



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

North West Cambridge

Future Phases of Eddington

September 2025



Planning Statement



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Planning Statement

North West Cambridge
Masterplan

SEPTEMBER 2025

Q230959

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1 Introduction

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of an outline planning application (“OPA” / “the Application”) for the North West Cambridge Masterplan (“NWCM”) at Land Between Huntingdon Road, Madingley Road and M11, Eddington, North West Cambridge, Cambridgeshire (“the Site”). It is submitted on behalf of The University of Cambridge (“UoC” / “the Applicant”).
- 1.2 This Planning Statement explains the Application in the context of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. It is structured as follows:
 - [Section 1 – Introduction;](#)
 - [Section 2 – Government Planning Reforms and Cambridge;](#)
 - [Section 3 – Site Context;](#)
 - [Section 4 – Consultation and Engagement;](#)
 - [Section 5 – The Proposed Development;](#)
 - [Section 6 – Planning Designations and Policy Context;](#)
 - [Section 7 – Planning Assessment;](#)
 - [Section 8 – Planning Obligations and Draft Heads of Terms; and](#)
 - [Section 10 – Conclusion.](#)
- 1.3 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the wider application documents which comprise the planning application submission, as listed in the Covering Letter.

Eddington

- 1.4 Eddington is the University of Cambridge’s response to the need to provide affordable housing for its staff so it can attract and retain top talent to maintain its global competitiveness. By housing staff in a purpose-built, high quality neighbourhood, the University also reduces the demand on the wider housing market in the city. By providing 50% of housing for staff and the remainder contributing to increasing the overall supply of housing in the city, the Eddington development supports the highly successful Cambridge eco-system which provides long-term growth and prosperity for the local, regional and national economy.
- 1.5 Importantly however, Eddington is open to all. Eddington combines all the community infrastructure that is needed for a new, growing neighbourhood. The University’s investment in the community is evident in the school, nursery, post-doc centre, hotel, supermarket, community centre, sports facilities and parklands as well as homes delivered in Phase 1. The Site will remain under the University’s long-term stewardship.

- 1.6 Outline Planning Permission (ref. 11/1114/OUT and S/1886/11) was originally granted in February 2013 (“2013 OPP”) for the North West Cambridge Development (or ‘Eddington’ as the settlement has now been named). The full description of development for that Outline Planning Permission is as follows:

“Proposed development comprising up to 3,000 dwellings; Up to 2,000 student bedspaces; 100,000 sq.m. employment floorspace, of which: up to 40,000 sq.m. commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses) and at least 60,000 sq.m. academic floorspace (Class D1); up to 5,300 sq.m. gross retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5) (of which the supermarket is 2,000 sq.m. net floorspace); Senior Living, up to 6,500sq.m. (Class C2); Community Centre; Indoor Sports Provision; Police; Primary Health Care; Primary School; Nurseries (Class D1); Hotel (130 rooms); Energy Centre; and associated infrastructure including roads (including adaptations to Maddingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd), pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes, parking, drainage, open spaces and earthworks.”

- 1.7 Details of what was consented and what has been delivered so far / under construction is set out in **Table 1-1** below.

Use	Quantum Approved	Delivered in Phase 1
Residential	3,000 units (50% affordable housing to meet the needs of Cambridge University key workers, 50% market housing)	1,138 occupied of these, 686 for University key workers and 435 market homes. Total homes to come forward in Phase 1 = 1,848.
Student Accommodation	2,000 units	325
Employment/Academic Floorspace	100,000 sqm (40,000sqm employment / 60,000sqm academic)	-
Retail	5,300sqm	New Local Centre including supermarket, additional retail units and market square. Total Phase 1 retail floorspace approved through reserved matters applications - 4,158 sqm
Senior Living	6,500sqm	-
Hotel	130 rooms	Delivered
Primary School	-	Delivered (University of Cambridge Primary School)
Community Centre	-	Delivered (Storey’s Field Centre)

Table 1-1 - 2013 OPP Development Quantum and Phase 1 Delivery

- 1.8 The ability to bring forward further residential dwellings under the Outline Planning Permission (through Reserved Matters Applications) expired in 2023. As a result, the University needs to bring forward a new planning application for the Future Phases of the NWCM.

The Site and Application Proposals

- 1.9 The Site is located approximately 2km north-west of Cambridge city centre and comprises land between Huntingdon Road (A1307), Madingley Road (A1303) and the M11. The Site forms part of the emerging settlement of Eddington.
- 1.10 The Site is located across the administrative boundary of South Cambridgeshire District Council (“SCDC”) and Cambridge City Council (“CCC”) which are therefore the Local Planning Authorities (“LPAs”) for the Site. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (“GCSPS”) manages planning services on behalf of SCDC and CCC.
- 1.11 The Applicant is seeking Outline Planning Permission (“OPP”) for the Future Phases of the NWCM. The Outline Planning Application (“OPA”) seeks planning permission for:

“Outline planning application (all matters reserved except for means of access to the public highway) for a phased mixed use development, including demolition of existing buildings and structures, such development comprising:

- *Living Uses, comprising residential floorspace (Class C3/C4, up to 3,800 dwellings), student accommodation (Sui Generis), Co-living (Sui Generis) and Senior Living (Class C2);*
- *Flexible Employment Floorspace (Class E(g) / Sui Generis research uses);*
- *Academic Floorspace (Class F1); and*
- *Floorspace for supporting retail, nursery, health and indoor sports and recreation uses (Class E (a) – E (f)).*

- *Public open space, public realm, sports facilities, amenity space, outdoor play, allotments and hard and soft landscaping works alongside supporting facilities;*
- *Car and cycle parking, formation of new pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular accesses and means of access and circulation routes within the site;*
- *Highway works;*
- *Site clearance, preparation and enabling works;*
- *Supporting infrastructure, plant, drainage, utility, earthworks and engineering works.”*

- 1.12 The OPA includes three Control Documents for the Proposed Development. These Control Documents are: the Development Specification; the Parameter Plans; and the Design Code.
- 1.13 The Parameter Plans indicate which uses would be suitable within each Building Development Zone to manage where each proposed use can be delivered on the OPA Site. The Parameter Plans also identify features such as maximum building heights; areas of green infrastructure; and access and movement routes. The Parameter Plans are set up to provide a level of flexibility for the detailed design stage of the scheme which will need to be approved by the local planning authority through subsequent Reserved Matters Applications (“RMAs”).
- 1.14 The Control Documents, along with the Planning Permission and Section 106 Agreement, would establish a framework within which future RMAs would be prepared. An Illustrative Masterplan is submitted with this Application and shows one way in which the Site could be developed.

- 1.15 The Application is supported by an Environmental Statement ("ES") that details the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") carried out in accordance with GCSPS's adopted Scoping Opinion. A suite of supporting plans and technical reports is also provided. A full list of the material submitted as part of this OPA is set out in the Covering Letter.

Planning Policy

- 1.16 The Site is allocated as a major development site in both Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018).
- 1.17 Cambridge Local Plan Paragraph 2.38 describes how the Site was released from the Cambridge Green Belt to support the ongoing development of the UoC. This Site is subject to the policies set out in the North West Cambridge AAP ("NWC AAP"), which was jointly developed and adopted in 2009 by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 1.18 The NWC AAP allocates the land to deliver:
- Approximately 3000 dwellings, 50% of which should be affordable housing for Cambridge University and College key workers;
 - Approximately 2,000 units of student accommodation;
 - 100,000m² employment and academic floorspace:
 - i) approximately 60,000m² of higher education uses, including academic faculty development and a University Conference Centre within Use Class D1; and
 - ii) up to 40,000m² of University-related sui generis research institutes and commercial research uses within Use Class B1(b).
 - A new local centre with high quality services and facilities;
 - Public art; and
 - Open space and recreation uses.

Consultation

- 1.19 The Applicant takes seriously its responsibility to local communities and understands the importance of seeking the views of the local community to inform the contents of the development proposals. The Applicant has engaged extensively and meaningfully over the course of a year, including multiple public exhibitions, stakeholder workshops and community engagement events. Further detail of the consultation carried out, the feedback received and how the designs have evolved in response to public consultation is detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement ("SCI") and in Section 4 of this Planning Statement.
- 1.20 In parallel to this, the Applicant has worked closely with GCSPS through a robust pre-application process that has involved over 30 pre-application meetings with them and other statutory consultees between July 2024 and July 2025. This is in addition to regular workshops with the County Council on the development's transport impacts. The Applicant has also sought specialist advice from the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. Further detail on the pre-application process and how the designs have evolved in response to feedback received from the GCSPS and the Quality Panel are set out in Section 4 of this Planning Statement.

2 Government Planning Reforms and Cambridge

Introduction

- 2.1 Since July 2024, the new Government, and the Chief Planner, have issued several statements to 'Get Britain Building', identifying the housing crisis that we face, and a very clear response to it.

Planning Reform

- 2.2 The King's Speech and briefing papers, delivered on 17th July 2024, set out the Government's intent to get Britain building, and to accelerate the delivery of high-quality housing. It recognises that *"the current planning regime acts as a major brake on economic growth"* and that more housing that community's need must be unlocked as an enabler of growth¹.
- 2.3 The Secretary of State made a statement to the House of Commons on the 30th of July 2024² outlining the government's plan to get Britain building, confirming that *'delivering economic growth is our number one mission'*, setting out *'a radical plan to not only get the homes we desperately need but to also drive the growth, create jobs and breathe life back into our towns and cities'*.
- 2.4 The Secretary of State also issued a ministerial statement *'Building the homes we need'*³ setting out the following policy objectives:-
- *'Sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people'.*
 - *'Nowhere is decisive reform needed more urgently than in housing'.*
 - *'We are in the middle of the most acute housing crisis in living memory. Home ownership is out of reach for too many; the shortage of houses drives high rents; and too many are left without access to a safe and secure home'.*
 - *'Reforms to fix the foundations of our housing and planning system – taking the tough choices needed to improve affordability, turbocharge growth and build the 1.5 million homes we have committed to deliver over the next five years'.*
 - *'Updating the standard method and raising the overall level of these targets – from around 300,000 to approximately 370,000'.*

¹ The King's Speech Briefing Papers 2024

² Appendix 3 – Secretary of State statement to the House of Commons, 30th July 2024

³ Appendix 4 - Ministerial Statement Building the homes we need, 30th July 2024

- *‘There is no time to waste. It is time to get on with building 1.5 million homes’.*

2.5 The Secretary of State’s statement to the House of Commons and written correspondence are material considerations which carry great weight and demonstrate a clear direction of travel from the Government.

Cambridge

2.6 In July 2023 the previous Government outlined an ambition for significant housing and jobs growth in Cambridge. The Cambridge Delivery Group was established with the purpose of exploring and advising the Government on how the ambition could be realised.

2.7 On 6th March 2024, the “Case for Cambridge” was published setting out the ambitions for the growth of Cambridge and the actions being taken to tackle existing constraints. Importantly the Government recognised the UoC’s role in economic growth, noting

“Already, the University of Cambridge alone makes a total net economic impact on the UK economy of nearly £30 billion annually. This makes the university’s contribution to the UK almost four times that of the Premier League. Supporting the university and wider Cambridge ecosystem will have a significant impact on the overall economic health of the UK.”

2.8 The need for more housing to allow for economic growth is also highlighted in the report where it is noted that

“Increasing the housing stock, improving affordability and easing journeys will boost the supply of skilled labour to the city, removing one of the major constraints to Cambridge’s economic growth.”

2.9 On 15th May 2024, Homes England registered the Cambridge Growth Company with Companies House. The establishment of the Cambridge Growth Company effectively replaced the “Cambridge Delivery Group” as the entity overseeing the government’s ambitions since the project’s inception. Its purpose is to take forward the government’s ambitions for Cambridge including considering longer term delivery options.

2.10 Following the general election in July 2024, on 23rd August 2024 the Minister of State for Housing and Planning wrote a letter to local leaders in the Greater Cambridge area entitled ‘Realising the Full Potential of Greater Cambridge’ to advise that Cambridge remained a “key priority” for the new government and that *“the recent focus on Cambridge and its untapped economic potential are entirely warranted.”*

2.11 The Secretary of State went on in the letter to commit to helping remove and overcome significant issues holding up planned development, highlighting that recent action to tackle water scarcity in Cambridge as an example of how a significant issue holding up planned development can be tackled when local authorities, central government and public bodies work in partnership on nationally significant priorities.

2.12 In a letter dated 30th October 2024, Matthew Pennycook outlined an immediate priority for the Cambridge Growth Company was to enable and accelerate developments which align with the Government’s ambitions for Cambridge.

- 2.13 Given that the ability to bring forward further residential dwellings at Eddington under the 2013 OPP has expired, an excellent opportunity is presented to respond to the Government's planning reforms and ambitions for growth in Cambridge through the proposals for the Future Phases of the NWCM. Through the lessons learned from Phase 1 of Eddington, the design and consultant team has revisited the quantum of development that can be achieved on the remaining development areas in order to optimise the delivery of housing and other uses.

3 Site Context

- 3.1 This Section of the Planning Statement describes the Site and the surrounding area, before providing a summary of the Site's planning history.

Site Location

- 3.2 The Site is approximately 114 hectares (ha) in size and comprises all land within the red line boundary that is not in red hatch as displayed in
- 3.3 below. Cambridge City Centre is located approximately 2km to the south-east of the Site at its nearest point.

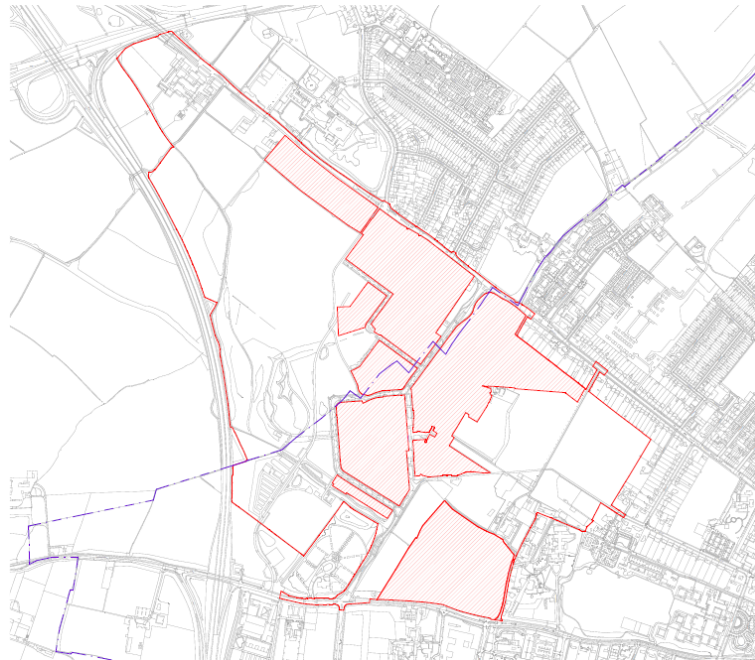


Figure 3-1 - Site Location Plan

- 3.4 The Site is located across the administrative boundaries of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council. The purple dashed line in **Figure 3-1** represents the administrative boundary line between CCC (to the east) and SCDC (to the west). **Figure 3-2** below, which forms the Key Diagram of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018), also shows how the Site sits across the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council areas.

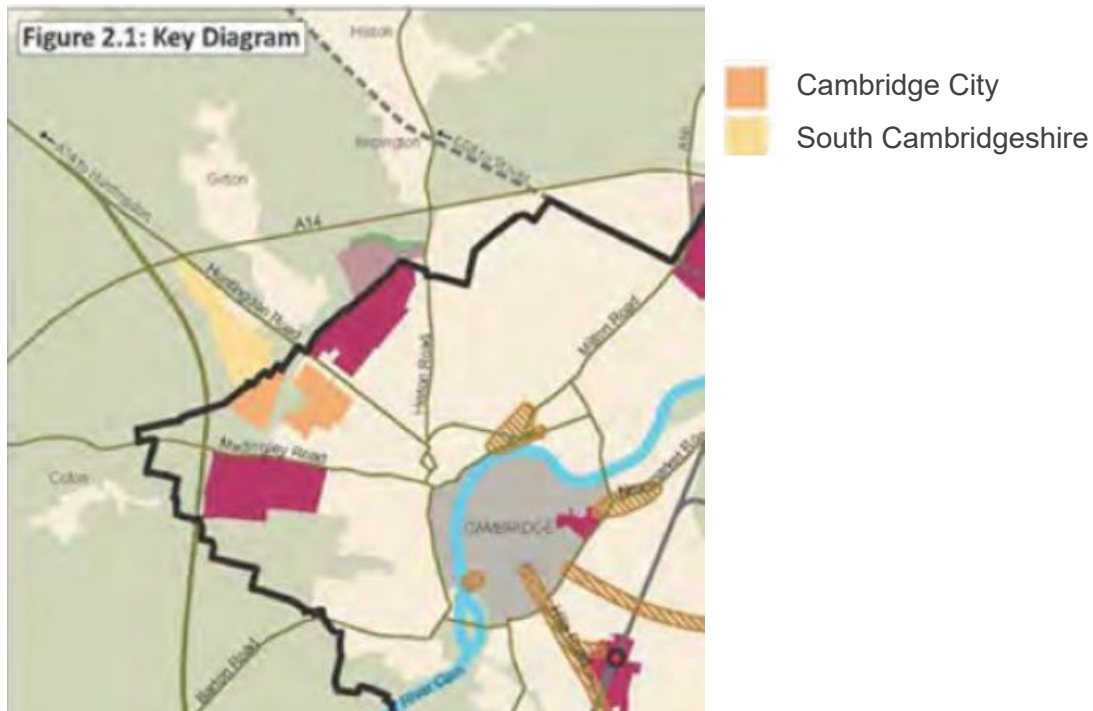


Figure 3-2 – Local Planning Authority Boundaries

Site Description

- 3.5 The Site is roughly triangular in shape and comprises land between Huntingdon Road (A1307), Madingley Road (A1303), the A14 and the M11. The Site forms part of the emerging settlement of Eddington.
- 3.6 The Site predominantly comprises grassland fields, construction areas, and sections of Huntingdon Road (A1307) and Madingley Road (A1303). Barcroft Centre and associated buildings are located within the most northerly extent of the Site, along Huntingdon Road. The Site contains areas of hard standing, including an area utilised for parking to the south of the Site. There are a variety of amenity and green spaces on the Site including swales, ponds, grassland, areas of woodland, hedgerows and individual trees. A storm water recycling system pond, which has never been commissioned, is located along the western edge of the Site.
- 3.7 Traveller's Rest Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest ("SSSI") is located within the eastern extent of the Site. The Washpit Brook is the closest watercourse to the Site which runs through the Site from southeast to the northwest.
- 3.8 Much of the Site comprises topsoil and clay that emerged as a result of development undertaken pursuant to the 2013 OPP at North West Cambridge.
- 3.9 The western edge of the Site and the central Girton Gap are located within the Green Belt.
- 3.10 The Site is bound by:
 - a small portion of the A14 to the north, and Girton College, residential properties and agricultural fields which front onto Huntingdon Road (A1307) to the north and north-east;

- residential properties located along Huntingdon Road, Ascension Parish Burial Ground, Trinity Hall (University of Cambridge student accommodation) and Trinity Hall sports grounds to the east of the Site;
- Madingley Road Park and Ride, Madingley Road (A1303), and residential properties and buildings associated with the University of Cambridge to the south; and
- the M11 motorway to the west, beyond which lies agricultural fields.

Surrounding Context

- 3.11 The area immediately surrounding the Site is mixed in nature, mostly comprising low-rise residential properties, educational uses associated with the University of Cambridge and agricultural fields.
- 3.12 To the north of the Site, beyond Huntingdon Road (A1307), is the village of Girton, which comprises low-rise residential properties, Girton College, University of Cambridge and its associated uses, and agricultural fields. To the east of the Site is low-rise residential properties. To the south of the Site is Madingley Road Park and Ride. Beyond Madingley Road is the Cambridge West Innovation District which has uses associated with the University of Cambridge, including the Queen's Veterinary School Hospital, research buildings and the University of Cambridge Sports Centre and Gym. To the west of the Site beyond the M11 is mostly agricultural fields and areas of woodland, allocated as Green Belt.

Transport and Access

- 3.13 The Site is located to the south of Huntingdon Road (A1307), which runs at an east-west bearing adjacent to the Site, and links to the strategic road network approximately 2km to the west at Junction 31 of the M11.
- 3.14 Vehicular access to the Site can be gained via either Huntingdon Road to the north or Madingley Road to the south of the Site. Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road are linked via Eddington Avenue, which traverses the south-eastern extent of the Site. Pedestrian access can be gained via the same routes. Pedestrian and cycle access can also be gained via Horse Chestnut Avenue and Bunkers Hill (from Huntingdon Road), as well as Storeys Way and Madingley Rise to the east of the Site.
- 3.15 A Public Rights of Way (Footpath 99/5) crosses the Site in the north-west corner, running between Huntingdon Road to Cambridge Road, and crossing beneath the M11.
- 3.16 The Site is a 15-minute cycle from the centre of Cambridge.
- 3.17 There are numerous cycleways in close proximity to the Site: Eddington Avenue has dedicated verge cycleways adjacent to both sides of the carriageway. To the east, the cycleway provides direct connectivity to Cambridge City Centre and connects with the wider city cycle network.
- 3.18 The Universal bus service connects Eddington with Cambridge West, the City Centre, Cambridge Rail Station and the Biomedical Campus. The nearest bus stops for the Site are located on Eddington Avenue outside Sainsbury's and further down by Madingley Road.

- 3.19 Cambridge City Centre is a 20 minute bus journey from the Site whilst Cambridge Rail Station is approximately a 30 minute bus journey.
- 3.20 Cambridge Railway Station is located approximately 3.5km from the closest point of the Site to the south-east and provides East Anglia and West Anglia rail services and provides connectivity to further afield areas such as London, Brighton, Birmingham, Peterborough, Ely, Norwich and Ipswich. Cambridge North Railway Station is also located approximately 4.0km north-east of the Site.

Environmental and Heritage Designations

- 3.21 Within the Site boundary, there is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (“SSSI”): Traveller’s Rest Pit which is designated for geological interest. 1.5km to the northeast, Histon Road SSSI is located, which is also designated for geological interest.
- 3.22 **Figure 3-3** below shows a map with the key environmental and heritage designations in and around the Site.

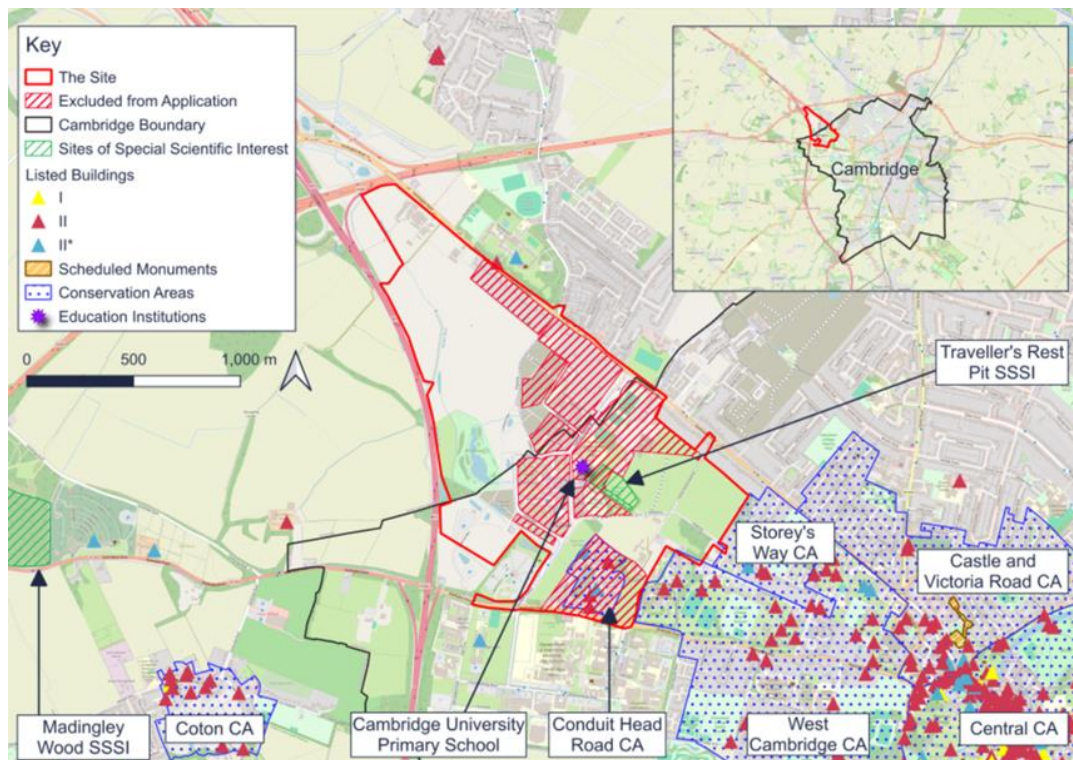


Figure 3-3 – Environmental and Heritage Designations

- 3.23 SCDC has no designated Air Quality Management Areas (“AQMA”s).
- 3.24 Relevant planning policies and planning designations are described in detail in **Section 6** of the Planning Statement.

Planning History

The Site

3.25 An OPA was submitted by the UoC in 2011 for the North West Cambridge Development. OPP was granted on 22 February 2013 (Planning References: 11/1114/OUT / S/1886/11).

3.26 The 2013 OPP granted permission for the following:

“Proposed development comprising up to 3,000 dwellings; Up to 2,000 student bedspaces; 100,000 sq.m. employment floorspace, of which: up to 40,000 sq.m. commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses) and at least 60,000 sq.m. academic floorspace (Class D1); up to 5,300 sq.m. gross retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5) (of which the supermarket is 2,000 sq.m. net floorspace); Senior Living, up to 6,500sq.m. (Class C2); Community Centre; Indoor Sports Provision; Police; Primary Health Care; Primary School; Nurseries (Class D1); Hotel (130 rooms); Energy Centre; and associated infrastructure including roads (including adaptations to Madingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd), pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes, parking, drainage, open spaces and earthworks.”

3.27 The 2013 OPP was granted subject to a condition that all applications for approval of all the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of 10 years in respect of any residential development, and 20 years for all other uses, from the 22 February 2013.

3.28 Since the 2013 OPP, a Section 73 application (refs. 13/1402/S73 / S/2036/13/VC) was approved in 2013 for a minor material amendment to increase the building heights in the local centre.

3.29 There have also been numerous RMAs and non-material amendments pursuant to the OPP that have been approved. A full breakdown of these applications is provided in **Appendix 1**.

3.30 The site also gained planning permission for a hotel/apart hotel under a full planning application (ref. 19/0156/FUL) in July 2019. Although the OPP approved the principle of a hotel, the proposals in this application exceeded the rooms and floor space specified under the OPP and it also did not include any apart-hotel rooms.

3.31 **Table 3-1** below provides a breakdown of what has been delivered so far / under construction as part of Phase 1.

Table 3-1 – 2013 OPP Development Quantum and Phase 1 Delivery

Use	Quantum Approved	Delivered in Phase 1
Residential	3,000 units (50% affordable housing to meet the needs of Cambridge University key workers, 50% market housing)	1,138 occupied of these, 686 for University key workers and 435 market homes. Total homes to come forward in Phase 1 = 1,848.
Student Accommodation	2,000 units	325

Employment/Academic Floorspace	100,000 sqm (40,000sqm employment / 60,000sqm academic)	-
Retail	5,300sqm	New Local Centre including supermarket, additional retail units and market square. Total Phase 1 retail floorspace approved through reserved matters applications - 4,158 sqm
Senior Living	6,500sqm	-
Hotel	130 rooms	Delivered
Primary School	-	Delivered (University of Cambridge Primary School)
Community Centre	-	Delivered (Storey's Field Centre)

3.32 **Figure 3-4** below shows spatially the Phase 1 development delivery (plots shown in colour).



Figure 3-4 – Map showing the NWCD Phase 1 Development Plots

Surrounding Context

3.33 There are several recent large developments within the surrounding context of the Site. These have been summarised below.

Cambridge West

3.34 The Cambridge West Innovation District is directly adjacent the Site to the south. On 21 June 2024, outline planning permission (ref. 16/1134/OUT) was granted with all matters reserved for up to 383,300m² of development for the following uses: academic, commercial/research institute, nursery, retail/food and drink, assembly and leisure, and sui generis uses, including an Energy Centre and Data Centre. As well as associated infrastructure, of most relevant to the NWCM Site is the highway junction adaptations on Madingley Road.

Darwin Green

3.35 Darwin Green is a residential-led mixed use development directly north of the Site.

3.36 In December 2013, outline planning permission (ref. 07/0003/OUT) was granted for a mixed use development comprising up to 1593 dwellings, a primary school, community facilities, retail units (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5) and associated infrastructure including vehicular, pedestrian and cycleway accesses, open space and drainage works.

