

D4 HOUSING

OBJECTIVES

- D4/a** To provide an adequate and continuous supply of land for housing to help meet the Structure Plan requirement set out in Policy P9/1;
- D4/b** To provide high quality housing that makes best use of land with higher densities in locations close to a good range of services and facilities and public transport stops;
- D4/c** To ensure the provision of a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing, to meet the identified needs of all sectors of the community, including key workers.

POLICY CE/10 Cambridge East Housing

Housing Supply

- 1.** Cambridge East will provide an adequate and continuous supply of land for housing for approximately 10,000 to 12,000 dwellings up to and beyond 2016.
- 2.** Phase 1 north of Newmarket Road will provide approximately 1,500 to 2,000 dwellings by 2016.

Density

- 3.** At Cambridge East a range of densities will be provided following a design-led approach, including higher densities in and around the District Centre, Local Centres and at public transport stops, and lower densities on sensitive outer edges of the urban quarter particularly close to villages where building heights will be restricted. Subject to the design-led approach and the need to provide a full range of house types, the average net site density across the urban quarter will be at least 50 dwellings per hectare, but development will aim to achieve an average net housing density in the order of 75 dwellings per hectare.

House Types and Quality

- 4.** There will be variety in the housing types provided at Cambridge East to offer choice. It will require imaginative and high quality developments which include apartments in the more accessible locations and close to services and facilities, town houses, terraced housing and family housing in forms which embrace the

move towards more sustainable ways of living and will include a significant proportion of smaller homes.

Affordable Housing

- 5. Proposals for housing developments will only be permitted if they provide an agreed mix of affordable housing types, including for key workers, to meet local needs. The amount of affordable housing sought will be approximately 50% of the dwellings for which planning permission may be given on all sites. Account will be taken of any particular costs associated with the development and whether there are other planning objectives which need to be given priority.**
- 6. The occupation of affordable housing will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long term. The appropriate mix in terms of housing tenures and house sizes of affordable housing within a development will be determined in response to identified needs and funding priorities at the time of the development.**
- 7. In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters.**
- 8. Employment development proposals likely to have an impact on the demand for affordable housing in the Cambridge Sub-Region, will be expected to mitigate such impacts by making either:
 - (i) A financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing ~~off-site~~ elsewhere within the urban quarter; or**
 - (ii) A provision of affordable housing on-site.****
- 9. If the employers of staff recognised as key workers can demonstrate that they are providing or contributing to the provision of key worker housing for their staff, this will only satisfy the affordable housing requirement of this policy where the employment development is to be occupied by that employer.**
- 10. In exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that there are insurmountable subsidy issues for the provision of affordable housing at the time of a detailed application, the Councils may negotiate a lower proportion of built affordable housing to be provided on site. This will not apply at the outline planning application stage. Contributions for off-site provision will not be appropriate.**

Housing Supply

- D4.1 Cambridge East will provide an adequate and continuous supply of land for housing for approximately 10,000 to 12,000 dwellings up to and beyond 2016. Phase 1 north of Newmarket Road will provide approximately 1,500 to 2,000 dwellings by 2016 and come forward for development as early as possible in the plan period.

Housing Density

- D4.2 Creating an urban quarter which makes best use of land, minimises the amount of land that will need to be taken for development and which provides a basis for sustainable living where services and facilities are nearby for most of its residents means development at average net densities of at least 50 dwellings per hectare across the urban quarter as a whole must be achieved. However, pursuant to the Structure Plan which requires Cambridge East to be a high density development, the aim should be for an average net density in the order of 75 dwellings per hectare. The approach should be design-led and seek to make the most effective and efficient use of land across the development. The actual densities to be achieved both across the development as a whole and in individual phases and locations will be determined through the masterplans and design guides.
- D4.3 Higher densities will be appropriate in the District and Local Centres and around public transport stops where increased density and scale of buildings will also contribute to the design quality of Cambridge East by providing opportunities for landmark buildings and different character areas.
- D4.4 There will be some areas that are relatively less accessible and where lower densities may be more appropriate and also to provide variety in character and more typical family housing. Housing areas that border the countryside between Cambridge East and the villages of Fen Ditton and Teversham, should also generally be developed at lower densities and in particular with lower building heights in order to help the areas of Green Separation maintain the village character of these two villages

