Cambridge Station Square © Louis Sinclair

6 Cambridge Skyline and Tall Building Strategy

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The preceding chapters have set out a comprehensive overview of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. They have established an understanding of aspects that are sensitive to tall and larger scale buildings and defined what constitutes a tall building within the city and the wider district. This chapter sets out the strategy for assessment of buildings that are considered tall.

6.1.2 The baseline study has shown how townscape, landscape, heritage and skyline qualities that are intrinsically linked to the Cambridge's history, its experience and its perception and identity. Taller developments, due to their greater height and visibility, inherently have the potential to affect, disrupt or undermine established characteristics of the townscape, the skyline, the setting of heritage assets or the relationship of city or rural villages with the landscape. Therefore taller developments require greater levels of scrutiny during the design development and application stage to understand the effect they may have on any of these sensitivities and specifically the skyline, and to make sure their impact remains appropriate.

6.1.3 The Cambridge Local Plan (2018) Policy 60 sets out a number of policy criteria that proposals for tall building should be assessed against in order to be acceptable. This is complemented by Appendix F, which provides more information on the skyline, landmarks and views, and how the policy is expected to be applied. The policy establishes a criteria-based framework for the assessment of taller building proposals in the city. This requires applicants for taller buildings to undertake significant testing during the concept stage and design development, to establish and then demonstrate to the planning authority the appropriateness for a taller building in its location.

6.1.4 The current policy approach however does not providespatial definitions on areas that are sensitive to tall buildings or indications of appropriate areas with associated height guidance. The appropriateness of tall buildings is established through a constructive pre-application process with the planning authority, drawing on the established criteria in Policy 60 and the testing from recognised viewpoints. However, the initiative for change rests with the development community, and until proposals are tested through this process, there is limited clarity on whether specific height approaches will be acceptable. This creates a degree of uncertainty for developers, as the process is not guided by a proactive, city-wide understanding of the skyline or of the sensitivities that may render certain areas less suitable for buildings of greater height.

6.1.5 Historically much of Cambridge's development was low to medium rise and effectively remained hidden below the tree line in views, or integrated within the established urban fabric. However, land economics typically require increased densities on urban renewal sites, which means buildings are often proposed at greater heights. Contemporary development, especially on central infill sites but also on larger brownfield sites, are more likely to come forward with heights that rise above their surrounding built form and landscape context, and that may be considered tall. Modern buildings, such as apartments, offices, and especially R&D and industrial

developments, by their nature have often larger scale floorplates, which result in more bulky massing. Functionally designed, their tops are often characterised by technical installations such as plant and lift rooms, flues and cranes, rather than the decorative turrets, spires and chimneys that adorn historic landmarks in the city. With greater scale and bland or technical appearance, their visual impact on the skyline or in views can be much more conspicuous and domineering, even at only modestly greater heights.

6.1.6 Preserving and enhancing the distinct image of Cambridge's skyline, specifically of the historic core with its famous buildings and treasured landmarks, will remain paramount. However, the city needs also to provide opportunities for modern new development, that responds to current trends and market demands to support and underpin the success and competitiveness of Cambridge as a growth location.

6.1.7 To support this, this study proposes a more pro-active approach to tall developement than set out by the current policy. It proactively identifies areas and parts of the skyline that are specifically sensitive to tall buildings and those, where there may be greater scope for height. In addition it provides design principles that can help to mitigate impacts and integrate new development better with Cambridge's skyline and townscape characteristics. This approach is set out in this chapter and chapter 7 of this report.

6.1.8 Whilst Local Plan (2018) policy principles and much of the supporting guidance remain valid, this study proposes to complement them with more detail and provide clarity on how the policy is applied and what its effects and recommendations are on specific geographic areas. As such the strategy will build on and provide further detail to Appendix F, whilst, where beneficial, recommend superseding aspects of the existing policy guidance.

6.2 Aims and Objectives

6.2.1 In short, the overarching aim of this strategy is to put in place an approach to taller buildings that helps ensure the preservation and enhancement of valued townscape and skyline characteristics of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, whilst planning for an evolving skyline with high quality buildings that support the city's success and growth.

6.2.2 The strategy aims to deliver the following objectives:

1. **Provide a pro-active, planned and coordinated approach to the management of the skyline and taller buildings that supports the sustainable growth of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire;**
2. **Preserve and enhance valued townscape, landscape, heritage and skyline characteristics of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and ensure that individual and cumulative impacts of taller buildings are fully understood and mitigated;**
3. **Where appropriate allow new places to establish their own proportionate and meaningful addition to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire's skyline and character**
4. **Help ensure that taller buildings appropriately respond to and integrate with the surrounding context and deliver positive benefits to the local community; and**
5. **Help ensure that taller development proposals will provide the highest quality of architectural and sustainable design.**

6.3 Approach

6.3.1 The skyline and tall buildings strategy comprises the following five components:

1. **Responding to sensitivities to tall buildings** – introduced in chapters 2 and 3, policy criteria in this chapter 6.
2. **Area specific definition of what constitutes a tall building** – set out in chapter 5.
3. **Directing tall buildings to appropriate locations** – set out in this chapter 6 together with design guidance for key development areas.
4. **General design guidance for the skyline and taller buildings** – set out in chapter 7.

Image 42: Historic Core skyline as seen from Castle Mound (View A)

6.4 Responding to Tall Building Sensitivities

6.4.1 Introduction

6.4.1 Chapters 2 and 3 provide a detailed overview of aspects in Greater Cambridge that are sensitive to tall buildings. Mainly, these comprise Heritage, Landscape, Townscape, Skyline, and Visual sensitivities. Any proposed tall development in Greater Cambridge will need to undergo testing to fully understand its potential impact on each of these sensitivities.

6.4.2 Proposals should be designed to maintain and complement the key positive characteristics of the Cambridge skyline and so avoid creating harm. Where this is not possible, a strong justification is required that balances harm against tangible strategic planning benefits, and development must demonstrate how its impact has actively been minimised and mitigated.

6.4.3 This section of the strategy sets out the approach and policy principles that should be applied in respect to the above sensitivities.

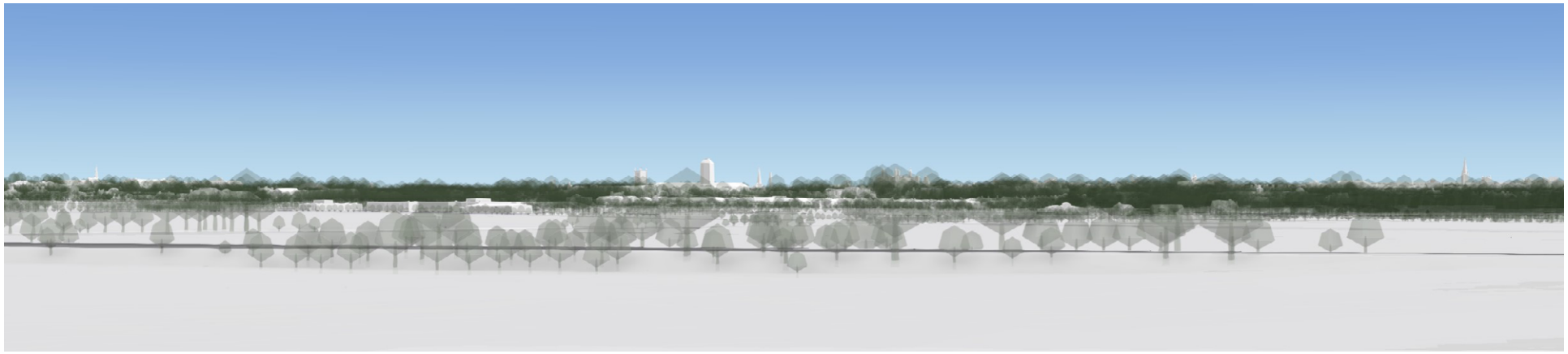

Image 43: View from Red Meadow Hill towards the landmarks of the Historic City centre

6.4.2 Skyline and Visual Impact

6.4.4 The combination of gentle topography, generally low historic building heights, and extensive tree coverage imparts Cambridge with a subtle and restrained skyline when viewed from most angles and distances in and around the city.

6.4.5 A central feature of the skyline are the historic landmarks and spires situated in and around the historic core, that rise above the treeline, and that are seen from strategic views as silhouettes against the sky or a rural backdrop. Its principal elements are St. John's Chapel, King's College, All Saints Church, University Library, and Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs. These are complemented by other (often smaller-scale) historic landmarks and roofscapes. Most historic landmark buildings are of modest scale and form accents on the skyline, without a strong hierarchy. Together, they shape the landmark 'ensemble' that is characteristic of Cambridge's skyline and the historic city centre. The skyline of the historic core will be perceived differently in views from around the city, as the relative position between landmarks changes.

