

Received by email: [email address redacted]

Dear Sirs,

I have the following comments regarding railway and road connectivity which you may wish to address as a part of your Strategic Planning.

- There is an opportunity to greatly enhance rail connectivity if an interchange station is constructed at the point where the East-West Rail crosses HS2. This would not involve connecting the rails but have platforms on both routes. Such a facility would –
 - Greatly improve connectivity between the East Midlands, the North East of England to Oxford and the South of England.
 - Provide good access to HS2 for users in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, provided suitable road access is provided to the station.
 - Potentially will be a location for a New Town which would be well connected both within the East-West corridor and for commuting to London.

It is not suggested that this proposal should be addressed as part of the HS2 phase1 project other than to ensure that its layout is compatible with such a future enhancement.

- The discussion paper indicates the potential to operate train services on East-West rail from locations beyond Oxford including using it as a section of route for long distance services. In principle this is highly desirable, but there will be a need to include capacity enhancement on the existing Didcot-Oxford line which already operates at close to capacity.
- The existing Bletchley – Bedford rail route will need to be upgraded to allow much higher line speeds if anything other than local trains are to use the route.
- Any new / upgraded expressway running between Oxford and the A1 will be well used. It will inevitably generate more traffic, both within the region and also be an ideal route for long distance traffic. It will be essential to design this expressway to provide for this probable traffic growth.

Best Regards,

[name redacted]

Received by email: [email address redacted]

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE - MILTON KEYNES - OXFORD CORRIDOR: A DISCUSSION PAPER

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;**
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and**
- c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?**

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

Greetings,

I have strong interest in this area having advised both Cambridge and Northampton on strategic planning issues and, though I am now based abroad, having written and advised extensively on strategic planning issues and the opportunities of this area.

The discussion paper sets out cogently the need for strategic planning in the area and the need for joint governance structures, however these are two separate but overlapping issues. There is a need for a strategic plan for drive joint programmes in a joined-up way, there is also a need for governance structures to manage joint programmes across the region including the preparation of the strategic plan itself.

The management task then is one of portfolio management, managing a range of complex and integrated programmes including the delivery of a strategic plan and the management of infrastructure and human capital investment programmes deriving from that plan.

The discussion paper 'jumps straight in' to the governance arrangements, however a better approach would be to take a 'project portfolio management' which would begin with the scoping of the portfolio.

The scoping needs to address the challenges and opportunities the area faces and then build consensus through stakeholders on the commissioning process for the strategy, including but not confined to the governance of the strategy itself.

One of the key lessons learned from past strategic initiatives, such as Thames Gateway, MKSM, London, Stansted- Cambridge, the Arc etc. is if their purpose is not clearly framed and shared then there will not be sufficient 'buy in' from key stakeholders and joint working withers on the vine. This is a clear risk to current regional initiatives such as Northern Powerhouse and the 'Oxford-Cambridge' Arc.

Emerging out of a political climate that is hostile to regional and sub-regional approaches it is imperative that the business case for a strategic plan is clear. It is not enough to state that there are housing affordability problems, though particularly acute in Oxford and Cambridge these are problems across almost all of England; the business case needs to be clearer as to what marks this area out and how opportunities cohere to form the region which requires the plan. When the discussion paper refers to transport corridors it is on clearer ground, however the 'Oxford Cambridge Expressway' will not primarily serve the purpose of commuting between Oxford and Cambridge, and if it did it would be a poor investment, rather it serves the purpose of West-East movement to the East Coast Port and Europe and regional movements between the South Midlands and East Anglia. Hence there needs to be much more clarity on the **drivers of Economic Geography**. Ahead of the formal setting up of long term governance structures the Infrastructure Commission should draw together stakeholders to scope the strategy based on an analysis of these drivers. Long term governance structure might take months, and years if as is likely it requires legislation. Hence an interim structure whereby the commission is client for a strategy should be preferred with an advisory board which can evolve for a formal governing board with legal authority over time.

In my view the key economic drivers are as follows:

1. The weak East West Links to the East Coast ports and North of London more generally which holds back the economic development of the South Midlands/East Anglia.
2. The tight constraints (both policy and physical) around the university Oxford and Cambridge which creates economic development and housing affordability issues as well as long distance commuting.
3. The underdevelopment of knowledge based industries in other major towns in the region such as Aylesbury, Northampton and Milton Keynes which all lack Universities.
4. The opportunities presented by East-West Rail and HS2 freeing up major capacity on WCML – opportunities which converge around Milton-Keynes and Northampton.
5. The opportunities presented by major former defense bases which have closed or are about to close – such as Alconbury and Lakenheath.
6. A series of new and expanded towns and Garden Cities which have now reached their originally planned size and now need to consider options for future growth
7. Past growth in the area being planned without proper consideration of supporting water infrastructure which is now a constraint on growth (e.g. the Rye Meads treatment plant. Now a special protection area, which serves 5 towns).
8. The fact that London and Greater Birmingham cannot meet their housing needs within their boundaries. This need overflows to the surrounding area and could total over 1 1/2 million homes. These pressures and opportunities converge in the Arc area.

Arising from this a strategic plan needs to do three things:

- A. Optimize the locations of major employment growth at transport nodes
- B. Link the nodes with regional transport networks
- C. Plan for strategic new housing locations at optimum transport nodes on this network so that jobs can be accessed at lowest cost and sustainably.

This networks approach where networks link hubs should replace the flawed language of corridors. This led to the flawed and abandoned approach in the early London-Stansed-Cambridge work where seemingly every field between London and Cambridge was surveyed for potential housing growth, when it was always the case that a limited number of nodes only was required. Need for clarity on the drivers is essential. For example, unless there is clarity on whether the stakeholders including Central Government accept the need for overflow from metropolises then the programme could fail later down the line in terms of disagreement about options, or worse face legal challenges down the line from development interests.

The challenges also provide clarity on the geographical coverage of the strategy and governance, a key issue which the paper omits.

I would strongly recommend that the arc sweeps from Swindon to Ipswich/Bury/Lowestoft not just Oxford/MK/Cambridge, and also considers the intersection of other transport corridors which have great potential such as WCML, WAGN and London/Stansed/Cambridge – and so should include Northampton, Harlow, Stevenage etc.

Finally follow through requires strong Treasury support. The Treasury will soon be piloting development rights auctions in a transport corridor. This could be strongly compatible with the new 'permission in principle' (Zoning) model and strategic sites arising from the strategy. This could solve the infrastructure problem of costs being front loaded and values backloaded by giving an income stream through land capture that could be borrowed against. This is a model pioneered in the area

in Garden Cities. Borrowing however needs to be 'off balance sheet' of the PSBR, and this should be taken into account in setting up governance arrangements for receipt and spending of value capture and ensuring compatibility with State Aid rules. It may be an arm's length company limited by guarantee is needed where public sector bodies do NOT have an equity stake.

The lesson of past failures in this region is that weak 'partnership' models have no legs. Without a clear mandate and budget, they have not garnered long term stakeholder support. Also models which have involved direct central government intervention (e.g. UDCs) had limited achievements because of local hostility.

New Opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;**
- b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and**
- c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?**

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41?

How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for subregional collaboration?

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

In the post-RS NPPF DTC world the duty to cooperate is supposed to fill the vacuum. It either hasn't happened or is happening too slowly.

The reasons for this are the duty to cooperate takes 5 or moves years to 'bite'. First LPAs have to realise they have to cooperate, then commission strategic housing and other studies and then reach unanimity – as if they were the medieval Polish parliament. On issues of urban expansion there is a clear bias in favour of rural districts surrounding urban towns which they outnumber. As geographical area expands the sheer number of authorities requiring unanimity expands exponentially.

The other major failing regarding the Duty concerns the failure so far to deal with metropolitan overspill and even agree a structure/MoU to tackle it, or even in some cases that there is an issue at all.

Whilst the paper is correct that the role of Central government needs to be supportive rather than directive of the strategy and its delivery strategy under current legislation including the DTC can only work if National Government provides clear support.

In my view National Government needs to do five things if the Programme is to be a success:

- a. Set down a policy position that the Arc Strategy is a National priority and to fulfill the DTC stakeholders should work together to further the strategy
- b. The strategy needs to be agreed by a board of affected authorities and the NIC but this need not be subject to a rule of unanimity

- c. The strategy will be subject to informal panel appointed by the PI/SOS its recommended changes then going forward for the SoS for endorsement
- d. Once endorsed local plans must be in general conformity with the strategy to fulfill the DTC and be sound
- e. The SoS will devolve infrastructure spending/development auction revenues to an Arc governance body providing it agrees to further the strategy and agrees to a proportionate share of housing need overspill from Greater Birmingham and Greater London as set out in the strategy.

In terms of the sub-regional/regional interface the lesson of past regional planning projects is that they are largely pieced together – not always coherently – from sub-regional plans. Retention of strong sub-regional cooperation is essential not least because of the scale of the area and the success of some existing partnerships. It is essential though that the regional strategy is properly resourced and driven by a dedicated team/consultants so it coheres and has its own identity – not just being a part time endeavor. There should however be no need for a middle tier of sub-regional plans/MOUs. This would be too complicated and be slow to ‘trickle down’ rather sub-regional work should flow up into the strategy plan.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

The preparation of the strategy cannot wait until long term governance arrangements are worked through and legislated for.

The NIC should commission the strategy in late summer 2017 following scoping work with local authorities – and then set up an interim programme board to manage the contract. You would be waiting decades if dozens of individual districts, county councils and combined authorities each took to their members a budget and agreement to commission a strategy. It would take as long to agree as DTC MOUs – we already know this doesn’t work in the necessary timescale.

Also long term governance cannot wait until there is universal coverage of combined authorities, therefore it is necessary to have large and potentially unwieldy board arrangements. This should be seen as a supervisory board however not an executive board. An executive board should comprise one rep per county plus one from each of the four main town, Oxford, Cambridge, MK and Northampton because for political reasons county only representation would be unacceptable. Day to day management should in the short term rest with the NIC as the only constituted and capable body already in existence able to handle the commissioning work.

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Oxford Cambridge Corridor

Comments by [name redacted]

1. Introduction

1.01 Despite the fact that this idea has only been around for a few years there are signs that it has already assumed the status of a 'good idea' to the extent that proponents do not feel it is necessary answer basic questions about the soundness of the concept of the 'corridor' and its appendages. It is always helpful to keep an eye on where an idea originates as it is always necessary to check that it is based on firm foundations. The need to have an early if not continuous review is centered on the possibility that abandonment or very substantial change might be the better options and might serve to prevent the emergence and ultimate burden of another vanity project. Reviews might also identify emerging internal conflicts or inconsistencies that stifle or prevent progress.

1.02 Most of the 19 page consultation goes to illustrate just how complicated the project as being formulated is becoming. This response is by way of explaining that the neither the problems nor the opportunities are being accurately described going on to set out the very (or relatively) simple solution that could and should be applied to what is a generally acknowledged problem.

1.03 It will not be only the scientific community in the UK which sees the heavy irony in being asked to consider the merits of a proposal largely if not exclusively based on a belief that the domestic science base should be reinforced, at a time when the Government is taking a step almost guaranteed (at least in the short term) to disable the same scientific community by leaving the EU and its associated collaborative programmes (eg Euratom). Brexit might mean that some stimulus is required to maintain scientific activity of international calibre, but not necessarily in the form of a transport corridor.

1.04 Whist this response contains a number of assertions made with as little evidence as assertions being made in the consultation itself, an opportunity arose to discuss the main issues of contention with two people who know most about the subjects being raised; so much so that there is a risk they could be identified from this description without actually being named. It was encouraging to know that they both together shared the view that the railway link would be 'stopped in its tracks' so long as there remains a serious threat that the expressway would be carried through (alternatively this might mean the railway requiring substantially greater public subsidy). But it was also revealed that attempts had already failed to persuade the NIC drop the road scheme, suggesting and that this was not an argument which could be won until the conflict became even more obvious or the road scheme hit the buffers of local resistance in the areas that would be affected.

2. What are the foundations built of?

2.01 In a small and densely populated country with a very dense network of roads and railways it is counter intuitive, undesirable and unachievable to isolate a relatively small and contrived area for special attention. Of course a statement by the Chancellor that the corridor represents "... a single, knowledge intensive cluster that competes on the global stage". , could be taken as 'political speak' but has been repeated in this consultation document implying that its authors have taken it on board.

2.02 To a social or economic geographer the danger implicit in this underlying principle of a 'single' anything is that the reduction to this point has excluded a number of important elements which would have enhanced the project; even to the extent of making it a success instead of a failure.

2.03 There are number of other potential fallacies and omissions which lead to a questioning of the project and which need to be addressed and corrected before it proceeds.

- There is no mention of the compatibility with the transition to a low and then zero carbon economy from 2050. It is necessary to know whether the working assumption is the 10% annual carbon emission reduction estimated by the Tyndall Inst before the commitment to 1.5 C of warming, or the 6% estimated by the Committee on Climate Change. In either case there needs to be reliable estimates of the carbon emissions from the construction and use of both the proposed rail and road links.

- The lack of housing in the area is stated as a given and related to lack of infrastructure. Although such a statement strikes notes very popular at a time when there are serious housing stresses, there are no grounds for describing this very complex issue in a way that conveniently fits with and purports to justify the investment being discussed. It would be necessary for the NIC to understand the relationship between permissions and delivery and the role being played by the volume builders (see the Housing White Paper) before relying on housing as a justification for regional ingrastructure.

- One of the aspects of the housing market that is clearly not working is 'affordability'. The fallacy of relating high prices to lack of supply has been repeatedly exposed in theory and in practice. There is no evidence to suggest that houses built along the corridor would be any cheaper than the existing houses in the respective areas. That logic would suggest that there would be a commensurate decrease in house prices between and including Oxford and Cambridge. Is that what is being suggested or proposed?

- One obvious effect of singling out the 'corridor', which is seen as a benefit or necessary cost, is the exclusion of people and businesses located outside the designated area. The self-imposed blinkers have for example:
 - excluded Felixstowe which is very dependent on its road links to the rest of the country and an east west rail link could have massive benefit in the transfer of freight from road to rail.
 - The same could be said of the port of Southampton that is over-dependent on the A34 (of which more later) and would benefit hugely from being able to use an upgraded rail network. Improvements have been carried out over the last ten years would complement the east west rail link.
 - Norwich, Ipswich, Bath, Bristol, Newbury, and Swindon would have resources which could be realised through a fast east west rail link. These places bring skills and businesses into play that do not exist within the corridor but which might be tempted to relocate were there to be inducements or privileges without losing their local market.
 - It should not be assumed that these 'outliers' would benefit from the 'expressway'. That logic points to inducing longer car journeys. While it might only be 83 miles from Oxford to Cambridge it is over a hundred miles from Swindon to Norwich. It is 'old hat' that new road generate new traffic. This is necessary to justify the investment but brings with it the costs in time and carbon emissions which it is a statutory duty to reduce. It is also well established that by generating traffic new roads add to rather than reduce overall congestion.
 - Oxford and Cambridge are obviously important to the overall concept. However, even these institutions are much more than centres of scientific excellence. There are many more non-scientists contributing to the economy and life in general than the few people working in areas in R&D. Scientific collaboration now takes place on a global scale where it is more important to be in a compatible time zone than on the same transport link.
 - There does not appear to be a very good understanding of the existing planning regime. It is not possible to pool financial contributions from more than 5 developments. CIL is different but there is no certainty that all the councils involved are intending to adopt CIL (before it is withdrawn). It is even more uncertain councils would see a piece of regional infrastructure as important as the social/affordable housing needed in their area. Developers are already chiselling contributions on grounds of viability before being required to give a hefty chunk to a regional road.
 - The idea of capturing the value of development land started in 1947 and has been tried about ten times since. The Housing White Paper published in January 2017 makes no mention of this. Councils around the country would be very pleased if this principle could be enshrined in the planning system as a whole and not just in the single area between Oxford and Cambridge?
 - The consultation refers to an integrated plan and to tackling major constraints. A reasonable knowledge of this region would show that congestion is a major constraint which is likely to be exacerbated by the

'expressway' and that the isolation of a contrived corridor is the very opposite of integration.

2.04 A project of this nature is being sold as being urgent just at the time when the Government has noted the lack of a National Industrial Strategy. The NIC/Government should step back and develop a greater understanding of how the economy could and should look through the required transition to low/zero carbon. Looking at a wider range of options could show that reinforcing infrastructure in different areas, or inserting/reinstating particular rail links is a better overall strategy than stimulating growth in areas that are already over-heated. In Holland there is already a carbon neutral railway.

3. The real infrastructure problem

3.01 There is a genuine demand if not need for a better east west rail link. As there was in the past before it was dismantled. The question for the NIC should be how best to provide this rail link in the shortest possible time. Because this need has been wrapped up with some outdated obsession with road transport and unsubstantiated claims about housing provision in the region the question has been corrupted to the extent that it is no longer possible to suggest the right answer to the right question.

3.02 The best evidence available in support of the claim that the right answer has been undermined was provided by a representative of Chiltern Railways when asked about the compatibility (ie commerciality) of a new railway line were a fast road link provided in the same corridor. It is not necessary to rely on 'railway science' to know that the point of the road would be for it to be used by cars and freight (at no charge unless the expressway is code for toll road?) that could have been accommodated on the new railway that would have depended on the revenue. Unsurprisingly, Chiltern railways were not impressed by the idea of the road.

3.03 The point about the conflict between the road and the rail has been put repeatedly to the Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP (as well as in response to the previous consultation) but seems not to be accepted. The NIC should recognise at an early stage the risk that there might not be both a road and railway and, if it none or the other, which should it be? It seems (para 1.04) that there is some as yet unexplained resistance to doing a u-turn on the road proposal.

3.04 New railways and roads would have very different impacts on the region. It is difficult to think of any case where the impact of a dual carriageway would not be substantially worse than a twin track railway. Meanwhile, the realisation of the latter is being place under threat by the suggestion of the former.

4. The 'expressway'

4.01 The first expectation would be an increase in cars and trucks along all the feeder roads. This reveals the fallacy of any suggestion that a 'single corridor' can be isolated as an analytic tool let alone a real 'piece' of infrastructure. Very little of the traffic will originate in Oxford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes or Bedford. In the west the main feeder roads are chronically congested. The congestion on the A34 causes multiple problems all with damaging consequences. The A34 is a strategic route (Euro 05) from Algeciras to Greenock, a trunk route from Southampton to Preston and a local distributor/commuter route around Newbury, Didcot (Science Vale), Abingdon and Oxford. There is continuous argument about the unacceptability of this congestion (suggesting the most extreme road building as a solution) as background to this project designed to increase traffic.

4.02 Other feeder routes are the A40 going west to Witney that is close to stationary during a very long peak 'hour'. Local users would not welcome the addition of more long distance drivers or freight. The A420 is also congested and built to a standard which attracts a deserved reputation for road traffic accidents. Only by excluding the existence and impacts of Swindon can this issue be ignored. Some of this traffic could use the M4/A34 with similar effects.

4.03 It might be that the 'feeder' road issue extends as far as Bath and Bristol on the M4 when a chunk of time is taken off the route between Oxford and Cambridge, generating even more long distance traffic.

4.04 It would be extraordinary if the same or similar effects were not felt at the Cambridge 'end' of the corridor. Indeed, as the purpose of the road must be to generate traffic and justify its construction, it would defeat the object of the exercise if more traffic did not use local roads. There might well be similar problems along the route at Milton Keynes and Bedford.

4.05 It should be said that a faster road link might benefit the current coach service (that doubles as a service bus) or allow for an express coach with fewer stops and diversions. However, it would be very surprising were the proponents of the expressway to justify the investment in the expressway on an enhanced coach service, especially as the NIC should not be giving up on the rail link which could be planned and built with express and stopping services.

5. The rail link

5.05 There may well be a significant existing demand for a rail link that need not wait for all the housing growth in the countryside between Oxford and Cambridge.

5.02 The demand for a rail link is along the network (not the corridor) and includes Southampton, Reading, Didcot, Bath Bristol, Swindon and Norwich,

Ipswich, Felixstowe. There are network improvements that should be regarded as part of this east west project. A line from north to/from the west at Didcot would avoid a change and meet demand for better services to/from Oxford to Bristol. There might be similar improvements required in the Norwich, Ipswich and Felixstowe area.

6. The future of the car

6.01 There are two scenarios that should be taken into account when considering the expressway – neither of which appear in this or previous reports.

6.02 The first is that for a number of reasons we have not only reached peak car but car use will decline. The costs are no longer affordable to those not already owning and driving private cars. There is no answer currently available to the problems posed by the pollution (GHGs, NOX, particulates, dust from road, tyres and brakes) being looked at by 4 Select Committees. In the absence of any solution it would be reasonable to rely on the one response that is available, a substantial reduction in use. In these circumstances it would be perverse to be building new roads often across open countryside.

6.03 The other possibility is that the above problems are miraculously solved and car use is maintained if not increased. In this case the consequence would be to undermine the viability of the rail link at whatever stage it had reached just so long as the prospect of the road remains a possibility.

7. The right question and the right answer

7.01 The legacy of Beeching is an incomplete railway network; a strong east/west route being the most debilitating. The question should be framed as how to find the quickest and best way to re-establish this link? If, when it has been established, there is some justification for roads within the corridor (ie local distributors to service residential and commercial developments) these could be built, but with an eye to prevent the diversion of traffic away from the railway. These roads would not be anything like the proposed expressway blasting a route through south Oxfordshire and beyond.

7.02 The railway should be planned to take all the rail traffic identified in the current NIC modelling – plus all that which could reasonably be expected to use rail rather than any new/faster road. This will only be achieved with four tracks along most if not all of the length to accommodate stopping and express trains (and freight). Anything less will not be able to cope with the demand and will hand the competitive advantage back to the road.

7.03 The question of a junction at the crossing with HS2 is being debated. As the justification for HS2 based on reducing journey times has been played down if not entirely removed, the case for stops/junctions needs to be re-evaluated. The case for a junction as east west meets north south would seem to be

compelling, especially if it reduces the rail traffic going into the over-stressed London terminals. It might be that such a junction could justify continuing with HS2 as well as adding to the case for the east west line?

7.04 In the context of the complex picture painted in the consultation, a major advantage of the railway would be that all the objectives of the rail/road proposals (and along the wider network) would fall into place but without the road or all the administrative gymnastics described in the consultation.

8. Summary

- We can have rail or road, but not both
- Rail has significant benefits and fewer of the costs of a new road
- The threat of a new road will prevent the realisation of a rail link (or make the public subsidies substantially greater)
- The analysis should extend over a much wider region and a more extensive rail network – including the ports and HS2
- The R&D of a couple of scientific communities does not amount to a justification for new dual carriageway road
- Local housing needs do not provide any justification for a new regional road and the consequent environmental impacts
- The road proposal should be subjected to a carbon account (ie the transition to a zero carbon economy) – which includes the threat to a railway and its potential savings
- That the credibility of the NIC might be affected by support for building a new road (at the expense of a need rail link) at a time when, for many reasons, the future of road transport is so uncertain (eg a 55mph national speed limit would defeat its purpose)

Across the Grain

The Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford "Corridor"

Many years ago I had occasion to go by train from Banbury to Bedford. It was a wonderful experience. The train consisted of an ancient tank engine, a six wheeled carriage with whitewashed interior, wooden slatted seats and oil lamps, and a cattle truck. I was the only passenger except for a cow in the cattle truck whose plaintive moos added colour to the journey. We rambled gently through the countryside and eventually reached Bedford, calling at Northampton on the way. It was all reminiscent of that wonderful film "The Titfield Thunderbolt". Of course that rail connection is long since gone, as also most of the cross country lines. There is now no direct rail link between Cambridge and Oxford and no one seems to miss it.

The road connection between Cambridge and Oxford is still a mixture of good roads and roads which are little more than improved country lanes. In the middle of it, like an airport runway, is a stretch of road built to motorway standard which by-passes the village of Tingewick, just to the west of Buckingham. One wonders why it was built to such a high standard, given that it connects two barely improved single carriageway roads.

Although Cambridge, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Bicester and Oxford lie approximately on an arc centred on London there is no hint on the ground of a "corridor" between them. Each of the main towns on the "corridor" is linked to London by motorways or enhanced A Class roads and direct rail lines but interaction between them is, I suggest, not significant. Thus to create a "Corridor" would be going across the grain of development which goes back to Roman times. Although each of the main towns is thriving their development does not appear to depend upon their relationship to one another. The radial development centred on London means that each of those towns is economically and socially independent. For example, Cambridge has little to do with towns as close as Huntingdon and St Ives, both Great North Road communities.

There is, I admit, a tendency for Cambridge to develop westwards, with the improvement of the A14 and the building of new settlements such as Cambourne. The overwhelming tendency is, however, for development along the radial routes encouraged, of course, by the overbearing influence of Greater London. There would seem to be more mileage in encouraging development along the Peterborough-Cambridge-Stansted Corridor (with access to Stansted Airport) than trying to create a "corridor" between the two ancient university cities. Moreover the new Combined Authority of Cambridge/Peterborough has now come into existence which would facilitate this.

Given the lack of good rail and road connections a new "expressway" and rail link between the towns on the "corridor" would have to be built from scratch, a massive undertaking which, I suggest, would not be justified by the existing traffic. Building those new links would therefore only be justified on the grounds that they would induce demand, surely undesirable in the light of climate change. Demand for travel facilities might materialise if "dormitory" communities of new housing were built along the corridor by developing existing villages, a pattern of development which is manifestly unsustainable.

Although there is a statutory duty on local authorities to co-operate on matters of development and planning there seems to be no cogent reason why the authorities on the "corridor" should co-operate to develop it. Moreover each of the local planning authorities is bogged down trying to produce its local plan which, in the case of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, does not take the possible development of this "corridor" into account.

I conclude, and submit, that the development of the "corridor" would not necessarily enhance the development of the towns along it, development which is already taking place, so that the high cost involved can hardly be justified. It is therefore unlikely to secure the active co-operation of the local authorities.

[name redacted]

[address redacted]

[telephone number redacted]

6th May 2017

Received by email: [email address redacted]

> TO GROWTH CORRIDOR EVIDENCE TEAM
National Infrastructure Commission

>

> FROM [name redacted]

>

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> A. INTRODUCTION

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> 1. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this debate. Your discussion paper highlights the central dilemma; page 19,Q7; 'Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning be exploited without statutory governance to 'lock-in' collaboration in the long term?'

2. It is a question I have sought to answer for sometime. This submission, based on both experience and research, suggests there is a middle way. It will require time, and a political consensus not only locally, but also from the start in Westminster. This is a realistic national aspiration as policies for more housing and more economic growth do not seem to be politically divisive in the run-up to the 8 June 2017 general election.

> 3. In this submission I critically comment upon points in your discussion paper. I also describe examples to put into context the governance challenge and residents resistance your Corridor proposal will encounter. They are the wider regional context; the local barriers you will encounter; and a recent illustration of the the paranoia housing ideas generate locally which prevent discussion in an atmosphere which can quickly become toxic. Then I reach some conclusions.

>

> 4. Finally I put forward in Appendix 1 a case study which illuminates the scale of the fear; in Appendix 2 I suggest how the governance of the Corridor must follow a new nationally based housing land supply solution in order to proceed despite these barriers; in Appendix 3, I make some observations about the Corridor's governance; and at the end in Appendix 4 are my personal details.

>

> B. THE WIDER CONTEXT: Is there a Spatial Vacuum?

>

> 5. This is an initiative I welcome. The Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge corridor proposal by NIC is the first serious attempt in a long time in the South East to look far ahead on a strategic and regional basis. Without this sort of vision-based, long term thinking, my experience, based on several decades market facing private sector professional work, convinces me the nation's big productivity barriers (including housing affordability, rural and urban connectivity, lack of regional balance, and business productivity) will not be overcome. Because the initiative comes with clear Government support it is in a novel, important step which, I hope, may set a benchmark.

>

> 6. I also welcome it, as it is my opinion the housing crisis is different to other domestic barriers to efficient working. It cannot be solved by government policy alone, however well grounded in evidence based research new initiatives may be. The distinctive feature of the housing crisis, is that initiative after initiative fails because of muscular local resistance. Accommodating, not challenging this hostility is key to providing the new housing supply we need. You have identified the key barrier

to progress, the chronic housing shortage. All the same it is my opinion neither of your Illustrative models will succeed in the manner you hope.

>

> 7. But your proposal begs another question. Why only this corridor? As you say (para.16), Investment in infrastructure....'must' not be developed in isolation. Is this singular region and unconnected proposal the best way to meet the nation's housing/growth needs? Perhaps it is merely phase one, of a bigger regional picture? It ought to be so. Most other rural areas of the south east also have a chronic housing shortage. Why? For the same reasons as those identified by NIC applicable within the Corridor.

>

> 8. For example why is the government not also considering the growth potential of the Thames Valley region, with the economic major attractors of Reading, Slough and Heathrow? The growth pressures in this sub-region have been apparent from many sources since the seventies. I cite only one.

>

> 9. Demand for hi-tech buildings and business parks in the UK first emerged in the Thames Valley. What does this tell us? Despite strong evidence of above average growth, over three decades at Campbell Gordon attempts to focus the attention of political and community leaders in Berkshire and the Thames Valley on the need for significant new housing supply in response to above average growth pressures have dismally failed. The reasons for failure are relevant for your Corridor initiative.

>

> 10. The recent national focus on the housing shortfall (since the 2010 general election) is encouraging. But I see barriers ahead to new supply which cannot be overcome unless the housing (land) delivery system is radically changed. For delivery of the Corridor to happen those with the final say must first overcome the fears and passions of local residents (and their leaders) who will be certain their quality of life will be ruined by major house building plans in rural areas and equally certain the value of their principal financial asset (their home) will be damaged. It is suggested an increasing number of residents see the need for thinking and planning far ahead. This is welcome, but insufficient. Local opposition is deeply rooted. On a site by site basis for local residents resistance becomes absolute. This opposition is legitimate despite being time-serving.

> 11. I find little sharp-edged appreciation of this harsh emotional reality in either of the two NIC papers, or the original terms of reference, or in Illustrative governance models. Neither coherent or rational explanation of the need for housing in isolation will suffice. Your acknowledgement of the need for democratic accountability will not convince residents who see their beloved way of life under threat.

>

> 12. In order to win local support to the extent necessary, extending over long periods of construction upheaval, rumours and exaggerations in local hot-spots, promoters of this plan will need to identify a signally more penetrating, persuasive governance solution that appeals to local residents than appears in the two models the discussion paper offers.

>

> 13. . In Appendix 2 of this submission I put forward a governance and delivery solution which, given adequate time, cross-party leadership and consistent policy support and active promotion will win sufficient acceptance and cooperation at local level for the NIC Corridor vision to be fulfilled.

>

> C. GOOD START. No connections. Lacks a time frame.

>

> 14. There is a lot of good sense in the NIC ideas for boosting Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge connectivity. As mentioned, the concept has my full support.

>

> 15. But the Corridor needs to be part of a bolder, more visionary solution for overcoming the acute housing affordability problem now widespread throughout the Home Counties north, west and south of London. At national level these rural regions, beyond the London metropolitan borders, will inevitably play an important part in meeting projected OCUS new household formation rates to 2036 and beyond.

>

> 16. To solve the chronic housing shortfall identified in the NIC report we will over the two generations ahead, say looking sixty years ahead (2020-2080) need to plan for several new Milton Keynes' or city extensions of equivalent scale throughout the south east, including within the Corridor. The concept will therefore make more sense, and be understood more readily by the electorate if it is seen to be part of a radical change in planning horizons both geographically and in timescale terms within the south east region. To win this degree of acceptance locally the Corridor must be planned as part of a grander scale vision for the whole of the rural south east which looks much further ahead than 2050. A vision for two generations is needed.

>

> 17. Accordingly I shall not comment upon the detail of the Corridor proposals except to observe the Corridor has the good fortune of including large areas of unprotected land. This advantage stands in sharp contrast with equivalent corridor locations west and south of London. For this reason the Corridor's good transport connections back to London offer major opportunities to absorb some of the south east region's wider supply deficit.

>

> D. HISTORY. Resistance to change

>

> 18. The case study (see Appendix 1 below) illuminates the deeply rooted resistance to local change. It is a symptom of a widespread problem. Over four decades opposition to building sufficient new homes in rural parts of the South East has been successfully blocked by local residents, and their local leaders.

>

> 19. The problem is long established and the solution is obscure as these two statements make clear. In 1990 Chair of Berkshire County Council said "The regional planning group (SERPLAN) is proposing what I believe is an unacceptable level of new housing in Berkshire. The task of the forthcoming consultations will be to moderate this, and yet not leave the county open to challenge".

>

> 20. At about the same time the Director of Planning at Berkshire County Council highlighted the dilemma:

>

> "It is commonly said that Berkshire suffers from the problems of success. In the circumstances it is natural to wonder what local government in general, and the County Council in particular, can do to make sense of these fast moving changes and plan for the future with any hope of success". (Berkshire County Council, Towards 2000, February 1990).

>

> 21. Bob Clarke, the Director, identified the dilemma. It remains unsolved.

E. DISCUSSION PAPER: Some Comments

22. All comments below follow your paragraph numbers

8. I have significant evidence of the resistance to change in the Thames Valley going back over 30 years. Mindful of the request to limit submissions to 10 pages I have left out most.

11. This is good. It needs to be exploited. For example, I see the Oxford Mail daily online. So far although there are stories about the split between different Oxfordshire based authorities and the possible formation of one authority, your radical Corridor ideas have not appeared once. As they are relevant and time is passing you seem to be missing an opportunity to influence the debate. It is here on the ground that the hearts and minds will be won or lost. The sooner a sustained, carefully planned programme of awareness starts within the corridor the sooner work on sites within the Corridor will be able to start.

12. Very welcome.

14. The focus on knowledge intensive clusters is understood. The Corridor location is also ideal for employers and distributors keen to connect to markets equally north and south.

16. There is chronic undersupply of homes throughout almost all of London and the south east, except in some areas east of London. Whatever governance solution is chosen for the Corridor it must set the appropriate standard for other sub-regions with the same nightmare. I agree the current governance mechanisms are not going to deliver the step change needed anywhere in the rural Home Counties.

17b As an aspiration this is fine. But it is too weak to deliver the homes needed. It also lacks headline simplicity. The Horizon map and DSA policy proposed below, once they are familiar concepts, may be more easily understood and accepted.

25. Unlocking this opportunity will above all require a step change in mind-sets of existing residents. Based on my experience it is better not expect local political leaders to take the lead. They do not want to offend too many of the local electorate. New locations for new housing are toxic. In local communities the climate for sensible debate is too charged. So the first step is changing local mind-sets.

26. You talk here about linkages. They are vitally important. In the last few months SODC (South Oxfordshire District Council) has issued two invitations to the public to comment upon their draft Local plan. I have pointed out that although the draft offers some building land support to the City of Oxford, which is keenly trying to find ways to solve its housing deficit, neither SODC draft makes any attempt to help Reading's shortfall. This is important as Reading's historic and deranged boundaries mean the town has very little land for housing. The truth is that SODC wants the advantages of a buoyant Reading on its doorstep, but does not want to give anything back. This myopic mind-set has existed for many years, and explains why there is no third bridge across the River Thames in Reading despite years of pressure. This mind-set is common throughout the Thames Valley region. Changing it could take years. Why will it be different in the Corridor?

27. I agree. My experience suggests you are pushing at an open door. The potential win will be considerable.

28. Looking ahead 33 years is not enough. It is less than half a lifetime. What then happens after 2050? Where does the next generation of growth in an affluent area go? You need a system which

will deliver building land free of controversy. The delivery system needs to recognise land zones which must be protected in perpetuity, whilst the linking into remaining areas which are not protected and are accepted as suitable for development in the long term. Once this sort of spatial thinking has local clarity, you can plan infrastructure far ahead, along the right travel lines of actual or potential growth.

28/Criteria 2 I do not agree. S106 and CIL revenues are inadequate. They must be replaced by land value capture. There is a massive potential win here. Please see Appendix 2 below.

28/Criteria 4. However detailed and thorough an integrated cost-benefit analysis maybe, at strategic level it has limited value. The bottom line is this: will the public sector take the lead, or will it abdicate responsibility to the private sector? Local councils experience is reactive, not pro-active. This Corridor concept will stand or fail on the leadership and authority the delivery body is granted. Development is a high risk business. But the public sector has the power and the time if it can recover the self-confidence needed. In my opinion unless the public sector retains and actively uses its authority the Corridor will collapse into a series of sporadic settlements in remote locations without sufficient connectivity. The potential win will disappoint policy makers and annoy existing residents.

30. Thinking rooted in a wider vision across wider geography is welcome. It will not happen without direction and drive. Pro-active leadership is critical.

32/33. There seems to be some inconsistency here. I understand the government's wish to avoid imposition by Whitehall which is always resented locally, in planning terms far more than is understood. And I support local responsibility for decisions on housing locations and local infrastructure. But theory is one thing; reality is different.

WHO WANTS THE POWER? It is a hot potato. Here is the dilemma. Since 2010 the government has pursued policies intended to hand back power to local communities. It is a welcome change of direction. In the rural Home Counties in theory the change gives local councils access to the power they want to direct and manage housing need according to local priorities. But the evidence since 2010 is they do not deliver. The issue of new housing is so toxic for local political leaders councillors and local Members of Parliament, despite house prices now being at nightmare levels for their new voters, local leaders are not keen to publicly engage with the issue and do not want to participate in open debate about possible housing supply solutions. They know the reactions of local residents in possible locations will be outspoken and vehement. In terms of winning and keeping local support for additional housing this reaction is not helpful to local leaders.

IS THERE A LEADERSHIP VOID? Following publication by the government in March 2016 of " Locally-Led garden villages towns and cities" intended to encourage local authorities to bring forward new communities all of Berkshire's MP's were sent a detailed professional analysis of Berkshire's housing challenge (where in Berkshire do you locate 100,000–200,000 new homes over 20 to 40 years?) together with a suggested long-term solution which pointed to the need for local leadership. Understandably they were reluctant to engage until Zac Goldsmith, my Richmond MP at the time, reassured them that he did not object my initiative. One of the eight met me, took the matter up with a Minister and obtained a substantive response. That support was helpful.

Engaging with local councils with different planning control priorities, is helped by participating in the draft local plan public consultations. Since December 2015 I have put forward a similar analysis of local housing deficit to several Thames Valley councils with a similar solution. It is not yet possible to say if these policies, in their draft Local plans which in my judgement are neither sustainable or sound, will become so.

35. I am not convinced.

36. My conclusion is that delivery may demand a carrot and a stick. Currently there are no incentives for local leaders to support and promote new housing. This is a fatal weakness. If sufficient incentives are put in place, and there is provision for compensation to local residents whose quality of life will suffer, there may be no need to use the stick. If these changes are not introduced, the Corridor will struggle.

40/41. I am confused. Paragraph 41 sets out governance principles, not design principles. Somewhere here there ought to reference to land value capture.

47. The focus is rightly on the governance model. If it fails, the Corridor will fail. There are many threats, including vested interests. Which is why the solution below demands a lot of time. To deliver new settlements which are sustainable local governance will need

- *cross-border jurisdiction
- *local political consensus
- *consistent policies
- *20/60 year phased delivery

The challenge for the government will be to first obtain cross-party consensus in Westminster.

> F. CONCLUSIONS

>

> 23. At national level, several decades of failed housing policy make it clear the current delivery system for new housing in high demand areas is broken. A lasting, sustainable housing land supply solution needs the existing landowner-led methods of identifying and bringing forward new land for house building to be replaced within ten years.

>

> 24. The existing delivery failings will have the same negative impacts on the Corridor. Despite government support for the principle of the Corridor these constraints will severely impair and delay your proposals if they are not removed. Appendix 2 suggests the way forward.

>

> 25. The big challenge is changing local mind-sets, which are currently
> programmed into a knee-jerk reaction of opposition to new housing near
> them. This is a justified attitude based on four decades of erosion of
> the rural fabric of many counties in the south east; and overloaded
> local infrastructure. This negative mind-set can only be changed if
> voters are convinced

>

> *many more houses somewhere will eventually mean they, their children
> and their grandchildren will have much more spendable income for other
> purposes;

>

> *more houses near them is a fair and befitting way of protecting
> other more beautiful parts of England's green and pleasant land;

>

> *voters who are most directly effected by new houses near them will

- > receive financial compensation;
- >
- > *their local communities will also directly and substantially share
- > in the financial gains delivered by the governance and land delivery
- > body that decides where the new housing will go through land value
- > capture;
- >
- > *the expectation amongst those in the building industry that there will be a big increase in the supply of housing land by 2025-2030 will break the short term deadlock currently blocking new housing supply as those in control of building land realise the market will start to move against them, as new supply comes forward and they need to act to protect their current expectations.

26. The broken housing supply system can be mended. It will require years. It will require strong and consistent leadership. It will require governance changes. It will require a change in local mind-sets. It will require financial changes, self-funded through land value capture to enable some residents to receive compensation and local councils to be incentivised. It will require high calibre development expertise from the delivery body, with a pro-active, not reactive leadership style.

27. The aim of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford review is, as the Annex says, to provide the Government with proposals and options for the long term infrastructure priorities to unlock growth, jobs and housing within the Corridor over the next 30 years. Without delivering a lasting solution to local opposition in rural areas to local change any attempt to unlock growth here, or in similar locations where there is great potential, will not fail; instead it will be disappointing. The Thames Valley has boomed in in four decades, with little help from government. How much more be achieved with a different attitude is unknown; in my view, a very great deal more.

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- >
- > APPENDIX 1 LOCAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE; CASE STUDY
- >
- > A. In response to housing shortages in the eighties an attempt was made to substantially enlarge one of the existing major urban centres in the Thames Valley. Several large corporate land owners and other established owners in an unprotected area of mixed brown land and agricultural land with the support of the NRA ( the predecessor to the Environment Agency) worked on a plan to build a few thousand new homes. Eventually the proposal was withdrawn by the promoters due to high speculative funding costs (fees) and a change in their business priorities.
- >
- > B. A second, more sustained attempt on a far bigger scale was made a decade later by experienced investors in partnership with the same landowners over a period of several years. A speculative investment of many millions was made to fund the professional team. This attempt too, to provide thousands of new homes set around water and a natural garden with comprehensive supporting infrastructure and new area of public open space of hundreds of acres failed. It was eventually withdrawn in the face of growing local opposition, policy changes by one regulator and shifts in viability as austerity took hold.
- >
- > C. In part these unsuccessful initiatives reflected an earlier Research paper published in early in the nineties called 'Growth v. Quality of Life: a Thames Valley solution'. Its focus was on the need to build many more homes somewhere on unprotected land in the Thames Valley to prevent house

prices reaching unaffordable levels. It contained this revealing quotation from a Berkshire County Council report:

>

> "Historically house prices in the south east, including Berkshire, have been high in relation to other parts of the the UK. Halifax building society estimate that in the fourth quarter of 1990 the average price if all houses in the south east was £88,396-33% above the average prices in the UK as a whole (£66,811). Yet average incomes in Berkshire were only 10 and 18% higher than the UK equivalent. This implies that Berkshire residents will need to devote a higher proportion of their income to house purchase than the national average.

>

> As financial institutions will only generally lend between 2.25 and three times the annual household income, this suggests households other than those in above incomes, or with substantial savings, will have difficulty meeting the cost of house purchase in Berkshire."

>

> D. There was no public response from Berkshire County Council or the local councils, although the proposal for a new urban extension to Reading received front page exposure in the local media. Some academics, some in the business community and others showed interest in the years following. The objective, to encourage local debate and early recognition of the dilemma ahead, was not achieved.

>

> E. Instead the opposite happened. There was a subsequent debate in the House of Commons, lead by local MP's seeking Ministerial support to draw firm lines to prevent new housing development going in the direction of the limited white land available.

>

> F. Years later, when the affordability ratio had tripled, in 2014 the Wolfson Economic Prize 2014 invited candidates to submit competitive essays on the topic ' How would you deliver a new Garden City, which is visionary, economically viable, and popular?' My firm submitted an entry. The solution was site specific, again proposing an urban extension to Reading of 20,000 new homes.

>

> G. Local publicity produced two unexpected reactions, one a public meeting in opposition and second a petition of a few hundred names to the prize judges in opposition. Attempts to correct key misunderstandings were not accepted by those leading the opposition.

>

> H. The public reaction surprised me. I was impressed by the local reaction to an academic proposal and struck by the increase in local opposition and impassioned criticism compared with 20 years earlier. Such a response to a solid evidence based idea for essential new housing supply for their community from a vocal local group of residents and their leaders, whose homes were located several hundred yards away provided a vivid illustration of the delivery challenge ahead.

