

WESTHORPE

PARISH COUNCIL



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Lodge Farm, Westhorpe, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4TA

Adrian Ramsay MP
Parliamentary Office
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

16th June 2025

Email: adrian.ramsay.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Ramsey,

At the recent Annual Meeting of Westhorpe Parish Council, alarm was expressed that under plans from central government Mid Suffolk District Council is expected to provide 30 new properties to be built in the village over the next twenty years.

Over the last 60 years there have been 30 new properties built or barns converted. This in many ways is an acceptable number despite the lack of a shop, post office in the village. In many villages such as Westhorpe it is only possible to travel by car as there is only a bus service once a week. There has been considerable expansion of neighbouring villages with the result being a large increase in traffic putting the road network increasingly under pressure.

We are fortunate to reside in a very rural part of Suffolk with a main farming family delivering a high standard of farming and nature conservation, the farm was featured in the BBC Wild Isles and was praised by Sir David Attenborough but this business is at risk due to the government's attack on family farms.

As rural people, we are conscious of the need for our farms to provide quality food for the rapidly growing population. Alongside the crops and wildlife habitats we have an excellent footpath network which allows people to access nature and our historic countryside.

We are in the process of producing a 'Neighbourhood Plan' which hopefully will guide a more sensible approach to development but what is being proposed is beyond any reasonable criteria. We are concerned about the lack of water a situation that means businesses are not permitted to expand. We cannot grow the economy without sufficient water. In addition, our health service is under great pressure as the population expands. Suffolk is in the main a very rural and well managed county but there are concerns regarding the large number of solar farms being proposed, many on the best agricultural land. In our view food security is not being given a high enough priority in the government's agenda.

We believe that the proposed increase in properties in Westhorpe as suggested by the government is both unsustainable and against the interests of the parish. Please would you pass on our concerns to the relative Government department.

Yours sincerely

David Barker MBE Chairman of Westhorpe Parish Council
cc Andrew Mellen Leader Mid Suffolk District Council