



By Online Planning Register

Cambridge Past, Present & Future  
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**Response to 24/04575/FUL demolition and redevelopment with Use Class E at 210-240 Cambridge Science Park Milton Road Cambridge**

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.

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Cambridge Past Present & Future object to this application because we do not consider that the development meets the requirements of Policy HQ/1 in that the design, height and bulk and of the buildings are inappropriate when viewed in the wider context.

Policy HQ/1 (Design Principles) requires all new development to be of high-quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to the local and wider context. The development must preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context in the wider landscape and be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.

Although the Area Action Plan is draft it does indicate the Council's policy direction. It identifies that buildings in this location should be 3-6 storeys (10m-19m) with landmark buildings being 8 storeys (25m).

The building heights are the same across the site (~31m to top of plant screen and ~39m to top of the flues). Building C is approximately 4m taller. The buildings also have a large footprint with building widths up to ~115m (Building B) and buildings A and D having widths of 95m. This results in giant inelegant boxes, the bulk of which is further emphasised by the regimented fenestration. We do not consider that the mass and form of the buildings is sufficiently outstanding for this key location within the Science Park and with its potential to set a precedence for the design of future redevelopment sites. An example of high quality and innovative design can be seen on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus with buildings such as Astra Zeneca and Royal Papworth Hospital.

Furthermore, all four buildings are of similar height and of similar design. The design has tried to break up the bulk with terracing and landscaped terraces, but when viewed from a distance the buildings will aggregate into one building. Their location on the Science Park means that they impact the character of the city skyline viewed from within Cambridge and from the countryside to the north. When viewed from Great

St Mary's Church, the development will be seen has a huge block, sitting above horizon as demonstrated by viewpoint 20. The buildings will also be visible in the skyline from the north on the Mere Way byway (viewpoints 11 & 17), the footpath along A14/A10 flyover (viewpoint 14), the bridge over A10 Milton P&R (viewpoint 15), and Jane Coston Bridge (viewpoint 16).

Cambridge has a distinctive skyline that combines towers, turrets, chimneys and spires with large trees. The overall character of the city's skyline is one of relatively few taller buildings that emerge as 'incidents' above the prevailing lower buildings and trees. It is accepted that there have been approvals for buildings of scale nearby and elsewhere in Cambridge, but it is important to strictly apply policy HQ/1 (and Policy 60 of the Cambridge Local Plan) in each individual application. Otherwise, the cumulative impacts of development such as this, the redevelopment of the Grafton Centre, the Beehive, Land south of Coldham's Lane and North East Cambridge and Cambridge East will result in the skyline becoming dominated by large bulky buildings rather than the slim and elegant towers and turrets of the churches and chapels.

CambridgePPF do not object to tall buildings but would wish to see more innovative design and greater articulation between buildings with taller buildings being balanced by significantly lower buildings. As currently proposed the buildings are not of sufficient quality or elegance to overcome their height and bulk.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Nicholas*

Principal Planning Officer