

PRESS RELEASE

Haddenham 'Say No to Mereham' Group Update

Date: 3rd September 2007

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Since its establishment the Haddenham 'Say No to Mereham' Group has been active in supporting opposition to the planned development of 5,500 houses (long term plan up to 7,500 houses) at the Mereham site between Wilburton and Stretham on the A10. The following actions are being taken and we would like to encourage as many people as possible to support us. The Developers, Australian company Multiplex Stannifer, have huge resources available to them to fight for planning to be granted - all we have are our voices and (very limited) time, plus whatever donations we can obtain from the local community.

Scale of Development: To put the Mereham development in context we have been doing some research on local population figures. Taking a (modest) average of 2.4 persons per dwelling at Mereham will give a potential future population of 13,200 rising to 18,000 stuck in the middle of nowhere on the A10. By comparison, according to Cambridgeshire County Council figures the 2005 population of parishes within East Cambridgeshire and their rates of population growth are:

| Parishes: POPULATIONS | 2001 | 2005 | % change 2001-05 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|------------------|
| Ashley | 570 | 600 | 5.3% |
| Bottisham (*) | 1,920 | 2,020 | 5.2% |
| Brinkley | 370 | 350 | -5.4% |
| Burrough Green | 370 | 320 | -13.5% |
| Burwell (*)(**) | 5,650 | 6,030 | 6.7% |
| Cheveley | 1,850 | 1,900 | 2.7% |
| Chippenham | 510 | 560 | 9.8% |
| Coveney | 410 | 420 | 2.4% |
| Downham | 2,330 | 2,450 | 5.2% |
| Dullingham | 700 | 700 | 0.0% |
| Ely (*) | 14,630 | 17,200 | 17.6% |
| Fordham (**) | 2,540 | 2,650 | 4.3% |
| Haddenham & Aldreth (*) | 3,130 | 3,350 | 7.0% |
| Isleham | 2,270 | 2,330 | 2.6% |
| Kennett | 350 | 350 | 0.0% |
| Kirtling | 360 | 350 | -2.8% |
| Littleport | 7,280 | 7,700 | 5.8% |
| Lode (*) | 860 | 890 | 3.5% |
| Mepal (*) | 890 | 880 | -1.1% |
| Reach | 350 | 350 | 0.0% |
| Snailwell | 220 | 230 | 4.5% |
| Soham | 8,820 | 8,940 | 1.4% |

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|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Stetchworth (*) | 670 | 720 | 7.5% |
| Stretham | 1,630 | 1,590 | -2.5% |
| Sutton (*) | 3,260 | 3,420 | 4.9% |
| Swaffham Bulbeck | 830 | 840 | 1.2% |
| Swaffham Prior | 740 | 740 | 0.0% |
| Little Thetford (*) | 670 | 670 | 0.0% |
| Wentworth | 150 | 160 | 6.7% |
| Westley Waterless (*) | 150 | 160 | 6.7% |
| Wicken | 810 | 840 | 3.7% |
| Wilburton (*) | 1,190 | 1,270 | 6.7% |
| Witcham | 420 | 450 | 7.1% |
| Witchford | 2,270 | 2,330 | 2.6% |
| Woodditton (**) | 1,730 | 1,750 | 1.2% |
| East Cambridgeshire District | 70,900 | 75,500 | 6.5% |

and the 2005 housing stock figures for these centres of population are:

| Parishes: HOUSING STOCK | 2001 | 2005 | % change 2001-05 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Ashley | 260 | 260 | 0.0% |
| Bottisham (*) | 770 | 820 | 6.5% |
| Brinkley | 160 | 160 | 0.0% |
| Burrough Green | 150 | 150 | 0.0% |
| Burwell (*)(**) | 2,430 | 2,580 | 6.2% |
| Cheveley | 860 | 890 | 3.5% |
| Chippenham | 240 | 250 | 4.2% |
| Coveney | 160 | 160 | 0.0% |
| Downham | 940 | 1,000 | 6.4% |
| Dullingham | 300 | 310 | 3.3% |
| Ely (*) | 6,850 | 8,150 | 19.0% |
| Fordham (**) | 1,100 | 1,140 | 3.6% |
| Haddenham & Aldreth (*) | 1,340 | 1,390 | 3.7% |
| Isleham | 940 | 970 | 3.2% |
| Kennett | 150 | 160 | 6.7% |
| Kirtling | 160 | 160 | 0.0% |
| Littleport | 3,130 | 3,330 | 6.4% |
| Lode (*) | 390 | 390 | 0.0% |
| Mepal (*) | 370 | 400 | 8.1% |
| Reach | 140 | 140 | 0.0% |
| Snailwell | 90 | 90 | 0.0% |
| Soham | 3,830 | 3,970 | 3.7% |
| Stetchworth (*) | 290 | 290 | 0.0% |
| Stretham | 710 | 740 | 4.2% |
| Sutton (*) | 1,360 | 1,450 | 6.6% |
| Swaffham Bulbeck | 370 | 400 | 8.1% |
| Swaffham Prior | 320 | 320 | 0.0% |