6.4.6 Outside of the historic core, the skyline is predominantly suburban and low with limited verticality, the punctuating elements generally being historic churches and some modern elements. Some recent development, for example, around Cambridge station, detracts from views to the ensemble of historic city centre landmarks and has a negative and intrusive impact on Cambridge's skyline.

6.4.7 Larger development in peripheral growth locations, specifically in Addenbrooke's, but also in Cambridge East, North East Cambridge and West Cambridge, are visible on the skyline. However, they appear distinct from and well away from the historic centre, and as such, do not cause a major intrusion in strategic views to the ensemble of historic landmarks in the city centre.

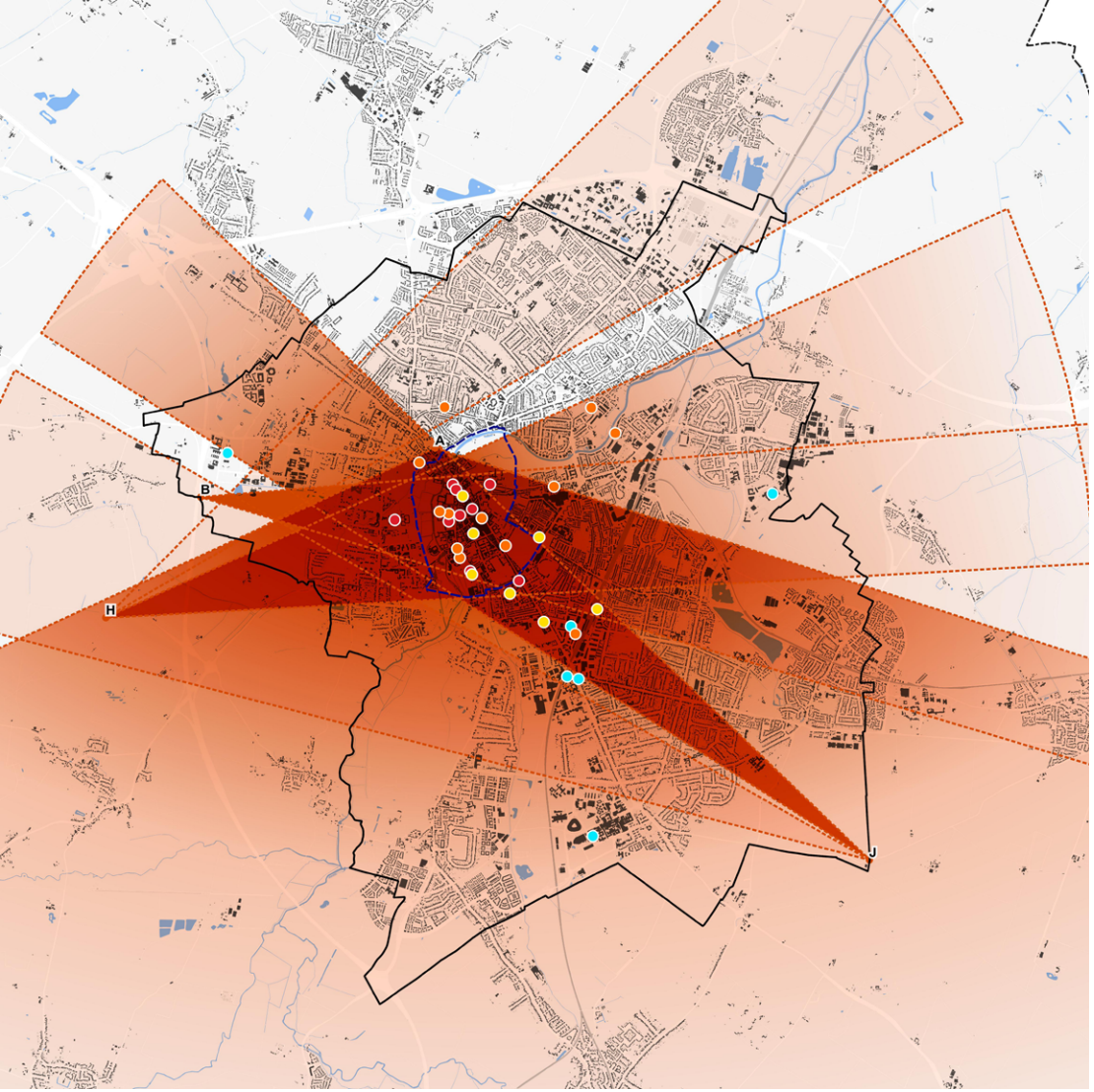

Figure 35: Highly Sensitive Strategic View Cones - Cambridge City scale

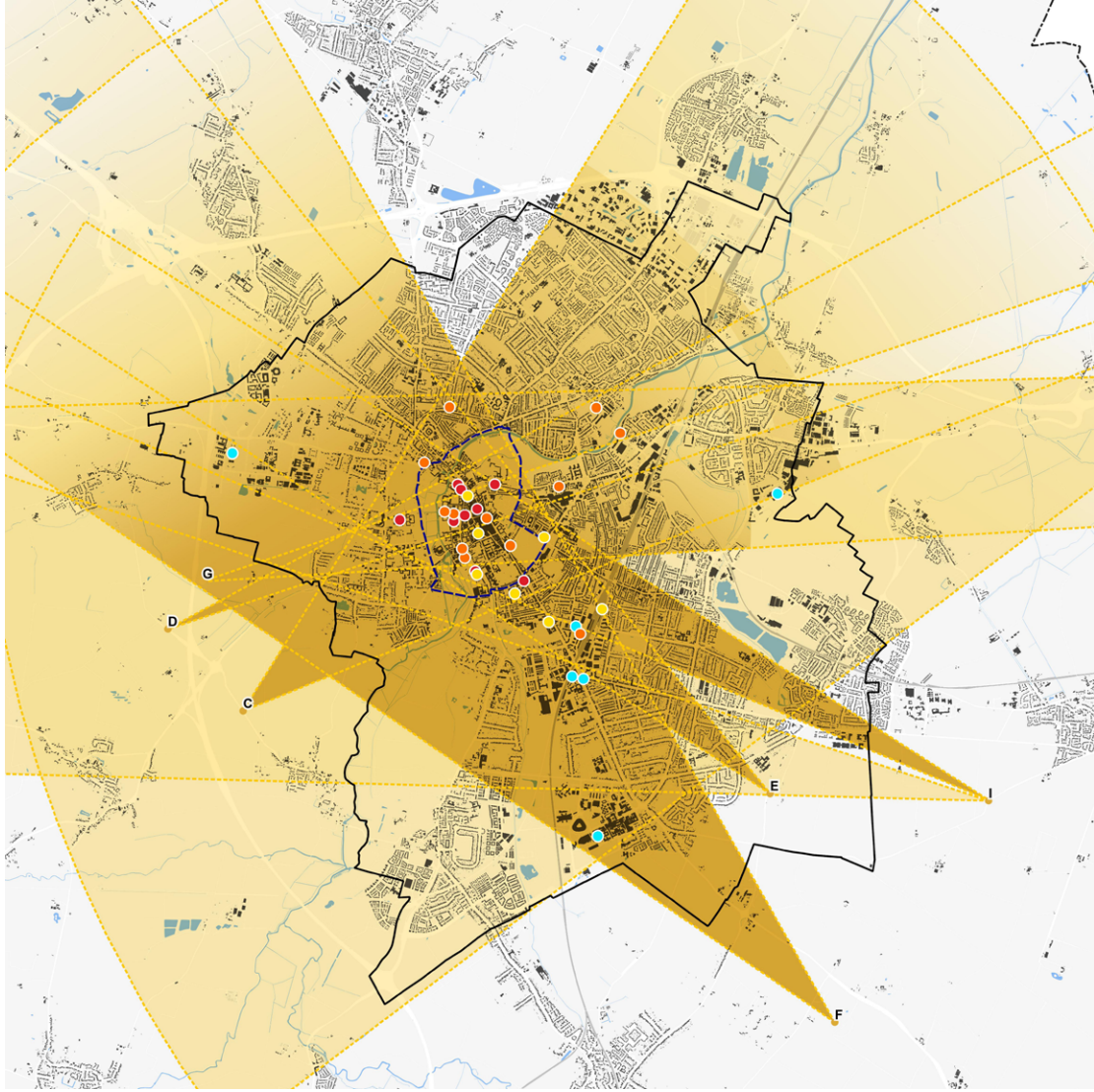

Figure 36: Sensitive Strategic View Cones - Cambridge City scale

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Historic Core

Landmark Buildings
- Key Historic Landmark
- Other Historic Landmark
- Intrusive Landmark
- Modern Landmark

Highly Important Strategic Views - Potential Visual Exposure
- Foreground (Highly Sensitive)
- Background (Highly Sensitive/Sensitive)
- In the distance(Sensitive/Less Sensitive)

Important Strategic Views - Potential Visual Exposure
- Foreground (Highly Sensitive)
- Background (Highly Sensitive/Sensitive)
- In the distance (Sensitive/Less Sensitive)

Note:
Highly Sensitive Views - View Cones are those where heritage assets form a defining feature of the skyline, and where areas of separation are vital for appreciation and setting of heritage assets/features in this view; Sensitive Views - View Cones are those where Heritage assets are an aspect of the skyline, but do not form a defining feature. Areas of separation are not vital for appreciation and setting of heritage assets/ features in this view.