3.37 Several RMA's pursuant to the 2013 permission have been approved:

- RMA (ref. 14/0086/REM) for access roads, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, services across the site and one allotment site.
- RMA (ref. 15/1670/REM) for 114 residential units and local centre including library, community rooms, health centre and retail units
- RMA (ref. 16/0208/REM) for first housing phase (known as BDW1) including 173 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space.
- RMA (ref. 21/04431/REM) for second housing phase (known as BDW2) including 323 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space.
- RMA (ref. 21/05434/REM) for third housing phase (known as BDW3) including 210 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space.
- RMA (ref. 21/05433/REM) for the fourth housing phase (known as BDW4) including 342 dwellings, with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space.
- RMA (ref. 21/03619/REM) for fifth and sixth housing phases and Allotment 3 (collectively known as BDW5 and 6) including 410 dwellings and allotments with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space.

3.38 The applications above comprise Phase 1 which is currently under construction.

3.39 Phases 2 and 3 recently gained outline planning permission (ref. 22/02528/OUT) at Appeal in August 2024 for up to 1,000 residential dwellings, a secondary school, a primary school, community facilities, retail uses, open space and landscaped areas, associated engineering, demolition and infrastructure works.

Girton College

- 3.40 Girton College is directly adjacent the Site to the north.
- 3.41 In February 2022 an outline planning application (ref. 22/00887/OUT) was submitted for the construction of student residential accommodation together with ancillary meeting, office and social space (maximum 14,700 sqm), auditorium (maximum 1,300 sqm) replacement buildings and grounds maintenance workshops, one new and relocated sports pitch, additional ball-stop fencing, relocated tennis courts, two new vehicular accesses and replacement car park with some matters reserved except for access. The application was approved in June 2025.

National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB)

- 3.42 NIAB is also directly north of the Site.
- 3.43 In February 2024, a full planning application (ref. 21/03609/FUL) was approved for the retention of the former NIAB Headquarters building, the demolition of all other buildings and structures, and the erection of buildings with basements for 291 Build to Rent units (Use Class C3) including affordable housing and a 202 bed Apart-Hotel (Sui Generis) and associated facilities along with access, car and cycle parking, landscaping and infrastructure works.
- 3.44 In December 2023 an outline application (ref. 23/04643/OUT) was submitted for the demolition of all site buildings and structures other than Chapter House and erection of buildings for a laboratory/office campus (Class E (g(i)) and (g(ii))) and associated facilities, cafe (class E(b)), access, car and cycle parking, revised access, car and cycle parking and refuse storage for the retained Chapter House with some matters reserved except for access, layout and scale. This application is awaiting determination.

4 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 This Section sets out the consultation measures that have taken place in advance of the submission of this OPA, as advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (December 2024) paragraphs 40-47. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF also recognises that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.
- 4.2 The proposals have been subject to extensive pre-application consultation and engagement with local and statutory stakeholders carried out between July 2024 and July 2025. Full accounts of the community engagement are set out in the SCI. In summary there were:
- 3 stages of consultation with the public and key stakeholders;
 - Pre-application meetings held with GCSPS, plus additional meetings with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority, Anglian Water, Cambridge Water, Environmental Health Officers, Ecology Officer and Sustainability Officer;
 - Engagement with the Quality Panel; and
 - Joint Development Control Committee (“JDCC”) Briefings.

Public Consultation

- 4.3 The SCI details the process of community involvement that has been undertaken to explain the proposals to relevant and interested parties. Engagement has been undertaken in accordance with GCSPS’s Statement of Community Involvement (March 2024) and the NPPF (December 2024).
- 4.4 There have been three distinct stages of community and stakeholder consultation with engagement beginning in September 2024. Further detail can be found in the SCI, but in summary:
- Over 1,100 people were engaged with across the community;
 - Over 30 engagement events and meetings were held;
 - 24,000 flyers were sent to local addresses; and
 - 400 feedback forms were received and reviewed.
- 4.5 The SCI sets out the issues raised throughout the consultation process along with the responses to these issues.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.6 The Applicant has gone through a comprehensive pre-application process with GCSPS, via a Planning Performance Agreement.

4.7 The Applicant has held pre-application meetings between July 2024 and July 2025 with GCSPS, where the following topics were discussed:

- Vision;
- Scale and Massing;
- Design;
- Landscape and Open Space;
- Ecology;
- Sustainability;
- Air Quality;
- Transport;
- Water;
- Waste;
- Noise;
- Density and Housing Mix;
- Landscape and Visual Impact; and
- Parameter Plans and the Design Code.

4.8 The scheme has positively evolved and developed as a result of this engagement. A summary of how the scheme has responded to main points of advice from GCSPS is set out in **Error! Reference source not found..**

Table 4-1 – Summary of responses to preapplication feedback

Theme	Advice	Response
Principle of Development	The principle of development of the site is established.	The proposals optimise development on the Site for housing delivery. In terms of site capacity, pre-application discussions have considered both design and visual impact factors as well as technical strategies such as transport, energy, sustainability, waste, utilities and flood risk and drainage.
	The overview of key technical strategies provides reassurance that the implication of intensification of the development, and change to strategies such as heating and non-potable water, will not compromise the potential to deliver the emerging masterplan.	The proposed Parameter Plans have been refined following comments from officers and additional information has been added to them (such as defining both storey and AOD heights on the Proposed Maximum Heights Parameter Plan and the minimum areas of open space within the Shared Gardens on the Green Infrastructure, Play and Open Space Parameter Plan) in order to help confirm the maximum extent of develop proposed.

Theme	Advice	Response
		The masterplan has been continually informed by the supporting technical strategies. The Shared Gardens for instance form the basis for Sustainable Urban Drainage.
Vision and placemaking	Future phases must maintain a globally ambitious approach to quality of place, innovation and sustainability, building on the aspirations of Phase 1 and addressing contemporary local and global challenges.	The Applicant continues to be committed to delivering the highest quality sustainable development, building on the success of what has been brought forward under Phase 1 so far. Three Place Principles – Designed for Today & the Future; Fostering Healthy Living; and Reducing Whole Place Carbon underpin the masterplan and these are defined by 10 key sustainability criteria. Examples of sustainability targets include 100% of clay to be reused on site and 80 litres per person per day potable water consumption.
Massing	The proposed massing strategy is evolving positively, however careful thought is needed on how it can be managed through the parameter plans and design code. Refinement of the massing is needed to ensure the variations in scale are clearly discernible. The introduction of a greater range of heights, layering, and variation in the roofscape are supported and should be clearly defined in parameter plans and codes. Tallest buildings should be limited to the north and south of the common.	The Design Code incorporates a section on Sitewide Massing and Character which has clearly defined codes on layering, variation in roofscape and articulated skylines. Parameter Plan 6 defines the Proposed Maximum Heights which have been carefully informed by the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (“LVIA”). The plan limits the location of the tallest buildings to a cluster around the common.
Neighbourhood Blocks	The indicative layout creates too many leaky spaces that fail to define the key streets and spaces that the neighbourhood block should be working hard to contain.	To ensure ‘leaky’ spaces are prevented, the Design Code includes a section on Streets in Neighbourhood Blocks that defines that buildings must align in way that form streets.
North Western Employment Land	The north west development plots function as a gateway to Cambridge therefore a high-quality design which responds to its context is required and this must be detailed in the Design Code. The LVIA work will need to inform the landscape strategy for this area. Mid-tech uses should not be a generic business park typology and the design team should	The design of the North Western Employment Land, known as Innovation Street, has been subject to significant discussion throughout the pre-application process. The illustrative masterplan has been developed to focus building frontages onto the street, place parking and servicing areas to the rear of the buildings and locate the buildings in a landscaped setting.

Theme	Advice	Response
	review other recent Mid-tech schemes in Cambridge which incorporated design features such as articulated roofscape, punched windows and a feature ground floor entrance. A northern hub with provisions that link to the employment uses should be provided to encourage linked trips. This would be a supporting centre to the main local centre delivered in Phase 1.	The Design Code sets a number of criteria to be addressed in this area of the Site in relation to buildings and open spaces including – buildings having positive street frontages; main building accesses onto streets; buildings framing the access to the area; roofscape articulation; and façade treatments. These controls should ensure a high-quality design appropriate to its location. An area for a 'hub' containing supporting uses (i.e. retail and recreation uses) has also been identified on the Parameter Plans to help activate this part of the Site.
Parking Strategy	Surface parking must not be dominant in the streetscene / undermine the ability to create low speed environments.	The location of surface parking has been carefully considered as the masterplan has been developed. For example, each of the neighbourhoods that form the western part of the masterplan have been designed to 'intercept' cars as they pass through the internal access street to reduce car numbers as vehicles move away from Cartwright Avenue. During pre-application discussions, different parking level scenarios have been presented within the neighbourhoods to demonstrate how these could affect the street scene. The Design Code depicts that car storage must be clustered in a way that reduces car presence on the street and planted landscape must be used to mitigate the visual impact of car storage on the public realm.
Shared Gardens	Further consideration should be given to how the built form would interact with the shared gardens to ensure they are well designed and useable. The parameter plans should include minimum width(s) for the shared gardens and the design code should define the critical widths for all the key open spaces e.g. minimum widths for areas with trees, where there are paths etc. to ensure that the key green spaces and landscape framework remain intact and deliverable at the reserved matters stage.	The Design Code has several codes that shape how the built form interacts with the shared gardens to ensure the gardens are well designed, functional spaces. The Green Infrastructure, Play and Open Space Parameter Plan defines fixed locations with minimum widths for the Shared Gardens. The Design Code then specifies the need for varying widths (15m – 30m) between building facades on the edge of the Shared Gardens.

Theme	Advice	Response
Landscape and Tree Strategy	Officers are broadly supportive of the landscape and tree strategy. One area which officers consider needs further definition is Brook Leys, as this has an important landscape and visual role in managing key views into the site from the south and west. The next stage is for the tree and landscape strategies to be translated into the design code. The site wide design must positively plan for large trees, ensuring the space requirements above and below ground are considered (distance from building, below ground infrastructure etc.).	The Design Code contains a dedicated section on Brook Leys to address matters such as character and levels; community and amenity; planting and biodiversity; movement; and built form. Requirements for an articulated skyline as well as breaks in the massing will help manage views into the Site. The Tree Strategy maps the proposed location for large trees, ensuring sufficient space above and below ground for the tree species proposed to develop fully.
Brook Leys	The landscape strategy will need to consider how Brook Leys can provide visual screening with reduced landscape bunds.	Surplus material from the development is to be deposited on the north west corner of Brook Leys this will provide visual screening to/from the M11.
Streets	Officers welcomed the narrowing of the street width for Cartwright Avenue in comparison to the previous outline consent and encouraged further narrowing of the carriageway subject to testing the technical requirements.	The Design Code requires the road carriageway width of Cartwright Avenue to be as narrow as practical whilst allowing sufficient space for all forms of travel including buses.
Sports and Recreation	The vision of a network of linked areas for sports, play, allotments etc. is supported. The intensified sports provision on land adjacent to the park and ride is also supported. The BMX track should be located closer to the play area. Officers suggested engaging the existing community at Eddington on future provisions for sport and allotments.	The open space and amenity strategy for the NWCM has been closely developed with the GCSPS to ensure sufficient provisions of sports and recreation uses are provided to support the proposed number of homes. The Applicant held a Design Exhibition in collaboration with University of Cambridge Primary School in July 2025 which focused on the provision of open spaces including sports, play and allotment provision for the future phases. This feedback received in this consultation event has informed the final design proposals.
Parameter Plans	An additional urban framework parameter plan was recommended to capture key urban design principles for the site.	Parameter Plan 7 'Urban Design' was developed in response to this comment and includes key urban design features such as frontage, viewpoints, open spaces and clusters of activity.
Sustainability Strategy, Energy Strategy and Utilities	Overheating, ventilation, and daylighting are important design considerations which should be adequately addressed through the Design Code. This should include a commitment to minimise single-aspect units as far as possible.	The Design Code priorities dual-aspect homes and sets out other measures to reduce overheating, such as solar shading, glazing ratio, ventilation and orientation.

Theme	Advice	Response
	The ASHP on a parcel/plot basis is accepted in principle but this must be balanced carefully with outdoor amenity requirements. Where external structures are required, officers expect the design of these will be coherent with the Phase 1 utility buildings.	The design of external utility structures will be designed to be coherent with Phase 1.
Refuse Strategy	Officers supported the proposed street layout allowing for a simplified refuse strategy. Underground waste points must be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of the waste service. This should be captured in the Design Code. Food waste will need to be collected from both Phase 1 and future phases from April 2026.	The Design Code sets out the criteria that the underground waste bins must adhere to in order to integrate them into the landscape. The Operational Waste Management Strategy provides a strategy for food waste for the Site. Please see the strategy for further details.

Quality Panel

- 4.9 The Applicant and Project Team presented the emerging proposals to the Quality Panel on two occasions. The first presentation took place in November 2024. This was deliberately early in the design process, which the panel welcomed.
- 4.10 The Quality Panel provided feedback following the first review, the key recommendations were to incorporate lessons learnt from Phase 1 into the new masterplan for the Site; design the north-west corner as a gateway to Cambridge; ensure the M11 noise pollution is appropriately mitigated; engage the community on key decisions; maximise active frontages; and investigate incorporating mobility hubs. All of these points have been incorporated in the scheme design as it has developed.
- 4.11 The second Quality Panel session took place in 28 April 2025 after the proposals had advanced in response to pre-application engagement with GCSPS and further design and technical work by the project team.
- 4.12 The key recommendations from the Quality Panel and the design responses to the recommendations are summarised below in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2 – Summary of responses to Quality Panel feedback

Theme	Advice	Response
Community and Social Infrastructure	Evaluate whether the mix and provision foster a sustainable, diverse community.	The market and key worker homes will comprise a mix of unit sizes which are provided as ranges to allow for flexibility as the scheme comes forward. The mix of key worker homes has been informed by a Housing Needs Survey. See the Affordable Housing Statement for further details.
	Reassess social facility locations; current layout seems scattered.	Three locations for the supporting ancillary uses (e.g. retail and recreation) are included within the Masterplan, at the Common and in the north west and south east parts of the Site. These locations are key nodes of activity in the development.
	Ensure the Common serves as a vibrant social hub, not just a backdrop for taller buildings.	The Common provides a generous piece of public realm and a mobility hub to foster easily accessible space to socialise in. It is also designed to have an area for pop-up events.
Design and Quality	Future-proof the dwelling mix, typologies, and frontage widths.	The dwelling mix is proposed as ranges to allow for flexibility to meet future demand. Similarly there is flexibility within the Development Specification for variations in the quantum of different 'Living' uses.
	Minimize hard surfaces and embed quality throughout the project.	A core objective underpinning the landscape strategy has been to reduce the proportion of hard landscape in the public realm and increase the soft landscape.
	Reevaluate building angles for better functionality.	Buildings are proposed to be laid out at different angles to accentuate vistas and create visual interest in key areas such as the Shared Gardens.
	Enhance legibility to emphasize Cartwright Avenue as both a place and corridor.	Cartwright Avenue is designed to have varying characters along its length but a continuous material palette for paving to promote legibility. The Common provides a space of congregation along Cartwright Avenue and has infrastructure to support small informal events which will foster Cartwright Avenue's role as a place.
Environmental and Sustainability Goals	Promote carbon targets, biochar use, and soil-conscious strategies.	The Energy Statement that accompanies the OPA sets out the predicted carbon savings at each stage of the energy hierarchy for the Proposed Development and demonstrates that the development shows significant carbon emissions savings compared to policy targets. The reuse of soil has been explored. The Sustainability Strategy sets the following targets for soil: 100% of stockpiles to be used; 100% clay to be used; and soil to be moved only once.
	Expand biodiversity net gain (BNG) potential.	As described in the Biodiversity Net Gain report that accompanies the OPA, the Illustrative Scheme exceeds BNG targets.

Theme	Advice	Response
	Maximize green assets, including large trees, photovoltaic systems, and battery storage.	On-site renewable energy generation will be maximised by utilising the available flat roof space for apartments and non-domestic buildings and suitably oriented pitched roofs on houses for solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. Differently scaled trees have been planned for in appropriately scaled spaces. For further detail refer to the Landscape Strategy.
Transportation and Connectivity	Define a robust public transport strategy.	A robust public transport strategy has been developed, detail of which can be found in the Transport Assessment.
	Balance car use with efficient storage solutions for vehicles, bikes, and bins.	The Design Code includes requirements for efficient storage solutions e.g. storage solutions are to be provided within close proximity of each other within the public realm.
	Address podium design challenges thoughtfully.	This is a detailed design matter to be considered at reserved matters stage.
Land Use and Building Efficiency	Analyse land use percentages to optimize planning.	The future phases NWCM has taken a design-led approach to optimise development on Site.
	Minimise provision of single-aspect dwellings.	The Design Code priorities dual-aspect homes.
	Rethink the northern end's functionality and explore less segregated mid-tech units.	Significant design development of the north west corner has occurred as a result of pre-application feedback. The addition of the northern hub adds spatial proximity to ancillary uses whilst the organisation of the mid-tech uses around a street that connects to Cartwright Avenue allows for easy access to and from the wider development.
Innovative Solutions	Challenge the prevalence of full height glazing to avoid overheating.	This is a detailed design matter to be considered at reserved matters stage.
	Leverage the Research Group's expertise for greater impact.	Research undertaken by the Behaviour and Building Performance Group from the University of Cambridge has influenced the design of the future phases NWCM. Further details on the research and its influence on the design can be found in the Design and Access Statement.

4.13 Overall, the panel were supportive of the emerging masterplan for North West Cambridge and supported the increase in density to allow for delivery of more homes on the site.

Joint Development Control Committee Briefings

4.14 The Applicant and Project Team presented to the JDCC twice, in November 2024 and April 2025. The design responses to the JDCC's feedback is presented in **Table 4-3** below.

Table 4-3 – Summary of responses to JDCC feedback

Theme	Advice	Response
Land Use	Nursery provision should be included.	Provision has been made for a nursery to be delivered within the future phases of development. See Parameter Plan 4 - Land Use.
	Increased provision of sports facilities to cater for the additional residents.	Formal and informal sports provision has been calculated to ensure policy compliant standards are met for the population demand. See Landscape Strategy for further details.
Townscape	More height articulation and townscape articulation should be incorporated into the future phases of development.	The Design Code incorporates several codes to ensure the Future Phases deliver a more varied townscape e.g. Codes requiring articulated skylines, layering and massing breaks. The Proposed Maximum Heights Parameter Plan introduces taller height around the Common which will allow for more height articulation in the Future Phases.
	Roofscape is an important design principle to incorporate.	The Design Code includes a site wide design requirement for roof articulation where practical.
	Present key sensitive views to demonstrate the landscape and visual impact of the proposals.	Key sensitive views are presented in Environmental Statement Volume 2, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
Transport	Provision for cargo bikes.	It is proposed that 5% of the total capacity of the residential cycle parking will be designed to accommodate oversized bikes such as tandems or cargo bikes.
	Plan for the desire lines between Girton, Darwin Green and West Cambridge. Active and quiet routes should match the desire lines.	Numerous routes through Masterplan have been provided to meet direct desire lines, connect Huntingdon Road with Madingley Road, provide alternative leisure routes, and connect onto Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road at appropriate points to meet existing and proposed crossing infrastructure.
Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure should be delivered early.	Significant green infrastructure has been delivered in Phase 1 e.g Brook Leys, Pheasant Drive Green Finger. The Future Phases will deliver green infrastructure alongside the delivery of built form to ensure each phase of development is supported by an appropriate amount of green space.
	Overshadowing of the shared gardens should be tested.	Within the central zone of the Shared Garden lower rise development is proposed to avoid overshadowing of green space.
Overheating	Single aspect homes should be avoided where possible.	The Design Code priorities dual-aspect homes and sets out other measures to reduce overheating, such as solar shading, glazing ratio, ventilation and orientation.

Theme	Advice	Response
Noise	Mitigation is vital for the M11 Noise.	Environmental Statement Volume 1 Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration concludes that by incorporating design led noise mitigation measures such as building orientation, layout and façade sound insulation, appropriate acoustic conditions can be achieved.

5 The Proposed Development

5.1 This Section of the Planning Statement describes the Proposed Development.

Description of Development

5.2 The description of development (the “Proposed Development”) is provided below:

“Outline planning application (all matters reserved except for means of access to the public highway) for a phased mixed use development, including demolition of existing buildings and structures, such development comprising:

- *Living Uses, comprising residential floorspace (Class C3/C4, up to 3,800 dwellings), student accommodation (Sui Generis), Co-living (Sui Generis) and Senior Living (Class C2);*
- *Flexible Employment Floorspace (Class E(g) / Sui Generis research uses);*
- *Academic Floorspace (Class F1); and*
- *Floorspace for supporting retail, nursery, health and indoor sports and recreation uses (Class E (a) – E (f)).*

- *Public open space, public realm, sports facilities, amenity space, outdoor play, allotments and hard and soft landscaping works alongside supporting facilities;*
- *Car and cycle parking, formation of new pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular accesses and means of access and circulation routes within the site;*
- *Highway works;*
- *Site clearance, preparation and enabling works;*
- *Supporting infrastructure, plant, drainage, utility, earthworks and engineering works.”*

5.3 The following section provides an overview of the different components of the Proposed Development. Further information is provided in the accompanying Environmental Statement, Development Specification and the Design and Access Statement.

Site Clearance and Demolition

5.4 To enable the construction of the future phases of the NWCM, site clearance and demolition will be required.

5.5 Parameter Plan 01 - Demolition Plan, as extracted at **Figure 5-1** below, identifies the areas where existing buildings / structures are to be demolished as well as areas where partial demolition may be required.



Figure 5-1 – PP1 - Demolition Plan

Control Documents

5.6 The OPA includes three Control Documents which describe the principal components of the Proposed Development, define the parameters for the Proposed Development and control how the Proposed Development will come forward in future. They provide the parameters, design principles and controls that will guide future RMAs. These Control Documents are – (1) the Development Specification; (2) the Parameter Plans; and (3) the Design Code.

Development Specification

5.7 The Development Specification sets out the type and quantity of development that could be provided across the Site. These details are summarised below.

Land Use

5.8 A mix of land uses are proposed in order to meet the requirements of the site allocation. The proposed maximum floor areas for the land uses put forward in the Development Specification are summarised in **Table 5-1** below:

Table 5-1 – Proposed Development Quantum

Use	Use Class	Amount (GEA sqm)
Residential	C3/C4	Up to 365,000*
Co-Living	Sui Generis	Up to 52,000*
Student Accommodation	Sui Generis	Up to 52,000*
Senior Living	C2	Up to 6,500

Employment	E(g) / Sui Generis Research Uses	Up to 40,000
Academic	F1(a)	Up to 60,000
Supporting retail, nursery, health, indoor sports and recreation	E(a) – E(f)	Up to 3,500
Ancillary floorspace comprising Back of House, Enclosed Plant, Storage, Servicing, Car and Cycle Parking Areas, development infrastructure required to support the development etc	N/A	No maximum

*Total maximum floorspace of Residential (C3/C4) + Co-living (Sui Generis) + Student Accommodation (Sui Generis) – Up to 417,000 sqm GEA

5.9 The Parameter Plans indicate which uses would be suitable within each Building Development Zone to manage where each proposed use can be delivered on the OPA Site.

5.10 It is proposed a floorspace limit is placed on the Residential (C3/C4), Co-living (Sui Generis) and Student Accommodation (Sui Generis) floorspace. The combined total floorspace of these uses is set out in **Table 5-2** below.

Table 5-2 – Maximum Residential Floorspace

Land Use	Maximum Floorspace (GEA)
Residential (C3/C4) + Co-living (Sui Generis) + Student Accommodation (Sui Generis)	417,000 sqm

Open Space and Recreation Provision

5.11 Informal open space, sports provision, allotments, community growing space, and play space shall be provided in accordance with the Open Space and Recreation standards set out in Appendix 3 of the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009).

Residential development

5.12 Unless otherwise agreed, the residential units will be provided in accordance with the site wide unit mix ranges shown in **Table 5-3** below.

Table 5-3 – Site wide unit mix ranges

Market Unit minimum / maximum ranges:

	Minimum	Maximum
Single Person Unit	n/a	7.5%
1 Bed	10%	30%
2 Bed	25%	45%
3 Bed	10%	35%
4 Bed+	20%	45%

Key Worker Unit minimum / maximum ranges:

	Minimum	Maximum
Single Person Unit*	30%	55%
1 Bed	15%	35%
2 Bed	10%	35%
3 Bed+	2%	5%

The key worker single person units comprises either:*

- *Studio Self Contained Unit*
- *Studio Community Unit – a combination of self contained private and shared amenity spaces to respond to the specific requirements of University Staff*

5.13 The precise unit mix will be confirmed through the submission of RMAs. For the purposes of this outline planning application, it is anticipated that up to 3,800 homes would be delivered on the Site. The unit mix of specific phases of development may fall outside of the site wide unit mix range so long as it does not prejudice the site wide unit mix from complying with the ranges set out in **Table 5-3** or the delivery of mixed and balanced communities within the Site.

5.14 50% of the homes are proposed as Key Worker Homes for University and College Staff.

Parameter Plans

5.15 The Parameter Plans set the parameters associated with the scale, layout, access and circulation and distribution of use classes and public space for the Proposed Development. They also establish the Building Development Zones across the Site. The Parameter Plans identify features such as maximum building heights; areas of green infrastructure; and access and circulation routes. The Parameter Plans are set up to provide a level of flexibility for the detailed design of the scheme at a later date which will need to be approved by the local planning authority through subsequent RMAs.

5.16 A set of 7 Parameter Plans have been prepared which explain how the Proposed Development should come forward. These are described in **Table 5-4** below. All of the Parameter Plans need to be read together in order to establish all of the relevant parameters for the Proposed Development and for a particular Building Development Zone.

Table 5-4 – Parameter Plans

Parameter Plan	Description
Parameter Plan 1 – Demolition Plan	The Plan identifies the areas within the Site where buildings and structures are proposed to be demolished. The Plan also identifies previously developed areas which may require partial demolition and/or removal of structures.
Parameter Plan 2 – Green Infrastructure Plan, Play and Open Space	The Plan identifies the location of open spaces, allotments, community growing spaces, sports facilities and play space within the Site. The Plan does not preclude these spaces coming forward additionally in other locations on the Site.
Parameter Plan 3 – Access and Movement	The Plan identifies the location of the principal vehicle, cycle and pedestrian circulation routes, accesses and egresses to and within the Site. It also shows areas where access points to the Proposed Development will be situated. The Plan includes Limits of Deviation for the routes to provide flexibility in the layout .
Parameter Plan 4 – Land Use	The Plan identifies the permitted uses within the different Building Development Zones.
Parameter Plan 5 – Existing Levels	The Plan identifies existing levels across the Site. This Plan is not for approval.
Parameter Plan 6 – Proposed Maximum Heights	The Plan describes the maximum heights (both AODm and storey heights) to which buildings or structures could be built within each Building Development Zone. It also identifies proposed levels. Maximum Building Height includes roof plant, parapets and lift overruns. Maximum storey numbers are also shown on the plan (these storey numbers exclude roof plant, parapets and lift overruns).
Parameter Plan 7 – Urban Design	This composite Plan draws together key features such as frontages, viewpoints, open spaces and clusters of activity. This Plan is not however for approval.

5.17 A number of the Parameter Plans are produced below, accompanied by a further description. **Figure 5-2** shows the Proposed Maximum Heights Parameter Plan. The maximum storey heights (7 – 8 storeys, shown in dark blue/pink hatching) are clustered around the Common in the central point of the masterplan. Elsewhere, maximum storey heights range from 3 – 6 storeys, with heights generally being lower around the edges of the Site and where they interface with existing development. The maximum AOD heights set out on the Parameter Plan include roof plant, parapets and lift overruns. Any flues or antennas that might be required would sit above this height.

