

Great Ellingham Parish Council

Response to Breckland District Council

Call for Sites / Planning Issues Questionnaire – 2025

Parish Council Contact Details

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SECTION A: Planning and Development Context

1. Key Planning Issues Affecting Great Ellingham

Great Ellingham has experienced unprecedented levels of development, with 410 new dwellings approved in recent years—representing approximately 27% of the total rural growth across Breckland villages. This level of development is significantly out of scale with the existing infrastructure and character of the village.

Key concerns include:

- Infrastructure Strain:

- Education: Promised S106 contributions to education facilities have not been upheld or delivered locally. Specifically:

- £465,760 for an additional school classroom

- £174,660 for pre-school provision

These funds have reportedly been absorbed into the broader Norfolk education fund and not allocated to Great Ellingham, despite the village bearing the brunt of the development.

- School Capacity: The primary school is already at capacity. Planned relocation of the pre-school from the recreation grounds to school grounds is a paramount for the much needed development of a new village recreation centre/village Hall.

- Healthcare: Lack of capacity at local GP surgeries and dental practices.

- Utilities: Concerns over water pressure, sewerage infrastructure, and broadband reliability.

- Transport and Access: Weaknesses in public transport links, limited footpath and cycle networks, including limited wheelchair accessible village pathways especially along Long Street and car dependency are major issues for new residents and long-standing parishioners alike.

- Section 106 Agreements:

- Some building projects have made commitments through S106 agreements to provide community assets such as:

- Land for a new recreation centre
- Provision for a village shop
- There is growing concern about the lack of transparency, enforcement, and delivery of these obligations.

- Recreation Centre and Community Space:

- The pre-school's necessary relocation will broaden the availability of the current recreation centre to expanded uses.
- A new centre and associated parking requirements need to be fully integrated into village planning without causing further disruption or fragmentation.

2. Settlement Boundary and Future Development

The current settlement boundary is already under pressure. Several Call for Sites proposals, if accepted, would lead to further erosion of the village nucleus, threatening the character and cohesiveness of the community. To preserve this, future provision of extended open space should be considered for all new developments

While Great Ellingham accepts the need to contribute to district housing targets, further development should only be considered if:

- Infrastructure is upgraded or fully funded in advance
- S106 or CIL funding is guaranteed to be spent locally
- There is a transparent allocation strategy for any additional housing

SECTION B: Site Proposals and Pre-Allocations

1. Has there been any pre-allocation or pre-approval discussion on sites already put forward? The Parish Council would welcome clarification on whether any of the submitted Call for Sites locations have already been informally agreed or assessed positively by Breckland District Council officers.

BDC Response – Not as far as the officers in attendance were aware

2. How many more houses are expected to be assigned to Great Ellingham?

Given the scale of development already permitted, the community seeks a clear answer from Breckland District Council on:

- The minimum housing number still to be assigned to the village
- Whether Great Ellingham is still considered appropriate for further expansion under the revised Local Plan

BDC Response - Whilst this cannot be confirmed as yet we were told that any new builds post 1/4/2024, would be deducted from the allocation GE receives.

How confident are Breckland District Council in demonstrating a deliverable 5 year rolling land supply?

BDC response – this is always a difficult one and is subject to constant change, though long term with bigger developments coming on stream it should be more sustainable.

What is the position of Great Ellingham within the development Hierarchy

BDC response – this is being bought forward and should be available by the end of July 2025, and is reliant on the scale and timeline for the delivery of Significant Delivery Sites (SDA's) which, it is hoped, will be clearer at the end of July

SECTION C: Devolution and Long-Term Planning

How will proposed devolution (Norfolk Combined Authority) affect future housing and infrastructure delivery?

There is uncertainty in the community over:

- Whether future infrastructure funding or planning decisions will be centralised at the county or regional level
- If local needs and concerns will still be given meaningful weight in the planning process
- How devolved powers might impact planning gain, school funding, and infrastructure prioritisation

BDC Response – Again this is unclear at present

SECTION D: Summary Statement from the Parish Council

Great Ellingham Parish Council urges Breckland District Council to:

- Recognise the disproportionate development the village has already absorbed
- Ensure delivery of previously promised infrastructure and S106 commitments
- Reject speculative development that would further damage the cohesion of the village
- Prioritise a transparent, locally accountable planning process going forward
- Clarify how devolution and future housing allocations will be managed and communicated to the community

Signed:

Peter Ewin, Chair, Great Ellingham Parish Council

Date: June 11, 2025