

## Chapter 5: Living in Cambridge

### Objectives

- 1 To provide new housing and community facilities to meet the needs of the City and to contribute to meeting the needs of the Cambridge Sub-region.**
- 2 To retain existing housing and needed community facilities.**

### Introduction

5.1 This chapter contains policies relating to the provision of housing and community facilities such as schools, health centres and hospitals, community halls, places of religious worship and childcare facilities. The intention is to increase the number of houses being built that people can afford to buy or rent and to provide well-located and accessible community facilities. Meeting this challenge successfully will help ensure a better quality of life for residents across the City and the Cambridge Sub-region and help foster healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities.

### Housing

#### 5/1 Housing Provision

**Provision is made for an increase of 12,500<sup>1</sup> dwellings (net) over the period 1999-2016. This will comprise approximately 6,500 dwellings within the urban area and 6,000 in the urban extensions.**

**Sites of 0.5 hectares or more proposed for residential development and the urban extensions are identified in the Proposals Schedule and on the Proposals Map. These sites and provision are safeguarded and development for alternative uses will not be permitted except:**

- a - as provided for in Policies 9/4 to 9/9 or the proposals schedule; or**
- b - for additional floorspace for established firms for their own occupation and use on their existing site.**

**Proposals for housing development on windfall sites will be permitted subject to the existing land use and compatibility with adjoining uses.**

<sup>1</sup>This provision does not include student units or other non self-contained dwellings.

5.2 The ability of the City to accommodate more housing is based on the findings of the Cambridge Urban Capacity Study 2002 and on a review of the Green Belt. The provision of additional housing will help to meet housing needs where residents will be closer to services and jobs and so have less need to use the car.

5.3 A number of sites identified for residential development are currently occupied by other land uses such as industry. Housing is the preferred use if

these sites come forward for development, which constitutes a change from their primary lawful use. This will not prejudice existing uses remaining on these sites and expanding or reorganising their premises.

5.4 The housing requirement will be achieved in the following ways. Note that other windfall sites may come forward that have not been identified in the Urban Capacity Study.

**Table 5.1: Housing Supply 1999 - 2016**

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>DWELLING</b>
Dwellings built 1st July 1999 - 31st March 2002	451
Discounted Permissions at 31st March 2002 <sup>1</sup>	2,378
Discounted potential capacity from the Urban Capacity Study <sup>2</sup>	3,671
In the urban extensions <sup>3</sup>	6,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> Including capacity on implemented but not completed sites, extant unimplemented planning permissions as at 31st March 2002 (discounted by 10%), and sites with resolutions to grant planning permission subject to a planning obligation not otherwise included in the monitoring of planning permissions (discounted by 10%).

<sup>2</sup> The undiscounted identified capacity is 8,018 dwellings.

<sup>3</sup> Identified on the Proposals Map and in Policies 9/4 to 9/8, the land to be released from the Green Belt includes a significant reserve of land for the post 2016 period. Any land not needed for development before 2016 to meet the housing requirement will be safeguarded for the period after 2016.

## **5/2 Conversion of Large Properties**

**The conversion of single residential properties and the conversion of non-residential buildings into self contained dwellings will be permitted except where:**

- a - the residential property has a floorspace of less than 110 square metres<sup>1</sup>;**
- b - the likely impact upon on-street parking would be unacceptable;**
- c - the living accommodation provided would be unsatisfactory;**
- d - the proposal would fail to provide for satisfactory refuse bin storage or cycle parking; and**
- e - the location of the property or the nature of nearby land uses would not offer a satisfactory level of residential amenity.**

<sup>1</sup> Calculated from the building footprint measured externally, multiplied by the number of whole floors, excluding basements, conservatories, and lofts.

5.5 The conversion of large properties into additional dwellings makes a useful contribution towards new housing provision, particularly for the identified need for smaller dwellings. However, it is also recognised that unrestricted conversion could lead to the loss of existing dwellings suitable for family occupation. The residential accommodation provided should reach a satisfactory standard and not be located in areas where residential amenity would be at risk. The reference in the policy to the conversion of single residential properties will discourage the horizontal conversion of two houses

both below 110 square metres into smaller self contained dwellings. Such conversions cannot offer the same standard of residential amenity as the original houses particularly in respect of noise transmission between dwellings. This policy does not prevent the permanent extension of a house to satisfy the 110 square metre criterion provided that the extension itself is acceptable.

