – free warm space  
Less dogs per household  
Pub with better opening hours x3  
Shop with earlier opening  
Football  
Bigger/better village hall x2  
Make use better use of what we have and very sufficient for size of village  
Better signposting of village footpaths  
Indoor family activities

### **Things people would like safeguarding in the village**

Shop/post office  
Church  
Village Hall  
Footpath

## ***Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement***

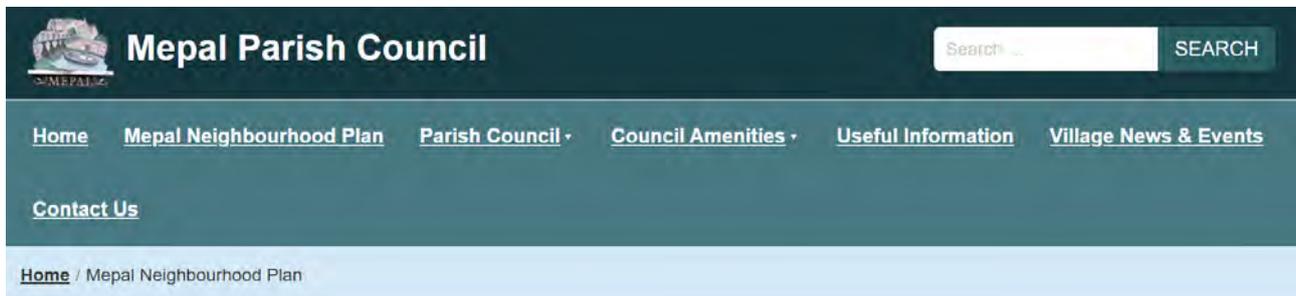
Recreational Field/open spaces  
Control on development of houses  
Don't lose community spirit  
Feeling of Safety  
No through village/ low traffic volumes  
NHW  
Conservation (wildlife and river)  
School  
Youth Club  
Christmas Light Event  
Safeguard Laurel Close Green from vehicular access  
Mepal Makers  
Mepal Markets

### **What three things could be better in Mepal that this plan could help to address?**

A large number of suggestions are not within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan so are omitted from the answers below.

Cooperation of Villagers for future use of rec  
LHI  
Protect clubs for younger people – Youth Club  
Prevent large scale development  
Review of accessibility of parish owned land and property  
Football Usage of rec and pavilion to come at no cost to other villagers  
Get rid of football pitch  
Stop spending money on pavilion  
Dog Fouling Solutions  
Continued improvement of play equipment – older age group  
Seating around the village  
Safeguard Laurel Close Green from vehicular access

# Appendix 2 - Consultation Material for Pre-Submission Draft (Regulation 14)



## Mepal Neighbourhood Plan

Following the efforts of the Mepal Community Led Plan (CLP) in February 2019, the Parish Council has continued to receive requests from Parishioners particularly in regards to how the Parish Council can better preserve the village character and limit inappropriate large housing developments, after the successful opposition to the Brick Lane development of 55 houses. The Parish Council therefore applied for grant funding and engaged a consultant to work with the community to use the published Community-Led Plan as a foundation for a Neighbourhood Plan. A number of articles have been published in the Mepal Matters newsletter over the last two years asking for input and involvement from the community, as well as items on the agenda of Parish Council meetings. The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside the Local Plan and has weight in determining planning applications in the local area. It is a statutory document.

Neighbourhood Plans are a powerful tool to shape our local area, as Neighbourhood Plan policies take precedence over non-strategic Local Plan policies in decision-making. In other words, the Neighbourhood Plan "trumps" the Local Plan (on certain matters).

After initial feedback was gathered, a Questionnaire was issued in the September/October 2022 issue of the Mepal Matters Newsletter. The survey results were then reported in the November/December Mepal Matters Newsletter and the Consultant engaged produced a first draft plan based on the CLP and all feedback and information received. This was discussed in a separate Neighbourhood Plan group held before the Parish Council on 13th December 2022.

The Parish Council passed a resolution in the February Council meeting to put the draft plan out to consultation, along with the supporting documents. The consultation material will advise:

1. What the Neighbourhood Plan is about
2. Where the NP can be viewed (online and physical)
3. How long the consultation period is and how to make comments
4. Details of any 'Drop-in Sessions' or other events for consultation or to find out more
5. What happens after your comments are received (comments made will become public although personal data will not be made available and the information given will only be used by Mepal Parish Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council for purposes connected with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan including future consultation stages.

