

# Making Space for People: CENTRAL CAMBRIDGE VISION, AIMS & OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Interim consultation working towards a  
Supplementary Planning Document



SEPTEMBER 2019

**Document prepared by:**

Urban Design Team at Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and the Policy, Strategy & Economy Team at Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Project collaborators: BDP, Urban Flow and Turley (Heritage).

Document is intended to be printed at A4.

All images courtesy of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service.

Maps – Crown copyright and database right 2019. Ordnance Survey Licence Number: 100019730.



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Key questions to consider</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Part 1: Introduction, Purpose and Context</b>	<b>8</b>
Introduction	8
Purpose	9
Context	10
Policy context	10
Project Study Area	11
Change context	11
Partnership context	13
Project context	15
Making Space for People Baseline Report	15
<b>Baseline Report key findings</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Part 2: Cambridge as a 'liveable' City</b>	<b>18</b>
Defining the need for positive change	18
Walkable City	18
Economic and social benefits	18
Health benefits	19
Climate change and adaptation	20
Air quality	20
Public Art	20
<b>Part 3: Defining a street and place user hierarchy for Central Cambridge</b>	<b>21</b>
Intended user hierarchy for streets and spaces	21
User hierarchy	21
<b>Part 4: A Vision for Central Cambridge</b>	<b>22</b>
Aims & Objectives	24
Strategies	27
Movement focused strategies	27
Spaced focused strategies	29
Economic focused strategies	31
<b>Part 5: Engagement and next steps</b>	<b>33</b>
Engagement purpose and process	33
Next steps	33
<b>Appendix: References</b>	<b>35</b>





■ Trinity Street, Cambridge



# Foreword

**Making Space for People is our chance to help define Cambridge's future and what centre could mean tomorrow for all of us who live, work, play or visit. It is an opportunity to describe a new vision for our exciting city, and in shaping it we want to take account of the many different views, needs and desires of all so that the decisions made about the future use of streets and spaces are ones we can all understand and accept.**



**Cllr Katie Thornburrow**

Executive Councillor,  
Planning & Open Spaces



**Cllr Nicky Massey**

Executive Councillor, Transport  
and Community Safety



# Key questions to consider

As you read through this document, there are key questions that we would like you to consider. We have identified these below. You may have other comments, questions and suggestions too and we would love to hear about them!

## **Question 1:** What will make Central Cambridge a great place to be in?

(To help inform your answer, you may want to read pages 18-20)

- Do you agree with trying to make Central Cambridge better for pedestrians including those with limited mobility?
- Can you think of any other benefits or disadvantages to making Central Cambridge a more pedestrian and cycle focussed place?

## **Question 2:** Have we got the 'street user hierarchy' right?

(To help inform your answer, you may want to read page 21-22)

- Do you have any suggestions about the ordering?



■ Jesus Green, Cambridge



### **Question 3: Do you agree with our Vision for the kind of place Central Cambridge could be?**

(To help inform your answer, you may want to read page 23)

- Is our vision bold enough?
- Has anything important been left out?

### **Question 4: Have we identified the right aims and objectives for the project?**

(To help inform your answer, you may want to read page 24)

- Do they focus on the right kind of issues?
- Should they be bolder or more specific?

### **Question 5: Do the strategies cover the right themes?**

(To help inform your answer, you may want to read pages 27-31)

- Have you got any suggestions about how Movement, Space and Economic Strategies could be realised?



