

## Grafham Parish Council Response: Call for Sites

### Additional Sites Allocations for Local Plan to 2046 (May 2026)

Site Name: [Grafham 2 South of Village Farm, Grafham](#)

This proposal has the potential to damage the nature of the village and adversely affect the village infrastructure unless appropriate mitigations are put in place.

#### **Size of Plot**

The claimed area of 1.62 ha is not correct; the plot actually measures  $\approx$  1.1 ha.

The number of homes must therefore be corrected to a maximum of 24, to maintain the proposed housing density.

This still represents a 9% increase in the number of houses in the village, which is greater than the 5% in the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Surface Water Risk / Surface water drainage**

As stated in our response to the initial call for sites. Grafham has no fluvial flooding, due to its location on a modest hill. However, this “hill” comprises boulder clay which reduces the effectiveness of soakaways. Once garden soakaways become saturated, surface water enters the sewage system. As the result of heavy rainfall incidents, the sewer system surcharges resulting in surface flooding in some parts of the village, particularly during the winter months.

The Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan addresses this problem with regard to any potential new development with the following policy:

<b>GENP 13 – Flood Risk and Drainage</b>
<p>A proposal shall neither exacerbate existing water supply or wastewater issues nor create water supply or disposal issues for properties elsewhere in the neighbourhood plan area.</p> <p>A proposal for a new development shall provide a surface water drainage solution using a sustainable drainage system that does not discharge or risk discharge, to the existing foul sewer systems in the villages. Surface water drainage design shall comply with the guidance given in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document and the CCC Surface Water Drainage Guidance for Developers. It shall be noted that these documents prohibit soakaway design infiltration rates lower than <math>1 \times 10^{-6}</math> m/s. It is anticipated that soakaways in the heavy clay soils in the neighbourhood plan area will not be possible. Where this is the case, other infiltration methods such as swales, ponds and wetlands shall be explored or, where demonstrably unsuitable, such alternatives as may be acceptable to the local planning authority with the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority.</p> <p>A proposal shall not increase flood risk from any form. A site-specific flood risk assessment in line with the requirements of local and national policy advice shall accompany a proposal on a site with an identified risk of flooding or where otherwise justified by the local planning authority.</p>

Thus, any development must propose a surface water drainage solution that does not involve the use of soakaways.

### **Connection to the sewer system**

The sewer system surcharges in wet weather, causing flooding in extreme rainfall conditions. We note the requirement for “early engagement and agreement with the Council in liaison with the Environment Agency and Anglian Water Services that waste water flows from the proposal can be accommodated”. However, this must result in Anglian Water committing to improve the capacity of the system before any houses are built. (Grafham has a pumped sewer system, out of the village). We understand that once planning permission has been granted the Developer has right of connection. Anglian must have provision in its Capital Programme for any improvement.

### **Village Farm**

The site is located immediately south of Village Farm, a Grade II listed Building. It is considered that any development of the site will result in harm to the setting of the heritage asset and its character. A significant buffer would be required to mitigate impacts upon the heritage asset, therefore reducing the ability of the site to accommodate the proposed level of development.

### **Vehicular Access to the site**

Buckden Road access could be feasible if an appropriate junction is implemented, e.g. a roundabout. Access onto Buckden Road from Home Close and Chestnut Close, opposite the site, is already quite hazardous, mainly due to the close proximity of the blind bends by School House / Brampton Road.

Church Hill is not feasible as an access route. It is a single track road, and forms part of the cycling and walking route around the reservoir. There is no potential for widening the road from this site to Church Road.