Appendix 5: Report on Autumn 2020 stakeholder workshops

1. Aims and objectives

Interim evidence base findings were published in autumn 2020 and we held a series of stakeholder workshops, similar to those held in 2019 prior to the First Conversation consultation, to explore the findings and understand the views of different interest groups.

The six stakeholder workshops enabled us to openly and transparently share with our stakeholder communities, at an early stage as it has come forward, initial evidence base documentation which has been commissioned to help inform and shape the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The publication of these 17 initial evidence base documents, via our GCSPS website Document Library, has helped to facilitate greater awareness with and involvement of our communities in the development of our Local Plan.

The online stakeholder workshop format enabled key stakeholder communities to explore and feedback to GCSPS key lines of enquiry in relation to the evidence base assessments of growth and strategic spatial options for development, at a level of detail not possible through alternative online methods during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 2.2 provides detail in relation to the methodology underpinning delivery of the stakeholder workshops and Section 3 presents a summary analysis of the key lines of enquiry in relation to growth and strategic spatial options fed back during each of the 6 stakeholder workshops.

2.2. Methodology

2.2.1 Identifying stakeholders

Stakeholder workshop communities were identified in the following ways:

- Former engagement in the plan-making process

- Stakeholders had also signed up to be kept informed and involved via our Contact Form or have requested to be involved via email or in writing.

2.2.2 Communicating the evidence base findings

Stakeholders were emailed links to the 17 published evidence base documents and a summary report on the GCSPS website Document Library two weeks in advance of the workshops.

2.2.3 Workshop support - presentation

A summary PowerPoint overview was presented at each workshop setting out:

- the background context to the plan-making process for the Local Plan
- the minimum, medium and maximum housing, and job growth forecasts
- the eight strategic spatial options assessed by the evidence base documents.

Links to the PowerPoint slides available on the GCSPS website were subsequently emailed to all workshop attendees.

2.2.4 Workshop support – facilitated breakout sessions

Attendees at each of the six workshops were supported by facilitators and notetakers in breakout rooms of up to 10 participants. The notes taken from the breakout room sessions inform the analysis within this Summary Report.

Workshops were two hours in duration, with two separate breakout sessions in each workshop, each lasting 20 minutes. The following prompts were provided to breakout session participants to help facilitate discussion:

Breakout session 1 – prompts (growth levels)

- What are the opportunities and challenges of each of the minimum, medium and maximum growth options?
- Should housing keep pace with jobs growth? What are the implications if it does not?

- How to balance the cost of ambitious ‘net zero’ policies and the opportunities they give us to enable more growth at a lower carbon cost?
- What kind of mix of homes should we be providing – balancing affordable homes, build to rent, self-build/custom build, Gypsy and Traveller sites, and conventional market sale homes?
- How to balance creating development that lessens carbon emissions, with creating a variety of types of homes for different lifestyles?
- How should the issues around water affect the level of growth we plan for?

Breakout session 2 – prompts (strategic spatial options)

- What issues should be prioritised when considering the spatial approach?
- How to balance density versus land take?
- How should development in villages be planned, balancing the desire to sustain village community wellbeing, services, and local employment, with reducing carbon emissions?
- What are the priorities regarding the Green Belt in relation to carbon reduction?

2.2.5 Workshop attendees

In total, 300 stakeholders attended the workshops:

- Workshop 1: Members (City and SCDC)
    - 6 facilitated breakout rooms (12 breakout sessions)
    - 60 attendees
- Workshop 2: Parish Councils and Residents Associations
    - 6 facilitated breakout rooms (12 breakout sessions)
    - 60 attendees
- Workshop 3: Senior Officers (City and SCDC)
    - 4 facilitated breakout rooms (8 breakout sessions)
    - 40 attendees
- Workshop 4: Statutory Consultees and Third Sector
    - 6 facilitated breakout rooms (12 breakout sessions)
    - 40 attendees

- Workshop 5: Developers and Agents
    - 6 facilitated breakout rooms (12 breakout sessions)
    - 60 attendees
- Workshop 6: Businesses
    - 2 facilitated breakout rooms (4 breakout sessions)
    - 20 attendees

In addition to a dedicated workshop for elected City and South Cambridgeshire District Council members, Joint Local Plan Advisory Group (JLPAG) elected members were invited to attend each of the five further workshops alongside stakeholders.

