

Figure 2: Land use mapping - Cambridge City scale

2.3 Land use

2.3.1 Despite its compact size compared to other cities, Cambridge is an internationally renowned city, that also acts as a regional centre across the East of England. It is known for its world-class educational institutions and knowledge-based industries (such as research, tech, bio-tech and bio-medical industries).

2.3.2 The city is characterised by its universities and colleges, many of which form an intrinsic part of the cultural and built heritage of the city. A large part of the city centre and the area to the west of the centre is characterised by educational institutions.

2.3.3 The remainder of the city centre land use is largely characterised by historic city centre mixed use development and residential use.

2.3.4 The majority of the city suburbs are residential with pockets of commercial and industrial uses, and then significant edge of City developments such as Cambridge Biomedical Campus, West Cambridge and the Cambridge Science Park area (Figure 2).

Sensitivities to tall buildings

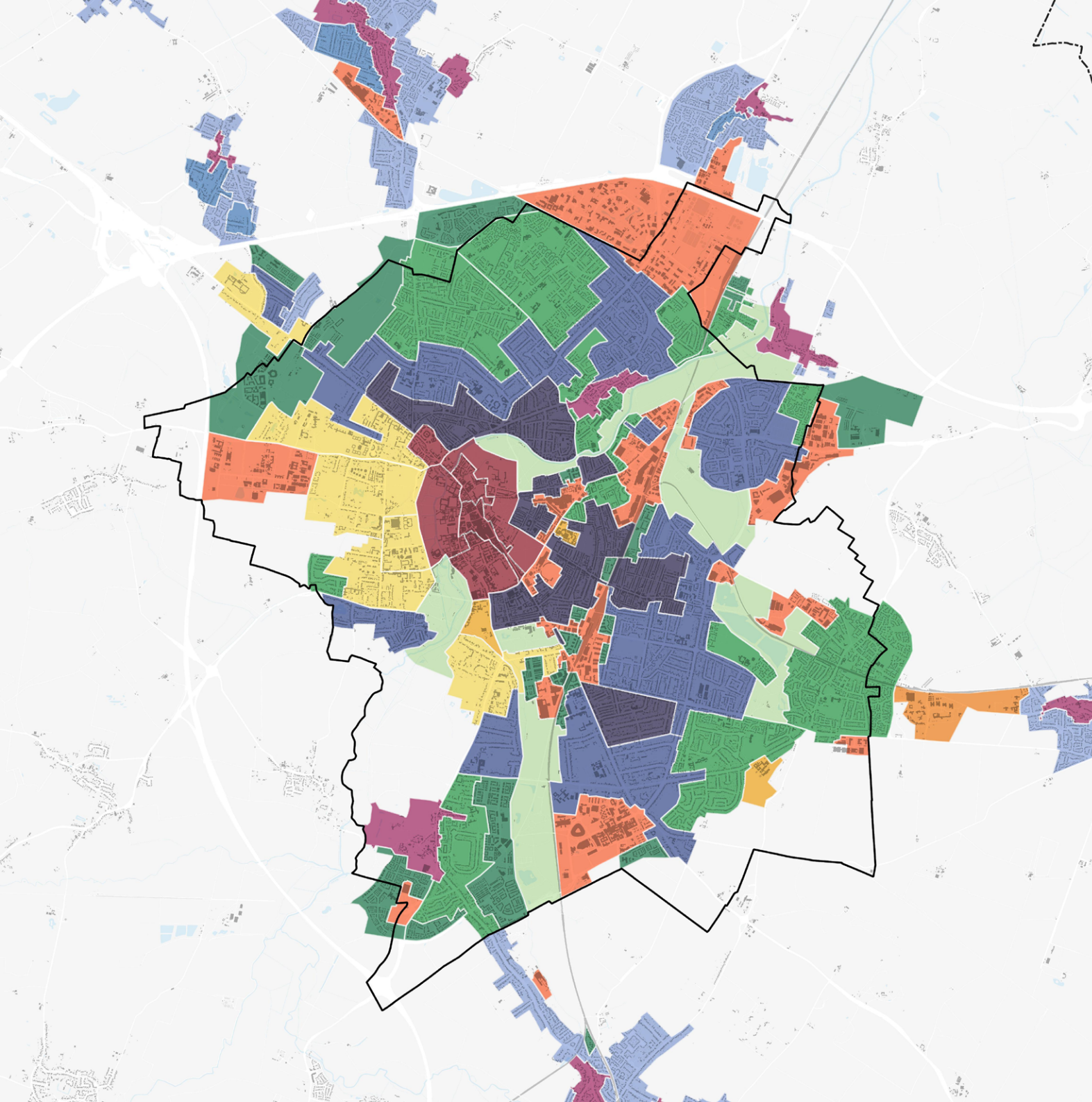
2.3.5 Mixed-use and institutional areas, in theory, have a greater ability to assimilate tall buildings and have the potential to gain wider benefits from their social, economic, environmental and regenerative role. By their nature mixed-use areas have greater activity levels, support higher densities and have a sense of urbanity that makes them more able to assimilate tall buildings as part of their character and support their use and activity levels. Likewise, institutional areas provide a key public-facing function within Cambridge and tall buildings in these areas could help to enhance legibility, concentrate activities in central places, be part of a place making approach and contribute to a distinct character.

