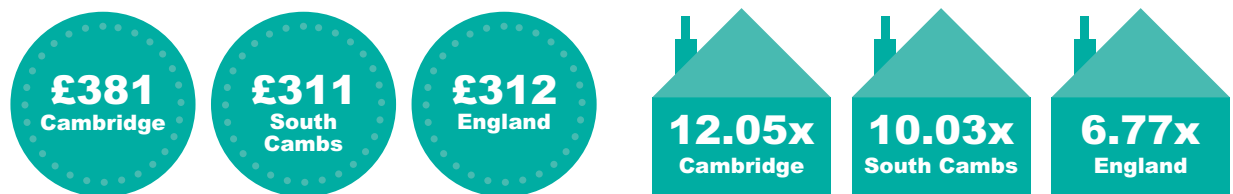
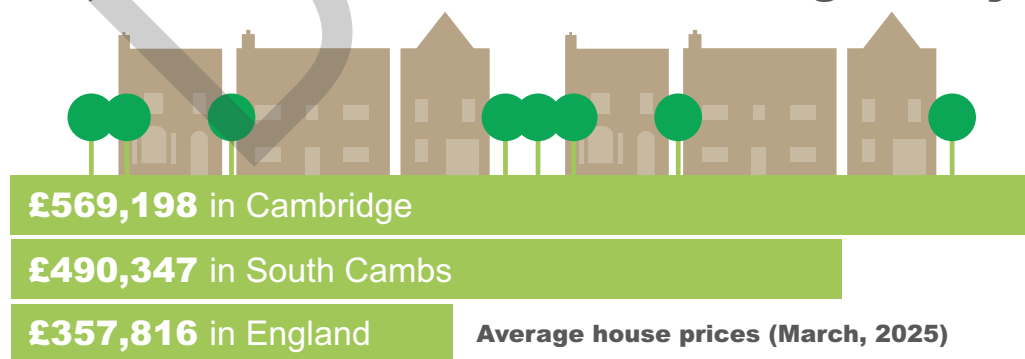


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131,612 homes in Greater Cambridge today



Median private weekly rent for a 2 bed home

Lower quartile house price to income ratio

Introduction

- 9.1 In the Homes theme we set out policies that would be applied when considering planning applications for new housing developments.

How community engagement helped shape the homes policies

- 9.2 Through consultation feedback you told us about concerns about potential levels of development, but also whether we were planning for enough homes, particularly to reflect the growing economy. You told us about the importance of delivering affordable housing, and homes to meet a variety of needs including for younger and older people.

Our strategic priority for our homes policies

- 9.3 **Strategic Priority:** Plan for enough housing to meet our needs, including significant quantities of housing that is affordable to rent and buy, and different kinds of homes to suit our diverse communities.

-
- 9.4 We want our local plan to deliver high-quality, affordable housing in the right places. The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy sets out our high-level approach to tackling these challenges, including through the building of a new generation of council homes, promoting the development of affordable homes and the delivery of a co-ordinated effort to reduce homelessness. It has guided our policies in this local plan.

- 9.5 As well as planning to meet the overall need in terms of the number of new homes, our policies seek to ensure that the right mix of house types and tenure is delivered. We want homes to be of a high quality, we therefore set minimum sizes for rooms and outdoor space. We require homes to be adaptable, so they can meet need through people's lives.

- 9.6 We require a high proportion of new homes to be Affordable Housing, provided at a cost below market rates to meet the needs of those who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices. Our policies support innovative housing products, such as self-build, built to rent and co-living. We also require housing to meet specific needs including for older people and for Gypsies and Travellers.

What our homes policies do

- Require 40% of housing on most development schemes to be delivered as Affordable Housing;
- Support delivery of rural exception sites, which help deliver affordable housing in rural communities;
- Require a varied choice, type and mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community;
- Control development of garden land to ensure the quality of places are protected;
- Set minimum standards for internal spaces within new homes, and for external private and shared amenity space;
- Require developments to help meet the need for specialist housing, such as for older people;
- Help people find plots for self or custom build homes, by requiring a proportion of large development to include plots;
- Guide the development of build to rent and co-living schemes to ensure they are of a high quality and appropriately managed;
- Set criteria and standards that proposals for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) that require planning permission;
- Support appropriately located purpose built student accommodation where there is a need and where it doesn't impact on the supply of family housing;
- Identifies the circumstances where new houses in the countryside would be supported;
- Provides guidance on where residential boat moorings could be delivered and the standards they would need to meet;
- Guides development of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots.

Policy H/AH: Affordable housing

What this policy does

- 9.7** This policy sets out how affordable housing will be delivered on new housing developments, including specifying the size of developments on which affordable homes will be provided and the proportion of affordable homes required, and setting out the tenures of affordable housing required to address identified needs.

Policy H/AH: Affordable housing

Self-contained dwellings and co-living developments

1. All major developments for housing will provide at least 40% of the new homes on site as affordable housing, unless a different requirement is set out within the allocation policy or the development is on land within the Green Belt. This applies to all residential developments of self-contained dwellings, including those for Build to Rent or specialist accommodation, and also to Co-living developments for the equivalent of 10 or more dwellings (calculated using the other communal accommodation units to dwellings ratio in the Housing Delivery Test).
2. Within the affordable housing secured on major developments for housing (except for within Build to Rent and Co-living developments), the proportions of each affordable housing tenure will be provided as set out in Table 00.

Total number of new dwellings	Affordable housing tenures
10-14 dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% social and affordable rent homes, and • 25% shared ownership homes, or other affordable
15 dwellings or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% affordable rent homes, • 10% social rent homes, and • 25% shared ownership homes, or other affordable

Table 00: Affordable housing tenures

3. All affordable housing secured within Build to Rent and Co-living developments will be provided as Affordable Private Rent homes.

4. Any major developments for housing that are on land within the Green Belt will provide at least 50% of the new homes on the site as affordable housing, in accordance with the Golden Rules set out in national planning policy and guidance.
5. New affordable homes will be:
 - a. limited to people in need of affordable housing;
 - b. available in perpetuity (wherever possible); and
 - c. tenure blind in design so that they are indistinguishable from any other housing tenures and well-integrated with market units on the site.

Additionally, with the exception of affordable homes provided on Co-living developments, new affordable homes will be:

- d. phased proportionally within the build out of the development to enable proper integration and timely provision; and
- e. designed to accommodate different family compositions, with the bedspaces per dwelling for social and affordable rent homes in line with Table 00.

Number of bedrooms	Minimum number of bedspaces
1-bedroom	2 bedspaces
2-bedroom	At least 4 bedspaces
3-bedroom	At least 5 bedspaces
4-bedroom	At least 6 bedspaces
5-bedroom	At least 7 bedspaces

Table 00: Bedrooms and minimum number of bedspaces for social and affordable homes

6. Within major developments for housing, the new affordable homes must be dispersed in small groups or clusters that:
 - a. create an even distribution of affordable housing throughout the development as a whole, and when considered in combination with neighbouring developments;
 - b. contain a mix of affordable housing tenures and a mix in the number of bedrooms; and
 - c. are proportionate in size to the overall size of the development, having regard to the type and location of the housing being provided.
7. The off-site provision of affordable housing or a financial contribution (commuted sum) for affordable housing will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. on-site provision would not be practicable;
 - b. the proposed alternative to on-site provision would be more effective in achieving a mixed and balanced community; and

- c. the financial contribution for, or off-site provision of, affordable housing is at least equivalent to the increased development value resulting from affordable homes not being provided on-site, unless the applicant's viability assessment provides compelling evidence that this would not be viable.
8. Where a larger site has been subdivided into smaller development parcels, the major developments threshold and the requirement for 40% of new homes to be affordable housing will apply to the site as a whole.

Student accommodation

9. Any developments of student bedrooms that are equivalent to 10 or more dwellings (calculated using the student accommodation bedrooms to dwellings ratio in the Housing Delivery Test) or any developments of 10 or more self-contained student units will provide a financial contribution for the off-site provision of affordable housing that is equivalent to at least 40% of the bedrooms or units being affordable. On-site delivery of affordable housing can be provided if both the Council(s) and the University agree that this is appropriate.
10. An affordable housing contribution will not be sought where the proposed development is:
 - a. within an existing university or college campus site, or
 - b. for the redevelopment of existing purpose-built student accommodation owned by a university or college, and which will continue to be owned by a university or college after the redevelopment to provide student accommodation to meet its needs.

Supporting information

9.8

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire have been identified by the Government as areas of high affordability pressure and our evidence shows that there is an acute need for affordable housing in Greater Cambridge. The policy therefore seeks to maximise the supply of new affordable housing by requiring affordable housing on all major developments for housing that are providing self-contained dwellings, irrespective of their use class. Major developments for housing that are specifically for retirement living or other forms of specialist accommodation, Build to Rent, and Houses in Multiple Occupation, will therefore be expected to contribute towards the delivery of affordable housing.

- 9.9** The policy also requires affordable units to be provided within Co-living developments. Although these developments are not providing self-contained dwellings, they are contributing towards meeting our overall housing requirement and it is therefore important that they also contribute towards meeting Greater Cambridge's affordable housing need. As they are likely to be delivered as a form of Build to Rent, it is appropriate to seek the affordable units on-site and that they are provided following the same principles as Affordable Private Rent homes.
- 9.10** Where student accommodation is delivered within an existing university or college campus, the policy exempts such development from contributing towards affordable housing, as other types of housing would not normally be delivered in these locations. However, student accommodation brought forward on other off-campus sites could equally be suitable for other types of housing, therefore it is important that such developments are required to contribute towards meeting our affordable housing need. This would also apply where an existing university or college campus is redeveloped for other types of housing. Recognising that the provision of affordable housing on-site within a development for student accommodation is unlikely to be achievable due to management issues, a financial contribution would be sought that is comparable to the on-site delivery of affordable housing within other residential schemes.
- 9.11** The thresholds at which affordable housing must be provided on any Co-living or student accommodation developments are in line with national planning policy, which allows for affordable housing to be sought on any major developments for housing i.e. 10 or more dwellings. The number of Co-living units and student bedrooms should be converted to a dwelling equivalent using the ratio for either other communal accommodation or student accommodation set out within the Housing Delivery Test rulebook. This is currently 1.9 units to one dwelling for other communal accommodation (which will be used for Co-living developments) and 2.4 bedrooms to one dwelling for student accommodation.
- 9.12** As set out in national planning policy and guidance, vacant buildings credit will apply to any major developments for housing on land outside of the Green Belt but will not apply to any major developments for housing on land within the Green Belt.
- 9.13** New affordable housing for sale or rent will be limited to those whose needs are not met by market housing, and taking account of the criteria set out in national planning policy for each of the different tenures of affordable housing. The majority of the identified need is for rented affordable housing, rather than affordable home ownership, and therefore it is important that the Councils prioritise the delivery of affordable housing for rent. The provision of genuinely affordable housing is also a priority for both Councils. The policy therefore seeks to secure an affordable housing tenure mix that will meet a wide range of housing needs and create mixed and balanced communities, providing for different types of households and household incomes.
- 9.14** The specific requirements in terms of price caps and discounts for First Homes, which are an affordable home ownership tenure, mean that they are unlikely to be a suitable affordable housing tenure on the majority of new developments in Greater Cambridge.
- 9.15** Viability will be considered as set out in national planning policy and guidance, and in accordance with Policy I/ID: Infrastructure and Delivery.

