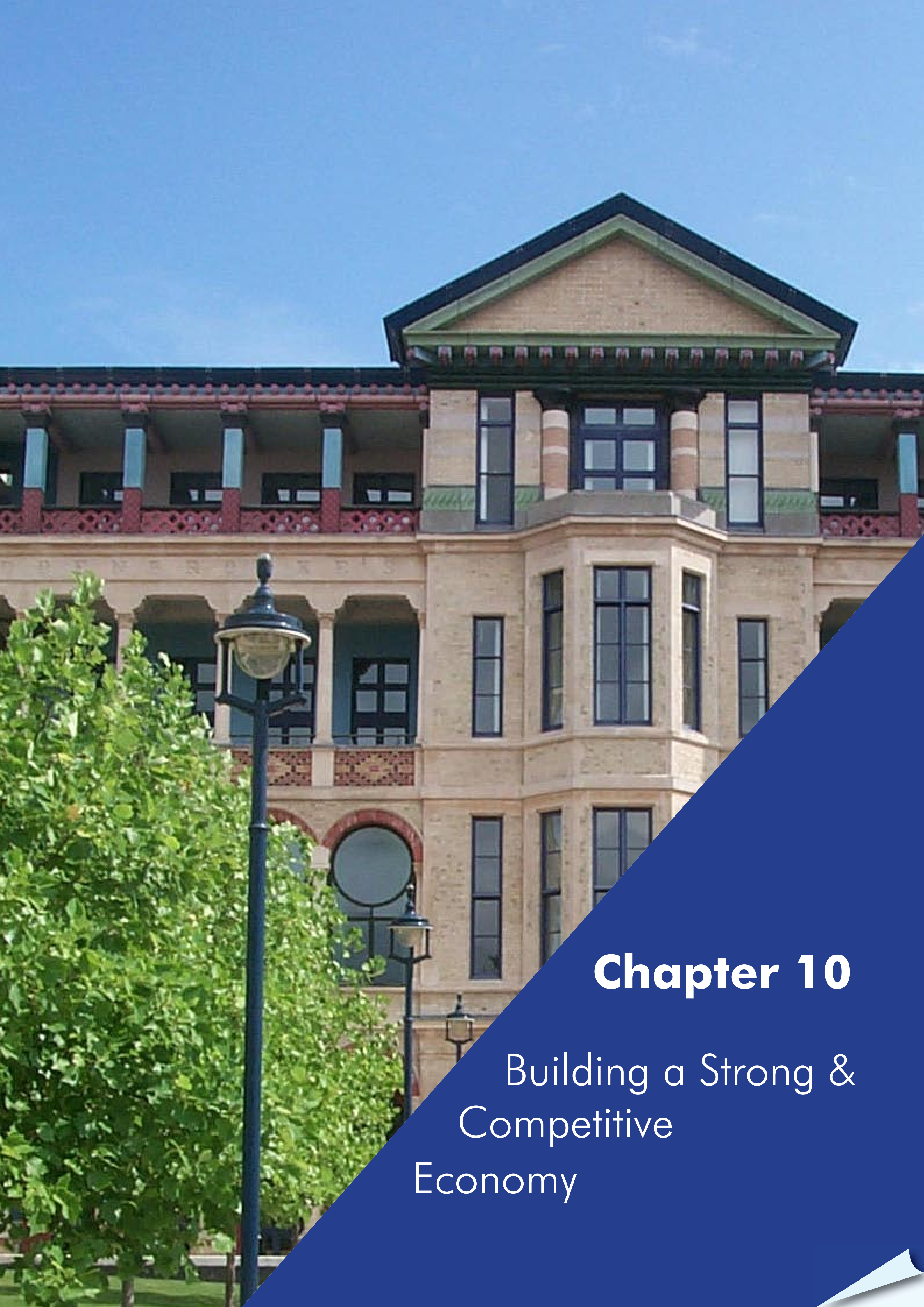

Chapter 10

Building a Strong & Competitive Economy

CHAPTER 10 – Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

10.1 Cambridge has bucked the trend and performed well in the economic downturn and it is important that the Council plans to meet the needs of business and the supply of land for business through the Local Plan. It should encourage and support sensibly managed economic growth in areas where Cambridge already stands out: higher education, research and knowledge-based industries, whilst also supporting development of businesses that provide an essential service for Cambridge.

10.2 Cambridge is a regional shopping destination. The Local Plan should ensure that it maintains Cambridge's position as a regional centre, providing a range of shops to meet the needs of the wider area. At the same time the district and local centres and shopping streets throughout the city will be supported as they have a valuable role in providing for day-to-day needs.

10.3 Cambridge is a major national and international tourist destination. Key attractions include King's College Chapel, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge University Botanic Gardens, Kettle's Yard, the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences, Cambridge and County Folk Museum and further afield Imperial War Museum Duxford and Anglesey Abbey. The Local Plan should help to encourage the sustainable growth of tourism and maximise the economic benefits it brings while also ensuring that it does not impact adversely on the quality of life of existing residents.

10.4 This chapter outlines issues and options relating to building a strong and competitive economy, including employment, retail, higher education and tourism. It is consistent with the NPPF. It has been drawn up using a number of sources of evidence, including the feedback from workshops held in early 2012.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Option 121 – Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

To strengthen and grow Cambridge's economy to provide a range of job opportunities across the city, especially in areas where Cambridge already stands out: higher education, research and knowledge based industries, and maintain and strengthen the city's regional role as a centre for shopping and tourism.

Key Facts

EMPLOYMENT

- There are 98,000 jobs in Cambridge[1];
- Cambridge is a national centre for higher education and research and development, with employment in those sectors over 10 and 8 times higher than the national shares of employment respectively[2];

[1] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431840/report.aspx?town=cambridge
[2] http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/economicandcommunitydev/ecodevelopment/economicassessment.htm

- Growth is forecast in business services, education, and health to 2031; whilst jobs in public administration, manufacturing, and communications are forecast to contract[3];
- Cambridge has experienced a loss of industrial sites in recent years, as they have been redeveloped for retail, leisure or residential use, and there is likely to be continued pressure to redevelop such sites for higher value uses[4];
- Cambridge has bucked the trend and performed well in the current economic downturn, it has a strong private sector, high numbers of skilled workers and large numbers of workers in the knowledge-based economy[5].

RETAIL

- Cambridge is a regional shopping centre.
- Shopping in the City Centre is split between the historic core and the Fitzroy/Burleigh Street area, which includes the Grafton.
- There are currently 3 district centres and 22 local centres in the city, providing for day-to-day needs.
- Shopping along Mill Road is characterised by its diversity and independent traders.
- Retail warehousing is found at the Cambridge Retail Park and Beehive Centre on Newmarket Road.
- Smaller supermarkets and convenience shops are found within existing centres, and there are 5 out of centre superstores within the city.

HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION

- 20,355 students studied at the University of Cambridge and 7,566 studied at Anglia Ruskin University in 2009/10.
- Despite a decline of up to 14% in university applicants nationally. This has not been the case in Cambridge, which continues to attract applicants from the UK and internationally.
- Undergraduate student numbers at the University of Cambridge have been growing at 0.5% per annum, with postgraduate numbers growing at 2% per annum. Current indications are that these levels are likely to be maintained to at least 2031.
- The continued growth in student numbers puts pressure on providing enough student accommodation for both universities.
- Both Universities are affected by the high cost of housing in the area for their key workers. The University of Cambridge is planning to make

[3] http://www.insighteast.org.uk/viewResource.aspx?id=18136
[4] Cambridge Cluster at 50 – The Cambridge economy retrospect and prospect
[5] http://www.centreforcities.org/20123.html

significant new provision for housing in North West Cambridge.

- There are 22 language schools in the city, which contribute significantly to the local economy. The throughput of students has increased significantly in recent years to around 30,000 students annually in 2009.

TOURISM

- Cambridge is a major international visitor destination. 4.1 million people visited Cambridge in 2010 and of those 3.2 million were day trippers and 835,300 were staying visitors. Overall numbers have declined by around 1% since 2008.
- Key attractions include Kings College Chapel, Fitzwilliam Museum, the Botanic Gardens, Kettles Yard, the Folk Museum and Sedgwick Museum, and further afield Duxford and Anglesey Abbey.
- Tourism generated £393 million for the local economy and employed over 5,150 people in 2010, though 1500 fewer than in 2008.
- Aside from leisure tourists who generate around 35% of the demand for visitor accommodation, the University and businesses also generate significant demands, about 65% of the demand for good quality visitor accommodation. Events such as graduation, Cambridge Science Festival and the Folk Festival also draw in large numbers of visitors to the city.
- The current Local Plan tries to encourage more sustainable tourism, by providing more visitor accommodation to encourage staying trips, and supporting the development of new and alternative attractions.

