

Proposed post-committee amendments to the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy

Wording to be removed is in ~~strike through~~

Wording to be added is in *italics*

Amendments proposed following South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scrutiny & Overview Committee 6 June 2024

(NB Appendix numbers refer to committee report appendices).

a) Appendix A, Main Strategy document, page 7: Statement on our ambitions to achieve net zero carbon is correct, but recommend to add that South Cambridgeshire's target to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 is *"currently under review"*.

b) Appendix A, Main Strategy document, page 14, Adapting to and Mitigating climate change: Add: *"The planned growth for Greater Cambridge provides an exciting opportunity to create sustainable and vibrant new communities that contribute to meeting national targets set out in the Climate Change Act. [The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD](#) ensures that new development contributes to meeting the challenges posed by a changing climate. Through the emerging Local Plan, the councils will look to set specific levels of energy use that will be allowed for new development, how renewable energy should be used to meet that energy need, and how whole-life carbon emissions should be taken into account. Details of which can be found in the emerging [Policy CC/NZ: Net zero carbon new buildings](#)."*

And add: *"Both councils aim to lead the way to building exemplar new homes that not only help to mitigate the challenges of climate change, but also help to reduce energy costs for our tenants"*.

c) Appendix B, Annex 1, Housing for Specific Groups, add a new para 1.5 and amend subsequent paragraph numbers: *Although this policy cannot override National Planning Policy and associated guidance, or the councils' adopted Local Plans, it will be a material consideration in dealing with planning applications.*

d) Appendix B, Annex 1, Housing for Specific Groups, para 6.2: On new developments there should be a proportion of one-bedroom properties available on the open market to help meet the needs of young single people and couples. Add: *"Whist this will increase the availability of homes more suitable for young single*

people and couples, it is acknowledged that access to a deposit is often a barrier to getting a foot on the ladder. In 2023 the average age of a first-time buyer in the UK was 34 years old [source: Statista Research Feb 2024]”. Other types of housing “should also be considered that could help to meet this need beyond the more traditional house-build, such as” ~~could be provided~~ in the form of Build to Rent schemes, smaller units with some shared community facilities or good quality bespoke HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation). Any such housing needs to be balanced against the wider housing needs for the area.

e) Appendix B, Annex 4, Affordable Rents Policy, para 3: As a point of clarification, add to wording – Where the design and quality of homes is above national or local planning standards in place at the time, *for example built to Passivhaus principles or similar*, to help achieve the councils’ objections in relation to zero carbon homes and tackling fuel poverty, consideration will be given for Affordable Rents to be charged at up to 80% of a median market rent.

f) Appendix B, Annex 6, Summary of Evidence, Tables 2 & 3. Add: *“Please note that the percentages add up to more than 100%, as some of the figures are not mutually exclusive. For example, the number of households with incomes of under £30,000 also includes households with incomes of under £20,000.”*

g) Appendix B, Annex 8, Key Achievements: Add for South Cambridgeshire: *“During the last 10 years we have carried out a programme of energy efficiency improvements to council homes, including 295 air source heat pumps, 4,971 double or triple glazing, 524 external wall insulation, 3,628 cavity wall insulation, 4,187 loft insulation, 1837 modern storage heaters.”*

h) Typographical errors to be corrected:

- **Appendix A, Main document, page 20, Existing Homes, first paragraph:** incorrect spelling of insulation.
- **Appendix A, Main document, pages 27 & 28** examples are repeated from page 27.
- **Annex 2: Affordable Housing Requirements – page 10, paragraph 8.1:** full stop and space after ‘extra’.

Amendments proposed following Cambridge City Council Housing Scrutiny Committee 18 June 2024

- j) **Main Strategy document, page 10. Relationship with Local Plans:** This Strategy complements both councils' adopted Local Plans. *Although it cannot override National Planning Policy, and the adopted Local Plans and remain the starting point for decision-making, it will be a material consideration in making planning decisions.*
- k) **Main Strategy document, page 10, Relationship with Local Plans, 2nd paragraph onwards:** We recognise that in planning for new homes and communities it is essential to consider a wide range of factors such as: ~~water supply; where new settlements should be located; quality & design; site density; climate change; biodiversity; green space; services & facilities; parking; transport & other infrastructure; and protecting the character of the area.~~
- *Water supply*
 - *Transport and other infrastructure, including parking*
 - *Overall number of homes to be delivered*
 - *Design and quality of new homes and neighbourhoods, including requirements around sustainable design and construction*
 - *Site density, where new settlements should be located, and protecting the character of the area*
 - *Green space and biodiversity*
 - *Services and facilities*
 - *Student housing in Cambridge*

All of these issues, including the overall number of homes to be delivered, are required to be dealt with through the statutory Local Plan process, and so, to avoid duplication, these are not covered in detail here.

