



# North East Cambridge Area Action Plan

Proposed Submission

Topic Paper: Housing

Greater Cambridge Planning Service

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## Introduction

This topic paper supports and complements the following housing policies included in the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (AAP):

- Policy 11: Housing design standards
- Policy 13a: Housing Provision
- Policy 13b: Affordable housing
- Policy 13c: Build to Rent
- Policy 13d: Housing for local workers
- Policy 13e: Custom build housing
- Policy 13f: Short term/corporate lets and visitor accommodation

It sets out the national and local context for each of the policies, the evidence and data to support each of the policies, the lessons learnt from elsewhere to help inform the provision of new homes on the North East Cambridge development, and the reasons for the preferred approach as set out in the policies in the AAP.

The vision for the North East Cambridge AAP is for a healthy, “inclusive, walkable, low-carbon new city district with vibrant mix of high quality homes, workplaces, services and social spaces, fully integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods”. As the AAP makes clear, well considered placemaking, of which housing is an essential component, will be key to achieve this vision.

There are high levels of housing need across Greater Cambridge, and housing affordability is a major issue. Increasing housing supply, including affordable housing are a high priority for both Councils.

The AAP makes provision for around 8,350 homes within the North East Cambridge area. The AAP policies detail how housing can deliver significant value to the new communities at North East Cambridge by ensuring new homes contribute to meeting local housing need and are of high-quality design, sustainable, liveable, and inclusive.

## Background

The Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans 2018 identify the need for 33,500 new homes across Greater Cambridge (which is the area covered by the two

local authorities Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire) between 2011 and 2031. The adopted Local Plans place no reliance on development at North East Cambridge to deliver homes to meet this requirement due to the uncertainties at that time over the feasibility of relocating the Water Treatment Plant.

The Local Plans are subject to an early review that is already underway. The Greater Cambridge Local Plan: First Proposals identifies the new homes at North East Cambridge as being an important contribution towards meeting the preferred housing requirement for the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

There is a strong history of the two authorities working together in bringing forward development on urban fringe sites. Cambridge City Council owns some of the land at North East Cambridge and intends to pursue direct delivery of homes on that land.

## **Engagement**

The AAP process has recognised that development at North East Cambridge will have an impact beyond the site boundary and is engaging stakeholders constructively, actively, and on an ongoing basis.

Landowners within the AAP area are also being regularly engaged through a monthly 'Landowners Forum', and key developers and members of the local community formed part of a series of design workshops to co-design the spatial framework.

There are a number of studies relating to housing issues that will inform the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan, but will also be considered as is appropriate to support the AAP.

## **National Context**

### **Overall Housing Mix**

Paragraph 8 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF, July 2021) aims to ensure that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Paragraph 62 states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. Groups include those requiring affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, disabled people, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes, and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

## **Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF 2021 glossary at Annex 2 as “housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)”, and which complies with one or more of the following definitions for affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing, and other affordable routes to home ownership.

Paragraphs 63-65 of the NPPF 2021 state that where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should:

- specify the type of affordable housing required,
- expect that the affordable housing is provided on-site,
- only seek affordable housing on major developments (defined as being sites of 10 or more dwellings),
- allow a proportionate reduction to the affordable housing contribution where vacant buildings are being re-used or re-developed, and
- expect at least 10% of all homes on a major development to be available for affordable home ownership unless the development is solely for build to rent, specialist accommodation, self or custom build homes, or affordable housing.

New national planning guidance on [First Homes](#) was published in May 2021 to take account of the announcement of the delivery of First Homes in the [Affordable Housing Update Written Ministerial Statement](#). First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing that fall within the affordable housing definition. National planning guidance sets out that First Homes should account for at least 25% of the affordable homes delivered on a development that is expected to provide affordable homes. There are specific criteria for the sale and purchase of First Homes, with the ability for local authorities to set additional local criteria. For the

remaining up to 75% of the affordable homes, the national guidance prioritises the delivery of social rent homes before any affordable rent and shared ownership homes, where this is set out in local planning policy.

National planning guidance sets out that First Homes can contribute towards delivering some or all of the at least 10% affordable home ownership products that should be provided on major developments that is set out in the NPPF 2021. The new national planning guidance on First Homes explains how the two requirements can work together, and provides worked examples of this.

Both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire have been identified by the Government as [areas of high affordability pressure](#).

### **Housing Design, including Residential Space Standards and Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

The 'agent of change' principle (NPPF 2021 paragraph 187) establishes a responsibility for new developments to mitigate impacts from existing noise-generating activities; which is especially important for noise-sensitive development such as housing. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

Paragraph 130 (part f) of the NPPF 2021 states that planning policies should ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The accompanying footnote (Footnote 49) states that planning policies for housing should make use of the optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing and also the nationally described residential space standard, where these would address a need and can be justified.

The [Housing: optional technical standards](#) section of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out that where a local planning authority wishes to require an internal residential space standard that this can be done by reference to the nationally described residential space standard. The PPG sets out that local authorities should



provide justification for requiring the standard taking account of need, viability and timing, with guidance provided on what should be considered for each.

The same section of the PPG also sets out that local authorities can require accessibility, adaptability and wheelchair standards in new dwellings provided that they have evidence that demonstrates a clear need for these types of housing and their resulting policies plan to meet this need. The PPG states that planning policies should only set out the requirements for enhanced accessibility or adaptability of dwellings through reference to the optional requirements within [Part M of Building Regulations](#) – M4(2) ‘accessible and adaptable dwellings’ and M4(3) ‘wheelchair user dwellings’, and that the proportion of new dwellings that should comply with each requirement should be clearly stated.

The PPG specifies that any planning policies requiring either Building Regulations M4(2) and / or M4(3) should take into account site specific factors and that for developments where step free access is not viable, neither of the requirements should be applied.

Building Regulations distinguish between wheelchair accessible homes (a home readily useable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and wheelchair adaptable homes (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users), and that Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should be applied only to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling.

The Government [consulted](#) on options for raising accessibility standards for new homes in September - December 2020.

The [nationally described residential space standard](#) sets out internal space requirements relating to bedrooms, storage and internal areas for new dwellings, with the requirements determined by the number of storeys, bedrooms and bedspaces.

### **Specialist Housing and Homes for Older People and Disabled People**

Older people and disabled people are defined within the NPPF 2021 glossary at Annex 2.

The [Housing for older and disabled people](#) section of the PPG sets out that it is critical to provide housing for older people as people are living longer and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing, and therefore offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities, and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. It also sets out that provision of appropriate housing for disabled people, including specialist and supported housing, is crucial in helping them to live safe and independent lives.

There are different forms of specialist housing:

- **age restricted general housing** – this is general housing specifically for people over a certain age that may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens, but does not include support or care services.
- **sheltered housing** – this usually consists of purpose built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room, and does not generally provide care services, but does provide some support such as 24 hour assistance via alarms and wardens.
- **extra care housing or housing with care** – this usually consists of purpose built flats or bungalows with medium to high levels of care available (if required) through an onsite care agency. These developments have 24 hour access to support services and staff, and meals are available. They often include extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre.
- **residential care homes and nursing homes** – these have individual bedrooms and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living.

Some of these forms of specialist housing will be considered to be use class C3 (dwellings) and some will be considered to be use class C2 (residential institutions / communal accommodation). National planning guidance sets out that it is for the local planning authority to determine which use class a particular development falls into, but suggests that when making the decision consideration could be given to the level of care provided and the scale of communal facilities provided.

## **Student Accommodation**

National planning guidance on the [assessment of student housing need](#) explains how strategic policy-making authorities need to plan for sufficient student accommodation for both communal halls of residence and self-contained dwellings, on and off campus. It advises the provision of more dedicated student accommodation should take pressure off the private rented sector and increases the overall housing stock. Strategic policy-making authorities are therefore encouraged to consider options which would support both the needs of the student population as well as local residents before introducing caps or restrictions on students living outside university-provided accommodation. Consultation with universities and other higher educational establishments will need to be undertaken by local authorities to ensure they understand the student accommodation requirements in their area.

## **Self and Custom Build Homes**

Self and custom-build housebuilding is defined in the Glossary of the NPPF 2021 as “housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with them or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing”.

Under the [Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#) and [Housing and Planning Act 2016](#), local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots within the area for their own self-build and/or custom housebuilding, and local planning authorities have a duty to have regard to the register and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. This legislation also provides a legal definition of self-build and custom-build housing for the purposes of applying the Acts.

The level of demand is established from the number of entries added to the register each year, and at the end of each year a local planning authority has three years in which to give permission for the equivalent number of serviced plots of land for self-build or custom-builds.

The [self-build and custom housebuilding](#) section of the PPG provides more detailed guidance on the register and the duty of the local planning authority to give suitable

development permissions. The PPG sets out that as a minimum anyone wishing to be added to the register must provide their name and address, but that local authorities can record additional information as part of the registration process, such as size of household, a preferred location, the type of project – self or custom build, a preferred size of dwelling, and/or their budget. It also sets out that local authorities can set a local connection test and/or a financial solvency test, where they have strong justification for doing so.

The PPG (Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 57-016-20210208) states that “in considering whether a home is a self-build or custom build home, relevant authorities must be satisfied that the initial owner of the home will have primary input into its final design and layout. Off-plan housing, homes purchased at the plan stage prior to construction and without input into the design and layout from the buyer, are not considered to meet the definition of self-build and custom housing”.

The PPG advises that local authorities should consider how local planning policies can address self and custom build housing to ensure that enough serviced plots are given permission, and the guidance provides two examples - a number of units required as part of certain allocated sites or on certain types of site. It also advises that there is no duty on local authorities to permission land which specifically meets the requirements expressed by those on the register, but that any preferences expressed by those on the register can be used to guide their decisions when considering how to meet the duty to grant planning permission.

### **Build to Rent Homes**

Build to Rent is a specific form of private rented sector accommodation and is defined in the Glossary of the NPPF 2021 as “purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out” and it also states that “schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control”.

The [Build to rent](#) section of the PPG sets out that the affordable homes within a Build to Rent development should be provided as Affordable Private Rent homes, and that 20% is generally a suitable benchmark for the level of Affordable Private Rent homes to be provided. The PPG outlines that if local authorities wish to set a different

proportion of Affordable Private Rent homes that they should justify this using evidence, and set this out within their Local Plan. Guidance is also provided on how the rent for the Affordable Private Rent homes should be calculated and on scheme management.

## **Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, and Caravan and Boat Dwellers**

[Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015](#) provides guidance on the requirements for addressing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Within Annex 1 it defines gypsies and travellers as “Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such”.

The [Housing and Planning Act 2016](#) (by amending the Housing Act 1985) requires local authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of all people residing in or resorting to their area in houseboats or caravans, including Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.

In March 2016, the government published [draft guidance](#) for local authorities on reviewing the housing needs for moorings for houseboats and for residential caravans within their area.

## **Visitor Accommodation and Short Term Lets**

Paragraph 82 of the NPPF 2021 states that planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration.

Whilst tourism and visitor accommodation are only mentioned specifically in relation to town centres (NPPF 2021 paragraph 86) and rural economies (NPPF 2021 paragraph 84), NPPF 2021 paragraph 93 explains how planning policies and

decisions should provide social, recreational, and cultural facilities including services needed by the community. It includes the need for:

- (a) local authorities to plan positively for the provision of community facilities including public houses and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- (b) take account of, and support the delivery of local strategies to improve the health, social and cultural well-being of all sections of the community.
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

The Government issued its [Tourism Recovery Plan](#) in June 2021 which sets out the role that the UK government will play in assisting and accelerating the tourism sector's recovery from COVID-19. Its objectives are as follows:

- A swift recovery back to 2019 levels of tourism volume and visitor expenditure.
- As tourism recovers and then exceeds 2019 levels, the government wants to see the benefits shared across every nation and region.
- To build back better with a more productive, innovative and resilient tourism industry.
- A tourism industry that contributes to the enhancement and conservation of the UK's cultural, natural and historic heritage and minimises damage to the environment.
- For the UK to be a leading European nation for hosting business events.

Tourism is included in the [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Industrial Strategy](#) (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and HM Government, July 2019) as one of five sectors that are important to the areas'

economy. Visitor and business tourism are highlighted as are the potential impacts of over tourism and the need for additional conference facilities.

### **Housing for Local Workers**

There is no specific national planning policy or guidance on the approach that should be taken to providing homes specifically for local workers, however as part of achieving sustainable development the NPPF 2021 sets out that a sufficient range of homes should be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

There is no specific national planning policy or guidance on the approach that should be taken for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), however as part of achieving sustainable development the NPPF 2021 sets out that a sufficient range of homes should be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.