Objectives

Employment

- Promote the growth of and linkages between employment clusters and key destinations;
- Maintain and enhance the diversity of jobs available in Cambridge;
- Provide a range of new employment land and seek to protect key employment areas.

Retail

- To maintain the vitality and viability of all centres in Cambridge and ensure that these are the priority location for new retail development;
- To provide a diverse retail offer which supports smaller independent traders.

Higher and further education

- To ensure that Cambridge remains a world leader in higher education and continues to develop as a centre of excellence in higher education research and knowledge-based industries.

- To support the University of Cambridge and the Colleges in maintaining their pre-eminent position internationally;.
- To support the development of Anglia Ruskin University in meeting the needs of the region.
- To work with the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University in managing the impact of their expansion in student numbers on the city's overall housing stock.
- To address any distortions in the local housing market as a result of the attractiveness to developers of providing student housing.

Tourism

- To encourage the sustainable growth of tourism to protect the environment, the impact upon the quality of life in the city, the impact upon the quality of life in the city, and maximise the economic benefits it brings;
- Protect and broaden the range of visitor accommodation to encourage longer stays;
- To manage visitor accommodation proposals to ensure they meet identified demands and forecast potential;
- Promote the development of alternative attractions to reduce pressures on the historic core.

Employment

10.5 Cambridge is a world leader in higher education, research and knowledge based industries and has a prosperous and dynamic economy. The recent economic down turn has not affected Cambridge as badly as other cities in the UK and unemployment in the City remains low. Cambridge faces other economic challenges, most notably a restricted land supply and competing demands for other uses, e.g. residential.

Vision

10.6 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to set out a clear economic vision for their area, which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. The following is proposed:

> *Cambridge will continue to develop as a centre of excellence and a world leader in the fields of higher education and research; it will foster dynamism, prosperity and further expansion of the knowledge-based economy. The quality of life in the city that makes it an attractive place to live, work, study and visit in will be protected and enhanced.*

Questions

10.1 Do you agree with the vision?

10.2 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added?

Selective Management of the Economy

10.7 Cambridge has a long established policy of 'Selective Management of the Economy', whereby employment uses that have an essential need for a Cambridge location or provide a service for the local population are given positive support. This ensures that the limited supply of land in Cambridge is reserved for businesses that support the Cambridge economy.

10.8 However, the Cambridge Cluster at 50 study noted that this approach may be having unintended consequences of discouraging large scale, high value manufacturing as well as high-tech headquarter functions from locating to the area, and recommended that the Council review this policy. This recommendation needs to be balanced against the fact that Cambridge's economy is faring relatively well and this policy has helped to shape the local economy. The question therefore is: to what extent has Cambridge's economy fared well despite this policy, or because of it?

10.9 Furthermore, there have been, and continue to be ongoing changes to national policy that may impact on the operation of this policy. The review of the Local Plan should consider whether selective management of the economy as a policy approach should be continued, amended or discontinued.

10.10 National policy requires local authorities to plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries. In Cambridge, the policy of selective management of the economy has traditionally been the policy tool to implement this, ensuring there is sufficient land supply for Cambridge's high-tech cluster. Recent reports have identified the potential for a need to amend this policy, the following options set out the reasonable means of doing this.

Option 122 – Continue with Selective Management of the Economy unamended

One option could be to leave the selective management policy in the 2006 Local Plan unchanged and roll it forward into the new Local Plan. This reserves new employment land in Cambridge for uses that support the high tech cluster or provide a service for the local population.

This policy supports the Cambridge Phenomenon by reserving limited employment land for those uses that have an essential need to locate in Cambridge. This policy is a long running feature of Cambridge's planning policy and it could be argued it has contributed to Cambridge's current economic success.

The land supply in Cambridge is very limited. By limiting employment land to those firms that benefit from locating in Cambridge and benefit the Cambridge Phenomenon or those that serve the local economy, the policy ensures that there is enough land for these firms and they are not priced out of the market by more generic, but higher value, uses.

Option 123 – Amend Selective Management of the Economy to include some additional uses

A second option could be to amend selective management of the economy to allow for large scale, high value manufacturing and high tech headquarters to locate to Cambridge.

High value manufacturing linked to the wider Cambridge economy could benefit the Cambridge Phenomenon by encouraging the evolution of the cluster from pure research to include the development and commercialisation of ideas. The promotion of high tech firms' headquarters in Cambridge could encourage the evolution of the cluster from pure research to include and corporate decision-making. Headquarter functions provide a high proportion of high value jobs and help retain wealth for the local area. These amendments would preserve the thrust of the policy, which is to retain land for those firms that benefit the economy.

Opening up the limited supply of employment space to other uses will reduce land available to pure research and development. Furthermore, corporate headquarter functions are high value and could push out lower value uses that are fundamental to the success of the Cambridge economy.

Option 124 – Discontinue the policy of Selective Management of the Economy

A third option could be to not continue with the policy of selective management of the economy in the new Local Plan.

The policy currently discriminates against certain users, increasing costs for them and hindering them from locating to Cambridge. Discontinuing this policy will remove these costs from business and allow the market to decide which business should locate in new employment space in Cambridge. This would also remove a barrier to investment in new employment land.

The policy discourages the redevelopment of employment space that is past its prime, as any such redevelopment would result in the Selective Management policy being applied and investors can be nervous about this restriction. This can result in sub-standard offices not being redeveloped, hindering the supply of office space in Cambridge.

Questions

10.3 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.4 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.5 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.6 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Protection of Industrial and Storage Space

10.11 In order to maintain a diversity of employment opportunities and a full range of services in Cambridge, the Council operates a policy of protecting industrial and storage space in Cambridge. In some specifically identified sites, development which results in the loss of any floorspace in industrial or storage use is not permitted. In areas not specifically identified on the proposals map, development which results in the loss of industrial or storage space is only permitted if certain criteria are met. In essence, this is a policy of 'protect the best, evaluate the rest'.

10.12 Despite this policy, the Council's Employment Land Review 2008 indicates that there have been substantial losses of employment land in Cambridge since 1998, much of this within industrial and storage use. The review of the Local Plan will want to consider to what extent the Council should continue to protect these uses.

10.13 The NPPF says that local planning authorities should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Evidence suggests that there is a shortage of industrial land in Cambridge and the reasonable options for protecting industrial land are set out below.

Option 125 – Continue with Protection of Industrial and Storage Space unamended

One option could be to continue with the policy of preventing loss of industrial / storage space in protected industrial sites and evaluating the redevelopment of other industrial and storage sites in other areas of the city against criteria. The criteria currently assessed against deal with: the supply of and demand for industrial land; jobs generated by redevelopment; impact on the surrounding environment / amenity; redevelopment of the site for industrial uses; and redevelopment for other uses.

There continues to be a need to maintain a diversity of employment opportunities within Cambridge, not everyone wants to, or is able to work in an office. There have been considerable losses of industrial / storage space in the past, and evidence suggests that continued loss of these uses could pose a problem in the future. There is a continued need for a full range of local services to be provided within Cambridge. The loss of industrial floorspace within Cambridge would mean these businesses are pushed out of the city to locations that will result in less sustainable journeys. Protecting industrial and storages space allows the Council to meet the forecast needs of business in the plan period. The loss of land for such uses within the city is not yet a problem, but further loss of space could become an issue in the future. Small workshop units are sometimes the initial home for new businesses unable to afford higher rents for proper office space. Protection of this part of the supply chain for employment development has an impact on the wider economy.

Option 126 – Amend the policy of Protection of Industrial and Storage Space by deleting all protected sites

A second option could be to amend the policy by deleting all protected industrial and storage areas, in effect allowing the criteria that are used to assess the loss of industrial / storage space throughout the rest of the city to be applied to sites currently protected from any loss of floorspace. The criteria currently assessed against deal with: the supply of and demand for industrial land; jobs generated by redevelopment; impact on the surrounding environment / amenity; redevelopment of the site for industrial uses; and redevelopment for other uses.

This would allow flexibility for change of use or redevelopment of sites where there are persistent vacancy problems. This would allow some uses that are able to provide more low skilled jobs than industrial units can per square metre (although a different type of job), for example children's indoor activity centres, on sites where this would otherwise not be able to happen. Increasing the flexibility of the policy would allow sites currently protected from any change of use to be changed in certain circumstances. Increasing the flexibility to change would mean that some of the best industrial sites in Cambridge could come under increased pressure in the future.

Option 127 – Amend the policy of Protection of Industrial and Storage Space to encourage other forms of employment development

A third option could be to amend the criteria used in the policy to add a criterion such that loss of floorspace in industrial / storage use is acceptable where it facilitates an overall growth in employment floorspace (for example in office floorspace).