■ Sidney Street, Cambridge



# Part 1: Introduction, Purpose and Context

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Cambridge has an enviable collection of historic buildings, streets and spaces that combine to form its unique and enduring character. Every year the City welcomes 8.1 million visitors<sup>1</sup>, over 30,000 students attend the two universities and world leading companies choose to locate here to have the 'Cambridge' address. Residents enjoy living and working in or near to Cambridge with easy access to a wide range of facilities, open spaces and the surrounding countryside.
- 1.1.2 However, the growth of research & development based industries, new homes and businesses have placed Cambridge and its City Centre under significant pressure. The City has experienced continued traffic growth and increased numbers of people living, visiting, studying and working. These factors have impacted on the quality of Cambridge in terms of the physical appearance of streets and other spaces and experientially in terms of how enjoyable the City is to be in and move around whether that is for work or pleasure.
- 1.1.3 The impact of motor vehicles on historic places is not unique to Cambridge and cities across the world have similarly experienced an erosion of character and domination by the needs of vehicles. Pedestrians and cyclists have been pushed to the bottom of the hierarchy and made urban places hostile and confusing for residents and visitors alike.
- 1.1.4 In Cambridge, previous attempts to tackle congestion and competition for space in the late 1990s and early 2000s focussed on key streets and spaces such as King's Parade, Bridge Street and Trinity Street and were largely successful at the time, creating genuine changes in many parts of the Historic Core<sup>2</sup> by reallocating space and removing or rationalising motor vehicle routes.
- 1.1.5 Cities such as Nantes, Grenoble, Amsterdam and Copenhagen and further afield have radically changed the way in which people move round and experience their cities by moving pedestrians and cycles to the top of the user hierarchy and making a positive character and sense of place a priority in decision making.
- 1.1.6 There is a real opportunity to fundamentally change the way in which the Central Cambridge including the Historic Core operate. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) has committed to achieving a 24% reduction in traffic by 2031<sup>3</sup> (based on 2018 assessment figures). Other

1 2017-18 Tourist Figures from Visit Cambridge & Beyond

2 The Historic Core is identified in the Cambridge Historic Core Appraisal (2016)





work being undertaken by the GCP will look at demand management<sup>4</sup>, air quality and getting more people across Greater Cambridgeshire to use more sustainable forms of transport. In Cambridge, 33% of people cycle as part of their daily routine and far exceeds other parts of the country. With decreasing car ownership across the city<sup>5</sup>, there is an opportunity to improve this further in addition to increasing the number of people that walk short journeys and use public transport.

- 1.1.7 The result of this work will create a step change in the way in which we can think about the public realm in Cambridge, how we use and enjoy streets and other spaces to improve the quality of the Central Cambridge. Such a move is essential to ensure that Cambridge continues to be a place that offers the best living, working and studying conditions that have, for so long, been part of what makes this a great 'world' City.

## 1.2 Purpose

- 1.2.1 The Making Space for People project will ultimately produce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will provide planning guidance for the streets and public spaces that form the public realm in Central Cambridge. The SPD

will align with relevant public realm and movement planning policies in the Cambridge Local Plan (2018)<sup>6</sup>, providing more specific and detailed guidance on how to interpret and implement these policies. It will also support the aims of the local transport authorities who have made a commitment to achieving a substantial reduction in traffic and a significant shift to sustainable transport modes.

- 1.2.2 This document forms part of an interim step in the production of the SPD. It forms the basis of public engagement on an emerging 'vision' for Central Cambridge, and the principles and strategies which could underpin the future SPD.
- 1.2.3 In preparing this document, there have been a number of targeted and wider public engagement events which took place in 2018. The key issues and opportunities identified at this initial stage have shaped the vision, principles and strategies. The background work that has informed this document is set out in the Baseline Report which is being published as a supporting evidence base.

3 The reduction in motor vehicles of 10-15% is against the 2011 baseline with subsequent growth this equates to a 24% reduction based on 2018 flows

4 Demand management is the application of strategies and policies to reduce travel demand, or to redistribute this demand in space or in time

5 RAC Foundation Report dated 26th December 2012 reveals a 7.1% reduction in car ownership in Cambridge between 2001 and 2011 censuses.

6 The Cambridge Local Plan forms part of the development plan for Cambridge. It sets out the vision, policies and proposals for the future development and land use in Cambridge to 2031. It is the main consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## 1.3 The Consultation Process

1.3.1 This Making Space for People Vision, Principles and Strategies document has been published to give residents, businesses and the wider public an opportunity to have a say in how we can improve the streets and spaces in Central Cambridge. The consultation period is between 9am on Monday 2nd September 2019 and 5pm on Monday 14th October 2019. Further information regarding how to submit your comments on the document can be found online<sup>7</sup>. The comments received from the consultation will inform the draft SPD. It will also influence local Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) transport schemes as these are shaped. Figure 1 right provides the anticipated project timeline.