>

> I. On the 3rd May 2017 Reading Borough Council published its latest draft ( May 2017) Local Plan. It identifies a similar area as an area of search for new housing.

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> APPENDIX 2 MY DELIVERY SOLUTION

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> A. Because it has taken four decades to terminally break the housing supply market it will take more than two decades to put in place a new locally led delivery system which will work. The Corridor will need a similar lead time to win local support unless the governance changes set out here can be implemented more rapidly.

>

> B. This appendix explains the steps that I suggest be followed and the chronological sequence needed to have a realistic chance of mending the system. The first step is recognition that a national housing land supply policy must be introduced with cross-party political support in Westminster. If this consensus is not achieved the threat of policy U-turns at local and general elections means the construction sector will not have the confidence to make necessary long term commitments. Policy consistency based on cross-party consensus is vital. Five year electoral cycles conflict with the need for realistic delivery timeframes. Because the objective is to achieve a very substantial increase supply of housing land in the medium term 2025-2030 and a very substantial increase in the supply of new homes in the long term, i.e. after 2030 suppliers, that is to say land owners, developers, builders and planning authorities, will believe nothing has changed if a credible consensus based policy does not exist first in Westminster.

>

> C. Because the big challenge is to change local mind-sets about new
> homes; (residents are currently programmed into a knee-jerk reaction
> of opposition to housing near them) ; this mind-set can only be
> changed if voters are convinced

*. voters most directly affected by new houses near them will receive financial compensation.

* their local communities will also directly share in the financial gains

* local recognition the existing structure of local councils prevents long-term, consistent, cross border housing land delivery system that is needed.

Putting this message across will take several years. Because a reversal in attitudes is needed from local residents, it cannot in my opinion be done in months or even a year or two.

D. This section explains the steps, to be followed to rebuild the market, so it functions in a normal manner. By normal I mean new supply follows new demand and reduced demand leads to reduced supply. And that house prices reflect the usual production costs, off site and on-site, in each case without state intervention.

E. The process must start with a government policy Statement which has the support of the main opposition parties.

STEP 1. Announcement of an intention to eventually produce a massive increase in the supply of housing (and housing land) through the introduction of a very long term land supply policy. It will apply to the period 2030 to 2080.

STEP 2. At the same time all sub-regions, except the metro areas with appointed mayors areas, will be required to produce by 2020 a Horizons map. The local Horizons map will identify all their land and confirm the boundaries of all existing major land use restrictions which are subject to current protection policy. The focus will be on the greenbelt zones, AONB zones, floodplains whether flood risk exceeds a certain level, and SSI's where protection policies are expected to endure into the long term.

STEP 3. The sole purpose of the Horizons map is to visually distinguish all rural land areas which are protected. What land remains, which is not already developed, is unprotected land. It is called white land by planners. Protected land is and will remain unavailable for development (unless special exceptions are made). During the five year period 2020-2025 all councils, together with their

neighbours, will use their Horizons map to produce and adopt a building sites or land bank long term (2025 -2080) policy map.

STEP 4. Call this map the designated search area (DSA) map. It will identify in each sub-region locations where within the white land zones housing might be located at any time up to 2080. Within the DSA the map will distinguish those white land areas where there is reason why despite the land being white land, development will not be supported locally even in the long term and the remaining areas where house building is not ruled out, and therefore is possible in the future. These two categories can be called 'preferred white land' and 'rejected white land'.

STEP 5. By 2025, when all areas have completed their research and adopted their DSA policy the government will review all the DSA maps. It will confirm if aggregated nationally there will be sufficient 'preferred white land' in each region to meet all housing demand needs today, and long into the future. If so, it will not be necessary to revisit any of the 'rejected white land' zones for additional housing land.

STEP 6 In the short term, by 2025 once local councils have formally adopted their DSA policy the value of all land and buildings inside the 'preferred white land' zones will be fixed. Any subsequent changes in value due to market movements will be excluded from compensation under the CPO code if the land/buildings are later acquired for development by the delivery body. This change is intentional. It is to create a new source of funding. In affluent areas with high land values retention by local communities of development values will make new housing self funding. These funds will pay regional and national infrastructure needs, and will provide local compensation to residents whose quality-of-life will suffer.

STEP 7 The proposal in Step 6 looks contentious. By critics it will be called nationalisation of land. These claims need not be a big challenge if these three additional changes are also introduced at the same time.

A. An alteration to the existing compulsory purchase code, whereby landowners whose land is acquired not only receive market value for their land or property (inclusive of Hope value) at the adoption date of the DSA policy but in addition a further payment. Called a goodwill or equity supplement designed to capture in most cases, their goodwill and cooperation it will be between 25 and 100% higher than market value at the DSA adoption date (existing use value + hope value if this element exists) and will become payable to the landowner in addition to the market value. The goodwill payment must be seen as a generous extra payment to those directly affected. It is a price paid for their willing cooperation.

B. As indicated, once the DSA policy is adopted all land property values within the 'preferred white land' parts of the DSA will be frozen at prevailing market levels. Land and property owners will be free to buy and sell in the usual way, but any subsequent payments at a higher level unless reflecting changes in market values outside the 'preferred white land' zones (or hypothetical equivalent) will be excluded from compensation set in A. above. Suggestions this change amounts to a form of nationalisation of development values will be balanced by the argument that additional development values are created by the community and therefore belong to the community.

C. The third change, to be introduced at the same time, will be the introduction of compensation for existing residents who is quality-of-life and value of their home are adversely affected in both short-term and in the long term (subject to a cut-off date) by the adoption of the DSA policy. Once again there are various ways compensation can be calculated. Compensation will be paid through the local council share in the development value.

STEP 8 From 2030 the new long-term DSA based policies will replace those parts of adopted local plans where conflict arises.

STEP 9. Around the same time the governance changes needed to liberate land supply in local areas will take effect. The new delivery bodies will take over responsibility for buying the land identified in the DSA maps, granting the necessary housing consent, selling the land to builders subject to the density, design and other policies which will apply throughout the new settlement area.

IMPACT OF THESE STEPS: Three Points of Note

RELEASE SUPPLY. First, these steps if announced on a cross party basis at Whitehall level will start a process of change over period of several years in the mind-sets of residents in areas for future change, ie. 'preferred white land' areas which in turn will lead to changes in the attitude of local leaders as decisions on future housing locations becomes a less toxic issue. The announcement will also start to change the attitude of developers in the short term who understand there will be more supply, and therefore more competition. In response they will then bring forward projects currently in hibernation more quickly.

MARKET REACTION. Second, in the meantime the market is reacting to these initiatives. Landowners, developers, and that their professional advisers will be very interested in how local councils will proceed in the new environment within their local areas. As usual land that is seen to have above average potential development will be quickly targeted. Builders and developers will seek agreement with landowners, typically options and conditional contracts to control the land. It is a highly competitive and secretive sector. These reactions are not a threat. With exception of land seen by the market as virtually certain to be given consent to build in the short term, most land values will remain low, that means not significantly above current use values for many years. In other words the additional value attributable to the development potential, called Hope value will remain low despite the uplift of 100 times and more with consent to build. This will be because of a site by site basis both location and timing are big unknowns. The risks will deter undue speculation. Hope value will only emerge as a significant cost when councils have identified long-term site search locations within the DSA, have decided programmes the first phases, which are credible to the market but have not yet formally adopted the DSA policy. This response is not a threat

SELF-FUNDING. Finally in affluent high-value areas like the Thames Valley and similar parts of the rural Home Counties land value capture is a rare opportunity to finance transport infrastructure, social needs and compensate local resident whose quality of life will be changed, at no cost to the taxpayer. This sounds too good to be true. It is not. If the government decides to give council's land value capture powers in place of S106 and cil agreements most of the uplift in value due to grant of planning consent can be directed back to the local community.

For sample, if a second Milton Keynes is built in an unprotected area to the west of London where agricultural land is worth £10,000 per acre and assuming housing land is worth, without services, £1 million per acre and 20,000 acres of land is needed, but only 50% is built on, the local communities will share a pot of around £10 billion.

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APPENDIX 3. OBSERVATIONS ON THE CORRIDOR's GOVERNANCE

In the governance area I have no expertise. History suggests appropriate power must be given to the delivery body. Otherwise it will fail in its task. Local council representatives who wear two hats must not be able to sabotage the efforts of the delivery body to act. Officials employed by the delivery body may need to have a policing role in this context.

Cambridge and Peterborough are now one body. The councils making up the districts of the County of Oxford plus Oxfordshire County Council are now in dispute about proposed changes to the governance in Oxfordshire. I have no information about Milton Keynes.

My judgement is all councils should participate in preparing and tabling the Horizon and DSA maps. This process might act as a 'wake-up' call to all local council members and local MP's. It may be appropriate to give them freedom to agree governance changes throughout the Corridor by 2025. If they do the government can then decide if their proposals suffice. If they do not, the government might treat all councils in the Corridor in the same way as areas like the Thames Valley, where the onus is on production and delivery of the new land supply policy as set out in Appendix 2.

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APPENDIX 4. WHO IS [name redacted]?

[personal information redacted]

~~~~~

My personal details are

[address redacted]

DATED Tuesday, 9th May 2017

Mob. [telephone number redacted]

Email. [email address redacted]

SIGNED. [name redacted]

PS Please send written confirmation of receipt of this email.

~~~~~ENDS~~~~~

Response to NIC March 2017 Consultation on behalf of the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust



Date: 11th May 2017

Author: [named redacted]

Introduction

The Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust made a submission to the initial NIC Consultation in 2016. The Trust continues to have a strong interest in the work of the NIC on the Cambridge/Milton Keynes/Oxford Corridor, particularly in relation to governance. The Waterway Park route runs through an area covered by three Local Authorities, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes. Cross boundary co-operation and joined up strategic planning will be crucial to the success of the Waterway Park.

This submission is made on behalf of the BMKW Trust by [name redacted], the [job title redacted] and also the former [job title redacted] for Milton Keynes Partnership (MKP). MKP was established by Statute in 2004 to lead on delivering growth in Milton Keynes and is referred to in the NIC Interim Report published in November 2016. Thus, some of the points made in this response are made with the benefit of first-hand experience in establishing and running a delivery vehicle during the period when recent growth in Milton Keynes was at its highest level. Key to this success were building a Business Plan for growth and establishing an Infrastructure Tariff, prior to the introduction of CIL.

The BMKW Trust's approach to promoting the Waterway Park is built around a business planning and project management approach. Successful implementation will be dependent on it being integrated into an overall strategic plan and on effective delivery through a governance structure which integrates infrastructure as part of a strategic whole, with strong emphasis on sustainability and a sense of place rather than just the prioritisation of projects.

BMKWT Response to NIC March 2017 Consultation Questions

An Integrated Strategic Plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;**
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?**

In its submission in response to the Call for Evidence in 2016 the Trust stated clearly its view that a coordinated strategic/cross-boundary approach to planning for growth opportunities within the corridor is essential. In the current absence of a comprehensive strategy there is a lack of longer term certainty and therefore reduced incentive to unlock private and public sector investment, both critical to delivering strategic infrastructure improvements. A clear and endorsed strategic planning framework can establish the longer-term priorities for growth, thereby creating greater certainty and confidence for investors needed to implement both residential and employment growth.

The approaches explored in the consultation paper can rectify the situation by establishing a context for strategic planning, identifying broad locations for growth and the infrastructure needed to underpin it but also creating distinct but successful places. The four criteria for an integrated plan, as proposed in the Discussion Paper, would establish that much needed certainty, robust financial planning and clear phasing to help deliver high quality and sustainable places.

The Waterway Park can be a key asset which helps establish that distinct sense of place in the heart of the corridor.

Without a strategic context, there is little incentive for cross boundary co-operation and the existing pattern of growth, on a site by site basis, will perpetuate. This means that infrastructure provision for local communities is localised and piecemeal and often lags behind in the development process. This has directly impacted on the potential to deliver the Waterway Park as part of a strategic approach to water management and movement as balancing and drainage facilities are small scale and not capable of being real assets to the local community.

The key example of the advantages of a strategic approach is Milton Keynes which has benefited throughout its development from advance investment in infrastructure, including strategic blue green infrastructure and this in turn has created a strong framework for delivery creating certainty for private sector investment. Early investment has enabled balancing lakes and flood plains to become assets to the new city and provided an enhanced green blue framework with well-established and attractive settings for new development. The Waterway Park can help establish a similar framework and create a context for linked new settlements along its route in a green and sustainable setting.

The three local authorities along the Waterway Park route already work together as part of a wider Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Consortium of partners. Whilst all three Local Authorities have policies to protect the Waterway route the level of co-operation and consistency in policy planning does not extend

further to using the Waterway Park as a framework for planning and managing growth.

The Waterway Park route runs alongside East West Rail and the proposed route for the Expressway and therefore putting the Waterway Park at the heart of new communities would maximise the potential of planned infrastructure between Milton Keynes and Bedford.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

A bottom up approach is failing to deliver the scale and pace of growth required in the corridor. Whilst collaboration at a local level is essential, the lack of a clear top down strategy will potentially impact on infrastructure planning and delivery. It is already impacting on the deliverability of the Waterway Park to which the Trust aspires as there is no incentive to co-operate over potential enabling development in an approach which puts quality as well as quantity at its core. However, if taken to wide then a strategic plan will lose focus and relevance for communities. Bringing together the three Local Authorities along the route of the Waterway Park would establish a meaningful level of strategic planning.

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;**
- b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and**
- c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?**

Regional and sub regional strategic planning across the corridor will provide greater certainty and thereby a stronger focus and incentive for investment in infrastructure and housing and potentially a greater willingness for key players to collaborate and engage. The legal agreement underpinning Milton Keynes Tariff provided much more than financial support for planned growth – together with the Business Plan for Growth it linked housing and employment developers with infrastructure providers and was unwritten by Government via a funding agreement with English Partnerships. There are clear similarities to some of the points made in paragraphs 36 and 37 of the Discussion Paper, albeit at a more local level, however in Milton Keynes this type of “compact” with a business planning approach, reviewed and updated annually made a significant difference to the pace of growth. See also response to Q6 below.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Recommendation 2 of the Interim Report stated:

“The quality of infrastructure design and its impact on maintaining and enhancing the character of the built environment should be central to any strategic plan for the area.

As part of the next stage of its work, the Commission will continue to work with urban planners and the design community to understand how infrastructure can enable new and expanded settlements which incorporate the highest standards of design and place making.”

and added

“in addition to strategic planning, it is crucial for success that joint governance structures can be formed that support collective decision making..... different issues will be required at different spatial scales. While collaboration on strategic transport infrastructure is likely to require collaboration at the whole corridor level, leadership on strategic spatial planning, may require local authorities to collaborate around a travel to work area or across clusters of housing market areas. “

The Trust believes that the Waterway Park can be one of the essential attributes that make the corridor an attractive place to live and work, creating inclusive liveable places, connecting people and communities with opportunities for work and leisure. Putting it at the heart of the Bedford to Milton Keynes section of the corridor and focussing on placemaking as an essential part of sustainable growth would link three local authorities (who are already working together as the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Consortium) and would facilitate a bottom up collaboration building on existing co-operation

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

The design principles are workable. Local “ownership” of strategies is important and existing local collaborations are a good way to start from a bottom up level. The Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Consortium is a good example of an informal cross boundary and cross agency collaboration which has worked well to protect the route of the Waterway Park and, where significant opportunities arise, secure its delivery as part of new development. See response to Q4 above.

The three local authorities along the route have clear geographic links and could operate at a level which recognises local patterns of identity. There is potential at this level to “work with the grain”, to be representative and accountable but to take meaningful collective decisions across an area that has strong east/west links.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for subregional collaboration?

Sub regional collaboration is more likely to secure commitment at the local level and be easier to understand and relate to locally than a single tier of corridor wide governance. The Waterway Park provides a readymade basis for collaboration. See responses to Q4 and Q5 above.

National Infrastructure Commission | Discussion Paper 19

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to ‘lock-in’ collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to

a) their strategic plans, and

b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term? Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Whilst informal collaboration is to be welcomed, higher levels of housing delivery, population growth and economic growth in the corridor have been underpinned by more formal structures, with Milton Keynes

being a good example. In the period it operated as a delivery vehicle, Milton Keynes Partnership (MKP) significantly increased the pace of growth as evidenced by the Commissions interim report in November 2016

“Indeed, between 2004 and 2013, Milton Keynes as a city had the strongest job growth of any UK city”

Whilst the local authority was represented on the partnership, MKP was established by statute which gave it its own planning powers in designated areas. It operated as a subcommittee of English Partnerships, took decisions through its own development control committee and in consultation with landowners and Milton Keynes Council, was able to establish the Milton Keynes Tariff, with support from Treasury.

Most importantly the Tariff Agreement not only provided the basis for raising contributions but also incorporated mechanisms to drive delivery forward by linking contributions to time based triggers and payment longstop dates. For example, once a planning consent was granted then contributions became payable either by a real “start on site” date or a “deemed start on site” should the developer delay for any reason. Thus contributions became payable whether or not the developer had started on site and therefore there was a strong incentive to build once planning consents were issued. None of this would have been possible through informal collaboration or under the Local Authority’s own powers and procedures.

MKP was also able to work across agencies and establish a Business Plan for Growth which prioritised infrastructure and amalgamated funding sources and then implemented projects through a rigorous project management approach which drew from expertise in English Partnerships (now the HCA). Where necessary it was able to secure Treasury approvals for major capital expenditure effectively and efficiently to ensure projects were delivered on time and to budget. Thus being able to draw on more than local government resources, legislation and funding made a significant difference

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Build on existing collaborations such as that formed by the BMK Waterway Consortium.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

The Milton Keynes Business Plan for Growth (see above) was designed to manage, monitor and review the pace of growth and the integration of infrastructure projects.

Appendix 1: Background to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park

The Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park is a potentially transformational project which will provide significant and wide-ranging benefits to the immediate locality and the wider region as a whole. It will run from the River Great Ouse in Bedford through the Marston Vale to the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes. It will be the first new waterway in the UK for 100 years and a huge source of interest and innovation. It will provide a key missing link in the wider regional Anglian waterway network thereby opening up major tourism opportunities and providing a significant boost to the local and wider economy and to the Marston Vale area in particular. The new link will bring with it the potential benefits for regional water management such as improved water storage and transfer as well as improved flood defences. The wider Waterway Park will provide significant new healthy lifestyle and leisure opportunities and, at the same time, increase biodiversity as it links major wetland sites.

In addition, the new Waterway Park can play a very significant role in establishing a sense of place for new settlements along its route. As an early part of a strategic approach it can provide a crucial cross boundary green/blue landscape framework to help structure and absorb pressure for growth. It can provide a recognisable heart for new communities and a focus for consistency in designing unique high quality places in which people want to live and work.

The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park Trust is a charitable organisation which, along with a wider Consortium of Local Authorities and other agencies, seeks to promote the project for the benefit of the wider sub region. Further information about the Trust, its background and achievements is set out in Annex 1, including contact details.

The Trust's current Business Plan estimates that the Waterway Park would probably take around 10 years to implement. It will be a catalyst for regeneration and economic growth and require both public and private sector commitment and investment. It has the potential to establish major new tourism destinations around iconic features and thus attract investment. If recognised strategically as infrastructure which can underpin growth in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford corridor, then the timescale for development of delivery mechanisms and implementation of the project will be significantly enhanced.

Strategic planning in the Cambridge-MK-Oxford corridor

Response to the NIC discussion paper

[name redacted],[job title redacted], Centre for Transport Studies, University College London

Investment appraisal

It is recognised that investment in infrastructure, including enhanced east-west transport links, can help to address the undersupply of homes in the corridor, but it must be properly aligned with a strategy for new jobs, homes and communities, not developed in isolation. It is also recognised that an integrated strategic plan should be shaped by the requirements of a robust and integrated appraisal framework.

There are two relevant approaches to economic appraisal within Government.

The economic appraisal framework of the Department for Transport (DfT) focuses on the benefits to users of improved transport facilities and plays down the way in which new transport services can make land accessible for development. WebTAG unit A2.3¹ deals with transport appraisal in the context of dependent development:

- It is required that forecasts should be constrained to the projections provided in the National Trip End Model (NTEM) data set, which combines official projections of population growth, household forecasts, employment, car ownership and trip rates, to provide a consistent basis for appraisal. It is recognised that lags in data flow may mean that the NTEM does not reflect local planning. Moreover, it is widely believed amongst transport planners that NTEM contributes to overstated forecasts of road traffic growth.
- It is recognised that where housing development is dependant of transport investment, the economic benefits may be high. However, because transport investment is only one of a package of infrastructure investments needed, DfT requires that the benefits of the dependent housing unlocked by a transport scheme should **not** be included in the Analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits table and thus not be included in estimates of the Net Present Value, nor in estimates of the Benefit to Cost Ratio, for the transport scheme.

1

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540729/webtag-tag-unit-a2-3-transport-appraisal-in-the-context-of-dependent-development-july-2016.pdf

The Appraisal Guide² of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), published in December 2016, focuses on Land Value Uplift as the recommended approach to valuing the benefits of development. Land value data is seen as a rich source of information because it is actual market data on individuals' or firms' willingness to pay for a piece of land. Assuming rational decision-making, market prices should reveal the 'true' private benefit of a development. This information can be used to undertake cost benefit analysis to quantify the potential welfare implications of a development.

Thus there is a marked contrast between the approaches of the two Departments with respect to Land Value Uplift: DCLG treats this as integral to the economic appraisal whereas DfT regards this as a secondary matter. The DfT attitude stems from the long-standing focus of transport economists on benefits to users of the transport system, of which the main one is travel time savings. DfT regards the inclusion of Land Value Uplift as double counting benefits already counted in time savings, recognising that over time these may become converted, via markets, to other forms of benefit including higher rents to property owners.

The DfT approach contrasts with that of the US Department of Transportation, which funds transportation investments that help generate economic recovery.³ The full cost-benefit analysis required in support of bids includes time savings and other user benefits. However, net increase in land value may also be counted as a benefit, provided rigorous justification is offered.⁴

It is well established, from 40 years of findings of the National Travel Survey, that average travel time is quite stable at about an hour a day, despite many £ billions of investment in transport infrastructure based on the estimation of expected time savings. It follows that in the long run there are no travel time savings. To the extent that time savings occur, they are short run and hence not appropriate as the basis for appraising the value of long lived infrastructure.

The DfT and DCLG approaches would generate contrasting outcomes when applied to a transport investment aimed at making land available for development, even when using the same assumptions, since DCLG benefit:cost ratio would include Land Value Uplift whereas the DfT ratio would not.

What is needed is an evidenced-based approach common to both Departments. Evidence from evaluations of completed investments should inform appraisal of similar prospective investments. What is real should be counted; what is only notional, such as the output of unvalidated models, should not. In general, uplift in land values will be seen if looked for. Time savings may also be observable,

2

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576427/161129_Appraisal_Guidance.pdf

³ <https://www.transportation.gov/tiger>

4

https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/TIGER_BCA_Guidance.pdf

generally in the short run. An evidence-based approach avoids double counting benefits since people can only do one thing at a time: if they take the benefits of investment as time savings, they cannot at the same time travel further to benefit from lower cost housing, and vice-versa.

Modelling

An evidence-based approach would require reconsideration of conventional transport modelling. In general, models that support investment appraisal assume unchanged land use and incorporate the NTEM assumptions. The output of such models includes the time savings that are inputs to appraisal. However, this is the wrong way around: we need models that assume unchanged average travel time in the long run, the outputs of which would be changes in land use and value. Land Use Transport Interaction models exist but their use has not been required by the DfT, hence they remain underdeveloped.

What is needed are models that relate transport investment to the development of housing and commercial property, within a spatial economics framework.

Conclusion

There is a marked contrast between the approaches of two government departments to valuing development arising from improved access made possible by transport investment. DCLG includes Land Value Uplift as integral to economic appraisal, whereas DfT excludes this from the cost-benefit calculation, to avoid double counting user benefits, regarded as the main benefit within a welfare economics framework. What is needed is an evidence-based approach that recognises all the real, observable consequences of investment, in both modelling and appraisal.

18 May 2017

Received by email: [email address redacted]

My comments are related primarily to ensuring appropriate governance is put in place to deliver the necessary coordination of transport and development so as to realise the ambition of the Corridor.

In my view there are limits on how far joint working across local authority boundaries between autonomous local planning and transport authorities can achieve the progress required to make this project a reality. The election of a new Executive Mayor for Cambridgeshire and the track record of co-operation around Cambridge is a positive sign but the lack of such a Mayor and the record or reputation of poor co-operation around Oxford is an indication of the problems that can also come about.

My time as [job title redacted] between 2005 and 2012 at London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC) leads me to suggest that a Development Corporation model for the Oxford Cambridge Corridor is worth serious investigation. There are a number of different scenarios which could bring this about.

There is the current example of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation which seems to have a model similar to the LTGDC (other examples are Thurrock Thames Gateway and West Northamptonshire). There are the Mayoral Development Corporations being established in London and Teesside. I understand also that there has been a recent legislative change that has enabled new towns in areas where local authorities have been supportive to be achieved through the establishment of development corporations.

Key to the success of development corporations is the ability to bring together planning, compulsory purchase and wider regeneration powers including investment in place-changing transport initiatives. The most successful development corporations such as London Docklands have had public land transferred to them at either zero or reduced cost and have then had to supplement with compulsory purchase.

With regard to planning, the powers to prepare strategic plans and determine strategic planning applications (say, over 50 residential units) is vital. There is a question of how these strategic plans can relate to and fit in with the statutory planning structure but a good example is the Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks prepared by the Mayor of London. The determination of strategic planning applications should be done through a collaborative process as far as possible with existing planning authorities but there needs to be an overall Planning Committee that makes the decisions. Such a Committee should clearly include political representation from the local authorities. The Development Corporation should also be as free as possible, depending on prospective changes to the relationship between Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106, to set up some kind of tariff similar to that of the Milton Keynes Partnership or LTGDC. The LTGDC tariff which I led on for the Corporation led to commitments worth £200 million to strategic infrastructure. Another good model is the Greater London Authority's Crossrail CIL.

[name redacted]

19th May 2017

The Savills logo consists of the word "savills" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, colored red, set against a solid yellow rectangular background.

Sent by email to: GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

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Dear Sir/Madam

National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) – Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: A Discussion Paper – Response on behalf of Thames Water

Thames Water Utilities Ltd (Thames Water) Property Services function is being delivered by Savills (UK) Limited as Thames Water's appointed supplier. Savills are therefore pleased to respond to the above consultation on behalf of Thames Water.

Thames Water is the largest water and wastewater services company in the UK, serving over 15 million customers across the London and the Thames Valley area, from Kent and Essex in the east, to the edge of Gloucestershire in the west. Oxford and Oxfordshire are located within Thames Water's area along with the southern part of the Buckinghamshire county. We have the following comments on behalf of Thames Water:

Para 28 Criteria 1 (e) and Para 31(b)

Thames Water support the statements at para 28 (e) and 31 (b) where they set out that the strategic plan should highlight the scale future needs of utilities infrastructure such as water supply and wastewater treatment.

As previously indicated, the town planning system, both forward planning and development control, is critical in enabling Thames Water to plan for and provide the necessary infrastructure to service development and protect the environment. It is essential to ensure that such infrastructure is in place in time to meet the needs of our customers and the environment, and avoid adverse impacts on the environment such as sewage flooding of residential and commercial properties, pollution of land and watercourses and water shortages with associated problems of low pressure water supply.

The plan-led system helps Thames Water to plan for the water and sewerage infrastructure that new developments require. However, the development control stage is equally important in regulating development and providing for the necessary infrastructure. Thames Water support the policy references to water supply and wastewater infrastructure in the NPPF, in particular paragraphs 156 and 162 and the more detailed guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Thames Water promote the recognition that infrastructure should be in place for new development where and when it is needed. It is essential to ensure that adequate water and sewerage infrastructure is delivered prior to development taking place, in order to avoid unacceptable impacts as set out above.

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

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Water and sewerage undertakers have limited powers under the Water Industry Act (WIA) to prevent connection ahead of infrastructure upgrades and therefore may need to rely on the planning system to ensure infrastructure is effectively in place ahead of occupation. In some incidences Thames Water may seek an appropriate planning condition. This is especially relevant to wastewater infrastructure where powers to control connection through the WIA are limited to the quality of construction of the connection to our sewer, rather than the suitability of the point of connection.

It is therefore essential that developers work with the water companies in partnership to demonstrate that adequate capacity exists both on and off the site to serve the proposed development and that it would not lead to additional capacity constraints for new and/or existing users.

In relation to major new settlements or brownfield redevelopments Thames Water would recommend that a mini Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) is produced to support the development promotion. The scope of the mini IWMS could include:

- Assessment of the existing water supply infrastructure in the local area;
- Assessment of the existing sewerage and drainage infrastructure in the local area;
- Consideration of the likely range of demands for water supply, sewerage and drainage through the development phases;
- Proposals for a range of options to minimise drinking water demand, maximise grey/rainwater re-use, maximise the use of sustainable drainage systems;
- Assess the spatial implications of any required infrastructure; and
- Assess the outline costs and programming of any required infrastructure.

For all other major developments it is still important that the developer's produce a detailed drainage strategy early on in the development planning process to identify any on and or off site drainage infrastructure impacts, how these will be resolved, at what phases of the development they will be constructed, by what means and establishing the delivery route for that infrastructure. It is Thames Water's strong preference that this is produced well before the planning application is submitted.

Para 28 (d)

Notwithstanding the above, it will be difficult for Thames Water to identify the detailed infrastructure requirements until specific sites are identified in Local Plans.

If you wish to discuss any of the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]

Response from FSB Milton Keynes and North Buckinghamshire to the discussion paper on the strategic planning for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor

An integrated strategic plan

The Milton Keynes and North Buckinghamshire Branch of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), recognises there are currently restrictions with the transport infrastructure, for some reason much of the transport infrastructure works south to north but not east to west. And so improved road and rail links from east to west will be in the interest of many and not just those on the corridor.

However, our concern is that Milton Keynes is already a very fast growing city and struggling to cope with building houses for those who are already relocating to Milton Keynes and the immediate environment. This new link is going to add to that situation and from presentations we have attended over the last 12 months we understand that Milton Keynes is seen as a solution to the housing problem in so much that its cheaper to build houses and to live here. This means that there will be a significant increase in those moving to the area since people will be able to live in Milton Keynes and commute to Oxford and Cambridge.

However we feel this then puts additional pressure on the city in different ways:

1. It will contribute to the congestion in and around Milton Keynes station for parking which currently falls short for those commuting to London or further afield on a daily basis. In turn this puts additional pressure on the available parking for the offices and the city centre shops.
2. If we can't build houses quickly enough for those working in Milton Keynes then how can we also build houses for those living here and commuting to Oxford and Cambridge?
3. And then there is the impact on businesses in Milton Keynes, many businesses are already finding it very hard to recruit the skilled workers they need, especially technical staff. This new corridor will mean that it's easier for everyone to travel and so will add to the pressure on local businesses to recruit and or retain staff.

The additional housing will also have an impact on the Aylesbury Vale District Council boarders since they are supposedly taking some of the overspill of housing.

We are aware that Milton Keynes has recently published its economic and development strategy as well as PlankMK both cover some of this and we will be responding to these documents and sharing the same concerns. But unless Milton Keynes Council gets the right funding it will be hard for them to provide the resources needed to support an expansion of the city.

New opportunities

We would hope that the planning explored will enable the housing developers and infrastructure providers, along the corridor, to engage and form long-term collaborations and that these will bring growth opportunities to SMEs who can provide services and goods to them. We also hope that the government would consider setting criteria that a certain percentage of contracts or value of contracts has to be awarded to SMEs, particularly those within the corridor. And that in any proposals and tenders submitted these providers and developers have to demonstrate compliance with these criteria and be measured accordingly. These measurements should also include the prompt payment for goods and services in accordance with the government guidelines for SMEs.

We are aware that similar provisions have been made in the past and this is an opportunity to help all sizes of business grow in the area.

At the same time we would encourage consideration around sustainability i.e. how houses and roads are constructed as well as ensuring there are sufficient cycle paths and walkways for people in the residential areas and linking these to the railway stations. In Milton Keynes we have the Redways, they are a great asset and something similar in all residential areas would be of great benefit to the people living there plus of course helping to reduce cars on the road and emissions and so have health benefits.

We also suggest an extension of the driverless vehicles in Milton Keynes to the new residential areas.

Connectivity is key to any community in the 21st Century and this is a big issue in Milton Keynes where there are mobile black spots as well as very slow and unreliable broadband/internet connections. We suggest that all planning forces high speed broadband to be delivered to every home, school, and public building in any new developments.

Furthermore we suggest that funding is made available to businesses, particularly small businesses, to access improved connectivity and that the providers are encouraged to work in collaboration for the good of the local economy as a whole and the success of all that its delivered through the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor

Governance

We have no further comment on the governance other than to support the principles in paragraph 41 however we would welcome a 'lock-in' collaboration over the long term.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

We have no comment on these questions.

[name redacted]

[job title redacted], Milton Keynes and North Buckinghamshire Branch, Federation of Small Businesses

May 2017

Response to NIC Paper on Strategic Planning and Governance for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor

About CPRE

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) welcomes this opportunity to respond to the National Infrastructure Commission's discussion paper *Strategic Planning and Governance for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor* (March 2017). CPRE works for a better future for the English countryside. We work locally and nationally to protect, shape and enhance a beautiful, thriving countryside for everyone to value and enjoy.

As a charity with about 60,000 members, a branch in every county, over 200 district groups and more than 2,000 parish council members, we have long had an interest in infrastructure proposals, whether of local or national scales and we engage with the planning system at all these levels. We are most grateful for the invaluable input provided into this response by our Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire branches and our South East and East of England Regional Groups with their extensive local knowledge of the geographical area being considered by the Commission.

CPRE has set up a specialist cross-regional working group to take forward its involvement in the work on the Corridor and to demonstrate how seriously we take these proposals. We note in para 4 of the Paper that this 'represents the start of a debate, not its conclusion', and confirm that CPRE nationally, regionally and locally look forward to participating fully in that debate. We welcome opportunities for further discussion and of course involvement in any further consultations.

References in this Response are to the current Consultation Paper unless otherwise stated.

Our vision for the area

CPRE's vision is to protect and enhance the area's environment, including landscape, biodiversity and heritage, whilst enabling local communities to accommodate locally arising sustainable growth in a way that retains their separate characters and identities, and supports rural businesses and a thriving agricultural sector. We look to transport in and through the area becoming more sustainable, with a decreasing emphasis on private and commercial road transport, with improved and increasing use of public transport including a fully completed East-West Rail, and pro-active support for walking and cycling.

Introduction

We note the Chancellor's original Terms of Reference of March 2016 that new infrastructure should 'maintain and/or protect the area's environment and cultural assets (including the Green Belt)', and that environmental assets should be identified. These must be major themes running through the studies and proposals, and ones that we strongly support.

CPRE promotes the principle of subsidiarity in planning, that decisions should be made at the most local level appropriate to the issues at hand. With that principle in mind, we do support strategic planning in cases such as coordinating the delivery of regeneration, development and infrastructure for a city and its hinterland, but such planning must be the result of local communities identifying for themselves the need to work together to resolve their own identified issues.

We note that para 2 in the NIC's Paper states that:

the NIC has taken into account input from officials from local authorities and local enterprise partnerships across the corridor. It has taken into account input from officials within the Department for Transport and the Cities and Local Growth Unit.

However, *nothing* is mentioned about responses received from parties other than local authorities and LEPs, either in the present consultation document or in the NIC's Interim Report (Nov 2016) following the Call for Evidence, and how the Commission has had regard to them. We have yet to see the NIC engaging directly with local communities or environmental NGOs at all. Para 8 refers to *key local and national stakeholders*. It is not implicit that this includes local communities nor is it clear who qualifies as a 'key' stakeholder. These proposals will fail unless there is engagement with local communities and the environmental sector, not merely at the later stages of specific development proposals but early on. We sense that there is already building up a local feeling of 'what we are about to have done to us': this is no way for the planning system to operate.

We trust that the NIC will publish not only the comments received in respect of this Consultation but also its response to them, acknowledging any differing views expressed.

We now go on to answer the specific Questions posed by the Commission.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and
- c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

1.1 There is an inherent assumption here that is not universally accepted, namely that the so-called "Corridor" represents a single coherent geographical area for which strategic planning is appropriate. The Corridor is as yet geographically undefined but potentially large and includes a wide diversity of communities and history.

1.2 CPRE supports the principle of strategic land-use planning at an appropriate geographical scale, provided that there is rigour in transparency, public participation and genuine consultation, and that ownership is by democratically elected authorities and not unelected bodies. The large urban metropolitan conurbations are examples of an appropriate geography for strategic planning: they have a major urban focus on which transport networks converge and a regional or sub-regional identity. However, land-use planning over a large area away from the major metropolitan cities, even if they comprise a number of smaller cities and larger towns, will not work if it becomes distant from – and undemocratically rides roughshod over – local communities. Localism must not be forgotten.

1.3 This was a major drawback of most of the former Regional Strategies: the scale was far too large, communities could not identify with them and participation by anyone other than local authorities and developers was actually quite difficult, although NGOs (including CPRE) did their best to take part. But at least these regional plans covered a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues and were subject to a rigorous process, with full consultation and public examination (intimidating though the latter was for some local groups).

1.4 That is not to say that a level of planning above that of the Districts and Unitary Authorities cannot be achieved. There are locations where this could work well and the forthcoming co-operation between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a case in point. In that instance, the two authorities are adjacent, have much in common and have historical associations. Another example is the Oxfordshire Growth Board, a joint committee of the county, district and city councils, which ‘brokers’ the Duty-to-Co-operate between member authorities (although it has to be said that local NGOs remain far from content that democratic accountability is adequate even here). There may be potential for a similar arrangement between Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale, and another (separate) one between Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. However, to achieve that there is a need for enhanced engagement with all sectors involved in achieving sustainable development.

1.5 Another assumption is that large-scale new inter-urban transport infrastructure is required in order to stimulate growth. Public transport links need to be improved anyway, both inter-urban and local, to provide sustainable alternatives to road transport. But the very notion that major new transport links are required in order to facilitate growth in the already overheated economies of South East and Eastern England is only to exacerbate existing problems and create new ones. Such transport improvements that are shown to be necessary can go ahead without strategic planning on this scale – indeed, work is already underway by Highways England and Network Rail.

1.6 We would refer the Commission to CPRE’s publication¹ *The impact of road projects in England* which *inter alia* points out the additional induced traffic, on top of that displaced from other routes, that new road construction brings, and also the resulting highly car-dependent patterns of land development in out-of-town locations, such as offices and retail, that would be better located in town centres which are better served by public transport, walking and cycling. Nevertheless, in several cases we may support small scale, local road ‘pinch-point’ relief to deal with local congestion, as part of a multi-modal approach. However, major new trunk road capacity between cities and towns does nothing to solve the well-recognised ‘last mile’ problem.

1.7 There is scope too for a complete segregated off-road cycle route between the two cities (at present, there are only relatively short sections such as NC Route 51 between Bedford and Sandy). Both Oxford and Cambridge have well-established cycling traditions with high levels of usage and Milton Keynes has its extensive ‘Redway’ network. Linking these by a high quality and attractive route would be an important contribution.

1.8 All development within a defined distance of the proposed Milton Keynes – Bedford Canal (whose route has been established and protected) should contribute, through s.106 or other mechanisms, to the construction of the canal. The adjacent towpath/bridleway could form part of the cycle route referred to in the preceding paragraph. (The canal route passes through Milton Keynes, Central Bedfordshire and Bedford local authority areas.)

1.9 East-West Rail (EWR) is needed anyway, whether or not we have a ‘corridor’ – and sooner rather than later. EWR has a national as well as a regional role in reducing the necessity for cross-country passenger travel via London (although it must provide adequate interchange opportunities with north-south rail routes). It will also provide an alternative to the inexorable growth in road traffic for both passengers and freight. The business and transport case for EWR is not dependent on development in the Corridor.

¹ See <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport/roads/item/4542-the-impact-of-road-projects-in-england>, March 2017.

1.10 The very notion of being ‘developed into a major economic corridor’ (para 24) is a heavy-handed top-down approach and the antithesis of the assertion (para 32) that

By working collectively, and from the bottom up, planning authorities can exploit these opportunities within the existing National Planning Policy Framework, bound by the duty-to-cooperate, rather than by top-down targets.

1.11 At a wider level, we are concerned that other Regions will experience outgoing migration to the Corridor, adding to the overheating of the area. Parts of the Midlands and the North of England, not to mention other extremities of the UK, are crying out for even a fraction of the levels of investment that are being considered here.

1.12 We nevertheless recognise that local towns and cities need to grow in order to sustain their own local economies and to accommodate natural internal growth, but they need to do this in a way that retains their individual characters and distinctiveness and that does not lose their separate and unique identities. The imposition of additional housing on them over and above their objectively assessed locally arising need would make this aim impossible to achieve.

1.13 The worst possible outcome for local communities would be for a corridor of ribbon development 120km long, even if punctuated by a few green spaces here and there. We have already seen developer proposals for major ribbon development to the south of Milton Keynes, extending well outside the new town itself, swallowing up villages and quality agricultural land.

1.14 The statement in para 41(e) that –

The need for collective decision-making must be balanced against the need to protect the interests of communities

– rings very hollow throughout the remainder of the NIC’s Paper.

1.15 Local authorities in the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge arc already suffer from the demand for housing from London commuters – a demand which will only increase, since the more housing that is built in the area, the more London commuters will be attracted, defeating the object of providing for local or even sub-regional need. To suggest that the Corridor needs to be opened up to enable long-distance east-west commuting as well, especially by car, is highly unsustainable and should be resisted.

1.16 We reject the suggestion that the undersupply of new houses is exacerbated by poor east-west transport links. Local authorities in the area are already doing all that they can to increase housing supply towards extremely demanding targets. Any shortfall arises from a combination of developers not bringing forward all the sites for which they have permission, the lack of priority given to the development of vacant or derelict brownfield land and financial constraints.

1.17 Para 28 suggests that a strategic plan would identify ‘broad locations’ for different types of development, but

stop short of identifying particular sites for commercial and residential development.

This was supposed to be the intention of the Regional Strategies, but when it came to the justification of particular ‘strategic’ development locations and the arguments for and against them at Examination, the sites themselves had to be identified, effectively bypassing the local

plan process which could then do very little other than to specify detailed boundaries. It is by no means straightforward to choose 'broad locations' without identifying their capacity for development and their policy constraints.

1.18 Para 48b exposes the NIC's intention to ensure that any strategic plan(s) for the area constrain Local Plans. This is likely to be resented. Local communities and NGOs engage effectively at the Local Plan level and would not appreciate being told by the local authority that "there is nothing that we can do" because "the strategic plan says so".

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

2.1 Local co-operation between adjacent authorities is already a requirement of the NPPF. There is no need to extend this over great distances. For example, the authority areas adjacent to Oxford and Cambridge respectively can (and do) come together in order to discuss housing and employment land provision and the opportunities that one authority might provide to an adjacent one where the latter is highly constrained. But to suggest that Milton Keynes or Bedford (for example) should provide housing for Oxford or Cambridge is to encourage unsustainable commuting between them.

2.2 The suggestion of a single strategic plan covering the whole area, whether formal or informal, should be dropped. Each local authority is already struggling to meet its own development needs without further imposition from above. We reject the suggestion that this proposal for a strategic plan for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc area would solve local problems with 5-year housing land supply. These problems stem from the usual tendency to overinflate estimates of housing need coupled with the unwillingness of house builders to deliver, which this plan would do nothing to address.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

3.1 CPRE is deeply concerned that there no reference to collaboration with local communities, the environmental sector and NGOs. This appears to be a theme running through this whole project, namely that it can all be left to local authorities, developers, LEPs and infrastructure providers, and never mind anyone else. Para 48a confirms this:

... involving local authorities, LEPs, central government departments and national delivery agencies.

3.2 CPRE is strongly committed to the principles of sustainable development and this emphasises the importance of participation and engagement by all interests and sectors in plan-making. We have been concerned by the failure of discussions on the Corridor to date to be inclusive and the reliance on input from narrow groups with only commercial or political interests.

3.3 Whatever the final outcome of arrangements for the Corridor, it is vital to get local communities and local organisations on board. This involves meaningful participation rather than superficial consultation (often after decisions have to all intents and purposes already been made). Local communities and interested NGOs have much to contribute and will do so constructively, given the chance.