This would allow flexibility for change of use or redevelopment of sites where there are persistent vacancy problems. It is identified that there will be a medium term shortage of office floorspace in Cambridge. This increased flexibility may help address that shortage, albeit not necessarily in prime locations. Increasing the flexibility of the policy would allow sites currently protected from any change of use to be changed in certain circumstances. The policy has not succeeded in preventing the loss of industrial floorspace in the past. Should the policy be continued if it has not succeeded? Some uses that could replace industrial uses would be able to provide more low skilled jobs than industrial units can per sqm (although a different type of job), for example children's indoor activity centres. The policy can result in a degree of "hope value" on sites outside protected industrial site, discouraging good maintenance and letting of premises. Increasing the flexibility to change would mean that some of the best industrial sites in Cambridge could come under increased pressure in the future.

Questions

10.7 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.8 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.9 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.10 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Protection of other Employment Space

10.14 Currently, the Council only protects employment land that is in industrial or storage use. The Employment Land Review 2008 and the Cambridge Cluster Study 2011 identify a shortage of office space in and near the centre of Cambridge in the medium term (once the office development around Cambridge Station (called "CB1") has been developed and let). Once the CB1 scheme is let, there is likely to be pressure on other offices in the city. At present, tired offices in need of refurbishment can currently find tenants simply due to the lack of alternatives. With increased pressure to refurbish or redevelop other offices throughout the city, it is possible that some of this pressure will take the form of demand to change the use of sites to other uses (e.g. residential). Given the identified medium term shortage of office space and the potential for loss of existing office space, the Council should consider protecting office space within Cambridge from changing use to alternative uses. The Employment Land Review 2008 specifically identifies a number of sites for protection.

10.15 The NPPF says that local authorities should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Evidence suggests that there will be shortage of office space in Cambridge and the reasonable options for protecting offices are set out below.

Option 128 – Do not protect office space

One option could be to continue to not protect office floorspace in Cambridge from change of use.

This would let the market decide on the loss of office space. A continued demand for offices may be able to ensure that land values are resilient enough to hold off pressure to change to higher value uses.

Option 129 – Protection of office space

A second option could be to protect office floorspace in Cambridge from change of use using a criteria based approach.

There is evidence that there will be a medium term shortage of office space in Cambridge, especially in the City Centre. Any loss of offices will exacerbate this problem, hindering the ability to meet the needs of business and negatively impacting on the Cambridge economy.

Questions

10.11 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.12 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.13 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.14 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Promotion of Cluster Development

10.16 The Council currently has a policy that seeks to promote development linked to the Cambridge cluster. This policy sets out those uses that are fundamental to the success of the Cambridge Phenomenon and positively promotes development that can demonstrate a clear need to cluster in Cambridge. It promotes the development of purpose-designed accommodation for these sectors (e.g. high tech incubator units), as well as locations particularly suited to these activities. However, this policy is rarely used.

10.17 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries. Cambridge has an internationally recognised high tech and research cluster and the reasonable options for promoting it are set out below.

Option 130 – Continue to Promote Cluster Development

One option could be to continue the policy to promote Cluster Development in Cambridge.

The policy gives a clear indication of those sectors that support the Cambridge Phenomenon as well as an indication of those locations particularly suited to these activities. The policy promotes purpose-designed accommodation for sectors that support the Cambridge Phenomenon. The policy is positively promoting the type of development the Council would like to see in Cambridge.

Option 131 – Do not Promote Cluster Development

A second option could be to discontinue the policy to promote Cluster Development in Cambridge.

The policy is rarely used and is unlikely to be a deciding factor in any planning decision. The risks of removing it may be small and will not prevent cluster development.

Questions

10.15 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.16 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.17 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.18 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Shared social spaces as part of employment areas

10.18 The Cambridge Cluster at 50 study identifies the fact that a number of peripheral employment sites are perceived to be isolated, both in relation to each other and in relation to the City Centre and the Railway Station. The lack of a social aspect, especially on the newer peripheral employment sites (e.g. West Cambridge), is making them less attractive places to locate to. The study notes that this could simply be a function of time. The reasonable options for promoting shared social spaces in new employment areas are set out below.

Option 132 – Promote shared social spaces

One option could be to introduce a policy to promote shared social spaces involving a mix of uses in employment areas.

The policy will make newer employment areas more attractive to business, as well as reducing pressure upon office space in the City Centre.

Option 133 – Do not promote shared social spaces

A second option could be to not introduce a policy to promote shared social spaces in employment areas.

The policy is likely to have financial implications for the developers of new business space. There is a danger that the shared social spaces are not successful. Furthermore, there are question marks as to what form the shared social spaces could take (restaurant, conference facilities, public house etc) and how they would be implemented. If they will benefit new employment areas by making them more attractive to business, then the market may provide them by itself.

Questions

10.19 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.20 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.21 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.22 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Densification of existing employment areas

10.19 The main employment locations within and on the edge of Cambridge are the offices in the City Centre and around Cambridge Station, Business Parks and Cambridge Science Park in the Northern Fringe, Cambridge Airport, Addenbrooke's Hospital and West Cambridge. In addition to these areas there are a number of offices and industrial uses dotted around the City.

10.20 Evidence shows that the land supply for potential development in Cambridge is very limited, and land for employment development is no different. Furthermore, the Cambridge Cluster at 50 Study identified the desire for businesses to be located in the City Centre, or in locations with good access to the City Centre and Railway Station. The limited supply of land combined with the desire to be in the City Centre (competing with the multitude of other uses that also want to be in the City Centre) means that in order to support the economy of Cambridge an argument could be made that Cambridge should make the best use of its employment land supply and seek to densify the use of some employment sites. There would be site specific design challenges as to how this could be done, or if this could be done, on a site by site basis.

10.21 The NPPF says that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. A number of specific site options are looked at in the Opportunity Areas section of this report in Chapter 5, these include opportunities at West Cambridge, Cambridge Northern Fringe East and the Station Area. The reasonable options for densifying existing employment areas are set out below.

Option 134 – Densify existing employment areas

One option could be to introduce a policy to densify a number of specific employment sites.

This would make best use of existing developed land and reduce the pressure to develop Greenfield sites. This may represent an opportunity to redevelop run down sites. This may make public transport to peripheral employment sites more viable and allow improvements in the service. Seeking to densify peripheral employment sites will give an opportunity to introduce or improve shared social spaces on employment sites. The lack of shared social spaces on employment sites is identified as a problem in the Cambridge Cluster at 50 Study.

Option 135 – Do not densify existing employment areas

A second option could be to not introduce a policy to densify a number of specific employment sites.

There are design challenges as to the quantum of development that can fit on a site. Seeking to densify employment sites may result in pressure to change the use of existing industrial areas to higher value uses resulting in the loss of industrial land, of which there is an identified issue of supply. Seeking to densify employment sites could have an impact on the surrounding transport infrastructure.

Questions

10.23 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.24 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.25 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.26 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Retail

Need for additional retail floorspace to 2031

10.22 A key issue is how much additional retail floorspace will be needed by 2031 to support the increase in population associated with additional homes and jobs in the city. The Cambridge Sub-Region Retail Study (CSRRS) was produced as a retail evidence base by consultants, GVA Grimley, for Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council in October 2008. This showed that retail in Cambridge was performing well and provided an assessment of the need for new floorspace for both comparison goods (items not generally purchased on a frequent basis e.g. clothing, shoes, electrical goods, furniture, books.) and convenience goods (everyday and essential items e.g. food and drink) to 2021.

10.23 An update of the retail needs assessment will be undertaken this summer to provide a more up to date forecast of the need for retail to 2031. This will take into account current retail expenditure growth rates and the predicted proportion of sales from the internet over the next 20 years. The results of this will be fed into the plan-making process and will inform the sites consultation to be carried out later this year and the development of policies in the Draft Plan.

Question

10.27 Do you know of any sites, which could be considered for additional retail, if there were a need for further retail development?

Shopping in Town Centres

10.24 The hierarchy of town centres is outlined in the Spatial Strategic Options Chapter (Chapter 4). Within Cambridge, this includes the City Centre, district centres and local centres. A key objective of the Local Plan will be to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of its centres. A policy that seeks to maintain a high proportion of retail floorspace (Use Class A1 – mainly shops) but also encourages a proportion of mixed uses and diversity can help to achieve this. A proportion of mixed uses can enhance the vitality of town centres and ensure they remain active in the evenings.

10.25 The NPPF requires that Local Plans define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas. These boundaries will be shown on maps and consulted upon in the sites consultation later this year and will be shown on the Proposals Map. Within the City Centre, there are primary shopping frontages, which are areas mainly for shops (Use Class A1), and secondary shopping frontages, where there is a greater opportunity for diversity of uses. The extent of these will also be consulted upon.

10.26 In line with the sequential approach, set out in the NPPF, new retail developments should be located as a priority in centres. Development within the different types of centre in Cambridge should be of an appropriate nature and scale to the centre. For example, large-scale development that would be suitable in the City Centre, would not be suitable in a Local Centre. Development should also not have a detrimental impact on the functioning of other centres.