More detail on view cones can be found in Appendix A.

6.4.8 This study identified 11 key strategic views and six dynamic views. The strategic views provide a panorama of Cambridge's skyline from slightly elevated positions and allow an appreciation of the historic core, its landmark heritage buildings, and their unique setting within the rural backdrop. As seen already in views from the southeast where the recent taller development around Cambridge Station is in the foreground, the historic core skyline is inherently vulnerable to visual intrusion by contemporary buildings, as they can weaken or detract from the ensemble of historic landmarks and its green and rural setting.

6.4.9 Figure 35 and Figure 36 show cones from strategic viewpoints towards the city centre that are particularly sensitive to effects on the historic core landmarks or their setting. The impacts of tall buildings in the foreground of the historic centre are magnified, whilst they diminish slightly the further back from the centre the proposed development is relative to the viewpoint. Tall buildings outside of these view cones may also have an impact on the wider setting characteristics of the city and its heritage, which must also be considered.

6.4.10 Poorly managed tall buildings, particularly those located in close proximity to the historic core, that are excessively tall, visually dominant, or intrusive within strategic and dynamic views, have the potential to cause significant harm to the character of Cambridge's skyline, the setting of its heritage assets, and the wider identity of the city. Cumulatively, such buildings may coalesce to create a visually incoherent and fragmented skyline, eroding the subtle characteristics and distinctiveness that define Cambridge.

Approach and Principles

6.4.11 Any development that exceeds the prevailing context height in its location, and particularly where it rises above the applicable tall building threshold, should preserve the defining characteristics of Cambridge's skyline. It must not obstruct or detract from distant, strategic, or local views of key or other historic landmarks, nor compromise the visual integrity of the historic landmark groupings in the city centre, which should remain legible as a coherent, undisturbed, and recognisable ensemble.A Visual Impact Assessment is required to understand the impact that a proposed tall building will have on the skyline and on strategic and local views. Any proposal for tall buildings will be expected to produce accurate visual representations and test any relevant views in which the taller development will be seen.

6.4.12 A visual impact on views to the historic core could arise from development being located either in the foreground or the backdrop of a view. Development in the foreground of the historic core skyline will appear magnified, and may block parts of the view or dominate the focus and detract from the historic city centre skyline. The scale of development in the backdrop diminishes the further away from the historic centre it is situated in a view. Development in the back may interfere with the silhouette of historic landmarks, crowd out and urbanise the backdrop, and affect the rural landscape setting of the city.

6.4.13 A computer-generated zone of theoretical visibility of the proposed development of greater height should be prepared and used to identify any potentially impacted views. The starting point should be the views and viewing locations identified by this strategy.

6.4.14 Chapters 2 and 3 identify landmarks, notable views and viewpoints, dynamic experiences through open spaces, and key approaches into the city, which together are important for the appreciation of Cambridge's skyline and the city's identity. Appendix A identifies and describes in detail strategic views and dynamic views that must be considered. The Local Authority may identify other views, and particularly local views, that should be considered. The applicant should engage in pre-application discussions with the Council to determine which views should be considered.

6.4.15 At the concept design or masterplan stage, the testing should, as a minimum, include a massing model of the proposed development, making use of Greater Cambridge's 3D model. If needed, this could be complemented by photographic representations of views with an accurate overlay of wireline or massing model renders.

6.4.16 At the Architectural Design Stage, Verified Views / Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) of key views should be prepared based on detailed architectural proposals, superimposed into photographs. Where relevant, proposals should be shown in daylight and night conditions and in different seasons. Visual Impact work may also be supported by render outputs from Greater Cambridge's 3D model for other views as agreed with the Local Authority.

6.4.17 The Visual Impact Assessment should follow the Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition or successor, Landscape Institute).

6.4.18 Visual representation should be prepared for the individual development in its context, and also, where relevant, in the context of other permitted or proposed developments (including where under construction) to allow an understanding of the cumulative impact of development on views and the skyline.

6.4.19 The proposed development should demonstrate how individually and cumulatively, with its height, massing, and design, it helps to preserve and enhance established skyline characteristics of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Proposed development should:

- Avoid detracting from strategic, local or dynamic views towards city landmarks or the skyline of the historic core, or interfering or competing with their distinctive silhouettes;
- Avoid visually closing gaps in-between important skyline features in strategic views;
- Be proportionate in their height and/or visual prominence to the significance of their location in the hierarchy of places in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, without undermining the visual prominence and setting of the skyline of the historic core;
- Where visible as a single outstanding exception, ensure that it is a meaningful landmark on the skyline that marks a place of centrality and civic importance;

- Demonstrate how the design has considered and mitigated its skyline impact by following design principles set out by the skyline and tall building design guide (Chapter 7); and
- Overall, avoid disrupting, dominating, or cluttering the skyline and having a significantly positive and meaningful impact on the way Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are experienced and their visual identity.

6.4.20 Applicants should refer to *Appendix A: Strategic and Dynamic Views,* that details and establishes the key elements and sensitivities of identified key views. Further, it should make reference to views identified in Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, or other documents as relevant.

6.4.3 Heritage Impact

6.4.21 Tall buildings that are inappropriately sited, overly tall, incongruous, or conspicuous can have a harmful impact on the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting and should be avoided.

Approach and Principles

6.4.22 A proposal for a tall building will need to identify any designated heritage asset (situated nearby or further away) that may be affected by the proposed development in its curtilage or setting.

6.4.23 A zone of theoretical visibility of the proposed tall(er) building should be prepared to help identify any viewpoints of heritage assets that may be affected. Heritage views should be represented by mirroring requirements in paragraph 6.4.17 to 6.4.19 for Visual Impact Testing outlined above.

6.4.24 Scheme promoters will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the heritage value and significance of any affected heritage assets and their setting, referring to Conservation Area Appraisals, Listed Buildings Records, and other relevant documents. Specific heritage expertise will be required in areas where there is a strong likelihood of impact on heritage assets.

6.4.25 A tall building proposal will need to demonstrate how it has successfully taken account of its impact on designated heritage assets and avoided harm to the significance of these assets or their setting. Where it causes less than substantial harm, it will require clear and convincing justification, demonstrating that alternatives have been explored, harm is minimised, and that there are significant public benefits that outweigh that harm.

6.4.26 In respect of heritage views (including strategic skyline views), proposed tall(er) development in the Cambridge context will need to take particular care in relation to:

- Maintaining the visual separation between the historic tall elements of the core and future modern tall elements when seen from a range of views in and around the city;
- Conserving the foreground, fringes, and backdrops of key views of historic buildings in the Core in longer and medium-distance

