





The Parochial Parish Council of St Andrew's Cherry Hinton objects to Mission St's application for land south of Coldham's Lane (23/04590/OUT) on the following grounds:

- 1. The lack of specific site specific information necessary to reassure the Environmental Health Department, the Environment Agency and local residents of the safety of this application with regards to:**
 - a. Risks to controlled waters (*the risk of creating a new and significant source-pathway-receptor pollutant linkage is great and no mitigation measures have been proposed Envir Health July 24*) This risk is identified in every statutory response, reflecting the huge local concern about the health of our precious chalk streams and chalk aquifers, from which we drink. We point the Planners to £420k of public money being spent on cleaning up our chalk streams agreed by the Combined Authority in November 2022, and the irony should they then approve this application to build on landfill adjacent to one of these world renowned streams. We also need hardly remind the Council of the problems of water scarcity which this development will surely enhance; especially as their remediation strategy involves taking water they pollute from the chalk aquifers and pumping it into the sewage system.**
 - b. Risks to site users should soil remediation and gas mitigation measures fail and the lack of enough detail to enable clear and enforceable planning conditions at this point (*The need for such a high level of detail and certainty reflects the complex and very serious nature of the contamination risks (soil and gas) posed to future site users. In addition, as the remediation strategy will involve an engineered capping layer, the interaction of this capping layer with landscaping and surface water drainage requirements has to be fully realised and understood at the application stage' ibid.*) See also the cautions around asbestos in particular on page 55 and chart 13.1 of the GQRA report from Ramboll 19th April 2024. There are several references in the Ramboll report to the PPE and safety measures needed to be strictly observed by construction workers – but no mention of protecting the residents and school children so close to this site from air born contaminants.**

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- c. Risks to residents and site users of noxious odour (*'Whilst the generic approach and methodology for the Odour Management Plan Scoping Report (Ref: RUK2022N00597-RAM-RP-00021 Rev 1.0) produced by Ramboll Ltd and dated March 2024 is acceptable in principle, a detailed site-specific report will be required prior to determination.'*)

Most quotations are from the recent (29th July) Environmental Health report in which they consolidate their previous very strong objection and support a continued holding objection from the Environmental Agency on this application. We urge the Planning Committee to consider this report in detail. So concerned do Environmental Health seem to be about the inability perhaps of the EA to carry out the necessary watching brief, they take the unusual step of proposing that Section 106 monies be spent on securing independent third party validation/oversight of the remediation strategy. This indicates a high level of anxiety about the risks to human and environmental health which residents of Cherry Hinton share.



The Developers own consultants, Ramboll, stress the need for a careful watching brief over the whole lifetime of the development in order to ensure safety for human users of the site and the surrounding environment.

The EA has somehow been persuaded (9th August 2024) to drop its holding objection which it argued for vigorously in its submission dated 24th May 2024. We object to the fact that the EA has succumbed to obvious pressure to do so, although it is clear from the 15 pages of strict conditions which follow, that it is very reluctant to do so, and very skeptical about the ability of the developer to find solutions to the many risks of building on this site.

We note that the EA also argues for 106 funds to be spent on independent monitoring and although we would of course support anything that would ensure the safety of this development we object to money which should be spent on enhancing our community being spent simply to keep us, and our water supply, safe.

We respectfully ask whether the need for independent oversight of this project reflects a lack of muscle or resource on the part of the EA – and to what extent they are unable to make decisions based on science alone – rather than political pressure?

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The developer's own consultant, Ramboll stress the need for a strong ongoing watching brief, because samples taken in one part of landfill will of course not reflect the reality everywhere NB from the developer's own consultant:

'• Watching Brief: in addition to any remediation requirements, and in accordance with good practice in developing brownfield land, it is recommended that a watching brief is implemented during ground works to identify unforeseen ground conditions or localised contamination hotspots (e.g. concentrated pockets of ash, asbestos or hydrocarbons), especially during any ground works in the Waste material. If previously unforeseen contamination is identified, the risk assessment should be updated accordingly.'



We should draw Planning Committee's attention to the many pages of risks and recommendations at the end of this report!

There is an updated 15 July 2024 (OUTLINE FOUNDATION WORKS RA) report from Ramboll outlining the risks of various approaches to creating foundations for the building. Note its coloured charts showing the high and very high risks if mitigation isn't done. These all fade to medium or low risk when certain mitigations are undertaken – but how can we be certain these mitigations will be successful, and monitored? The risks of failure seem very high.

2. We object to a lack of public consultation and honesty about the risks posed by this proposed development.

The Applicant could not provide details of how the risks to human and environmental health would be mitigated at the time of their public consultation preceding their first application in late 2023. They took the contact details of those wanting a further meeting on the health and safety aspects of their proposal, but have not as yet convened the promised meeting with residents. They have periodically proposed meetings with community representatives, but have then not followed through and actually held those meetings. A representative finally met with two community leaders on 15th August (the deadline for submission of responses to their latest proposals) and did his best to reassure that the planning permission requested at this stage is simply to commence tests and trials – which will be carefully monitored, with the many conditions set out by the EA enforced.

