

Section 1. About Cambridge

Appendix B Section

The Cambridge Plan

I-1. This is the new local plan for Cambridge which will when finalised replace the existing local plan and take it forward to 2031 (Note: the base year of the plan for housing monitoring purposes is 2011). Some proposals and aspects of the strategy will be completed in an uncertain time horizon stretching beyond this plan period, however it is necessary to provide a vision and framework for developments which will take many years to complete their final form. The term 'Cambridge Plan' is used to avoid any confusion with the previous Cambridge Local Plan adopted in 2006.

I-2. The plan has been written to comply with national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework and elsewhere, including the presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.

I-3. Cambridge continues to be a city of major change and equal challenges. The Plan places great importance on issues of sustainability and innovation in achieving sustainable development. Arguably Cambridge demonstrates the success that can be achieved with planned 'Smart Growth' (see next section) contrasted with the alternatives that present themselves, no or unplanned growth or worse unplanned urban sprawl. We are not complacent, the City Council adopts a positive and proactive approach, the challenges facing the city are complex and often have no easy resolution, requiring partnership and joint resolve amongst many stakeholders to achieve solutions. Delivery of infrastructure to support growth, meeting carbon reduction, and managing change to heritage assets of international importance and, land requirements and land use conflicts within a compact tightly bounded city are particular challenges.

I-4. This plan is based on finding solutions to these challenges, with a high level vision to galvanise the civic, academic, business and local community. This is followed through in terms of specific cross-cutting themes and objectives to tackle these challenges, then a spatial strategy to deliver the strategic priorities of the plan (some of these reflect national priorities but also includes priorities for Cambridge and Cambridgeshire). Then there are slightly more detailed delivery policies to achieve the strategic priorities through day to day decision taking on planning applications. Finally there are area spatial frameworks for the major opportunity areas within and on the edge of the City as well as a

strategic spatial framework for the historic city centre. These include allocations of land for development.

I-5. This plan is essentially a pragmatic readjustment and continuation of the 2006 growth strategy set out in the next section, it focuses on delivery and recognising that the availability of some urban extension sites has been pushed back beyond the plan period requiring an examination of more new settlement options just beyond the Green Belt in South Cambridgeshire District Council. We also need to reflect in the new plan how growth has changed the City and what new challenges this creates. In light of experience the new plan also has an increased emphasis on mitigating negative transport impacts, securing further progress on sustainable development, area improvement and urban design.

I-6. This new plan, in line with national policy, is succinct with a focus on delivery. Please read and use the plan as a whole, cross references are kept to a minimum. The policies are designed to be used as a toolkit creatively applied to individual sites to find solutions to deliver sustainable development. Supporting information is kept to a minimum and a more detailed explanation of how each policy area has developed and the reason for the choice of chosen options is published outside and in parallel with this plan.

I-7. Note: The plan is written in the form that is intended to be submitted and adopted. This round of consultation will be the opportunity to comment on the plan itself in its whole form and influence its final content. After this consultation will be the submission stage when rather than consultation there will be representations. These will formally support or object to the plan in terms of its legal compliance and compliance with national policy (soundness) tests. These will go forward to an independent inspector who will invite some individuals and groups to public hearings to test the plan.

Cambridge – A Spatial Portrait

I-8. Cambridge is the County Town of Cambridgeshire in the East of England most famous for being the home of the University of Cambridge.

I-9. It is situated in a gap in low chalk and clay hills about 50 miles (80 km) North of London, connected by a frequent rail service. The River Cam flows through this gap out to the fens immediately to the north of the City and historically the Cambridge was founded in a loop of the river, within this grew the medieval core which is broadly bounded by a ring of University Colleges (mostly grade I, II* & II listed) and open spaces. It is this visual synergy of river, riverside, open spaces, colleges and historic buildings, set within a fenland/meadowland landscape, which give the City its special character and which, together with its historical associations, make it one of the most important tourist destinations in the UK.

I-10. The City gradually grew along road corridors and the medieval core is now surrounded by Georgian and Victorian terraced suburbs, such as Newtown and Romsey, which also have their own local and district centres and character. Together this gives Cambridge its compact, walkable, and cyclable characteristics and its high quality of life. From the 2011 Census 33% of City Council area residents commute by bike, compared with 34% by car. Sustainable forms of transport are the norm rather than the exception in Cambridge.

