

# The Expansion of Cambourne and what it means for our Village

The draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan sets out the future land use and planning policies for the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire identifies the need for new homes and jobs; services and infrastructure; and proposes where development should happen. It applies from 2026 to 2045 and beyond. It can be found at <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan>.

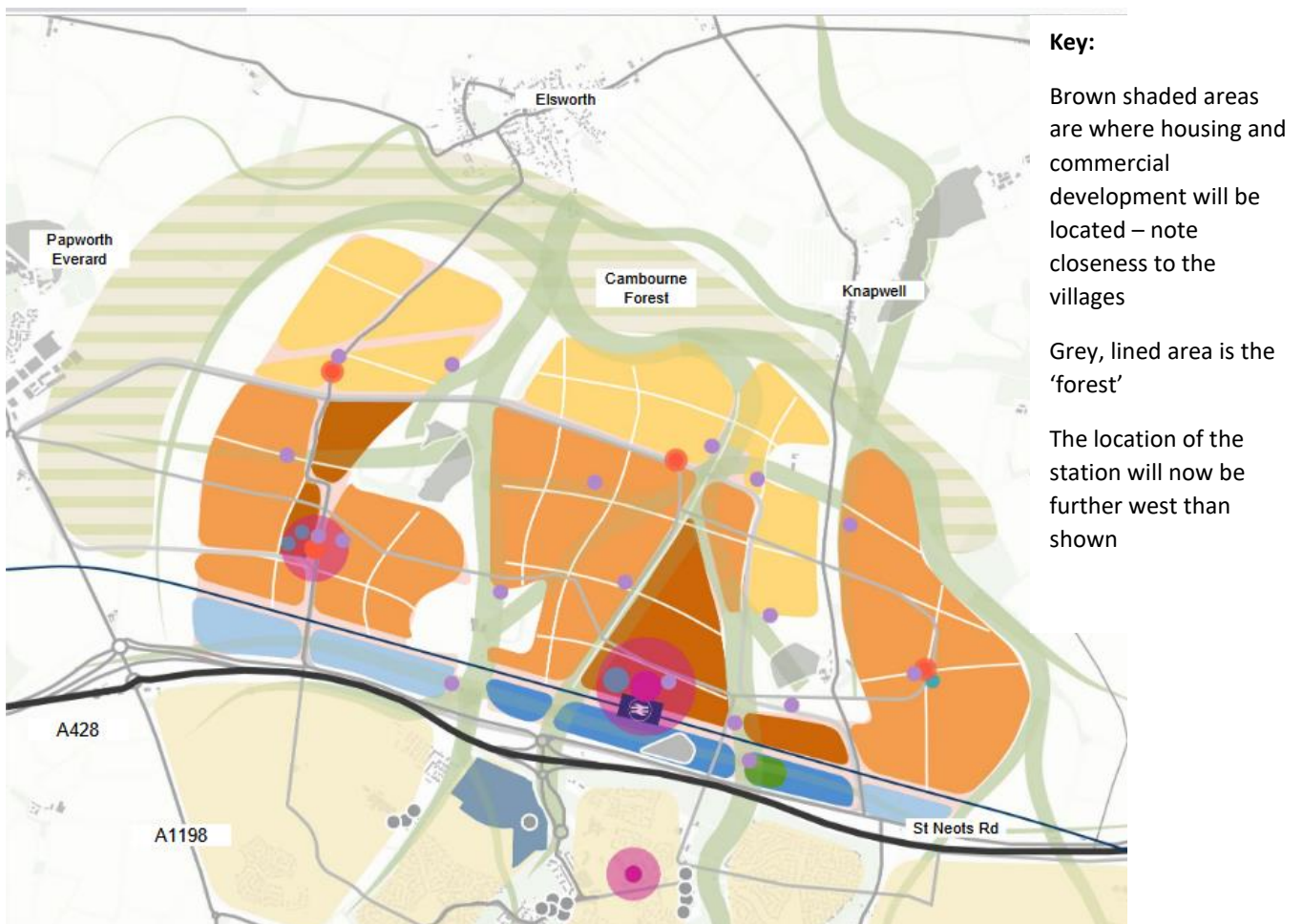
## WHY ARE WE CONTACTING YOU?

The Plan proposes the expansion of Cambourne north of the A428 with 13,000+ new homes to be built between Elsworth, Knapwell and the A428 around the new Cambourne railway station. This development will come very close to our villages and have major traffic and environmental impacts for us. **Presently very little is proposed in the way of measures to mitigate these impacts.**

The Plan is out to public consultation and **you have until 5.00 p.m. on 30 January 2026 to submit comments.** The sheer amount of documentation is rather daunting, however it is important that as many people respond as possible if the impacts on Elsworth are to be mitigated. Therefore this leaflet sets out some of the major impacts and draws attention to the things in the Plan that relate most directly to Elsworth. **There will also be a public meeting on Monday, 19 January 7.00-8.30 p.m. in the Pavilion.**

## SOME CONTEXT

- Development in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor is seen as important by Government for the national economy and house building.
- East West Rail is coming and will stimulate house building near the stations along the line; a station for Cambourne will be constructed north of the A428 (though sited further west than originally planned).
- Expansion of Cambourne to provide 13,000+ new homes to meet current and expected needs, create a critical mass for services/facilities and a new town centre; it is expected to become the third largest settlement in Cambridgeshire after Cambridge and Peterborough.



## POSSIBLE BENEFITS

There will be some benefits which might be realised from the proposals, for example:

- Proximity to the rail station
- Improved bus services (a possible extension to the C2C busway and more regular bus services)
- Community services and facilities in Cambourne North (health, recreational, schools, retail, etc)
- Biodiversity gains (or at least compensation)
- Employment opportunities
- Strengthen local businesses/possibly support school numbers

## ACTUAL CONCERNS

On the other hand there are a number of real concerns such as traffic, loss of village identity and the danger of coalescence between the villages and Cambourne North, water supply/waste, the speed of build, etc.

