Land Improvements and Pigeon

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27/10/2026

Response to consultation on Cambridge South

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.

Thank you for consulting Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CambridgePPF) on your proposals for Cambridge South. CambridgePPF firmly supports a plan-led system of urban development, and we therefore strongly object to this proposal. The scheme represents an entirely speculative, premature departure from the adopted and emerging statutory development plans and would result in severe, unmitigated harm to the Cambridge Green Belt, local heritage, and environmental infrastructure.

The site is not allocated in either the adopted Local Plan or the Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The emerging spatial strategy focuses growth through new settlements beyond the Green Belt, meaning this speculative proposal is in strict contradiction to established development strategy. Furthermore, the Submission Local Plan already identifies more than sufficient land for housing and employment across Greater Cambridge—supported by a robust seven-year land supply—rendering this development entirely unjustified. Major strategic proposals of this scale must be tested and scrutinised through the formal Local Plan Examination process, rather than being brought forward piecemeal via a premature planning application.

The entire site lies within the Cambridge Green Belt. The recent independent Green Belt review to support the Local Plan[1] confirms that development here would result in a very high level of harm against Green Belt purposes, contributing strongly to purpose D (preserving the setting and special character of historic Cambridge) and failing to qualify as Grey Belt. This area of the Green Belt is vital for checking unrestricted sprawl, and the proposed development would severely erode the physical and visual separation between Cambridge and Great Shelford, resulting in harmful urban coalescence. Moreover, Great Shelford is identified in the development plan as a Rural Centre where growth is strictly directed within defined development extents; your proposal directly conflicts with this spatial policy.

[1] Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment – Review following changes to National Policy and Guidance (LUC, 2026)

In addition, the consultation materials fail to properly assess or address the profound impacts of a major urban extension on designated heritage assets, including the two scheduled monuments within the site and the Great and Little Shelford Conservation Areas.

Regarding natural green infrastructure, while the scheme proposes a riverside park along the River Cam, the scale of a 4,000-home community, housing approximately 10,000 residents generate a population-wide demand for accessible natural green space that cannot be met solely by an on-site linear park. This proposal risks creating unmitigated recreational and visitor pressures on existing countryside and heritage assets owned and managed by CambridgePPF, specifically Wandlebury Country Park and Coton Countryside Reserve. Wandlebury Country Park is already at capacity at peak times. Without dedicated, permanent off-site mitigation, funding, the cumulative influx of new residents will severely degrade our sites.

We are also unpersuaded by assertions regarding the site's connectivity to Cambridge South station and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC). For a community of 10,000 residents, the limited access points to the wider road and active travel network are entirely inadequate. Pedestrians and cyclists traveling toward Cambridge South station and the CBC will have no direct access to the dedicated busway cycle path and will instead be forced to navigate the already congested and hazardous Addenbrooke's Road and Shelford Road junction. Because the southern edge of Cambridge has already absorbed immense growth through the Biomedical Campus expansion and surrounding housing sites, adding another major, but unallocated scheme will exacerbate local traffic congestion, highway safety risks, and overall pressure on the southern fringe.

Finally, Greater Cambridge is an area of acute water stress, yet the consultation fails to provide a credible, sustainable solution for securing the additional water supply required for a 4,000-home community while safeguarding chalk streams and local ecology from further depletion. While water-saving measures are welcomed, they represent a standard baseline requirement rather than an exceptional planning benefit. Developers of your scale should actively champion legislative changes—such as mandatory greywater and rainwater harvesting infrastructure—rather than relying on business-as-usual frameworks.

In summary, Cambridge South is entirely contrary to the plan-led framework, threatens the integrity of the Cambridge Green Belt, lacks adequate infrastructure and water mitigation, and would impose unacceptable pressures on local heritage and environmental assets.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Nicholas

Principal Planning Officer