3.4 It needs to be ensured that there is a clear and rigorous process for developing, consulting on and testing any strategic plan through an independent Examination or equivalent. Otherwise, there is a risk of undermining the proper debate to be had in local plan making over strategic decisions affecting those areas, as pointed out in our answer to Q.1, above.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

4.1 CPRE believes that transparent discussion and co-operation between authorities is all that is necessary. We would add that the Local Enterprise Partnerships, having no democratic accountability and whose deliberations are highly opaque with no public input, should have no greater influence than any other interested party.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

5.1 Para 41a says that there should be a clear geographic scope. We therefore cannot understand the NIC's reluctance to reduce the boundaries of the Corridor at this stage. It may be too early to draw final detailed lines on maps, but at least an approximate boundary would eliminate the more distant and less relevant authorities. If we are going to define a Corridor at all (a principle that we do not accept), then it should only include authorities in the relatively narrow strip between the two cities. The larger the area, the less local communities will be able to identify with it, and the greater will be the difficulty of gaining their co-operation and acceptance.

5.2 The suggested inclusion of the whole of certain counties makes the Corridor area far too large. Some local authorities on the periphery may wish to be included merely because they see funds coming their way, but by doing this the Corridor loses its focus and the problems of strategic planning over such an increased area are greater. High Wycombe and Amersham (Bucks), for example, contribute nothing towards discussions about Oxford, Milton Keynes or Cambridge: they are too far south and are too influenced by London. Similarly, Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough are too far north even if they have an aspiration to be linked in. Importantly, growth at these and similar 'outlier' locations can contribute nothing towards transport improvements in the Corridor as they will not benefit from them.

5.3 We disagree fundamentally with many of the other principles in para 41. In particular, the proposition at para 41b (ii) that boards or forums should be empowered

without the need for decisions to be ratified through individual local authorities' decision-making processes

would result in an intolerable democratic deficit, since any sub-regional body is not going to be accountable to the electorate except by the most indirect and ineffective means. Such an arrangement would be no more democratically accountable than the unpopular regional strategies, which were abolished partly for that reason. The Chancellor made clear in his March 2016 letter to the NIC that proposals should be brought forward *whilst ensuring democratic accountability is preserved* (our italics).

5.4 If any new form of collective governance is created, it should be democratically accountable and fully transparent. It must include comprehensive mechanisms to address the obvious democratic deficit that is inherent in any supra-authority arrangements. Failure

to recognise the legitimate concerns of the existing communities along the corridor or to work with the public and NGOs to address the Chancellor's commitment are likely to create significant difficulties within each local authority and its communities. Any governance arrangements therefore must indeed include safeguards to protect the interests of individual areas (para 41e refers). There must be a true commitment to this, not mere tokenism.

5.5 Para 41(i) has the desirable aim of minimising bureaucracy. However, this should not mean any loss of rigour in applying environmental and other assessments, reduction in public involvement or loss of accountability. Public scrutiny must be of the highest standards.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

6.1 Sub-regional collaboration should continue and not be superseded or overridden by an undemocratic governance structure.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

7.1 Yes, definitely. The local authorities concerned can agree on common policies regarding s.106 and s.278 planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levies in order to contribute to transport, environmental and other cross-boundary infrastructure.

7.2 However, no attempt should be made to bind local authorities, who produce statutory local plans, by a higher tier of non-statutory planning or guidance.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

8.1 Local Plans typically cover 15-20 years. Compulsory 5-yearly updates are proposed in the Housing White Paper. Those Local Plans will have been devised and ultimately adopted following co-operation with adjacent authorities. Such co-operation should be more transparent than it is at present. That should give sufficient confidence to anyone who needs it.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

9.1 As stated previously, the Corridor is as yet geographically undefined but potentially large, and we do not believe that it is necessary to have a single strategic plan for the whole area in the form currently proposed. . There may be a case for strategic plans covering smaller areas, perhaps two or three adjacent authorities where they share housing market areas or travel-to-work areas. But whichever format is adopted, all strategic plans should be prepared with full public transparency and involvement, genuine consultation and debate, and independent assessment.

9.2 Our preference, however, is for more local cross-boundary collaboration, along the lines suggested in our answer to Q.1, above.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

10.1 Effective monitoring is good practice for any plan. Monitoring reports should be readily accessible to – and readable by – all, not merely for favoured stakeholders.

Additional comment: Environment

11.1 References to important matters such as the environment and green infrastructure are conspicuous by their absence. There is a brief reference to the Chancellor's request to the NIC in para 14 of the Paper: "... whilst protecting the area's high quality environment" and to strategic environmental assessment (which is a legal requirement for all statutory plans anyway) in para 28. We support a robust appraisal framework for all forms of plan. There is much mention of housing, employment and transport infrastructure, but little or nothing on these other policy topics which are so important to people and must sit alongside and carry equal weight to development issues.

Conclusion

12.1 In summary, CPRE finds that existing planning arrangements are likely to be sufficient to absorb locally-generated growth without overwhelming existing communities or the natural and rural environment. The Duty to Co-operate could be strengthened by making it more transparent. Should cross-boundary planning be shown to be necessary beyond this, then it could be shaped on a county-by-county basis with cross-county agreements on transport and environmental infrastructure funding. The involvement of local communities and the voluntary sector is paramount and a democratic deficit must be avoided at all costs.

Final submitted version 25 May 2017

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**Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor: A
Discussion Paper March 2017**

Response by Arnold White Estates Ltd

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| Project reference | GP 046 | Date | 25 May 2017 |
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Report is the response to the consultation by the The National Infrastructure Commission (**NIC**) on the Discussion Paper Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor (**DP**) on behalf of Arnold White Estates Ltd (**AWEL**).
- 1.2 AWEL is a development company with extensive land interests in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Aylesbury Vale, including sites the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor (**CMKOxC** or **the Corridor**). AWEL responded to the 'call for evidence' in July 2016. Gardner Planning Ltd (**GPL**) attended the RTPi seminar in Milton Keynes on 20 April 2017.
- 1.3 The DP in Section 3 asks for comments in response to 10 questions grouped into 4 themes. Before embarking on that exercise, it is considered appropriate to make some overall comments as an introduction.
- 1.4 The NIC team responsible for the DP seems to have broadened the scope of the Commission to expand from 'infrastructure' (para 12) to 'strategic planning' (paras 1, 3) and throughout the document refer to the need for a 'strategic plan for infrastructure, planning and jobs' for the Corridor. This is strongly supported in this response. The lack of strategic planning in this Corridor, and elsewhere, has exposed the difficulties of current structures to plan strategically across boundaries.
- 1.5 This is the second phase study following the interim report¹ which identified the following:
- could be the UK's Silicon Valley – a world renowned centre for science, technology and innovation
 - chronic undersupply of homes *made worse* by poor east-west transport connectivity
 - consistently failed to build the number of homes it needs
 - Investment in infrastructure, including enhanced east-west transport links ... must be properly aligned with a strategy for new jobs, homes and communities, not developed in isolation
 - Local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, government departments and national delivery agencies, should work together to develop an integrated strategic plan for infrastructure, housing and jobs across the corridor.
 - joint governance arrangements required to deliver coordinated planning
 - The Commission will support this process as part of the second phase of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford study.
- 1.6 This second phase study will consider²
- how local and national agencies might develop an Integrated Strategic Plan (**ISP**), and
 - mechanisms to strengthen governance across the corridor, which will enable integrated planning and infrastructure decision-making across the wider area.

¹ Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: Interim Report (November 2016)

² DP para 19

1.7 The purpose of the DP is to:

*progress debate on how local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, government departments and national delivery agencies, can work together to develop and deliver an integrated strategic plan for infrastructure, housing and jobs across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.*³

1.8 The scale of the task of strategically planning growth is huge:

- the under provision of homes just to serve existing job potential of an extra 335,000 jobs, economic output +£85bn and, by 2050, 700,000 homes +£163bn⁴.
- how the East West rail and the Oxford-Cambs Expressway be delivered and how the opportunities they create can be realised⁵

1.9 Post the demise of regional/sub-regional planning in 2011 - 13 there has been a failure of strategic planning. The following are this Report's examples in the Corridor:

- Bedford/Aylesbury Vale/Central Beds/MK have been unable to agree a joint housing distribution between themselves, with AV unable to agree a distribution with Wycomb/Chiltern/S Bucks and CBC unable to agree housing numbers with Luton. This has meant that both CBC and AVDC are on their second or third versions of unfinished Local Plans which have already been 6 - 7 years in the making
- prolonged and inconclusive debate at individual Local Plan Examinations on housing numbers instead of a clear 'top-down' allocation through a regional or sub-regional planning system (e.g. the Milton Keynes-South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy 2005).

1.10 The introduction by the Prime Minister in the Housing White Paper (Feb 2017) includes the following:

*I want to fix this broken market so that housing is more affordable and people have the security they need to plan for the future. The starting point is to build more homes. This will slow the rise in housing costs so that more ordinary working families can afford to buy a home and it will also bring the cost of renting down. We need to build many more houses, of the type people want to live in, in the places they want to live. **To do so requires a comprehensive approach that tackles failure at every point in the system.***

1.11 This Report fully supports that paragraph. The response to the DP's questions now follows.

³ DP para 1

⁴ DP para 27

⁵ DP para 26d

2.0 AN INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

- 2.1 The Savills' research for the NIC⁶ provides housing figures for the Corridor in Table 6 p96. The current local planning system has a collective annual housing target of 15,926 p.a. whereas the level suggested by Savills is 20,752 homes p.a.⁷ - a 23% shortfall. Over a 20-year period there would be a shortage of 96,520 homes, meaning a shortage of workers of over 100,000. However, this may not be the limit of 'aspirational' growth fuelled by the economic dynamics of this Corridor. In any event, there will not be enough resident workers to sustain the growth in the economy. There seems to be no shortage of construction capacity, the Savills Table 6 shows maximum annual delivery since 2004/5 at 22,670 homes.
- 2.2 A key part of the problem is a lack of coordinated plan making. Each Housing Market Area (**HMA**) commissions a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (**SHMA**) which seeks to provide an Objectively Assessed Need (**OAN**) for future housing usually for the HMA as a whole and subdivided to individual Local Planning Authority (**LPA**) Areas. Each LPA produces an individual Local Plan (**LP**) and seeks agreement from the other LPAs in the HMA, through a Duty to Cooperate⁸. The only sanction is for the LP Inspector to find a LP 'unsound' but the DtC is not a 'duty to agree'⁹. The Savills Table 6 shows that this is not working. There is an inherent flaw in the system whereby the LPA commissions the SHMA, then is not bound to accept its findings. There needs to be an external body overseeing and coordinating the process with powers to intervene if necessary.
- 2.3 Currently, operational 'east-west transport infrastructure' is virtually non-existent. The Arup Report¹⁰ summarised the position as follows:

This limited labour market interaction across the corridor appears to be due in part to the physical distances and the size of the towns and the comparatively poor quality of orbital links. Many road links have relatively little separation of local and interurban traffic with long journey times as a result. Furthermore, although the western leg of the East West Rail is under construction, there is presently no comprehensive direct rail link across the corridor. Many rail journeys are therefore best undertaken via London or via interchanges in locations to the north of the study area.

This suggests that there may be benefits to be gained from enhancing orbital connectivity, and (as suggested by the Local Enterprise Partnerships in their response to the NIC consultation) complementing investment in strategic infrastructure with 'first mile/last mile'

⁶ The Property Market Within The Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor Savills report to NIC November 2016

⁷ *ibid* Table 6 p96

⁸ NPPF DtC para 178

⁹ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 9-001-20140306

¹⁰ Arup Feb 2017 Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor. Transport workstream

*connectivity across all modes. This may also unlock housing sites and deliver growth and employment in a successful part of the economy.*¹¹

- 2.4 The East-West rail project will eventually connect Cambridge, MK and Oxford. The Western Section Phase 1, MK to Oxford, was completed in December 2016¹². Phase 2, MK to Bedford, is underway. The Central Section Bedford to Cambridge is less certain being “*under design development, possible completion in the early 2030s*” and
- Network Rail proposes to work with the East West Rail Consortium, the Department for Transport and industry partners to establish potential funding sources for remaining development stages and construction. However, the Secretary of State for Transport recently announced his intention that the line should be procured using a private sector procurement mechanism.*¹³
- 2.5 The second major infrastructure proposal is the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway which is a strategic road link between Cambridge and Oxford. This was launched by the Government in December 2015 and is currently at the planning stage. Some sections are existing, the main one being the recently improved A421, to the east and west of Bedford, which links the A1 with the M1.¹⁴
- 2.6 The Arup study summarises the strategic infrastructure proposals and their benefits, but is less explicit about the commitment of public funds for implementation. It recognises the improved attractiveness of some development sites with access to the new infrastructure¹⁵, which is a benefit in terms of increased housing supply, which is recognised as critical to the unlocking the potential of the Corridor in the Savills report, but does not complete the interactive circle of recognising that development provides the opportunity for funding the infrastructure.
- 2.7 The main towns along these two infrastructure routes are Cambridge, Bedford, Milton Keynes and Oxford¹⁶. Other towns in the Corridor include Aylesbury and Luton. Bedford has yet to acknowledge the importance of the growth proposals in the Corridor in its emerging Local Plan¹⁷.
- 2.8 Bedford is a key location to facilitate the ‘missing link’ of the Central Section of East-West Rail. Bedford is also in the middle of an existing section (the A421) of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The strategic importance of Bedford and its ability to deliver significant housing and employment growth deserves recognition.
- 2.9 AWEL is engaging with another landowner in the Northern Marston Vale to promote a comprehensive development south of Bedford which includes urban expansion to existing settlements and other developed areas. The combined sites would be a new strategic settlement of regional importance in the heart of the CMKOx Corridor with outstanding connectivity, able to link the three existing main settlements of Bedford, The Wixams and Stewartby and make a significant contribution to housing and employment needs. It is

¹¹ Arup Feb 17 2.1 summary pp16,17

¹² Arup p36

¹³ Arup p38

¹⁴ Arup Fig 13 p39

¹⁵ Arup pp 89, 90

¹⁶ Arup Figs 12 and 13 pp 37, 39

¹⁷ Bedford BC Local Plan 2035 Consultation Paper April 2017

anticipated that at least 5,000 (with much greater future potential) new homes could be delivered. An illustrative masterplan, based on “Garden Village” principles is attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.10 Luton is less central to the Corridor and has a significant housing need which it unable to meet from within its own administrative area. Some 9,300 homes will be accommodated outside Luton¹⁸, mainly in southern Central Bedfordshire (because of connectivity with Luton) where AWEL also have a site known as Checkley Wood with potential to be a new “Garden Village” settlement, including some 4,500 homes, north of Leighton Linlade.
- 2.11 Much of Aylesbury Vale also lies within the Corridor and has the capacity to deliver major new housing schemes to support the rapid expansion of Westcott Venture Park which has already been identified and supported by the Government as being a location for high tech businesses including those involved in the growing space engineering sector.¹⁹ AWEL has a site suitable for development north of Aylesbury (350 homes) and at Waddesdon (600 homes and an A41 relief road).

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

- 2.12 The recognition now being given to the CMKOx Corridor as a growth area requires some realignment of the strategic planning and infrastructure functions in order to achieve better coordination to maximise or even to realise the full potential of this initiative. Before 2011/2013 the strategic planning system (not least the scale of growth) was embedded in the Regional or Sub-Regional Plan. The scale of growth, including housing numbers, was debated at Regional Examinations but once adopted were mandatory on LPs. Before that, County Structure Plans provided the same function.
- 2.13 Since then, as explained above, the system is managed internally by individual LPAs with any coordination arrived at through DtC requirements, which are not effective enough.
- 2.14 Thus, much firmer control and coordination is required. An Integrated Strategic Plan would restore that function. For example, individual local SHMAs could be replaced by an overarching document, which after a short consultation and examination would become the starting point for LPs. Moreover, the debate would be a single (not fragmented) process. Savills T6 shows some 22 LPAs in the Corridor and although some have combined/are combining there are still too many SHMAs generating overlapping process and debates. All of that is inefficient, time consuming and ultimately ineffective.
- 2.15 Only ‘collective governance’ can achieve this²⁰. It is the nature of that ‘collective governance’ which seems to be the focus of the DP and only 2 models are presented²¹:

¹⁸ Luton LP Modifications MM12 April 2017

¹⁹ Arup Fig 4 p18

²⁰ DP para 41

²¹ DP pp 15, 16

- a 'cross corridor strategic planning board' to consider 'sub-regional' planning issues, made up of the c.30 LAs in the CMKOx corridor
 - a 'cross corridor strategic planning board' to consider 'issues and themes' made up of 3 'sub-regional' boards (Cambs/Peterborough, and two others - presumably MK and Oxford) with grouping of LAs supporting them.
- 2.16 Given the need for a single vision across the corridor, backed up by a dynamic and fast moving plan making process, this report would support a "cross corridor strategic planning board" backed up by a fast track and autonomous approach to planning and a presumption in favour of consents being granted where they accord with the strategic vision as set out in the approved Plan,

3.0 "NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;**
- b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and**
- c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?**

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

- 3.1 Developers and infrastructure providers are much better able to plan ahead within the context of a wide-area strategy rather than one which locally based. Discussion and debate is more efficient when concentrated rather than repeated in a large number of forums. Local planning is better for detailed local matters but ill-suited to manage strategic issues covering a wide area. The under-performance (or perhaps failure) of the current LP system has been highlighted above.
- 3.2 It is sometimes said that the planning system 'delivers' housing, but that is inaccurate. It may offer opportunities and facilitate development, but in the current system of market-led housing only commercial companies actually deliver housing. Local planning is often less visionary with a reputation for being restrictive rather than encouraging. A higher level of planning, on past experience, has often produced a more positive vehicle. Partly, this is because it is closer to Government which defines national priorities. Partly it is because of the inherent conservatism of local communities, and thus Councils, which are resistant to change and growth, however understandable that might be in a local context. Developers are often battling against this conservatism, resorting to the appeal process in order to achieve site development. Housing developers would rather engage through the plan-led system and at a strategic level.

4.0 GOVERNANCE

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

4.1 Yes.

4.2 It would be necessary to establish a Strategic Planning Board (**SPB**) as described in Illustrative models 1 and 2, but 41 b ii must be established at the outset - asking 'c.30 (or 22²²) LAs' to agree and ratify decisions would be unworkable. Of course, there would have to be consultation and discussion.

4.3 Two important points are missing:

- an illustration of the scope and nature of an Integrated Spatial Plan (**ISP**) and the inter-relationship with the scope and nature of Local Plans
- there is no mention of funding or staff support for the SPB

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub regional collaboration?

4.4 The SPB needs to have an over-arching role and become the final decision making body.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

4.5 No. The existing NPPF Duty to Cooperate (para 178) has not been a success²³. Central Government should engage with local structures (Local Government/Local Economic Partnership²⁴) to form a SPB, a single entity, with the production of an ISP²⁵.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

4.6 It is the view of this response that 'informal models of collaboration' will not work, being little different from the *status quo*.

²² Savills table

²³ DP para 30

²⁴ DP para 35

²⁵ DP para 34

5.0 DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING AN INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

- 5.1 Whilst this response is critical of the effectiveness of Duty to Cooperate, it could be used as the interim basis for LPAs to begin to collectively plan strategically if directed to do so by Government. This could include a common framework and timetable for Local Plans already in preparation, so long as their adoption is anticipated before the end of 2018.
- 5.2 Beyond that, the scope and nature of Local Plans *vis a vis* the ISP would need to be determined and full scale reviews would be necessary to align the Local Plans with the ISP.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

- 5.3 'The plan' surely means both the ISP and subordinate Local Plans to the extent that areas lie within the Corridor. Currently Local Plans are required to have a framework within a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is a statutory requirement²⁶. It would be possible to amend PCPA Section 15 to encompass a 2-tier system of plan making, to specify that each tier must have objectives and timetables against which they are assessed and monitored.
- 5.4 Oxfordshire is a good example of how the Oxford Growth Board coordinated the numbers for unmet housing needs of Oxford to be apportioned to the 5 LPAs. A process and timetable was established and studies were undertaken. Unfortunately, South Oxfordshire declared it would not accept its figure. This was a limited collaboration and strategic planning in the group is fragmented with Districts seeking to individually grapple with concepts such a Didcot Garden Town and the Science Vale.

²⁶ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 section 15



Appendix 1

Northern Marston Vale:

Concept Masterplan

[commercially confidential map redacted]



Canal &
River Trust

26 May 2017

National Infrastructure Commission
By Email Only

Dear Sir/Madam,

NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION: STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE - MILTON KEYNES - OXFORD CORRIDOR (DISCUSSION PAPER)

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales. We are among the largest charities in the UK. Our vision is that “living waterways transform places and enrich lives”.

The Trust submitted representations to the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Growth Corridor in August 2016 (see appendix 1). We welcome the further opportunity to comment on the specific issue of strategic planning in the corridor, which is the subject of this consultation.

Our August 2016 response explained that waterways contribute significantly to the economic, environmental and social well-being of the communities through which they run. We already own and manage a variety of waterways in this growth corridor, with the primary routes (the Grand Union and Oxford Canals) running north-south through it. A new waterway (The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park) has been proposed which, if built, could provide valuable strategic, east-west green infrastructure and, as previously suggested, add significantly to the prosperity and place-making of the Growth Corridor.

The proposed Waterway Park is a strategic ‘canal & linear parkway’ project linking the canals of the Midlands to the waterways of East Anglia. It could provide significant and wide-ranging benefits to the immediate locality and the region. It would be the first new waterway for over a century and a huge source of interest and innovation. Significantly it will provide a key missing link in the wider Anglian regional waterway network thereby opening up major tourism opportunities and providing a significant boost to the local and wider economy. In addition, a new link could bring with it the potential benefits for inter-regional water management such as improved water storage and transfer as well as improved flood defences. The wider Waterway Park could provide significant

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new leisure opportunities, improve sustainable connectivity with new pedestrian and cycle routes and, at the same time, increase biodiversity as it links major wetland sites. Our previous response set out in more detail the key benefits identified in the business plan of The Bedford and Milton Keynes' Waterway Trust (B&MKWT), the charity promoting the new park.

The Milton Keynes section of the waterway was entered into Big Lottery Living Landmarks and was shortlisted (credible and fundable) but a runner up. It did benefit from an award of £250k, which helped establish the route in planning terms (including through safeguarding in local plans) and cover the cost of initial engineering drawings for sections. There has already been investment in infrastructure along the route with an underpass created under the A421 in Marston Vale and Bedford Borough's planned Innovation Park.

Much of the NIC's current discussion paper focuses on the mechanisms and governance structures that could be used to deliver a strategic planning framework. Whilst this is clearly an important discussion, especially for the public sector bodies operating in this region, the Trust's main interest is in the outcomes that more coherent strategic planning could deliver rather than the specific governance mechanisms through which it is delivered. A key caveat to this position is that we consider it imperative that the approach taken allows for collaboration and cooperation with parties involved in the management and delivery of strategic infrastructure in the corridor not just so that they are able to identify new requirements but so that they are able to assess the impacts on existing infrastructure. The Trust already takes an active interest in the preparation of local authorities' local plan documents to consider these issues and would want to do so in the event that a strategic plan is produced.

The Trust supports the previous recommendation of the NIC that options for funding infrastructure should be fully integrated into strategic planning, supported by a phased delivery plan. We suggest that the entity responsible for strategic planning must consider the full range of strategic infrastructure that will be required to drive the success of the growth corridor. Its focus should not simply be on roads, railways and utilities, which are the focus of paragraphs 26(d) and 28(e) of the discussion paper. We consider that it is important to ensure that a strategic approach is taken to green infrastructure to make the most of the funding and delivery opportunities that become available. Green infrastructure is vital for the health, wellbeing and productivity of the region. Investing in quality of life and wellbeing of communities and place and considering these fully when strategic planning decisions are taken will help to attract and retain the best talent and keep people healthy, which in turn will ensure long-term sustainable increases in productivity and growth.

Including strategic green infrastructure within the remit of the strategic planning framework proposed by the NIC would see its benefits and costs considered in a manner that is consistent with other forms of infrastructure. It would also enable the planning and safeguarding of routes to

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be considered in a more formal, joined-up manner and ensure that new forms of infrastructure can be delivered in harmony with one another, minimising the risks that one sterilises another. Importantly, it would give the significance of the role that green infrastructure plays in the character and quality of places (which is, rightly, identified as a key issue by the NIC) the recognition that it clearly deserves.

We believe that a strategic planning approach that includes consideration of green infrastructure could help to deliver The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park, delivering the benefits set out above and in our August 2016 response. It could also help to protect and deliver any improvements to the existing waterways of the corridor that may be identified as being required, over time. We consider that this in turn would support growth of the Corridor and existing and new communities within it.

Should you wish to discuss any of the points raised in this response then please contact me using the details below.

Yours faithfully

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
[email address redacted]
[telephone number redacted]

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Appendix 1: Canal & River Trust submission to National Infrastructure Commission (August 2016)

CAMBRIDGE – MILTON KEYNES – OXFORD GROWTH CORRIDOR

02 August 2016

INTRODUCTION

This response is submitted on behalf of the Canal & River Trust (the Trust). The Trust is a company limited by guarantee which became registered as a charity on 4 April 2012. The assets and undertaking of British Waterways (“BW”) in England and Wales were transferred to the Trust on 2 July 2012 by a Statutory Transfer Scheme under the Public Bodies Act 2012.

The Trust cares for an extraordinary collection of waterways in England and Wales, holding them in trust for the nation in perpetuity. This includes 2,000 miles of working canals and river navigations in both urban and rural communities.

Waterways contribute significantly to the economic, environmental and social well-being of the communities through which they run. Land development values close to waterways are commonly greater than those further afield and businesses prefer these locations to grow and prosper. The Trust owns and manages a variety of waterways in this growth corridor for example the Grand Union and Oxford Canals. Whilst these waterways run north south across the growth area a new waterway (The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park) has been proposed which, if built, could add significantly to the prosperity of the Growth Corridor.

Whilst existing waterways shouldn’t be overlooked, the Trust’s main response to this consultation refers principally to the benefits of this new proposed waterway.

Many places across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor have very successful local economies and are perceived as highly desirable places to live.

What have been the key drivers of that success?

- Proximity to London and good quality north – south transport routes. The corridor as a whole benefits from three north south motorways, the M40, M1 and M11 plus the A1. In addition, three north south rail routes run through the corridor, the West Coast Mainline, Midland Mainline and the East Coast mainline. All provide easy access to London for business, commuters and leisure.
- The area benefits from a range of attractive green infrastructure particularly around rivers and canals. The Grand Union canal is a key feature in Milton Keynes and in Bedford the Great Ouse provides the town centre with an attractive riverside setting.

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- Quality of academic institutions – Oxford and Cambridge are significant key drivers for growth and in the middle of the corridor both Cranfield and the Open University provide different but complementary bases for innovation and the development of a skilled work force.
- The quality and range of housing available. The corridor provides a significant range of both urban and rural settlements with a range of high and rapidly growing housing supply. Milton Keynes in particular thrives on innovative approaches to new development and high quality social and physical infrastructure.

What is holding back further growth and greater productivity?

- Despite excellent north/south connectivity, the corridor lacks high quality east – west routes. Travel across the corridor is hampered by sections of single carriageway routes and in places the main highways pass through urban areas e.g. Milton Keynes. Recent improvements to the highway network have helped as will east-west rail.
- Tourism in the central section of the corridor lacks focus. Whilst Oxford and Cambridge are highly popular tourist destinations in their own right, Bedford and Milton Keynes are significantly less so. Whilst there are popular destinations such as Centre Parks, Whipsnade and Woburn, there is no strong theme or product 'brand' which links potentially attractive places within the central section corridor.

In particular, what planned or new infrastructure improvements would best support sustainable growth and promote innovation over the long-term?

- Completion of East West Rail in a way that takes careful account of the impact of the infrastructure on the existing natural and historic environment. The Trust has been working closely with HS2 to ensure that the design of the proposed new railway takes account of the rich natural and industrial heritage of the waterways it crosses. Part of this work involved the publication of a "HS2 Design Principles" document – see links below. We would like to build on the work undertaken with HS2 and work with the organisation chosen to complete the east-west rail link to ensure the project is world class in terms of design quality:

Links to document (in two parts):-

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/6524.pdf>

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/6525.pdf>

- Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park. This proposed Waterway Park is a strategic trans-regional 'canal & linear parkway' project linking the canals of the Midlands to the waterways of East Anglia. It could provide significant and wide-ranging benefits to the immediate locality and the region. It would be the first new waterway for over a century and a huge source of interest and innovation. Significantly it will provide a key missing link in the wider Anglian regional waterway network thereby opening up major tourism opportunities and providing a significant boost to the local and wider economy. In addition, a new link could bring with it the potential benefits for inter-regional water management such as improved water storage and transfer as well as improved flood defences. The wider Waterway Park could provide significant new leisure opportunities, improve sustainable connectivity with new pedestrian and cycle routes and, at the same time, increase

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biodiversity as it links major wetland sites. The waterway charity promoting this new Waterway Park, The Bedford and Milton Keynes' Waterway Trust (B&MKWT), points to the following benefits in its business plan:

- Improved connectivity, especially for walking, cycling and horse-riding with subsequent reductions in emissions and improved health benefits from active modes of travel and recreation. The Waterway Park has the scope to act as a trigger for opening up a wide range of leisure opportunities focussing on healthy lifestyles, walking, cycling and water based sport.
- The ability to improve an underperforming rural economy creating new tourism opportunities, bringing visitors who stay in the sub region and generating new commercial opportunities in catering and accommodating visitors, marinas and sector supporting businesses.
- Opportunities to showcase innovation and grow business tourism. It will be the first new waterway for 100 years with significant opportunities for technological innovation and development.
- The benefits to regional water management subject to investment in pumping and water management. The 'waterway' will create a major opportunity for improved water storage and transfer, improving land drainage and flood defences at a regional level.
- The ability to increase biodiversity by linking major ecosystems, wetland sites and parkland. Creating new habitats and parkland at a sub-regional level thereby increasing ecological resilience.

In addition there may be opportunities to

- Use the Waterway infrastructure for district heating schemes and as a route to improve 4G and 5G connectivity in towns and rural areas. Towpaths across the country, including the Grand Union Canal have been used as conduits for fibre connectivity.
- Open up opportunities for waterside development, both commercial and residential, thereby enhancing land values.
- Contribute to cooling the urban environment and improving air quality through increased green/blue infrastructure
- Provide opportunities to create sustainable energy sources

The B&MKWT is currently seeking to update an economic impact study undertaken by consultants, SQW in 2009 and significantly broaden it to encompass potential environmental and social benefits. The 2009 study pointed to significant economic benefits of a new Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.

| Economic impact | Estimated scale of impact | Comment |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------|
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------|

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| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Employment creation | 2,370 to 2,925 person-years of employment | A one-time impact |
| Property uplift | £45 million increase in property values | A one-time impact based on 1,500 housing units benefitting from improved amenity. |
| Visitor economy: Waterway with towpath and picnic sites | 42,400 to 84,800 day and tourist visitors
Gross spend of £813,436 to £1.6 million | Estimates of visitor economy activity with only minimal accompanying infrastructure. |
| Visitor economy: Waterway with towpath and picnic sites, and marina/basin development | 75,000 to 150,000 day and tourist visitors
Gross spend of £2.1 million to £4.2 million | Estimates of visitor economy activity with the addition of marina facilities and other waterside services. |
| Visitor economy: Waterway with towpath and picnic sites; marina/basin development and Iconic attraction at Brogborough | 500,000 to 750,000 day and tourist visitors
Gross spend of £13.8 million to £20.7 million | Estimates of visitor economy activity with the addition of a high-quality iconic structure at Brogborough Hill. |

Source: SQW 2009

In summary, when completed the Waterway Park is predicted to generate a gross annual visitor spend of between £16.7m - £26.5m gross annual spend. The B&MKWT believes that updating and broadening this study should be a vital element of any examination of the drivers of growth in the Cambridge/Milton Keynes/Oxford corridor.

Does the corridor require better connectivity to other major centres of growth?

Yes. A Waterway will provide links east-west and improved connectivity both north towards Northampton and Birmingham and south towards Watford and London especially in relation to sustainable modes of travel and fibre / sustainable heat networks.

Does the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford area, including Northampton, form a recognizable economic corridor? If so:

What factors unite the area?

- There aren't a great many unifying factors. Both Oxford and Cambridge are powerful entities in their own right, whilst Milton Keynes and Bedford have few links with either of the cities at either end of the corridor or each other. Thus there are few strong linkages in the central part of the

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corridor. Both Bedford and Milton Keynes have much stronger north south links than links across the corridor.

Would greater emphasis on corridor-wide planning and decision making benefit local communities and local economies?

- Yes. More coherent strategic planning would benefit local communities and economies, along the same lines as the branding and planning of the Northern Powerhouse.

Would that same emphasis on coordinated planning and decision making provide wider benefits for the UK economy?

- Strategic planning can bring about benefits at both a national and local level. Delivery of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park could have both economic and environmental benefits beyond the immediate locality simply because it will close a significant gap in the national waterway network.

Should adjacent towns and cities be incorporated into the corridor in terms of growth and infrastructure planning?

- Yes, it is important to focus on the smaller settlements in and adjacent to the corridor e.g. Bicester, Aylesbury, Banbury, Bedford. Connectivity all along the corridor needs to be improved by linking these smaller settlements

Describe your vision to maximise growth, maintain a high quality environment, and deliver more jobs and homes across the corridor over the next 30 years:

What does that mean for growth and infrastructure investment in your area?

- The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park has the potential to help maximise growth and maintain a high quality and sustainable environment. Unlike much other infrastructure which improves travel times between destinations, the Waterway Park has the opportunity to drive significant growth by being a destination in its own right at the heart of the growth corridor. Within the counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, the existing canal network (Grand Union Canal etc.) attracts over 6.5m visitors p.a. with an annual spend of c. £30m supporting the equivalent of c. 900FTE jobs. The network acts as an 'Information Superhighway' and is also a source for thermal energy generation and cooling. Waterside locations in these areas have resulted in the creation of attractive and healthy places to live, with consequent increased investment and spend on leisure activities. Improvements to waterways have been demonstrated to help underpin economic prosperity.

What steps are currently being taken to realise that vision, and what more needs to be done?

- The project is already supported and promoted by the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Trust¹ and the wider Consortium of partners including Local Authorities along the route, SEMLEP, the

¹ The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust was established in 1995 to promote and assist in the provision and maintenance of a new 16 mile long Waterway Park connecting the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes to the River Great Ouse in Bedford. The Trust's current Business Plan estimates that the project would probably take around 10

Environment Agency, Canal & River Trust and two other charitable Trusts, the Forest of Marston Vale and Milton Keynes Parks Trust. The Milton Keynes section of the Waterway was entered into Big Lottery Living Landmarks and was shortlisted (credible and fundable) but a runner up. It did benefit from an award of £250k, which helped establish the route in planning terms and cover the cost of initial engineering drawings for sections. There has already been investment in infrastructure along the route with an underpass created under the A421 in Marston Vale and Bedford Borough's planned Innovation Park. The B&MKWT has appointed a part time Programme Manager and the Consortium has invested in new promotional material and is intending to develop a Business case for the project subject to securing funding.

What value could new cross-corridor intercity road and rail links bring? How do these compare to other transport initiatives e.g. intra-city links, or wider infrastructure, priorities?

Are there lessons to be learnt from previous initiatives to maximise the potential of the corridor?

The 2009 eco town initiative to create a new settlement in the Marston Vale was not well received locally as it was perceived as developer-led. A locally led initiative linked to a public/private partnership may have the potential to deliver growth that is less unpopular, which could deliver the central section of the waterway.

Are you aware of any examples of UK or international good practice, for example in respect of new technology, local frameworks or the built environment that are relevant to this review?

No comment.

I do hope that the Canal and River Trust's considered response is helpful. If you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact;

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

[email address redacted]

[telephone number redacted]

Thank you for giving the Canal & River Trust the opportunity to comment on the Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford Growth corridor.

Yours sincerely

years to implement. The waterway and the parkland through which it will run are complex. Currently the project is likely to be developed in sections, some incorporated within new commercial or residential development and others by public or private investors. Thus the project is dependent in part on the planning approval, timing and feasibility of new development and in part on the availability of funding from public or private sector investors or grant aid. Consequently, a specific timescale for delivery of the waterway park is very difficult to predict. It will require a great deal of preliminary work to plan the detail, secure approvals and raise finance in advance of construction. If recognized as infrastructure which can underpin growth in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford corridor, then the timescale for development of delivery mechanisms and implementation of the project could be compressed.

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Planning

HEAD OF SERVICE: [NAME REDACTED]



National Infrastructure
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gsi.gov.uk

Textphone users add 18001 before you dial

Our reference: NIC Strategic Planning Response, May 2017

25 May 2017

Dear Sirs

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge- Milton Keynes- Oxford Corridor: A National Infrastructure Commission Discussion Paper: Response from Vale of White Horse Council, 25 May 2017

Introduction

Vale of White Horse District Council recognises the broad economic growth potential of the Oxford to Cambridge corridor, and the need to better plan for infrastructure, jobs and homes within it. In particular, the district has for some time worked together and with others including South Oxfordshire District Council, the County Council and Oxfordshire LEP in planning for jobs and homes growth in tandem with infrastructure improvements in the Science Vale area in and around Didcot, which in turn is part of the central Oxfordshire knowledge spine as identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan.¹

As part of our partnership work, new ways of forward funding infrastructure have been progressed, allowing for upfront investment to support new jobs and homes coming forward. For example, in proximity to the Harwell Campus and Milton Park employment areas, new road improvements have been delivered to support new business at the Science Vale Enterprise Zone, with investment to be paid back from future business rates.

The Council continues to work with other authorities on spatial planning matters as part of the 'duty to cooperate' requirements under the National Planning Policy Framework. At an Oxfordshire level, this has mainly been facilitated through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, including work on the Strategic Housing Market

¹ Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, at: <http://www.oxfordshirelep.com/content/strategic-economic-plan>

Assessment, addressing Oxford's unmet housing need and development of an Oxfordshire Strategic Infrastructure Strategy. The Council works in partnership with other surrounding authorities on matters such as cross border transport impacts. They are committed to develop relevant partnership work and are currently considering work on a Joint Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire.

In association with the County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council, the Council have also put a proposal forward to central government for a new unitary council for Oxfordshire. Called 'Better Oxfordshire' the proposals set out plans to deliver more cost effective, efficient and joined-up local government services. They build on the already good working relationships established through the Growth Board, but would critically allow one body to have an overview and make future decisions on development and infrastructure planning in the sub-region.²

The following sections highlight responses to questions raised in the paper.

Integrated strategic plan:

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

Response:

It is recognised that working in partnership to better plan for growth across the corridor is likely to assist in maximising the potential of new east-west infrastructure links. This is particularly so for the longer-term period following current planned and committed local plan growth when such infrastructure is likely to be realised, and could assist in decisions on proposed locations of new employment and housing areas. Taking a strategic approach can ensure linkages and better co-ordination that will help in delivery and support to growth.

In light of this, the Oxfordshire authorities are currently working together to review how a longer-term strategic framework for development and infrastructure could be developed that will support investment and housing in this sub-regional area. It is considered that this work can form the foundations of inputting to the wider strategic planning across the corridor, and if successful, can be driven by a new Oxfordshire unitary council. However, this work is at an early stage and will need to take account of the following points:

- Several new district level Local Plans are already at an advanced stage of development, which will plan for forecast housing and employment needs to the mid-2030s and be informed by considerable evidence base work as required under the NPPF.³

² <https://www.better-oxfordshire.org/>

³ The Vale of White Horse has an adopted Local Plan Part 1 2031, and is developing a Local Plan Part 2.

- To inform longer-term planning in a strategic context, there will be a requirement for new evidence base to inform choices on the quantum and location of development. To start, this will need to build on local plan evidence, as well as more strategic work such as the Oxfordshire Strategic Infrastructure Study. This can then be developed further, including review of linkages between the sub-regional areas across the corridor.
- That the sub-regional area of Oxfordshire has strong economic and social relationships with areas outside of the main Oxford to Cambridge corridor. For example, parts of the Vale of White Horse have links to Swindon.
- That there is strong support for communities to develop plans for homes and infrastructure in their areas as manifest in development of a large number of Neighbourhood Plans in the district. Any strategic framework needs to ensure that the role of local communities in planning is recognised.

New Opportunities:

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Response:

The Council supports development of strategic planning that will in particular generate public and private sector monies and provide greater certainty for investment decisions to be made. As noted above, this approach should take account of the distinct sub-regional area of Oxfordshire, and its housing market area, and build on the effective partnership working on planning and infrastructure undertaken to date. As such, any infrastructure compact will need to recognise at what level infrastructure requirements are met, either across the corridor, at a sub-regional level, or at a more local level.

There is a need to recognise that at least in the medium-term, and given current government policy, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans will still have the role of guiding plans for infrastructure linked to specific development areas and growing settlements. Any planning frameworks at a sub-regional, or corridor level will need to take these local plans and associated evidence base as a starting point, and build on, rather than replace the work undertaken in support of their development. Individual council sovereignty will remain an important factor.

Governance:

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Response:

Whilst the principles as set out in paragraph 41 seem useful to inform how collective governance arrangements could be developed, the Council would wish to understand in more detail how the interests of the sub-regional and more local areas can be protected and recognised as part of any new arrangements. In particular, the Council considers that democratic accountability would need to be considered carefully in any proposals for new collective decision-making arrangements at a regional and sub-regional level.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

Response:

As set out above, the Council is already committed to relevant sub-regional collaboration, including work being undertaken under the umbrella of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Council is also committed to the 'Better Oxfordshire' proposal for a new unitary council. It is considered important that this sub-regional work continues to ensure that economic, housing and infrastructure needs of Oxfordshire are considered appropriately, and where relevant this feeds into wider regional collaboration. This could either build on the partnership arrangements as set up through the Growth Board, or be enabled through a new unitary council, should the current 'Better Oxfordshire' Bid to central government be successful.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

Response:

It is recognised that there may be concerns regarding obtaining agreement to key priorities without new formal statutory governance structures being put in place. However, the planning system already has the 'duty to co-operate' provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework which require adjoining authorities to collaborate on planning matters and which is tested through the Local Plan examination process. In Oxfordshire, authorities are already collaborating on planning matters through Growth Board workstreams, and also where relevant with authorities in surrounding areas where cross border matters such as infrastructure impacts need review. This collaboration would continue at a sub-regional level should a new unitary council be developed.

Developing and delivering an integrated plan:

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

The Council in association with other authorities in Oxfordshire already have partnership arrangements in place as set out above, and are currently looking to strengthen these to look in more detail at longer-term strategic planning options across Oxfordshire. The proposal for a new unitary council for Oxfordshire put forward by the Council in partnership with the County Council and South Oxfordshire would clearly help integration of planning at a sub-regional level. In addition, the work on development of England's Economic Heartland Alliance provides some basis for wider partnership across the Oxford to Cambridge corridor.

However, individual authority resource constraints need to be taken into account when considering setting up any new collective governance arrangements. This is particularly important given their continued statutory planning functions around development of local plans and determining planning applications in the context of significant pressure for additional development. Should a strategic plan be developed, needing 'buy-in' from a large number of planning authorities across the corridor, these resource pressures would need addressed appropriately.

Yours faithfully

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]

National Infrastructure Commission

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor:

Growth Corridor Evidence

A plan for unlocking and supporting growth, housing and jobs in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.

Strategic Rail Freight Interchange – opportunity

www.StrategicLandEurope.com

A Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) is a large multi-purpose rail freight interchange and distribution centre linked into both the rail and trunk road system. It has rail interfacing warehousing and container handling facilities and may also include manufacturing and processing activities.



Such a facility is possible at the heart of the proposed Growth Corridor near the bisection of the M1, East West Rail and the planned Expressway is ideal, particularly with future direct links to the UK's key container ports.

Why an SRFI in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Growth Corridor

- There is already a justifiable need for an SRFI in the Milton Keynes region **to support major industry and logistics businesses and the use of and access to intermodal rail.**
- The **East West Rail** enables and enhances this opportunity as it directly links to all the **UK's major container ports.**
- An East West growth corridor 'hub' would increase the value of this opportunity and will concentrate major freight activity where best needed, **providing direct rail freight access and uncompromised rail freight interface to ports.**
- The creation of new jobs and housing further brings the need for construction materials preferably off the road.

The **Strategic Rail Freight Policy Guidance** sets out Government policy for **Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI)** infrastructure. It was produced in the interim pending the publication of the Department for Transport's consultation document on the **National Networks National Policy Statement (NPS)**.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4377/strategic-rail-freight-interchange.pdf

Summary of Government Policy: The main objectives of Government policy for Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges (SRFIs) are to:

- Reduce road congestion** - to deliver goods quickly, efficiently and reliably by rail and help to reduce congestion on our roads;
- Reduce carbon emissions** – to meet the Government's vision for a greener transport system as part of a low carbon economy;
- Support long-term development of efficient rail freight distribution logistics** - to ensure a network of SRFI - modern distribution centres linked into both the rail and trunk road system in appropriate locations to serve our major conurbations;
- Support growth and create employment** – through the transfer of freight from road to rail, where this is practical and economic.

