



Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy (Interim) - Stage Two

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service,
Cambridge City Council & South
Cambridgeshire District Council

July 2026

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Vision, Priorities and Outline Cultural Infrastructure Needs	11
3. Recommendations for Funding & Delivering Cultural Infrastructure	17
4. The Case for Cultural Infrastructure within Planning Policy	36
5. Cultural Infrastructure Needs Analysis	43
6. Area Based Needs Assessment	63
7. Summary of Implications for Strategic Growth Areas	66

1. Introduction

Context and Strategic Drivers to 2045

- 1.1 This report forms part of the evidence base supporting the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. It provides an assessment of cultural infrastructure needs, identifying the key social, spatial and economic factors that will shape demand through to 2045.
- 1.2 The report identifies how planned growth in Greater Cambridge necessitates and can support the vision and priorities for cultural infrastructure established through the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage One, which were based on an extensive audit of existing infrastructure provision, engagement with key stakeholders in cultural infrastructure delivery, and community involvement.
- 1.3 The report makes the case for cultural infrastructure as a core component of social and economic infrastructure, essential to delivering sustainable, inclusive and high-quality places and therefore the need to provide and maintain infrastructure through new development to support planned development and mitigate the impact of development.
- 1.4 The report identifies the need for contributions through S106 agreements, in addition to wider funding mechanisms, to deliver the necessary cultural infrastructure to support Greater Cambridge's economic and population growth.
- 1.5 Greater Cambridge is entering a period of significant growth, with new settlements, urban extensions and regeneration areas planned across the area. This will reshape patterns of everyday life and increase demand for infrastructure that supports community cohesion, identity and wellbeing. Cultural infrastructure will be critical in this context, providing spaces for social interaction and shared experience, and helping to establish vibrant, distinctive local centres from the outset of development.
- 1.6 Alongside growth, existing structural challenges persist. Engagement to date highlights uneven access to cultural infrastructure, particularly where pockets of deprivation coincide with limited local provision. In rural areas, issues of isolation, especially among older populations, reinforce the importance of accessible local social and cultural spaces.
- 1.7 These spatial inequalities sit alongside wider societal pressures. Rising levels of mental health need, and increasing recognition of culture's role in supporting wellbeing, point to the importance of embedding accessible, everyday cultural infrastructure within communities as part of a preventative approach to health and social resilience.
- 1.8 Economic factors are also significant. As a globally recognised knowledge economy, Greater Cambridge relies on a strong creative and cultural sector to attract and retain talent, whilst supporting innovation, identity and competitiveness. Increasing affordability pressures - particularly within Cambridge City - are constraining access to workspace for creative practitioners and businesses, creating risks of displacement and loss of cultural capacity.

-
- 1.9 Expectations of cultural provision are evolving. Engagement indicates growing demand for flexible, multi-functional and locally embedded spaces, alongside greater use of outdoor and green spaces for cultural activity, reflecting a shift towards more distributed and integrated models of provision.
 - 1.10 The findings presented here reflect evidence derived from engagement and analysis and should be understood as indicative rather than definitive. They will be further tested and refined through subsequent stages of the Cultural Infrastructure Strategy.
 - 1.11 Taken together, these factors highlight the need for a more strategic and coordinated approach to cultural infrastructure - one that addresses existing gaps while ensuring that future growth is supported by accessible, inclusive and resilient cultural provision, aligned with the Local Plan's wider ambitions for sustainable development, healthy communities and high-quality place-making.

Defining Cultural Infrastructure

- 1.12 For the purposes of this report, cultural infrastructure is understood as the ecosystem of spaces, assets, activities and networks that enable cultural and creative industries production, participation and everyday cultural life across Greater Cambridge.
- 1.13 Cultural infrastructure encompasses the buildings, spaces and places where culture is experienced, produced and embedded within everyday life. This includes not only formal cultural venues, but also the wider network of spaces that support cultural activity, ranging from creative workspaces and rehearsal facilities to public realm, community assets and supporting commercial uses.
- 1.14 To support a comprehensive understanding of provision and need, whilst providing flexibility and innovation in how this need is met, cultural infrastructure within this study is organised into four interrelated typologies:
- 1.15 **Cultural Performance & Multi-Use** - Spaces primarily designed for the presentation and live experience of cultural activity, including arts centres, theatres, concert halls, live music venues, cinemas, outdoor performance spaces and multi-purpose performance venues.
- 1.16 **Cultural Presentation** - Spaces focused on the exhibition, interpretation and dissemination of cultural content, including museums, galleries, heritage sites, visitor centres and immersive exhibition spaces.
- 1.17 **Cultural Production & Creative Workspace** - Spaces that support the creation, development and participation in cultural activity, including artist studios, maker spaces, rehearsal facilities, affordable creative workspace, community workshops, and specialist production facilities.
- 1.18 **Placemaking** - The wider infrastructure that embeds culture within everyday life, including public art, artist residencies, meanwhile uses, festivals and events, cultural-use of public spaces, civic buildings, high streets, town centres, night-time economy venues and other informal cultural spaces.
- 1.19 A more comprehensive list of infrastructure and interventions which qualify under these categories can be found within the appendices.

-
- 1.20 These typologies are highly interdependent. A resilient cultural ecosystem requires a strong relationship between cultural production, presentation, participation and placemaking. Many cultural assets operate across multiple typologies; for example, a cultural hub may combine creative workspace, exhibition space, performance facilities and community activity within a single venue.
- 1.21 This framework provides the basis for assessing existing provision, identifying gaps in infrastructure and understanding how culture can be embedded within future growth and development across Greater Cambridge.

Infrastructure Outside the Scope of this Study

- 1.22 Other forms of community infrastructure clearly contribute towards the cultural life of communities and should be considered important cultural infrastructure. However, these lie outside the scope of this study as they have their own policies and requirements within the Local Plan. They include:
- Libraries and Archives
 - Community Centres
 - Schools and Education Spaces
 - Places of Worship
 - Sports facilities
 - Affordable workspace (non-creative sector specific)
 - Commercial premises such as public houses
- 1.23 Contributions towards the cultural capacity of these assets, such as investment in equipment for hosting public cultural events or programmes within community centres, or the creation of hybrid spaces which blend community, commercial and cultural uses should still be seen as valid contributions towards cultural infrastructure.

Greater Cambridge Growth Context to 2045

- 1.24 Greater Cambridge is planned to accommodate substantial population, housing and employment growth through to 2045, reflecting its role as a nationally significant knowledge economy and a major focus for development within the East of England. The scale and distribution of this growth will have significant implications for the planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure.

Employment Growth and Economic Context

- 1.25 The draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan identifies a need for approximately 73,300 additional jobs between 2024 and 2045, supported by substantial new employment floorspace, including approximately 302,600 sqm of office space, 600,000 sqm of research and development space, and 317,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace.
- 1.26 This reflects the area's continued economic strength, with Cambridge recognised as one of the UK's most productive and fastest-growing city economies. Cambridge City Council's Productivity Plan highlights sustained employment growth and a knowledge economy comprising more than 5,500 knowledge-intensive businesses generating over £20 billion annually.

Housing Growth and Population Change

- 1.27 To support this growth, the Local Plan identifies a minimum requirement for 48,195 new homes between 2024 and 2045, with total identified supply exceeding 51,000 homes and rising to approximately 55,000 homes when North East Cambridge is included.
- 1.28 For infrastructure planning purposes, the Greater Cambridge Infrastructure Delivery Plan tests a higher growth scenario of approximately 54,447 homes, equivalent to around 140,600 additional residents over the plan period.

Spatial Distribution and Long-Term Growth

- 1.29 Growth is distributed across Cambridge City, edge-of-Cambridge urban extensions, new settlements and major regeneration areas, including North East Cambridge, Cambridge East, Waterbeach and Cambourne.
- 1.30 Importantly, growth is expected to continue beyond the formal Local Plan period. Current site allocations identify at least 17,950 additional homes beyond 2045, while the Infrastructure Delivery Plan suggests that full build-out across all strategic sites could ultimately deliver approximately 92,000 homes.

Implications for Cultural Infrastructure

- 1.31 This represents a significant long-term expansion in both the scale and geography of Greater Cambridge's communities and employment base. Cultural infrastructure planning must therefore respond not only to existing gaps in provision, but also to the needs of new settlements, emerging centres of activity and a sustained pattern of growth extending well beyond 2045.

-
- 1.32 The scale of planned growth reinforces the need for a strategic approach to cultural infrastructure that combines protection and enhancement of existing assets with the delivery of new cultural infrastructure capable of supporting community wellbeing, creative industries growth, place identity and long-term economic competitiveness.

Interpreting the Evidence Base

- 1.33 The findings presented in this report draw on a combination of baseline analysis and stakeholder and community engagement undertaken to date. They provide an initial indication of emerging needs, opportunities and priorities for cultural infrastructure across Greater Cambridge.
- 1.34 It is important to note that this is an early-stage assessment, and the findings should be understood as:
- indicative rather than comprehensive
 - reflective of current perceptions and priorities
 - one component of a wider and evolving evidence base

Summary of existing planning policy relating to Cultural Infrastructure

Strategic Alignment

- 1.35 This report supports the delivery of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan by articulating the role of cultural infrastructure in achieving its wider objectives for sustainable growth, inclusive communities and high-quality place-making.
- 1.36 It directly aligns with the Local Plan's Wellbeing and Social Inclusion framework, particularly:
- Policy WS/NC: Meeting the Needs of New and Growing Communities, which establishes the requirement for social infrastructure to be planned alongside development
 - Policy WS/CH: Cultural and Creative Hubs, which recognises the role of cultural infrastructure in supporting community cohesion, identity and participation
 - Policy WS/MU: Meanwhile Uses, which highlights the role of temporary and flexible uses in activating sites during phased development

-
- 1.37 Together, these policies reinforce the need to embed cultural infrastructure early in the development process, ensuring that new communities are supported by accessible and adaptable provision from the outset.
- 1.38 The report also aligns with the Local Plan's economic priorities, including **Policy J/AW: Affordable Workspace and Creative Industries**, which supports the provision of accessible and affordable workspace for creative practitioners and businesses
- 1.39 This is particularly significant in the Greater Cambridge context, where rising land values and development pressures risk displacing creative activity. Cultural infrastructure therefore plays a dual role in supporting both economic competitiveness and place identity.
- 1.40 Within the Cambridge City Centre, the report responds to **Policy S/PA/CC: Cambridge City Centre, and Policy J/SA: Primary Shopping Area**, which emphasise the importance of maintaining a vibrant, mixed-use centre, including support for cultural, leisure and evening economy uses that contribute to footfall, vitality and distinctiveness.
- 1.41 In addition, the Wellbeing and Social Inclusion framework is supported by a wider set of policies relating to health, community infrastructure, inclusive access and place quality. These reinforce the role of cultural infrastructure in supporting mental and physical wellbeing, reducing social isolation and enabling participation across diverse communities. Policies relating to the protection of community facilities highlight the importance of safeguarding existing cultural assets - including informal and commercial venues - alongside new provision.
- 1.42 Further alignment is found with policies on green infrastructure and open space, which provide important opportunities for cultural activity within parks, commons and landscape settings, and with design and place-making policies that support the integration of cultural infrastructure into the fabric of development. Together, these policies position cultural infrastructure as a cross-cutting component of sustainable development, embedded within both the social and spatial planning of Greater Cambridge.
- 1.43 The evidence and analysis presented in this report build on the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1 (2025), which has informed the development of Local Plan policy. This Stage 2 work provides further spatial and thematic detail, supporting the translation of policy ambition into delivery mechanisms and site-specific approaches.
- 1.44 The report is also informed by supporting evidence within the Local Plan, including the Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Topic Paper (2025), the Jobs Topic Paper (2025) and the Site Allocations Topic Paper (2025), which together set out the case for integrated infrastructure provision, the role of the creative economy, and the spatial distribution of growth.
- 1.45 This report therefore provides a critical bridge between policy and delivery. By establishing a clearer understanding of cultural infrastructure needs and opportunities, it supports the integration of culture within planning policy, development management and infrastructure planning processes - ensuring that it is treated as an essential component of place-making, rather than an add-on.

Precedent for Cultural Infrastructure Requirements in S106 and CIL within Greater Cambridge

- 1.46 Greater Cambridge has an established history of integrating arts and culture within the planning system, most notably through the use of “percent for art” approaches, which secured contributions from development towards public art and cultural activity.
- 1.47 This approach was embedded within earlier local planning policy frameworks, including policies within the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018), where public art contributions were secured through Section 106 agreements and supplementary guidance.
- 1.48 The requirement was placed on schemes above a qualifying threshold, such as residential schemes of 10 or more dwellings or commercial builds over 1,000 square meters, with qualifying developments expected to make an equivalent contribution of 1% of total construction cost towards public art provision.
- 1.49 Cultural provision has also historically been considered part of requirements for community infrastructure including *Policy SC/4: Meeting Community Needs* and *Policy SC/6: Indoor Community Facilities* which set requirements 111m² per 1,000 for indoor community space within new development in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018).
- 1.50 **Both national policy and local evidence have highlighted the limitations of such historic approaches.**
- 1.51 “Percent for art” has often been applied in narrow ways, focusing on physical artworks with less emphasis on long-term infrastructure, programming, stewardship, access and identified need. This has led to requirements being challenged by development schemes due to weak justification as essential infrastructure, or the provision which delivers little social benefit to communities.
- 1.52 In contrast, loose definitions of community infrastructure have meant cultural needs have been neglected and undervalued within S106 provision. This has resulted in under provision of cultural infrastructure within schemes to the detriment of local communities and the Greater Cambridge economy.
- 1.53 **A fresh approach is required for Cultural Infrastructure within the Greater Cambridge Local Plan** which builds upon these precedents but presents a clearer requirement and justification for cultural infrastructure based on the specific merits of cultural infrastructure to communities and the Greater Cambridge economy, and evidence of the need created by new development.
- 1.54 **The requirements recommended within this report should therefore not be seen as new expectations being placed on developers, but a refinement of requirements that already existed within local planning policy.**

-
- 1.55 This evolution in practice aligns with the direction of national planning policy and guidance. The emerging Design and Placemaking Planning Practice Guidance (MHCLG) places strong emphasis on the delivery of well-designed places that support health, wellbeing, inclusion and local identity. It highlights the importance of embedding a mix of uses, community facilities and social infrastructure within development, and recognises the role of culture, creativity and community engagement in shaping distinctive and successful places.
- 1.56 The Guidance also makes clear that local authorities should define locally appropriate design expectations through policy and guidance, providing a framework through which cultural provision can be embedded within development in a more strategic and coordinated way.
- 1.57 Across the UK, a number of local authorities have adopted more strategic approaches to cultural infrastructure planning, including the use of spatial frameworks, typologies and benchmark-based models to guide provision at different scales. Examples include cultural infrastructure strategies developed in London, Manchester and Birmingham, which move beyond fixed percentage contributions towards more flexible, place-responsive approaches while still providing clarity for developers.
- 1.58 Examples of these approaches, including the use of benchmark frameworks and delivery mechanisms, are explored in the appendices of this report. Together, they provide a comparative context for Greater Cambridge, informing the development of a more strategic and effective model for embedding cultural infrastructure within future growth.

2. Vision, Priorities and Outline Cultural Infrastructure Needs

Vision for Cultural Infrastructure

- 2.1 The ambition for Cultural Infrastructure in Greater Cambridge is that:
- 2.2 All Greater Cambridge residents will be able to access community-focused social spaces within walking distance, where they can experience and participate in culture close to where they live, forging distinctive local identities and creating vibrant communities
- 2.3 All Greater Cambridge residents will be within reasonable car and public transport distance of regional cultural facilities where they can experience international-quality live performance, art and heritage during the day and evening
- 2.4 Creative freelancers and independent creative small businesses throughout Greater Cambridge will be able to access affordable creative workspace, rehearsal space and facilities where they can exhibit, perform and deliver community activity
- 2.5 The culture and creative industries sector in Greater Cambridge will have access to modern, affordable, industry-standard workspace that helps them be a driving force of Greater Cambridge's high-growth innovation economy
- 2.6 Existing cultural infrastructure in Greater Cambridge will be valued, protected and enhanced so it can continue to form the foundations of cultural life in the region
- 2.7 Cultural infrastructure in Greater Cambridge will be well resourced, maintained, sustainable and capable of adapting to changing needs and trends
- 2.8 Cultural uses will be particularly encouraged and protected within clusters of high density creative and cultural activity.
- 2.9 Cultural infrastructure will be embedded in urban centres, high streets and town centres, supporting their vibrancy and economic resilience
- 2.10 Cultural infrastructure will be embedded in new communities and settlements from early stages to foster community identity, seed cultural activity and support emerging retail, leisure and wider uses
- 2.11 Culture will be an integral part of major employment sites in Greater Cambridge, with affordable creative production spaces and cultural experiences acting as catalysts for innovation, supporting the region's ability to attract global talent through its reputation for knowledge and creativity

Priorities of the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1

- 2.12 The Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1 (2025) established a clear set of strategic priorities to guide the future planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure across the area. These priorities reflect a combination of baseline analysis and stakeholder engagement and provide the foundation for the more detailed needs analysis and delivery framework set out in this report. The six key priorities identified are:
- 2.13 **Community engagement and ownership of cultural infrastructure:** Strengthening the role of communities in shaping, accessing and sustaining cultural infrastructure, ensuring that provision reflects local needs and supports long-term stewardship.
- 2.14 **Addressing infrastructure cold spots, rural access and future growth areas:** Tackling spatial inequalities in provision, with a focus on underserved areas, rural communities and the integration of cultural infrastructure within major new developments.
- 2.15 **Protecting and enhancing key infrastructure and clusters:** Safeguarding existing cultural assets and supporting the continued development of established clusters, recognising their importance to the wider cultural ecosystem.
- 2.16 **Supporting a distinctive independent cultural identity:** Enabling a diverse and locally rooted cultural offer, including support for independent and grassroots cultural activity that contributes to the character and identity of Greater Cambridge.
- 2.17 **Leveraging the opportunities of the creative industries:** Supporting the growth and sustainability of the creative economy, including the provision of appropriate workspace and the integration of creative industries within wider economic development.
- 2.18 **Ensuring coherent delivery of cultural infrastructure:** Improving coordination between policy, planning, funding and delivery mechanisms to enable a more strategic and effective approach to cultural infrastructure provision.
- 2.19 These priorities establish a strategic framework that moves beyond individual interventions towards a more coordinated and place-responsive approach. They underpin the analysis and recommendations set out in this report, ensuring alignment between the evidence base, policy context and future delivery of cultural infrastructure across Greater Cambridge. These priorities provide the basis for investment decisions, planning obligations, Cultural Plans and the prioritisation of both on-site provision and off-site contributions.

