

CAMCYCLE



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Sav Patel, Case Officer for 17/2245/FUL
Cambridge City Council
Guildhall
Cambridge CB2 3QJ

February 12, 2018

Dear Sav Patel,

Camcycle is a charity that works for more, better and safer cycling and walking in the Cambridge region.

We object to application 17/2245/FUL for the following reasons: (A) it does not satisfy Local Plan (2006) policies 3/7, 8/4 and 8/5 because the design turns its back on the Chisholm Trail creating an isolated, difficult to access and indefensible space that will raise serious personal safety concerns for individuals who might use it; and (B) because according to policy 8/2 the proposed 151 car-parking spaces are excessive for the location and will cause unacceptable transport and quality-of-life impact. We are not opposed to the principle of development and would withdraw our objections under the conditions that have been outlined below.

As of February 12th we have received 412 signatures on a petition¹ laying out these objections.

(A) Chisholm Trail Access

Policy 3/7 states that:

Development will be permitted which demonstrates that it is designed to provide attractive, high quality, accessible, stimulating, socially inclusive and safe living and working environments. Factors to be taken into account are:

- a. a comprehensive design approach which achieves good interrelations and integrations between buildings, routes and spaces; [...]*
- d. the orientation of buildings to overlook public spaces and promote natural surveillance;*

¹<http://change.org/p/cambridge-city-council-mill-road-depot-development-control-forum-request>

- e. *the provision of active edges onto public spaces by locating entrances and windows of habitable rooms next to the street;*
- f. *the provision of clearly distinct public and private spaces and the design of such spaces so that they are usable, safe and enjoyable to use; [...]*
- h. *designs which avoid the threat or perceived threat of crime, avoid insecurity and neglect and contribute to improving community safety; [...]*
- m. *a consideration for the needs of those with disabilities to ensure places are easily and safely accessible.*

However, the proposed routing of the Chisholm Trail has been walled off from the rest of the site, with the only public cycling access from an inappropriately sharp turn off Hooper Street, and a narrow footway access from the new Headly Street. These conditions are not conducive to encouraging full use of the Chisholm Trail, and a space that is isolated and trapped between Network Rail fencing and a blank brick wall will be perceived as unsafe and unwelcoming. We object to this design under policy 3/7, parts (a), (d), (e), (f), (h) and (m) as well as policy 8/4, which states that walking and cycling should be given maximum convenience and link with the surrounding walking and cycling network.

We note that policy 8/5 states that “*new developments will safeguard land along identified routes for expansion of the walking and cycling network*” and that the applicants have safeguarded a corridor for the Chisholm Trail. Paragraph 8.13 further clarifies that the developers must fund “*any [other paths] that may be suitable for accessing the particular development*” and paragraph 8.14 states “*All paths should conform to established good practice*”. Connections between the Chisholm Trail and the Depot site are necessary and suitable for access to the site, as well as good practice. Last, but not least, the Mill Road Planning and Redevelopment Brief required any application to include an integrated network of pedestrian and cycle connections across the site, including the Chisholm Trail.

Our first objection may be withdrawn if revised plans are submitted that (1) add back the multiple publicly-accessible walking and cycling connections to the Chisholm Trail from the Depot site, designed to a high quality with adequate visibility splays and following natural desire lines such that the Chisholm Trail receives adequate natural surveillance; (2) ease the sharp turn from the Hooper Street entrance so that the route follows a more natural and easy-to-use path connecting it to Ainsworth Street; and (3) the Chisholm Trail is included within the adoptable highway area.

We are also willing to consider alternative route designs that achieve the goal of providing a convenient, safe and secure walking and cycling route for the Chisholm Trail.

(B) Excessive Car Parking

Chapter 4.2 of the Design and Access statement mentions that 151 car parking spaces will be provided overall for all uses. We believe that adding 151 car parking spaces to this corner of Petersfield adjacent to Mill Road will have a disproportionate and significantly negative impact on quality-of-life for the surrounding neighbourhood, by attracting more usage of motor vehicles

and their corresponding air pollution and congestion problems. The Mill Road Depot site is one of the best locations for sustainable transport in the entire county, with a vibrant high street, numerous shops and facilities within a quick walk, a major railway station nearby, and a very strong local cycling culture.

Policy 8/2 states that “*development will only be permitted where they do not have unacceptable transport impact*” and paragraph 8.7 goes further to say “*In areas of the City where traffic congestion is particularly high, the Council may seek a zero increase or reduction in car traffic generation through any proposed redevelopment*”.

Mill Road and its surrounding streets are areas where traffic congestion is famously high and the Mill Road Depot is a prime site to seek significant reduction in car traffic generation. We note that typical car parking provision for existing dwellings in the area, based on street surveys we have conducted, points to an indicative ratio of 0.5 car parking spaces per dwelling.

Our second objection may be withdrawn if revised plans are submitted showing a car parking ratio of 0.5 spaces per dwelling or lower, with those resources devoted instead towards another worthy usage such as improving affordable housing provision or open public space.

Further notes

Please ensure that all cycle parking meets policy 8/6 and Appendix D standards at least, but preferably Cycle Parking Guide for Residential Developments standards.

What is the slope of the proposed bike ramp to the basement-level cycle parking?

The basement plans in B_05 show that the entrance to the cycle lift is completely obstructed by several cycle parking stands. This must be fixed.

The cycle lift in plan B_02 is accessed through a set of two 1.0 metre-wide doors. These doors may be an obstacle to persons with an adapted cycle for disability, a tricycle or a cargo cycle. The doors on the access path to the cycle lift should be 1.2 metres wide and should be equipped with activated electric assistance in a convenient manner.

We recommend some provision of cycle parking for larger cycles such as adapted cycles for persons with disability and cargo cycles, either on the ground floor or accessible via the cycle lift.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
On behalf of Camcycle

Matthew Danish,
Trustee