

November 29, 2006

Our ref: C 07 006

Your ref:

Brian Smith
Deputy Chief Executive
Office of Environment & Community
Cambridgeshire County Council
Box ET1011
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Castle Hill
Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Brian,

Proposed development at: Land at, Milton Park & Ride, Butt Lane, Milton, Cambridge, CB4 [was S/02055/06/CC] - Notice of Planning C.E.N. 13.11.06

We are writing to make a formal objection to this application on the grounds that the provision for cyclists and cycling is so poor. As you may know we have been in discussion with Alistair Frost, Patrick Joyce and Campbell Ross-Bain concerning the above since mid-October 2006; these discussions are ongoing.

The comments which follow have been developed by our members in our Park & Ride Subgroup. The group includes two Sustrans Rangers who have good knowledge of the area concerned.

1. Documents absent

In all the documents we have seen there is just one paragraph [4.15 in the Design, Access and Planning Policy Statement] which relates to cycling. This is quite unacceptable.

However one of your documents states that

“The transport assessment will consider the impact of the proposed development on the local road network and adjacent junctions. ... It will be important to consider all transport modes, including the effects of the scheme on cyclists and pedestrians, in order to ensure that there are greater opportunities for people to use the new site.”

but the 109-page Transport Assessment contains no assessment at all of:

- a) the needs of cyclists who currently use Cowley Road P&R; or
- b) cyclists who currently use the A10/Butt Lane footbridge; or

c) the potential numbers of cyclists who might use the new Milton P&R, and where they travel from – or to, if they leave their bicycle there overnight.

We consider these very serious omissions, and feel that the public & local parish councils have not been provided with sufficient information to make a value judgement on this planning application.

Indeed the whole application is very vague and lacking in detail. However, based on what little is provided, we have the following concerns.

2. Access to Milton P&R from Milton village

One of our most important objections is that all cyclists from Milton are expected to go over the A10/Butt Lane footbridge which slopes down at the precise point where motorists are turning left to enter the P&R site from the A10 southbound, and HGVs & motorists from Butt Lane eastbound. This is a blind corner and few drivers will expect to see cyclists crossing their path.

What has the Safety Audit said about this serious hazard?

3. Danger of A10 between Milton P&R and the A14 roundabout

We are also concerned that the new P&R site will generate a significant number of cyclist and pedestrian trips along the A10 to the A14 roundabout from the P&R site in the morning, and back at night. We consider cyclists and pedestrians to be in considerable danger on such a fast road which has no provision at all for them.

There is a similar danger to cyclists and pedestrians who will be forced onto the A10 to and from Landbeach, and the northernmost parts of Milton village, in order to reach the new P&R site.

What measures will you put in place to eliminate these dangers?

4. A10/Butt Lane footbridge

This footbridge is the main proposed access for both cyclists and pedestrians to and from Milton and we consider its current design to be totally inadequate.

Milton Parish Council have already asked that the parapet fences be raised due to their danger, especially to children. The right-angle bends on the bridge cause serious problems as well. It seems highly likely that people will park their cars at the end of Butt Lane in Milton to reach the P&R causing an additional hazard.

Greatly increased numbers of cyclists and pedestrians will be using this bridge, and so the bridge will need to be fully upgraded and redesigned. Indeed we feel that funding for an entirely new bridge should be sought with some urgency.

5. Cycle routes to and from the Jane Coston Bridge

We consider it essential that there is a safe, adequate cycle route between Milton P&R and the Jane Coston Bridge. Both Butt Lane (near the Primary School) and the High Street are already full to capacity with pedestrians and cyclists, so this route cannot be recommended.

Any new route should be clearly signed and publicised well before the Milton P&R opens.

6. Cycle parking on site

In some drawings there is reference to “40 cycle spaces under a tensioned polyester canopy - more can be added” but this is not in any of the public documents we saw. Their location is also not in the public documents - we have only been told this verbally by officers.

If this is what is intended, then we feel it is quite inadequate. At least 80 spaces should be provided at the outset, with as many covered as possible.

Security for parked bicycles at this relatively isolated site is likely to be a problem especially at night. It is essential that cycle parking areas are located within the field of vision of the parking attendants' desk and that they are illuminated and protected by CCTV at night.

There is no information about the type of cycle stands and their spacing. The council and others have standards which indicate what is required. We would like to see full details of the design and layout of the cycle parking areas.

A direct pedestrian/cycle access link off the bridge over the A10 into the P&R site is required. This access should be connected by a pedestrian /cycle route to the proposed cycle parking area by the main building. A direct link would reduce the risk to cyclists using the existing bridge exit onto Butt Lane to access the P&R site.

7. Access to Milton P&R from Impington & Histon

We have been told that a new shared-use cycle path will be built from Mere Way to the entrance to the Milton Landfill site, as part of a recent S106 agreement, ref. S/1017/06/F.

We think it essential that Eastbound cyclists heading for the A10/Butt Lane footbridge or the P&R be guided onto this shared-use path well before the proposed bell-mouth junction (entrance to P&R / public highway) otherwise there will be potential conflicts. Officers have informed us that it is their intention to put white lines diagonally across the road & a dropped kerb to enable this. This is a minimum requirement.

There should be a direct, raised, red-tarmac cycle lane created across the bell-mouth junction (entrance to P&R) – and the entrance to the Landfill site – along the line of the shared-use cycle path. This should be completed well before the Milton P&R opens.

Mere Way itself needs a new surface, so that cyclists and pedestrians are encouraged not to use the A10 as a way of reaching the Science Park or Cambridge Regional College.

8. Other matters

We have not seen any Safety Audit or Cycle Audit for this development. Please kindly supply copies of whatever audits have been carried out to us as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

(signed)

Martin Lucas-Smith,
Park & Ride Subgroup

cc. Patrick Joyce, Campbell Ross-Bain, Alistair Frost, Richard Preston, Clare Rankin, Milton Parish Council, Histon Parish Council, Sustrans, Landbeach Parish Council, Cllr M Williamson, Cllr J Reynolds, Cllr Alan Baker, Cllr Sian Reid, Cllr Julian Huppert, Cllr Colin Rosenstiel.