Government aims to meet these objectives by encouraging the development of a robust infrastructure network of **Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges**.

Government Strategy for Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges

The Government's policy of investing in the development of the **Strategic Rail Freight Network** is facilitating sustainable rail freight growth by allowing the industry to invest in and operate longer, bigger and heavier trains, providing increased capacity and operating efficiency and reducing transport carbon emissions.

In parallel, the Government is taking measures to unblock the development of SRFIs and to unlock the necessary private sector investment in such facilities. The Department has asked Network Rail to provide industry support to the development of a network of SRFIs, working collaboratively with the wider logistics industry to: speed up the delivery of SRFI sites to meet business demand; assist with funding mechanisms (potentially including Network Rail funding); and establish appropriate delivery vehicles for rail infrastructure elements of such proposals.

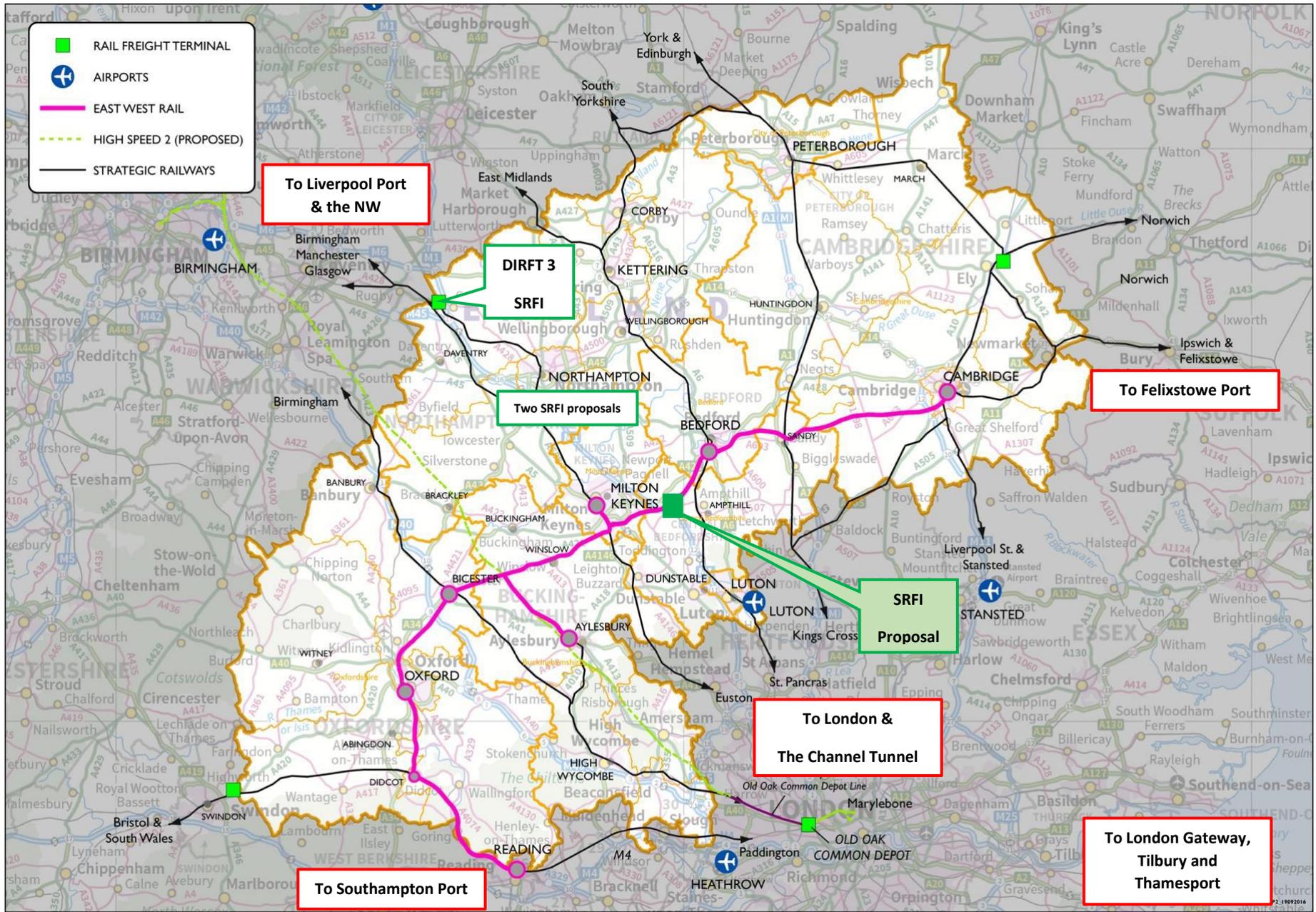
Container Intermodal Rail Freight & Logistics / Industrial facility

A brief look at the official plans attached to this presentation will reveal clearly that Milton Keynes is located centrally to the **East West Rail** line close to the **West Coast Main Line (WCML)** at Bletchley and with intended direct access by rail to the UK's largest container ports at **Felixstowe** to the East and **Southampton** to the South West.

Other leading container ports at **London Gateway** in the Thames Estuary and **Liverpool** will gain access will also enjoy access via the WCML.

The promoters of the opportunity to locate an **SRFI South East of Milton Keynes**, Strategic Land Europe Ltd. recognised the potential value of the East West Rail in 2011 when the lines promoted were seeking government recognition and funding to build the line and that it would also carry freight, most likely intermodal containers to and from the container ports. Two-way 'full' containers are possible utilising this proposed rail hub.

Discussion with leading businesses in the **10 miles around Milton Keynes** confirm they already bring in a very large number of containers from these ports and return, mainly empty, containers to the ports, all on the roads, currently.



However, while the proposed location of the SLE SRFI is close to and East of Junction 13 on the M1 and the A421, the potential of the Expressway running on a new West route and improved to the East makes this location highly appealing.

SRFI's and rail freight can remove a vast amount of road haulage in terms of mileage, congestion and pollution and reliably access rail intermodal terminals, distributing last-mile' and regional haulage by appropriate vehicles including electric transit and to a schedule to interface with the container ports.

In the case of a Milton Keynes location the currently heavily congested M3/A34/A421 from the West and the A421/A428/A14 will be relieved and last mile delivery and redistribution will improve with the Expressway, whichever route is chosen.

Routes to the North and South are likely to be supplemented by the use of shorter trains to the heart of London, Birmingham and beyond.

While the facility in Milton Keynes will become a freight transport 'hub' it is planned to become an electric facility for a large amount of the final delivery cycle vehicles and in some cases, can also utilise shorter trains in future for onward rail delivery to surrounding town and city centres.

It is also possible that much of the electricity required for the 'hub' can be generated and stored on-site.

The image of old rail yards, noise and pollution is already somewhat dispelled by the potential of electric or rechargeable rail haulage, on and off site, alongside good landscaping and on-site noise attenuation that will go a very long way to virtually hide the facility from its surroundings and noise. Vehicle flow can be controlled to avoid peak-time traffic.

Being aligned to the future, a considerably upgraded EWR line will also allow for the best possible access sidings and signalling to and from the line which in turn enables the best possible train 'visits' and fastest delivery servicing that will be designed by rail and container port expertise. The existing adjacent passenger station is a major asset for employees and visitors alike.

Container Port Interface

The UK is well known as a maritime nation and, surrounded by sea, there are a considerable number of ports. However, while most of these are rail-connected, there is not always sufficient volumes of intermodal containers to assemble economical trainloads, or the equipment needed to handle the volumes of containers at the ports.

For these reasons SLE have concentrated on the larger container ports initially and for the fundamental routing being of economical distance from the port and/or avoiding road bottlenecks and congestion, such as in the South and South East or supplementing the motorways and trunk roads.

It has been established that containers from the South East Ports will benefit from the longer journeys north and North West while the Northern Ports benefit from southward journeys not only for the distances but to enable the containers to be opened and re-packed for their key markets at inland facilities.

This applies to long-haul intercontinental trains that can be received in the South East but require container contents to be accessed and the contents prepared for final destinations.

Any major container port will be required to ensure it has prepared for inland interface of containers by rail as well as road and more specifically, to interface with efficient and sustainable intermodal rail freight terminals.

The **SFRI**, as stated in the **Department of Transport policy strategy**, will also provide a high security container facility for pre-delivered and seasonal goods allowing more efficient customs clearances at appropriate times off peak, and particularly at the Milton Keynes location also allow a passenger rail facility for visitors and employees, where it is estimated there will be a high proportion of office activity as well as goods movements, for **employment of about 3,500**.

[commercially sensitive map redacted]

The Land resource

The promoters, **Strategic Land Europe** (SLE) have long been researching and identifying land most suitable for the creation of the most efficient and sustainable **Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges** in terms of location, rail interface and operational interface with container ports and rail operation as well as serving major conurbations.

In the case of Milton Keynes and most other proposals, the size of the land resource is so large it is most often impractical to assemble prior to making a full planning case and therefore most of the core land is assembled under a legal development Option prior to embarking on costly planning processes.

The Milton Keynes land is mainly under the ownership of two land owners both, we understand, being willing to see development take place on their holdings, ideally in a non-confrontational process, thus contributing without cost or risk.

SRFI Network

A similar case presents itself in the **North West** where parallel attributes would benefit **Transport for the North** and where interface between these locations benefit rail hauliers and logistics operators.

SLE have also looked carefully at the need for strategic locations and 24/7 operation of networked sites, to include locations in the **Thames Estuary** and to resolve constrained and costly land issues as well as multi-modal benefits to include deep-sea and short sea operations in the South East.



www.StrategicLandEurope.com

[name redacted] – [email address redacted] – [telephone number redacted] – [address redacted]

Marston Gate - SRFI proposal – SE Milton Keynes



The first freight train to link China directly to the UK arrived in the Chinese city of Yiwu after covering over 12,000-kms (7,500 miles), in April 2017, making it the second-longest route in the world

China already has a regular direct freight train service to Germany, Europe's largest economy.

One route links the Chinese megacity of Chongqing to Duisburg, a steel-making town and one of Germany's most-important transportation and commercial hubs.

The other route links Beijing, the Chinese capital, to Hamburg, Germany's second-largest city.

Prime Minister Theresa May will visit China later this year, with talks likely to include closer trade ties for when Britain leaves the European Union, according to British officials.

"The reality is that there is nothing new here. Transcontinental rail transit has existed for over a century," said Theresa Fallon, director of the Centre for Russia, Europe, Asia Studies (CREAS) in Brussels.

It is certainly feasible to receive and handle such a train in Milton Keynes.

Received by email: [email address redacted]

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. I am responding to the discussion paper as [job title redacted] of Cuddesdon and Denton Parish Council, a village some five miles east of Oxford.
2. In our village, we recognise the need for co-ordination across the Corridor and welcome the reference to *local democratic accountability* in paragraph 3. We are concerned that this might be a token reference since the theme is not considered in the remaining text.
3. Bodies whose purpose is to integrate planning across local authorities and business run the risk of being labelled as unelected and unaccountable. For example, this is a criticism regularly made of the Oxfordshire LEP by local campaigners.
4. With the drive to encourage local communities to produce Neighbourhood Plans, it would be particularly unfortunate if they perceived that their hard work was being ignored by a remote regional body.
5. I would like to suggest that you add another requirement to paragraph 41, perhaps after point f: *Any new collective governance arrangements should **give confidence to local communities**. If an integrated strategic plan is to be accepted by local communities, they will want to know that their views have been heard and properly considered. The governance arrangements will need to be and to demonstrate in practice that they are transparent and democratically accountable.*

I have copied in our [job title redacted], [name redacted].

Kind Regards
[name redacted]

[job title redacted],
Cuddesdon & Denton Parish Council

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: a Discussion Paper

National Infrastructure Commission

RSPB Response

May 2017

Name and Position: [name redacted] [job title redacted]
Name of Organisation: The RSPB
Address: The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL.
Tel: [telephone number redacted]
E-mail: [email address redacted]

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (the RSPB) is the charity that takes action for wild birds and the environment. We are the largest wildlife conservation organisation in the country with over one million members. We own or manage 151,954 hectares of land for nature conservation on 213 reserves throughout the UK. We believe that sustainability should be at the heart of decision-making. The RSPB's policy and advocacy work covers a wide range of issues including planning policy, climate change, energy, marine issues, water and agriculture.

The RSPB has previously engaged with the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on a number of issues, including most recently responding to the National Infrastructure Assessment call for evidence.

We were not able to respond to the original call for evidence on the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor, but have now reviewed the Interim Report and the Discussion Paper.

We note that the Chancellor's mandate to the NIC in March 2016 was to:

“ ... make recommendations to maximise the potential of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor as a single, knowledge intensive cluster that competes on the global stage, whilst protecting the area's high quality environment and securing the homes and jobs the area needs.” (emphasis added)

There are some, limited, references to environmental constraints in the Interim Report, but both it and the Discussion Paper are almost completely silent on how to protect the area's high quality environment. Indeed, we believe that even this in itself would be lacking in ambition. The Discussion Paper refers to “a potentially transformational economic opportunity” (paragraph 24), but we urge the NIC to consider the corridor as **a potentially transformational environmental opportunity** as well.

Developing an integrated strategic plan

We agree with Criteria 1 that “any integrated plan should set out a clear and ambitious spatial vision for the corridor to 2050”. However, this should incorporate a transformational environmental vision, expressed spatially.

The map below shows that there are significant opportunities for transformational landscape-scale conservation in the corridor. The RSPB has identified four areas (RSPB Futurescapes) where action to enhance the natural environment should be focussed:

- Upper Thames River Valleys
- Greensand Ridge
- Upper Nene Valley
- The Fens

In addition, the Nene Valley is a designated Nature Improvement Area. Linear infrastructure projects such as road and rail also provide opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and ecological networks. We have given examples of this in our recent response to the National Infrastructure Assessment call for evidence.

Secondly, there will be many opportunities to bring nature closer to people at the local scale. The RSPB is developing a vision and set of principles for nature-friendly housing to promote high quality places that work for both people and nature, based on our experience working with Barratt Developments and Aylesbury Vale District Council at Kingsbrook, Aylesbury, which lies within the corridor. Further details are provided in Annex 1. This should be built into the NIC’s plans to maintain and enhance the character of the built environment.

The map also shows European and national nature conservation designations which must be respected and (as yet) undesignated RSPB reserves (in dark blue) where there has been significant charitable and public investment. We note that there is a concentration of these sites around Oxford and also Cambridgeshire, particularly the Great Ouse valley.

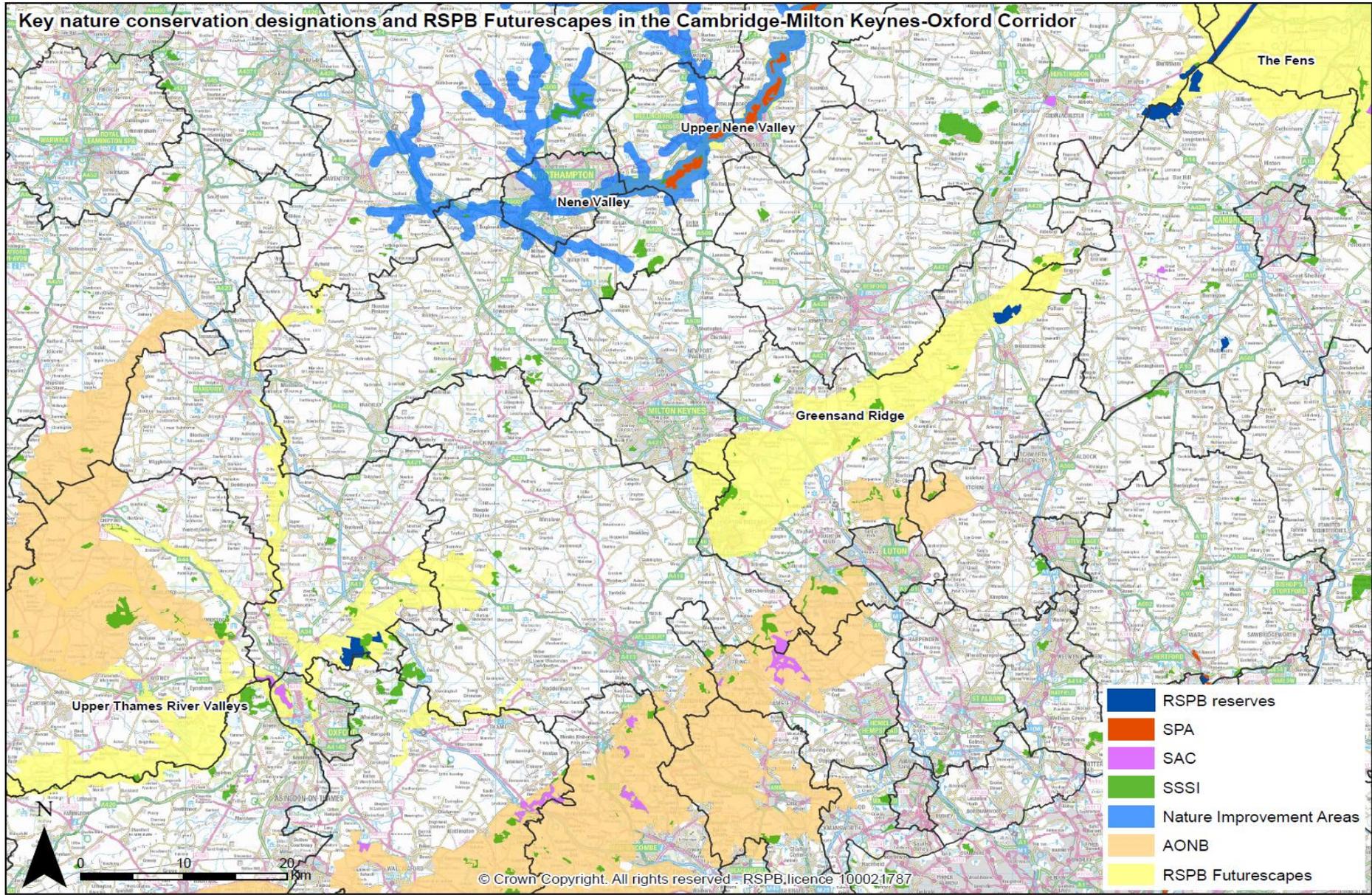
Climate change is likely to have a significant impact on the corridor by 2050 and must be taken fully into account by the strategy. This means not only considering the pattern of built development to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, but taking opportunities for the deployment of renewable energy in harmony with nature. We have set out how this could be done in the RSPB’s 2050 Energy Vision, details of which we have provided in previous submissions to the NIC. Future flood risk, water needs and ensuring that new developments are resilient in the face of climate change are also important considerations.

We also agree with Criteria 4 that “any integrated plan should be shaped by the requirements of a robust and integrated appraisal framework”. We welcome the reference to the use of Strategic Environmental Assessment and other assessment techniques, as these are important tools to help deliver sustainable outcomes and involve the public in decision making. However, the NIC should also bear in mind the need to enhance the area’s natural capital, including biodiversity.

Governance architecture

We have no strong views on the governance models proposed, but in order to realise the ambitions we have suggested it will be critical to engage fully with the Local Nature Partnerships in the area as well as with environmental stakeholders such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and the RSPB.

Key nature conservation designations and RSPB Futurescapes in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor



ANNEX 1 - Nature-friendly housing

1. With a Government ambition to build 1 million homes by 2020 it is essential that consideration is given to building high quality sustainable places that work for both people and nature as well as increasing the supply of homes.
2. The 2016 State of Nature Report¹ indicated that between 1970 and 2013, 56% of species assessed had declined, 40% showing strong or moderate declines. A new measure that assesses how intact a country's biodiversity is, suggests that the UK has lost significantly more nature over the long term than the global average. The index suggests **we are among the most nature-depleted countries in the world**. Of particular concern in England is the loss of lowland meadows² and lowland heathland³.
3. In respect of the urban environment the latest State of Nature Report identified a 47% long term and 49% short term decline of urban species. The rate of short term decline (10% between 2002-2013) has greatly accelerated versus an 11% long term decline over the 43 years 1970 to 2013. Of the 529 important urban species, 7% (37) were categorised as threatened with extinction.
4. The RSPB is committed to improving people's connection to nature recognising the mutual benefits for both people and wildlife. Through wider research, we know that greater levels of connection to nature correlate with better self reported health and engagement with pro-nature or pro-environment behaviours. **Therefore, we need to ensure there are wildlife-rich green spaces in and around housing developments to allow people to develop healthy connections with nature**. If properly integrated into urban design, these green spaces can also provide a core role in improving resilience to flooding, reducing urban diffuse water pollution, enhancing sustainable transport networks and reducing the urban heat island effect.
5. We are developing a vision and set of principles for Nature-Friendly Housing to promote high quality places that work for both people and nature. Our initial thoughts are set out below.

Nature-friendly housing means high quality places that work for people and wildlife. Wildlife-rich green spaces are available on the doorstep of people's new homes and links are provided to the wider countryside. Homes are built to zero carbon standards and designed to be highly efficient in the use of natural resources such as water. All homes incorporate wildlife-features such as swift bricks, nest boxes and hedgehog highways and gardens are designed and managed to be wildlife-friendly. Green walls and biodiverse green roofs are encouraged, particularly in higher density urban housing developments. The landscaped and built environment incorporates wildlife-friendly features. Permeable surfaces are utilised throughout and sustainable urban drainage systems, designed to incorporate wildlife-friendly features, are used to manage excess runoff.

An example of where this is happening in practice can be seen at Barratt Developments PLC flagship scheme at Kingsbrook, Aylesbury – see case study below.

¹ http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/State%20of%20Nature%20UK%20report_%2020%20Sept_tcm9-424984.pdf

² 97% of the lowland meadows in England and Wales were lost between the 1930s and 1984 – UK NEA (2011) The UK National Ecosystem Assessment.

³ 80% of the UK's lowland heathland – the great majority of it in England – has gone since 1800 - UK NEA (2011) The UK National Ecosystem Assessment.

Case Study: RSPB collaboration with Barratt Developments PLC

The RSPB has joined forces with Barratt Developments PLC to set a new benchmark for nature-friendly housing developments. This was the first national agreement of its kind in the UK.

Key features of the collaboration include:

1. A flagship development at Kingsbrook, Aylesbury, Bucks (see below).
2. Seconding a biodiversity expert from the RSPB to advise the company on the design of developments nationally.
3. Using RSPB advice and expertise on biodiversity to inspire Barratt homebuyers to 'give nature a home'.
4. Engaging with Barratt employees and raising awareness of wildlife-friendly best practice.
5. Working together to share best practice on supply chain management.

Barratt's flagship scheme for 2,450 homes at Kingsbrook, Aylesbury will include a major new urban fringe nature reserve as well as nature-friendly elements in the built environment. A range of biodiversity enhancements are expected to be delivered at Kingsbrook including: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) (swales and detention ponds), hedgehog highways in fences, flower-rich grasslands in public open spaces, native tree planting including rare black poplars, fruit trees in gardens, and swift bricks in the new homes (with 900 expected to be installed in total). Construction started at Kingsbrook in July 2016.

Kingsbrook was recently the 2016 winner of the prestigious [BIG Biodiversity Award](#)⁴ – "Large Scale Permanent" category.

In Autumn 2016, following close working between Barratt Developments PLC, the RSPB and Action for Swifts, Manthorpe Building Products Ltd launched a new integral swift brick⁵ offering safe, habitable spaces for swifts. This brick can be easily incorporated into the construction process and retails significantly cheaper than other products on the market. Swifts are highly charismatic, iconic birds, and a characteristic of the summer urban landscape. It is hoped that providing replacement nest sites in new buildings will help to reverse the decline in the swift population. A number of swift bricks have already been built into new homes at Kingsbrook.

⁴ The BIG Biodiversity Challenge to 'do one thing' invites you to add one new biodiversity enhancement to your construction site, development or existing building

⁵ <http://manthorpebuildingproducts.co.uk/product/gswb-swift-nest-brick>

30 May 2017

Delivered by Email

Dear Sir/Madam,

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE- MILTON KEYNES- OXFORD CORRIDOR A DISCUSSION PAPER

We write on behalf of CMK Hermes CMK General Partner Ltd, 'Owners' of centre:mk Shopping Building and other sites within and on the edge of the Primary/Core Shopping Area of Central Milton Keynes, and have been instructed to provide the following observations and comments to the aforementioned 'Discussion Paper' and the 'Key Questions' contained therein.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1a. Notwithstanding the absence of considerations surrounding any impact on national and regional growth of Britain's forthcoming exit from the European Union, it is considered that the approach to strategic planning can tackle the undersupply of homes and the infrastructure required to deliver and cater for those homes.

In order to achieve this, the role of each respective Local Planning Authority should be clearly defined, including how their emerging Local Plans and policies contained therein are coordinated to provide that regional and collaborative framework for delivering the vision for the corridor.

b. The mechanics of achieving new east-west infrastructure links either by road or by rail or both must be clearly defined, perhaps using experience of recent regional infrastructure improvements such as Crossrail. This should include consideration of the timelines and funding for such improvements.

c. Each town and city in the region comprises differing offers and strengths in terms of employment opportunities, housing offer and cultural and leisure attractions. As highlighted above, places must be desirable for people to live and this goes further than just job opportunities and housing supply. Central Milton Keynes for instances, given its planned form from the mid to late 1970's, comprises sufficient vacant and available land with the necessary capacity in terms of road infrastructure to provide a key destination of growth, being as it is, at the centre of the proposed corridor. It already offers regional shopping and leisure facilities which should be maintained and enhanced, and abundant designated land for housing and employment growth. Oxford and Cambridge are national hotspots with significant demand for housing growth. Their respective administrative boundaries couple with high land values and

The Charlotte Building
17 Gresse Street London W1T 1QL T
[telephone number redacted] turley.co.uk

established infrastructure make it more difficult to achieve the level of growth required. Focus should therefore be based on their education, research and biomedical industries, whilst allowing general employment growth in other towns in-between and along the corridor.

New opportunities

Q3a & b. A clear and defined structure of bodies to formulate and deliver the planned growth is essential from the outset. Other cities provide a mayor as the figurehead for delivering key initiatives and growth.

Any plan must first and foremost, focus on defining the corridor, followed by a commitment to provide the east-west links. Only then can housebuilders and infrastructure providers be persuaded to deliver the level of homes, utilities and telecommunications services required.

Q4. The above commentary would assist in strengthening the approach, alongside a clear vision of delivery timescales and secured funds to facilitate the east-west infrastructure links. The market will also play a role in delivering the growth around more peripheral towns along the route.

Governance

Q5a. We agree that a clear boundary is required. Basing this on existing administrative boundaries is a long established method of setting out regional growth, however the balance between each authorities needs and requirements within that boundary must be clearly set out.

b. We agree with a streamlined approach whereby decisions can be taken efficiently and in a timely manner. The initial/overarching 'Plan' or 'Strategy' should be the forum whereby individual local authorities ratify the approach.

c. It is considered that this area is clearly defined from the outset.

d. A suggestion to achieve this may be to appoint a representative from each authority onto any decision making board or forum.

e. We agree with this statement, however the converse could be true, whereby some communities may not wish to grow. Consideration must also be made on the role that Parish Council's will play, especially given the powers invested in local communities by the Localism Act, and the subsequent development of Neighbourhood and Business Neighbourhood Plans. It is conceivable that conflicts in aims and aspirations for areas at a local level may emerge, which could impact on the strategic vision.

f. This, in our view, is one of the key planks of delivering the aims and aspirations for the corridor. Although infrastructure investment may be driven by central Government, the investment required to deliver the jobs and homes and other facilities required to sustain the growth, will in essence be delivered by investors.

g & h. No comment

i. Bureaucracy and especially the time it takes for decisions to be made will be key in delivering the growth envisaged. In addition, consideration may be given to streamlined decision making and streamlined planning requirements, such as those experienced with Enterprise Zones.

Q6. The interests of every local authority must be integrated into any approach, alongside the interests and requirements of investors. Any further layer of governance must be streamlined in order not to weigh down the decision making, and ultimately the delivery process.

Q7. Coordination is required through strong and decisive leadership and drive.

Q8. Informal models of collaboration needs consideration, as there must be an overarching decision making body that can act decisively to deliver any strategic plan.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. This point has been discussed above. Some local planning authorities are currently embarking on new Local Plans. This work is aimed, in the main, at catering for the needs and requirements for development within their administrative boundaries. A clear framework will be required through any integrated strategic plan to ensure that ALL local planning authorities and their respective statutory development plans reflect the overarching strategic plan requirement. This, from experience, will lead to significant resource and time pressures, which creates lag in delivery.

The key therefore is the delivery of the vision, the Plan and fundamentally the east-west infrastructure, which in turn will provide the catalyst for growth and development.

Q10. This can only be achieved through delivery on the ground.

We trust the above is useful and look forward to further updates as they emerge.

If you have any queries or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at this office.

Yours faithfully

[signature redacted]

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

[email address redacted]

ASSET AND SPACE MANAGEMENT
The Malthouse, Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford, OX1 1NQ
From the [job title redacted]



National Infrastructure Commission

Email: GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

Date: 30 May 2017

Dear Sir or Madam

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor: A Discussion Paper.

The University of Oxford welcomes this opportunity to comment on the National Infrastructure Commission's Discussion Paper. The following response was agreed by the University's main Council Meeting on 15 May 2017.

An integrated strategic plan for jobs, homes and infrastructure.

Can the approach to strategic planning explored in the paper help to tackle major constraints on future economic growth, maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links and develop distinct towns and cities?

The University of Oxford whole heartedly welcomes this National Infrastructure Commission discussion paper and the proposal for there to be an integrated strategic plan for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor.

New opportunities to support improved collaboration with key stakeholders.

Can the approach to strategic planning in the discussion paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and house builders, infrastructure providers and central government?

The University of Oxford agrees with the approach being proposed by the National Infrastructure Commission but considers that the full benefits will only be achieved as and when the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor has a worthwhile integrated spatial plan.

Governance

Is there agreement with the collective agreement decision-making principles? Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

The University of Oxford encourages the National Infrastructure Commission to be firm with the Oxfordshire local authorities on this point of governance structures because, in the light of experience here in Oxfordshire, without collaboration being locked-in it is unlikely the vision for achieving an integrated spatial plan will be realised.

If the Local Authorities cannot reach agreement for collective decision-making very quickly, the University requests the Government to work closely with the Local Authorities and stakeholders to ensure necessary funding is unlocked to deliver transport and other important infrastructure.

I trust these comments are helpful and enable the NIC to continue in its endeavours to encourage strategic planning across this important corridor, particularly given the need for an increase in the supply of housing at the Oxford end of the corridor.

The University is a participant in the wider portfolio of work being undertaken by the NIC at the moment and is pleased to be able to take an active role. I would be very willing to organise a meeting involving senior representatives of the Collegiate University if this would be of assistance to the NIC.

Yours faithfully,

[signature redacted]

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

Estate Services University of Oxford

Oxfordshire County Council's Response to the NIC Discussion Paper:
Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Cambridge Corridor

Introduction

1. Oxfordshire has the fastest growing economy outside of London and contributes £21.9bn to the nation's Gross Value Added (GVA) output. Over the period 2011-31 the County and its economy is forecast to grow significantly with 85,000+ jobs and 100,000 new homes. So there is a real opportunity to develop the economy and greater productivity, with houses being delivered in support. Jobs growth since 2011 is exceeding forecasts
2. Oxfordshire's economic growth is broad-based, with a particularly important role being played by the county's knowledge economy and the prosperity generated by two universities, local teaching hospitals, and significant centres of scientific research and innovation including Harwell, Culham and Begbroke.
3. However, while improving in Cherwell and Vale Districts in particular , housing completions in Oxfordshire over the five year period 2011-16 have been significantly below the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) target of 5,000 homes annually, with only 11,660 homes being built. A shortage of housing, particularly affordable housing, is a major barrier to the county attracting business investment.
4. Infrastructure is critical to current and any future higher levels of growth. The lack of infrastructure/connectivity is impacting on the County's ability to realise its full economic potential. We estimate that the infrastructure upgrades required to support Oxfordshire's growth potential will require over £6bn of funding to 2030, of which it is anticipated around £4.3bn will be available through local and national programmes, leaving a very considerable gap in funding. Further infrastructure requirements will be required to support growth in the longer term, including significantly upgraded strategic east-west links and 'last-mile' links to/from the strategic network.
5. Oxfordshire as a key building block which in doing its own strategic plan which will be delivering the western end of this wider network. We fully support the development of integrated strategic development strategies to enable a higher level, strategic view to be taken on the planning of housing, employment, transport and other strategic

infrastructure. As a demonstration of this, the Council is a founding member of the England's Economic Heartland (EEH) Strategic Alliance, working collaboratively with all District, Unitary and County Councils to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of infrastructure planning across the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor.

6. Currently within Oxfordshire planning functions are split both functionally (between the county and district tiers) and geographically (between city and district councils within the county), with no definitive coordinating strategic body or overarching strategic plan at the level of the functional economic area demonstrated by housing and transport geographies, and the agreed LEP area, coterminous with the county. Existing governance structures fail to enable conclusive prioritisation across the county area, and fail to join up the development choices made by the local planning authorities (LPAs) and the impact on local infrastructure.
7. The Oxfordshire Growth Board (which comprises County, District & City Councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners) has been established, with a particular focus on strategic planning. The Board has commissioned an Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, to identify, map and prioritise the County's strategic infrastructure requirements to 2040 and beyond. It focuses on all aspects of strategic infrastructure - transport, education, health, energy and the utilities, flooding and water management, broadband & connectivity, green infrastructure and waste management. This Strategy is due to be published in autumn 2017. The Board has also agreed to commission a Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire, which is currently being scoped.
8. Nonetheless, whilst it has enabled a step-change in joint working, the work of the Growth Board is often slow and complex - for example taking three years from the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, to reaching majority support for an allocation of Oxford's "unmet need."
9. The County Council therefore believes that strategic spatial planning in Oxfordshire will be best undertaken through a unitary model of government and we have submitted our proposal for a Better Oxfordshire based on one new unitary Council. This proposal has been endorsed by two of Oxfordshire's District Councils - South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.
10. The alternative, a Combined Authority, is one the council has explored and engaged on constructively. However, there is a fundamental concern that adding an additional

new authority above existing local government structures risks increasing costs and complexity, with prolonged decision-making and potentially the risk of non-agreement. There has also, as yet, not been a single successful example of a Combined Authority or related devolution deal agreed by Government within a single administrative county.

11. A new unitary council for Oxfordshire would mean a single strategic plan – the statutory Local Plan - integrating the planning of housing, employment, community and strategic infrastructure across the county. This plan would deliver growth in locations which fit with/support the spatial vision to be developed for any integrated plan for Oxford- Cambridge corridor.
12. As a unitary council, Oxfordshire would have a single voice for the western end of the Oxford – Milton Keynes-Cambridge arc in any governance model for developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan for the corridor and as part of joined-up conversations with government and national infrastructure providers about infrastructure funding and phasing to support growth.

An Integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. **tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure**

13. Oxfordshire County Council supports the development of long term, strategic integrated planning for jobs, housing and transport infrastructure to help realise the economic potential of Oxfordshire and the Oxford- Cambridge corridor. An integrated plan for the corridor must ensure that that new housing and employment development is located where it can make best use of existing and planned strategic infrastructure capacity or where it would provide funding for new strategic infrastructure which may not otherwise happen, be unaffordable or not possible to justify.
14. The EEH Strategic Alliance has established a Strategic Transport Forum and has an approved and resourced work programme to help shape its transport and other priorities and deliver growth objectives for the corridor. The forum is overseeing the development of an over-arching transport strategy for the alliance with the intention that this will feed up to Highways England’s Road Investment Strategy and Network

Rail's investment plans, as well as informing local transport development. This will be a lead into a broader infrastructure strategy incorporating environmental, digital, energy, housing and other infrastructure that in turn would inform development of an integrated strategic corridor plan to tackle major constraints on economic growth.

b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links;

15. Significant upgrades to east-west connectivity will open new opportunities for strategic development, continuing beyond the periods of existing local plans. Growth locations would be identified in the corridor's collaborative strategy and together with the supporting investment strategy and phased delivery plan, this will give business confidence to invest with the certainty that funding and delivery of infrastructure is aligned to growth.

16. This will require a greater level of commitment to invest in infrastructure, and greater certainty on delivery timescales and outcomes. For example, East West Rail – a project that has been under development for over 20 years – has seen its completion date put back from December 2017 (the opening date when it was announced as a commitment in 2012) to 2022-2024 (current envisaged timescale). We cannot afford to perpetuate a situation where projects critical to economic growth are consistently years away from happening. This is also having knock-on effects on Local Plan proposals and opportunities along the route.

17. As stated above there is an estimated £1.7bn gap in Oxfordshire between planned infrastructure investment across all sectors and the actual amount needed to support the scale of predicted growth up to 2030, taking account of potential funding sources. Work in preparing the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy to 2040 and beyond will identify additional infrastructure needs to support longer term growth. It will be important that development options maximise the opportunities offered by major new east-west infrastructure and other strategic infrastructure capacity so as to not add to the County's already significant infrastructure funding gap.

c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

18. Place-making is an important part of strategic and local planning. Strategic planning at the corridor level will plan for key pieces of infrastructure and the scale / broad locations of growth. Business will be attracted to locations with excellent connectivity,

a quality environment, where employment land/premises exist or are being planned and there will be homes available - and importantly affordable - to their workforce.

19. Local plans aligned to the corridor's strategic vision will provide for detailed place-making; new settlements planned to take advantage of new east-west transport links, will need time to develop into distinct communities. We support the strategic corridor plan having a long timeframe to 2050 as delivery of strategic transport infrastructure has a long lead in time. 2050 would also match the timeframe for the London Infrastructure Plan with which the Oxford-Cambridge corridor may have synergies.
20. Defining urban typologies within the vision for the corridor and using typologies to inform the distribution of planned growth is likely to be of limited value and could work against distinctiveness. Oxford for example is an engine of the Oxfordshire economy but its ability to grow is physically constrained by a tight Green Belt; it is atypical of a regional economic centre or business cluster with its own distinct character.
21. Parts of Oxfordshire, particularly the south-west and south-east, have functional links with other economic corridors: Reading/Thames Valley to the south east and Swindon M4 to the south-west and it will be important that strategic planning and infrastructure provision supports the opportunity these connections bring.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

22. To be successful and achieve this, we need a step-change in the scale at which infrastructure and growth are planned collaboratively.
23. Any strategic plan will be strengthened if it can build upon national investment proposals, such as those outlined for the corridor by the NIC. Currently, Local Plans and Local Transport Plans (LTPs) across the corridor plan to varying timescales; in Oxfordshire local plan periods range from 2011-31 to 2016-36. Any collaborative strategic plan would need to knit together and build upon already planned growth and transport proposals and set a date at which all statutory plans and LTPs prepared within the corridor would align.

24. In Oxfordshire, a unitary council with a single local plan covering the whole county would help overcome this problem by reducing the number of local plans, alignment to agreed timescales of any collaborative strategic corridor plan and the defined five year time periods of the proposed accompanying infrastructure investment strategy.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;**
- b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and**
- c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?**

25. We broadly support the approach outlined in the paper and believe it should build on strategic joint work already being undertaken through the EEH Strategic Alliance and the Oxfordshire Growth Board on growth and infrastructure investment strategies: it should not duplicate joint work.

26. The EEH Strategic Transport Forum brings together nine councils with transport responsibility, three LEAs, the Oxfordshire Growth Board, national transport providers and other partners to provide strategic leadership and decision-making to improve transport connectivity across the east-west corridor. The Forum has developed a 'Planning for Growth document' setting out an initial vision for key strategic transport links including East-West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway which will inform a long term transport strategy for the EEH area.

27. It is crucial that investment in these transport links is forthcoming, as this will provide the foundation and catalyst for accelerated, long term growth, with the resulting GVA uplift to the national economy that will comfortably exceed the direct investment cost.

28. As set out under Q1a, the EEH work programme includes development of a Transport Strategy and an Infrastructure Strategy, work which is now underway. These will provide a framework for national infrastructure providers to develop their long term investment strategies, aligning planned growth and new infrastructure provision.

29. Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy also sits within the context of National and 'Sub Regional' proposals, particularly the emerging EEH strategies and priorities. As a result, it will be influenced by progress of strategic projects such as East West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway schemes. It will also take into account future initiatives, including the increasing role of innovation and technology.
30. Engagement with national infrastructure providers throughout the OxIS work has been a priority, although success has been variable. Some providers have found it difficult to take a long term view of the implications of growth to 2040 and beyond for the capacity of their service delivery infrastructure and to identify additional infrastructure that might be required. Currently the Utilities planning work is reactionary, on a 'predict and provide' basis; there needs to be more incentive to providers to look further ahead, collaborate, be proactive and seek opportunities through innovation.
31. We support the principle of the proposed 'infrastructure compact' to provide more certainty on the infrastructure projects government will support, and on the timing of government funding and its phasing. This will require joined up thinking and agreement at national level between government departments on growth priorities in the corridor and how they should be supported.
32. Greater commitment and certainty on government's priorities will improve the prospects of the corridor attracting private sector investment. However, government support and changes to regulatory frameworks may be required to encourage the Utilities to proactively engage in long term infrastructure planning and to align their investment plans to planned growth.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

33. We support the proposal for a phased delivery plan setting out when key employment and residential developments will come forward aligned to infrastructure delivery. We agree that this should be by five year periods, recognising that the last ten years may be difficult to plan with the same degree of accuracy as the earlier periods.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

34. Collaborative working across the whole region – captured in some form of framework tying together infrastructure and growth – is essential, and we broadly agree with the design principles. We particularly support the principle that governance arrangements should be as simple and stream-lined as possible. A small number of voices representing areas within the corridor reduces the risk of delayed decision-making and would enable easier conversations with government and infrastructure providers on funding and delivery of infrastructure.
35. We would support the minimum sized block of any structure being of a strategic size and based on functional geographies. For Oxfordshire which is a functional economic area and a housing market area, this would mean the County; this is also the area covered by the Oxfordshire LEP.
36. Governance should be clear, accountable, efficient, and robust. In Oxfordshire, this could build on joint working by the Growth Board, but in time will be best achieved by moving to a single unitary model of local government. If there is political will, an Oxfordshire unitary council could combine with a neighbouring authority or authorities at the western end of the corridor, to undertake joint work and collective decision-making on spatial planning and infrastructure investment at the sub-regional level. This work would feed into and help shape the overall integrated strategy for the full corridor.
37. The scope of governance arrangements should include collective decision-making on infrastructure priorities and investment as well as spatial planning. An investment strategy to which the whole of the corridor jointly commits funding is more likely to be successful in delivering infrastructure identified as essential to support the growth in the collaborative plan. Decision-making should be split between whole-corridor and sub-regional levels, depending on the issues.
38. New statutory bodies are likely to be required. For Oxfordshire, a new unitary authority is the only way to ensure clear, accountable governance and ‘lock-in’ collaboration on spatial planning and strategic infrastructure investment. We also support a sub-regional transport body for the area which the EEH Strategic Alliance is working towards.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

39. Yes - see above

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

40. No. Non-statutory governance structures are likely where we need to begin to get support to move forward and to achieve progress. The status quo is unlikely to achieve lock-in collaboration on spatial planning over a long period and may not even achieve it in the short term. In the absence of statutory structures it is also less likely that there will be agreement on strategic infrastructure priorities and how they are to be funded, including pooling of s106/CIL and other funds.