2.3.6 Much of the area outside of Cambridge city centre comprises low-rise (1-3 storeys) residential areas of a domestic scale suburban character, which are sensitive to tall buildings. A tall building within or adjacent to a low-rise residential area may appear alien and intrusive and detract from its coherent domestic character and urban form. It may also



Image 9: Napp Pharmaceutical Building © Bob Jones

affect the residential amenity and privacy of existing residents, cause overlooking or overshadowing and have an overbearing or demeaning impact on properties and their private outdoor spaces. Proposals within or adjacent to low-rise residential areas will be sensitive to tall buildings, and will need to test their impact and appropriateness at pre-application and application stage.



- Cambridge District
- South Cambridgeshire District
- Historic Core
- Historic village core
- Victorian / Edwardian terraced housing
- 1900-1940 suburban housing
- 1900-1940 village expansion
- Post-war village expansion
- Post-war suburban housing
- 20th century new settlement
- 21st century new settlement
- 21st century growth
- Open space
- Bespoke houses and University colleges
- Other education development
- Historic commercial/industrial/service development
- Modern commercial/industrial/service development
- MOD land
- Aerodromes

Figure 3: Character areas mapping - Cambridge City scale

2.4 Townscape character

2.4.1 The townscape character of Cambridge is reflective of its historical development, with the city centre being largely characterised by an historic city core, historic educational buildings and campuses, and Victorian & Edwardian terraced housing.

2.4.2 Around the city centre there is a large concentration of 1900s-1940s suburban housing which is interspersed with smaller sites of post-war suburban housing. Additionally, there are larger sites of post-war suburban housing, 21st century residential expansion and large commercial/industrial and service development sites towards the outer limits of the city. There is further commercial/industrial and service development along the railway corridor that transects through Cambridge.

2.4.3 Figure 3 shows the character assessment of Cambridge undertaken as part of this study. This identifies a range of typical character typologies found in the city.



