

# **PLANNING STATEMENT BY THE SHOTLEY PENINSULA PARISHES ALLIANCE**

## **Introduction**

The Shotley Peninsula Parishes Alliance (SPPA) was set up earlier this year in recognition of the common issues we face and in the belief that we could be more effective at looking after the interests of our 10,000 plus residents if we worked together as a collective. SPPA represents the eleven parishes bounded by the Orwell and Stour Estuaries and the A137 in the west. We have identified planning as our top priority and concern.

## **Planning Issues**

We believe that, in the Babergh District, the Shotley Peninsula has a unique set of planning issues, largely borne out of the area's geography; a relatively isolated community on a peninsula. The peninsula has only two main points of access onto and off it and just one central spine road running along its length. All the main communities on the peninsula are either within or adjacent to the Suffolk Coast & Heaths National Landscape. The area is devoid of any significant employers yet has a disproportionate number of traffic generators including three secondary schools, Alton Water Reservoir and a number of other visitor honeypots around the estuaries. At the same time services and shopping facilities on the peninsula are either very stretched or absent.

The cumulative effects of all this are principally twofold:

- 1) Development and other activity in one parish will inevitably have an impact on most residents on the peninsula and its few and over-stretched services. Or, put another way, the interdependency between parishes and its residents, is probably greater here than it is in any other part of Babergh;
- 2) The level of traffic coming onto and off the peninsula is, proportionately, greater and is also more concentrated onto just two roads than it is in other similar sized areas, with the consequent impact on all road users, including cyclists.

The SPPA do not feel that, to date, the planning of the peninsula has not been considered or executed in a holistic enough way. There appears to be too little regard paid to the cumulative and knock-on impacts of individual developments and the pressure these place on our few roads and key junctions and our limited and stretched services. At the same time we have seen a number of planning application decisions, particularly for housing, being approved contrary to planning policy. The protected landscapes and open countryside are also being subjected to a slow but persistent suburbanisation. We are concerned that the application of the Council's settlement policy appears to be inconsistent and sometimes ad hoc.

We appreciate that we are now in the early stages of the JLP Part 2 and that this could present an opportunity to address a number of these issues. We would therefore like the opportunity to start engaging with the Council now and to work together to explore and address our concerns.

To help initiate this process we have set out below a number of questions we would like to discuss with you in the coming months.

### **Key Questions to explore**

1. Can we recognise the independence of the communities on the peninsula and hence the importance and relevance of assessing the cumulative impact of development and other changes on the peninsula ?
2. Can this desire for a more holistic approach to the planning of the peninsula in future be addressed in the JLP Part 2 by the introduction of appropriate area-wide policies, particularly with regard to settlement and housing policies and development?
3. What research and data would need to be carried out and collected in order to facilitate the approach posed above and could the SPPA help with any of this ?
4. How can the County Highway Authority best be involved in this discussion and assessment ?
5. In the short-term, that is before the JLP Part 2 is adopted, how much comfort can the Council give us about the weight that can be given to those housing policies and allocations which are now 10 years old, and can the Council, at the same time, retain a 5 year housing supply ?

**SHOTLEY PENINSULA PARISHES ALLIANCE**  
**September 2024**