All documents and information in regards to the Mepal Neighbourhood plan are available here and any questions can be emailed to

[mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org)

## **Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement**

A list of the drop-in sessions to view the plan and ask questions:

**The Village Hall during the Warm Hub sessions:**

6<sup>th</sup> March from 10:00 - 13:00  
13<sup>th</sup> March from 10:00 - 13:00  
20<sup>th</sup> March from 10:00 - 13:00  
27<sup>th</sup> March from 10:00 - 13:00

**Mepal Community Pavilion:**

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March from 12:00 - 14:00  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April from 13:00 - 15:00  
Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April from 17:00 - 19:00

### **NHP-Background and Feedback Form**

Draft Neighbourhood Plan & Supporting Documents

**Mepal Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP SEA Screening Request (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP Basic Conditions Statement (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP Consultation Statement (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP Designated Area and Explanatory Statement (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP HRA Screening Request (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal NDP Local Green Spaces Evidence (Regulation 14)**

**Mepal Settlement Boundary Methodology (Regulation 14)**

The online feedback form will be available here from 1st March 2023 for 6 weeks

## NHP Consultation

6 week Consultation on draft Mepal NHP

Name *(Required)*

First

Last

Email

Address *(Required)*

Street Address

Address Line 2

City

County / State / Region

ZIP / Postal Code

Country

United Kingdom



## Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement

Do you support the Neighbourhood Plan in its current form? (Required)

Yes

No

Would you like to see any amendments to the plan? (Required)

Yes

No

Please tell us of any amendments you would like to see

Detail any further information for or against the plan

SUBMIT

# Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement

Your Voice, Your Village, Your plan!



**Consultation runs from Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

We are pleased to inform you that the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan has been completed and will now be published for public consultation. This six-week pre-submission consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan is the last time we will be asking people for comments before submitting the plan to East Cambridgeshire District Council.

A Neighbourhood Plan is an important tool for local communities to shape the development and growth of the village, over the next 10 years or so. When it is adopted any planning application in the village will be judged against the Neighbourhood Plan. It is an important part of the process that we keep the community informed and seek the views of various people at each stage. It is a substantial document, represents a great deal of work over the last year and sets out our vision, objectives and policies designed to ensure that Mepal maintains its uniqueness over the period 2022 to 2031.

The 'Neighbourhood Plan' is made up of the draft plan and the supporting documents:

- Mepal Neighbourhood Plan – draft
- Consultation Statement
- Basic Conditions Statement
- Designated Area and Explanatory Statement
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
- HRA Screening Request
- SEA Screening Request
- Local Green Spaces Evidence Document
- Settlement Boundary Methodology

During March and April, the Parish Council are undertaking community engagement in the village through drop-in sessions where local residents can find out more about and comment on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Paper copies of the draft plan and associated documents are available in the Village Hall and the Mepal Community Pavilion.

The draft plan and associated documents are also available on the Mepal Parish Council website:

<https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan and associated documents are substantial and many of them by necessity are complex. Although the Plan has been written in a way designed to make reading it as easy as possible it will take time and effort to read and assimilate.

Following the consultation, the Plan will go forward to the next stages which will include an Independent Examination. Then finally, the Plan will be subjected to a local referendum requiring a majority “yes” vote of all those voting in order for it to be adopted, a process legally known as being ‘made’. In the event of a “yes” vote, it will then form part of ECDC’s wider statutory plan and will be used to determine planning applications across the Mepal Parish.

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## Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement

### Contact Details (Block Capitals)

Name:

Address:

Email:

### Question 1

Do you support the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan in its current form?

YES

NO

### Question 2

Please write any comments you have in support of or against the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan

*Comments can be continued on a separate sheet if necessary.*

### Question 3

Please detail any amendments that you would like to be made to the plan.

*Comments can be continued on a separate sheet if necessary.*

**Signature:**

*Thank you for taking part in this consultation exercise.*

This consultation provides you with the opportunity to comment on the details of the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan. This response form can be handed in at the Post Office Stores or can be posted to:  
Mepal Parish Council Clerk  
c/o 19 High Street  
Aldreth.  
Ely  
CB6 3PQ

Alternatively, please email a scanned copy of the completed form to: [mnhp@mepalparish.org](mailto:mnhp@mepalparish.org)  
An online version of the form is also available on the Neighbourhood Plan section of the Mepal Parish Council Website <https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/> with all of the supporting documents and a copy of the plan.

# Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal

March/April 2023

Can you guess the location of  
this lovely walk in mepal?

