

NECAPP, Planning Policy Team

South Cambridgeshire Hall

Cambourne Business Park

Cambourne

Cambridge

CB23 6EA

24th September 2020



Dear Councillors

North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

I am very concerned about your vision for North East Cambridge on the following grounds:

Need for the development:

Is this the right time to be planning such a large development of very high-density housing? We are in times of economic crisis when Covid-19 has meant a change to working practices. I also question the need for over 275,000 square metres of new business space when office blocks up and down the country are standing empty and could be converted to residential accommodation. The project needs to be totally rethought given the realities of the post COVID social and economic situation.

Connected and integrated:

This relies on people being able to walk or cycle to work. It presupposes that everyone living there will be young and active and remain that way. Communities are a mixture of all ages and abilities, but this development does not appear to cater for all of them. The demographic seems to be unnaturally narrow.

Building heights and density:

Such high density is not appropriate for this area. One- and two-bedroom dwellings in 13 storey blocks could lead to social isolation and lack of community feeling. Such buildings have already been tried and failed both in terms of residents' physical and mental wellbeing and in terms of community relations. Furthermore, your planning doesn't sufficiently cater for growing families. Again, the importance of access to safe spaces has been highlighted by the pandemic and should act as a lesson for future planning. High rise blocks of flats are not acceptable.

Open places:

Whatever open spaces are planned they cannot compensate for the loss of the wide open spaces of the Green Belt where the new WWTP is expected to be sited. Milton Country Park is not sufficiently big or open to accommodate so many people and it is already used to capacity. Other green spaces are few and far between and often already overly full.

Biodiversity:

The negative impact on flora and fauna caused by the construction process cannot be undone. The site chosen for the relocation of WWTP to enable this development will suffer immeasurably and catastrophically. You are using a brown field site but destroying other sites of irreplaceable value. This goes against all current wisdom and urgently needs to be reconsidered.

Discouraging car use:

Not everyone is able to walk or cycle to work. As people age or their families grow, they will become reliant on cars. The development does not take this into consideration. Nor does it give a realistic estimate of car use during autumn and winter months.

Additional points to consider:

The community has been planned with a secondary school possibly being built later. This is unacceptable and again suggests a narrow and exclusive demographic, if families with teenage children are not being catered for.

The planning of this development already had significant shortcomings but given the massive shifts in society resulting from Covid 19, this project now needs to be totally rethought, as it is no longer appropriate or fit for purpose.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Krombacher

I understand that to register for this consultation my name will be published with my comment, but that, in line with your privacy statement, my contact details and other personal information will not.