- 9.16** To align with the Councils' Lettings Policies and Local Housing Allowance criteria, minimum bedspaces are set out for different numbers of bedrooms to accommodate different family compositions and to enable occupancy to be maximised.
- 9.17** Local Lettings Plans will be required for affordable rented and social rented homes where necessary to achieve mixed and balanced communities and/or to prioritise affordable housing for local workers or for specific groups of people. The Local Lettings Plan must be agreed by the Housing Team(s) at the Council(s) and will be published on their websites.
- 9.18** The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy sets out the Councils' priorities to tackle the housing challenges facing the area and is a material consideration in any planning decisions. The current Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy covers 2024-2029.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

Policy H/ES:

Exception sites for affordable housing

What this policy does

- 9.19** This policy sets out the circumstances in which Rural Exception Sites for affordable housing and First Homes Exception Sites in South Cambridgeshire will be supported.

Policy H/ES: Exception sites for affordable housing

1. Rural Exception Sites to meet identified local housing needs in rural parishes on small sites adjoining a defined development extent of a Rural Centre, Minor Rural Centre, Group Village or Infill Village will be permitted subject to:
 - a. there being demonstrable social or economic need for affordable housing for local residents which cannot be met in any other way, which can reasonably be expected to persist in the long term, and which is evidenced by an independent local housing needs assessment;
 - b. the number, size, design, mix and tenure of affordable homes being limited to, and reflecting, identified local needs, as evidenced by an independent housing needs assessment;
 - c. the development being of a scale and location appropriate to the size, facilities and character of the settlement. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby and meet housing need within a wider catchment area where that area has been agreed with the Council;
 - d. for sites at settlements within or adjoining the Green Belt, that no alternative sites exist that would have less impact on Green Belt purposes; and
 - e. the affordable homes being secured in perpetuity for occupation by those in need of affordable housing. Mortgagee in Possession clauses will be allowed to enable development to proceed.
2. Rural Exception Sites will be delivered by, or in partnership with, Registered Providers or community-led housing groups and must be named in the relevant s106 agreement.
3. First Homes Exception Sites to meet identified local housing needs on small sites adjoining a defined development extent in South Cambridgeshire will be permitted subject to:

- a. demonstration that a First Homes Exception Site is a more appropriate development for the proposed site than a rural exception site;
 - b. the development being of a scale and location appropriate to the size, facilities and character of the settlement;
 - c. the development being located outside of the Green Belt;
 - d. the number and size of the First Homes being commensurate with demand for First Homes within South Cambridgeshire, that there is a realistic likelihood that all homes will be occupied by people with a local connection to South Cambridgeshire, and that this is evidenced by an independent housing needs assessment; and
 - e. any other forms of affordable housing proposed within a First Homes Exception Site being acceptable based on evidence of local need from the adjoining settlement for those tenures of affordable homes.
4. All affordable homes on either a Rural Exception Site or a First Homes Exception Site will be subject to a local connection criteria policy.
- a. For a Rural Exception Site the local area is defined as the parish in which the scheme is located (or village if more appropriate), and for a First Homes Exception Site the local area is defined as being South Cambridgeshire.
 - b. For Rural Exception Sites the local connection criteria will be applied for 3 months before a cascade system will be used.
 - c. For First Homes Exception Sites the local connection criteria will be applied for 3 months, but for the first 4 weeks of this period priority will be given to people with a local connection to the adjoining village.
 - d. An applicant for an affordable home on either a Rural Exception Site or a First Homes Exception Site will be considered to have a connection to the local area if they meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - i. the applicant is in full time or part time employment in the relevant local area for 16 hours or more per week;
 - ii. the applicant has lived in the relevant local area for at least 6 of the last 12 months, or 3 of the last 5 years;
 - iii. the applicant has family members who have been resident in the relevant local area for a period of 5 years or longer and are currently resident in the relevant local authority area. Family members are defined as parents, adult sons and adult daughters, or brothers or sisters. Other family associations will be considered on a case-by-case basis; or
 - iv. there are special circumstances that the council considers give rise to a local connection.

5. In order to facilitate the delivery of significant additional affordable housing the Council will consider allowing some market housing on rural exception sites and First Homes Exception Sites where demonstrated to be necessary on viability or deliverability grounds:
 - a. where market housing is proposed on Rural Exception Sites or First Homes Exception Sites it should be of a scale and mix appropriate to the exception site and designed to integrate with the affordable housing;
 - b. viability should be based on exception site land values; and
 - c. the delivery of any market housing through custom and self build plots will be encouraged.
-

Supporting information

- 9.20** There is a shortage of affordable housing in Greater Cambridge. There is a particularly acute shortage in many rural communities where the Right to Buy is an attractive option to tenants and few new affordable homes have been built due to national policy not requiring affordable housing on developments of less than 10 homes. Rural Exception Sites have been delivered successfully over many years in South Cambridgeshire.
- 9.21** Exception sites deliver affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be permitted for housing. They are located adjacent to an existing settlement and have not been allocated for housing within a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Rural Exception Sites support local communities by prioritising the new affordable homes for people with a local connection to the parish or village concerned. This is achieved by applying the local connection criteria set out in the policy. Priority is given to applicants who meet the criteria. Where there are no suitable applicants meeting the criteria the definition of local is widened to include neighbouring parishes and / or the district, and this will be set out in the s106 agreement. The local connection criteria policy is applied each time an affordable home on a rural exception site becomes available.
- 9.22** Some villages are very small and whilst housing need may be acute for the people concerned it may not be large enough in scale to support a viable Rural Exception Site scheme. It may be appropriate, sometimes, to develop a scheme in one village that can support a small cluster of villages thereby supporting local facilities that are serving a catchment beyond the village where they are based. Any clusters of villages or parishes should be agreed with the Council and the housing needs assessment will need to cover the agreed area. The villages selected for this approach should be in close proximity, ideally with sustainable transport connections, and with some form of functional relationship such as school or GP surgery catchment areas.
- 9.23** The government introduced the concept of a First Homes Exception Site to replace entry-level exception sites. Although, First Homes Exception Sites will comprise primarily First Homes they can include other affordable housing tenures where there is evidence of need.

- 9.24** Government planning guidance on First Homes allows local authorities to apply their own eligibility criteria such as a local connection criteria, a local income cap or key worker criteria. The draft plan applies the national criteria to First Homes regarding price caps, household income caps and discount levels. However, a specific local connection criteria has been included in the policy. In line with Planning Practice Guidance, these local eligibility criteria will apply for 3 months from when a home is first marketed. If a suitable buyer has not reserved a home after this point, the eligibility criteria will revert to the national criteria. To maximise the number of homes on a First Homes Exception Site that are occupied by households with a local connection to the village concerned priority will be given to these households for the first 4 weeks within the 3 month period.
- 9.25** To demonstrate why a First Homes Exception Site is better suited than a Rural Exception Site, an applicant must demonstrate that the availability of First Homes or other affordable home ownership tenures is insufficient within the village of the proposed development to cater for the needs of first-time buyers. In terms of scale, First Homes Exception Sites should generally be no larger than a typical rural exception site of between 10 and 20 homes, bearing in mind that they are likely to be all one tenure and smaller homes.
- 9.26** The introduction of a First Homes Exception Site component, with locally specific criteria to the policy, will ensure the policy is complementary to requirements already set out in national planning policy and will support schemes to be more tailored to local needs within Greater Cambridge. It is important that the policy encourages Rural Exception Sites and First Homes Exception Sites to work in tandem enabling schemes to come forward across all settlement sizes that address local needs but are also sympathetic to local constraints. One key difference between Rural Exception Sites and First Homes Exception Sites is that national planning policy allows Rural Exception Sites to be developed in the Green Belt under certain circumstances whereas First Homes Exception Sites are not permitted within the Green Belt.
- 9.27** The primary focus of exception sites is to address identified need for affordable housing. Therefore, any market housing should be the minimum required to make a scheme viable and should be supported by a viability assessment which is transparent and complies with relevant national or local planning policy and guidance applicable at the time. Where a viability assessment has been submitted the Council will undertake an independent review of that appraisal for which the applicant will bear the cost.
- 9.28** Exception sites work by granting planning permission on a site that would not otherwise be acceptable for residential development. As a result, the land should not attract residential land value. The Registered Provider therefore pays a price higher than the existing land use value (typically agricultural) but lower than residential value. The lower land value enables the Registered Housing Provider to build high quality homes than can be rented at a discounted level.
- 9.29** Exception sites, by definition, tend to be on the edge of a settlement and can therefore be in sensitive locations. The impact of the proposed development on village character and the rural landscape will be key considerations in determining any planning application. Proposals to extend exception sites will be considered on their merits having regard to the overall scale of the site that would be created when combined with the original development and the cumulative visual impact.