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We understand that they do not yet have the detail of the strategies by which they will keep this development safe for the environment and for the people who work in it and live around it. But their attitude continues to be 'trust us – we will be able to find an engineering solution to all the risks'. We ask the Planning Committee if they decide to grant Mission St permission to commence trials, that there is a requirement for these developers and the EA to present to local residents the conclusions of these trials and proposed solutions – so that residents can be assured that our health and the health of our waterways will not be compromised by this development.

- 3. We concur with the objection posted by Urban Design which identifies proposals for the buildings adjacent to Coldham's Lane and adjacent to Kathleen Eliot Way as out of character with the height of buildings nearby. The development will fundamentally change the nature of Coldham's Lane.** ('I maintain the view that both existing and proposed developments along Coldhams Lane are low-rise, with buildings ranging from single storey structures to, at most, potentially a short length of frontage reaching four storeys (Cherry Hinton North Development). These buildings, both existing and planned, are characterized by a much smaller scale and massing compared to the proposals under consideration. The revisions have not addressed my concerns regarding the introduction of larger and bulkier buildings along Coldham's Lane.' From Urban Design's most recent response.
- 4. We object to the Transport Plan which very unfortunately does nothing substantial to improve cycling in this area.** The construction of this science park will, we imagine, severely impact the safety of a key Greenway into the city centre and we would like clarification on how often and for how long this cycle route will be closed – and how safe it will be when open, given the high risk of asbestos fibres in the contaminated soil which will be moved around.

Furthermore we feel the only realistic opportunity to pay Network Rail to improve the notorious 'pinch point' on the Tins has been missed. Why haven't planners mandated that the developers find the money necessary to ensure cooperation from Network Rail? This seems such a fundamental barrier to cycling from an increasingly populated area of the city. Even Network Rail must have a price. Why aren't you demanding that the applicants pay it?

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Given there are no plans to widen the Tins at this dangerous pinch point, the explosion in cycle traffic once thousands of employees descend on 'Project Newton' will create unacceptable risk for cyclists using this Greenway – especially for the many children and families using this route for access to schools and nurseries. We also note an absence of plans to provide a bike route through from the development to Coldham's Lane via Parcel B which would create a welcome cycle access point from the Springstead development.

5. Finally, the 'Lakes' (of course 'lakes' gives a false impression of what they really are – quarries). We object to the Management Plan for the opening up of an urban park around the 'Lakes' as it is currently outlined.

- a. The costs of managing Parcel C are totally unrealistic. £38,000 p/a will barely cover the costs of the charity complying with charity regulations and other administrative duties. This sum doesn't take into consideration the costs of clearing up after raves, or just normal littering. It fails to consider the cost of dealing with major incidents – the press, legal challenges and the likely difficulty of finding Trustees willing to take on the personal liability for such a risky enterprise. We refer to the Wildlife Trust's conclusions (***'In particular, [£38,000] does not appear to cover the full "ranger" costs associated with safely opening up the lakes to public access. It may also not include contingency costs associated with infrequent but major incidents, e.g. unwanted camping or a rave or worse a tragic fatality from an individual swimming in the lake and succumbing to cold water shock. The Wildlife Trust has unfortunately had to deal with such incidences over the past twenty years, and it is difficult for all involved and we would be concerned that a small local charitable trust responsible for this site might be under-prepared and under-resourced to cope.'***)*

Since the writing of this report a tragic fatal incident has of course occurred at this site. We are appalled that some people are responding by suggesting that these incidents would be more rare if more people were encouraged to access (and inevitably swim in) these waters. The very fact that City Council says these quarries should be open access gives a false impression of security. We remind the committee that these are not 'lakes' with gently sloping access, but deep quarries with sharp sides. The water, being so deep, is very cold and very importantly is contaminated by all the leachate that comes into it from the waste pits adjacent to the water.

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St Andrew's

Space for God in Cherry Hinton

We understand the desire to provide public access, but think that 24/7 access in this context -- a heavily populated area, with many bored youngsters, and a number of mental health facilities nearby -- is deeply unwise. The more people who jump into risky water, the more fatalities -- unless there are lifeguards around (and the cost of providing lifeguards or even life saving equipment over such a large area is prohibitive. Even the life buoys provided now get vandalised and thrown into the lake by the teenagers who break in.

We have been told by the developer that there will be a two year trial period with representatives from all the landowners and community groups considering the proposals.... That nothing will be done without reference to that group and that monies in excess of the £38,000 estimate will be available if need be. This is not clear from the Management Plan submitted as part of the documentation. We wonder what the plan is should no one be prepared to serve as a Trustee on such a charity, given the huge risk to life posed by this enterprise.


We realise that there is fatigue setting in after many years of trying to decide what might be possible on this land. However the risks of approving this proposed development simply to get it off the 'pending' list are very high.

All of the scientific statutory consultees identify serious risks associated with plans for both Parcel A and Parcel C. Some, perhaps all, of these can be mitigated. However it is highly likely that we won't know if this is the case until many years in the future. All the agencies stress the need for careful and ongoing oversight of the project and we wonder whether the EA has the resources to achieve this to the extent necessary in such an urban area. We remind the committee of the unusual proximity of homes and three schools to this site, and along with almost all the statutory consultants, we urge great caution.

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