I-11. In the inter-war years Cambridge developed a circle of detached and semi-detached suburbs, with ribbon development absorbing, connecting to, or leaving only slivers of land between a ring of villages around the Cambridge, such as Chesterton and Trumpington. A number of villages close to the City, such as Grantchester, and Fen Ditton, however managed to maintain their separation and individual character. The heritage and setting of such villages, seen in conjunction with the historic city's skyline and setting, are part of the special character of Cambridge and its hinterland.

I-12. Green corridors of fen and meadow open space penetrate right through to the City Centre along the River Cam central to the importance of the City's historic setting, as are views of the skyline, its famous towers and spires of the City Centre viewed from in particular the West where the countryside comes close to the historic core, and from high ground to the North and South such as the Gog-Magog Hills.

I-13. In the post-war years the University of Cambridge developed enormous breakthroughs in science, biomedicine, computing and engineering. In the 1980s the 'Cambridge Phenomenon' of 'Silicon Fen' exploded with entrepreneurial vigour creating a knowledge cluster which today is the primary driver of the region's economy and is of critical importance to the national economy.

I-14. By the late 1990s it became apparent that the traditional approach to managing a historic city, a tightly defined Green Belt with development encouraged to go beyond it with growth distributed around villages, despite its successes in maintaining the character of Cambridge, was having some severe side effects. The dispersal strategy for employment was not really working as Cambridge was the economic driver. This led to enormous in commuting and an imbalance between jobs and homes; pricing many out of the local housing market or forcing them to live some distance away, creating congestion as they commuted into or through Cambridge. It also led to rapid growth of some villages without necessarily the supporting community facilities or transport links to support this growth.

I-15. The early 2000s saw a radical shift in strategy to tackle these problems. Visioning exercises and various studies and plans led to a strategy of expansion along public transport corridors, with extended green corridors between, creating new neighbourhoods and communities to the North East, North West, East and South, as well as focussing growth on the larger better connected villages. Some of these schemes are now well advanced. There was also new settlements planned close to Cambridge at Cambourne and Northstowe. Park and Ride was introduced and expanded to intercept cars from penetrating to the historic core, this has been a considerable success. Access to much of the historic centre of Cambridge is now restricted with bollards for bus and cycle access only, but the volume of traffic on the inner ring road and other busy roads around the centre does act as a barrier to sustainable forms of transport entering the City Centre.

I-16. Cambridge City Council itself is tightly bounded and parts of the Cambridge urban area, such as the Science Park, are within South Cambridgeshire District. Indeed South Cambridgeshire is a ring shaped district with the City Council contained within it. South Cambridgeshire looks to Cambridge in terms of transport links, shopping and services and in turn many working in Cambridge make their home in South Cambridgeshire. The two local authorities are so functionally and geographically intertwined that very close alignment in plan making has been necessary, indeed all of the urban extensions planned for Cambridge are partially within South Cambridgeshire District.

issues remain a challenge including the cost of upgrading the A14.

I-18. As well as commuting into the City Centre there are also major commuter movements across the centre especially north-south with the Science Park and Addenbrookes Hospital/the Cambridge Biomedical Research Campus being major attractors of work trips. The ability to move large numbers across the City Centre is a major challenge which the Busway considerably helps. In the longer term however to maintain quality of service of public transport additional public trans-