[www.mepalparish.org](http://www.mepalparish.org)

Your Voice, Your Village, Your plan!



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Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April from 17:00 - 19:00

## Mepal Neighbourhood Plan Response Form

Fill me in and drop me off in the black collection box in the Post Office

### Contact Details (Block Capitals)

Name:

Address:

Email:

### Question 1

Do you support the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan in its current form?

YES

NO

### Question 2

Please write any comments you have in support of or against the draft Mepal Neighbourhood Plan

*Comments can be continued on a separate sheet if necessary.*

### Question 3

Please detail any amendments that you would like to be made to the plan.

*Comments can be continued on a separate sheet if necessary.*

**Signature:**

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Mepal Parish Council Clerk

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Ely

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An online version of the form is also available on the Neighbourhood Plan section of the Mepal Parish Council Website <https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/> with all of the supporting documents and a copy of the plan.

## Parish Council News

### Who are your current Parish Councillors?

The up-to-date list of your Parish Councillors is always available on the Parish Council Website, so please take a few minutes to look us up!  
[www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/councillors/](http://www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/councillors/)

### Mepal Parish Councillors



**Brian Rollason**  
Chairman



**Lorna Williams**  
Vice Chair



**Lorna Delanoy**



**Jack Hickman**



**Sam Foord**  
(Knightley)



**Jim Stewart**

### Mepal Neighbourhood Plan

Well, after a lot of work and analysis of your responses to last years survey we are finally at the draft consultation stage, and this issue has the consultation announcement and paper form on pages 5 and 6. There is also a very easy to fill in form on the Parish Council website that will go live on 1st March. Please try to engage through the various opportunities during the warm hub sessions in the village hall on Mondays from 10am and also at the dedicated sessions in the Community Pavilion located on the Witcham Road end of the Recreation Field. We have copies of the draft plan and all the support documents for you to read and we ask you all to send your feedback in to have your voice heard.

### Vandalism and Antisocial Behaviour

After the damage caused to the noticeboard reported in the last newsletter, the Parish Council have agreed to fund a low cost replacement, with the Maintenance Manager being asked to repair the board as best as possible.

We continue ask Mepal residents to use the correct communication routes to report all concerns, anti-social behaviour and other issues. The Police have asked that all vandalism and antisocial behaviour is reported to them, however trivial you may think it is, to enable them to build up a better picture of what is happening in our community. Without official reports being made to the correct agencies, the community will continue to be targeted. Any issues related to Parish Council land or assets should

be reported directly to the clerk, or via the Contact us function on the website. Faults or issues with verges have to be dealt with by Cambridge County Council or East Cambridgeshire District Council or in the case of service faults to the service company. Remember that we do not have full time Parish Council staff, so the councillors can only deal with genuine emergency actions outside of the Clerk/Maintenance Managers official hours. Facebook groups are not an official route to report issues and therefore any posts cannot be acted upon.

### Verge Maintenance plans for 2023

We are just finalising the in-house plans for grass cutting and the 2023 schedule will be outlined on the website when agreed. Please note that any schedule is dependant on resources and also the weather!

### Mepal Matters Newsletter

We are having some changes in distributors due to a variety of reasons, but this is a request that if anyone is available to share the High Street and Wilton Gardens delivery route that they contact [mepalmatters@mepalparish.org](mailto:mepalmatters@mepalparish.org). Thanks to our new volunteers for Bridge Road and New Road.

### Elections May 2023

District Council and Parish Council elections are due to take place on Thursday 4 May 2023.

**Warm Hubs**  
Let's get together to support each other this winter.

A Warm Hub is now open in:  
**MEPAL - LAST DATE 27TH MARCH**

We look forward to seeing you:  
Location: **MEPAL VILLAGE HALL, SCHOOL LANE**  
Days: **MONDAYS** Times: **10AM - 1PM**

It's a safe, warm & friendly place to:

- share the company of others
- enjoy refreshments & social activity
- obtain information & advice on winter challenges

Find out more about the Warm Hubs network at:  
[www.cambsacre.org.uk/warmhubs](http://www.cambsacre.org.uk/warmhubs) Tel: 01253 860850  
Search for #WarmHubsCams on Facebook

FUNDED BY:   
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System

# Appendix 3 - Pre-Submission Draft Plan (Regulation 14) Consultation Responses

23. Consultation with statutory and other consultees took place over the statutory 6-week period from took place from Wednesday 1st March 2023 to Wednesday 12th April 2023. As detailed in the main report the number of individual responses received to the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan was as follows:

	Statutory Consultees	Landowners & Developers	Local Residents	Total
Representation	11	0	10	21
(Proportion)	(52.4%)	(0%)	(47.6%)	

24. The individual responses often referred to multiple policies, therefore the individual number of representations to be considered was greater. Through the consultation respondents were asked to indicate if they supported the plan or not and what changes they were seeking. A consultation response form was made available, although responses were received and accepted in any written form.

