
Greater Cambridge Local Plan Regulation 18 Issues and Options 2020

Representations on behalf of Endurance Estates

February 2020

**Greater Cambridge Local Plan
Regulation 18 Issues and Options 2020**

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Project Ref:	31167/A5/P1/AW/SO	31167/A5/P1/AW/SO
Status:	Draft	Final
Issue/Rev:	01	02
Date:	December 2020	February 2020
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Ref: 31167/A5/P1/AW/SO
File Ref: 31167.P1.I&O.AW
Date: February 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These representations are made on behalf of Endurance Estates and set out comments in relation to several questions in the Issues and Options Consultation on the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (2017-2040). This representation is concerned mainly with the housing delivery strategy for Greater Cambridge and related Green Belt issues. However, it also touches upon interrelated topics such as climate change, biodiversity and green spaces, wellbeing and social inclusion and great places.

The emerging plan will need to strike the right balance between high growth needs and the character of what makes the area unique. It will also need to consider how the economic success of the area is not hampered by inadequate transport infrastructure, housing delivery and other infrastructure needs. Along with housing and economic drivers, the development strategy for Greater Cambridge will need to tackle sustainability in a holistic way, rebalancing growth in the area to respond positively to issues such as health and wellbeing, community, biodiversity, green infrastructure and climate change.

In response to this challenge, this representation advocates allocating the widest possible range of sites in order to provide a more sustainable development strategy and to rebalance growth needs in Greater Cambridge in accordance with paragraphs 67 and 68 of the NPPF 2019. This means, amongst other things, allocating sufficient housing land for small-medium housing sites in rural settlements, which can deliver quickly and improve the rate at which houses can be absorbed by the market. To address this, it is clear that current settlement boundaries will need to flex to accommodate further growth in sustainable locations.

Having assessed the reasonable options for meeting identified housing need set out in paragraph 137 of the NPPF, there is a compelling case for Greater Cambridge to initiate a review of the Cambridge Green Belt in order to best meet the challenges of its housing need and direct growth to sustainable locations, enhance the sustainability of existing rural settlements and promote sustainable travel in accordance with paragraphs 78, 103 and 138 of the NPPF.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These representations are made on behalf of Endurance Estates and set out comments in relation to several questions in the Issues and Options Consultation on the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (2017-2040) in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 These representations should be read alongside Barton Willmore's Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Study (Appendix 1). This includes a detailed review of Greater Cambridge's housing needs, current housing delivery strategy and local transport plan and the corresponding implications for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Several key findings are made within this study in relation to the growth strategy for Greater Cambridge and provide the context for the recommendations set out in this representation.
- 1.3 This representation is concerned mainly with the housing delivery strategy for Greater Cambridge and related Green Belt issues. However, it also touches upon interrelated topics such climate change, biodiversity and green spaces, wellbeing and social inclusion and great places.

2.0 GREATER CAMBRIDGE HOUSING STRATEGY - RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) 2018 highlighted concern that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are running a very significant risk of not achieving their economic potential due to insufficient levels of planned housing. It calls for the recalibration of housing need assessments based on more accurate employment growth forecasts, which in turn should set new, higher housing targets – at the very least adding on accumulated backlog. This would require delivery of around 2900 homes per annum in Greater Cambridge until 2040. These indicative housing projections are substantially higher than the Government’s standard method and present exceptional circumstances to justify an alternative approach to the standard method.
- 2.2 To address this higher housing forecast up until 2040 the development strategy will need to balance the distribution of housing supply and ensure (as per para.59 of the NPPF) that sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. The current Local Plan trajectory places significant reliance on growth sites continuing the housing supply beyond 2031, but such sites are skewed to the north of the district and do not consider communities to the south. The collective proximity of these growth sites to one another also present future challenges in terms of market absorption rates.
- 2.3 Basing the CPIER’s estimates against the existing proportional representation of growth across the adopted development strategy shows the potential need for 6,294 additional homes in rural areas up until 2040 (see Barton Willmore Housing Delivery Study, 2020 – Appendix 1) beyond the current pipeline of homes that have permission or are allocated in the adopted Local Plans. This relies on the remaining housing need being delivered through densification of Cambridge, further urban fringe sites and new settlements. Whilst some of this need may be coordinated or shared with neighbouring authorities through the duty to cooperate it is highly likely that a great deal of this need will need to be delivered within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire taking into account the affordability crisis, sustainability objectives, as well as economic and market forces. Future pressure on Cambridge to densify and further expand its urban fringes will therefore need to be weighed against the harm to its compact and historic character.
- 2.4 The alternative scenario for the development strategy is to steer a greater proportion of homes towards sustainable rural settlements. As such, there is potential scope to consider the need for more than 6,294 additional homes to be delivered in rural areas up until 2040. In purely quantitative terms this would mean delivering around 60 homes in each of the 106 rural settlements as a minimum.

- 2.5 This raises some key questions for the Local Plan that are already contained in the Issues and Options Consultation, as follows:

Question 31: How should the Local Plan help to meet our needs for the amount and types of new homes?

- 2.6 **Summary Answer:** The Local Plan should allocate the widest possible range of sites in order to provide choice, affordability and diversity in the market. The Letwin Review, published in October 2018, placed a clear emphasis on the need to tackle the homogeneity of homes on offer and diversify the types and tenures on offer on large sites. Small-medium sized sites play an important role in providing a wide variety of house types, tenures, sizes and mix and also deliver quickly compared to larger sites. In accordance with paragraphs 67 and 68 of the NPPF, strategic policy-making authorities should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites over the local plan, including at least 10% of their requirement on sites no larger than one hectare.

Question 32: Do you think we should plan for a higher number of homes than the minimum required by government, to provide flexibility to support the growing?

- 2.7 **Summary Answer:** Yes, we think housing need should reflect the upper housing range recommended in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER, 2018) in order to support the forecast and needed economic growth over the next 20 years. This equates to around 2900 homes each year for Greater Cambridge and an uplift of 58% housing supply compared to the current objectively assessed need. Basing the CPIER's estimates against the existing proportional representation of growth across the adopted development strategy shows the potential need for 6,294 additional homes in rural areas up until 2040 (see Barton Willmore Housing Delivery Study, 2020 – Appendix 1).

Question 37: How should we encourage a shift away from car use and towards more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking?

- 2.8 **Summary Answer:** Sustainable transport is not only about the provision of sustainable travel infrastructure but also the creation of sustainable movements. Sustainable growth within villages can contribute to the footfall needed to support village services and facilities, which in turn reduces the need to travel by private car. As promoted in paragraph 78 of the NPPF, sustainable development in rural areas is about locating

housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Additionally, new development can contribute to sustainable transport improvements in rural areas through S106 contributions.

Questions 40: How flexible should the Local Plan be towards development of both jobs and homes on the edge of villages?

- 2.9 **Summary Answer:** We think it should be highly flexible not only to meet additional housing need but also to deliver sustainable enhancements to existing villages and rural areas more generally.

Question 41: Do you think the Local Plan should be more flexible about the size of developments allowed within village boundaries (frameworks), allowing more homes on sites that become available?

- 2.10 **Summary Answer:** We think the development strategy should be more flexible about the size of developments allowed within village boundaries by recalibrating the settlement hierarchy based not only on existing levels of services and facilities in each settlement **but also** the potential sustainability enhancing effect of accommodating growth.

Question 47: What do you think about growing our villages?

- 2.11 **Summary Answer:** The emerging plan will need to strike the right balance between high growth needs and the character of what makes the area unique. Given the high level of housing need in the area it is inevitable that several villages will need to accommodate further growth. This means, amongst other things, allocating sufficient housing land for small-medium housing sites, which can deliver quickly and help distribute growth more sustainably throughout the district (para. 68 of the NPPF) and identifying opportunities for villages to grow and thrive in order to enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (para. 78 of the NPPF).

Question 48 What do you think about siting development along transport corridors?

- 2.12 **Summary Answer:** Transport corridors present potential sustainable locations for new development, as well as better connecting rural areas to important facilities, services and employment areas. However, the development strategy needs to consider sustainability in a holistic way by considering other factors that contribute to the sustainability of existing and new settlements, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

- 2.13 In responding to questions 31, 32, 37, 40, 41, 47 and 48, it is important to note that paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It goes on to promote planning policies that identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.
- 2.14 Frameworks have been defined to take account of the present extent of the built-up area and planned development, but the level of planned development has been notably limited by the application of the settlement hierarchy (Policies S/7 - S/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018) and the principle that development can only occur within the settlement framework boundary. This is evident in the categorisation of South Cambridgeshire's 'Group' or 'Infill' villages and the tightly drawn settlement boundaries, which have created little room for villages to grow. Examples of this are provided in the appended Barton Willmore Housing Delivery Study (2020).
- 2.15 Taking into account future requirements for housing land supply and housing affordability, it is clear that current settlement boundaries will need to flex in order to accommodate further growth in sustainable locations. As previously mentioned, the settlement hierarchy has defined the sustainability of each village as determinate rather than giving merit to its transformative potential through sustainable development. We are not arguing here for a removal of the settlement hierarchy, but a recalibration measured against levels of services and facilities in each settlement **and** potential sustainability enhancing measures such as:
- Transport improvements that better connect villages to surrounding larger settlements, employment areas or service centres;
 - Local transport enhancements that provide more sustainable travel options to services and facilities and/or ease of access for satellite villages surrounding larger or better served settlements e.g. new footpaths/cycleways, real time bus stops;
 - Increasing capacity of local community facilities to better serve local needs;
 - Provision of new community services and facilities e.g. play areas, new business incubators;
 - New housing that provides different sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of different groups in the community and supports a greater demographic mix;
 - Provision of much needed affordable housing;
 - Local employment generation;
 - New or enhanced access to public open space and recreation (i.e. health and wellbeing gains); and

- Net gain in biodiversity and opportunities to 'scale-up' local green infrastructure networks.
- 2.16 The above factors present scope to expand village populations in a sustainable way; the degree of expansion will need to be scored against the level of existing and potential sustainability levels. Not all village settlements will be equal in this regard and therefore a scoping exercise will be required to assess each settlement and preferably define an extent of housing supply matched with new housing land allocations.
- 2.17 Local communities may have a particular view on the needs of their village or where growth opportunities are best located. Similar to the emerging Bedford Local Plan, housing policy could give the option to local communities to steer allocated growth through a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order (Regulation 16), or if one has not been submitted the Council can consider the need to allocate additional sites.
- 2.18 There are further benefits to consider through appropriate expansion of rural settlements. Housing sites in rural areas tend to be small to medium in size, which in turn have shorter delivery times than larger sites. Research by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners 'Driving housing delivery from large sites: What factors affect the build out rates of large scale housing sites' (NLP, 2018) shows that the lead-in time for sites of less than 500 homes take 1.7-1.8 years to deliver the first dwelling after receiving detailed planning permission, whereas larger sites of 2000+ homes take much longer (2.9 years).