10.27 Maintenance of existing retail diversity and the support for further retail diversity in all of the centres within the retail hierarchy is also a key issue in Cambridge. It is important to tackle this to prevent Cambridge becoming a ‘clone’ of other towns and to provide variety and distinctiveness in the shopping experience. Some parts of Cambridge, such as Mill Road, have a diverse retail offer and are characterised by small independent traders. The NPPF requires that Local Plans promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres. The NPPF is also supportive of retaining and enhancing existing markets such as those in Cambridge’s City Centre.

10.28 One of the ways in which the planning system can help to encourage retail diversity is by making sure that there is a range of shop sizes available, and also by preventing shops from amalgamating to produce larger units which may not be suitable for smaller independent traders. We could also require that any new major retail developments provide a proportion of small retail units to maintain the diversity of shops and that these be occupied by independent businesses, therefore providing a mix of retail uses. A small shop could be defined as one with 80sqm gross floorspace or less, occupied by an independent retail or service outlet (one with nine units or less following the Goad definition). This definition was used in the London Small Shops Study (2010)[6].

10.29 Food and drink uses (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5) provide a valuable contribution to the vitality and viability of centres and particularly contribute to the evening economy. However, they can also have a significant impact on residential amenity or environmental quality as a result of noise, vibration, smells, increased late night activity, or increased traffic and parking. Such problems are exacerbated where there is a concentration of such uses.

10.30 Another issue in Cambridge, has been the change of use from shops (Use Class A1) and other town centre uses (within Use Classes A2 to A5) to housing or student accommodation at ground floor level. In local centres this can undermine the functioning of the centre. Policy 6/7 of the current Local Plan prevents the loss of shops to other uses, but this has not always been successful. Other town centre uses do not currently have any protection and so there is no policy protection for public houses (Use Class A4) within centres. The issue of the loss of pubs is addressed further in Chapter 11.

10.31 Whilst housing at ground floor level is a concern, living above shops and other town centre uses is supported. Town centres are sustainable locations in which to live, with good access to shops and facilities and public transport. People living in the centres also add to their vitality and provides potential customers for the shops and facilities, adding to their viability.

10.32 The reasonable policy options are outlined below. In some cases, different approaches have been set out to deal with the same issue and we would welcome comments on these alternatives:

Option 136 – General shopping policy that applies to all centres

One option could be to develop a policy that addresses all the issues that are outlined above. This would bring together aspects of several individual policies in the current Local Plan (Policies 6/6, 6/7 and 6/10). This policy would apply to all planning applications for new retail or change of use in centres. It could include the following criteria:

- New A1 retail development will be permitted within centres if it is of an appropriate nature and scale to that of the centre and will add to the vitality and viability of the centre.
- That there should be no joining up of smaller shops to form larger units unless there are special circumstances where this would add to the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- That any new large retail, leisure or mixed use developments provide a proportion of small shops in order to maintain the diversity of shops in the city. A small shop could be defined as one with 80sqm gross floorspace or less, occupied by an independent retail or service outlet (one with nine units or less). Such developments could also provide

[6] Greater London Authority, London Small Shops Study (2010), Roger Tym & Partners

restaurants and cafés (A3) or drinking establishments (A4) which would add to vitality and viability. We would welcome comments on what should be considered a large development. This could be 2,500 sqm following the threshold for a retail impact assessment in the NPPF, or 1,000 sqm the threshold for major applications?

- We could control the change of use from A1 to other town centre uses (A2 to A5, C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis) by including a percentage of A1 uses, below which we would not allow any further changes of use in order to keep the majority of units within a shopping use. This is the approach used in the current Local Plan. The percentage of A1 uses would vary depending upon the centre and the current percentage of A1 uses taking into account the results of the recent shopping survey. In the case of the City Centre, this percentage would be different in the primary and secondary frontages.

Or

- We could control the change of use from A1 to other town centre uses (A2 to A5 C1, D1, D2 or related sui generis) based upon factors such as:
    - The location and prominence of the unit;
    - The size of frontage of the unit;
    - Consideration of the number and location of other non-A1 units in the street frontage and centre as a whole and whether there is a clustering of non-A1 units;
    - Consideration of whether there are any vacant units in that Use Class within the centre;
    - Any benefits the new use may have in relation to diversity or on the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.
- No loss of A1 - A5 town centre uses to housing or student accommodation at ground floor level as this tends to undermine centres. However, there may be cases where it is better to allow redevelopment rather than having a vacant building. In such exceptional circumstances, we would require clear evidence in the form of active marketing for at least 12 months and local surveys to indicate a specific need for the new use.
- Support for residential uses located above retail and other town centre uses wherever possible, especially in new developments or redevelopments.
- Any developments within Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 (food and drink outlets) will only be permitted within centres where they will not give rise to unacceptable environmental problems, traffic problems or nuisance and their cumulative impact is considered. The policy could also be extended to include leisure uses found within centres such as night clubs and music venues.

The advantages of this policy would be that it brings all town centre shopping issues under the umbrella of one policy and it also helps to support the diversity, vitality and viability of town centres.

The disadvantages of this approach would be that the policy could be very long and there is the potential for losing the differences in policy approach between different types of centre.

Option 137 – Separate policy options for different types of centre

A second option could be to have separate policies that deal with the following types of centre:

- City Centre;
- District Centres;
- Local Centres.

In relation to the same issues as Option 136 above:

- Vitality and viability;
- Scale of new development according to nature and scale;
- Encouraging retail diversity and small shops;
- Change of use from A1 to other uses;
- Prevention of over-concentration of food and drink outlets.

This policy would have the same effect as the option above, but would be organised in a different way.

The advantage of this option would be that it would be clearer what applies to each of the different types of centre in the retail hierarchy. However, the disadvantage would be that there could be a lot of repetition in the policies.

Questions

10.28 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.29 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.30 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.31 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Neighbourhood Shops outside centres

10.33 There are a number of individual shops and small groupings of shops or other town centre uses (in Use Classes A1 to A5) within the City, which are not large enough to be classified as a local centre, however they still have an important role to play in providing for local needs within easy walking distance. The current Local Plan does not provide any protection for such units and so some of these are being lost to other uses such as housing.

10.34 There are two possible options: to either include a policy extending some protection to shops performing a neighbourhood role outside the identified centres in the retail hierarchy or not, instead focussing protection on the identified centres. If some of the smaller local centres are no longer classified as such (under policy option 26 dealing with the retail hierarchy), it may be more important to protect any remaining shops.

Option 138 – Neighbourhood Shops

One option could be to include a policy on protection of individual shops or small groups of shops not in an identified centre, which have a neighbourhood function (excluding retail warehousing and out of centre superstores). Change of use from Use Classes A1 - A5 to any other use would not be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, alternative uses would be considered but clear evidence would be required in the form of marketing and local surveys to indicate a specific need for the new use.

This option would have the advantage of protecting neighbourhood shops, which currently do not have policy protection. However, it may be better to focus protection of shops within the identified centres, as market forces may mean that these shops are less economically viable and should be allowed to freely change to other uses.

Option 139 – No policy on Neighbourhood Shops

A second option would be not to have a policy dealing with neighbourhood shops as market forces will determine whether shops are viable or not. Instead, policy protection would be concentrated on the identified district and local centres.

Questions

10.32 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.33 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.34 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.35 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Convenience Shops

10.35 The potential need for further convenience shops (foodstores) and where these should be located is an issue. The need for further convenience floorspace will be updated in the review of the retail needs assessment. However, more recent work has taken place looking at the need for further convenience floorspace in North West Cambridge, which can be used as an evidence base.

10.36 A Supplementary Retail Study (SRS) was undertaken by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners in 2010 as a supplement to the Cambridge Sub-Regional Retail Study. It was used to develop Informal Planning Policy Guidance (IPPG) on foodstore provision in North West Cambridge. This sets out a strategy for two medium sized supermarkets of 2,000 sqm net floorspace, one in the local centre at the University site and one in the local centre at the NIAB site, and one small supermarket in the local centre at Orchard Park. The IPPG also sets out a number of development principles in relation to the development of foodstores and local centres, which should be followed by developers. The strategy for foodstores set out in the IPPG needs to be included within the new Local Plan as policy. This is possible for the NIAB site, but the development plan for the University site is the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan, which will not be replaced by the Local Plan. In this case, the IPPG and policy in the Local Plan will be material considerations in planning decisions.

10.37 The IPPG has already been adopted by the Council as a material consideration, and it was always intended that it be included as a policy when the Local Plan was reviewed. Therefore, there is only one reasonable alternative to include this as a policy option.

Option 140 – New Foodstore in North West Cambridge

This option would allow for the inclusion of a policy stating that within the local centre at the NIAB 1 site a medium sized foodstore of up to 2,000 sqm net floorspace will be permitted. The foodstore should be designed so that it is successfully integrated within the local centres. The policy wording will be based upon the contents of the adopted IPPG.