## 1.4 Context

1.4.1 Policy context

1.4.2 The policy context to the Making Space for People project is the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) adopted by Cambridge City Council on 18 October 2018. The future SPD will provide supplementary detail and should be read in conjunction with adopted policies in the Local Plan and other relevant material considerations. Key Local Plan policies relevant to the project are:

- Policy 10 The City Centre: sets out the City Centre's role as a multi-functional regional centre. It identifies the Council's aim of improving the capacity and quality of the public realm throughout the city centre and the intention to set out more detail through the production of a city centre public realm strategy SPD.

**Figure 1: Making Space for People project timeline**



■ Opportunity Area Policies:

■ **Area Policy 12**

Fitzroy/Burleigh Street/Grafton  
Area of Major Change

■ **Area Policy 21**

Station Areas West and Clifton Road  
Area of Major Change

■ **Area Policy 22**

Mitcham's Corner Opportunity Area

■ **Area Policy 23**

Eastern Gate Opportunity Area

■ **Area Policy 24**

Mill Road Opportunity Area

■ **Area Policy 25**

Cambridge Railway Station, Hills  
Road Corridor to the City Centre  
Opportunity Area

- 1.4.3 As well as providing supplementary guidance on the above policies, the SPD will also link into the following Local Plan

policies relevant to Making Space for People in Central Cambridge:

- 1.4.4 The Making Space for People project will also support the GCP's target of a 10 to 15 per cent reduction in city centre traffic flows over 2011 levels, as part of the City Deal negotiations that resulted in the £500m devolution funding. Traffic has grown considerably since 2011 and this target now equates to a reduction of some 24 per cent over today's levels or the equivalent to taking one in four cars off the road network. To align with all GCP projects, Making Space for People is working to ensure that it is aligned with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Interim Mayoral Transport Strategy and the emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP).

- 1.4.5 Cambridge City Council declared a Climate Change & Biodiversity Emergency on 22 May 2019, and many other local authorities have followed suit. These declarations form part of the policy context for this project.

## 1.5 Project Study Area

- 1.5.1 The Making Space for People Study Area is identified in Figure 2 overleaf. It includes the city centre and the opportunity areas identified in the Policy Context. Together these form the area referred to as 'Central Cambridge' in this document.

## 1.6 Change Context

- 1.6.1 The Greater Cambridge area of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District is set to grow by up to 30% over the next 15 years, with the population rising by 65,000 to 338,000 by 2031 (from 273,000

Policy Number	Policy Title
Policy 7	River Cam
Policy 36	Air Quality, odour and dust
Policy 55	Responding to context
Policy 56	Creating successful places
Policy 59	Designing landscape and the public realm
Policy 61	Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
Policy 65	Visual pollution
Policy 67	Protection of open space
Policy 69	Protection of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance
Policy 70	Protection of priority species and habitats
Policy 71	Trees



Figure 2: Making Space for People Study Area





in 2011)<sup>8</sup>. Population growth means trips on the transport network will increase by 25,000 by 2031 (from 101,000 in 2011 to 126,000). If we carry on as we are by 2031:

- Traffic in Cambridge will increase by over 30% in the morning peak
- Traffic in South Cambridgeshire will increase by almost 40% in the morning peak
- The time spent in congestion will more than double.

1.6.2 Whilst Greater Cambridge is experiencing very high growth, many of the changes affecting the city are common to other parts of the UK. These include:

- The ageing population with the percentage of Cambridge residents that are over 65 predicted to rise from 11.8% in 2011 to 16.38% in 2036 (Cambridgeshire Insight).
- Changes in the 'High Street' which is facing many challenges, with some retailers struggling to find their place in the 21st century.

