

Martin Lucas-Smith, local resident. I am not affiliated with any other group speaking.
I am happy, Sir, to send you a copy of this statement afterwards, if that would be of use.

I live on York Street, directly facing onto the site. But my concerns are not those of a NIMBY. There is no particular love in the area from local people for the current inefficient use of the site by an enormous car park, despite us all using the shops. Currently I 'enjoy' the architectural wonders of a bland façade of the back of a metal box shop and poor-quality trees.

So I could easily be a YIMBY if the proposals were better. But there are issues *in principle*.

1) The fundamental issue is the addition of large amounts of employment on a site not designated as such in the Local Plan, unbalanced by housing. 6,000 unanticipated jobs means a net requirement of around 3-4,000 dwellings, exacerbating the existing shortage. The unaffordability crisis in the city is completely unacceptable already. The proposals need to be neutral in housing requirement: part-employment, part-housing, in balance. The Local Plan aims to balance housing and employment, but this creates a significant imbalance.

So the key issue is how the development could possibly be strategically acceptable in housing shortage terms. The local authority gives reference to technical acceptability in planning terms on this, but the reality is that this will create an actual housing imbalance.

The council itself has spent 10 years building 1,000 houses. In a single stroke, this creates an imbalance of 3 to 4 times their entire work of 10 years.

Many residents would support a mix-used employment/housing development, demonstrating clearly this is not a typical NIMBY consideration against the principle of substantive development on the site.

2) Second. The location of science units on this site does seem strange. The current high-tech activity around the city, which I broadly support as a key part of Cambridge's economy, is effective because of the agglomeration effects of co-location of science and R&D units, as well-established in academic geographical literature. Yet here we have a labs-based business park isolated from other such sites. It would seem much more appropriate for the site to be much-needed housing and shopping, and to co-locate labs in areas like the science parks in the north of the city where land is inefficiently used by large car parks, where new housing is planned, and where expansion is not particularly controversial.

3) The third fundamental issue is loss of shops. They are heavily-used, not just by those driving here but also by huge numbers of us locally walking/cycling. Shops such as B&M

provide affordability to many. The developer has given no formal confirmation for relocating them, although there are encouraging noises. This must be a formal condition. The developer has the capability to resolve it, and appears willing, by moving them to the retail park (with a multistorey car park). Whilst I am a very strong supporter of local independent shops, particularly on the nearby Mill Road, the fact is that there will remain demand for large shops. If not relocated, the result would ultimately be unsustainable new out-of-town shops, forcing everyone to drive, hardly a sensible outcome.

So the second issue is doing whatever can legally be done to condition avoiding losing key shopping facilities, which would resolve this in my view.

4) Four. Improving the cycling/walking route through the site is welcomed, as is the public realm, as is the modal split, as is skateboarding, as is replacing the very hazardous roundabout in favour of a CYCLOPS junction. However, 3m-wide shared-use in part of the site is unacceptable for an unconstrained new-build. This needs to be 4-5m throughout, properly segregated.

Whilst this may seem an obscure issue perhaps for those who do not live in this area, but for those of us that do, and witness the fact that around a third of people in Cambridge cycle regularly, building inadequately wide infrastructure is a long-term problem. This would be straightforward for the developer to amend.

5) Five. The proposed massing is rather overpowering. A dominant set of buildings faces into the private bathrooms and bedrooms of York Street houses. The developer should be required to implement a denser tree row to deal with this, and required to fund remediation measures against overlooking.

Again, this is not a blocker to development as such, but ought to be conditioned.

6) Lastly, the loss of the existing swimming facility at the affordable gym would exacerbate the existing shortage around the city. A gym with swimming should be conditioned, and would be well-used by the new employees.

For these reasons, particularly housing shortage imbalance, I therefore have had to object for now. I would urge you to consider carefully the housing imbalance issue even though this is, remarkably, within the Common Ground of the two parties.