Overall Cultural Infrastructure Need

- 2.20 An outline assessment of overall need carried out for this Cultural Infrastructure Strategy and summarised in Chapter 4 of this report indicates the following region-wide needs by 2045.
- 2.21 A detailed breakdown of how this translates to area and strategic growth area needs is then provided in Chapters 6 & 7.

Cultural Performance, Presentation & Multi-Use Infrastructure

- 2.22 The combined Arts Council England and Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) Standard Charge model recommends a national standard 75sqm of arts and museum floorspace per 1,000 residents (not including creative workspace, libraries or community centres).
- 2.23 This national baseline must be adjusted to a local context to account for levels of engagement and existing provision. The DCMS Participation Survey indicates that residents in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge are **33% more likely to attend performing arts venues and 53% more likely to visit museums and galleries than the UK average**.
- 2.24 Comparison and mapping analysis carried out for the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage One indicates that overall current levels of cultural infrastructure are above average within Cambridge but significantly below average in South Cambridgeshire.
- 2.25 This assessment is further nuanced when broken down by area and infrastructure typology
- 2.26 The higher level of demand indicates a baseline requirement for **100sqm of arts and museum floorspace per 1,000 resident** within Greater Cambridge.
- 2.27 Based on the latest planned housing growth provided by GCSP and ONS baseline population data, there will be an anticipated 135,280 additional residents in Greater Cambridge by 2045.
- 2.28 This would require **13,528 sqm of new local cultural infrastructure by 2045**.
- 2.29 To encourage greater flexibility in the provision of cultural infrastructure and reflecting current levels of provision, it is recommended that this spatial requirement be split between a simplified definition of arts and museum spaces.
- **Cultural Performance & Multi-Use** – encompassing performing arts, music, cinema and community workshop spaces
 - **Cultural Presentation** – encompassing museums, galleries & community visual arts, craft and design creative spaces
- 2.30 Based on the analysis of demand and current supply of infrastructure types conducted for the Stage One Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Plan and benchmarking against comparator regions, we have outlined this 13,528 sqm of local need by 2045 to include:
- 7,891 sqm of Cultural Performance & Multi-Use
 - 5,637 sqm of Cultural Presentation
- 2.31 Local delivery of cultural infrastructure may also be achieved through the upgrading of existing community and social spaces, such as supporting cultural event infrastructure in community centres, churches and other ‘third spaces’.
- 2.32 The above values do not account for population growth in the wider catchment that cultural infrastructure in Greater Cambridge serves, which analysis for the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage One indicates stretches throughout the East of England.

- 2.33 Nor does this account for the substantial population that works within Greater Cambridge but live outside the region, which would be expected to benefit from both regionally and locally significant cultural performance, presentation and mixed-use spaces.
- 2.34 The combination of regional population growth; employment growth and growth in Greater Cambridge's tourism and visitor economy formed the basis, alongside strategic requirements of the sector, for the prioritisation of regionally significant infrastructure.
- 2.35 This includes:

Infrastructure Need	Timescale	Spatial Requirement	Investment Requirement
Large-scale Arts Production Centre	2030-35	1,000sqm+	£4m-£8m
National-Standard Touring Theatre Venue	2035-40	2,000-3,000 sqm	£35m-£70m
Arena Music/Events Venue	2040-45	5,000 sqm	£45m-£75m
Community Arts Centre in Cambridge	2035-45	500-1,000 sqm	£4m-£12m
Film, Media & Digital Arts Production Hub	2030-35	5,000sqm	£15m-£35m

- 2.36 The benchmarking of need for regional scale cultural spaces, conducted for the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage Two and based on recommendations from the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage One indicates a further 15,000 sqm of provision required for regionally significant infrastructure by 2045.
- 2.37 In addition, there is an ongoing requirement for financial contributions towards the maintenance and upgrading of existing cultural infrastructure of both locally and regionally significant venues.

Cultural Production & Creative Workspace

- 2.38 With 8,621 additional creative workers expected in the region by 2045 there is an expected need for 119,838 sqm of creative workspace for employed creative industries, based on the subsector makeup of the creative industries in Greater Cambridge and the HCA Employment Density Guide.
- 2.39 An estimated 27,562 sqm of this provision would need to serve the requirement of creative freelancers.
- 2.40 Demand at the higher commercially viable end of the creative industries will likely be absorbed by expected commercial development, except in cases identified within the regional infrastructure needs (such as film and media production facilities).
- 2.41 The provisions within the Affordable Workspace Policy of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will meet further needs of the creative industries, particularly office and desk-based creative businesses and freelancers.

- 2.42 Based on the subsector profile of Greater Cambridge and demand analysis from the *Greater Cambridge Creative Workspace Supply And Demand Study (2020)* and *Greater Cambridge Creative Business and Cultural Production Workspace: Specifications and Practical Requirements Study (2021)*, there will remain a need to address targeted shortfalls in sector-specific affordable creative workspace provision and future growth in sector demand.
- 2.43 The findings of the Greater Cambridge Affordable Business Study suggest that affordable creative workspace interventions, including discounted rents, flexible leases, managed workspace provision, capped service charges, and shared facilities, are likely to be critical in supporting creative business viability and retention within Cambridge.
- 2.44 Based on an example creative business study provided in the report, rents would need to fall by well over half relative to typical market levels in order for many to achieve its target profitability under the modelled assumptions.
- 2.45 This indicates that provision of creative workspace and production space will need to go beyond the standard affordable workspace requirement of 30% below market rent. A minimum of 50% below local market rents will be needed to support the unstable incomes of small creative businesses and freelancers.
- 2.46 Creative workspace provision will also need to extend beyond affordability, accommodating typologies that are suitable for specific creative sectors such as artist studios, makerspaces, music recording, film production and performing arts rehearsal/R&D spaces.
- 2.47 Subject to further infrastructure action plans focused on specific infrastructure needs of creative businesses, **the benchmark of 27,562 sqm has been defined for the provision of specialist affordable creative workspace as cultural infrastructure**. This focuses on the area of creative freelancers and microbusinesses of maximum need as well as production spaces serving community needs.

Requirement Summary and Timeline

- 2.48 Delivery of infrastructure will need to align with population and employment growth within the region, this has been modelled across the plan period and can be summarised below:

Infrastructure Typology	2030	2035	2040	2045
Local Performance & Multi-Use	1,486	3,032	5,692	7,891
Local Presentation	1,193	2,463	4,026	5,637
Production & Creative Workspace	6,891	13,781	20,671	27,562
Regionally Significant Infrastructure	-	6,500	9,000	15,000
Total Spatial Requirement	9,809	26,269	39,382	56,090

-
- 2.49 These targets should be seen as indicative. In reality, much of the requirement should be delivered within hybrid spaces which blend the cultural uses listed above, as well as providing wider community use such as community centres, libraries and other civic amenity.

Mitigating Infrastructure Loss

- 2.50 These targets are based on an assumption of retention of the existing stock of cultural infrastructure. However, the total need requirement should also account for potential loss of cultural infrastructure through development.
- 2.51 This should primarily be addressed through requirements to retain or replace off-site cultural infrastructure that is removed through any new development.

Placemaking Infrastructure

- 2.52 All Strategic Growth Areas should treat placemaking infrastructure as part of cultural infrastructure, rather than as a separate or decorative layer.
- 2.53 **Public Art & Artist Residencies** - Public art should be embedded early in masterplanning and linked to site identity, community engagement and long-term stewardship. Artist residencies are particularly relevant in new communities, science / health campuses and heritage-led sites, where artists can support co-design, storytelling, interpretation and community integration.
- 2.54 **Meanwhile Uses** - Meanwhile cultural uses should be used to activate early phases of development, seed creative communities and test demand. However, meanwhile provision should include a legacy route so artists and cultural organisations are not left in permanent precarity. The Stage 2 report specifically highlights the value of meanwhile uses in seeding town centres, relieving pressure on creative workspace and testing future permanent provision.
- 2.55 **Supporting Infrastructure for Culture** - Contributions should be able to fund the enabling infrastructure that allows culture to happen, including technical equipment, lighting, sound, power, demountable staging, storage, fit-out and community access arrangements. This is particularly important in rural areas, where pubs, churches, village halls, schools and community spaces may provide the most appropriate cultural infrastructure.
- 2.56 **Parks and Public Realm** - Parks, greens, civic spaces and public realm should be designed as programmable cultural infrastructure. This includes power, lighting, access, servicing, weather resilience, seating, performance areas and capacity for markets, festivals and community events. This is particularly important in new communities where permanent cultural buildings may arrive later than the first phases of occupation.

3. Recommendations for Funding & Delivering Cultural Infrastructure

- 3.1 The scale of need for cultural infrastructure suggests it will need to be secured through a coordinated planning, investment and governance framework that embeds culture throughout the lifecycle of growth and development.
- 3.2 Our recommended framework establishes expectations for developer contributions, the preparation of Cultural Plans for qualifying developments as a requirement within planning submissions, the prioritisation of investment and the long-term stewardship of cultural infrastructure as fundamental requirements of cultural infrastructure delivery.
- 3.3 The need for financial and spatial developer contributions via S106 and CIL as part of this funding and delivery mix is based on a series of factors:
- Cultural infrastructure needs in Greater Cambridge are primarily driven by increased demand from new residential and commercial development
 - The economic, social and cultural benefits of cultural infrastructure directly enhance new residential and commercial development, improving community identity; individual and collective wellbeing; attractiveness of places to live and work; town centre vitality; innovation and talent retention.
 - Challenges delivering and operating cultural infrastructure within Greater Cambridge by other means indicate structural market failures that cannot be overcome by other mechanisms such as public funding.

Proposed Approach for Infrastructure Development

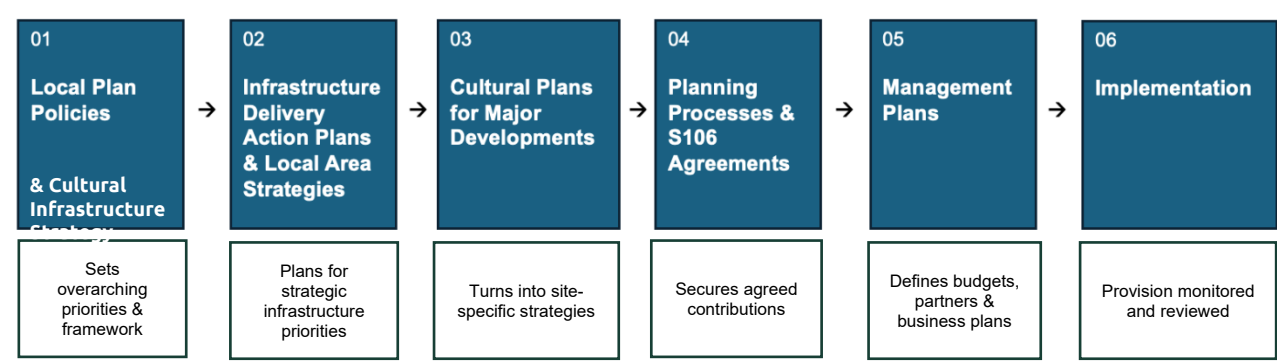


Figure 1 Framework for delivering cultural infrastructure

-
- 3.4 The delivery framework for cultural infrastructure moves from overarching priorities for cultural infrastructure defined within the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stages One & Two and secured in planning policy via the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, through the development of Action Plans for strategically important infrastructure to specific proposals for infrastructure delivery secured via Cultural Plans for qualifying developments, S106 Agreements and post-planning Management & Maintenance Plans for cultural infrastructure.
- 3.5 The proposed approach aligns with best practice cultural infrastructure planning and recognises that cultural infrastructure should be planned alongside housing, employment, transport and community infrastructure. Delivery should combine the protection and enhancement of existing assets with the provision of new cultural infrastructure that responds to the scale, location and character of development.

Action Plans for Cultural Infrastructure Priorities

- 3.6 Some cultural infrastructure needs to operate at a regional scale and cannot reasonably be delivered by a single provider. These priorities require coordinated investment, partnership working to identify the appropriate provision, location and pooled funding mechanisms.
- 3.7 To support these, the local authorities and the planning authority will need to develop Action Plans for Cultural Infrastructure priorities. Current regional priorities identified through the needs analysis include:
- Major performance venues including potential requirement for national-standard touring theatre, a major music/events venue and a review of festival infrastructure
 - High growth creative industries including potential infrastructure for film, media and creative tech/R&D sectors
 - Creative freelancers and microbusinesses including infrastructure for artists and grassroots cultural organisations
 - Maintenance and upgrading of existing infrastructure including maintenance of major cultural assets and cultural upgrades of rural community assets
- 3.8 These actions should help direct developer contributions towards the protection, enhancement or delivery of strategic cultural infrastructure where a clear relationship exists between growth and increased demand.
- 3.9 The Local Planning Authority should maintain a Cultural Infrastructure Priority List to guide the allocation of pooled contributions and future investment.

Source of Contributions towards Cultural Infrastructure

- 3.10 The diagram below shows how a combination of contributions from different forms of development will collectively contribute towards new cultural infrastructure, the protection of existing cultural infrastructure and the upgrading of infrastructure of local and regional significance.

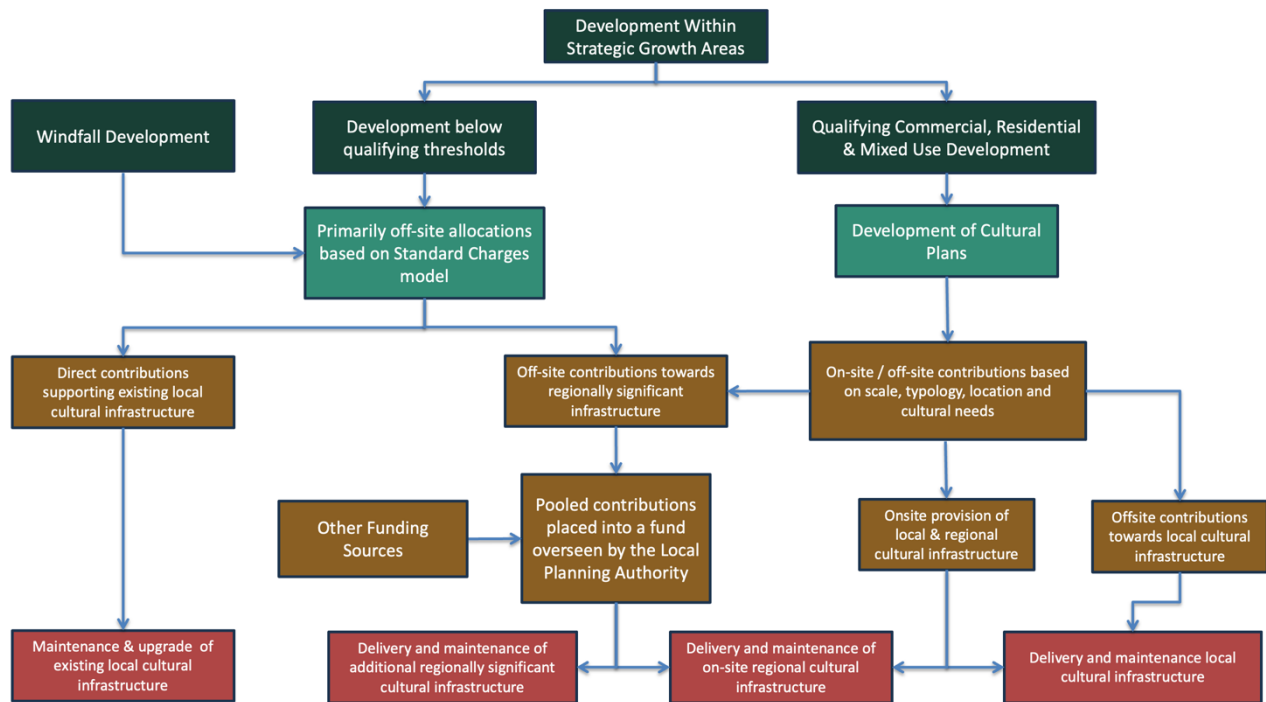


Figure 2 Framework for funding cultural infrastructure

- 3.11 Developer contributions alone will not be sufficient to achieve the investment needed to create, maintain and resource cultural infrastructure. Additional sources that will need to be drawn upon include:

- Central government funding & DCMS
- Local and regional authority funds
- Lottery funding including Arts Council and National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Charitable trust and foundation funding
- Individual and company philanthropy and crowdfunding
- Investment by strategic partners such as Universities & commercial operators
- Potential proceeds from Community Infrastructure Levy
- Income from trading and commercial activity

- 3.12 **It is important to note that developer contributions through S106 are essential to unlocking these wider forms of funding.** Contributions can act as match funding to leverage wider investment. This is particularly important for areas like Greater Cambridge which are not seen as areas of additional social need or deprivation, making it harder to attract public funding.