### **Community Led Housing**

There is no specific national planning policy or guidance on the approach that should be taken for community-led housing. Community-led housing is a way of delivering self-contained homes through different delivery models such as:

- **Community Land Trusts** – these are developments that provide affordable homes, but where the Trust acts a long term steward of the housing, ensuring that it remains affordable in perpetuity.
- **Co-housing** – these developments provide homes for each of their residents, as well as shared and community spaces. They usually have a common house with shared facilities for cooking and dining, meeting and play areas, and guest rooms. They will often manage themselves and come together to make decisions.
- **Co-operatives** – these are developments that provide homes for each of their residents, but where a mutual society made up of the residents owns or leases the homes collectively and then each resident pays rent for their home. The residents therefore act as their own landlord.

## Viability

Paragraph 58 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable, and that it is for the applicant to demonstrate that there are particular circumstances that justify the need for a viability assessment at the planning application stage.

## Corporate Strategies and Plans

### Vision and objectives

Cambridge City Council's vision as set out in its [Corporate Plan 2019-2022](#) is to lead a united city, 'One Cambridge - Fair for All', in which economic dynamism and prosperity are combined with social justice and equality. The aim is for Cambridge to be a place which is: fair for all; a great place to live, learn and work; and one that cares for the planet. The council's Corporate Plan is based on five main themes:

- Helping people in Cambridge who have the greatest need;
- Planning for growth and ensuring our new communities are successful;
- Protecting our environment and tackling climate change;
- Delivering quality services within financial constraints; and
- Developing effective partnerships and an innovative and dynamic organisation.

South Cambridgeshire District Council's [Business Plan 2019-2024](#) is about putting the heart into the district by:

- Building homes that are truly affordable to live in – by building vibrant communities in locations where people have good access to facilities and transport links, so they can genuinely afford to live a happy and healthy life;
- Helping business to grow – by supporting businesses of all sizes, including rural enterprises and farming, to help create new jobs and opportunities near to where people live;
- Being green to our core – we will create a cleaner, greener and zero-carbon future for our communities; and



- Being a modern and caring Council – we will provide our customers with high-quality services, strive to reduce costs, build on what we are good at to generate our own income and make decisions in a transparent, open and inclusive way.

## **Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 and Annexes**

The [Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023: Homes for our future](#) has been developed between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils within the context of wider council objectives. It sets out how both Councils aim to meet the housing challenges facing the area, so that everyone has access to a suitable home and that homes are provided that are affordable to people on all incomes.

Part of the role of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy is to complement the Councils' Local Plans and to help inform planning decisions. It is a material consideration in making planning decisions. [Annex 5: Summary of Requirements for Development of New Homes](#) provides more detail on the Councils' requirements around the delivery of new homes, including requirements around housing to meet different needs.

**Housing mix:** it sets out that both Councils are keen to promote a range of housing options to accommodate people and families throughout their lifetime across all tenures, to enable them to live safely and independently for as long as possible.

It sets out that the greatest need for social housing for rent across Greater Cambridge has been for 1 and 2 bedroom homes, and that the affordable housing mix on new developments should therefore broadly reflect this need whilst also providing some larger properties where appropriate. The strategy therefore provides a housing mix for affordable dwellings for both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire based on the Home-Link register in 2017, but notes that this mix may be subject to change.

**Affordable housing:** it sets out that the Councils will prioritise the delivery of affordable housing for rent (with a preference to deliver social rent homes rather than affordable rent homes, where possible) as part of a wider mix of affordable housing

on new developments. It sets out that the Councils will seek the following proportions of different tenures of affordable homes:

- Cambridge: 75% affordable housing for rent (social rent homes and / or affordable rent homes) and 25% intermediate tenures, and
- South Cambridgeshire: 70% affordable housing for rent (social rent homes and / or affordable rent homes) and 30% intermediate tenures.

The proportions recognise that intermediate tenure affordable homes (such as shared ownership homes) are required to support the delivery of affordable housing for rent through cross-subsidy, and that this needs to be factored into the viability of the overall affordable housing tenure mix. Where affordable rent homes are to be provided, to ensure rents are kept at affordable levels the Councils have set out their expectations in terms of rents in [Annex 11: Setting of Affordable Rents](#).

[Annex 10: Clustering and Distribution of Affordable Housing](#) sets out how any affordable homes for rent and shared ownership homes should be clustered and distributed in relation to each other and other intermediate and market tenures on any new developments, and how sizes and types of affordable homes should be grouped together. The guidance seeks to deliver fully integrated mixed tenure housing schemes, with a mix of unit sizes.

**Residential space standards and accessible and adaptable homes:** it includes “achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities” as one of its priorities and to achieve this sets out that all new homes should meet the nationally described residential space standard as a minimum, that the design of new homes should be future proofed so that as residents age homes can be easily adapted to meet their changing needs, and that the Councils will themselves (wherever possible) build new homes to the Building Regulations M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard and encourage other housebuilders to do so as well.

**Specialist housing:** it sets out that the Councils will continue to develop partnership working with appropriate organisations to ensure that sufficient support is available for those at greatest risk, including young people leaving care, ex-offenders, those suffering from domestic abuse and asylum seekers, and that where purpose built

accommodation is required, the Councils will work with the commissioners and developers to secure appropriate accommodation on new developments.

Based on the [Older People's Housing: Care and Support Needs in Greater Cambridge 2017- 2036](#) report (Sheffield Hallam University and University of Sheffield, November 2017), it recommends that:

- approximately 5% of new homes are age exclusive, and likely to take the form of mainstream housing built with older people in mind by meeting Building Regulations Part M4 (2 or 3),
- around 7% of homes are specialist housing for older people, and this could take the form of care ready type accommodation or extra care, dependent on availability of revenue funding from the County Council, and
- appropriate additional care beds are provided, consisting of residential and/or nursing care taking into account health and social care policy requirements.

**Self and custom build homes:** it sets out that within South Cambridgeshire there is an expectation that new developments will support the delivery of self and custom build homes, and that South Cambridgeshire District Council will be seeking around 5% of homes on large sites to be for self or custom build homes.

**Build to Rent:** it recognises that private rented accommodation can help support the needs of those on middle incomes who come to work in the area but cannot afford to live locally. It sets out that where a need for private rented sector accommodation has been identified, the Councils will seek a range of unit sizes and types for different income levels and the provision of Affordable Private Rent. [Annex 9: Build to Rent](#) provides additional detailed guidance on the Councils' requirements for new Build to Rent developments.

### **Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, and Caravan and Boat**

**Dwellers:** it sets out that a key priority for South Cambridgeshire District Council is to identify new sites to accommodate those that wish to live in a caravan. It recognises that although the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2016 did not identify any need for Gypsy and Traveller sites for those meeting the planning definition, it did show a need to provide sites for those residing in caravans who no longer travel, as well as pitches to accommodate Travelling Showpeople. It also sets

out that South Cambridgeshire District Council is keen to understand the role that existing mobile home parks play in the district to meet the accommodation needs of older people, and whether this type of accommodation should be supported in the future mix of homes provided.

**Homes for local workers:** it sets out that both Councils are keen to work with local employers and other partners to get a better understanding of the housing needs of the local workforce to support local services and the local economy, and reduce commuting.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation:** it sets out that well managed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) have an important part to play in meeting housing needs, offering a more affordable housing solution for single low income households. It outlines that HMOs are predominantly located in Cambridge, but highlights that the Councils will explore what role new build HMOs can play within the strategic sites that straddle the Cambridge-South Cambridgeshire administrative boundary.

**Community led housing:** it sets out that the Councils are keen to explore new ways of delivering different types of housing, such as community-led developments including co-operative housing and Community Land Trusts.

### **Other relevant strategies and plans**

These include Cambridge City Council's [Climate Change Strategy 2021-2026](#), [Carbon Management Plan 2016-2021](#), and [Anti-Poverty Strategy 2020-2023](#), the [Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide 2017](#), and South Cambridgeshire District Council's [Zero Carbon Strategy 2020](#).

### **Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans and other related planning documents**

- [Cambridge Local Plan 2018](#)
- [Cambridge Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2008](#)
- [South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018](#)
- [South Cambridgeshire Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2010](#)

- [South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010](#)
- [Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document 2020](#)

## **Overall Housing Mix**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 45 states that developments should include a balanced mix of dwelling sizes (measured by the number of bedrooms in each dwelling), types and tenures to meet projected future household needs. The mix of dwellings and tenure types shall have regard to the differing needs for different unit sizes of affordable housing and market housing.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/9 states that a wide choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children, older people, those seeking starter homes, people wishing to build their own homes, people seeking private rented sector housing, and disabled people.

The policy specifies that the market homes in developments of 10 or more homes in South Cambridgeshire will consist of at least: 30% 1 or 2 bedroom homes; 30% 3 bedroom homes; and 30% 4 or more bedroom homes; with a 10% flexibility allowance that can be added to any of these categories taking account of local circumstances. This requirement is subject to the housing mix of affordable homes (except starter homes) in all developments being determined by local housing needs evidence. The required housing mix does not apply to developments including specialist housing for older people (with or without care).

## **Affordable Housing**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 45 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/10 set minimum affordable housing requirements on new developments (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Affordable housing requirements as set out in the adopted Local Plans 2018

<b>Local Plan</b>	<b>Minimum affordable housing requirement</b>
Cambridge City	25% of homes on sites of 11-14 units 40% of homes on sites of 15 or more units
South Cambridgeshire	40% of homes on sites of 11 or more units

Source: Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans 2018

The Councils' planning committees in November 2018 agreed to apply a lower threshold of 10 dwellings or more (rather than 11 dwellings or more) to be consistent with the NPPF that had been revised during the preparation of the Local Plan.

Where a developer considers that meeting the required affordable housing percentage will be financially unviable, both councils require robust evidence to support any such claim.

The Cambridge Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2008 resolves to achieve 75% social/affordable rent housing on qualifying sites, unless overall evidence of need indicates otherwise. The SPD also sets out that affordable housing should not be visually distinguishable from market housing by its external appearance, and that developers should avoid designs that would result in high maintenance and service charges affecting the affordable part of a development.

The SPD sets out that the layout of developments should integrate affordable and supported housing with open market housing in ways that minimise social exclusion, avoiding tenure monocultures. Clustering is described as the 'usual approach' to affordable housing distribution with clusters normally expected to be between 6 and 25 dwellings. In flatted schemes no more than 12 affordable dwellings should normally have access from a common stairwell or lift. The affordable housing should be provided in prominent parts of a site to aid integration.

The South Cambridgeshire Affordable Housing SPD 2010 refers to 75% rent and 25% intermediate housing as the starting point for negotiations on the urban fringes of Cambridge, in alignment with Cambridge City Council's approach. The SPD sets out that affordable housing should be visually indistinguishable from market housing, and developers should avoid design that results in high maintenance or service charges. It also requires that affordable housing be provided in small groups or clusters distributed through the site.

### **Housing Design, including Residential Space Standards and Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policies 55-57 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy HQ/1 specify the criteria that should be considered when designing new developments and homes.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policies 28, 30, 31 and 32 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policies CC/1, CC/3, CC/4, CC/5 and CC/6 specify the criteria relating to the delivery of sustainably designed and constructed homes. Further detailed guidance is provided in the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 50 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/12 specify that new residential units need to meet the internal residential space standards set out in the Government's Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015) or its successor.

For Cambridge, Policy 50 also sets out that all new residential units are expected to have direct access to an appropriate area of private amenity space, based on specified criteria. There is not an equivalent policy for South Cambridgeshire, however the South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide SPD 2010 provides in Chapter 6 guidance on the provision of private gardens and amenity space.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 51 requires all homes to be built to Building Regulations M4(2) standard with 5% of the affordable homes on developments with 20 or more affordable homes to be built to meet Building Regulations M4(3) standard. As set out in paragraph 6.38 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the

Council encourages developers to build wheelchair accessible market homes, as well as wheelchair accessible affordable homes.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/9 requires 5% of homes in a development to be built to Building Regulations M4(2) standard, with the provision split evenly between the affordable and market homes in a development. The supporting text sets out that the provision of housing constructed to wheelchair housing design standards will only be expected as part of the affordable housing element of developments and then only in response to identified need.

### **Specialist Housing**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 47 applies to specialist housing, including: sheltered housing; residential care and nursing homes; extra-care housing; shared homes; cluster units; respite, rehabilitation and convalescent accommodation; and hostel accommodation. Proposals must be supported by evidence of need, and: be suitable for the intended occupiers; be accessible to local shops, services, appropriate community facilities, and public and sustainable transport; and be in a location that avoids excessive concentration of such housing within any one street or small area.

