

Development Strategy

Topic Paper

Appendix 15: Identifying the Strategic Policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan



Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Topic Paper published as part of the Proposed Submission Local Plan - Regulation 19 consultation (August 2026 - September 2026)

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Introduction

- 1.1 National planning policy sets out that plans should be explicit about which policies are strategic policies, and that the non-strategic policies should be clearly distinguished from the strategic policies.
- 1.2 The [National Planning Policy Framework \(December 2024\)](#) (NPPF) defines strategic policies as “Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.”
- 1.3 Collectively, the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provide further definition around which matters strategic policies should address, supporting plan-makers to reach a view on which policies should be considered strategic or non-strategic.
- 1.4 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

Criteria used to identify Strategic Policies

- 1.5 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF outlines that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for:
 - A. homes, employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development,
 - B. infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat),
 - C. community facilities - such as health, education and cultural infrastructure,

and

- D. conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

1.6 The NPPF also sets out in paragraphs 11, 23, 78, 124, 144, 145 and 171 that:

- E. strategic policies should provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, informed by a local needs assessment, and provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward at a sufficient rate to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period,
- F. strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period,
- G. strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land,
- H. any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies,
- I. strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, and
- J. strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources.

1.7 The [PPG](#) (Paragraph: 076 Reference ID: 41-076-20190509) sets out additional considerations for reaching a view on whether a policy may be strategic:

- a. whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective,
- b. whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development,
- c. the scale at which the policy is intended to operate,
- d. whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced,
- e. whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the local plan or spatial development strategy,

- f. in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the local plan or spatial development strategy, and
- g. whether the local plan or spatial development strategy identifies the policy as being strategic.

Methodology

1.8 The Councils have considered each of the policies in the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan against criteria A-J from the NPPF 2024 and criteria a-g from the PPG to reach a view as to whether the policy should be considered a strategic policy or non-strategic policy. These criteria also address the legal requirement in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that strategic policies should collectively address the Plan's strategic priorities. For each strategic policy, relevant criteria from the NPPF and/or PPG have been identified, and for all policies the reasoning for why it is or is not considered to be a strategic policy has been captured.

Strategic Policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Table 1: Strategic Policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
S/JH: New jobs and homes	A, E, F	a, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective and/or direction.
S/DS: Development strategy	A, E, F, G, I	a, b, d, f, g	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective and/or direction.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
S/SH: Settlement hierarchy	A, E, F	a, b, c, e, g	Yes	Policy sets a standard that is essential to achieving an overarching objective.
S/DE: Defined development extents	A, B, C	a, b, e, g	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective and/or direction.
S/GB: The Cambridge Green Belt	D	a, d, g	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective and/or direction.
S/MO: Monitoring			No	Procedural policy.
Area of Major Change policies in the Cambridge Urban Area, Edge of Cambridge, Rural Southern Cluster and Rest of Rural area chapters ¹	A, B, C, D, G	a, b, c	Yes	Strategic to maximising homes and jobs, particularly on previously developed land; and shaping the broad characteristics of development

¹ While each policy is not listed individually, the assessment applies equally to each

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
S/PRIA: Public Realm Improvement Area policies ²	D	b, c	Yes	Policies seeking to conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and shape the broad characteristics of development
S/PA/CC: Cambridge City Centre	A, C, D, G	a, b, c	Yes	Policy setting out an overall direction and seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
S/PA/LN: South of A1307, Linton			No	Detailed spatial policy setting locally specific criteria not critical to the delivery of the strategic priorities.
CC/SD: Sustainable development and the climate emergency	B, D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.

² The assessment applies equally to the following policies: S/PRIA/CRP: Cambridge Retail Park, S/PRIA/MC: Mitcham's Corner, S/PRIA/EG: Eastern Gate, S/PRIA/MR: Mill Road, S/PRIA/HRRS: Hills Road and Regent Street Corridor, S/PRIA/OPML: Old Press/Mill Lane

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
CC/DC: Designing for a changing climate	D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development
CC/NZ: Net zero carbon new buildings	B, D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
CC/WE: Water efficiency in new developments	B, D, J	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
CC/IW: Integrated water management, sustainable drainage and water quality	B, D, J	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development. Policy setting out an overarching