Question 39: Should we look to remove land from the Green Belt if evidence shows it provides a more sustainable development option by reducing travel distances, helping us to respond to climate change?

- 2.19 **Summary Answer:** Yes. It is important to note that the Green Belt is a planning designation rather than an environmental designation. The current and future constraints to housing growth within Cambridge, its fringes together with a potential overreliance on new settlements presents a strong case to review Green Belt release when considering the high growth needs of the area and the overarching need to deliver growth in a sustainable way. The high level of housing delivery needed to sustain a rolling 5 year housing supply throughout the plan period is best met through a mix of housing sites and land availability. Sustainable growth on the edge of the City and within settlements surrounding Cambridge can make an important contribution to this objective, creating opportunity to rebalance housing supply and foster zero carbon developments and lifestyles through reduced travel distances and sustainable travel options. Releasing land

from the Green Belt on the edge of and in close proximity to Cambridge, where existing infrastructure can be enhanced, arguably provides the best opportunity to influence and change people's behaviours around travel and commuting and encourage adoption of more sustainable modes of transport. Development in these locations can support residents living sustainable lifestyles, as well as living in sustainable buildings.

Question 45: What do you think about developing around the edge of Cambridge in the Green Belt?

- 2.20 **Summary Answer:** Applying the CPIER growth scenario to Cambridge's urban fringes and factoring in some housing delivery at North East Cambridge and Cambridge Airport would result in the need for 6,294 additional homes on the edge of Cambridge up until 2040 (see Barton Willmore Housing Delivery Study, 2020). This is especially challenging when considering the sensitivity of the edge of Cambridge and the existing extent of expansion beyond its historic core. The high level of housing delivery needed to sustain a rolling 5 year housing supply throughout the plan period is best met through a mix of housing sites and land availability. Sustainable growth on the edge of the City where possible and within settlements surrounding Cambridge can make an important contribution to this objective, creating opportunity to rebalance housing supply geographically across the district and provide more sustainable travel to justify potential release from the Green Belt.
- 2.21 Paragraphs 136 and 137 of the NPPF states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation of updating of plans. Prior to concluding exceptional circumstances the policy-making authority should demonstrate that it has examined all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This should include: 1) making as much use of possible suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land; 2) optimising the density of development; and 3) be informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities as to whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development.
- 2.22 In light of the pressing housing problems in Greater Cambridge and the undersupply of housing relative to economic growth, there is a clear need for the emerging Local Plan to consider what capacity exists to accommodate housing delivery on brownfield sites, through densification and the duty to cooperate. Paragraph 3.112 of the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan (2018) acknowledges the lack of available previously developed land and with the exception of the Northern Fringe East it is hard to imagine where significant numbers of additional homes will be feasibly accommodated within the urban area of Cambridge by 2040. Applying the CPIER growth scenario to the current proportion

of housing allocated to the Cambridge urban area would result in the need for 5,199 additional homes until 2040 (see Barton Willmore Housing Delivery Study, 2020).

- 2.23 Applying the CPIER growth scenario to Cambridge's urban fringes would result in the need for 9,577 additional homes, either through further urban extensions or densification. This is especially challenging when considering the sensitivity of the edge of Cambridge and the existing extent of expansion beyond its historic core. It is therefore vital that less sensitive locations on the edge of Cambridge are reviewed for Green Belt release, taking into account the opportunity to bring forward sustainable development in a location that arguably provides the best opportunity to influence and change people's behaviours around travel and commuting and encourage adoption of more sustainable modes of transport. Development in these locations can support residents living sustainable lifestyles, as well as living in sustainable buildings.
- 2.24 The majority of the growth needs are anticipated to be directed to the Greater Cambridge area, particularly given the existing affordable housing needs of the area. This is pertinent given the remaining high ratio of lower quartile price to incomes in the area (Housing Market Bulletin, Hometrack, September 2019) and the 4,712 applicants currently on the combined Housing Register.
- 2.25 The aforementioned constraints to housing growth within Cambridge, its fringes together with a potential overreliance on new settlements presents a strong case to review Green Belt release when considering the high growth needs of the area and the overarching need to deliver growth in a holistic and sustainable way. The Green Belt is a planning designation not an environmental designation, which should be reviewed at Local Plan stage in order to consider the most sustainable growth options for the area.
- 2.26 The high level of housing delivery needed to sustain a rolling 5 year housing supply throughout the plan period is best met through a mix of housing sites and land availability. Sustainable growth on the edge of the City where possible and within settlements surrounding Cambridge can make an important contribution to this objective, creating opportunity to rebalance housing supply geographically across the district and tie in with improved sustainable transport measures. Not all of the villages, however, will score highly in sustainability terms or benefit from planned transport improvements.
- 2.27 A total of 28 villages fall wholly within the Green Belt and 10 further villages adjoin the Green Belt totaling 36% of all village settlements in the district. A significant proportion of these villages fall within a 'higher sustainability category' taking into account both existing service and facilities and potential sustainability enhancements. The closer these

villages are to the City the greater the options for sustainable travel and the use of new forms of mobility (e.g. electric bikes).

- 2.28 Continued limits to growth in these villages through Green Belt designation will result in dispersion of housing further away from Cambridge, increasing the burden on surrounding villages to accommodate growth of the anticipated 6,294 additional homes in rural areas, contributing in turn to more unsustainable travel patterns. Such an approach would result in these surrounding villages accommodating 123 homes each if distributed equally. This would represent a significant uplift in housing delivery particularly in current 'infill villages' where historically housing growth has been low. For instance, between 2002-2017 Knapwell Village only saw 2 new homes completed ('Cambridgeshire Housing Completions 2002-2017, Cambridgeshire Insight, 2019).
- 2.29 Limited release of Green Belt land has previously been identified in the villages of Comberton, Histon and Sawston – all of which benefit from relatively good levels of service provision, including secondary schools or colleges. There is therefore a precedent for this approach and one that must meet the strict tests Chapter 13 (Green Belt) of the NPPF. Having assessed the reasonable options for meeting identified housing need set out in paragraph 137 of the NPPF, there is a compelling case for the Councils to initiate a review of the Cambridge Green Belt in order to best meet the challenges of its housing need and direct growth to sustainable locations, enhance the sustainability of existing rural settlements and promote sustainable travel in accordance with paragraphs 78, 103 and 138 of the NPPF. In doing so, the opportunity presents itself to:
- Redistribute housing delivery in the area, enabling greater access to housing outside of Cambridge City and improving the wider sustainability of the area;
 - Recognise the role that small and medium sized sites can make in contributing to housing need, building out quickly and maintaining a rolling 5 year housing supply;
 - Promote more sustainable forms of construction in rural areas and high quality design in line with Village Design Guides and the National Design Guide to enhance the character and appearance of villages;
 - Secure more affordable housing and provide greater housing choices to meet a range of community needs, including specialist accommodation for the elderly, self/custom build and a mix of market homes;
 - Rebalance the scale of growth in existing settlements to create sufficient opportunity to transform local services and infrastructure, directing more S106 funding contributions and public investment towards villages;

- Bolster existing and proposed village services, improving vitality, demographic mix and social sustainability;
- Relieve some of the development burden on Cambridge City, redistributing travel patterns, boosting opportunities for sustainable transport and reducing carbon emissions; and,
- Support green infrastructure improvements and biodiversity net gain in rural areas that have hitherto lacked such opportunities due to limited growth and investment.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 In relation to questions 31, 32, 37, 40, 41 and 47 of the Greater Cambridge Issues and Options Consultation 2020, it is clear that current settlement boundaries will need to flex in order to accommodate further growth in sustainable locations. Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Accordingly, the existing settlement hierarchy should be revised or re-ordered to consider further housing growth and its potential transformative nature.
- 3.2 There are several benefits to existing villages in receiving further housing supply and infrastructure, which have been highlighted in this representation. Transport is a key theme for the emerging Local Plan and the siting of additional housing in rural settlements near to transport corridors or planned transport interventions presents opportunity to realise a reasonable scale of growth that is both sustainable and meaningful compared to previous Local Plan allocations. Consequently, in answer to question 48, planned transport improvements create opportunity to rebalance housing supply geographically across the district, improve sustainable transport measures and better connect rural areas.
- 3.3 In response to questions 32, 39 and 45, the pressing housing problems of Greater Cambridge and the undersupply of housing relative to economic growth present a strong case for the emerging Local Plan to consider all development scenarios including a review of the Green Belt. The constraints to housing growth within Cambridge, its fringe areas and the potential overreliance on new settlements presents further reason to secure Green Belt release when combined with the high growth needs of the area and the overarching need to deliver growth in a sustainable way. It is vital that less sensitive locations on the edge of Cambridge are reviewed for Green Belt release, taking in to account the opportunity to bring forward sustainable development in a location that arguably provides the best opportunity to influence and change people's behaviours around travel and commuting and encourage adoption of more sustainable modes of transport. Development in these locations can support residents living sustainable lifestyles, as well as living in sustainable buildings.
- 3.4 The high level of housing delivery needed to sustain a rolling 5 year housing supply throughout the plan period is best met through a mix of housing sites and land availability. Sustainable growth of settlements surrounding Cambridge can make an important contribution to this objective, creating opportunity to rebalance housing supply geographically across the district and tie in with improved sustainable transport measures.