House Types and Quality

- D4.5 One of the keys to the success of Cambridge East will be as much the quality of what is provided as the nature of the uses, services and facilities themselves. High densities do not mean a sacrifice of quality. A high quality of design in both the buildings and the wider environment will be required, and the package of supplementary guidance that will be required will be a key tool in ensuring that high quality is delivered on the ground.
- D4.6 In order to meet the need for smaller dwellings in the area and to respond to the density requirements for the urban quarter, a variety in dwelling types will

need to be provided. This will also help provide interest in the character and design of the town. This will include modern apartments in the District Centre and close to services and facilities and public transport nodes, perhaps in the form of urban squares reflecting the Cambridge College Courts, as well as the imaginative use of town houses, terraces and other forms of high quality but higher density housing types. In the interests of providing a range of housing at Cambridge East, it would also be desirable for land to be made available within the urban quarter for an element of self-build projects.

D4.7 In addition to the affordable housing requirements, including for key workers, the development should provide a proportion of new homes to help meet the needs of other specific groups in accordance with PPG3: Housing and assist with creating a truly sustainable community in the long term, including the following:

- i. "Lifetime homes" – i.e. housing suitable for the elderly and those with mobility problems.
- ii. Retirement homes.
- iii. Students and young single people.

[The District Council will prepare a Travellers' Policy Development Plan Document which will include policies and proposals for the needs of travellers, including site requirements, which may include provision at Cambridge East. It will be informed by a Sub-Regional Travellers' needs survey. The Document is provided for in the Council's Development Plan Scheme.](#)

D4.8 For new homes to meet the needs of current and future residents, it is important that they are designed to a high quality and create an attractive environment that functions well, where people want to live, which meets their needs, and which creates a sense of place where community identity can develop. A key element in ensuring that new homes meet local needs is providing homes which are adaptable to the changing needs of most households.

D4.9 Lifetime homes are those designed to meet the needs of most households, focussing on accessibility and design features that make the home flexible enough to meet whatever comes along in life: a family member with a broken leg, a family member with serious illness, or parents carrying in heavy shopping and dealing with a pushchair. Part M of the Building Regulations cover accessibility and Lifetime Homes features to build-in flexibility to make new homes easy to adapt as peoples' lives change. Lifetime Homes will be suitable for older people (whose numbers are increasing rapidly) and for the vast majority of disabled people, as well as the non-disabled person. Housing for the elderly and those with mobility problems should be located close to facilities and services and designed with the needs of occupants in mind.

Housing Mix

- D4.10 Cambridge East should provide a mix of housing sizes that address the high level of need for smaller 1 and 2 bedroom homes in the Cambridge area, whilst at the same time creating a balanced community for the long term. Affordable housing should be of an appropriate mix to respond to identified needs at the time of the development.

Affordable Housing

- D4.11 A key driver behind the growth area strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region is to help provide more affordable housing in and close to Cambridge having regard to published studies of housing need.
- D4.12 Affordable housing is defined in the Structure Plan as “housing that is in some way subsidised for people who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market”. This definition is consistent with a view of affordable housing as an umbrella term for all types of subsidised housing to meet a variety of needs, including those of key workers. It includes within it:
- (i) **Social rented housing:** housing provided at below market rents at levels controlled by the Housing Corporation, normally provided by Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations);
 - (ii) **Intermediate housing:** housing for those who do not qualify for social rented housing, but whose incomes are such in relation to local housing costs that they are nonetheless not able to access market housing. This includes:
 - (a) **Intermediate rented:** rents are not to exceed 30% of net median household incomes in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire taken as a whole except where provided for specific groups of workers, where they should not exceed 30% of the net median income for the specific group;
 - (b) **Low cost home ownership:** including shared ownership, equity share, and discounted market housing. Costs (mortgage and any rent) are not to exceed 30% of gross median household incomes in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire taken as a whole except where provided for specific groups of workers, where they should not exceed 30% of the gross median household income for that specific group.
 - (iii) **Supported housing:** is a generic term used to include supported housing for all client groups covered by the Supporting People Strategy (including people with physical or other disabilities) who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market. Provision will be considered in the light of identified needs and published strategies.