3.0 Workshop findings

Sections 3.1 to 3.6 below, capture the feedback from each stakeholder workshop in relation to growth and strategic spatial options.

3.1 Members workshop

Growth

- Members put forward a range of views regarding growth and development.
- Relationship between jobs growth and housing growth needed to be considered when exploring housing growth options.
- Greater Cambridgeshire is an area with significant historic and forecast jobs growth and is recognised regionally/nationally/internationally as a centre of excellence in specific sectors. There is a responsibility to support the economy and therefore the associated housing needed by workers.
- Need to understand the impacts of COVID-19, Brexit and a possible recession.
- Discussion focussed on how possible negative impacts associated with increased local jobs growth, such as increases in commuting-related carbon emissions and damage to the climate may be mitigated by increased local housing supply. Concern was raised that the job-related housing growth options would not resolve these environmental issues, as much of the increased housing supply would be not be affordable to local workers, who would still need to commute from further afield.
- Discussion considered how the findings of the initial water study published and implications for local biodiversity impact on whether the housing growth options are justifiable. Members fed back that the maximum growth option does not currently appear possible (particularly with reference to the term deal breaker referenced in the water study). Members highlighted that timing around resolution of water issues is key to determining housing growth options, that the appropriate water infrastructure needs to be in place and that government should be petitioned to help achieve this.

Spatial options

Members put forward a range of views on the spatial options:

- **Densification**
- Densification provided benefits where jobs and homes are closely located, however, COVID-19 has highlighted a need for more garden spaces and thus more land. Concerns were raised that densification will impact on the character of the city and that too much density will not be sustainable.
- **Edge of Cambridge**
- There was support for development on the edge of Cambridge where it is accompanied by sustainable infrastructure.
- Support for a focus on North East Cambridge and the airport site where real communities can be created with sustainable transport links.
- **Green Belt**
- The role of the Green Belt was highlighted in preventing flooding and protecting the character and setting of the historic city and concerns that development would result in the unrestrained expansion of Cambridge.
- Views also considered the relationship between carbon and the Green Belt and whether the City should stay as a compact city or whether we should reconsider to meet our climate change targets.
- There was some reference to development of Green Belt for keeping green space around homes if it would avoid over densifying.
- **New settlements**
- The idea of Garden Cities as new towns was discussed, and whether firms want a 'prestigious' CB City post code.
- It was discussed that strategic sites take a long time to come forward along with the required infrastructure.
- Members discussed that new settlements and potential carbon impacts.
- The need to plan transport investment now to deliver housing needs for new settlement growth was discussed.
- **Villages**
- Members held mixed views on development in villages, including wishes to preserve the rural character of villages, views that larger

villages cannot accommodate more growth, and concerns with maintaining the identity of village areas and the massing of new development, as well as for heights of new developments in rural village areas.

- It was recognised some villages would welcome development which could help with social infrastructure and social sustainability, with ageing populations requiring appropriate housing and young people not being able to afford to stay in the area where they grew up.
- There was some support for more housing where employment opportunities exist in villages.
- The need to facilitate village amenities was discussed including more shops, pubs, job opportunities and sustainable public transport links.
- Village interconnectivity, including footpaths and cycle links, was considered important and the need to reduce car usage as some villages need to travel to avail of facilities.
- **Public transport corridors**
- The A1307 corridor, A505 corridor dualling of A428 corridor and the coming of the railway, and OxCam Arc were mentioned as considerations.
- **Cluster (integrating jobs and homes)**
- It was welcomed that the spatial options took the idea of clustering into account with close location of jobs and housing.
- The example of model villages for their workers was discussed and that local businesses could think about making housing provision for their workers.
- There was discussion around the disconnect between the major employment sites in south of the area and new settlements emerging in the north of the area.
- There were views that there could be more opportunities to develop in where major investment was taking place in the A428, Cambourne and Northstowe.
- **Additional comments on spatial options**

