

WAKE UP to the plans for North East Cambridge says local residents' association

HPERA (Hurst Park Estate Residents' Association) is imploring Cambridge residents to have their say about a new 'North East Cambridge' development that could change the character of the city for ever. A consultation on the proposed North East Cambridge development ends on Monday 5 October and HPERA urges residents to take part.

Andrew Milbourn, Chair of HPERA, said: "Although we understand the need for growth, we are concerned that there is very little awareness of the scale and impact of the current plans, which will affect the whole of Cambridge for years to come." He continued: "The proposed development would have a population the size of Ely densely housed in blocks of flats up to 13 storeys high. This will have significant impact on everyone living in Cambridge."

The 5 key concerns raised by HPERA are:

- 1. Density** - The density of the housing will be twice that of much of Inner London if you consider London's large parks. Constructing 8,000 small dwellings in high-rise blocks will not provide the quality of life people expect post-Covid. With more people working from home, a good environment and outdoor space is vital. The density is also combined with plans for housing which will be up to 13 storeys high.
- 2. Green space** - The green space within the development fails to meet the requirements for Cambridge's Local Plan. The contrast with other new developments on the fringe of Cambridge is stark: Trumpington has 90 hectares of green space for 3,500 homes whereas North East Cambridge will have 10 hectares for 8,000 homes. The plan assumes that Milton Country Park is part of a solution to the lack of green space, but the people who run Milton Country Park say it is already at capacity. The North East Cambridge development will depend parasitically on many existing Cambridge facilities.
- 3. Facilities** - The level of facilities planned is not adequate for a development of this size. Despite claims the area will be self-sufficient, a secondary school is not guaranteed, there is no swimming pool, GP only healthcare, and limited leisure facilities, not to mention no significant plans for places of worship or cultural centres. Compare this to the large villages like Cottenham that have secondary schools or the facilities in Ely that include a swimming pool and a decent arts centre. The lack of facilities will create traffic and transport congestion as NEC residents have to go elsewhere, and overcrowding of existing facilities in Cambridge.
- 4. Traffic** – We estimate that the number of trips along Milton Road will increase by a factor of three, due to at least 4,000 cars on the residential development, a significant increase for the Science Park and extra traffic from large new developments at Waterbeach and Northstowe. Despite this, the plan assumes that there will be NO extra journeys on Milton Road because of measures to "discourage"

cars. This is totally unrealistic as these measures are too vague and could be subject to extreme pressure from developers to dilute them further.

5. Erosion of the vision – The original vision articulated for the North East Cambridge development had much to commend it, including a green bridge designed to integrate the two halves of the development combined with aspirations to be carbon-neutral and car-free. However, the good aspects of the development are being relentlessly diluted to maximise profit. Many of the mitigations are just aspirational with little legal force. It is said that car parking on the Science Park will be reduced "*where possible*", for instance.

Andrew Milbourn, ended: "We are extremely concerned that many people may not be aware of the true implications of this plan. We don't believe that this plan is appropriate for Cambridge, and we don't think people, especially in a post-Covid world, will be happy to live somewhere that will make CB1 look modest. The original vision has been watered down. How much worse will things get in 10 years?"

The deadline for making your comments on the plan is next Monday at <https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/document/213/37771>
Please have your say and let your local councillors, who have mostly maintained a deathly silence on these issues, know your views too.

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Contact details

If you are interested in this HPERA press release, and would like to find out more, please contact Sophie White on 07913 076426, or Andrew Milbourn on 07480 843172.