-
- 3.13 The spatial and financial contributions to deliver cultural infrastructure will need to be secured through contributions across the region. The scale of contributions will need to be proportionate to their scale, mitigation of impacts, location and viability..

Requirements of Major Developments

- 3.14 For the purposes of the Cultural Infrastructure Strategy, major development is considered to include:
- Sites providing 2,500sqm or more GIA of office or R&D Development
 - Sites providing 100 or more dwellings of residential space
 - Mixed-use developments over 10,000 sqm
- 3.15 **All major developments will be expected to prepare a Cultural Plan** demonstrating how cultural infrastructure has been considered within the development and proposing a mix of spatial and financial contributions towards cultural infrastructure within their site as well as off-site contributions.
- 3.16 Combined on-site and offsite major development contributions to cultural infrastructure are expected to align with outline guidance provided within this document.
- 3.17 Proposals should include provisions for early cultural activation of sites, either through early delivery of infrastructure or through temporary programmes that support a phased growth of cultural activity within the site.
- 3.18 **All major developments will be expected to contribute on-site provision of cultural infrastructure** as part of S106 agreements except in exceptional circumstances
- 3.19 **Major Developments will be expected to produce a Cultural Management & Maintenance Plan** as a condition of S106 agreements which indicates the planned stewardship arrangements of cultural infrastructure including operators, lease arrangements, management, maintenance, programme management and community voice and review.

Requirements of Minor Developments and Windfall Development

- 3.20 Development sites underneath the major development threshold or outside the planned growth areas of the Local Plan, but above the following thresholds will be expected to contribute towards cultural infrastructure, primarily through offsite contributions:
- Sites providing 1,000sqm or more GIA of office or R&D Development
 - Sites providing 10 or more residential dwellings
- 3.21 The scale and form of contributions should be informed by the Cultural Infrastructure Needs Calculator, local context and the priorities identified within this report.

Calculating Developer Contributions

- 3.22 The combination of on-site spatial provision, on-site financial support and off-site contributions should align with the following baselines:

- 100sqm of cultural infrastructure per 1,000 expected residents within a new development or financial equivalent
- 1.5% of NIA in office and R&D development to be allocated towards cultural infrastructure or financial equivalent. This provision should be additional to affordable workspace requirements. Where affordable creative workspace is created which goes above and beyond affordable workspace baseline requirements, such as provision and fit-out of bespoke creative workspace facilities or provision at below 50% market rent, this may be factored into the required provision

3.23 Spatial provision should be expected to include construction, design and fit-out of facilities.

3.24 Onsite provision should be an appropriate mix of revenue (financial) and capital (spatial) contributions. This balance needs to ensure that infrastructure is well supported and sustainable. Revenue contributions can consist of both direct financial and in-kind contributions such as:

- Long term peppercorn leases or rent waivers
- Financial contributions towards startup costs
- Covering maintenance and repair costs
- Contributions towards startup costs
- Contributions towards non-commercial activities such as education and engagement projects

3.25 Where onsite financial contributions are being provided in lieu of spatial contributions this should be of an equivalent value. As a guideline we recommend this be calculated as **£7,318 per sqm of equivalent cultural space**. This is a mid-point estimate of the cost of construction, design and fit-out of a combination of performance, presentation and creative production space in Greater Cambridge sourced from Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors' Building Cost Information Service.

3.26 Where an offsite financial contribution is deemed more appropriate than an onsite spatial contribution the following equivalent values can be applied based on the average per/sqm construction costs of creative performance, exhibition and production spaces:

- £888.68 per new resident
- £70.17 per sqm office and R&D space

3.27 To incentivise spatial contributions to cultural infrastructure, the planning authority should look to pool S106 offsite financial contributions and use to reduce the developer cost to support delivery of onsite cultural infrastructure. This is particularly necessary where infrastructure is of regional significance or is being delivered in an area of development with multiple site promoters and a requirement to coordinate contributions between them.

3.28 Baseline expectations of spatial to financial contributions and onsite to offsite contribution should be adjusted by the scale of development.

Scale of Development				
	Primarily Financial		Primarily Spatial	
	0% to 25% onsite 100% to 75% offsite	25% to 50% onsite 75% to 50% offsite	50% to 75% onsite 50% to 25% offsite	75% to 100% onsite 25% to 0% offsite
Residential	10 – 50 Units	50 - 100 Units	100 - 500 Units	500+ Units
Commercial	1,000 – 2,500 sqm	2,500 – 10,000 sqm	10,000 – 60,000 sqm	60,000+ sqm
Mixed Use	N/A	N/A	Block/ Neighbourhood Scale	District / Masterplanned Community

Figure 3 Adjusting onsite / offsite and financial / spatial contributions based on site scale

- 3.29 Whilst this calculation methodology provides a spatial and financial requirement guidance, cultural infrastructure contributions should be assessed on the quality of the provision not purely the quantity. Good practice evidence of cultural infrastructure delivery indicates that well-designed, effectively resourced infrastructure, with strong delivery partnerships and community involvement are more important than spatial or financial provision alone.
- 3.30 Assessment of cultural infrastructure contributions within planning submissions will be viewed in relation to quality and appropriateness of infrastructure and its anticipated outputs and outcomes, supported by review from a panel of cultural experts.

Adjustments Based on Types of Site

- 3.31 Site contributions towards cultural infrastructure are expected to be appropriate to the location, typology and context of the development, reflecting the benefits that cultural infrastructure brings to the site and the additional pressure new development places on cultural infrastructure need. Below we indicate the expected priorities for different types of site.

Development Type	Expectation of Contribution (Spatial to Financial)	Typical Cultural Infrastructure Priorities
New Settlements	Prioritising spatial onsite provision with financial contributions for stewardship	Community cultural hubs, flexible performance/presentation space, flexible cultural production & creative workspace, meanwhile uses, public art, stewardship arrangements (such as community funds, financial support for local cultural organisations)

Urban Extension	Split of onsite spatial provision and offsite contributions to existing urban centre or surrounding community assets	Community cultural hubs, smaller scale performance and presentation space, affordable creative workspace, meanwhile uses, public art, financial support for cultural partnerships and surrounding community assets
City Employment	Split of onsite spatial workspace with offsite contributions to existing urban centre assets	Creative workspaces, cultural programming and partnerships, public-facing activity
City Residential	Split of onsite ground floor cultural uses with offsite contributions to existing urban centre assets	Small-scale flexible performance/presentation space, cultural programming and partnerships, placemaking & public realm
City Mixed-Use/Leisure	Prioritising onsite spatial and programming contributions	Performance venues, evening economy uses, creative workspace, public realm activation
Outer Urban & Rural Employment	Prioritising offsite contribution to regional significant infrastructure and financial contributions for onsite cultural partnerships	Culture and innovation partnerships (spatial and financial), placemaking and public realm, community engagement & education
Rural Residential	Split of onsite & offsite dependent on strength of existing and planned surrounding infrastructure	Community cultural hubs, support for hybrid social spaces, stewardship arrangements (such as community funds, financial support for local cultural organisations)

3.32 Site typologies will therefore vary in regards to the extent to which contributions are expected to be onsite or offsite, reflecting the extent to which infrastructure is needed to serve the community onsite or surrounding the development and the extent to which it creates additional need and pressure on existing infrastructure or adjacent communities.

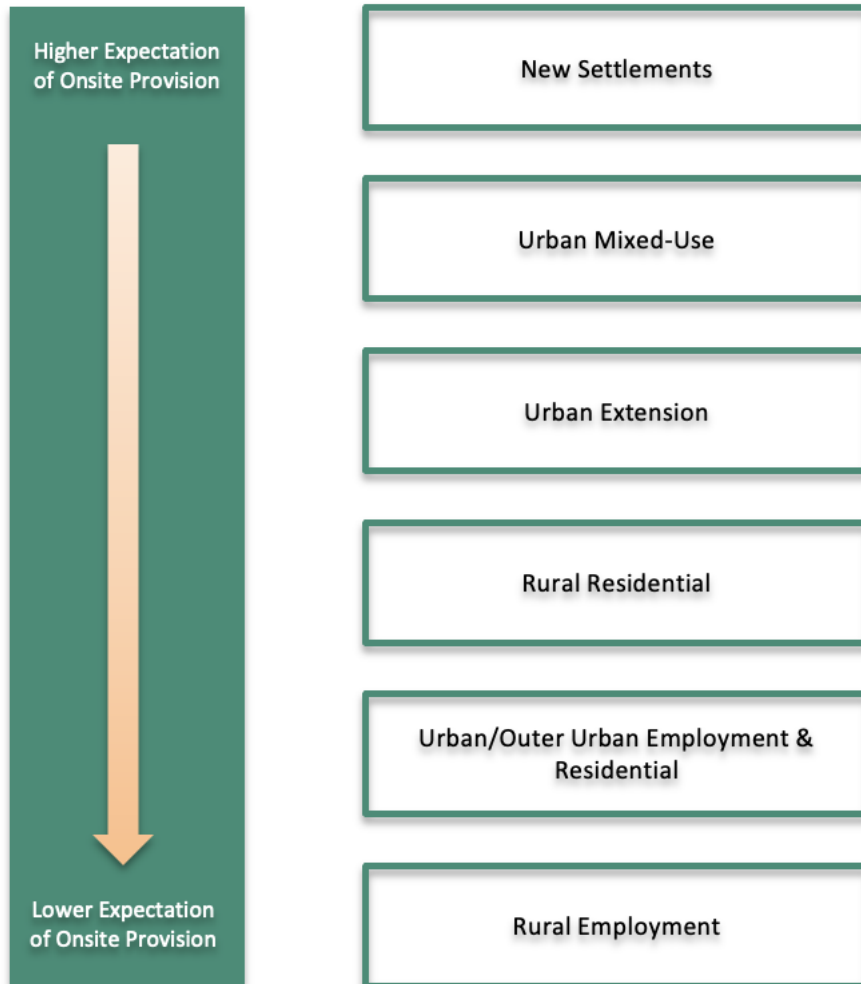


Figure 4 Adjusting onsite expectations based on site typology

Adjustments for context

3.33 The scale and form of cultural infrastructure contributions should be informed by local context rather than applied uniformly across all sites.

3.34 Factors that should further influence requirements include:

- Whether existing levels of different cultural infrastructure provision within the catchment area of the development are high or low (based on the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Map)
- Evidence of high cultural participation and demand
- Proximity to areas of deprivation or higher social need for cultural infrastructure
- Density of creative industries employment, workspace need and expected growth (identified through local employment analysis and sector engagement)

-
- Whether a site serves a wide surrounding catchment, influenced by factors such as transport connectivity and populations within drive-time and public transport travel time distances
 - Existing supporting infrastructure for regionally significant culture such as hotels, evening & night time economy uses, transport links, parking availability & visitor economy
 - Physical & non-physical heritage assets such as buildings, sites of historic significance and cultural heritage
 - Strategic culture and regeneration priorities

3.35 Cultural Plans should show how each of these factors have been considered within the calculation of cultural contributions.

3.36 Where evidence identifies significant under-provision, infrastructure cold spots or strategic growth opportunities, enhanced cultural infrastructure requirements may be appropriate. Conversely, in areas with strong existing provision, contributions may focus on enhancement, programming or long-term sustainability rather than new floorspace.

Indicative Example

- 3.37 To indicate how site promoters can calculate their expected contributions we will explore a hypothetical scheme of a 400-acre urban extension site which plans to provide:
- 7,500 new residential units with an expected 20,250 new residents
 - 180,000 sqm of office, commercial and R&D space
 - A new district centre with retail and leisure uses
 - Parks and public green spaces
- 3.38 Cultural infrastructure requirements for the site would also need to take into account:
- 10-year multi-phase construction requiring early activation & revenue support
 - Location in proximity to underserved existing communities
 - Evidence of high creative workspace particularly within music, media and photography
- 3.39 **Step 1 Baseline Requirement** – The starting point requirement of the site would be based on its anticipated residential population (100sqm per 1,000 new residents) and quantum of commercial space (1.5% of NIA). This gives an anticipated total requirement of 4,185sqm of new cultural infrastructure with an equivalent financial value of £30.6m.
- 3.40 **Step 2 Balancing onsite to offsite** – As a major development, there is an expectation that the site contributions would primarily be onsite (between 75% - 100%). As the site is an urban extension, putting additional demand onto regional infrastructure in Central Cambridge as well as other existing surrounding neighbourhoods, it is recommended that the lower 75% onsite requirement is applied. This creates an offsite contribution of £7.6m (25% of the equivalent financial value of £30.6m) that would primarily go towards
- 3.41 **Step 3 Overall Context Considerations** – The site also has additional considerations which may require an increase in the expected cultural contribution. The need to support a district centre suggests a recommended 5% uplift whilst the proximity to existing deprived communities lacking access to cultural infrastructure indicates a further 5% additional requirement. This would bring the total onsite requirement to 3,460sqm of a financial equivalent.
- 3.42 **Step 4 Onsite Spatial to Financial Mix** – The need to support the gradual growth and build out of cultural infrastructure within a community over a long, multi-phase project indicates that there would be a need for revenue resources to support early-stage development and sustainability of cultural infrastructure, community engagement and placemaking. As such it is recommended that 30% of the contribution is provided in an onsite financial form. Applying the £7,318 per equivalent sqm of cultural space and 30% to the total gives an onsite financial value contribution of £5.3m. This would include provision of facilities on a 10-year peppercorn lease, support towards startup costs and ongoing maintenance, as well as a fund for cultural events, festivals, community participation and public art.

3.43 Step 5 Adjusting Spatial Contribution to Context: An initial benchmark of 40% production space, 35% performance space and 25% exhibition space would be adjusted based on research development of the Cultural Plan. Factors would include a review of nearby cultural infrastructure provision using the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Map; community and sector engagement; analysis of creative industries business demand; and exploration of strategic cultural priorities for the site would influence the mix of proposals. In the example case, a recognition of low demand for performance space and a high need for creative production space including potential operating partners for music and media production would influence the planned mix resulting in a provision of 45% for production, 25% for performance and 30% for exhibition. This would result in an expectation of:

- 1,090 sqm of production space
- 727 sqm of exhibition space
- 605 sqm of performance

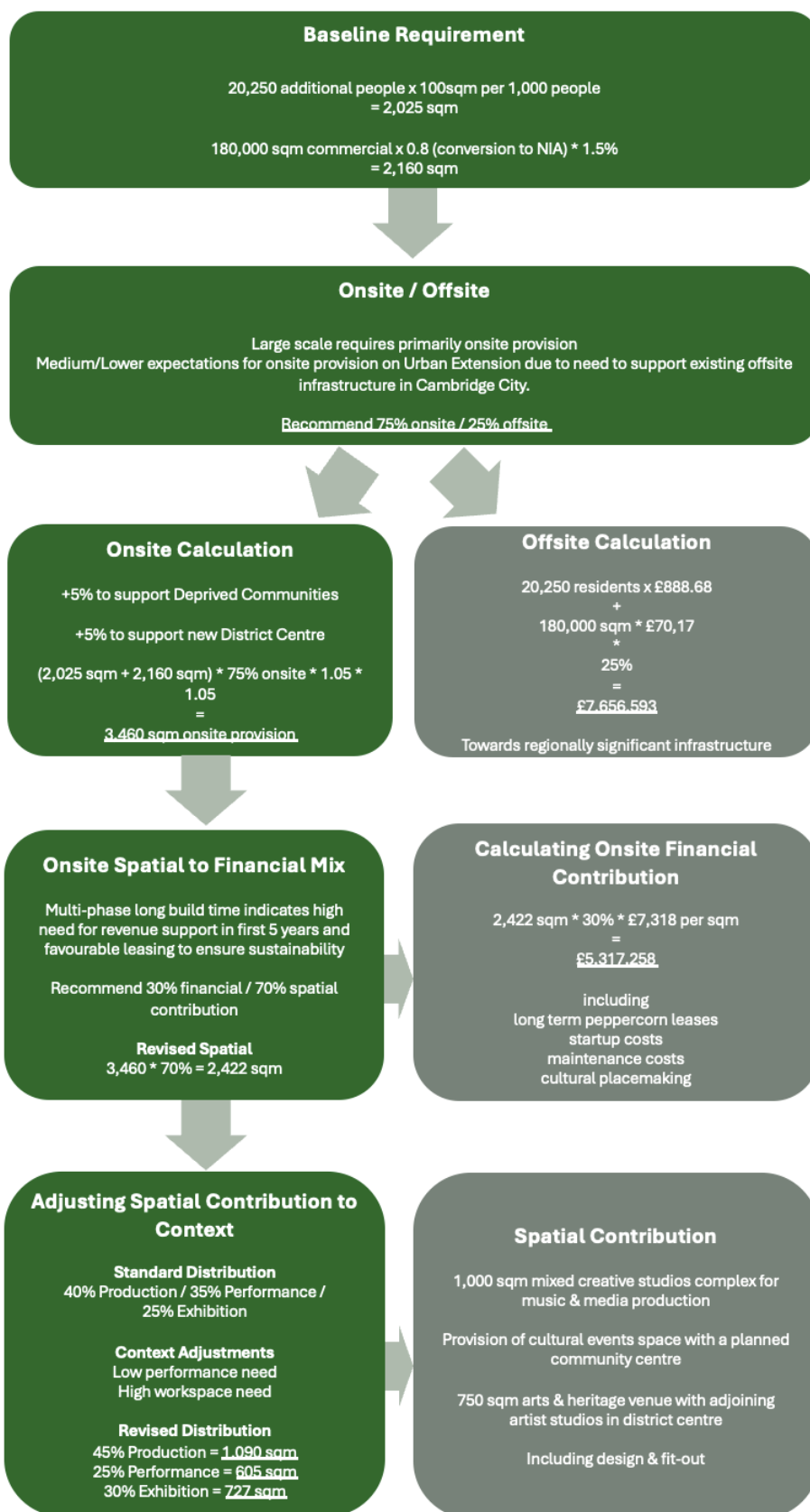
3.44 Step 6 Turning Expectations into Proposals: Provision would be expected to be integrated into the development, including identifying opportunities for hybrid provision. For example:

- Integrating the performance space requirement into a wider planned community hall facility by providing equipment and design that supports a range of performing arts, music, small-scale film and wider events
- Providing a mixed 750sqm arts & heritage venue with adjoining artist studios located inside the district centre, acting as a small creative hub for the development
- Creating a 1,000sqm mixed creative studios complex within the office / R&D development, focused on being a regional centre of music, media and photography, encouraging collaborations with surrounding commercial tenants including events and exhibitions within office buildings
- Co-designing public art, play and nature interpretation into onsite green spaces with surrounding communities utilizing a combination of onsite and offsite financial contributions
- Incorporating cultural event infrastructure into public spaces through the onsite financial budget
- Supporting capital improvements to regional venues in the city and creating partnerships that provides onsite residents with discounted tickets
- Utilising onsite and offsite financial contributions to create partnerships with city festivals, including encouraging delivery of festival events onsite

3.45 Due to the long delivery time frame, proposals would require early activation to test and trial provision, such a temporary creative production space linked to onsite artistic residencies and community engagement, with the flexibility within agreements to adapt proposals based on the learnings of early activation programmes.

3.46 This example is indicative and designed to show the steps that would be taken, cultural proposals would be subject to viability tests. A summary can be found in the figure below:

Summary of Example Calculation



Required Information within Cultural Plans & Management and Maintenance Plans

3.47 Cultural Plans should demonstrate how culture has been integrated into the development from the earliest stages of design and masterplanning. They should provide an evidence-led framework for cultural infrastructure delivery, ensuring that provision responds to local needs, supports wider strategic priorities and remains viable over the long term.

3.48 A summary of information to be provided within Cultural Plans is outlined below:

	Section	What Needs to be Clear	Information Sources
Needs Analysis	Site Information	What are the outline expectations of cultural infrastructure based on the number of dwellings, commercial floorspace, location and typology of the development?	Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 2 – Calculating Developer Contributions
	Cultural Context & Gaps Analysis	Will the site impact existing surrounding infrastructure? What gaps in provision exist in the area? What other area priorities need addressing?	Cultural Infrastructure Map Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1 Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 2 – Area Based Needs Assessment
	Community & Sector Engagement	Based on meaningful engagement with existing surrounding communities, sector representatives and policy review, what further identified local and/or regional needs have been identified?	Engagement with residents, cultural organisations, local government, creative freelancers and Policy Review
Cultural Strategy	Cultural Vision & Strategy	What are the proposals for culture within the site? How do they work together in a coherent site-wide strategy? What need is being addressed and is it local, area-wide or strategic?	National Cultural Planning Toolkit Urban Land Institute: <i>Including Culture in Development: A Step-by-Step Guide</i>
	Provision Type	Will this involve creating or enhancing cultural performance, exhibition, community, creative workspace and/or placemaking? Is this via a new bespoke facility, shared use, temporary space, upgrade of an existing asset or revenue funding?	
	Early Activation & Phasing Plan	Is there early delivery of infrastructure; programming or temporary uses? What is the timing and sequencing of delivery and how does this align with phasing strategy of the development? What occupation triggers and fallback routes are proposed?	Meanwhile Use for London Guide: GLA
Design, Management & Operations	Specifications	Is infrastructure suitable for the planned uses, including floorspace, layouts, accessibility, equipment, public access, servicing, fit-out needs and location within the development?	GLA Designing Spaces for Culture Toolkit
	Operations & Management	Is there a suitable operating partner(s) or a plan to procure? What is the proposed structure of ownership, leasing arrangements, management, eligible uses, maintenance and governance?	
	Funding	What is the proposal for funding capital, fit-out, maintenance and cultural programming? Is there sufficient revenue funding or business plan to ensure cultural infrastructure and activity is sustainable?	
	Governance, Monitoring & Review	What outputs, outcomes and community benefit will be measured and how will these be reported and reviewed? Will community, cultural sector and local government have involvement in/oversight of cultural infrastructure delivery?	Bennett School of Public Policy: <i>Measuring Social and Cultural Infrastructure</i>

-
- 3.49 The level of detail required should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the development. Strategic locations and major mixed-use schemes will typically require more comprehensive Cultural Plans than smaller development proposals.
- 3.50 The objective of Cultural Plans should be to reach an agreed level of financial and spatial contribution towards culture that can be secured within a S106 agreement.
- 3.51 In doing so, they need to meet the criteria of being necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable.
- 3.52 At the same time, S106 agreements will need to leave space for cultural provision to be co-designed and shaped with communities, local sector and operators/partners in the post-planning phase of development.
- 3.53 To balance these needs, S106 agreements should avoid being overly proscriptive in terms of operational approach, detailed design and programming (such as opening hours and balance of commercial and non-commercial activity).
- 3.54 Instead, they should focus securing the spatial and financial contributions that will give operators and cultural partners the optimal conditions to develop business models that respond to the needs and opportunities of the site and can be flexible and adaptable to changing contexts over time.
- 3.55 To safeguard this process, in most cases S106 agreements should include a requirement for Cultural Management and Maintenance Plans to be provided by site developers, that would require the signoff of the planning authority and relevant partners as a condition of occupation.
- 3.56 Management & Maintenance Plans should provide assurance of quality, sustainability and the delivery of cultural outcomes and impact to a level of detail that isn't possible at planning stage. Details should include:
- Confirmed operator(s) / partner(s) for cultural infrastructure and programmes
 - Supporting business plan for cultural facilities
 - Confirmed funding strategy for construction and operation including timelines and budgets. This may include planned contributions via pooled S106 offsite contributions and additional external sources
 - Leasing terms and draft Heads of Terms with operator(s) / partner(s)
 - Procurement and delivery plan
 - Statement of community involvement / support
 - Operational details including key outputs such as public programmes & events / number of business supported / education programmes
 - Impact assessment including the indicators and KPI metrics to be measured and provided to project stakeholders to monitor quality of provision

Guidance on Delivery Phasing

- 3.57 For sites with long, phased delivery timelines it is recommended that cultural infrastructure is carefully phased in line with the growth of the community, allowing provision to adapt to evidence of demand and effective delivery.

-
- 3.58 This should begin from early activation of sites, implementing temporary cultural infrastructure and community programmes that can engage communities, bring cultural partners onto the site and trial approaches and provision that can inform longer-term.
- 3.59 These activities should inform the provision of longer-term permanent infrastructure as the community grows.
- 3.60 Below we provide an indicative guideline of how this can be shaped in practice.

3.61 Early phase: 0–5 years

- Deliver meanwhile cultural uses, public art, artist residencies and community engagement.
- Provide event-ready public realm, outdoor performance space and basic cultural equipment.
- Support temporary workspace, pop-up exhibition, community cinema and trial programming.
- Establish governance and operator pathways before permanent buildings are committed.

3.62 Mid phase: 5–10 years

- Deliver permanent community and cultural hubs once population thresholds and operator models are clearer.
- Formalise affordable creative workspace, studios and rehearsal / learning provision.
- Secure community access agreements for schools, colleges or shared-use facilities.
- Review whether meanwhile uses should transition into permanent cultural infrastructure.

3.63 Long term: 10+ years

- Deliver larger-scale or specialist infrastructure where demand, catchment and viability are proven.
- Use pooled S106 / CIL and partnership funding for regional infrastructure.
- Expand existing venues and cultural clusters to meet growth in audience demand.
- Maintain and refresh cultural infrastructure priority lists in consultation with local authorities, Create Cambridge, cultural organisations and community representatives.

Governance and Decision Making

- 3.64 Effective governance is required to ensure that cultural infrastructure is strategically aligned, locally relevant and capable of long-term delivery.
- 3.65 Cultural infrastructure planning should be treated as an ongoing, evidence-led process rather than a project-by-project negotiation, enabling investment to respond to changing growth patterns, community needs and sector priorities over time.
- 3.66 The process of developing strategically important projects, Cultural Plans for individual sites, cultural infrastructure proposals for sites and maintenance and management plans should be a collaborative activity with local authorities, planning authority, site promoters, cultural partners and communities working together to develop mutually beneficial outcomes.

Local Authority Oversight

- 3.67 Relevant Local Authority Planning, Culture, Community and Economic Development officers should be consulted in the preparation and review of Cultural Plans and associated Cultural Management or Delivery Plans. These officers should act as strategic advisers throughout the planning process, giving guidance on the requirements set out in the local plan and alignment with local and regional priorities, helping to inform planning assessment, Section 106 agreements and the discharge of relevant obligations.
- 3.68 Formal decision-making and sign-off should remain with the Local Planning Authority.

Case Study: Bristol City Council – Embedded Public Art Governance

Bristol has maintained a long-standing commitment to public art through planning, supported by officer expertise within the council and supplementary planning guidance. This has enabled a relatively consistent approach to securing developer contributions and integrating public art into major schemes. While resourcing has varied over time, the model is recognised for embedding cultural considerations within planning processes rather than treating them as standalone commissions.

Independent Cultural Infrastructure Advisory Panel

-
- 3.69 To ensure that cultural infrastructure decisions are informed by specialist expertise and reflect the needs of Greater Cambridge's cultural ecosystem, the Local Planning Authority should establish an Independent Cultural Infrastructure Advisory Panel.
- 3.70 The Panel should act in an advisory capacity, providing independent, multidisciplinary advice to the Local Planning Authority on strategic cultural infrastructure matters. It should review:
- Cultural Plans submitted alongside major development proposals
 - Proposals for significant cultural infrastructure investment
 - The Cultural Infrastructure Priority List and associated investment priorities
 - The allocation of pooled Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions towards cultural infrastructure
 - Emerging infrastructure gaps, opportunities and sector needs
- 3.71 The Panel should provide recommendations to the Local Planning Authority but would not hold formal decision-making powers. Formal planning decisions should remain the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority
- 3.72 Membership should be drawn from a broad cross-section of the cultural and creative sector and may include representatives from.
- Major cultural institutions
 - Independent cultural organisations
 - Sector-wide representative bodies such as Create Cambridge & Cambridge Arts Network
 - Creative industry representatives
 - Creative workspace providers
 - Artists and creative practitioners
 - Local museums, local history organisations and heritage organisations with expertise in the area's cultural heritage
 - Relevant academic and research institutions
 - Community and neighbourhood representatives
- 3.73 Appointments should normally be made for a fixed term (for example, two years), with membership reviewed periodically to maintain an appropriate balance of expertise, diversity of perspective and representation across Greater Cambridge's cultural ecosystem.
- 3.74 At the commencement of each membership term, Panel members should elect a Chair and Deputy Chair from within the membership for the duration of that term. The Chair should be responsible for coordinating the Panel's discussions and communicating its recommendations to the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.75 To maintain the Panel's independence and diversity of representation, the Chair and Deputy Chair should not be drawn from the same organisation.
- 3.76 The Local Planning Authority should provide secretariat support to the Panel, including arranging meetings, circulating papers and recording recommendations.

-
- 3.77 Given the specialist expertise required, consideration should be given to remunerating Panel members in line with established practice for independent planning and design review panels. Appropriate remuneration would support consistent participation, recognise professional expertise and broaden access to participation beyond organisations able to contribute officer time without charge.
- 3.78 The establishment of an advisory panel would help ensure transparency, consistency and sector confidence in decision-making, while providing developers with clear and informed feedback on cultural infrastructure proposals.

Community Input

- 3.79 Community involvement should be an expectation of all Cultural Plans in addition to input into cultural proposals as part of formal consultation.
- 3.80 This should include engagement with local parish, ward and town council representatives to support integration of cultural proposals with wider community priorities.

Infrastructure Prioritisation

- 3.81 To support consistent decision-making, the Local Planning Authority should maintain and periodically review a Cultural Infrastructure Priority List.
- 3.82 The Priority List should identify:
- Strategic regional cultural infrastructure priorities
 - Existing assets requiring investment, enhancement or protection
 - Area-based cultural infrastructure needs and opportunities
 - Projects suitable for pooled developer contributions through Section 106 or CIL
 - Emerging priorities identified through monitoring, engagement and infrastructure planning
- 3.83 The Priority List should be developed and maintained collaboratively by Planning, Culture and Community teams, in consultation with the cultural and creative sector. It should be used to:
- Guide the allocation of windfall Section 106 contributions
 - Inform prioritisation of CIL-funded projects
 - Support decision-making on off-site contributions and strategic investment priorities
 - Provide transparency to developers regarding infrastructure priorities and investment needs

Case Study: Greater London Authority – Cultural Infrastructure Planning Framework

Through the London Cultural Infrastructure Plan, London has embedded culture within strategic spatial planning, requiring boroughs to assess, protect and plan for cultural infrastructure. The approach combines evidence-led mapping, policy protection and proactive planning in growth areas. It is widely cited as a leading UK example of integrating culture into planning policy at scale.

Monitoring and Review

- 3.84 The Cultural Infrastructure Priority List should be reviewed at regular intervals, for example every two to three years, or following major updates to the Local Plan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Cultural Infrastructure Map or significant planning permissions.
- 3.85 Reviews should consider:
- New development and population growth
 - Changing cultural sector needs and priorities
 - Delivery progress against identified infrastructure priorities
 - Operator viability and asset performance
 - Evidence from community and sector engagement
- 3.86 This process will help ensure that cultural infrastructure planning remains evidence-led, responsive to local circumstances and aligned with wider planning, regeneration and economic development objectives.

4. The Case for Cultural Infrastructure within Planning Policy

- 4.1 Statutory tests for Section 106 (S106) agreements dictate that any planning obligations must be: necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed scheme.
- 4.2 In this section we directly address those questions in relation to cultural infrastructure
- 4.3 This case can broadly be summarised as:
- 4.4 **Necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms:**
- Without contributions to cultural infrastructure, new development in existing communities would be detrimental to community health and wellbeing by placing additional strain on cultural infrastructure and resources
 - A lack of cultural infrastructure within new communities would be detrimental to the community health and wellbeing of residents in those communities
 - Without contributions to creative workspace, new commercial development risks the displacement of vulnerable creative sectors, due to rising commercial rents, that bring valuable additional economic and social benefits to the region
- 4.5 **Directly related to the development:**
- New residents and commercial tenants will use cultural infrastructure within the catchment area, receiving the social, mental health and wellbeing benefits of the cultural services this infrastructure delivers
 - Cultural infrastructure provides recognised economic benefits for new development including improving the attractiveness of residential areas, creating better places to work, supporting talent attraction & retention, contributing to the vibrancy and resilience of high streets, town and district centres, and attracting people into the visitor economy
 - Catchment areas for cultural infrastructure typologies are provided which indicate where infrastructure directly benefits surrounding development.
- 4.6 **Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind:**
- The methodology for benchmarking expected contributions is directly linked to scale of impact from development, based on national standards which draw from the evidence of baseline levels of cultural infrastructure provision needed required to serve the needs of local communities, as well as evidence of demand from Greater Cambridge residents.

Need From New Residents: Implications for Planning

- 4.7 Demand for cultural infrastructure increases as new communities are established and residential populations grow.
- 4.8 Major growth areas should provide local cultural infrastructure alongside housing and community facilities to meet the social and wellbeing needs of residents.
- 4.9 Regional cultural venues will experience increased demand from population growth across the wider region.