25. To assist in categorisation of representations we have summarised them into three broad headings namely: 'Local Residents; Statutory Consultees; and Landowners & Developers'. The first of these is self-explanatory, under the heading of 'Statutory Consultees' this includes those public bodies and organisations we were obliged to consult under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. Under the heading of 'Landowners & Developers' this includes parties such as developers and site promoters or housebuilders who have a professional interest of land being advocated for allocation, but not including local residents.

26. It is difficult to categorise comments into being simply an objection or a supporting representation. Many submissions made incorporate numerous comments which often include suggestions for changes alongside supportive statements and objections - as such at the draft plan stage it is more logical to simply categorise all submissions as comments.

27. The Steering Group on behalf of the Parish Council in collaboration with their professional advisor on the Neighbourhood Plan reviewed all representations in detail before deciding whether or not to make any changes to the Neighbourhood Plan in response.

## Statutory Consultees

28. A general summary<sup>13</sup> of the responses received from statutory consultees are:

### National Grid Electricity Transmission

- confirmed that they had no specific comments

### National Gas Transmission

- confirmed that they had no specific comments

<sup>13</sup> These are brief summaries of the representations made, the original representations can be viewed on request

Historic England

- no specific comments, provided general guidance on heritage and neighbourhood plans

Natural England

- confirmed they had no specific comments to make

National Highways

- no comments to make

Environment Agency

- no comments

The Coal authority

- no comments

Witcham Parish Council

- no comments

Anglian Water

- highlighted that a sewer easement was under the proposed allotments site and that they have assets under various Local Green Spaces but they had no objections to Policies 3 or 9. In Policy 5 on Climate Change Mitigation they requested support for the provision of renewable energy to support the operation of essential infrastructure such as their water recycling centre. They highlighted that although the Neighbourhood Plan has no policy on SuDS they noted that the Local Plan sets out a suitable policy framework

Cambridgeshire County Council (single response covering their role as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Public Health, Climate Change and Energy Services and Communities, Employment and Skills)

- Public Health supported Policy 2 (Community Assets), Policy 3 (Allotments), Policy 4 (Highway Impact), Policy 6 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets), Policy 7 (Views and Vistas), and Policy 9 (Local Green Spaces). In Policy 5 on Climate Change Mitigation, they requested support for community heat schemes
- The Minerals and Waste Planning Authority supported reference to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- Climate Change and Energy Services provided some comments on the SEA Screening to improve clarity. They supported Objectives A and B and suggested reference in section 22 to the nature of home heating being a significant source of carbon emissions
- Communities, Employment and Skills supported Policy 2 (Community Assets)
- Lead Local Flood Authority suggested including a Policy on flood risk and surface water management and suggested some additional cross referencing to the Local Plan and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD

East Cambridgeshire District Council

- Made some technical comments on the Explanatory Statement, the Basic Conditions Statement, the SEA Screening and the HRA Screening
- Requested some text changes to Policies 1 (Settlement Boundary), Policy 2 (Community Assets), Policy 4 (Highway Impact) and Policy 9 (Local Green Space)
- Suggested that matters of character and intensification be considered, including because of the revision of the settlement boundary
- Suggested that the Recreation Ground and Church Field be considered for Local Green Space designation

