

Collective response to the draft Joint Local Plan on the question of intensive industrial livestock production

We wish to highlight a significant omission in the draft Joint Local Plan which must be addressed for the Plan to be a workable tool and sound guide for future development in Suffolk. It is not currently an effective and therefore sound development plan on which to base future decision-making in Suffolk.

Our concerns centre on our recognition of the recent growth in intensive industrial poultry farming. There is no reference to or guidance in respect of intensive industrial livestock production in the draft Local Plan.

The nearest guidance on this issue is LP21: Change in land use for Equestrian or Other animal/rural Land Base Uses, in particular 15.39. However, this section in no way deals with the conversion of arable land to intensive poultry or pig production or the expansion and further intensification of existing poultry or pig units and sites.

We are supportive of the necessity to enable economic development in the area and we welcome statements about economic development being suitable, appropriate and sustainable. However, we believe that the proliferation of intensive factory farming will undermine the economic progress which is proposed, through its financial, social and environmental cost. The road network will struggle to cope with the increase in heavy traffic, villages will suffer traffic congestion and air quality and living conditions will deteriorate as a result. Such development also has the very real potential to give rise to substantial and adverse transformation of the valued landscape and the visual environment of rural Suffolk.

All aspects of pollution related to intensive animal production call into question statements of commitment to health and well-being, promotion of tourism, sustainable housing development and the protection and enhancement of environmental assets.

Air pollution problems caused by intensive units will intensify, making it more difficult to fulfil the Local Plan's objectives to support strong and healthy communities and to protect the environment.

Furthermore, there is no regard to the concentration and cumulative effects of multiple developments in rural areas, which contradicts any intent to protect the environment.

We want a development plan that addresses these issues, gives clear guidance to residents, developers and Planners and looks to a wider, joined-up approach to planning.

As it stands, there is a basic tension between the thrust for economic growth and the commitment to an environmentally sound vision for Mid Suffolk.

We therefore request that express policy guidance be provided within the draft Plan concerning intensive agricultural operations. The objective of such guidance should be to control the unrestricted growth of development within this sector and set out considerations against which such development should be considered, having regard to the wide range of impacts which such development generates.

This collective statement is made on behalf of:

Eye Town Council,	Horham & Athelington Parish Council,	Redlingfield Parish Meeting,
Rishangles Parish Meeting,	Southolt Parish Meeting,	Stradbroke Parish Council,
Worlingworth Parish Council		

Note: This statement does not constrain each council from responding individually, as well as collectively.