There is no specific policy relating to specialist housing in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

For both local authorities, where the development falls within use class C3 (dwelling houses), the development will be expected to contribute to the supply of affordable housing (as set out in Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 47 and South Cambridgeshire Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2010 paragraph 3.35).

### **Student Accommodation**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 46 states the circumstances in which new student housing will be permitted. This states that Cambridge intends to deliver accommodation to address the identified future growth aspirations of the institutions and to provide additional flexibility with around 3,104 units to 2026.



There is no specific policy relating to student housing in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

### **Self and Custom Build Homes**

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/9 states that on all sites of 20 or more dwellings, and in each phase of strategic sites, developers will supply dwelling plots for sale to self and custom builders. Exceptionally, no provision will be expected in developments or phases of developments which comprise higher density multi-storey flats and apartments.

There is no specific policy relating to self and custom build housing in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

### **Build to Rent Homes**

There is no specific policy relating to Build to Rent developments in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

There is no specific policy relating to Build to Rent developments in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, however within paragraph 7.36 (which is part of the supporting text for Policy H/9: Housing Mix) it states that the Council will support the private rented sector to grow through build to let, to meet the growing demand for rented homes as part of the market element of housing developments.

### **Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, and Caravan and Boat Dwellers**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 49 provides a set of site criteria against which applications for permanent, transit and emergency stopping provision for Gypsies and Travellers will be considered. It also sets out that should an up to date needs assessment indicate there is a need, then opportunities to deliver sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be sought as part of significant major development sites.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/20 requires provision to be made for at least 11 plots for Travelling Showpeople between 2011 and 2031, based on

the Cambridgeshire, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Peterborough and West Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/21 sets out that if a need is identified, opportunities to deliver Gypsy and Traveller sites will be sought as part of large scale new communities and significant major development sites, and that the need and opportunities should be kept under review through the planning of future phases of such developments as they come forward.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy H/23 sets out the criteria for the design of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots.

The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 do not include specific policies for use when considering proposals for new residential caravan sites / mobile home parks.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 54 sets out the criteria to be used when considering proposals for new residential moorings. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 does not include a policy for use when considering proposals for new residential moorings.

### **Visitor Accommodation and Short Term Lets**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 77 supports high quality visitor accommodation in a number of specified mixed-use sites in Cambridge city centre and in other locations including North West Cambridge and Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The policy also outlines where new visitor accommodation should be located – on the frontages of main roads, in areas of mixed-use, or within walking distance of bus route corridors with good public transport accessibility.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 78 protects visitor accommodation unless the use is no longer viable. Evidence of viability includes demonstration that all reasonable efforts have been made to preserve the facility and marketing for at least 12 months.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 79 explains the policy criteria that new and extended, small-in-scale visitor attractions need to satisfy to be supported. These include complementing the cultural heritage of the city and broadening the attraction

on offer, especially for families. The location of new proposals should have good public transport accessibility.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 Policy E/20 explains the circumstances when tourist accommodation will be supported inside and outside development frameworks. Inside development frameworks, the scale and type of the proposal should relate to the role and function of the centre. Outside development frameworks, suitable buildings should be repurposed and be small scale new development appropriate to local circumstance.

### **Housing for Local Workers**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 paragraph 6.7 allows the possibility of employers providing housing specifically for their employees as part of schemes for employment development, subject to evidence of need. Affordable housing requirements will apply to such schemes.

There is no reference in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 to housing for local workers.

The approach in the Councils' Affordable Housing SPDs in relation to key workers has been largely superseded by the approach in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 48 supports proposals for large houses in multiple occupation (*sui generis*) where the proposal meets certain criteria, including not creating an over-concentration of such use in the area, not causing harm to residential amenity or the local area, and appropriate management arrangements being in place.

There is no reference in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 to housing in multiple occupation.

## Community Led Housing

The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 do not include specific policies for use when considering proposals for community-led housing.

## Evidence and Data

### Population Forecast

The overall population of Greater Cambridge is expected to increase considerably during the period of the adopted Local Plans 2018 (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Forecast increase in population 2018 to 2031

Location	Population 2018	Population 2031	Increase	% increase
Cambridge City	136,850	154,050	17,200	12.6%
South Cambridgeshire	157,470	196,860	39,390	25.0%
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>294,320</b>	<b>350,910</b>	<b>56,590</b>	<b>19.2%</b>

Source: [Cambridgeshire County Council 2018 based population forecasts](#)

### Overall Housing Mix

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) makes recommendations on the housing mix – the proportion of dwellings by number of bedrooms – for new developments. The study uses population projections that GL Hearn have developed, that are linked to the standard methodology calculations for identifying housing needs, to forecast changes in household types between 2020 and 2040.

The study considers the projected changes in household types alongside other factors, such as the profile of the existing dwelling stock in the study area, the

existing occupancy patterns of different household types, and the needs of those on the housing registers, to develop recommendations for the housing mix for the study area and each district by tenure. The study recognises that occupancy patterns might change in the future if either affordability was to worsen meaning that households would be forced to consider smaller houses than they would ideally like, or alternative housing types were to become available (for example, more specialist housing for older people) that would release other existing properties into the housing market.

The study recommends that local issues and circumstances should also be considered when identifying the appropriate housing mix for each district, but that there would need to be justification for a housing mix that differs significantly from its recommendations. The study highlights that the recommended housing mix for each district will generally reinforce the existing stock profile, and therefore some variations could be needed to take account of changes to the projected population structure and household types for that district.

The study recommends individual housing mixes for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (see Tables 3 and 4 below).

Table 3: Housing mix for Cambridge

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>1-bedroom</b>	<b>2-bedrooms</b>	<b>3-bedrooms</b>	<b>4+- bedrooms</b>
Market housing	0-10%	15-25%	40-50%	25-35%
Affordable housing – ownership	15-25%	35-45%	25-35%	5-15%
Affordable housing – rented	35-45%	30-40%	15-25%	0-10%

Source: [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021)

Table 4: Housing mix for South Cambridgeshire

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>1-bedroom</b>	<b>2-bedrooms</b>	<b>3-bedrooms</b>	<b>4+- bedrooms</b>
Market housing	0-10%	20-30%	35-45%	25-35%
Affordable housing – ownership	15-25%	35-45%	25-35%	5-15%
Affordable housing – rented	25-35%	35-45%	20-30%	0-10%

Source: [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021)

The study states that overall the analysis does not suggest a substantially different housing mix for each district when compared to that for the study area or between districts. Therefore, the study recommends that the Councils should broadly seek the same housing mix in all locations, but should be flexible to a different mix where specific local characteristics are justified by factors such as local characteristics, the mix provided on other recent housing developments, and / or data from the housing register. The study recommends that the Councils should monitor what is being built to ensure that a reasonable mix is provided in the district and in individual settlements.

### Housing Costs and Affordability

Greater Cambridge is an area of high housing costs relative to other parts of England (see Tables 5 and 6 below).

Table 5: Average house prices at July 2011 and June 2021

<b>Location</b>	<b>July 2011 average (mean) house price</b>	<b>June 2021 average (mean) house price</b>	<b>Ten year increase</b>	<b>Ten year % increase</b>
Cambridge City	£325,487	£531,031	£205,544	63%
South Cambridgeshire	£306,388	£477,940	£171,552	56%
East of England	£253,342	£389,441	£136,099	54%
England	£244,124	£354,964	£110,840	45%

Source: [Cambridge sub-region housing market bulletins](#), from Hometrack, based on sales and valuations

Table 6: Lower quartile house prices at June 2016 and June 2021

<b>Location</b>	<b>June 2016 lower quartile house price</b>	<b>June 2021 lower quartile house price</b>	<b>Five year increase</b>	<b>Five year % increase</b>
Cambridge City	£320,000	£370,000	£50,000	16%
South Cambridgeshire	£266,000	£315,000	£49,000	18%
East of England	£185,000	£245,000	£60,000	32%
England	£148,000	£190,000	£42,000	28%

Source: [Cambridge sub-region housing market bulletins](#), from Hometrack, based on sales and valuations. 10 year comparison not available

Rents are also high (see Table 7 below), and Local Housing Allowance rates, on which housing related benefits for tenants renting privately are based, until recently, were nowhere near enough to cover even lower quartile rents in Greater Cambridge (see Table 8 below). They were raised for 2020/21 in response to the Covid-19 crisis and remain at the same level for 2021/22, and this has gone some way to close the gap in Cambridge City. For South Cambridgeshire, rates for most property sizes are now higher than lower quartile rents in the district.



Table 7: Monthly average private rents April 2020 to March 2021

<b>Location</b>	<b>Average (mean) rent</b>	<b>Lower quartile rent</b>
Cambridge City	£1,256	£950
South Cambridgeshire	£1,083	£880
East of England	£889	£650
England	£864	£565

[ONS private rental market summary statistics](#)

The local housing allowance has increased across the board from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 in both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire for all sizes of property (see Table 8 below).

Table 8: Monthly lower quartile private rents by size, compared with monthly equivalent Local Housing Allowance

<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Cambridge City Lower Quartile Private Rents</b>	<b>South Cambridgeshire Lower Quartile Private Rents</b>	<b>Local Housing Allowance 2019-2020</b>	<b>Local Housing Allowance 2020-2021 and 2021-2022</b>
Room	£450	£475	£349.88	£421.49
Studio	£700	£590	£564.14	£775.02
1 bed	£875	£700	£564.14	£775.02
2 beds	£1,100	£850	£648.79	£850.02
3 beds	£1,250	£975	£753.90	£950.00
4 beds+	£1,700	£1,275	£1,005.66	£1300.01

Source: [ONS private rental market summary statistics](#) April 2020 to March 2021; and Local Housing Allowance rates [2019 to 2020](#), [2020 to 2021](#) and [2021 to 2022](#) (monthly equivalents)

Data on changes to Local Housing Allowance levels is also relevant in terms of decisions on the level at which to cap affordable rents. Local Housing Allowance rates are now considerably closer to median market rents (see Tables 9 and 10 below). This is particularly so for South Cambridgeshire where rates are now over 79% or more of median rents for all sizes of property from 1 to 4 bedrooms.

Table 9: Weekly Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rates compared with median weekly market rents: Cambridge City

<b>Property Size</b>	<b>2019/20 LHA rate</b>	<b>New 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate</b>	<b>Increase 2019/20 LHA rate to 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate</b>	<b>% increase 2019/20 LHA rate to 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate</b>	<b>Median weekly market rent at June 2021</b>	<b>2019/20 LHA rate as a % of median weekly market rent</b>	<b>New 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate as a % of median weekly market rent</b>
1 bed	£135.99	£178.36	£42.37	31%	£226.00	60%	79%
2 bed	£156.40	£195.62	£39.22	25%	£300.00	52%	65%
3 bed	£181.75	£218.63	£36.88	20%	£345.00	53%	63%
4 bed	£242.43	£299.18	£56.75	23%	£450.00	54%	66%

Source: Local Housing Allowance rates [2019 to 2020](#), [2020 to 2021](#) and [2021 to 2022](#) and [Cambridge sub-region housing market bulletins](#), from Hometrack

Table 10: Weekly Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rates compared with median weekly market rents: South Cambridgeshire

Property Size	2019/20 LHA rate	New 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate	Increase 2019/20 LHA rate to 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate	% increase 2019/20 LHA rate to 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate	Median weekly market rent at June 2021	2019/20 LHA rate as a % of median weekly market rent	New 2020/21 and 2021/22 LHA rate as a % of median weekly market rent
1 bed	£133.72	£178.36	£44.64	33%	£178.00	75%	100%
2 bed	£153.79	£195.62	£41.83	27%	£225.00	68%	87%
3 bed	£178.71	£218.63	£39.92	22%	£276.00	65%	79%
4 bed	£238.38	£299.18	£60.80	26%	£346.00	69%	86%

Source: Local Housing Allowance rates [2019 to 2020](#), [2020 to 2021](#) and [2021 to 2022](#) (monthly equivalents) and [Cambridge sub-region housing market bulletins](#), from Hometrack

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) reports that the median workplace based affordability ratio for Greater Cambridge has seen a significant rise over the last 20 years, and that throughout those 20 years has consistently been higher than the East of England average and the national average. The study sets out that in 2019, median house prices in Greater Cambridge were 11.27 times median full time earnings. It also provides information on the lower quartile workplace based affordability ratio, and at 2019 lower quartile house prices in Greater Cambridge were 12.14 times lower quartile full

time earnings. The study concludes that affordability is particularly an issue for the lower end of the market.

