

Chapter 19: Planning Obligations to support local employment and skills

Introduction

- 19.1 While many areas of Greater Cambridge are comparatively affluent, there continue to be concentrations of poverty and deprivation in particular communities in Cambridge. The Cambridge City Council Community Wealth Building Strategy 2024 includes the strategic objective of increasing skill levels and social mobility. Employers can contribute directly to improved outcomes for local residents through adopting positive business practices such as providing local employment, apprenticeships and skills and training programmes.

Policy Context

Cambridge

- 19.2 The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes a strategic objective to assist the creation and maintenance of inclusive, environmentally sustainable communities.

South Cambridgeshire

- 19.3 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 seeks to ensure that all new development provides or has access to a range of services and facilities that support healthy lifestyles and well-being for everyone.

Development types from which Obligations will be sought

- 19.4 Residential and commercial development. The scale of development when an employment and skills plan will be encouraged is set out in paragraph 19.7 below.

Form in which obligations should be made

- 19.5 Major developments in Greater Cambridge will be encouraged to contribute towards the provision of skills and employment and supply chain opportunities for local residents and businesses through provision and implementation of an Employment and Skills Plan.

- 19.6 The Employment and Skills Plan should address opportunities that could be made available during both the construction and operational phases of a development. The construction phase provides opportunities for local employment and pre-employment support, apprenticeships and training, and school, college and community engagement. Once complete the occupiers of commercial developments can also bring skills and employment opportunities for local people. In addition, during both construction and operational phases developments can generate opportunities for local businesses to become part of the contractor and occupiers' supply chains.

When will a skills plan be sought?

- 19.7 Employment and Skills Plans are most suited to larger developments. The following table will be used to guide when an employment and skills plan will be encouraged.

Table 19-1: When a skills plan will be encouraged

Use Class	Development	Threshold	Construction stage	Occupation stage
C3	Residential	50 or more dwellings	✓	-
E	Commercial, business and service	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
B2	General industrial	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
B8	Storage and distribution	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
C1	Hotel(s)	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
F1	Learning and non-residential institutions	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
F2	Local community	Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓
Sui generis		Building(s) of 10,000m ² or more	✓	✓

- 19.8 There may be occasions when commercial uses are developed jointly as part of one application. If the cumulative floorspace of these uses exceeds

10,000m², the development will also be recommended to provide skills and employment and supply chain opportunities.

- 19.9 These thresholds are intended to promote the development of Employment and Skills Plans on major developments where there is likely to be scope to provide a significant contribution on site. We would also strongly encourage applicants on smaller schemes to work with the councils to demonstrate that they are maximising employment and skills outputs.

Skills and Employment Plans in s106 Agreements

- 19.10 If an Employment and Skills Plan is to be prepared and implemented, the provisions and requirements would be included within a s106 Agreement. This would typically include:

- A requirement for the developer and council, and where known, the end user or occupier, to meet to discuss the development of a Skills and Employment Plan for the development prior to the implementation of the planning permission.
- The submission of a Skills and Employment Plan for the construction phase of the development for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority (through the Economic Development Team) 3 months prior to the implementation of the planning permission.
- For phased developments the submission of an updated plan for each stage 3 months prior to commencement.
- The appointment of a Skills and Employment Plan co-ordinator
- A commitment not to implement the Planning Permission until the Employment and Skills Plan has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- A commitment to comply with the Employment and Skills Plan during the development.

Content of Skills and Employment Plans

- 19.11 An Employment and Skills Plan should outline how the development will create skills, training and supply chain opportunities and how they will be realised locally. It should:

- Outline the overall approach to be taken by the developer and/or main contractor and how this will address the economic needs of local residents and businesses.

- Detail the measures that will be implemented to achieve the approach proposed, how they will be delivered and a timetable for implementation. This should include how they will be tailored to ensure that they will benefit local residents and businesses.
- Explain how opportunities will be made available to local residents who have difficulty accessing the labour market, for example but not limited to, NEETS (not in education, employment or training), armed services leavers, refugees and asylum seekers, care leavers, people in long-term unemployment, those with a disability, sickness, or caring responsibilities.
- Explain how opportunities will be made available to those who have not traditionally accessed the career paths available through the development, for example, women in construction.
- Explaining how they will look to support and develop SME's and local social businesses through their supply chain linked to community wealth building.
- Explain how they will look to encourage enterprise and skills development through the use of meanwhile space and onsite requirements - such as catering.
- Establish specific measurable outputs for each individual measure (see below).
- Outline how the project, and each measure, will be managed and resourced. Identify keys stakeholders and relevant existing or future city, district or sub-region wide skills and employment initiatives and how the development will engage with them.
- Include a commitment that the outputs for the development will be written into any contracts with contractors, sub-contractors and new occupiers.

19.12 A recommended template for an Employment and Skills Plan has been developed in collaboration with the Combined Authority and will be provided on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service website.