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
CC/RE: Renewable and low-carbon energy projects and infrastructure	B, D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
CC/CE: Supporting a circular economy and sustainable resource use	D	b, d	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
CC/CS: Supporting land-based carbon sequestration and carbon sinks	D	b, d	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
CC/SR: Sustainable Retrofit	D	b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development; and setting standards that are essential to achieving the plan's vision and aspirations
BG/BG: Biodiversity and geodiversity	D	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
BG/GI: Green infrastructure	B, D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
BG/UGF: Urban Greening Factor	D	b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development; and setting standards that are essential to achieving the plan's vision and aspirations
BG/TC: Tree cover and the population	D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
BG/RC: River corridors	D	b, c	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development
BG/PO: Protecting open spaces	D	a, b, c	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
BG/EO: Providing and enhancing open spaces	C, D	b, e	Yes	Policy sets a standard that is essential to achieving an overarching objective
WS/HD: Creating healthy new developments	B, C, D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
WS/NC: Meeting the needs of new and growing communities	A, C	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
WS/CF: Community, sports, and leisure facilities	C	b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective
WS/CH: Cultural and creative hubs	A, C	d, e	Yes	Policy sets a standard that is essential to achieving an overarching objective.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
WS/MU: Meanwhile uses			No	Detailed development management policy not critical to the delivery of the strategic priorities.
WS/IO: Creating inclusive employment and business opportunities through new developments			No	Detailed policy development management policy setting procedural / evidential requirements for certain planning applications.
WS/HS: Pollution, health and safety	D	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
WS/PH: Protection of public houses	C	b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
GP/PP: People and place responsive design	B, C, D	b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
GP/QD: Achieving high quality development	D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
GP/HD: Housing density	A, D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
GP/QP: Establishing high quality landscape and public realm	D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
GP/LC: Protection and enhancement of landscape character	D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
GP/HE: Historic environment	D	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
GP/HA: Designated heritage assets	D	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
GP/ST: Skyline and tall buildings	D	a, b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad Characteristics of development.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
GP/ND: Non-designated heritage assets			No	Detailed development management policy setting locally specific criteria not critical to the delivery of the strategic priorities
GP/AR: Archaeology	D	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
GP/CC: Adapting heritage assets to climate change			No	Detailed development management policy setting locally specific criteria and evidential requirements for certain planning applications.
GP/SF: Shopfronts			No	Detailed development management policy setting locally specific criteria not critical to the delivery of the strategic priorities

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
J/NE: New employment development proposals	A, E, G	a, b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
J/RE: Supporting the rural economy	A, E	a, b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
J/AL: Protecting the best agricultural land	A, E	a, b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
J/PB: Protecting existing business space	A, E	a, b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.
J/AW: Affordable workspace and creative industries	A, C, E	a, b, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
J/EP: Supporting a range of facilities in employment	A, C, E	a, b, d	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or parks objective.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
J/MS: Markets and street trading			No	Detailed development management policy relating to markets and street trading.
J/RC: Retail and other complementary town centre uses	A, C, E	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
J/SA: Cambridge City's Primary Shopping Area	A, C, E	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective
J/VA: Visitor accommodation, attractions and facilities	A, E	a, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
J/FD: Faculty development and specialist or language schools	A, E	a, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
H/AH: Affordable housing	A, E, G	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching objective.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
H/ES: Exception sites for affordable housing	A, E	a, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting a framework for how competing priorities should be balanced.
H/HM: Housing mix	A, E, G	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy sets a standard that is essential to achieving an overarching objective.
H/GL: Garden land and subdivision of existing plots			No	Detailed development management policy relating to the subdivision of existing plots.
H/SS: Residential space standards and accessible homes	A, E, G	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy sets a standard that is essential to achieving an overarching objective.
H/SH: Specialist housing	A, E, G	a, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to address objectively assessed housing needs.
H/CB: Self and custom build homes	A, E, G	a, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to address objectively assessed housing needs.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
H/BR: Build to rent homes			No	Detailed development management policy on delivery of build to rent tenure homes
H/CO: Co-living			No	Detailed development management policy on delivery of build co-living units
H/MO: Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)			No	Detailed development management policy setting local criteria for applications for HMO tenure
H/SA: Student accommodation	A, E, G	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy seeking to address objectively assessed needs
H/DC: Dwellings in the countryside	A	a, c, d, e	Yes	Policy setting an overarching direction and/or objective and sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced
H/RM: Residential moorings			No	Detailed development management policy relating to residential moorings.
H/GT: Gypsy and traveller and travelling show people plots	A, E, G	a, b, c, d, e	Yes	Policy seeking to address objectively assessed housing needs.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
I/ST: Sustainable transport and connectivity	B	a, b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
I/MH: Mobility hub facilities			No	Detailed development management policy relating to mobility hub facilities.
I/CV: Cycle and vehicle parking	B	a, b, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective. Policy seeking
I/SD: Servicing and last-mile deliveries	B	a, b, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
I/SI: Safeguarding important infrastructure	B	a, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
I/AD: Aviation development	B	a, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
I/EI: Energy infrastructure masterplanning	B, D	a, c, e	Yes	Policy setting out an overarching direction and/or objective.
I/ID: Infrastructure and delivery	B, E	a, c, e	Yes	Policy sets a standard / requirement that is essential to achieving an overarching objective.

Policy	NPPF criteria met	NPPG criteria met	Strategic Policy? (Yes/No)	Reasoning
I/DT: Digital and telecommunications infrastructure	B	a, b, c, e	Yes	Policy seeking to shape the broad characteristics of development.
I/CM: Construction management			No	Detailed development management policy relating to construction management.