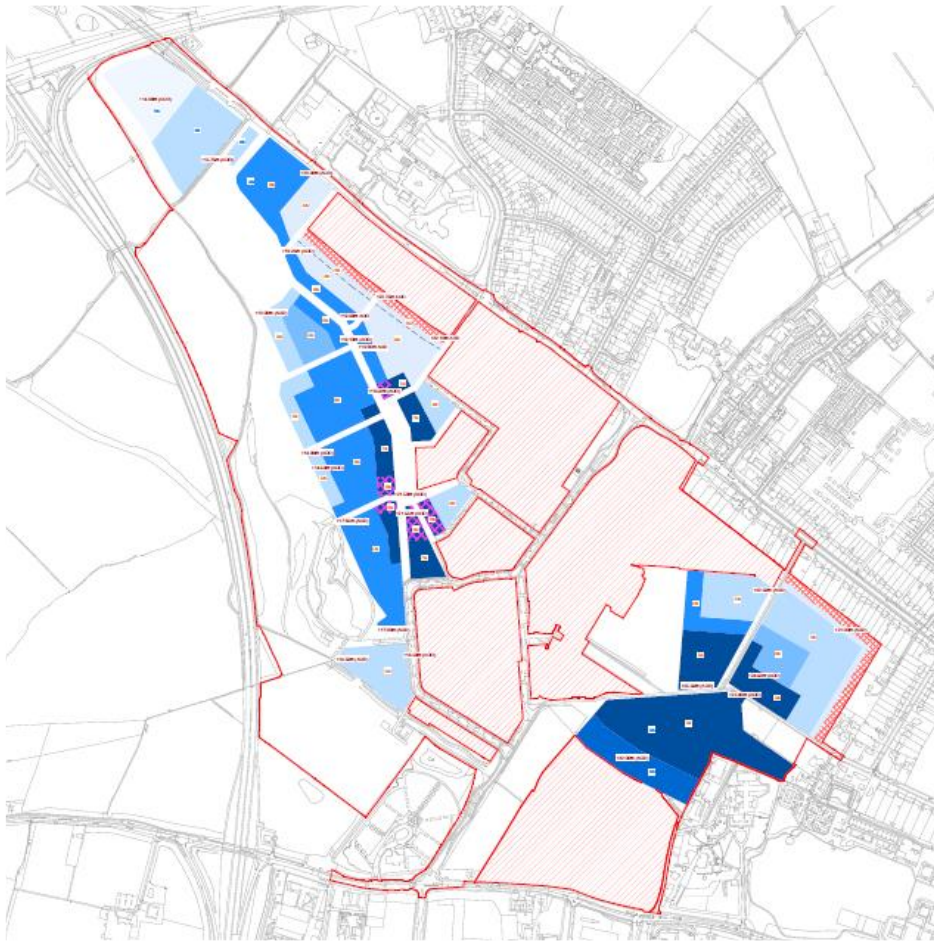


Figure 5-2 PP6 – Proposed Maximum Heights Parameter Plan

5.18 **Figure 5-3** shows the Green Infrastructure, Play and Open Space Parameter Plan. The Parameter Plan identifies various existing areas of green infrastructure across the Site. In relation to the proposals, the plan identifies fixed locations/widths for the Shared Gardens, beyond which there is a further zone for open space to come forward within. It also defines other open spaces such as the area of the Common and open spaces associated with non-residential areas of the Site. Finally, locations for formal sports, community growing space, allotments and play spaces are set out on the plan.



Figure 5-3 – PP2 – Green Infrastructure, Play and Open Space Parameter Plan

5.19 **Figure 5-4** shows the Land Use Parameter Plan. Areas are coloured to show which use(s) can come forward within each Building Development Zone. Living uses (comprising residential (Use Class C3/C4) and Co-Living (Sui Generis)) are coloured yellow and distributed through most parts of the Site. Other living uses, such as student accommodation (Sui Generis) and Senior Living (Use Class C2) have been located to come forward in areas closer to the existing Local Centre or in closer proximity to the 'hubs' (defined by pink circles) identified for supporting ancillary uses (retail, nursery and recreational use). Student accommodation can also come forward in the area identified for academic related floorspace (shown in light blue). Employment floorspace (Use Class E(g) / Sui Generis research uses) is positioned on the north western part of the Site and shown in orange.

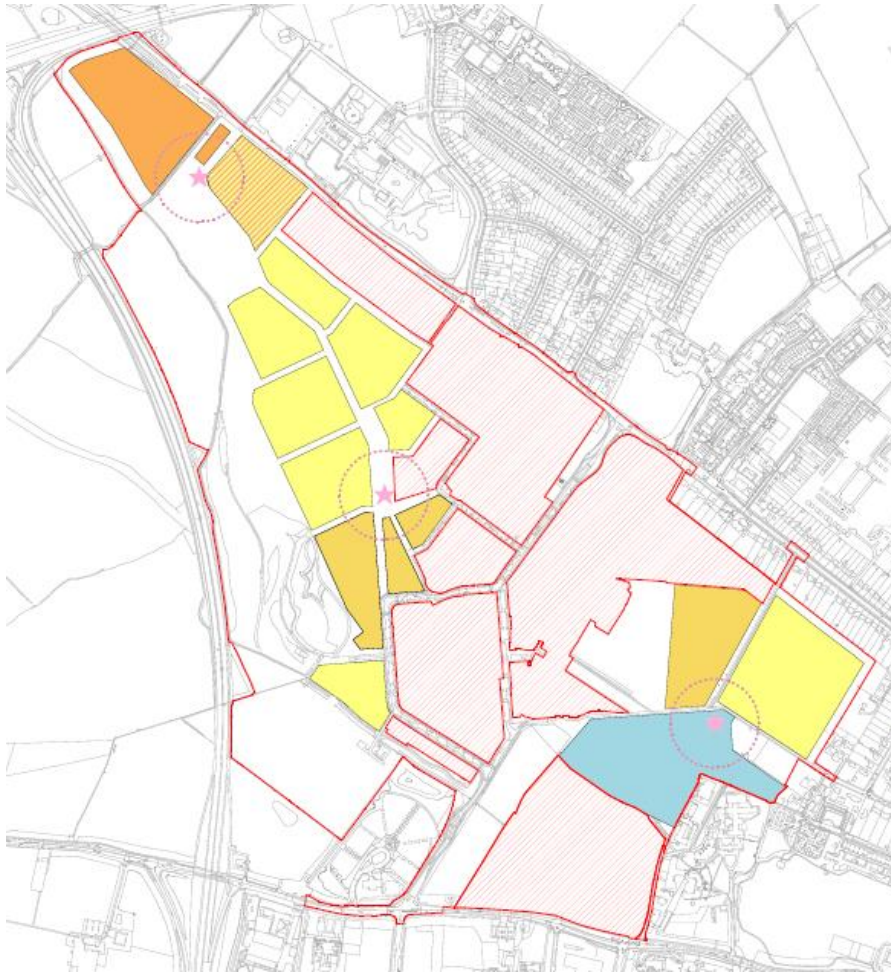


Figure 5-4 – PP4 – Land Use Parameter Plan

5.20 **Figure 5-5** shows the Access and Movement Parameter Plan. Existing routes are shown for context. The key pedestrian, cycle and vehicular routes and access points from surrounding roads are depicted on the plan, including shared pedestrian/cycle routes as well as segregated cycle routes. Routes are provided with a limit of deviation and the plan does not preclude other routes/links/accesses from coming forward.

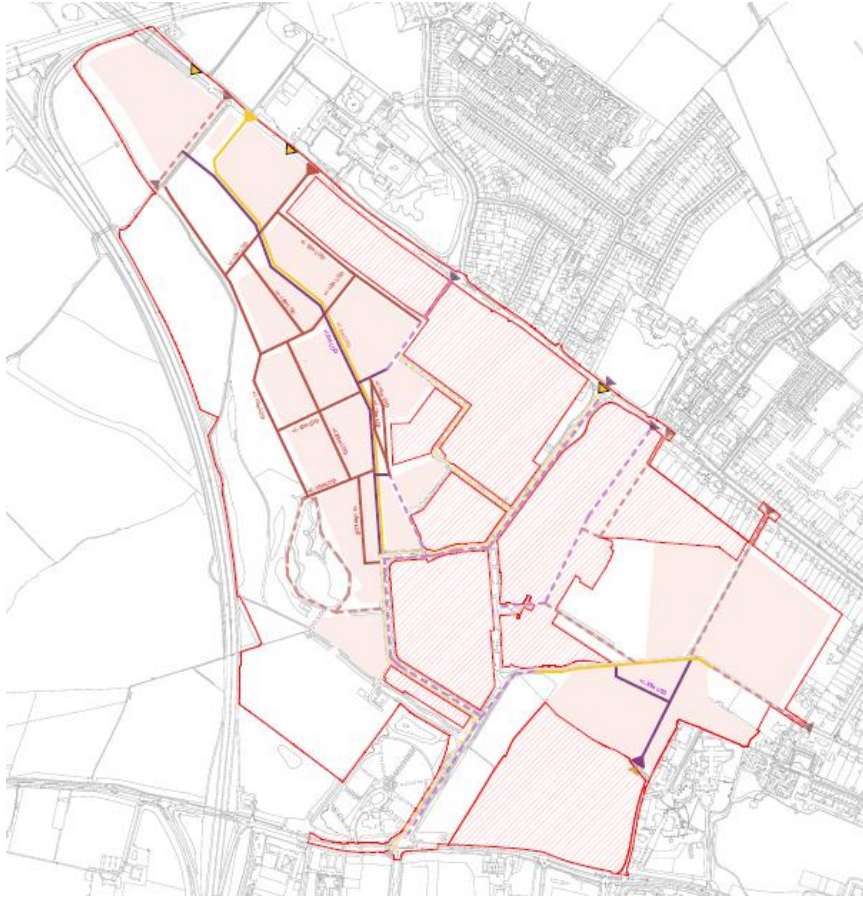


Figure 5-5 – PP3 – Access and Movement Parameter Plan

Design Code

5.21 The Design Code has been prepared to guide the preparation of RMAs. It sets out a commitment to embedding high quality design within the masterplan as it emerges over time. It is anticipated that a condition would be attached to the grant of outline planning permission requiring such future submissions to be substantially in accordance with the Design Code.

Illustrative Scheme

5.22 In order to test and validate the OPA, an Illustrative Scheme showing the potential location of buildings, uses and open spaces has been produced. This scheme provides a vehicle for examining the possible architectural, environmental, operational and social impacts of the Proposed Development. It remains schematic but it conforms to the parameters as defined in the Development Specification, Parameter Plans and Design Code. The Illustrative Scheme is not a design template or submitted for approval; it represents one possible way the principles as defined by the Control Documents could be interpreted/achieved and developed into a design.

5.23 The Illustrative Masterplan is provided in **Figure 5-6** below:



Figure 5-6 – The Illustrative Masterplan
Floorspace

5.24 A summary of the floorspace area of the Illustrative Masterplan is provided in **Table 5-5** below. All of these floorspaces are within the limits as set out in **Table 5-1** above.

Table 5-5 – Illustrative Scheme Proposed Floorspace

Land Use	Floorspace (GEA)
Residential (C3)	355,596 sqm
Student Accommodation (Sui Generis)	51,513 sqm
Academic Floorspace (F1)	59,708 sqm
Employment (E(g), Sui Generis)	Office – 17,786sqm Mid-Tech – 21,674sqm

5.25 The residential floorspace in the Illustrative Scheme equates to 3,742 units and the student accommodation floorspace equates to 1,730 units. With regard to the other uses proposed in the OPA, it is envisaged that co-living floorspace/unit numbers would mirror that of the student accommodation given the similarities in the configuration of the two uses. In future RMAs, these uses, alongside the C3/C4 residential use would be 'drawn down' from the overall

417,000sqm floorspace cap set out in **Table 5-2** above. Also in future RMAs, ancillary retail, nurseery and recreation uses, as well as Senior Living accommodation could be accommodated in those areas identified on the Land Use Parameter Plan.

Housing

5.26 **Table 5-6** presents an indicative residential housing mix for the Proposed Development, based on the Illustrative Scheme.

Table 5-6 – Indicative Housing Mix

Unit	Market			Key Worker Housing	Total (%)
	Flats	Houses	Total	Flats	
Single Person Unit	45 (5%)	-	45 (3%)	645 (30%)	690 (18%)
1 Bed	317 (35%)	-	317 (20%)	752 (35%)	1,069 (30%)
2 Bed	522 (55%)	32 (5%)	554 (35%)	698 (32.5%)	1,252 (33%)
3 Bed	68 (5%)	192 (30%)	260 (16%)	54 (2.5%)	314 (8%)
4 Bed+	-	417 (65%)	417 (26%)	-	417 (11%)
TOTAL	952	641	1,593	2,149	3,742

Landscape

5.27 Open landscape within the Site will serve a range of functions including: human use and enjoyment; nature recovery and biodiversity net gain; and to help embed the Proposed Development into the surrounding landscape.

5.28 The Landscape Strategy provides a detailed summary of the landscape proposals. The key landscape character areas are explained below.

Shared Gardens

5.29 In the Future Phases Masterplan the concept of the Green Fingers in the 2013 OPP has evolved, these spaces are now known as 'Shared Gardens' and vehicles are not permitted in these spaces. They are for non-car modes of travel and to foster an amenity network.

5.30 The Shared Gardens will provide doorstep growing spaces, social spaces and gathering points, play space and playable features, public art, rain gardens integrated with play as well as a movement corridor for active travel.

The Common

5.31 The Common sits to the north of Cartwright Avenue and is a generous piece of public realm in which movement corridors navigate east and west.

Brook Leys

5.32 Brook Leys is a significant piece of public realm, with existing features such as Washpit Brooke, and the Phase 1 Lagoon. The space is defined by its varied and undulating natural landscape.

A green edge to the development where biodiversity is thriving, proposals will enhance and protect habitats whilst allowing residents to connect to nature.

Transport

- 5.33 Within the Future Phases Masterplan, the aim is for active travel to be the first and easiest choice. The Proposed Development has three main alternative cycle/pedestrian routes that pass through the centre of the Site – a ‘fast’ route, an ‘adventure’ route and a ‘quiet’ route. It is proposed that the density of vehicular routes are reduced and that secondary vehicular routes are downgraded in the movement hierarchy below green infrastructure.
- 5.34 The Access and Movement Parameter Plan shows where the key vehicular and non-vehicular access points and routes will be. This network would be supported by a finer grain of streets, paths, roads and routes that will ensure the Site is highly permeable.
- 5.35 An internal spine road, known as ‘Cartwright Avenue’, will be delivered linking Huntingdon Road and Turing Way. Cartwright Avenue has been designed to prioritise active travel, with dedicated pedestrian and cycle paths and low-speed environments. The proposed width of the carriageway has been reduced in comparison to the 2013 OPP.

Highway Access Works

Northwest Huntingdon Road Access

- 5.36 The principle of access to the site remains as per the 2013 Consent. The Huntingdon Road West junction was not delivered as part of the Phase 1. The access proposals have been revisited as part of this application with the following changes to be made to better accommodate active travel users and assessed against Active Travel England’s and Cambridgeshire’s Toolkit. This junction is therefore being applied for in detail in accordance with the plans referenced 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SK-CH-HR02 and 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SK-CH-HR10.
- 5.37 Huntingdon Road West junction has been redesigned, to accommodate policy and guidance updates since the 2013 consent which better cater for pedestrians and cyclists (LTN 1/20). Its approximate location is consistent with the approved 2013 consent. This junction provides access between Huntingdon Road and the primary street within the masterplan known as Cartwright Avenue.
- 5.38 Additional, points of access from Huntingdon Road into commercial plots are also included in this application drawing and detailed consent is also sought.
- 5.39 The design provided by 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SK-CH-HR02 and 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SK-CH-HR10 include for the following key design elements:
- Two new priority-controlled accesses off Huntingdon Road into the two main northern employment plots.

- Uncontrolled crossing points over each priority access set back from main carriageway with drop kerbs, tactiles, appropriate visibility, and kerb radius to accommodate vehicles expected at each.
- Signalised junction between Huntingdon Road and Cartwright Avenue.
- Signalised arrangement to include; one lane approach on each arm plus right turn lane into site from NW, no right turn from Cartwright Avenue with physical restriction, staggered controlled crossing over Cartwright Avenue arm, no crossing facilities over Huntingdon Road to reduce impact on capacity and account for crossing facilities provided North and South.
- On road uni-directional cycle tracks on Huntingdon Road south of the junction.

Northeast Huntingdon Road Access

- 5.40 The Northeast Huntingdon Road access with Eddington Avenue was approved and implemented as per the 2013 OPP. This junction includes a signalised arrangement.
- 5.41 An upgrade of Eddington Avenue / Huntingdon Road junction to include a new right turn signal head and signal timings to allow for right turn movements to giveaway is proposed.

6 Planning Designations and Policy Context

Introduction

- 6.1 This Section provides the national, regional and local planning policy context to the proposals and describes the designations affecting the Site.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 6.2 In December 2024 (with amendments February 2025), the Government published revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (which was originally published in March 2012). The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The most relevant parts of the NPPF to the Proposed Development are set out below.

Sustainable Development

- 6.3 Paragraphs 7 and 8 note the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which has the following three overarching objectives:

“an economic role – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy...

a social role – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations...

an environmental role to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...”

Making Effective Use of Land

- 6.4 Paragraph 124 states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 125 recognises that planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside. Paragraph 129 states that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development and the availability of land to accommodate it as well as local market conditions and viability.
- 6.5 Paragraph 130 describes how design codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially

important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.

Residential Development

- 6.6 Paragraph 61 states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. Paragraph 66 states that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs.
- 6.7 Paragraph 77 recognises that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages or towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).

Economy

- 6.8 Paragraph 66 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.
- 6.9 Paragraph 86 goes on to state that planning policies should pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy and be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, and allow for new and flexible working practices and spaces to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

Design

- 6.10 Section 12 highlights the planning and development process should achieve the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable places
- 6.11 Paragraph 135 sets out that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

“Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;

are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting;

establish or maintain a strong sense of place;

optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and

create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.”

- 6.12 Paragraph 96(a) states that planning policies should promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages.
- 6.13 Paragraph 98(a) states that planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Paragraph 103 goes on to state that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.

Climate Change

- 6.14 Paragraph 164 notes new development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising for climate change and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions e.g. through location, orientation and design.

Transport

- 6.15 Section 9 provides considerations for promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 117 states applications for development should prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements, address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility, create places that are safe and secure, allows for efficient servicing and emergency vehicles and be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 6.16 Paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.17 On 6th March 2014 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published to provide supporting guidance to the NPPF covering a range of topics.

National Design Guide

- 6.18 The National Design Guide was first published by the Government in October 2019 and updated January 2021 as planning practice guidance to ensure that all aspects of good design are considered in planning proposals. The guidance outlines the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of following ten characteristics:
- Context – enhances the surroundings.

- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social, and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy, and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.

The Development Plan

6.19 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.20 The Development Plan comprises:

- Cambridge Local Plan (2018)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018)
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (“NWC AAP”) (2009)

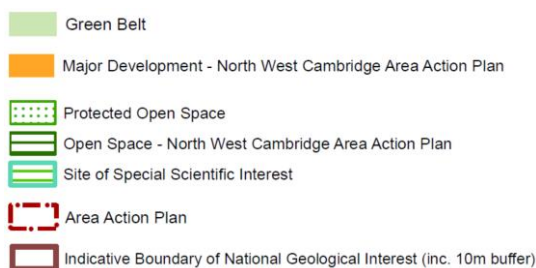
6.21 Through pre-application discussions with the GCSPS, it has been recognised that the NWC AAP remains part of the Development Plan and has been a material consideration for previous outline planning permissions. Whilst some policies will probably be replaced by wider Local Plan policies, the NWC AAP has set an important, ambitious framework that future applications should aspire to follow.

6.22 A summary of the Site Allocation and Planning Designations are provided below.

Site Allocation and Planning Designations

Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

6.23 The Cambridge Policies Map identifies the following designations for the part of the Site within CCC’s administrative boundary (**Figure 6-1**):



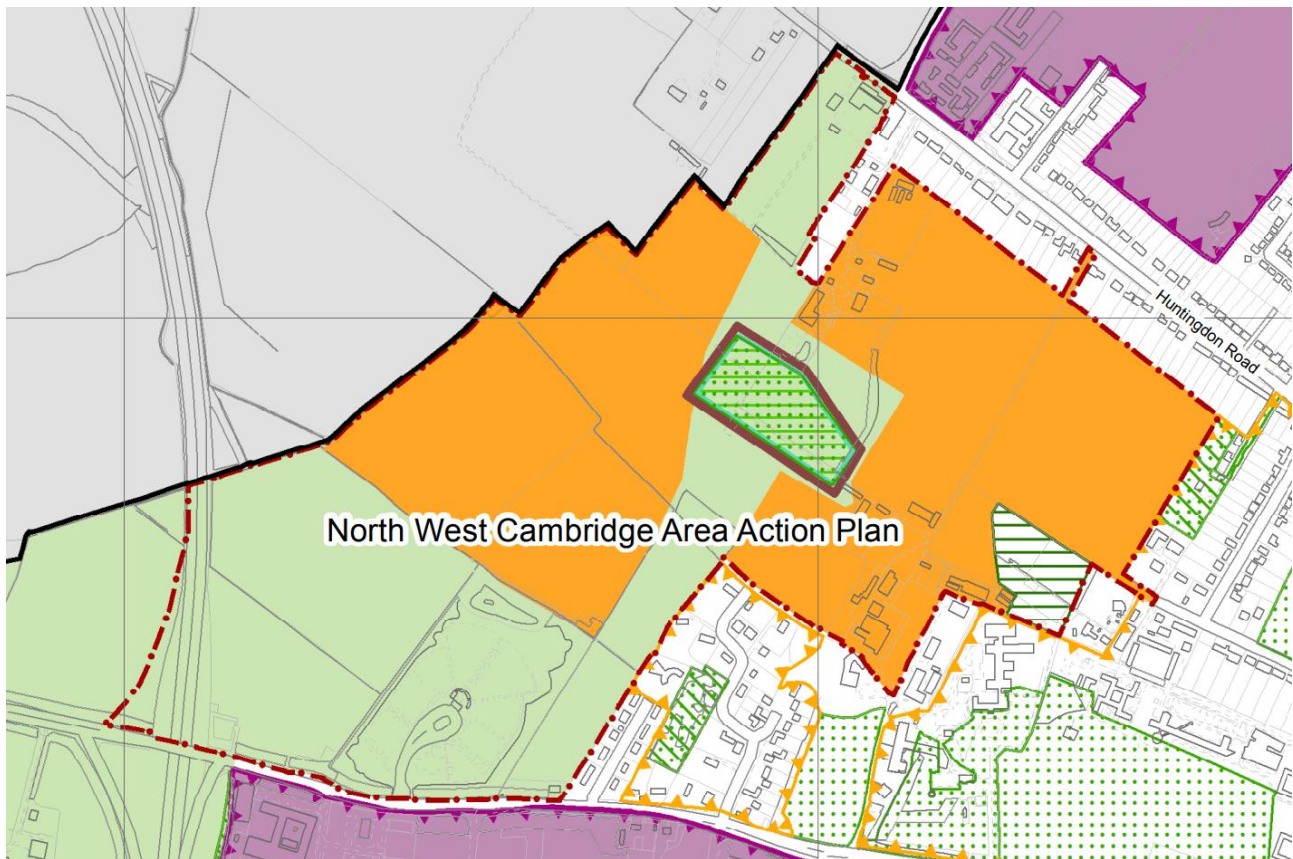


Figure 6-1 – Extract of Cambridge Policies Map

6.24 Paragraph 2.38 of the CCC Local Plan notes the Site is subject to the policies set out in the NWC AAP, which was jointly developed and adopted in 2009 by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

6.25 The Cambridge Local Plan goes on to state in paragraph 3.13 that this plan does not address the UoC's North West Cambridge site, which is covered by the NWC AAP.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018)

6.26 The South Cambridgeshire Policies Map identifies the following designations for the part of the Site within SCDC's administrative boundary (**Figure 6-2**):



Figure 6-2 – Extract of South Cambridgeshire Policies Map
North West Cambridge Area Action Plan

6.27 The NWC AAP includes a Proposals Map, as extracted at **Figure 6-3** below, which shows the relevant planning designations on one map for the Site.



Figure 6-3 – Extract of APP Proposals Map

6.28 The policies within the NWC AAP allocate the Site to deliver:

- Approximately 3000 dwellings, 50% of which should be affordable housing for Cambridge University and College key workers;

- Approximately 2,000 units of student accommodation;
- 100,000m² employment and academic floorspace:
 - approximately 60,000m² of higher education uses, including academic faculty development and a University Conference Centre within Use Class D1; and
 - up to 40,000m² of University-related sui generis research institutes and commercial research uses within Use Class B1(b).
- A new local centre with high quality services and facilities;
- Public art; and
- Open space and recreation uses.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

6.29 The SPDs that are relevant to this planning application are listed below and referred to within planning application documents where relevant:

- **Biodiversity SPD (2022):** This document provides guidance on how developments should consider biodiversity from the outset of the planning process to ensure that biodiversity is properly integrated into projects and is increased and enhanced as an outcome of development.
- **Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2018):** The SPD gives guidance on how to design new developments to manage and lessen flood risk and include sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). It also sets out guidance on the adoption and maintenance of SuDS.
- **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020):** This document sets out the standards required to meet the visions, objectives and policies of the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans as sustainably as possible. It contains more specific guidance on how the policies should be implemented to ensure that negative environmental and social impacts of development are minimised.

A sustainability checklist is provided for applicants to use to demonstrate that specific design guidance has been considered on issues such as carbon and energy reduction, water conservation and biodiversity
- **Greater Cambridge Health Impact Assessment SPD (April 2025):** This document builds on national guidance and provides advice and guidance on the preparation of Health Impact Assessment (“HIA”), including the steps involved in the process and details of what should be included in the HIA to demonstrate that any health-related impacts have been fully considered.
- **Planning Obligations Strategy SPD (2010, updated 2023):** This SPD provides the framework for the negotiation and use of planning obligation monies across Cambridge. Its main purpose is to provide the mechanisms to secure provision of new infrastructure or improvements to existing infrastructure; measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of development; and measures to address the needs identified to accommodate the projected growth of Cambridge and, where appropriate, the surrounding area.

- **Public Art SPD (2010):** This SPD defines what is meant by the term Public Art, provides an outline of the wider benefits of having Public Art, and gives guidance for developers to encourage them to include Public Art within proposed development schemes.
- **SCDC Open Space in New Developments SPD (2009):** This document gives more information on standards for children's play space, outdoor sport, and informal open space for new developments. It also provides guidance on how to calculate the requirements of individual developments.
- **CCC Open Space and Recreation Strategy SPD (2011):** The strategy sets out the protection of existing open spaces; promotes the improvement of and creation of new facilities on existing open spaces; sets out the standards for open space and sports provision in and through new development; and supports the implementation of Section 106 monies.
- **Landscape in New Development SPD (2010):** This SPD seeks to ensure consideration is given to keeping landscaping features within developments, or incorporating new planting into new designs.
- **Affordable Housing SPD (2010):** This SPD provides further detail of SCDC's approach to securing affordable housing through the planning process.
- **District Design Guide SPD (2010):** This document provides guidance on how developments can be made sustainable and meet high design standards in a way that respects the local area.
- **Trees and Development Sites SPD (2009):** This SPD gives guidance to applicants preparing development proposals that may affect trees, including protected trees (for example, those covered by Tree Preservation Orders or sited within a Conservation Area) and trees that are unprotected but of significance.

6.30 GCSPS sets out how the pre-2018 SPDs were produced to provide guidance to now superseded Development Plan documents. Whilst GCSPS state that these SPDs are still material considerations when making planning decisions, if policies/standards are different to what is contained in current Development Plan documents, the current Development Plan documents will take precedence.

Emerging Policy

[Local Plan for Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. A Regulation 18: 'Preferred Options' \(2021\)](#)

6.31 The GCSPS has begun to prepare a joint Local Plan for Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. A Regulation 18: 'Preferred Options' consultation was undertaken in 2021. However, due to uncertainties around water availability, transport and national planning changes, it was determined in March 2024 that the next formal plan making stages would not begin until autumn/winter 2025. The Greater Cambridge Local Development Scheme (January 2025) identifies that Submission to Secretary of State for independent Examination (Regulation 22) is expected in December 2026.

6.32 Draft policy S/DS: 'Development Strategy' identifies North West Cambridge as a site allocation.

- 6.33 Policy S/NWC provides the detailed policy for the North West Cambridge site which includes additional policy provision to accommodate more homes within the existing site boundary, through changes to the dwelling mix and appropriate intensification of development areas that have yet to be built. This is anticipated to be in the region of 1,000 to 1,500 homes, with the final figure for the Local Plan to be derived from a detailed review of the masterplan.

[Supplementary Planning Documents](#)

- 6.34 GCSPS consulted on a first draft version of the Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD between November 2024 to January 2025. An updated consultation was published in August 2025.

7 Planning Assessment

Introduction

7.1 This Section reviews the Proposed Development against the relevant planning documents, policies and guidance set out in the documents referred to in Section 6 and also considers other material considerations. The following matters are considered in turn:

- Principle of Development;
- Proposed Land Uses
 - Housing and other 'Living' Uses
 - Employment and Academic Floorspace
 - Ancillary Uses
- Design and Density;
- Landscape Visual Impacts;
- Open Space;
- Transport;
- Flood Risk, Drainage and Water;
- Energy and Sustainability; and
- Environmental Effects.