Image 10: Trinity Street © Stanley Howe



Image 11: Scotland Road © Graham Knott

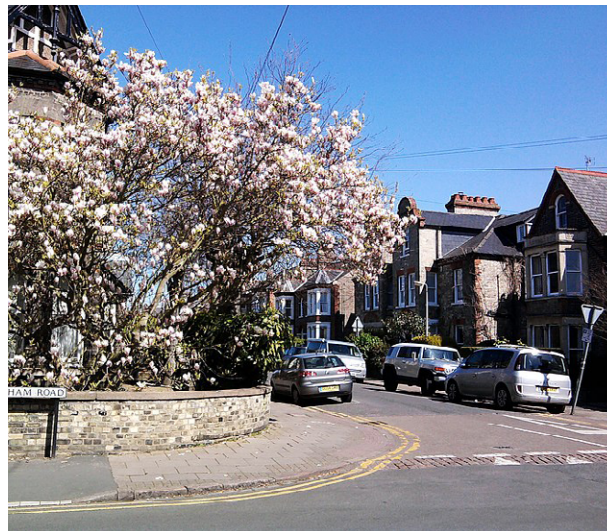
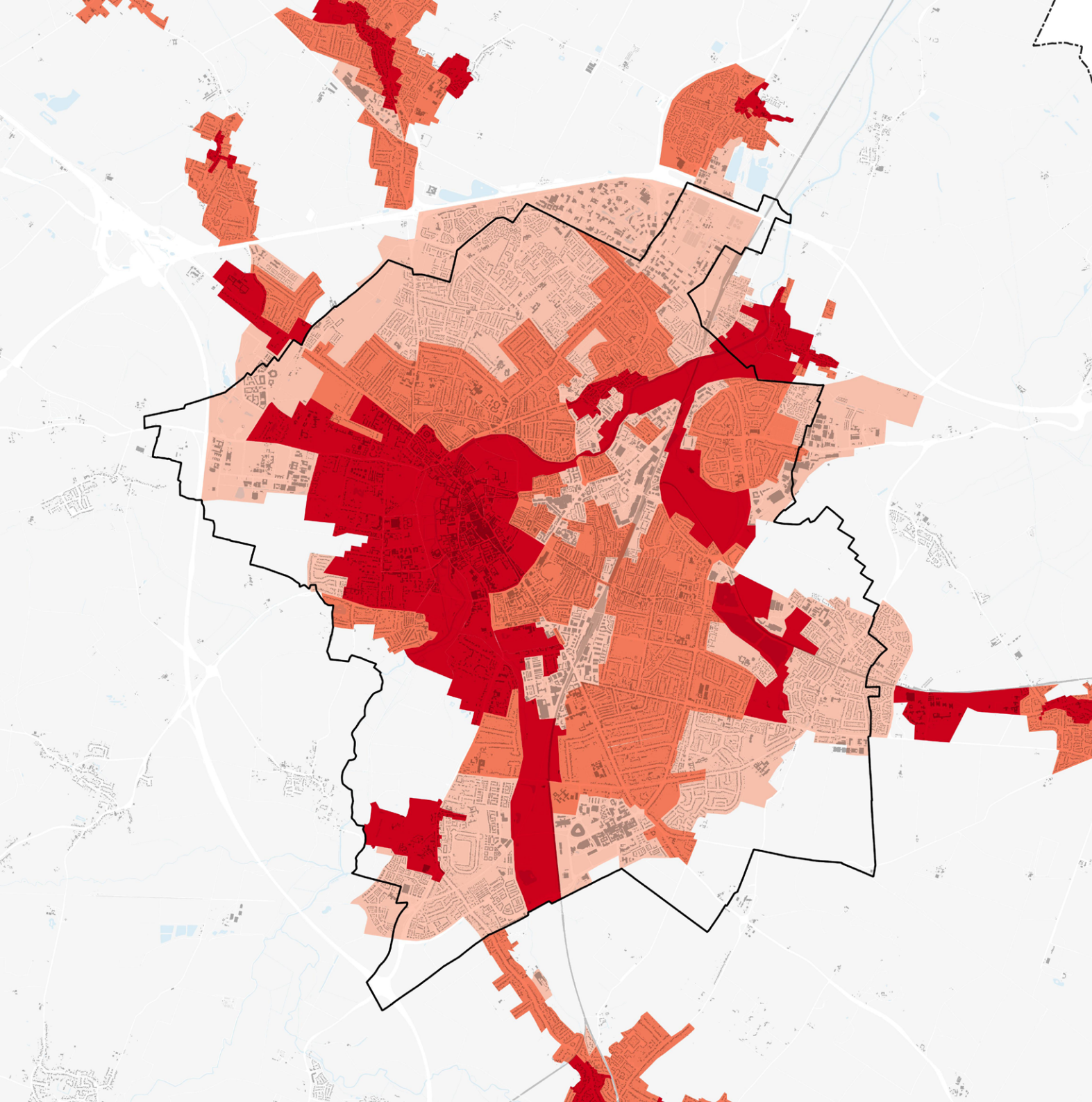


Image 12: Gresham Road and Glisson Road © Rich Tea



Image 13: Coldham's Lane © Wikimedia



- Cambridge District
- South Cambridgeshire District
- Townscape Sensitivity
 - Highly sensitive
 - Sensitive
 - Somewhat sensitive
 - Less sensitive

**Figure 4: Townscape
Character Sensitivity -
Cambridge City scale**

Sensitivities to tall buildings

2.4.4 Some of the townscape character areas types of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire will be inherently sensitive to tall building developments, which can be incongruous and out of character due to their scale, massing and overall height.