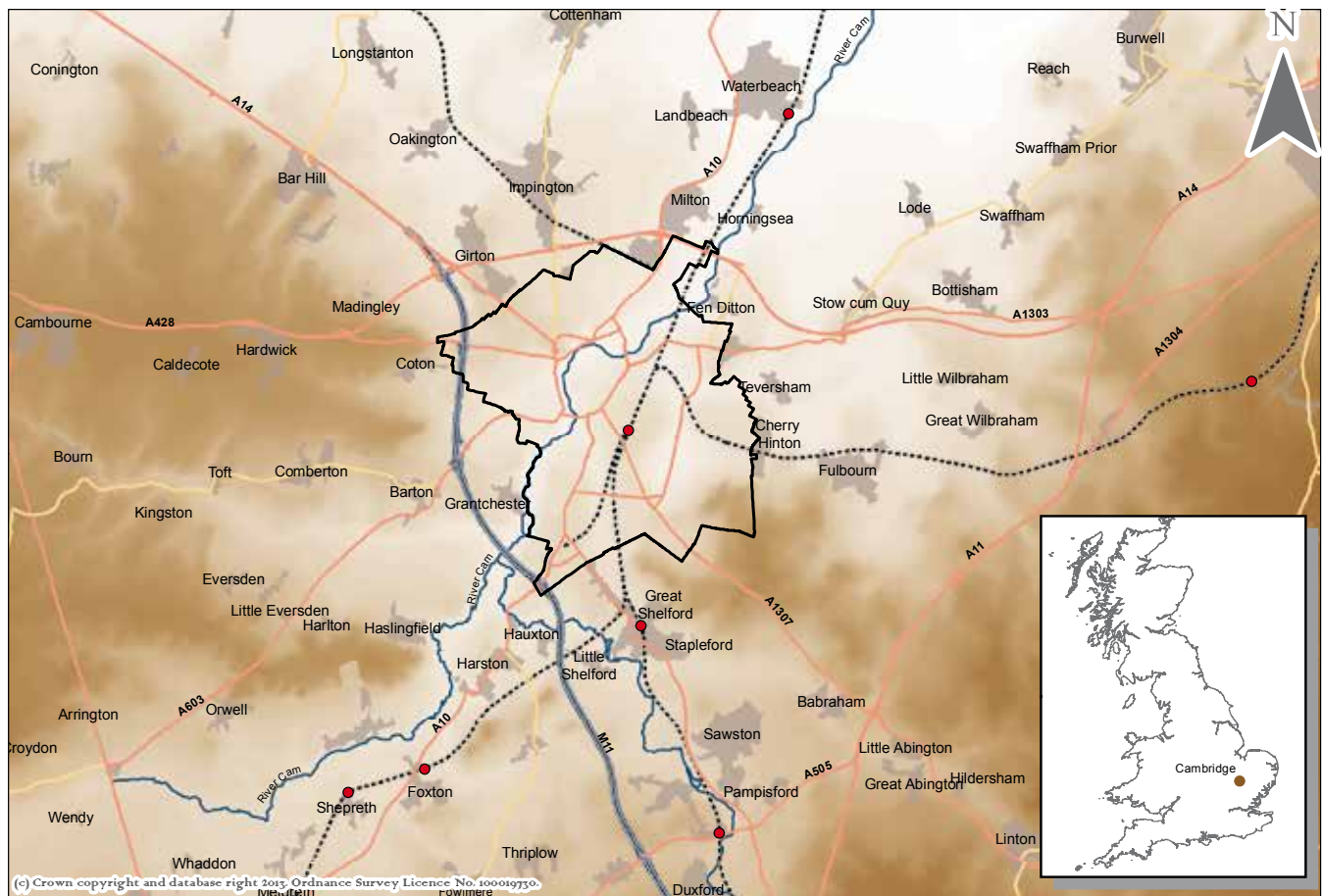


Figure 1 Cambridge Location and Topography

I-17. Management and mitigation of the impacts of growth is a key challenge. The risk is that without integrated approaches to planning of development and transport the achievements in shifting towards sustainable transport - walking, public transport and cycling - in recent years will be lost and there will be a lack of public transport capacity. Major improvements have begun to kick in most particularly the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway - the Busway - running north south through and beyond the city. Infrastructure funding

port capacity and solutions are needed. These are set out in the Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire which is being produced to support the local plans.

I-19. Today Cambridge has become a very cosmopolitan place. The number of workers, students and visitors to Cambridge gives it a far higher level of shops, places to eat and drink, and art and cultural facilities than one would expect from a City with its level of permanent residents. Cambridge tends to bench-

Key Facts About Cambridge

- Cambridge has a population of 123,900, nearly 14% higher than 10 years ago.
- The population is forecast to grow by over 20%, to 150,000, by 2031.
- Cambridge is 60 miles north north east of London on the M11 and on the King's Lynn-London railway.
- The A14 to the north is an important east west link across the country.
- Cambridge is home to the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University.
- Consequently 25% of the population are in their 20s, whilst 22% are under 20. It houses around 29,000 university (undergraduate and postgraduate) students.
- Cambridge is an internationally renowned historic city attracting over 4 million visitors a year.
- Cambridge has the lowest shop vacancy level in the UK - 6%.
- Cambridge is a world leader in higher education, research and knowledge based industries.
- Cambridge is a compact city in which around 32% of residents cycle to work.
- Cambridge is a centre for jobs, shopping and leisure for the surrounding area.
- Houses in Cambridge are expensive, average prices are £321,189. With a high house price to earnings ratio of 9.2.
- Total and per capita carbon emissions for Cambridge decreased between 2005 and 2010 - 780.98 to 750.79 ; 7.1 to 6.0 - units kt CO₂

mark its progress against compact cities in Europe which are known for their innovation, high sustainability and quality of life, such as Groningen and Freiburg, rather than other UK towns and cities.