- There was concern about water supply and that new water may likely come from the north or west, so major new development should also be in these areas.
- Discussion focused on issues with the availability of, public usage of and types of public transport available for both urban and rural areas and how this needs to align with development.
- There were concerns that infrastructure needs to be available.
- Discussion took place on timing and that spatial options should allow for development and infrastructure to be in place quickly, however, it was believed this is often outside of the Councils' control.
- Generally, it was agreed that the First Conversation consultation big themes should help shape where we build and that there needs to be a healthy balance to allow for good quality of life and wellbeing.

3.2 Parish Council and Residents Association workshop

Growth

- There were mixed comments in relation to jobs and housing growth.
- There was some general support for growth, though major issues such as COVID-19, with people working from home, could likely create new patterns of commuting and a reduced need for employees to live close to Cambridge, resulting in subdued need for housing growth to accompany jobs growth. This and the impact Brexit could have on business, may require figures for housing and employment needs to be revised.
- Concerns were also expressed about growth levels, particularly the maximum. Some considered minimum growth levels being too low over 20 years, maximum growth levels too high, and that the medium growth levels appeared achievable without significantly compromising on key areas such as zero carbon and water supply.
- There was discussion around whether jobs and economic growth needed to centre on Cambridge or whether jobs growth could centre on other locations such as a newly created 'tech Fen' instead – leading to wealth, housing and jobs.

- Participants discussed the need to manage job growth and people commuting to work and the requirement to minimise travel, and encourage use of public transport and cycling, both in urban and rural areas.
- Transport, carbon footprint, biodiversity and the environment were all discussed as important considerations.
- Growth would need to be accompanied by significant investment in infrastructure, green infrastructure, and protection of green spaces.
- Supply of power/energy infrastructure (not just water) was also a concern. It was mentioned that the Grid is at capacity and with electrification of heat and transport this will become more of an issue.

Spatial options

- There was discussion generally about the need for a mixture of all spatial options, with elements of all options to be deliverable, with integrated and mixed-use development (key for villages and the city equally).
- The idea of aligning jobs with housing, rather than aligning housing with jobs was discussed.
- **Densification**
- There was concern that densification will cause overheating and water shortages in areas such as North East Cambridge, and that height creep is an issue with densification generally in all areas. There was a view that high density developments are not suitable for small villages and that high density is for larger towns. Caution was raised about over-densification and that creation of low-rise areas rather than blocks of flats was preferable. It was mentioned that job creation in some locations has led to densification problems.
- **Edge of Cambridge**
- There were mixed views in relation to development on the edge of Cambridge, with some concerns around further substantial development of the city edge and the Green Belt. There was discussion that Cambridge Airport was a sustainable location.
- **Green Belt**

- Importance of protecting and enhancing the Green Belt was highlighted by many, as it is important to protect in order to preserve the environment, green spaces, green corridors and lifestyles.
- The benefits of short distances into city from the Green Belt was also discussed and the need for the Local Plan to create a balance between competing issues.
- Some support was raised for building into the Green Belt, and that this would need to be mitigated by improved public transport connections to disperse commuter congestion.
- It was held that open space is critical to society and that it was not clear how or when the outputs of the Green Infrastructure Strategy evidence base will feed into the work on spatial options and growth scenarios.
- **Villages**
- There was concern that villages close to Cambridge will lose their character and that scattering small amounts of development through villages would not help develop the required village infrastructure.
- Views were held that villages could take more development but only if accompanied by improvements to bus and transport links as well as water and drainage infrastructure. Development in villages should be sustainable as some isolated areas lack growth, and there is a need to provide shops, amenities, and schools.
- Discussion took place in relation to the advantages of a larger critical mass of housing for villages to support services.
- The question arose of whether the assumptions of the evidence base that transport emissions associated with villages are as high as suggested.
- **New settlements**
- There was discussion that big new settlements should provide for jobs to reduce commuting and that new settlements, such as Cambourne, have struggled to attract employers and are not necessarily self-sustaining (with a lot of Cambourne residents working in Cambridge).
- **Clusters (integrating jobs and housing)**
- There was some support for cluster development close to Cambridge with south east better than west.

