

Hinxton Parish Council

Statement to the Planning Committee on Wellcome Planning Application S/4329/18/OL

Hinxton Parish Council respects the research conducted at the Wellcome Genome Campus and would not object to a modest expansion for R&D purposes. However, we are totally opposed to the proposal in its current form.

1. The application does not comply with the 2018 Local Plan. A scheme of this magnitude should be considered on a strategic basis through the Local Plan review, which would allow proper consideration of the very significant infrastructure issues.
2. The scale is massive and out of character with the environment. Its impact would be substantial and damaging. Hinxton is a village of 150 houses. Wellcome's proposed development includes 1500 residential units and multiple new use classes. This is urbanisation of the countryside at significant scale.
3. In regard to traffic, congestion on the A505 and adjoining A1301 is notoriously bad during peak hours. A further 4,500 campus employees and 1500 housing units will increase traffic substantially. To suggest that traffic issues can be fixed by minor tweaks of the McDonalds roundabout is absurd. Turning a major north-south A road into a traffic-calmed "village road" through the campus will increase travel delays. Rat-running will increase markedly, as drivers seek to avoid the worsening congestion points (and this raises safety issues under the NPPF). Wellcome's analysis of the traffic issues is appallingly poor, and the proposed mitigations equally so. [15.18ff]
4. On housing, we object to the very substantial allocation:
 - i. The location of the residential units (notably Development Area 3) has a substantial negative Landscape and Heritage impact on Hinxton village, as also recognised by the Council's Historic Buildings Officer. [14.42]
 - ii. There is no way that 1500 residential units can be justified for the national or local economic interest. The District has an up-to-date Local Plan and a 5-year housing land supply. There is no need for these houses within the Plan period.
 - iii. No proper justification has been provided that there will be demand for that number of units by campus workers. Although we see that there may be some rental demand by short-term workers, we question how many people will want to buy a house on a work campus with limited facilities.
 - iv. The Viability Report suggests very loose ties to the campus, with only a 6 week campus offer period before housing is sold on the open market.

Consent to this scheme in full now would provide a back door route to a private residential allocation.

Hinxton strongly objects to this planning application and urges the Planning Committee to reject it. We are not opposed to modest and sensible expansion of the campus, but the scale of this proposal, particularly the residential element, is indefensible.