Having assessed the reasonable options for meeting identified housing need set out in paragraph 137 of the NPPF, there appears to be a compelling case for Greater Cambridge Planning Service to initiate a review of the Cambridge Green Belt in order to best meet the challenges of its housing need and direct growth to sustainable locations, enhance the sustainability of existing rural settlements and promote sustainable travel in accordance with paragraphs 78, 103 and 138 of the NPPF.

APPENDIX 1

Barton Willmore

Housing Delivery Study, 2020

Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Study

Barton Willmore

February 2020

**Greater Cambridge
Housing Delivery Study**

Barton Willmore

Project Ref:	31167/A5/P2/AW/SO	31167/A5/P2/AW/SO	31167/A5/P2/AW/SO
Status:	Draft	Draft	Revised Final
Issue/Rev:	01	02	02
Date:	December 2019	January 2020	February2020
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Ref: 31167/A5/P2/AW/SO
File Ref: 31167.P2.HDS.AW
Date: February 2019

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 For the first time, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are working together to create a joint Local Plan up until 2040 to ensure that there is a consistent approach to planned growth in Greater Cambridge. This will set out a joint vision and objectives for the long-term development of the area, together with evidence of future levels of growth, agreed levels of additional housing and the broad spatial approach to realise the growth needs of the area. The emerging Local Plan is proposed to be adopted in 2023 but its start date is likely to be 2017, because this is the most recent year for which data is available to provide a baseline to monitor against. This housing delivery study therefore covers the period 2017-2040.
- 1.2 The emerging plan will need to strike the right balance between high growth needs and the character of what makes the area unique. It will also need to consider how the economic success of the area is not hampered by inadequate transport infrastructure, housing delivery and other infrastructure needs. Along with housing and economic drivers, the development strategy for Greater Cambridge will need to tackle sustainability in a holistic way, rebalancing growth in the area to respond positively to issues such as health and wellbeing, community, biodiversity, green infrastructure and climate change.
- 1.3 This report aims to identify what level of housing need is required in the area up until 2040 and what implications settlement hierarchy policy, strategic growth sites and future transport interventions might have on the future direction of Greater Cambridge's housing delivery strategy. Accordingly, the report is structured as follows:
- Housing Need and Supply
 - Current Housing Delivery Strategy
 - Proposed Transport Infrastructure
 - Summary Implications for Greater Cambridge Housing Delivery Strategy

2.0 HOUSING NEED AND SUPPLY

Housing Need

- 2.1 The starting point for deciding how many homes need to be planned for in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan is an assessment of housing need. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects strategic policy-making authorities to follow the 'standard method', as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) *Housing and economic needs assessment*. The standard method uses a formula to identify the *minimum* number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. The standard method identifies a minimum annual housing need figure; it does not produce a housing requirement figure nor does it reflect economic growth requirements as this is usually informed by a detailed Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 2.2 The minimum housing need under the standard method is calculated by setting the baseline household growth projection over 10 consecutive years, then adjusting it based on the affordability of the area (using median workplace-based affordability ratios) and finally capping the level of any increase an individual local authority can face depending on the current status of its strategic housing policies.
- 2.3 The standard method housing need calculation for Greater Cambridge is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Standard Method Housing Need Calculation for Greater Cambridge

Standard Method Housing Need Calculation	Cambridge City	South Cambridgeshire	Total in Greater Cambridge
1. Setting the baseline Annual household growth for 2019-2029 (MHCLG 2014-based household projections)	+4,177 = 418 per annum	+8,115 = 812 per annum	12,292 = 1,229 per annum
2. An adjustment to take account of affordability Apply an adjustment for affordability where the ratio is above 4.0 (ONS 2018 median workplace-based affordability ratios)	12.95 = factor of 1.559	10.25 = factor of 1.391	
Result	651	1,129	1,780
3. Capping the level of any increase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing policy requirement • Cap of +40% Hence no cap is required	700 980	975 1,365	1,675 2,345
Comparing the Standard Method Need figure with the existing Policy Requirement Per Annum	-49	+154	+105

Barton Willmore analysis of MHCLG 2014-based household projections and ONS 2018 median workplace-based affordability ratios

2.4 The standard method indicates a minimum need of **1,780 homes per year** compared to the current combined requirement of 1,675. This revised annual need amounts to 40,940 homes for the 23-year period of 2017-2040 for Greater Cambridge.

2.5 The PPG sets out that assessing housing need is the first step in the process of deciding how many homes need to be planned for. The PPG reiterates the following commitment (paragraph 10):

“The government is committed to ensuring that more homes are built and supports ambitious authorities who want to plan for growth. The standard method for assessing local housing need provides a minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates.”

2.6 It includes the following circumstances:

- Growth strategies, for example where funding is in place (e.g. Housing Deals);
- Strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in homes;
- or
- An authority agreeing to take on unmet need for neighbouring authorities.

2.7 The area between Oxford and Cambridge, incorporating the county areas of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire forms a core spine that the Government recognises as the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (the Arc). Productivity in the Arc as a whole is around 2.55 % higher than the UK average¹ and subject to sufficient investment in housing and infrastructure there is potential to support 1.1m new jobs and increased economic output of £163bn per annum².

2.8 To understand the area’s potential, the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) published its ‘Partnering for Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc’ (2017).

This recommended that current housing delivery rates will need to double up until 2050 to realise the Arc's economic potential. This level of growth would require significant investment in new transport infrastructure from Government in the form of a new East West rail line and an Expressway connecting Oxford to Cambridge. To firm up its commitment to the Arc, the Government made a joint declaration with local authorities in 2019 setting out a collaborative approach to meeting the Arc's ambitions and the desire to establish a joint Advisory Group.

2.9 The economic ambition of the area is also a key issue for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. Current growth strategies in the area are being facilitated through the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) and the City Deal, which was signed with the Government in June 2014 and provides £500 million of grant funding to deliver infrastructure to support growth in the area. Through the City Deal, there is the commitment to prepare a joint Local Plan and deliver 1,000 additional new homes on rural exception sites by 2031. These affordable homes are to be delivered over and above the housing requirements of the Local Plans. South Cambridgeshire Council does not expect this surplus delivery to be achievable until after 2020/21.

2.10 In 2017, the Combined Authority established the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission to develop an authoritative evidence base on the economic performance of the area and inform choices on local policy priorities and strategic investment. This resulted in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER, 2018) , which reported that:

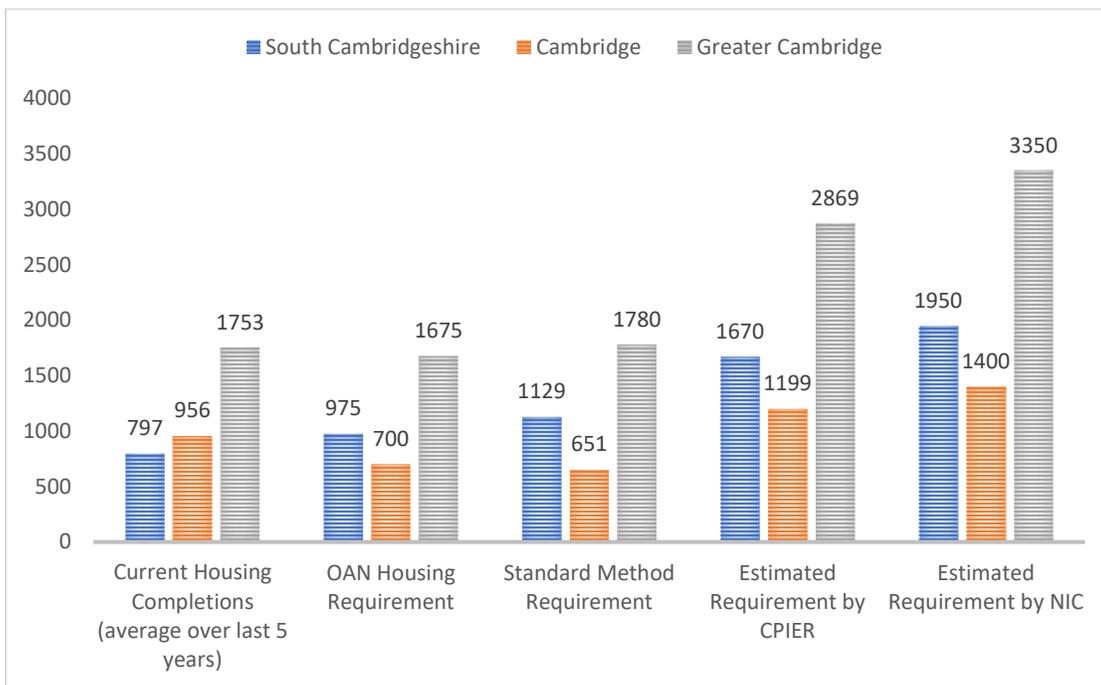
"Growth in employment has not been matched by corresponding house-building, or developments in infrastructure. Consequently, house prices have soared and journey times have increased as congestion has intensified. This has meant that many have been forced to endure unpleasant commutes, or been priced away from the city altogether due to the unaffordability of rents. This is bad for both people and businesses, and we believe is an unsustainable approach to growth." (CPIER, 2018, p.9)

2.11 To address this deficiency the CPIER indicated that housing supply across the area should be in the range of 6000-8000 homes per year over the next 20 years based on the potential for higher growth in employment than currently forecasted. This is a substantial uplift in housing

levels compared to the current objectively assessed need of 4,670 homes and confirms that economic growth will be a key driver for re-assessing housing requirements in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

2.12 In reviewing the scenarios presented by both CPIER and the NIC, it is evident that a *transformational* level of housing delivery would be required to accommodate the predicted economic needs of the area, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Summary of Differing Annual Housing Need Scenarios



Barton Willmore analysis of CPIER, 2018, Greater Cambridge, 2019³ and NIC, 2017⁴

2.13 Figure 1 shows that current housing completions are almost on par with the minimum housing need identified using the Government’s standard method. However, to keep up with estimated economic growth over the next 20 years, using the upper housing range recommended by CPIER will mean a 71% uplift in housing supply compared to the current objectively assessed need (OAN) set out in the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans (2018). In stark contrast, the NIC’s recommendations to double the current OAN would mean another 1,675 homes delivered each year to reach a total of 3,350 homes per annum.