Principle of Development

7.2 The principle of developing the Site for a residential-led mixed use scheme is strongly supported at all levels of planning policy and has been previously established by the 2013 OPP. The principle of densifying the number of homes delivered under the extant consent is also strongly supported by the Government's clear objectives to accelerate the delivery of high quality housing as well as it's aims to realise the full potential of Greater Cambridge.

7.3 As described below and within the other supporting planning application documents, the Site has the capacity to accommodate the additional residential development beyond what has already been consented. Other uses are proposed in a very similar quantum to the 2013 OPP.

National Planning Policy

7.4 The NPPF supports the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out that sustainable development will contribute towards meeting the three overarching objectives: the economic objective; the social objective; and the environmental objective. The Proposed Development contributes to achieving all of these:

- It includes the delivery of a significant quantum of new housing at time of national housing shortage. It does so whilst providing on-site community infrastructure that will foster happy and healthy communities, thus contributing to the NPPF social objective.
- The significant amount of housing proposed will also deliver economic growth as recognised in Angela Rayner’s statement to the House of Commons on the 30th July 2024. Economic growth will also be realised through the delivery of the employment and academic floorspace. Synergies between these land uses will also foster innovation.
- The Proposed Development will contribute to nature recovery delivering a significant provision of habitat creation at Brook Leys whilst also protecting existing habitats with high biodiversity value on site. Whilst the sustainability charter for the scheme will ensure the delivery of a resource efficient and climate resilient development in line with the NPPF environmental objective.

7.5 The Proposed Development will support NPPF paragraph 124 through the promotion of an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses and paragraph 125 through delivering multiple benefits through a mixed-use scheme, achieving net environmental gains and improving public access to the countryside. The Proposed Development also makes an efficient use of land in accordance with paragraph 129 of the NPPF.

Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

7.6 The Site is allocated in the Cambridge Local Plan as a Major Development Site. Paragraph 2.38 describes how the Site was released from the Cambridge Green Belt to support the ongoing development of the UoC. Supporting text to Policy 43 ‘University development’ notes at paragraph 5.26 that UoC’s key growth needs are being met by the developments in West and North West Cambridge and around Addenbrooke’s and that the development of the University of Cambridge’s North West Cambridge site should be assessed in accordance with the NWC AAP.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018)

7.7 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Policies Map identifies the majority of the site as a Major Development Site. The remaining land is identified as Green Belt.

7.8 Policy S/6 ‘The Development Strategy to 2031’ identifies the edge of Cambridge as the main preferred area to meet the needs for jobs and homes (having regard to the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt). The ‘Key Diagram for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire’ identifies the Site as a ‘Major Development Site within South Cambridgeshire’ as set out in **Figure 7-1** below.

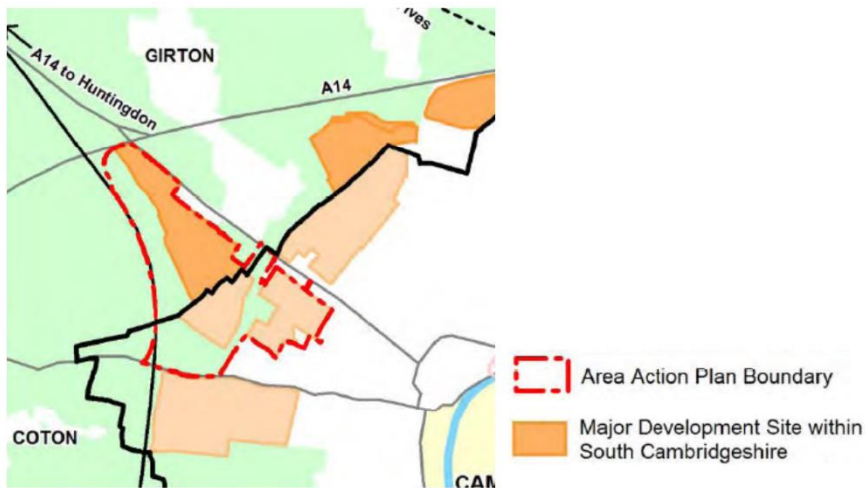


Figure 7-1 – Key Diagram for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

7.9 **Figure 7-2** also identifies the Site and associated designations:

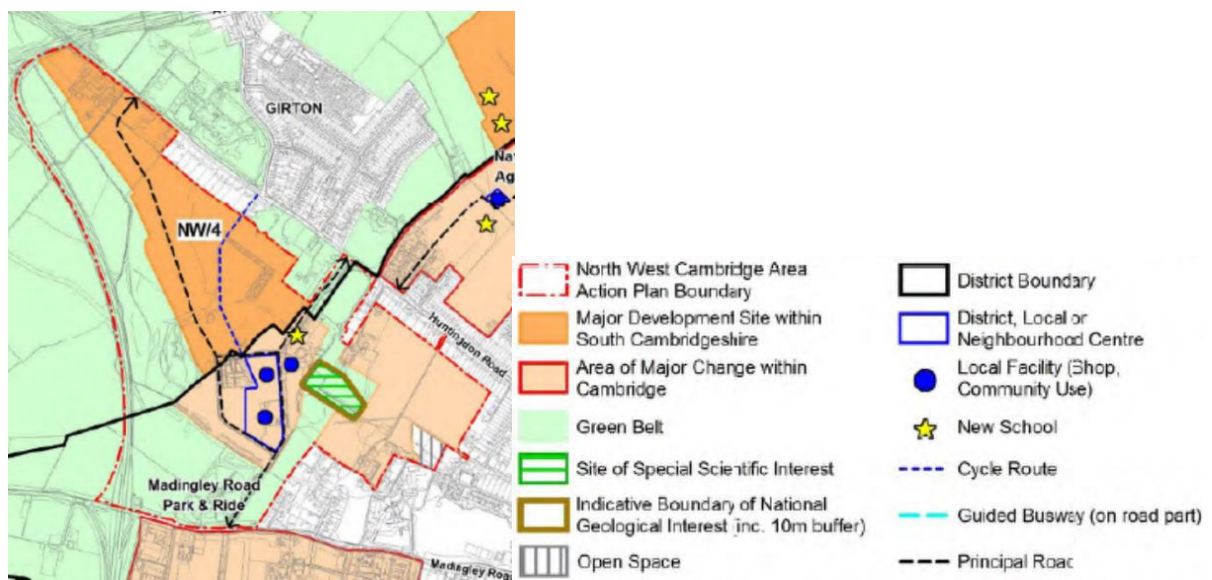


Figure 7-2 –The Site and associated designations

North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009)

7.10 The NWC AAP includes a Concept Diagram which shows in diagrammatic form the structure of the development which is noted to provide the basis for subsequent Masterplans, Design Guides and Design Codes (**Figure 7-3 below**):

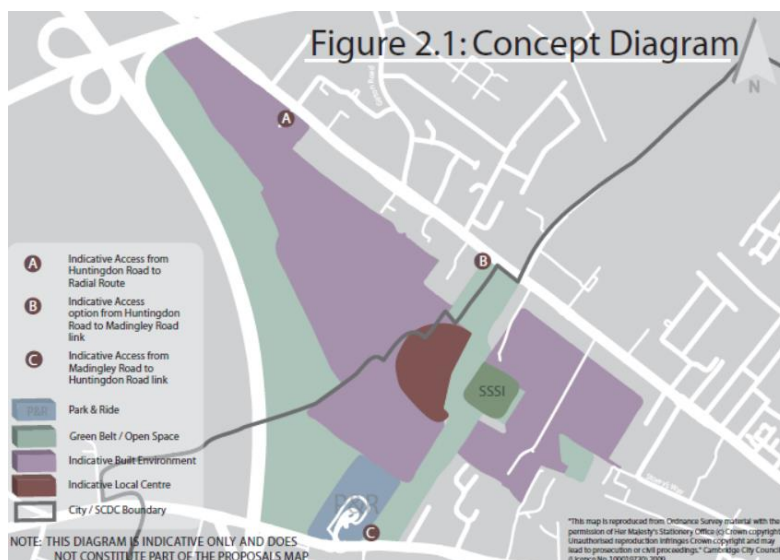


Figure 7-3 – NWC AAP Concept Diagram

7.11 The Proposed Development's spatial layout aligns with the NWC AAP Proposals Map and Figure 2.1 Concept Diagram, proposing built form within the part of the Site allocated for Major Development and informal open space and sports, play, community growing and allotment uses on Green Belt land, adjacent to the existing park and ride and as per the 2013 OPP. Continuing this approach will not harm the openness of the Green Belt in line SCDC policy NH/10: Facilities for Recreation in the Green Belt.

7.12 The Future Phases of the NWCM still aligns with the 'Vision' for the Site set out in NWC AAP Policy NW1 (the local centre having been delivered in Phase 1):

"North West Cambridge will create a new University quarter, which will contribute to meeting the needs of the wider city community, and which will embody best practice in environmental sustainability. Development will be of the highest quality and support the further development of the University, Cambridge and the Sub-Region as a centre of excellence and a world leader within the fields of higher education and research, and will address the University's long-term development needs to 2021 and beyond. There will be a new local centre which will act as a focus for the development and which will also provide facilities and services for nearby communities. A revised Green Belt and a new landscaped urban edge will preserve the unique character of Cambridge, enhance its setting and maintain the separate identity of Girton village."

7.13 Supporting paragraph 2.5 sets out the Objectives of the NWC AAP. **Table 7-1** below describes how the Proposed Development addresses these:

Table 7-1 – Response to NWC AAP Objectives

NWC AAP Objective	Scheme Response
a) To contribute to meeting the long-term development needs of Cambridge University	As evidenced in the Affordable Housing Statement and the Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment (Appendix 2) and later in this Planning Statement the Proposed Development will contribute to meeting the

NWC AAP Objective	Scheme Response
	long-term housing, academic and employment needs of the University.
b) To create a sustainable community	The Future Phases will develop the sustainable community established through Phase 1 of Eddington. The Proposed Development includes a mix of uses, wide range of housing types and tenures and sustainable transport links within and beyond the Site. The Local Centre will remain the heart of the community, however ancillary town centre and recreational uses within the Future Phases scheme will provide further community facilities.
c) To make the best use of energy and other natural resources, to be built as an exemplar of sustainable living with low carbon and greenhouse gas emissions and be able to accommodate the impacts of climate change	The energy strategy for the Proposed Development follows the relevant planning policy and guidance and proposes passive design and efficiency measures to reduce the space heating and domestic hot water demands, before meeting the designs with low/zero carbon heating systems and also generating renewable electricity on site. The development is predicted to achieve an 80% carbon reduction over Part L 2021 for the domestic element. The non-domestic element is predicted to deliver a 9% carbon emissions saving over Part L 2021. Three Place Principles – Designed for Today & the Future; Fostering Healthy Living; and Reducing Whole Place Carbon underpin the masterplan and these are defined by 10 key sustainability criteria. Examples of sustainability targets include 100% of clay to be reused on site and 80 litres per person per day potable water consumption.
d) To create a satisfactory mix of uses, taking into account: i. Identified University development needs ii. The need for affordable housing for University and College staff	Please see response to part a) above.
e) To secure a wide range of housing types and tenures	A wide range of housing types and tenures are provided in the Future Phases, including market flats and houses, key worker flats, student accommodation, co-living accommodation and senior living accommodation.
f) To secure high quality development of both built form and open spaces	The Applicant continues to be committed to delivering the highest quality sustainable development, building on the success of what has been brought forward under Phase 1 so far. The Future Phases Masterplan has undergone a

NWC AAP Objective	Scheme Response
	design-led approach, informed by the technical consultant team, public consultation and an extensive pre-application process with GCSPS and the Quality Panel. This has resulted in a well considered, high quality masterplan that carefully considers the relationship between built form and open spaces and provides an excellent framework for future RMAs where the detailed design of buildings and open spaces will be assessed.
g) To create a community which respects and links with adjoining communities	As explained in the SCI, the community consultation exercise has specifically engaged adjoining communities, such as Girton Parish Council. As shown on the Access and Movement Parameter Plan, access points to the Site and the routes that extend from them have been positioned to ensure good connections to other parts of Cambridge.
h) To achieve a modal split of no more than 40% of trips to work by car (excluding car passengers) and to maximise walking, cycling and public transport use	As set out in Section 13 of the Transport Assessment, the site wide external mode share shows car trips as significantly below 40%, with walking, cycling and public transport trips comprising the majority of travel modes.
i) To maintain the purposes of the Green Belt	The building components of the Proposed Development are located on the areas identified for built form in the NWC AAP. Informal open space and sports, play, community growing and allotment uses is positioned on Green Belt land, adjacent to the existing park and ride and as per the extant planning permission. The purposes of the Green Belt will therefore be maintained.
j) To provide an appropriate landscape setting and high quality edge treatment for Cambridge	With respect to landscape impact, the LVIA concludes that an assessment of landscape impact identifies a range of effects across different receptors during construction, at Year 1, and at Year 15 post-completion of the Proposed Development. However, there would be no residual significant adverse impact on the landscape receptors, once the Proposed Development is operational (Year 15). Indeed, the Proposed Development will result in some long term beneficial effects, namely on the local townscape character, the landscape character of the site and the Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands.
k) To provide appropriate separation between Cambridge and the village of Girton to maintain village character and identity	The Future Phases masterplan maintains the same extents of built development as the extant scheme. As such appropriate separation distances have been maintained.

NWC AAP Objective	Scheme Response
l) To provide standards for infrastructure provision including renewable energy, open space, car and cycle parking, sewerage and surface water drainage	The preferred energy strategy utilises individual air source heat pumps (“ASHPs”) for dwellings and a local heating network supplied by building-mounted ASHPs for apartments. On-site renewable energy generation will be maximised by utilising the available flat roof space for apartments and non-domestic buildings and suitably oriented pitched roofs on houses for solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. Open space in the Illustrative Scheme has been provided in line with the standards set out in Appendix 3 of the NWC AAP. The proposed level of car parking provision is substantially lower than the NWC AAP and the previous 2013 OPP. The minimum cycle standards as set out in the NWC AAP have also been applied to the Illustrative Scheme in order to help plan for the space requirements for the Proposed Development. An additional 10% provision for visitor cycle parking has also been applied. It is proposed that 5% of the total capacity of the residential cycle parking will be designed to accommodate oversized bikes such as tandems or cargo bikes. Surface water runoff from individual plots will be attenuated and restricted to greenfield runoff rates before discharging into the sitewide drainage network. Surface water attenuation will be provided on-plot and across the sitewide drainage network to limit the surface water runoff up to 1 in 100-year storm event plus 40% climate change allowance. The SuDs approach aligns with NWC AAP policy NW25: ‘Surface Water Drainage’.
m) To provide an appropriate level of community services and facilities to serve the development satisfactorily	A Local Centre has already been delivered in Phase 1 which has provided a supermarket, retail units and market square. Phase 1 has also delivered a primary school and community centre. A health centre will also come forward. Areas have been identified in the Future Phases masterplan to accommodate further community services – retail, nursery, recreation and health uses – to come forward as demand requires.
n) To determine appropriate phasing of development taking into account that development should only proceed when the University can prove the need for it	The Proposed Development will be phased, however the final phasing will be determined at RMA stage. A set in the sections below, it is no longer proposed that the University have to prove a need to bring forward development on the Site.

NWC AAP Objective	Scheme Response
o) To secure the infrastructure needs of the development, including green infrastructure	Please see response to Item l) above.
p) To protect special geological interest, existing wildlife and wildlife corridors and secure a net increase in biodiversity	A BNG of more than 10% is achievable for habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units.

Proposed Land Uses

Housing and other 'Living' Uses

Introduction

- 7.14 The housing and other 'living' uses proposed will strongly support the Government's objective of significantly boosting housing as set out in paragraph 61 of the NPPF and provide a good mix of housing types. The Proposed Development will also align with paragraph 77 of the NPPF by supplying a large number of new homes through planning for larger scale development as an extension to an existing settlement.
- 7.15 Paragraph 2.2 of the NWC AAP recognises that given the longstanding difficulties in the local housing market the University needs to achieve a fourfold increase in its provision of housing available to staff. This need is to deal with recruitment and retention problems arising from local house prices and rental level. The objectives of the NWC AAP set out in paragraph 2.5 include creating a satisfactory mix of uses, taking into account identified University development needs and the need for affordable housing for University and College staff, as well as securing a wide range of housing types and tenures.
- 7.16 NWC AAP Policy NW7: 'Balanced and Sustainable Communities' states that a suitable mix of house types, sizes and tenure (including affordable housing) will be provided, attractive to and meeting the needs of, all ages and sectors of society including those with disabilities. The mix in each particular development will be determined by evidence at the time of planning permission, including housing need, development costs and viability, and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities.
- 7.17 The Proposed Development will provide a wide range of housing types, sizes and tenures, including houses and flats ranging from single person to 5 bed units. Alongside the proposed student, co-living and senior living accommodation, the Proposed Development will meet the needs of a wide range of ages and sectors of society.
- 7.18 NWC AAP Policy NW7 also refers to the affordable housing being intermingled with the market housing in small groups or clusters. Whilst Key Worker Housing and market housing will come forward in the same Building Development Zones; as recognised in the Committee Report for the 2013 OPP, due to the size of some of the apartment blocks, clustering to the extent that the policy envisages would not be possible. Like Phase 1, the Future Phases Masterplan will however still enable Key Worker Housing and market housing to come forward in close proximity to help with creating a mixed and balanced community. All of the development will be designed 'tenure blind' making sure that key worker housing and the market housing is indistinguishable architecturally.

- 7.19 Policy NW6: 'Affordable Housing' states that housing developments will only be permitted if they provide 50% affordable housing to meet the needs of Cambridge University and College key workers (as distinct from units of student accommodation), but account will be taken of any particular costs associated with the development (e.g. infrastructure provision) and other viability considerations, whether there are other planning objectives that need to be given priority, and the need to ensure balanced and sustainable communities. It goes on to state that the occupation of such housing will be limited to Cambridge University and College key workers in housing need. It must be available over the long-term. Supporting paragraph 4.7 states in determining planning applications for residential development, the authorities will have regard to any evidence of housing need, housing costs, household incomes and development viability which is available at that time.
- 7.20 In the Proposed Development, 50% of the housing is proposed to meet the needs of Cambridge University and College key workers. The OPA is accompanied by an Affordable Housing Statement which sets out the Key Worker Housing proposals in more detail and key findings are summarised below.

Key Worker Housing

- 7.21 Key Workers are defined as *“staff employed by the University and/or its colleges, which the University accept as a priority for housing having regard to their level of housing need and their contribution to the functioning and success of the University and its colleges, and affiliated organisations”*
- 7.22 The Affordable Housing Statement describes how the University's 2024 Key Worker Housing Survey not only reaffirmed the scale of need for Key Workers but has also helped to shape the type of housing that best meets their needs – which is distinct. Availability and affordability of housing is a pressing concern for many, and as a result this poses a serious risk to recruitment and retention of specialist staff, as the extent and range of their needs are not met by the market.
- 7.23 The focus of requirements from the Key Workers is from the younger, single income professionals who relocate to Cambridge on fixed term contracts, the majority of whom are in research roles. The need is for affordable and flexible accommodation close to the University that is good quality, with good tenancy terms and within a wider community that is inclusive and welcoming. Cambridge has a shortage of such homes, and key workers struggle disproportionately to find a suitable place to live, experience greater dissatisfaction and in turn present a significant risk to the University being able to have confidence in its ability to attract staff to these vital and very specific roles.
- 7.24 The Affordable Housing Statement describes how the Key Worker Housing Survey presents a clear need for a mix of housing weighted towards smaller homes. Two thirds of respondents (comprising singles, couples, and people sharing their home with others / family) need a one-bed home. Having regard to the fact that single income households are more likely to require affordable housing, then the KWH need is even more concentrated towards the provision of smaller homes. This is reflected in the proposed Key Worker Housing unit mix ranges set out in **Table 5-3** above.
- 7.25 The proposed housing within the OPA addresses a well-evidenced institutional need, and supports the sustainable growth of both the University and the city. It also relieves pressure on

the private rental market, particularly within shared housing (“HMOs”) in central Cambridge, supporting broader city-wide housing objectives.

Market Housing

- 7.26 Following on from the above and in relation to the market housing unit mix set out in **Table 5-3**, the proposed mix of single person and 1-bed units in particular is important in meeting needs that are specific to the University of Cambridge and its workforce. The 2024 Key Worker Housing Survey evidence highlights that a significant proportion of university staff comprises highly mobile, in-demand researchers and academics who relocate to Cambridge on fixed-term contracts. Furthermore, the recruitment and retention of these employees is vital to the enable the University to continue to grow and maintain its success. This creates a distinct and recurring demand for smaller, flexible housing options suited to individuals who are typically younger, more likely to live alone, and not necessarily seeking permanent housing solutions.
- 7.27 Additionally, given the temporary nature of these roles and the potential for social isolation among new arrivals, there is interest from employees in more sociable and community-oriented housing models. These forms of housing are often better aligned with the preferences and lifestyles of this demographic, offering both convenience and built-in social networks that can ease the transition into a new city.
- 7.28 Analysis of the survey results confirms that a significant proportion of this specific housing need is concentrated in need for affordable University Key Worker Housing. However, this need also extends into the market housing sector; as the University’s impact on the wider Cambridge housing market is so significant, the housing needs of its workforce should be a key consideration in determining the overall market housing mix.
- 7.29 This is further supported by responses to a survey question that asked participants to indicate their preferred size of home when considering a future move. The results are as follows:
- Studio: 6%
 - 1-bed: 18%
 - 2-bed: 35%
 - 3+ bed: 41%
- 7.30 These findings clearly demonstrate that demand is spread across a range of dwelling sizes, with a substantial proportion of respondents seeking smaller home - studio, one- and two-bedroom units - particularly relevant for early-career academics, researchers, and other University staff on fixed-term contracts. The proposed market housing mix has been shaped in direct response to this evidence and aims to ensure a balanced supply that reflects both affordable and market-sector needs.
- 7.31 The proposed housing mix ranges set out in **Table 5-3** has therefore been determined in line with evidence, including housing need and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities, in line with NWC AAP policy NW7.

Student Accommodation

- 7.32 Part 2 of NWC AAP policy NW5: 'Housing Supply' states that approximately 2,000 units of student accommodation will be provided. 2,000 units of student accommodation were approved under the 2013 OPP and 325 units have come forward as part of Phase 1, leaving 1,675 consented units unbuilt. These could still come forward under the 2013 OPP as they are not subject to the 10 year RMA time limit that applies to residential use.
- 7.33 Within the Illustrative Scheme, 51,513sqm of student housing floorspace is accommodated within the masterplan, which equates to c. 1,800 student units, slightly above the residual figure of 1,675 from Phase 1. The Illustrative Scheme demonstrates how this number of student units can be accommodated within the Future Phases Masterplan. It should also be noted that the 2,000 figure in NWC AAP policy NW5 is an "approximate" figure and not an upper limit.
- 7.34 Student accommodation is therefore clearly a use that is acceptable in principle on the Site and the slightly increased quantum of proposed student accommodation has been tested and justified.
- 7.35 The Land Use Parameter Plan shows how the location of the student accommodation has been included in those Building Development Zones which are closest to the existing Local Centre or the academic focused Building Development Zones on the eastern part of the Site.

Co-Living Accommodation

- 7.36 The UK housing market is challenged with a lack of homes for the growing population, with the public and private sector looking for ways to ease the supply versus demand pressure. These pressures are particularly prevalent in Cambridge. There is recognition that there is benefit in providing diversity in the types of homes that are provided and that this offers the potential to speed up delivery of much needed homes.
- 7.37 Co-Living is higher quality rented accommodation, providing flexible living space at a more affordable price point than is typically available elsewhere in the market. It represents an expanding trend in modern managed rental housing, particularly for single renters focusing on young workers. This segment, historically poorly served by traditional rental markets, is now finding a viable and attractive option through Co-Living. The principal appeal of Co-Living for residents lies in its all-inclusive price, professional management and greater flexibility in tenancy durations. The most common minimum lease terms are 3 months although some operators require 6 month or 12 month contracts. It is emerging as a solution for those who don't want to live alone but require greater privacy and an upgrade from house shares / Houses in Multiple Occupation ("HMOs").
- 7.38 Co-Living buildings are thoughtfully designed to balance private and communal spaces. Residents have access to their own private studios, which are then complemented by a variety of shared amenities. These often encompass co-working spaces, fitness centres, screening rooms, expansive cooking and dining facilities, along with lounge areas for relaxation and social interaction. Many Co-Living operators curate events and activities fostering a sense of community within the building. The format of accommodation is particularly appealing to university graduates, researchers and those newly arriving into a city or town centre and looking to build a social or work-related network. It appeals to a broader range of young workers (typically aged 18-39 years) who have become accustomed to living in higher quality

purpose built accommodation and therefore view living in a shared flat with a private landlord and individual bills as a step backwards.

- 7.39 The shared access to significant internal and external amenity means that Co-Living is a completely different model for residential living (i.e. the entire building is designed to be the living environment of the residents). Co-Living schemes are typically professionally managed to ensure that resident experience is high as possible and the all inclusive rent has the potential to be cheaper than the comparative all in housing costs (rent plus all bills etc).
- 7.40 Co-Living is targeted at single person households. This is a significant and growing proportion of the population with c.55% of the UK population being single (ONS) and 35% of households in the UK Private Rented Sector (PRS) comprising one-person households, the most significant proportion of households (English Housing Survey 2021-22). Within Cambridge, 29% of households within the Private Rented Sectors, constitute as one-person households (this excludes sharers and students which will be a higher proportion than many other cities). Looking forwards, ONS projections are forecasting continuing increases in single person households (up by c. 8% between 2024 and 2041). The majority of single person households are young, these are households who have even more limited housing choices given they will be on lower incomes, without savings and trying to find a pathway to their own home.
- 7.41 Single person households are particularly affected by the very limited choice of housing affordable to them. For most, buying their own home will not be a realistic option until they are older and with the benefit of a dual household income. Barriers to entry to buying include the significant deposits required along with ratios of house prices to salaries that are out of the reach of many single people and which would not meet lender's criteria. The average age of a first-time buyer is now 34 in the UK with 60% of renters not expecting to be able to buy their own home within five years (English Housing Survey 2021-22). The cost of housing in Cambridge is high, driven by the level of demand.
- 7.42 For many single person households the choice of rental options available is very limited, often poor quality, insecure in terms of the tenancies offered and often require to be in shared / HMO homes.
- 7.43 Due to recent house price growth, these single person households are typically unable to individually afford to buy an apartment locally (prices in the area are now c.8x median incomes) and typically remain ineligible for social rented housing. As a result, these households typically require private rented sector housing. The private rented sector has grown by c.35% in the area since 2011 (Census 2021). Almost half (41%) in the private rented sector constitute as 16–34-year-olds, many of whom are typically single person households.
- 7.44 Cambridge has a low proportion of one-bedroom units (18%) compared to three and four-bedroom units (54%). For many single person households their choices are to: i) informally live with parents or friends; ii) leave the local area; or iii) live in unsuitable low quality/overcrowded house shares.
- 7.45 It is therefore considered that Co-Living can form part of the wider housing offer at Eddington to add diversity and choice in meeting housing needs whilst also helping to achieve mixed and balanced communities.

- 7.46 Co-Living buildings occupy a similar footprint and population number to student accommodation therefore the design testing around the student accommodation undertaken in the Illustrative Masterplan equally applies to any Co-Living accommodation that would come forward under the RMAs.

Senior Living

- 7.47 Similar to the student accommodation, there is 6,500sqm of unbuilt senior living floorspace from the extant planning permission. It is proposed to carry this floorspace across to the Future Phases scheme as it can contribute to mixed and balanced communities. Following discussions with officers at GCSPS, the Building Development Zones where senior living uses can come forward are those in close proximity to the existing Local Centre or the secondary hubs of activity on the northern and southern parts of the Site.

Custom Build / Self Build

- 7.48 As part of a wide choice, type and mix of housing, SCDC policy H/9: 'Housing mix' refers to people wishing to build their own homes. The Proposed Development has the ability to accommodate Custom Build / Self Build housing and the Applicant is happy to have further discussions in relation to the S106 Agreement where this could come forward on the Site, the quantum proposed and the mechanisms around the disposal of self-build plots.

Employment and Academic Floorspace

- 7.49 NWC AAP Policy NW8: 'Employment Uses' sets out how NWC will provide employment land for:

"a) Predominantly D1 educational uses, associated sui generis research establishments and academic research institutes where it is in the national interest or where they can show a special need to be located close to the University in order to share staff, equipment or data, and to undertake joint collaborative working;

b) A mix of commercial research uses within Use Class B1(b) that can demonstrate a special need to be located close to the University."

- 7.50 Supporting paragraph 5.2 states that the Councils will therefore be looking at employment land at North West Cambridge not to provide land for general research and development, but to provide a development cluster focussing on occupiers with strong University links and academic association with cognate University activities that would benefit from proximity. This will encourage the development of the higher education cluster benefiting from close proximity to the University and thus benefit the economy of Cambridge and the UK. It will be appropriate for occupiers to demonstrate a need to be close to other research facilities associated with the University.