- 9.30** Given the shortfall in custom and self build plots in Greater Cambridge, it is considered reasonable to encourage this tenure where market housing is needed for viability reasons.
- 9.31** Neighbourhood Plans may include exception site policies with more locally specific criteria to encourage developments to better integrate with and support local communities. This could include support for community-led housing development.
- 9.32** This policy does not specifically relate to exception sites for community-led development, which are supported by national planning policy. There are no additional local requirements for these types of development beyond those set out in national planning policy.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Greater Cambridge – A First Homes Interim Position Statement (March 2022)

Policy H/HM: Housing mix

What this policy does

- 9.33** This policy sets out the mix of housing to be provided by new development, to ensure that new homes are generally of a size and type that meet the housing needs of different groups in the community.

Policy H/HM: Housing mix

1. A varied choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community, including families with children, older people, those seeking their first home, people wishing to build their own homes, people seeking private rented sector housing, and people with disabilities. Unless an alternative mix has been justified as part of a planning application, developments of 10 or more units should provide the following housing mix:

For Cambridge:

Market housing			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
10%	35%	35%	20%
Discounted market housing and other affordable routes to homeownership			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
20%	45%	25%	10%
Social rent, affordable rent, and affordable private rent			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
20%	35%	30%	15%

For South Cambridgeshire:

Market housing			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
5%	30%	40%	25%
Discounted market housing and other affordable routes to homeownership			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
15%	45%	30%	10%
Social rent, affordable rent, and affordable private rent			
1-bedroom homes	2-bedroom homes	3-bedroom homes	Homes with 4 or more bedrooms
20%	35%	35%	10%

2. Deviations from the above housing mixes will be allowed where an alternative mix is justified, having regard to the location and character of the area, the built form of the new development, the nature or type of development being proposed, the viability of delivery given site-specific constraints or requirements, changes in affordable and market housing demand in the local area, and the existing housing mix in the surrounding area.
3. The mix of homes to be provided on sites of 9 homes or fewer must take account of housing demand in the local area, the existing housing mix in the surrounding area, and the character of the local area.
4. Development proposals will be supported where a mix of housing types (e.g. houses, flats and bungalows) are provided proportionally across all market and affordable tenures, taking account of the local character and built form and up-to-date evidence of housing need.

Why this policy is needed

- 9.34** In order to deliver a wide choice of high-quality homes that help to satisfy a diverse range of housing needs and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, it is important that the plan promotes a mix of housing based on the needs of different groups in the community.

- 9.35** The housing stock across Greater Cambridgeshire has traditionally comprised larger detached or semi-detached homes. The high cost of housing locally also affects the size of homes that people can afford to live in, even if they would prefer or have a need for a particular property size; it is important to provide for everyone's needs in order to maintain mixed and balanced communities. Therefore, the policy sets out housing mix requirements for residential development of 10 or more dwelling units in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, which should be used as the basis for the housing mix of new developments, unless an alternative mix can be justified. For proposals of 9 or fewer dwelling units, the Local Planning Authority will expect applicants to justify their proposals on the basis of local needs and circumstances.
- 9.36** There are cases where the above housing mix may not be suitable in meeting a particular, identified need; the housing mix may not be appropriate to apply to developments of a nature intended for a particular community need, including student accommodation, some residential institutions, custom and self-build housing, or other types of specialist housing for different groups in the community (such as older people, looked-after children, or other groups identified by national planning policy). Deviations from the stated housing mix may also be allowed if an alternative housing mix can be justified because of the site's location and site constraints, such as within the centre of Cambridge where a higher density of development may be more appropriate or in locations where an alternative mix is needed to ensure the development is viable.
- 9.37** Deviations from the housing mix stated within the policy will only be allowed where sufficient, robust evidence is provided as part of a planning application to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- 9.38** In some special circumstances, the Local Planning Authority may use planning conditions or other planning instruments to protect the housing mix of developments that have been designed to meet a particular community need.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

Policy H/GL:

Garden land and subdivision of existing plots

What this policy does

- 9.39** This policy sets out criteria to determine when it will be acceptable in principle for garden land and existing residential plots to be developed for new housing or residential annexes.

Policy H/GL: Garden land and subdivision of existing plots

1. The development of land used as residential gardens for new dwellings or residential annexes will only be permitted where:
 - a. The residential amenity and privacy of neighbouring existing and new properties is protected;
 - b. The proposed siting, design, scale, and materials of construction of the new dwellings or residential annexes are appropriate to the surrounding pattern of development and the character of the area;
 - c. There is the existence of, or ability to create, safe and adequate amenity spaces, vehicular access arrangements and parking spaces for the existing and proposed dwellings or residential annexes, and these spaces are designed to fully utilise permeable materials to reduce surface flooding risk;
 - d. Sufficient garden and amenity space around existing dwellings is retained; and
 - e. There is no detrimental effect on the potential comprehensive development of the wider area.
2. Additionally, a residential annexe will only be permitted where:
 - a. It is subordinate in scale to the principal dwelling;
 - b. Its occupant(s) share the existing vehicular access, parking spaces, garden and amenity spaces with the principal dwelling;
 - c. It remains in the same ownership as, and is occupied in conjunction with, the principal dwelling;
 - d. Occupation of the annexe is ancillary to the principal dwelling; and
 - e. It meets the internal residential space standards and accessible and adaptable homes standards set out in Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes.

3. Proposals for new dwellings within settlements will be subject to other policies in the development plan, including policy S/SH: Settlement hierarchy and Policy S/DE: Defined Development Extents. Proposals for new dwellings and residential annexes outside of settlements will only be acceptable where they meet the requirements in Policy S/DE: Defined Development Extents and Policy H/DC: Dwellings in the Countryside.
-

Supporting information

- 9.40** National planning policy sets out that Local Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, though there is currently no national guidance specifically relating to residential annexes. Gardens are an important environmental asset and can make a significant contribution to local character and amenity. Residential gardens within built up areas are not defined as previously developed land by national planning policy. However, some forms of redevelopment and infill development, which are well designed and make efficient use of land, will continue to be a valuable additional source of housing supply. This policy defines the criteria which would need to be met for such proposals to be deemed not inappropriate, alongside compliance with other policies in the local plan.
- 9.41** The Councils anticipate that there will be increasing demand for residential annexes as intergenerational living rises, people live longer, and the costs of residential care remain high. To support families and an ageing population, well-designed residential annexes that help households adapt to changing circumstances will be supported, provided the annexe remains subsidiary to the principal dwelling. Occupation of any residential annexe permitted will be restricted through planning conditions to ensure that a new independent dwelling is not created.
- 9.42** This policy relates both to developments where an existing dwelling or dwellings are demolished for redevelopment and the proposed replacement dwelling(s) cover a wider footprint than the original, and where an existing dwelling is retained and a new dwelling(s) or a residential annexe is erected in the garden.
- 9.43** Residential outbuildings (that are permitted via Class E of the General Permitted Development Order 2015) are specifically for uses that are incidental to the enjoyment of the principal dwelling, and therefore should not contain all the primary living accommodation functions of kitchens, bathrooms, and bedrooms. Residential outbuildings should not be capable of being occupied as residential annexes or independent dwellings.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)

Policy H/SS:

Residential space standards and accessible homes

What this policy does

- 9.44** This policy sets the required standards for internal spaces within new homes, the proportion of accessible and adaptable dwellings to be provided, and the required standards for external private and shared amenity space.

Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes

Internal residential space standards

1. All new residential units (including residential annexes) created through new build, conversions and change of use must as a minimum meet, and wherever possible exceed, the residential space standards set out in the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or a successor document.
2. The Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) requires that:
 - a. The dwelling provides at least the gross internal floor area and built-in storage area set out in Table 00;
 - b. A dwelling with two or more bedspaces has at least 1 double (or twin) bedroom;
 - c. In order to provide 1 bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m² and is at least 2.15m wide;
 - d. In order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin bedroom) has a floor area of at least 11.5m²;
 - e. One double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.55m wide;
 - f. Any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the gross internal area unless used solely for storage (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage, assume a general floor area of 1m² within the gross internal area);
 - g. Any other area that is used solely for storage and has a head room of 900-1,500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all;

- h. A built-in wardrobe counts towards the gross internal area and bedroom floor area requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths set out above. The built-in area in excess of 0.72m² in a double bedroom and 0.36m² in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement;
- i. The minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m for at least 75% of the gross internal area.

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *	–	–	1.0
1b	2p	50	58	–	1.5
2b	3p	61	70	–	2.0
2b	4p	70	79	–	2.0
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
3b	5p	86	93	99	2.5
3b	6p	95	102	108	2.5
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
4b	6p	99	106	112	3.0
4b	7p	108	115	121	3.0
4b	8p	117	124	130	3.0
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
5b	7p	112	119	125	3.5
5b	8p	121	128	134	3.5
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
6b	8p	125	132	138	4.0

Table 00: Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m2)

Notes:

- Built-in storage areas are included within the overall Gross Internal Areas (GIAs) and include an allowance of 0.5m² for fixed services or equipment such as a hot water cylinder, boiler or heat exchanger.
- GIAs for 1 storey dwellings include enough space for 1 bathroom and 1 additional WC (or shower room) in dwellings with 5 or more bedspaces. GIAs for 2 and 3 storey dwellings include enough space for 1 bathroom and 1 additional WC (or shower room). Additional sanitary facilities may be included without increasing the GIA provided that all aspects of the space standard have been met.

- Where a 1 bed 1 person (1b1p) dwelling has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.
- Furnished layouts are not required to demonstrate compliance.

External residential space standards

3. All new residential dwellings, created through new build, conversions and change of use, will be expected to have direct access to private external amenity space that is immediately outside their living accommodation. The form of amenity space will be dependent on the typology and size of housing and could include a private garden, roof garden, balcony, glazed winter garden or ground-level patio with defensible space from any shared external amenity areas. The required external amenity space standards may be met through a combination of multi-levelled private amenity space.
4. Developments must meet or exceed the following private external amenity space standards:
 - a. Any house (irrespective of the number of bedrooms) should provide a minimum of 30 m² of private external amenity space,
 - b. Ground floor apartments (irrespective of the number of bedrooms) should provide a minimum of 10 m² private external amenity space immediately outside their living accommodation, with a minimum depth of 2500mm, or
 - c. Upper floor apartments with 1 bedroom (one or two bedspaces) should have a private external amenity space of 5 m² through the use of a private balcony with a minimum depth of 1500mm and a minimum usable width of 3000mm. An additional 1 m² will need to be provided for each additional person (bedspace).
5. In providing appropriate private external amenity space, development must:
 - a. consider the location and context of the development, including the character of the surrounding area;
 - b. take into account the orientation of the amenity space in relation to the sun at different times of year, balance openness and protection, and be designed to provide a sense of privacy to avoid spaces that feel overly exposed;
 - c. address issues of overlooking and enclosure, which may otherwise impact detrimentally on the proposed dwelling and any neighbouring dwellings;
 - d. design the amenity space to be of a shape, size and location that allows for effective and practical use of the space by residents;
 - e. provide balconies that are designed as integral elements of the building's architecture and not appear as bolt-on additions, with semi-inset or inset balconies encouraged, to support cohesive facade compositions and support usability; and
 - f. provide well designed defensible spaces for ground floor apartments ensuring buffer zones are deep enough to create a layered transition between the home and public realm to support usability.

