

Planning and New Communities
South Cambs District Council
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge

10th January 2022

Dear Michael

Ref. 21/03822/FUL – Site 1 , Granta Park – erection of R & D building and associated carpark and landscaping

Recommendation: The Parish Council recommends **REFUSAL** of this planning application.

Comments: Great Abington Parish Council considered this planning application in October 2021, and sent in their comments in a letter dated 10 October 2021.

The Parish Council has now reconsidered all the documentation in the light of the amendments made in the additional documentation posted on the planning portal on 10 December 2021.

The Parish Council noted that the main changes were:

- a reduction of one floor in the height of the multi-storey car park, and hence a reduction of 39 car parking spaces;
- a significant increase in biodiversity enhancement of both habitats and hedgerows;
- an Addendum to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

However, the Parish Council also noted that there was **no** change in the height of the proposed R & D building. In the Parish Council's view this building is overtly dominant in its size, height and location, and this remains a major reason for the Parish Council's view that this application should be refused.

Initial buildings on the site were limited to two storeys and the existing two storey buildings on the Granta Park site fit reasonably well into the rural landscape. However, the proposed speculative **four** storey R & D building is over twice the height of the tree belt fronting Newmarket Road. The building would therefore **not** therefore be shielded from view and would dominate the skyline in this rural location.

The **Landscape and Visual Appraisal** document states that: 'the surrounding woodland ... extends round the Park giving enclosure to and screening of the built elements within.' (page 13). However, the photo montage on first page of the **Design and Access Statement Part 2** gives a clear visual representation of just how the height of the proposed R & D building would dominate its surrounding and the tree belt certainly does not screen the bulk of the building.

The Parish Council noted the reduction in height and number of car parking spaces in the amended multi-storey car park. However, this building would still be higher than the tree belt fronting Newmarket Road.

The reduction in the number of car parking spaces would still provide just over 300 car parking spaces associated with the new building. In isolation, the reduction of the number of car parking spaces would be welcomed; however, at the Parish Council's meeting where application 21/03822/FUL was considered, the Parish Council also considered planning application 21/05165 relating to Zone 2 of Granta Park. This latter application involves an additional 1,018 car parking spaces.

The Parish Council has been concerned for some time that the cumulative impact of various planning applications relating to Granta Park have not been considered as a whole.

There are already problems with the existing volume of traffic using the Granta Park site, with traffic at the morning peak queuing back onto the A505. The Parish Council is therefore very concerned about the implications of a further 1,300+ car parking spaces on Granta Park, with all vehicle movements using the existing single entrance to the site. The existing morning congestion not only causes delays into the site, but the associated tailing-back also causes delays to traffic on Newmarket Road, both to local traffic and to traffic exiting south from the Four Wentways service area.

Mitigation of existing traffic movements is necessary, and the Parish Council's view is that there should be improved cycling access and other more sustainable modes of travel to and from Granta Park, not building more car parks. The Parish Council is also of the view that the Linton Greenway route should, after crossing the A11, go along Newmarket Road to the Entrance to Granta Park and then continue along Pampisford Road until it meets the A1307.

The **Addendum to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** actually relates to Little Abington parish, and this raises an important point for the planning service. Great Abington Parish Council (GAPC) understands that Little Abington Parish Council (LAPC) has requested that all planning applications relating to Granta Park and TWI be sent to them, in addition to GAPC, but this does not appear to have happened. Some parts of the Granta Park site virtually border on Little Abington parish, and traffic issues relate as much to roads in Little Abington as to Great Abington.

Great Abington Parish Council therefore **requests** that all planning applications relating to Granta Park and TWI be sent to Little Abington Parish council as a matter of course.

Local residents have expressed concern about light pollution (car park and some building lights are on all night) from the Granta Park site, and this is only likely to increase with a further large and highly conspicuous building and multi-storey car park on the site. Noise has also been of local concern.

The Parish Council does request that the application be referred to the District Council Planning Committee for determination, with a site meeting prior to the consideration of this application.

Yours sincerely

Paula Harper
Clerk to Greta Abington Parish Council