- 7.51 Policy NW10: 'Mix of Uses' then goes onto identify:

"Employment and academic development at North West Cambridge will constitute 100,000m₂ of floorspace as follows:

a Approximately 60,000m² of higher education uses, including academic faculty development and a University Conference Centre within Use Class D1; and

b. Up to 40,000m² of University-related sui generis research institutes and commercial research uses within Use Class B1(b)."

7.52 In line with the above, the 2013 OPP consents 100,000sqm of employment floorspace of which up to 40,000sqm is commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses) and at least 60,000sqm academic floorspace. It is proposed to carry this unbuilt floorspace across to the Future Phases OPA.

7.53 However, condition 18 of the 2013 OPP requires a needs assessment to be provided with any RMAs for academic/research floorspace to demonstrate that the University has a need for the land to be released for development. Having regard to more recent Local Plan policies, it is proposed that such a restriction is no longer applied to the Future Phases OPA.

7.54 CCC Local Plan Policy 2: 'Spatial strategy for the location of employment development' refers to a particular emphasis on growth of the Cambridge Cluster of knowledge-based industries and institutions and other existing clusters in the city, building on existing strengths in 'knowledge-based' activities. Proposals that help reinforce the existing high technology and research cluster of Cambridge will be supported. Supporting paragraph 2.41 describes how the Plan seeks to deliver new employment land at six key locations in Cambridge, one of these locations is North West Cambridge.

7.55 CCC Local Plan Policy 40: 'Development and expansion of business space' refers to proposals for new offices, research and development and research facilities being considered on their merits. Supporting Table 5.2 of the Plan identifies North West Cambridge as one of the key employment sites in Cambridge with planning permission, with a net floorspace of 31,200sqm of research and development use. Paragraph 5.9 also describes North West Cambridge as one of the six key employment sites in Cambridge that will deliver new jobs and prosperity to the Cambridge area and that development on these sites will help grow the Cambridge Cluster. Paragraph 5.14 sets out that employment proposals in B use class that are situated in sustainable locations will be supported.

7.56 Importantly, supporting paragraph 5.15 states:

"In the past, employment policies sought to support the high technology economy through selective management of the economy, reserving employment land in Cambridge for high technology uses. There is now a significant supply of land for high technology uses, enough to last beyond the lifetime of the plan, and hence this policy emphasis has changed. Changes in national policy, combined with new local evidence, indicated that this approach was no longer the best for Cambridge. Consequently, the previous policy no longer applies and the new approach supports all types of employment development, subject to a number of criteria."

7.57 Similarly, supporting paragraph 8.10 of SCDC Local Plan policy S/5 'Provision of New Jobs and Homes' states how the Council will consider the case for removing restrictive planning conditions and planning obligations imposed under previous development plans which have served their purpose of supporting the embryonic high tech R&D sector and are not consistent with our current approach to local economic development. Paragraph 8.11 identifies

opportunities for significant further employment provision at Cambridge University's North West Cambridge development (for 100,000m² of research facilities, including up to 40,000m² for research institutes and private research facilities linked to the University).

7.58 Policy S/6: 'The Development Strategy to 2031' identifies the edge of Cambridge as the main preferred area to meet the needs for jobs and homes (having regard to the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt). Paragraph 8.4 states recent evidence suggests that the local high-tech cluster is 'maturing' and that growth in the research and development sector will be slower than in the past, and other sectors will account for a higher proportion of growth. New sectors are likely to include renewable technologies, the creative ICT sectors, digital, health/bioscience, high-technology manufacturing, professional business services, tourism and leisure. Paragraph 8.5 goes on to state how the Local Plan provides more flexibility than recent past policies as part of delivering the objective to support economic growth by maintaining South Cambridgeshire's position as a world leader in research and technology based industries, research, and education by continuing to support proposals that build on the successful employment clusters; whilst alongside this providing opportunities for a wider range of other employment that supports sustainable economic growth through a suite of policies and the development of existing and new employment sites.

7.59 Policy E/9: 'Promotion of Clusters' states that development proposals in suitable locations will be permitted which support the development of employment clusters, drawing on the specialisms of the Cambridge area in the following sectors:

- Biotechnology and biomedical;
- Computer services;
- Electronic engineering;
- High-technology manufacturing;
- Information technology / telecommunications;
- Healthcare, teaching and research;
- Research and development;
- Clean Technology;
- Other locally driven clusters as they emerge

7.60 The policy goes on to state that employment locations especially suited for cluster development include North-west Cambridge. These areas will be expected to include provision of a range of suitable units, including for start-ups, SMEs, and incubator units.

7.61 In March 2025, GCSPS published the Greater Cambridge Warehouse and Industrial Space Needs Report as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. It contains a number of references to mid-tech uses:

- **Mid-tech** requirements typically arise from the demand for R&D testing and production space associated with some tech / physical science businesses spinning out of university and science parks
- **Mid-Tech and Advanced Manufacturing:** Cambridge Cluster Insights reports that there are 358 mid-tech / advanced manufacturing companies in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, employing 11,789 people. There has been a steady increase in mid-tech employment since 2010, at an average rate of 2.4% per annum. More recently, between 2021 and 2022 there was a growth of 5.1% in one year
- **Edge of urban locations** provide an optimal location for mid-tech start-up and scale up space.
- All stakeholders were in agreement that amenity space was crucial for mid-tech occupiers. Aspects such as landscaping, cycle pathways and amenities were no longer regarded as nice-to-have features for companies wishing to attract/retain a Cambridge graduate workforce
- **Emerging plans for mid-tech at Eddington** meet this sub sector broad locational requirements as far as identified in this study.

7.62 With regard to the employment floorspace, the Illustrative Scheme includes a mix of office and Mid-Tech floorspace (39,940sqm in total) within a range of unit sizes. Although, the exact mix of Class E(g) / Sui Generis Research Uses will be determined through RMAs in response to market demand as each Building Development Zone comes forward. This flexibility is critical to the success of place in the medium to long term, so the University can be agile enough to respond to the changing needs of their researchers, partners and tenants.

7.63 Included at **Appendix 2** to this Planning Statement is an Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment. This explains how Cambridge is a global hub for innovation, world-class research and development and plays a vital role in the UK economy supporting economic growth. The UoC is a major employer but also a catalyst for business growth through partnerships, spin-outs, and its influence on the wider innovation ecosystem. Cambridge functions as a collaborative ecosystem, where institutions and firms (whether directly related to the University or not) benefit from shared resources, talent, and proximity to the University. To sustain this ecosystem, there is a need for flexible business space, some of which will be University-managed, but also open to other public, private, and research entities.

7.64 The Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment goes onto report the findings of the 2024 Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: 'Life Science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs' report, which considers the Greater Cambridge floorspace needs. This notes that by 2041 projected needs will include: 289,700 sqm of office space and 600,000 sqm of R&D space. Despite good lab space supply, there will be a shortfall of 73,000 sqm office space and 150,000 sqm R&D "stretch" space. The 40,000 sqm of employment space included within the Proposed Development will help address these needs. Also relevant is that this Study already includes 40,000 sqm of Dry lab ICT/Tech/Engineering floorspace from the 2013 OPP as part of the committed supply – so it is clear that all of the proposed commercial space has already been identified as short term pipeline for Greater Cambridge needs. The proposed employment floorspace should not therefore be subject to further needs assessments before it can come forward.

7.65 In relation to academic needs, the Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment explains how the University's operations will need to grow and change, responding to student, economic and academic needs. The University has world leading growth plans across sectors including AI, life-sciences, engineering and business as well as an ever expanding programme of outreach, enterprise and partnership. The needs of their faculties and students will evolve and, in order to retain their global position, they will need to invest and respond. The University proposes to create, as much as possible, a series of shared facility hubs for students and researchers (e.g. lecture theatres, catering, shared offices, library) around which will be their places of study and work. Within the city centre this will involve making better use of the University's built heritage to provide this mix around a hub. Outside the city centre the University will aim to provide shared facility hubs next to major research facilities. At the heart of the University Estates Strategy is the principle of creating environments that maintain and enhance this successful model of collegiate study and space for researchers, students and staff to mix both at work and socially. The Proposed Development will provide space for this.

Ancillary Uses

7.66 NWC AAP policy NW20: 'Provision of Community Services and Facilities, Arts and Culture' describes how the development will provide an appropriate level and type of high quality services and facilities in suitable locations to serve all phases of development. The main focus of Eddington will remain the Local Centre, however as developed through pre-application discussions, a number of hubs are proposed within the Future Phases masterplan to provide ancillary retail, leisure and recreation facilities to serve those residents and employees in close proximity to them.

Design and Density

7.67 In line with policy NW3: 'Implementing the AAP' of the NWC AAP, a Masterplan has been produced to accompany the OPA and the Parameter Plans show the general disposition of development, roads, services, open spaces and landscaping. A DAS and Design Code have also been submitted with the OPA which set more detailed design criteria, both Site Wide as well as across different areas of the masterplan. This also aligns with SCDC Local Plan policy HQ/1: 'Design Principles' which explains that larger and more complex developments will be required to submit Masterplans and Design Codes and CCC Local Plan policy 56: 'Creating successful places' which seeks a comprehensive design approach.

7.68 In accordance with policy NW4: 'Site and Setting' of the NWC AAP, the Future Phases Masterplan retains the strategic gap between the two parts of the Site to ensure separation is maintained between Cambridge and Girton village. The lower heights proposed, the provision of Shared Gardens and an articulated skyline form part of a series of design measures to enable the Building Development Zones along the western edge of the Proposed Development to create a high quality built edge to the urban area and provide an appropriate setting to Cambridge that maintains the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. This also follows SCDC Local Plan policy NH/8: 'Mitigating the Impact of Development In and Adjoining the Green Belt' which requires that development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt to include careful landscaping and design measures of a high quality.

7.69 Built development is only proposed those areas of the Site where it was approved for the 2013 OPP and in line with those areas identified for built development on the AAP Proposals Map.

The Proposed Development will therefore maintain the substantial area of open land between the M11 and the western limit of the built-up area. As noted in paragraph 3.4 of the NWC AAP, the open area would be of sufficient scale to retain its Green Belt functions of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and checking the unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of Cambridge.

- 7.70 The Future Phases Masterplan follows the Development Principles set out in policy NW2: 'Development Principles' of the NWC AAP. The Masterplan has been informed by an extensive pre-application process which has included design review through the Quality Panel. Section 4 above describes how the scheme has responded to comments received at pre-application stage. Pre-application discussions focussed on the layout and design of north-west employment area; building heights across the Masterplan; the interface of the built development and the western edge; and the open spaces provided across the Site. Along with what has already been delivered under Phase 1, the Future Phases will provide an attractive and distinctive mixed-use development well integrated with the City and connected to surrounding communities and the countryside, aligned with paragraph 96a of the NPPF. Also in line with policy NW2, the Design Code is structured so that the different areas of the Site will have their own character and legibility and the formal and informal open space provision will continue from Phase 1 to create a balanced, viable and socially inclusive community where people can live in a healthy and safe environment.
- 7.71 The tallest building heights (7 – 8 storeys) have been focussed around the Common at the centre of the Site. Heights across the rest of the Masterplan range between 3 – 6 storeys with 3 storey heights and areas for no built development to come forward at the interfaces of the Site and the existing properties on Huntingdon Road and Storey's Way/All Souls Lane. A residential density comparison exercise between Phase 1 and the Illustrative Scheme has been undertaken and whilst there has been an increase in density (Phase 1 had a net dwelling per hectare ("DPH") figure of 90, the Illustrative Scheme's net DPH only increases to 109 DPH), this is not a significant increase. Following the approach described in NWC AAP policy NW5, a range of densities will be provided following a design-led approach, including higher densities in and around the local centre and close to public transport stops, and with development of an appropriate scale and form where it adjoins existing housing.
- 7.72 As set out below, the ability of the Illustrative Scheme to provide for its open space requirements and the acceptable transport impacts are further evidence that the proposed scheme densities are appropriate.
- 7.73 The Illustrative Scheme has also been designed so that all proposed C3 dwellings would comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards ("NDSS"), in line with CCC Local Plan policy 50 (Residential space standards Internal residential space standards). For Key Worker Housing 'Studio Community Units', a combination of self contained private and shared amenity spaces will be provided to respond to the specific requirements of University Staff. Communal facilities will be provided for co-living accommodation. For the C3 dwellings, storage will be provided in line with the NDSS.
- 7.74 All dwellings will have access to external amenity space. Whether this comprises private amenity space, public open space or a combination of both will be determined at RMA stage. In accordance with CCC Local Plan (2018) policy 51 (Accessible Homes), all dwellings will

meet Building Regulations requirement M4 (2). M4 (3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' will also be provided at RMA stage having regard to policy requirements.

- 7.75 A Public Art and Culture Strategy has been produced to accompany the OPA, following the requirements of NWC AAP policy NW22: 'Public Art'. The strategy sets out a framework for commissioning accessible to all site-specific artworks and artist-led programmes that respond to the immediate landscape, architecture, and communities. The intention is that the resulting artworks exist harmoniously with those commissioned following the inaugural Art Strategy 2013 OPP.

Landscape Visual Impacts

- 7.76 The OPA is accompanied by a LVIA which evaluates the effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape character and visual amenity of the surrounding area. The LVIA considers baseline conditions, assesses effects during construction, at Year 1 post-completion, and at Year 15 once mitigation measures have matured.
- 7.77 The LVIA explains that at Year 15, no significant adverse residual landscape effects are anticipated. The landscape receptors, including Landscape Character Area 2B and the Early 21st Century Mixed-Use Townscape Character Area, are considered capable of accommodating the Proposed Development in line with planning policy and existing development patterns. While there is some transformation of the landscape within the Site itself, these changes are consistent with the Site's allocation for development and represent an enhancement over its current, degraded condition. Long-term effects on landscape elements such as tranquillity, vegetation cover, and the Cambridge skyline are either negligible, neutral, or beneficial following full implementation of the landscape strategy.
- 7.78 The LVIA goes on to explain that the Proposed Development will result in some long term beneficial effects, namely on the visual amenity of users of the Brook Leys park, the local townscape character, the landscape character of the Site and the Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands. The Proposed Development will deliver an extensive and interconnected green infrastructure network, improved vegetation cover, and reinforced planting belts that will enhance local biodiversity, visual quality, and integration with the surrounding context. These features, alongside high-quality architectural principles and careful skyline articulation, will contribute positively to the character of this key gateway into Cambridge, aligning with both local policy objectives and the aspiration for a sustainable urban edge.
- 7.79 The visual impact assessment covers 21 viewpoints. Residual adverse significant visual effects are identified at six viewpoints at Year 15. These effects are classified as moderate adverse and are concentrated at locations where receptors experience a change from open or wooded skylines to built form. Receptors include users of public rights of way, key recreational routes and residents in proximity to the Site. The LVIA describes that while the Proposed Development is generally well integrated, the scale and enclosure introduced by built form in some locations give rise to locally significant impacts, which are compatible with the scale of development expected for the Site's allocation.
- 7.80 To address the residual effects, secondary mitigation measures are set out in the LVIA, including:

- Ensuring that the final layout and design does not cause any visual impact materially greater than the one identified at Year 15, which demonstrates a low level of residual adverse effects.
- Ensuring that key elements of the Design Code (e.g., roofline articulation, permeability, building breaks) are robustly implemented through the reserved matters process.

7.81 The LVIA concludes that the Proposed Development results in a series of managed and expected landscape changes. While visual impacts from some key viewpoints remain significant in the long term, they are localised and considered acceptable within the context of the Site's allocation and overall landscape strategy. With the implementation of secondary mitigation and monitoring guidelines, the landscape and visual effects of the scheme can be appropriately managed and integrated over time.

7.82 The LVIA also considers the 2013 OPP. The Environmental Statement ("2012 ES") prepared for that application considered a slightly different developable area, and the parameter plans and visualisations did not take account of roof plant. Nonetheless, the 2012 ES concluded that, at completion, the Proposed Development would not give rise to significant adverse effects on the regional landscape character or the local townscape character. However, some residual significant adverse effects were anticipated for visual receptors in proximity to the Site (namely the 2012 ES viewpoint equivalents of viewpoints 3, 8, 9 and 10), including views from the M11 and from public footpaths. These were considered to be limited by the fact that such receptors are *'temporary and transitory in their use, thereby limiting the duration of the adverse visual effects experienced'* (paragraph 6.12.11 of the 2012 ES). The LVIA there acknowledged that a degree of significant adverse impact is inevitable with developments of the scale proposed. However, this is not necessarily unacceptable, as both the 2012 ES and this LVIA demonstrate that, with appropriate design, the development can be successfully integrated into the surrounding landscape and townscape, with visual amenity largely preserved.

7.83 Having regard to the findings of the LVIA, the Proposed Development complies with SCDC Local Plan policy NH/2: 'Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character', which requires development to respect and retain, or enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the individual National Character Area in which it is located. The Proposed Development also addresses part 3 policy NH/8: 'Mitigating the Impact of Development In and Adjoining the Green Belt' which requires development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt to include careful landscaping and design measures of a high quality. Similarly, CCC policy 8: 'Setting of the city' requires development on the urban edge to respond to, conserve and enhance the setting, and special character of the city; promote access to the surrounding countryside/open space; and include landscape improvement proposals that strengthen or re-create the well-defined and vegetated urban edge, improve visual amenity and enhance biodiversity.

7.84 Policy 60 of the CCC Local Plan, 'Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge' sets out a number of criteria that will be considered for a structure that breaks the existing skyline and/or is significantly taller than the surrounding built form (**Table 7-2**):

Table 7-2 – Tall Building Criteria

Tall Building Criteria	Scheme Response
a) location, setting and context – applicants should demonstrate through visual assessment or appraisal with supporting accurate visual representations, how the proposals fit within the existing landscape and townscape	Refer to commentary above and LVIA that accompanies the OPA.
b) impact on the historic environment – applicants should demonstrate and quantify the potential harm of proposals to the significance of heritage assets or other sensitive receptors (view of, backdrop and setting), assessed on a site-by-site basis but including impact on key landmarks and viewpoints, as well as from the main streets, bridges and open spaces in the city centre and from the main historic approaches, including road and river, to the historic core. Tall building proposals must ensure that the character or appearance of Cambridge, as a city of spires and towers emerging above the established tree line, remains dominant from relevant viewpoints	Refer to commentary on Heritage below and the Heritage Assessment that accompanies the OPA. In summary, the Heritage Assessment finds that due to the separation distance between the Site and the majority of the receptors within the study area, combined with the townscape character, topography, intervening built form and landscape features, the majority of the built heritage receptors will not experience any meaningful change to their setting, that would result in any impact on their sensitivity. The Heritage Assessment goes onto state that the Proposed Development would result in a degree of change to the setting of the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area through the introduction of built form immediately to the north of the receptor. The potential impact on Conduit Head Road Conservation Area is identified in the Heritage Assessment to be a moderate adverse significance of effect. In NPPF terms, this impact is also considered to be less than substantial harm
c) scale, massing and architectural quality – applicants should demonstrate through the use of scaled drawings, sections, accurate visual representations and models how the proposals will deliver a high quality addition to the Cambridge skyline and clearly demonstrate that there is no adverse impact	In accordance with policy NW4: 'Site and Setting' of the NWC AAP, the Future Phases Masterplan retains the strategic gap between the two parts of the Site to ensure separation is maintained between Cambridge and Girton village. The lower heights proposed, the provision of Shared Gardens and an articulated skyline form part of a series of design measures to enable the Building Development Zones along the western edge of the Proposed Development to create a high quality built edge to the urban area and provide an appropriate setting to Cambridge.

Tall Building Criteria	Scheme Response
	Built development is only proposed for those areas of the Site where it was approved for the 2013 OPP and in line with those areas identified for built development on the AAP Proposals Map. The Masterplan has been informed by an extensive pre-application process which has included design review through the Quality Panel. Section 4 above describes how the scheme has responded to comments received at pre-application stage, including in relation to building heights. The tallest building heights (7 – 8 storeys) have been focused around the Common at the centre of the Site. Heights across the rest of the Masterplan range between 3 – 6 storeys with 3 storey heights and areas for no built development to come forward at the interfaces of the Site and the existing properties on Huntingdon Road and Storey's Way/All Souls Lane.
d) amenity and microclimate – applicants should demonstrate that there is no adverse impact on neighbouring buildings and open spaces in terms of the diversion of wind, overlooking or overshadowing, and that there is adequate sunlight and daylight within and around the proposals	Following the 2013 OPP, the lowest heights proposed, alongside areas for no built development have been positioned at the interfaces of the Site and the existing properties on Huntingdon Road and Storey's Way/All Souls Lane. Given that they are unlikely to have significant effects, Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing and Wind Microclimate topics were scoped out of the OPA at EIA Scoping Stage.
e) public realm – applicants should show how the space around tall buildings will be detailed, including how a human scale is created at street level	The precise detailing of this will come forward at RMA stage, however the Landscape Strategy accompanying the OPA establishes the core objectives for the landscaping and the Design Code sets specific public realm requirements at a site wide and character area level for RMAs to adhere to.

7.85 Considering the findings of the LVIA and assessment against policy above, it is considered that the Proposed Development can accommodate the increased building heights and density when compared to the 2013 OPP.

Open Space

- 7.86 NWC AAP policy NW29: 'Strategic Landscaping' sets out that strategic landscaping of the development will be needed to ensure that each part of the development area is landscaped, managed and protected where practical before much of the development is started. CCC Local Plan policy 59: 'Designing landscape and the public realm', states that external spaces, landscape, public realm, and boundary treatments must be designed as an integral part of new development proposals and coordinated with adjacent sites and phases. SCDC Local Plan policy NH/6: 'Green Infrastructure' states that the Council will support proposals which deliver the strategic green infrastructure network and requires all new developments to contribute towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network within the district.
- 7.87 The OPA is accompanied by a Landscape Strategy which establishes a number of Core Objectives for landscaping (such as 'Hardworking and Multi-functional', 'Biodiverse and Nature Based Solutions' and 'Diversity of Experience with Distinctive Character'); a green and blue Landscape Framework; and considers how Site features such as drainage and topography influence the landscape proposals. The Landscape Strategy also establishes approaches to hard and soft landscaping; tree planting; and open space, sports, amenity and play.
- 7.88 Taking into account the Open Space and Recreation Standards set out in Appendix 3 of the NWC AAP, the Illustrative Scheme has been used to establish the open space and amenity quantum for the Proposed Development in order to demonstrate that it can comply with NWC AAP policy NW23: 'Open Space and Recreation Provision'. The significant variety of routes for pedestrians and cyclists proposed within the Masterplan also ensure that the Proposed Development will provide improved linkages to the adjacent open countryside, in line with policy NW23.
- 7.89 The Landscape Strategy considers the provision of open space, sports, amenity & play holistically across Phase 1 and Future Phases. This is linked to a separate Phase 1 RMA that is being prepared to address issues with existing sports facilities that have previously been delivered as part of Phase 1 but need to be upgraded. Overall, the Landscape Strategy demonstrates how Phase 1 and Future Phases can exceed targets, having regard to the demand from Phase 1 and the Future Phases Illustrative Scheme (**Table 7-3**):

Table 7-3 – Proposed Open Space

Phase 1 and Future Phases Target (Ha)	Phase 1 and Future Phases Provision (Ha)
Informal Open Space – 26.1	Informal Open Space – 48.54
Sports – 14.16	Sports – 14.97
Allotments/Community Gardens – 5.07	Allotments/Community Gardens – 5.22
Play – 3.72	Play – 3.79

- 7.90 The delivery of the Proposed Development's sports pitches, play spaces and allotments will be secured via the S106 agreement. It is anticipated that there will be restrictions on the

occupation of the Proposed Development until the necessary spaces have been provided, including any relevant spaces being provided by the Phase 1 RMA.

- 7.91 The sports provision includes 3G pitch provision incorporating an uplift in area based on the 2013 OPP S106 multiplier. As part of the allotment provision, 'community gardens' are proposed as growing spaces which can be brought closer to homes and combined with social spaces. These have the benefit of being located in spaces such as the Shared Gardens and are therefore much more accessible to the community than the more formal allotments which are focused on the southern and northwestern parts of the Site.

Transport

- 7.92 The Conclusions section of the Transport Assessment ("TA") accompanying the OPA sets out the relevant transport planning policies and how the Proposed Development complies with them. In relation to Section 9 of the NPPF (Promoting Sustainable Transport) the TA states how a vision led approach from the early stages of the planning process has been used, including early engagement with local communities, stakeholders and authorities. In line with paragraph 117 of the NPPF, sustainable transport modes are prioritised throughout and safe and suitable access to the Site can be achieved for all users. The TA also demonstrates that the Proposed Development does not lead to unacceptable impact on highway safety or capacity, there is a substantial reduction in forecast peak hour vehicle trips when compared with the 2013 OPP consented Trip Budget. Following implementation of the Transport Strategy, the Proposed Development is forecast to have a negligible impact on the operation of the local highway network, in line with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.
- 7.93 In response to policies 80: 'Supporting sustainable access to development' and 81: 'Mitigating the transport impact of development' of the CCC Local Plan, the Proposed Development prioritises sustainable transport modes—walking, cycling, wheeling, and public transport—while ensuring accessibility for all users, including wheelchair users. The TA confirms the development will not result in unacceptable transport impacts, considering both highway capacity and sustainable travel networks.
- 7.94 In response to policy TI/2 of the SCDC Local Plan: 'Planning for Sustainable Travel', sustainable modes of transport have been placed at the top of the user hierarchy, and a range of active travel and public transport routes/services have been designed to integrate with the wider area, intending to serve both existing and new communities.
- 7.95 Having regard to the NWC AAP, the Proposed Development has been prepared in accordance with the policies outlined in the AAP, including with reference to car and cycle parking standards and achieving a modal share of no more than 40% of trips to work by car (excluding car passengers), in line with policy NW11: 'Sustainable Travel'. The TA also demonstrates that sufficient highway capacity is available to serve the Proposed Development in line with policy NW12: 'Highway Infrastructure' and that vehicular access to the Proposed Development is from Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road in line with policy NW13: 'Vehicular Access'.
- 7.96 Finally, public transport provision will be extended into the Future Phases and a wide range of new cycle links and walking routes are proposed in line with policies NW16, NW17 and NW18 of the NWC AAP.

Flood Risk, Drainage and Utilities

- 7.97 The OPA is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (“FRA”) and Surface Water Drainage Strategy (“SWDS”) as well as a Strategic Utilities Report. The FRA explains that the Site is predominantly located within Flood Zone 1 with a small area in the north-west corner located in Flood Zone 2. All residential units will be located within Flood Zone 1. The Site is classified as ‘More Vulnerable’ and as such the Exception Test is not required. As the Site is allocated, a Sequential Test is not required.
- 7.98 As part of the 2013 OPP, the Proposed Development was deemed to cause a potential increased risk of fluvial flooding to the downstream village of Girton. To address this, a Flood Alleviation Scheme (“FAS”) was designed and implemented during Phase 1 of the development. This arrangement successfully reduces the volume of water passed downstream and mitigates flood risk both to and from the Site. The fluvial hydraulic modelling has been updated since to incorporate higher climate change allowances and ReFH2 rainfall-runoff method and the results confirm that the FAS continues to provide effective protection and ensures that the completed development in its entirety does not increase flood risk.
- 7.99 Other sources of flood risk have also been assessed. Surface water flood risk is concentrated in low-lying areas near the Washpit Brook; however, it will be managed through sustainable drainage systems (“SuDS”) in line with best practice and Environment Agency guidance. Groundwater flood risk is considered low, with some potential in localised areas that will be addressed through appropriate design measures. The Site is considered to be at low risk of sewer flooding. The Site is located outside the extent of potential reservoir flooding.
- 7.100 SCDC policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems states that development proposals must incorporate SuDS appropriate to the nature of the site. The SWDS explains how SuDS are proposed in line with 2013 OPP, maintaining the principle of discharging to the Washpit Brook at greenfield runoff rates. Surface water runoff from individual plots will be attenuated and restricted to greenfield runoff rates before discharging into the sitewide drainage network. Surface water attenuation will be provided on-plot and across the sitewide drainage network to limit the surface water run-off up to 1 in 100-year storm event plus 40% climate change allowance. The SuDs approach aligns with NWC AAP policy NW25: ‘Surface Water Drainage’.
- 7.101 In relation to potable water, the Strategic Utilities Report describes how the potable water would be distributed via a strategic main running the length of Cartwright Avenue and plots would be fed from this main and that the development assumes a restriction on potable usage of 80 litres per person per day as per the extant planning permission, with the remainder being served via water saving measures and the on-plot non-potable water collection and distribution networks. The 80 litres per person per day is in line with the supporting text to NWC AAP policy NW24 - ‘Climate Change and Sustainable Design and Construction’ and better than the 110 litres sought by the Water Efficiency policies (Policy 28 and Policy CC/4) within the CCC Local Plan and SCDC Local Plan respectively.
- 7.102 Discussions were held with Cambridge Water in November 2024 and February 2025 to determine the availability of potable water in the local grid. Cambridge Water confirmed that there was sufficient capacity in their networks to accommodate the number of dwellings (3,000) approved by 2013 OPP. With regard to the scheme proceeding above 3,000 units, Cambridge Water indicated there was likely insufficient capacity to supply the additional proposed units without local network reinforcement. The Strategic Utilities Report goes on to explain that whilst

the scope of any required reinforcement would be subject to detailed design, analysis and demand modelling, it could be expected that it would take the form of:

- Upgrades to the potable water booster station constructed in Phase 1 at the northern end of Eddington Avenue near the junction with Huntingdon Road.
- Reinforcement of the potable water main installed in Eddington Avenue and Turing Way, running from the booster station to the proposed junction with Cartwright Avenue.
- Potential reinforcement of the potable water main installed in Five Acres, depending on unit number increases in the eastern Building Development Zones.