6. In exceptional circumstances, reduced private amenity space provision for houses may be acceptable where it forms part of a clearly defined and well-designed communal living arrangement such as co-housing or community-led housing scheme and where high-quality, shared communal space is provided that demonstrates that:
 - a. The communal space is of sufficient size, quality, and accessibility to meet residents' day-to-day needs;
 - b. It is integral to the design and function of the development (no leftover or peripheral space);
 - c. Long-term management arrangements are in place to ensure its usability and maintenance; and
 - d. The approach is appropriate to the nature of the community and tenure model proposed.

Accessible and adaptable homes

7. All new build residential units (including residential annexes) must be designed to be accessible and adaptable in accordance with the Building Regulations M4(2) standard.
 8. For development proposals providing 20 or more new build dwellings, 10% of the affordable units and 5% of the market units must be 'wheelchair user' dwellings in accordance with the Building Regulations M4(3) standard. These homes should be delivered as Building Regulations M4(3)(a) 'wheelchair adaptable' dwellings unless the Council has identified a need for Building Regulations M4(3)(b) 'wheelchair accessible' dwellings.
 9. Exceptions to meeting the Building Regulations M4(2) and M4(3) standards as set out above will only apply where robust justification is provided that sets out how site-specific circumstances, in addition to the other requirements for the development, make the proposed development impractical, unachievable or unviable.
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Supporting information

- 9.45** National planning policy sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development acceptable to communities. This policy will ensure that new homes across Greater Cambridge provide high-quality internal and external spaces so they are inclusive, accessible, adaptable and flexible to meet the needs of existing and future users, and therefore enable and support healthy lives.
- 9.46** New dwellings should provide sufficient internal and external spaces for daily activities and needs, and private amenity space can make an important contribution to improving quality of life for residents. It is important to note that the internal and external amenity space standards are expressed as minimum space standards, and housing that

exceeds standards will always be encouraged. The internal and external amenity space standards apply to all tenures of housing in Greater Cambridge, and all homes created through conversion, change of use, or new build. In order to achieve certain design configurations, to work within site constraints or to deliver units to a particular segment of the housing market, designers and developers may need to make early allowance to exceed the internal and / or external amenity space standards for that dwelling type.

9.47 External amenity space should be sufficient to accommodate the following:

- a table and chairs suitable for the size of dwelling;
- where relevant, provision of a garden shed for general storage (including bicycles where no garage provision or cycle storage to the frontage of the dwelling is possible);
- space for refuse and recycling bins;
- an area to dry washing;
- circulation space; and
- an area for children to play in.

9.48 External amenity space does not include car parking or turning areas. Suitable arrangements for access to refuse and recycling bins should be made. One-bedroom dwellings would not be expected to provide space for children to play, due to the lower likelihood of children occupying these units.

9.49 Accessible and adaptable homes (i.e. dwellings in accordance with the Building Regulations M4(2) standard) support the changing needs of residents over their lifetime. They include design features that allow the home to be altered to meet the needs of a wide range of occupants, such as older people or those with disabilities. Wheelchair user dwellings (i.e. dwellings in accordance with the Building Regulations M4(3) standard) are those specifically designed to meet the needs of wheelchair users.

9.50 Between 2024 and 2045, our evidence projects an increase in the number of older people, an increase in the number of older people with mobility problems, and an increase in the number of people with mobility problems, impaired mobility and wheelchair users. It also shows a likely need for a greater proportion of affordable housing to rent for wheelchair users. The Housing Needs of Specific Groups Update (2025) recommends that up to 5% of all new market homes and up to 10% of all new affordable homes should be wheelchair user dwellings, and sets out that these figures reflect that not all sites would be able to deliver homes of this type. Requiring all new build dwellings to be designed to meet the Buildings Regulations M4(2) standard will ensure that new homes will be provided that meet the needs of a wide range of occupants, including older people, others with disability or mobility issues, and some wheelchair users. Requiring a proportion of market and affordable dwellings on sites of 20 dwellings or more to meet the Building Regulations M4(3) standard will help to ensure that new homes will be provided to meet the specific identified need for wheelchair users.

- 9.51** The requirement to meet Building Regulations M4(2) and / or M4(3) standards will normally be controlled through the use of a planning condition to ensure that the relevant homes are delivered to meet the standards. When calculating the amount of wheelchair user dwellings required for a development meeting the threshold as set out in the policy, developers should round up to the nearest dwelling.
- 9.52** Application of residential space standards, both internally and externally, should be shown on all submitted layouts and floorplans and be clearly demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement, which will be used to assess the acceptability of any proposal. Compliance with the accessible and adaptable homes standards should also be demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement.
- 9.53** There may be specific developments where meeting the required internal and external amenity space standards, and / or accessible and adaptable homes standards, would not be appropriate for the identified occupants, such as new pod homes for the homeless. However, any exceptions would need to be clearly justified with evidence provided to demonstrate that the proposed development still delivers suitable and appropriate homes for the anticipated occupants.
- 9.54** This policy applies to all proposals for self-contained dwellings, irrespective of their use class. However, developments of residential caravans are not required to meet the requirements in this policy as there are other more appropriate standards such as the British Standard for Residential Park Homes and Caravans that ensure residential caravans are built to acceptable standards.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)
- Cambridge City Council – Sustainable Housing Design Guide (2021)
- South Cambridgeshire District Council – District Design Guide SPD (2010)

Policy H/SH:

Specialist housing

What this policy does

- 9.55** This policy guides proposals for specialist housing (within both Use Classes C2 and C3) designed to support a variety of groups such as older people, disabled people, people with alcohol or drug dependency, those requiring refuge from harassment and violence, looked after children and others who may, for a variety of reasons, need specialist supported housing. Student accommodation is covered in Policy H/SA: Student Accommodation.

Policy H/SH: Specialist housing

1. Proposals for residential development should consider and respond to the need for specialist housing.
2. Planning permission will be granted for the development of specialist housing, subject to the development being:
 - a. supported by evidence of the demonstrable need for this form of development within Greater Cambridge;
 - b. suitable for the intended occupiers in relation to the quality and type of facilities, and the provision of support and/or care;
 - c. accessible to local shops and services, public transport and other sustainable modes of transport, and community facilities appropriate to the needs of the intended occupiers; and
 - d. in a location that does not create an over-concentration of such housing in the local area.
3. Proposals for specialist housing within settlements (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map) will be subject to other policies in the development plan, including policy S/SH: Settlement hierarchy. Proposals for specialist housing outside of settlements will only be acceptable where they meet the requirements in Policy S/DE: Defined Development Extents.
4. Unallocated strategic sites of 1,000 dwellings or more will be expected to provide at least 10% of homes as specialist housing. Proposals must meet the following criteria:
 - a. the majority of specialist housing is expected to be focused on the needs of older people and disabled people but other forms of specialist housing will be encouraged where supported by appropriate evidence of need;

- b. specialist housing should be designed to support its integration into the wider community, and be within walking distance to a local centre, appropriate facilities such as health services, and public transport; and
 - c. the phasing of specialist housing should be planned alongside the provision of services relevant to the type of specialist housing proposed such as health and education facilities, shops and bus services.
 5. If development, including change of use, would involve a net loss of specialist residential floorspace, this will only be permitted where:
 - a. appropriate replacement specialist housing accommodation will be provided that satisfies the four criteria 2a–2d;
 - b. it is demonstrated that there is reduced local need for the existing provision of specialist housing; or
 - c. the new proposals provide specialist housing of a significantly higher quality.
-

Supporting information

- 9.56** Specialist housing is designed so that support can be provided to its occupants where required (and often to others in the wider community) while promoting independent living. National planning policy requires the size, type and tenure of homes needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and that the results of that assessment be reflected in planning policies.
- 9.57** Providing specialist accommodation for older people and disabled people can help people to live independently whilst staying within their local community. It can also provide opportunities for people to downsize if they choose to do so and help to support mixed and balanced communities. The need to help older people and disabled people downsize or stay within their community through ‘whole life housing’ approaches is also addressed in Policy H/HM: Housing mix and Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes.
- 9.58** The Local Plan therefore needs to set out how the Councils will deliver sufficient specialist housing to meet the identified need and how proposals for new specialist housing will be considered. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the evidence base supporting the Local Plan which considers the needs of a wide range of groups. However, proposals can also provide their own evidence to support their specific plans for specialist housing. This could include more up to date data or more detailed evidence on a specific form of specialist housing.
- 9.59** To ensure that specialist housing is well integrated with wider communities when developing strategic sites the specialist housing needs should be considered at an early stage. Where strategic sites involve a masterplanning or similar process this should address how and where specialist housing will be provided.

9.60 There is a need for market and affordable housing for older people. Therefore, specialist housing for older people will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of affordable housing. Where self-contained specialist housing for older people forms part of a larger multi-tenure development it will count towards the overall numbers against which affordable housing requirements are calculated (as set out in policy H/AH: Affordable Housing).

9.61 It is recognised that it will often be inappropriate for market and affordable homes for older people to be delivered in an integrated manner. Therefore, when a market scheme for specialist housing triggers a requirement for affordable provision a financial contribution will be sought in lieu of on site provision. Most other forms of specialist supported accommodation are likely to be considered as affordable housing.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Development Strategy Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

Policy H/CB: Self and Custom Build homes

What this policy does

- 9.62** This policy sets out how self and custom build homes will be delivered in Greater Cambridge. This includes specifying the size of developments on which self and custom build homes will be provided, the proportion of self and custom build homes required, where exceptions apply and how specific proposals for self and custom build homes will be assessed.
- 9.63** The term self and custom build is used to apply to all forms of custom homes and self build homes. Although they are often seen as a broad spectrum of house building options with varying levels of input from the home owner, in planning law, all custom and self build homes have the same status.