2.4.5 The following character areas have been classified according to the following sensitivity scale (Figure 4)

Highly Sensitive

- Historic core
- Historic village
- Open space
- Bespoke houses and university colleges

Sensitive

- 1900s-40s suburban housing
- 1900s-40s village expansion
- Post-war village expansion
- Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing
- Education developments within Cambridge city centre
- Historic Commercial/industrial/service development

Somewhat sensitive

- Post-war suburban housing
- Post-war housing development
- 20th century new settlement
- 21st century new settlement
- 21st century expansion
- Education development outside Cambridge city centre¹
- Modern Commercial/industrial/service development²
- Aerodrome

Less sensitive

- MOD land (Northstowe, Waterbeach, Bassingbourn)

2.4.6 The identification of sensitivity to tall buildings by character area type is only the starting point when understanding if a

¹ A few commercial and educational areas that are fully within Conservation Areas have been independently assessed and classified in terms of their townscape sensitivity.

² See footnote 1.

specific area is sensitive to a tall building. Other factors such as the quality and size of an area and its surrounding context will also need to be considered. An area may also be sensitive to tall buildings due to heritage or visual sensitivities, even though its townscape character could accommodate a tall building. Assessment will need to consider all factors in and around.

2.4.7 A tall building proposal within or affecting a highly sensitive, sensitive, or somewhat sensitive character area will need to take account of the impact it will have on the character of this area, including its setting, coherence and experience. Where its impact is adverse, detrimental or degrading to the existing townscape character or its setting, it will require clear and convincing justification, demonstrating that alternatives have been explored, mitigation measures are implemented to minimise the impact, and that there are significant public benefits that outweigh that impact. Tall buildings should generally not be promoted in highly sensitive character area types and may be less likely found appropriate in sensitive character area types.

