

My ref: Witcham Neighbourhood Plan

Your ref:

Date: 29 August 2025

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Dear Sirs

**Witcham Neighbourhood Plan – Submission Draft**

I refer to the consultation on the Witcham Neighbourhood Plan and thank the District Council for affording the County Council the opportunity to comment.

I have received comments from several services within the County Council and these are set out in the Appendix 1 to this letter. I trust that this will be of assistance to the Parish and District Councils as they progress the Neighbourhood Plan.

Please feel free to reach out if you wish to discuss these comments further.

Yours sincerely

*Colum Fitzsimons*

Colum Fitzsimons  
Development and Policy Manager  
Planning, Growth and Environment

## Appendix 1: Witcham Neighbourhood Plan – Submission Draft May 2025: Response by Cambridgeshire County Council

Response By	Policy	Response/Comment
Communities	Community Action 3 – Youth Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is noted that the Parish Council recognises that an independent youth club is not necessary in Witcham and it is planning to offer support to the existing facilities in Mepal. The County Council supports this approach but recommends that awareness of travel issues to and from the youth club that could be barriers to accessing should be considered.</li> </ul>
	Policy WHM13 – Infrastructure and Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding community facilities (pg31) the Plan provides insightful feedback around this and gaps or lack of provision.</li> <li>When looking at developing areas, such as age-appropriate play areas, football goals, youth shelter on the recreation ground/ green spaces, a specific youth consultation would be helpful.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity and Greenspaces	Policy WHM4 – Biodiversity Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are extremely pleased to see biodiversity considered thoroughly in the Neighbourhood Plan. We are particularly pleased to see that a new local Wildlife and Nature Conservation Group has been set up and will work with the Parish Council to support biodiversity within the area. It is also excellent to see features on dark skies, statutory protected areas and opinions of residents accounted for in the Plan.</li> </ul>
	Paragraph 7.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>However, we would suggest the following minor adjustments:</li> <li>The Plan refers to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) under paragraph 7.9. The draft LNRS documents are out for consultation and accessible from the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and it is anticipated that the final version will be published by the end of December 2025. We would like the neighbourhood plan to consult with this document and include any relevant information in their final submission (<a href="#">Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation - Your Voice - Cambridgeshire County Council - Citizen Space</a>).</li> </ul>
	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering the above, we are satisfied that the Witcham Neighbourhood Plan has thoroughly considered biodiversity, and the impacts future development could have on habitats and</li> </ul>

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		species within the village. We have highlighted some minor points that we feel the plan could incorporate/amend.
Transport Strategy	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is considered that this plan demonstrates alignment with the overarching vision of other key local transport strategies, such as the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, and particularly the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy.</li> <li>In terms of the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy, there is clear alignment with the neighbourhood plan and some of the objectives and policies that guide the key initiatives. Specifically, the objectives outlined in the neighbourhood plan address certain solutions for enhancing active travel in rural areas as delineated in the CPCA Active Travel Strategy (<a href="#">Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Strategy   Cambridgeshire County Council</a>):</li> </ul>
	Objective 11 - Protect, maintain and improve the Public Rights of Way network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We encourage collaborative working with Witcham Parish Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council as the local planning authority to achieve this goal. As the local highway authority, Cambridgeshire County Council is tasked with managing the public rights of way network, in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>
	Objective 12 - Ensure that new development minimises impact on the existing road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This objective is in line with Policy AT04, which emphasises the prioritisation of active travel in new developments. Early integration of active travel provisions is crucial for the development of high-quality infrastructure and sustainable growth.</li> </ul>
	Objective 13 - Support proposals that deliver improvements to identified dangerous road junctions and address issues relating to the speed of traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This objective supports Policy AT09: Safety for All. The County Council's membership in the Vision Zero Partnership underscores our commitment to a Safe System approach.</li> </ul>
	Objective 14 - To support and identify ways to improve connectivity between villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This objective is closely associated with the Vision Zero Partnership and Policy AT20: Cycling and Walking in Rural Areas, which advocates for the development of new or improved connections to essential services in towns and villages.</li> </ul>

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	for safe and easy travel by cycle or foot	
	<p>Policy WHM14 – Public Rights of Way</p> <p>Community Action 7 – Improving Footpaths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We also support initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality and extent of the public rights of way network in the vicinity of the village. Additionally, we support the improvement of footpaths to facilitate better access between local communities and the implementation of the Community Speed Watch initiative, along with other measures to enforce speed restrictions.</li> <li>• It is expected that these active travel improvements or implementations are maintained and enhanced in accordance with Policy AT10: Improve existing walking and cycling provision and Policy AT11: Improve supporting infrastructure of the existing network in the Cambridgeshire active travel strategy. Supporting infrastructure includes providing secure and accessible cycle parking for standard and adapted cycles in the right locations, providing appropriate lighting where possible, and installing benches, signage and wayfinding to make routes as user friendly, attractive and safe as possible.</li> </ul>
	Policy WHM6 – Design Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We note the Witcham Design Guidance and Codes and expect that the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Design Guide, Highways Development Management General Principles for Development and Highway Operational Standards have been applied as it sets out how all users will be considered appropriately as active travel schemes are designed and delivered where they impact on existing rights of way.</li> <li>• The County Council draws particular attention to the <a href="#">General Principles for Development</a> which outlines the County Council's expectations and basic standards in relation to adoptable highway infrastructure, and new developments affecting the public highway.</li> </ul>
Lead Local Flood Authority	Policy WHM6 – Flooding and Sustainable Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LLFA is supportive of Policy WHM 8 as this promotes the use of attenuation, storm water harvesting to manage surface water by replicating natural greenfield run off.</li> <li>• The inclusion of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD) is supported by the FFLA as this proposes the use of SuDS.</li> <li>• The LLFA would encourage reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (sections 170-182) <a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework</a>, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) <a href="#">Flood risk and</a></li> </ul>

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		<a href="#">coastal change - GOV.UK</a> and Surface Water Planning guidance <a href="#">Surface Water Planning Guidance</a>