Policy H/CB: Self and Custom Build homes

1. All development proposals including 20 or more dwellings must provide at least 5% of the new homes as serviced plots for custom and self build houses and/or serviced custom-build flats.
 - a. Specific types of housing schemes are not appropriate for custom and self build homes and are therefore excluded from this requirement. Exclusions include:
 - i. Build to Rent schemes,
 - ii. Schemes where at least 80% of homes are affordable,
 - iii. Gypsy & Traveller sites, Travelling Showpeople yards and other residential caravan schemes,
 - iv. Residential institution use accommodation,
 - v. Accommodation specifically for older people such as extra-care schemes or age-restricted housing, and
 - vi. Other accommodation that is primarily targeting the rented market such as Homes in Multiple Occupation.
2. On major developments for housing where affordable housing is being provided the custom and self-build homes will count towards the market housing contribution unless they are specifically delivered as affordable homes. Early delivery of custom and self-build homes will be strongly supported

3. The following criteria apply to all custom and self build developments:
- a. Each plot must be marketed for at least a 12 month marketing period in accordance with a marketing strategy and valuation approved by the local planning authority at the outline or full planning application stage. Once plots have been marketed for the minimum period, they will either be further marketed for a period of time as has been agreed by the local planning authority or will be transferred to a Registered Provider for the provision of affordable housing at affordable housing land values,
 - b. Prior to marketing, each plot must be developable by a custom and self build home builder, with no issues to prevent immediate purchase and development,
 - c. Conditions will be attached to outline planning permissions to secure agreement of Plot Passports and Design Codes for the development prior to the submission of the first Reserved Matters application,
 - d. Applications must demonstrate how initial occupants have had or will have primary input into the final design and layout of the dwelling which is sufficient to meet the definition of custom and self build housing, and
 - e. Custom-finish proposals will only be acceptable as flats.
-

Supporting information

- 9.64** National planning policy requires the housing needs of those who wish to commission or build their own homes to be reflected in planning policies. National legislation requires local authorities to keep a register of those people seeking to acquire serviced plots within the area for their own custom or self build home, and through the same legislation local planning authorities have a duty to grant planning permission for enough plots to meet the identified demand.
- 9.65** The legal definition of custom and self build housing is clear that to comply the initial occupant, or group of occupants, must have primary input to the final design and layout.
- 9.66** The Greater Cambridge Custom and Self Build Register demonstrates a continued demand for custom and self build plots and this policy responds by ensuring an increased supply of new provision is delivered.
- 9.67** The supply of custom and self build plots with planning permission is routinely monitored and is reported at the end of each base period on the [Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service website](#). The 5% requirement may be reduced where at least a 1 year oversupply of custom and self-build housing permissions exists and subject to agreement with the local planning authority. In assessing the extent to which a shortfall or surplus of custom and self-build housing permissions exists across the plan area, the Greater Cambridge Custom and Self Build Register will be used with reference to the relevant base period.

- 9.68** A significant proportion of new development in Greater Cambridge is expected to be flatted accommodation. If the statutory duty to match demand for custom and self build with permissions is to be met it is important that this development contributes towards the delivery of custom and self build plots. It is recognised that the type of custom and self build delivered will be influenced by the type of dwellings being built on any given development. Flatted developments may be better suited to a custom finish approach but it is important that such dwellings still provide sufficient design input opportunity for the occupier to meet the definition of custom and self build.
- 9.69** Criteria 1 and 3e) identify the distinction between flats and houses and the requirement that custom finish proposals will only be acceptable as flats. This distinction is designed to allow for the delivery of custom-build flats, which by their very nature cannot facilitate the same level of customisation achievable in custom and self-build houses, whilst helping to ensure houses are designed and delivered in a manner consistent with the preferences expressed through the Council's Custom and Self Build Housing Register.
- 9.70** Criterion 2 strongly encourages the early delivery of custom and self-build plots. Custom and self-build plots should be delivered prior to 25% occupation of the relevant phase in which the serviced plots are located as agreed at outline planning application stage. For larger schemes of 200 or more dwellings, a phasing plan should be included at the outline planning application stage showing how custom and self-build plots will be made available at a rate broadly in proportion to the build out of the phase.
- 9.71** In applying criterion 3d) and demonstrating compliance with the custom and self-build housing legal definition, set out in section 1(A1) of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) and interpreted in the self-build and custom housebuilding section of national planning practice guidance, applicants of outline applications should briefly set out how initial occupants will have primary input into the final design and layout of the custom and self-build home(s). A potential satisfactory explanation could be that serviced plots will be sold to initial occupants prior to the submission of the first design focussed plot level reserved matters application.
- 9.72** Applicants of full or relevant reserved matters applications should set out how initial occupants have had primary input into the final design and layout of the custom and self-build home(s). Potential satisfactory explanations could include that the applicant will be the initial occupant or the initial occupant has had the primary input into the design and layout of their home through the preparation of the full or relevant reserved matters application.
- 9.73** Relevant reserved matters applications will usually be the first such application on each plot that seeks to fix the design and layout of the custom and self-build home(s).
- 9.74** Proposals specifically for custom and self build homes will be required to contribute towards the delivery of affordable housing in line with Policy H/AH: Affordable housing. However, it is anticipated that most provision will be through a commuted sum. Direct delivery through a Registered Provider or community-led housing scheme will also be acceptable.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Custom and Self Build Register

DRAFT

Policy H/BR:

Build to Rent homes

What this policy does

9.75 This policy sets out when and how proposals for Build to Rent homes will be supported.

Policy H/BR: Build to Rent homes

1. Proposals for Build to Rent housing will be approved where they meet the following criteria:
 - a. Schemes should be designed so that their scale and location does not dominate the surrounding area or the overall scheme if part of a wider multi-tenure proposal,
 - b. The homes are held as Build to Rent under a covenant of at least 15 years,
 - c. The development offers tenancies of at least 3 years available to all tenants (subject to any future legislative changes), and
 - d. The development will be professionally managed by a single management operator and have an agreed Management Plan.

Supporting information

9.76 National planning policy requires the size, type and tenure of homes needed for different groups in the community, including those who rent their homes, to be assessed and that the results of that assessment be reflected in planning policies. Build to Rent homes can respond to a need, by providing quality homes for those who wish to rent, which adds to the flexibility of the local housing market to respond to demand. There is evidence of local need for this type of housing, and therefore the Local Plan needs to be clear how any proposals for these types of development will be considered.

9.77 National planning guidance states that 20% is generally a suitable benchmark for the level of Affordable Private Rent homes to be provided in any Build to Rent scheme. It therefore follows that Build to Rent developments may not achieve the 40% affordable homes as required on other major residential developments. Given this and that Build to Rent developments will only provide one tenure of affordable housing, the proposed policy direction does not change the overall requirement for 40% affordable housing on major multi-tenure developments, as set out in Policy H/AH: Affordable housing. It is also appropriate to limit the proportion of Build to Rent homes within large new developments in order to secure the provision of a range of affordable housing tenures to meet identified need and provide mixed and balanced communities. Any such limits

would still need to enable the resulting number of Build to Rent homes to be sufficient to be delivered and managed viably.

- 9.78** Based on evidence of high levels of affordable housing need, the Councils will aim wherever possible to secure more than 20% of the homes on any Build to Rent scheme to be provided as Affordable Private Rent homes, looking in particular for a balance between the percentage of Affordable Private Rent homes which can be achieved and the potential rental affordability of those homes and a balance between Affordable Private Rent and other affordable tenures on larger multi-tenure developments.
- 9.79** Policy H/HM: Housing Mix provides a starting point for considering the appropriate housing mix of Build to Rent developments. However, it is acknowledged that Build to Rent is a relatively new type of housing and the profile of occupants may differ from other forms of housing. Where proposals are supported by compelling evidence an alternative housing mix will be acceptable.
- 9.80** Management of Build to Rent developments by a single management operator, with an appropriate level of on-site daily management, will minimise any community risks arising from the development, and ensure that schemes are well-integrated into the community. A Management Plan showing how the whole development will be managed and maintained must be produced and submitted with the planning application, and the agreed Management Plan should be secured through a Section 106 agreement. The Management Plan should include detailed information on long term management and maintenance arrangements, and outline the measures that will be in place to manage any issues arising that could impact on amenity in the surrounding area.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)
- Build to Rent Market in Greater Cambridge and West Suffolk (Savills, June 2020)
- Build to Rent Market Strategic Overview and Summary of Site-Specific Appraisals (Arc4, March 2021)
- North East Cambridge Market Demand Appraisal Build to Rent (Arc4, March 2021)
- Northstowe Market Demand Appraisal Build to Rent (Arc4, March 2021)
- Waterbeach New Town Market Demand Appraisal Build to Rent (Arc4, March 2021)
- Bourn Airfield New Village Market Demand Appraisal Build to Rent (Arc4, March 2021)

Policy H/CO:

Co-living

What this policy does

- 9.81** Co-living developments, also known as large-scale purpose-built shared living developments, comprise non-self-contained studios with extensive communal facilities that are under a single management company. Co-living developments have an emphasis on communal living, with large-scale shared dining, recreation and sometimes workspaces, as well as additional services and facilities such as room cleaning, provision of bed linen, an on-site gym, and a concierge service. This policy sets the criteria and standards that proposals for all Co-living homes (sui generis) must meet.

Policy H/CO: Co-living

1. Proposals for Co-living developments (sui generis) will be supported, where the proposal meets all of the following requirements:
 - a. Developments will be located in sustainable, highly accessible areas that are well connected to local services and employment by active travel or public transport, and where the development does not contribute to car dependency, and parking can be minimised reflecting the high level of accessibility.
 - b. Developments must be of good quality, well designed and contribute towards mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods. Schemes will not be supported where they result in an over concentration of this type of tenure within an area or harm the overall mix of housing to meet needs.
 - c. Developments will be of a moderate scale of between 50 and 200 units. A higher number of units will only be considered where need is clearly demonstrated. Financial contributions may be sought to mitigate pressures on services, should evidence of need be demonstrated.
 - d. The private units will provide suitable functional living space and layouts and must not be self-contained homes or capable of being used as self-contained homes. A sufficient proportion of the units must be designed to be accessible and adaptable (taking account of Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes) so that they are accessible and usable by those who have minimal mobility.
 - e. To meet the requirements of the intended number of residents, at a minimum services and facilities will include private en-suite studio rooms, internal communal space, external communal space, laundry and drying facilities, on site

management, maintenance and cleaning services, a reception service, and large item and cycle storage provision.