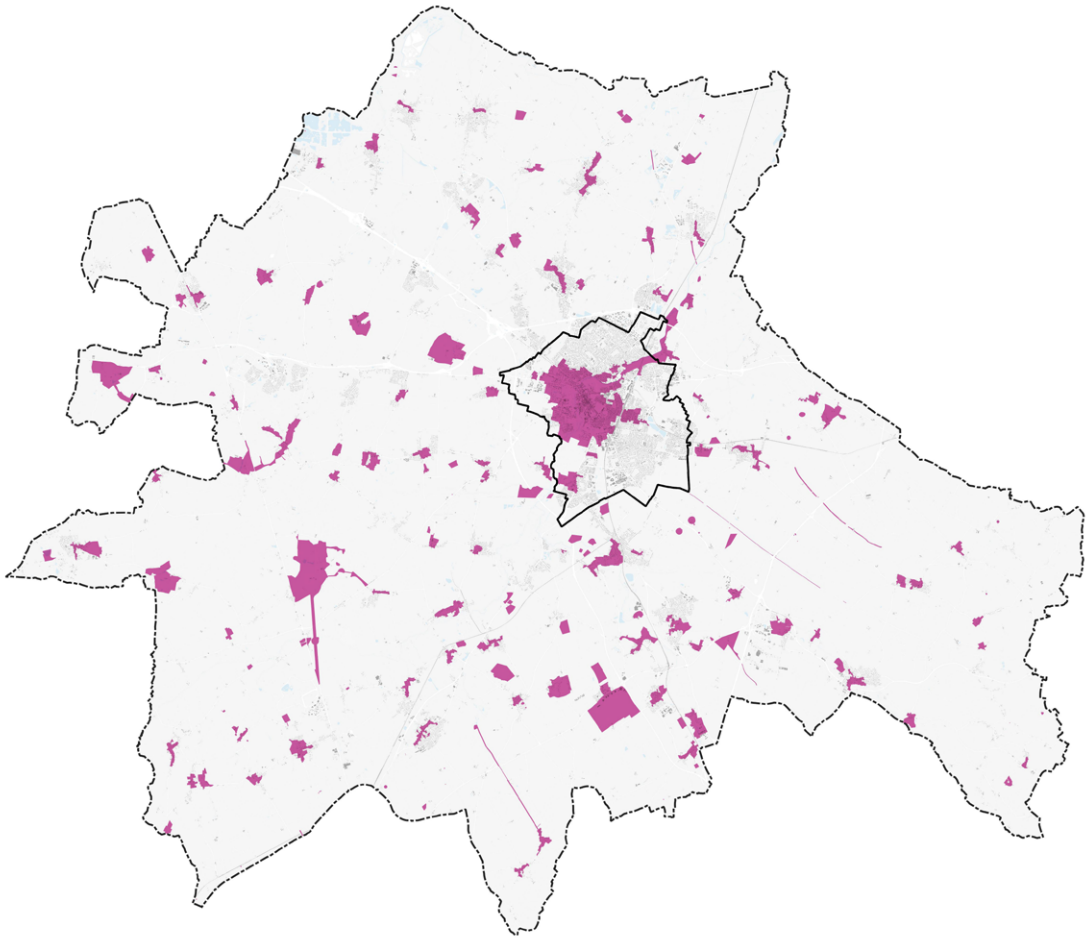

Figure 37: Heritage Sensitivities - District Wide scale

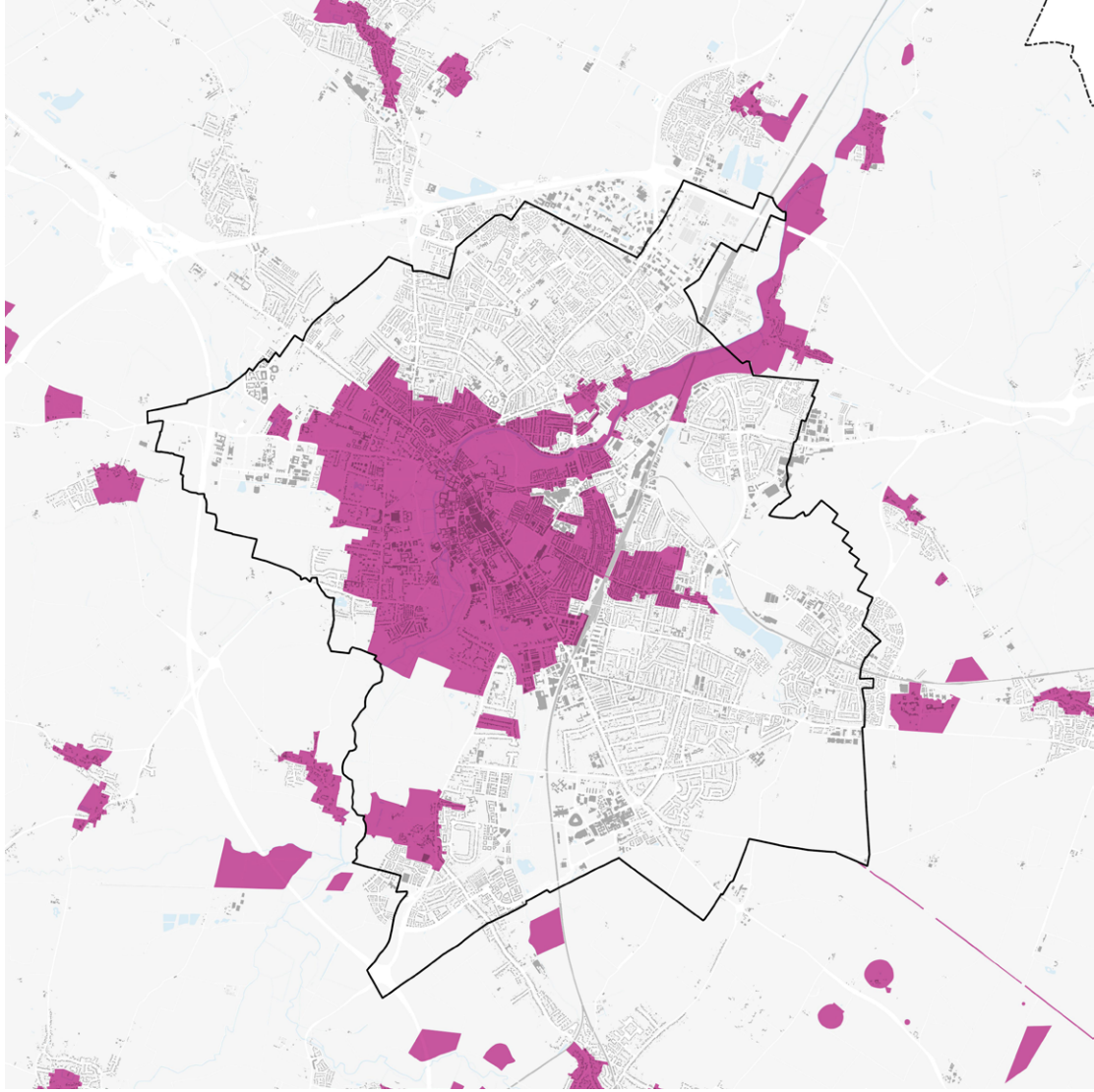

Figure 38: Heritage Sensitivities - Cambridge City scale

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Highly sensitive

views, including elevated views from the southwest;

- Not overtopping historic buildings, conservation areas, or enclosed parks and gardens with new tall development;
- Ensuring that views of designated assets from third points that feature both development and the assets are fully considered in development proposals (e.g., fixed and dynamic views from open areas such as the commons within Cambridge, from rural landscapes around Cambridge, and from the identified viewpoints). While views from assets are often important, views of them can also make a contribution to setting and significance; and
- Maintaining the outstanding architectural quality of the Historic Core, its relationship to the commons, the River Cam, and the wider landscape around the city.

6.4.27 Tall(er) developments should generally not be promoted in or in close proximity[1] to Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens. These areas are highly sensitive to tall buildings as they would introduce significant change to the character they are aiming to preserve. See Figure 37 and Figure 38 that identify areas considered highly sensitive due to their heritage designation and hence generally inappropriate for tall buildings.

6.4.28 Scheme promoters of tall(er) developments should discuss the potential impact on heritage assets with the Local Authority and agree on the scope of testing to be undertaken at this stage.

6.4.29 A heritage impact assessment may be required at the application stage in support of a tall(er) building proposal that impacts on heritage assets.

1 The distance at which a tall building may impact the significance of a Conservation Area depends on a range of factors. These include the heritage significance of the Conservation Area and its setting, the degree of visual exposure of the tall building (whether seen from within the Conservation Area or in its wider setting), local topography, and the height, massing, architectural expression, and location of the proposed building. As a rule of thumb, a minimum buffer from the edge of the Conservation Area equivalent to twice the height of the proposed tall building should generally be avoided. However, the actual 'safe' distance could vary significantly, it may be 100 metres or 1 kilometre, and should be assessed on a case-by-case basis through a Heritage Impact Assessment.

6.4.4 Townscape Impact

6.4.30 Some sub-areas in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are inherently sensitive to tall building developments due to their distinct character, presence of historic landmarks, or the coherent scale, grain, and massing of development, and new tall(er) development would be incongruous or out of scale.

6.4.31 Figure 39 and Figure 40 identify townscape sensitivity. Generally, townscape areas identified as highly sensitive or sensitive will unlikely be considered appropriate for tall buildings.

6.4.32 Townscape character areas that are somewhat or not sensitive to tall buildings (not highlighted in the diagrams), may be less affected by a tall(er) building. This does not mean that tall buildings would be automatically acceptable in these areas.

