

CAMBRIDGE DESERVES BETTER

The plan

Before “Raylands”, the 1910 Edwardian house at 291 Hills Road (corner of Queen Edith’s Way) which is surrounded by trees.



After Demolish, replace with 15 flats and remove all but 5 trees



Should you care?

Yes, if you are concerned about the speed and nature of change in Cambridge. Look around you. Many neighbourhoods are changing fast, losing character, over-developed. The house next door to you could be torn down and flats built. As each change is forced through, it becomes more difficult to resist more of the same.

Cambridge Past Present and Future objects to the proposal: “This is an unfortunate proposal that seeks to take a lovely large and historic residential building within a large plot, demolish it and overdevelop the site to hold numerous apartments. However, it is a proposal we are seeing over and over again. The Council should be strong and resist the urge to kowtow to developers on the basis that ‘more is more’.

David Jones (author of “Hideous Cambridge, A city mutilated”) reacts: “While there is something to be said for replacing clapped out, inconvenient, and badly insulated houses with better ones, it is a different matter when the density of occupation changes and an agreeable leafy suburb becomes a densely urbanised area of high-rise apartments. It is a change of such magnitude that it should not be countenanced without popular support. It is currently happening barely noticed, by increments.”

Peter Studdert (former Cambridge City Council Director of Planning) wrote in 1994: “Hills Road is the main route into the city from the South-east. ... It is important for any City but particularly one as eminent as Cambridge to which visitors flock, that its approach roads are memorable. This is best done where trees flank the carriageway. It is the streets endowed with trees which one remembers.”

Cambridge is town as well as gown We have world-famous buildings in the historic city centre which are of course carefully protected. But there is history and character in the suburbs too – north, south, west and east.

Everyone from anywhere can object!

Loss of period building and city character No attempt to preserve and enhance an Edwardian period detached family home of the type which makes this area of the city distinctive and attractive.

Supply and demand Families are forced into the villages by the shortage of affordable family homes in Cambridge. Supporting the supply of such homes reduces commuting, pollution and traffic, benefitting the entire community. Turning to flats: there is already a large over-supply in the area. Many of these flats are purchased as an investment by foreign buyers who leave them empty, or are used by London commuters.

Design The design of the proposed flats is bland and out of keeping with the unity provided by the block of 5 attractive red brick Edwardian houses. 291 was designed for good place making and to reflect and enhance an important road junction with the bay articulating the corner. This development is simply a massive rectangular block with no regard to its corner location.

Impact on a busy junction 15 flats would generate frequent vehicle movements onto Queen Edith's Way, right next to the already-congested junction with Long Rd, and increase the risk of accidents. There would be major congestion issues during the construction phase. The positioning of six large commercial bins so close to the junction would be a mistake.

Overdevelopment and flooding This area already has flooding problems, after the loss of all the Hills Road verges "soakaway" to provide space for the cycleway. The larger building footprint, the hard landscaping, the removal of greenery and the creation of an enormous basement would together increase flood risk.

Loss of a valuable habitat and treeline for wildlife Gardens all along this stretch are full of hedgehogs, bats, birds, deer and newts. The plot has considerable biodiversity and its greenery mitigates pollution on one

CAMBRIDGE DESERVES BETTER

of Cambridge's busiest roads for householders, pedestrians, motorists, cyclists, 2 colleges, 2 schools and the region's main hospital. Yet the City Council's corporate plan aims to increase Cambridge's tree canopy, address pollution and climate change. The wholesale removal of vegetation will leave the site open to the road and be highly visible.

Parking is already a big issue in this area. Councillors and residents have lobbied hard for parking controls.

Raylands has been a family home since 1910. It could also be a hostel for medical students at Addenbrookes, or a home for local nurses, teachers and others, who could walk or cycle to work.

Loss of amenity Hills Road is a beautiful Cambridge approach road. It links the city's "flagship" Biomedical Campus with the University and provides well-being for all those who use it, thanks to the green.

How to object and keep in touch

Cambridge belongs to us all. If you want to take part in shaping how your city changes, please comment as soon as possible. **Friday 15 September** is the end of the consultation period, but the Council will consider all comments received by **Friday 13 October**.

Online through www.cambridge.gov.uk/planningpublicaccess The reference is 17/1372/FUL. You can see all the documents and other comments. You have to register first, although this only takes a couple of minutes. If your comment is long, it is best to type it out first and then paste in, just in case the computer "times out".

Or email charlotte.burton@cambridge.gov.uk the Senior Planning Officer, making sure to quote the reference 17/1372/FUL.

Or write to the Head of Planning, PO Box 700, Cambridge, CB1 OJH, quoting reference 17/1372/FUL.

Keep in touch Email: CambridgeDeservesBetter@gmail.com