Need From New Residents: Evidence

- 4.10 The population within the catchment of Greater Cambridge's major cultural venues is expected to increase by approximately 6.6% over the next decade, reaching around 3.9 million people. This growth is occurring alongside substantial housing growth within Greater Cambridge and across the wider East of England.
- 4.11 As the population increases, demand will grow for both community-focused cultural infrastructure and larger-scale cultural destinations, including performance venues, museums and galleries.
- 4.12 Planning for cultural infrastructure therefore needs to respond not only to local population growth, but also to increased demand on strategic facilities serving regional audiences.

Need Due to Creative Employment Growth: Implications for Planning

- 4.13 The creative industries are an important strategic sector for Greater Cambridge, not only providing growth, but also having a multiplier effect upon other industries as a catalyst of innovation, R&D, creative identity and attractiveness to talent. Microbusinesses and freelancers are a major part of the creative industries ecosystem and therefore growth in the creative industries will increase demand for affordable creative workspace, production facilities and rehearsal space.
- 4.14 Planning policy should help safeguard and expand creative production space within growth areas. This not only needs to be suitable for the bespoke needs of the sector, but also protected from rising commercial rents to maintain affordability.

Need Due to Create Employment Growth: Evidence

- 4.15 Skills England forecasts suggest creative industries employment could grow by between 8% and 20% between 2025 and 2030. Within Greater Cambridge this could equate to approximately 2,660–3,800 additional creative jobs and between 750 and 1,064 additional creative freelancers.
- 4.16 Existing workspace studies identify shortages in affordable creative workspace, particularly for small and growing creative businesses. Without intervention, rising land values and development pressures may constrain the growth of the creative economy and limit opportunities for creative practitioners and businesses to remain within Greater Cambridge.

Creative Industry Employment within Greater Cambridge (ONS Business Register & Employment Survey 2024)			
	Employment	Employment Density (+/-)	
Sector	Greater Cambridge	vs South East	vs England
Advertising and marketing	325	-0.25%	-0.29%
Architecture	990	+0.61%	+0.58%
Design and designer fashion	600	+0.26%	+0.06%
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	375	-0.21%	-0.31%
IT, software and computer services	10,000	+5.71%	+6.71%
Museums, galleries and libraries	1,150	+0.89%	+0.85%
Music, performing and visual arts	625	+0.10%	+0.14%
Publishing	3,100	+2.43%	+2.40%

Economic Benefits of Cultural Infrastructure

- 4.17 Cultural infrastructure contributes to economic growth, productivity, town centre vitality and the long-term competitiveness of places. It should therefore be considered as economic infrastructure alongside transport, utilities and employment space.

Economic Value to Sustainable Communities and Town Centres: Implications for Planning

- 4.18 Cultural infrastructure supports footfall, visitor spending and business activity within town centres and high streets.
- 4.19 Cultural venues act as economic anchors that support regeneration and diversification.
- 4.20 Investment in culture generates wider economic benefits through tourism, hospitality and local supply chains.

Economic Value to Sustainable Communities and Town Centres: Evidence

- 4.21 Research commissioned by Arts Council England found that three-quarters of regularly funded cultural venues are located within a five-minute walk of a high street, demonstrating the close relationship between culture and town centre vitality.
- 4.22 Evidence from Historic England's High Streets Heritage Action Zone programme found that £103 million of public investment generated more than £245 million in benefits, alongside job creation, improved public realm and the reuse of vacant commercial floorspace.
- 4.23 The UK arts and culture sector generates approximately £13.5 billion in GVA annually and supports around 190,000 full-time equivalent jobs. For every £1 of turnover generated directly by arts and culture, an additional £1.23 of economic activity is supported elsewhere in the economy.
- 4.24 OECD evidence also demonstrates that culture-led regeneration can contribute to employment growth, visitor spending and increased regional GVA, particularly when cultural investment is integrated with wider regeneration and economic development strategies.

Economic Value to Commercial Development and Business Environments: Implications for Planning

- 4.25 Cultural infrastructure supports talent attraction and retention.
- 4.26 Cultural assets strengthen innovation ecosystems and knowledge exchange
- 4.27 Mixed-use developments with strong cultural offers often demonstrate stronger commercial performance and occupier demand.
- 4.28 Cultural infrastructure contributes to place distinctiveness, investor confidence and long-term asset value.

Economic Value to Commercial Development and Business Environments: Evidence

- 4.29 Evidence from Arts Council England highlights the importance of cultural provision in attracting highly skilled workers and supporting quality of life. This is particularly relevant within knowledge-based economies such as Greater Cambridge, where access to talent is a key driver of economic performance.
- 4.30 Research highlighted by the Urban Land Institute suggests that successful business districts increasingly combine employment space with cultural, social and public realm infrastructure, creating more resilient and attractive places to work and invest.
- 4.31 A 2025 report by the Centre for Economics and Business Research found that publicly funded arts and culture generate approximately £3.12 in GVA for every £1 invested. Cultural infrastructure therefore contributes not only to productivity within businesses, but also to wider economic resilience and diversification.

Social and Placemaking Benefits of Cultural Infrastructure: Implications for Planning

- 4.32 Cultural infrastructure contributes to health, wellbeing and social resilience.
- 4.33 Participation in culture supports community cohesion and pride in place.
- 4.34 Cultural infrastructure provides pathways into education, skills development and employment.
- 4.35 Access to cultural infrastructure can help address inequalities and improve social mobility.

Social and Placemaking Benefits of Cultural Infrastructure: Evidence

- 4.36 The World Health Organization's review of more than 3,000 studies found substantial evidence linking arts participation with improved health and wellbeing outcomes across the lifespan.
- 4.37 Research undertaken through DCMS's Culture and Heritage Capital programme identified significant social value associated with cultural participation, with estimated annual benefits ranging from £18.5 million to £8 billion depending on activity and cohort.
- 4.38 Arts Council England's evidence review found strong links between cultural participation and community cohesion, reduced social isolation and increased pride in place. Historic England's heritage-led regeneration programmes demonstrate how cultural infrastructure can simultaneously deliver economic benefits and strengthen community identity.
- 4.39 Evidence also suggests that participation in arts and culture can support educational attainment, employability and social mobility. At a time when participation in arts education is declining, accessible cultural infrastructure plays an increasingly important role in providing opportunities for skills development, confidence-building and progression into creative careers.

Summary of Economic and Social Benefits by Typology

Benefit	Performance & Exhibition Spaces	Cultural Production	Placemaking	Development context
Creative industries growth and employment	Medium	Large	Medium	Strongest in commercial and mixed-use schemes
Footfall and local spend in high streets and town centres	Large	Medium	Large	Strong in both; especially town-centre renewal
High-value tourism and visitor-economy jobs	Large	Small	Large	Strongest in city centres, heritage areas and destination quarters
Creative skills, education and talent pipelines	Medium	Large	Medium	Strongest in residential growth areas, campuses and mixed-use districts
Productivity, social interaction, innovation and talent attraction	Medium	Large	Large	Strongest in commercial districts, science parks and innovation corridors
Residential and commercial value uplift	Medium	Medium	Large	Strongest where culture is integrated with public realm and heritage assets
Mental health and wellbeing	Medium	Large	Large	Strongest in residential and community settings
Pride in place and community cohesion	Large	Large	Large	Strong in both residential and town-centre settings
Social mobility, inequality reduction and young people	Medium	Large	Medium	Strongest where affordable access and progression pathways are built in

- 4.40 Different forms of cultural infrastructure deliver different outcomes. Community and production-focused infrastructure typically delivers the strongest social and economic returns within growth areas, while presentation infrastructure often generates the greatest visitor economy, destination and place-branding impacts.
- 4.41 A balanced cultural ecosystem therefore requires investment across multiple typologies rather than reliance on a single form of provision.

Geographic Spread of Beneficiaries of Cultural Infrastructure: Implications for Planning

- 4.42 Cultural infrastructure serves catchments that vary significantly in scale
- 4.43 Local cultural infrastructure should generally be delivered on-site.
- 4.44 Strategic cultural infrastructure may be more appropriately supported through pooled off-site contributions.
- 4.45 Major developments are likely to require a combination of on-site provision and contributions towards wider cultural infrastructure networks.

Geographic Spread of Beneficiaries of Cultural Infrastructure: Evidence

- 4.46 Evidence from the South Hampshire Cultural Infrastructure Audit demonstrates that cultural participation routinely extends beyond administrative boundaries. Different forms of cultural infrastructure operate at neighbourhood, town, sub-regional and regional scales, resulting in overlapping catchments and patterns of use.
- 4.47 This supports a networked approach to cultural infrastructure planning. Community-facing infrastructure such as rehearsal space, community arts facilities and libraries will often be most appropriate for on-site delivery, while larger venues, museums, galleries and strategic production facilities may be better delivered through pooled investment and off-site contributions.
- 4.48 The catchment evidence therefore provides a clear justification for combining local provision with investment in wider cultural infrastructure networks, ensuring that both everyday access and strategic cultural infrastructure needs are addressed.

Typology	Scale	Catchment (50%)	Catchment (75%)	Indicative Roles
Multi-use arts venues / theatres	Small	~3.9 miles	~8.4 miles	Neighbourhood / local access
	Medium	~4.9 miles	~10.6 miles	Town / district provision
	Large	~13.5 miles	~25 miles	Sub-regional / strategic destination
Public libraries	Neighbourhood/small	~0.6 - 1.5 miles	~1.5-3.7 miles	Highly local, everyday access

	Medium/large	~1.1-1.5 miles	~2.1-2.75 miles	Town centre / wider catchment
Museums	Local	~6.6 miles	~ 24.2 miles	District / sub-regional
	Regional / national	~61.5 miles	~114.5 miles	Regional / national destination
Galleries	Mixed	~12.7 miles	(Variable, larger than theatres)	Sub-regional cultural offer
Archives	Strategic	~10-24 miles	~41-51miles	Sub-regional infrastructure

5. Cultural Infrastructure Needs Analysis

5.1 This section sets out the current and future need for cultural infrastructure across Greater Cambridge, structured across three spatial scales:

- Regional needs – large-scale infrastructure serving sub-regional and national catchments
- Existing infrastructure – maintaining and upgrading current assets
- Local needs – baseline provision required to support growth and new development

5.2 Together, this establishes a quantified and plan-led approach to cultural infrastructure investment, aligned with population growth, economic development and spatial planning priorities.

Regional Needs

5.3 Greater Cambridge's continued growth as a global knowledge economy requires investment in cultural infrastructure of regional significance. The Cultural Infrastructure Strategy identifies a number of critical gaps in provision, particularly in facilities that operate at scale, support production, and enable national and international cultural activity.

5.4 These infrastructure types serve wide geographic catchments, delivering economic, social and cultural benefits across the region and beyond.

Identified Infrastructure Needs

5.5 Large-Scale Arts Production Centre

5.6 Description - A major creative production facility providing affordable artist studios, maker spaces and production infrastructure at scale.

5.7 Evidence Base - Both the Creative Workspace Supply & Demand Report and the Greater Cambridge Creative Business and Cultural Production Workspace Study identify a significant shortfall in affordable, scalable creative workspace. Existing provision is typically below 500 sqm and lacks the critical mass required to sustain creative ecosystems.

5.8 Provision & Investment:

- Spatial requirement: 1,000 sqm+
- Benchmark: Comparable to models such as Cockpit Arts
- Investment: To be defined through feasibility, but likely significant capital investment with potential for phased delivery

5.9 Benefits & Catchment:

- Supports regional creative industries growth
- Enables clustering, collaboration and innovation

-
- Attracts and retains creative talent
 - Catchment: sub-regional

5.10 Indicative Timeline: 2030–2035, aligned with creative sector growth and workspace demand

5.11 Arena Music / Events Venue

5.12 Description - A large-scale arena capable of hosting major music, events and conferences.

5.13 Evidence Base - The Cultural Infrastructure Strategy identifies a regional gap in arena-scale provision, particularly following the closure of the East of England Arena. The nearest comparable facility is Marshall Arena.

5.14 Provision & Investment:

- Spatial requirement: ~5,000 sqm+
- Significant capital investment, likely requiring partnership delivery

5.15 Benefits & Catchment:

- Drives high-value visitor economy (overnight stays, spend)
- Supports conference and knowledge economy functions
- Enhances regional cultural offer
- Catchment: regional / national

5.16 Indicative Timeline: 2035–2045, aligned with population growth and demand thresholds

5.17 National-Standard Touring Theatre Venue

5.18 Description - A venue capable of hosting national and international touring theatre, musicals and opera.

5.19 Evidence Base - While Cambridge has a number of theatre spaces, there is a lack of venues at the scale and specification required for major touring productions. There is also a spatial imbalance, with limited provision in South Cambridgeshire.

5.20 Provision & Investment:

- Spatial requirement: 2,000–3,000 sqm
- Requires strong transport connectivity and town centre / edge-of-centre location

5.21 Benefits & Catchment:

- Expands cultural offer and audience access
- Reduces pressure on existing venues

-
- Supports evening economy and town centres
 - Catchment: sub-regional

5.22 Indicative Timeline: 2030–2035

5.23 Cambridge Community Arts Centre

5.24 Description - A multi-arts facility focused on community participation, education and inclusive access.

5.25 Evidence Base - Community engagement through the Cultural Infrastructure Strategy identified a need for more accessible, community-focused cultural space, particularly in areas of deprivation. Delays to refurbishment of Cambridge Junction further highlight this gap.

5.26 Provision & Investment:

- Spatial requirement: 500–1,000 sqm
- Moderate capital investment with potential for partnership delivery

5.27 Benefits & Catchment:

- Supports inclusion, wellbeing and participation
- Provides space for youth and community-led activity
- Strengthens local cultural ecosystems
- Catchment: local to city-wide

5.28 Indicative Timeline: 2035–2045

5.29 Film, Media & Digital Arts Production Hub

5.30 Description - A specialist hub supporting film, media and digital arts production, including R&D and industry collaboration.

5.31 Evidence Base - Organisations such as Collusion highlight the lack of production facilities, recording studios and R&D space for digital and immersive media.

5.32 Provision & Investment:

- Spatial requirement: ~5,000 sqm
- Likely to require hybrid funding (public, private, academic partnerships)

5.33 Benefits & Catchment:

- Aligns with Cambridge's innovation economy
- Supports high-growth creative tech sectors

- Enables cross-sector collaboration (science + arts)
- Catchment: regional / national

5.34 Indicative Timeline: 2030–2045

Indicative Capital Investment Requirements for Strategic Cultural Infrastructure

- 5.35 The investment ranges above should be treated as order-of-magnitude capital estimates only and should not be interpreted as cost plans, funding commitments or final developer contribution requirements. They are intended to indicate the broad scale of investment likely to be required to deliver strategic cultural infrastructure of this type.
- 5.36 Each project would require further testing through RIBA Stage 0/1 feasibility, including assessment of specification, venue capacity, operating model, site conditions, land assumptions, technical fit-out, public realm requirements, inflation, optimism bias, VAT, lifecycle costs and long-term maintenance.
- 5.37 This is particularly important for larger and more specialist typologies, such as an arena / events venue, where capital costs will vary significantly depending on whether the facility is conceived as a large flexible events hall, a conference and performance venue, a full arena with seating bowl and technical back-of-house requirements, or part of a wider mixed-use destination.
- 5.38 Based on the indicative ranges above, the total regional strategic cultural infrastructure pipeline is estimated at approximately £103m–£200m+. This should be understood as a broad investment envelope to support long-term planning, partnership development and future feasibility testing.
- 5.39 *The ranges are drawn from recent UK comparators: Cockpit Deptford's maker-space redevelopment was around £3.24m; Aviva Studios / Factory International was £240m for 13,350sqm; Bradford Live is a c.£50m 3,000+ capacity venue; a 5,000-capacity arena feasibility study in West Yorkshire estimated c.£41.4m; and recent screen-sector comparators include Bottle Yard Studios' £11.8m/£12m 7,600sqm expansion and The Northern Studios' £3.76m 30,000 sq ft conversion.*

Summary Table

Infrastructure Need	Timescale	Spatial Requirement	Investment Requirement
Large-scale Arts Production Centre	2030-35	1,000sqm+	£4m-£8m
National-Standard Touring Theatre Venue	2030-35	2,000-3,000 sqm	£35m-£70m
Arena Music/Events Venue	2035-45	5,000 sqm	£45m-£75m
Additional Arts Centre in Cambridge	2035-45	500-1,000 sqm	£4m-£12m
Film, Media & Digital Arts Production Hub	2030-35	5,000sqm	£15m-£35m

Comparator City Benchmarking

- 5.40 The table below compares cultural infrastructure provision across a selection of UK cities with broadly similar population scales and knowledge-based economies. It highlights how cultural infrastructure supports multiple roles, including creative production, visitor economy, civic life and talent attraction.
- 5.41 The analysis indicates that Greater Cambridge's key challenge is the capacity and diversity of its infrastructure base, particularly in relation to:
- affordable creative workspace and production space;
 - mid-scale performance and event infrastructure; and
 - community-facing cultural provision.
- 5.42 This approach reflects best practice in cultural infrastructure planning, which considers typology, catchment, capacity and population served rather than asset numbers alone, and provides a clear basis for identifying gaps and informing future provision.