7.103 Local network reinforcement to provide additional capacity to accommodate an uplift in unit numbers is not an unusual measure and the alterations suggested by Cambridge Water as part of the initial consultation are not significant in nature, and are reserved to infrastructure within the current Eddington development. Ongoing liaison with Cambridge Water will be required following the determination of the OPA, however this is standard practice for developments of this nature. The Strategic Utilities Report concludes that with respect to Cambridge Water it has been confirmed that there will need to be limited network reinforcement to the local water network to serve the proposed increase in units. It is likely therefore that any reinforcement would be limited to the on-site local grid and would not be of a strategic nature. The Proposed Development can therefore address SCDC policy CC/7 ('Water Quality') requirements to ensure an adequate water supply.

Energy and Sustainability

7.104 The OPA is accompanied by an Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement which describe both the strategic approach to energy and sustainability within the Proposed Development and provide an assessment against relevant planning policies.

Energy

7.105 The Energy Statement describes how the Illustrative Scheme has been used to demonstrate how the Proposed Development can address relevant planning policy and guidance. The Energy Statement replicates the Energy Hierarchy from the CCC Local Plan (Figure 4.2) as well as the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document ("SPD") (2020) (Figure 3) and sets out in Figure 1 which elements of the hierarchy are addressed at Masterplan stage (e.g. layout, orientation and green infrastructure) and which are addressed at RMA stage (e.g. passive building design and renewables) The Energy Statement then explains the strategy at each energy hierarchy stage which includes:

Energy Efficiency Measures	• A fabric first approach has been adopted to reduce energy demand with fabric specification deemed by the project team to be equivalent to Passivhaus Principles. • The resulting area weighted Dwelling Fabric Energy Efficiency (DFEE) is less than the Target Fabric Energy Efficiency (TFEE) Part L 2021 target by 26%.
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	• The building services will include energy efficient lights, optimised heat distribution and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery. • The domestic units are currently showing a CO₂ emission saving of 37% from energy demand reduction.
Overheating	• GHA Early-Stage Assessment has been undertaken.
Decentralised Energy	• The University is not intending to connect future phases of the development to the existing District Heating network on site, as a plot by plot approach provides greater flexibility over the 10 to 15 year likely build out period and future-proofing for future technologies.
Renewables	• The preferred energy strategy utilises individual air source heat pumps (ASHPs) for dwellings and a local heating network supplied by building-mounted ASHPs for apartments. • On-site renewable energy generation will be maximised by utilising the available flat roof space for apartments and non-domestic buildings and suitably oriented pitched roofs on houses for solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.
Predicted carbon savings	• As a result of this energy strategy, on-site carbon emissions reduction associated with the high-level design information available at this stage is estimated to be a 52% saving against Building Regulations Part L 2021 compliant designs (regulated energy only).

7.106 The Energy Statement also sets out the predicted carbon savings at each stage of the energy hierarchy for the Proposed Development and demonstrates that the development shows significant carbon emissions savings compared to a scheme built to comply with Building Regulations Part L 2021 and therefore addresses the carbon reduction requirements of CCC Local Plan policy 28 - Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use. Finally the Energy Statement undertakes an Overheating Risk Assessment and outlines both passive solutions (e.g., low g-value glazing, external shading, natural ventilation) and active measures (e.g., mechanical cooling, retrofit readiness) will need to be considered at the appropriate design stage.

7.107 In relation to renewable energy, the renewables includes the ASHPs and the PVs. The predicted percentage reduction of 42% greatly exceeds SCDC Local plan policy CC/3 target of 10% reduction and NWC AAP target (policy NW24) of 20% in carbon dioxide emissions from on-site renewable energy generation and low carbon technologies. It also complies fully with CCC Local Plan Policy 28 which seeks for all developments to minimise carbon emissions and incorporate sustainable design and construction.

7.108 In accordance with Policy NW24 of the NWC AAP, the residential component of the development is expected to meet the equivalent of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5. Although the Code has been withdrawn, the proposed development far surpasses the regulated energy targets under CSH Level 5, especially given the more ambitious Building Regulations Part L 2021 baseline.

Sustainability

7.109 SCDC policy CC/1: 'Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change' states planning permission will only be granted for proposals that demonstrate and embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation into the development. Applicants must submit a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate how these principles have been embedded into the development proposal. The level of information provided in the Sustainability Statement should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development

7.110 The Sustainability Statement accompanying the OPA is founded on three key place principles, which are also the principles set out in the Design and Access Statement for the Future Phases scheme – 'Design for Today & the Future'; 'Fostering Healthy Living'; and 'Reducing Whole Place Carbon'. The Sustainability Statement also sets out the key sustainability aspirations for the project which include:

- Delivering homes aligned to Passivhaus Principles, including modelling using PHPP (Passivhaus Performance Package) and enhanced quality control on site
- 80 litres/person/day water consumption
- Use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) to mimic greenfield run off rates
- 100% of clay and stockpiles to be reused on site
- Daylighting targets following BRE guidance
- Food growing strategy to include dedicated allotments, doorstep growing space and integrated productive planting
- Achieve at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) over current baseline.

7.111 Section 4 of the Sustainability Statement provides a response to how the Proposed Development addresses sustainability policies and guidance, including on topics such as water efficiency, embodied carbon and waste. A BREEAM pre-assessment has been undertaken, which indicates that an 'Excellent' rating can be achieved in line with CCC Local Plan policy 28 and NWC AAP policy NW24. The Sustainability Statement also includes a completed Sustainable Design and Construction SPD Sustainability Checklist.

Environmental Effects

7.112 Full details of the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development are set out in the Environmental Statement ("ES") accompanying the OPA. This sub-section will provide a brief summary of the environmental effects for the Completed Development (i.e. following construction stage), which are particularly relevant to planning considerations.

Heritage

7.113 As well as a Built Heritage ES Chapter, the OPA is also accompanied by a Heritage Assessment. The Heritage Assessment finds that due to the separation distance between the

Site and the majority of the receptors within the study area, combined with the townscape character, topography, intervening built form and landscape features, the majority of the built heritage receptors will not experience any meaningful change to their setting, that would result in any impact on their sensitivity. The Heritage Assessment identifies that the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area has the potential to experience a significant effect (in EIA terms) as a result of the Proposed Development. The Heritage Assessment goes on to state that the Proposed Development would result in a degree of change to the setting of the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area through the introduction of built form immediately to the north of the receptor. The submitted Parameter Plans, and Illustrative Masterplan demonstrate how the Proposed Development can be built out to minimise any impact on the identified heritage receptors. The potential impact on Conduit Head Road Conservation Area is identified in the Heritage Assessment to be a moderate adverse significance of effect (in EIA terms). In NPPF terms, this impact is also considered to be less than substantial harm.

7.114 The Heritage Assessment also states that the impacts identified in the assessment have been appraised against the worst-case scenario. There is potential for these impacts to be reduced through additional mitigation measures secured at the reserved matters stage. It is envisaged that through the detailed design of the Proposed Development including architectural treatment, materiality, layout, and landscape design. This would ensure that the scheme delivered a high-quality development that responds positively to the local character of the surrounding area and that any impact to the sensitivity of the Conservation Area could be reduced to a minor adverse significance of effect. Such an impact would likely continue to fall within the category of less than substantial harm in NPPF terms.

7.115 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. Policy NH/14: 'Heritage Assets' of the SCDC Local Plan reaffirms NPPF policy and Policy 61: 'Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment' of the CCC Local Plan also refers to justifying harm and a consideration of the public benefits of the proposal.

7.116 The public benefits of the proposed development are substantial and include new up to 3,800 new homes, with 50% of the homes proposed as Key Worker Homes for University and College Staff; employment/commercial floorspace (that could create over 4,000 jobs); significant sized open spaces including sports, play, allotments and informal open spaces as well as a range of new routes throughout the Site and the Common.

7.117 Each of the above benefits are considered to carry very substantial weight in favour of the Proposed Development and would be enough to substantially outweigh and fully justify any less than substantial harm that is caused to these heritage assets. On balance, therefore, the Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable with regards to its effects on built heritage.

Noise and Air Quality

7.118 The Noise and Vibration Chapter of the ES (Chapter 9) undertakes a site suitability assessment and explains how a good acoustic design process has been followed while developing the Illustrative Masterplan, with the iterative process reducing reliance on the acoustic design measures required. Each of the Proposed Development plots are exposed to sound pressure

levels that mean that further acoustic design is required so that the future occupants of the Proposed Development are not adversely affected by sound. The acoustic conditions, and the required design measures are comparable to those experienced by Phase 1. The plots of these phases will come forward in future RMAs which will detail the building orientation, layout and the façade sound insulation requirements. It is through these additional design decisions that appropriate acoustic conditions can be achieved without reliance on screening from buildings i.e. plots can be delivered independently.

7.119 Furthermore, the evaluation of external amenity shows that it is feasible for areas of external amenity to be provided close to each residential plot. The reduced sound levels can be provided through positioning the buildings to reduce the sound levels in key locations.

7.120 It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development can meet the requirements of CCC Local Plan policy 35: 'Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration' which states residential and other noise sensitive development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that future users of the development will not be exposed internally and externally to unacceptable levels of noise pollution/disturbance from existing or planned uses and SCDC Local Plan policy SC/10 Noise Pollution which states that planning permission will not be granted for development which would be subject to unacceptable noise levels from existing noise sources, both ambient levels and having regard to noise characteristics such as impulses whether irregular or tonal.

7.121 A site suitability assessment has also been undertaken with respect to air quality in Chapter 8 of the ES. In the operational year of 2038, receptors introduced as a result of the Proposed Development are not anticipated to be exposed to pollutant concentrations above the respective objective values. All modelled pollutant concentrations are well below their respective objectives, and there is no requirement for mitigation. The Proposed Development therefore complies with policy 36: 'Air Quality, odour and dust' of the CCC Local Plan and policy SC/12: 'Air Quality' of the SCDC Local Plan.

Ecology

7.122 Chapter 11 of the ES assesses Ecology and Biodiversity. With respect to the Completed Development, Chapter 11 states the likely significant residual effects of the Proposed Development on ecological receptors during the completed development phase are as follows:

- Delivery of measures to improve the Washpit Brook, which will be required to meet BNG targets, resulting in a Minor Beneficial (significant) effect;
- Delivery of measures to improve woodland habitat, which will be required to meet BNG targets, resulting in a Minor Beneficial (significant) effect; and
- Increase in the amount of hedgerow habitat as part of the landscape design, which will be required to meet BNG targets, resulting in a Minor Beneficial (significant) effect.

7.123 The Proposed Development also has the potential to extend the mosaic of habitats in the western part of the site, including Brook Leys, other Phase 1 wetland habitats and associated woodland and grassland through the landscape design of adjoining areas of open space. This could extend the area covered by this mosaic of habitats to beyond the 10ha threshold for

habitat mosaics to be considered as County Wildlife Sites (“CWSs”). The Proposed Development therefore has the potential to effectively create a habitat mosaic of County importance that could be designated as a CWS. This would be an additional beneficial effect at the County scale, resulting in a Moderate Beneficial (significant) effect.

7.124 No additional cumulative effects have been identified with the exception of adverse effects on skylark, whitethroat, linnet and brown hare which may be affected by one or more of the cumulative schemes. However, the scale of significance of the effect is not considered to be any greater cumulatively for all schemes combined than for the Proposed Development alone.

7.125 Finally, the Proposed Development is committed to delivering a BNG of at least 10% in relation to habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units.

7.126 The Proposed Development therefore addresses CCC Local Plan policy 70: ‘Protection of priority species and habitats’ and SCDC Local Plan policy NH/4: ‘Biodiversity’ which requires new development to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and take opportunities to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development.

8 Planning Obligations and Draft Heads of Terms

- 8.1 This Section provides a summary of the main legislation, policy and guidance relating to planning obligations. It also provides a Draft Heads of Terms.

National Legislation and Policy

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)

- 8.2 Regulation 122 (Limitation on use of planning obligations) states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is:

- a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
- b) Directly related to the development; and*
- c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.'*

NPPF

- 8.3 Paragraph 56 of the NPPF makes clear that planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition. Paragraph 58 of the NPPF reiterates the Regulation 122 Tests set out above.

Local Policy and Guidance

- 8.4 Policy 85 (Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy) of the CCC Local Plan states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported/permitted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. Planning obligations could be required for:

- a. transport infrastructure
- b. public transport
- c. drainage and flood protection
- d. waste recycling facilities
- e. education
- f. healthcare

- g. leisure and recreation facilities
- h. community and social facilities
- i. cultural facilities, including public art
- j. emergency services
- k. green infrastructure
- l. open space
- m. affordable housing

8.5 Policy TI/8 (Infrastructure and New Development) of the SCDC Local Plan similarly states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. The nature, scale and phasing of any planning obligations sought will be related to the form of the development and its potential impact upon the surrounding area. Supporting paragraph 10.46 sets out a similar list of potential contribution types as set out in policy 85 of the CCC Local Plan.

8.6 Policy NW31 (Infrastructure Provision) of the NWC AAP states planning permission will only be granted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services & facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.

8.7 In 2010 (updated in 2023), CCC published a Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (“Planning Obligations Strategy SPD”) to aid in the negotiation and use of planning obligations. The SPD provides further guidance in relation to topics such as transport; open space and recreation; community facilities; and waste.

Draft Heads of Terms

8.8 These Draft Heads of Terms are set out on behalf of the Applicant to inform the preparation and negotiation of the S106 Agreement with the GCSPS as part of any planning permission for the NWCM. **Table 8-1** below describes the Applicant’s proposed position on financial and other obligations having regard to relevant policy and guidance and pre-application discussions.

Table 8-1 - Proposed Draft Heads of Terms

HoT	Tariffed/Financial Contribution	Comment
Residential		
Key Worker Housing for University and College Staff	N	
Custom Build / Self Build	N	

HoT	Tariffed/Financial Contribution	Comment
Sports and Open Space		
Sports Pitches	N	Includes Third Generation (3G) Pitches – a pitch of 0.79 hectares in lieu of 2.37 hectares of grass pitch.
Informal Sports	N	
Changing facilities and associated parking	N	
Children's Play Areas	N	
Allotments and Community Gardens	N	
Informal open land and open land provision	N	
Management and maintenance of open space	N	
Swimming Pool Contribution	Y	
Community Infrastructure		
Health Facility Extension	N	If required
Community Development Worker Payment	Y	
Education		
Contribution to primary school provision, subject to needs review	Y	
Contribution to secondary school provision, subject to needs review	Y	
Ecology		
Biodiversity Net Gain of 10%	N	
Waste		
Waste Centre Contribution	Y	
Waste Vehicle Contribution	Y	
Household Waste Receptacles Contribution	Y	
Underground Bin Waste Scheme	N	
Transport		
Highways Works	N	Enter into s278 to deliver agreed highways works
Highways Improvements Contribution	Y	Includes pedestrian and cycling contribution + bus contributions
Strategic Transport Improvements	Y	
Environmental Improvements Scheme	Y	
Controlled Parking Zone	Y	
Travel Plan	N	
Travel Plan Monitoring Contribution	Y	

HoT	Tariffed/Financial Contribution	Comment
Mobility Hubs	N	
Bus Strategy	N	
Phase 1 – Enhancements	N	Milne Ave / school crossing – formal assessment and possible upgrade Turing Way/Ridgeway Crossing – upgrade to controlled crossing Eddington Ave / Storeys Field Crossing & bus stop interaction – formal assessment and possible changes Turing Way/Eddington Avenue southern crossing – improvements to cater for pedestrian and cycle desire lines Eddington Ave to Garrod Street crossing - improvements to cater for pedestrian and cycle desire lines Storeys Field playground /Ridgeway – formal assessment and possible upgrade
Off-Site Mitigation	N	Cartwright Avenue Site Access (Signal controlled junction) Huntington Road/Eddington Avenue Signal Timing Changes to include right turn indicative arrow Uni-directional cycle lanes along northwestern end of Huntingdon Road to fill gap between Girton Road and A14 bridge to serve existing active travel users and new residents. Drawing 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SSK-CH-HR02 Shared footway/cycleway provision between NW Huntingdon Road access and A14 bridge to fill existing active travel gap. Drawing 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SSK-CH-HR10 Signalised Toucan (with equestrian push buttons) PRow crossing northwestern end of Huntingdon Road to serve PRow through St Johns Land and over A14 bridge and link into the NWCM –Drawing 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SSK-CH-HR02 Signalised Toucan crossing between NW Access and Girton Road, to link in to the NWCM –Drawing 24067-KMC-HGN-XX-SSK-CH-HR10
On-site mitigation	N	Wayfinding Strategy within the site.
Other		
Public Art	N	Public Art provision in line with Public Art Strategy
Monitoring	Y	

Notes:

(i) The above list is intended to be a brief summary of the range of topics envisaged by the Applicant at the time of submission as appropriate to be addressed within a Section 106 Agreement. This list is based on ongoing discussions with the local planning authorities and other appropriate bodies.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 Eddington is the University of Cambridge's response to the need to provide affordable housing for its staff so it can attract and retain top talent to maintain its global competitiveness. By housing staff in a purpose-built, high quality neighbourhood, the University also reduces the demand on the wider housing market in the city. By providing 50% of housing for staff and the remainder contributing to increasing the overall supply of housing in the city, the Eddington development supports the highly successful Cambridge eco-system which provides long-term growth and prosperity for the local, regional and national economy.
- 9.2 The Proposed Development will provide a highly sustainable, residential led mixed-use development that is supported by all levels of planning policy. The Site is allocated as a major development site the CCC Local Plan, SCDC Local Plan and NWC AAP. The Proposed Development builds on the successes of Phase 1 and takes the lessons learned from Phase 1 to densify the proposed residential component within the areas of the Site identified for built development. The Proposed Development also positively responds to the Government's clear objectives to accelerate the delivery of high quality housing and it's aims to realise the full potential of Greater Cambridge.
- 9.3 The Applicant has engaged extensively and meaningfully over the course of a year with the local community, including multiple public exhibitions, stakeholder workshops and community engagement events. The Applicant has worked closely with GCSPS through a robust pre-application process with them, the Quality Panel and other statutory consultees.
- 9.4 As well as increasing the residential component of the 2013 OPP, the Proposed Development carries forward the unbuilt 2013 OPP floorspace in relation to student accommodation, senior living, employment and academic floorspace. Having regard to more recent planning policy and commercial needs, the Proposed Development seeks the provision of more flexible employment and academic floorspace compared to the 2013 OPP. It is also proposed to introduce new uses, such as Co-Living to form part of the wider housing offer at Eddington to add diversity and choice in meeting housing needs whilst also helping to achieve mixed and balanced communities.
- 9.5 The Affordable Housing Statement describes how the University's 2024 Key Worker Housing Survey not only reaffirmed the scale of need for Key Workers but has also helped to shape the type of housing that best meets their needs – which is distinct. Availability and affordability of housing is a pressing concern for many, and as a result this poses a serious risk to recruitment and retention of specialist staff, as the extent and range of their needs are not met by the market.
- 9.6 There has been a robust testing and analysis of the OPA, both looking at the maximum development parameters as well as the Illustrative Scheme to ensure that all of the impacts are understood and can be addressed. The design of the Proposed Development has responded to comments made during pre-application discussions, especially the approach to building heights, landscaping design and the north-west corner.
- 9.7 The scheme benefits are wide ranging and substantial, they include:

- Up to 3,800 new homes
- 50% of the homes are proposed as Key Worker Homes for University and College Staff
- Student, Co-Living and Senior Living accommodation
- Between 1,520 and 4,255 new jobs (depending on the final composition of the non-residential floorspace)
- New open spaces, external amenity facilities, routes through the Site and links to existing communities.
- A BNG of at least 10% in relation to habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units.
- Exceedances of policy targets in terms of the predicted carbon emission reductions from onsite renewable energy sources
- Sustainability measures including:
 - 80 litres/person/day water consumption
 - 100% of clay and stockpiles to be reused on site

9.8 In consideration of Section 38(6) of the Act, we can conclude that taking the Development Plan as a whole, the Proposed Development accords with the Development Plan, and having regard to all material planning considerations, should be approved. In line with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the development proposals should be approved without delay.

Appendix 1 – NWCD Full Planning History

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
Masterplan Applications			
Entire North West Cambridge Site	S/1886/11 & 11/1114/OUT	Proposed development comprising up to 3,000 dwellings Up to 2,000 student bedspaces 100,000 sq.m. employment floorspace of which: up to 40,000 sq.m. commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses) and at least 60000 sq.m. academic floorspace (Class D1) up to 5,300 sq.m. gross retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5) (of which the supermarket is 2,000 sq.m. net floorspace) Senior Living up to 6500sq.m. (Class C2) Community Centre Indoor Sports Provision Police Primary Health Care Primary School Nurseries (Class D1) Hotel (130 rooms) Energy Centre and associated infrastructure including roads (including adaptations to Madingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd) pedestrian cycle and vehicle routes parking drainage open spaces and earthworks.	Approved 22 February 2013
Entire North West Cambridge Site	S/2036/13/VC & 13/1402/S73	Vary condition 69 (Drawing Numbers) of S/1886/11 & 11/1114/OUT	Approved 25 and 21 November 2013
Entire North West Cambridge Site	13/1402/NMA1 & S/1220/18/NM	Non-material amendment to S/2036/13/VC & 13/1402/S73 to amend condition 34 (Site Wide Biodiversity Strategy) to allow changes to the approach to monitoring and the provision of bird nest boxes in place of the originally proposed artificial badger set	Approved 20 April 2018
Entire North West Cambridge Site	S/1716/18/NM & 13/1402/NMA2	Non-material amendment to Condition 44 (Parking Management Arrangements) on applications S/2036/13/VC & 13/1402/S73. The Car Park Management Plan has been revised so that the scheme for pay and display parking enforcement can be operated on private land, by a contractor that is a member of the British Parking Association	Approved 29 May 2018 and 8 June 2018
Entire North West Cambridge Site	13/1402/NMA3	Non-material amendment to planning permission 13/1402/S73 to amend wording of condition 5 (Phasing Plan) of the consent, to read "The development shall be carried out in	Approved 17 Feb 2021

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
		accordance with the North West Cambridge Phasing Plan, dated December 2020.", such as to allow an alternative sequence for the delivery of development plots within the scheme	
Entire North West Cambridge Site	14/0929/NMA	Non material amendment for amendment to Condition 30 North West Cambridge Foul Drainage Strategy	Approved July 8 July 2014
Entire North West Cambridge Site	15/2208/NMA	Non-material amendment on application 13/1402/S73 for the amount of retail space (A1-A5) allocated within zones 1, 2 and 3 on parameter plan 04 : Land use.	Approved 22 December 2015
Entire North West Cambridge Site	S/0227/20/PO	Modification of planning obligations in relation to Keyworker housing allocations	Approved 20 January 2020
Development Delivery Applications			
Lot 1	13/1748/REM	Reserved matters application pursuant to 13/1402/S73 for a foodstore (2000sqm net, Use class A1) and retail space (use class A1-A4), 117 residential units, comprising 41 one bedroom key worker units and 76 two bedroom key worker units, a primary health care centre (Use class D1), a police office (Use class B1), a district heating energy centre, access roads, including bollard controlled street running through the local centre (with cycle and pedestrian routes), cycle parking, car parking, landscaping, public realm, utilities and associated ancillary structures.	Approved 26 February 2014
Lot 2	14/1722/REM	264 key worker units comprising 100 one bedroom units, 161 two bedroom units and 3 four bedroom units, 1,983sqm of commercial uses A1, A3 and A4, flexible social space and ancillary estate office, alongside car and cycle parking, landscaping, public realm, utilities and associated ancillary structures, pursuant to outline approval 13/1402/S73.	Approved 23 January 2015
Lot 3	13/1827/REM	Reserved Matters Application (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 11/1402/S73 for 232 residential units, including 87 one bedroom key worker units and 140 two bedroom key worker units and 5 four bedroom shared key worker units,	Approved 20 March 2014

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
		including a semi-basement car park and cycle parking, a flexible community space, residential car parking courts for wider local centre uses and the adjacent access Lane from the primary street to the residential courts, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures.	
Lot 4	14/1028/REM & S/1447/14/RM	Reserved Matters Application (access appearance landscaping layout and scale) pursuant to S/2036/13/VC for 70 residential units including 49 market units and 21 key worker units access roads (including cycle and pedestrian routes) cycle parking car parking landscaping utilities and associated ancillary structures. ..Please note that part of the application above (the gardens around the Veteran Oak) are located within the boundary of Cambridge City Council and are being applied for under 14/1028/REM pursuant to 13/1402/S73	Approved 18 September 2014 (Not implemented)
Lot 4	14/1028/REM	Reserved Matters Application (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 13/1402/S73 for the hard and soft landscaping associated with part of the Veteran Oak Gardens contained within Lot 4.	Approved 8 September 2014
Lot 4	22/01168/REM	Reserved matters application for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 88 dwellings, a shared surface service road (for refuse collection and pedestrian access), cycle parking, car parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures following outline planning permission S/1886/11 as varied by application S/2036/13/VC.	Approved 7 June 2022
Lot 5	13/1400/REM & S/2044/13/RM	Reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 11/1114/OUT (North West Cambridge Scheme) for: Post Graduate Accommodation comprising 325 student bed spaces, associated porters lodge, cycle parking, hard and soft landscaping, strategic drainage works, associated ancillary structures, part of strategic green corridor and part of strategic cycle and pedestrian route.	Approved 19 December 2013
Lot 6	14/0626/REM	3FE (three form entry) Primary School pursuant to 13/1402/S73 (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale), which	Approved 16 July 2014

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
		incorporates early years provision, and a centre of research and teacher training, along with car and cycle parking, access, hard and soft landscaping, and associated ancillary structures.	
Lot 7	13/1828/REM	Reserved Matters Application (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 11/1402/S73 for the community centre and nursery, alongside a pedestrianised Community Square, with cycle parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures.	Approved 20 March 2014
Lot 8	14/0109/REM	73 residential units, including 20 one bedroom key worker units and 53 two bedroom key worker units, alongside car and cycle parking, landscaping, public realm, utilities and associated ancillary structure pursuant to 13/1402/S73.	Approved 16 April 2014
Utility Buildings	S/1187/14/RM and 14/0866/REM	Reserved Matters Application (access appearance landscaping layout and scale) pursuant S/2036/13/VC to for the freestanding utility structures associated with Phase 1 of the North West Cambridge site including three electricity sub-stations foul water pumping station a gas pressure reducing station the portable water booster station and the Granta switch along with groundworks and sub-surface works for the utility buildings and associated access and landscaping...Please note that the majority of the application above is located within the boundary of Cambridge City Council and is applied for under 14/0866/REM pursuant to 13/1402/S73..	Approved 22 August 2014
Ridgeway Pedestrian, Cycle Route and Green Corridor works	S/0655/14/RM	Reserved Matters (access appearance landscaping layout and scale) pursuant to S/2036/13/VC for surfacing of a shared used pedestrian and cycle path along the Ridgeway Green Corridor (02) and works along Bunker's Hill to create a shared use pedestrian and cycle route connecting the Ridgeway to Huntingdon Road (including vegetation clearance fencing demolition and resurfacing) along with associated landscaping and drainage swales.	Approved 19 June 2014