- **Public transport corridors**
- Discussion took place around the possible impact of East West Rail, the OxCam Arc, Greater Cambridge Partnership projects, Cambridge Autonomous Metro and the dualling of the A428. There was discussion that the northern route could be positive in the context of the East West Rail proposals. Concern was raised about Cambourne being close to existing routes, that it is becoming too big.
- **Additional comments on spatial options**
- Concerns were raised around water, climate change, carbon, biodiversity, sustainability, and infrastructure when considering spatial options.
- In relation to water, there was concern that it will be too late for a planning inspector to examine the implications by the time water companies provide information in 2023.
- Transport was discussed in depth, with transport planning considered key to the spatial options strategy. Discussion was held that it would be useful to have an overlay of where employment opportunities are located and how this relates to housing and commuting/transport planning.
- Comments were raised that the Transport Study needs to recognise the link between where people live, work and the role of commuting (with the view that it currently takes an overly simplistic view) and it was questioned whether 2030 is the right year for the modelling transport emissions, or should we be looking to 2035 or 2040.
- It was discussed that electrification of the fleet may help to reduce carbon impacts and lessen the pressure of development on the Green Belt.
- It was viewed that there is a ‘Chicken and egg’ scenario with the planning of new settlements and proposed new transport routes.

3.3 Senior Officers workshop

Growth

- Comments included feedback that the minimum, medium, and maximum growth scenarios, should be looked at regarding the physical constraints, i.e., climate change, sustainability, biodiversity etc. and that climate change may be harder to address under a maximum growth scenario.

- Issues around growth scenarios were discussed, including the issues of not planning for sufficient development to meet needs.
- Evidence needed to be kept up to date in light of Covid and other issues.
- It was discussed there is currently no degree of certainty post COVID-19 on people's employment, lifestyles, opportunities etc.
- It was thought that COVID-19 means people are now not moving to be nearer jobs, therefore housing could be in one location, with people living further away as work can (mostly) be done virtually/remotely. Following COVID-19 the employment/housing link could be a lot weaker thereby impacting on housing requirements in Greater Cambridge.
- There was discussion that it is not always easy to locate jobs in new developments – e.g. Cambourne and that Greater Cambridge needs better infrastructure to allow people to move around as many people will not live and work in the same place.
- Think around growth in a networked way rather than individual transport (cars), such as 15-minute cities and that putting people closer to city reduces transport infrastructure needs.
- The link between travel/transport and carbon emissions was recognised along with the affordability of new housing - workers will still need to commute if they cannot afford housing close to work.
- It was discussed that not everyone works in the city. There are jobs all over the Local Plan area – a complex ecosystem – which means we need homes in different areas.
- Certain issues related to growth, e.g. water, were discussed as being bigger than Greater Cambridge and that government needs to provide clearer direction. It was discussed that we need to keep planning for major infrastructure (water etc) but macroeconomic information is just unknown.
- There were insights from specific areas of officer expertise, such as commercial waste, with ideas that revenue generated from growth could be invested in new innovative technology for waste disposal systems.
- It was mentioned that the demand for electricity is likely to quadruple and that we should perhaps be planning for decentralisation of energy supply.

Spatial options

- A spatial mix of places is probably the answer and that there are no easy choices and it will be a hybrid.
- It was discussed that the best places to live are those within easy (10-15 min) walking distance of local services i.e., shop, pub, GP, childcare services. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this into focus.
- **Densification**
- It was perceived that density mean different things to different people and different communities.
- Discussion looked at densification and achievement of the net zero carbon agenda. It was mentioned there are no ground source heat pumps opportunities, but that there are emerging low carbon communities which are high density and friendly and that a low carbon ethos encourages people to make connections.
- Housing colleagues stressed the current demand for one-bedroom units, which outstrips demand for larger units, which would favour densification scenario.
- It was discussed that densities range in all settlements, even in villages and that improved public transport links into the City and major employment sites would be crucial if an urban densification option is not progressed.
- Historic environment and retention of the historic core and keeping Cambridge as an attractive place to live so as not to fundamentally change the character of a place for existing (and new) residents, was mentioned as important.
- **New settlements**
- It was discussed that it could be more difficult to build a sense of community in new settlements when starting from scratch and that it is not always easy to locate jobs in new developments. Cambourne was cited as a new settlement where many people do not live and work in the same place and that better transport infrastructure is needed for new settlements from the outset. Cambourne was cited as an example of where local facilities are slowly improving; but that there were issues for early residents.