2.14 The emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan will therefore need to review housing requirements based on the potential for higher growth in employment than accommodated

in the current Local Plans. Such figures go well beyond the calculated standard method requirement as estimated by leading bodies such as the CPIER and the NIC. Applying these indicative higher figures would result in a need to deliver 65,987 – 77,050 homes between 2017-2040. This would require a review of land available to support a further net additional, **29,587 – 40,650** homes during the Local Plan Period over and above the 36,400 homes that already have permission or are allocated in the adopted 2018 Local Plans, as summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary Housing Growth Needs in Greater Cambridgeshire Up Until 2040

Existing Commitments	36,400 homes
Target Need under CPIER Scenario	65,987 homes
Target Need under NIC Scenario	77,050 homes
Outstanding Unmet Need	29,587 - 40,650 homes

Housing Supply to 2040

- 2.15 The Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply (2019) projects a total supply of 38,402 homes by 2031 against the objectively assessed need of 33,500 homes. Allocated Fringe Sites in Cambridge, as shown in this trajectory, build out by 2028-2030 whereas allocated new settlements, such as Northstowe, Waterbeach and Bourn continue to deliver housing beyond 2031. Table 3 below highlights the potential delivery scenarios of the current growth sites post 2031.

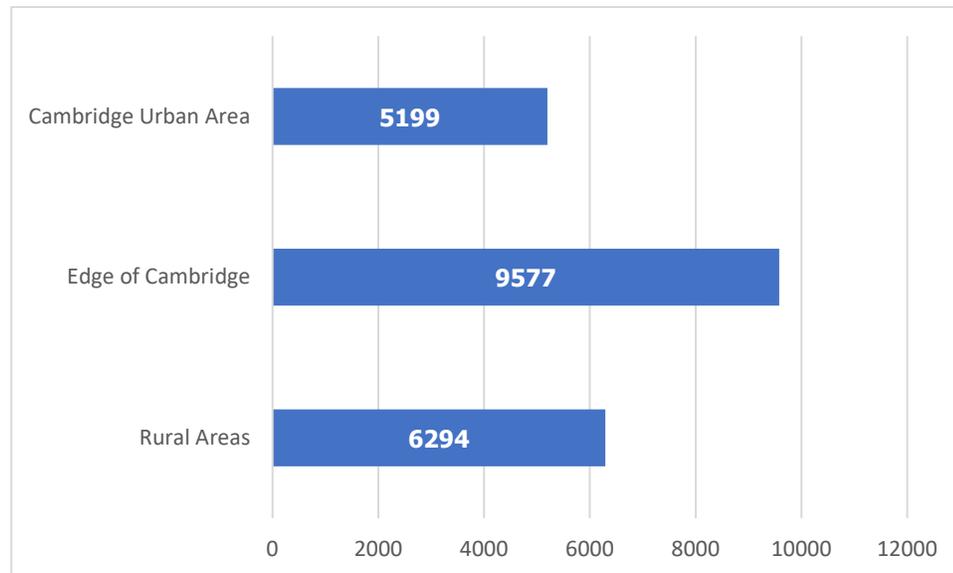
Table 3: Potential Delivery Scenarios for Growth Sites in Greater Cambridge

Growth Site	Assumed dwellings per annum (DPA) (based on current trajectory)	Approximate completions 2017- 2040 based on assumed DPA
Bourn	150	2,675
Northstowe	250	5,084
Waterbeach	250	4,650
Cambourne West	150	2,350
Total		14,759

**Above estimations based on 'Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply, 2019'*

- 2.16 The four growth sites listed above will continue to deliver housing up until 2040 and beyond in some cases, representing 41% of the 36,400 homes already in the pipeline between 2017 - 2040 and around a fifth of the housing needs indicated by the CPIER. Under the current plan, the high proportion of housing from strategic sites has potential to put housing delivery at risk through overreliance on single growth sites, particularly new settlements.
- 2.17 Other strategic growth sites already identified at North East Cambridge (near Cambridge North Train Station) and Cambridge Airport have the potential to cumulatively deliver approximately 20,000 new homes with opportunities for densification, but these will take a long time to deliver and will only contribute a proportion of this housing up until 2040. Estimates based on the average 8.7 year lead-in times and 139 dwelling annual build out rates in Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners 'Driving housing delivery from large sites: What factors affect the build out rates of large scale housing sites' (NLP, 2018) would give approximately 2,224 homes up until 2040, albeit North East Cambridge may take longer to start due to its brownfield status. This would result in remaining need for 27,363 – 38,426 homes based on the CPIER and the NIC scenarios.
- 2.18 Greater Cambridge, however, has a strong track record of housing delivery on the urban fringe sites across the two administrative boundaries. Allocated sites such as the 'southern fringe' have experienced high annual build out rates (see Table 4), high quality design, policy compliant affordable housing and very high levels of sustainability facilitated through new/enhanced community facilities and transport infrastructure. As such, urban fringe sites present highly sustainable locations for transitioning to low/zero carbon developments and lifestyles.
- 2.19 The NIC scenario and the growth plans for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc at this point in time are not sufficiently advanced to give any certainty to such levels of growth in Greater Cambridge. The CPIER growth scenario, however, is based on forecasted economic growth levels in the area and presents significant challenges for the emerging Local Plan. The remaining need for 27,363 homes under the CPIER scenario would, when pro-rated in line with the current development strategy, result in the following distribution of housing need shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Greater Cambridge's Potential Additional Unallocated Housing Need to 2040 (CPIER Scenario)



2.20 As can be seen in Figure 2, a substantial amount of additional housing could be required in rural areas if this distribution is taken forward. In purely quantitative terms this would mean delivering around 60 homes in each of the 106 rural settlements as a minimum (excluding new towns). The capacity of villages to accept this level of growth in a sustainable way, however, is an important matter which is explored in the next sections.

Implications for Greater Cambridge Growth Strategy

2.21 The success of Cambridge's economic growth has placed increasing pressure on the sub-regional housing market, creating historic undersupply and resulting in increasingly unaffordable house prices and rents. To maintain current economic growth it is abundantly clear that a *transformational* level of housing delivery will be required both within Cambridge, the edge of Cambridge and rural areas to balance the development strategy. The majority of this housing delivery is currently predicated on seamless delivery at major strategic growth sites (principally new settlements); however, such delivery is skewed to the north of the district and places an over-reliance on single growth sites, requiring significant infrastructure investment. The emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan will therefore need to balance growth needs with other sustainable locations for development, including well connected locations on the edge of Cambridge and a supply of small-medium housing sites in rural settlements. It is evident that not all villages will be able to accommodate the level of growth indicated above and so more sustainable villages will need to accommodate proportionally more growth. In doing so, it creates opportunities to rebalance housing needs throughout the district, ensure sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed (as per para.59 of the NPPF) and improve the sustainability of the wider area. Whilst growth on the edge of Cambridge has the benefit of being able to foster more sustainable travel patterns and promote change in behaviours, a greater focus on small-medium housing sites in rural areas also presents multifarious benefits from a sustainability perspective (as per para.78 of the NPPF), as outlined in Section 3 of this study.

3.0 CURRENT HOUSING DELIVERY STRATEGY

3.1 Previous plans for the Greater Cambridge area have prioritised development within a sustainable hierarchy starting first within Cambridge City, then on the edge of Cambridge, at new settlements close to Cambridge, and lastly at better served villages. This section provides an overview of the current Local Plan's dependence on strategic sites and limitations to sustainable growth in the area supported by evidence of:

- slow delivery rates;
- concentration of large sites to the north of the district;
- ability of the market to absorb the predicted build out rates;
- lack of diversity in the market (supported by Letwin Review findings);
- ongoing affordability crisis and travel/commuter constraints; and
- settlement hierarchy limitations.

Delivery Rates

3.2 Greater Cambridge has seen several large-scale strategic housing sites and long lead in times for new settlements such as Cambourne and Northstowe, the latter of which comprises 10,000 homes. This study has reviewed the local analysis of build out rates for large-scale strategic housing sites against the other housing delivery categories in the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply (2019). Table 4 below summaries the findings of this review.

