



By Online Planning Register

23/06/2022

Dear Cheng

Cambridge Past, Present & Future
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Response to hybrid application for 1000 dwellings and associated services and facilities at Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3

Cambridge Past, Present & Future is Cambridge's largest civic society. We are a charity run by local people who are passionate about where they live. We operate in the greater Cambridge area and working with our members, supporters and volunteers we:

- Are dedicated to protecting and enhancing the green setting of Cambridge for people and nature.
- Care about Cambridge and are an independent voice for quality of life in the strategic planning of Greater Cambridge.
- Are working to protect, celebrate and improve the important built heritage of the Cambridge area.
- Own and care for green spaces and historic buildings in and around the city for people and nature, including Wandlebury Country Park, Coton Countryside Reserve, Cambridge Leper Chapel & Barnwell Meadows, Bourn Windmill and Hinxtton Watermill.

CambridgePPF consider that the application does not meet the ambitions and high standard of design sought by Policy SS/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (and policy 20 of the Cambridge Local Plan) and details relating to landscaping, drainage, and sustainable travel should be re-negotiated and improvements sought:

1. Country Park & Landscaping

CambridgePPF regrets that the country park is proposed adjacent to the A14 where its enjoyment and well-being benefits will be significantly reduced by proximity to traffic. It is likely to be at least 30 years before tree planting adjacent to the A14 has an ameliorating impact. This in turn will result in residents from Darwin Phases 1-3 travelling to visit other green spaces, placing additional pressures on them.

We note that no bund is proposed for "Impington Wood" and therefore the impact of the A14 is likely to be high in this area of the park.

We also note that "Darwin Meadows" is to be almost entirely circled with trees. This raises concerns that, once the trees are mature, that this area of the park will lack natural surveillance, creating a risk of anti-social behaviour (or a fear in some users of feeling unsafe). We would recommend instead that at least some views are retained from some of the surrounding properties overlooking the park (ie gaps in the tree planting or the planting of scrub rather than "woodland buffer planting").

We accept that the overall split of 2, 3, and 4 storey buildings is reasonable, but we urge that the positioning of the 4-storey housing alongside the two main routes through the development can be softened by planting, so as to reduce the 'canyon' effect.

2. Sustainability

We are disappointed that there is not a 'grey water' collection and treatment, as has been provided at the adjacent development of Eddington. Given the water crisis in Cambridge, we urge that this is conditioned for the development. The very low sustainability standard of the proposed water system is now further reduced by the reduction in water storage. There is no commitment to BREEAM Excellent for public buildings, not even for the schools, as is local government policy and now common practice. The low sustainability standard of this development runs counter to national and to local guidelines, and notably counter to public opinion.

3. Transport

We are concerned that the active travel connections have not been maximised. "The development masterplan aims to provide **potential future** connections to Thornton Close at the western boundary of the Site, with cycle routes crossing the country park to connect Girton to the new development" (my emphasis). We are disappointed that there is no commitment at this stage to open up new active travel routes, in particular across the A14 to Girton, Histon and Impington. There should be a commitment that all potential future active travel connections will be delivered, under Section 278 or 106 agreements, before first occupation.

In relation to public transport, the committed bus route links the development to the city centre. Disappointingly there is not a direct service to any railway station. The University of Cambridge Transport Strategy 2019-2024 has a commitment PT4 that where partnership working or the market place do not provide what is required, consideration will be given to securing additional services directly. There is no proposal in this application to secure services which would benefit the development and the whole of north Cambridge. Ideally, the developer should have secured an agreement with the University of Cambridge to co-fund a bus service to provide direct connections to, at a minimum, West Cambridge, the Cambridge Science Park and Cambridge North station, from first occupation.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely
Sarah Nicholas
Principal Planning Officer