

The Crown Estate
c/o Kanda Consulting

By email to:

cambridgebusinesspark@kandaconsulting.co.uk

8 July 2025



Cambridge Past, Present & Future
Wandlebury Country Park
Cambridge CB22 3AE

Phone 01223 - 243830

www.cambridgeppf.org

Response to Cambridge Business Park Consultation June/July 2025

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 inviting Cambridge Past, Present & Future to take part in your recent consultation event.

We consider that some of the concerns we raised in December 2024 have not been fully addressed.

Overall layout and lack of connectivity: It is difficult to understand how people will move around and through this development. It is not clear from the consultation, but we assume there is a single road access from Milton Road. We consider that this is hampering a good layout and connectivity. We previously raised the point that the site needs to incorporate connections in all directions – Hartree to the north, East Chesterton to the south, Cambridge North Station to the east and Cambridge Science Park to the west.

We do not feel that this has been adequately addressed and that the current proposed layout of a single central spine road with a series of compartmental 'character areas' along it reinforces the existing inward-looking layout.

We appreciate that the site is surrounded on three sides by connection barriers - guided bus to the southwest, Cowley Road and the parallel First Public Drain to the northeast and Milton Road to the northwest. However, we believe that consideration should be given to a major (all vehicle) link to Cowley Road and Hartree, with the necessary loss of floor space, otherwise the compartmental layout approach will prevail.

We are concerned that you overestimate the ease for pedestrians to access the Science Park. The masterplan character area visualisation implies an easy pedestrian crossing from the Business Park to the Science Park. This does not take into account the feeder lane into the Business Park and the need to cross a dual carriageway.

Residential Area and connectivity: The Connectivity and Parking exhibition board is unclear as to what routes are being proposed for different modes of transport. The current masterplan shows the residential area is located at the far end of the spine road and far end of the site. Apart from the spine road the only connection

out of the site is a pedestrian(?) route to Hartree. Although this location benefits from being close to the railway station and adjoins the residential development of the 'Brookgate' scheme, care needs to be taken that residents do not feel isolated from services and facilities.

We consider that the scheme would benefit from the residential area taking a central role on the site together with the community spaces such as cafes. It should also be concentrated around a larger green space and the green space should be on the primary route to Hartree. The crossing of the First Public Drain and Cowley Road should be given status and weight in terms of design to create a welcoming area to and from the site prioritising pedestrians and cyclists.

Layout, height and mass: The masterplan currently lacks detail concerning height and mass of the buildings. As we commented previously, we support development which has variation in orientation and height, and sufficient gaps between blocks to create a layered, textured and interesting development to compliment the Cambridge Skyline and not appear as one large wall of development. Some buildings can be built taller, but this must be compensated by lower buildings. Our previous suggestion that density and height should increase towards the southeast hasn't entirely been taken up. Taller blocks have been dotted around the site and judging from the model, they are taller than adjacent development sites. The 'landmark' (large) buildings proposed to front Milton Road behind an overly narrow landscape strip appear particularly dominant and overbearing.

As tall residential blocks are uncommon in Cambridge, the design of blocks of residential flats must be distinguished by their elegance and refrain from appearing overtly massive. Your consultation explores architectural styles from capital cities and large conurbations. These styles are not appropriate for Cambridge which is a compact city with a sky line dominated by taller incidents of towers and turrets, with views across the skyline from key points around the city.

We support the retention and refurbishment of the more recent buildings and trust that this will be incorporated into the final masterplan to ensure it is delivered.

Landscaped areas: We support the aspirations suggested in the consultation for the green spaces - inclusivity for workers and residents alike, enhanced biodiversity, urban orchards, species rich meadows, nature play areas, wildlife ponds etc. These areas should demonstrate connection to surrounding areas of landscape and biodiversity.

We also suggest that Crown Estates consider and provide details of a sustainable management plan for the future. Natural areas of species rich landscape that need to accommodate a large number of users, takes time as well as focused and reactive management/ongoing maintenance to come to a successful realisation.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Nicholas

Principal Planning Officer