- f. Public open space provision will be provided in accordance with Policy BG/EO: Providing and Enhancing Open Space.
 - g. Buildings will be designed and managed in a way that lowers barriers to social interaction, encourages engagement between people and creates a sense of community.
 - h. The Co-living development must be under a single management company or operator and have an agreed Management Plan.
 - i. All units will be available for rent, with minimum tenancies of three months.
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Supporting information

- 9.82** National planning policy requires the size, type and tenure of homes needed for different groups in the community, including those who rent their homes, to be assessed and that the results of that assessment be reflected in planning policies. Co-living developments are becoming more popular, and can respond to a need by providing an alternative type of accommodation for single-person households to living in self-contained homes, houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) or flat shares. Whilst not currently commonplace in Greater Cambridge, developers are seeking pre-application advice on proposals for co-living developments, and therefore the Local Plan needs to be clear how these proposals will be considered.
- 9.83** Development of Co-living units will be directed to the most sustainable areas of Greater Cambridge, well connected to active travel routes, public transport links and services. Therefore, car use will not be relied on, and onsite car parking should be kept to a minimum. Details of any proposed car parking should be submitted with the planning application with justification of provision. New proposals should not result in over-concentration of Co-living units within an area or harm the delivery of a mix of housing to meet needs, and should contribute towards creating mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods.
- 9.84** Co-living developments are generally of at least 50 units, to allow for the provision of the additional on-site services and facilities. There is currently no clear guidance on the maximum number of units. Considering Co-living units are likely to be used on a transitional basis, unless there is clear evidence of need for a higher number of units, developments will be restricted to a maximum of 200 units. This is because Co-living developments should not compromise the delivery of self-contained homes.
- 9.85** Co-living developments must be well-designed and provide functional internal living spaces and external amenity spaces for their residents. Proposals should consider the internal and external residential space standards set out in Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes. For example, the internal residential spaces standards set out in Policy H/SS include specific requirements for the floorspace of

bedrooms, which could be applied to Co-living developments, if the internal communal areas provided the remainder of the internal space standard requirements. Additionally, as Co-living developments have a similar format to HMOs in that they have communal areas such as kitchens, proposals should also consider the minimum size standards related to internal communal areas such as kitchens set out in licensing standards for HMOs (see Policy H/MO: Houses in Multiple Occupation).

- 9.86** A proportion of units should be designed to be accessible and adaptable for those who have minimal mobility, taking account of the requirements set out in Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes.
- 9.87** Tenancies should be for a minimum of three months to ensure large-scale purpose-built shared living developments do not effectively operate as a hostel.
- 9.88** Policy BG/EO: Providing and Enhancing Open Space is used to signpost the requirements for public open space. Proposals specifically for co-living units will be required to contribute towards the delivery of affordable housing in line with Policy H/AH: Affordable housing.
- 9.89** Management of Co-living developments by a single management company or operator, with an appropriate level of on-site daily management, will minimise any community risks arising from the development, and ensure that schemes are well-integrated into the community. A Management Plan showing how the whole development will be managed and maintained must be produced and submitted with the planning application, and the agreed Management Plan should be secured through a Section 106 agreement. The Management Plan should include, but not be limited to, detailed information on long term management and maintenance arrangements, such as:
- a. measures in place to manage any issues arising that could impact on amenity in the surrounding area,
 - b. security and fire safety procedures,
 - c. move in and move out arrangements,
 - d. how all internal and external areas of the development will be maintained,
 - e. how communal spaces and private units will be cleaned and how linen changing services will operate,
 - f. how deliveries for servicing the development and residents' deliveries will be managed, and
 - g. tenancies, including that sub-letting is not permitted.
- 9.90** Buildings should be designed and managed in a way that lowers barriers to social interaction and encourages engagement between people, such as:
- incidental meeting spaces should be provided in public and semi-public spaces within the building,
 - communal kitchen spaces should be designed for social interaction, such as shared kitchens with cooking stations facing each other,

- amenity spaces should be of a size and quality that actively encourages their use and community engagement, and
- where appropriate, entrance lobbies and public amenities such as restaurants and bars should encourage use by the surrounding local community as well as the internal community.

9.91 Co-living developments respond to a housing need, and like HMOs or flat shares will be the main or only residence for some people. Any Co-living developments will contribute towards meeting our housing requirement on a pro-rata basis, in line with the ratio for other communal accommodation set out within the Housing Delivery Test rulebook (which is currently 1.9 units to one dwelling).

9.92 Planning applications for Co-living developments should include the following information to enable the acceptability of the proposal to be assessed:

- a. private unit sizes and locations, including which of these are considered suitable for double occupancy,
- b. clear identification of communal internal and external spaces, including which are only for use by the Co-living residents, and which are semi-public or public and can be used by non-residents of the Co-living development,
- c. size and distance calculations that demonstrate how the kitchen and dining facilities are sufficient and appropriately located, and
- d. calculations that demonstrate how the facilities are sufficient for the intended number of users, including residents' visitors.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

Policy H/MO: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

What this policy does

- 9.93** This policy sets the criteria and standards that proposals for all houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) that require planning permission (C4 or sui generis) must meet.

Policy H/MO: Houses in Multiple Occupation

1. Proposals for HMOs that require planning permission (C4 or sui generis) will be supported, where:
 - a. the proposed HMO does not create an over-concentration of such a use in the local area or cause harm to residential amenity or the surrounding area;
 - b. would not result in an existing residential property (C3 use) being 'sandwiched' between two HMOs or result in three or more adjacent properties as HMOs;
 - c. the building or site (including any outbuildings) is suitable for use as a HMO, with provision made for appropriate refuse and recycling storage, cycle and car parking, and drying areas; and
 - d. the HMO has access to sustainable modes of transport, shops and other local services.
 2. Appropriate management arrangements should be put in place in order to monitor and minimise antisocial behaviour and adverse impact on local residents. A condition to this effect may be applied to any planning consent.
 3. All new HMOs that require planning permission (C4 or sui generis) must meet the internal space standards required for a HMO to be licensed, in addition to the internal and external residential space standards set out in Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes.
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Supporting information

- 9.94** HMOs form an important part of the housing market in Cambridge. About half are occupied by students. However, the high cost of housing in Cambridge also makes HMOs a more affordable option than self-contained accommodation for other groups including young professionals and lower paid staff more generally. HMOs form a smaller, but still significant, part of the housing market in South Cambridgeshire and it is important that the policy operates across Greater Cambridge as a whole.
- 9.95** This policy applies to any HMOs that require planning permission, whether they fall within use class C4 or sui generis. A HMO is a property rented out by at least 3 unrelated people in 2 or more households who use the HMO as their main or only residence. They share basic facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. 'Unrelated' means that the occupants do not have a relationship by blood, marriage or cohabitation.
- 9.96** Students, as well as migrants or asylum seekers, who do not occupy the property all year will be considered as occupying it as their main residence. Therefore, this will fall within Use Class C4 (if there are no more than 6 occupants) or Sui Generis (usually if there are more than 6 occupants).
- 9.97** A continuous frontage of two or more HMOs immediately adjacent to each other is considered to be an over-concentration of HMOs. Further work will take place to consider possible refinements to the definition of over-concentration within Greater Cambridge and the potential of providing guidance within a Supplementary Planning Document will be explored.
- 9.98** The Councils are considering introducing an Article 4 Direction to require planning permission for a change of use between residential (use class C3) and a HMO (use class C4) in particular locations. The policy has been drafted so that it will apply to all HMOs that require planning permission, and therefore to smaller HMOs if an Article 4 Direction is enacted. The Councils are also considering the impacts of increasing numbers of HMOs on the housing mix within Greater Cambridge, and in particular the current and future supply of family homes.
- 9.99** HMOs are required to meet the internal and external residential space standards set out in Policy H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes, which apply to all dwellings including HMOs. The internal residential spaces standards set out in Policy H/SS specify the overall floorspace for a dwelling (including HMOs) based on its number of bedrooms and the number of occupants, as well as specific floorspace for bedrooms.
- 9.100** All HMOs with 5 or more people (whether use class C4 or sui generis) must also be licensed. This licensing process operates outside of the planning system and includes a range of minimum room size standards related to bedrooms and communal areas such as kitchens. There are currently different licensing standards within Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Cambridge City Council's [Private Rented Sector Housing Standard](#) sets out the licensing standards applicable in Cambridge. The licensing standards for South Cambridgeshire are set out in South Cambridgeshire District Council's [Guidance for Amenity Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation](#).

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

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Policy H/SA:

Student accommodation

What this policy does

- 9.101** This policy sets out how and when proposals for new student accommodation for higher education institutions will be supported. The policy applies occupancy requirements for new shared student accommodation to ensure it is occupied by their intended users, and outlines how specific proposals for shared student accommodation will be assessed and the specific criteria to be applied. This policy applies to undergraduate, postgraduate and academic staff accommodation.

Policy H/SA: Student accommodation

1. Planning permission will be granted for the development of new student accommodation for undergraduate and / or postgraduate students subject to the development:
 - a. meeting the identified needs of an existing higher educational institution within Greater Cambridge in providing housing for students attending full-time courses of one academic year or more, and
 - b. restricting occupancy to students attending full-time courses of at least one academic year, and
 - c. within academic terms, the approved schemes being occupied solely as student accommodation for an identified higher education institution(s), and
 - d. the development not resulting in the permanent net loss of existing market or affordable housing, and
 - e. minimising any potential for antisocial behaviour, impacts on residential amenity, and if appropriate being warden-controlled, and
 - f. not significantly detracting from local amenity including parking provision, and where appropriate having management arrangements in place to discourage students from keeping cars in Cambridge and
 - g. having an agreed management strategy in place, where appropriate.
2. Development(s) for student accommodation provided in individual, self-contained units, either as part of a shared student accommodation development or an individual proposal, shall as appropriate also provide suitable facilities and open space for dependents.