41. There is currently informal joint working between the Oxfordshire authorities on strategic planning issues via the Oxfordshire Growth Board. To illustrate some of the difficulties of cooperative working, it took almost three years from commissioning of the Oxfordshire SHMA to achieving an agreement by the Oxfordshire Growth Board on how Oxford's unmet housing need should be apportioned between the Councils: the decision was not unanimous, with one council not agreeing its proposed shared allocation figure or taking its full share forward into its local plan immediately. Sites for accommodating the unmet need have yet to be allocated in adopted local plans and there is no consistent approach to reviews of the Oxford Green Belt.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

42. Informal models of collaboration supported by high level Statements of Common Ground, Statements or Memos of Cooperation under the duty to cooperate are a good start, but unlikely over the longer term to guarantee commitment and give confidence to wider stakeholders, including infrastructure providers. This would be particularly the case where decision-making is required on growth issues which are controversial (i.e. major new settlements and investments) or where pooling of funds is required to

deliver strategic infrastructure outside a council's area but which is needed for the success of the integrated strategic corridor plan as a whole.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

43. There are two main areas - establishing Governance and progressing an agreed evidence base. Options for Governance are set out in this proposal and, whilst further work would be needed on the details, in broad terms the Council supports the approach set out in Illustrative Model 2 in the consultation paper.
44. Through the EEH Strategic Alliance, work has commenced on developing a joint evidence base for the EEH area, collating information on the scale and location of already planned growth and identified strategic transport requirements. As work on developing an Infrastructure Strategy progresses, there will also be an audit of current available infrastructure evidence and mapping. This work could be completed ahead of any new collective governance arrangements. Oxfordshire will also be well-placed to provide evidence on its future infrastructure requirements on completion of the OxIS.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

45. The Plan and its effectiveness should be monitored against a suite of strategic measures – these could include for example: Tracking housing and jobs delivery against target; GVA uplift; Productivity rates increasing; Value of private investment levered in; Land value capture if this can be realistically quantified and secured.
46. In helping to devise and finalise a monitoring framework, we would draw on practice developed in Oxfordshire, for example in relation to the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal, as well as best practice from the EEH Area and elsewhere.

May 2017

Ramblers' response to the Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford

Corridor discussion paper

- 1.1 The Ramblers helps everyone, everywhere, enjoy walking and protects the places we all love to walk. We are the only charity dedicated to looking after paths and green spaces, opening up new places to explore and encouraging everyone to get outside and discover how walking boosts health and happiness. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the National Infrastructure Commission's consultation.
- 1.2 We broadly welcome the discussion paper as the start of a debate on strategic planning and other infrastructure in this corridor and notes that the ideas outlined in the paper are not NIC recommendations. We further note that several modes of transport have been considered in the paper, including investment in new road and rail links. However, there seems to be no mention of walking as a sustainable mode of transport, the opportunity to improve the walkability of existing towns and cities or the potential for walker-friendly new developments to form part of the solution to congestion.
- 1.3 The Ramblers wants cities and towns that are designed to encourage people to go about their everyday lives on foot. Walking should be the easy choice, for any type of urban journey, whether just trying to get from A to B or for recreation and relaxation. Cities and towns with high-quality, well connected, accessible networks of paths and spaces that are rich in natural features encourage walking and in so doing improve public health, boost local economies and help create safer, happier, more cohesive communities. The National Infrastructure Commission, in shaping the strategic planning debate at an early stage, has an opportunity to ensure that these considerations are placed at the heart of planning and design process.
- 1.4 Urban development must put the needs of people to live in healthy places above the needs of car traffic. Plans for new developments must prioritise walking, providing green routes and spaces that connect to public transport, surrounding streets, shops and amenities.
- 1.5 For decades, the built environment has been designed to get cars – rather than people – moving. We would like to see the strategic planning for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor taking a step forward, away from this model, which has resulted in urban environments that are less safe, less pleasant, more polluted, more congested, noisier and more difficult to navigate, leading to a decline in physical activity.
- 1.6 The routes and spaces which facilitate walking should be considered as a network, in the same way as roads. Individual agencies and strategic plans (both national and local) concerned with transport, environment, health and planning should recognise the potential of walking to improve the social and economic fabric of communities and work together to deliver improvements to the network.
- 1.7 Green Belt land should only be developed where there is an existing opportunity to link the development to public transport. Where it is given over to development, local policies should require the impact to be offset by compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land and by additional green, accessible space. Developers must be required

to provide high quality, accessible green spaces and routes within the development itself and must make a substantial contribution to the overall provision of green space in the surrounding area.

- 1.8 The value of Green Belt land should be taken into account including the accessibility and environmental quality of the land as well as the health, social and economic benefits from the recreational opportunities it provides or might provide if accessible. Natural Capital accounting systems should allow for this analysis to be undertaken.
- 1.9 We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you the opportunities of integrating walkability in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor, as well as other strategic planning areas.

30/05/2017

Planning

HEAD OF SERVICE: [NAME REDACTED]



Listening Learning Leading

National Infrastructure
Commission

Contact officer: [name redacted]
[email address redacted]
Tel: [telephone number redacted]

Textphone users add 18001 before you dial

By email:
GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

Our reference: NIC Strategic Planning Response, May 2017

25 May 2017

Date

Dear Sirs

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge- Milton Keynes- Oxford Corridor: A National Infrastructure Commission Discussion Paper: Response from South Oxfordshire Council, 25 May 2017

Introduction

South Oxfordshire District Council recognises the broad economic growth potential of the Oxford to Cambridge corridor, and the need to better plan for infrastructure, jobs and homes within it. In particular, the district has for some time worked together and with others including the Vale of White Horse District Council, the County Council and Oxfordshire LEP in planning for jobs and homes growth in tandem with infrastructure improvements in the Science Vale area in and around Didcot, which in turn is part of the central Oxfordshire knowledge spine as identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan.¹

The number of homes required to be delivered within the Oxfordshire Market area has been informed by the Oxfordshire Strategic Oxfordshire Housing Market assessment (SHMA) undertaken in 2014.² This indicated that approximately 100,000 homes should be delivered to meet need in Oxfordshire by 2031, with these homes to be planned through the respective district Local Plans. All districts are in the

¹ Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, at: <http://www.oxfordshirelep.com/content/strategic-economic-plan>

² Oxfordshire SHMA, at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-growth-board>
South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire
OX14 4SB www.southoxon.gov.uk



process of updating their local plans to meet this need, as well as a proportion of Oxford's unmet need for those districts surrounding Oxford. In South Oxfordshire, the SHMA indicated an annual provision to be planned as a range of 725-825 homes per annum. The latest consultation draft Local Plan makes provision for 775 homes per annum, as well as a proportion of Oxford's unmet need. Taking into account current commitments, this could deliver approximately 21,000 new homes in the area to 2033.³

As part of our partnership work, new ways of forward funding infrastructure have also been progressed, allowing for upfront investment to support new jobs and homes coming forward. For example, in proximity to the Harwell Campus and Milton Park employment areas, new road improvements have been delivered to support new business at the Science Vale Enterprise Zone, with investment to be paid back from future business rates.

The Council continues to work with other authorities on spatial planning matters as part of the 'duty to cooperate' requirements under the National Planning Policy Framework. At an Oxfordshire level, this has mainly been facilitated through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, with work on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and addressing Oxford's unmet housing need, now being followed by development of an Oxfordshire Strategic Infrastructure Strategy. The Council also works in partnership with other surrounding authorities on matters such as cross border transport impacts. They are committed to develop relevant partnership work and are currently considering work on a Joint Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire.

In association with the County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council, the Council have also put a proposal forward to central government for a new unitary council for Oxfordshire. Called 'Better Oxfordshire' the proposals set out plans to deliver more cost effective, efficient and joined-up local government services. They build on the already good working relationships established through the Growth Board, but would critically allow one body to have an overview and make future decisions on development and infrastructure planning in the sub-region.⁴

The following sections highlight responses to questions raised in the paper.

Integrated strategic plan:

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

Response:

It is recognised that working in partnership to better plan for growth across the corridor is likely to assist in maximising the potential of new east-west infrastructure links. This is particularly so for the longer-term period following current planned and

³ <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-second-preferred-options-consul>

⁴ <https://www.better-oxfordshire.org/>

committed local plan growth when such infrastructure is likely to be realised, and could assist in decisions on proposed locations of new employment and housing areas. Taking a strategic approach can ensure linkages and better co-ordination that will help in delivery and support to growth.

In light of this, the Oxfordshire authorities are currently working together to review how a longer-term strategic framework for development and infrastructure could be developed that will support investment and housing in this 'sub-regional' area. It is considered that this work can form the foundations of inputting to the wider strategic planning across the corridor, **and if successful, can be driven by a new Oxfordshire unitary council**. However, this work is at an early stage and will need to take account of the following points:

- Several new district level Local Plans are already at an advanced stage of development, which will plan for forecast housing and employment needs to the mid-2030s and be informed by considerable evidence base work as required under the NPPF.⁵
- To inform longer-term planning in a strategic context, there will be a requirement for new evidence base to inform choices on the quantum and location of development. To start, this will need to build on local plan evidence, as well as more strategic work such as the Oxfordshire Strategic Infrastructure Study. This can then be developed further, including review of linkages between the 'sub-regional' areas across the corridor.
- That the 'sub regional' area of Oxfordshire has strong economic and social relationships with areas outside of the main Oxford to Cambridge corridor. For example, parts of South Oxfordshire have strong links to London and the Thames Valley for employment and services.
- That there is strong support for communities to develop plans for homes and infrastructure in their areas as manifest in development of a large number of Neighbourhood Plans in the districts. Any strategic framework needs to ensure that the role of local communities in planning is recognised, **and that the local distinctiveness of settlements should be respected.**
- That as well infrastructure requirements associated with new development, there is also a backlog of infrastructure requirements that need investment commitments to ensure that the area remains economically competitive at a national and international level.

New Opportunities:

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Response:

⁵ South Oxfordshire District Council is developing a new Local Plan for the period until 2033.

The Council supports development of strategic planning that will in particular generate public and private sector monies and provide greater certainty for investment decisions to be made. As noted above, this approach should take account of the distinct sub-regional area of Oxfordshire, and its housing market area, and build on the effective partnership working on planning and infrastructure undertaken to date. As such, any infrastructure compact will need to recognise at what level infrastructure requirements are met, either across the corridor, at a sub-regional level, or at a more local level. It will also be important to ensure that decisions on key strategic infrastructure schemes such the proposed new Oxford to Cambridge Expressway are made in time to inform considerations of spatial planning options beyond the current local plan periods. These decisions should take into account the needs of local communities and areas through the appropriate engagement of districts and other local partners.

There is a need to recognise that at least in the medium-term, and given current government policy, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans will still have the role of guiding plans for infrastructure linked to specific development areas and growing settlements. Any planning frameworks at a sub-regional, or corridor level will need to take these local plans and associated evidence base as a starting point, and build on, rather than replace the work undertaken in support of their development. Individual council sovereignty will remain an important factor.

Governance:

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Response:

Whilst the principles as set out in paragraph 41 seem useful to inform how collective governance arrangements could be developed, the Council would wish to understand in more detail how the interests of the sub-regional and more local areas can be protected and recognised as part of any new arrangements. In particular, the Council considers that democratic accountability would need to be considered carefully in any proposals for new collective decision-making arrangements at a regional and sub-regional level.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

Response:

As set out above, the Council is already committed to relevant sub-regional collaboration, including work being undertaken under the umbrella of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Council is also committed to the 'Better Oxfordshire' proposal for a new unitary council. It is considered important that this sub-regional work continues to ensure that economic, housing and infrastructure needs of Oxfordshire are considered appropriately, and where relevant this feeds into wider regional collaboration. This could either build on the partnership arrangements as set up through the Growth Board, or be enabled through a new unitary council, should the current Better Oxfordshire Bid to central government be successful.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

Response:

It is recognised that there may be concerns regarding obtaining agreement to key priorities without new formal statutory governance structures being put in place. However, the planning system already has the 'duty to co-operate' provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework which require adjoining authorities to collaborate on planning matters and which is tested through the Local Plan examination process. In Oxfordshire, authorities are already collaborating on planning matters through Growth Board workstreams, and also where relevant with authorities in surrounding areas where cross border matters such as infrastructure impacts need review. This collaboration would continue at a 'sub-regional' level should a new unitary council be developed.

In this context, the Council would generally prefer a governance model that included a strong role for the sub-region in planning and decision-making. However, within this there should also be appropriate local input to decision-making regarding growth and infrastructure priorities.

Developing and delivering an integrated plan:

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

The Council in association with other authorities in Oxfordshire already have partnership arrangements in place as set out above, and are currently looking to strengthen these to look in more detail at longer-term strategic planning options across Oxfordshire. The proposal for a new unitary council for Oxfordshire put forward by the Council in partnership with the County Council and Vale of White Horse would clearly help integration of planning at a sub-regional level. In addition, the work on development of England's Economic Heartland Alliance provides some basis for wider partnership across the Oxford to Cambridge corridor.

However, individual authority resource constraints need to be taken into account when considering setting up any new collective governance arrangements. This is particularly important given their continued statutory planning functions around development of local plans and determining planning applications in the context of significant pressure for additional development. Should a strategic plan be developed, needing 'buy-in' from a large number of planning authorities across the corridor, these resource pressures would need addressed appropriately.

Yours faithfully

[signature redacted]

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]



Anglian Water Services Ltd.

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Ermine Business Park,
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Cambridgeshire
PE29 6XU

Mr Philip Graham
National Infrastructure Commission
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London
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Tel 01480 323 000

www.anglianwater.co.uk

30 May 2017

Dear Philip,

I'm pleased to share with you our response to the National Infrastructure Commission's consultation on strategic planning across the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor. As a vital infrastructure provider in the region, with a crucial role underpinning sustainable growth, we welcome the approach set out in the paper and believe that an integrated strategic plan will add real value to our region.

As you may be aware, the East of England is home to three of the five fastest growing cities in the UK. The extent and success of this growth is reliant on resilient support infrastructure and a thriving natural environment.

We are in a unique position with regards to the development and delivery of a strategic plan for the Corridor, as we operate across the majority of its surface area in a way that no single local authority does. Successful development and delivery will require long term confidence in the plan and the building of inter-local authority relationships. Both of which we can play a critical role in facilitating through early engagement and in utilising our existing cross-authority relationships.

An integrated strategic plan will facilitate early, ongoing and meaningful engagement between stakeholders and ensure alignment of infrastructure provision. In order to be successful, we maintain our belief that water and sewerage companies should be made statutory consultees in the planning process – something we will continue to pursue with Government as we work to unlock growth, whilst protecting and continuing supply and services to our existing customers.

This approach would, we believe, also increase the development and adoption of SuDS and other innovative flood risk management technologies.



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The establishment of a multi-agency steering group is something we support and believe that this should most certainly include utilities. The delivery of mixed support infrastructure involves a number of complex relationships that must be closely integrated to be truly collaborative and effective. By incorporating the view of all stakeholders at an early stage, a strong and easily accessible platform can be developed to deliver such infrastructure.

I have enclosed a copy of our full response to the discussion paper for your information.

As always, I would be very happy to discuss these thoughts further with you and your team in person if helpful.

With many thanks and very best wishes,

[signature redacted]
[name redacted]
[job title redacted]

The Approach to Integrated Strategic Planning Explored (Question 1)

It is impossible for the East of England to grow, develop or prosper economically without sufficient water and water recycling infrastructure. The same is true for the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Growth Corridor. Anglian Water is in a unique position to help realise these growth opportunities: we are the water or sewerage provider for around two thirds of the corridor so we can provide an important strategic input to the development of an integrated strategic plan.

Our role goes beyond simply connecting new properties to the sewer and water supply networks. We are the custodians of our most precious natural resources and play a critical role in protecting and enhancing the natural environment. This role is central to the development of an integrated strategic plan.

We believe we have a valuable mix of skills, experience and data to bring to strategic planning for the corridor as a key partner in the process. This must be from the earliest stages and to shed light on issues that are fundamental to its success. We can draw on our experience to identify opportunities to create climate resilient communities and businesses, explore innovative ways to fund infrastructure upgrades and meet long term water resources challenges.

Our data, knowledge, experience and expertise can, and must, help shape strategic planning proposals, and not simply through infrastructure capacity studies. Involving us at the planning application process is too late; early and detailed engagement is essential in order to deliver sustainable, resilient, and responsible economic growth in this globally-renowned part of the country.

Broadly speaking, we support the principles of the regional planning approach outlined in the discussion paper, particularly the emphasis placed on efficient siting of land use activities, infrastructure and settlement growth across the corridor. This approach will tackle effective land allocation, transport requirements, interactions between local authorities, Mayors and Local Enterprise Partnerships, and, from the water and sewerage perspective, alignment of the delivery of such vital resources and avoiding any possible constraints.

In order to maximise East-West transport links, we envisage that the corridor may be delivered by means such as Development Consent Orders (DCO). The DCO process enforces the requirement for early engagement and consultation. This will be vital to deliver a high quality continuous transport link that maximises the ability to develop housing and growth distribution. We have seen from the engagement with the A14 DCO process that large scale projects have a major impact on our assets and asset protection. In addition to this, the requirements for large quantities of water, for example for construction material use, unless identified and managed in accordance with all aspects of a project have the potential to impact project delivery and influence supply demand balance in a region which is water-stressed. This is all the more reason why it is critical for infrastructure providers to be involved early on in the development of the integrated strategic plan.

Strengthening this Approach to Integrated Strategic Planning (Question 2)

We advocate the use of specialist working groups to strengthen the delivery of the strategic plan. For example, a group which deals with utility provision - power, telecoms and water and sewerage - would assist with the unique requirements of each utility provider. Moreover, utilities offering differing services operate in very different regulatory and funding environments. For example, the water industry is governed in five year business planning cycles whereas gas and electricity providers operate in eight year cycles. A specialist working group can promote better understanding of the different statutory provisions governing each utility and the different funding regimes, both of which can impact on the timing of delivery of a project. This can also be used to foster greater understanding and working with planning authorities.

Strategic planning to improve long term collaboration and engagement with stakeholders (Question 3)

Broadly speaking, the criteria and approach outlined in this paper can provide a basis for long term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and the various stakeholders. However, it could go further in promoting greater collaboration with utilities providers, specifically water and sewerage providers.

A clear and ambitious spatial plan can only be truly integrated when the support infrastructure is in place to help unlock growth. This requires the greatest involvement and collaboration with utilities as early on in the planning process as practically possible. In their inquiry into Future Flood Prevention, the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee recommended that water and sewerage companies be made statutory consultees in the planning process. We strongly support this position, as we believe it is the best way to achieve sustainable growth.

We have already piloted statutory consultee status in the planning process for a period of three months with Central Bedfordshire Council. Contrary to Government assertions, we found that it did not hold up the overall pace of development. Instead, it allowed for a more thorough assessment of each application whereby relevant authorities are consulted, including water and sewerage providers, adding value to the overall quality of development as consideration of flood risk was taken into account in the planning process. We wholeheartedly believe that this is the best approach to reducing flood risk, whilst also enabling the sustainable growth potential which the Cam-MK-Ox Corridor aims to achieve. Through this early engagement with the process, we will be better able to align future infrastructure upgrades with planned housing development.

We agree that an integrated plan should be supported by a phased delivery plan, long term investment strategy, and a robust appraisal framework. A rightly rigorous, but sometimes inflexible regulatory regime governs how we deliver the enabling infrastructure which accompanies large scale housing development, such as water and sewerage. The water industry is regulated in five year asset management periods (AMPs), which limits the ability for the industry to plan funding for the long term (beyond five years) or meet the needs of growth which doesn't appear in local plans. Greater regulatory accommodation of growth needs, delivered as part of an integrated strategic plan for the corridor or an 'infrastructure compact', could help water and sewerage companies to provide the enabling infrastructure more effectively and efficiently.

Amending and strengthening the approach to strategic planning (Question 4)

Flexibility for acceleration of supporting infrastructure

We believe there is scope within the strategic planning of the corridor for Government to explore wider opportunities to accelerate the delivery of supporting infrastructure. Many utility-related infrastructure projects, including the provision or improvement of pumping stations and some sewage treatment works upgrades, must be considered through the planning system in their own right.

We believe there is potential to explore the better use of planning freedoms or enhanced permitted development rights, potentially agreed at a local level, to assist infrastructure providers to deliver timely infrastructure and adapt to change. We would welcome opportunities to discuss this further.

Funding for growth

In the development of our current business plan (AMP5), we proposed a mechanism of 'logging up', in line with the approach followed at previous price reviews. In practice, this means that we 'log up' the costs brought about by development which is not allocated in our five year business plan. We then claim this money back in subsequent business planning cycles. This approach would allow us to better manage infrastructure provision for growth whilst ensuring affordability for our customers, and that developers pay a fair contribution. Unfortunately, this proposal was not accepted by the industry regulator, but we would recommend Government considers approaches like this when looking at creating a regulatory framework that is ready to deliver ambitious growth within the corridor. We would be happy to share more information on this approach if helpful.

Greater Transparency of data

We support the principle of greater transparency throughout the planning process. A greater transparency of data would help us arrange charging, and plan for infrastructure and inform adaptive risk planning. We have started working with the East of England Local Government Association to understand how data could be shared to improve growth intelligence. A key part of this is ensuring that data is retrievable in a consistent and accessible format that can be easily manipulated into spatial scales, such as Water Recycling Centre catchments.

Greater Collaboration with the Planning Process

Greater collaboration between housing developers, water and sewerage companies, and planning authorities can be facilitated through the planning process, and is all the more important as part of an integrated plan for the Cam-MK-Ox corridor. In order to improve existing relationships, in addition to making water and sewerage companies statutory consultees, the Government should remove the automatic right for developers to connect surface water drainage to the public sewers.

This move would be in line with the rest of the UK, where developers must consider and exhaust all other potential drainage solutions before connecting surface water flows to the public sewer. This move would very much incentivise the take up of Sustainable Urban Drainages Systems (SuDS). SuDS offer a cost-effective way to reduce flood risk, by mimicking natural drainage, and promoting

sustainable growth. It would also encourage greater consultation and communication between housing developers and drainage authorities, as they work to ensure the right sustainable drainage approaches are utilised to facilitate growth.

Supporting Governance Principles (Question 5)

Largely, we agree with the design principles set out in paragraph 41. However, we reiterate the importance of the ability to join local geographic plans together at a strategic level in order to deliver the necessary infrastructure for growth.

Our experience of operating under the planning reforms that have taken place since 2010 shows that the absence of a formal strategic regional layer of planning makes it more challenging to forecast and deliver strategic infrastructure to facilitate growth. Often, this can lead to support infrastructure being delivered behind the curve in areas of high growth and low visibility for non-statutory consultees in the planning process, particularly those who operate in strict regulatory cycles like water and sewerage companies. The Ox-MK-Cam corridor provides an opportunity to repair these shortcomings.

Overall, we therefore firmly believe that any new strategic planning body should be adequately empowered to take collective decisions with clear lines of accountability, and it must be equally representative and collaborative of all stakeholders that would be involved in delivering growth. This must include support infrastructure providers, like Anglian Water, as well as local planning authorities, Mayors and regulators. Without these guiding principles, long term confidence in the overall plan, both by investors and corridor stakeholders, could falter and the potential of the growth corridor might fail to be realised.

The Role of Subregional Collaboration in Cross-Corridor Governance (Question 6)

We envision a continuing role for sub-regional collaboration, particularly in aligning working and goals at the boundaries of the corridor area. It is important to recognise and retain the principle of subsidiarity as this will allow for the streamlining of decisions which do not affect the whole of the corridor area.

Statutory Governance Structures to Exploit Growth Opportunities in the Long Term (Question 7)

In principle, we would like to see non-statutory governance structures effectively deliver growth, but in our experience, they have failed to reach the full potential of growth opportunities. Indeed, we have seen voluntary governance structures work well within our industry, such as the Biosolids Assurance Scheme Ltd and Water Resources East. We do believe that there is a place for this voluntary approach within our ways of working, but it cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach. This is particularly the case with the current planning system which is failing to enable the delivery the housing numbers needed to match population growth. The Cam-MK-Ox Corridor is a unique growth opportunity which cannot afford to fall by the wayside because of an unwillingness to be bold and break the mould of current practice which is currently holding back the UK's housing stock.

Our preference would be for greater certainty and clarity of responsibility and purpose for the stakeholders involved, which we think statutory governance arrangements are better suited to deliver. Within this, we remain firmly of the belief that water and sewerage providers should be statutory consultees in the planning process.

Governance Models to Instil Long Term Confidence in Stakeholders (Question 8)

Further to our response to Question 7, we do not believe that an informal model of working is best suited to delivering this unique growth opportunity.

Although the governance arrangements would apply to local planning authorities, we would like to see a wider stakeholder group established, which would include utility providers. At present, water and sewerage providers are not statutory consultees for new developments. Although we are asking for this to change, membership of an informal strategic stakeholder group would help give us visibility of plans as they emerge and allow us to fully engage in a timely manner to deliver more efficient infrastructure when and where it is needed.

Utilising our expertise, knowledge and data at the earliest stage possible is the best way to ensuring the delivery of efficient, sustainable infrastructure for growth. Such oversight on the part of water and sewerage companies, and other utility providers, is by far the best way to for local authorities to give confidence to wider stakeholder groups.

Developing and Delivering an Integrated Strategic Plan (Question 9)

Early progress could be made in delivering the strategic plan with the establishment of an informal cross-authority strategic group. Such a group, involving Local Enterprise Partnerships, could start building the relationships needed to take the growth corridor forward over the long term. These arrangements and relationships may already exist in some areas, such as the Greater Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, but these should be extended to cover the whole corridor and wider stakeholders, including infrastructure providers. Any informal working arrangements should be superseded once collective statutory governance structures are put in place.

As above, we seek to be statutory consultees and would want extensive involvement in the development of a strategic plan from the outset. We are in a unique position to facilitate cross-local authority relationships in the majority of the corridor owing to the expansive geography of our supply area, the existing relationships we have with local authorities, and the critical role we play in delivering growth across the region.

The early establishment of working groups would help ensure that the necessary support infrastructure is in place in time to underpin the growth corridor. We propose a combined utilities group that would feed into and hear from other groups, such as transport and housing. Local Planning Authorities could also outline their goals and objectives, as well as identifying issues and priority works. Early involvement would allow us to identify opportunities, key water or sewerage supply/demand shortfalls, and where investment or upgrades are needed. In turn, this would identify any funding issues and innovative approaches and how these could be advanced. Overall,

this would allow local authorities to give long term confidence to stakeholders in the growth corridor.

ASPLEY GUISE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: [name redacted] [address redacted]
Tel: [telephone number redacted] [email address redacted]

National Infrastructure Commission
5th Floor
11 Philpot Lane
London
EC3M 8UD

31st May 2017

Dear Sirs,

Strategic planning and governance in the Cam – MK – Ox Corridor: discussion paper

We are writing to set out our response to the consultation on the above discussion paper.

Aspley Guise is a small village on the edge of the new town of Milton Keynes through which much of the traffic travelling to and from Milton Keynes passes either on the A421 or the local roads through the village.

Much of the success of Milton Keynes is due to the careful planning of the grid road system at the outset of the new town's development. More recently the development of Milton Keynes has continued beyond the originally planned urban area without the benefit of an updated transport strategy for the wider area. This has led to greatly increased traffic on the country roads around Milton Keynes, including on the roads in our village, as drivers try and avoid congestion on the major routes.

We therefore believe a strategic plan for the wider area that considers both transport issues as well as the delivery of new housing is long overdue and an essential pre-requisite before any further growth around Milton Keynes is considered.

However, for the reasons set out below, we are concerned that the process set out in the discussion paper will not be effective in meeting the NIC's objectives and easing the chronic short-term under-supply of new housing unless it is made fully accountable to those affected and integrated into the existing planning system.

Our concerns over the process set out in the discussion paper are as follows.

1. There is no evidence that setting up a new layer of strategic planning will improve the rate of housing delivery. Regional Spatial Strategies were in place before the financial crisis but the rate of new housing delivery was well below the level needed even then.
2. However flat the governance structure of the new strategic body is, the additional bureaucracy is bound to slow down the already painfully slow Local Plan process.

3. The work of NIC is already delaying sites being brought forward for new housing – see the current draft of the Milton Keynes Local Plan known as “Plan:MK” in which the major Strategic Reserve site is protected from development until after 2026 pending the decision on a route for the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.
4. There is no clear evidence that the existing planning system is the main cause of the low level of housing delivery – there are many existing planning applications that are not being brought forward quickly enough by the major housebuilders, including in Milton Keynes.
5. Establishing the ability for local authorities to acquire and develop land at an economic value should be tried first.
6. The existing transport infrastructure deficit and additional infrastructure needed to support the current level of planned house building needs addressing first, growth levels over and above this are unrealistic at the current time, particularly with all the uncertainty over the outcome of the Brexit negotiations.
7. Housing need projections cannot be properly understood until a timescale for the reduction in net migration to the tens of thousands is established if this becomes government policy.
8. Giving unelected boards decision making power over where development should occur is unlikely to win local support and is inconsistent with the expressed will of the people to “take back control”.

We hope that you will take account of these issues while preparing your final proposals.

Yours faithfully,

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]



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National Infrastructure Commission
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EC3M 8UD

26 May 2017

JW/SM – 17/075
BY EMAIL

Dear Sir or Madam,

CAMBRIDGE-MILTON KEYNES-OXFORD CORRIDOR DISCUSSION PAPER – COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF WAVENDON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES LLP AND MERTON COLLEGE OXFORD

On behalf of our clients, Wavendon Residential Properties LLP and Merton College Oxford, we hereby provide our comments on the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor Discussion Paper document, which was published for consultation in March 2017.

a. South East Milton Keynes

Wavendon Residential Properties LLP and Merton College Oxford own Wavendon Golf Club, a 40Ha golf course to the southeast of Milton Keynes and located entirely within Milton Keynes District. The land is strategically located to meet the growth needs of Milton Keynes and to make a valuable contribution to the supply of housing in the wider Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor. It should be noted that the land is located in the centre of the previously proposed South East Growth Area identified through MK2031, which was subsequently reduced in scale and ambition through the 2008 East of England Plan and subsequent 2013 Milton Keynes Local Plan. The concept in MK2031 was for South East Milton Keynes to be a key growth node (together with a South West Milton Keynes Growth Area) underpinned by new public transport infrastructure in the form of East-West Rail and an extension to the Milton Keynes grid network to facilitate the delivery of new sustainable communities. The resultant scaling back of ambition changed an 8,000 home project to be delivered over a 10 year period (800 dwellings per annum) to a 3,900 home project to be delivered over a 20 year period (195 dwellings per annum) based on the most recent strategy outlined in the emerging Milton Keynes Local Plan (currently out to consultation until 9th June 2017). Accordingly, the ability of the primary growth area of Milton Keynes to deliver growth is being vastly underplayed, despite this area being the likely major beneficiary of new strategic rail and strategic road infrastructure over the next decade.

b. Aligning homes, jobs and infrastructure

In our view, the alignment of new homes and jobs with infrastructure is the most critical factor in achieving sustainable new communities, as it ensures necessary growth is accommodated in the most sustainable and co-ordinated manner and facilitates more sustainable living patterns. South East Milton Keynes is a vital location within the Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge Corridor where the delivery of significant infrastructure upgrades offers the potential to support major growth.

We support the acknowledgement within the Discussion Paper of the potential within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor for major infrastructure projects to address issues such as the chronic undersupply of homes by improving connectivity within the corridor and providing the necessary infrastructure to facilitate ambitious growth around key nodes such as Milton Keynes. We agree that planning for new jobs, homes and communities should be properly aligned with the enhanced east-west links within the corridor, and support the vision set out within the Discussion Paper for an integrated strategic plan for the wider corridor to seek to address the key issues identified

through the co-ordinated delivery of new homes, employment and infrastructure across the Corridor. It will be important in this regard to maximise the potential of new major east-west infrastructure to unlock sites for development. For example, southeast Milton Keynes presents a prime opportunity within the Corridor to align necessary growth with major infrastructure.

Two key major infrastructure proposals identified for Milton Keynes and the surrounding area are East-West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway. East West Rail involves the creation of a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England. The 'Western Section' of the project is a committed, funded scheme to re-introduce passenger and freight services between Bedford and Oxford, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. Woburn Sands railway station is a key transport node on the line, and thereby greatly enhances the sustainability of Wavendon Golf Club and this part of South East Milton Keynes more generally.

In addition to East-West Rail, three potential options for the route of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway have been identified, as set out in the Stage 3 Report published by the Department for Transport and Highways England in November 2016. 'Road Option B' is Milton Keynes Council's preferred option and this would correlate with an expanded South East MK urban extension.

c. A Holistic and Co-ordinated Growth Strategy

The Growth Corridor spans eight different local authorities and growth is therefore set and controlled by eight different Local Plans, brought forward at different times, with different plan periods and different growth aspirations. We are concerned that this approach will severely harm the ability of the Corridor to realise its economic potential unless there is a collective buy-in across the authorities to reflect and positively plan for a sub-regional growth strategy in each of their Local Plans.

We believe that this failure to realise economic potential is already happening and is being exacerbated by Milton Keynes Council within its draft Milton Keynes Draft Plan:MK document, published for consultation in March 2017. The Council's Development Plan does not seek to maximise the potential to align housing and economic growth with the significant opportunities presented by the major infrastructure enhancements proposed to improve connectivity across the Corridor. In southeast Milton Keynes where the benefits of new cross-corridor rail and road infrastructure are likely to be most keenly felt, the Local Plan is proposing just 195 dwellings per annum over the next 15 years in order to "allow development to bed in". This approach is worrying and represents a fundamental lack of ambition. Furthermore, it contradicts the aims of the NIC of ensuring that key hubs such as Milton Keynes make a significant contribution to addressing some of the main cross-Corridor issues identified by the NIC such as the affordability of housing and the potential for economic growth. At present, we believe that the emerging Plan:MK represents a significant threat to the realisation of the aims and vision of the NIC. We believe that a sub-regional growth strategy with the buy-in of Central Government is urgently needed and that if key locations such as Milton Keynes are not positively planning to deliver a more radical growth strategy, the Government should consider intervention.

We are pleased to enclose a vision document, which identifies the significant role South East Milton Keynes can play as a key focal point within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor by maximising the opportunities presented by the planned investment in key strategic infrastructure upgrades. Such an approach would not only lead to the creation of highly sustainable new communities, but through land value capture would also play a critical role in helping to fund this infrastructure, which is considered to be of regional and national importance.

We trust these comments assist with the NIC's continuing work to encourage and guide the delivery of a more co-ordinated and strategic approach to development within the Corridor. We would be pleased to discuss these matters further in due course.

Yours faithfully,

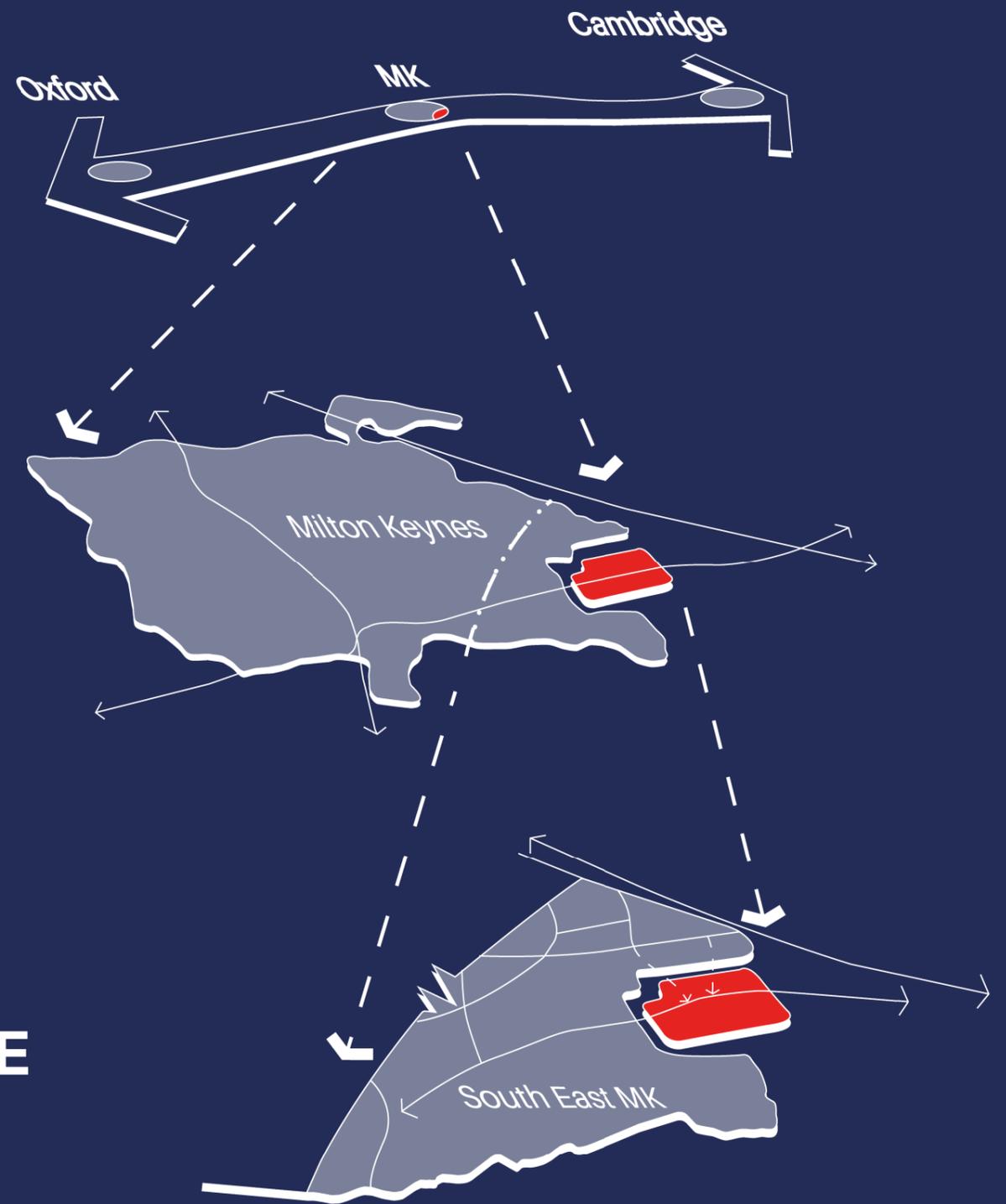
[signature redacted]
[name redacted]
[job title redacted]

ALIGNING GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE OXFORD/MK/CAMBRIDGE GROWTH CORRIDOR

NIC REPRESENTATION

for Wavendon Residential Properties LLP | Merton College Oxford

31 May 2017





Contents

1. Strategic Infrastructure in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc
2. Aligning Homes, Jobs and Infrastructure in Milton Keynes
3. South East Milton Keynes: The Comprehensive Approach
4. South East Milton Keynes: Comparative Local Plans

Introduction

This document has been produced by Icen Projects Ltd, for Wavendon Residential Properties LLP & Merton College Oxford in relation to land at Wavendon Golf Course.

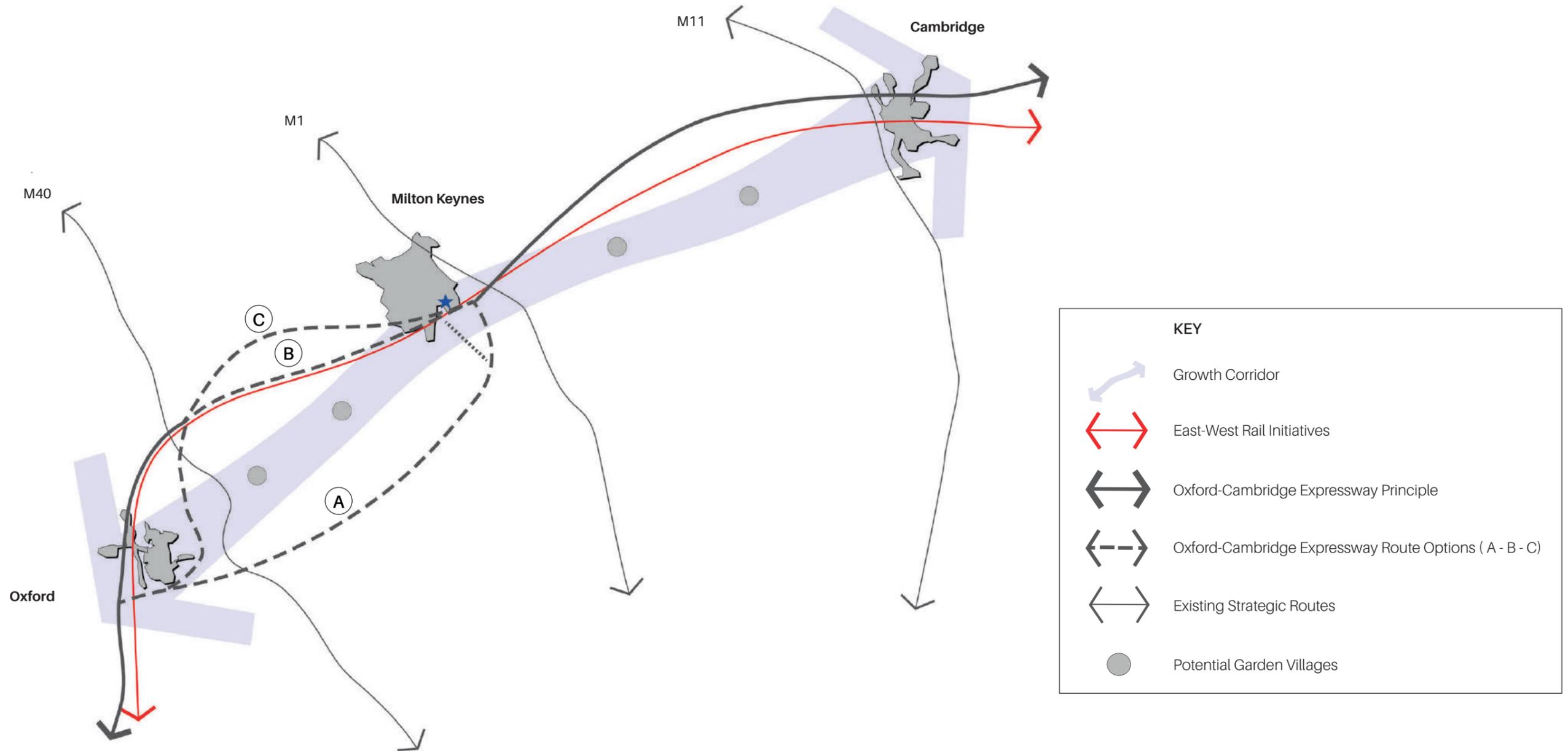
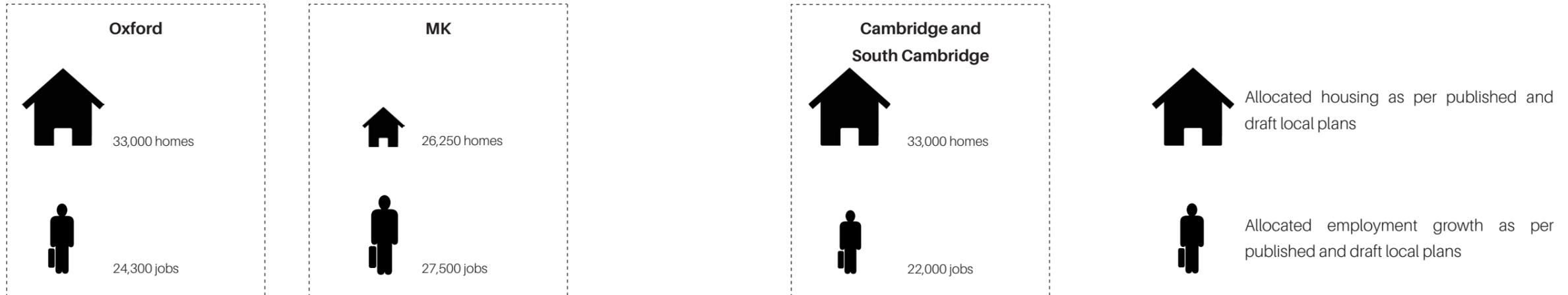
It has been produced in response to the draft Plan:MK consultation and NIC consultation on the Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge Growth Corridor.

This document considers the following development growth at three scales:

1. The **Region**: An introduction of the key growth arc between Oxford and Cambridge, and the position of Milton Keynes within this region.
2. The **Conurbation**: The opportunities the East-West Rail and the new Oxford to Cambridge Expressway present to the South East of Milton Keynes.
3. The **District**: How proposed growth and transport improvements can interact at a local level at Wavendon and deliver coordinated growth.

Analysis at the above scales demonstrates how strategic development, in conjunction with planned infrastructure upgrades in the South East of Milton Keynes can deliver new neighbourhoods to meet growth needs in the short, medium and long term.

Plan Period Growth 2016 - 2031



1 Strategic Transport Infrastructure in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc

The Oxford - Cambridge Arc is a growth area of national importance.

Major new road and rail infrastructure is proposed in order to unlock the economic potential of the area.

Whilst the three conurbations benefit from strategic infrastructure and are successful economic centres in their own right, the transport connections between the cities is very poor.

East - West Rail is a committed railway project, upgrading the existing network to connect Oxford with Cambridge via stations to the south and east of Milton Keynes.