- There was support however for additional new settlements, as from the start they could be planned as sustainable and a reasonable size for services there and that Greater Cambridge we are now better at these having learned from experience.
- **Villages**
- It was discussed that development in villages should not be ruled out to sustain local communities and that villages need to accommodate some growth to maintain services. It was mentioned that with home working and electronic vehicles there is a place for growth in villages and that development of villages is good for affordability and allows people to remain in communities.
- The idea of clustered villages was discussed to sustain services collectively as well as for villages near to Cambridge accessing edge of city facilities. It was mentioned this approach depends on good transport links between the villages to support the carbon agenda.
- Historic Environment was discussed as being part of the whole equation of sustainability and that villages typically have historic cores which are protected, and many have already grown beyond their cores. The need to consider landscape impact and the identify of villages which are bound up in landscape was discussed.
- **Edge of Cambridge**
- There was discussion of the benefits of the site opportunities that did not require green belt release.
- **Green Belt**
- There was discussion that the Green Belt spatial option, and acknowledgement of its importance. If it was needed it would depend on optimal social and transport links.

3.4 Statutory Consultees and Third Sector workshop

Growth

Statutory consultees and third sector participants held a range of views in relation to growth:

- Some support for minimum growth given the climate emergency, net zero carbon ambitions and the possible impacts of COVID-19, with commuting no longer essential for remote workers, especially in the Cambridge context of a strong knowledge economy.
- It was mentioned that both Councils have signed up to produce a Sustainable Local Plan and therefore the lower growth option could be justified.
- Discussion also included the view that the minimum level of growth does not address affordability concerns. Many people are not able to live close enough to the office in Cambridge to meet carbon ambitions affected by transport and commuting.
- Some considered development should be diverted to other employment opportunities to Peterborough and other parts of East Anglia to boost other local economies. It was also highlighted that if less employment is accepted, companies may decide to locate abroad rather than in the UK.
- Concern was raised about the impact upon neighbouring districts, such as Fenland, if the maximum growth option was selected. It was mentioned that there is a need to work across boundaries generally in developing the Local Plan.
- Water supply was discussed as an issue to growth and that moving water from other parts of the country is expensive and not sustainable in terms of energy required to transport the water.

Spatial options

- **Densification**
- Some support for the densification spatial option and for growth to focus on East Cambridge.
- It was discussed that the densification option, along with a mix of windfall sites in the larger villages, seemed reasonable. It was mentioned that the restructuring of the High Street following COVID-19 will also provide opportunities to increase urban open spaces and/or opportunities for additional housing.

- With densification of urban areas, thought should be given about the type of housing available and the role of the public sector in releasing land for increased affordable housing.
- It was discussed that areas such as London seeing a huge demand for people wanting to leave dense urban areas to move to areas with more outdoor space (private), particularly as people are now only having to commute one or two days a week.
- Support for the densification option in Cambridge; however was countered with concern about the cumulative effect of adding 'just one storey'/'just a bit larger' approach of last 20 years or so, with each site in isolation having a minor impact on historic character – but over time this has been detrimental. The need to look at ways to increase residential density in a good way without impacting the historic environment was discussed, looking at the work of Historic England. The location of high buildings can have a significant impact on historic character.
- **Villages**
- There was some favour for re-use of farm/agricultural buildings in rural/village locations for local employment i.e. Melbourn Science Park to avoid concentrating jobs in the City. It was suggested policies could be relaxed in this regard along with improved broadband for such developments and that farm-based employment schemes can provide cheaper rents for 'start-up' companies compared to other Science Parks.
- There were views however that farm-based development in rural locations are not sustainable and rely on car journeys and that employment sites need to be accessible by public transport and by cycling/walking.
- There was discussion that development in villages can be positive, but the challenge is education provision. School sites can be restrained, there may be no room for expansion, some schools are at capacity and there may not be enough pupils to make it sustainable.
- **New settlements**
- It was suggested that rather than have one large 9,000 population settlement there could be 2 x 4,500 settlements. These would still be large enough for critical mass for many services such as a school.