6.4.33 Greenfield, brownfield, grey belt or other regeneration sites targeted for major development offer an opportunity to establish a new place with its own character and identity. In these areas, the appropriateness for tall buildings should be established through a masterplan-led approach, which

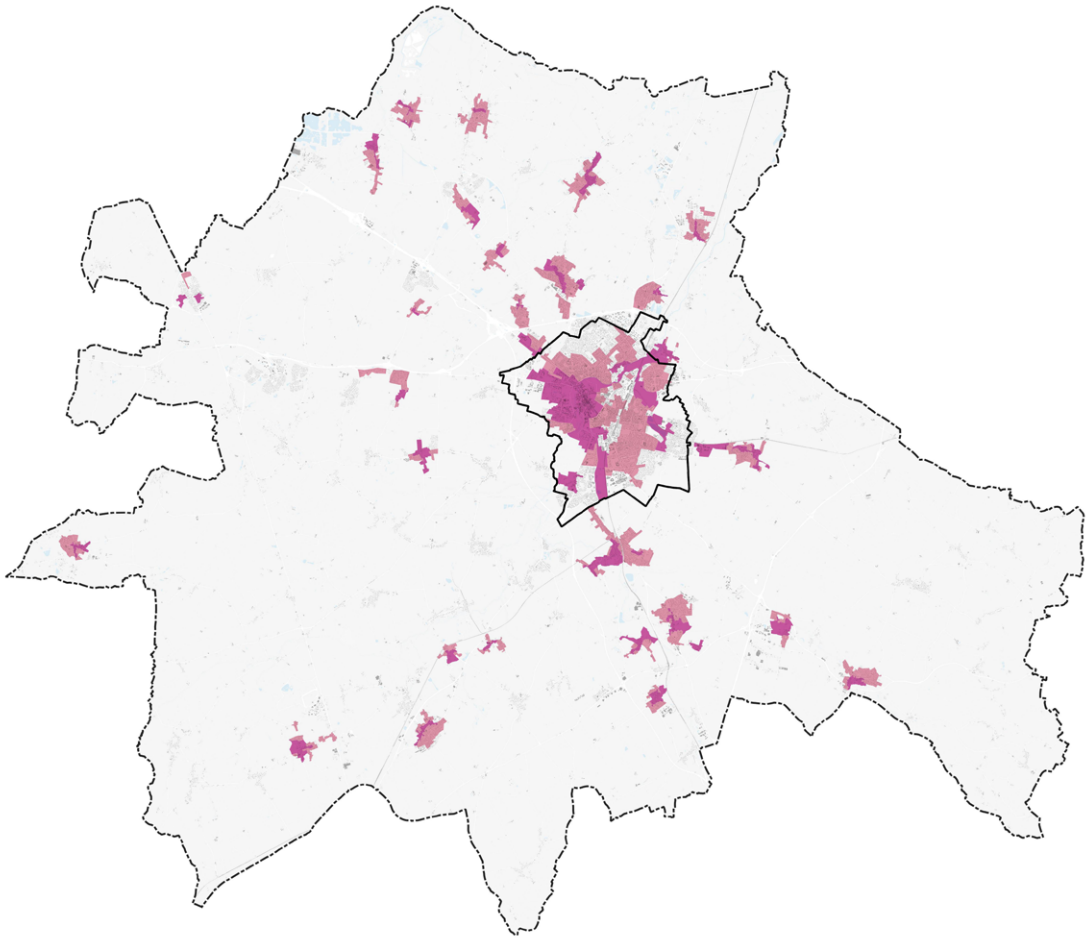

Figure 39: Townscape Sensitivities - District Wide scale

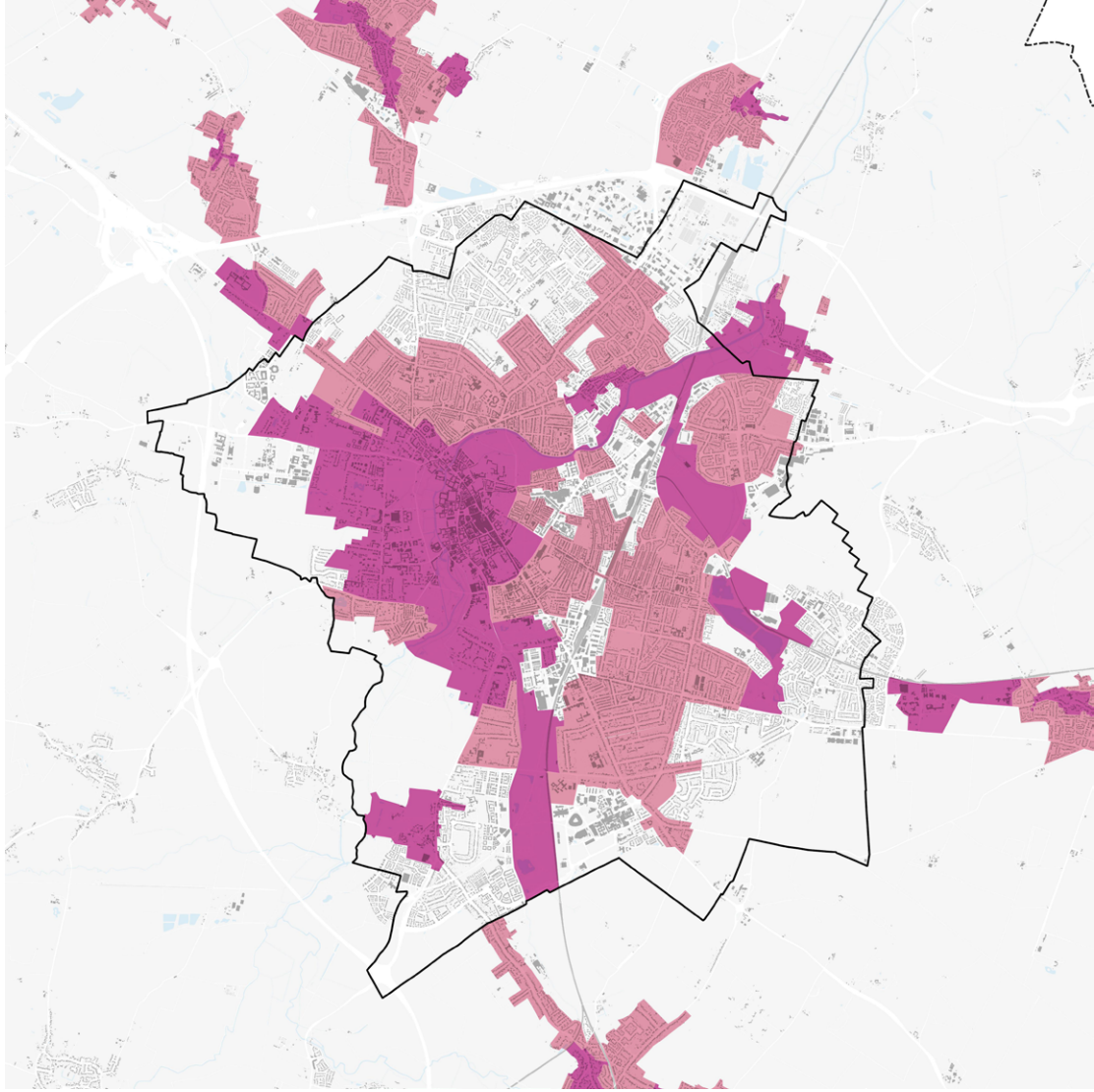

Figure 40: Townscape Sensitivities - Cambridge City Scale

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Townscape Sensitivity
Highly sensitive
Sensitive

defines the future townscape character and sets out respective principles for building height and tall buildings.

Approach and Principles

6.4.34 A tall building proposal, wherever it is located, should demonstrate a robust understanding of its context, including the existing townscape character and how this is going to evolve and change.

6.4.35 The starting point for this should be a townscape assessment as part of comprehensive urban design appraisal that identifies the defining characteristics and values associated with the location. As a minimum, this should include an appreciation of the history of the area, the defining structuring elements, the height and scale of development, distinctive landmarks and features, the definition and enclosure of streets and open spaces, the role of topography and landscape elements in its character, access and transport, the distribution of activities, heritage assets and views, and socio-economic and cultural aspects. The appraisal should further include an understanding of how the area is going to evolve in the future, making reference to established planning policy, regeneration frameworks or masterplans, or an interpretation of emerging development characteristics in the absence of formal plans.

6.4.36 Against this baseline, a proposed tall(er) development should demonstrate how it responds to and successfully integrates with its established (or emerging future) context and character. A proposed tall(er) building should:

- Be proportionate to and integrate well with surrounding townscape characteristics, including the height, scale, massing, and grain of development;
- Be a meaningful addition to the townscape that enhances or strengthens the prevailing character or contributes to placemaking and distinctiveness;
- If a singular tall building, perform the role of a landmark in a place of significance, and provide a distinctive design that can assist with wayfinding and legibility;
- Effectively mitigate and avoid stark contrasts in height with lower surrounding development; and
- Avoid an overbearing impact on open spaces, low-rise residential development, private or communal outdoor spaces.

6.4.37 The assessment should make use of 3D massing and architectural models and also illustrate design development and alternatives with different heights that have been explored. The findings of this assessment and its conclusions should be discussed both during the concept/ masterplanning stage and the architectural design stage with the Local Authority.