Earlier [local affordability analysis](#) by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils for the Greater Cambridge Partnership (June 2018) estimated that at that time across Greater Cambridge some 35% of households were on incomes of less than £30,000; the group for whom social/affordable rent housing would be the most realistic option in terms of affordability, if there was sufficient supply.

The analysis also identified that around 26% of households in Greater Cambridge at that time were on incomes of £30,000 to £50,000; the group which might be expected to be able to afford low-cost affordable housing other than social/affordable rent housing. For these households much of the housing supply comes from the private rented sector – often the only available options for people in the middle of the market, although affordability is often a barrier. Shared ownership, although in relatively short supply, also contributes to this proportion of the housing market.

Earlier [detailed affordability analysis](#) by Savills for the Greater Cambridge Partnership (June 2017) highlighted that house prices in Greater Cambridge at that time were very high relative to local incomes, such that although relatively high levels of new homes had been delivered only a low proportion of the market homes were affordable to those on lower incomes. The analysis showed that there was a gap in provision of homes to meet the needs of those with household incomes below £40,000, and that a mix of tenures and discounts would be required to meet this need.

## **Affordable Housing**

There are high levels of need for social/affordable rent housing compared with the annual supply of these homes (see Table 11 below). The highest need in recent years has been for smaller homes – one bedroom, followed by two bedrooms.

Table 11: Applicants on Home-Link housing register by property size required

<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Number of applicants on Cambridge City Register September 2021</b>	<b>Number of Cambridge City lettings April 2020-March 2021</b>	<b>Number of applicants on South Cambridgeshire Register October 2021</b>	<b>Number of South Cambridgeshire lettings April 2020-March 2021</b>
1 bedroom	1,138	242	871	152
2 bedrooms	488	220	530	273
3 bedrooms	325	64	257	81
4+ bedrooms	81	8	95	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,032</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>1,753</b>	<b>519</b>

Source: Home-Link data from Locata. Includes all applicants with status of 'live'.

There is also high demand for housing made available through Help to Buy (which is low cost affordable housing other than social/affordable rent housing, including, for example, Help to Buy equity loans and shared ownership homes), with the highest demand for one to two bedroom properties (see Table 12 below).

Table 12: Help to Buy applicant households registered as wanting to live in Greater Cambridge at July 2021

<b>Bedroom Entitlement</b>	<b>Number of applicants</b>
1 bed	370
2 beds	618
3 beds	225
4beds	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,238</b>

Source: Help to Buy East & South East

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) estimates the need for social and affordable rent homes in each local authority area and collectively across the housing market area, by considering local house prices and rents, income levels and affordability, need from homeless, overcrowded, concealed or new households, and existing supply and relets. The study states that based on the identified affordable housing need for social/affordable rent homes in 2020-2040, the level of need equates to around 44% of the overall need calculated using the standard methodology. The study clarifies that this is a crude comparison, but recommends that this suggests the local authorities should continue to seek as much affordable housing delivery as viability allows.

The study recommends that the Councils do not have a rigid policy for the split between social rent and affordable rent homes based on affordability alone, but states that the analysis is clear that both tenures are likely to be required in all areas. The study highlights that if local authorities wish to specify a split, they would need to consider a range of issues such as affordability, funding streams and viability.

The study considers the need for affordable home ownership and concludes that across the study area there is only a limited need for this type of housing. The study highlights that this should be considered alongside the acute need for rented affordable housing within the study area. The study therefore recommends that it is reasonable for the Councils to meet the NPPF 2021 requirement for 10% of all new homes to be affordable home ownership on eligible sites, and that there is limited evidence to suggest any district should set a requirement to exceed this proportion.

### **Housing Design, including Residential Space Standards and Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

Recent national research by [Place Alliance](#) has found that the design of new housing development is overwhelmingly mediocre or poor. It points to widespread evidence that high quality design makes new residential developments more acceptable to local communities and delivers huge value to all; but that high quality design does not have to be unaffordable. The NPPF 2021 is also clear that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. The Councils are seeking high quality design in all new developments within Greater Cambridge, and in the last 5 years, Cambridge has won more awards for the quality and design of its new housing developments than all of the other major UK cities combined.

#### **Residential Space Standards**

The Councils prepared evidence to support the inclusion of the planning policies in their adopted Local Plans that require new dwellings to meet or exceed the nationally described residential space standard. This evidence considered the need for the standard by analysing whether the nationally described standard was already being met on a sample of new developments. The analysis found that while the majority of new developments met or exceeded the standard, there were still significant percentages of new homes within these sample developments that did not meet one or more of the elements of the standard. The evidence also considered viability and timing, and concluded that a policy requiring the standard would not have an impact on the viability of proposed developments and that no transitional provisions were necessary.



## **Private Amenity Space**

The [London Plan 2021](#) sets out in Policy D6: Housing quality and standards that a minimum of 5 sqm of private outside space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1 sqm should be provided for each additional occupant. It also sets out that it must achieve a minimum depth and width of 1.5m. The supporting text sets out that “Private outside space should be practical in terms of its shape and utility, and care should be taken to ensure the space offers good amenity. All dwellings should have level access to one or more of the following forms of private outside spaces: a garden, terrace, roof garden, courtyard garden or balcony. The use of roof areas, including podiums, and courtyards for additional private or shared outside space is encouraged.”

## **Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) reports that 26.6% of households in Cambridge and 27.4% of households in South Cambridgeshire, or 13.0% of the population of Cambridge and 13.9% of the population of South Cambridgeshire, had a long term health problem or disability based on the Census 2011. The study also reports that the majority of people in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire with a long term health problem or disability are aged 65 years or over, and that people living in social rented properties are twice as likely to have a long term health problem or disability.

Based on its population projections, the study anticipates that there will be a 51.3% increase in over 65s with mobility problems in Cambridge by 2040 and a 62.1% increase in over 65s with mobility problems in South Cambridgeshire. GL Hearn state that the analysis of projected increases in population with mobility problems by 2040 would suggest that the Councils should require all new dwellings to be M4(2) ‘accessible and adaptable dwellings’, subject to constraints such as built form, topography, and flooding. The study states that in some cases the M4(2) requirements may challenge viability.

The study also analyses data on wheelchair users, and based on its population projections, concludes that the need for wheelchair user homes equates to 6.4% of the overall housing need 2020-2040 for Cambridge and 6.6% of the overall housing

need 2020-2040 for South Cambridgeshire. The study also estimates the need for wheelchair user homes by tenure, and concludes that for Cambridge there is a need for 5% of market homes and 13% of affordable homes to be wheelchair user homes, and for South Cambridgeshire there is a need for 5% of market homes and 14% of affordable homes to be wheelchair user homes. However, the need varies across the housing market area, with other districts having a higher need than within Greater Cambridge, and therefore GL Hearn recommend that all Councils in the housing market area seek 10% of all new market homes and 25% of all new affordable homes to be M4(3) compliant.

The study states that it may not be possible for some developments to meet the M4(3) requirements due to both site constraints and viability. The study includes the differences in the costs associated with each of the M4(2) and M4(3) requirements when applied to a range of types and sizes of homes. The costs associated with meeting the M4(2) requirements are less than £1,000 per dwelling, with higher costs for flats (around £900) rather than houses (around £500). However, the costs associated with M4(3)(a) and M4(3)(b) are much higher, as the study records that to meet M4(3)(b) in a new house is over £22,000 per dwelling, and to meet M4(3)(a) is less but still high at around £10,000 per dwelling. The costs associated with M4(3)(a) are lower for flats, at around £7,500-£8,000.

Based on its population projections for the different growth level scenarios, the [Housing Needs for Specific Groups – Greater Cambridge Addendum](#) (GL Hearn, 2021) reports that for all scenarios there will be an increase of over 60% in the over 65s with mobility problems by 2041. It also concludes that the need for wheelchair user homes equates to between 4.7% and 6.4% of the overall housing need 2020-2041 for Greater Cambridge, depending on the growth level scenario.

The Councils are working on a project to better understand the needs of people who need to move to wheelchair accessible housing. The Councils will work alongside the SEND (Specialist Education Needs and/or Disabilities) Specialist Housing advisors and the Disability Social Care Service. The project includes looking at the size and locations of the homes needed, when they are likely to be needed, and the likely future demand in Greater Cambridge.

## Specialist Housing and Homes for Older People

### Homes for Older People

The older population is expected to increase nationally, and particularly in South Cambridgeshire (see Table 14 below). The largest percentage increase is likely in the number of people aged 85 and over, although the greatest numerical increase is expected in the 75-84 age group. By 2031, over 65s are expected to make up nearly 1 in 5 of the Greater Cambridge population.

Table 13: Forecast change in over-65 population in Cambridge 2018 to 2031

<b>Age</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>% increase</b>
65-74	8,430	10,660	2,230	26%
75-84	5,410	7,710	2,300	43%
85+	2,930	4,400	1,470	50%
<b>All 65+</b>	<b>16,770</b>	<b>22,770</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>36%</b>

Source: [Cambridgeshire County Council 2018 based population forecasts](#)

Table 14: Forecast change in over-65 population in South Cambridgeshire 2018 to 2031

Age	2016	2031	Increase	% increase
65-74	16,700	20,680	3,980	24%
75-84	9,630	15,160	5,530	57%
85+	4,230	7,760	3,530	83%
<b>All 65+</b>	<b>30,560</b>	<b>43,600</b>	<b>13,040</b>	<b>43%</b>

Source: [Cambridgeshire County Council 2018 based population forecasts](#)

Cambridgeshire County Council are currently considering the future provision of accommodation based care for older people in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and are forecasting future demand on an individual district basis taking account of existing supply, projected population changes, and the changing way that care is provided by supporting more independent living and providing care based on the individual level of need and as required.

The number of people living in specialist retirement housing or in care homes is relatively low, with most older people living in their own homes. It is estimated by [Age UK](#) that nationally around 410,000 people in the UK currently live in care homes.

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) reports that based on the population projections that GL Hearn have developed, that are linked to the standard methodology calculations for identifying housing needs, there is predicted to be a significant ageing of the population within the study area between 2020 and 2040 – those aged 65 and over are projected to increase by 52%, compared to an overall population growth in the study area of 21%. The study highlights that a broadly similar trend is expected in each of the districts, with the exception of Cambridge.

The study highlights that older people tend to live in under-occupied homes, and therefore if the existing housing stock is used more efficiently and new suitable smaller homes were provided within existing communities, this would enable older people to 'downsize'. The study suggests that retirement villages are one way of encouraging 'downsizing' provided that they deliver homes for different income levels, of different tenures, and of different house types and sizes. The study recognises that high services charges on retirement villages can impact on the feasibility of affordable housing and also that providing affordable housing on these specialist housing schemes is less viable for developers.

The study considers the need for specialist housing in each district using a model that analyses existing prevalence rates for these types of specialist housing within the current population of the study area and applying them to the projected population profile for the study area, along with consideration of the likely tenure requirements within each district based on levels of deprivation, and existing supply of specialist housing. The study estimates that at 2040 there will be a surplus of housing with support (retirement living or sheltered housing) which is rented in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, but that there will be a significant shortfall of all other forms of specialist housing in all districts in the study area.

Table 15: Surplus or shortfall in specialist housing in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire at 2040

<b>District / Specialist housing</b>	<b>Cambridge</b>	<b>South Cambridgeshire</b>
Housing with support – rented	Surplus of 289 self-contained units	Surplus of 502 self-contained units
Housing with support – leasehold	Shortfall of 643 self-contained units	Shortfall of 1,447 self-contained units
Housing with care – rented	Shortfall of 121 self-contained units	Shortfall of 192 self-contained units
Housing with care – leasehold	Shortfall of 300 self-contained units	Shortfall of 473 self-contained units
Residential care and nursing homes (Use Class C2)	Shortfall of 179 bedspaces	Shortfall of 1,613 bedspaces

Source: [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021)

The study explains that these estimates should be considered as providing a set of parameters, and that the actual level of provision needed will be influenced by broader local strategies for older peoples housing and care which are being developed by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Comparing the levels of need for each of these types of specialist housing to the overall housing need for Greater Cambridge for 2020-2040 equates to the following needs:

- 4% of new homes to be housing with support,
- 3% of new homes to be housing with care, and

- 3% of new homes to be residential care and nursing homes.

Note: the comparison has been done by comparing the net shortfall in self-contained units or bedspaces across Greater Cambridge to the overall housing need calculated for Greater Cambridge, based on the standard methodology and as reported in the [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021). For residential care homes and nursing homes, the net shortfall in bedspaces has been converted to a dwelling equivalent using a ratio of 1.8 bedspaces to a dwelling, which is the ratio used for older peoples accommodation when calculating the Housing Delivery Test.