Cambridge – The Wider Context

I-20. Cambridge has a wide influence on its surrounding area, it is a hub of both road and rail connections as well as being the centre of a wider travel to work and housing market area (that is an area in which people live to get to work at a settlement that offers major employment). This area of influence - the Cambridge City Region - includes the whole of South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, and parts of Huntingdonshire, Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury, and North Herts Districts.

I-21. In the past strategic planning for Cambridge has been undertaken at a 'higher level', through the Regional Spatial Strategy (the East of England Plan). This has now been revoked and Strategic Planning must now be done at a local level. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit has been set up to help coordinate the development of strategy with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other local planning authorities and stakeholders in the area.

I-22. Cambridge sits at the Eastern End of an 'Arc' of Towns and Cities that runs westwards through to Oxford and Milton Keynes. The government has described this as the area of greatest opportunity for employment and housing growth in England outside London but it suffers from very poor transport connections east west, especially by rail. Transport routes through to London also form a number of corridors of development pressure, though the greatest opportunities for sustainable development exist at public transport nodes within this arc and these corridors.

I-23. A few major developments outside Cambridge are worth mentioning because of their influence on the City Council area.

I-24. Firstly the Alconbury Enterprise Zone, designated in 2011, which comprises 150Ha of land with incentives for business development. Alconbury has good connections north-south, through the A1 and East Coast Mainline, and east-west through the A14. There is a lot of new employment land at Alconbury, if developed and promoted well there is potential for new manufacturing space that complements the research that takes place in Cambridge.

I-25. In South Cambridgeshire are the new settlements of Cambourne (to the West of the City) and Northstowe (soon to commence to the North) and City bus services have or are being extended to meet them. Further new settlements are being considered as part

of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

I-26. To the South East of the City is London's third airport, Stansted, in Uttlesford district, on a branch of the main London-Cambridge Rail route. If Stansted is chosen for future expansion it will be essential to upgrade this route as well as making connections to the north to ensure that people in the East and North of England can access the airport without passing through London. This could give Cambridge a new role as the major transport hub in the East of England with much faster connections to London.

I-27. There are a ring of market towns around Cambridge: Ely, Chatteris, Huntingdon, Royston, Haverhill and Newmarket around ten or fifteen miles from Cambridge. These market towns provide a certain level of services and facilities to their local vicinity. They also help house a significant proportion of the workers who commute into Cambridge everyday. A number of these such as Newmarket and Ely are planned for major growth.

I-28. In terms of strategic road connections the M11 and A14 are the main trunk roads that connect Cambridge to the strategic road network. The M11 bounds Cambridge to the south and west, and provides a direct link to London. The A14 runs bounds the north of the city, and creates a link from the east coast and the port of Felixstowe through to the M1 and M6 Motorways at the Catthorpe Interchange.

I-29. The A14 is a heavily used freight route, and is often congested. There are currently plans to upgrade the road during the plan period, to help relieve the congestion and reduce the accident rate. The A14 study, which is dealing with the proposed upgrade, is being carried out by the Highways Agency in conjunction with various key stakeholders, including Local Authorities, businesses and the Department for Transport.

I-30. The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB), but known as 'the Guided Bus' or 'the Busway', is a 'Bus Rapid Transit' public transport scheme connecting some of the major conurbations along the A14 corridor in Cambridgeshire. The scheme links Cambridge, St Ives, Huntingdon and the proposed new town of Northstowe to the north-west, and with Trumpington, Addenbrooke's/The Cambridge Biomedical Park and the M11 motorway to the south. The route includes two sections of guided operation, a bus-only road and other places with on-street operation in conventional bus lanes. New Park and Ride sites have been built at Longstanton and at St Ives, with a tarmac cycle track/

bridleway provided alongside some sections of the route to promote better cycle links in the area.