### **5/3 Housing Lost to Other Uses**

**The change of use of buildings originally built as housing but currently in a non-residential use, to any use other than housing, will not be permitted except where:**

- a - the living accommodation provided would be unsatisfactory;**
- b - the location of the property or the nature of nearby land uses would not offer a satisfactory level of residential amenity;**
- c - necessary for the provision of community facilities for which there is a need in Cambridge.**

5.6 Over the years many properties in the City Centre and elsewhere which were originally built as housing have changed to use as offices, hotels and community facilities. The reversion of these properties to housing will help to meet the demand for housing in the City, and particularly in the City Centre where additional residents will add to its vitality and the feeling that it is a safe place, particularly at night.

### **5/4 Loss of Housing**

**The redevelopment of existing dwellings or the change of use of residential accommodation to other uses will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:**

- a - the property is unfit for human habitation and cannot be rehabilitated;**
- b - it is a subsidiary part of a non-residential property without any practical means of separate access being provided;**
- c - it is a Listed Building which can best be preserved through change of use;**
- d - it is necessary for the provision of community facilities for which there is a need in Cambridge; or**
- e - the lost accommodation is replaced by at least an equivalent amount of new residential floorspace. Such provision will be made on site unless otherwise agreed.**

5.7 The retention of existing housing is as important as the provision of new housing in meeting housing needs. Land is a scarce and expensive resource and opportunities exist to make better use of it by the redevelopment of existing dwellings to provide additional residential accommodation.

## 5/5 Meeting Housing Needs

**Housing developments<sup>1</sup> on sites<sup>2</sup> of 0.5 hectares or more and all developments including an element of housing which have 15 or more dwellings will only be permitted if they provide an agreed mix of affordable housing types<sup>3</sup> to meet housing needs. The Council will seek as affordable housing 40% or more of the dwellings or an equivalent site area<sup>4</sup>. The precise amount of such housing to be provided on each site will be negotiated taking into account the viability of the development, any particular costs associated with the development and whether there are other planning objectives which need to be given priority. The occupation of such housing will be limited to people in housing need and must be available over the long term. Provision will be made on site unless otherwise agreed.**

<sup>1</sup>Including the provision of retirement homes for sale.

<sup>2</sup>This policy applies to all sites, including windfalls, which satisfy the threshold criteria.

<sup>3</sup>Affordable housing types are social rented, intermediate rented, low cost home ownership and include affordable supported housing and housing for key workers.

<sup>4</sup>An equivalent site area will comprise the area which would have been occupied by the dwellings and indicates the site provision needed if the affordable housing is to take the form of supported housing such as a hostel, group home or residential institution.

5.8 The availability of housing that is affordable and accessible to those in housing need is a major and growing problem in Cambridge and the Cambridge Sub-region. The Cambridge Housing Needs Survey 2002 identified that there was a backlog of housing need of 297 households. In addition, there are a further 1,564 households per year falling into housing need. It is estimated that there will be a supply of affordable housing, primarily through re-lets of existing properties, of 889 units per year. Advice from Government is to meet the backlog over 5 years. The yearly net affordable housing requirement is estimated at 734 units per year or 3,670 dwellings. The survey advises that the Government best practice guide methodology suggests a target for affordable housing of 80% of all new dwellings (assuming no minimum site size threshold). However, it recommends that taking into account custom and practice, a target of 50% would be justifiable in Cambridge. Additional evidence relating to the needs of key workers in the Cambridge Sub-Region Key Worker Housing Research Report 2003 shows a yearly key worker housing demand in Cambridge of 295 units of which 247 are related to Addenbrooke's Hospital. A target of "40% or more", which would reflect the requirements of the Structure Plan, is considered to be a more realistic and achievable target to include in the Policy than that recommended by the Housing Needs Survey.

5.9 Affordable housing is housing provided for people who cannot afford to rent or buy housing locally to meet their housing needs. It includes affordable supported housing. It must be provided for the long term to meet existing and future needs. Affordable housing can include all of the following tenures:

- **Social rented housing:** housing provided at below market rents at levels controlled by the Housing Corporation, normally by Registered

Social Landlords (Housing Associations).

- **Intermediate housing:** housing for those who do not qualify for social rented housing, but whose incomes are such in relation to local housing costs that they are nonetheless not able to access market housing. This includes:
  - **Intermediate rented:** rents are not to exceed 30% of net median household incomes in Cambridge except where provided for specific groups of key workers, where they should not exceed 30% of the net median household income for the specific group;
  - **Low cost home ownership:** including shared ownership, equity share, and discounted market housing. Costs (mortgage and any rent) are not to exceed 30% of gross median household incomes in Cambridge except where provided for key workers, where they should not exceed 30% of the gross median household income for that specific group.