Table 4: Assumed Build Out Rates in Greater Cambridge

Development Site Category	Average Dwellings Per Annum	Number of years of completions
New Settlements and Fringe Sites	250	4+
Sites of 100-199 in South Cambridgeshire	60	3
Sites of 50-99 homes in South Cambridgeshire	38	2
Sites of 10-49 homes in South Cambridgeshire	15	1

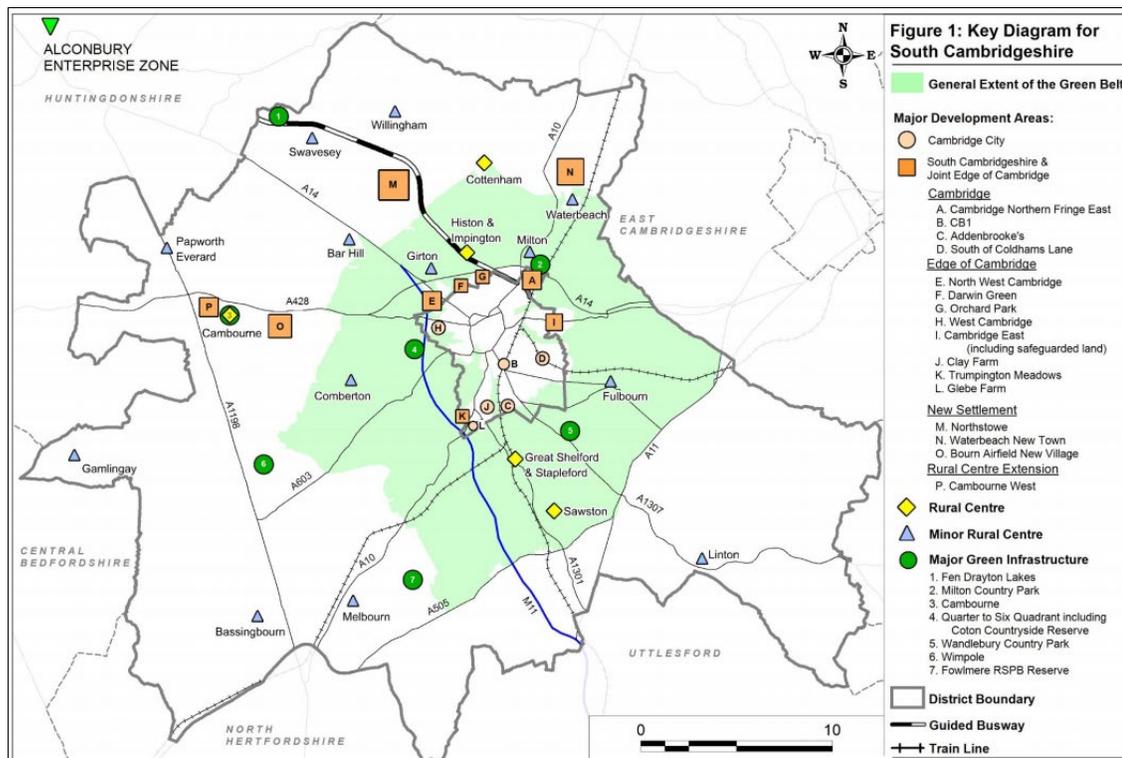
Source: Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply (2019)

3.3 Generally, large sites deliver more housing each year on average, but the advantage of smaller sites is that they tend to build out quicker and have shorter lead-in times overall when considering the planning approval process. This is confirmed in the 'Driving housing delivery from large sites: What factors affect the build out rates of large scale housing sites' (NLP, 2018), which shows that the time after receiving detailed planning permission to delivery of the first dwelling for smaller sites of less than 500 dwellings is 1.7-1.8 years and for larger developments of over 2,000 dwellings it is 2.9 years.

Concentration of Large Sites to the north of South Cambridgeshire

3.4 The majority of Greater Cambridge's allocated large-scale housing development is located to the north of the district, as identified in the 'Major Development Areas' in Figure 3. This reflects the proximity of these large growth sites to key transport routes such as the M11, A14, A428, A10 and Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, cheaper land prices and less sensitive landscape.

Figure 3: Current Development Strategy in Greater Cambridge



Source: South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2018

3.5 It is worth noting the historic concerns about development south of the city. A good example being the failed Eco-town proposal, Hanley Grange, Hinxton, which was widely resisted by the community, district and county councils, and Cambridgeshire Horizons. At the time this was in part because development was to be focussed at Northstowe. Other issues were raised and any large-scale development, such as a new town, may face similar opposition to those faced by Hanley Grange, e.g. concerns regarding:

- Distance from the centre of Cambridge (it was 15 kilometres);
- Relative remoteness from Cambridge;
- Traffic impact on A1301/A1307 into Cambridge;
- Poor sub-regional access;
- Potential to attract commuters to London and Stansted;
- Potential flood risks and Ground Protection Zones; and
- Low landscape suitability.

3.6 However, the pressure for development is now vastly greater than in the 2000s, as recognised with the recent approval of 1,500 homes at the Wellcome Genome Campus in Hinxton. Housing development within the southern half of the GCLP area, with good links to road, rail and sustainable transport modes should be considered. Small-medium sites have a key role to play here in redistributing housing delivery in the area and sustaining housing supply throughout the local plan period.

Absorptions Rates and Diversity in the Market

3.7 The Letwin Review, published in October 2018, placed a clear emphasis on the need to tackle the homogeneity of homes on offer and diversify the types and tenures on offer on large sites. The argument being that, by doing so, market absorption rates increase as a greater variety of house types are available. Build out rates can also increase, as house builders are not trying to sell lots of the same product all at once. While the Review focusses on sites of over 1500 dwellings, the principle can apply to small-medium sized sites, as these are able to provide a variety of house types, tenures, sizes and mix in a wider variety of locations.

3.8 Current housing mix policy in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 requires a mix of housing sizes, namely: at least 30% 1 or 2 bedroom homes; at least 30% 3 bedroom homes; at least 30% 4 or more bedroom homes; with a 10% flexibility allowance that can be added to any of the above categories taking account of local circumstances. The Strategic Housing

Market Assessment, however, needs updating in order to establish if this mix is still appropriate as affordability will increasingly be a factor.

- 3.9 It is anticipated that, due to soaring house prices, the market will require a greater proportion of smaller units and more rental. It is notable that the area has yet to see any Build to Rent (B2R) schemes emerge, although Brookgate is proposing 1000 B2R units on its site at North Cambridge. It is also worth noting that, in terms of affordability, B2R may not be the only solution as rents tend to be as much as 9.3%⁵ higher due to the better quality, maintenance and facilities generally provided. Alternatives for the delivery of market rental properties may need to be explored e.g. through the Councils' own building schemes, policy, and, if possible, incentives.

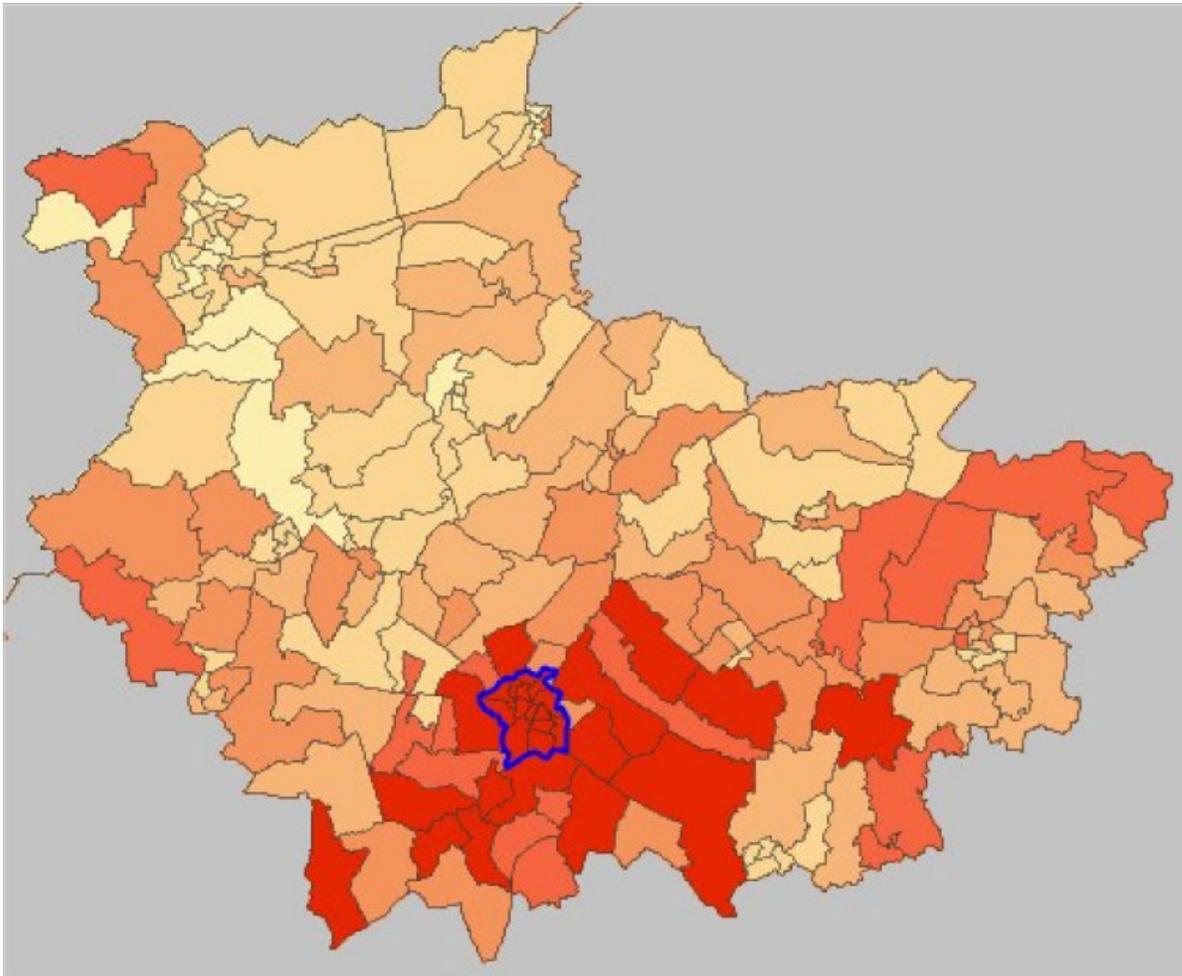
Affordability and Travel Constraints

- 3.10 The latest housing report 'Detailed affordability analysis: Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire' (2017) prepared by Savills on behalf of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council indicates the low levels of affordability within the City and South Cambridgeshire. Households with incomes of less than £45,000 are facing a lack of supply of suitable units. Although new market supply was found to be high, it was not well aligned with local incomes. Sales levels have been supported by investors and higher salaried earners including London commuters. As a consequence, the private rented sector has grown.
- 3.11 There has been an increase in the 'professional, scientific and technology' and human health and social work' sectors of employment. It stated that: "Housing that is affordable to potential incomers is therefore a critical factor in ensuring jobs can be taken up, contributing to better productivity and continuing economic growth" (page 34). Private rented housing has increased due to decreasing affordability and a lack of access for lower income households. This has notably grown for professional couples and families and caused a knock-on impact on household formation and out migration by younger people (especially in the 30-44 year old bracket).
- 3.12 Housing is more affordable in South Cambridgeshire compared to Cambridge, however, there needs to be an increase in supply. The report finds that for South Cambridgeshire a household income of £30,000 can afford a one-bedroom market unit for a single person or couple, a two-bedroomed unit would be borderline affordable for a single person or couple with a child,

