

SECTION ONE: ABOUT CAMBRIDGE

The Cambridge Local Plan

- 1.1 This is the new plan for Cambridge. This plan replaces the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and sets out policies and proposals for future development and spatial planning requirements to 2031.
- 1.2 Built around the banks of the River Cam, Cambridge is a successful city with a world-class reputation for education, research and knowledge-based industries and its historic environment. It is a place that people want to visit, live, work and study in. This plan aims to maintain and enhance that success.
- 1.3 Cambridge already demonstrates the success that can be achieved with well-planned growth. The council adopts a positive and proactive approach; but this success also brings challenges. The challenges facing the city are complex and often have no easy resolution, requiring partnership working and consensus amongst many stakeholders to achieve positive solutions. Delivery of infrastructure to support growth, reducing carbon consumption and managing change to heritage assets of international importance all within a compact tightly bounded city are particular challenges.
- 1.4 Working closely with South Cambridgeshire District Council, whose area wraps around the city, this plan is based on finding solutions to these challenges, with a high level vision that meets the aspirations of residents, civic, academic and business communities. The plan follows these through with specific crosscutting themes and objectives to tackle these challenges, and then sets out 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). There are area specific spatial frameworks for the areas of major change and opportunity areas within and on the edge of the city as well as the City Centre. These include allocations of land for development and more detailed delivery policies to achieve the strategic priorities through day-to-day decision taking on planning applications.
- 1.5 This plan is essentially a pragmatic continuation of the 2006 growth strategy, with adjustment to reflect the experience of delivery of that strategy and the current context for planning. It focusses on delivery and meeting Cambridge's needs. The plan reflects how the current growth is changing the city and the new challenges this creates. In light of experience, the plan has an increased emphasis on mitigating transport impacts, securing further progress on sustainable development, area improvement and place making.
- 1.6 This plan sets out what is important for Cambridge to achieve. The plan should be read as a whole with cross-references kept to a minimum. A more detailed explanation of how each policy area has developed and the reason for the choice of chosen options is published alongside this plan.

- 1.7 The plan is written in the form that is intended for submission and adoption. This round of consultation will be the opportunity to comment on the plan itself in its whole form. These comments need to 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 interested individuals and groups to public hearings to test the plan.

Cambridge and its context

- 1.8 Although Cambridge is a small city in size, its stature on an international scale and the extent of facilities it offers is much greater than one would expect. The population of Cambridge was 123,900 in 2011.¹ It is predicted that by 2031, the population will reach 150,000. Cambridge also has to consider the needs of its academic population. The city hosts a large student population from the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University. In 2012, the student population was estimated at 29,087.²
- 1.9 It is estimated that over four and a half million people visit Cambridge each year. The city boasts 743.59 hectares of Protected Open Space, including large parks and gardens such as the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens, Parker's Piece and the other pieces, greens and commons. Overall, this equates to approximately 6.2 hectares of Protected Open Space per 1,000 people, of which 2.9 hectares per 1,000 people is publicly accessible. Cambridge has an internationally renowned legacy of designated and undesignated heritage assets and seeks to enhance this legacy by encouraging innovative new buildings of the highest quality. An essential part of the character of the city stems from the spaces and grounds around buildings and the important role of trees and other landscape features.
- 1.10 Cambridge is a demonstrably successful place where economic success and high quality of life, sustainable living and quality of place are inextricably linked. Cambridge's modern day accomplishments include a thriving hi-tech and biotech industry, which has developed since the 1960s and is known as the Cambridge Phenomenon. Although the hi-tech and biotech clusters in Cambridge remain successful, the city has seen some negative impacts of success. Management and mitigation of the impacts of growth is therefore a key challenge. Average wages in the city have not risen in line with the city's average house prices. This has made it increasingly difficult for people to purchase property in the city, and this has associated impacts on the level of people commuting into the city from the surrounding villages and market towns.

¹ Census 2011

² Cambridge City Council Annual Monitoring Report 2012

- 1.11 Cambridge is a busy city and has a wide influence on its surrounding area. 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 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. The city is situated on the London to King's Lynn railway line, with London accessed within 45 minutes. In addition to being a hub of both road and rail connections, it is the centre of a wider travel to work and housing market area (the area in which people live to get to work at a settlement that offers major employment). The city's area of influence, both as a sub-regional centre and a major focus for employment, includes the majority of Cambridgeshire, parts of West Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Essex and North Hertfordshire.
- 1.12 More people in Cambridge are likely to use sustainable modes of transport to travel to work than anywhere else in the United Kingdom. According to the 2011 Census, 33% of our residents commute to work by bike, compared with 34% by car. Given the level of in-commuting, the growth of the city and ongoing demand for the city's services and facilities, transport infrastructure in the city is under pressure. As a result of these trends, more needs to be done to support the use of sustainable modes of transport. Without integrated approaches to the planning of development and transport, the significant achievements in shifting towards sustainable transport, walking, public transport and cycling in recent years will be undermined. On the positive side, major new public transport improvements have been delivered recently in the form of the Cambridgeshire Busway that connects to Peterborough, St Ives and Huntingdon through and beyond the city. Nevertheless, infrastructure funding issues remain a challenge.
- 1.13 The need for new housing in Cambridge is high. Current new large-scale housing developments are underway at sites at Trumpington Meadows, Clay Farm, Glebe Farm, NIAB, and the University of Cambridge's North West Cambridge site and these are estimated to provide over 7,000 new homes. These sites, however, will not meet all future housing need to 2031, which is forecast to be around 14,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031. This plan addresses that shortfall.

What Comprises the Development Plan for Cambridge?

- 1.14 In the past, strategic planning for Cambridge was undertaken at a 'higher plan-making level', through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and the Regional Spatial Strategy (the East of England Plan 2008) and their predecessor documents. Both these documents have now been revoked and strategic planning is now undertaken at a local level, co-ordinated by a statutory "duty to co-operate." 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. However, the outputs of this strategic work are not statutory and therefore do not form part of the official development plan for Cambridge.

1.15 On adoption of this plan, the official statutory development plan for Cambridge comprises:

- Cambridge Local Plan 2014;
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework;
- Cambridge East Area Action Plan (excluding policies CE/3 and CE/35 which are replaced by Policy 12: Cambridge East); and
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan.

The Cambridge Local Plan 2006 is deleted in its entirety and no longer forms part of the development plan.

1.16 Supporting the development plan for Cambridge, there are a number of additional policy documents and guides. These are set out in more detail in Appendix A.