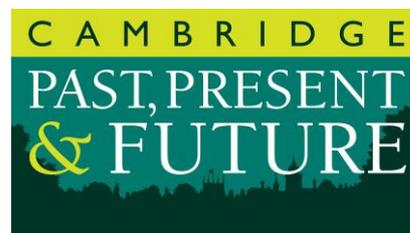


Adam Bridgeman
Cambridge City Council
Guildhall
Cambridge
CB2 3QJ



Wandlebury Ring, Gog Magog Hills
Babraham, Cambridge CB22 3AE

Phone: 01223 – 243830
www.cambridgeppf.org

5 October 2017

Dear Mr Bridgeman

RE: 17/1484/OUT *The erection of a cycle-themed cafe and shop along with associated infrastructure including car and cycle parking and new internal roads. | Land Adjacent To Barnwell Lake Newmarket Road Cambridge*

Cambridge Past, Present & Future **objects** to this planning application due to:

1. Outline nature of the application
2. Ecological impact / net-loss biodiversity
3. Inappropriate scale, mass and design of development for the location

Our more detailed response is provided below:

1. Outline nature of the application

This is an outline planning application with all matters reserved apart from the access road. This makes it very difficult to assess whether harm to the greenbelt might be outweighed by any benefits. We are concerned that there could be significant changes to the proposal at a later stage.

Given that this proposed development would be in the *Greenbelt*, in a *City Wildlife Site* and in a *significant location* we would want to see a full application submitted so that a full and proper assessment could be made.

As a result, we believe there is insufficient information contained within the application to make a proper assessment of the harm.

2. Ecological impact/net-loss biodiversity

As we have highlighted in Item 1 the outline nature of the application makes it difficult to assess the ecological impact. For example, reference is made to play equipment but this is not shown on any plans.

From consideration of the plans available we consider that the proposal would result in a net loss of biodiversity, contrary to the Local Plan (adopted and draft) and the NPPF. The development site is within Barnwell Pit City Wildlife Site, a site which supports a mosaic of locally important habitats. The site layout shows a large proportion of the development area as buildings, hard standing, access road, and car and cycle parking.

We agree with the submission made by the Wildlife Trust that states:

A suggestion is made in the ecological report that the site could be enhanced with creation of new wildflower grassland and some native shrub planting however, no detail of this has been provided. This suggestion is not acknowledged in the proposed site layout or the Design and Access Statement, which fails to address impacts on the City Wildlife Site at all within the section on Ecology (section 7).

We agree with the submission made by the Wildlife Trust that states:

Part of the application area is already included in the recently approved Chisholm Trail. There is an existing requirement for mitigation for the Chisholm Trail in this area. The Ecological Technical note for the Chisholm Trail (see version 7 dated May 2017) states the following with regards to this section of the trail: "This section comprises scrub and neutral semi-improved grassland. Construction of the cycleway at this section will require the loss of scrub and neutral semi-improved grassland. This area will be used as a compound during the works, with the majority of the area utilised. This will be replaced by hardstanding and species-rich neutral grassland. A strip of scrub along the western edge of the compound area will be retained and managed to allow encroachment in the future to create a mosaic of scrub and grassland adjacent to the waterbody next to the Site. The detailed design of this area will take into account the habitat requirements of warbler species, particularly Cetti's warbler, providing a waterside scrub mosaic." No mention has been made within the current application of the existing requirement for mitigation in this area under the Chisholm Trail application and how the proposals for the cycle cafe will take account of this and ensure it is not compromised.

We agree with the submission made by the Wildlife Trust that states as part of a full planning application a clear assessment of the total areas of habitat to be lost and gained to the development is needed including whether mitigation proposed for the Chisholm Trail should also be part of this.

3. Inappropriate scale of development for the location

Given that this development would be in the *Greenbelt*, in a *City Wildlife Site* and in a *location visible* from the busy Newmarket road and the Chisholm Trail we have concerns about the scale of development proposed in this application, in particular:

- Hard-standing for car and cycle parking is excessive and access road to the building is excessive: We believe that layout should be possible to create a turning area for service vehicles that would be part of the car park, negating the need for a service road to cross the trail. This would be less visually intrusive and reduce the risk of accident or interruption to users of the Trail.
- Scale and massing of the proposed building is inappropriate: We question whether there is sufficient business case for a café/shop of this scale in this location and whether a building of this scale would meet greenbelt requirements.

There would be benefits to the community of a facility in this general location which provided toilets, refreshments and limited parking - for people taking part in informal recreation at Coldham's Common, the Chisholm Trail and the Leper Chapel.

However, there is a risk that if the café/cycle shop proved not to be economically viable then there would subsequently be a change of use - which could result in the building serving no community purpose. In this scenario any benefits would not outweigh the harm. If the Officer is minded to support this application, we would want to see planning conditions that could assure long-term community benefit.

Summary

We trust that our response will be taken into consideration when determining this application. Given that this application relates to land that is opposite ours, and in future will be linked by a subway, we would be grateful if you could keep us informed of the progress of this application through the planning system.

Kind regards

Stacey Weiser, IHBC
Head of Planning and Conservation
On behalf of the CambridgePPF Planning Committees