but a three or more bedroom house would be unaffordable for a single person or couple with two or more children.

- 3.13 Geographically, this problem manifests itself most notably to the southern and eastern half of the district, as shown in the darker red shading in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Median Price Compared to Median Income in Greater Cambridge and Surrounding Areas



Source: Housing Market Bulletin: Issue 41, page 12: Median price compared to median income

- 3.14 The Savills' report looked at a case study of Cambourne to establish if it is still affordable when the cheaper house prices are combined with the greater costs of travelling into Cambridge. It notes that house prices are approximately 50% cheaper than the equivalent in Cambridge and as such are more affordable to a wider range of households and incomes. It assumes a first time buyer, purchasing a property in the lower quartile value. It then factors

in travel costs per annum including free parking, council parking if travelling by car or a weekly pass for the bus. It notes that travel costs are a substantial addition to the outgoings of those on lower incomes. It concludes that "For renters there is less difference in housing costs so the impact of the commuting costs is felt more strongly, two bus season tickets added to rent make Cambourne more expensive than Cambridge" (Savills, 2017, p.40).

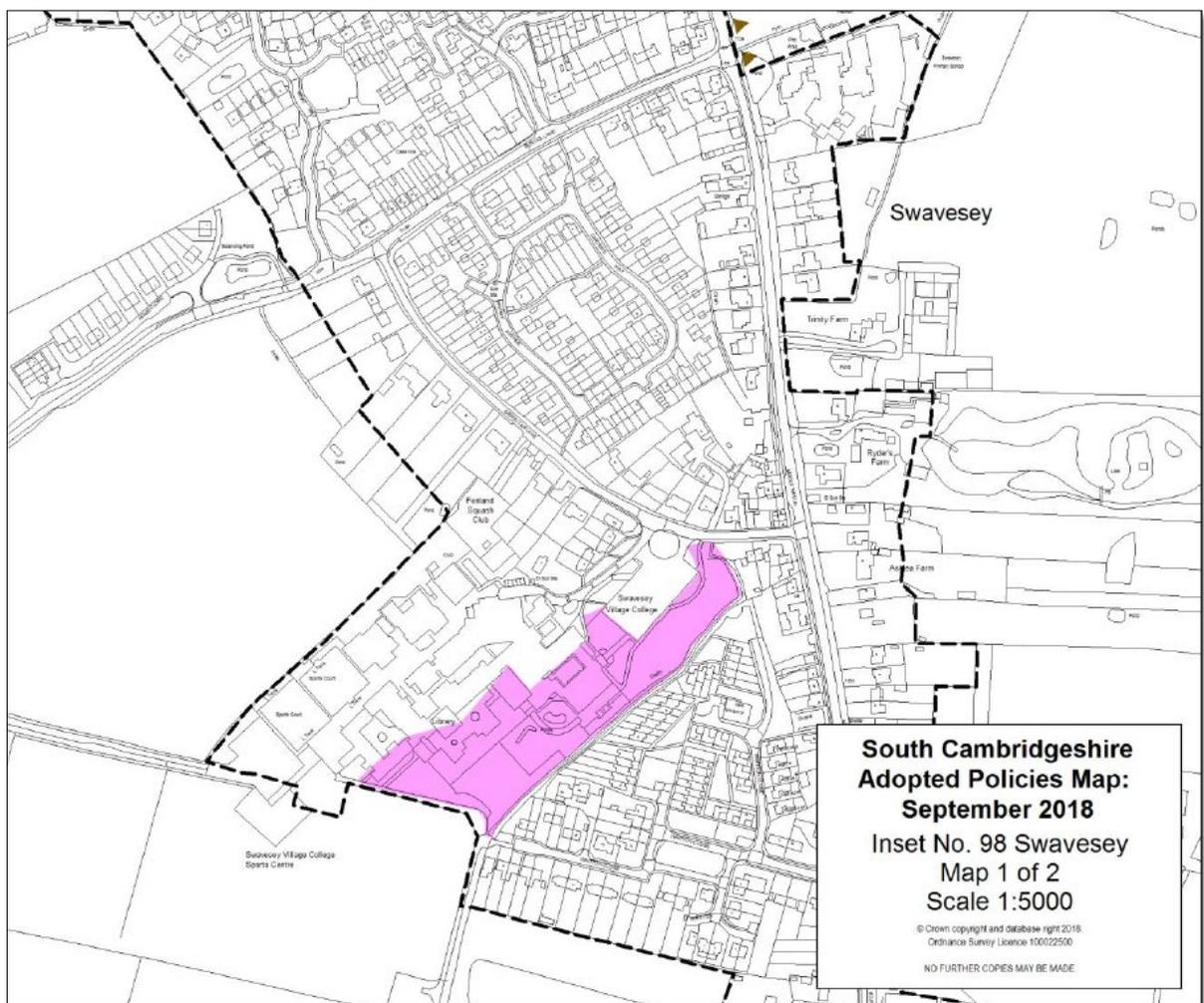
- 3.15 This demonstrates that affordability is not a straightforward factor and that to be genuinely affordable, housing outside of the City must be provided alongside affordable travel options, including on foot, cycle and public transport. This is essential if Cambridge is to attract needed low income earners and improve affordability and access to housing for a broader spectrum of the population.

Settlement Hierarchy

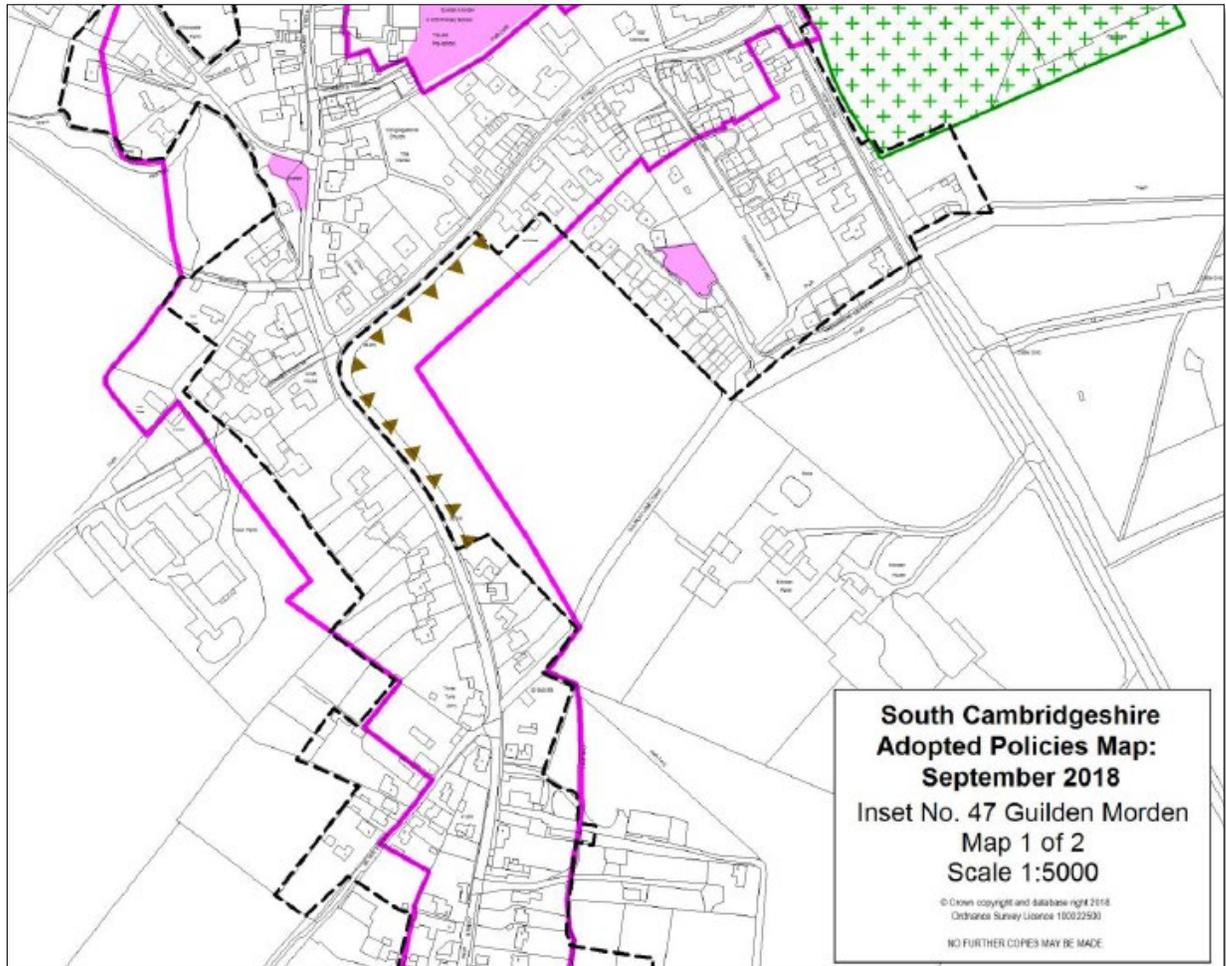
- 3.16 The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) sets a framework (boundary) for each village, outside which development is heavily restricted. This is intended to protect the countryside from gradual encroachment, and guard against incremental growth in less sustainable locations away from services, facilities and public transport. The plan does allow affordable homes to be built outside village frameworks, where there is evidence of local need for affordable housing, as an exception to normal policy (so-called 'rural exception sites').
- 3.17 The adopted 2018 Local Plan categorises villages into four different types according to how 'sustainable' they are in terms of access to shops, public transport and local services. This is intended to restrict growth in the smallest villages, where transport alternatives to the car are often limited, and where there is a need to travel for basic services like schools. The category limits how many homes can be built on a single development within each limited settlement boundary, as follows:
- Rural Centre: No limit;
 - Minor Rural Centre: 30 dwellings;
 - Group Village: 8 dwellings or exceptionally 15 dwellings on brownfield sites; and
 - Infill Village: 2 dwellings or exceptionally 8 dwellings on brownfield sites.
- 3.18 Frameworks have been defined to take account of the present extent of the built-up area and planned development, but the level of planned development has been notably limited by the