- **Green Belt**
- It was discussed that building on Green Belt can promote a socially sustainable approach and reduce commuter travel, but green spaces are extremely good for wellbeing and that consideration of Green Belt for development is a difficult one and not popular with people living close by.
- It was mentioned there needs to be further discussion around issues of affordability in relation to Green Belt.
- **Public transport corridors**
- There was comment that the public transport corridors options were not considered to align with the sustainability data which states that villages are far less sustainable for future growth than other spatial options.
- The forthcoming East West Rail was thought to be an opportunity to allow for sustainable commuting patterns and it was suggestion a ninth spatial option could focus on growth to the north of the city as this is where the infrastructure is/will be and could sustain growth over a longer period than the south.
- **Additional spatial options considerations**
- There was discussion that the Local Plan should be vision led and look at the opportunities from different spatial options, for example improved infrastructure to areas which are under served, rather than be driven by the pros and cons of each option.
- There was general agreement that net zero carbon makes any spatial scenario challenging.
- There was discussion around the need to decide on, and stick to, a primary focus for the plan; possibly minimising carbon, and to then to look at how much land is available for development in the right places. It was discussed that a blended approach might likely be best taken.

3.5 Developers and Agents workshop

Growth

- Developers and Agents discussed the importance of supporting the economic potential of the sub-region. There was some opinion that the

standard method is flawed and will not realise the potential of the area. There was agreement that growth forecasting must be based on jobs.

- It was mentioned that growth in life sciences continues to increase both across start-ups and ‘grow-ons’ and that the council should plan for more growth.
- The impact of COVID-19 was discussed and that only 24% of people have been working from home during the pandemic. There was thought to be a clear range between minimum to maximum growth and that the minimum requirement is quite low.
- It was considered that the economy is moving faster than the housing market and there is a challenge to capture the economic activity before it goes elsewhere. It was thought possible to look to high levels of growth with Cambridge a hub for biomedical research and that success in the development of vaccine will lead to continued significant growth in this area, leading to demand for additional housing.
- There was discussion that the maximum growth option does not achieve the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) doubling gross value added (GVA) scenario and that this should be tested as it may be raised at examination. It was mentioned that consideration of forecasting in the issues and options responses and testing of these should take place, as the organisations who submit responses may be likely to challenge at examination. It was suggested that doubling of Gross Value Added (GVA), even if deemed not deliverable, should be tested to ascertain what constrains it.
- There was discussion that the evidence on industrial use land and the extant Local Plans do not support jobs going outside the area, and a view that a balance should be found within the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority area.
- It was considered there is more work to be done to understand the growth levels and the challenges/opportunities.
- There was discussion about the benefit of growth in providing infrastructure and that without further development, which will bring new water infrastructure, there will be continued pressure on the chalk aquifer. It was

mentioned that agriculture relies on private water supplies and that if there is further pressure for residential water the licences for agricultural use will not be extended.