3. Any accommodation for occupation by academic staff, will also be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. occupation by academic staff will generally be restricted to a maximum of 25 percent of the units provided by the development, and
 - b. for a minimum period of 6 months and up to a maximum period of no more than an aggregate of 3 years, and
 - c. meeting the identified needs of an existing educational institution within Greater Cambridge in providing housing for academic staff associated with the institution.
 4. All schemes for new student accommodation must provide:
 - a. evidence at application stage demonstrating that there is agreed interest to occupy with at least one existing educational establishment based in Greater Cambridge providing full-time courses of one academic year or more (for example an intention to occupy letter); and
 - b. written agreement/ confirmation prior to occupation that the intended occupiers have entered into a formal agreement with at least one existing educational establishment based in Greater Cambridge providing full-time courses of one academic year or more to demonstrate compliance with the occupancy requirements as set out by this policy.
 5. Condition(s) and/or obligations shall be applied to implement the above, and for the future management and maintenance of the student accommodation. The interest to occupy and formal agreement will confirm that the proposed accommodation is suitable in type, layout, and maintenance regime for the relevant institution.
 6. All new student accommodation will be located:
 - a. in an appropriate location for the institution it is intended to serve, and
 - b. in a location well served by sustainable modes of transport.
 7. Planning permission will not be granted for development which results in a net loss of existing student accommodation, unless the net loss is compensated with better quality accommodation or, it can be demonstrated that the accommodation is no longer needed.
 8. Where students do not attend full-time courses of one academic year or more, or for academic staff whose length of stay is less than six months, their accommodation requirements will be expected to be provided within the site of the institution which they attend; or by making effective use of existing student accommodation within Cambridge outside term time; or by use of home-stay accommodation.
 9. Permanent purpose built student accommodation will not be supported on sites allocated for housing, or with an extant planning permission for residential development, unless in exceptional circumstances where no overall net loss of housing can be demonstrated through alternative off site housing provision and this is capable of being legally secured.
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Supporting information

- 9.102** Higher education institutions are an important aspect of Cambridge's character and the students, academic staff and academic visitors who attend these institutions make up a significant proportion of the population of Cambridge. If adequate provision is not made for the identified needs of existing higher educational institutions in suitable locations, significant pressure will be placed on the local housing market. Our evidence demonstrates that there is a continued identified need for the development of new student accommodation and staff accommodation in Greater Cambridge (evidenced through local growth projections informed by consultation between the councils and higher education institutions).
- 9.103** For student accommodation, existing permissions and allocations (including strategic sites) are anticipated to deliver an over provision against the identified need. For staff accommodation, North West Cambridge (Eddington) delivers key worker accommodation which exceeds the staff accommodation needs identified by the University of Cambridge Colleges. This policy steers how future student and staff accommodation development should be delivered and provides general support for the development of new student accommodation for students attending full-time courses of one academic year or more and for academic staff for a maximum of 3 years (subject to specific criteria), where it is identified that development of accommodation is needed to help to meet the growth needs of an existing educational institution in Greater Cambridge.
- 9.104** The provision of student accommodation can contribute to the development of balanced and mixed communities, but careful consideration needs to be given to the scale and impact of the development on local residential amenity and on the character of residential areas. Accessibility by public transport is also important as most students in purpose-built accommodation do not usually have access to cars, although parking needs for disabled people should be explored to ensure developments are accessible. The policy ensures students can live in an appropriate and sustainable location, within suitable and well-managed developments.
- 9.105** Policy controls requiring a formal legal agreement with at least one existing educational establishment based in Greater Cambridge and for the future management and maintenance of the student accommodation, prevent sub-division to allow these units to be sold on the open market and/or to be occupied independently from the student accommodation. This ensures that these units are only used by their intended occupants and are not treated or sub-divided for Use Class C3 residential occupancy (or other use), without planning consent. The requirement of a formal legal agreement also ensures that student accommodation is well designed, provides appropriate internal and/or amenity space and facilities (including provision for disabled students and staff needs).
- 9.106** Encouraging more dedicated student accommodation can overall provide lower-cost housing that takes pressure off the private rented sector and increases the overall housing stock. The development of new student accommodation reduces demand for private accommodation occupied by full-time students and may release housing back onto the market to cater for wider housing needs. Any student bedrooms will contribute

towards meeting our housing requirement on a pro-rata basis, in line with the ratio for student accommodation set out within the Housing Delivery Test rulebook (which is currently 2.4 bedrooms to one dwelling). A financial contribution for the provision of affordable housing will be sought from developments of student accommodation in line with the requirements set out in Policy H/AH: Affordable housing.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Development Strategy Topic Paper (2025)
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Homes for Our Future and Annexes 1-8
- Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

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Policy H/DC:

Dwellings in the countryside

What this policy does

- 9.107** This policy sets out the types of residential development that may be acceptable in the countryside outside of defined development extents (previously known as settlement boundaries or development framework boundaries).

Policy H/DC: Dwellings in the countryside

Reuse of buildings in the countryside for residential use

1. The change of use and adaptation of redundant or disused buildings outside a settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map) to residential use will only be permitted where:
 - a. It has been demonstrated through marketing the property for at least 12 months at a realistic price that there is no demand for their development for employment use, or the buildings are unsuitable for employment use;
 - b. The buildings are structurally sound, not makeshift in nature and are of permanent, substantial construction as evidenced by a structural survey;
 - c. There will be an enhancement to the immediate setting of the buildings;
 - d. The form, bulk, design, landscaping and materials used in the change of use and adaptation and any associated extensions are sensitive to the character and appearance of the building and locality; and
 - e. There is a safe vehicular site access.

Replacement dwellings in the countryside

2. The one-for-one replacement of dwellings within a curtilage, outside a settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map), will be permitted where:
 - a. If the replacement dwelling is not on the footprint of the original dwelling, that the original is demolished within a month of the replacement dwelling's first occupation;
 - b. In considering countryside impact and effect on local character only the removal of existing buildings currently lawfully used for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the original dwelling can be taken into account and they must still be standing at the time of the application;

- c. The replacement dwelling is in scale and character with the local area; and
 - d. If in the Green Belt, that the replacement dwelling is not materially larger than the one it replaces.
3. Caravans and mobile homes are distinct from permanent dwellings since they can be removed. Given the restrictions on development in the countryside the replacement of caravans and mobile homes with permanent dwellings will not be permitted outside a settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map).

Countryside dwellings of exceptional quality

4. Outside the Green Belt, and outside a settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map), single new bespoke dwellings of exceptional quality will be permitted in the countryside providing all of the following criteria are met:
- a. The dwelling would reflect the highest standards in architecture, being recognised as truly outstanding or innovative;
 - b. The dwelling would significantly enhance its immediate setting;
 - c. The nature and size of the site, and the design of the dwelling, its landscaping and location on site are sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area and to wider views; and
 - d. That there are no existing dwellings on the site capable of being replaced.

Extensions to dwellings in the Countryside

5. Extensions to dwellings outside settlements (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map), will be permitted where:
- a. The development would not create a separate dwelling or be capable of separation from the existing dwelling;
 - b. The existing home is of permanent design and construction;
 - c. The extension is in scale and character with the existing dwelling and would not materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings;
 - d. If in the Green Belt, the extension would not result in a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling; and
 - e. If the original dwelling is subject to an occupancy condition, it must be demonstrated through an independent review undertaken by an appropriate professional consultant, that the resultant dwelling can be supported by the viability of the site / holding or rural enterprise and that the cost of its occupation would not be unaffordable to workers employed in agriculture, forestry or another business where a rural location is essential.

Dwellings to support a rural-based enterprise

6. Proposals for permanent dwellings outside a settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on the Policies Map) for full-time workers in agriculture or forestry or in another business where a rural location is essential, will be permitted if the proposal demonstrates that the following criteria are met:
 - a. There is a clear existing functional need for one or more workers to be readily available at most times;
 - b. The enterprise has been established for at least three years and is, and should remain, financially viable as evidenced by an independent review undertaken by an appropriate professional consultant;
 - c. There is no other accommodation within the site / holding or nearby which is currently suitable and available, or could be made available and suitable through conversion and change of use, as evidenced through the provision of a sequential test, proportionate to the scale of the proposal and needs of the enterprise;
 - d. A dwelling or building suitable for conversion to a dwelling within the site / holding has not been sold on the open housing market without an agricultural or other occupancy condition in the last year; and
 - e. The proposed dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the reasonable needs of the enterprise; and
7. Where criterion 6b cannot be met or it is a new enterprise on a well established site / holding, the development of a temporary dwelling may be permitted for up to three years where all the other criteria in part 6 are met, and there is clear evidence demonstrating:
 - a. A firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise;
 - b. That the enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis as evidenced by an independent review undertaken by an appropriate professional consultant; and
 - c. That the functional need cannot be fulfilled by another existing building on the site / holding or any existing accommodation.
8. Where a new dwelling is permitted, this will be the subject of a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, forestry or in another business where a rural location is essential, or a surviving partner of such a person, and to any resident dependents.
9. The relaxation of an occupancy condition will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. There is no longer a continued need for the dwelling on the site / holding or for the enterprise, or to house surviving partners and any resident dependents;
 - b. There is no long term need for a dwelling with restricted occupancy to serve need in the locality;

- c. The property has been effectively marketed for a minimum of 12 months at a rate which is comparable to local market value reflecting the existence of the occupancy condition, and it has been demonstrated that the current use on site is no longer viable or necessary; and
 - d. If other buildings are associated with the dwelling, the marketing must include the dwelling being offered for sale independently of the other buildings.
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Supporting information

- 9.108** South Cambridgeshire is a predominantly rural district with an attractive and much valued open environment. The development strategy in this local plan focuses development in sustainable locations, but it is also important to support the rural economy and appropriate residential uses. The policy uses a range of criteria to control development that needs planning permission in a way that supports rural communities, reduces unsustainable living patterns and minimises the carbon impacts of new housing.
- 9.109** Assessment of the design quality, scale, countryside impact, and effect on local character of the proposed development will be considered against other policies in the Local Plan.
- 9.110** For replacement dwellings in the countryside, planning conditions may be used to remove permitted development rights for extensions to these dwellings, both within and outside the Green Belt.
- 9.111** For extensions to dwellings in the countryside, in determining what constitutes 'a disproportionate addition', account will be taken of the extent to which the dwelling has been previously extended or could be extended under permitted development rights, and the character of the area. Also, 'original' is defined as the size of the dwelling as it was built or as it existed as of 1 July 1948, whichever is the oldest date.
- 9.112** Where criterion 5b requires an existing home be of permanent design and construction this will be assessed on a similar basis to criterion 1b whereby it should be structurally sound, not makeshift in nature and of permanent, substantial construction. However, a structural survey will not necessarily be required.
- 9.113** Occasionally the nature of agricultural and other rural enterprises make it essential for someone to live on, or in close proximity to the enterprise. Applications for new dwellings in such circumstances will need to demonstrate that the enterprise or intention to engage in an enterprise is genuine, will be sustained for a reasonable period of time, and that the enterprise needs one or more workers to be readily available at most times. Such dwellings may be exceptionally permitted in open countryside only because of the needs of the enterprise.
- 9.114** For dwellings to support a rural based enterprise, the Council will require evidence of the viability of proposed enterprises and where future viability is uncertain will resist new permanent dwellings in the countryside.