Previous analysis of the housing needs of older people in the [Older People's Housing: Care and Support Needs in Greater Cambridge 2017- 2036](#) report (Sheffield Hallam University and University of Sheffield, November 2017) developed a model to estimate supply and demand for older people's housing. Using the model developed, the report estimated the need for different forms of specialist accommodation for older people by 2035, and concluded that in Greater Cambridge:

- 917 additional age exclusive homes were needed,
- 2,741 additional self-contained specialist homes in the form of sheltered accommodation or extra care accommodation were needed, and
- 1,724 additional care beds were needed.

This need was in addition to the already known shortfall in provision at 2016 as estimated by the model.

Table 16: Current and recommended supply of older people’s accommodation in Greater Cambridge

<b>Type of older people’s accommodation</b>	<b>Current total supply at 2016</b>	<b>Recommended total supply at 2016</b>	<b>Recommended total supply at 2035</b>
Age exclusive homes	239	1,145	2,062
Specialist self-contained housing	3,280	3,422	6,163
Care beds	1,825	2,152	3,876

Source: Older People’s Housing: Care and Support Needs in Greater Cambridge 2017- 2036 report (Sheffield Hallam University and University of Sheffield, November 2017)

The report also compared its own model results to those estimated by the SHOP@ model, which is an existing alternative model, and concluded that both models suggested there was a current undersupply of specialist housing for older people and that future demands were likely to place major pressures on existing provision. The report set out that these estimates should be the basis on which more informed policy making could take place, but recognised that demand could and would be met in various ways, shaped by various interventions by public bodies, and voluntary and private providers.

### **Specialist housing for others**

During 2018/19, Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group undertook a review of [specialist housing needs](#) for disabled people or people with mental health issues across the sub region. This research used population forecasts and projecting forwards existing prevalence rates to create a model to forecast future need, based on current provision. The findings indicate that for South Cambridgeshire and



Cambridge City there may be a future need of 47 additional specialist units across the area up to 2036 (see Table 17 below).

Table 17: Greater Cambridge specialist housing requirements (disability – working age)

<b>Disability client group</b>	<b>Number of units required across Greater Cambridge up to 2036</b>
Learning disability	7
Mental health	29
Physical disability	5
Autism	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

Source: [Cambridgeshire & West Suffolk Specialist Housing Need](#)

This assumes ‘business as usual’ in terms of future care provision and acts as a starting point to inform the level of future need. Further work is required to establish the future direction of travel for services for different disability client groups, including the extent to which services may continue to be provided in specialist schemes as opposed to supporting people in mainstream housing.

### **Student Accommodation**

Purpose built student accommodation is intended for students of Higher Education institutions that are undertaking full-time courses of one academic year or more. While Cambridge Regional College, adjacent to the site, provides a number of Higher Education courses, the Councils do not have evidence of a specific need for purpose built student accommodation within North East Cambridge.

## Self and Custom Build Homes

Under the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots within the area for their own self-build and custom house building, and local planning authorities have a duty to have regard to the register and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand.

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have a joint [self-build and custom build register](#), that has been open since April 2016. Information on an entrant's preferences is recorded through the registration process; however the Councils do not currently apply either a local connection test or a financial solvency test.

Between April 2016 and October 2020, 639 entries have been added to the Greater Cambridge self and custom build register, which equates to approximately 140 entries a year. Data extracted from the register in terms of preference for the location of plots, and type and size of property, shows that entrants on the register tend to be looking for plots for detached homes and for 3 or 4 bed homes.

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) records the total number of entries collectively and individually as at 2019/2020 on all the self and custom build registers in the housing market area. To assess the likely continuing demand for self and custom build plots, GL Hearn have calculated that this historic data equates to approximately 250 new entries each year on the registers across the housing market area, and approximately 164 new entries each year on the register for Greater Cambridge. The study recognises that there is nothing to prevent individuals or groups of individuals registering on more than one self and custom build register, and therefore there is likely to be double counting of demand across the study area and country. The study sets out that Councils do not have an option to reduce the provision of self and custom build plots to take account of this.

As part of the study, GL Hearn have also sought to understand the strength of demand for self-build homes by speaking to local estate agents. A limited number of responses were received, and these responses were based on anecdotal evidence

of their experience, however the suggestion from estate agents is that there is a strong demand for self-build plots within the housing market area.

### **Build to Rent Homes**

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) highlights that the private rented sector has grown by 68% within Cambridge between 2001 and 2011, while within South Cambridgeshire the change is 113% over the same period. The study also provides more recent estimates that suggest an increase of 10.1% in private rented homes in Cambridge between 2012 and 2018, with a slight decrease of 3.3% within South Cambridgeshire in the same period.

The study has not estimated the need for additional private rented housing as whether people buy or rent their homes is dependent on several factors that can fluctuate over time such as mortgage lending practices, availability of housing related benefit, and existing types and tenures of homes available in the area.

The study highlights that Cambridge is unusual compared to other similar sized regional cities as it currently has very few Build to Rent developments. The study outlines that demand for Build to Rent is still embryonic and therefore that it is difficult to accurately predict its location and scale, but that research by Savills is clear that developer interest has focussed on urban areas. The study therefore suggests that demand is likely to be within Cambridge and the immediately surrounding villages, from students, academics and young professionals.

The study recommends that the Councils are supportive of Build to Rent developments, subject to their location and the characteristics of the site and affordable private rented homes being provided. The study recommends monitoring the take up of developments completed within the study area as an indication of demand.

The [Build to Rent Market in Greater Cambridge and West Suffolk](#) report (Savills, June 2020) considers the housing market within the study area and the demand for private rented housing, the potential role that Build to Rent developments can play on large scale new developments, and other potential locations suitable for these

developments. The report outlines that the high house prices within the study area make Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire unaffordable to many potential buyers, and this creates a demand for rented accommodation. The report also highlights that private rented households typically cluster close to employment opportunities or university campuses. The report acknowledges that Build to Rent could be provided on almost any site where build to sell can be provided, but that the majority of Build to Rent schemes that have been brought forward are in more urban locations due to both the lower level of competition for these sites with housebuilders but also that these locations more closely align with the highest demand for private rented homes. The report includes information on how investors select where to bring forward Build to Rent schemes, such as the typical demographic information considered, the strength of the local economy, proximity to good transport connectivity, the local housing market, access to appropriate social infrastructure and local amenities, and capital values and likely rental values.

The report sets out that the average size of a completed Build to Rent scheme is 133 homes, with only a few Build to Rent schemes of over 250 homes completed so far, but that developments of over 1,000 private rented sector homes are now coming forwards in London and Manchester. The report states that the majority of Build to Rent schemes are delivering wholly or mostly apartments, and that this is mainly due to their location; however it also makes clear that Build to Rent homes can be provided as houses, and some are being delivered by PlaceFirst and Sigma.

The [Build to Rent Market Strategic Overview and Summary of Site-Specific Appraisals](#) report (Arc4, March 2021) outlines the policy approaches to Build to Rent developments that have been taken by other urban locations, provides feedback from registered providers and investors on Build to Rent developments, considers the role and risks of Build to Rent developments and their implications for place shaping, and sets out recommendations in terms of the content of planning policies for Build to Rent developments. Site specific appraisals were completed for nine strategic sites and the report concludes that there is clearly an opportunity for Build to Rent in each of these developments. The report makes clear that there may be other sites that offer the opportunity for Build to Rent that have not been considered as part of this study, such as town centre or regeneration sites located close to public transport.

Four of the six site specific appraisals completed were for developments within Greater Cambridge, including one for [North East Cambridge](#). The appraisal outlines that there is an opportunity for Build to Rent homes to be provided at North East Cambridge, and that Build to Rent schemes have the potential to contribute positively towards the delivery of North East Cambridge if they are delivered in a balanced way that is aligned to the Area Action Plan's strategic objectives.

The report recommends that the following should be included in planning policies for Build to Rent developments:

- a minimum of 20% Affordable Private Rent is provided, unless the Councils wish to seek a higher percentage based on local evidence and taking into account viability;
- a range of unit sizes is provided, including family sized units, in line with up to date evidence, and that all units should be self contained;
- Affordable Private Rent homes should be distributed throughout the development and be physically indistinguishable from the market rent homes in terms of quality and size;
- all homes should be under common management, with access to the same facilities, and there should be on-site staff;
- a minimum three year tenancy should be offered and the tenancy agreement should be clear on the process for rent reviews and renewals;
- deposits should be held securely and all rents should be inclusive of service charges;
- Affordable Private Rent homes should be let at an agreed discount from the local market rent of an equivalent home, with the discount reflecting local affordability;
- consideration of whether the first priority for the Affordable Private Rent homes should be given to those with an agreed local connection, and / or whether a proportion of the Affordable Private Rent homes should be tethered to local employers or secured for other local needs;
- any affordable homes should be secured in perpetuity and a covenant period of at least 15 years should be considered for the retention of the private market rented homes with a clawback mechanism;

- consideration of the potential implications of the Build to Rent scheme on place shaping;
- the minimum number of units for a Build to Rent scheme on a strategic site should be 50 homes, with the maximum number to be determined by evidence demonstrating how the scheme will support the place shaping agenda, meet local housing need, complement the existing or proposed surroundings in terms of scale, and take account of wider policy considerations including overall scheme viability; and
- any applications for Build to Rent schemes should be based on clear evidence of need.

The Councils recognise that there are both pros and cons for Build to Rent schemes. Build to Rent schemes can help accelerate delivery of homes as they are not subject to the same absorption constraints as market housing for sale, and they can also accelerate occupation within larger sites which can contribute to building the community. However, large concentrations of rental accommodation of a similar type and size that are aimed at specific groups, may make it difficult to create mixed and balanced communities.

Although Build to Rent schemes offer longer and more certain tenancies, and provide a more consistent quality of management than in other private rented sector accommodation, there is likely to still be a higher turn-over of residents than in most other tenures. This along with any impacts that can arise from sub-letting or holiday letting if tenancy conditions are not enforced, may have impacts on the commitment of residents to placemaking and community building and / or result in anti-social behaviour and community safety issues.

In London, which already has an established history of Build to Rent development, the London Plan requires 35% affordable housing on Build to Rent development (to qualify for the fast track route) or the submission of viability evidence where this is not proposed. Further, 30% the discounted market rent housing is required to be the equivalent of London Living Rent, and all discounted market rent units must fully meet the definition of intermediate housing and be affordable to those eligible for intermediate rented housing in London.

Viability of schemes depends on both the amount and tenure(s) of housing, and the economics of Build to Rent developments, including Affordable Private Rent, are different to the economics for market homes for sale and affordable housing developments. Build to Rent developments provide a long term income stream to their investors but the annual return is lower than traditional build to sell models. These financial implications are likely to affect both the percentage of Affordable Private Rent that can reasonably be provided and the levels of contributions that can be made towards other infrastructure (Mind the Viability Gap, Investment Property Forum, 2015). As a result, Build to Rent schemes tend to come forward on a reasonably large scale (50+ units) to enable them to be financially viable.

### **Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, and Caravan and Boat Dwellers**

An assessment of the accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showmen and Bargee Travellers and other Caravan and Houseboat Dwellers in Cambridgeshire (including Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire), Peterborough, West Suffolk and King's Lynn & West Norfolk is being carried out. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and social distancing guidelines, the completion of this assessment has been delayed as it has impacted on the face-to-face surveys with the different groups. The study is expected at the end of 2021.

### **Visitor Accommodation and Short Term Lets**

Figures from Economic Impact of Tourism reports prepared by Destination Research indicate that tourism is important sector for the Greater Cambridge economy. It is estimated that the total value of tourism to the area in 2018 was over £1 billion and that in the same year it provided over 20,000 jobs. For Cambridge, employment in the tourism sector was estimated to be 22% of total employment.

The jobs created by the sector not only directly result from tourism businesses but also indirectly from their supply chain and the multiplier effects of spending by their employees.

Most visitors come to Cambridge on day trips. Only 11% of visitors stay overnight in the City. The difference in the value that day trips bring to Cambridge compared to

overnight stays is significant. Spend per trip by day visitors is on average just under £37, for overnight visitors it just over £366 per trip and just over £87 per night.

An analysis of the supply of visitor accommodation between 2012-2020 indicates that there was an increase of over 400 hotel bedrooms in Greater Cambridge during this period. The majority of the growth was around the edge of Cambridge city centre. Growth in the city centre was focused on extensions to existing hotels.