- The need to undertake viability work was discussed, to understand the increased costs of delivering net zero carbon development for both delivering infrastructure as it moves away from fossil fuels and at an individual housing development. It was discussed that net zero carbon can be easily achieved in concentrated developments options (in urban settings and new settlements) both through new models of modern construction and in the scale of the development opportunities provided, but that delivery of zero carbon infrastructure will be a challenge in delivering an ambitious growth proposal. The length of development time for the A14 and East West Rail were cited as examples.
- The financial mechanism capturing local off-setting to achieve net zero carbon development for a scheme at Addenbrookes was discussed as a possible vehicle to support net zero development. Initiatives such as local energy companies set up by Planning Authorities and use of a roof tax to invest in zero carbon project / carbon offsetting projects were discussed as potential projects to help reduce carbon emissions and reduce fuel poverty locally. The benefits of looking for examples around the UK was discussed.
- There was discussion around delivery rates and that historical delivery rates should not be relied on for future growth. Reference was made to the Lichfields Report appearing hesitant to push the limits. It was discussed that delivery rates could be much higher in the City than settlements such as Cambourne and that Private Rental Sector Schemes could deliver 100s units very quickly. It was discussed that top and bottom [age groups] of the market need to be catered for and that it would be beneficial to builders and developers to not to have a top-heavy strategy to deliver in a timely manner, that there are innovative building techniques which can be used but it is important to see what land is available coming forward.

Spatial options

- Some participants believed that no single spatial option would work and that a range of options would need to be selected. It was discussed that a combination option (dispersed allocations) would help avoid market absorption issues and improve delivery. There was comment that distributing growth is a better way to achieve it, as it spreads the risks of permissions, delivery and there is plenty of commercial land to attract people/businesses to different parts of Greater Cambridge.
- It was thought that large sites including the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan and Marshalls have the potential to deliver huge amount of the target and leave a small amount of additional growth and that the Local Plan needs to do a bit of everything; in Cambridge, the Green Belt, new settlements and in villages.
- **Densification**
- It was commented that there is higher densification closer to transport hubs and that high densification can be good but open space is also relevant. It was mentioned that densification risks green space being lost in urban areas and that Cambridge cannot deliver higher density.
- There was discussion around the tension for demand for bigger houses with more outdoor space due to increased homeworking and the idea of densification. North East Cambridge was cited as an example of where developers thought there may be likely demand for family housing.
- In relation to North East Cambridge, it was mentioned that the Science Park is under pressure to meet the trip budgets that the Area Action Plan is proposing, and that infrastructure needs to be in place to deliver this, but that densification will make it easier to deliver 5-8K developments with amenity and other facilities. The challenges of delivering facilities with a dispersal spatial strategy was mentioned.
- The potential for densification at Eddington was raised.
- **Villages**
- There was general sentiment that villages are in decline and there is a need to deliver some growth. Discussion considered that some villages are more sustainable then others depending on the current services available

and their proximity to Cambridge. It was mentioned that development in villages can ensure that schools remain open.

- There was discussion around some villages being at a tipping point, with no sales, residents getting older, no vibrancy, growth, schools, or community centre. It was considered that some villages can see the benefits of change leading to stronger communities and that brave decisions are needed.
- It was discussed that villages should be considered independently rather than categorised into one spatial option considered the least sustainable, with a blended approach to villages, looking at each individual village to see what is right for it. It was mentioned that village frameworks can hamper growth and that allowing self-build schemes on the edge of villages outside the village framework may be beneficial.
- There was a query about the Housing Statistical Information Sheet that was last published by the Council in 2018, which detailed the affordable housing needed in each village and how reinstatement of this could be a good way to demonstrate the benefit of development to village residents, with developments of larger developments (20+).
- It was discussed that in South Cambridgeshire there are village sites and good growth areas and an appetite for community land trusts in some villages.
- The opportunity to create sub-regions where villages focus as cohesive group was discussed, along with the benefits for primary schools and healthcare and the merits of creating a village style in a bigger development, clustering villages together to help combat closure of schools. It was thought village development, where not piecemeal, will support bus services and there was some discussion around how doubling a village's size could make it more sustainable, e.g. at Orwell, where no growth is planned but it was questioned how they will continue to exist.
- **Green Belt**
- Views ranged from the Green Belt being considered an 'outdated designation', to the need to look at why some areas are Green Belt and that biodiversity is important, to comments that the Green Belt is meant to be open in perpetuity but could benefit from development in some locations.