City	Population	Cultural Infrastructure (Indicative)	Strengths	Gaps / Challenges	Key Insight
Greater Cambridge	~308,000	194 cultural production & creation spaces; 575 wider community venues	Strong museum and heritage cluster; significant university cultural assets; highly engaged and educated audience; strong creative and digital sector	Limited affordable artist studios and creative workspace; lack of mid-scale performance venues; under-provision in South Cambridgeshire; reliance on central Cambridge; access inequalities	Infrastructure is strong but unevenly distributed, with growing pressure for affordable, flexible and locally accessible space, particularly to support creative production and growth
Oxford	~162,000	Strong museum and university-led cultural offer; mix of theatres and galleries	Globally significant cultural institutions; strong visitor economy; integrated heritage offer	Limited grassroots and affordable creative space; high cost base	Similar institutional strength to Cambridge, but facing comparable affordability pressures

York	~210,000	Extensive heritage assets; museums; festivals; tourism-led cultural offer	Strong place identity; high cultural participation; well-developed visitor economy	Over-reliance on heritage and tourism; limited contemporary production infrastructure	Strong in presentation, weaker in production
Brighton & Hove	~290,000	Dense network of venues, studios, festivals and independent cultural spaces	Strong creative industries base; vibrant music and night-time economy; diverse grassroots sector	Pressure on workspace affordability; venue closures risk	More balanced ecosystem across production, presentation and participation
Bristol	~470,000	Large-scale cultural ecosystem including major institutions, independent venues and creative workspaces	Strong creative economy; diverse infrastructure; strong night-time and live music sector	Development pressure on venues; affordability challenges	Demonstrates value of retaining grassroots + scaling infrastructure together

Sources: Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1 Audit (2026); ONS population data; Arts Council England; World Cities Culture Forum; GLA Cultural Infrastructure Map; local authority cultural strategies; comparisons indicative due to differing methodologies.

5.43 Maintaining and Upgrading Existing Infrastructure

5.44 In addition to new provision, there is a critical need to sustain and enhance existing cultural infrastructure, much of which is operating under financial and physical constraints.

5.45 Identified Need - evidence from operator engagement indicates:

- Ageing infrastructure requiring capital investment
- Rising operating costs impacting viability
- Demand for modernisation to meet accessibility, sustainability and technical standards

- Engagement with stakeholders such as Create Cambridge will be essential to refine priorities

5.46 Investment Requirement - a programme of ongoing capital and revenue investment will be required to:

- Maintain existing assets
- Improve quality and accessibility
- Support long-term operational sustainability

5.47 Benefits & Catchment:

- Protects existing cultural provision
- Maintains economic and social value
- Supports established audiences and communities
- Catchment: varies by asset (local to regional)

5.48 Indicative Timeline: Immediate to ongoing, aligned with asset lifecycle and funding cycles

5.49 Priority Framework

5.50 A full asset condition audit and operator needs assessment is required to quantify the scale of investment needed to sustain existing cultural infrastructure. In advance of that work, the following interim framework identifies likely investment priorities based on Stage 1 mapping, operator engagement and area-based needs. It should be used to guide early prioritisation of CIL, windfall S106 and partnership funding, with final requirements confirmed through site-specific assessment and engagement with asset owners and operators.

Asset / typology	Type of need	Evidence source	Priority level	Potential funding route
Major venues	Technical upgrades, energy efficiency, audience capacity	Operator engagement / Stage 1	High	CIL / pooled S106 / capital grants
Community venues	Equipment, access, programming	Parish / community engagement	Medium-high	Windfall S106 / parish grants
Heritage assets	Conservation, interpretation, public access	Stage 2 / heritage evidence	Medium	CIL / NLHF / S106

Grassroots music venues	Protection, sound mitigation, programming	Stage 1 / Stage 2	High in affected areas	Agent of change / S106 mitigation
-------------------------	---	-------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------------

Local Needs

- 5.51 Local cultural infrastructure is essential to supporting day-to-day cultural participation, community life and inclusive growth. This section establishes a baseline approach to provision, which will inform on-site delivery through development.
- 5.52 Approach to Quantifying Need - local need is assessed through a combination of:**
- 5.53 Per capita benchmarks - The Arts Council England and the Museums and Libraries Association guidance of 75 sqm of arts and museums infrastructure per person provides a strategic benchmark for whole-place cultural infrastructure need.
- 5.54 This national baseline must be adjusted to a local context to account for levels of engagement and existing provision. The DCMS Participation Survey indicates that residents in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge are 33% more likely to attend performing arts venues and 53% more likely to visit museums and galleries than the UK average.
- 5.55 Comparison and mapping analysis carried out for the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Strategy Stage One indicates that overall current levels of cultural infrastructure are above average within Cambridge but significantly below average in South Cambridgeshire.
- 5.56 Increased provision within Cambridge needs to adjust for the wider catchment that it serves, with the catchment of its regionally significant venues, museums and galleries extending far beyond Greater Cambridge to include communities across the East of England.

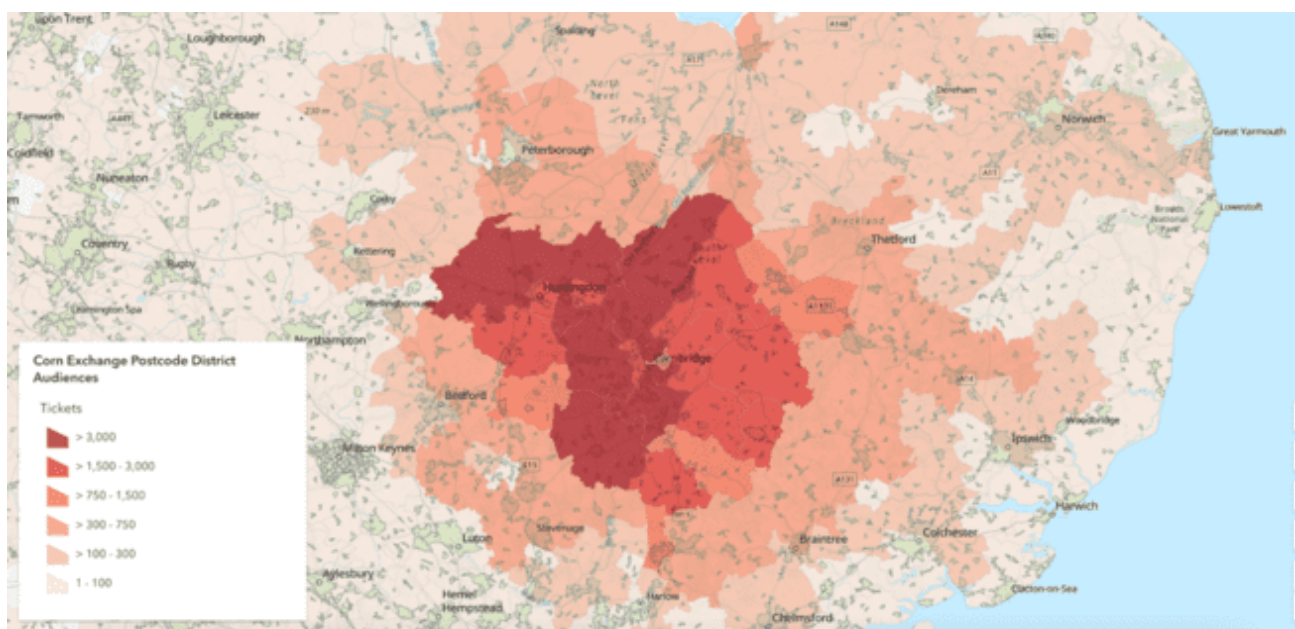


Figure 5 Map showing the catchment of audiences for Cambridge Corn Exchange extending across the East of England

- 5.57 This assessment is further nuanced when broken down by area and infrastructure typology

5.58 The 33% higher level of demand indicates a proportional increase of the baseline requirement from 75sqm to 100sqm of arts and museum floorspace per 1,000 resident within Greater Cambridge

5.59 This benchmark should be used to indicate the overall scale of cultural performance and exhibition space required to support thriving, culturally active places, but should not be interpreted as a direct requirement for all provision to be delivered as new on-site floorspace.

Instead, it should be translated into proportionate site-specific requirements through the the development of Cultural Plans, taking account of existing assets, local priorities, development scale, viability and appropriate delivery mechanisms.

Using the 100 sqm/person benchmark

The Arts Council England and MLA benchmark of **100 sqm per person** provides a national benchmark which should be used as a strategic measure of whole-place cultural infrastructure need. It indicates the scale of cultural infrastructure required across the full ecosystem of venues, production space, community facilities, public realm, libraries, participation spaces and supporting infrastructure.

For planning obligations, this benchmark should be translated into a proportionate site-specific requirement. This may include on-site provision, off-site contributions, enhancement of existing assets, cultural programming, public realm infrastructure, fit-out, equipment and management arrangements. This ensures that cultural infrastructure is planned at the right scale while remaining deliverable, viable and proportionate to development impact.

Assumptions and Interpretation for Quantifying Cultural Infrastructure Need

5.60 The calculations in this report are intended to provide indicative, strategic estimates of cultural infrastructure need. They should not be interpreted as fixed tariffs or final S106/CIL contribution requirements. Final requirements should be refined through site-specific Cultural Plans, review of existing provision using the Cultural Infrastructure Map, updated cost benchmarks, viability assessment and engagement with relevant cultural, community and operator stakeholders. The following assumptions underpin the indicative calculations:

Assumption	Basis	How it is used
Population generated by housing growth	A working assumption of 2.58 residents per dwelling, derived from the Greater Cambridge Infrastructure Delivery Plan assumption that 54,447 homes generate approximately 140,600 additional residents.	Used to estimate the resident population generated by Strategic Growth Areas where only housing numbers are available.
Region-wide cultural infrastructure benchmark	The benchmark of 100 sqm of cultural infrastructure per person.	Used as a strategic whole-place benchmark to understand the scale of cultural infrastructure required across the full cultural

		ecosystem. It is not treated as a direct requirement for all provision to be delivered as new on-site floorspace.
Typology allocation	A working typology split based on the needs analysis: 40% production space, 35% performance space and 25% exhibition space	Used to translate overall need into broad categories of provision. This should be adjusted through site-specific evidence.
Adjustment factors	Applied based on participation demand, supply-side benchmarking, creative employment growth and local strategic priorities.	Used to refine the scale and type of provision required. Adjustment factors should be applied proportionately and not added together mechanically.
Cost benchmarks	A blended benchmark cost can be used for indicative modelling only, based on relevant cultural infrastructure cost comparators and updated using BCIS/RICS or project-specific feasibility work.	Used to estimate potential financial equivalents where provision is delivered through off-site contributions, fit-out, enhancement or pooled investment.
Housing quanta	Drawn from the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals and related growth evidence for Strategic Growth Areas.	Used to model indicative needs for areas where sufficient baseline growth data is available.
Existing provision	Assessed using the Cultural Infrastructure Map, Stage 1 audit and engagement evidence.	Used to determine whether provision should be delivered on-site, off-site, through enhancement of existing assets, or through programming / public realm investment.

Cultural Infrastructure Needs Calculator

- 5.61 Local cultural infrastructure requirements should be assessed through a two-stage model. The first stage identifies the strategic whole-place need for cultural infrastructure, using the benchmark of 100 sqm per person or 1.5% of NIA commercial area. This provides a high-level indication of the scale of cultural infrastructure required across the full ecosystem of venues, production space, community facilities, public realm, participation spaces, libraries, meanwhile uses and supporting infrastructure.
- 5.62 The second stage translates this strategic need into a proportionate developer contribution requirement, identifying what should reasonably be delivered on-site, funded off-site, enhanced within existing infrastructure, or supported through programming, fit-out, management and public realm investment.
- 5.63 This approach ensures that the benchmark is used to evidence the importance and scale of cultural infrastructure need, while avoiding an overly literal interpretation that would require each development to deliver the full benchmark as standalone new cultural floorspace.

5.64 Step 1: Strategic Whole-Place Need

- 5.65 The strategic benchmark should first be used to understand the full scale of cultural infrastructure need generated by population growth:

$(Population\ generated\ by\ development \times 100\ sqm) + (Additional\ NIA\ commercial\ space\ created \times 0.015) = strategic\ whole-place\ cultural\ infrastructure\ need$

- 5.66 This figure represents the broad ecosystem of cultural infrastructure required to support a thriving place. It should be understood as a strategic benchmark, not a direct on-site floorspace obligation.
- 5.67 For Strategic Growth Areas, the calculation should be undertaken for both:
- the Local Plan-period growth expected within the site; and
 - the full-build-out population, where a site will continue to grow beyond the plan period.
- 5.68 This allows the Local Planning Authority and developers to distinguish between immediate phase-based contributions and the longer-term cultural infrastructure required to support a mature settlement, district or employment cluster.

5.69 Step 2: Translate Strategic Need into a Proportionate Developer Requirement

- 5.70 The strategic whole-place need should then be translated into a proportionate developer contribution requirement. This should consider:
- the scale and type of development;
 - whether the site is a new settlement, urban extension, regeneration area, employment campus or cultural cluster;
 - existing cultural infrastructure within the relevant catchment;

- whether existing assets can be enhanced or expanded;
- viability and deliverability;
- the need for on-site provision to support early community formation;
- opportunities for off-site pooled contributions to strategic infrastructure;
- requirements for cultural programming, public realm infrastructure, fit-out, equipment and management.

5.71 This step should identify which elements of need are to be met through:

Delivery route	Role
On-site provision	New cultural floorspace, cultural hubs, studios, rehearsal space, community arts space, libraries or flexible venues.
Off-site contribution	Investment in existing or planned cultural infrastructure serving the development catchment.
Enhancement of existing assets	Upgrades to community centres, venues, libraries, heritage assets, parks, pubs, churches, schools or shared-use facilities.
Public realm and placemaking infrastructure	Event-ready parks, squares, public art, artist residencies, lighting, power, staging, seating and storage.
Programming and management	Revenue support, operator development, meanwhile uses, community access agreements and cultural delivery plans.

5.72 This translation stage is essential to ensure that contributions are proportionate, deliverable and aligned with the statutory tests for planning obligations.

5.73 Step 3: Typology Allocation

5.74 The proportionate developer contribution requirement should then be allocated across relevant cultural infrastructure typologies. The following split provides a starting point, to be adjusted through site-specific Cultural Plans and evidence from the Cultural Infrastructure Map:

Typology	Baseline Share	Typical delivery forms
Creative Production	40%	Affordable studios, maker spaces, creative co-working, film/media/music production space, community arts rooms, rehearsal studios, learning spaces
Performance / multi-use spaces	35%	Music venues, theatres, arts centres and multi-use arts spaces, performance spaces and event infrastructure within community facilities

Exhibition space	25%	Gallery, display, interpretation, heritage exhibition or flexible presentation space
------------------	-----	--

5.75 The typology mix will vary significantly between sites based on their context, existing provision and evidence of demand, therefore these values should be taken as a starting point as opposed to a fixed criteria. For example, employment-led campuses may require a higher proportion of creative workspace, innovation-linked cultural uses and public realm programming, while new settlements may require a stronger emphasis on community, learning, rehearsal and participation space.

5.76 Step 4: Apply Adjustment Factors

5.77 Adjustment factors should be applied to the proportionate developer contribution requirement, not mechanically to the full strategic whole-place benchmark. They should be used to refine the scale, typology and delivery route of contributions based on evidence of local need, existing provision, participation demand, creative sector growth and strategic priorities.

5.78 Where more than one adjustment factor applies, the Local Planning Authority should agree a single combined adjustment factor based on the overall evidence of need. This should avoid double counting where multiple indicators point to the same underlying issue.

5.79 The combined adjustment factor will normally range from 0.8x to 1.5x of the proportionate developer requirement. Any uplift above 1.5x should only be applied where exceptional evidence demonstrates significant need to address development impact and harms, with significant under-provision, strategic need or the absence of suitable existing infrastructure within the relevant catchment.

Factor	Adjustment		Purpose
A. Participation Demand Adjustment	Adjust provision based on local demand for cultural participation. - High participation (above national average) → proportional increase requirement - Low participation but strategic priority (e.g. underserved communities) → maintain or increase provision - Low participation with strong existing provision → reduction in provision		Ensures infrastructure reflects <i>actual and latent demand</i> , not just population.
B. Supply-Side Adjustment	Creative workspace / production space under-provision	Uplift to workspace / production component	Addresses identified shortfall in affordable studios, maker space and production

(Provision Benchmarking)			infrastructure; aligns provision with comparator cities (e.g. Brighton, Bristol) and supports creative industries growth
	Performance / event infrastructure gap	Uplift to performance component	Responds to lack of mid-scale venues capable of supporting touring work and local programming; fills a consistent gap identified across benchmarking
	Uneven geographic distribution (e.g. South Cambridgeshire, growth areas)	Overall uplift, location-specific	Ensures provision reflects spatial inequity and supports delivery of local cultural infrastructure in new settlements and underprovided areas
	Exhibition / gallery space gap	Uplift to exhibition component	Maintains provision in line with comparator cities while allowing for incremental growth where needed
C. Creative Workspace Demand Adjustment (Employment Growth)	Adjust provision based on projected creative industries employment growth. • High growth in creative sector → increase workspace allocation • Stable growth → baseline applies • Low growth → reduce workspace share or shift to other typologies This adjustment should primarily affect: • creative workspace / production space		Aligns infrastructure with economic strategy and sector growth.

	specialist facilities (e.g. digital, media, making)	
D. Local Context and Strategic Priority Adjustment	Apply a final adjustment based on: - deprivation and access to cultural infrastructure - town centre role and regeneration priorities - transport accessibility - cultural strategies and local plans - Priority growth / regeneration areas → increase provision - Well-served areas → no uplift or redistribution	Ensures provision supports inclusive growth and spatial strategy.

