

REPORT TITLE: Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025

To:

Councillor Katie Thornburrow Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport
Committee (23rd March 2026)

Report by:

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Wards affected: All

Director Approval: Director Stephen Kelly confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Cabinet/Cabinet Member for decision.

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Cambridge City Cabinet:

Agree the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025 (included as Appendix A) for publication on the Councils' websites.

Delegate any further minor editing changes to the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025 to the Joint Director of Planning, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

- 2.1 Local planning authorities are required to publish information monitoring progress of the implementation of their Local Plan Timetable and planning policies included in their development plan documents at least on an annual basis in an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR is also required to give details of what action the Council has taken relating to the duty to co-operate, details of any neighbourhood development orders or neighbourhood development plans made, and once the Council has an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, information relating to the collection and spending of CIL monies.

3. Alternative options considered

- 3.1 To not publish the Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025.

This option has been rejected because Local authorities have a statutory duty to publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) under The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and accompanying regulations.

4. Background and key issues

- 4.1 The AMR for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025 covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The AMR includes indicators to measure the performance of the Councils' adopted planning policies as set out in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and the four adopted Area Action Plans for Northstowe, Cambridge East, Cambridge Southern Fringe, and North West Cambridge. It also includes indicators to measure change in the area against the objectives set out in the Sustainability Appraisals that accompany each of the adopted plans and to look at the wider effects of its planning policies on the district. The AMR includes details on the action the Councils have taken relating to the Duty to Co-operate and of any neighbourhood plans made.

Authority Monitoring Reports were formerly known as Annual Monitoring Reports. They were renamed by government.

The AMR for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025 accompanying this report has three chapters. Chapter 1 provides some background and context. Chapter 2 includes sections on the progress against the Local Plan Timetable, what actions the Councils have taken relating to the duty to co-operate and the current status of Neighbourhood Plans. Chapter 3 sets out a topic by topic analysis of the Greater Cambridge area including the impact of various policies.

Key findings from the AMR for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025 include:

- There has been significant recent progress against the Local Plan Timetable. Although much of this has occurred after the 2024-2025 monitoring period it is still worthy of note:
- The latest Local Plan Timetable became effective on 26 November 2025 and commits to submitting the Greater Cambridge Local Plan for examination by December 2026;
- Regulation 18 public consultation on the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan took place between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026;
- The withdrawal of funding from MHCLG for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant has resulted in key policies from the proposed North East Cambridge AAP being incorporated into the Local Plan rather than being pursued through a separate AAP.
- The South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2024-2025, the first Neighbourhood Plan in Cambridge. Although no new Neighbourhood Plans were made in South Cambridgeshire during the monitoring year, four were made in the following months (Pampisford; Thriplow & Heathfield; Harston; and, Stapleford & Great Shelford).
- Combined annual housing completions in 2024-2025 for Greater Cambridge,

reflecting the joint development strategy of the two adopted Local Plans 2018, was 2,264 dwellings. Of these, 1,735 were delivered in South Cambridgeshire and 529 were delivered in Cambridge. The average annual delivery rate required over the plan period 2011 to 2031 is 1,675 dwellings a year. The average annual delivery rate achieved between 2011 and 2025 is 1,711 dwellings.

- A total of 9,900 dwellings were permitted in South Cambridgeshire during the 2024-2025 monitoring year. The majority of these dwellings (9,000) were the result of three outline planning permissions: Waterbeach New Town East (4,500 dwellings, S/2075/18/OL), Darwin Green Phase 2/3 (1,000 dwellings, 22/02528/OUT) and Bourn Airfield New Village (3,500 dwellings, S/3440/18/OL).
- There were 687 affordable dwellings completed in Greater Cambridge in 2024-2025. This is 30% of all housing completions. There was a significant increase in affordable housing completions in Cambridge compared with the previous year due to both completions on strategic sites - Darwin Green (105 dwellings) and Land north of Cherry Hinton (29 dwellings), and on a number of Cambridge Investment Partnership schemes (125 dwellings). Permissions granted in 2024-2025 have been broadly in line with affordable housing policy requirements.
- In the 2024-2025 monitoring year there was a net gain of 10,893 sqm of employment floorspace in Cambridge and a net gain of 51,956 sqm in South Cambridgeshire. The largest completions were 11,316 square metres of R&D space on Granta Park (21/03822/FUL) and 8,916 square metres of new office development at Lockton House in Cambridge (20/04826/FUL).
- There remain considerable commitments for employment space. In South Cambridgeshire there was 259,631 square metres of employment space with full or detailed planning permission at 31 March 2025. In Cambridge there was 148,852 square metres of employment space with full or detailed planning permission at 31 March 2025.
- There was a small net loss of retail space in South Cambridgeshire in 2024-2025 (402 square metres) but a much bigger loss in Cambridge (7,317 square metres). The

net loss of 7,317 square metres in Cambridge in 2024-2025 was almost half of the loss experienced over the plan period. This was due to switches from retail to leisure uses in both the Grand Arcade and Lion Yard.