I-31. The busway has, and will continue to play a key role in providing sustainable travel choices and accessibility for those wishing to travel to and from Cambridge in the areas the busway serves. The busway has had a successful beginning, with in excess of 1.75 million passengers being carried in the first year, with demand projected to increase to 3.5 million in year three.

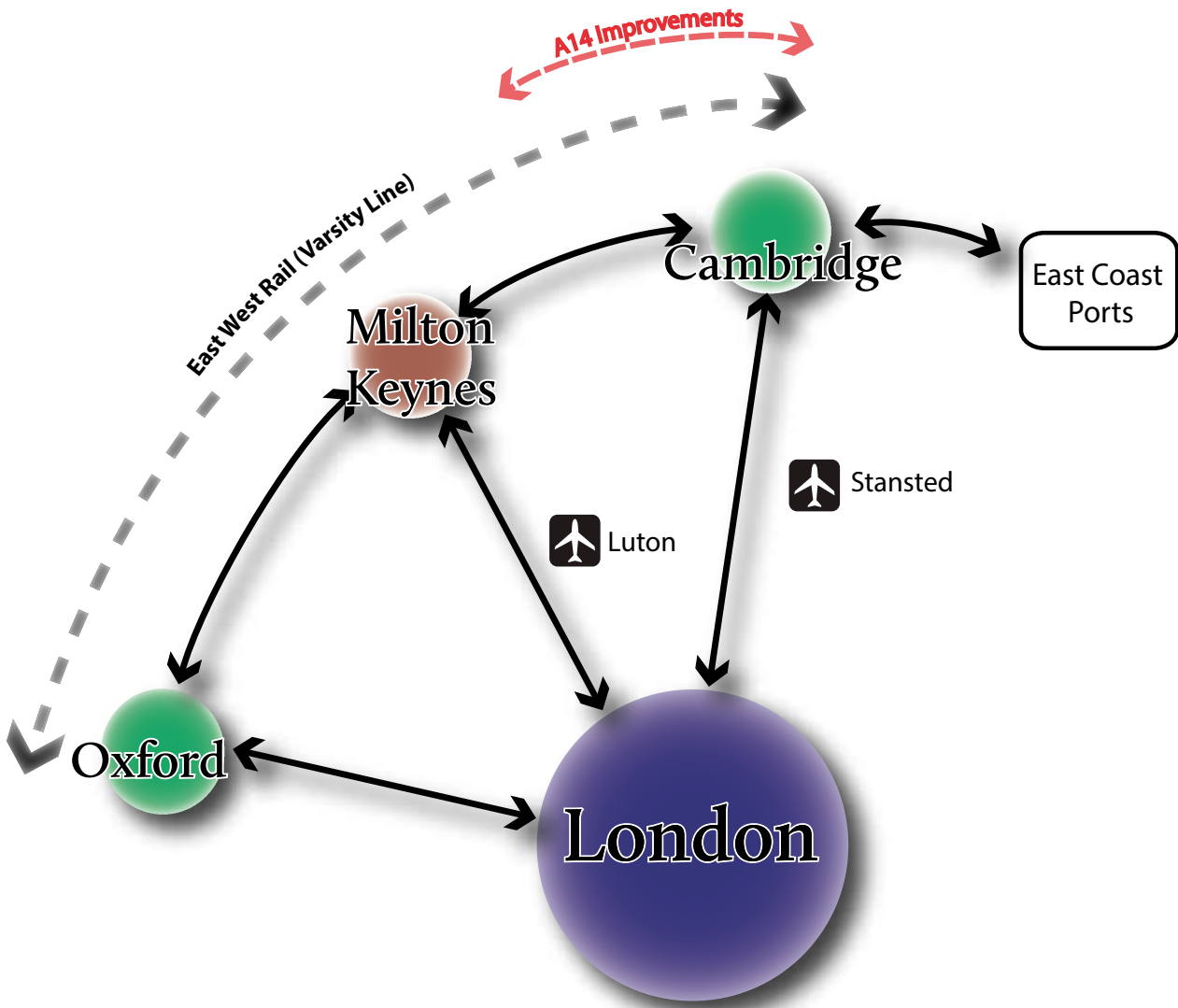


Figure 2 The Oxford-Cambridge-London Arc

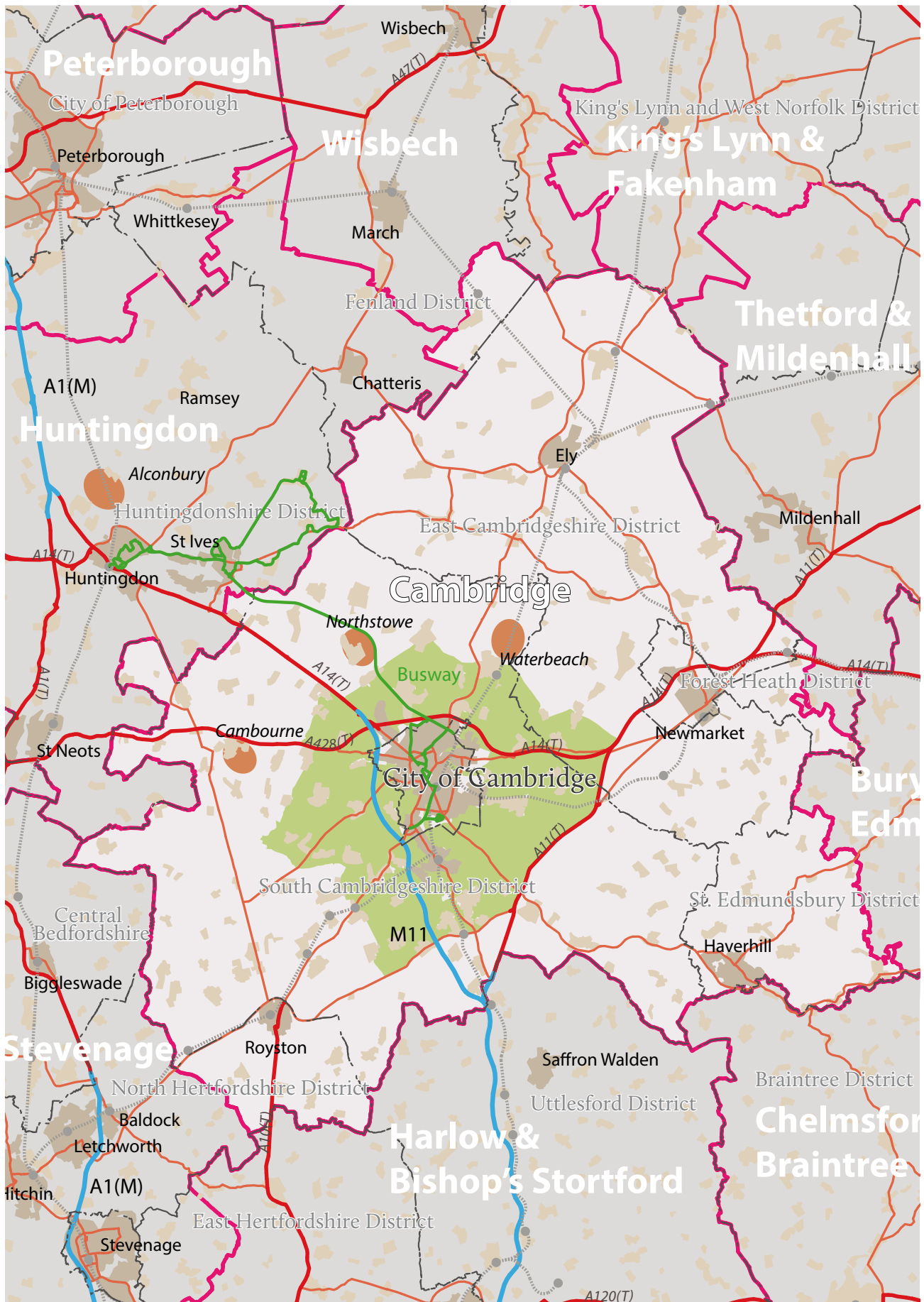


Figure 3 The Cambridge City Region

Cambridge's Approach to Delivering Sustainable Development

Policy 1. Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals, a positive approach will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, working with applicants to find solutions so that proposals can be approved wherever possible to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this plan (and where relevant, with policies in any neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no plan policies relevant to the application, or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, planning permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- i. any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- ii. specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

I-32. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for future generations. Sustainable development is an evolving concept, its role should not be pinned down too narrowly. The Government's definition of sustainable development is based on that drawn up by the Brundtland Commission –and the UK Sustainable development strategy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. It has three broad aims:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- effective protection of the environment & the prudent use of natural resources; and
- the maintenance of high and stable levels of sustainable economic growth and employment.

