

Greater Cambridge Share Planning Service

By Online Planning Register



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**Response to 25/00016/FUL: Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of buildings for Use Classes E at Trinity Hall Farm Industrial Estate Nuffield 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 57 in that the design, in terms of location on the site, height, scale and form, are inappropriate when viewed in the wider context.

Policy 57 (Designing new buildings) requires the development of high-quality new buildings to have a positive impact on their setting.

Trinity Hall Farm is a relatively small site, on which it is proposed to erect four blocks, which are linked at first floor level and above. There are no views into or through the site from the public realm. This along with the height and bulk of the buildings creates a very cramped development and appears as over development for the size of the site. This layout and design have resulted in minimal landscaping. For the landscaping proposed to be successful the design needs to allow sufficient space for trees to grow to maturity and prevent the need for pollarding.

The northern elevation fronts the busway and is visible when approaching along Milton Road from the north and to cyclists and pedestrians using the busway cycle path. We note that the buildings have been stepped back to allow more landscaping, but we do not consider that there is sufficient articulation to break up or soften the impact of the 27m high buildings. They will appear as a wall of development with minimal landscaping restricted by the gas main. The rooftop plant, although stepped is bulky in itself, and appears to be out of proportion to the lower floors of the building.

Although the Area Action Plan is draft it does indicate the Council's policy direction. It identifies building heights for this site at typically 3-6 storeys (10m-19m). The proposed development exceeds this parameter.

In accordance with Policy 60 (Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge), it is important to consider the impact of the height and bulk of the proposed blocks on the Cambridge skyline. 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. The proposed massing shows minor variation in height between blocks A1, A2 and A3 where there is only a variation of between 1-2m. We note the proposed variation in height from north to south but are still concerned that the development will be perceived as a large block, as these variations in heights will not be perceptible from a distance giving the appearance of large blocks.

The public realm in this area of Milton Road is not attractive, particularly the underpass, which results in some people avoiding using it. We consider that this development should contribute to more strategic improvements to the public realm such as this underpass beneath the Guided Busway.

In conclusion, we consider that the development of the site is cramped resulting in insufficient landscaping and the height and bulk and of the buildings are inappropriate when viewed in the wider context.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Nicholas*

Principal Planning Officer