- Planning policies in both Council areas continue to have a positive impact on climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. For example, levels of all measured pollutants were below their respective national air quality objectives in 2024-2025 and there were small increases in renewable energy capacity in both districts.
- Both Councils have policies that seek to protect and enhance priority species and habitat. These policies continued to be effective throughout the monitoring year. One new County Wildlife Site was selected in 2024-2025 and another County Wildlife Site was extended.
- Green Belt policy continues to be applied effectively. In 2024-2025 there were no developments granted permission within the Cambridge Green Belt that were inappropriate and / or did not demonstrate very special circumstances to warrant approval.
- There have been no significant changes to the number of listed buildings or entries on the Historic England Buildings at Risk register in either Cambridge or South Cambridgeshire.
- Quality of life indicators continue to be generally favourable for the Greater Cambridge area. Life expectancy exceeds the national average for men and women in both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and deprivation levels are well below the England average across a range of indicators.
- The AMR includes two appendices. Appendix 1 lists all of the indicators across the plans and provides data where it is available. A traffic light system is used for target based indicators to quickly illustrate whether the target is being met and where potential issues may be arising. The appendix identifies only one red flag. This relates to Policy 6

of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, which seeks to increase retail floorspace by 14,141 square metres over the period 2011 to 2022. However, dramatic changes in shopping trends mean that although there was a gross increase in retail floorspace in Cambridge, in net terms, there was a decrease of 7,707 square metres. There are also a small number of amber flags. The majority of these were concerned with the progress of allocations such as West Cambridge and Clifton Road where schemes are still being progressed or retail related issues. Appendix 2 provides the detailed data behind the quantifiable indicators.

5. Corporate plan

5.1 *Leading Cambridge's response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies and creating a net zero council by 2030*

The AMR monitors the contribution our development plans are making to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures

Tackling poverty and inequality and helping people in the greatest need

The AMR monitors the contribution our development plans are making to health and well-being in our local communities

Building a new generation of council and affordable homes and reducing homelessness

The AMR monitors the contribution our development plans are making to housing, and in particular affordable housing, in the area

6. Consultation, engagement and communication

6.1 In compiling the AMR Council officers and external organisations have provided information and data for the indicators included. The final AMR will be published on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service website. Local planning authorities are not required to undertake consultation on their Authority Monitoring Report prior to

publication. However, the report is a joint report for South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council and needs signing off by both Councils. The report was considered by South Cambridgeshire District Council at their Cabinet meeting on 3 February 2026.

7. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

7.1 *Consider the anticipated outcome of consideration of this report. For example, it may be that a new major policy or statutory plan is being developed to improve service delivery for a particular group of the population; or a review of existing policy is expected to streamline current processes. What will be different as a result of this decision (what does good look like)? And how will we know – what are the appropriate measures?*

The annual production on an AMR is a statutory requirement. The report monitors the impact and effectiveness of current planning policies and is used to inform the development of new policies in emerging development plans. The report also includes a wide range of data concerning Greater Cambridge which can be used to inform and shape a wider set of Council initiatives and priorities beyond land use planning.

8. Implications

8.1 Relevant risks

There are no risks in publishing this report. It is a monitoring report and has no financial or legal risks (other than we are required to publish it). There are no reputational risks. The AMR 2024-2025 demonstrates planning policies continue to have a positive impact on the sustainable development of Greater Cambridge and the quality of life of its residents.

Financial Implications

8.2 There are no financial implications. It is a monitoring report with no recommendations concerning finance.

Legal Implications

- 8.3 There are no legal implications (other than we have a statutory duty to publish an AMR).

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

- 8.4 As this is a monitoring progress rather than about making explicit changes to practices or policies it will not need an EqIA. There are no equalities implications of this report. This has been confirmed by the equalities lead at Cambridge City Council.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

- 8.5 The AMR is a monitoring report and has no impacts on net zero, climate change and environmental issues. However, the AMR monitors the impact of planning policies on climate change and the environment. It covers a wide range of relevant issues such as: carbon dioxide emissions; renewable energy; sustainable design and construction; flood risk; water quality and resources; air quality; protected wildlife and geological sites; development in locations of environmental importance; and, biodiversity net gain requirements.

The ARM would have a Nil impact as the proposal will not have a climate change impacts.

Procurement Implications

- 8.6 There are no procurement implications. The AMR is written by Council staff.

Community Safety Implications

- 8.7 There are no community safety implications. The AMR does include a small range of crime data.

9. Background documents

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to

Information) Act 1985

9.1 The adopted Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and the four adopted Area Action Plans for Northstowe, Cambridge East, Cambridge Southern Fringe, and North West Cambridge, and their accompanying Sustainability Appraisals are published on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website:

- [Local Plans](#)
- [Area Action Plans](#)

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: [Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2024-2025](#)
[Appendix 1 to Appendix 1](#)
[Appendix 2 to Appendix 1](#)

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Mark Deas, Senior Policy Planner, tel: 01954 713284/ 07857 665 001, email: Mark.Deas@greatercambridgeplanning.org