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|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Little Thetford (*) | 290 | 290 | 0.0% |
| Wentworth | 60 | 60 | 0.0% |
| Westley Waterless (*) | 60 | 60 | 0.0% |
| Wicken | 340 | 350 | 2.9% |
| Wilburton (*) | 480 | 530 | 10.4% |
| Witcham | 180 | 180 | 0.0% |
| Witchford | 920 | 970 | 5.4% |
| Woodditton (**) | 780 | 780 | 0.0% |
| East Cambridgeshire District | 30,900 | 33,300 | 7.8% |

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE NOTES

(*) Minor boundary changes were all a result of the East Cambridgeshire (Parishes) Order 1993.

(**) Minor boundary changes were a result of the Cambridgeshire & Suffolk (County Boundaries) Order 1992.

Dwelling figures may not add to totals due to rounding.

So Mereham, with no existing or properly planned additional facilities for transport (other than buses and some road-widening), drainage (straight into the fen), gas supply, electricity supply, water supply and no extra provision for secondary schools, hospitals or accident and emergency services is going to have almost as many houses as Ely has now and be close to the current population of Ely, which is already the fastest growing City in Europe.

Excluding Ely, it will be far bigger than any of the other centres of population in East Cambridgeshire and will clearly have an unsustainable effect upon the resources and character of the District.

Clearly this is not a practicable or desirable proposition.

The fact is that East Cambridgeshire is already on target to meet its allocation of new homes by 2021: an additional 8,600 new homes at the rate of 430 a year. This has been achieved by developing existing towns and villages and the rapid growth of homes around Ely. There is no need to build Mereham to meet current housing targets.

Petition: A petition is being set up on the '10 Downing Street' web site. We are just waiting for approval and as soon as we have this we will circulate the web address. Paper copies are also being distributed to local shops and we will try and arrange door-to-door visits. We are also trying to arrange stands at other public gatherings such as the Haddenham Steam Fair and Ely Market. We urgently need volunteers from all over Cambridgeshire to collect signatures. If you care about our local environment and community and want to help, please contact Julie Parr on 01353 741380.

Signs: A further supply of signs with some different slogans is available. All residents of Haddenham are being encouraged to download and display the window sign from www.eastcambs.gov.uk/mereham or put up one of the campaign placard

signs in their garden or other open space. In Haddenham these can be obtained from Julie Parr - 01353 741380.

Public Meeting: All residents of Haddenham and east Cambridgeshire are being encouraged to register to speak at the Public Enquiry in the Arkenstall Centre on 9th October. You may pre-register with Lynette Duncan at Persona Associates - the appointed meeting programmes co-ordinator - at:

Lynette Duncan
Programme Officer ~ Mereham PI
Persona Associates
West Point, Springfield Road
Horsham, W. Sussex RH12 2PD
Email: LynetteDuncan@personaassociates.co.uk
Telephone: 01403 217799
Mobile: 07855 649904

There appears to be some debate as to how the physical registration process will be managed, some people having been told that there will be a Pre-Inquiry Meeting for this purpose. We will endeavour to keep you informed. **The safest bet is to email or write to Lynette Duncan NOW.**

Co-ordination: An action group has been formed in Witchford and there is a preliminary meeting on Wednesday 5th September at 6.30p.m. at St Andrews Hall, Witchford.

Wilburton has the well established WAGONS group, whose web site is at: <http://www.wilburton.org.uk/Mereham/>

News: We are organising news drops and posters throughout the village. We urge all our residents to look out for these and read them. This issue goes well beyond party politics and the Liberal Democrats have just used their resources to deliver the first such news drop. Please, please read it even if you are not a supporter of the Liberal Democrats.

Did you Know Number 2?: We are analysing the Mereham proposal in its entirety with the objective of exposing the planning gobble-de-gook it includes. We will be regularly keeping you amused with 'facts' from the application in a 'did you know?' format. The second one is printed below.

Did You Know No. 2

Did you know that RSS14, the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) Sustainability Appraisal Report. (2004) includes sustainability objectives? One of these objectives is to

'Reduce need for car and road based freight transport?'

The Mereham development will apparently meet this objective because, in the words of the application, *'High quality public transport and park and ride interchange will be provided.'*

We see no provision for any public transport improvements in the application beyond a large bus park and some bike lanes on the A10. So it would appear that, in order to be sustainable, all Mereham residents will have to make all their journeys to Ely, Cambridge and the surrounding villages by bus or bike and all freight, including construction materials, will arrive on site by teleportation. Wow! That's really advanced.

With facts like these who needs credibility?

Ends.