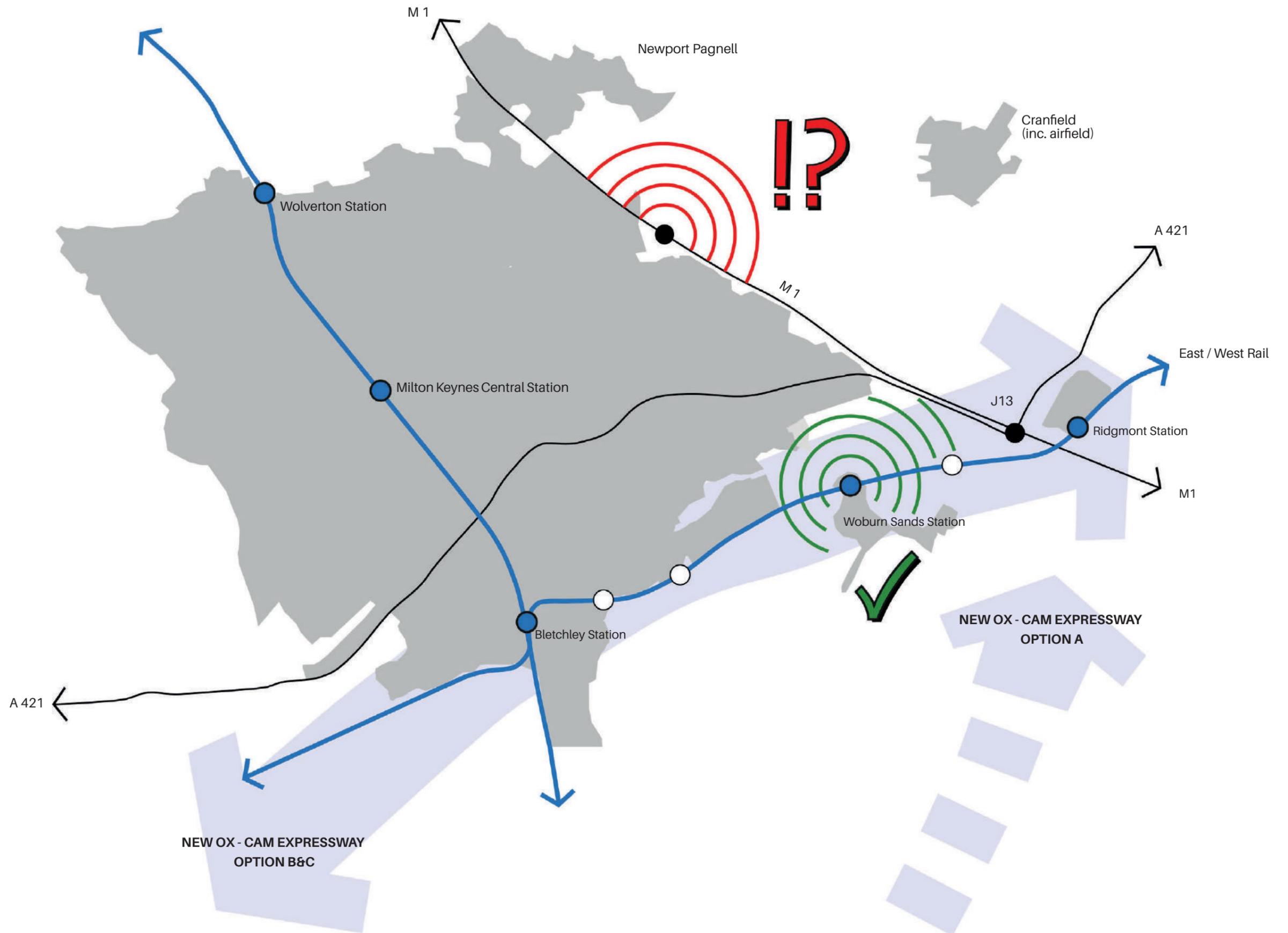
The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will pass to the south east of Milton Keynes. The final alignment of the road will be announced in Autumn 2017.



The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway is a new priority road reinforcing the role of Milton Keynes at the fulcrum of the growth corridor.



East-west rail will connect Oxford to Cambridge via Milton Keynes.



2 Aligning Homes, Jobs and Infrastructure in Milton Keynes

It is essential that new strategic development areas are supported by existing and new infrastructure. Critically, development unlocked by infrastructure contributes to sustainability by creating sustainable living patterns.

The new strategic rail and road infrastructure passing through South Milton Keynes reinforces the case for a major development area to the southeast of the city.

Failure to align growth and infrastructure creates inherently unsustainable development and constitutes to poor spatial planning. The emerging Milton Keynes Plan needs to correctly address these fundamental issues.

The current draft Plan:MK fails to match the ambition of the growth corridor, nor Milton Keynes' reputation as one of the fastest growing conurbations in the UK and Europe.



Why not the Draft Allocation: East of the M1

- Limited existing infrastructure, no future improvement plans
- Incremental growth is likely to result in a series of cul-de-sacs associated with M1 Junction 14.
- Poor sense of identity.
- Development would breach the M1 as a defensive boundary.
- Poor connectivity to MK infrastructure other than by car.



The sustainable credentials of South East Milton Keynes

- Existing infrastructure network for both rail and road
- Forthcoming Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will link to Junction 13 of M1
- 3,000 new homes along with 2 primary and 1 secondary school are being built at Eagle Farm and Glebe Farm close by
- Opportunity to extend the Milton Keynes renowned highway grid road system within the district boundary west of the M1
- Undeveloped land within the district boundary adjacent to existing and future infrastructure should be utilised for homes and jobs.

[commercially sensitive map redacted]

3 South-East Milton Keynes: The Comprehensive Approach

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Options B&C pass through the area and will support local infrastructure improvements such as the enhancement of Woburn Sands local centre, its environment and the operation of Woburn Sands station.

New connections through the Golf Club site and the Hayfield site (Central Bedfordshire Call for Sites ref: NLP463) will allow access to the new neighbourhoods of Eagle Farm, Glebe Farm, and the growing employment centre at Magna Park.

This approach provides an opportunity to further extend the unique grid road and system of greenways to connect with Junction 13 of the M1.

The comprehensive approach requires cross boundary authority coordination and possesses increased sustainability credentials, extending consolidated growth to a defensible boundary.

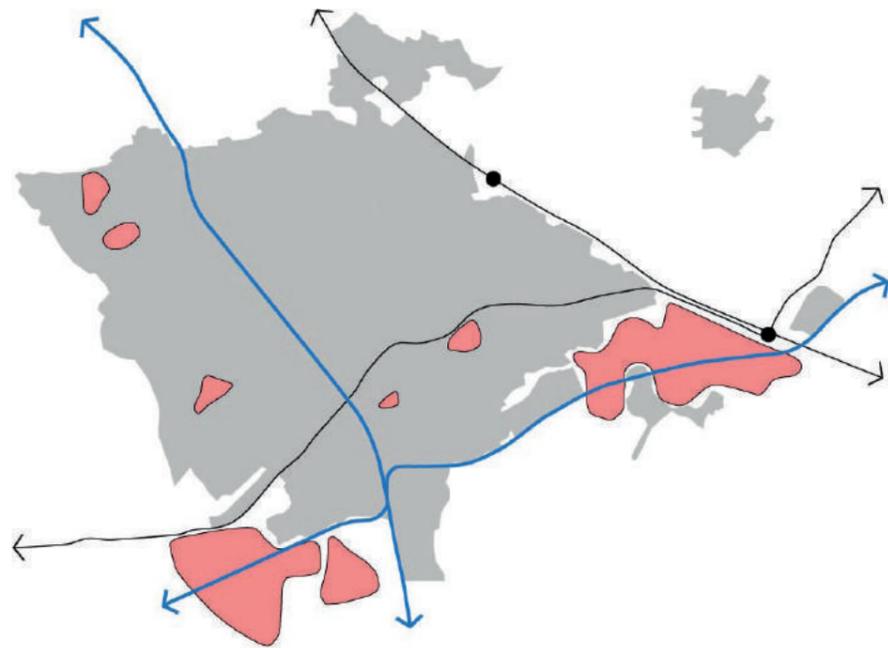
The planned upgrade of Woburn Sands Station will also be supported; improving footfall, with potential for drop off, taxi rank and bus interchange.

Continue the local plan promotion of Policy SD 13 on south east Milton Keynes strategic Urban extension, within the district boundary.

Create additional development capacity with the south-east Milton Keynes and Central Bedfordshire strategic urban extensions, accross Local Authority boundaries.

Past Proposed

1. The New Plan for Milton Keynes – A Strategy for Growth to 2031'

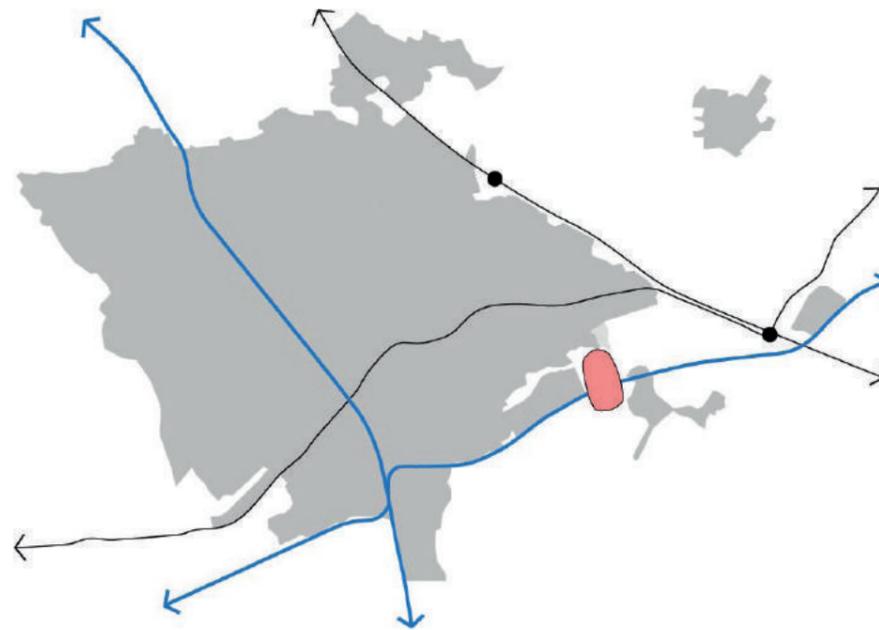


11,000 homes

Based on published options of the time

Current

2. 2017-2031 Draft Plan



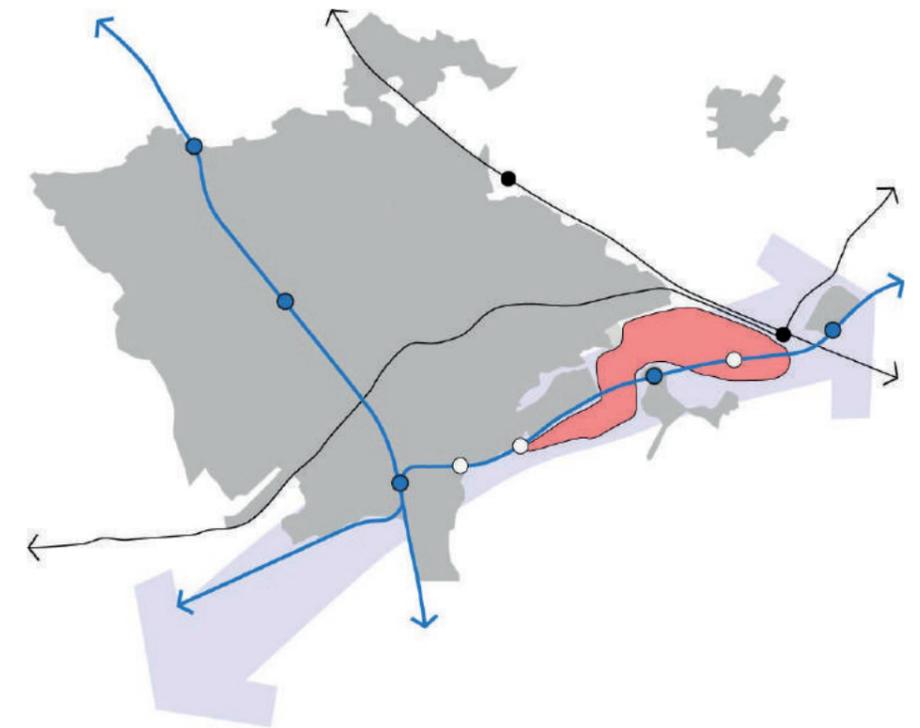
1,000 homes

The current draft Local Plan illustrates space for more homes than are actually suggested for the 1,000 proposed in the Plan Period.

The drawing above shows approximately what space would actually be needed for 1,000 homes.

Future?

3. The 2017 - 2031 Opportunity Plan



11,000 homes

Based on new road and rail initiatives

4 South-East Milton Keynes: Comparative Local Plans

Figure 1 shows an adaptation of the planned locations of growth from 'The New Plan for Milton Keynes – A Strategy for Growth to 2031' (2006). This plan identified southeastern Milton Keynes as a significant area for growth in the sub-regional context, with 7,000 to 8,000 new dwellings anticipated between 2016 and 2026.

Figure 2, an adaptation of the new draft Milton Keynes Local Plan proposes just 1,000 additional homes to South East Milton Keynes on top of existing commitments of 2,900 homes. This equates to an annual delivery figure of just 195 dwellings per annum in South East Milton Keynes.

Figure 3, a comprehensive plan, shows opportunity areas and forthcoming infrastructure. Indeed, as illustrated on the plan, the land to the south east of Milton Keynes remains the most suitable and sustainable location to accommodate significant levels of growth given the new infrastructure identified and/or committed.



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Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor Consultation Response

Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are public authorities established in areas of special drainage need in England, with IDBs covering around 10% of the total land area of the country.

The Bedford Group of Drainage Boards is a lead board consortium comprising the Bedfordshire and River Ivel IDB, the Buckingham and River Ouzel IDB, and the Alconbury and Ellington IDB. The Group provides professional engineering and financial staff to administer the three independent Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) with consistent, high quality governance. Each IDB comprises local members who represent the Special Levy paying local authorities (urban areas) and the drainage rate payers (agricultural areas). The Boards' members provide extensive local knowledge and experience covering all areas of the drainage district. The Group covers the single sub-catchment of the Upper Great Ouse, and is fully engaged with the Lead Local Flood Authorities in promoting consistency in flood risk management throughout the catchment. The Boards' districts stretch from north Oxfordshire in the west to Cambridgeshire in the east, and from Huntingdonshire in the north to south Bedfordshire and north Hertfordshire in the south, covering five County Councils, three Unitary Authorities and six District Councils.

The three IDBs exercise their powers and duties, under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Land Drainage Act 1991 (amended 1994), with consistency within the drainage districts to: implement maintenance; improve and construct new flood defence assets; protect the river corridor and make space for water; lead, guide and advise planning authorities; advise, guide and adopt SuDS; issue Consents and provide support to flood incidents.

The districts includes the Government's growth areas of Milton Keynes and Bedford. The Boards in the Group are heavily involved with the Town & Country Planning process. The Bedfordshire and River Ivel IDB is the operating authority who established the Marston Vale Surface Waters Group in 1997 which led to the Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan publication in 2002. This was appraised in 2008 as one of the Defra Integrated Urban Drainage pilot projects. The Buckingham and River Ouzel IDB was instrumental in the preparation of the Milton Keynes Drainage Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 2004. These policy frameworks provide a basis for strategic, integrated and maintainable SuDS for large scale development, that include funding and adoption regimes which provides drainage solutions to facility development and employment growth for sustainable communities.

Questions & Answers

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;**
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and**
- c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?**

A1. The Bedford Group of IDBs can offer best practice examples of the benefits of a strategic approach to development by the use of a master strategy for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan was jointly owned by the local flood risk authorities and the local planning authorities to align development aspirations with strategic and maintainable SuDS. The drainage Master Plan enabled multiple adjacent development sites to share strategic drainage infrastructure, which was pre designed in principle by the IDB so could be delivered without delaying the planning process with detailed individual applications for piecemeal SuDS. The model included for SuDS adoption by the IDB so as to avoid the future risks of inadequate maintenance and associated increase in flood risk. The long term management of the SuDS was covered by Legal Agreement/S106 commuted sums, so as to ensure the infrastructure is maintained effectively in the future to ensure flood risk is not increased. A similar strategy was used to implement strategic SuDS infrastructure in Milton Keynes for the benefit of the East and West expansion areas, which enabled 10,000s homes to be built under their Tariff model (similar to CIL). These examples enabled the developers to concentrate on delivering houses and jobs on the sites, rather than diverting efforts onto the SuDS, thus streamlining the processes of planning and development considerably. (See examples in Appendix)

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

A2. The Bedford Group of IDBs supports the strategic approach to Flood Risk Management and promotes the benefits of its best practise experience of having an agreed master strategy for sustainable drainage systems. The Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan was jointly owned by the local flood risk and the local planning authorities to align development aspirations with strategic and maintainable SuDS. A similar strategy was used to implement strategic SuDS infrastructure in Milton Keynes for the benefit of integrated development, whereby the flood risk authorities and local authorities jointly owned the plan. The key benefits of a strategic approach is the provision of integrated SuDS and the future maintenance being guaranteed by a statutory body, the IDB. This enables developers to focus on development, as drainage is provided for. It is critical that all parties jointly own the plan to ensure it is delivered, and that that ownership is reviewed and refreshed so it remains deliverable to 2050 and beyond.

It is important that this strategic plan is put into place to achieve the aspirations of the strategic plan for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor as currently the NPPF does not adequately make provision for the long term management and maintenance of the flood risk infrastructure. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 made provision for the SuDS Approval Body (SAB), but this has not been enacted. The SAB's role was to approve and adopt SuDS. However, only the approval role has been introduced. There is no clear direction for future maintenance and operation, including inadequate provision for funding this long term commitment.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

a. housing developers;

b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and

c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

A3. See Answer 2 above

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

A4. It is essential that the partners jointly own the strategic plan, as shown by the Marston Vale Surface waters Plan and Milton Keynes Drainage SPG.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

A5. The success of the Marston Vale Surface Water Plan was the lead role the IDB undertook, as its function was catchment focused based on flood risk and not political boundaries.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

A6. As mentioned above, it is important to accommodate the function of any flood risk infrastructure which is based on hydraulic catchment and not defined by political or regional boundaries.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

A7.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

A8. There are key benefits of a strategic approach, particularly for the provision of integrated SuDS as explained above. This enables developers to focus on development, as drainage is provided for. It is critical that all parties jointly own the plan to ensure it is delivered, and that that ownership is reviewed and refreshed so it remains deliverable to 2050 and beyond. This is crucial given the diverse pressures on public budgets at present.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

A9. Local Authorities could adopt the best practice discussed in this submission, thus providing a solution to strategic integrated and maintained SuDS.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

A10. See answers above and examples attached

Summary comments

To facilitate the delivery of an integrated strategic plan for jobs, homes and infrastructure in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor, it is essential that flood risk is managed strategically also. In the heart of your corridor, the Bedford Group of IDBs has successfully delivered drainage and flood risk solutions to accommodate large scale growth under the Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan and the Milton Keynes Drainage SPG, which promote strategic, integrated and maintainable flood risk management infrastructure. The model discussed in this consultation response can be used to deliver strategic infrastructure that is an enabling tool to facilitate jobs, homes and economic infrastructure.

For further details of the Bedford Group of IDBs extensive experience of SuDS approval and adoption please do not hesitate to contact:

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
[email address redacted]

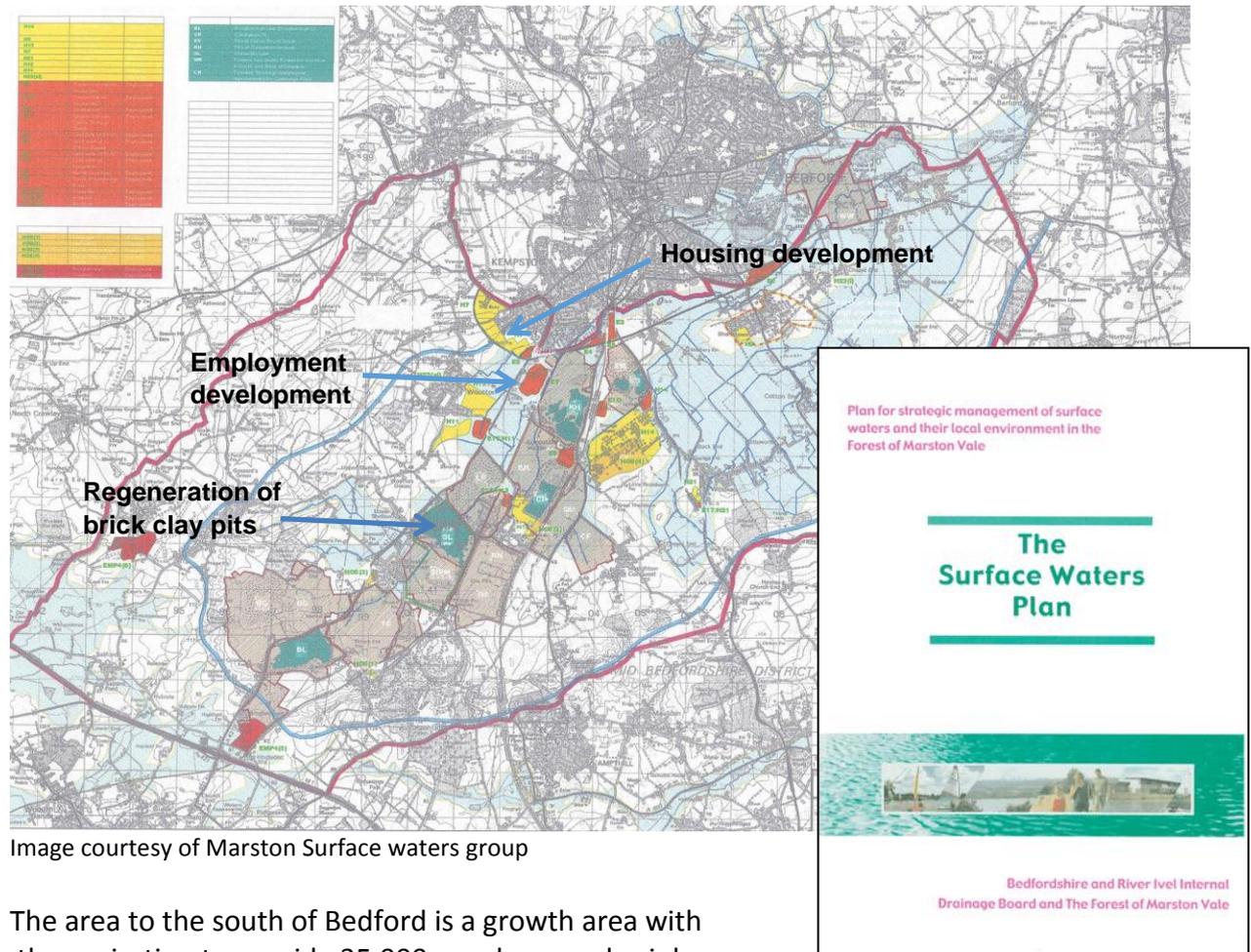
[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
[email address redacted]

Bedford Group of Drainage Boards
Vale House
Broadmead Road
Stewartby
Bedford
MK43 9ND

Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan

A catchment-scale strategic and integrated SuDS developed in partnership to enable significant growth and thousands of new homes

The Marston Vale is to the south of Bedford. The drainage is managed by the Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards and covers several local authority areas.



The area to the south of Bedford is a growth area with the aspiration to provide 35,000 new homes plus jobs between 2001 and 2031. To manage this pressure for development in a sustainable way the IDB instigated the Marston Surface Water Group (1998) of "partners" to help align planners' aspirations of growth and IDB's requirements for drainage/flood risk management.

The Group produced the Surface Waters Plan (2002), which promoted strategic, integrated and maintainable SuDS. As the clay catchment has little capacity for infiltration, attenuation was key to managing surface water. The Group wanted to avoid piecemeal drainage in private ownership, so the IDB, as statutory authority agreed to adopt the SuDS infrastructure with commuted sums from developers, to make sure assets were maintained and continue to function in the future.

Committed sums enabled developers to build the SuDS they wanted, which ranged from efficient and cheap to maintain dry attenuation basins to showcase lakes that support

premium house sales but are expensive to maintain. The provision of SuDS in this way did not place a burden on the local community.

To facilitate good SuDS, the IDB carried out strategic modelling for the area, which the developers could adopt, develop the detailed design, and construct. This resulted in integrated SuDS for the whole development area, with individual developers responsible for the works on their land.

The integrated SuDS enabled the local planning authorities, Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, to allocate sustainable sites for the new development, and to produce master plans that identify opportunities for aligning development aspirations with strategic surface water drainage and flood risk mitigation facilities.

This is an exemplar project with strategic and integrated drainage infrastructure that is maintainable in the future by a statutory authority for the benefit of the local community. A lesson learned was to ensure legal agreements for adoption are in place between the different parties prior to development. In many respects it is the model that the SuDS Approving Bodies are expected to use under the Flood and Water Management Act, where by the statutory body is responsible for approving and adopting the SuDS, working in partnership with other organisations.



Examples of effective maintenance and management of SuDS

Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB

Revision Debra IUD



MARSH LEYS MASTER PLAN Commuted Sum Calculator

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Discount Rate % | 3.5% |
| OPTION B: Manor Road Diversion Channel | £96,200.00 |
| OPTION C: Harwood Bridge Flood Reservoir | £45,900.00 |
| OPTION D1: Asda Pond | £107,200.00 |
| OPTION D1: Flood Relief Channel & Berm | £31,500.00 |
| OPTION D2: BCC Borrow Pit Site | £95,100.00 |
| OPTION E: Woburn Road Flood Plains | £210,100.00 |
| OPTION F: Van Diemens Flood Reservoir | £88,700.00 |
| OPTION G: Woburn Road Reed Beds | £91,700.00 |
| | £766,400.00 |
| Legal and Consultants Fees | £80,000.00 |
| IDB Administrative Costs @ 16% | £122,624.00 |
| | £969,024.00 |

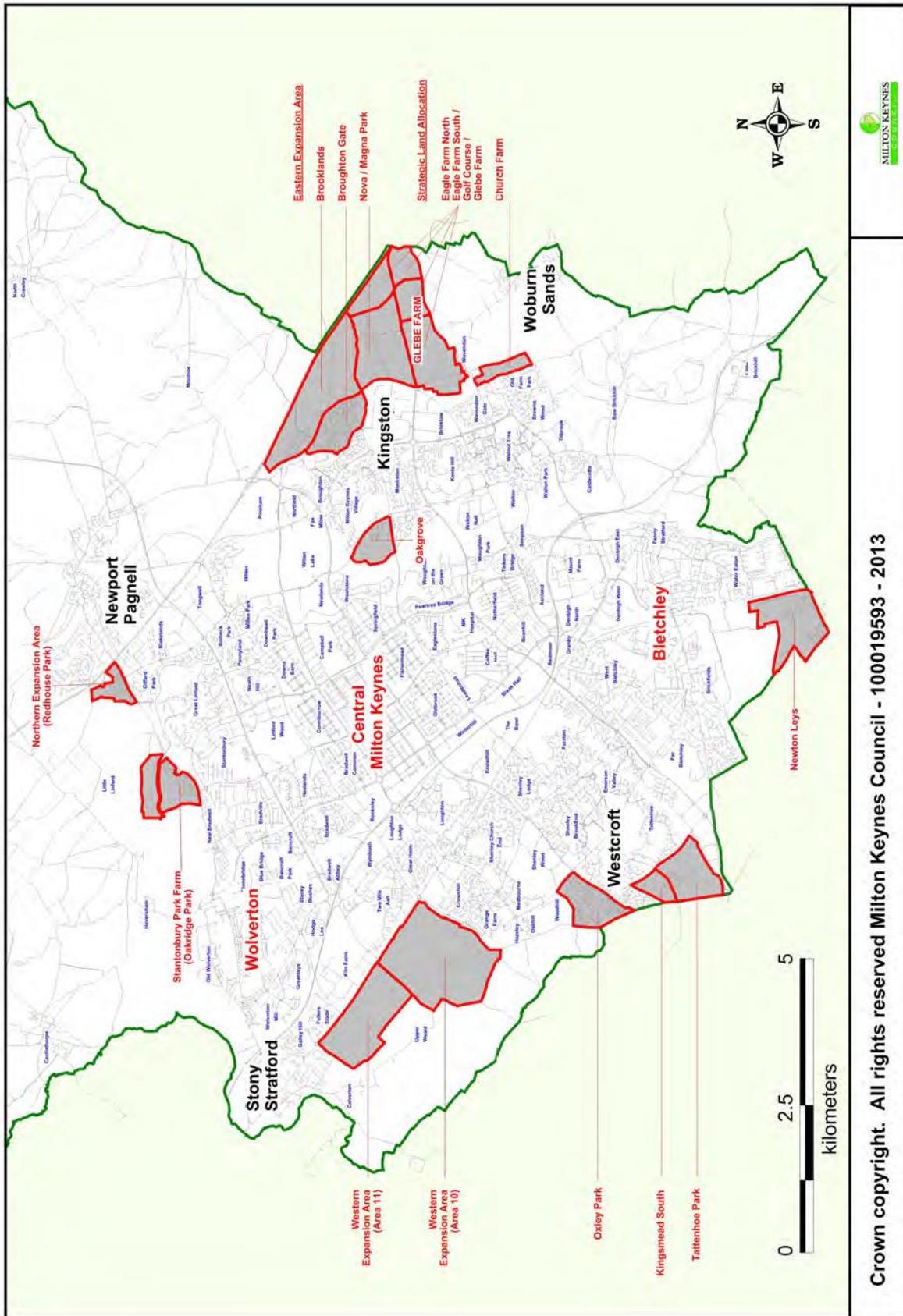
The Board is a public statutory authority and can only invest in low/no risk investments. It is not empowered to take advantage of the sort of investment that yields high returns. Consequently the Board expects a rate of return at or slightly in excess of the bank base rate. The rate of return given is based on a long term interest rate of 6.5% and an inflation rate of 3% and accords with DEFRA guidelines.

In accordance with PFC25 the commuted sum is based over a period of 30 years
 Note: The Board's policy is for commuted sums to be paid up-front and based on a 30 year period for areas benefitting inside the district and based on a 50 years period for areas benefitting outside the district.

| | | |
|-------------|-----|----------|
| Landowner A | 20% | £193,805 |
| Landowner B | 30% | £290,707 |
| Landowner C | 15% | £145,354 |
| Landowner D | 35% | £339,138 |

| Item | Description | Frequency / No. | Man Hours | ab/Plant Rate/Sum | Costs | single sum @ year | single sum @ year | single sum @ year | Amuity for n years | Sum Value | Amuity Value |
|----------------------|--|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| OPTION D1: Asda Pond | | | | | | | | | | | |
| £107,200.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | (1+r)-n | (1+r)-n | (1+r)-n | | | $\frac{((1+r)^n - 1)}{r}$ |
| 1 | Spillway replacement | 2 | | £6,000.00 | £12,000.00 | 20 | | | | £6,030.79 | - |
| 2 | Spillway erosion repairs | 2 | | £2,500.00 | £5,000.00 | 10 | 30 | | | £5,325.99 | - |
| 3 | Drop board structure | 1 | | £5,000.00 | £5,000.00 | 30 | | | | £1,781.39 | - |
| 4 | Replacement boards | 1 | | £250.00 | £250.00 | 10 | 20 | 30 | | £391.94 | - |
| 5 | Outlet pipe clearance | 4 | 2 | £18.00 | £144.00 | 15 | | | | - | £2,648.45 |
| 6 | Flap valve replacement | 1 | | £900.00 | £900.00 | 15 | 30 | | | £957.85 | - |
| 7 | Grass cutting fringes and access track | 6 | 4 | £38.00 | £912.00 | | | | | - | £16,773.55 |
| 8 | Power supply | 12 | | £20.00 | £240.00 | | | | | - | £4,414.09 |
| 9 | Backup battery / charger replacement | 1 | | £75.00 | £75.00 | | | | | - | £1,379.40 |
| 10 | Telecom connection and dial in | 12 | | £15.00 | £180.00 | | | | | - | £3,310.57 |
| 11 | Steel instrument cabinet | 1 | | £5,000.00 | £5,000.00 | 20 | | | | £2,512.83 | - |
| 12 | Telemetry/Control equipment | 1 | | £3,500.00 | £3,500.00 | 10 | 20 | 30 | | £5,487.17 | - |
| 13 | Sensor heads | 2 | | £300.00 | £600.00 | 10 | 20 | 30 | | £940.66 | - |
| 14 | Marginal reed clearance | 1 | 15 | £34.00 | £510.00 | 10 | | | | - | £9,379.94 |
| 15 | Jetting | 1 | | £500.00 | £500.00 | | | | | - | £783.69 |
| 16 | Fill banks of reservoirs | 1 | 8 | £36.00 | £288.00 | | | | | - | £5,296.91 |
| 17 | Vermin control | 1 | | £200.00 | £200.00 | | | | | - | £3,678.41 |
| 18 | Channel maintenance (& berm) | 600 | | £3.50 | £2,100.00 | | | | | - | £38,623.30 |
| 19 | Abandoned channel | 200 | | -£2.00 | -£400.00 | | | | | - | -£7,356.82 |
| 20 | Revetment replacement | 1 | | £5,000.00 | £5,000.00 | 20 | | | | £2,512.83 | - |
| 21 | Revetment repairs | 1 | | £2,000.00 | £2,000.00 | 10 | 20 | | | £2,422.97 | - |
| | | | | | | | | | | £29,048 | £76,148 |

Milton Keynes strategic SuDS infrastructure delivered by SPG / Tariff model



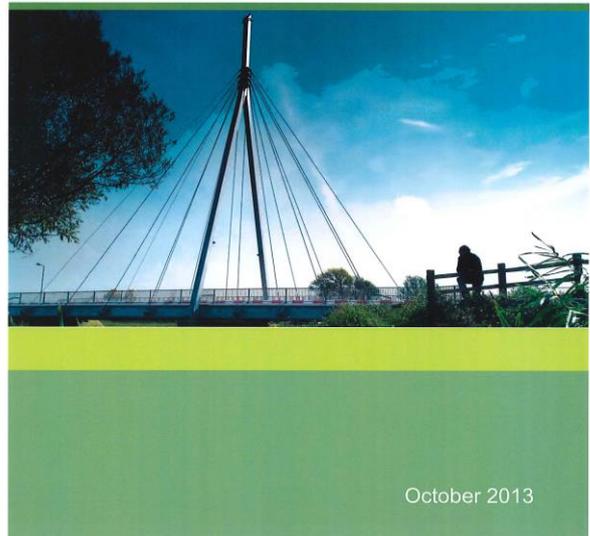
Crown copyright. All rights reserved Milton Keynes Council - 100019593 - 2013



Table 2: Required Infrastructure Investment by Type

| Expenditure by Infrastructure Type | Prior years | 2013 /14 | 2014 /15 | 2015 /16 | 2016/ 17 | 2017/1 8 | 2018/1 9 | 2019/2 0 | 2020 /21 | 2021 /22 | 2022 /23 | 2023 /24 | 2024 /25 | 2025 /26+ | Total Investment |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Education | 0.0 | 33.9 | 36.6 | 15.3 | 26.3 | 21.2 | 27.7 | 16.1 | 3.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 180.3 |
| Higher and Further Education | 0.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 113.1 |
| Health and Related Services | 0.1 | 1.6 | 8.4 | 16.2 | 13.5 | 14.4 | 15.6 | 6.0 | 6.5 | 3.5 | 1.0 | 5.2 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 92.5 |
| Thames Valley Police | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.9 | 7.0 |
| Highways and Transportation | 0.0 | 3.5 | 22.7 | 5.3 | 10.2 | 18.5 | 16.5 | 24.1 | 8.2 | 10.1 | 40.1 | 16.5 | 17.4 | 58.3 | 251.4 |
| Social Care | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.8 |
| Neighbourhood services | 0.0 | 14.4 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 129.6 | 0.5 | 2.3 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 149.4 |
| Community Facilities | 0.9 | 11.1 | 2.4 | 10.6 | 10.9 | 9.9 | 9.1 | 5.5 | 29.1 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 0.5 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 101.8 |
| Arts | 2.0 | 2.5 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 14.4 |
| Infrastructure and Utilities | 30.0 | 3.6 | 4.2 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 39.8 |
| Flooding and Drainage | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.7 |
| Open Spaces | 2.1 | 4.7 | 1.7 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 4.5 | 2.7 | 0.1 | 7.7 | 9.0 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 42.2 |
| Revenue Projects | 5.0 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 6.0 | 28.3 |
| Total Expenditure | 41.0 | 79.7 | 85.8 | 62.2 | 199.9 | 72.7 | 77.7 | 60.3 | 53.0 | 33.4 | 60.9 | 54.5 | 51.8 | 96.8 | 1029.7 |

Local Investment Plan



October 2013

This Local Investment Plan sets out the vision and aspirations for the Milton Keynes area as it continues to grow with the aim of delivering a further 28,000 new homes and over 40,000 new jobs by 2026

The Milton Keynes Tariff is a S106 framework agreement to forward fund and deliver infrastructure for the expansion areas in Milton Keynes

31 May 2017

GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: A discussion paper

The Home Builders Federation (HBF) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals for an integrated strategic plan for the growth corridor. The HBF is the principal representative body of the housebuilding industry in England and Wales and our representations reflect the views of discussions with our membership of national and multinational plc's, through regional developers to small, local builders. Our members account for over 80% of all new housing built in England and Wales in any one year.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;

It is the HBF's view that the area covered by the Growth Corridor and the area adjoining its southern boundary (referred to in paragraph 1.3 of the Interim Report published last year – which includes Luton, Stevenage and Aylesbury) is planning for too few homes. At best the authorities of this sub-region are just about meeting the household projections with very modest uplifts above the projected rates (for example Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire). In some cases, as with Stevenage, Central Bedfordshire and Luton, the local authorities are assuming much lower rates of net migration than projected by the official DCLG projections.

The figure below illustrate some of the differences between the DCLG 2014-based Household Projections and the demographic starting points assumed by local authorities:

West Essex and East Herts HMA

| DCLG | LPA |
|--------|--------|
| 49,638 | 36,899 |

Stevenage and North Herts HMA

| DCLG | LPA |
|--------|--------|
| 21,280 | 19,213 |

Luton and Central Bedfordshire HMA

| DCLG | LPA |
|--------|--------|
| 53,336 | 41,345 |

Totals

| | |
|---------|--------|
| 124,254 | 97,457 |
|---------|--------|

Collectively, this part of the country (or sub-region) is assuming that 26,797 fewer households will form over roughly the next twenty years than is suggested by the DCLG projections (we say roughly because the dates of the plan periods differ slightly between the three HMAs – some are planning for 20 years, some are planning for 22 years).

We have queried this because of the very strong housing market and travel to work relationships that all these authorities have with London. Many of the authorities in this sub-region are refusing to acknowledge the Mayor of London's migration assumptions that underpin the London Plan (adopted 2015) which assumes lower rates of household formation in Greater London owing to more people leaving the capital and fewer people moving to London (the Mayor assumes that only 39,500 households will form each year in London compared to the 54,000 that had been projected by the DCLG in its 2015 projections).

The HBF is concerned by the absence of any coordinated assessment of housing needs in the greater south east using a consistent approach to such critical factors as migration. This is likely to result in an under-estimation housing needs. To put it simply, local authorities are passing migrants around to evade the political challenge of allocating land for housing. In truth, planning cannot stop migration, especially among the more affluent. Nor can the planning system have much control over who gets to occupy the housing stock (except its own very limited council housing stock). If local authorities are unrealistic in their assessments of housing needs, then relatively affluent households, such as those leaving London in search of space and gardens, will acquire the housing stock to the detriment of lower income households. This could have severe consequences for the functioning of the regional economy.

The recent report by Lichfields illustrates that although nationally planned housing numbers in local plans are on course to just about exceed the current 2014 household projections, the area of the country where local plan adoption is poorest is in the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Surrey. The green belt authorities surrounding London have the poorest track-record of producing local plans (see figure 2 in *Planned and Deliver*, Lichfields Insight April 2017).

The Government's proposed reform to the assessment of housing need may help, but only if any exemptions allowed for local circumstances are carefully controlled and these do not allow for a local authority to undershoot the official projections. It is the HBF's view that every authority in the country, including London, should at least plan to meet the level of household formation indicated by the official household projections. They must then provide more homes than this to address economic growth.

Added to this problem is the issue of 'unmet' housing needs – i.e. where a local authority is unable to accommodate its assessed housing need in full within its own administrative area. There are some very large unmet needs in the sub-region. Luton Council has an unmet need of circa 9,000 homes. Oxford City has an unmet need of 15,000 homes. Welwyn & Hatfield Council has an unmet need of between 616 to 1,433 dwellings in total. There is also London's large unmet need of 7,000 dwellings a year. The London authorities are showing that they are unable to close this gap. This is tending to fuel the pace of out-migration from London. There is evidence that London Councils are beginning to purchase homes in the wider south east to accommodate those on their housing waiting lists. The following is an excerpt from a local Stevenage newspaper:

News article from *The Comet*, 7 April 2016

Councillor Simon Speller, who represents the Pin Green ward, said: “We’re facing a housing crisis caused by the overheating of the housing market locally and in London.”

He expressed frustration that some London boroughs are contributing to hikes in private rents by arranging accommodation for their tenants in Stevenage and not informing the council when they do so.

The duty to cooperate is supposed to resolve the problem of unmet needs but has proved largely ineffective to date although we are beginning to see some positive progress in Oxfordshire – at the western end of the Corridor. We will discuss the operation of the duty to cooperate as a governance mechanism under Q2 below.

It is not entirely bad news. The Oxfordshire authorities have shown that they are prepared to plan for growth. The housing assessment for the five Oxfordshire local authorities is based on a *Committed Economic Growth* scenario that assumes the need for significantly more homes than the basic household projections indicate are required. This has proved politically contentious and locally unpopular with some residents, but after a few initial hiccups (e.g. West Oxfordshire) we have been impressed by the shared commitment to growth and the willingness to cooperate to plan for Oxford’s unmet need (albeit none of this unmet need is scheduled to be provided for before 2021).

It should be noted that the local authorities within the Growth Corridor may well not accept the notion that the area is planning for too few homes. They will argue that they are meeting ‘objectively assessed needs’ (with some exceptions, as in the case of Luton, as described). We have provided evidence to suggest otherwise. The needs for the area will need to be re-tested against the Government’s proposed new approach to assessing need. It will be necessary for the business community to have some input into the assessment undertaken by the 30 local authorities who make up the growth corridor to ensure that the area is providing many more homes than the minimum number suggested by the DCLG household projections.

b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and

The HBF is unable to comment on the potential of the east-west infrastructure links except to support the objectives of the Growth Corridor and the development of more lateral routes in the wider south east to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services. We consider that the Commission should consider opportunities to extend the scheme to connect up with Ipswich and the port of Harwich (and possibly Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Norwich too). Ipswich is embracing growth. The town currently performs an important role providing homes for commuters working in Cambridge (there is an hourly train service that takes just over an hour). Ipswich also benefits from a very good train service to London (1 hour). The rail corridor should be able to accommodate freight.

The Commission should also consider extending the Corridor down to Swindon (possibly through Wantage). Swindon is also embracing growth and is planning positively for homes. An additional rail corridor connecting up Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Oxford, Swindon, Chippenham and Bristol could prove transformative to the UK economy. The development of good lateral transport connections should help to shift employment growth towards a new axis relieving the housing pressures in London.

c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

The development of the East-West Rail corridor will assist with the development of new and expanded towns along the route. We hope that the revised National Planning Policy Framework will emphasise the importance of the development of homes at all public transport nodes, such as rail stations, even where these are located within the green belt.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

We note that the discussion paper is reluctant to call for the need for the preparation of a statutory spatial plan for the Growth Corridor. The paper considers that it is feasible to realise the aims for the growth corridor without recourse to regional planning (paragraph 32). The paper considers that collective working, from the bottom-up, utilising the duty to cooperate of the NPPF, will suffice.

We are not so confident. The duty to cooperate has proved to be mostly ineffective. There are few places anywhere in the country where the DTC has been instrumental in delivering a single house that is related to an unmet need from elsewhere. There are some successful agreements in place that may provide for unmet needs at some point in the future – usually from 2021 onwards (as in the case of the Oxfordshire authorities) but this is really the extent of the effectiveness of the DTC. Despite the introduction of the DTC through the NPPF five years ago (March 2012), local planning authorities have proved extremely reluctant to do anything to assist each other on the question of housing.