## Landowners & Developers

29. No responses were received from landowners and developers.

## Local Residents

30. A general summary<sup>14</sup> of the responses received from local residents<sup>15</sup> are:

- BR - doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments
- EC - doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments
- GK - doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments
- LW - thinks an alternative approach towards the provision of new allotments is required
- RT - doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments
- JH - queries why the settlement boundary doesn't include the pub and buildings the far side of the old bridge and highlights a factual error in the flood risk section
- ES - makes a number of comments including requesting that reference to 'cemetery' be changed to 'graveyard' and that Mepal Chapel be amended from referring to Baptist to Union Chapel. Doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments. Requests that Mepal Great Dyke and sluice be added as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset in Policy 6. Suggests creation of a new walk/cycle crossing of the rivers and adding this to a list of CIL projects
- DS - makes a number of comments including requesting that reference to 'cemetery' be changed to 'graveyard' and that Mepal Chapel be amended from referring to Baptist to Union Chapel. Doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments. Requests that Mepal Great Dyke and sluice be added as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset in Policy 6. Suggests adding to Policy 5 on climate Change Mitigation a project involving a wind turbine perhaps on the Elean industrial estate to generate green hydrogen (*Note the Elean Business Park is not in Mepal Parish*). Requested a view through the Manor Farm site be added to Policy 7 on Views and Vistas
- LD - doesn't support the proposed site for new allotments. Requests that Mepal Great Dyke and sluice be added as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset in Policy 6. Advised that Mepal Chapel be amended from referring to Baptist to Union Chapel
- FW - supports many aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan, makes a number of comments relating to biodiversity, habitats, green corridors and blue infrastructure. Would like to see a policy included on sustainable drainage. Suggests including four sections of hedgerows/trees into Policy 9 (Local Green Spaces). Wonders if we could include a map of tree preservation orders in Mepal and whether something could be included relating to dark skies

## Summary of Main Changes Made to Neighbourhood Plan in Response to Consultation

31. The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require the Consultation Statement to set out a summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and describes

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<sup>14</sup> These are brief summaries of the representations made, the original representations can be viewed on request

<sup>15</sup> Representations from local residents are anonymised by use only of initials in the interest of data protection

## *Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement*

how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

32. In accordance with the principles of data protection, individual names of local residents are not identified in this Consultation Statement. Names of organisations, groups or bodies are however identified. The original copies of all representations received can be viewed on request.
33. Some consultees made no comments on the Neighbourhood Plan and indeed many statutory consultees such as Historic England and Natural England provide standardised general advice. The responses from consultees were in general support of the Neighbourhood Plan proposals or had no specific comments to make.
34. A number of local residents were seeking some changes to the Neighbourhood Plan, notably there were numerous objections to the proposed site for allotments. Some changes have been made in response; however, the neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
35. Following the Regulation 14 consultation on the draft plan the following main changes to the Neighbourhood Plan have been made:

### All Documents

- Updated to reflect the submission stage

### Designated Area Plan and Explanatory Statement

- Updated for clarity as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council

### SEA Screening Request

- Updated for clarity as suggested by Cambridgeshire County Council
- Additional detail added as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Updated to refer to consultation undertaken under Regulation 14
- Updated to refer to specific additional re-consultation with the three statutory environmental bodies as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council

### HRA Screening Request

- Updated to refer to consultation undertaken under Regulation 14
- Additional detail added as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Updated to refer to specific additional re-consultation with the three statutory environmental bodies as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council

### Local Green Spaces Evidence

- Updated to refer to consultation undertaken under Regulation 14 and the reasoning for not including the suggested four sections of hedgerows/trees put forward by a local resident
- Updated to include an additional LGS at the Recreation Ground/Play Area/allotments in response to the suggestion by East Cambridgeshire District Council. Together with an explanation as to why the suggestion that Church Field become a LGS has not been taken forward

### Settlement Boundary Methodology

- Updated to refer to consultation undertaken under Regulation 14, including the reasoning why the area around the Three Pickerels public house is not included in the settlement boundary
- Amended to refer to the consultation on the proposed allotments site in the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the decision to remove the allocation and pursue a more general approach in Policy 3 (Allotments)

Consultation Statement

- Updated to refer to consultation undertaken under Regulation 14 and summarise the comments received and the Parish Council's response

Neighbourhood Plan

Policy 1 - Settlement Boundary (Update to Development Envelope)

- Minor text amendments to cross refer to Local Plan Policy GROWTH 2

Policy 2 - Community Assets

- Some text moved from policy to supporting text as suggested by East Cambridgeshire District Council

Policy 3 - Allotments

- The policy has been amended to remove the proposed site for new allotments in response to feedback, the policy now offers general support to future provision not on any specific site

Policy 4 - Highway Impact

- Minor text amendments to cross refer to Local Plan Policies COM 7 & COM 8, together with some clarification regarding EV charging

Policy 5 - Climate Change Mitigation

- Policy 5 has been amended to include support for the provision of renewable energy to support the operation of essential infrastructure in response to Anglian Water such as their water recycling centre. They highlighted that although the Neighbourhood Plan has no policy on SuDS they noted that the Local Plan sets out a suitable policy framework