5.10 Affordable housing includes housing for key workers allocated on the basis of need. Key worker housing should be located within a 30 minute drive time of their place of employment. Key workers are normally involved in the care and comfort of the community and will normally be employed in the public sector. A register of key workers eligible for nomination to such housing will be kept by the City Council or by another body approved by the City Council. Key worker housing will be available to initial and successive occupiers unless there are no eligible nominees in which case units will be offered to others in housing need. The proportion of key worker housing on each site will be determined by the City Council based on evidence of need, location and land ownership, but will not normally be expected to exceed 30% of the affordable housing provision on each site. Housing for specific groups of workers other than those included in the above definition, and other than those deemed eligible by a body approved by the City Council to provide and manage the provision of key worker housing, can be included as affordable housing. This will be subject to evidence that their employers are facing recruitment and retention difficulties related to housing costs, and that the workers cannot afford to rent or buy suitable housing locally to meet their housing needs.

5.11 People in housing need will comprise people nominated by the City Council, from its Housing Needs Register, the priority homeless, those nominated by a Housing Association where the City Council does not have nomination rights, and those nominated from other registers of housing need as agreed by the City Council.

5.12 Guidance on the application of this policy will be provided as a Supplementary Planning Document. This policy will not apply to sites where the only residential accommodation to be provided will be in the form of a student hostel.

## **5/6 Meeting Housing Needs From Employment Development**

**Employment development proposals<sup>1</sup> likely to have an impact on the demand for affordable housing in Cambridge or the Cambridge Sub-region, will be expected to mitigate such impacts by making either:**

- a - a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing off-site; or**
- b - a provision of affordable housing on-site.**

**If the employers of staff recognised as key workers can demonstrate that they are providing or contributing towards the provision of key worker housing for their staff, this will satisfy the affordable housing requirement of this policy only where the employment development is to be occupied by that employer.**

<sup>1</sup>Employment developments to which this policy will apply are:

- B1(a) offices.
- B1(b) high-tech and related industries and services concerned mainly with commercial research and development.
- C2 hospitals including healthcare teaching and research.
- D1 educational uses and associated sui generis research institutes and academic research institutes.

5.13 New employment developments can add to the pressures on the housing market, whilst a lack of suitable and affordable housing can lead to recruitment difficulties, unsustainable travel patterns and threaten the development and expansion of employment clusters. Such developments will be expected to mitigate these impacts. Guidance on the operation of this policy will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

## **5/7 Supported Housing / Housing in Multiple Occupation**

**The development of supported housing and the development of properties for multiple occupation will be permitted subject to:**

- a - the potential impact on the residential amenity of the local area;**
- b - the suitability of the building or site<sup>1</sup>; and**
- c - the proximity of bus stops and pedestrian and cycle routes, shops and other local services.**

**The loss of existing supported housing will only be permitted where it is surplus to the requirements of the existing operator and there is no demand from another operator of supported housing in that location.**

<sup>1</sup>Including whether appropriate bin storage, cycle and car parking and drying areas can be provided.

5.14 Supported housing and housing in multiple occupation add to the mix and range of housing to meet the needs of a diverse community and workforce and helps in the creation of mixed communities. These uses are residential in character but often have different servicing needs and increased levels of activity associated with them. The location of such provision requires

careful consideration to ensure that the proposals respect the character and residential amenity of the local area. An over-concentration of uses, which can affect amenity and character can have a detrimental impact on a locality.

### **5/8 Travellers**

**The development of a temporary stopping place for travellers' caravans will only be permitted provided:**

- a - there is a demonstrable need for a site in Cambridge of the size proposed;**
- b - the site would not detract from the character and appearance of the area;**
- c - the site would not detract from the amenity of the occupiers of any nearby buildings;**
- d - the site can be adequately screened and secured and provided with essential services; and**
- e - the site will be properly managed.**

5.15 Provision for travellers in the Cambridge area is made at the Blackwall site on the northern fringe of Cambridge operated by South Cambridgeshire District Council and by a number of private sites on Fen Road to the north-east of Cambridge. Both are just outside the City Council boundary. The City Council does not consider there is a need for permanent site provision within Cambridge but accepts that there may be a need for a temporary stopping place. This would have a gated secure entrance and boundary, be surfaced, have a sewage disposal point and WC facilities, a water supply and refuse disposal facilities. In considering a planning application for such a development all of the policies and proposals in the Plan would be taken into account as far as they are relevant, as would its likely effect on residential amenity and local character, and site management arrangements.