I-33. These three aims should be secured through planning and design solutions which achieve them through optimal outcomes delivering, where possible, all three goals- the triple bottom line

I-34. Design solutions to build in sustainability relevant to culture, place, our heritage and enhancing and protecting sense of place, is the means of integrating these three aims and avoiding the need for difficult trade offs. Sometimes however difficult trade offs will be inevitable in a city with so little land and so much pressure

I-35. Sustainable development recognises that these three 'circles' of the economy, society and the environment are interconnected. Sustainable economic growth relies on protecting and enhancing the environmental resources that underpin it. Economic activities should be in the service of all human beings while at the same time safeguarding and expanding the diversity and productivity of biophysical systems and nature's services (ecosystem services) necessary for environmental well being and human existence and prosperity. Without sustainable economic growth a sustainable future cannot be secured; equally it is recognised that the social function of growth is to achieve economic development and environmental enhancement for the benefit of all. Growth should not be for its own sake but Smart Growth which improves the quality of life.

I-36. With good planning and design that recognises these principles there is no necessary contradiction between increased levels of development and protecting and enhancing the environment. Good planning and design helps ensure that development achieves these sustainability aims in an integrated, balanced and responsible manner.

I-37. Throughout the preparation of this Plan, including public consultation, a number of key themes have become apparent, which contribute to the definition of sustainable development in the Cambridge context, as outlined in Table 1 below.

I-38. The implementation of sustainable development should apply the precautionary principle - that where there are threats of serious or irreversible

damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent harm to the three arms of sustainable development.

I-39. This plan seeks to enhance the environment as part of development proposals. Significant adverse impacts on the environment should be avoided and alternative options to reduce or eliminate those impacts pursued. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, planning authorities and developers should consider possible mitigation measures. Where adequate mitigation measures are not possible, compensatory measures may be appropriate. In line with the UK sustainable de-