Questions

10.36 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.37 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.38 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

10.38 The SRS updated the convenience retail capacity assessment, and estimated a lower level of capacity than the 2008 CSRRS. This suggests that there will be limited capacity for further convenience stores to 2021, and these are more likely to be of a small scale and within centres. These figures will be updated in the review of the retail needs assessment.

10.39 Any applications that come forward which are not in a centre, would need to follow the tests set out in the NPPF. Proposals would have to be in line with the sequential approach and subject to an impact assessment if over 2,500 sqm. As part of the retail needs assessment consideration will be given as to whether there needs to be a locally set threshold for the impact assessment in Cambridge.

10.40 Consultation on the IPPG on foodstore provision in North West Cambridge showed that there is concern in Cambridge about the amount of non-food (comparison) goods being sold in foodstores and the potential impact this might have on other centres. On average, 30% of the sales areas in superstores is for the sale of comparison goods. The IPPG requires that only 5 to 10% of the medium sized foodstores in North West Cambridge be for non-food sales.

10.41 In light of current evidence, the following policy option has been put forward as the only reasonable alternative.

Option 141 – Convenience Shopping

This option would allow for the development of a policy stating that only small scale development of further convenience floorspace is required and that this should be located in centres. This will need updating when more up to date evidence from the review of the retail needs assessment is available.

Any other applications will be assessed in relation to the sequential test and may require a retail impact assessment and transport assessment. The Council will look carefully at the proportion of food and non-food sales and may restrict the amount of non-food (comparison) goods by condition.

Questions

10.39 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.40 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.41 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Retail Warehousing

10.42 Retail warehousing is concentrated around Newmarket Road at the Cambridge Retail Park and Beehive Centre. There are also some other units scattered around the city. The NPPF does not recognise existing out of centre developments as town centres. There is an obvious grouping of units on Newmarket Road which lead to linked trips, but as the majority of these are made by car, they contribute to the traffic congestion on Newmarket Road.

10.43 The Cambridge Sub-Region Retail Study concluded that retail warehousing (a form of comparison shopping) was performing well but this does not justify the development of further out of centre provision. The study also said that it is important to protect the vitality and viability of the existing centres and restrict the spread of high street retailing to out of centre locations.

10.44 We will not know the need for further comparison floorspace until the review of the retail capacity assessment has been completed. However, in line with the conclusions above, we would not want to encourage further development outside centres. Retail warehousing should be for the sale of bulky goods and there is concern that some of the existing units along Newmarket Road are stores which are normally found along the High Street. An issue is the cumulative impact that such units might have on retail in the City Centre.

10.45 The retail warehouse parks are low density development with large car parks. In the longer term, a potential option could be the relocation of the retail warehousing elsewhere within Cambridge, to free up this space for other types of development. However, the issue would be in identifying a suitable replacement site / sites which would have sustainable transport links. The existing sites would only be suitable for certain types of development as they were previously contaminated.

Option 142 – Retail Warehousing

This option would allow for the development of a policy which limits any further retail warehouse development to bulky goods and requires that developers show that there would not be a significant impact on the City Centre and that there are not any sequentially preferable sites.

Questions

10.42 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.43 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.44 Please let us know if you have any idea of sites where the retail warehousing could be relocated?

10.45 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Higher and Further Education

Faculty Development at the University of Cambridge

10.46 The University of Cambridge continues to be a world leader in education. It is a vital driver of the Cambridge economy and is the reason why so many high technology and knowledge-based employers decide to locate in the City. This has underpinned the Cambridge Phenomenon. The university and its colleges are also significant employers in their own right.

10.47 It has not been affected by the problems seen elsewhere in the Country relating to tuition fees and declining numbers of students. The University of Cambridge continues to attract a large number of students, with a high proportion from overseas. However, the success of the University does lead to the issue of how to accommodate such large numbers, including where the students study and where they live.

10.48 The university's faculty and administrative buildings have traditionally been located in the central area of Cambridge. The West Cambridge site, south of Madingley Road also accommodates faculty buildings, postgraduate accommodation and also research institutes and commercial research and development. The site has been developed in line with an agreed masterplan and there are still parts of the site to be built.

10.49 The university submitted an outline planning application at the end of 2011 for development of North West Cambridge (land between Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road). The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan 2009 provides the adopted planning policies for this part of the city. Development in this location will be for a new university quarter with academic facilities, accommodation for 2,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, and approximately 3,000 dwellings of which 50% should be affordable housing to meet the needs of the University of Cambridge and College key workers. The site will also accommodate research institutes and commercial research and development space, and also a new local centre providing services and facilities.

10.50 The university's Old Press/ Mill lane site in the historic centre provides a range of accommodation for University academic and administrative uses. The University are planning to relocate many of these uses on this site to West Cambridge and other parts of the city. The existing Local Plan identifies this area as being appropriate for redevelopment for more mixed use. The Council has worked with the University to produce a Supplementary Planning Document to guide the redevelopment of the site. This was adopted by the Council in January 2010.

10.51 Over the plan period, West Cambridge and North West Cambridge will meet much of the university's requirements. As these developments are built, some teaching facilities will be relocated to these locations, freeing up sites and allowing some redevelopment and improvement of sites within the centre of Cambridge.

10.52 The university and the associated cluster of research institutes and commercial research and development make a significant contribution to the economy of Cambridge and nationally. Continued growth is therefore important to the growth of the local economy.

10.53 In light of current evidence and the need to allow for the continuing growth of the university, the following policy option has been put forward as the only reasonable alternative.

10.54 Within this policy option, we would welcome comments on the criteria put forward and sites identified.

Option 143 – Continued development and redevelopment of the University of Cambridge's Faculty sites

This option would allow for the development of a policy which would allow further development or redevelopment of the University of Cambridge's faculty and administrative sites provided that they meet certain criteria, including:

- Sensitive to its surroundings;
- Does not have any adverse impacts on the environment or amenity;
- Makes public realm improvements;
- Is an efficient use of land;
- Reduces parking spaces.

The policy would identify Old Press/Mill Lane site and the New Museums site as areas where an element of mixed use would be supported in order to enhance the attractiveness of the public realm. This would be similar to existing Local Plan policy 7/5 in the 2006 Local Plan.

The policy would also identify the following sites as opportunities for further development / redevelopment:

- The development of medical teaching facilities and related university research institutes at Addenbrooke's Biomedical Campus;
- West Cambridge site, including the Cavendish Laboratory and Vet School. This is being explored as a separate area of opportunity;
- The North West Cambridge site, which will be continue to be planned and built out over the next plan period.

The advantage of this approach is that it would provide flexibility for the best use to be made of central sites whilst at the same time encouraging environmental and public realm improvements.

Questions

10.46 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.47 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.48 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

University of Cambridge Student Housing Needs

10.55 The growth in student numbers means that there is still likely to be demand for more hostel accommodation for each college.

10.56 Proposed development at North West Cambridge will potentially provide two new colleges accommodating 2,000 units of student accommodation during the plan period.

10.57 The University aims for 100% of its undergraduates and 90% of its post graduates to be accommodated in colleges. Fulfilling this ambition will require around 21,390 student rooms by 2031. The colleges currently have just under 15,000 rooms available and have added around 158 rooms per annum to their stock over the last 5 years. The colleges anticipate future building to be around 140 rooms per annum to 2016. It is anticipated 40% of this figure can be provided by adapting and rationalising existing college properties. There is however finite scope in what can be re-provided within existing premises and there will need to be a shift later in the plan period towards greater development of new sites. If the colleges build at the previously discussed rate to 2031, they would provide 2,660 rooms raising the total stock to about 17,650. This would mean a shortfall of 3,740 by 2031. It is possible some of this provision can be provided within the 2,000 units proposed for North West Cambridge. Existing allocations will need to be reviewed and other land will need to be identified in the Local Plan review for other new college hostels.

10.58 The type of accommodation required is also subject to change as there is likely to be a large increase in postgraduate and post doctorate students (2% per annum) who may require larger family type accommodation, which demands more space. The colleges generally have limited space within their existing sites for development.

10.59 It is important that the new Local Plan makes adequate provision for the residential needs of the University of Cambridge and its colleges. Failure to address these accommodation needs will increase pressure on the city's private housing market and lead to difficulties in continuing to attract the best quality students which in turn will detract from the university's competitive position internationally.

10.60 Two policy options are put forward below to provide for the continuing growth in the University of Cambridge's student numbers and their need for accommodation.

Option 144 – University of Cambridge Staff and Student Housing

One option is to continue with the existing policy, which allocates new sites, allows new provision within existing college sites and in other windfall locations, subject to amenity considerations, proximity, supervision, and they do not result in a loss of family residential accommodation.