### **5/9 Housing for People with Disabilities**

**Housing developments of 15 or more dwellings will only be permitted if they provide housing with external design, layout and access suitable for occupation by people with disabilities. The amount of such housing sought will be 15% of the market housing and 15% of the affordable housing, subject to negotiation. The housing should be designed or capable of adaptation to meet long term housing needs.**

5.16 It is important that the housing needs of people with disabilities and the frail elderly are provided for through additional homes that allow them to lead as normal a life as possible as part of the community. People are living longer and household formation is growing faster than that of the population as a whole. The Cambridge Housing Needs Study (2002) has found some 5,447 households containing people with disabilities and the frail elderly, some 13% of households. This has been rounded up to reflect an ageing population and because much of the existing housing stock in Cambridge could not meet the standards or be easily adapted to meet them because of its age. The majority

of such households comprise one or two persons but 14% live in households with three or more persons.

5.17 Housing provided for first occupation by people with specific disabilities would satisfy the requirements of Policy 5/9.

### **5/10 Dwelling Mix**

**On housing development sites of 0.5 hectares or more, or capable of accommodating 15 or more dwellings, a mix of dwelling sizes<sup>1</sup> and types will be required.**

<sup>1</sup>Measured in the number of bedrooms to be provided in each dwelling.

5.18 It is important in the design of new development incorporating residential units to achieve a good mix of size and type of dwellings. Such an approach helps to create mixed and inclusive communities offering a choice of housing and lifestyle and can assist the urban design process. For this purpose a threshold has been set as it may not be practical to provide a mix on smaller sites. The character of the area, site characteristics, the market and housing need will dictate different mixes on different sites across Cambridge. This policy does not apply to supported housing developments, student housing, or to other specialised housing such as sheltered housing for the elderly.

## **Community Facilities**

### **5/11 Protection of Existing Facilities**

**Development leading to the loss of community facilities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated:**

- a - the facility can be replaced to at least its existing level and quality within the new development; or**
- b - the facility is to be relocated to another appropriate premises or site of similar accessibility for its users; or**
- c - that there is no longer a need within the local community for the facility or that the need can be adequately met at an alternative facility of similar accessibility for its users.**

**The redevelopment of school sites for other uses will be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that they are not required in the longer term for continued education use.**

5.19 Community facilities are essential to the quality of life of residents, employees and visitors, so they must be conveniently located. Facilities serving a wider catchment require good access to public transport. Such provision helps to promote vitality and community spirit in the local area. Such a pattern of provision reduces the need for residents and employees to travel to meet their needs and promotes sustainable patterns of living.

5.20 Community facilities help meet the varied needs of the residents of Cambridge for health, education and public services, as well as social, cultural and religious activities. For the purposes of the Local Plan, community facilities are defined as uses falling within Class D1 'Non-residential institutions' of the Use Classes Order with the exception of university teaching accommodation. In addition the following sub-categories of Class C2 'Residential Institutions' are considered to be community facilities: hospitals, residential schools, colleges or training centres.

5.21 University teaching accommodation, language schools and tutorial colleges are specifically excluded as they do not cater for a primarily local market. These sectors are covered in the 'Working and Studying in Cambridge' chapter. Indoor and outdoor sports facilities and children's play areas fall within Class D2 'Assembly and Leisure' and are addressed in the 'Enjoying Cambridge' chapter. Supported housing, including old people's homes are dealt with in Policy 5/7.

5.22 Core uses within Use Class D1 which form the basis of community facilities include premises used for:

- the provision of traditional and complementary medical or health services, except for the use of premises ancillary to the home of the consultant;
- the provision of education;
- a crèche, day nursery or playgroup;
- place of worship or religious instruction;
- a museum or other building to display works of art for public viewing;
- a community centre, public hall or meeting place;
- a public library.

5.23 Also a number of uses outside the D1 or C2 classes (sui generis) are included, such as facilities for the emergency services, public toilets and court buildings.