Policy 6 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- Reference to Mepal Chapel amended from referring to Baptist to Union Chapel to correct error
- Mepal Great Dyke and Sluice has been added as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset in Policy 6 to address omission as it had been intended to include this originally due to its industrial heritage

Policy 7 - Views and Vistas

- No changes

New Policy 8 - Local Character

- In response to the suggestion and discussions with the District Council a new policy has been included addressing local character. This policy includes an overall framework for development to reflect local character and it identifies particular areas for protection as: Important Undeveloped Sutton Road Village Gateway; Important Verdant Open Areas Which Contribute to the Character and Setting of the Village; and Area Sensitive to Change and Intensification

Policy 9 - Boundary Treatment, Hedgerows, Trees and Public Realm

- Additional reference has been made relating to biodiversity and habitats
- Policy number amended to reflect insertion of new policy 8

Policy 10 - Local Green Space

- Updated to include an additional LGS at the Recreation Ground/Play Area/allotments in response to the suggestion by East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Policy number amended to reflect insertion of new policy 8

#### Text Generally

- Added reference in section 22 to the nature of home heating being a significant source of carbon emissions in response to Cambridgeshire County Council, also some text added to explain that renewable and low carbon energy schemes on domestic premises can often be permitted development
- Additional cross referencing added on flood risk and surface water management to the Local Plan and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD in response to the Lead Local Flood Authority
- Some additional comments relating to biodiversity, habitats, green corridors and blue infrastructure have been added as requested by a local resident
- Discussions are underway with East Cambridgeshire District Council about a map of tree preservation orders in Mepal; if they can provide such a map, it will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Data was updated to reflect local information from the 2021 Census that was released recently in the area profiles
- General updates to reflect the up-to-date position on the Local Plan Single Issue Review and the review of the neighbouring Sutton Neighbourhood Plan

## Summary of Aspects Not Changed in Neighbourhood Plan in Response to Consultation

36. As already set out the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require the Consultation Statement to set out a summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan. That includes being clear as to what issues and concerns raised have not had changes made in response:

#### Climate Change Mitigation

37. Reference to support for community heat schemes has not been included as such schemes are not considered realistic or viable in a community the size of Mepal.
38. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot include reference to project involving a wind turbine perhaps on the Elean industrial estate to generate green hydrogen as the Elean Business Park is not in Mepal Parish.

#### Views and Vistas

39. The view through the Manor Farm site has not been added to Policy 7 as it is not considered to be an important view, in any event the approved layout includes a garage in this location on which construction has recently started.

#### Local Green Spaces

40. The suggested four sections of hedgerows/trees have not been added into Policy 10 (Local Green Spaces). The suggestion that Church Field become a LGS has not been taken forward because it is considered that this area is better addressed as part of the new Policy 8 on Local Character.

#### Settlement Boundary

41. The settlement boundary doesn't include the pub and buildings the far side of the old bridge because the grouping of properties around the Three Pickerels Pub and Mepal Bridge

## *Mepal Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Statement*

lie within the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar boundary. Including land within the Ouse Washes notation within the settlement boundary would establish a principle in favour of development that would be incompatible with the statutory environmental designations.

### Biodiversity

42. As indicated some additional comments relating to biodiversity, habitats, green corridors and blue infrastructure have been added as requested by a local resident. However, it is not appropriate to include reference to biodiversity in nearly all the policies as suggested because this would fundamentally alter the meaning of some policies.

### Other Matters

43. The term cemetery in the Plan has not been amended to graveyard; the cemetery is marked as such on OS maps and is considered the most appropriate terminology for a burial ground that is physically detached from a church.
44. The suggestion that the creation of a new walk/cycle crossing of the rivers be included in the Neighbourhood Plan and be added to a list of CIL projects is not likely to be deliverable during the plan period. There is no such infrastructure project under consideration and no funding is identified, it would be significantly beyond the financial remit of the local element of CIL. In addition, such a proposal could be incompatible with the SAC and SPA designations and would be likely to trigger the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to then need to have a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.
45. A policy on sustainable drainage has not been included as it would merely duplicate national policy and Local Plan policies, which already provides a suitable policy framework. Content on dark skies is not considered feasible in a flat landscape where light spill can occur from schemes such as mineral extraction which are excluded matters from a Neighbourhood Plan.

# **Mepal Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2031**

## **Consultation Statement September 2023**

The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Mepal produced in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012



<https://www.mepalparish.org/mepal-neighbourhood-plan/>

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