1.6.3 Making Space for People has emerged in response to the issues highlighted above as a proactive approach to ensure that Cambridge rises to the challenge of accommodating growth and pressure in the heart of the City.

## 1.7 Partnership context

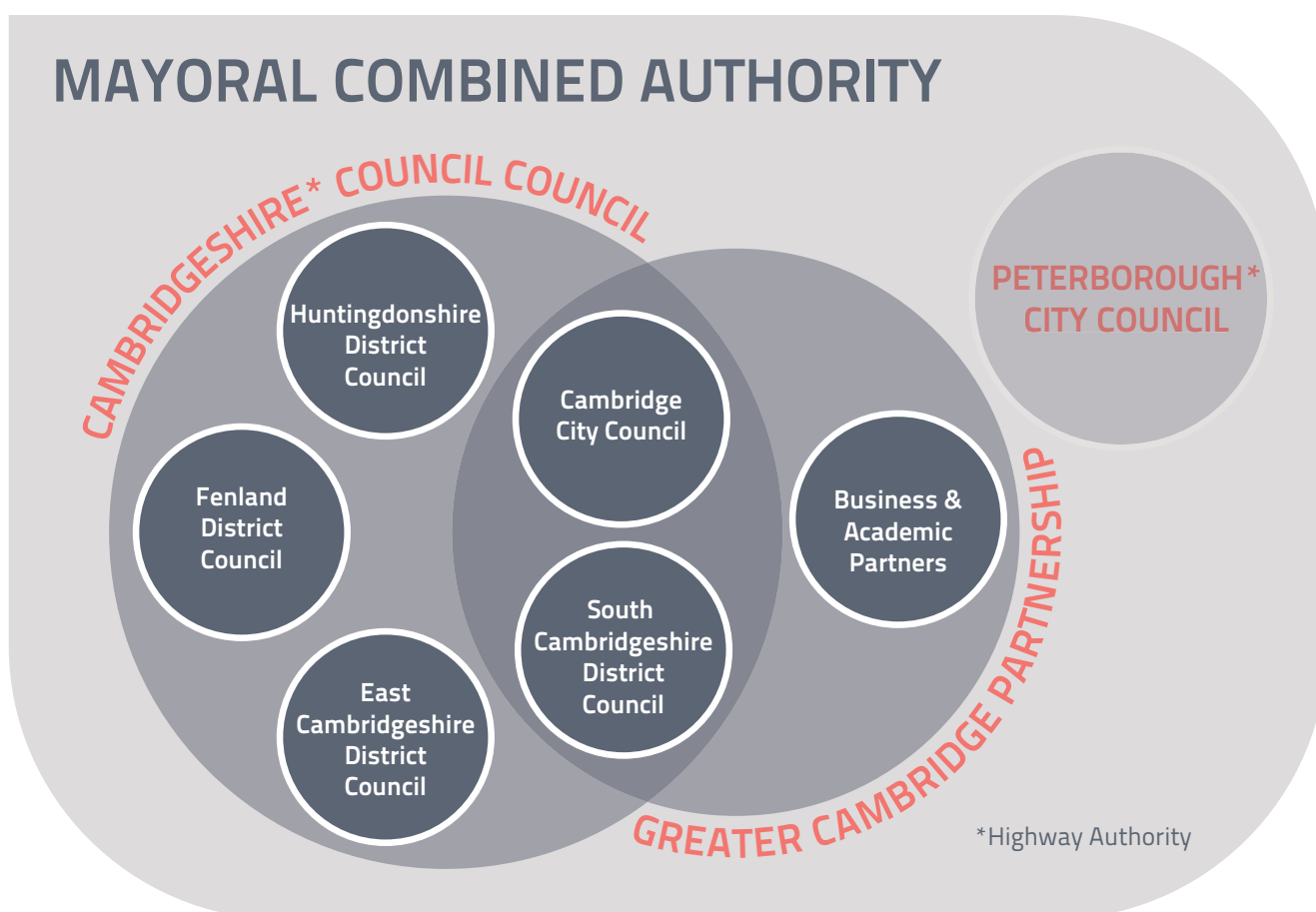
1.7.1 As the Local Planning Authority, Cambridge City Council is responsible for the development, adoption and implementation of the SPD.