5.24 The protection of existing facilities is necessary as the scope to provide additional facilities is limited by high land values. Developers will be expected to provide adequate evidence of a lack of local need, accessibility to users, the capacity of alternative facilities and of the level of demand from other organisations providing community facilities in order to justify the loss of a community facility. The following information will be required:

- details of site marketing attempts made to attract other community uses for which the premises are suitable;
- demonstration of site accessibility to users by all means of transport including foot and cycle;
- details of current or most recent use of facilities;
- evidence of spare capacity or agreement to accommodate displaced users at other equivalent facilities with similar accessibility for users; and
- a local survey to establish the level of interest in and viability of the continued use of the premises as a community facility.

5.25 The need for school sites, including sixth form colleges, does vary over time and across the City. However, with the provision of more homes in and around Cambridge, it seems unlikely that any further schools will be surplus to requirements, especially when considering the longer term. The City Council will liaise with the County Council on this issue. Redevelopment for residential uses will be the next most appropriate use of the site as schools tend to be located in residential areas.

### **5/12 New Community Facilities**

**Proposals to develop new or extend existing community facilities, for which there is a local need, will be permitted. The development of City-wide or Sub-regional community facilities will be permitted if they are provided in sustainable locations.**

5.26 The provision of new or extended community facilities to serve the needs of Cambridge will be supported. This is particularly critical in areas, which currently lack facilities. Flexible buildings, such as community centres or halls should be designed to accommodate as many different community and leisure activities as possible. This would enable shared use, for example, dual use of school halls and sports facilities.

5.27 The benefits that City-wide and Sub-regional developments bring to Cambridge are acknowledged. Community facilities located in Cambridge provide services to a wide catchment area and benefit from relatively good public transport links. However, in securing a suitable location for this type of proposal, developers will be expected to demonstrate use of the sequential test in considering sites for development.

5.28 These types of developments include hospitals and other health facilities, law courts, facilities for the emergency services, some schools, particularly if privately run, and places of worship serving a large catchment area.

### **5/13 Community Facilities in the Areas of Major Change**

**Development in the areas of major change will only be permitted if they are provided with all appropriate community facilities in accordance with an agreed phasing plan. Land may be allocated for City-wide/Sub-regional community facilities in these areas. This will be set out in the relevant further guidance for each scheme.**

5.29 The areas of major change are of such a scale that existing community facilities in Cambridge will be insufficient to provide for the needs generated by the development. Where it can be shown that City-wide/Sub-regional needs cannot be satisfied in the existing urban area, land will be allocated for it in the areas of major change.

5.30 The location, type and scale of facilities required will partly depend on the scale of development proposed, its location and evidence of need.

However, they may include schools, nurseries, places of worship or religious instruction, premises and sites for the emergency and health services, libraries, and other facilities for general community use such as community centres and sports halls. Policies 9/3 – 9/9 contain some further details of requirements for particular areas.

#### **5/14 Provision of Community Facilities Through New Development**

**New developments which lead to an increased demand for community facilities will be expected to provide or contribute to the provision of appropriate community facilities including education and childcare facilities to meet the needs of residents, employees and visitors.**

5.31 It is important that when new developments generate the need for community facilities they are met by contributions from the developer. The City Council has a strategy setting out the types of obligations that developers will be expected to agree to in securing planning permission. Other material considerations will also be taken into account in determining the provision or contributions for particular sites. If the providers of essential public infrastructure can demonstrate that they are able to meet the demand for related community facilities generated from new development, this will satisfy the requirement of Policy 5/14.

5.32 Childcare facilities include nurseries, integrated nursery centres, playgroups, crèches and child minding networks whether public or private.

5.33 The provision of such facilities is important to increase economic activity rates, to minimise travel distances, to improve the quality of life of parents and children and to reduce social exclusion.

#### **5/15 Addenbrooke's**

**Development at Addenbrooke's will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it is required to meet local, regional or national health care needs or for associated biomedical and biotechnology research and development activities within Class B1(b), related support activities, related higher education and sui generis medical research institutions. This is provided that it is in accordance with an agreed site Masterplan which covers the existing hospital campus and any proposed additional areas adjoining.**

5.34 Addenbrooke's Hospital is a centre of medical excellence and as such has a regional and national role to play in providing medical facilities as well as a local one. The NHS Trust's 2020 Vision outlines plans to develop the site as a biomedical and health cluster providing a range healthcare, biomedical and biotechnology research and development activities within Class B1(b), related support activities, related higher education and sui generis medical research institutions. Such development will be subject to Local Plan policies for the Southern Fringe and the Area Development Framework and its Masterplan.