application of the above settlement hierarchy. This is evident in the categorisation of 83% of South Cambridgeshire's villages as 'Group' or 'Infill' categories allowing only developments of 2-8 dwellings on greenfield sites. This restrained approach further compromises growth opportunities in villages when considering the tightly drawn settlement boundaries set out in the current Local Plan adopted Policies Maps. Such boundaries have created little room for villages to grow and have given very little indication as to where expansion might be appropriate. An example of this restrictive approach is provided in the adopted policy maps for Swavesey and Guilden Morden shown in Figures 5 and 6, which delineates settlement boundaries tight to rear garden boundaries and gives little indication of where sustainable housing growth might occur.

Figure 5: Swavesey Village Framework



Source: South Cambridgeshire Adopted Proposals Maps 2018

Figure 6: Guilden Morden Village Framework

Source: South Cambridgeshire Adopted Proposals Maps 2018

- 3.19 Such restrictive growth has contributed to the “sustainability trap” coined in the Taylor Review back in 2008, where too many communities are caught in a planning system that directs benefits of new development away from their communities. The review recommended that planners should move away from asking “is this settlement sustainable?”, to “will this development enhance or decrease the sustainability of this community – balancing social, economic and environmental concerns?”. For instance, technology and digital connectivity and social capital have huge potential to strengthen rural economies and provide amenities fit for 21st century communities but very few local authorities consider such assets in their sustainability assessments⁶.

- 3.20 The NPPF (2019), paragraph 78 empathises with this view and states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities to promote sustainable development. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 3.21 The ability of new development to support rural services is pertinent given the loss of rural services experienced in recent years. During 2010-2016 rural areas in South Cambridgeshire lost 11% of library services, 6% of general stores, 5% of post offices and 3% of scheduled bus services⁷. The impact of these service losses on rural communities is accentuated when considering pre-existing low service levels compared to better served, urban areas. Other economic, social and environmental problems emanate from the historic lack of growth opportunities in villages, as follows:
- Lack of housing choice and options, and fewer affordable homes;
 - Changing demographic balance of communities (more wealthy and older people and fewer poorer or younger people and families) impacts on demand for local services, particularly schools, post offices and public transport, and so their overall viability;
 - An erosion of family and community ties as younger family members move away for housing and jobs;
 - Missed opportunities for S106 contributions and investment;
 - Long distance commutes for those who are forced to live further out;
 - Lack of economic development and fewer opportunities to work locally and more sustainably;
 - Lack of broadband and digital facilities; and,
 - Increased levels of commuting and need to travel for services leads to greater challenges for offsetting carbon and mitigating climate change.
- 3.22 This continued decline in village vitality and the necessary footfall to maintain revered villages services and facilities such as shops and pubs, is a problem that can be reversed. Housing and transport infrastructure are key to addressing this decline in rural areas and should be addressed through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. A renewed approach to the settlement hierarchy could, for instance, consider new sustainability appraisals for each village that weigh up both the existing levels of services and the future sustainability enhancements brought about by housing or employment development. Such enhancements might include:

- Transport improvements (discussed in Section 4) that better connect villages to surrounding larger settlements, employment areas or service centres;
- Local transport enhancements that provide more sustainable travel options to services and facilities and/or ease of access for satellite villages surrounding larger or better served settlements e.g. new footpaths/cycleways, real time bus stops;
- Increasing capacity of local community facilities to better serve local needs;
- Provision of new community services and facilities e.g. play areas, new business incubators, broadband connection;
- New housing that provides different sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of different groups in the community and supports a greater demographic mix;
- Provision of much needed affordable housing;
- Local employment generation;
- New or enhanced access to public open space and recreation (i.e. health and wellbeing gains); and
- Net gain in biodiversity and opportunities to 'scale-up' local green infrastructure networks.

3.23 Out of the issues listed above, transport infrastructure plays a key role in facilitating sustainable travel patterns and access to wider services and facilities. As such, this will be an important issue for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and therefore warrants further discussion. Section 4 of this study reviews the implications of the emerging transport provisions in the area up until 2050.

Implications for Greater Cambridge Growth Strategy

3.24 Previous plans for the Greater Cambridge area have prioritised development within a sustainable hierarchy starting first within Cambridge City, then on the edge of Cambridge, at new settlements close to Cambridge, and lastly at better served villages.

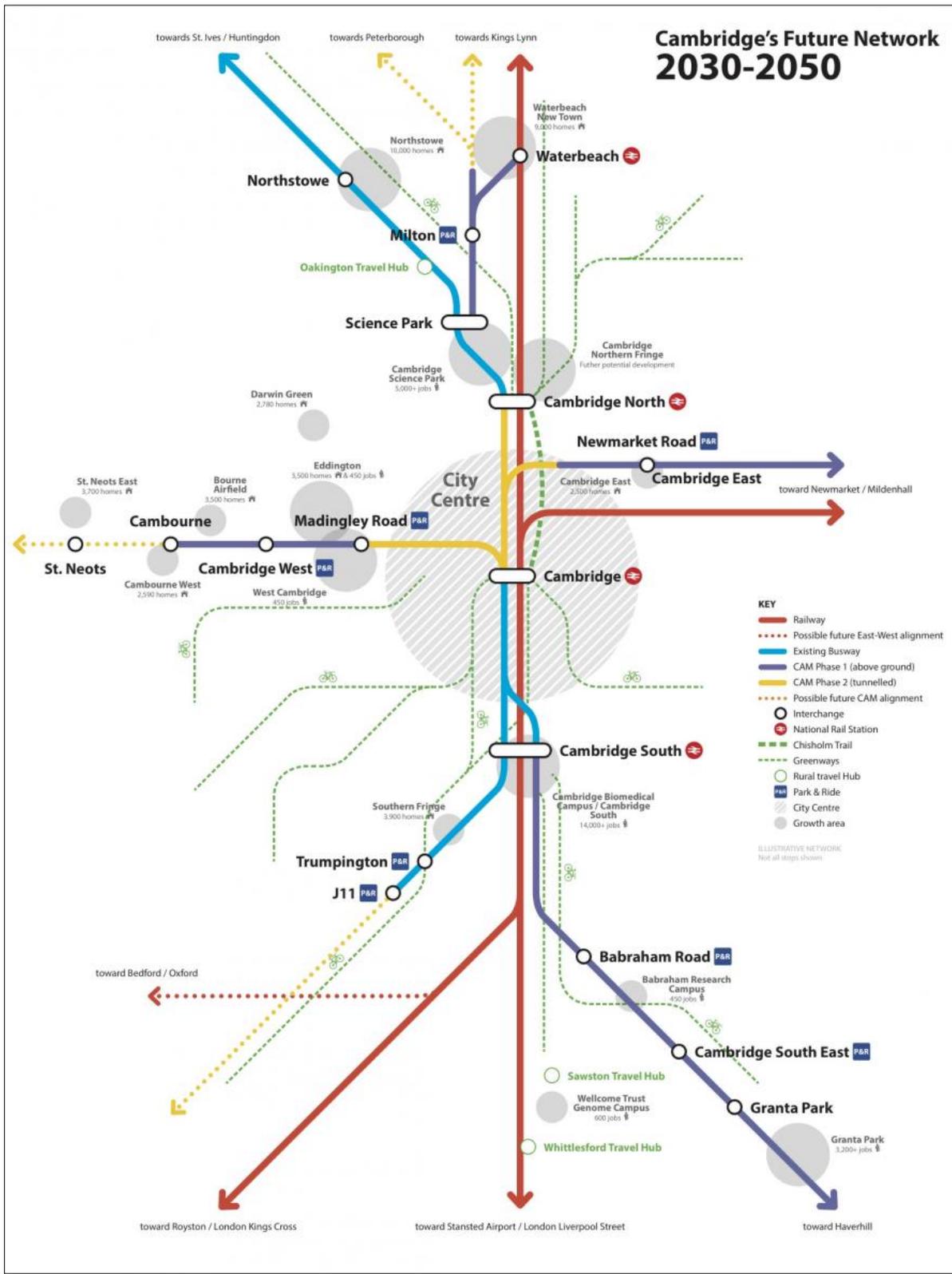
3.25 As outlined in Section 2 of this study, there appears to be a growing reliance on major strategic growth sites (principally new settlements) to deliver future housing delivery, which poses inherent risks in terms of slower absorption rates, lack of housing diversity, longer lead-in times and lack of housing distribution particularly to the south of the district where affordability is generally worst. By aligning the Greater Cambridge housing strategy to boost the supply of small-medium housing sites in rural areas there is significant opportunity to

direct housing to sustainable locations and promote sustainability enhancements within rural communities. This produces a number of benefits for rural settlements as outlined in this study and addresses an historic undersupply of housing in these areas and the decline of village services and facilities. To facilitate these improvements, it is clear that village settlement boundaries will need to flex in appropriate locations based on several sustainability criteria. Such criteria should consider the transformative nature of new housing and infrastructure, in particular the emerging transport provisions in the area identified in the next section.