5.80 Step 5: Set On-site to Off-site

5.81 Once final benchmark sqm is established:

On-site provision

- Required where infrastructure serves local catchment needs
- Where large strategic sites are able to deliver regionally significant infrastructure

Off-site contribution

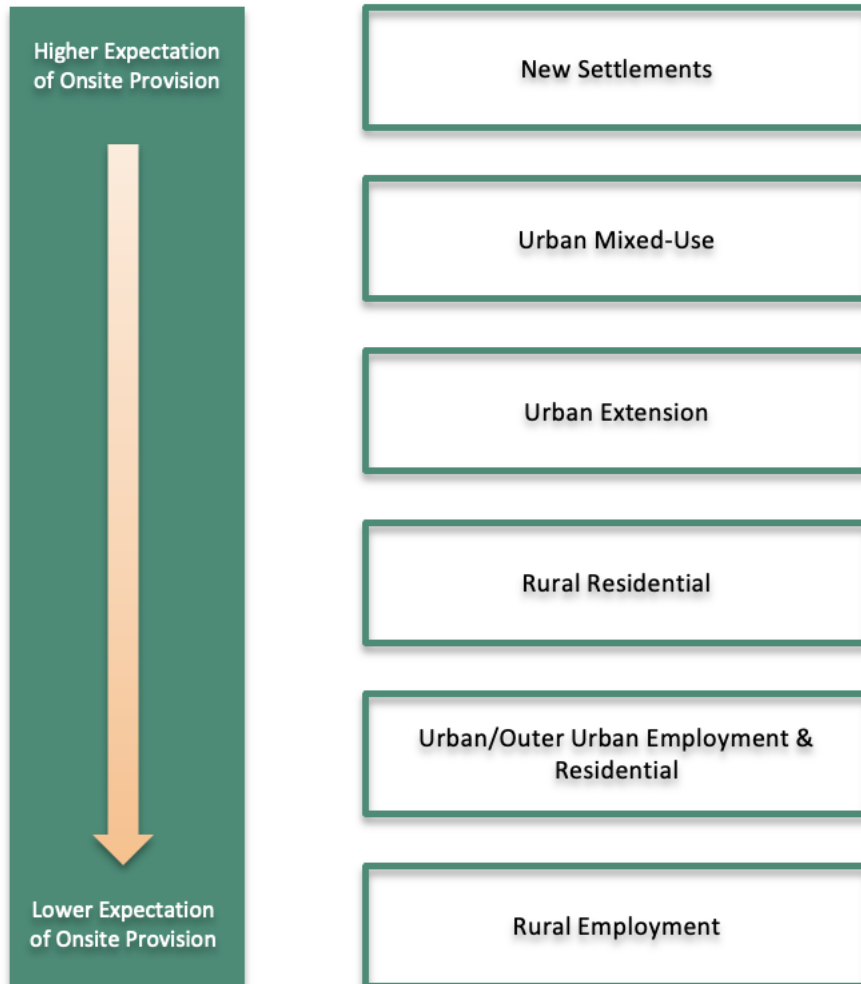
- Required where infrastructure required by the development is best served by existing infrastructure within the catchment or delivered on a separate site within the catchment area of the development
- Where existing facilities that will be impacted by the development require expansion or upgrade

- 5.82 The calculation of off-site contributions should be made in relation to the equivalent value of the sqm of cultural floorspace that would otherwise require to be delivered on site.
- 5.83 As a guideline we recommend this be calculated as £7,318 per sqm of equivalent cultural space. This is a mid-point estimate of the cost of construction, design and fit-out of a combination of performance, presentation and creative production space in Greater Cambridge sourced from Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors' Building Cost Information Service.
- 5.84 Baseline expectations of spatial to financial contributions and onsite to offsite contribution should be adjusted by the scale of development.

Scale of Development				
	Primarily Financial			Primarily Spatial
	0% to 25% onsite 100% to 75% offsite	25% to 50% onsite 75% to 50% offsite	50% to 75% onsite 50% to 25% offsite	75% to 100% onsite 25% to 0% offsite
Residential	10 – 50 Units	50 - 100 Units	100 - 500 Units	500+ Units
Commercial	1,000 – 2,500 sqm	2,500 – 10,000 sqm	10,000 – 60,000 sqm	60,000+ sqm
Mixed Use	N/A	N/A	Block/ Neighbourhood Scale	District / Masterplanned Community

Figure 5 Adjusting onsite / offsite and financial / spatial contributions based on site scale

5.85 Site typologies will therefore also vary in regards to the extent to which contributions are expected to be onsite or offsite, reflecting the extent to which infrastructure is needed to serve the community onsite or surrounding the development and the extent to which it creates additional need and pressure on existing infrastructure or adjacent communities.



5.86 Step 6: Set On-site Spatial to Financial Contributions

5.87 Once an overall benchmark has been set and the balance of onsite to offsite provision established, the extent of spatial to financial onsite contribution should also be considered.

5.88 This requires consideration of:

- Whether the site can viably accommodate spatial provision of sufficient scale to be sustainable and effective
- Whether the needs of the community are best served by permanent infrastructure or other forms of cultural support such as programming, non-building based activity such as festivals, community participation programmes, education support, and creative sector development

- The financial resources that will be needed to establish, maintain and increase the impact of cultural infrastructure including start-up costs, favourable leasing terms, financial contributions to cultural programmes and maintenance support. These financial needs should always be factored into provision to ensure infrastructure provided is well resourced and maintained

5.89 Financial support should include both direct cash contributions towards cultural activity, and in-kind support provided by the developer such as rent and service charge reductions.

Interpreting the Outputs

5.90 The calculator produces two related outputs:

Output	Meaning	Use
Strategic whole-place need	The total cultural infrastructure ecosystem implied by the 45 sqm/person benchmark	Used to demonstrate the scale of need and support long-term infrastructure planning
Proportionate developer contribution requirement	The reasonable contribution to be secured from a development through floorspace, funding, enhancement, programming or management	Used to guide S106/CIL discussions, Cultural Plans and planning obligations

5.91 The strategic benchmark should not be read as requiring all provision to be delivered as new standalone cultural floorspace on-site. In many cases, particularly in rural areas, employment campuses and regeneration locations, the most appropriate response may be a combination of new provision, enhancement of existing assets, off-site pooled contributions, cultural programming, public realm infrastructure and long-term management commitments.

6. Area Based Needs Assessment

- 6.1 Chapter 6 identifies broad area-based needs. Chapter 7 translates these into site-specific implications for Strategic Growth Areas and cultural cluster / regeneration areas.
- 6.2 Drawing on the Stage 1 cultural infrastructure mapping, population and employment growth projections, and the Future Needs and Engagement analysis, this section identifies a place-based framework for cultural infrastructure provision across Greater Cambridge.
- 6.3 The assessment reflects three consistent themes emerging from the evidence and engagement:
- A need to balance new provision with better use and enhancement of existing assets, particularly in rural areas
 - The importance of early, flexible and multi-use infrastructure in growth areas, including outdoor and meanwhile provision
 - Recognition that informal and community-based infrastructure (e.g. pubs, churches, green spaces) plays a critical role alongside formal venues
- 6.4 The recommendations below are structured to support:
- Windfall development contributions (S106/CIL)
 - Strategic growth area planning and phasing
 - Targeted enhancement and protection of existing assets

South Cambridgeshire – North

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
• Delivery of artist studios, maker spaces and live/work units, particularly in Northstowe and Waterbeach, where gaps in production space have been identified • Flexible community and cultural hubs embedded within town centres and new phases of growth • Outdoor performance and event infrastructure (e.g. greens, festival	• Expansion of programming and access within shared school/community facilities (e.g. theatres, studios), supported by robust community use agreements • Enhancement of heritage assets (e.g. Denny Abbey, local barns) and their integration into cultural programming • Strengthening public art and public realm networks (e.g. sculpture	• Strategic green spaces and landscape assets, including those supporting festivals and community events • Historic and heritage assets, including rural heritage buildings and conservation areas • Existing community anchors (e.g. village halls, community centres)

spaces) delivered early in development phases	trails, water park connections)	
---	---------------------------------	--

South Cambridgeshire – South East

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
- Local cultural and community hubs integrated within new settlements and expansions - Creative workspace and rehearsal space, particularly linked to employment growth areas - Cultural uses within green infrastructure, including interpretation, education and food-growing initiatives	- Improved connectivity between heritage assets (e.g. the Abingtons) and wider cultural networks - Programming and activation of public open space and community venues - Support for local cultural events and community-led activity	- Local community culture and social infrastructure, including pubs and informal gathering spaces - Historic landscape character and nature assets - Existing village-scale cultural provision

South Cambridgeshire – South West

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
- Multi-use community and cultural spaces within growth areas - Potential need for regionally significant cultural venue dependent on progress of East-West Rail - Affordable creative workspace - Distributed cultural infrastructure model (clustered provision across parishes) to	- Investment in parish-level assets (village halls, churches, pubs) to support expanded cultural programming - Development of shared cultural programmes across parish clusters (e.g. festivals, heritage trails, intergenerational projects)	- Wildlife sites, woodlands and green corridors supporting cultural and recreational use - Rural community infrastructure and social spaces - Local identity and heritage landscapes

address rural accessibility challenges		
--	--	--

Cambridge City – West/Central

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
• Flexible, meanwhile and pop-up cultural spaces • Cultural use of public realm and open space • Targeted provision of mid-scale performance and event space where gaps exist	• Intensification and optimisation of existing venues and cultural anchors (e.g. major venues, civic spaces) • Greater use of parks and commons (e.g. Jesus Green, Midsummer Common) for cultural programming • Improved access, affordability and diversity of programming	• Strategic cultural venues and institutions • Public realm and open spaces with cultural use value • Creative and nightlife ecosystems

Cambridge City – North Area

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
• Cultural infrastructure embedded in regeneration and employment areas, including North East Cambridge • Flexible production and workspace provision linked to innovation clusters • Greater provision for large-scale and regionally significant infrastructure, currently underrepresented	• Activation of open space and interim sites for cultural use • Strengthening links between existing venues and emerging development areas • Expansion of community-facing cultural provision	• Existing cultural venues and grassroots infrastructure • Strategic open space assets • Local creative ecosystems

Cambridge City – East Area

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
• Significant uplift required in cultural infrastructure provision, reflecting identified gaps • Integration of cultural uses into major development sites • Provision of community, performance and creative workspace typologies	• Improved use and programming of existing educational and community facilities • Development of cultural networks and partnerships across the area	• Publicly accessible green spaces and community assets • Existing local cultural provision

Cambridge City – South Area

New cultural infrastructure to be provided	Existing Cultural infrastructure to be enhanced	Cultural infrastructure to be protected
• Targeted provision of community and cultural spaces within growth and institutional areas • Opportunities to embed cultural uses within education and research environments	• Strengthening of creative education infrastructure (e.g. sixth form arts provision) • Improved access to and programming of public realm and institutional spaces	• Existing green spaces and civic assets • Educational and cultural institutions with public access roles

7. Summary of Implications for Strategic Growth Areas

7.1 This chapter sets out the implications of the Cultural Infrastructure Needs Analysis for Greater Cambridge's Strategic Growth Areas and other major cultural cluster / regeneration areas. It provides a framework for identifying expected on-site provision, off-site contributions, and wider investment priorities to be secured through S106, CIL and other delivery mechanisms.

7.2 Indicative Cultural Infrastructure Needs Based on Population Growth

Site	Population Increase 2024-2045	Commercial Space Increase 2024-45 (sqm)	Outline Cultural Infrastructure Contributions (sqm)	Financial Equivalent to Cultural Infrastructure Contributions
Bourne Airfield New Village	9,975	5,400	1,062	£7,773,911
Cambourne West	5,843	30,625	952	£6,965,272
Cambourne North	7,268	108,000	2,023	£14,802,850
Cambridge Biomedical Campus	1,800	687,000	8,424	£61,646,832
Cambridge East (Airport, Marleigh & Springstead)	16,521	53,700	2,297	£16,805,787
Cambridge Urban Area (allocations and windfall)	12,096	N/A	1,210	£8,851,853
Darwin Green	6,053	N/A	605	£4,429,585
Grange Farm New Settlement	7,268	35,000	1,147	£8,392,282
Land N&S of Worts' Causeway	1,161	N/A	116	£849,620
North East Cambridge	8,969	320,000	4,737	£34,664,634
Northstowe	17,753	47,000	2,339	£17,118,997
North West Cambridge	9,209	100,000	2,120	£15,520,746

Rural allocations & windfall	15,357	N/A	1,536	£11,238,253
Waterbeach New Town	5,727	39,800	1,050	£7,686,095
Wellcome Genome Campus	4,275	127,500	1,957	£14,324,985

7.3 By way of comparison, the strategic whole-place need generated by major growth areas is significantly larger than the footprint of individual cultural venues. This demonstrates that the Arts Council England benchmark should be understood as referring to the wider cultural infrastructure ecosystem of a place, including formal venues, creative production space, community infrastructure, public realm, libraries, meanwhile uses, programming and supporting infrastructure.

7.4 For example, a 1,000–1,500 sqm facility may support a small standalone cultural or creative production hub, while a 500–700 sqm space may accommodate a substantial flexible hall or production facility. The strategic need identified for major growth areas is therefore not a requirement for a single building of equivalent size, but evidence that cultural infrastructure should be planned as a layered network of spaces, investment, programming and management.

7.5 Summary of On-site to Off-site Contributions

7.6 Based on indicative typology, location and indication of need based on the Greater Cambridge Cultural Infrastructure Map, the following summary of anticipated sources of on-site spatial, financial and off-site that contributions will be sought for.

Site	On-site Spatial Provision (sqm)	Onsite Non-Spatial Financial Contribution	Offsite Financial Contribution
Bourne Airfield New Village	425	£1,554,782	£3,109,565
Cambourne West	333	£1,044,791	£3,482,636
Cambourne North	1,618	£1,480,285	£ -
Cambridge Biomedical Campus	3,370	£12,329,366	£24,658,733
Cambridge East (Airport,	1608	£3,361,157	£1,680,579

Marleigh & Springstead)			
Cambridge Urban Area (allocations and windfall)	605	£885,185	£3,540,741
Darwin Green	242	£885,917	£1,771,834
Grange Farm New Settlement	459	£1,678,456	£3,356,913
Land N&S of Worts' Causeway	0	£424,810	£424,810
North East Cambridge	2,842	£8,666,159	£5,199,695
Northstowe	1,754	£4,279,749	£ -
North West Cambridge	848	£3,104,149	£6,208,298
Rural allocations & windfall	0	£ 0	£11,238,253
Waterbeach New Town	630	£1,537,219	£1,537,219
Wellcome Genome Campus	392	£4,297,496	£7,162,493

7.7 Area-Based Priorities for Strategic Growth Areas and Cultural Cluster Areas

The areas covered are grouped as follows:

Geography	Strategic Growth Areas / Cultural Cluster Areas	Cultural Infrastructure Priorities	Indicative contribution approach
South Cambridgeshire North	Northstowe New Town	Mixed arts / cultural venue provision, including studio or workshop space, small-scale performance space and exhibition space. Town centre cultural uses within cafés, bars, retail and other F&B spaces, supported by live entertainment and exhibition infrastructure. Outdoor event infrastructure to support festivals, markets,	On-site provision: community arts space, flexible studio / workshop space, outdoor event infrastructure, public art and cultural public realm. Off-site / pooled contribution: enhancement of cultural

		winter events and community gathering. Public art and cultural identity-building across the Unity Centre, Water Parks and wider public realm. Enhancement of existing and planned community infrastructure, including the Town Hub / Phase 3A community centre where appropriate	programming capacity, public art trails, shared cultural equipment and support for wider Northstowe cultural development.
	Waterbeach New Town	Artist studio space to support year-round creative presence, potentially linked to repurposed heritage or barracks infrastructure. Exhibition and event space with potential links to visual arts, heritage and community use. Programmable public realm and town centre infrastructure to support festivals, markets and animation. Enhancement of local heritage and cultural assets, including Tithe Barn at Landbeach, Denny Abbey and the Farmland Museum. Protection of Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum and related heritage assets.	On-site provision: artist studios, exhibition / community event space, town centre cultural infrastructure and public realm. Off-site / pooled contribution: heritage programming, event infrastructure and enhancement of existing nearby heritage assets.
South Cambridgeshire South East	Land adjacent to A11 and A1307 at Grange Farm	Nature and heritage-linked learning space, connected to the heritage of Little and Great Abington, IWM Duxford and surrounding green spaces. Heritage, nature and food-growing interpretation activities, including artist commissions, learning programmes and community farm / growing opportunities. Artist workspace or residency provision linked to local heritage, nature and community engagement.	On-site provision: heritage / nature interpretation, artist residency or workspace, cultural learning space and public art linked to landscape. Off-site / pooled contribution: support for nearby heritage assets, community programming, equipment and local cultural networks.