6.4.38 The townscape impact, mitigation and integration, as well as contribution to placemaking and legibility should be demonstrated as part of the Design and Access Statement in support of the planning application. A formal townscape impact assessment may be required for proposals within or near highly sensitive or sensitive townscape character areas.

6.4.5 Landscape Impact

6.4.39 The setting of Cambridge in its landscape, and the distinct landscape character of South Cambridgeshire, are protected by policy.

6.4.40 The majority of the landscape character areas of South Cambridgeshire and surrounding Cambridge City, including parts of the River Cam corridor, are either classified within the 2021 Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment as "conserve" or "conserve and enhance." Respectively, these are designated as highly sensitive and sensitive to tall buildings. In these areas, tall buildings may detract from the prevailing landscape characteristics and the way development nests in the landscape.

6.4.41 Figure 41 and Figure 42 identify landscape areas that are considered sensitive or highly sensitive to tall buildings, where any such proposal should be treated with extreme caution. Tall development located within these areas, or situated nearby and visible from them, may have an impact on landscape character and should be subject to careful scrutiny to assess its appropriateness. Proposals for tall buildings are generally considered inappropriate in areas identified as highly sensitive.

6.4.42 A proposal for a tall(er) building that can be seen from its sensitive landscape context may have a material impact on the setting of the city or the sub-region's landscape character. It, therefore, will need to test its landscape impact. This applies to proposed buildings located on greenfield sites or on the edge of established settlements, as well as further away if they may have an impact on landscape character.

Approach and Principles

6.4.43 A zone of theoretical visibility of the proposed tall(er) building should be prepared to identify those parts of the landscape that may be affected. An assessment of the characteristics and values of potentially affected local landscape characters should be undertaken in reference to the Cambridge Character Assessment (2021), and the impact of the proposed tall(er) development be assessed.

6.4.44 The proposed development should demonstrate how individually and cumulatively, with its height, massing, and design, it helps to preserve and enhance established landscape characteristics of South Cambridgeshire and the landscape setting of Cambridge.

6.4.45 Proposed tall(er) buildings should:

- Avoid detracting from established landscape characteristics;
- Avoid or significantly mitigate the visual urbanisation of the settlement edge and landscape interface; and
- Conserve and enhance the setting and unique character of Cambridge.

6.4.46 The detail of visual testing undertaken during the concept design/ masterplanning stage or the architectural design stage should mirror requirements for Visual Impact Testing outlined in the next section below. A formal landscape impact assessment may be required at the planning application stage.

