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Response to consultation on Tritax Park, Queens' 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 Hinxton Watermill.

Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CPPF) notes the significant revisions made to the layout since the initial November 2025 public consultation. Notwithstanding our objection in principle to development that is not in accordance with the adopted or emerging local Plan we wish to make the following comments.

1. Overview of the scheme revisions

While a reduction in overall massing is a step forward, it is regrettable that the geographic extent of peripheral structural planting has also been significantly reduced compared to the original, more expansive layout.

The revised site masterplan leaves a substantial portion of the original site boundaries within arable agricultural use. While this avoids immediate building coverage, it leaves ample opportunity for future industrial expansion, a prospect that concerns CPPF from a long-term landscape preservation perspective.

2. Clarity on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Tree Canopy Calculations

You claim that the updated proposal will increase tree canopy cover from 1.8% of the site to over 25% , while targeting a minimum 20%+ Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Given that the actual physical extent of the proposed development footprint has been dramatically reduced —leaving large fields in agricultural use—we are unclear whether these canopy and BNG percentages are assessed relative only to the developed parcel of the site or across the entirety of the site including that within the blue line. It is difficult to understand how a 25% canopy cover can be legitimately achieved for the whole site when a substantial part of the originally proposed landscape strategy has been omitted in favour of retained arable farming. We request that full metric calculations are made transparently available within the upcoming Environmental Statement and Ecology Reports.

3. Recommendations for Boundary Land Use and Advance Planting

Rather than retaining the undeveloped fields as a buffer for future industrial expansion, CPPF believes a more sustainable approach would be to reduce the amount of retained agricultural land in favour of a substantial, continuous area of advance structural planting along the site boundaries.

We would like to see a landscape strategy which aligns more closely with the deep buffer principles of the original proposal, establishing a minimum depth of 25 metres for boundary planting. Implementing this deep structural woodland buffer would:

- Significantly improve visual mitigation and soft screening of the 18.8-metre-high buildings from the surrounding landscape.
- Deliver a more secure, robust, and meaningful long-term biodiversity net gain across the entire site ownership.

4. Surface Water Management and Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)

CPPF broadly supports the inclusion of sustainable drainage measures. However, to maximise the ecological benefit of the scheme, we suggest the elimination of underground storage systems in favour of enlarging the proposed attenuation ponds and creating high-quality wetland areas. This would successfully manage water volumes while creating valuable, wet-ecological habitats that boost local wildlife.

5. Urban Forestry, Car Parking, and Microclimate Mitigation

Introducing extensive car parking and hardstanding areas into an open agricultural landscape create a substantial localized heat-island effect. We would therefore like to see a significantly greater number of trees incorporated into the parking areas, specifically focusing on large-canopy species capable of providing meaningful shade to buildings, vehicles, and hard surfaces.

Tree planting within hard-paved environments must be structurally designed to ensure successful establishment and long-term survival, including watering and maintenance regimes.

To ensure best practice is met, we refer you to guidance set out in established publications, including the Trees and Design Action Group's (TDAG) *Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery*, as well as Cambridge City Council's *Draft Urban Forest Strategy (2026–2036)*.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Nicholas

Principal Planning Officer