4.0 PROPOSED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.1 Transport issues will need to be considered at the earliest stage of plan-making and the NPPF advises that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of sustainable transport objectives. Paragraph 103 states that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in plan-making.
- 4.2 Tackling peak-time congestion in and around Cambridge is a key issue for the emerging Local Plan with Greater Cambridge Partnership aiming to reduce traffic levels by 10-15% by 2031 (based on 2011 traffic levels)⁸. Of people who work in Cambridge, 40% live in Cambridge and 28% live in South Cambridgeshire⁹. With average cycling levels amongst South Cambridgeshire more than double the national average and the City boasting the highest mode share of cycling in the country there is much potential to reduce congestion in the area and manage patterns of growth linked to new investment in public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure. The blueprint for this has been presented in the draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan with infrastructure schemes already being implemented by the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership in relation to £100 million of government funding up until 2020.
- 4.3 The illustrative summary in Figure 7 (overleaf) shows the range of sustainable transport proposals planned for the area.

Figure 7: Cambridge's Future Transport Network 2030-2050



Source: Greater Cambridge Partnership (2019)

a) Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM)

4.4 The Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) will provide a high frequency metro services between employment hubs and high-tech clusters of Greater Cambridge. Service routes will reach out north to link to the existing Guided Busway to St Ives, west towards St Neots, south west to Trumpington, south east to Haverhill and northeast towards Mildenhall.

b) Transport Interchanges

4.5 Complementing the CAM will be a better integrated network of local bus services, connecting the suburbs of Cambridge and smaller towns and villages to employment centres across the area and the CAM network. Park and Ride sites will be better integrated into the surrounding local transport networks acting as travel hubs with interchange between the CAM, local bus, demand responsive transport, and the walking and cycling network. Transport interchanges are planned at Cambourne, Cambridge West, Madingley Road, Northstowe, Milton, Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge North, Waterbeach, Cambridge East, Trumpington, Cambridge South, Babraham Road, Cambridge South East and Granta Park.

c) Greenways

4.6 There are 12 Greenways planned that will connect local villages with the city via all weather non-motorised routes. The proposal includes Greenway connections to the following settlements:

- Waterbeach
- Horningsea
- Swaffham
- Bottisham
- Fulbourn
- Linton
- Sawston
- Melbourn
- Haslingfield
- Barton
- Comberton
- St Ives

d) Rural Travel Hubs

- 4.7 Rural Travel Hubs are planned as small flexible transport interchanges at key locations in South Cambridgeshire, facilitating more sustainable transport networks and aiming to reduce car trips between Cambridge and the surrounding villages. Potential hub locations have been proposed at Oakington, Linton, Shepreth, Swavesey, Foxton, Meldreth, Whittlesford, Sawston, Comberton and Cambourne. The most advanced of these is Oakington, which has been subject to public consultation with potential pilot schemes also in Sawston and Whittlesford.

e) East West Rail and Cambridge South Station

- 4.8 On 30 January 2020, the East West Rail Company announced a preferred route option between Bedford and Cambridge with a new station earmarked for Cambourne in South Cambridgeshire. Services are proposed to run between Oxford and Cambridge before 2030, which gives scope to create a transport interchange at Cambourne, opening up connections for surrounding rural settlements and providing swift access to Cambridge and the St Neots/Sandy area (new station).
- 4.9 Plans are currently being developed for Cambridge South Station to serve the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and new housing developments across the Cambridge Southern Fringe. Public consultation on the proposals began on 20 January 2020, which includes three potential locations for the new station and potential for integration with the Guided Busway to better connect surrounding rural areas with this key employment area. Proposed timescales for the station show a targeted opening date before 2025.

Implications for Greater Cambridge Growth Strategy

- 4.10 Cambridgeshire's future transport network looks set to be transformed by a suite of interventions designed to tackle congestion within the city and better connect the wider area through sustainable transport options. Key transport corridors radiate out from the city to provide enhanced linkages to surrounding service centres such as St Ives, Waterbeach New Town, Newmarket and Mildenhall, St Neots and Royston and Haverhill. At a more granular level, villages located within or near to these corridors or transport interchanges gain much better and potentially quicker access to key services, facilities and employment areas in Cambridge and the surrounding large settlements. Opportunities may also exist to promote

new villages within or near to these transport corridors, directing growth to the most sustainable locations and creating a sufficient scale of development to incorporate new community infrastructure with long lasting benefits for residents.

5.0 SUMMARY IMPLICATIONS FOR GREATER CAMBRIDGE HOUSING DELIVERY STRATEGY

- 5.1 This study has identified what level of housing need is required in the area up until 2040 and what implications the existing development strategy and future transport interventions might have on the future direction of Greater Cambridge's housing delivery strategy. The findings of this study are summarised below, along with recommendations for future strategic policy making in the area.

Housing Requirement

- 5.2 The success of Cambridge's economic growth has placed increasing pressure on the sub-regional housing market, creating historic undersupply and resulting in increasingly unaffordable house prices and rents. To maintain current economic growth it is highly likely that a *transformational* level of housing delivery will be required both within Cambridge, the edge of Cambridge and rural areas to balance the development strategy. This could mean a requirement to deliver around 27,363 additional homes in Greater Cambridge until 2040.
- 5.3 The majority of this housing delivery is currently predicated on seamless delivery at major strategic growth sites (principally new settlements); however, such delivery is skewed to the north of the district and places an over-reliance on single growth sites. The emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan will therefore need to balance growth needs with other sustainable locations for development, including a supply of small-medium housing sites in rural settlements to ensure sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed (as per para.59 of the NPPF). In doing so, it creates opportunities to rebalance housing needs throughout the district and improve the sustainability of the wider area. Whilst growth on the edge of Cambridge has the benefit of being able to foster more sustainable travel patterns and promote change in behaviours, a greater focus on small-medium housing sites also presents multifarious benefits from a sustainability perspective (as per para.78 of the NPPF), as outlined in Section 3 of this study.

Existing Development Strategy

- 5.4 Previous plans for the Greater Cambridge area have prioritised development within a sustainable hierarchy starting first within Cambridge City, then on the edge of Cambridge, at new settlements close to Cambridge, and lastly at better served villages. Settlement

frameworks have been drawn up to restrict growth in rural areas and direct the majority of development towards the most 'sustainable' locations. This has unfortunately contributed to the "sustainability trap" coined in the Taylor Review back in 2008, where too many communities are caught in a planning system that directs benefits of new development away from their communities.

- 5.5 The current development strategy also presents growing reliance on major strategic growth sites to deliver future housing delivery, which poses inherent risks in terms of slower absorption rates, lack of housing diversity, longer lead-in times and lack of housing distribution particularly to the south of the district where affordability is generally worst.
- 5.6 By aligning the Greater Cambridge housing strategy to boost the supply of small-medium housing sites in rural areas there is significant opportunity to direct housing to sustainable locations and promote sustainability enhancements within rural communities in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF. This produces a number of benefits for rural settlements as outlined in this study and addresses an historic undersupply of housing in these areas and the decline in village services and facilities. To facilitate these improvements, it is clear that village settlement boundaries will need to flex in appropriate locations based on several sustainability criteria. Such criteria should consider the transformative nature of new housing and infrastructure, in particular the emerging transport provisions in the area.
- 5.7 When coupled with growth on the edge of Cambridge, which has the benefit of being able to foster more sustainable travel patterns and promote change in behaviours based on supporting and enhancing existing infrastructure, there is a real opportunity to provide the growth that is needed through a sustainable development strategy tailored to the different locations and able to enhance existing communities through a balancing of the three overarching principles of sustainability; being social, economic and environmental considerations.

Transport

- 5.8 Cambridgeshire's future transport network looks set to be transformed by a suite of interventions designed to tackle congestion within the city and better connect the wider area through sustainable transport options. Key transport corridors radiate out from the city to provide enhanced linkages to surrounding service centres such as St Ives, Waterbeach New Town, Newmarket and Mildenhall, St Neots and Royston and Haverhill. At a more granular

level, villages located within or near to these corridors gain much better and potentially quicker access to key services and facilities in Cambridge and the surrounding large settlements. Opportunities may also exist to promote new villages within or near to these transport corridors, directing growth to locations which are or can be made sustainable (para.103 of the NPPF) and creating a sufficient scale of development to incorporate new community infrastructure with long lasting benefits for residents.

Endnotes

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⁴ National Infrastructure commission (NIC), (2017), Partnering For Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc.

⁵ Home Owners Association, (2019), What is Build to Rent? (<https://hoa.org.uk/advice/guides-for-homeowners/i-am-buying/build-to-rent/>)

⁶ Country Land and Business Association Limited (2018), CLA Policy Briefing 3, Sustainable Villages – Making Rural Communities Fir For The Future.

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⁹ Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, (2019), The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan: Evidence Base.

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