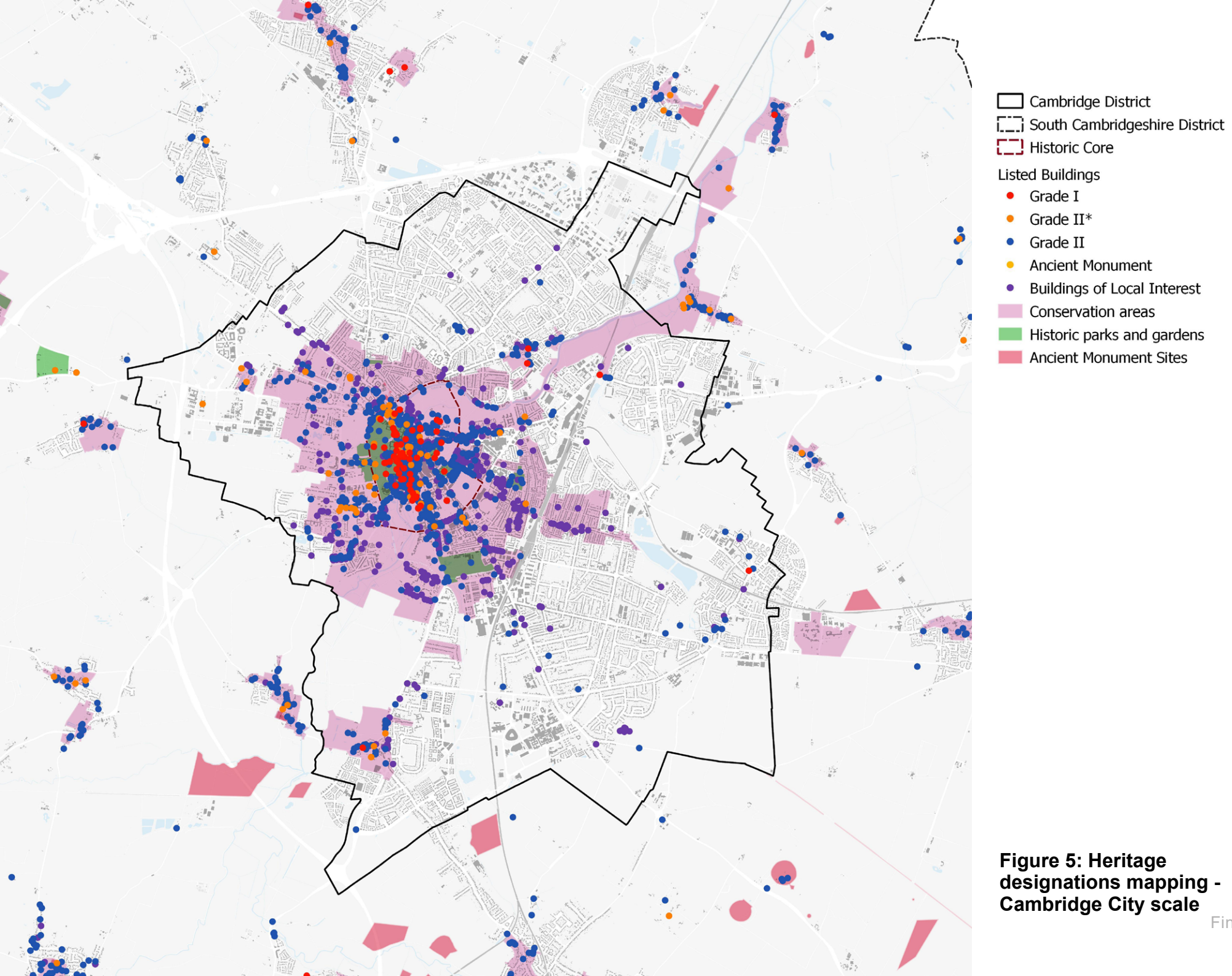


Figure 5: Heritage designations mapping - Cambridge City scale

2.5 Heritage

2.5.1 Cambridge is renowned for the architecture and townscape of the Historic Core, with its remarkable combination of college, civic, religious and mercantile architecture, set within an evolved layout reflecting its medieval origins and relationships to the river and castle.

2.5.2 Cambridge has a total of 17 no. Conservation areas, 8 no. Registered Parks and Gardens, 831 no. Listed Buildings and 465 no. Buildings of Local Interest (Figure 5). Together these represent the many phases of Cambridge's historic development and encompass a diverse and important range of types, forms and styles. As well as the grand buildings and streets of the Core, there are extensive areas of 19th century terraced development with associated civic, religious and industrial buildings. The City also contains a number of good examples of 20th century town planning and design.

2.5.3 Many of the assets contribute to the skyline of Cambridge in long distance, medium distance and close up views. In particular, the colleges and churches in and around the core are a key feature of the skyline of the City, marking its historic heart.



Image 14: Fitzwilliam Museum © Philip Pankhurst

Sensitivities to tall buildings

2.5.4 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.

2.5.5 A tall building proposal within or affecting a designated heritage asset will need to take account of the impact at application stage and avoid substantial harm to the significance of the asset or its setting. Where it causes less than substantial harm it will require clear and convincing justification, demonstrating that alternatives have been



Image 15: The University Arms Hotel © Rich Tea

explored, harm is minimised, and that there are significant public benefits that outweigh that harm.

2.5.6 In the Cambridge context particular care will need to be taken 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 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.
- Maintaining the outstanding architectural quality of the Historic Core, its relationship to the commons, the River Cam and the wider landscape around the City

2.5.7 Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens will be highly sensitive to tall buildings as they would introduce significant change to the character they are aiming to preserve. Tall buildings within or close to these areas may be harmful to the significance of these heritage assets and are unlikely to be unacceptable.



2.6 Skyline and key landmarks

2.6.1 Cambridge is one of England's most important historic settlements. The city has a strong identity that derives from the city's history as a university town, its grand college buildings, institutional landmarks, the fine grain historic market town fabric, the River Cam that encircles the city, and its green spaces and meadows. Together they contribute to form the mental image that people have of Cambridge and that makes it distinctive.

2.6.2 A combination of the prevailing 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.

2.6.3 Within this relatively restrained skyline landmark buildings, often taller buildings, can play an important role in terms of structuring the city and highlighting key locations. For Cambridge this is particularly the case with the skyline of the Historic Core, with historic spires and towers emerging from above the varied street scene and treed landscape of the city.

Outside of the Core itself, this skyline is best experienced from the southwest i.e. from the Grantchester Meadows and elevated viewpoints on Red Meadow Hill and Castle Mound (see Views section 2.7); and from the network of open spaces around and within the Core. Although it sits just outside the Historic Core, the Cambridge University Library Tower plays a prominent role in defining the skyline of this area.

