Future Growth of Cambridge

Can urban growth go bad?

The answer is yes; when it increases inequality and becomes unsustainable. While some people or organizations benefit, everybody is effected by congestion, housing problems and environmental loss and pollution; these being felt more by the less well off.

The urban system in dealing with these problems becomes increasingly unsustainable. Solving the immediate situation allows more growth, with further solutions becoming larger and more expensive; a vicious circle of growth and problem.

Can in the case of Greater Cambridge, the benefits of growth outweigh the problems?

The Cambridge location has been promoted as being critical to scientific research and interaction. Has this however not achieved a critical mass, and any increase subject to the law of diminishing return? It's present promotion seems more one of self importance and commercial intrests. Would not the expansion of research be more beneficially located in other university town, or along the Oxford-Cambridge Arc?

Growth is based on projections from the past. These are comfort calculations for planners which cannot take account of events and changing circumstances. These projections unfortunatly often encourage growth rather than it being directed to other better locations.

In Silicon Valley the problems of growth has meant that new start-ups are locating elsewhere. With continuous unlimited growth there seems to be a dilemna; not solve the problems of growth, and research goes elsewhere, or solve them, changing the character of Cambridge, and therefore making it less attractive to new companies.

The benefits seem questionable, the problems are obvious.

Concerning the Local Plan Consultation process:

Given that unlimited growth has the detrimental effects of increased inequality and unsustainability, influences the location of research and causes adverse outcomes on the character of the city, it is impossible to understand why this is the only option being considered in the consultations.

The people most affected by problems caused by growth are the present residents who are being consulted on these problems, but not on the cause. There is no clear option, choice, discussion or investigation being offered of a need to consider a future limiting of growth after the present commitments. This opportunity is being omitted in the consultations.

Without this opportunity, the public consultation should be considered flawed and open to challenge.

D.G.T