19.13 The developer will be responsible for the delivery of the Employment and Skills Plan. They must use their reasonable endeavours to meet their employment and skills obligations on-site.

19.14 During the construction phase, it is expected that the developers will include the requirement to meet the agreed Employment and Skills Plan targets in their contracts with contractors and sub-contractors. For commercial developments, the occupation phase will require developers to use reasonable endeavours to agree internal protocols/agreements with new occupier(s) that cover the targets, measures and monitoring laid out within the plan.

Outputs

19.15 It is preferred that outputs in an Employment and Skills Plan are generated using an industry approved model such as by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), although other formats may be acceptable.

19.16 Employment and skills measures would include as many of the following as are practically achievable:

- Recruitment of local residents through job brokerage, job centres and other local organisations (the Councils' economic development teams may be able to assist with guidance on such opportunities).
- Creation of new apprenticeship opportunities. Indicative targets for placements are: 1 construction training placement will be required per: 20 residential units; 20 student/ hotel/ hostel bedrooms; 1,000 sqm (GEA) commercial and employment floorspace (additional and/or replacement). All apprentices should be paid at least the real Living Wage.
- Accredited training, for example, CSCS cards (Construction Skills Certification Scheme).
- Pre-employment support, for example, mentoring, work trials and interview experience.
- Work experience and work placement opportunities designed to support education and learning (14-16 years, 16-19 years and 19+ years).
- Training and employment opportunities in areas such as green sector skills or retrofitting buildings to help reduce carbon emissions associated with energy use.
- Some larger development may require site-based facilities to implement the plan. These could be used for on-site training, accommodating school visits, on-site assessment inductions, skills audits, etc.

19.17 All of the measures above should work towards achieving greater:

- Participation in education initiatives linking with local schools and colleges, supporting the transition between school and work, for example, through school talks and careers advice.
- Working with the voluntary and community groups locally to support disadvantaged people.
- Participation in local forums created to promote sector development, sharing good practice to stimulate improvement.

19.18 The above list is not exhaustive and it is recommended that applicants engage with the Councils' Economic Development teams as well as potential local

employment and skills delivery partners during pre-application discussions or, where these do not take place, early on in the planning application process.

19.19 As part of their supply chains obligations, developers should:

- Work with the councils to promote and advertise tender opportunities and to achieve the procurement of construction contracts and goods and services from companies and organisations based in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
- Brief sub-contractors on the requirements for local procurement and ensure that cooperation is agreed as a prerequisite to accepting sub-contract tenders and include a written statement in contracts with sub-contractors encouraging them to work with local businesses.

19.20 Where relevant, the developer will be expected to engage with new skills and employment initiatives active in the local area for the duration of the s106 obligation commitments on skills and employment.

Monitoring

19.21 The councils will seek to monitor the performance and process of Employment and Skills plans. The developer will be expected to:

- Inform the planning department when the development has commenced.
- In a non-residential development, inform the planning department when there are new occupiers.
- During the construction phase, submit a report at the end of each development phase detailing the outcomes achieved.
- During the occupation phase, provide quarterly reports detailing outputs achieved.

19.22 If, for some reason, the projected outcomes from the Employment and Skills Plan have not been implemented or achieved, and this has not been sufficiently justified, then the councils may seek measures to be undertaken to rectify this situation. This may take the form of suitable alternative measures, or payments in lieu of, if the original outcomes can longer be secured.

Exemptions

No specific exemptions.

Further guidance

- [Cambridge City Council Community Wealth Building Strategy](#)

Chapter 20: Planning Obligations to support affordable workspace

Introduction

- 20.1 The successful economy of the Cambridge area means that rents for employment space are high. This makes it difficult for some types of businesses, such as micro business or social enterprises, which are important for creating successful places. Rather like affordable housing, there is potential for large new commercial developments to make provision for this type of space, where suitable units are let at below market rates.
- 20.2 The Cambridge Community Wealth Building Strategy highlights the importance of supporting a vibrant local economy and facilitating partnership action to tackle inequalities.
- 20.3 In the London Plan, affordable workspace is defined as: "...workspace that is provided at rents maintained below the market rate for that space for a specific social, cultural, or economic development purpose." Affordable workspace provision offers the opportunity make economic, cultural and social impacts. For example, the floorspace could provide start-up space within Greater Cambridge's key economic sectors, creative space for local arts companies, local community workspace for home-workers and organisations or affordable space for local charities and third sector organisations.
- 20.4 The adopted Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans do not include policies requiring affordable workspace provision. The potential for a requirement is being explored through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.
- 20.5 However, the provision of affordable workspace within new commercial developments is encouraged. This section of the SPD sets out how it will be applied and managed if developers make provision within a scheme.
- 20.6 In September 2024 the [Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs](#) was published. The study involved significant engagement with stakeholders, businesses and other organisations. In exploring the needs of these sectors. It identified that in order to support the future needs of these sectors a range of premises in terms of scale, particularly for life science businesses, ensuring that smaller