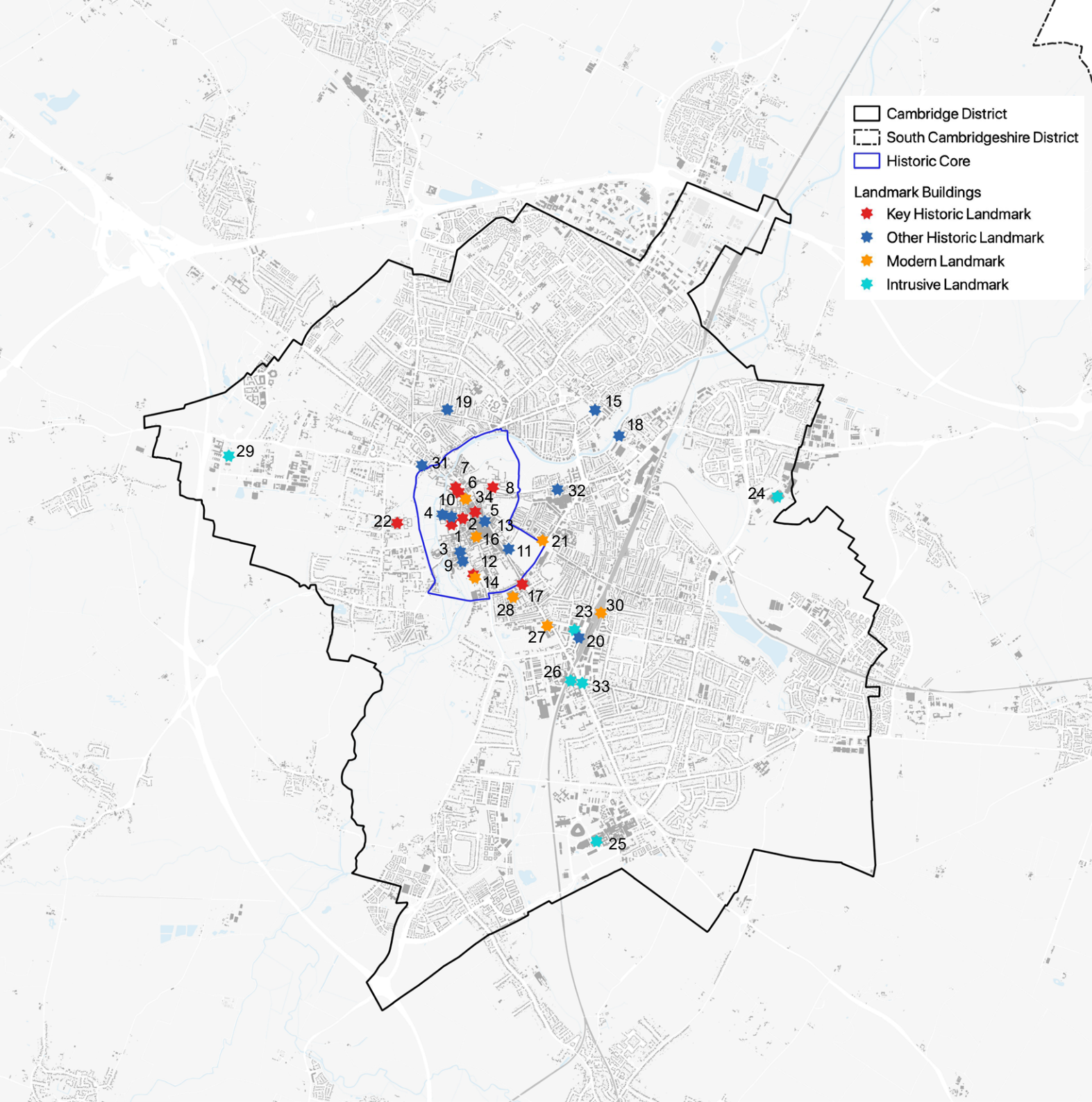
2.6.4 Away from the Core, the skyline is predominantly suburban and low with limited verticality, the punctuating elements generally being historic churches and some modern elements, both positive and negative.

2.6.5 Landmark buildings were identified in the Cambridge Local Plan (2018), within and outside the Core. These are generally not dominant elements in long and medium distance views, although Addenbrooke's and other major modern development can be very prominent in medium distance views. Many of them feature in those views and play an important positive, or negative, role in shaping those views

and the identity of Cambridge. These landmarks also tend to play a stronger role in their more immediate townscape. Others do not feature from afar and make their contribution on a more local scale.