### Traffic

The focus in the Plan is very much on active, sustainable travel (walking, cycling), both within Cambourne North and between existing Cambourne and the new development. However, little attention has been paid to traffic coming and going further afield including proposed new developments such as the Lattenburys and the logistics hubs near junction 24 of the A14. Moreover, Cambourne North and the forest are trumpeted as destinations people will want to visit for work, recreation, etc, while the station will, of course, attract commuters. Inevitably, most of these people will be travelling by car, There is also an underlying assumption that Cambourne North residents won't want to have/use their own vehicles, but thousands of houses is going to mean thousands of cars which won't all just sit on driveways.

No work has been done on traffic flows coming through Elsworth or Knapwell to go to from and from the new railway station and the new town centre, nor on how these might be mitigated (e.g. bypasses for the villages), apart from references to traffic calming measures which by themselves won't do the job (they don't now).

As things stand Brockley Road is the obvious route for traffic travelling to/from the north west to Cambourne North and via Boxworth and Knapwell for traffic to/from the north east. Given the state of the local roads and the absence of pavements in our villages, these traffic flows heighten the risk of accidents.

**These traffic concerns need to be addressed before the station is built.** However, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is responsible for producing the regional transport strategy and it is unsatisfactory that this work will not have been completed until after the District Council's Local Plan has been signed off.

### Landscape buffer :

The Plan recognises that "Large scale development at Cambourne North would have landscape impacts difficult to fully mitigate".

A landscape buffer is proposed ('Cambourne Forest'). This would be multi-purpose:

- to screen the new development
- to provide separation and avoid coalescence between the villages and Cambourne North and the loss of village identity
- for ecological purposes
- recreational use

It is proposed that the landscape buffer would also be more than just a 'forest' and include open spaces, arable fields and recreational areas (e.g. perhaps an adventure playground).

The local parishes have already expressed concerns about:

- The proximity of development area to Elsworth and Knapwell (400 metres in the case of Elsworth)
- The depth of the buffer near the villages (compared to Papworth Everard)
- These two issues taken together must give rise to serious doubts that the landscape buffer will meet the purposes mentioned above
- The funding of and the responsibility for the stewardship of the forest; whether a planting plan exists and when planting would begin; what steps might be taken to avoid the forest becoming a focus for anti-social behaviour
- Whether any residual land left after allocations for housing/commercial developments, the forest, open spaces and recreational areas would continue to be viable to farm
- Rather than Cambourne Forest, whether more in keeping with the intentions for the landscape buffer and local history, the designation 'Elsworth and Knapwell Forest' would be more historically appropriate.

### **The speed of development:**

- **Water**

While it is anticipated that construction of the rail line to Cambridge and the station will commence before 2030, water supply issues means 2032 is likely to be the earliest that house/commercial construction can start. Elsworth suffers from flooding so there are concerns that concreting over this large area will make this worse. Further work needs to be done on these issues and it is concerning this has not yet been completed before the Plan has come forward.

- **House/commercial construction**

The speed of house building will determine when facilities and services come on stream, but a critical mass of people will be required before provision becomes viable so some of the benefits that might accrue from development north of the A428 will be delayed, while some adverse impacts will begin to be experienced much earlier.

### **Coalescence:**

The vision in the Plan for a 'Greater Cambridge' has the effect of leading to proposals which will see the slow but gradual urbanisation of much of South Cambridgeshire, nowhere more so than in the Cambourne area.

While the Plan refers to ways of avoiding coalescence between the villages and Cambourne North, the development will take roughly 50% of Elsworth parish and even more of Knapwell. Presumably Cambourne Town Council will become responsible for the development area as that is seen as an extension of the existing town. A number of questions arise from this which are not addressed in the Plan such as:

- Whether a community governance review will be undertaken by SCDC and what this might mean for the villages
- What will the position be with regard to the substantial Section 106/other monies arising from the construction of the development as it currently sits in the parishes of Elsworth, Knapwell and Boxworth?

## **ELSWORTH, KNAPWELL AND BOXWORTH**

The parishes of Elsworth, Knapwell and Boxworth are particularly affected by the proposals to expand Cambourne north of the A428 and representatives have been working together to have their voices heard by engaging with SCDC in workshops, and submitting comments in order to influence the next iteration of the Plan which will come forward in Summer 2026; the submissions made so far are on the Parish Council web site at:

- <https://elsworth-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Joint-Submission-to-LP.pdf>
- <https://elsworth-pc.gov.uk/comments-on-the-landscape-buffer-and-coalescence-between-elsworth-knapwell-and-cambourne-north/>

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can read and comment on all the multiple themes and policies in the Plan. At the very least look at:

- **The Summary** which provides an overview and includes the Vision for Greater Cambridge; Identifying Development Needs; the Development Strategy; the Local Plan Themes and can be found at: <https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/draft-greater-cambridge-local-plan-consultation/summary-greater-cambridge-local-plan>
- **The Interactive Policies map** which is at <https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/draft-greater-cambridge-local-plan-consultation/policies-map>
- **Policy S/CBN: Cambourne North** which relates to the expansion of Cambourne north of the A428 at <https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/draft-greater-cambridge-local-plan-consultation/site-allocations/new-settlements/policy-scbn>

For instructions on how to submit your comments submit go to

<https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/draft-greater-cambridge-local-plan-consultation>

## REMEMBER!

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION SO THAT ELSWORTH'S VOICE IS HEARD SO PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO LOOK AT THE PLAN AND SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS BY 30 JANUARY**