Looking forward, the pipeline of future hotel bedrooms, based on planning permissions and existing Local Plan allocations, suggests that the next ten years could see significantly faster growth than the previous ten years. Most of the growth would be accounted for by three sectors: 4\*, aparthotels and budget hotels. It would be concentrated in city centre and edge of city centre locations although some growth is expected in the remainder of South Cambridgeshire. In total, these developments could increase the number of rooms by over 1,800. However, it should be noted that not all planning permissions or allocations will necessarily result in development activity.

An online review suggests there has been considerable growth in the serviced apartments sector (not included in the analysis above). A recent market report suggests there are five operators with 192 apartments in 2019/20<sup>1</sup>. This represents an increase of about 50% on the 2012 baseline.

At the smaller end of the visitor accommodation sector, about 30 planning permissions were identified which have resulted in changes to the visitor accommodation stock. Those increasing stock outweighed those reducing stock by about 3:2. However, it should be noted that information on the number of rooms was not always available, so it has not been possible to quantify the scale of change.

The most common source of new stock has been the conversion of residential properties to B&B accommodation - ten examples were identified. There have also been small scale extensions to hotels and accommodation blocks added to pubs.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Statements of Needs Assessments for an Aparthotel project at CB1, Cambridge – Update December 2020', Bridgit Baker Consulting Ltd for Brookgate Property Ltd



The most common source of losses has been the conversion of B&B accommodation to Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

The short term lettings sector has seen substantial growth over a number of years with the growth of the sharing economy and online lettings platforms such as Airbnb and Vrbo. A [Guardian article in February 2020](#) estimated that there were 1,181 active Airbnb listings in Cambridge and 436 active listings in South Cambridgeshire in the six months to January 2020 with the highest incidence in Newnham, Market and Petersfield.

Short term lets can create significant problems for local residents including neighbour disturbance, safety worries and loss of social cohesion, and, where they develop in large numbers, for the local housing market. As at August 2021, the Planning Enforcement team were balancing a caseload of 60 short-term lettings cases in Cambridge.

From a demand side point of view, there remains a high degree of uncertainty around the medium to longer term impacts of Covid on the travel and tourism sector both locally and nationally. As part of the development of its Tourism Recovery Plan, the Government commissioned [UK Tourism Scenario Forecasts](#) research from Tourism Economics understanding of the future landscape of recovery in the Tourism and Travel sector. The analysis was conducted in late March 2021.

The analysis concludes that domestic demand is likely to remain the key driver of overall UK demand in the near-term. Under their baseline scenario, they forecast that domestic travel will remain 46% below 2019 levels in 2021 but recover fully by 2023. International visits in 2021 are expected to remain 73% lower than 2019 levels with travel demand returning to 2019 levels in 2025 due to uncertainty around new virus strains and longer-term economic effects.

Additional research will take place in 2022 to understand the impacts on the supply and demand of visitor accommodation in Greater Cambridge. It is expected that the position in respect of the tourism market for Greater Cambridge will be clearer at this stage.

## **Housing for Local Workers**

Both Councils have signalled an ambition to work with local employers to provide accommodation that can support local workers, and there is growing interest from local businesses and their representatives in gaining a better understanding of the housing needs of people working in the Greater Cambridge area.

For example, Cambridge University Hospitals has been conducting some research into the housing needs of its workers, and submitted this to the Councils as part of their representations on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan: First Conversation. This included a report by Savills on [Assessing the Housing Need of Hospital Workers](#) and their own publication on [Delivering Affordable Housing for our Hospital Workers: The Case for Change](#).

Also, Cambridge Ahead has published information on how Cambridge employers are [supporting their workers](#) to be able to live locally.

In December 2020, South Cambridgeshire District Council granted outline planning permission (S/4329/18/OL) for up to 1,500 homes, employment uses, and supporting community uses and social infrastructure at the Wellcome Genome Campus in Hinxton. The homes permitted are specifically for existing and future Campus workers, to enable the retention of staff and provide a competitive offer for future employees.

## **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) does not provide specific information on the need for new HMOs, however it reports that 'other households' in Cambridge, such as Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), are projected to increase by 38.3% between 2020 and 2040, and that 'other households' in South Cambridgeshire are projected to increase by 55.0% over the same period.

## **Community Led Housing**

There are a number of Community Land Trusts in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire looking to bring forward developments.

[Marmalade Lane](#) at Orchard Park is an example of a co-housing development that has been completed in Greater Cambridge.

## Preferred Approach and Reasons

### Overall Housing Mix

There is a clear need for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures, at different price points to create choice and meet the range of housing needs being identified as required across Greater Cambridge. It is generally accepted that mixing of tenures on a development can have a positive effect in terms of place making, through building mixed and sustainable communities and improving integration. The [National Design Guide](#), part of the government's collection of planning practice guidance, refers to the need for different tenures to be well-integrated and for there to be no segregation of tenure.

The overall housing mix (in terms of size – number of bedrooms) promoted at North East Cambridge reflects both the need to support social inclusion and wellbeing through the creation of a mixed, balanced, sustainable and successful community, along with the need to deliver homes that contribute towards meeting overall housing needs across Greater Cambridge. Nevertheless, Policy 13a: Housing Provision recognises that housing needs may change over the development period for North East Cambridge and therefore sets out that proposals for new homes should take account of the latest evidence, such as the recommendations on housing mix set out in the [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021), whilst also having regard to the requirement to deliver high quality higher density homes that meet the objectives of the Area Action Plan.

While North East Cambridge spans both authorities, when taking account of district wide evidence, a housing mix for Cambridge based on its urban character and higher densities is likely to be considered more appropriate than the equivalent for South Cambridgeshire based on its more rural context.

## **Phasing**

With mixed tenure and higher densities planned for the site, there will need to be careful consideration of how to minimise any potential negative community impacts, to ensure that North East Cambridge is a pleasant place to live and can make a positive contribution to health and wellbeing. For example, it has been identified that on previous large developments in Cambridgeshire, where the infrastructure and facilities are less established this has contributed towards some residents feeling isolated, often leading or contributing to mental ill health.

Housing needs to be delivered alongside other facilities and social infrastructure, including appropriate community, cultural and recreational provision. Accessible amenity spaces can facilitate and encourage social activity, community cohesion and help tackle inequality. It is therefore critical that the bringing forward of infrastructure and facilities is phased appropriately in line with development across the Area Action Plan area, especially in relation to parcels including housing and/or affordable housing, to help support wellbeing and an integrated community from the outset. This requirement for a co-ordinated approach to the development of North East Cambridge is included in Policy 23: Comprehensive and Coordinated Development.

## **Affordable Housing**

### **Need for Affordable Housing**

Greater Cambridge is an expensive place to buy or rent a home, with housing affordability being one of the main housing challenges facing the area. Proximity to good transport links has the potential to increase demand and push prices up further. We know from other higher density developments that high service charges on new homes can also be an issue.

Because of this, both Councils see provision of affordable housing as a priority, but there are issues around the extent to which so-called affordable housing is genuinely affordable. For example, the national approach to affordable rents for social housing being able to be charged at up to 80% of market rents will be unaffordable to many. [Annex 11](#) of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 therefore sets out how the Councils would like Registered Providers to go about setting rents for

Affordable Rent homes in Greater Cambridge to ensure they are as affordable as possible to those who need these homes, and consideration of this Annex (or its successor) is a requirement of Policy 13b: Affordable housing.

Other factors can also have an impact on housing affordability. For example, energy efficient homes, living close to places of work, opportunities for active travel and access to cheap public transport can also affect the extent to which households are able to afford their housing costs. Evidence demonstrates that for those on low incomes the housing options are scarce, with a heavy reliance on social/affordable rent homes. However, there is also a growing 'affordability gap' where middle income households are being squeezed out of the market with limited housing options for low cost home ownership or the private rented sector. It is therefore important that new homes delivered at North East Cambridge are genuinely affordable, as set out in Policy 13b: Affordable housing.

One of the issues in determining the affordable housing mix at an early stage of planning, is that during the life of the development new evidence on housing needs, as well as changes to national and local policy, can impact on the tenures and sizes of homes required. Policy 13a: Housing Provision and Policy 13b: Affordable housing therefore set out that the size and type of any new homes proposed at North East Cambridge should be informed by the latest evidence of needs.

High house prices have contributed recently to difficulties for some developers in selling shared ownership properties. For example, a 25% share in a new two bedroom apartment valued at around £380,000 combined with rent on the unsold share and potential service charges, is still unaffordable for many. Consideration will need to be given as to how shared ownership is made affordable to those on middle incomes, and whether there are other routes to home ownership that can help meet the needs of this group.

Both adopted Local Plans require 40% affordable housing, and therefore with a clear need for affordable housing in Greater Cambridge, it is appropriate that the requirement for 40% affordable homes should apply to the AAP area as set out in Policy 13a: Housing Provision and Policy 13b: Affordable housing. To achieve this, all developments that provide 10 dwellings or more should include affordable housing.

The split between affordable and market homes that would arise from such a policy, based on the delivery of 8,350 homes, is set out in Table 18 below.

Table 18: Potential number of affordable and market homes at North East Cambridge

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number of homes</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Affordable	40%	3,340	Likely to be a mixture of social/affordable rent housing, low cost home ownership, First Homes, affordable routes to home ownership, and Affordable Private Rent.
Market	60%	5,010	A mix of market sale and private rented, including Build to Rent
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,350</b>	-

### **Tenure Mix of Affordable Homes**

Both Councils' Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Documents were agreed some years ago, and the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 points to the need for the balance of affordable housing tenures for both districts to be reviewed. The [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021) reports that there is a need for both social/affordable rent and affordable homeownership homes. New affordable housing tenures, such as First Homes, have been introduced through national planning policy and guidance.

These factors, together with the importance of North East Cambridge in supporting the needs of the local economy, and the significant numbers of affordable homes that will be delivered within North East Cambridge due to its higher density nature, mean that the Councils need to look beyond the previously recommended

social/affordable rented to intermediate affordable housing tenure splits of 75%/25% for Cambridge and 70%/30% for South Cambridgeshire.

The affordable housing tenure mix therefore needs to both recognise the high level of need for social/affordable rent housing, but also the need to consider a broader range of affordable housing tenures. It is also important to ensure that there is not an imbalance in terms of the overall rented sector (social/affordable rent, Affordable Private Rent and market rent Build to Rent homes) compared to other tenures. By providing a wide range of affordable housing tenures, this will contribute to the delivery of a balanced and mixed community, and it will result in homes to meet a wide range of income levels, including those of local workers. Policy 13b: Affordable housing therefore sets out the proportions of each affordable housing tenure that will be sought from residential proposals at North East Cambridge, whilst also allowing for some variations to this where it is agreed with the Councils and responds to specific circumstances. All affordable housing tenures should only include those where the homes or grant funding used remains available for affordable housing in the long term.

### **Location, Distribution and Design of Affordable Homes**

Consideration needs to be given to how affordable housing is both located and distributed within each land parcel and across North East Cambridge as a whole, and also designed both in terms of its physical external appearance and internal layout, to meet national planning policy and guidance requirements, support community integration, and ensure homes can be effectively managed. Clusters of social/affordable rent homes in particular need to be well integrated, tenure blind, and not confined to less prominent parts of the site as a whole or on any individual land parcel.

[Annex 10](#) of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 sets out how any affordable homes for rent and shared ownership homes should be clustered and distributed in relation to each other and also in relation to other intermediate and market tenures on any new developments, and how sizes and types of affordable homes should be grouped together to deliver fully integrated mixed housing schemes. The principles set out in this policy should be applied to North East

Cambridge, and therefore Policy 13b: Affordable housing refers to this Annex (or its successor).

### **Size of Affordable Homes**

In terms of sizes of affordable homes, district wide recommendations are provided in the [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) study (GL Hearn, 2021). Alongside this, the Councils' housing registers currently suggest demand for social/affordable rent housing is mostly for smaller properties; however, turnover of larger properties tends to be slower, and the required mix is liable to change over time. North East Cambridge therefore needs to deliver appropriately sized homes to meet demand within the context of its higher density nature, and therefore the majority of affordable homes are likely to be smaller (mainly one and two bedrooms), with some larger family homes to reflect the generally lower turnover of those sizes of homes and support the creation of a balanced community. There is also the potential for houses to be provided as Affordable homes for rent to meet some of the need for family affordable housing. Policy 13b: Affordable housing therefore requires the size and type of any affordable housing to be informed by the latest evidence of needs.

### **Housing Design, including Residential Space Standards and Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

High quality housing design is recognised as important for the occupants themselves, and can also make a major contribution to place-shaping. It is also important that new development is designed to have a positive impact on, and integrate with, existing communities, with the existing natural, built and historic environment, and elements such as access to local amenities and facilities.