2.6.6 There are some exceptions to this. In terms of larger development, the following modern elements play a strong role in forming the current skyline of Cambridge, but they all sit in visually distinct locations away from the historic core:

- Addenbrooke's Hospital / Cambridge Biomedical Campus defines the character and skyline to the south of Cambridge,
- the bulk and mass of the hangers at Cambridge Airport play a strong role in the east; and
- the visually prominent Schlumberger Building and other parts of the West Cambridge Campus have a clear presence to the west.



- 1 - King's College Chapel
- 2 - St Mary the Great
- 3 - The Pitt Building
- 4 - Trinity College Hall
- 5 - Holy Trinity Church
- 6 - St John's College, New Court Gate House
- 7 - St John's Chapel
- 8 - All Saint's Church, Jesus Lane
- 9 - Emmanuel Reform Church
- 10 - Gonville and Caius College
- 11 - De Vere University Arms Hotel
- 12 - Fitzwilliam Museum
- 13 - St Andrew the Great, St Andrew's Street
- 14 - William Stone Building for Peterhouse
- 15 - St Andrew's Church, Chesterton
- 16 - Arup Building
- 17 - Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs
- 18 - Cambridge Museum of Technology chimney
- 19 - St Luke's Church, Victoria Road
- 20 - Foster's Mill at the railway station
- 21 - Parkside Fire Station Development
- 22 - University Library tower
- 23 - 50-60 Station Road Building
- 24 - Aircraft hangars at Cambridge Airport
- 25 - Cambridge Biomedical Campus
- 26 - The Belvedere
- 27 - Botanic House
- 28 - Chemistry Building, Cambridge University
- 29 - The Schlumberger Building
- 30 - Carter Cycle Bridge
- 31 - Westminster College
- 32 - Christ Church, Christchurch Street
- 33 - The Marque, Hills Road
- 34 - Trinity College, Wolfson Building

Figure 6: Landmark Buildings
Final Report



Image 17: All Saints Church © Keith Edkins



Image 18: Carter Cycle Bridge © John Sutton



Image 19: Chemistry Building Cambridge University © George Rex



Image 20: King's College Chapel © Graham Hogg

2.6.7 More recent developments such as the CB1 Station redevelopment (particularly 50&60 Station Road) and recent schemes such as The Marque, Belvedere and Botanic House are changing the townscape of areas of the city at a more local level.

2.6.8 The identified landmark buildings have been classified as follows and are shown on Figure 6 in the context of their surrounding heights and topography:

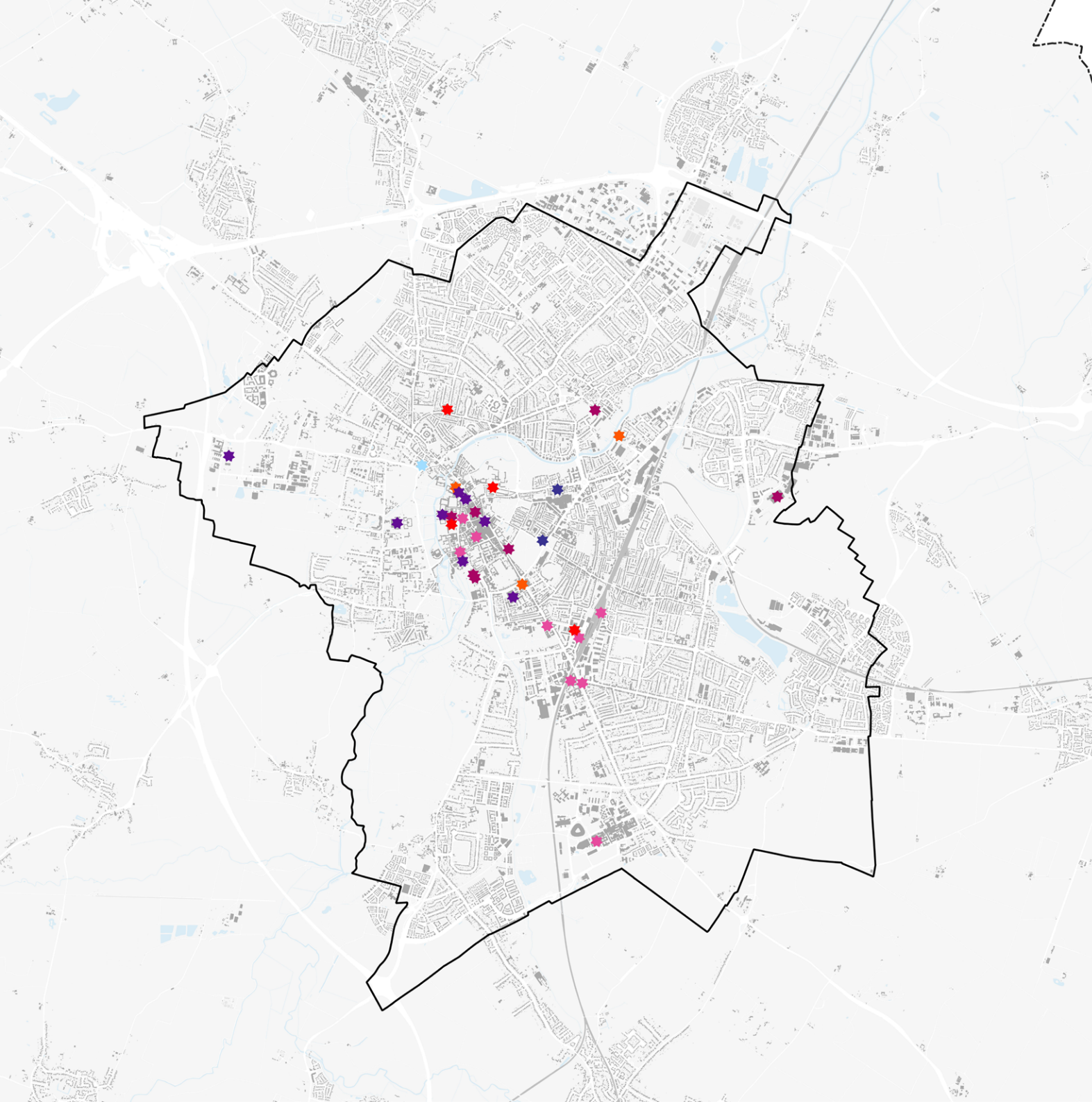
- **Key historic landmark buildings** – these are buildings that are generally of high historic quality / importance and which play a key role in either the visual

representation of the city and / or in views across and through the city

- **Other historic landmarks** – these are generally notable historic buildings that tend to have a more localised presence in the townscape
- **Modern landmarks** – these are modern (mid-20th century onwards) buildings that make a positive contribution to the wider townscape or longer distance views
- **Intrusive landmarks** – these tend to be modern buildings that figure prominently in views and detract from the experience of the wider city

Sensitivities to tall buildings

2.6.9 Key Landmarks that make a positive contribution to Cambridge's skyline and character may be vulnerable to other tall buildings that affect their prominence and visibility on the skyline in strategic or local views. Inappropriately located or designed taller buildings may intrude in or obstruct the view towards landmarks, compete or detract from the importance of landmarks in views and affect the character and composition of views.



- Cambridge District
- South Cambridgeshire District

Landmark Building Heights

- 0 - 7m (1 Storey)
- 7 - 10m (2 Storeys)
- 10 - 13m (3 Storeys)
- 13 - 16m (4 Storeys)
- 16 - 22m (5-6 Storeys)
- 22 - 28m (7-8 Storeys)
- 28 - 34m (9-10 Storeys)
- 34 - 43m (11-12 Storeys)
- 43m + (14+ Storeys)
- No Data

Note: Storey heights are indicative and are based on floor to floor heights of 3.2m for typical residential floors and 4m for typical commercial floors.

Figure 7: Views and Landmark by height - Cambridge City scale

2.7 Notable views and viewpoints

2.7.1 Cambridge's historic core is characterised by a rich and diverse architecture and urban form, with many striking and iconic views – these views tend to be local in scale, often being up close and personal in nature. These views are a key component of the city's character and are described, mapped and assessed in the [Historic Core Conservation Area appraisal](#). They are not re-examined here but will be important considerations for the assessment and design of schemes in and around the core.



Image 21: Clare College © Alex Brown



Image 22: Bridge of Sighs - St John's College © Peter Veenendaal