Consequently, we have very little confidence that in its current form the duty to cooperate will serve as an effective governance mechanism to implement the aims of the Growth Corridor Strategic Plan. The duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree. It is merely a duty for the local authorities in the housing market areas to talk to each other and consider any requests for assistance made. If no request is made, then a local authority is not obliged to consider the needs of another authority. The duty to cooperate has been in existence for five years but there are few instances anywhere in the country where any adopted local plans commit to providing for unmet needs from the date of adoption (the exceptions are Stratford-Upon-Avon, Bromsgrove, Warwick, North Warwickshire, Lichfield, Gedling, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, South Derbyshire – these authorities are providing for unmet housing needs of more constrained metropolitan neighbours). The Oxfordshire local plans will only begin to accommodate Oxford's unmet need from 2021 onwards at the earliest.

Furthermore, we are aware of the changes to the duty to cooperate mooted by the *Housing White Paper*. This proposes that local authorities will be expected to prepare a Statement of Common Ground setting out "how they will work together to meet housing requirements and other issues that cut across authority boundaries" (HWP, paragraph 1.9). We are not convinced that this change will prove any more effective than the current practice because many authorities already group together to produce such Statements. These statements are often valueless because they are too vague and non-committal about what the authorities will actually do.

Baggy, non-committal Statements need to be avoided at all costs if the Growth Corridor is to be delivered and the integrity of planning as a discipline is to be maintained in the UK. Statements of Common Ground worded along the following lines should be rejected by Central Government:

"The constituent authorities of the Corridor commit to working together to deliver the spatial vision. This will entail the authorities focusing in the first 15 years initially on accommodating objectively

assessed housing needs arising within their own areas in so far as they are able to. This level of supply is judged to be sufficient to implement the first phase of the Spatial Strategy. The wider, unmet housing needs of the HMA will be delivered from 2030 onwards on the completion of the Stage 2 growth options report...etc”

Such loose statements are designed to delay important land-use decisions. If a Statement is to be produced for the Growth Corridor it should describe what the development needs are for the project as a whole, the phasing, and in terms of housing, if there are unmet needs that cannot be accommodated within particular authorities, the statement should clearly apportion this unmet need among the other local authorities. This is what the Oxfordshire Statement of Common Ground does (agreed in September 2016).

To assist with the agreement of a binding duty to cooperate, Central Government will also need to set out a clear case for the economic benefits of the Growth Corridor and the importance of the project. It should also explain the economic consequences of failure. This is necessary to impress upon the authorities and the people of the area the benefits of the project.

We support the four criteria for an integrated plan listed in paragraph 28.

We note that paragraphs 28 and 29 refer to a spatial vision for the corridor to 2050. It would also be necessary to establish a base date. This base date is important for the preparation of plans to implement the vision.

It will also be necessary to set out precisely which local planning authorities fall within the growth corridor – i.e. the precise political geography of the Corridor – and therefore which authorities will be required to produce local plans that will contribute to implementing the spatial strategy for the growth corridor. All the constituent local authorities should produce local plans that use common dates – e.g. all should have a commencement date of 2020 (if 2020 is to be the start date for the commencement of the implementation of the project). Common dates are essential for monitoring purposes and for properly coordinating the delivery of development.

It may be necessary to second from the member authorities or recruit a spatial planning team to implement the project.

We note the mention under Criteria 2 of the LEPs. The Government should clarify the role of the LEPs in the Growth Corridor. Our experience to date with LEPs is that these are less interested in promoting the benefits of higher levels of housebuilding in the area (with the exception of the Oxfordshire LEP). LEPs are compromised institutions because the local authority members of these bodies tend to be reluctant to give housing too much prominence as part of any future growth plans.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

a. housing developers;

Planning for housing is politically very unpopular. To ensure that the housing needs of the Growth Corridor are properly planned for, and at an adequate scale to justify the public investment in transport, it will be necessary for the house building industry to be

properly represented within the new governance structures of the Growth Corridor. To date the industry has struggled to be heard through the LEPs. It is therefore important that the Government articulates the national importance of the project and its clear expectation that the constituent authorities will realistically assess the need for housing within the corridor at a scale needed to complement the growth vision and allow for more housing to be provided if there is the need and demand for that housing (i.e. building upon the success of the Growth Corridor).

To assist with strategic planning of the Growth Corridor it will be necessary to identify: a) the constituent local authority members of the Growth Corridor; b) the objectively assessed housing needs for the area; c) determine how that need will be accommodated; d) a strategic spatial plan for the Growth Corridor will need to be prepared. This will need to be examined by the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate.

The assessment of the housing need, and therefore plan preparation, will need to be divided up into two or three phases if the project will run until 2050. E.g.

Phase 1 - 2020 to 2035;

Phase 2 – 2035 to 2050

All local plans for the Growth Corridor should be based on these dates.

The Government should make it clear that priority must be given to the production of strategic local plans for the Growth Corridor area. These strategic local plans will need to specify the overall housing numbers and the strategic sites and other important allocations that are necessary to provide for the housing needs of the Strategic Spatial Plan.

b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and

c. central government – through, for example, a new, long-term ‘infrastructure compact’?

To ensure that this happens it is necessary for Central Government to emphasise the national importance of the Growth Corridor project. It should secure a mandate for this in Parliament. It should then communicate a clear expectation that all local plans should be based on the defined plan period and should accommodate all the development needs identified by 2050. A Strategic Spatial Plan will need to be published and submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

The Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough could provide an example of the type of governance structure that is needed across the Growth Corridor. However, because the formation of Combined Authorities is voluntary, it will be necessary to create a public body, like a development corporation, that will straddle all the existing institutions that exist within the area covered by the Growth Corridor. This body will need to be supported by all the local authorities and country councils. This body will be tasked with producing a Strategic Spatial Plan for the area covered by the Growth Corridor, which we understand to include twenty local authorities.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

We broadly support the principles outlined in paragraph 41. We provide the following observations on some of these principles:

a. It is essential that Central Government identifies the local authorities that are party to the Growth Corridor project. This must be based on administrative boundaries. If administrative boundaries are not used then the production of a Strategic Spatial Plan for the Corridor that relates to individual local plans will become incredibly complex and unwieldy, and ultimately the project will fail.

b. Collective decision making is essential. This should be based on the needs of the corridor as a whole. Securing unanimous support from each constituent authority may not be feasible and we agree that decisions should not have to be ratified by each individual authority so long as democratically elected representatives from each authority are represented on the Growth Corridor Board. Ultimately, however, it is Central Government's duty to communicate the national importance of the Growth Corridor project and to secure political support for this through Parliament, as with HS2.

c. Ensure clear lines of accountability. The lines of accountability are:

Central Government establishes the need for the Growth Corridor, and secures support for this through debate in Parliament.

A Growth Corridor Board is appointed that includes elected representatives from every local authority and county council. This has responsibility for producing a Growth Corridor Strategic Spatial Plan. This is subject to public consultation and examination in public.

The constituent local authorities or relevant combined authorities - are then responsible for producing local plans that implement the Growth Corridor Strategic Spatial Plan in their area. Each local plan needs to be in general conformity with the Strategic Spatial Plan. Each local plan is subject to public consultation and examination in public.

This would address principle i. – the need to minimise bureaucracy.

e. include safeguards to protect the interests of individual areas. We would question why this principle has been included since it undermines/contradicts the principle articulated in (bi) which asserts the importance of advancing the needs of the corridor as a whole. The paper refers to the protecting the "interests of communities – including those that wish to grow". However, it is more likely that such an exemption or caveat will be applied by those local authorities "who do not wish to grow". This clause will compromise the delivery of the growth corridor project if some local authorities are allowed the ability not to implement the most appropriate spatial strategy devised for the corridor as a whole. If the majority of the democratically elected councils support a Strategic Spatial Plan for the Corridor, then the implementation of this Strategy should not be compromised by a minority of councils disagreeing with this. Include this at your peril.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

We do not see why not, but ultimately it should be the Growth Corridor Strategic Spatial Plan that undertakes the critical assessment of the development needs of the corridor

and prepares an appropriate spatial plan that will accommodate these needs. If too much detailed work is devolved to the sub-regional (corridor) level then this increases the risk of delay and evasion of critical issues relating to land-use allocations.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structure to ‘lock-in’ collaboration over the long-term?

It could be a challenge to implement the vision of the Strategic Plan for the Growth Corridor without statutory backing. The Government can assist by securing assent for the Growth Corridor through a debate in Parliament. It then needs to communicate its aim for the Corridor and then relate this to its investment decisions making it clear that this investment is conditional upon delivery of the vision in accordance with the Strategic Spatial Plan. Central Government should set out its clear expectation that the Growth Board will produce a Strategic Spatial Plan that has the majority support of the constituent local authorities.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to: a) their strategic plans; and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

The HBF has no confidence in informal models of collaboration. The duty to cooperate is testament to the ineffectiveness of voluntary arrangements when it comes to planning for housing although it may be effective in other less contentious areas, such as waste and bio-diversity. Nor were Regional Strategies very much more effective at encouraging collaboration if an authority didn't like the Plan (e.g. the judicial reviews of the South East Plan by South Oxfordshire and Guildford councils).

The only way to provide confidence is for Central Government to communicate clearly its expectations with regard to the Growth Corridor project. The Government will need to express its minimum requirements. It should state what these minimum requirements are so that the Growth Board knows what it is to achieve. These minimum requirements will need to be expressed in and delivered through the Strategic Spatial Plan. Government must make it clear that the investment of any public money, including the acquisition of land using public money, is conditional upon delivering these minimum requirements.

CPO powers should only be used where these can help to deliver more housing than would otherwise be the case had local plans been produced in isolation. CPO powers should be used where it is necessary to provide for the full objectively assessed housing needs of the growth corridor.

Clear articulation of these minimum requirements by Government will make it clear that local plans that are not up to the task of implementing the project in detail will not be found sound.

A single housing needs assessment should be produced for the Growth Corridor that factors in the growth ambitions of the project (i.e. higher rates of economic growth requiring more homes). This should provide indicative housing needs (OAN) figures for each local authority encompassed by the corridor. This strategic level assessment does not need to supplant more localised assessments of need carried out on the basis of defined housing market areas, but it will provide a benchmark against which these localised assessments can be compared. We would suggest that if the local housing need assessment is suggesting a figure that is lower than the strategic benchmark figure then this will indicate a problem. It will indicate an authority that is not fully committed to the aims of the Growth Corridor.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

The Government, working with the NIC, should define the geography of the Growth Corridor (i.e. which local authorities will be involved). It should establish the minimum development requirements of the project. It can specify the precise time-frame that the project will operate over (beginning and end dates). It can decide if this project needs to be broken down into phases. These phases will need to be related to the Government's forward investment programmes. It could also begin to provide a provisional assessment of the housing needs of the Corridor using its new method once this is published later in the year. The Government and the NIC can commission a report to scope out these matters. This should be consulted upon. The views that it receives will enable the NIC to measure the degree of enthusiasm for the project and the extent of the political opposition it may face. The more that local authorities wish to keep matters unspecified will be an indication of the extent to which the project is likely to fail.

Based upon the representations received to this consultation, the Government and the NIC should specify the governance structure of the Corridor. It could begin to consult with the relevant authorities on who might be appropriate to chair the board.

This work can begin in late 2017.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

The first critical step will be the adoption of the Growth Corridor Strategic Plan. This Plan must include as much detail as possible and make critical strategic decisions (rail and road corridors, new stations, new and expanded towns) and important site allocations for transport, business and housing (such as urban extensions for housing and employment). It must also set out the broad locations for growth. We assume that this Strategic Plan will need to be adopted by 2020 so that subsidiary local plans (and possibly a spatial plan for the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Combined Authority area) can be produced rapidly afterwards that will enable applications to be approved without delay.

The project should aim for subsidiary local plans to all be in place by 2025 at the very latest.

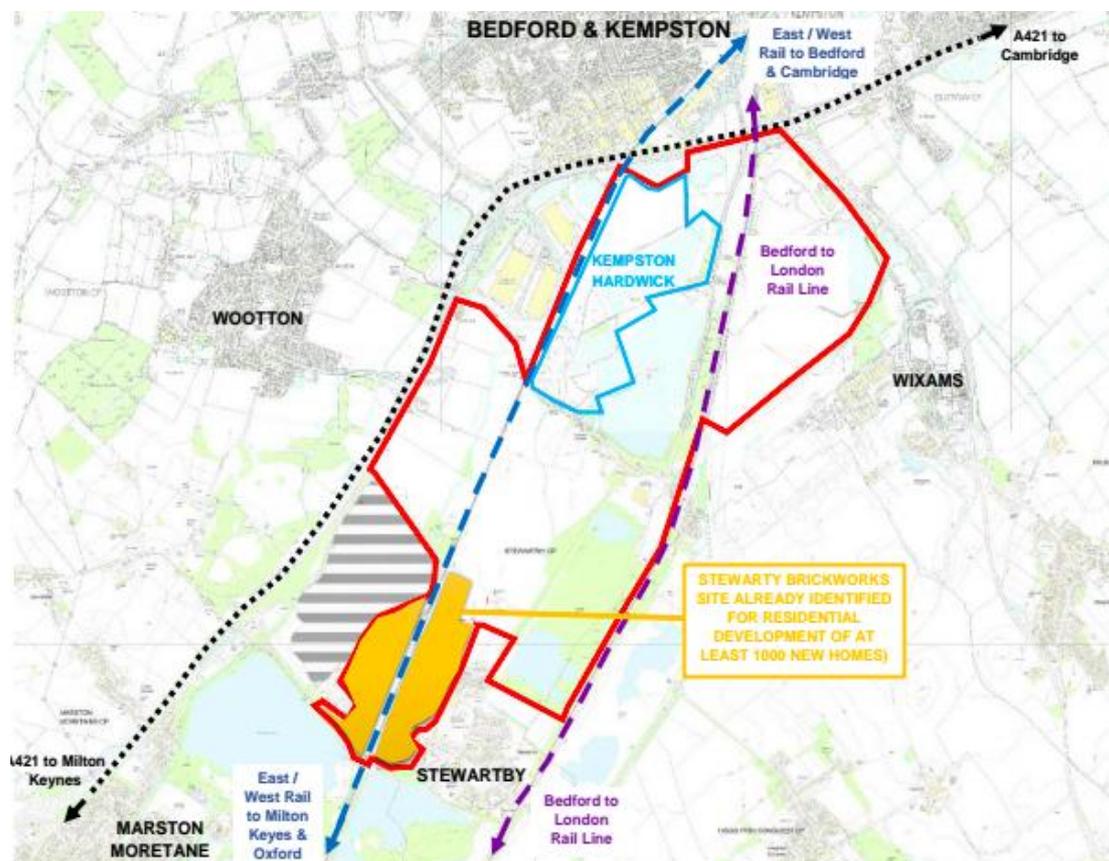
The Strategic Plan will need to be supported by a land commission type of report that explores how the various development needs of the Growth Corridor can be accommodated while avoiding harm to the most important environmental and heritage assets. The land commission report will need to be commissioned in 2018 to allow its findings to be worked up into a Spatial Plan, supported by the constituent authorities, and consulted upon and examined.

It is essential that all the local authorities involved in preparing subsidiary local plans should adhere to a common commencement date. This is necessary so that transport and infrastructure decisions that have cross boundary implications (e.g. new rail and road links, waste treatment plants) can be agreed without delay. The first phase should run for at least 10 years, if not 15.

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
Home Builders Federation
Email: [email address redacted]
Tel: [telephone number redacted]

Submission to the National Infrastructure Commission in response to its consultation document: Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor.

1. This submission is made by Shift Living Limited ('Shift Living'). Shift Living is a private limited company, formed to acquire two major strategic brownfield sites to the south of Bedford, both of which are former brickworks owned and operated by Hanson.
2. The first site, known as the Stewartby Brickworks site, totals approximately 52 hectares. The second site, known as the Kempston Hardwick Brickworks site, totals approximately 97 hectares. The Stewartby site is delineated in orange on the map below, and the Kempston Hardwick site is delineated in blue.
3. Shift Living is in discussion with a small number of other landowners with adjoining sites, which would enable the creation of a major development opportunity totalling more than 1,200 acres suitable for residential and employment use. Together with Shift Living, these landowners form The Bedford Consortium. This larger site is delineated in red on the map below. Shift Living is of the view that, appropriately master-planned and developed, this site could be a strategic site of major regional importance. Situated at the heart of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor; benefitting from outstanding transport connectivity, including the proposed East-West rail link; and with access to the highly-skilled labour markets of Oxford, Cambridge and London, the site could make a significant contribution to satisfying housing need across the Corridor, deal with overspill housing from the London market, whilst also making a substantial incremental contribution to local and regional GVA.



4. Shift Living has a positive and constructive working relationship with the Local Planning Authority, Bedford Borough Council. Members and executives have high levels of ambition for what Bedford can and should achieve spatially, socially and economically. Given Bedford's central position within the Corridor, that ambition extends to the important role Bedford should be playing anchoring the centre of the Corridor.
5. It is precisely because of the role that Bedford will play at the heart of the Corridor, that Shift Living is interested in the long-term, integrated strategic planning approach outlined in the NIC's discussion document, and is submitting the following responses to the ten questions outlined in the document.
6. In making these responses, Shift Living has one over-riding point to make in connection with the proposed strategic development of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor. The economic weight of the proposed rail corridor between Oxford and Cambridge would be significantly enhanced if there was one stand-out, fulcrum location mid-way between the two cities connected with a London inter-city line. That location should be Bedford. This would elevate the proposed rail line from being a regional commuter train project between Oxford and Cambridge, and places in between, to being a significant part of the country's national economic infrastructure. The implications of this would be to limit travel times between Oxford and Cambridge to an hour, with perhaps one other stop at the fulcrum location. The implications of this would greatly enhance the viability of development options.

Q1 & Q2 An integrated strategic plan

7. Sites of regional significance would benefit from a "greater than local" strategic approach to planning. Goods, services, labour and capital flows don't respect local administrative boundaries. For this reason, a strategic approach to planning across the Corridor is to be welcomed.
8. This strategic approach should not be merely confined to spatial planning. Spatial, economic, infrastructure and financial planning should be aligned across the Corridor.
9. It should be for the local authorities and LEPs across the Corridor to determine which of the two models outlined in the discussion document is potentially most workable. However developers will be looking for reassurance that the eventual arrangements:
 - i. are workable as between the multiple public sector stakeholders involved;
 - ii. there will be transparency in the arrangements;
 - iii. there will be mechanisms in place for resolving disputes and avoiding deadlock situations between public sector partners;
 - iv. there will be clarity on the planning policies and processes arising from the integrated approach to strategic planning;
 - v. there will be clear accountability for policy and decision making processes;
 - vi. there will be no disruption to planning activity as an integrated strategic plan is introduced.

Q3 & Q4 New opportunities

10. Whilst the focus of the strategic plan for the Corridor should quite rightly be on new strategic opportunities to maximise the economic return from investment in East-West connectivity, it is imperative that consideration is equally given to "last mile" connectivity. Most of the towns and cities across the Corridor suffer from considerable local rush hour congestion. A Corridor strategic planning function should equally enable and empower local authorities to deal with the local consequences of major infrastructure investment. That includes the identification of the investment to fund the appropriate transport and road improvements, their timetabling, and the proposed delivery mechanisms.

11. Many major development opportunities across the Corridor will require significant investment in supporting infrastructure, not least of which will be the East-West rail link. Developers and investors would benefit from clearer undertakings about the timetabling and financing of this infrastructure investment than is currently the case. Where there are projected shortfalls in finance, there is a case for the public sector to explore with developers and investors a fuller range of delivery mechanisms and sources of funding than has hitherto been the case. Consideration should also be given to the devolution of additional sources of funding from the Government to Corridor authorities to allow greater flexibility in working with developers to deliver innovative new schemes.

Q5, Q6, Q7 & Q8 Governance

12. In order for the Corridor to achieve its full economic potential, there will need to be a substantial degree of collaboration between local authorities, LEPs and the Government. This will most likely need to be reflected in new collective governance arrangements, which reflect more closely the functional economic markets operating within the Corridor than is currently the case. Shift Living broadly supports the principles outlined in paragraph 41 of the discussion document. In formulating new governance arrangements for the Corridor, Shift Living is additionally of the view that the individuality of towns and cities across the Corridor needs to be respected, and local authorities should retain sufficient autonomy within any collective scheme of governance to ensure this individuality is protected. There may well be some trade-off in providing this autonomy, with those local authorities which most actively support the Corridor plan-making process, and reflect the strategic spatial priorities of the Corridor in their local plans, being afforded a greater degree of local autonomy than those authorities which do not.

Q9 & Q10 Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

13. Spatial plans need to be forward looking, grounded in market reality and deliverable. Much of the discussion document focuses on collaboration between public sector bodies in achieving a new strategic planning framework, and there is little emphasis on the role the private sector could and should play. It is to be hoped that developers and investors, with their first hand knowledge of the market, will be appropriately represented in the new and emerging governance and plan-making arrangements for the Corridor. ***The NIC might also wish to give consideration to the formation of a developer/investor group designed to test the workability of the emerging governance/planning proposals for the Corridor from the perspective of the development and investment sector. Shift Living's directors, staff and investors would welcome any opportunity to further support and contribute to this evolving discussion, or to contribute to the work of such a developer/investor group.***

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this submission, please contact [name redacted] at the above address or by email: [email address redacted], mobile [telephone number redacted].



STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE - MILTON KEYNES - OXFORD CORRIDOR: A DISCUSSION PAPER – WOODLAND TRUST RESPONSE

MAY 2017

1. The Woodland Trust (The Trust) is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity and aims to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future. We do this by restoring and improving woodland biodiversity and increasing people's understanding and enjoyment of woodland. We own and manage over 1,250 sites across the UK, covering over 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres) and we have 500,000 members and supporters.

SITE SELECTION

2. We appreciate that the corridor proposals are at a very early stage. However we seek assurances that the natural environment will be central to the integrated strategic planning proposed in paragraph 3 and must be fully embedded in the evidence base. Development must be carefully located with regard to the natural environment. The Trust would like to make particular reference to the importance of protecting ancient woodland.
3. Ancient woodland is one of the country's richest terrestrial wildlife habitats, home to 256 species of conservation concern as listed on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. It has evolved over hundreds, if not thousands, of years and cannot be recreated, nor its loss compensated for. Furthermore, it also holds a unique, immeasurable value for all those who visit or have an association with it.

Our ancient woodlands are quintessential features of England's much-loved landscapes – irreplaceable, living historic monuments which inspire us and provide us with a sense of place and history in an increasingly frenetic world

4. These are not The Trust's words, but taken from the government's own Keepers of Time, written as a statement of policy to better protect and value ancient woodland. The Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement (2013) confirms the Government's commitment to Keepers of Time by stating *protection of our trees, woods and forests, especially ancient woodland, is our top priority*. This has recently been reinforced by the Housing White Paper which set out a clear intention to improve the protection of ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees¹. Clearly there is a wide recognition of the importance of ancient woodland, something that must be considered as a part of the strategic planning process.
5. Natural England's (NE) standing advice for ancient woodland and veteran trees (April 2014) recognises that ancient woodland is irreplaceable and that development of adjacent land can have a significant negative effect on ancient woodland.

A GREEN CORRIDOR?

The corridor connecting Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford could be the UK's Silicon Valley – a world renowned centre for science, technology and innovation.

6. This is an exciting vision which could bring transformative change to the UK. The Trust would like to see this vision be taken further to make it a green corridor rich in woods and trees. The skilled staff who these new centres of innovation will want to employ and engage with will be highly mobile aspirational individuals. The report recognises that the area currently suffers a chronic under supply of homes. It will not be enough to simply supply the required number of 'units' these homes and communities will need to be somewhere that people really aspire to live and work.

7. A resilient healthy environment can be central to this aspiration. We would like the Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford corridor to set clear ambitious targets that set a gold standard for new developments. There are existing standards on open space provision that the Trust would like to see these new residential developments adhere to as an absolute minimum. The standards are as follows:

Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) recommend:

No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace of at least 2ha in size

- at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home
- one accessible 100ha site within 5km of home
- one accessible 500ha site within 10km of home
- provision of at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 people

The Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard (developed in association with the Forestry Commission) aspires:

- That no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size
- That there should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km round trip) of people's homes

BENEFITS OF WOODS AND TREES

8. Woods and trees have the ability to deliver multiple benefits. Planting schemes should be bespoke to fit the needs of both the site and the community. Woodland creation can do everything from build resilience to flood risk and climate change to helping to instil an understanding and respect for the natural environment in children. Evidence proves that the presence of trees can increase house prices as people are willing to pay more for a view of treesii

and since the 1970s studies have found that trees can add between 4% and 7% on to house prices.ⁱⁱⁱ Their presence can also encourage more active transport choices through walking and cycling, minimising congestion and having a positive impact on residents' health.

9. We want people to be excited about new developments and progress coming to their area, seeing it as a positive opportunity to enhance their local environment. Woods and trees can form a vital part of this. Too often in the past trees have simply be seen as a means of hiding new development, not a reason for celebrating it. Engaging local people, particularly school children in tree planting activities can help foster a sense of community and belonging, bringing existing and new communities together. The Trust has a very successful free tree pack scheme for community, school and voluntary groups. For example in November 2013 we distributed over half a million trees to over 4,000 groups.

RELEVANT WOODLAND TRUST PUBLICATIONS

[Residential Developments and Trees](#) (PDF, 1.4MB)

[Greening the concrete jungle](#) (PDF, 1.5MB)

[Healthy Trees, healthy places](#) (PDF, 0.7MB)

[Trees in our towns](#) (PDF, 1.2MB)

[Urban air quality report](#) (PDF, 1.4MB)

ⁱ Fixing our broken housing market, 7 February 2017

ⁱⁱ Trees or Turf? Best value in managing urban green space, Prepared for the Woodland Trust, by Land Use Consultants, May 2011

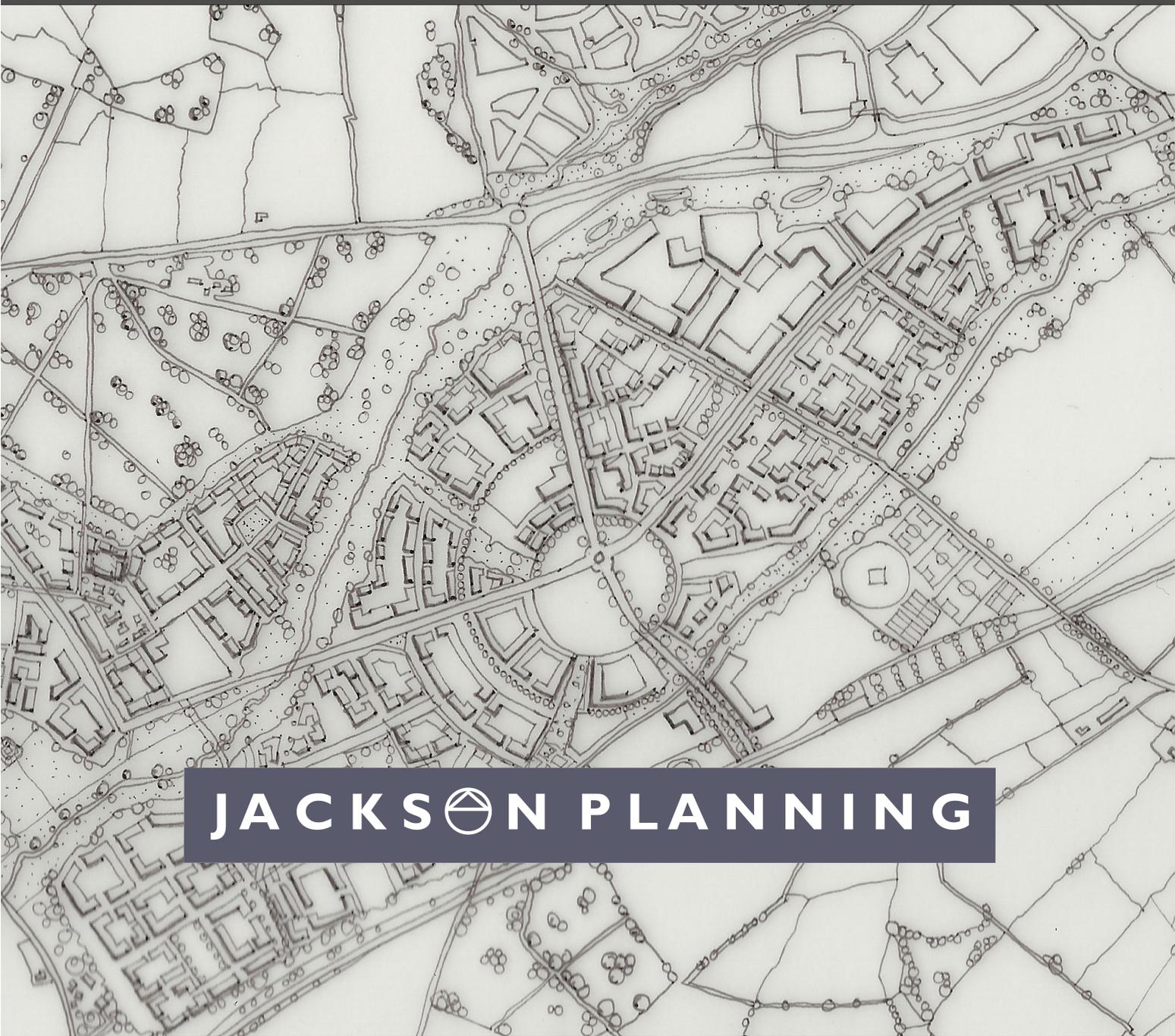
ⁱⁱⁱ Garrod G and Macmillan D (2003) Social and Economic Benefits of Forestry Phase 2: Landscape value of forests and woodland , report to the Forestry Commission, Centre for Research in Environmental Appraisal and Management, University of Newcastle.

Consultation Response to National
Infrastructure Commission

on behalf of Chase Consortium

Strategic Planning

Oxford- Milton Keynes- Cambridge Corridor



JACKSON PLANNING

Executive Summary

This response has been made on behalf of **Chase Consortium** who are strategic promoters of land for development in the south west of Milton Keynes they have been promoting land for over 10 years.

Jackson Panning, who have prepared this response, have been promoting the site at South West Milton Keynes for Chase Consortium since 2010. This response focuses on Milton Keynes.

Chase Consortium fully **SUPPORTS** the concept of a **2050 Spatial Vision** and sees this is the only way to break the cycle of piecemeal planning that has dogged the proper planning of the area for the past decade since the demise of the South East Plan.

The spatial vision should **determine the ultimate physical optimum size** of each of the three cities and the city regions and their ultimate roles in England, the UK, Europe and the World and then fit the infrastructure and building blocks to achieve the ultimate design of each city.

Milton Keynes offers the **most scope for planned expansion** in the growth corridor and the new 20th century city offers considerable planned expansion that history culture and environment have not yet throttled. The bold form of the expediency super-grid, first master-planned in 1968, could be extended without fear of history.

There is **little community support to extend Milton Keynes east of the M1 motorway**; the majority of the 1500 respondents to the 2016 consultation did not support this idea, yet it is a key long-term policy in the emerging local plan for Milton Keynes to 2031. This idea needs proper examination through the **2050 Spatial Vision** and needs to be considered against the alternatives to extend Milton Keynes to the south-west.

There needs to be an **expedited process** for allocation of development site based on the broad allocations for example the '**permission in principle**' concept now in place for brownfield land.

In addition to an agreed **National Funding Formula** we recommend a 'grown-up' version of the community infrastructure levy that overcomes the shortcomings implemented at the local authority level and accommodates the corridor-wide infrastructure programme supports planned infrastructure.

I. Introduction

- I.1 This statement has been prepared by Jackson Planning on behalf of Chase Consortium as a response to the invitation to respond to the consultation by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC).
- I.2 The Chancellor asked the NIC to:

“make recommendations [to government] to maximize the potential of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor as a single, knowledge intensive cluster that competes on the global stage, whilst protecting the area’s high quality environment and securing the homes and job the area needs”
- I.3 This response considers the strategic planning with the overall aim of creating a corridor of growth in this so-called ‘Brain Belt’.
- I.4 Chase Consortium are strategic promoters of land for development in the south west of Milton Keynes they have been promoting land for over 10 years.
- I.5 Jackson Panning have been promoting the site at South West Milton Keynes for Chase Consortium since 2010 and previous to this Lisa Jackson, in her role as Director of Urban Design at Turley Associates (Southampton) had promoted the site for development since 2007.
- I.6 This submission deals primarily with the physical **growth at Milton Keynes and land use planning matters** in the context of the wider consultation.

2. The Shortcomings of the System

- 2.1 Chase Consortium has consistently responded to consultations by both Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and Milton Keynes Council (MKC) about issues of a lack of strategic and proper land use planning in relation to the planned extension of Milton Keynes, and the narrow focus based on administrative boundaries rather than proper planning of the area.
- 2.2 There has been a long history of so-called 'strategic planning' for MK. The Sustainable Communities Plan in 2003 Established Milton Keynes as a growth area and the **south west of Milton Keynes is largely an unconstrained opportunity for future growth.**
- 2.3 The New Plan for Milton Keynes by Milton Keynes Partnership, Growth Strategy to 2031 drafted in June 2006 **identified the south west of Milton Keynes** as supporting the sustainable urban extensions of up to 15,000 dwellings by 2031.
- 2.4 The South East Plan - The Panel Report August 2007 **supported the south west** of Milton Keynes as a Strategic Development Area, above any extension to the east of the M1 motorway.
- 2.5 The Milton Keynes Core Strategy Preferred Options consultation September 2007 recognised the extension to the **south west of Milton Keynes** as one of two strategic development areas to 2026.
- 2.6 In 2007 Chase Consortium made representations to AVDC and MK Councils. They envisaged a future that expanded on the existing grid and working with a live planning application on the adjacent site promoted as Salden Chase a large urban extension to the south west of Milton Keynes.
- 2.7 The withdrawal of the South East Plan then led to individual approaches from both Councils that had little regard to strategic growth and did not and could not consider growth beyond their boundaries.
- 2.8 The demise of the Regional Spatial Strategy (The South East Plan) is the main reason for the lack of progress in this regard. In July 2010 Chase Consortium wrote to the then Inspector of the AVDC local plan examination as follows:
- 2.9 *"The confirmed revocation of the South East Plan presents particular difficulties for the expansion of Milton Keynes beyond its boundaries. Unlike many other authorities who have a 'fall-back' position to the 'Option 1' figures, there is no such figure for AVDC as it relates to the expansion of Milton Keynes. The significant growth of Milton Keynes was first identified in RPG9 with a view to a specific cross-border study highlighted in Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy. It would appear the closest both authorities come to this joint study was the MK2031 Growth Plan (Grimleys) this identified two significant phases of growth to the southwest of the city of 7500 dwellings pre and post*

2026. However, in the subsequent rounds of the South East Plan iterations Aylesbury Vale opposed this level of development within their boundary with an alternative to the east of the M1 motorway in direct conflict with the strategy that Milton Keynes were pursuing. There is no agreed locally derived level of development for South West Milton Keynes, as AVDC viewed the South East Plan figures to have been ‘imposed’ upon them.”

- 2.10 This is the nub of the issue here, it has, it is, and will always be the key issue in relation to the growth of Milton Keynes. In order to deflect criticism in AVDC they have sought to move growth east of the M1 motorway, without proper justification and with no study ever really resolving how to physically integrate a sustainable community across the main north -south motorway in England.

A decade’s lack of cooperation, lack of progress

- 2.11 The lack of the strategic planning has made both MK and AVDC retreat from the concept of a strategic extension of the city properly planned and considering long-term impacts. This is well illustrated by the MKC response to the draft AVDC Local Plan where the Statement of Common Ground set out the disagreement between the Councils:

- 2.12 Whilst there is agreement that the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (September 2016) to allocates two sites, at South West Milton Keynes and Shenley Lodge for a combined 4,000 dwellings. In principle, both Councils concur as to the sites’ suitability, subject to details regarding infrastructure and masterplanning matters. However, Milton Keynes Council does have a site-specific objection regarding policy wording relating to a ‘long-term defensible edge’ for the sites. This to avoid sterilising broader longer-term growth options for Milton Keynes.

- 2.13 Thus it is clear that the Councils are seeing the expansion of Milton Keynes in completely different light. MK see it as the potential for something bigger, AVDC see it as a way to get rid of difficult decisions about housing allocations in the rest of their plan and call a halt to the expansion of Milton Keynes without having considered the much longer term growth of the City.

- 2.14 In ten years of land use planning by MKC and AVDC the long term growth of the city has simply not progressed.

Plan : MK February 2017 Draft

- 2.15 In February 2017 MK produced the result of consultation from the Strategic Development Directions (SDD) Consultation Document 2016. This was primarily looking at a 15 year time horizon.

- 2.16 The four possible directions for growth that were presented within the SDD Consultation Document reflect the results of the workshop discussions about how and where Milton Keynes could grow in the future. These directions were:

Direction of Growth 1: West, South-west and/or South-east
Direction of Growth 2: Expansion East of the M1
Direction of Growth 3: New satellite settlement(s) in the rural area
Direction of Growth 4: Intensification and redevelopment of the urban area of Milton Keynes city.

- 2.17 MKC are currently consulting on a plan “**Plan:MK**” until June 9th 2017 , this consultation is about issues on a much shorter time horizon than the NIC are considering with the plan only running to 2031.
- 2.18 The draft plan at least acknowledges the role the NIC will now play in determining the future of the Region in shaping the city. However, MK continue to underperform in the consideration of the long term future of the city and they also propose an east of the M1 solution despite the consultation response reported in February 2017 that the **majority of responses indicated a preference for no development beyond M1**
- 2.19 The Plan NK purports to reflect the recommendations of MK Futures 2050 with its six big projects
- Making Milton Keynes the hub of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor.
 - Enhancing lifelong learning opportunities through the establishment of a new university for Milton Keynes.
 - Learning 2050 – providing world class education.
 - Smart, Shared, Sustainable Mobility for all.
 - Renaissance: CMK creating an even stronger city centre fit for the 21st century.
 - Milton Keynes: The Creative and Cultured City.
- 2.20 However, the draft plan simply does not deliver upon these strategic objectives.
- 2.21 The whole future expansion if the city is discussed in a mere three paragraphs with absolutely no explanation why in the draft Plan:MK (February 2017) allocates land to the east of the M1 motorway, south of Newport Pagnell as shown on the Key Diagram. It is envisaged that this area will provide a sustainable urban extension after 2031 towards the east. Given the majority of respondents indicated they did not want this and that it should be considered simply as ‘sustainable urban extension’ demonstrates the lack of strategic planning and clear thinking for the city.
- 2.22 The plan goes on to say: “there may be further potential for growth in this direction beyond the Plan:MK period but realising the full potential of this area would require cross-boundary agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council and improvements to Junction 14 of the M1 to enable strong connections between the urban extension and the existing city.” This is not underpinned by any strong evidence or support. There is nothing in the evidence base to justify this position.

- 2.23 Plan:MK remarks that “Further information from the National Infrastructure Commission on the proposals for this corridor is still required before we can provide a full understanding of how growth to support these infrastructure projects can be best brought forward”. This is not positively planned and sound or effective planning for the city, it is reactionary and lacks vision and has no hope of achieving the strategic growth objective.
- 2.24 The Growth of MK is not an infrastructure project; it is about the proper long term planning of the area without the constraints of administrative boundaries. This ‘bolt-on’ attitude is simply wrong and is starting from the wrong perspective.
- 2.25 Plan:MK’s employment strategy is well meaning, but does not appear to embrace the idea of MK as the hub of the ‘brain belt’. The employment strategy feels like all ifs, buts and maybes and there is nothing concrete to reflect the hub role in the strategic growth corridor. The plan could embrace flexible allocations for development that could support either housing or employment based on current needs and working with a physical masterplan to look at the best locations for those uses.

An Alternative Vision

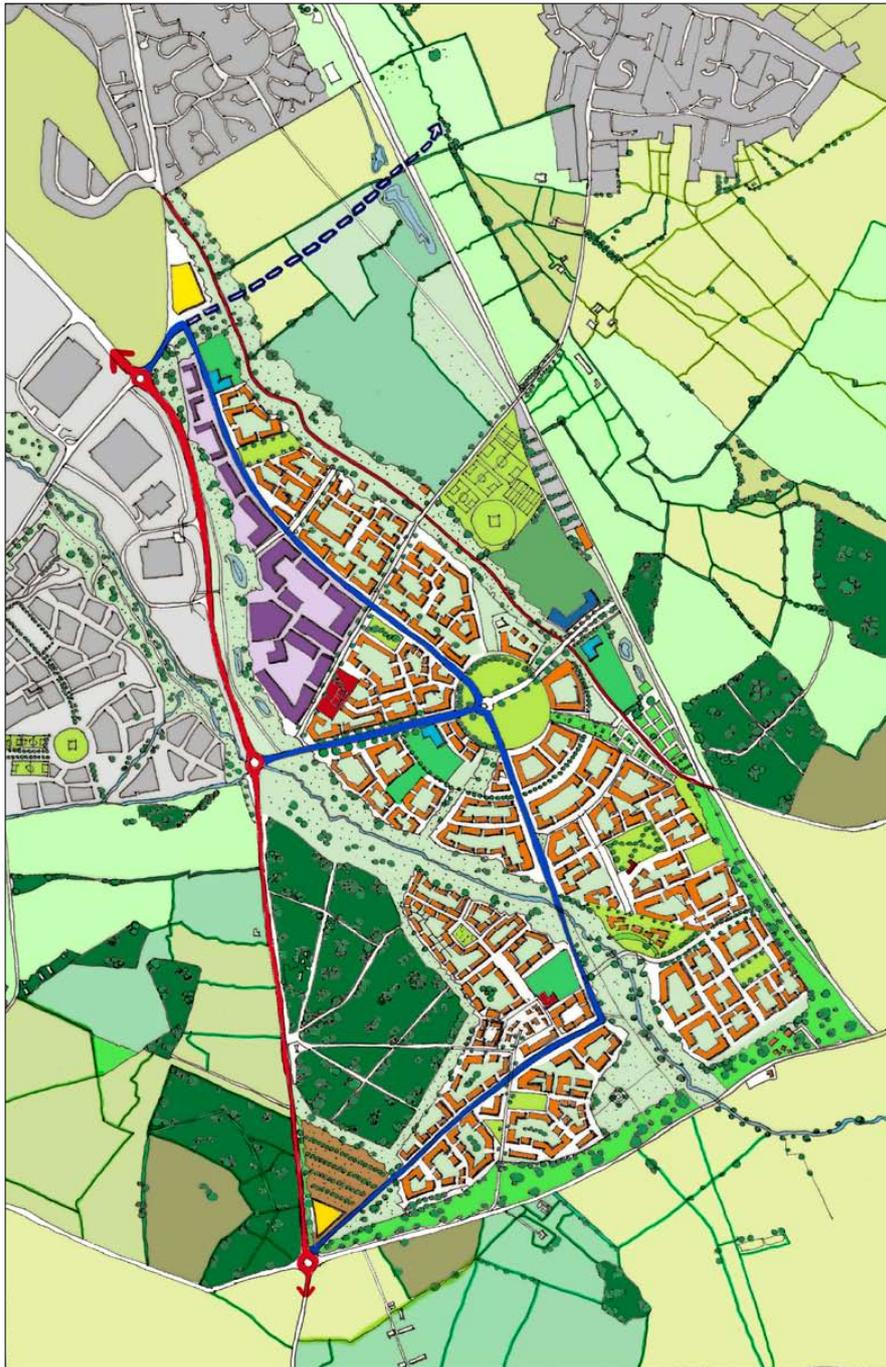
- 2.26 Chase Consortium prepared an alternative vision in 2010, based upon submission made to MKC and AVDC in 2007 that looked at an expansion south west of Milton Keynes based entirely within AVDC’s area. This is show in illustration in Figure 1. This vision would support any east –west rail, and expressway and form part of the extended grid of the city.

East v West or Both?

- 2.27 In 2004 the debate about whether the city needed to expand either East or West was considered by the Inspector into the Milton Keynes Local Plan, Keith Holland, who stated “I do not agree with those objectors who believe that all the growth should be to the east of the City.” He explained that “Expansion to the west is also an important component of the overall public transport strategy that depends to a large extent on substantial and concentrated development at both ends of the proposed east-west mass transit corridor For these reasons I support the strategy of having large expansion areas to the west and east of the City.” However, he did go on to say: “My view is that the M1 should not be seen as a long-term barrier to development. It is certainly not unusual to have motorways running through cities.”
- 2.28 The NIC needs to resolve this issue and settle once and for all the direction of future growth of the city and its ultimate extent.