~~Other issues dealt with through the Local Plans rather than the Housing Strategy include:~~

~~Student housing in Cambridge, recognising that this may help free up accommodation suitable for the wider population~~

~~Supporting development by Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) builders, through the current Local Plans allowing for a mix of sites to come forward; and through national planning policy requirements to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of local housing requirement on sites of less than a hectare, which will be considered in developing the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan.~~

~~The councils will also supporting development by Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) builders, through The current Local Plans allowing for a mix of sites to come forward, including developments by Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) builders; and through a National Planning Policy requirements requires councils to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of local housing requirement on sites of less than a hectare, which and this will be considered in developing the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan-~~

l) Annex 1, Housing for Specific Groups, add a new para 1.5 and amend subsequent paragraph numbers: *Although this policy cannot override National Planning Policy and associated guidance, or the councils' adopted Local Plans, it will be a material consideration in dealing with planning applications.*

m) Annex 2, Affordable Housing Requirements, para 1.2: It sets out some of the main high level policies within our adopted Local Plans (2018) relating to affordable housing. It also provides a set of more detailed supplementary requirements, building on the policies in the adopted Local Plans (2018) and on the requirements in the previous Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 to 2023, *and in the context of National Planning Policy and associated guidance.*

n) Annex 2, Affordable Housing Requirements, para 1.7: *Although this policy cannot override National Planning Policy and associated guidance, or the councils' adopted Local Plans, it will be a material consideration in dealing with planning applications.*

o) Annex 2, Affordable Housing Requirements, after para 2.1: Add the current policy position for both councils:

"The councils' previous policy requirement in relation to the percentage of affordable housing by tenure, as detailed in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 was as follows:

- *Cambridge - A 75% : 25% split of rented (social or affordable rent capped at LHA rates) : intermediate (other forms of affordable housing set out in the NPPF).*
- *South Cambridgeshire - A 70% : 30% split of rented (social or affordable rent capped at LHA rates) : intermediate (other forms of affordable housing set out in the NPPF)"*

p) Annex 2, Affordable Housing Requirements, para 2.5: Add:

- 75% “of the 40% affordable housing requirement” to be Affordable/Social Rent. On S.106 sites above 15 homes at least 10% (of the 75%) to be allocated for Social Rent.
- 25% “of the 40% affordable housing requirement” will typically be for shared ownership where it is sufficiently affordable to meet local needs, although other types of tenure may be considered on individual schemes on a case by case basis.

Start new paragraph:

This reflects shared ownership as the councils’ preferred home ownership option. Where other tenure types are considered, either alongside or in place of shared ownership, this must align with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirement for at least 10% of the total number of homes to be for affordable home ownership, unless an exemption can be demonstrated.

q) Annex 2, paras 3.3, 3.4 & Table 2:

Tables 2 & 3 below, taken from research carried out to support development of the proposed Greater Cambridge Local Plan, represents a evidence based starting points for the affordable size mix within a development, gives evidence of need across the whole of Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, within each of the local authority areas.

Table 2: Affordable Housing Property Sizes: starting point

Property Size	Percentage mix of social/affordable rent homes
1 bedroom	30 to 40%
2 bedrooms	35 to 45%
3 bedrooms	15 to 25%
4+ bedrooms	0 to 10%

Source: [GL Hearn, Housing Needs of Specific Groups Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, October 2021, paragraph 7.75, estimated need for Cambridgeshire & West Suffolk](#)

Table 2: Affordable housing property sizes: starting point for Cambridge City

Tenure	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms
Market	0-10%	15-25%	40-50%	25-30%

Affordable home ownership	15-25%	35-45%	25-35%	5-15%
Affordable housing (rented)	35-45%	30-40%	15-25%	0-10%

Source: [GL Hearn, Housing Needs of Specific Groups Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, October 2021, paragraph 7.75, estimated need for Cambridgeshire & West Suffolk](#) [GL Hearn, Housing Needs of Specific Groups Cambridgeshire & West Suffolk, October 2021, Table 83.](#)

Table 3: Affordable housing property sizes: starting point for South Cambridgeshire

Tenure	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms
Market	0-10%	25-35%	40-50%	15-25%
Affordable home ownership	15-25%	40-50%	25-35%	0-10%
Affordable housing (rented)	30-40%	30-40%	20-30%	0-10%

Source: [GL Hearn, Housing Needs of Specific Groups Cambridgeshire & West Suffolk, October 2021, Table 87.](#)

3.4 In terms of new urban development, including fringe sites, a staged approach will be taken to assess a suitable affordable housing size mix, *taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding the proposed development.* The factors taken into account will include:

- *The overall housing mix proposed for the development*
- Up to date evidence
- Demand, *including numbers of applicants on the councils' Home-Link housing registers for different types of properties*
- *Turn-over of different sizes of property (i.e the extent to which different sizes of property tend to become available)*
- Any ~~E~~-existing Section 106 requirements
- National policy
- Affordability
- Wheelchair/specialist housing needs
- Mix in surrounding area

- Any other relevant factors

r) Annex 2 Affordable Housing Requirements. Amend paragraph numbers throughout in accordance with amendments above.

s) Annex 3: Clustering & Distribution of Affordable Housing, para 1.3: The policy should be used to help guide applicants to submit successful planning applications. ~~and~~ *Although it cannot override National Planning Policy and associated guidance, or the councils' adopted Local Plans, it will be a material consideration in making decisions on applications.*

t) Annex 5, Build to Rent: Para 1.3: The policy should be used to help guide applicants to submit successful planning applications. ~~and~~ *Although it cannot override National Planning Policy and associated guidance, or the councils' adopted Local Plans, it will be a material consideration in making decisions on applications.*