- 9.115** Where the policy requires evidence in the form of an independent assessment undertaken by an appropriate professional consultant, it is recognised that what is appropriate will vary according to the nature of the evidence required and the nature of the business involved. Appropriateness could be evidenced by professional qualifications / membership, references and relevant experience of having undertaken similar assessments.
- 9.116** Regarding equestrian based rural enterprises, it should be noted that the security of horses is not considered to be sufficient in itself to justify the provision of a dwelling as site security can be achieved by other methods.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)

Policy H/RM:

Residential moorings

What this policy does

- 9.117** This policy sets out the criteria to be used when considering proposals for new residential moorings in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

Policy H/RM: Residential moorings

1. Proposals for residential moorings will be permitted where the proposal:
 - a. Provides demonstrable evidence of need for the type of mooring proposed;
 - b. Is located within, or is well related to, an existing settlement (shown as Defined Development Extents on Policies Map);
 - c. Is of a scale appropriate to the location taking into account where the settlement sits within the settlement hierarchy (Policy S/SH: Settlement Hierarchy) and the cumulative impact of the proposal when considered with other existing and planned moorings;
 - d. Integrates successfully and positively with the surrounding landscape and/or townscape;
 - e. Is served by adequate pedestrian, cycling, public transport, and vehicular access (including access for emergency services);
 - f. Is served by appropriate electricity, water supply, sewerage and refuse disposal facilities;
 - g. Has no significant negative effect on the amenity, visual character, water quality, historic and ecological value of the river or nearby land;
 - h. Is close to existing services and amenities;
 - i. Only provides minimal essential external lighting, which shall be located so as to minimise glare and/or visual intrusion;
 - j. Does not impede navigation and/or the use of any footpath;
 - k. Has a design that is appropriate for the intended use and elements such as flood risk and manoeuvrability have been considered; and
 - l. Provides details of how the moorings will be managed and maintained.

Supporting information

- 9.118** Residential moorings are an existing part of the housing provision within Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Houseboats meet the housing requirements of some groups whilst also contributing to the diversity and supply of different forms of housing in the area. It is important to have a policy within the Greater Cambridge Local Plan so that there are clear requirements for any new moorings so as to take account of the different river users, houseboat occupiers and any neighbouring uses.
- 9.119** A criteria based policy approach is considered appropriate because the Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and Bargee Travellers and other caravan and houseboat dwellers found no specific need for more residential moorings.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, Bargee Travellers, and other caravan and houseboat dwellers for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2024)

Policy H/GT:

Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots

What this policy does

- 9.120** This policy sets out the requirements for any new Gypsy and Traveller pitches or Travelling Showpeople plots, including specifying where they should be located and how they should be designed.

Policy H/GT: Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots

1. Any proposals for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches or new Travelling Showpeople plots on unallocated sites must:
 - a. demonstrate a clear need for the new pitch(es) or plot(s), and why the need cannot be met by an existing available lawful pitch(es) or plot(s),
 - b. set out who the proposed residents are, including how they meet the definition of a Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showperson as set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) or a successor document,
 - c. be in a sustainable location, with access to a range of services and facilities, particularly a primary school and healthcare facilities,
 - d. be located where the needs of the residents can be met without placing undue pressure on existing local services and facilities,
 - e. respect the scale of the nearest settled community, and not dominate it when considered individually or in combination with other existing and planned sites,
 - f. provide an appropriate environment for residents in terms of health, safety, and living conditions, and therefore not be located on contaminated land or where there are noise, dust, air quality or other issues, unless suitable remediation or mitigation can be provided prior to occupation, and
 - g. consider the impacts on the surrounding area, and not have an unacceptable adverse impact, when considered individually or with other existing and planned sites, on: the amenity of surrounding land uses, the built environment, landscape character, heritage assets or their setting, biodiversity, or the amenity of public rights of way.

2. All Gypsy and Traveller pitches or Travelling Showpeople plots on allocated or unallocated sites must be well designed, and any proposals must:
 - a. set out the number of pitches or plots proposed, and be appropriate for the size and location of the site proposed,
 - b. have a clear layout that includes demarcation between pitches or plots, and also between the site and the surrounding land uses, using appropriate boundary treatments and landscaping that are in keeping with the surrounding area and provide safety and security for residents,
 - c. have safe and appropriate access into and out of the site for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, and not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the safety of the public highway from the traffic generated,
 - d. have sufficient space within the site for the safe movement, including turning and parking, of caravans, vehicles (including emergency vehicles and refuse/recycling vehicles), pedestrians and cyclists,
 - e. have sufficient space within a Travelling Showperson site for the storage, maintenance, and testing of equipment,
 - f. include provision of essential utilities including water, electricity, drainage, sewerage, and the collection of refuse and recycling,
 - g. clearly differentiate between public communal spaces and private spaces, and between residential and non-residential areas,
 - h. provide space for play within a communal area of the site, if the site proposed is for 10 or more pitches or plots,
 - i. minimise the harm to the surrounding area, and therefore any developments within the countryside must have limited built development,
 - j. include amenity buildings that are of an appropriate scale and design for the location and the size of the pitch or plot, and
 - k. not result in overcrowding or unnecessary sprawl, and therefore pitches or plots must be an appropriate scale for the number of caravans and residents to be accommodated.
 3. A varied choice, type and mix of housing will be provided within all strategic sites to meet the needs of different groups in the community including Gypsies and Travellers. Any unallocated strategic site of up to 5,000 dwellings will provide one area of serviced land that is 1 hectare to accommodate approximately 12 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and any unallocated strategic site of over 5,000 dwellings will provide two areas of serviced land that are each 1 hectare to each accommodate approximately 12 Gypsy and Traveller pitches. The site(s) provided will be located within but on the edge of the strategic site, or outside but in close proximity to the strategic site. Access to the site(s) must not rely on minor residential roads.
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Supporting information

- 9.121** National planning policy for travellers sets out that the government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community. It also requires local authorities to ensure that traveller sites are sustainable (economically, socially and environmentally), and to very strictly limit new traveller sites in open countryside that is away from existing settlements.
- 9.122** Our evidence shows that there is a need for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots within Greater Cambridge, but that there are also existing vacant pitches and pitches that are not being occupied by those meeting the definition of a Gypsy and Traveller. It is therefore important that any new pitches or plots that are proposed demonstrate a clear need for the new pitches or plots, provide details on how the proposed residents meet the definition of a Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showperson, and are located in a sustainable location, with the design and layout of any new sites providing healthy, safe and secure living conditions for their occupants. Any proposals for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots within the Green Belt and/or within areas of flood risk will be considered against the relevant national and local planning policies.
- 9.123** Proposals for Gypsy and Traveller sites are predominantly residential uses and therefore will generally be acceptable within settlement boundaries, provided that the requirements in other policies in the Local Plan are also met. However, proposals for Travelling Showpeople sites generally include both residential and non-residential uses, as these sites tend to include areas for the storage and maintenance of equipment, and therefore will need to be located where a mix of uses can be accommodated within the site without impacting on the living conditions of either the proposed occupants of the site or the existing neighbouring uses.
- 9.124** Each Gypsy and Traveller pitch or Travelling Showpeople plot should be designed to provide appropriate accommodation for a household, and will normally include space for the siting of a mobile home, a touring caravan, an amenity building containing kitchen and bathroom facilities, car parking and a turning circle for vehicles, and external amenity space. Proposals for family sites, such as to accommodate an extended family rather than one household, must identify the number of pitches the site is capable of providing if it were to be occupied by individual households, in order for the impacts of the site to be fully considered. A condition will be included on any planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller pitches or Travelling Showpeople plots that sets out the number of static and touring caravans that can be stationed on each pitch or plot permitted.
- 9.125** Strategic sites provide an opportunity to deliver Gypsy and Traveller pitches, alongside other types and tenures of housing, to ensure that new communities meet the needs of different groups in sustainable locations with access to services and facilities. New communities that accommodate Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community from their conception allows for the different land uses to be considered in a co-ordinated and integrated manner through the masterplanning and design process.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Homes Topic Paper (2025)
- Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, Bargee Travellers, and other caravan and houseboat dwellers for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2024)
- Addendum to Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, Bargee Travellers, and other caravan and houseboat dwellers for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025)

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developments such as hospitals, medical centres and surgeries, which often attract a high number of blue badge holders, applicants must review local need and it will likely be necessary to exceed the minimum standards set out in BS 8300-1.

- 10.36** Building Regulations require Electric Vehicle charging provision for residential and non-residential developments but it is important that in large and strategic developments site wide Electric Vehicle charging needs for other land uses and visitors are considered holistically. Developers must ensure infrastructure for Electric Vehicles is considered and designed-in from the outset and is located so that it does not cause street clutter or conflict with active travel routes and users, and should have regard to section 2.5xvii of Cambridgeshire County Council's On-street Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Policy which complements the Cambridgeshire Highways Development Management General Principles for Development – January 2023 – Amended, and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.

Supporting topic paper and evidence studies

- Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Topic paper 8: Infrastructure (2025)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2023)

