

CVF response to 3rd Fen Reservoir consultation.

December 2025



The consultation document on ‘**associated water infrastructure proposals**’ states that the new reservoir “*will secure water supplies to meet the needs of future generations, while helping to protect our most precious environments.*”

We understand that you are currently researching the potential sources to fill the reservoir, and the following are being investigated:

- Water from the Ouse Washes, **when it’s available**, and/or the River Great Ouse. The document states that it has now been determined that the amount of water that would need to be transferred from the Ouse Washes is higher than original planned.
- Water from the River Nene **when it has available flows**
- water from the Middle Level System when **it’s available**

What is not clear from this document is how you will determine the point at which there is sufficient water in any of these sources for abstraction to the reservoir, how the environmental impact will be monitored, and how variability in rainfall and dry weather will affect the functioning of the reservoir, given that climate change is making this more extreme. Given that an intended aim is to help protect the ‘most precious’ environments, we feel that additional information on this is needed.

In discussion with experts, we have been led to understand that the timing of Cambridge Water’s abstractions from the Chalk aquifer may play a critical role in ensuring the best water flow to maintain the health of the region’s nationally important chalk streams. If the timing of the water company’s abstraction rate matters, then the knock-on effects will inevitably mean that planning the timing for use of the reservoir water for domestic water supply will also be critical. This is a highly technical issue and we would like to be assured that it is being fully addressed in the planning for the reservoir. A member of the Cam Valley Forum Committee has been following up on this and is sending you a list of recognised experts in this field, and we would strongly urge you to contact them, if you have not done so already.