6.4.47 Whilst, in principle, development should preserve established landscape

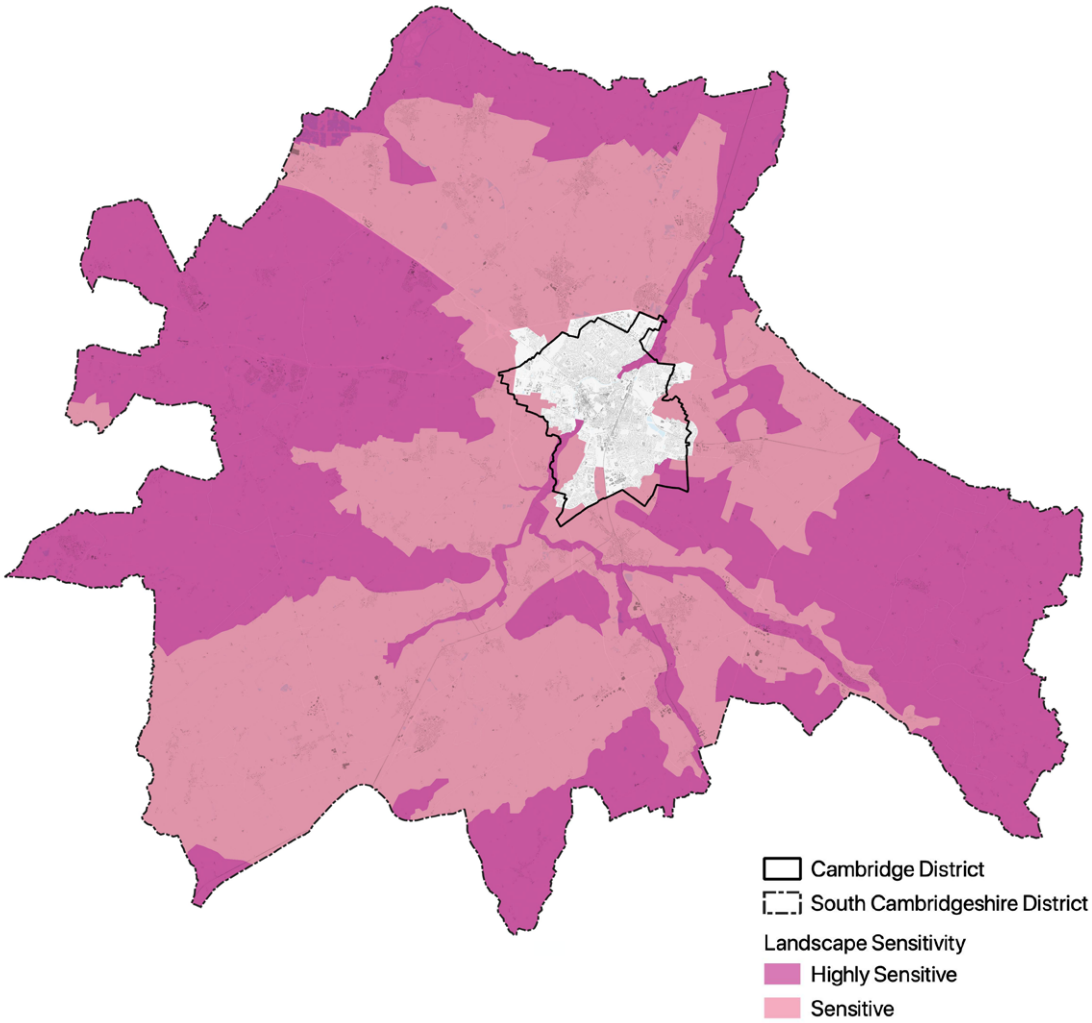

Figure 41: Landscape Sensitivities - District Wide scale

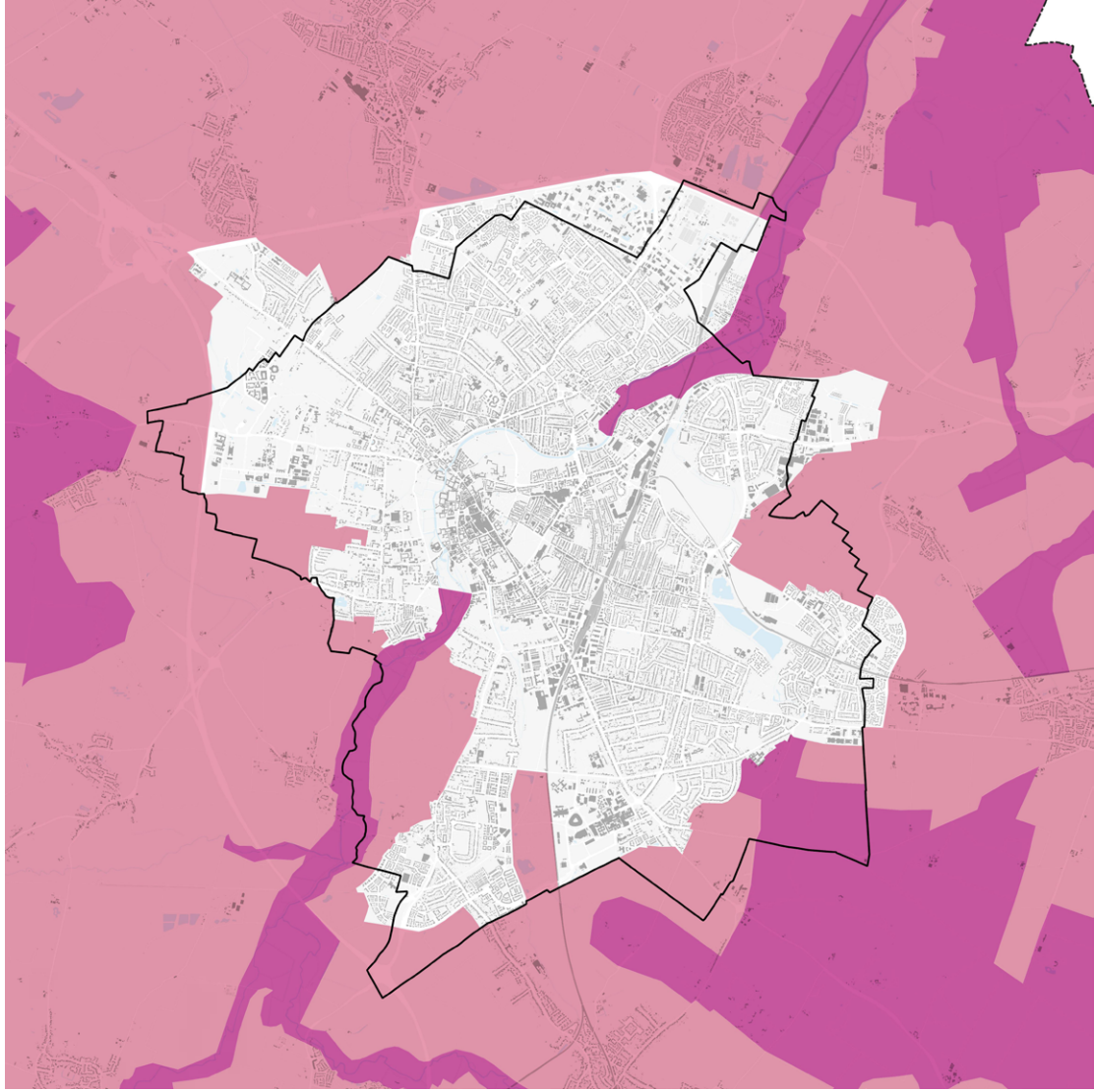

Figure 42: Landscape Sensitivities - Cambridge City scale

characteristics and maintain Cambridge's rural setting, as set out above, this does not preclude the potential for large new settlements, such as North Cambourne, Waterbeach, and Northstowe, to establish their own placemaking principles. These may involve distinct approaches to landmarks, scale, and development density, resulting in a different relationship with the surrounding landscape character and, in turn, a degree of change to that character. Such an approach would require comprehensive masterplanning, landscape impact assessments, and full justification as part of the policy development or development management process.

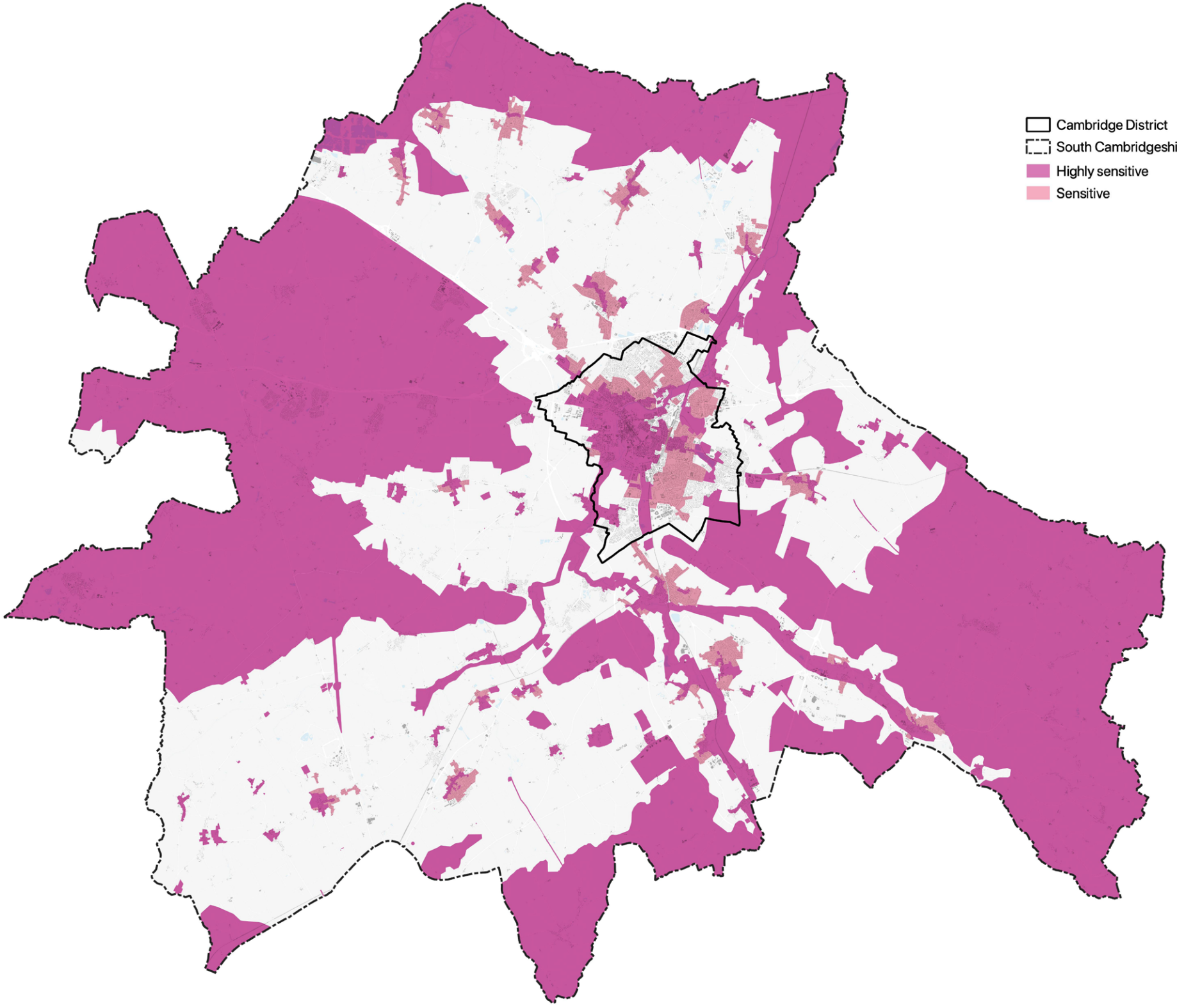

Figure 43: Combined heritage, townscape and landscape sensitivity to tall buildings - identifying areas unlikely to be appropirate for tall buildings (District wide scale)

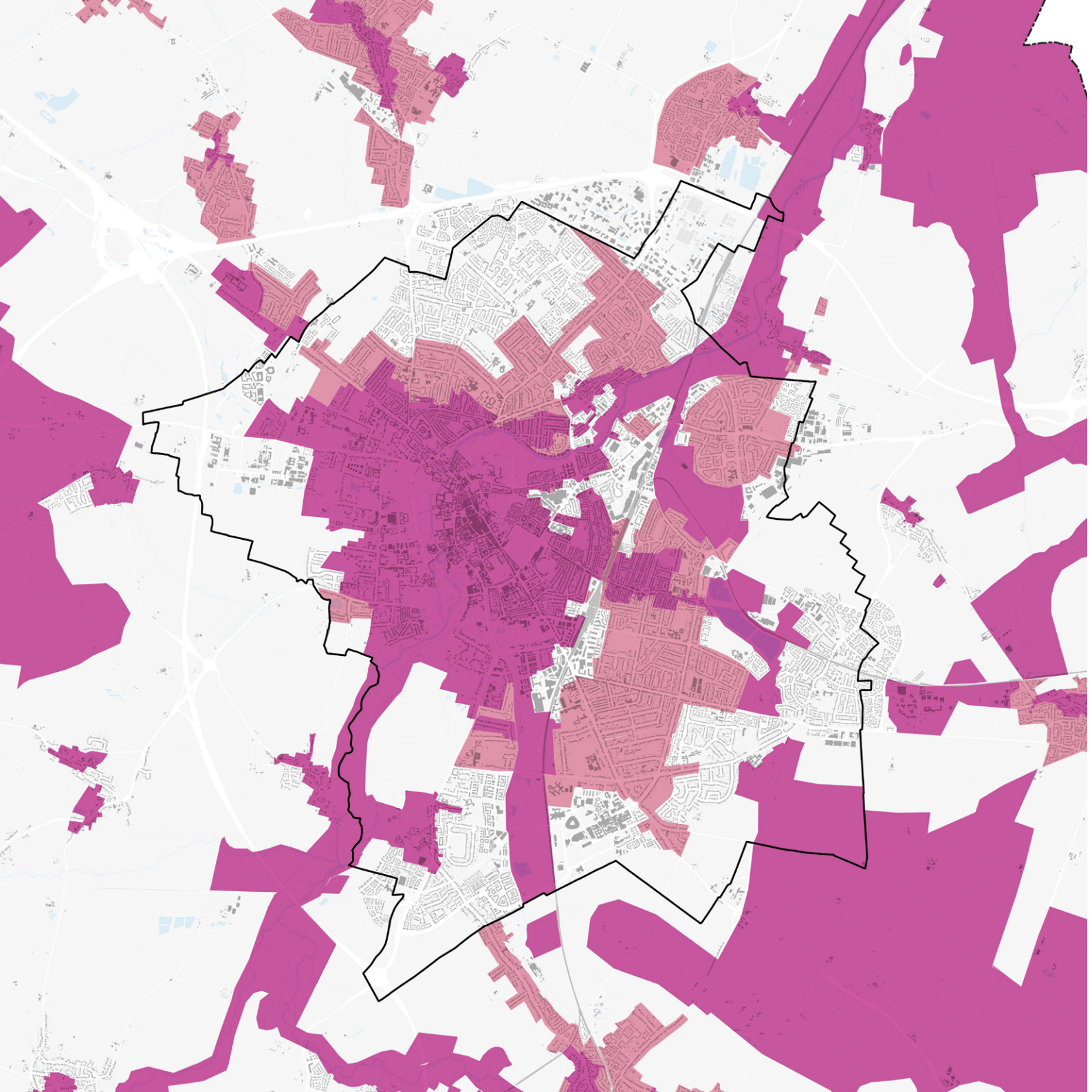

Figure 44: Combined heritage, townscape and landscape sensitivity to tall buildings - identifying areas unlikely to be appropirate for tall buildings (Cambridge City scale)

6.5 Directing Tall Buildings to Appropriate Locations

6.5.1 Introduction

6.5.1 A tall building or buildings in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire is likely to impact and change the skyline. If not coordinated, the cumulative impact of new tall buildings over time can lead to a fragmentation of the skyline and the loss of its distinctiveness and cherished qualities.