- It was discussed that we should not be afraid to look at the Green Belt again as there are sustainability and carbon gains from developing the Green Belt in the right locations.
- It was mentioned that the Green Belt has less contamination issues and can provide a good supply of affordable housing compared to other sites.
- Discussion considered how rapid transport options could unlock Green Belt more easily or facilitate their release.
- It was believed there are still some opportunities with Green Belt, but it will require a balanced portfolio of different spatial options
- **New settlements**
- It was discussed that new settlements provide an opportunity to do something different and that sites need to be carefully selected to benefit from existing infrastructure, as affordable housing contributions risk being reduced to fund infrastructure.
- It was mentioned that new settlements perform as well as urban extensions 'consuming their own smoke' but that people still want to travel for work and socialising.
- Discussion considered how a lot of employment growth has been put into new settlements, such as Cambourne, previously, however new employers want to be in Cambridge, not on the edge of a housing estate. It was mentioned how in previous situations, (Uttlesford and another Local Authorities), there have been new settlements which did not work, and the projects were stopped.
- **Public transport corridors**
- It was discussed how it was important to bring housing to employment locations and not exclusively to transport corridors. There was a realisation that to do this there will need to be infrastructure invested in these areas and this needs to be in place before housing if possible. It was discussed that the east of Cambridge has not historically taken growth so it may have infrastructure capacity and that Network Rail are looking to create capacity in the Newmarket-Cambridge rail line.
- **Clusters**

- There was discussion of the benefit of collocating houses near employment clusters and that residents would be willing to cycle or walk to work, with excellent benefits for zero carbon emissions.
- It was discussed that the piecemeal development south east of the City will not provide new infrastructure.

3.6 Business Sector workshop

Growth

- Business sector participants raised questions about the relationship between the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) and the GL Hearn evidence base study. Reference was made to the data due to be published in February 2021 by Cambridge University in relation to growth in Cambridge including the spatial impacts, which was predicted to show fast growth has continued beyond the data assessed by GL Hearn.
- It was questioned whether consideration should be given to the implications of growth greater than the figures projected, which could be detrimental to the character of Cambridge and the economy.
- The growth relationship between jobs and homes was also questioned, with comments that people buy homes based on lifestyle, social elements and long-term decisions and not just for jobs (particularly if they move jobs often).

Spatial options

- Discussion generally focused on the need to optimise the balance between sustainability, carbon reduction and transport numbers/commuter patterns.
- **Densification**
- There was support for the densification spatial option benefits of allowing for walkable/accessible food and efficient deliveries in densely populated locations and discussion around whether densification could take place through development forms other than high rise tower blocks. Great Kneighton was cited as a good example of lower level (3 storey) high density development.

- **Villages**
- The issue of village sustainability was discussed as being important and the need to review each village in terms of services, access to transport corridors and other criteria to work out the best option for each village.
- It was mentioned that rural businesses are changing in response to COVID-19 and that there is likely to be a growth in online activity with less demand for retail space. Small business owners may need bigger homes to work from.
- The importance to the rural economy of SMEs and micro-businesses was mentioned.
- **Green Belt**
- Discussion took place that people value open green space and that the Green Belt has helped to keep Cambridge compact. Discussion also considered that some people are put off Cambridge by the congestion and cost of living and that allowing some development in the Green Belt could ease pressures. It was also discussed that the Cambridge Green Belt provides limited access to the public, with much of it used as agricultural land. New development in some parts of the Green Belt could help to open other parts of it to the public.
- **Edge of Cambridge**
- It was discussed that development of housing in areas such as the edge of Cambridge, with access to biggest range of opportunities could be beneficial.
- **Public transport corridors**
- There was discussion around companies historically moving into Greater Cambridge and locating to the east and south east and only more recently considering the west of the area. It was mentioned that relocations to the west are starting pick up and the Ox-Cam Arc will encourage this over time.
- Participants mentioned that Cambridge has a good motorway network around it and that public transport corridors should be maximised to connect jobs and housing. There was support that spatial planning should ultimately be employment led. It was discussed that Cambourne has taken

a long time to attract employment and was planned to be self-contained, but employers have been reluctant to go there.

- There was comment that the southern and eastern side of the Greater Cambridge area are a more logical focus for growth.
- **Clusters (integrating jobs and housing)**
- There was discussion that growth focused on the south and west of the area have attractions if a jobs-led approach is followed.