1.7.2 Cambridgeshire County Council is the Local Highway Authority with responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the road network in the City and across Cambridgeshire.



- 1.7.3 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is the Strategic Transport Authority with responsibility for transport policy through the Local Transport Plan and the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure.
- 1.7.4 The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), whose membership comprises of Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge University, has been established to deliver the Cambridge City Deal with up to £500 million of funding from Government over a 15-year period. The GCP is funding a programme of high-quality transport infrastructure to support the delivery of housing and new employment in the Greater Cambridge area.
- 1.7.5 The SPD will need to align with the new emerging Local Transport Plan being developed by the CPCA and to be influenced and informed by the County Council's relevant highway policies and practices.
- 1.7.7 The SPD also needs to take account of the CPCA's Cambridge Autonomous Metro (CAM) project which proposes a network of high quality public transport corridors linking Cambridge with surrounding towns and villages with the potential for a series of tunnelled routes under the city linking key housing and employment sites in and around Cambridge, including the city centre.

**Figure 3: Local Government in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough**







## 1.8 Project context

1.8.1 Making Space for People aligns with the GCP's City Access project which has a key objective of reducing traffic levels, delays and congestion in the city to facilitate:

- A more reliable and attractive public transport system
- Improvements for cycling and walking
- A significant improvement to air quality in the city
- Space reallocation to improve the journeys made by walking, cycling and public transport and enhance the public realm.

1.8.2 City Access has recently completed an extensive engagement exercise called 'Choices for Better Journeys'<sup>9</sup>. It sets out the GCP's vision to give more people a more attractive public transport option compared with the car and sought feedback from people living, working and studying in Cambridge. The consultation also set out some of the challenges around funding and delivery, including seeking feedback on different demand management options.

## 1.9 Making Space for People Baseline Report

1.9.1 A Baseline report has been produced by consultants working with the project team. It describes and analyses how Central Cambridge is currently performing in terms of its public realm, access and movement and begins to articulate the challenges it faces now and in the future.

1.9.2 The Baseline Report summarises the outcomes of a comprehensive programme of meetings, workshops, online engagement, desktop review, analysis and site visits that have been undertaken to help formulate a thorough understanding of the central area of Cambridge and those who live and work in the city and the potential impacts of projected growth.

1.9.3 The results of the baseline research and associated public engagement described in the Baseline Report have been distilled into twelve key findings shown on the following pages.

9 <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/cityaccess/choices-for-better-journeys>

# Baseline Report key findings

**1** A city with a global profile that has struggled to keep up with the pace of change and lost ground compared with other cities – a city that is not living up to expectations.



**2** Lack of civic spaces and variable quality and maintenance of the public realm detract from historic assets rather than provide a positive setting.



**3** Congestion and conflict between transport modes (pedestrians, cycles, cars, delivery vehicles, buses) as a result of too much being asked of limited space in the heart of the city.



**4** Vehicle dominance (numbers and size) within the narrow streets of the historic core creates an intimidating, uncomfortable and in places unsafe environment for people.



**5** The allocation of street space has no winners and instead tends to be unfair to all that use it, particularly those on foot and the mobility impaired.



**6** Congestion, including at and around Drummer Street Bus Station, and bus routing contribute to poor bus service reliability and quality.





**7** Increasing concern over climate change issues and the impact of air quality on health and quality of life.



**8** The quality of cycling infrastructure and facilities fall some considerable way short of the “City of Cycles” billing.



**9** Green spaces are underutilised and disconnected from each other and access to and interaction with the river is limited.



**10** Tourist congestion hotspots discourage locals visiting the historic core and greatly limit a positive and substantial tourist contribution to local economy.



**11** Local businesses both in the City and neighbouring local centres need support and the evening economy could be expanded.



**12** Stakeholders are frustrated by current conditions within the City and keen to see positive and demonstrable change to create a high quality and well managed