- D4.13 Affordable housing includes housing for key workers. It is allocated on the basis of need for those who currently live in or are employed in the locality of the site in the public sector and / or who are involved in the care and comfort of the community or as may otherwise be defined by the local authorities in the future. Whilst occupiers of social rented or supported housing could meet the definition of key worker, the term key worker housing is generally used in relation to intermediate housing as defined above.
- D4.14 Such housing will be available to initial and successive occupiers who qualify as Key Workers unless there are no eligible nominees in which case units will be offered to others in housing need from the local authorities' Housing Registers. The relevant proportion of any Key Worker housing will be determined by the local authorities based on evidence of need e.g. Sub-Regional Key Worker Housing Study 2003.
- D4.15 Housing for specific groups of workers other than included in the above definition will be included as affordable housing provided that it is supported by evidence that their employers are facing recruitment and retention difficulties related to housing costs, and that the workers cannot afford to rent or buy suitable housing locally to meet their housing needs.
- D4.16 The availability of housing that is affordable and accessible to those in need is a major and growing issue. Policy P9/2 of the new Structure Plan states that 40% or more of the new housing in the Sub Region will be affordable which will include key worker housing.
- D4.17 Housing Needs Surveys from 2002 identified that there was a combined backlog of housing need of 1,097 households across both Council areas. In addition, a further 2,611 households per annum are falling into housing need. It is also estimated that there will be a supply of affordable housing through re-lets of existing properties of 1,212 units per annum. Advice in the government's best practice guide for assessing net annual need for affordable housing is to spread the backlog over 5 years. The annual combined net affordable housing requirement for the period 2002-2007 is estimated at 1,618 units per annum. The Surveys advise that the best practice guide methodology suggests a target for affordable housing of 66% of all new dwellings (assuming no minimum site size threshold) in South Cambridgeshire and 80% in Cambridge. However, they recommend that in both districts taking account of custom and practice a target of 50% would be justifiable.
- D4.18 The mix in the types of affordable housing appropriate for an individual phase of development, will be considered having regard to the nature of identified need at the time of the development in both districts, the location and scale of the development, and the development economics of the site having regard to the overall infrastructure calls on the development.

D4.19 It is envisaged that the indicative mix of affordable housing appropriate at Cambridge East is likely to be:

1. Approximately 30% social rented; and
2. Approximately 20% intermediate housing, including for Key Workers;

giving a total of 50% affordable housing, unless it can be demonstrated that the local circumstances suggest a different mix would better meet local needs and help achieve a balanced and sustainable community profile.

D4.20 In order to ensure sustainable communities, affordable housing should be of a high quality and integrated with market housing. Affordable housing will be distributed through the development in small groups or clusters. The appropriate size of affordable housing groups or clusters will vary depending on their location within the development, eg. at the District Centre or in a residential neighbourhood, and the type of housing being provided, eg. family housing or apartments.

D4.21 New employment development increases pressure on the housing market, and a lack of suitable affordable housing can lead to recruitment difficulties, unsustainable travel patterns and hinder development and expansion of clusters. Developments will therefore be expected to mitigate these impacts. Employers with local land holdings, which can be developed without a change to policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework, or the Cambridge Local Plan, will be expected to make provision for their own workers on that land before provision can be made elsewhere, unless it can be demonstrated that the land is needed for the core activities of the employer.

D4.22 Guidance on the application of this policy will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Document on affordable housing.

D4.21 The local authorities are mindful of the significant infrastructure requirements of building an urban quarter of the scale of Cambridge East and of the costs associated with business relocation. If there is an issue about whether the development will stand the affordable housing target, that is a matter that needs to be addressed through the planning application process where all the policy calls on the development, together with other development related requirements, can be looked at comprehensively and relative priorities determined.

D4.23 In the exceptional circumstances of insurmountable subsidy issues, alternative approaches to the provision of affordable housing in Cambridge East can be considered. It is appropriate to allow for the provision of a lower proportion of built units on site if exceptional circumstances were demonstrated by way of very clear evidence to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authorities. However, having particular regard to the long period over which the urban quarter will be built, such evidence can only be provided

at the time a detailed planning application comes forward in the light of circumstances pertaining at that time. This policy approach will therefore not apply at the outline planning stage when setting the overall affordable housing requirement.