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
Huntingdon Road East Junction	S/0493/14/DC	Discharge of Condition 46 Huntingdon Road East Junction	Approved 28 April 2014
Madingley Road West Junction	S/1866/13/DC	Discharge of Condition 48 Madingley Road West Junction of planning consent ref. S/1886/11.	Approved 20 November 2013
Madingley Road Junction Embankments	13/1258/FUL	Planning permission is sought for highway embankment construction; gabion retaining wall construction; drainage and land drain construction; installation of fencing; carriageway and footway reconstruction; installation of buried infrastructure, including traffic signal ducting and associated landscaping.	Approved 21 November 2013
Primary Street	13/1401/REM and S/2037/13/RM	Reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 11/1114/OUT (North West Cambridge Scheme) for: (1) The Primary Street surface finishes including seating, bins, bollards, cycle parking, underground bin laybys, surface water drainage swales, hard and soft landscaping. (2) Phase 1 infrastructure including buried services and utilities, drainage pipework and engineered swales, ground slabs and sub-surface works for utility structures, initial Western Edge earthworks, surface water lagoon excavation, two stage channel and engineered road build up on utility corridors.	Approved 19 December 2013
Primary Street Swale	14/0719/FUL	Section of primary street swale and hardstanding for the pedestrian footpath.	Approved 10 June 2014
Secondary Street	14/0630/REM	Part of secondary street pursuant to 13/1402/S73 including associated hard and soft landscaping.	Approved 22 July 2014
Western Edge	13/1740/REM & S/2533/13/RM	Reserved Matters Approval, pursuant to 13/1402/S73 for the formation of part of Green Corridor 01 from Primary Street to the Western Edge to include formation of swales, planting and associated infrastructure including disabled parking spaces and cycle parking, along with approval for a children's adventure play area and associated equipment and planting.	Approved 26 February 2014
Cricket and Sports Pitches	14/0864/REM & S/1186/14/RM	Reserved Matters Application (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to 13/1402/S73 for the formation and	Approved 20 August 2014

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
		finish of the cricket pitch, sports fields and associated pavilions, including hard and soft landscaping, footpaths, cycle paths (including part of two strategic cycleways), ecological enhancements and play facilities.	
Gravel Hill Farm Complex	12/1640/FUL	The temporary use of land to provide a temporary project office of 540sqm (including a community space of 129sqm) and artists' studios of 150sqm for a period of 10 years, comprising the installation of temporary serviced office units, the conversion of the existing farmhouse into meeting rooms and staff rooms, refurbishment of barn 254, retention and repairs to the existing barns 245 and 253, demolition of the remaining barns and structures, site access and service road, car parking and cycle parking, landscaping, perimeter fencing, gates and low level lighting and connections into the existing utilities system.	Approved 22 February 2013
Gravel Hill Farm Complex	23/03667/FUL	Continued temporary use of land for a further period of 10 years to retain a project office, the continued use of the existing farmhouse and previously approved extension as meeting rooms and staff rooms, use of building 254 as part office, part storage and use of barns 245 and 253 for associated storage. The retention of site access and service road, car and cycle parking, landscaping, fencing, gates and low level lighting and associated infrastructure connections.	21 November 2023
Temporary access road from Madingley Road	13/0279/FUL	The temporary use of land to provide a temporary access road from Madingley Road into the North West Cambridge site during construction. The temporary use is for a period of 10 years. The development comprises the laying out of the road, a surfaced vehicle turning and inspection area, a pedestrian link for site operatives, a storage area, a security kiosk and barrier and drainage.	Approved 17 July 2013
	24/01157/FUL	Extension to the temporary use of land to provide a temporary access road into the North West Cambridge site during construction. The temporary use is for a period of 10 years. The development comprises the laying out of the road, a surfaced vehicle turning and inspection	Approved 5 September 2024

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
		area, a pedestrian link for site operatives, a storage area, a security kiosk and barrier, lighting and drainage.	
Earthworks	13/0537/REM	Reserved Matters for the stripping of topsoil and its temporary storage, stockpiling of materials for the period of construction works, removal of areas of hardstanding, the clearance of vegetation and associated felling of trees, the installation of a temporary security fence and the construction of a temporary access road and temporary car parking area for up to 350 vehicles for a period of 10 years.	Approved 17 July 2013
	24/01158/FUL	The temporary storage of topsoil, the retention of a temporary security fence and a temporary car parking area for up to 350 vehicles and swale and lighting for a period of 10 years.	Approved 5 September 2024
	24/01152/FUL	Temporary storage of topsoil, the retention of a temporary security fence and a temporary access road and lighting for a period of 10 years.	Approved 7 May 2025
Lots S1 And S2	21/04036/REM 22/04982/REM	Reserved Matters approval for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 373 dwellings, access roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, cycle and car parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures at Lots S1 and S2, North West Cambridge Development following outline planning permission S/1886/11 as varied by planning permission S/2036/13/VC	Approved 7 October 2022
Lot S3	18/1195/REM	Reserved Matters application pursuant to application 13/1402/S73 for construction of 186 residential units, access road, cycle parking, car parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures.	Approved 5 April 2019
Northern boundary of Lots M1 and S1	S/1302/17/FL	Erection of a 2.1m high fence	Approved 19 May 2017
Lots M1 and M2	15/1663/REM & S/2219/15/RM	240 market residential units (121 units in Cambridge City Council and 119 units in South Cambridgeshire District Council) access roads (including cycle and pedestrian routes) cycle parking car parking landscaping utilities and associated ancillary structures	Approved 7 December 2015

Site	Ref.	Description	Decision
Parcel M1/M2	S/2766/19/RM	Approval of matters reserved for access appearance landscaping layout and scale following outline planning permission S/1886/11 - for Submission of details reserved by condition to 9 units on the northern side of Villa Street part of parcels M1/M2 at NWC development. (net loss of 1 unit)	Approved 7 November 2019
Parcel M1/M2	20/01762/RE	Approval of matters reserved for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline planning permission S/2036/13/VC for 5 units (net gain of 4 units)	Approved 21 October 2020
Parcel M1/M2	20/01549/REM	Approval of matters reserved for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline planning permission S/2036/13/VC for 8 units (net gain of 4 units)	Approved 13 October 2020
Lot M3	17/0285/REM	106 market residential units, 416sqm of commercial space (use class D1), access onto Eddington Avenue, cycle parking, underground car parking, landscaping, a roof garden, utilities and associated ancillary structures, pursuant to outline approval ref: 11/1114/OUT.	Approved 28 June 2017
Lots M4 & M5	22/04989/REM	Reserved Matters approval for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 160 dwellings, access roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, cycle and car parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures at Lots M4 and M5, North West Cambridge Development following outline planning permission 11/1114/OUT as varied by ref:13/1402/S73.	Approved 13 April 2023
Lot H	19/0156/FUL	150 room hotel and 180 room aparthotel (C1 Use Class), with ancillary uses including a restaurant, bar, cafe, co-working space and gym, along with associated cycle parking, car parking, landscaping, utilities and associated ancillary structures.	Approved 18 July 2019

Appendix 2 – Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment



Quod

Academic & Commerical Needs Assessment

North West Cambridge

SEPTEMBER 2025

Q240707

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment has been prepared by Quod on behalf of The University of Cambridge (UoC) (the ‘Applicant’) and is submitted in support of a hybrid planning application for the development of North West Cambridge Masterplan (‘NWC’ and ‘NWCM’) (the ‘Site’) in Cambridge City Council (‘CCC’) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (‘SCDC’).

Document Purpose

- 1.2 The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan¹ (‘NWCAAP’) (2009) sets out the vision and objectives for a new development at North West Cambridge. It recognises that the site is strategically important for both residential and employment development.
- 1.3 The NWCAAP provides some guidance on the development of employment floorspace at NWC – placing any delivery in the context of the wider objectives for the region. It is important to note that, while still part of the Development Plan, the APP is 16 years old now and the economic context of Cambridge has evolved significantly with more emphasis than ever on the city’s strategic economic importance. These policies are listed below to provide context but updated policies and studies on economic growth (at both the local and national level) confirm that these restrictions on employment uses are now out of date. Current policies strongly support growth, including flexible growth options, to support both the academic and commercial future of Cambridge, and recognise and reinforce the overlap between these uses.
- 1.4 **Policy NW8: ‘Employment Uses’** provided detail on the regional objectives at the time (2009) to address the imbalance of jobs and housing in Cambridge - employment growth at Cambridge has outstripped housing delivery resulting in increased housing needs. Therefore, although the strategic need for development here is well established any significant proposals for employment would need, under the terms of this policy, to demonstrate a ***need to be based near the University and its research facilities***.
- 1.5 The policy wording detailed what employment land would have been supported at NWC. It noted in **Part a)** that employment land should be predominantly educational in nature supporting sui generis research establishments or academic institutes with links to the University or links which require collaborative working.
- 1.6 **Part b)** outlined that a mix of commercial uses would be accepted where, again, it could be demonstrated that there was a need to be located close to the University.
- 1.7 The supporting text (paragraph 5.1 – 5.2) outlined that any commercial development should be predominantly University-related and ***‘not provide land for general research and development’*** (R&D). It went on to encourage the development of the higher education clusters benefiting from being near the University and its research facilities.

¹ Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (2009). North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Local Development Framework (Adopted October 2009).

1.8 **Policy NW30 'Phasing and Need'** outlined how this justification should be demonstrated with the requirement for a Needs Statement to be submitted with any planning application. The main objective of the Statement being to demonstrate the need for employment development.

1.9 These policies were reflected in the 2013 OPP² conditions as summarised below (our emphasis added):

- Condition 18 - With any submission of reserved matters for Academic/Research floorspace (use classes D1, B1(b), and sui generis, within the areas illustrated on drawing ref. NWC/OPA/PAR/04/A) a needs assessment, **to demonstrate that the University has a need for the land to be released for development** shall be submitted to the local planning authority.
- REASON The strategic need for development at this site has been accepted; however other sites which are currently under development should remain the priority for development until they have reached capacity, **unless a suitable needs-based argument can be established for the early release of land on the application site.** North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Policy NW30.
- Condition 19 - Prior to first occupation of any of the Academic/Research floorspace (use classes D1, B1(b), and sui generis, within the areas illustrated on drawing ref. NWC/OPA/PAR/04/A) approved by this permission, or prior to any subsequent occupier within the first 10 years from the date of first occupation, details of the proposed occupier(s) shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.
- a) The proposed occupier(s) for any D1 educational use, associated sui generis research establishment or academic research institute **shall demonstrate that their need to be located on this site is either in the national interest, or can show a special need to be located close to the University of Cambridge.**
- b) The proposed occupier(s) for any commercial research within Use Class B1 (b) shall demonstrate a **special need to be located close to the University of Cambridge.** No employment building shall be occupied until the local authority has agreed in writing that the occupier conforms to the criteria above, and the building shall then only be occupied by those previously approved. After 10 years from the date of first occupation for each building, the occupier is not limited to the above criteria, only the Use Class.
- REASON To ensure that any occupier on this site has an **essential need for a Cambridge location, and hence balance the growth of the local economy with the local housing need and protection of the environment.** North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Policy NW8.

² As noted above, the Site has Outline Planning Permission (OPP) which was granted in February 2013 (11/1114/OUT and S/1886/11) for a residential-led mixed use development. Phase 1 of the NWCM is currently underway with some plots providing key worker housing and the local centre already delivered and operational.

The full description of development for that OPP is as follows:

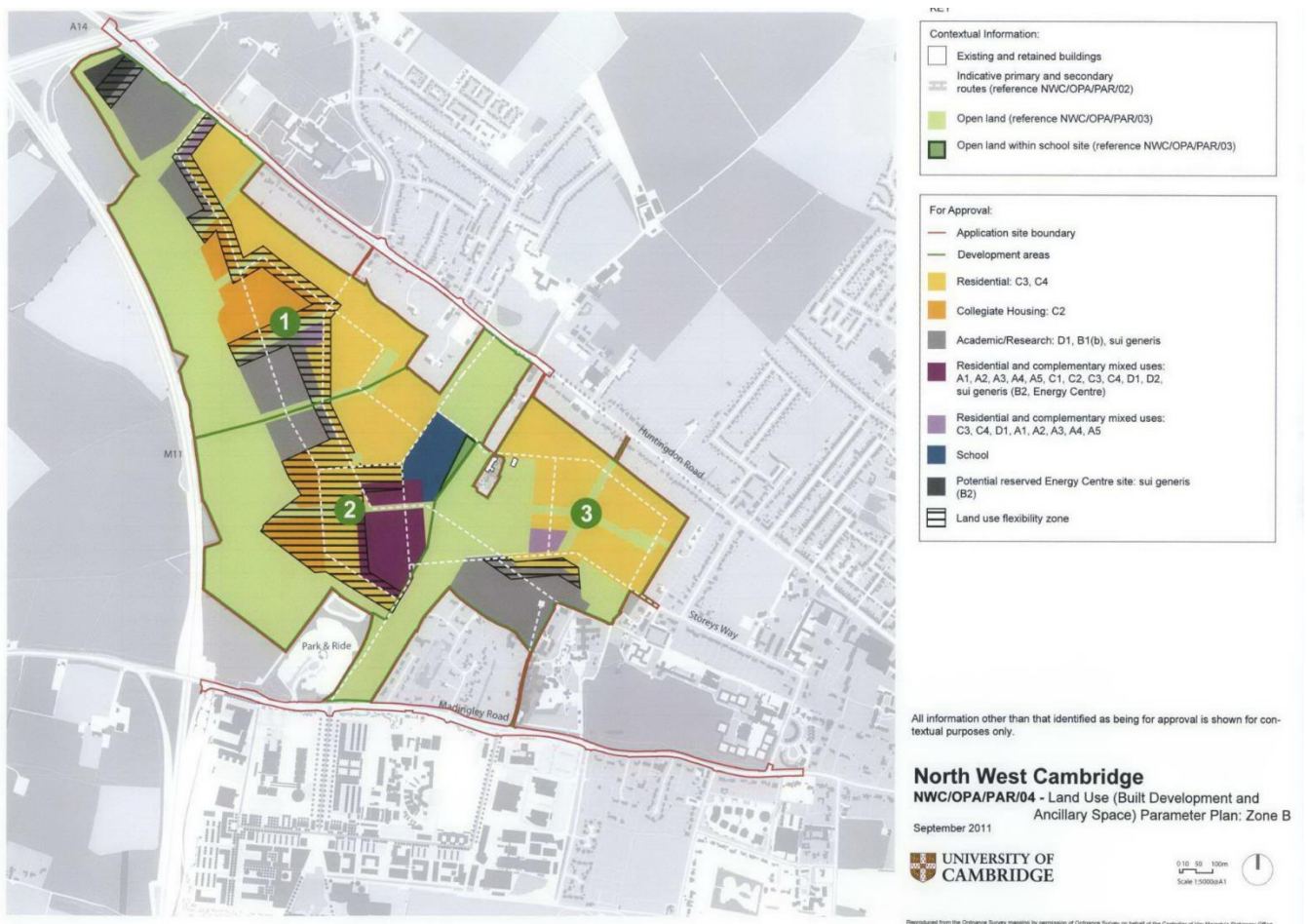
"Proposed development comprising up to 3,000 dwellings; Up to 2,000 student bedspaces; 100,000 sq.m. employment floorspace, of which: up to 40,000 sq.m. commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses) and at least 60,000 sq.m. academic floorspace (Class D1); up to 5,300 sq.m. gross retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5) (of which the supermarket is 2,000 sq.m. net floorspace); Senior Living, up to 6,500sq.m. (Class C2); Community Centre; Indoor Sports Provision; Police; Primary Health Care; Primary School; Nurseries (Class D1); Hotel (130 rooms); Energy Centre; and associated infrastructure in-cluding roads (including adaptations to Madingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd), pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes, parking, drainage, open spaces and earthworks."

Extant permission overview

1.10 The extant planning permission grants permission for 100,000 sqm of employment floorspace, of which:

- up to 40,000 sqm commercial floorspace (Class B1(b) and sui generis research uses)
- at least 60,000 sqm academic floorspace (Class D1).
- The relevant zones are shown in grey in Parameter Plan 4 (of the extant permission; a new Land Use Parameter Plan will supersede this one as part of this application).

Figure 1: Approved Parameter Plan 4: Land Use



Current policy position

1.11 A full overview of the current policy position is set out in the Planning Statement accompanying this application. In summary, those of most relevance to this Assessment are:

- The Government has recognised the strategic and substantial role of UoC in the UK economy.

- The Government has identified the “untapped economic potential” of the Greater Cambridge area and the need for this area to be a “key priority” for investment and growth.
- In a letter dated 30th October 2024, Matthew Pennycook outlined an immediate priority for the Cambridge Growth Company was to enable and accelerate developments which align with the Government’s ambitions for Cambridge.
- Paragraph 66 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Cambridge City Council (CCC) Local Plan Policy 2³: ‘Spatial strategy for the location of employment development’ refers to a particular emphasis on growth of the Cambridge Cluster of knowledge-based industries and institutions.
- CCC Local Plan Policy 40⁴: ‘Development and expansion of business space’ refers to proposals for new offices, research and development and research facilities being considered on their merits. Paragraph 5.9 describes North West Cambridge as one of the six key employment sites in Cambridge that will deliver new jobs and prosperity to the Cambridge area.
- Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils have policies and supporting text that confirm that “selective management” and “restrictive planning conditions” related to employment land no longer serve a planning purpose in the context of the growth and aspiration for the Greater Cambridge area.

Report Structure

1.12 To date, neither condition 18 nor 19 has been triggered through what has been brought forward in Phase 1 to date. In the 2013 OPP the type of floorspace that would trigger conditions 18 and 19 is proposed in two areas of the masterplan – Plot A and Plot B2 – to the north of the Site, and Plot J to the south east. As the UoC is now submitting an updated masterplan and planning application for the remaining phases of development, this document has been prepared in order to confirm that, in the current economic and policy context, the application of a restrictive condition on the academic and/or commercial uses at NWC no longer serves a planning purpose and will not be required for the Future Phases.

1.13 The report structure is outlined below:

- **Section 2** provides an overview of the Proposed Development and the outline application including employment uses.
- **Section 3** provides an overview of Cambridge’s updated economic context including any contextual matters of particular relevance that have changed since 2009.

³ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan. Page 23

⁴ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan. Page 142

- **Section 4** outlines the demand for academic, research and related commercial floorspace in Greater Cambridge. This includes information on current pipeline of employment provision in Greater Cambridge set against identified need. It also presents the changing market context on the type of floorspace required by the wide range of businesses linked directly and indirectly to the University, and their need for flexibility in a dynamic and innovative market.
- **Section 5** provides Vision for the proposed employment floorspace at North West Cambridge and how it will meet the needs of Greater Cambridge and the University, (directly or indirectly), supporting the university to continue to be an economic powerhouse for this nationally important region and facilitating the growth of the city region in line with its potential.

2 Proposed Development

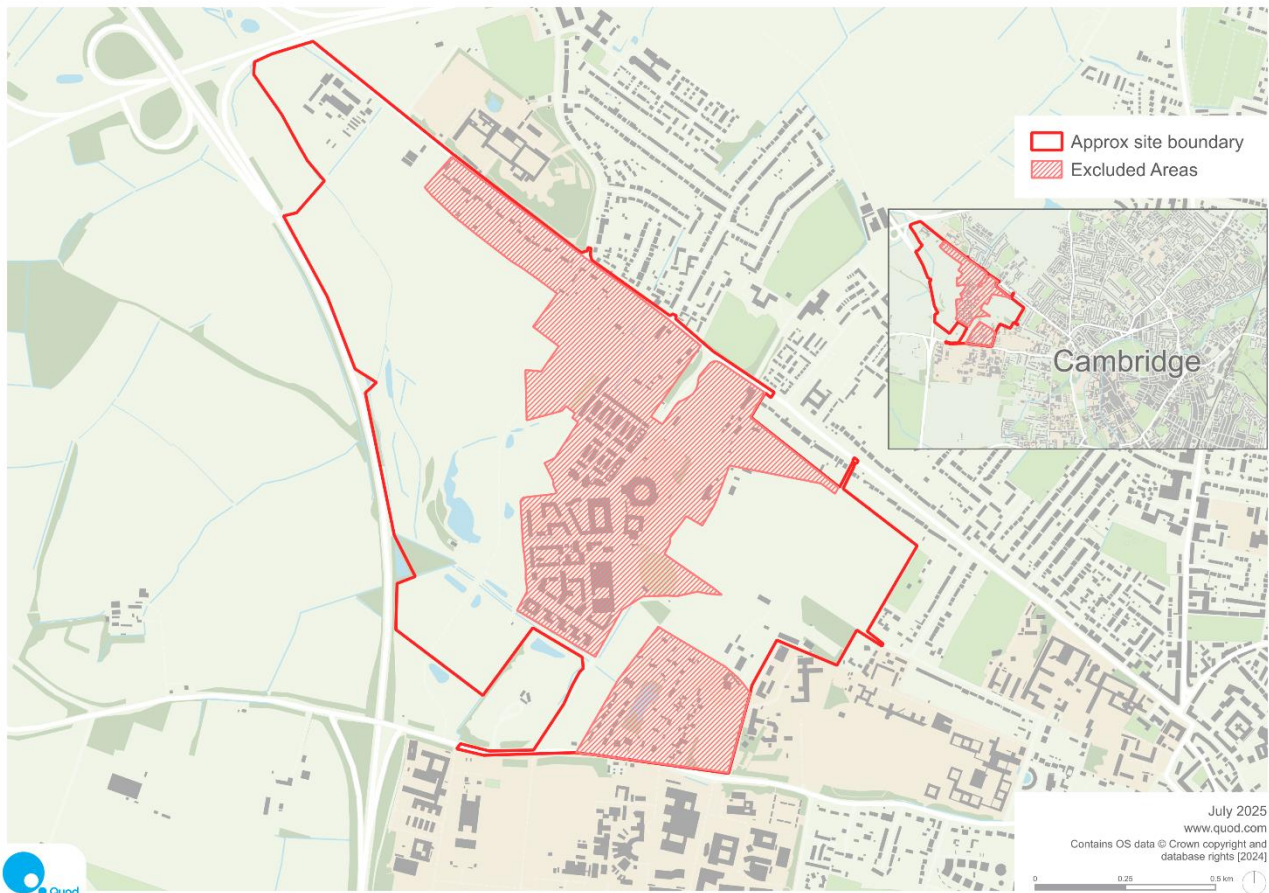
- 2.1 The Site is in Eddington on the north-western edge of the City of Cambridge, to the south of the village of Girton.
- 2.2 The University of Cambridge (UoC) is seeking Outline Planning Permission (“OPP”) for the future phases of the NWCM. The Outline Planning Application (“OPA”) seeks planning permission for:

“Outline planning application (all matters reserved except for means of access to the public highway) for a phased mixed use development, including demolition of existing buildings and structures, such development comprising

- *Living Uses, comprising residential floorspace (Class C3/C4, up to 3,800 dwellings), student accommodation (Sui Generis), Co-living (Sui Generis) and Senior Living (Class C2);*
- *Flexible Employment Floorspace (Class E(g) / Sui Generis research uses);*
- *Academic Floorspace (Class F1); and*
- *Floorspace for supporting retail, nursery, health and indoor sports and recreation uses (Class E (a) – E (f)).*
- *Public open space, public realm, sports facilities, amenity space, outdoor play, allotments and hard and soft landscaping works alongside supporting facilities;*
- *Car and cycle parking, formation of new pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular accesses and means of access and circulation routes within the site;*
- *Highway works;*
- *Site clearance, preparation and enabling works;*
- *Supporting infrastructure, plant, drainage, utility, earthworks and engineering works.”*

- 2.3 The OPA is submitted with all matters reserved to provide the necessary flexibility for the detailed design of the scheme at a later date. The drafted ‘Control Documents’ including the Development Specification document, the Parameter Plans and Design Code, will inform and control all future RMAs.

Figure 2: The Site Boundary



Employment Floorspace

- 2.4 The description of development provides flexibility as to the uses that can be undertaken on Site in line with the Development Specification document.
- 2.5 For employment floorspace the following use classes and maximum floorspaces are proposed:
- Use Class E(g) / Sui Generis Research Uses – up to 40,000 sqm (gross external area (GEA)); and,
 - Use Class F1(a) Academic Floorspace – up to 60,000 sqm (GEA).
- 2.6 The Illustrative masterplan envisages a potential breakdown of this as follows:
- E(g)/Sui Generis: Office: 17,786 sqm GEA
 - E(g)/Sui Generis: Mid-Tech: 21,674 sqm GEA
 - F1 Academic Floorspace: 59,708 sqm GEA
- 2.7 The Parameter Plans submitted as part of the Control Documents include a Land Use Parameter Plan which indicates which Building Development Zones may be suitable for each use and therefore manage where proposed uses may be delivered across the masterplan. Other employment generating floorspace (in addition to the above) is proposed with the

provision of up to 3,500 sqm (GEA) of Class E(a)-(f) uses. The indicative locations for these uses are outlined in the Land Use Parameter Plan with flexible Class E proposed adjacent to the key employment development zone in the north (adjacent to Plot A and Plot B2) and south (adjacent to Plot J). These are critical to the placemaking of North West Cambridge for both residents and businesses, but are not relevant to or further assessed in this report.

3 Economic Context

Overview

- The Cambridge economy is of national importance and this is recognised in national policy and Government statements.
- Cambridge has long been a place for innovation – and has experienced significant growth in recent years driven by this innovation and its world-leading research capability.
- The University of Cambridge has a critical role in supporting and driving innovation as a nationally significant employer directly, but also as a supporter of business through partnerships, spin-outs, and indirect agglomeration and synergistic effects.
- Being based in Cambridge provides opportunities to institutions and firms whether or not they are directly affiliated with the University – they operate as an ecosystem sharing resources, skills and talent, supply chains and markets and the University is the cornerstone of this ecosystem.
- Therefore, for the University of Cambridge to thrive, and for Cambridgeshire economy to make the most of that, it needs a strong supply of flexible business space, some of which will be directly owned and managed by the University, but also have the flexibility to be owned by other public, private, research, social and commercial institutions, all benefiting from their proximity and relationship.
- All the floorspace proposed under this planning application therefore meets the criteria of needing to be located on this site either in the national interest or because it is essential for it to be in Cambridge and/or for it to be located near university.

3.1 This section of the Academic and Commercial Needs Assessment provides more context on this, the national role of Cambridge and how the University of Cambridge is linked to that through direct and indirect links.

National Strategic Importance

- 3.2 Cambridge plays a vital role to the UK economy, delivering innovation-led economic growth. New research from the Centre for Business Research (CBR) highlights that: driven by Knowledge Intensive (KI) sectors including high-tech manufacturing and life sciences, employment growth in Greater Cambridge is far exceeding the performance of the national economy⁵.
- 3.3 The UK is falling behind other G7 countries in the race for new jobs, new industry and new technology. The Government has therefore developed a strategy that aims to “kick start” economic growth in the UK. The strategy is focused on growth through seven key pillars including increasing investment and driving up productivity.

⁵ Greater Cambridge Partnership, 2024. *The leading light for the UK economy*. GreaterCambridge.org.uk, published 9 July 2024. Available at: <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/news/the-leading-light-for-the-uk-economy> [Accessed 1 July 2025].

- 3.4 Cambridge's economy is central to government plans to support and grow the UK economy. The Oxford-Cambridge corridor is a proposed economic growth region between two world-class universities (Oxford and Cambridge) via Milton Keynes, aimed at providing innovation, housing, and infrastructure development. The region already accounts for 7% of total UK gross domestic product (GDP) and contributes over £40 billion to the UK economy⁶.
- 3.5 The aim for the Ox-Cam corridor is to create a world-leading region for emerging technology-related fields including artificial intelligence (AI), life sciences and semiconductors³.
- 3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁷ provides further support to this objective by supporting economic development in high-growth sectors including research and development. Notably, page 24 paragraph 87 sets out the planning policies and decisions should make provision for: *"clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries"*
- 3.7 Similarly, the 2025 Industrial Strategy⁸ emphasises the value of building stronger connections between innovation clusters and introduces the role to be played by the Cambridge Growth Company, helping to tackle the shortage of high-quality research facilities.

The 'Cambridge Phenomenon'

- 3.8 The University of Cambridge contributes an estimated £30 billion annually to the UK economy⁹. In 2023, the largest employment sector in Cambridge was 'Education', employing 25,500 people (22%), shortly followed by 'professional scientific & technical services' which employed 23,000 people (20%) and health which accounted for 20,500 jobs (17%).
- 3.9 Within education, the largest employment industry was 'First-degree level higher education', accounting for 62% of jobs within the 'Education' industrial employment sector, thus demonstrating the crucial role that higher education plays in Cambridge directly supporting the economy through employment.
- 3.10 However, it is not only direct employees that are relevant to the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Economies. The University plays a wider role supporting business growth in the economy in Cambridge. In the 1970s, the University created what has now become the Cambridge Science Park and set into motion a new era of collaboration between academia and the private sector¹⁰. In the years that followed, the 'Cambridge Phenomenon' began to

⁶ Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, 2025. *Minister Vallance underlines how Oxford-Cambridge corridor ambitions can boost whole UK*. GOV.UK, published 30 January 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-vallance-underlines-how-oxford-cambridge-corridor-ambitions-can-boost-whole-uk> [Accessed 1 July 2025].

⁷ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework. revised 12 December 2024 (last amended 7 February 2025)*.