All tenures of housing should not be visually distinguishable from each other by their external appearance (as set out in Policy 13a: Housing Provision and Policy 13b: Affordable housing) or by their residential space standards or accessible and adaptable standards (as set out in Policy 11: Housing design standards).

Homes should integrate the principles of sustainable design and construction, as currently set out in the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction



SPD 2020, unless it can be demonstrated that it is inappropriate or unviable to do so. This is included as a requirement in Policy 2: Designing for the climate emergency, and more information is provided in the Climate Change, Energy, Water and Sustainable Design and Construction Topic Paper. Homes that meet higher sustainability standards will contribute towards minimising the environmental impact of new development but will also create social benefits such as reduced living costs that contribute to the overall affordability of homes.

Housing development should also meet the principles laid down in the [Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide](#), which sets out key design principles for the development of council owned land and new social housing delivered by/for the Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency in Cambridge. It is based around four key principles: Community, Connectivity, Character and Climate. Its objectives are to: address issues such as fuel and water poverty; build homes that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents; build homes that are designed and built to high design and sustainability standards; ensure new homes are easy to maintain and affordable to heat; and ensure they are adaptable, both for residents and to future climate change.

Noise mitigation will be important given the surrounding context of roads and railway, the retention of the aggregates railheads, and the more compact form of proposed development. As the site matures, it is reasonable to expect a growth of town centre noise generating uses such as schools, pubs and music venues. The Agent of Change principle should be treated as a key consideration for determining residential applications. Development proposals for housing should demonstrate how noise, pollution and other potential nuisances have been mitigated. Given the proposals for higher density provision of homes at North East Cambridge, meaning large numbers of flatted development and mixed use schemes, the build quality will need to ensure noise is mitigated from both external (e.g. A14 and railway) sources and internal sources (as set out in Policy 11: Housing design standards). Neighbour noise is critical and is something that has been learned from other recent developments. The Environmental Health Topic Paper, [Mixed Use Development: Overcoming barriers to delivery at North East Cambridge](#) (GL Hearn, June 2020), and the Typologies Study and Development Capacity Assessment provide further information on this.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of information technology and digital connectivity to support home life. Developments in North East Cambridge should integrate these considerations into the design of homes (as set out in Policy 30: Digital infrastructure and open innovation, with more detail provided in the Smart Topic Paper: Digital Infrastructure), to ensure an equitable distribution of high quality digital infrastructure. These design considerations will support communication and community building that is ever more reliant on IT.

Building to Secured by Design principles (as set out in Policy 7: Creating high quality streets, spaces and landscape) and creating spaces that are designed to be inclusive, safe and enjoyable (as set out in Policy 6a: Distinctive design for North East Cambridge) can help make homes and neighbourhoods safer and more secure, removing the threat or perceived threat of crime, reduce levels of anti-social behaviour, and improve community safety. It can help promote a sense of public ownership and make homes easier to maintain and housing developments easier to manage.

Housing has a key role to play in promoting health and wellbeing. Having a stable, secure home that is truly affordable to live in is recognised as a key determinant of good mental and physical health. Homes should have access to open space as this is critical to the welfare and mental health of new communities in particular (see Policy 8: Open spaces for recreation and sport). As North East Cambridge is a new community, it will provide a place for new families to start, so even on small unit size properties, the need for homes to be integrated with considerations around child placement/care/nursery provision is key to support health and wellbeing.

### **Residential Space Standards and Private Amenity Space**

To deliver high quality homes, all homes at North East Cambridge should be designed so that their internal space standards meet the nationally described residential space standards as a minimum, and they should have an appropriate provision of private amenity space, as required by Policy 11: Housing design standards.

The Councils believe that private outside space is desirable in all circumstances at North East Cambridge, and that all dwellings should be provided with adequate

private outside space in the form of a garden, terrace, balcony or glazed winter garden. The Councils have used the Greater London Plan 2021 Policy D6: Housing quality and space standards to inform the requirements for North East Cambridge as developments in London are similar in typology to those proposed for North East Cambridge. The Councils have therefore adopted the London requirements for private amenity space at North East Cambridge Area Action Plan for all housing tenures.

### **Accessible and Adaptable Homes**

North East Cambridge provides an opportunity to deliver good quality accessible housing for older people and others with mobility needs. Homes designed to be accessible and adaptable enable people to live independently for longer, creating a mixed community and also helping to reduce strain on wider health, care and support services.

Our evidence, which sets out population projections in Greater Cambridge and anticipates a significant increase in the over 65s with mobility issues by 2040, recommends that all new homes should meet the Building Regulations M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' standard. The same evidence also reports a need for some dwellings to be specifically designed to meet the needs of wheelchair users. Policy 11: Housing design standards therefore requires a proportion of new homes to be provided at North East Cambridge that meet the Building Regulations M4(3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' standard with either the home being suitable for a wheelchair user at the point of completion or the home being able to be easily adapted to meet the needs of a wheelchair user.

### **Specialist Housing and Homes for Older People**

Our evidence shows that we have a need for specialist housing both for older people and disabled people, and that as well as mainstream housing that is adaptable, a variety of different types of specialist housing are needed (both self contained homes within larger schemes and bedspaces) to meet a broad range of needs and different levels of care.

It is important to provide a range of housing options as people are not always willing to move out of long-term family homes, even where their health and social care needs would be better met elsewhere. Therefore, the homes delivered at North East Cambridge need to be future-proofed through design and flexible to meet needs of both young and old, giving as many people as possible the opportunity to continue to live within the area and for their home to be adapted to their needs so that they can remain at home. Requiring homes to meet the accessible and adaptable homes standards (as set out in Policy 11: Housing design standards) will allow for homes to be adapted over time to accommodate a wheelchair user(s), or to take account of other disability or mobility issues. Self and custom build dwellings can also be designed specifically to meet the requirements of the occupant(s) and therefore take account of any disability or mobility issues.

However, alongside the provision of homes that can be adapted to meet needs, there is also a need for specialist housing for a wide variety of groups with varying needs and levels of care. As part of creating a balanced and mixed community, specialist housing should therefore be provided at North East Cambridge to meet some of the Greater Cambridge needs as set out in Policy 13a: Housing Provision. Any specialist homes for those with disabled people should be located in walking distance to services and facilities.

There are likely to be strategic and revenue implications for Cambridgeshire County Council when specialist housing and bedspaces are provided, and there are inherent difficulties in the time lapse between planning for and delivering specialist housing schemes in relation to commitments to revenue funding. Any plans for delivery of specialist housing for either older people or disabled people should be discussed with Cambridgeshire County Council at the pre-application planning stage, and evidence of their endorsement for the scheme would need to be provided before any planning application is considered.

### **Student Accommodation**

Purpose built student accommodation is intended for students of Higher Education institutions undertaking full-time courses of one academic year or more. While Cambridge Regional College, adjacent to the site, provides a number of Higher

Education courses, the Councils do not have evidence of a specific need for purpose built student accommodation within North East Cambridge and therefore have not included a specific policy within the AAP.

### **Self and Custom Build Homes**

The Greater Cambridge Self and Custom Build Register records a demand for self build plots and custom build homes within Greater Cambridge, and therefore the Councils must have regard to this and grant planning permission for enough suitable plots to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build homes can provide market or affordable housing.

Policy 13e: Self and custom build housing therefore requires new developments at North East Cambridge to contribute towards meeting this demand by seeking 5% of all new homes on developments of 20 dwellings or more within the AAP area to be brought forward as self or custom build homes. This will also diversify the types of homes provided within the AAP area.

However, given the likely changes in the level of demand over time for self or custom build homes within North East Cambridge, where these homes are not taken up following 12 months of appropriate marketing, it is reasonable for the home to be delivered without the self or custom build requirement as set out in Policy 13e: Self and custom build housing.

Given the higher density planned for the area, it is likely that custom build or custom finish homes will be a more appropriate form of housing for North East Cambridge than self-build homes. It is expected that these custom build or custom finish units will be houses or apartments build to a shell finish where owners determine the final internal layout and finish. In bringing forward these homes, the Councils must be satisfied that the initial owner of each home will, as a minimum, have primary input into its final internal layout and finish. As set out in national planning guidance, homes bought off plan and prior to construction without the owner having input into their design and layout are not considered to meet the definition of self or custom build housing.

As set out in Policy 13e: Self and custom build housing, North East Cambridge has the potential to enable appropriate community led self or custom build housing initiatives to be supported, provided they are compliant with the policies in the AAP.

### **Build to Rent Homes**

Having good quality, well managed private rented accommodation in close proximity to work is likely to be attractive to young professionals, perhaps on short term contracts, who are not looking to purchase a home at that time. There is also a demand for rented accommodation within Greater Cambridge as a result of high house prices making buying a home unaffordable to many. The private rented sector within Greater Cambridge has grown considerably since 2001.

Our evidence highlights that there are still very few Build to Rent developments within Cambridge compared to other regional cities, even though private rented sector / Build to Rent investors favour urban locations where there is likely to be demand from students, academics and young professionals. The site specific appraisal for North East Cambridge outlines that Build to Rent schemes have the potential to contribute towards the delivery of the strategic objectives for the area, and that there is clearly an opportunity for Build to Rent schemes to be provided.

Allowing Build to Rent developments within North East Cambridge as set out in Policy 13c: Build to Rent will provide housing choice, as well as contributing to increasing housing delivery as these schemes will not be subject to the same market absorption issues as market homes for sale.

There are concerns that private rented sector housing has a higher risk than other tenures of housing of creating transient communities due to the turnover of tenants, and also that large concentrations of a similar type and size of rental accommodation that are aimed at specific groups will impact on delivering balanced and mixed communities and may result in anti-social behaviour and community safety issues. Therefore, minimising churn and transience and preventing the development of large concentrations of this housing tenure are key factors that need to be addressed to ensure the creation of a community at North East Cambridge. To limit the possible negative impacts of private rented sector / Build to Rent homes on the AAP area and surrounding communities, the Councils are keen to ensure that the principles of long-

term community building and place-shaping developed on other strategic sites such as Orchard Park and Eddington can be applied here.

It is clear that there is a potential need and demand for some purpose-built private rented sector housing, including Build to Rent, within North East Cambridge as part of the overall range of housing provision and that the policies within the AAP should be supportive of some Build to Rent homes. However, the amount of private rented sector accommodation and particularly Build to Rent homes needs to be carefully managed to ensure the creation of a balanced and mixed community, to limit the impacts on placemaking, to enable the delivery of the target of 40% affordable housing across the AAP area, and to limit the likely impacts of lower contributions towards infrastructure from Build to Rent schemes due to up front viability issues.

A range of unit sizes and household types will be required. Studio apartments may be acceptable in order to provide a more affordable housing option, but this will be subject to a clear evidence of need and only where they are provided as part of a wider mix of sizes, therefore providing a balanced offer.

Any new Build to Rent developments should take account of the guidance as set out in [Annex 9](#) of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023, or its successor document, as required by Policy 13c: Build to Rent. Specific requirements are also set out in the policy.

Rents for any new Build to Rent schemes should take affordability into account, assessed on the basis of 30 to 35% of net household income being reasonable to spend on housing costs, including any service charges.

### **Affordable Private Rent Homes**

Purpose built private rented sector schemes delivered as Build to Rent will be required to provide an element of affordable housing to help address the high level of need for affordable housing in Cambridge and the wider Greater Cambridge area. In line with national planning guidance, Policy 13c: Build to Rent requires at least 20% of Build to Rent homes to be provided as Affordable Private Rent homes, and the Councils will seek a higher percentage where there is a clear need and viability permits.

Applicant eligibility criteria for the Affordable Private Rent homes will need to be agreed with the Council concerned.

Affordable Private Rent housing should be evenly distributed throughout the Build to Rent development and physically indistinguishable from the market rent housing in terms of quality and size. Flexibility may be built in to alternate specific units between Affordable Private Rent and market rent over time.

Any Affordable Private Rent homes included as part of a Build to Rent scheme, and secured through a section 106 agreement, should be provided specifically as a community benefit in perpetuity. The future sale of a Build to Rent scheme, or the sale of individual homes within the scheme to other tenures, should not result in the withdrawal of the affordable housing contribution from the local community. Any changes should not result in the loss of affordable housing without alternative provision being made.

Appropriate clawback arrangements in the event of future tenure changes would also need to be agreed with the councils to secure the value of the Affordable Private Rent homes. The nature of these arrangements should depend on the circumstances at the time and evidence of good practice elsewhere.