An advantage of this approach is that it provides flexibility in the provision of future sites for student hostels. A disadvantage however is that accommodating new growth will put considerable strains on existing colleges and it may not be possible to find enough land to maintain expected levels of growth.

Option 145 – Expand existing colleges rather than plan for new colleges at North West Cambridge

As second option is: should space allocated for new colleges at North West Cambridge be refocused towards providing additional student rooms for existing colleges rather than new colleges?

An advantage of this is that best use would be made of the existing limited land supply for new hostels. A disadvantage will be that such accommodation may be more remote from the existing colleges. This may make it more difficult for the colleges to provide, pastoral and communal facilities in sufficiently close proximity to these new satellite communities.

Questions

10.49 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.50 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.51 Do you know of any additional sites that would be suitable for student hostels for the University of Cambridge?

10.52 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Anglia Ruskin University Faculty Development

10.61 Anglia Ruskin University has also seen a continued healthy demand to study there, with no decline in student numbers since 2006. The university has carried out considerable redevelopment at their East Road Campus following a master plan approved in 2009. Current expansion includes the proposed relocation of the Institute of Nursing to Young Street. The East Road Campus site is constrained and there will not be any further space to expand once the redevelopment proposals are finished.

10.62 An issue is whether the current campus will cater for the long-term needs of the University over the plan period or whether there will need to be a satellite site. In the existing Local Plan, longer term growth was supported at East Cambridge, however this no longer provides an opportunity as Marshall's will not be relocating during the plan period.

10.63 In light of current evidence of the continuing need for the growth of Anglia Ruskin University, the following policy option has been put forward as the only reasonable alternative.

Option 146 – Anglia Ruskin University – Faculty Development

This option would allow for the development of a policy which permits continued development at the university's East Road Campus as long as it is in line with the existing masterplan.

Any development of a satellite campus site would have to fulfil a number of criteria, such as:

- A green and connected location;
- Site or buildings capable of adaption to deliver high quality new architecture;
- New university buildings, which provide a positive gateway along with good connections to other university sites;

- Provide a safe and vibrant campus combining sports and social facilities with accommodation and learning;
- A sustainable form of development;
- Integration of public transport to reduce the need to travel;
- High quality landscaping from the outset.

This would be similar to existing 2006 Local Plan policy 7/8.

An advantage of this approach would be that it provides a clearer framework for the university to grow and will ensure the existing master plan principles agreed on the East Road site are not eroded by overly intensive development.

Questions

10.53 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.54 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.55 Do you know of any additional sites that would be suitable for faculty development for Anglia Ruskin University?

10.56 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Anglia Ruskin University Student Accommodation

10.64 Anglia Ruskin University is short of student residential accommodation and is heavily dependent on houses acquired on short leases and on lodging accommodation with local families. Reliance on lodging houses can create pressure on the housing market in Cambridge.

10.65 Policy 7/9 in the existing Local Plan was very supportive of the development of student hostels for Anglia Ruskin University. This included a provision that if residential developments provided a significant proportion of student hostel accommodation for Anglia Ruskin University, they would not have to provide affordable housing as set out in Policy 5/5. This has been successful in encouraging the provision of further student hostels at locations like the former Cambridge Regional College Brunswick site and the Station Area (CB1). However, only around 10% of the university's 7,500 students are housed in university controlled hostel accommodation. The university are keen to house as many of its students as possible in purpose built hostels.

10.66 There is also a considerable need for affordable housing in Cambridge and we need to consider whether we can afford to lose affordable housing provision in this way.

10.67 At the same time, Anglia Ruskin University still has a requirement for student accommodation to 2031. They are losing Bridget's and Nightingale hostels on

Tennis Court Road, which were leased from the University of Cambridge. This will result in the loss of 106 bed spaces.

10.68 The provision of key worker housing for Anglia Ruskin University is also an issue as members of staff frequently travel large distances to work which is unsustainable.

Option 147 – Anglia Ruskin University – Support for Student Hostel Development with affordable housing exemption

One option would be to leave the current policy towards hostels for Anglia Ruskin University unchanged and roll it forward into the new Plan.

This policy safeguards sites for Anglia Ruskin University on the Proposals Map. If the development of these sites is also providing residential accommodation no requirement for affordable housing is sought under Policy 5/5.

A disadvantage is that developers may seek to avoid affordable housing provision in mixed use schemes by providing student hostels for Anglia Ruskin University instead. This would ultimately lead to a reduction the level of affordable housing provision.

Option 148 – Anglia Ruskin University – Support for Student Hostel Development but removal of affordable housing exemption

A second option might be to remove the affordable housing exemption clause in Policy 7/9.

A disadvantage of this approach could be fewer hostels coming forward for Anglia Ruskin University, with the associated risk of the university having to rely on head leases on properties in the private housing market, resulting potentially in higher rents for students.

Questions

10.57 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.58 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.59 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.60 Do you know of any additional sites that would be suitable for student hostels for Anglia Ruskin University?

10.61 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Speculative Student Hostel Accommodation

10.69 Existing Local Plan policy 7/10 supports the provision of speculative student hostels on sites that have not been allocated in the Local Plan but have become available during the plan period, in view of the student housing shortages. However, the policy includes very few planning criteria to ensure any proposal is tested against the need for such accommodation that it is being provided in a sustainable way.

10.70 This restricts such speculative development to full-time students attending Anglia Ruskin University or the University of Cambridge. Concerns have been raised that this is unfair to other legitimate established education providers in Cambridge such as specialist schools (see section on specialist schools below). A similar policy in the Oxford Local Plan was overruled by the Inspector at the Examination in Public into the Council's Core Strategy on 21st December 2010 The Inspector removed the embargo restricting occupation of such hostels to students attending the two universities in Oxford on the basis that it was inequitable and was discriminating against non-university colleges

Option 149 – Speculative Student Hostel Accommodation – limited to Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge

One option would be to include a policy that limits speculative student accommodation to Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge.

Possible criteria:

- There is a proven need for student hostel accommodation;
- It is in an appropriate location and reasonably close to the institutions served;
- The site has good public transport links;
- Appropriate management arrangements are in place to ensure students do not keep cars in Cambridge;
- The scale and design of the building is appropriate for the location and would not cause any loss of amenity to adjoining occupiers;
- Rooms and facilities are provided, which are of an appropriate size for living and study;
- The site provides high quality landscaping.
- Parking for bicycles and, if required, cars, is provided at appropriate levels in line with adopted parking standards;
- They provide sufficient external amenity space for the occupiers;
- They are accessible to students/staff with disabilities;
- They are warden controlled and are designed so as to minimise any potential for anti-social behaviour

This would be similar to policy 7/10 in the 2006 Local Plan, but expand the criteria against which sites are assessed before they are given permission.

An advantage of this policy option is that student hostel provision is planned in a more sustainable way and any adverse impacts on neighbours and local residents are minimised.

Option 150 – Speculative Student Hostel Accommodation – widened to include other established educational institutions

A second option could be to include a policy that broadens option 149 (above). This could also include an occupancy clause, to ensure the accommodation is available to full-time students engaged in courses of an academic year, or more, attending an existing educational establishment providing full-time education in the City of Cambridge.

Such a policy would also be implemented with a series of criteria aimed at minimising amenity impacts and proving need for example:-

- There is a proven need for student hostel accommodation;
- It is in an appropriate location and reasonably close to the institutions served;
- The site has good public transport links;
- Appropriate management arrangements are in place to ensure students do not keep cars in Cambridge;
- The scale and design of the building is appropriate for the location and would not cause any loss of amenity to adjoining occupiers;
- Rooms and facilities are provided, which are of an appropriate size for living and study;
- The site provides high quality landscaping;
- Parking for bicycles and, if required, cars, is provided at appropriate levels in line with adopted parking standards;
- They provide sufficient external amenity space for the occupiers;
- They are accessible to students/staff with disabilities;
- They are warden controlled and designed so as to minimise any potential for anti-social behaviour and crime.

Such a policy approach would ensure hostel building was more sustainable and matched need. It would also ensure that any increases in the concentration of students moving into non-student neighbourhoods has an appropriate level of control to prevent amenity problem for neighbours. Other educational institutions attract students to the city who need hostel accommodation and cannot always provide these hostels themselves. To not make such a policy change would result in continued pressure on the local housing market.

Questions

10.62 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.63 Which of the options do you prefer?

10.64 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.65 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Specialist Schools

10.71 There are a growing number of specialist schools in Cambridge which include language schools, secretarial and tutorial colleges, pre-university foundation courses, crammer schools and tutorial colleges. These schools attract a large number of students and contribute significantly to the local economy. For example, the 22 language schools in the city had a throughput of around 30,000 students in 2009. The number of schools has remained fairly constant over the past 10 years as the current Local Plan and previous Plan had restrictions concerning the establishment of new schools. All 22 centres are members of English UK, a national Association for accredited language schools. They employ around 330 permanent staff, 749 temporary summer staff and 184 temporary staff during the winter months.