		Enhancement of The Abington Institute and Hinxton Watermill as cultural and community assets. Protection of listed heritage, pubs and existing local community culture.	
	Wellcome Genome Campus	Meanwhile community provision to support integration between new communities and neighbouring settlements. Artist residencies to support engagement, co-design and the evolution of long-term community infrastructure. Enhancement of heritage and community activity at Hinxton Watermill. Protection of Hinxton Hall, Hinxton village heritage, existing pubs and community provision.	On-site provision: artist residencies, community engagement space, public art and meanwhile cultural programming. Off-site / pooled contribution: support for Hinxton Watermill, village heritage programming and community cultural activity.
South Cambridgeshire South West	Cambourne North	Further feasibility testing for a regional flexible event space, with potential to address gaps in national touring theatre, musicals or arena-scale performance. Supporting infrastructure for any major venue, including hotels, F&B and evening / night-time economy uses. Creative workspace with potential focus on film, media, production, theatre production and affordable creative deskpace. Enhancement of Cambourne Village College Theatre and links to local theatre groups and creative education. Protection of surrounding wildlife sites, woodlands and green infrastructure.	On-site provision: flexible community / event space, creative workspace and supporting cultural town centre uses. Off-site / pooled contribution: feasibility and delivery contribution toward regional performance infrastructure, creative production space and cultural education partnerships.
Cambridge City / West	Eddington & West Cambridge	Flexible, low-cost space for artists and creative freelancers, including production space and space for exhibiting or selling work.	On-site provision: flexible creative workspace, hybrid cultural / commercial space, public realm

		Hybrid spaces for smaller-scale cultural programming that complement Storey's Field Centre. Supporting uses such as cafés, F&B and retail that strengthen Storey's Field Centre as a local cultural destination. Protection of existing cultural provision within Storey's Field Centre.	activation and cultural programming space. Off-site / pooled contribution: enhancement of Storey's Field Centre, including supporting uses, cultural equipment or programme development.
Cambridge City / North	North East Cambridge	Facility to support interaction between science, arts and culture, including creative workspace, makerspace, creative R&D and education space. Community arts space supporting performance, exhibition and engagement for new residents and adjacent communities. Library provision serving the three residential communities adjacent to the site. Support spaces for culture, including engaging public realm and café facilities close to cultural provision. Meanwhile programmes to shape and seed cultural offer through both infrastructure and events. Protection of existing local music infrastructure, including live music and rehearsal / production facilities.	On-site provision: creative R&D / makerspace, community arts space, library, meanwhile cultural infrastructure, public realm and supporting cultural uses. Off-site / pooled contribution: protection and enhancement of nearby music and rehearsal infrastructure, cultural programming and wider creative innovation partnerships.
Cambridge City / East	Cambridge East	Creative hub linked to surrounding creative production groups and existing cultural infrastructure, including Unit13, Flightpath Rehearsal Studios, Kiln Cambridge and St Barnabas Press. Community arts centre focused on engagement with surrounding areas of higher deprivation.	On-site provision: creative hub, community arts centre, rehearsal / production space, cultural public realm and heritage interpretation. Off-site / pooled contribution: enhancement of surrounding creative

		Enhancement of Barnwell East Nature Reserve and links to strategic green infrastructure. Protection and reuse of airport heritage, including interpretation within the new high street / town centre and potential heritage exhibition space.	production networks, Barnwell East Nature Reserve, heritage programming and inclusive cultural engagement.
	ARU Creative Quarter & Surroundings	Affordable creative production space to retain ARU graduates and strengthen a neighbourhood creative community. Future opportunity around the Grafton Centre to support a creative neighbourhood with performance, workspace, learning and public realm. Stronger links between ARU, East Road and surrounding independent retail, F&B and evening / night-time uses. Supportive public realm, public art and street art to reinforce a creative identity. Protection of existing nearby bars, pubs and evening / night-time economy venues, including The Tram Depot, The Six Six Bar and The Blue Moon.	On-site provision: affordable production space, creative workspace, small performance / event space, exhibition / learning space and creative public realm. Off-site / pooled contribution: support for existing grassroots venues, night-time economy infrastructure and public realm curation.
	Beehive Centre	Events and arts infrastructure within proposed mixed-use community space, with emphasis on youth arts, creativity and events. Creative commissions to support engagement and co-design with young people and girls. Potential skating or youth-focused creative infrastructure within the development. Enhancement of the Centre for Computing History. Protection of live music at The Geldart and The Corner House.	On-site provision: youth arts and events infrastructure, creative commissions, playable / active public realm and community cultural space. Off-site / pooled contribution: Centre for Computing History sustainability, grassroots music venue protection

			and local youth cultural programming.
Cambridge City / South	Cambridge Biomedical Campus Extension	Arts and health innovation infrastructure, including affordable workspace for creative health organisations and practitioners. Funding for creative health programmes and community creative health spaces. F&B and leisure uses that support an active 24-hour campus with embedded cultural programming. Public art that encourages interaction, play, outdoor exercise and programmable use. Stronger links with local schools and students, including Long Road and Hills Road creative arts programmes. Protection of publicly accessible green space, including The Green and Gardens where relevant.	On-site provision: creative health workspace, community creative health space, public art, cultural programming infrastructure and active public realm. Off-site / pooled contribution: creative health programmes, school / college partnerships and wider arts-and-health infrastructure.
	Cambridge Leisure	F&B, leisure and evening / night-time economy uses to strengthen the area as a destination close to Cambridge Station. Affordable creative workspace complementing Cambridge Junction, including creative innovation, R&D and new media infrastructure. Enhancement of Cambridge Junction, including technical upgrades and potential expansion to meet growing audience and community demand. Protection of existing cultural uses within the site.	On-site provision: creative workspace, R&D / new media infrastructure, evening economy uses and supporting public realm. Off-site / pooled contribution: Cambridge Junction technical upgrades, expansion feasibility and wider cultural programming.
Cambridge City / Central	Cambridge Civic Quarter	Market, retail and F&B uses that support a strong civic and cultural centre.	On-site provision: event-ready public realm, cultural use of civic buildings,

		Mitigation for live performance during the closure / refurbishment of the Corn Exchange. Improvements to Cambridge Corn Exchange, including infrastructure, energy efficiency, bar / concession capacity and audience capacity. Improvements to the Guildhall to increase use for cultural events and community programming. Event infrastructure and public realm improvements within the Market Square. Protection of heritage, community value and existing market traders.	market / F&B cultural infrastructure and public art. Off-site / pooled contribution: Corn Exchange upgrades, temporary performance mitigation, Guildhall cultural programming and civic event infrastructure.
--	--	---	---

7.8 This grouping recognises that not all areas perform the same planning function. Northstowe, Waterbeach, Cambourne North, Cambridge East, North East Cambridge and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus Extension are major growth areas where new provision will be required to support new populations, workers and visitors. Eddington / West Cambridge, ARU Creative Quarter, Cambridge Leisure, the Beehive Centre and Cambridge Civic Quarter are better understood as cultural cluster, regeneration or intensification areas, where the priority is often to enhance, protect and better connect existing cultural assets.

7.9 The approach to contributions should use the regional cultural infrastructure ratios as a baseline, then adjust these through site-specific assessment using the Cultural Infrastructure Map, the Stage 1 audit, local engagement evidence and the priorities set out below. The Stage 2 engagement report confirms that future needs analysis should support the calculation of on-site and off-site developer contributions, while also articulating area needs through “protect, enhance and provide” priorities.

7.10 Summary Tables for Cultural Infrastructure Contributions

7.11 The following tables provide an indicative framework for how cultural infrastructure typologies should be treated across Strategic Growth Areas. These should be used alongside the contribution calculator, site-specific Cultural Plans and the Cultural Infrastructure Map.

7.12 Cultural Presentation & Experience Infrastructure

Area	Live performance venues	Live music / night-time economy	Cinemas	Museums / heritage	Galleries / exhibition

Northstowe	On-site small event / flexible performance space	Support cultural F&B and evening uses	Community / pop-up screening only	Off-site / local heritage links	On-site exhibition capability
Waterbeach	On-site flexible event space	Town centre event equipment	Community / pop-up screening only	Protect Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum; support Denny Abbey / Farmland Museum	On-site exhibition / heritage display
Grange Farm	Small-scale / outdoor only	Support pubs / community venues	Not a priority	Strong on-site heritage / nature interpretation	Flexible display / interpretation
Wellcome Genome Campus	Community / meanwhile performance	Support local pubs / community provision	Not a priority	Protect Hinxton heritage	Residency / engagement outputs
Cambourne North	Potential regional venue subject to feasibility	Supporting night-time economy	Possible only if market-tested	Off-site contribution	On-site / venue-linked exhibition
Eddington & West Cambridge	Complement Storey's Field Centre	Hybrid cultural F&B	Not a priority	Off-site contribution	Flexible exhibition / selling space
North East Cambridge	On-site community arts / performance space	Protect nearby music infrastructure	Not a priority	Off-site contribution	On-site exhibition / engagement space
Cambridge East	Community arts centre /	Protect and link existing	Not a priority	Airport heritage interpretation	Heritage / community

	performance capability	production groups			exhibition space
ARU Creative Quarter	Performance / event space as part of creative quarter	Protect and strengthen night-time economy	Not a priority	Off-site contribution	Public-facing exhibition / graduate showcase
Beehive Centre	Youth arts / events infrastructure	Protect nearby live music venues	Not a priority	Support Centre for Computing History	Youth / community exhibition
Biomedical Campus	Event / programme space linked to arts and health	F&B / active campus cultural uses	Not a priority	Off-site contribution	Creative health exhibition / interpretation
Cambridge Leisure	Support Cambridge Junction	Strengthen evening economy	Existing commercial leisure context	Off-site contribution	New media / creative showcase
Civic Quarter	Corn Exchange and temporary performance mitigation	Evening civic centre uses	Not a priority	Guildhall / civic heritage	Civic / market exhibition infrastructure

7.13 Cultural Production, Learning & Community Creativity

Area	Affordable studios	Affordable creative workspace	Rehearsal & learning spaces	Libraries
Northstowe	Priority on-site	Priority on-site	On-site community / education-linked space	Consider through wider community infrastructure

Waterbeach	Priority on-site	On-site / heritage reuse	Community learning and event space	Consider through wider community infrastructure
Grange Farm	Artist residency / workspace	Limited, locally focused	Nature / heritage learning	Not a priority
Wellcome Genome Campus	Residency-based	Creative / community engagement workspace	Community engagement space	Not a priority
Cambourne North	On-site / venue-linked	Priority, especially film / media / production	Link to Cambourne Village College Theatre	Consider through wider growth needs
Eddington & West Cambridge	Low-cost artist / freelancer space	Priority on-site	Hybrid community / cultural programming	Not a priority
North East Cambridge	Makerspace / creative production	Priority on-site	Creative R&D / education space	Priority on-site
Cambridge East	Creative hub / production	Priority on-site	Community arts centre / learning	Consider through community hub provision
ARU Creative Quarter	Priority for graduates / emerging artists	Priority on-site	Learning / showcase / rehearsal	Not a priority
Beehive Centre	Youth / community creative space	Limited / linked to mixed-use community space	Youth arts and events space	Not a priority
Biomedical Campus	Creative health practitioners	Arts and health workspace	Creative health / community learning	Not a priority

Cambridge Leisure	Complement Cambridge Junction	Priority on-site	Rehearsal / R&D / new media	Not a priority
Civic Quarter	Limited	Limited	Guildhall / civic programming	Not a priority

7.14 Summary Position

- 7.15 The Strategic Growth Areas should not be expected to deliver identical cultural infrastructure in isolation. Instead, each area should contribute to a balanced Greater Cambridge cultural infrastructure network. That means:
- New communities should prioritise local cultural hubs, creative workspace, outdoor event infrastructure and flexible community-facing facilities.
 - Commercial and research campuses should prioritise cultural uses that connect workers, communities and innovation activity.
 - Creative clusters and regeneration areas should protect and intensify existing cultural ecosystems.
 - City centre and civic areas should focus on enhancing major assets, event infrastructure and public realm.
 - Rural and semi-rural areas should strengthen existing community, heritage, nature and social infrastructure as places where culture can happen.
- 7.16 The use of the Arts Council England benchmark demonstrates that cultural infrastructure need across Strategic Growth Areas is substantial when considered at whole-place scale. However, delivery should be proportionate and phased. Developer contributions should therefore be used to help assemble the cultural infrastructure network required over time, combining direct provision, off-site contributions, enhancement of existing assets, public realm infrastructure, meanwhile uses, programming and long-term management.
- 7.17 This approach ensures that developer contributions are not simply captured as generic community benefits, but directed toward a coherent, place-specific and evidence-led cultural infrastructure system for Greater Cambridge.

8. Appendix: Overview of Cultural Infrastructure Typologies

Cultural infrastructure encompasses the buildings, spaces and places where culture is experienced, produced and embedded within everyday life. This includes not only formal venues, but also the wider ecosystem of spaces that enable cultural activity to take place - from rehearsal studios and workspaces to public realm and supporting commercial uses.

As set out in cultural infrastructure planning practice, these assets typically operate across a spectrum of cultural consumption, cultural production and supporting place-based infrastructure, often overlapping in function and use.

To support a comprehensive understanding of provision and need, cultural infrastructure is organised into the following typologies:

Cultural Performance

Spaces primarily designed for the presentation and live experience of cultural activity, forming a key part of the visitor economy, night-time economy and civic identity.

This includes:

- Theatres (producing and receiving houses).
- Concert halls and recital spaces.
- Dance venues and performance studios with audience capacity.
- Live music venues (grassroots venues to large-scale arenas).
- Nightclubs and late-night cultural venues.
- Cinemas (multiplex, independent and community cinemas).
- Outdoor performance spaces (amphitheaters, festival stages, temporary event infrastructure).
- Multi-purpose performance venues (flexible black box spaces, cultural centres).
- Comedy venues and spoken word spaces.

These spaces are critical to cultural visibility, audience development and economic activity, and often act as anchors within town centres and cultural districts.

Cultural Presentation

Spaces focused on the exhibition, interpretation and dissemination of cultural content, supporting heritage, learning and cultural tourism.

This includes:

- Museums (local, regional, national and specialist).
- Galleries (public, private and commercial).

-
- Exhibition spaces (temporary, pop-up and meanwhile spaces).
 - Heritage sites and historic buildings open to the public.
 - Archives and collections spaces (including publicly accessible archives).
 - Libraries and cultural learning centres.
 - Interpretation centres and visitor centres.
 - Digital and immersive exhibition spaces (AR/VR, projection-based environments).

These typologies play a key role in storytelling, identity and cultural education, often bridging past, present and future narratives of place.

Cultural Production, Learning & Community Creativity

Spaces that support the creation, development and participation in cultural activity and forming the foundation of a sustainable cultural ecosystem.

This includes:

- Artist studios (individual and shared).
- Music studios (recording, production and DJ studios).
- Film and media studios (production, editing, post-production).
- Photography studios and digital content labs.
- Craft and maker spaces (including fabrication labs, workshops, print studios).
- Rehearsal spaces (dance, theatre, music).
- Creative incubators and accelerator spaces.
- Affordable creative workspace (co-working, shared offices for creative SMEs).
- Community arts centres and cultural hubs.
- Youth arts spaces and informal learning environments.
- Education and training facilities linked to creative industries (FE/HE, specialist academies).
- Technical production facilities (set-building, costume, lighting workshops).
- Storage and archive space for creative practice.

These spaces are essential because cultural production underpins all cultural consumption - without space to make work, cultural ecosystems cannot function. They also play a crucial role in talent development and skills pathways, local economic growth and job creation and community participation & co-creation.

Placemaking

A broader category recognising that culture is not confined to designated venues but is embedded within the wider built environment and public life of a place.

This includes:

- Public art (permanent, temporary and digital installations).
- Artist residencies embedded in developments or institutions.
- Cultural meanwhile uses (temporary activation of vacant spaces).
- Festivals, events and programmed activity in public spaces.
- Parks, landscapes and green/blue infrastructure used for cultural activity.
- Civic and community spaces (community centres, town halls, faith spaces used for culture).
- High streets and town centres as cultural corridors.
- Cultural uses within mixed-use developments (ground floor cultural space, integrated venues).
- Creative use of infrastructure (bridges, stations, transport hubs as cultural sites).
- Night-time economy infrastructure (bars, pubs, late venues supporting cultural activity).
- Informal and grassroots cultural spaces (LGBTQ+ venues, social clubs, grassroots music spaces).

These elements are vital in creating a network of accessible, everyday cultural spaces, ensuring that culture is integrated into daily life rather than experienced only in destination venues.

Positioning Across the Cultural Ecosystem

While presented as distinct typologies, these categories are highly interdependent. A resilient cultural ecosystem requires:

- A strong pipeline from production to presentation.
- A mix of formal and informal spaces.
- Integration of culture into wider placemaking and development.

Many spaces will operate across multiple typologies - for example:

- A cultural hub combining studios, exhibition and performance spaces.
- A public space hosting festivals and temporary installations.
- A library functioning as a learning, exhibition and community venue.

This framework enables a more nuanced understanding of:

-
- Gaps in provision.
 - Opportunities for co-location and multi-functionality.
 - How culture can be embedded systemically within place.