### **Affordability of Affordable Private Rent housing**

As set out in Policy 13c: Build to Rent, the rent for Affordable Private Rent homes should be set at least 20% below private market rent levels (inclusive of service charges) for the same or equivalent property and at levels that clearly meet the needs of those on middle incomes (currently £30,000 to £50,000), in line with up to date affordability analysis. In line with Annex 9 of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023, the Council will seek a discount of more than 20% compared with market levels wherever possible.

The discount should be calculated when an Affordable Private Rented home is rented out and when the tenancy is subsequently renewed. The rent should increase on the same basis as longer term market tenancies within the development.



## **Limiting the Number of Build to Rent Homes within the AAP area**

Given the lower contribution that Build to Rent schemes are likely to make to the overall delivery of affordable homes at North East Cambridge, and the high level of affordable housing need in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, in order to achieve the overall target of 40% affordable housing in the AAP area, it is important that the shortfall in affordable homes is made up elsewhere in the AAP area. As set out above, the dominance of Build to Rent homes will also have implications for placemaking, the creation of a balanced and mixed community, and the provision of infrastructure.

Consideration has been given to the means of securing the most appropriate balance between the provision of Build to Rent homes, securing 40% affordable homes across the AAP area, and creating a balanced and mixed community with the necessary infrastructure. The implications of different numbers of Build to Rent homes within the AAP area on the amount of affordable housing that it is likely would be secured and the provision of a variety of housing tenures have therefore been explored.

Firstly, if for example, Build to Rent homes made up all 8,350 homes within the AAP area, and 20% of these were Affordable Private Rent homes, quite apart from not creating a mixed community, only 1,670 affordable homes would be delivered. This is significantly less than the 3,340 affordable homes that could be secured if 40% of all homes provided were affordable. It would also result in no other housing tenures being delivered.

Secondly, if for example, Build to Rent homes made up 30% of the 8,350 homes at North East Cambridge, so around 2,505 homes, and 20% of these homes were provided as Affordable Private Rent homes, the other 70% of the homes delivered would be required to increase their provision of affordable housing by just over 6% to 46.25% to achieve the overall 40% affordable homes target. Having a mix of Build to Rent homes and market homes, and therefore Affordable Private Rent homes and other tenures of affordable housing such as social/affordable rent homes would enable the provision of a mixed community that meets the needs of a variety of households and incomes.

Finally, if for example, Build to Rent homes made up 10% of the 8,350 homes within the AAP area, so around 835 homes, and 20% of these homes were provided as Affordable Private Rent homes, the other 90% of the homes delivered would be required to increase their provision of affordable housing by just over 2% to 42.22% to achieve the overall 40% affordable homes target. Again, having a mix of both market and affordable tenures would enable the provision of a mixed community that meets the needs of a variety of households and incomes.

Having considered the impacts of different amounts of Built to Rent housing on the provision of affordable housing, and also on the creation of a balanced and mixed community with the necessary infrastructure, it is considered that a cap on the total amount of Build to Rent homes at 10% of the total homes for North East Cambridge is reasonable and appropriate and is therefore set out in Policy 13c: Build to Rent. This will enable the provision of up to around 835 Build to Rent homes, leaving the other 90% (around 7,515 homes) to be provided as a variety of market and affordable housing tenures.

This cap will help to ensure that the provision of housing at North East Cambridge will be viable and able to deliver the 40% affordable homes target overall across the AAP area, while supporting the delivery of a mixed and balanced community with the necessary infrastructure.

### **Management of Build to Rent schemes**

Our evidence on Build to Rent developments provides recommendations on what should be included regarding the requirements for covenants and management arrangements in any planning policies relating to Build to Rent homes. It is recommended that:

- all homes should be under common management, with access to the same facilities, and there should be on-site staff;
- a minimum three year tenancy should be offered and the tenancy agreement should be clear on the process for rent reviews and renewals;
- deposits should be held securely and all rents should be inclusive of service charges; and

- any affordable homes should be secured in perpetuity and a covenant period of a minimum of 15 years should be considered for the retention of the private market rented homes with a clawback mechanism.

It is important that Build to Rent schemes are well managed and therefore specific requirements are set out in Policy 13c: Build to Rent.

## **Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, and Caravan and Boat Dwellers**

It is acknowledged that the new accommodation needs assessment for Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showmen and Bargee Travellers and other Caravan and Houseboat Dwellers being carried out is likely to identify a requirement in Greater Cambridge for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, caravan sites, and residential moorings. However, given the high densities proposed at Cambridge North East, low density accommodation such as Gypsy and Traveller pitches, Travelling Showpeople plots, and caravan sites / mobile home parks are unlikely to optimise the development potential of North East Cambridge. It is therefore not consistent with the NPPF 2021 which requires development to make efficient use of land, in particular brownfield sites in close proximity to public transport hubs.

Existing Gypsies and Travellers at nearby Chesterton Fen Road should be able to benefit from the North East Cambridge development in other ways, this may include new travel improvements with a new foot and cycle bridge proposed in the Spatial Framework to cross the railway tracks, and they should be able to access all local services and amenities within North East Cambridge and by sustainable means.

## **Visitor Accommodation and Short-Term Lets**

### **New visitor accommodation**

The Area Action Plan makes the provision for a significant amount of new homes and jobs. Visitor accommodation would contribute towards the functioning of the area and the economy of Greater Cambridge and it is therefore appropriate for the

Area Action Plan to support the principle of visitor accommodation as set out in Policy 13f: Short term/corporate lets and visitor accommodation.

To meet NEC's low environmental impact objective, it is important the area is able to cater for its own needs and not become a destination location for uses serving people working further afield who may travel to the area by car. In order not to exceed the agreed 'trip budget' for North East Cambridge, it will be necessary to only support new visitor accommodation which support the aims and objectives of the area. This also means resisting visitor accommodation that is not meeting a need from businesses operating in North East Cambridge or creating a need for specific car parking provision.

Support for visitor accommodation at NEC should be subject to the following caveats:

- There must be a proven need for visitor accommodation to serve the area;
- To help ensure that housing is available to meet local needs, the development of visitor accommodation should not result in the loss of existing housing;
- To minimise the impact on residential amenity and the use of private cars, visitor accommodation should be directed towards areas with good public transport with appropriate amenities, for example in the district or local centres or within the business or science parks that they are intended to serve;
- The accommodation provided should be of high-quality with wheelchair accessible units/rooms and communal spaces. High-quality standards include environmental building standard/ratings as well as the facilities and services they offer their occupiers;
- To support the strategic objective of the AAP to create a low environmental impact urban district, addressing both the climate and biodiversity emergencies, proposals should minimise need to travel by private vehicle and should promote sustainable modes of transport.

To enable policy implementation, developers should be required to provide full details of the nature of the accommodation to be provided and the proposed terms of

occupation when submitting a planning application for an Airbnb type use, new apart-hotels and serviced apartments.

Serviced apartments and apart-hotels, if approved, should be conditioned so that they cannot be used for permanent residential use without the submission and determination of a planning application. This would be the case whether they fall under the C1, C3 or sui generis use classes. This may include the imposition of conditions to ensure minimum and maximum lengths of stay (typically 90 days) and a restriction on return visits. This would help to prevent the introduction of permanent residents and the resultant impacts described in the next section. It would also help to protect the local visitor economy.

In order to ensure that the area is able to cater for its own needs and not become a destination location for other hotel users, extensions to the 90-day maximum length of stay for serviced apartments should only be considered on a case-by-case basis for a specific employer operating in the Area Action Plan area. This would help to minimise pressure on the local housing market by discouraging the occupation of residential units by corporate lettings, for businesses operating within the Area Action Plan area. These should also be secured by condition or via a Section 106 agreement. If the business were to subsequently move away from the Area Action Plan area the extension would be terminated.

### **Conversion of existing visitor accommodation to residential use**

Where a serviced apartment building is converted incrementally to residential use, the resulting mix of transitory, visitor accommodation with permanent residents can cause significant issues, particularly for the new home owners. The potential impacts on the amenity of local residents where they are located alongside visitor accommodation are described below. The incremental conversion of serviced buildings can amplify these impacts, particularly for the initial residents whose sense of security, ability to form community connections and amenity can be undermined by their isolation. The effective management of the development can also be impacted.

For this reason, proposals to change purpose-built serviced apartment units (excluding apart-hotels) to residential use should only be supported in circumstances

where the whole block of units are converted and not sub-divided. Housing policies Policy 13a: Housing Provision and 13b: Affordable housing will be relevant must also be applied in these circumstances.

### **Conversion of existing residential uses to visitor accommodation**

As described above, in recent years, the use of online platforms such as Airbnb to rent out either whole or parts of a residential unit as temporary accommodation for a variety of occupiers has become quite prevalent. This is particularly the case in popular tourist locations and in areas close to large employment centres. Although these services provide opportunity to support good growth in cities, the widespread and concentrated prevalence of this activity involving the whole (including part use) of the residential unit has many negative effects on surrounding local residents.

These include:

- Loss of amenity space, privacy and enjoyment of their home resulting from patterns of behaviour of short-term tenants.
- Continual disruption caused by visitors moving in and out of the premises, disruptive occupants and associated servicing of the unit(s).
- Frequent rotation of unknown, neighbouring occupiers undermines residents' sense of security of living in their own homes.
- Loss of community cohesion associated with frequent rotation of unknown neighbouring occupiers.

In addition to those above, it also removes much needed housing from the existing local housing stock creating an imbalance and increasing local rental values.

In light of this, within North East Cambridge, the conversion of existing housing to visitor accommodation should only take place in exceptional circumstances where: it does not adversely affect; residents amenity and sense of security; or the character of or community cohesion within the area and , where a proposal involves the conversion of a whole block of units, a service management plan is agreed with the planning authority.

## Homes for Local Workers

With science and business parks forming part of the site, delivering homes for local workers provides the opportunity to support local employment, reduce reliance on cars to get to work thereby helping to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, and offer a better work/life balance.

Housing at North East Cambridge has the potential to completely change the character of the area in a way that can help induce more sustainable lifestyles. If housing is occupied by employees of businesses within and adjacent to North East Cambridge, the area has the potential to be transformed from an edge of town commercial centre into a truly mixed used neighbourhood where the majority of journeys are made via active travel.

In the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy, South Cambridgeshire District Council prioritises exploring working with businesses to help themselves to provide homes for their workers, and considering whether there are specific requirements to provide essential local worker accommodation as part of the overall mix of housing.

Cambridge City Council has been more supportive of meeting the needs of workers through other mechanisms, including giving some priority to those in employment in the allocation of affordable housing where appropriate, as opposed to supporting specific employers or types of worker.

Provision of a range of homes, including affordable housing, will also contribute to delivering a balanced and mixed community while also meeting the housing needs of local workers.

As detailed in the Internalisation Topic Paper, the transport evidence identifies significant potential for trip internalisation (i.e. trips generated within North East Cambridge that both begin and end within the boundary of the AAP). A significant shift away from private vehicle journeys will be needed, and a threshold (trip budget) has been set to mitigate the impact of vehicular traffic from the development on the existing highway network. A good mix of housing types and tenures, and particularly homes linked to nearby workplaces have been identified as part of the solution to achieving this.

Policy 13d: Housing for local workers therefore sets out that local workers should be prioritised when allocating a proportion of the affordable homes secured within North East Cambridge. Support should also be given to Build to Rent homes that are block leased to nearby employers, so that homes are linked specifically to individual companies reducing commuting and enabling increased trip internalisation.

A Local Lettings Plan should be agreed with the Council to prioritise the letting of affordable housing, including giving some priority to local workers, within each phase of the development, so that applicants on the housing register may be given some priority if they work in the area. It is also recommended that a legal agreement be used to set the eligibility criteria for local workers within any block leased Build to Rent schemes and particularly for the Affordable Private Rent homes within these developments. Together these measures will help to develop a mixed and balanced community.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

No specific provision of Houses in Multiple Occupation is recommended for North East Cambridge, as some market homes are likely to become Houses in Multiple Occupation over time anyway. Adopted district wide policies as set out in the Local Plan(s) should therefore be used to consider any proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation within North East Cambridge that require planning permission.

However, a proportion of Affordable Private Rent units within Build to rent schemes could be provided as studio apartments at price points comparable to the wider Cambridge Houses in Multiple Occupation market.

### **Community Led Housing**

There are opportunities for community led housing to be brought forward within North East Cambridge, particularly through any custom build schemes. However, as community led housing is a way of delivering self contained homes through different delivery models, it is not considered necessary to have a specific policy. The policies for housing as included in the AAP would apply to any proposals for community led housing.