6.5.2 To avoid this, this strategy recommends a proactive approach to the shaping of the city's and sub-regional skyline, so that the impact of taller development is well considered, planned for, and meaningful, rather than the result of incremental ad-hoc development.

6.5.3 Given the sensitivity of Cambridge and its skyline, there will only be a few places in the city and sub-region where tall(er) buildings can be accommodated and where the change to the skyline is justifiable and commensurate with the significance of this development for the city and the sub-region as a whole.

6.5.4 Principally, it is only growth areas (such as Areas of Major Change and New Settlements) or growth nodes (such as Opportunity Areas) and associated site allocations (see Figure 12 and Figure 13) that may have the capacity to bring forward development of a city-wide or sub-regional significance that could (potentially) merit a coordinated impact and potential evolution of the city's/sub-regional skyline. However, not every identified growth area or node will be suitable or able to justify tall(er) buildings in this respect.

6.5.5 This study has undertaken a siftings approach to identify "Areas of Search," which may offer an opportunity for tall buildings in Greater Cambridgeshire, subject to more detailed visual testing. The sifting approach is summarised in the Section 6.5.2 Sifting of areas of search.

6.5.6 Subsequently, the study has undertaken high-level visual testing of tall building scenarios for six major areas of search in Cambridge. The findings and area specific recommendations of this testing are summarised in Section 6.5.3 Testing of major areas of search.

6.5.7 General recommendations on the location and planning for tall buildings in growth areas in Cambridge are included in Section 6.5.4 Conclusion.

6.5.2 Sifting of areas of search

6.5.8 This section sets out the process of sifting of areas of search. The detail of this approach is provided in Appendix D to this report.

6.5.9 The first step to identifying areas with potential for tall buildings (Areas of Search) is to identify areas with promoting factors for tall buildings in Greater Cambridgeshire. Principally, these are areas where major development is promoted by the combined planning authority (site allocations and regeneration areas) as shown in Figure 45.

6.5.10 Large sites, targeted for change, offer an inherent opportunity for more intense and higher density development. They may be able to establish a character of their own, where taller buildings could play a positive role for place making and legibility. Furthermore, they offer significant growth and economic potential for the city and hence are of significance to planning in the city that may merit a positive impact on the skyline.

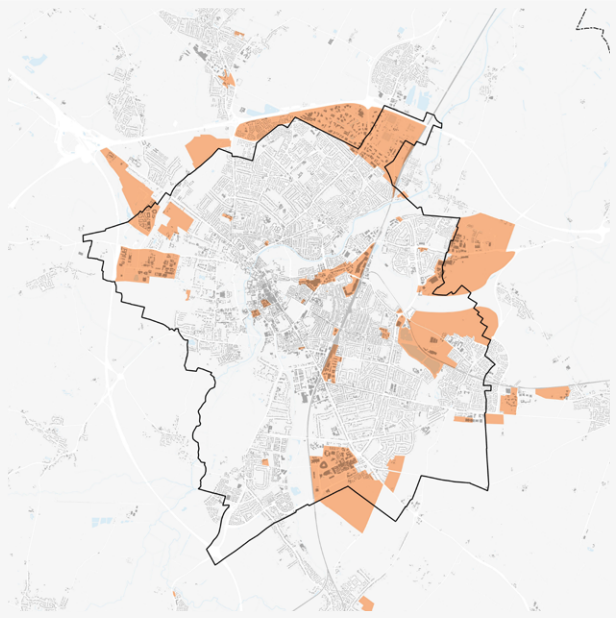

Figure 45: Step 1: Identify major development and growth areas in Cambridge

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Area with promoting factors for tall buildings

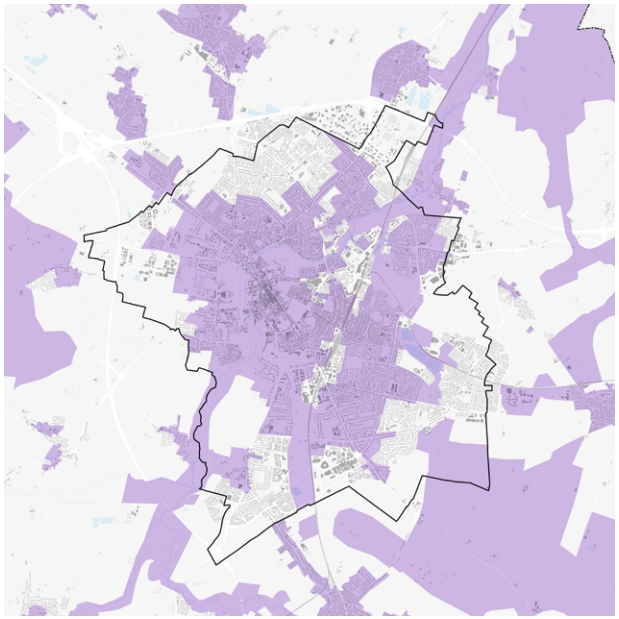

Figure 46: Step 2: Identify areas that are generally inappropriate to tall buildings

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Sensitive Areas not promoted for tall buildings

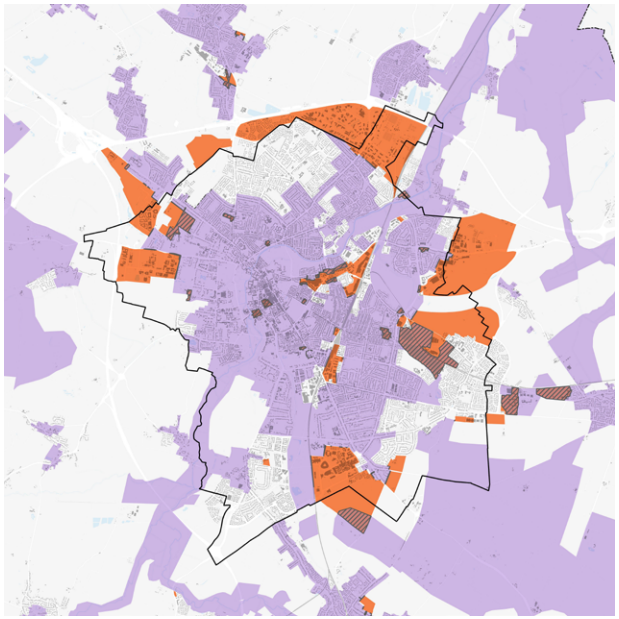

Figure 47: Step 3: Sifting out areas that are generally inappropriate to tall buildings

Cambridge District
South Cambridgeshire District
Excluded areas
Area with promoting factors for tall buildings
Sensitivities Areas not promoted for tall buildings

6.5.11 The second step involves collating all areas that are either highly sensitive or sensitive to tall buildings in Greater Cambridgeshire. These cover Heritage, Townscape and Landscape sensitivities as identified in Section 6.4 (Figure 43 and Figure 44). A composite of areas that are generally inappropriate for tall buildings is shown in Figure 46.

6.5.12 Step 3 (Figure 47) removes any areas deemed sensitive to tall buildings from the initial pool of sites with promoting factors. It overlays the composite tall building sensitivities and removes any sites or part of sites covered.

6.5.13 Step 4 discounts, for the purposes of this strategy, small sites of less than 1 hectare, as they are less likely to support comprehensive development of city-wide or sub-regional significance that would potentially justify a skyline impact in Cambridge (see criteria under paragraph 6.4.19 of the Tall Building Strategy), and as such, these sites should not be promoted for taller development.

6.5.14 Note that this does not imply that these smaller areas are inherently unsuitable for tall buildings; rather, they do not readily lend themselves to comprehensive masterplanning or development frameworks, are less likely to