10.72 In the last 20 years, there has been a 55% increase in the number of student weeks at Cambridge language schools from 80,000 to 124,000 (2.75%per annum). From 2007 to 2009, the number of student weeks increased from 122,000 to 124,000 (0.83%per annum). The annual load of students is now around 31,000 students. The increase has been mostly in student throughput as opposed to an increase in floorspace. The throughput has increased because students are attending all year round rather than just the summer months. Teaching is being carried out over a longer period of the day, extending into the evenings. The Cluster at 50 Study recognised the contribution that language schools make to the local economy and suggested a review of policy restriction on language schools on the basis of the contribution they make to the local economy which could be as high as £78 million per annum.

10.73 The type of students attending these specialist schools has also been diversifying from mainly school age children who spend their stay living in family housing to include older students who are undertaking pre- university foundation courses or business people studying English language. These students may require independent accommodation. This can put pressure on the local housing market in Cambridge, if students are not accommodated in purpose built hostels or in lodgings with host families.

10.74 The existing Local Plan has a policy, which only deals with language schools. However, these are only one type of specialist school, so a future policy would need to extend to include all of the other types of independent specialist schools. The numbers of these have increased from around 3 in the 1990s to around 8-10 currently. Examples include CATS in Round Church Street, Abbey College in Station Road, and Glisson Road, and Bellerby's College in Bateman Street and their premises at Manor Community College.

10.75 The existing policy 7/11 does not allow for new language schools, but allows an increase in existing facilities of 10% of existing floorspace. The policy has not been very effective because of the way the schools operate; the measure of load is based on student weeks. Using the number of student weeks may be a better way of managing the expansion of language schools and specialist schools as a whole, rather than using floorspace control.

10.76 The above proposed policy option of widening speculative student hostel accommodation provision to include occupancy by established educational institutions that have been in Cambridge would be a way of helping to provide for student accommodation for specialist schools and reducing pressure on the housing market in Cambridge.

Option 151 – Specialist colleges such as secretarial and tutorial colleges

One option could be to introduce a new policy to allow tutorial and secretarial colleges to set up and expand where the college provides residential accommodation social and amenity facilities for any non-local students.

This would fill a gap in current policy provision towards this class of specialist college, which fulfils an educational need for local residents in the sub-region and would be good for the local economy. Many of these types of institutions are already here and the policy would provide a clearer framework for applications from this sector to be considered.

A disadvantage of such a policy is that it adds to local housing pressures unless it is accompanied by relevant hostel provision.

Option 152 – Language Schools

A second option would be to relax the current policy restrictions on permanent language schools expanding their teaching space if they can provide purpose built hostel accommodation to support this growth on- or off-site.

An advantage would be investment in the local economy and greater economic benefits for the local economy as a result of the spend by students attending such establishments. Where residents provide host family accommodation, it provides them with an extra source of income and takes pressure off the open housing market.

A disadvantage which would need mitigating would be the pressure large numbers of students place on the City Centre's streets and open spaces. The schools should be encouraged not to leave students in large groups unsupervised.

Questions

10.66 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.67 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.68 Do you know of any additional sites that would be suitable for student hostels for specialist schools?

10.69 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Tourism

Visitor Accommodation/Hotel Provision

10.77 For the purposes of this section the term 'hotels' includes hotels at a range of standards from serviced apartments, aparthotels, budget, 2 star, 3 star, boutique and 4 star hotels. Between them these make up over 70-80% of the total supply of visitor accommodation in Cambridge with Guesthouses, B&B accommodation and the colleges who offer accommodation out of term time making up the remainder.

10.78 The city has 32 hotels, which provide 2,104 bedrooms. 13 hotels are located in the City Centre providing 938 rooms, 8 hotels are located outside the City Centre providing 293 rooms and 11 hotels are located on the city's outskirts providing a further 873 bedrooms.

10.79 Over the past few years, the recession in the economy has presented a window of opportunity for new hotel development and new supply has come on-stream, particularly at the budget level. The city's hotel stock is also diversifying with more luxury and boutique hotel offerings, and more recently, serviced apartments.

10.80 A consultancy study has been undertaken, entitled 'Cambridge Hotel Futures March 2012', to assess the supply of and demand for hotel and short stay accommodation in Cambridge to 2031.

10.81 The study shows that there is very strong and continuing market demand for significant new hotel development in Cambridge, particularly in the City Centre and on the outskirts of the city. Depending on how strongly the economy grows and the extent to which new hotels create additional demand, between 900 and 1,800 new rooms will be needed over the next 20 years. These rooms could be delivered as new hotels, as extensions to existing hotels, or through the re-positioning and redevelopment of existing hotels – or indeed as a mixture of the three approaches.

10.82 The performance of existing hotels is exceptional, well above national averages and benchmark figures for other competitor historic towns.

10.83 Planning permission has already been granted for around 1,100 rooms in 6 schemes in and around the city, with proposals for a further 300 rooms yet to be determined. It is not certain that all of these commitments will be actually delivered as the viability of hotel building is finely balanced, particularly where residential land values are so high.

10.84 The forecasts to 2031 suggest that at least a further 300, 4 star and boutique hotel bedrooms are needed in the City Centre over and above existing commitments. A further 70 bedrooms are needed in the 3 star category in the City Centre. If the hotels proposed in North West Cambridge and at Addenbrooke's are approved and come forward no more 3 or 4 star hotels are needed in the outer city area to 2031. Budget hotels look to be adequately catered for with existing commitments. A small growth in serviced apartments looks likely.

10.85 Hotels have an important role to play in both supporting and adding value to the tourism sector and the wider business development of the city. There is a need to plan proactively for an increase in the city's hotel supply to meet the anticipated further growth in hotel demand from business and leisure tourist markets.

10.86 The existing plan policy towards hotels includes no quantum of rooms needed, with no indication of the type of new hotel rooms required and no locational strategy for hotel development. The NPPF says that local planning authorities should encourage sustainable development and should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.

Option 153 – Additional Hotel provision based on a high growth scenario of around 1,800 new bedrooms

One option would be to plan for around 1,800 new hotel bedrooms being provided by 2031 by replacing the current policy with a new one which manages and monitors the future supply of hotel provision to ensure that sufficient quantity of new hotels bedrooms come forward at the levels required in the market.

Leaving delivery for the market to decide may mean we do not get the right sort of hotel provision in future or we will not get the best fit with key sites and types of hotel in greatest demand. A good proportion of this level of provision is already committed byway of existing planning permissions, although this does not necessarily mean these schemes will be delivered.

The above demand-led growth projections do not include any supply-led growth generated by new and existing hotels through their brand strength, marketing promotions or generated as a result of the enhanced conference facilities being planned at the Science Park, Addenbrooke's and North West Cambridge. It may not be appropriate to use this figure as a cap on overall hotel development. Flexibility may be needed in the application of any policy.

Under-provision in the city will also lead to visitors staying outside the city, more day-trippers, and will add to congestion and potentially adverse impacts upon local quality of life without bringing wider economic benefits to the city.

Option 154 – Additional Hotel Provision based on a medium growth scenario of around 1,300 new bedrooms

A second option would be to plan for a more modest growth of around 1,300 new hotel bedrooms to 2031, replacing the current policy with a new one which manages and monitors the future supply of hotel provision to ensure sufficient quantity of new hotels bedrooms come forward at levels required in the market.

Current proposals with planning permission or in the planning process, if delivered, would meet this level of future demand. This option would not however provide sufficient flexibility to improve the current mismatch in type of supply and demand. Nor would it take in to account supply-led growth generated by existing and planned hotel provision.

Under-provision in the city will also lead to visitors staying outside the city, more day-trippers, and will add to congestion and potentially adverse impacts upon local quality of life without bringing wider economic benefits to the city.

Questions

10.70 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.71 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.72 Do you think hotel development should be further encouraged?

10.73 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

What types of new hotels are needed and where should they be located?

10.87 It is preferable to locate new hotels in the City Centre, which is the most environmentally sustainable location and where there is identified demand for boutique hotels and a large luxury 4 star or 5 star hotel. There is, however, a lack of suitable sites in the City Centre. High site and development costs in the City Centre are also leading to the development of larger hotels, which might not be the most appropriate scale for the sensitive historic core. There is also intense competition from alternative uses for City Centre sites.

10.88 The City Centre remains the most desirable location for new hotel provision. Hotels fall within the definition of main town centre uses in the NPPF. Paragraph 23. The NPPF also advocates that a range of sites are identified to meet the scale and type of leisure and tourism needs in town centres. However, there are also a number of other priority locations on the edge of the City Centre and on the outskirts of the city, which are linked to drivers of demand including travel nodes, businesses and centres of employment.

