

S/4329/18/OL. Wellcome Trust Genome Campus. Hinxton.
Response from Little Abington Parish Council – 3 Feb 2019

Introduction

Little Abington Parish Council (LAPC) recognises the excellent and life-changing research carried out at the Genome campus and recognises the need for expansion to maintain its international lead. However, it is alarmed at the scale of these proposals, which can only add to the existing congestion in the area; in particular, the A505 is already extremely busy at peak times. This is likely to be exacerbated by several other planned developments nearby.

We are aware that Hinxton Parish Council has made extensive detailed comments and support their stance on this. LAPC objects to the application.

Points that are of particular concern to us include:

Planning

The recently adopted (2018) South Cambs Local Plan has not designated the area to the east of the A1301, which is good quality agricultural land, for housing or employment. Expansion of local businesses is allowed only if the scale is appropriate and there is no adverse effect on the countryside.

The scale of the proposed development will dwarf the local villages, both in number of dwellings and height of both residential and especially the industrial buildings. The density of this development is much greater than the existing campus and seems more appropriate to an urban location.

We are very concerned about the effect on both the landscape and environment, including the chalk aquifer.

Housing

We have recently seen a Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy issued for comment:

"This Strategy looks to build on this joint work and the success of the area, whilst ensuring that we retain the distinctive character of both areas, including historic Cambridge and the rural nature of the villages within South Cambridgeshire."

This application, with its large new housing content, and industrial scale buildings, seems totally incompatible with this strategy. The number and height of these buildings are both unacceptable.

Transport

We believe that a development of this scale needs to be properly planned in the local plan, along with the necessary infrastructure, notably roads. We feel that the measures proposed at the McDonalds roundabout are far from adequate and we are not convinced that the traffic-calming proposals for the A1301 are ideal for a busy route from the M11 to Sawston area. We are of course particularly concerned about the knock-on effect on our local roads, especially the A1307 and A11, in addition to the A505.

We feel that this aspect needs a coordinated approach to the various proposals, including this one, which would best be handled by a revised local plan. A possible solution might include an upgrade to junction 9 of the M11, which could also be used to handle traffic from Saffron Walden and perhaps even Haverhill.

Conclusion

The planning application seems to breach the new Local Plan in very many ways, as detailed by Hinxton Parish Council. Little Abington Parish Council objects to it and urges the District Council to ask the Wellcome Trust to withdraw and reconsider it in the light of these comments.