⁸ Department for Business and Trade, 2025. *The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy: policy paper*. Gov.uk, published 23 June 2025. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68595e56db8e139f95652dc6/industrial_strategy_policy_paper.pdf

⁹ London Economics Ltd, 2023. *Economic and social impact of University of Cambridge: Final report*. Commissioned by the University of Cambridge and published 14 March 2023. Available at: https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/le_-_economic_and_social_impact_of_university_of_cambridge_-_final_report.pdf [Accessed 1 July 2025].

¹⁰ Cambridge Phenomenon Ltd, 2019. *The Cambridge Phenomenon*. Available at: <https://cambridgephenomenon.com/phenomenon/> [Accessed 1 July 2025].

emerge as a large number of globally significant spin-out companies and innovations across bioscience, medicine and technology began to emerge and cluster in Cambridge.

- 3.11 The significance of the University and its relation to the private sector has continued to grow, and today Cambridge has a total of 30 science parks and is home to 5,300 knowledge intensive companies, 23 of which have reached \$US1billion “unicorn” status¹¹.

Spin-out businesses

- 3.12 Co-location of businesses, anchor institutions and research firms in one place creates a network between sectors allowing for collaboration and knowledge building. The collaboration and interplay between business, research and academia leads to more benefits for innovation, productivity and economic growth than if it was dispersed across a wider area.
- 3.13 University spin-out businesses are organisations that grow from existing companies often within the research and development sector and are key drivers for innovation in the UK economy. In 2023, a report by London Economics based on the 2020-21 financial year on the economic impact of the University of Cambridge counted a total of 178 spinouts and 213 start-up companies that have connections to the University. Since 2011, the University has created a total of 175 spin-outs, second only to the University of Oxford¹².
- 3.14 Spin-outs are key drivers to innovation and economic growth and are estimated to contribute approximately £23 billion (78% of the University’s total contribution) to the UK economy¹³.
- 3.15 In 2023, London Economics published a report on the Economic Impact of the University of Cambridge¹⁴. It sets out the economic impact of knowledge exchange activities from spinout and start-up companies but also wider knowledge exchange activities including:
- Contract research
 - Consultancy services
 - Business and community courses
 - Facilities and equipment hire
 - Licencing on university IP
- 3.16 The University has a rich knowledge exchange ecosystem between sectors and between academia and the private or quasi-private sector. The University and its Colleges have taken

¹¹ University of Cambridge, 2023. *Quantifying the Cambridge Cluster*. *Cam.ac.uk*, published 2 May 2023. Available at: <https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/quantifying-the-Cambridge-Cluster> [Accessed 1 July 2025].

¹² Royal Academy of Engineering, 2025. *Spotlight on Spinouts 2025: UK academic spinout trends* [PDF]. London: Royal Academy of Engineering. Available at: https://raeng.org.uk/media/xutduqvm/spotlight_on_spinouts_2025_24_03_25.pdf [Accessed 1 July 2025].

¹³ London Economics Ltd, 2023. *Economic and social impact of University of Cambridge: Final report*. Commissioned by the University of Cambridge and published 14 March 2023. Available at: https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/le_-_economic_and_social_impact_of_university_of_cambridge_-_final_report.pdf [Accessed 1 July 2025].

¹⁴ Ibid.

a proactive leadership role in raising the innovation potential of the University and its surrounding environment. This has been reinforced by:

- The creation of the first UK science park in 1970.
- The 2005 decision to create a differentiated intellectual property policy i.e. sector or product specific approaches to IP licencing.
- Establishment of Cambridge Enterprise seed funds (to develop investment capital potential for early-stage companies) and Cambridge Innovation Capital (for follow-on investment).

3.17 Cambridge Enterprise:

- Acts as the University's commercialisation arm, working to protect, develop and move innovations from research into the commercial market. Early-stage innovations are licensed to existing companies for development or spun out as new companies.
- Offers expert advice and support in commercialisation and social enterprise, including help with academic consultancy services, the protection, development and licensing of ideas, new company and social enterprise creation, and seed funding.

3.18 Additional programmes have been set up by the University to support entrepreneurialism:

- Cambridge Enterprise Chris Abell Postdoc Competition: designed to help accelerate the creation of businesses based on Cambridge research.
- Cambridge i-Teams: Multidisciplinary teams assess the commercial viability of new technologies and product designs and to learn about the processes involved in turning an idea into a product or business.
- Accelerate Cambridge: This start-up 'accelerator' is a ten-week programme of online lectures, workshops, coaching and mentoring.
- Impulse: This 12-week programme has been designed for 'high-potential' business cases .

3.19 Cambridge Innovation Capital (CIC) was established to help accelerate research to the point of being businesses ready to receive Series A investment (the first significant round of venture capital funding).

3.20 Examples of the most successful spin out enterprises that are now functionally and financially separate to the University are:

- Solexa (human genome sequencing technology, acquired in early 2007 by Illumina);
- Cambridge Antibody Technology (CAT) (acquired in 2006 by AstraZeneca and combined with its acquisition of MedImmune to form its global biologics R&D division);
- XenSource (enterprise-class virtual infrastructure solutions, acquired in 2007 by Citrix);
- KuDOS Pharmaceuticals (a biotechnology company focused on oncology therapies, acquired in late 2005 by AstraZeneca).

3.21 All set up either to translate and commercialise IP that originated from within the University of Cambridge or where collaborations and interactions with University researchers were important in enabling the IP generated at a partner institution to be commercialised.

3.22 These start-ups can be linked to the entrepreneurial ambitions of staff and students from the University (although not necessarily based on University IP), and/or there has been investment or formal business or enterprise support from the University, including through CIC. They also help to illustrate that even where enterprises have their origin in academia or the direct work of the University, they can quickly spin out to become private enterprises operating independently or acquired by the private sector.

Agglomeration

3.23 Key to the appeal of Cambridge to the innovation and life sciences sectors is the clustering of these private-sector businesses, the University, and other internationally significant research institutes based in and around Cambridge, including:

- the Wellcome Sanger Institute,
- the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology,
- the NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre,
- Cancer Research UK,
- the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute,
- the Babraham Institute,
- the Milner Therapeutics Institute,
- the Scott Polar Research Institute, and
- the Sainsbury Laboratory.

3.24 Agglomeration allows these businesses to benefit from collaboration, knowledge exchange and skills sharing, and a pipeline of emerging talent from the University. Research published by Imperial College London (2009) suggests that agglomeration in knowledge intensive businesses can improve productivity by 8.3%¹⁵.

3.25 The benefits of this clustering effect extend to the University. The University of Cambridge Strategic Framework for the Development of the Estate (2016)¹⁶ sets out the vision for development and management of the estate and recognises the importance of collaboration with the private sector to the University, and sets the objective of stimulating collaboration. As part of this, it includes a locational strategy outlining that commercial research is planned to take place at the University's sites at West Cambridge and North West Cambridge

3.26 The combination of the factors set out previously has created a large demand for high-quality research and development floorspace within Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

3.27 While the University itself remains a critical land holding for academic and commercial enterprise, the firms that spin-out from the University, or locate here because of its

¹⁵ Graham DJ., Gibbons S., and Martin R (2009). Transport investments and the distance decay of agglomeration benefits, Working paper. Imperial College London.

¹⁶ University of Cambridge (2016). Strategic Framework for the Development of the Estate (October 2016). Available at: https://www.em.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/em_report_for_web_april17.pdf

agglomeration benefits, need a good pipeline of flexible space to meet their growing and changing needs.

- 3.28 This Section demonstrates that there is significant overlap between commercial and academic space with commercial and academic research, spin-outs and start ups all benefiting from each other and benefitting from flexibility in how they operate and what space they need. The next section goes on to present the scale of demand for these uses.

4 Greater Cambridge Academic and Commercial Growth Needs

Greater Cambridge Needs

- 4.1 The 2024 Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life Science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs report¹⁷ produced by IcenI for the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (“GCSPS”) highlights the significant demand in Cambridge for R&D and office floorspace. It notes the importance of floorspace that provides the technical premises and facilities but also offers amenity, clustering and connectivity.
- 4.2 The report states that, “*Greater Cambridge remains one of the most desirable places in the UK and the world for both the ICT and life sciences sectors. Its outstanding legacy of academic and research institutions, businesses, science parks, labour and networks continue to support innovation, indigenous growth and attract inward investment.*”
- 4.3 The study identifies a future demand of 289,700 sqm office floorspace and 600,000¹⁸ sqm R&D floorspace to be delivered in Cambridge by 2041 and identifies that urban and edge of urban locations (like North West Cambridge) benefit from connectivity to workforce and amenities. Edge of urban locations can offer the greatest mix of scale, flexibility and connectivity.
- 4.4 The 2024 Greater Cambridge Office and Laboratory Employment Trajectory (updated October 2024)¹⁹ shows the balance between supply and demand needs for Cambridge. While supply of lab space in general is projected to be good, the study highlights that there is expected to be a shortfall of 73,000 sqm of office floorspace and 150,000 sqm of R&D “stretch” space in Cambridge by 2041. Stretch space is included in the study to enable flexibility for market choice²⁰. Note that this study already includes the 40,000 sqm of Dry lab ICT/Tech/Engineering floorspace from the 2013 OPP as part of the committed supply – so it is clear that all of the proposed commercial space has already been identified as short term pipeline for Greater Cambridge needs and an assessment requiring further evidence of need is not required.

¹⁷ IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024. IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024: *Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs*. Final report commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, published September 2024. Available at: <https://consultations.gretercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2024-09/EBGCLPGSSSep24v1Sep24.pdf> [Accessed 1 July 2025].

¹⁸ IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024. IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024: *Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs*. Final report commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, published September 2024. Available at: <https://consultations.gretercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2024-09/EBGCLPGSSSep24v1Sep24.pdf> [Accessed 1 July 2025]. Para 0.17 page 13

¹⁹ IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024. *Greater Cambridge Office and Laboratory Employment Trajectory*. Final report commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, published October 2024. Available at: <https://consultations.gretercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2024-10/EBGCLPOLETOct24v1Oct24.pdf> [Accessed 1 July 2025]. Table C, page 6

²⁰ IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024. IcenI Projects Ltd, 2024: *Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs*. Final report commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, published September 2024. Available at: <https://consultations.gretercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2024-09/EBGCLPGSSSep24v1Sep24.pdf> [Accessed 1 July 2025]. Para 8.12

- 4.5 The Iceni report states that, “*Requirements will change over time and through business cycles*²¹” highlighting the importance of flexibility to respond to market demand. It makes reference to space needing to “evolve” and to be “diverse” to provide the space needed to meet changing and future demands.
- 4.6 Demand will likely include start up, scale-up, large floorspace, flexible and managed ICT space etc to meet the demands of IT, head offices and management consultancies, architectural and engineering firms and life sciences and R&D. Life sciences and R&D space includes wet lab, dry lab, ancillary office and clinical space.
- 4.7 Office space has an increasingly important role to play in research, blurring the lines between traditional office and R&D typologies. This is driven by the increasing role of computer modelling as integral to life science research. International Project Managing firm Turner and Townsend report that:
- “Research and development (R&D) campuses are increasingly marked by a fusion of lab and office space as pressures around speed of delivery mount. [...] It is important to future-proof such spaces where possible, driven by the increasing application and influence of artificial intelligence, digitalisation and automation, which is leading to a move away from traditional wet labs and siloed iterative processes²².”*
- 4.8 For mid-tech provision Iceni’s Greater Cambridge Warehouse and Industrial Space Needs report (March 2025)²³ identifies a long-term target of around 15,000 sqm. It outlines the pipeline mid-tech space planned at Cambridge Research Park, Bourn, and Sawston. It suggests that spaces here could be expanded, but a new location closer to the city with better connectivity would be ideal. Eddington (NWC) is specifically identified as a promising site that meets locational needs. Future mid-tech provision should be part of broader mixed-use allocations rather than standalone parks, due to flexible leasing needs.
- 4.9 Cambridge City Council (CCC) Local Plan²⁴ Policy 2: ‘Spatial strategy for the location of employment development’ refers to a particular emphasis on growth of the Cambridge Cluster of knowledge-based industries and institutions and other existing clusters in the city, building on existing strengths in ‘knowledge-based’ activities. Proposals that help reinforce the existing high technology and research cluster of Cambridge will be supported. Supporting paragraph 2.41 describes how the Plan seeks to deliver new employment land at six key locations in Cambridge, one of these locations is North West Cambridge.
- 4.10 CCC Local Plan Policy 40²⁵: ‘Development and expansion of business space’ refers to proposals for new offices, research and development and research facilities being considered on their merits. Supporting Table 5.2 of the Plan identifies North West Cambridge as one of the key employment sites in Cambridge with planning permission, with a net floorspace of 31,200sqm of research and development use. Paragraph 5.9 also describes North West

²¹ Ibid.

²² Turner & Townsend, June 2024. Hybrid real estate boosts life sciences innovation. Available at: <https://www.turnerandtowntsend.com/insights/hybrid-real-estate-boosts-life-sciences-innovation/>

²⁴ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan. Page 23

²⁵ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan. Page 142

Cambridge as one of the six key employment sites in Cambridge that will deliver new jobs and prosperity to the Cambridge area and that development on these sites will help grow the Cambridge Cluster. Paragraph 5.14 sets out that employment proposals in B use class that are situated in sustainable locations will be supported.

4.11 Importantly, supporting paragraph 5.15²⁶ states:

“In the past, employment policies sought to support the high technology economy through selective management of the economy, reserving employment land in Cambridge for high technology uses. There is now a significant supply of land for high technology uses, enough to last beyond the lifetime of the plan, and hence this policy emphasis has changed. Changes in national policy, combined with new local evidence, indicated that this approach was no longer the best for Cambridge. Consequently, the previous policy no longer applies and the new approach supports all types of employment development, subject to a number of criteria.”

4.12 Similarly, supporting paragraph 8.10²⁷ of SCDC Local Plan policy S/5 ‘Provision of New Jobs and Homes’ states how the Council will consider the case for removing restrictive planning conditions and planning obligations imposed under previous development plans which have served their purpose of supporting the embryonic high tech R&D sector and are not consistent with their current approach to local economic development. Paragraph 8.11 identifies opportunities for significant further employment provision at Cambridge University’s North West Cambridge development (for 100,000m² of research facilities, including up to 40,000m² for research institutes and private research facilities linked to the University).

4.13 Policy E/9: ‘Promotion of Clusters’ goes on to state that employment locations especially suited for cluster development include North-west Cambridge.

University of Cambridge Needs

4.14 The Cambridge University economic ecosystem needs space directly for its own operations but also in a wide range of flexible supporting ways, for spin-outs, for commercial and research partners and for commercial enterprises to benefit from the catalytic and synergistic benefits of proximity.

4.15 The University’s operations will need to grow and change, responding to student, economic and academic needs. The University has world leading growth plans across sectors including AI, life-sciences, engineering and business as well as an ever expanding programme of outreach, enterprise and partnership. The needs of their faculties and students will evolve and, in order to retain their global position, they will need to invest and respond. The University proposes to create, as much as possible, a series of shared facility hubs for students and researchers (e.g. lecture theatres, catering, shared offices, library) around which will be their places of study and work. Within the city centre this will involve making better use of the University’s built heritage to provide this mix around a hub. Outside the city centre the University will aim to provide shared facility hubs next to major research facilities.

²⁶ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan. Page 147

²⁷ South Cambridge District Council, 2018. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Page 172

- 4.16 At the heart of the University Estates Strategy is the principle of creating environments that maintain and enhance this successful model of collegiate study and space for researchers, students and staff to mix both at work and socially²⁸.
- 4.17 Outside of its direct operations, the University plays a critical role in supporting new business especially within emerging life science and technology growth sectors. Around half of the University's current estate is classified as research space and the University expects demand to increase exponentially as the nascent life-sciences sectors begin to gather pace.
- 4.18 There is a pipeline of R&D floorspace in the Cambridge estate – most notably Cambridge West (as noted in NWCAAP Policy NW30) but the combined, planned growth across the estate is needed in combination to support the aspirations of the University and the city. The components of the estate will offer opportunity for specialisation and mini-clusters, as well as benefiting from integration and agglomeration across the City.
- 4.19 Cambridge West will be managed by the University providing opportunity for research organisations to co-locate with the University's main science and technology faculties. It is the location of the University's globally leading research in computer science, physics and engineering, including hosting national labs in Physics and Aeronautical engineering. Purpose built by the University for inter-disciplinary research and discovery it is where a community of the brightest minds, entrepreneurs and businesses are co-located to solve some of the world's most complex problems. From the climate crisis, to clean energy, ageing populations to AI, the University has brought the brightest minds and science together to deliver extraordinary innovation, every day.
- 4.20 The Cambridge West Campus is expected to grow to be home to world class academic research in, for example, Physics, Aeronautics Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Computer Science, AI, Quantum Mechanics, Semiconductors, Future Energy, Medical Devices, operating between research and academia in a fluid way. Its success will be because it operates in a manner where these researchers are activated to meet, connect, collaborate and implement new ideas collectively. It will be a place where PhD students, investors, experienced engineers and leading executives can all meet for a coffee to brainstorm a solution for the problems of today and tomorrow and be adjacent to the facilities, labs and partners needed to translate those discussions into action.
- 4.21 North West Cambridge will include accommodation for:
- University spin-outs
 - Other spin-outs and start-ups
 - Scale-up and growth focused businesses
 - Corporate venturing firms
 - Corporate R&D centres either in standalone or shared buildings

²⁸ University of Cambridge, 2016. Strategic Framework for the Development of the Estate Para 1.6

- 4.22 The overarching vision for North West Cambridge is for commercial and academic uses providing synergies and connectivity to Cambridge West. They will not compete; both are needed to meet Cambridge's growth needs as identified in the previous section.
- 4.23 The Planning Application is deliberately flexible, as agility and responsiveness is one of the key drivers in innovation success, but the University has a vision of how it is likely to come forward, and how it will complement North West Cambridge and the wider University and city offering.
- 4.24 The University envisages that an incubator or start-up would obtain series A/B funding, take a small fitted-lab in Cambridge West, develop, innovate and as the product gathers pace the North West commercial offering (mid-tech) enables the expansion towards a larger, non-fitted premises. This would retain talent within the Cambridge ecosystem with no-need to relocate out of the City (or out of the UK) as a result of North West Cambridge providing agile, sector-led solutions.
- 4.25 They are thus complementary. The combined and joined-up objectives of the sites will be to:
- Develop a highly visible ecosystem for R&D, which is a global exemplar
 - Develop a high-quality & sustainable physical environment
 - Create an excellent vibrant community that attracts & retains high-quality staff
 - Deliver an economic return to the University
 - Encourage interaction between the University and industry to facilitate collaboration
- 4.26 The sites, combined, would be in a strong position to attract four types of occupants closely related to and benefiting from the relationship to the University:
- Locally based start-ups
 - University & Corporate spin-outs and entrepreneurs looking to establish and build R&D businesses
 - Locally based and incoming SME businesses keen to work with academic partners and alongside other commercial organisations
 - National and international companies looking to locate their HQ & R&D centres in Cambridge as the location of choice because of the wide range of features and benefits on offer – not least the opportunity to interact with start-up SME businesses and academic faculty
- 4.27 This section and the one that preceded it confirm:
- Academic and commercial floorspace work together in mutually reinforcing and flexible ways.
 - There is a clear and demonstrable (indeed urgent and priority) need for the commercial and academic floorspace proposed at North West Cambridge and, in the context of local evidence and national policy, a further needs assessment is not required.

4.28 More detail on the North West Cambridge vision and how it responds to these needs is set out in the next section.

5 NWC Academic and Commercial Vision

- 5.1 The NWC vision is to create a new district and extension to the City centred around a mixed academic and urban community and be a place that is sustainable, long-lasting and ambitious, offering a high quality of life to enhance both City and University.
- 5.2 The NWC site provides an opportunity for larger, more established businesses that may not have a need to be directly co-located next to University faculties but do need access to community facilities and amenities already provided in Eddington.
- 5.3 North West Cambridge will provide a complementary, grow-on offer for Cambridge West, and the wider Cambridge University estate and Greater Cambridge-wide commercial offer. It will be integrated with research and residential floorspace, parks, sports and recreational facilities, community facilities (i.e. nursery) and excellent transport connections facilitated by the network of proposed mobility hubs. This builds on the success of Phase 1 which has cemented the University's reputation for providing sustainable residential-led mixed use development. The London Economics report on the impact of the University²⁹ highlights the essential role that affordable housing has played in supporting growth. Key worker housing and community infrastructure in Phase 1 (including school, nursery, community facility) has supported staff recruitment and retention helping the University to recruit the best talent from across the UK and the globe.
- 5.4 As previously set out, this planning application is in Outline and there is flexibility in how the research and commercial floorspace will come forward. The exact mix of Class E(g) / Sui Generis Research Uses will be determined through Reserved Matters Applications (RMA) in response to market demand as each plot comes forward. An illustrative, vision-led scheme developed suggests a floorspace split of approximately 60% mid-tech and 40% office / Class E(g). This flexibility is critical to the success of place in the medium to long term, so the University can be agile enough to respond to the changing needs of their researchers, partners and tenants. Despite this flexibility there is a strong vision which underpins the proposals.
- 5.5 The University has not identified specific occupiers. Demand is ever evolving and they will engage in discussions with the market closer to RMA stage to understand likely occupiers and any bespoke design requirements prior to commencement.
- 5.6 The University will hold freehold ownership of these commercial and research elements and leases will be offered to appropriate operators in line with the site-wide vision. The estate management strategy will provide a distinct management structure and active curation for commercial and research elements.
- 5.7 The following sections show a plot by plot vision for the commercial and academic areas. These should be read alongside the Land Use Parameter Plan (PP4). The dark orange zones

²⁹ London Economics Ltd, 2023. *Economic and social impact of University of Cambridge: Final report*. Commissioned by the University of Cambridge and published 14 March 2023. Available at: https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/le-economic_and_social_impact_of_university_of_cambridge_-_final_report.pdf [Accessed 1 July 2025].

are Flexible Employment Floorspace (Class E(g) /Sui Generis research uses). The yellow and orange hashed zones are mixed use including some Flexible Employment Floorspace (Class E(g) /Sui Generis research uses). The blue zone is Academic Floorspace (Class F1), student accommodation (Sui Generis) and/or Co-living (Sui Generis).

- 5.8 Plot A, or Innovation Street, is the northernmost plot. B2 is the hashed orange/yellow zone. Plot J is in blue.

Figure 3: Proposed Parameter Plan 4: Land Use

Plot A, Innovation Street Vision : Midtech

- 5.9 Mid-tech is an emerging typology providing a solution between industrial and office, designed to improve residential-commercial integration. Mid-tech enables a flexibility in design and floorplate enabling a wide, diverse range of occupiers.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MID-TECH



The mid-tech sector originally evolved from a recognised demand for a new genre of high-quality industrial style buildings to be constructed within established business park settings.

Typically, a mid-tech unit can be described as a high specification industrial unit, with a high power supply and high level of office content in comparison to a standard warehouse. Increasingly mid-tech units are becoming more sophisticated in appearance with higher specifications as rents rise. The key driver of mid-tech units is being flexible and able to provide the widest range of R&D occupier needs ranging from a creative office space, storage and manufacturing, to incorporating a full CL2 lab fit out.

Occupiers in demand of this unit span a wide range of science and technology types. Occupier examples in Cambridge have included:



What does a *typical mid-tech product* include:

- Double height, with mezzanine cover of 30-50% but designed to be flexible to 100% cover
- Ability to incorporate a dry lab or CL2 lab fit out
- Wide unit/suite sizes ranging from c. 1,000 sq ft – 30,000 sq ft +
- Loading doors and lifts
- High quality office accommodation and glazed frontage
- Secure yards with space for compounds and storage
- Power availability
- Can be Use Class E or Sui Generis



- 5.10 In the Illustrative Scheme, Plot A incorporates flexible mid-tech uses catering to the widest range of R&D occupier needs ranging from a creative office space, storage and manufacturing, to incorporating a full CL2 lab fit out. The introduction of mid-tech at this location will enable growing tech, R&D and incubator occupiers initially located at Cambridge West seeking additional space to relocate and grow within the Cambridge ecosystem. Certain occupiers will naturally compliment high density laboratory and office uses within Cambridge West and interconnectivity and integration between these emerging employment clusters will be key to the success of these parcels in lieu of both the immediate residential-led North-West Cambridge neighbourhood and Cambridge West. By prioritising people over vehicles, the masterplan seeks to foster a safer, more engaging street scene that encourages social interaction.

- 5.11 The Development Plot will be a landscaped and parkland setting providing quality of place to future occupiers and employees. Indicative unit specifications include targeting BREEAM Excellent supporting long-term sustainability and EPC A energy efficiency. Although access would be separate and independent from the wider masterplan, employees and researchers would benefit from North West Cambridge's placemaking.

Plot B2 Vision – Office / co-working cluster

- 5.12 In the Illustrative Scheme, this Plot provides high-quality office, co-working, conference facilities alongside flexible Class E(a)-(f) uses including retail and nursery facilities. This space would complement the local centre offer of the flexible Class E uses providing a successful place for individuals to work and live – many of whom will have a strong existing or former relationship with the University, setting out on their own research or business path.
- 5.13 The offer here is likely to support a range of occupiers and provide working space for North West Cambridge residents through the provision of co-working facilities. Co-locating co-working space alongside office uses here would provide indirect benefits to organisations and individuals choosing to base themselves here as they benefit from networking and knowledge sharing between enterprise, university and research.
- 5.14 As indicated previously in this report ("R&D campuses are increasingly marked by a fusion of lab and office space as pressures around speed of delivery mount"), office space typologies are increasingly important to be co-located or integrated with research space.

Plot J Vision: Academic-led Floorspace

- 5.15 It is vital for the University, the city of Cambridge and the wider UK economy that Cambridge retains its position amongst the world's pre-eminent Universities. As set out above, the means that the University must have options to grow and evolve in response to faculty and student needs. This will require the strategic management of its portfolio, repurposing some buildings that are no longer fit for purpose and growing where needed. A key part of this vision, set out in its *Strategic Framework for the Development of the Estate* is to "build more complete communities where people can work and interact nearby so that they develop a true sense of belonging and have every opportunity to meet and exchange ideas. These will be built on a human scale to encourage human interaction so that great people and great ideas can collide."
- 5.16 Within the city centre this will involve making better use of the University's built heritage to provide this mix around a hub. Outside the city centre the University will aim to provide shared facility hubs next to major research facilities.
- 5.17 A world class University in the heart of Cambridge enhances the quality of life of Cambridge residents, not just economically but also culturally, socially and environmentally. North West Cambridge is a key part of this vision for the co-location and integration of research, academia and social life. The University will develop Plot J as an academic-led complementary offer to Cambridge West.
- 5.18 The University of Cambridge currently intends to retain Development Plot J as a long term strategic land-holding facilitating future faculty, academic and related growth.

- 5.19 The academic floorspace would be accompanied by purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) and/or co-living as complementary land uses.
- 5.20 The economic importance of the University continuing to grow and evolve is clear, and a further needs assessment for academic floorspace is not required.

Conclusions

- 5.21 This Assessment sets out to confirm that the University has a clear and justified need for delivery of academic and commercial (E(g) and Sui Generis floorspace at NWC. The delivery of this floorspace would support organisations and businesses that benefit from this location close to the University of Cambridge.
- 5.22 Cambridge is a global hub for innovation, world-class research and development and plays a vital role in the UK economy supporting economic growth. The University is key to this success. The University of Cambridge is a major employer but also a catalyst for business growth through partnerships, spin-outs, and its influence on the wider innovation ecosystem.
- 5.23 Cambridge functions as a collaborative ecosystem, where institutions and firms (whether directly related to the University or not) benefit from shared resources, talent, and proximity to the University. To sustain this ecosystem, there is a need for flexible business space, some of which will be University-managed, but also open to other public, private, and research entities.
- 5.24 Studies considering the Greater Cambridge floorspace needs note that by 2041 projected needs will include: 289,700 sqm of office space and 600,000 sqm of R&D space. Despite good lab space supply, there will be a shortfall of 73,000 sqm office space and 150,000 sqm R&D “stretch” space. The 40,000 sqm of dry lab ICT/Tech/engineering space from the 2013 OPP is also already identified as part of the short-term pipeline.
- 5.25 North West Cambridge is identified as a key location due to its connectivity, flexibility, and proximity to amenities and talent.
- 5.26 The updated masterplan is designed to meet planning policy requirements and support the University’s strategic growth, while ensuring that development is appropriately phased and aligned with local housing demands delivering key worker housing and student accommodation. The University’s estate strategy supports clustering with the commercial and research floorspace planned at NWC and nearby West Cambridge.
- 5.27 These factors combined confirm the clear and demonstrable need for academic and commercial floorspace at North West Cambridge, and confirm there is no requirement for a further needs assessment.



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