10.89 Only one option has been put forward as to not focus development on the City Centre and priority locations would not represent a reasonable alternative in the light of national planning policy.

Option 155 – Location of New Hotels

This option would allow for the development of a policy to identify the City Centre as a primary location for new hotel development, particularly to provide new boutique provision and possibly a 4 or 5 star hotel. Potential City Centre locations include:-

- Shire Hall, possibly for a 5 star hotel if the site became available;
- Mill Lane as part of the area to be redeveloped under the existing Old Press/Mill Lane Supplementary Planning Document;
- Other locations should they become available e.g. other historic buildings suitable for conversion.

Direct other new build hotels to other priority locations at: -

- CB1 – a 4 star hotel –existing commitment and possibly a 3 star or one more budget hotel
- Cambridge Business Park/Science Park - existing commitment
- Addenbrooke's - existing commitment
- North West Cambridge - existing commitment
- Cambridge Airport in the longer term

A strong evidence base would be required to support hotels in other locations.

All applications would need to be supported by traffic impact assessments and car parking plans. New hotels should also encourage their guests to use sustainable forms of travel to reach the city and travel around once here.

Such a policy would guide new hotel development to the most sustainable locations and would reduce the need to travel in focusing some new hotel development on business areas. The policy should also clarify the extent of the City Centre.

Planning permission has already been granted or may be granted shortly for sufficient hotels in most of the above locations, apart from the City Centre and Cambridge Airport.

Questions

10.74 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.75 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.76 Do you know of any additional locations that would be suitable for hotel provision and why they are justified?

10.77 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Upgrade and Conversion of suitable City Centre properties to Hotels

10.90 One option to deliver future hotel potential is through repositioning/ rebranding, redevelopment and extension of existing hotels. Several hotels have identified an interest in doing this, by moving from 3 to 4 star or repositioning as a boutique hotel.

10.91 Internal upgrades or rebranding may not require planning permission and a number of other policies in the plan deal with extensions and other external changes to the appearance buildings.

10.92 Whilst some of the requirement may be able to be met in this way there is likely to be a requirement for further sites and conversion opportunities to fully satisfy the predicted demand, particularly in the City Centre where land is in short supply. Including a policy aimed at easing the upgrade of existing hotels and the conversion of suitable properties to hotels would seem a reasonable option for the new plan.

10.93 Given the shortage of land and the difficulty of finding hotel sites in the City Centre, the following policy option has been put forward as the only reasonable alternative.

Option 156 – Support the development of existing City Centre hotels and conversion of suitable City Centre properties to Hotels

This option would allow for the development of a policy to support the conversion and upgrade of existing hotels and other premises for hotel uses in the City Centre.

With no easily identifiable sites in the City Centre, this policy is vital to help to deliver some of the gaps identified in current and planned provision. Conversion is likely to be one of the most realistic ways forward. There will be pressure from higher value uses on any suitable properties that come forward so the inclusion of a favourable policy would help to meet these gaps.

An explicit criteria based policy would therefore seem appropriate.

Possible criteria might include:

- Located on frontages of main roads or areas of mixed use with easy access to good public transport;
- The properties are unsuitable for single family accommodation e.g. large houses with 5 or more bedrooms;
- Scale of development is compatible with adjoining uses;
- The premises provide safe access to the highway;
- Car parking to the Council's standards can be provided;
- There is no loss of amenity for adjacent residential uses.

Questions

10.78 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.79 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.80 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Serviced Apartments

10.94 A new generation of serviced accommodation that combines an element of self-catering with some hotel-style service is causing a blurring of the boundaries between uses in planning terms. These types of premises are generally intended to service extended stay corporate and university markets. They may, however, let units for shorter stays to business and leisure markets.

10.95 They fall into 4 main categories:

- all suite hotels (C1 hotel use)
- aparthotels/apartment hotels (C1 hotel use)
- purpose built serviced apartment blocks (C1 hotel use)
- residential apartments let as serviced apartments by letting agencies (C3 use)

10.96 Suite hotels, apartment hotels and serviced apartments can be let on a daily short-term basis, but may be subject to a 3 night minimum stay. They usually have a reception and hotel-style booking facilities.

10.97 If C3 residential units are subsequently let as serviced apartments, there is no planning distinction between the uses and they would not have occupancy conditions. Distinctions are further blurred within some residential blocks where some apartments are let for corporate and tourism clients and others are not.

10.98 Residential apartments may be operated as service apartments for variable periods depending on the owner's intentions. They may therefore not remain as serviced apartments on a permanent basis. Requiring a change of use may be difficult for the Council to enforce under current planning legislation.

10.99 In an area of high housing demand with large elements of affordable housing being negotiated, the further erosion of market stock in this way is not a desirable planning outcome.

10.100 It should also be recognised that residential apartments that are let as serviced apartments for extended corporate stays are competing in the residential lettings market as much as in the hotel market.

10.101 Three options have been put forward to either treat serviced departments as hotels and restrict permanent occupation of the premises as residential units or to develop a policy which prevents the change of use of permanent residential accommodation to a use for short term letting whether as serviced apartments or not.

Option 157 – Treat Serviced Apartments as Hotel Uses

One option could be to develop a policy for serviced apartments and aparthotels and make it clear they are being treated as a hotel use and restricting permanent occupation.

There may be legal difficulties in treating them as hotels under current planning legislation.

Option 158 – Prevent the change of use of newly built permanent residential accommodation to a use for short term letting

A second option could be to develop a policy which prevents change of use from permanent residential accommodation to a use for short term letting, whether serviced apartments or not, and impose conditions on the granting of any residential planning consent.

This option may be more practical and would require future serviced apartments to make bespoke planning applications rather than simply convert premises built as residential accommodation. Given the pressure on all development land, it may be more appropriate to have a policy that requires explicit applications for these uses.

Option 159 – Consider using licensing to regulate serviced apartments rather than planning policy.

A third option could be to encourage the used of licensing to control any erosion of residential apartments by changes in use to serviced apartments.

In some cases, serviced apartments may only be operating on a short-term basis with renewable agreements with operators. The time involved in securing planning permission may mean it is impractical. There are also issues as to whether such a change constitutes development under planning legislation.

Where only a proportion of apartments in a block are being let, it may become cumbersome to use the planning system to control these uses.

On balance, a more practical solution would probably be to seek to control such provision through some sort of licensing system.

Questions

10.81 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.82 Which option do you prefer?

10.83 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.84 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Hotel & Guest House Retention in the City Centre

10.102 Given the strong demand for central sites from many other residential, leisure and business uses and the lack of suitable new sites for hotels, the existing supply of hotels and guest houses in the City Centre is very valuable. There are strong arguments to retain such accommodation in the face of the difficulties in finding new sites and the attractions to convert to higher value uses. The current Local Plan's policy resists the loss of hotels and guesthouses other than to residential use. This is, however, the very use that is likely to be the most attractive alternative for hotel and guesthouse owners.

Option 160 - Retention of Hotels in the City Centre

One option could be to include a policy, which would protect existing hotels and guesthouses in the City Centre to prevent losses to other uses.

This could include relevant viability and marketing checks.

With the enhanced budget hotel supply, some guesthouses and small hotels may be seeking to exit the market. The policy would need to have some flexibility to deal with this, if they are less well located or poorer quality, and it can be demonstrated that they have no viable future as a hotel or guesthouse operation.

Option 161 - Do not include a policy to retain Hotels in the City Centre

A second option could be to not include a policy on this area and let the market decide.

This could however lead to pressures for existing hotels and guest houses to exit the market and sell premises for higher value uses such as residential uses.

It would lead to further difficulties in finding new sites and diminish the supply of visitor accommodation and lead to more visitors staying outside the city.

Questions

10.85 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.86 Which option do you prefer?

10.87 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.88 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?

Visitor Attractions

10.103 The Council's policy is to encourage the sustainable development of tourism in the city. The Council recognises that a range of attractions and facilities are important to improve the quality of the visitor experience, but also sees the need to protect the quality of life of people who live here. The main purpose of any tourist development should be to assist in the interpretation of the city, not to attract significantly more visitors to Cambridge.

10.104 The current Local Plan's existing policy towards visitor attractions aims to maintain, strengthen and diversify the range of visitor attractions if they are well related to the cultural heritage of the city.

10.105 Attractions that draw visitors beyond the City Centre attractions are encouraged.

Option 162 – Visitor attractions policy

This option would mean the retention of the existing policy towards visitor attractions. It would be improved within the new plan to better manage tourist numbers and encourage the development of alternative attractions throughout the Sub- Region.

Such a policy would need to ensure these attractions are accessed by sustainable modes of transport.

Questions

10.89 Is there a need for a policy addressing this issue?

10.90 Are there any points which have been missed and you feel should be added (perhaps even an entirely new option)?

10.91 Should more visitor attractions be developed?

10.92 Are there any reasonable alternatives that should be considered at this stage?