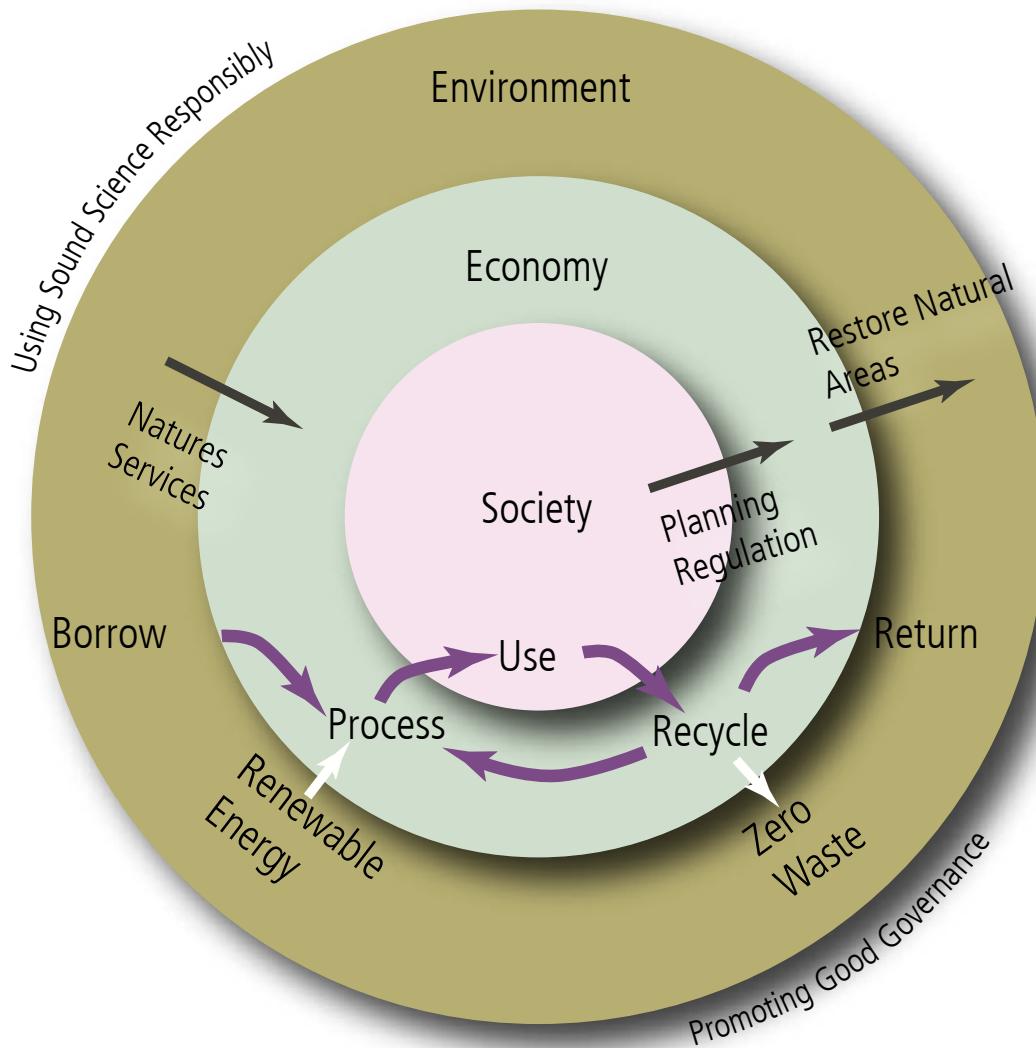


Figure 4 The Integrated Model of Sustainable Development

What is Sustainable Development

In the Cambridge specific context, sustainable development is defined as an ongoing process to improve the living conditions of the present generation that does not compromise the ability of future generations to do so. It seeks integration and improvements of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of development within the limits set by the environment and technology, in order to improve the quality of life.

velopment strategy, environmental costs should fall on those who impose them – the “polluter pays” principle.

I-40. Each following section contains an opening statement of how these principles of sustainable development will be carried through as a golden thread through the whole plan.

The Challenges the Plan must Address

I-41. Cambridge is a successful city experiencing string economic growth even in most years of an economic downturn. Cambridge’s success however generates its own challenges. The key issue in Cambridge is balancing and managing the conflicts between two dynamics. Firstly how to maintain the advantages in terms of sustainability and quality of life of a compact city, against demands for knowledge sector-led business growth and the housing needs this generates. Cambridge has to manage this within a tight boundary and with very little land to spare. Most of the responses to our consultations address one or the other side of this dynamic. The planning challenge is to integrate both.

I-42. Other specific issues include:

- Significant in-commuting leading to traffic congestion across the City, particularly in the centre;
- Enabling the continued success of the University of Cambridge, Anglia Ruskin University, and the high technology and research sectors and wider economy;
- Enabling the development needed to maintain the city’s role as a city-regional centre for retail, leisure and cultural activities; and
- Managing competing demands on land in a compact city with a tightly drawn boundary.

I-43. These challenges are set against a need to balance growth against the qualities that make Cambridge special. Throughout the development of the Local Plan, key areas for the Plan to address in order to respond to these challenges have been identified including:

- Encouraging growth that is symbiotic with South Cambridgeshire;
- Encouraging economic development that is in character with the Cambridge’s academic heritage, building on its strengths in the areas of high technology and research;

- Maintaining the green and compact nature of the city;
- Ensuring a well thought out transport policy and infrastructure, with significant investment in public transport and provision for cyclists and pedestrians;
- Balancing the housing and employment needs with impacts on the quality of life and tranquility of residents and resource availability (notably water);
- Ensuring that the historic qualities and character of Cambridge, from individual heritage assets to the wider appreciation of townscape and landscape, and the interaction between them, is conserved and enhanced for future generations;
- Ensuring that existing buildings, brownfield sites and infrastructure are optimised and retrofitted to meet future needs using high quality sustainable based design;
- Investing in high speed digital links to enable home working and a reduction in commuter and business travel;
- Supporting communities and individuals in community life – provision of social infrastructure for all ages; and
- Ensuring that development responds to our changing climate.

I-44. Policies in the Local Plan respond to these challenges, ensuring that new development meets the principles of sustainable development and balances growth against the need to preserve and enhance the character and setting of Cambridge.

What Comprises the Development Plan?

I-45. The Development Plan for Cambridge City comprises the local plan, the Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste Framework and Area Actions Plans for East and North West Cambridge (these Area Actions Plans are joint plans with South Cambridgeshire). These is also an Area Action Plan for the part of the Southern Fringe which lies within South Cambridgeshire. Please read this plan in conjunction with these interlocking plans which collectively form the plan for the future of Cambridge and its hinterland.

I-46. The Cambridge East Area Action Plan will need some limited updating because of land availability issues.