Strategic Planning -Oxford –Milton Keynes –Cambridge Corridor Consultation

- Key**
-  Existing Woodland
 -  Proposed Woodland
 -  Informal Parkland/Wildlife Corridor
 -  Employment Area
 -  Secondary School
 -  Primary School
 -  Park and Ride
 -  EW Rail Station and Car Park
 -  Formal Open Space
 -  Transport Corridor
 -  Improved Public Transport Corridor
 -  Community Centres
 -  Sustainable Energy Centres
 -  Existing Settlements
 -  Weaste Lane Redway
 -  Proposed Link to A4146
 -  Housing





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Client: Chase Consortium

Site: South West Milton Keynes

Drawing: Alternative Concept Masterplan

Drawn by: Lisa Jackson
(Based partly on David Lock Associates
Concept Plan May 2009 and Development
Framework Plan Sept 2009)

Revisions

Date: July 2010

Scale: NTS

Drawing Number: CC001

Issue: Final

3. Representation

- 3.1 **Chase Consortium** fully **SUPPORTS** the concept of a **2050 Spatial Vision** and sees this is the only way to break the cycle of piecemeal planning that has dogged the proper planning of the area for the past decade since the demise of the South East Plan.
- 3.2 Whilst it is clear from our experience that the problems for strategic planning in this corridor stemmed from the demise of the Regional Spatial Strategy we agree that it is too cumbersome to bring back regional planning just to resolve this sub regional/ cross regional issue. However any spatial vision must be delivered comprehensively to avoid the 'silo mentality' of the current administrative set up. Any adopted spatial strategy must be delivered by a new cross-boundary administration with executive power. A new version of Development Corporation that delivered the vast majority of Milton Keynes is what is required now.
- 3.3 **We cannot have more of the same**, even with the concept by the NIC for an integrated strategic plan which will provide a framework for cross-corridor economic and transport strategies and for strategic spatial plans which, when combined, enable a step-change in housing provision and connectivity. From our experience, this is not enough and the failed concept of '**Duty to Co-operate**' which we quickly understood was '**Not a Duty to agree**' is simply not enough to deliver the step-change the NIC have set out in the consultation.
- 3.4 **The problem is that whilst** Local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, government departments and national delivery agencies, should work together to develop proposals for the joint governance arrangements required to deliver coordinated planning this has clearly not happened to date.
- 3.5 **From our experience in Milton Keynes there are no good** existing cross-corridor collaborations, we believe formal joint governance mechanisms creation of **unitary authorities**, or **development corporations** with wide powers. These should include consideration of future devolved powers, freedoms and financial flexibilities.

The Strategic Plan

- 3.6 We **strongly support** the concept of a Strategic Plan – but recognise that in the 'Brain Belt' there are three individual and separate city regions. These are three pearls on a string. Each pearl has its own separate identity and influence, and needs to be separately identified and planned for. Oxford and Cambridge have similar but different functions in the brain belt but constrained heavily by culture, history and environment. Milton Keynes the new 20th century city offers the scope that history culture and environment have not yet throttled and the bold steps of the

expediency super-grid first master-planned in 1968 could be extended without fear of history.

- 3.7 We **do not agree** that the core function of any integrated strategic plan should be to determine the scale and distribution of commercial and residential development, and supporting infrastructure needs. It should be to look from the other end of the telescope and look at the ultimate cultural and environmental capacity of the landscape. The spatial vision should determine the ultimate physical optimum size of each of the three cities and the city regions and their ultimate roles in England, the UK, Europe and the World and then fit the infrastructure and building blocks to achieve the ultimate design of each city. All three cities should have a defined physical capacity to enable their distinct identity to survive for all time. In this respect the spatial vision should not be limited by time but by carrying capacity. There will be different ultimate time horizons for each city.
- 3.8 We **AGREE** that the strategic plan must tackle the major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the corridor’s chronic undersupply of sufficient, suitable and affordable homes, and weaknesses transport infrastructure required to connect towns and cities to each other and to their labour supply, but only after decisions about the ultimate capacity of each city is agreed.
- 3.9 We **support** the role the strategic plan should take maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure to unlock sites, improve land supply and co-ordinate patterns of development around transport hubs and interchanges. East West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway are once-in-a-generation investments, but only within the carrying capacity of the three cities.
- 3.10 We **do not agree** that the a robust methodology agreed by DCLG on future population growth; household formation; job growth; housing need; economic trends/drivers and the performance of current infrastructure and future infrastructure, this is backward looking. So much better to look to the ultimate size of the cities and plan accordingly for proper planned cities rather than ‘bolted-on’ additions that skew identity.
- 3.11 Whilst **we agree** that the NIC should stop short in any cross- corridor plan of identifying particular sites for commercial and residential development (which is suggested this would remain a function for local plans to perform) we support the NIC in a vision for an integrated strategic plan that should identify and map broad areas for development. We remain concerned that the Local Plan process cannot deliver the development sites quickly enough and there needs to be an expedited process for allocation based on the broad allocations for example the ‘permission in principle’ concept now in place for brownfield land.
- 3.12 **We would like to see the adoption of a broad physical masterplan** that is based on the environmental capacity especially a landscape led approach.

The NIC should commission development teams, transport planners and master-planners to provide the physical framework –especially in **Milton Keynes** where the **expediency supergrid** so successfully set the parameters for physical development of the city.

- 3.13 The physical place, the essence, the character of each city, and town in the growth corridor needs to be fully understood to reach the ultimate plan for that place. This is an important part of the proper place making agenda that should review all evidence to date and refresh and renew the understanding of place for future generations. In addition this corridor embraces the communities of **Buckingham** and **Bedford** including the Universities at Buckingham and Cranfield, these towns and institutions need a long-term plan too and consideration of how they fit within the growth corridor.
- 3.14 We **support** the concept of new ways of thinking for infrastructure delivery with commitments may be ‘firmed up’ at the beginning of each spending review period, road investment period or rail industry control period; a schedule of specific schemes to which national investments may be tied, with firm commitments on when they might be delivered; specific delivery milestones which would need to be met to unlock monies from nationally held funding pots.
- 3.15 This needs to work within a **corridor-level funding regime** to better enable infrastructure funding in a ‘grown-up’ version of the community infrastructure levy that overcomes the shortcomings implemented at the local authority level and accommodates the corridor-wide infrastructure programme.

Conclusion

- 3.16 Chase Consortium welcomes the consultation by the NIC and is particularly keen to see a strategic plan for 2050 with Milton Keynes the hub of the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor.
- 3.17 Chase Consortium can provide details of land in their control that available for development and would like to be involved in future consultations on the growth corridor.



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

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31 May 2017

To whom it may concern,

Response to the discussion paper on strategic planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National Infrastructure Commission's discussion paper on strategic planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor. This response is based in part on discussions between the Commission and RTPI members from the South East and East of England, as recorded during two workshops held in April.

The RTPI has over 24,000 members who work in the public, private, voluntary and education sectors. It is a charity whose purpose is to develop the art and science of town planning for the benefit of the public. The RTPI develops and shapes policy affecting the built environment, works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, practice advice, training and development.

Please see our response to the discussion paper below.

Yours faithfully,

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

Royal Town Planning Institute
41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL
[telephone number redacted] | [email address redacted]

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- tackle major constraints on future economic growth - i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;
- maximise the potential of major new east - west infrastructure links; and
- develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

We welcome the work of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) to investigate how strategic planning can help maximise the benefits of proposed transport investments and develop the corridor into a “single, knowledge-intensive cluster that competes on the global stage”. By integrating transport and land-use decisions, a strategic planning framework can help to ensure that infrastructure investment meets both local and regional/national objectives, while avoiding unintended negative impacts. This discussion paper from the NIC is a valuable first step in re-opening the debate on how this can be achieved within the corridor.

The RTPI has published a body of work on the subject of strategic planning, including our [2015 Policy Paper](#) and our partnership with IPPR North to develop a [Blueprint for a Great North Plan](#). The latter demonstrated a process for engaging stakeholders in the development of a high-level strategic plan, and led to the development of key principles for strategic planning at a regional scale. Many of these are relevant to the corridor and have been set out below:

1. A strategic plan should be high level, spatial and focused. Stakeholders need to be clear on what the plan *must* contain, how this will affect other statutory plans, and what issues are better dealt with at a smaller geographical scale and in other documents. It needs to demonstrate why a sub-regional approach is required, and show how the corridor fits within regional, national and global contexts.
2. It should set out an ambitious, long-term vision which recognises the potential to create a step change in housing delivery, infrastructure and economic performance, and to establish new ways of working. It should be supported by clear actions in the short and medium term, along with regular milestones for monitoring progress.
3. It should be evolutionary and collaborative, informed by a strong evidence base and engagement with a wide range of actors including local communities. It should be able to survive changes of local and national government, and include a framework which supports new models of cooperation. It should add value to existing plans and strategies by identifying common themes, resolving conflicts and reducing duplication.
4. It should be genuinely inclusive, recognising the complementary contributions that different parts of the corridor can make, and the links between them.

(the full list of principles can be [viewed here](#), pages 5-6)

Achieving specific objectives

It is important that the constraints on economic growth and objectives for strategic planning (as set out in Q1) are used as starting points rather than predetermined outcomes, and that alternatives are allowed to emerge both through this consultation and subsequent wider engagement. These can form the basis for developing different transformative scenarios, which can then be put to initial appraisal and public consultation.

In the discussions that we facilitated between RTPI members and the NIC, the following issues emerged which could help to strengthen the stated objectives, and which are detailed below:

Tackling the undersupply of homes

- A focus is needed here on facilitating the coordinated and sustainable use of public sector land within the corridor, and on supporting local authority-led housebuilding as a mechanism to guarantee enhanced levels of affordable housing delivery in specific locations. [New research commissioned by the RTPI](#) is identifying practical ways in which local authorities in England are engaging in the direct provision of housing in their areas, and we can make this evidence available to the NIC as it becomes available.
- Clear evidence will be required on where housing demand in the corridor originates from – e.g. the proportion generated by internal growth dynamics within the corridor and that which results from wider in-migration (e.g. from Greater London or abroad). Evidence will also be needed on the relationship between the undersupply of new housing and economic performance in the corridor, including the potential for investment and growth to be displaced elsewhere in the country/abroad.

East-west transport infrastructure

- Work is needed to identify potential synergies and conflicts between the proposed East West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, in terms of their ability to drive sustainable modal shift and reduce transport emissions, support compact development patterns (and avoid the dispersal of homes and jobs), and help tackle transport challenges within city-regions (including last mile congestion)
- Strong mechanisms will need to be established to prevent speculative development and land-trading as infrastructure plans become more certain.
- New transport infrastructure will need to be delivered alongside smart/integrated ticketing initiatives and demand management measures.

Developing distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor

- There will be a need to establish early on whether the corridor has the potential to develop over the long-term into an identifiable functional economic area, or whether demand will continue to derive from the individual growth potential of city-regions within the corridor. This will have implications for the shape of the strategic plan and required governance.

Placing the corridor within a regional and national context

The key justification for this focus on the corridor is to unlock transformational levels of housing, employment and economic growth which go beyond current trends and contributes to wider objectives. A necessary first step is therefore to identify the growth aspirations of the three major city-regions in the corridor, draw out synergies between them, and then relate these to infrastructure plans and strategic objectives at the regional and national level, for example:

- Changes to national transport infrastructure like High Speed 2 and the Strategic Road Network, and proposals for airport expansion in the South East
- Existing regional rail and road networks, airports and ports
- The growth of Greater London and Birmingham
- The emerging Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Plan

This early work will help to establish whether/how the growth aspirations of city-regions within the corridor can meet wider objectives, such as increased national economic output, growth in knowledge-based industries, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and the housing/infrastructure needs of Greater London and Birmingham. This evidence and analysis cannot be determined solely by stakeholders within the corridor – central government will need to show how transformative growth proposals will be considered and appraised in relation to wider regional and national objectives.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- **housing developers;**
- **infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and**
- **central government - through, for example, a new, long-term ‘infrastructure compact’?**

The growth aspirations of local authorities are often frustrated by the challenges of coordinating infrastructure delivery between the various government departments and agencies. The resulting uncertainty around infrastructure capacity can in turn lead to local concerns and political tensions over the scale and location of new housing, and results in economic plans which are not complemented by the necessary housing and infrastructure.

In our Strategic Planning paper the RTPI called on government to develop strong incentives in order to facilitate cooperation between local authorities. This included making the devolution of powers and resources conditional on having jointly agreed plans to cater for housing need, and by providing greater certainty around the infrastructure delivery needed to support this growth. This concept of a long-term infrastructure pipeline, agreed between central and local government, therefore represents a welcome step forward, with the potential to incentivise participation in corridor-level strategic planning and to promote greater cooperation. Specific incentives from central government could include:

- In the short term, greater certainty on the location and timing of infrastructure investment (covering transport, utility and social infrastructure).
- In the medium term, the integration of funding streams and investment programmes into existing governance structures along the corridor.

- In the longer term, the unlocking of additional local infrastructure funding when key milestones are met.

This should also include some degree of intervention to ensure that utility companies cooperate fully with planning and delivery, within a regulatory framework allows them to plan proactively to meet transformational levels of growth.

In return for proving incentives, government will need to see a commitment to ambitious housing and jobs targets across the corridor (e.g. more than the sum of existing local plans, or the redistribution of existing targets). An important milestone in this regard could be agreement on housing need across the corridor (or in the key city-regions in the corridor) using the new DCLG methodology, and set against the various growth scenarios. This would provide a useful benchmark against which the more politically challenging issue of site allocations could later be structured.

Mechanisms will also need to be established to prevent speculative development and land trading when plans for infrastructure are released, such as an allowance from government to allow a five year land supply across the corridor, or to provide assistance with CPO procedures. This could again be supported by government through reform of the 1961 Land Compensation Act in order to allow local authorities to compulsorily purchase land at existing use value and capture the increase in land value following public investment in infrastructure.

The NIC can play a supportive role by acting as a mediator between stakeholders in the corridor and relevant government departments, including HM Treasury, DCLG, DfT and DoH, along with the regulators. They can also assist process by presenting a clear business case for cooperation, which makes the link between housing growth, infrastructure investment and local economic development targets.

The ability of this approach to drive greater collaboration and engagement depends on the governance model adopted for the corridor, which is discussed in the next section.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

The design principles set out at paragraph 41 are sensible.

Q6 and Q7 get to the critical issue of governance and institutional capacity. Local authorities in the corridor have been affected by the loss of former Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) and associated plans for sub-regional growth. The provisions in the Localism Act, coupled with the 'streamlining' of the planning system and significant cuts to local transport and

planning departments, have often resulted in an incremental approach to planning, characterised in places by political antagonism and difficulties in cooperation.

Positive steps have been taken to overcoming these challenges, including the development of partnerships like the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Planning Unit, and the recent Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. While an enhanced approach towards corridor-wide strategic planning can be driven through a variety of administrative and governance arrangements, it would make sense to build on these existing 'bottom-up' models. A devolved approach is also necessary to ensure democratic accountability and to avoid the perception of changes being imposed from the top-down - as was the concern with RSSs.

In the absence of any regional reform it would make sense for new Combined Authorities (CAs) to be established for the Oxford and Milton Keynes city-regions, to complement the existing Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CA. This approach would be consistent with the existing functional areas within the corridor, and would help introduce a more strategic dimension to current planning activities – allowing mayors to work together on key issues that can only be resolved at the strategic level, while again leaving as much as possible to local determination. For example, agreement could be established between the CAs on core geographical areas in the corridor within which specific strategic policies and proposals carry the most weight, along with complementary actions that should be taken within each city-region. A CA approach would also make it easier to agree on the proposed long-term infrastructure pipeline with government. However, the issue of resourcing and capacity within planning departments will still need to be addressed under the CA model.

Formal models of cooperation will still be needed to lock-in collaboration across the corridor. This could be driven through a joint planning committee and technical team, incentivised with capacity funding from the government. The strategy should be approved by a board of affected authorities that are not subject to the rule of unanimity, and an informal panel appointed by the Secretary of State can assess the strategy before it is endorsed. A Written Ministerial Statement should set out an expectation that local plans be in general conformity with the strategy to fulfil the duty to cooperate, and further devolution of infrastructure spending and development auction revenues will be dependent on the board agreeing the strategy and a proportionate share of housing.

As noted, local ownership and input with the strategic plan will be essential to ensure democratic accountability. The CA model can address this through having a directly elected mayor that can make executive decisions for the city-region, and with joint arrangements where no minority has power of veto, but where minority views are carried forward for testing before ministerial approval and any endorsement of the strategic plan. The RTPI has had advance sight of evidence prepared for this consultation by the Common Futures Network, which suggests several ways in which local ownership can be achieved:

- Equal representation irrespective of size
- Protection of minority views without the power of veto (e.g. the Scottish model)
- A clear arbitrating role of ministers and/or an overseeing body for dispute resolution
- Independence of technical work
- Incentives in terms of additional resources for plan-preparation and implementation

A checklist will need to be in place to ensure that any new governance structures are sufficiently diverse in terms of membership.

The government will also need to consider the role of Development Corporations or similar models if, following suitable incentives and appropriate resourcing, improved cooperation

does not emerge between local authorities in the corridor. This may be necessary to address the containing problems experienced within the Milton Keynes city-region when it comes to cooperation on housing and infrastructure. This will need to be dealt with in order to enable dialogue with other city-regions in the corridor on where growth can be sustainably accommodated. The role of Development Corporations will also need to be considered for other parts of the corridor that require coordinated action to de-risk sites and attract investment.

Once reason has been established for using Development Corporations, existing or recently modified legislation may be sufficient to create new structures, such as the amended New Towns Act, proposed in the Housing White Paper. The role of any governance structure in place needs to be clearly defined, so that local communities understand why it exists.

It should also be recognised that these models may not be sufficient under increasingly transformational growth scenarios, such as if the corridor were to radically increase its population. A portfolio of governance options will be required that can be drawn upon over time as necessary.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

In the short-term, strategic planning opportunities could be driven by a coordination team at the NIC, incentivised by central government through the 'infrastructure compact', and backed up through an enhanced duty to cooperate in which plans are assessed by PINS against shared objectives. Existing strategic collaborations within the corridor could also be strengthened using existing legislative powers, such as a Written Ministerial Statement or similar from government which positions the corridor-wide strategy as a strategic priority.

Initial work would be to:

- Develop scenarios which explore the potential role and scale of city-regions in the corridor, under Combined Authority structures or other cooperative mechanisms.
- Identify the potential of specific flagship projects within the corridor (new settlements or innovation districts) and whether they will require special purpose vehicles to be delivered.
- Examine how city-region connectivity can be enhanced to complement new regional transport infrastructure, focusing on broad growth locations at public transport nodes along the corridor.

The government can also support this process by providing a common frame of reference for developing city-regional strategies along the corridor, in terms of national objectives, timescales and scenarios, and where collaboration between city-regions should be targeted.

The relative effectiveness of the Greater London Authority and Greater Manchester Combined Authority in this respect is related to their substantial technical resources, in contrast to the slow process in other parts of the country that lack such resources. Investment in technical capacity will be needed to start this process and develop evidence on scenarios.

Another first step will be to appoint champions within each local authority, Local Enterprise Partnership and transport authorities who can communicate changes and engage with relevant stakeholders.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

It is important that patterns of housing development within the corridor are in sustainable locations, close to jobs and easily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. However, there is very little spatial analysis of where housing development is occurring at the larger-than-local level, and whether these sustainability objectives are being met. As a first step towards addressing this gap, the [RTPI commissioned research](#) to understand the sustainability of planning permissions for new housing in twelve English city-regions, including Cambridge and Oxford. Similar spatial analysis within the corridor would help to monitor the impact of changes on the location of development over time.

NIC Discussion Paper: Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-
Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor

March 2017

A Response from Urban&Civic PLC

May 2017

Urban&Civic PLC – The Master Developer Approach

1. Urban&Civic specialises in delivering large scale, mixed use development projects as a committed, long term 'Master Developer'. We undertake this task without significant conflict or challenge: working in partnership with local communities, local authorities and delivery agencies. Through management of all aspects of delivery, from concept and vision to construction of infrastructure and homes, together with a real focus on community development and innovative approaches to unlock planning and highway issues, Urban&Civic bring forward sites and make a long-term commitment to manage, co-ordinate and facilitate the development of new, mixed use communities.
2. Our company is actively engaged in delivering and seeking to deliver strategic scale development on predominantly previously developed land within the corridor, both as a landowner, promoter and developer in its own right (notably bringing forward and now implementing the new settlement at Alconbury Weald and the eastern urban extension to St Neots) and as a development partner, notably to the MOD on the new settlement proposal at Waterbeach, north of Cambridge.
3. This focus reflects Urban&Civic's policy to act as Master Developer and owner/ investor on large projects in affordable areas of high population growth. The sub regional increase in population in and around Cambridge over the past ten years is around 15 per cent. Accommodating such growth requires large sites to be brought forward more quickly but with an emphasis on improved quality. Collectively the three Urban&Civic projects in Cambridgeshire will deliver 15,000 homes, four million sq ft of business space, eight primary schools and at least two new secondary schools.
4. The Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge Corridor is an undeniably important arc of development. There is already significant interest in and around the three key nodes and diverse transport improvements underpin existing delivery ambitions. It is recognised that the establishment of physical links between these nodes is important and brings with it the opportunity to identify new locations for growth along those routes for homes and businesses. The challenges in doing so are also well understood.

5. The following observations are provided by Urban&Civic from the Master Developer perspective. We would welcome the opportunity to continue this dialogue with the NIC and other stakeholders as proposals take shape.

Working Together

6. The NIC Discussion Paper opens with the explicit intention (Section 1, point 1) to progress a debate on how public sector bodies and delivery agencies can work together to deliver an integrated strategic plan for the Corridor.
7. Urban&Civic believe that there is also a critical contribution, at a strategic level, to be made by private sector interests who are already seeking to respond directly to the growth agenda for the Corridor, to engage in and support effective partnership working with public sector agencies and landowners.
8. At present Urban&Civic are engaging with stakeholders across the corridor to address issues which are limiting the expansion of the existing growth nodes. This consultation represents the first recognised arena within which to engage in any meaningful debate on the implications, priorities or complexities of delivering large scale development within the Corridor. We are aligned with the ambition to find ways to accelerate and intensify the pace, quality and quantity of development occurring within the Corridor but are mindful of the risks posed by macro intervention to existing priorities upon which current growth plans are based.
9. There is no doubt however, that helping to shape and then operating within an environment with more effective forward planning, which gives a level of certainty, could further accelerate a Master Developer's ability to deliver. By way of relatively recent example of where this happened within Cambridgeshire, Alconbury Weald was selected by the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP to be the area's Enterprise Zone candidate in 2012. This selection represented a highly efficient and focused debate amongst key stakeholders within a new political/economic geography which prioritised the growth potential of candidates in order to capture business rate growth for reinvestment in the area. Although not a formal designation for planning, the Enterprise Zone once confirmed by the Government was soon incorporated into local plans across the area and has remained a core focus for the LEP. Alconbury Weald now has outline consent for 5,000 homes and

three million sqft of employment floorspace and Urban&Civic are actively delivering on both.

10. The resurgence of a debate around the merits and benefits of a strategic plan for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor is welcome and may in turn be a catalyst for more far reaching changes to the planning process, to benefit the Corridor and other such functional geographies.
11. For now, the existing governance, planning and legal framework limit the scope for effective corridor wide planning. The challenge of fashioning a solution within these constraints (evident from the dilemmas explored within the discussion paper) carries considerable risk, particularly if the good intention introduces further bureaucracy and a further burden on existing, increasingly stretched local government. In the absence of certainty regarding mitigation of the impacts of large scale development, progress too often falters. Changes to the planning process, even ones that are potentially beneficial, can also cause considerable uncertainty and thus delay.
12. It is in this regard that Urban&Civic can make a positive and informed contribution to the debate, particularly early progress (**Q9**). Large scale development is most effectively delivered through a committed Master Developer. Our experience of delivering large scale development which is dependent upon uncertain strategic infrastructure provision, offers a useful model for working within the existing system and transitioning, without causing delay, towards improved strategic planning for growth. To do this we have:
 - a. taken every opportunity to join and build successful partnerships which have already delivered growth within the corridor;
 - b. worked with partners to develop highly innovative solutions to planning for development, securing consent for development, and commencing/progressing development even in circumstances where there is uncertainty about longer term strategic infrastructure solutions; and
 - c. maintained an absolute focus on quality in order to ensure that where major development occurs it creates benefits for communities and partners to be proud of and enjoy.

13. By way of further example from Alconbury Weald, the principal constraint upon commencing development was the fact that planned improvements to the A14 were not designed or committed at the time outline planning permission was sought. While the transport mitigation for a first phase of development, in advance of the A14 upgrade, could be planned for and implemented, mitigation for development beyond the first phase could not be defined. U&C worked with the Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire Council to devise, and imbed within the legal obligations, a mechanism to overcome this constraint and commence development. The approach, successfully deployed at Alconbury Weald, and now being considered for Waterbeach new town, is to 'Monitor and Manage.' Development is subject to an additional tier of approval, between outline and reserved matters planning consent, for each development phase, at which point detailed transport impacts are assessed, taking account of the effect of mitigation already implemented and taking account of wider planned infrastructure as schemes are designed, fixed and then implemented. Mitigation is then committed appropriate to that phase.
14. The attached information provides further information about the Urban&Civic approach to the Alconbury Weald Project.

Making a Strategic Plan

15. Urban&Civic broadly supports the ambition for a single integrated strategic plan for infrastructure, housing and jobs across the Corridor (**Q1**) delivered through integrated, collaborative working (**Q2**). The ambition for the Plan as outlined in paragraph 28 is welcome.

We would offer the following observations:

16. The evidence base is important as a starting point for understanding functional geography and economic potential, as key drivers. It is that evidence which must inform decisions about the appropriate scale at which strategic spatial planning must occur (be it corridor wide for some infrastructure or more local for others); and ensure that the overlaps and interrelationships (particularly north-south with other national infrastructure projects) are addressed to maximise the investment benefits.

17. As part of our own evidence base, Urban&Civic have commissioned research examining travel to work patterns in and around Cambridge. This reveals the complexity of the relationship between homes and workplaces and the degree to which the shortfall in housing supply; the recent concentration of new housebuilding to the south; and the challenge of getting into, across and around the city has shaped and changed functional relationships. More sustainable patterns - people living closer to the city and closer to work - have emerged to the south while a prevailing, persistent pattern of long distance commuting is evident to the north, where new large-scale settlements have not kept pace with the growth of the northern science parks. Local infrastructure challenges arise as a result and it is essential that a focus on linking Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge should not undermine improvements that are needed for each node.
18. The attached report by Quod was submitted by Urban&Civic and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation as part of our recent outline application for 6,200 homes at Waterbeach Barracks just north of Cambridge.
19. The Corridor needs a methodical appraisal of environmental capacity along with a robust and critical evaluation of land subject to imposed policy constraints (such as countryside protection policies). This will provide a much better starting point for a positive, pro-growth agenda. The focus must shift to realising the *full* potential for sustainable development. Where good development is in prospect in good locations, plan making should not get in the way; proactive authorities and effective partnerships can deliver without compromising emerging plans and denying communities their say. Progress at Alconbury Weald is testament to a ‘can-do’ attitude within the District Council, County Council and the existing nearby communities. The evolution of planning applications for Waterbeach and St Neots is equally encouraging.
20. We are firmly of the view that benefits of significant strategic scale investment flowing from an integrated, strategic plan for the corridor are, as the discussion paper suggests, of national, indeed international significance. It is in the national interest to support and invest in the infrastructure to facilitate that growth.
21. Major development can contribute to delivery of the big-ticket infrastructure items which should be the arteries for growth within the corridor but there needs to be a recognition

that local improvements are essential to land release and need to be prioritised. The expectation that existing large scale schemes can make a significant, additional contribution will be at the expense of other priorities (most likely affordable housing where viability review has been incorporated into future phases). Good spatial planning without testing and determining workable and viable delivery solutions is of limited value.

22. More fundamentally, caution is needed in addressing options for delivery and mechanisms for mitigating impacts and securing benefits through land value capture. There is a barely a square inch of the precious land within this highly dynamic Corridor that has not been subject to a development appraisal. The majority of the propitious growth locations are in the pipeline; hope value and land value are already locked in and underpin option agreements, proposals, consents and delivery activity. It is not practical or cost-effective to unpick this.
23. Building communities with a strong commitment to placemaking at a strategic and local scale demands an order of investment and stewardship which is a considerable burden. The quality of development and the quantity of affordable housing are already too often squeezed or compromised by obligations upon the land to meet the cost of building schools, libraries, health facilities, community buildings, sports and leisure facilities, training, community development, management plans, long term maintenance and local transport improvements.
24. If the unwritten ambition is to use the strategic plan to agglomerate strategic scale development across a large area to justify a call for development already in the pipeline to fund substantial, strategically important infrastructure projects, delivery will falter; quality will suffer; and the level of affordable housing will be impacted severely. Again, it is necessary to recognise and work with the grain of the existing circumstances. The potential for the diversion of funds away from addressing local impacts and ensuring the creation of high quality new communities is a matter of great concern.
25. If new opportunities are revealed through strategic planning for large scale development (maybe a new town) which is not subject to the hope value/land value constraints of proposals already in the system, a different model of delivery and land value capture may be appropriate.

26. Co-ordination and investment at a high level, across the Corridor as a whole, must not detract from the need to plan and progress the major, though less strategic infrastructure required to ensure that the primary settlements (Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge) can function and grow rapidly and sustainably. This is infrastructure needed to meet immediate commitments and proposed development. There is little benefit to be gained from better connections between constrained settlements that will become dysfunctional if the pace of development and pressure continues. Strategic infrastructure, the key to 'transformational' change must be planned in addition to and to complement more local, primary infrastructure.

Governance

27. A lack of local, political consensus to promote and support growth (often reflecting the prevailing view of the population) and inadequate or delayed investment in strategic infrastructure will continue to frustrate the potential for growth within the Corridor (acknowledging that sporadic, often speculative development without proper planning for infrastructure is presently a primary reason for a the lack of political support and local objection). Unless a change of approach is instigated constraints will also increasingly impact upon the economy and quality of life for existing residents.
28. The high ambition (paragraph 41 and **Q5**) expressed in the discussion paper is welcome, but there is little prospect of that ambition being realised by directing this vital task towards non binding, informal governance structures and processes which are not fit for the purpose (**Q7/Q8**).
29. U&C are also well aware that despite the considerable commitment of professionals working within local authorities within the corridor, they are beyond stretched and lack the resources to deal even with existing statutory planning requirements.
30. There are merit worthy examples of effective joint working between authorities, agencies and private sector organisations, where there are common challenges, common objectives and mutual interest. This generally occurs across smaller geographies/neighbouring authorities. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council have demonstrated this to good effect through joint planning and memorandums of understanding. There is no basis for confidence that this is likely to be effective at a sub-regional level, through informal

channels. Evidence from elsewhere in the UK demonstrates that the Duty to Cooperate has been largely ineffective in addressing strategic matters, or wide cross-boundary issues.

31. Effective and empowered decision makers, representative of all sectors and delivery agencies, well informed and locally knowledgeable, operating to co-ordinate and arbitrate at a larger than local scale is a necessary next step. Effective local partnerships and joint working should continue in advance and then under this umbrella. Critically, the establishment of any new governance arrangement and its operation must not interfere, delay or seek to unpick existing planning activity and commitments. Benefit will come through co-ordination, co-operation and giving impetus to what is already in prospect and what is possible in the future.
32. All interests including the development sector want clarity and certainly arising out of an effective, expedient and binding process. Infrastructure providers must be required to align their own plans and investment strategies to spatial plans and respond where opportunities arise to maximise on the benefits of the investment.
33. Urban&Civic would welcome an explicit infrastructure compact which supports and prioritises locations and development partnerships ready and able to respond to the growth challenge. Where the existing or improved planning regime fails, or is significantly delayed, the penalty should not be to relax or remove planning controls (which results in poorly planned development to the detriment of residents and uses up capacity to deliver good development, in the right places, in the short term) but direct intervention to accelerate strategic proposals.

For further information or should you wish to discuss any of the points raised herein, please contact [name redacted] on [telephone number redacted] or [email address redacted]

NIC Discussion Paper: Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-
Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor

March 2017

Appendix one

Alconbury Weald Case Study

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Development: | Alconbury Weald

alconbury-weald.co.uk |
| Location & Local Authority: | Huntingdon, Huntingdonshire; Huntingdonshire District Council. |
| Partners Involved & Roles: | Owned freehold by Urban&Civic: development management; project management; strategic planning and design; community communication; risk and finance; and property and estate management. |
| Description of Delivery Structure: | Delivery through Urban&Civic, with key sub-contractors, and disposals of serviced parcels to housebuilders. |
| Scheme commencement and completion date: | First acquisition made in 2009; duration 30+ years. |
| Scheme Type: | Employment-led, brownfield mixed-use. |
| Total Scheme Value (GDV): | £2bn+ |
| Total Scheme Cost: | Urban&Civic's infrastructure budget c£300m; further costs to be determined. |
| Gross Site Area (Ha): | 575 hectares |
| Development Description: | <p>Consent for 5,000 dwellings, up to 290,000 sq.m. of employment floorspace (B1/B2), hub and neighbourhood facilities featuring retail, commercial, leisure, health, church and community uses, three primary schools, nursery provision, a secondary school and land reserved for post-16 education provision, open spaces, woodlands, sports provision, a heritage area and retained listed buildings and a reserve site for a railway station and ancillary uses.</p> <p>Following completion of an award-winning Incubator Building (now complemented by the Club Building) phase one is well progressed; with three housebuilders on site. The first primary school opened in September 2016.</p> |



Phase 1 – Residential Development by Hopkins Homes and Primary School (foreground); Enterprise Zone and commercial buildings in the distance.



Phase 1 Master Plan



The Incubator and The Club

A bit of background: Prior to Urban&Civic's acquisition of the site in late 2009, this former Second World War and Cold War airfield had been controversially promoted for nearly 10 years as a significant rail freight B8 distribution centre. In early 2010, when we started discussions with key stakeholders, we inherited a position where a highly unpopular Secretary of State imposed planning consent had not been implemented and Huntingdonshire's Core Strategy was silent, saying only that the future of Alconbury Airfield should be addressed in any review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Partnership working – getting down to business: Since then we have resolutely worked in partnership with key stakeholders including the District Council, the County Council, Local Parish Councils and the LEP to establish a broad consensus for the concept of a mixed use development. An early example of this partnership approach came when 150 hectares of Alconbury were selected by the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP as the region's Enterprise Zone candidate in 2011, following a competitive process, and then chosen by the Government as one its 23 Enterprise Zones in the first phase. The delivery of the Enterprise Zone has created a strong working partnership with the LEP as well as Government departments with regular site visits by key Ministers. This included entering into a memorandum of understanding which set out how the site would be marketed and the way in which enquiries for existing local businesses would be managed. There are regular Enterprise Zone Steering Group meetings and we report into both the board of the LEP and BIS on progress.

Creating value as Master Developer – innovation and flexibility: Urban&Civic are fundamentally committed to engaging local communities and partners in the crafting and delivery of new places. Our approach is not only a key part of our corporate philosophy to be a considerate neighbour but also ensures robust assessment and community ownership of the outcomes. Community engagement and partnership have been central to our approach at Alconbury. In 2010, our second appointment to the project team was a Community Liaison Manager based on site to forge relationships and conversations with local communities and businesses. Our third key appointment was a Community Ranger to engage communities in collecting seeds and developing a tree nursery to supply some of the half a million trees we have pledged to plant on the site.

Our initial acquisition of Alconbury Weald was met with concern, specifically around the transport impacts of a mixed-use development, given that there was only one effective point of entry and exit into the site. When over 300 acres of neighbouring agricultural land became available, which provided an additional direct link to the town centre, we acted quickly to purchase it as it was clear from these early discussions that a dual access strategy would become an important part of the emerging vision. The purchase of Grange Farm was subsequently described by senior officers and members as a game changer and was welcomed by the Parish Councils with whom the concerns had originated.

Our regular dialogue included monthly meetings with the 6 parish councils surrounding the site, as well as supporting them with a planning consultant to act on their behalf through the application process. We also worked closely with local schools and youth groups on projects to involve them in the development and supported initiatives such as the Fusion holiday scheme, Young Lives charity, and local youth and sporting provision.

A Design Enquiry was held at the site to test the emerging masterplan and enable partners and local people to have their say. As well as workshops where over 100 specialists and technical experts gave their time to talk through the plans and feed into specific questions and challenges, we also had a series of events for the public – with 3 public meetings in local villages and a focused event to get people's views and ideas on site. Through targeted promotion, the provision of family

facilities and transport to the event, we had 2,500 people take part, representing a broad demographic of the local area.

Following the Design Enquiry at Alconbury Weald, where we pledged to plant half a million trees on site across the 20 year delivery, we worked with the local parish Councils to plant 2,500 trees along the boundary of the site to screen the military barbed wire fence and establish a strong and mature green boundary to the site 5 years ahead of any housing delivery. We also engaged with the local parish council to deliver and dedicate new public allotments on land adjacent to and serving the neighbouring village well in advance of the grant of outline planning consent. These early investments were entirely in accordance with the sustainable approach for the wider site and established significant trust with local people.

The process also included discussion on the extent and nature of retail within the development and how the new district centre (which we called “the Hub”) would operate in the context of the mix of uses. We worked closely with Huntingdonshire District Council and addressed concerns about the impact on Huntingdonshire town centre by not only limiting the scale of individual and the collective retail offer but also by strengthening the links with the town centre itself. We struck a balance which will reduce unnecessary trips for day to day items and activities but mean that the historic town centre has a meaningful role to play in the life of those living on the site. To support the planning position, we have held Board positions and made financial contributions to initiate a Town Centre Partnership, and now the Business Improvement District, which works with existing and new retailers, public authorities and services to develop a dynamic and attractive Town Centre.

In August 2012, Urban&Civic submitted an outline application across the entire site, ahead of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan review, when there was no policy support for residential development on the site. In December 2013 when Huntingdonshire District Council resolved to grant the application, the Local Plan had reached preferred option stage and identified Alconbury Weald as the largest of three strategic sites in the area which could deliver at least 5,000 new homes. Huntingdonshire District Council have received no material objections to the designation of the site via the local plan process and only around 20 representations were received on the outline planning application itself. The Local Parish council appeared in person to support the application at the Planning Committee meeting and following the completion of the s.106 agreement the outline planning permission was issued in 2014. Huntingdonshire District Council’s local plan review is still underway and they are currently considering increasing the allocation for Alconbury above 5,000 units given the momentum and support for delivery on the site.

Large scale multi phased strategic developments which are delivered over 10 to 20 years need flexibility in the grant of outline planning permission. Urban&Civic have pioneered a new three tier approach. The outcome has been to create a highly flexible outline planning consent with the ability to specify key phases as the development proceeds as opposed to enshrining a fixed phasing plan at the outset. Within this process, Urban&Civic is master developer and as each key phase is brought forward, detail relevant to that phase and consistent with the parameters established at the outline tier is presented to the Council and agreed. Reserved matters applications are then brought forward for roads, green infrastructure and buildings in accordance with the framework established by the key phase and outline tiers. The s.106 agreement and conditions work in parallel to establish this structure which provides the planning authority with key controls at the relevant stage of detail rather than only having one shot to get the controls in place as with a traditional outline. We have found that this approach, once the controls are understood, is welcomed by officers as it essentially allows for improvements from previous phases to be identified and incorporated without the need to constantly reengage the lawyers to affect variations to the outline consent.

At Alconbury Weald we have gone one stage further and established flexibility for the offsite highway works under a mechanism called monitor and manage. This mechanic was developed in light of the uncertainty over the improvements to the A14 at the time the consent was being considered. Given that the County Council didn't know the route of the new A14, whether it would be tolled or the timing for delivery, it was necessary to find a way of agreeing a s.106 agreement that could respond to the solution rather than stall the development pending that solution being announced. The outcome was that whilst the off-site works were agreed for an initial quantum of development, further key phases would be brought forward with their own transport assessment and identification of works relevant to the highway position at the time. An overall budget was agreed for these works which was incorporated into the viability assessment with the County Council taking the benefit of any underspend but accepting the risk of overspend. This position was agreed by the County Council and welcomed by the Highways Agency as providing real flexibility to spend money where it was needed at the time as opposed to where someone thought it would be needed historically.

Creating value as housebuilder – stronger together: At Alconbury Weald the sense of quality design, setting, and low carbon approaches were shared in the first vision meetings; reflected in early CGIs and exhibitions; developed in brand workshops and engagement/consultation platforms; captured in the phase design guides and regulatory plans and delivered in the first roads, tree planting and buildings on site. This consistency and integrity formed a robust foundation for later marketing and promotional work: from housebuilders to house buyers.

Early investment delivered an effective construction access, and in turn an aspirational new entrance for cars, bikes and pedestrians, set off by early investment in both an Incubator building to support new businesses and a Club building with facilities including a Café, gym, event space and meeting rooms, both of which were designed by our long-term collaborators Allford Hall Monaghan Morris. Not only did this establish the tone for the quality of building and setting – fully reflecting the vision – but it also provided space for us to host an extensive number of business and local networking events, bringing hundreds of businesses, local residents, stakeholders and even Government Ministers to site in the earliest days of development.

Particularly for the untested market around Alconbury, it was vital we demonstrated confidence in our own development, and invested for what we wanted the site to become. Instead of handing over S.106 payments we worked closely with local partners delivering key infrastructure such as the stunning Primary School, which also ended up being designed by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris.

To complement the character of the first phase and the established landscape setting, a range of typologies were carefully set out within the design code for the first homes, including 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed dwellings. Wide frontage detached and semi-detached dwellings combine with short terraces to form a series of tree lined streets, mews and courts. Homes benefit from more generous gardens and parking provision, with larger homes overlooking the green landscaped curtains, contributing to an overall lower density.

New employment is focussing on Low Carbon, High Tech & Creative Industries, ICT, Research and Development and advanced manufacturing, engineering and processing. Commercial development continues to move forward with planning permission granted for 6 new commercial buildings which are now under construction including major UK headquarters and two business incubation centres one of which is fully occupied. Planning has also been granted for an on-site training facility linked to the Enterprise Zone and the local college and this will be open for September 2017.

We have seen significant advantage in supporting smaller regional housebuilders to create diversity and quality within the industry and have a deep understanding of the market – not just company by

company, but regional office by office. By developing a unique Joint Venture / licence structure for housebuilders, we have provided a competitive environment for them with specific advantages, such as:

- Housing plots with infrastructure 'to the red line': meaning builders can "plug in and play".
- A positive planning environment, with local partner and community support, enabling Reserved Matters applications to be approved in a timely manner.
- A cohesive approach to construction management, road layout, design and use.
- Targets and support for companies to achieve site-wide strategies on apprenticeships, local employment and training.
- Site-wide energy, transport and community planning, which are phased in delivery, and
- Wider place-based marketing.

We selected Hopkins Homes as our JV partner for the first homes, drawing on their commitment to quality, bespoke offer for the site, and shared ethos. The agreement ensures that no money is exchanged until the first homes are sold, costs are split and all works are delivered to a business plan. We meet with Hopkins regularly to review progress, ensuring that the new homes are completed and occupied in co-ordination with the first facilities coming forward including the first Primary School opening in September this year; a community shop; gym and Early Years provision. The approach ensures the programme keeps to time and budget and co-ordinates the roll-out with stakeholders, partners and local communities, ensuring cohesion and quality reflective of the vision.

Hopkins has fully recognised that the strength of place, established by our investment in time and relationships as well as in landscape and buildings, meant that Alconbury Weald was already attractive to housebuyers. This was ultimately demonstrated in their confidence to do a sales launch 6 months ahead of their show home completion. The reservations achieved on that first weekend – which saw people queuing outside over an hour before opening – with 16 homes reserved off plan – was unheard of in the north of Cambridgeshire and unparalleled in Hopkins Homes experience. The strong start was sustained with the first year of sales seeing 37 legal completions and an additional 35 homes either reserved or exchanged.

Detailed planning permission has now been granted for some 600 homes on site across 3 housing parcels, with Morris Homes and Redrow joining Hopkins on site. Both Morris and Redrow have started taking reservations with their first legal completions coming in Q4 2017.

Tenders are now out to select parties for prime parcels overlooking the Cricket Pitch and Urban&Civic also gained reserved matters consent to build houses on site under its new Civic Living brand.

Delivery – a blend of funding: The acquisition and delivery of Alconbury has been funded from Urban&Civic equity. In addition £5m of grants has been secured to support the development of the Enterprise Zone and the Home Communities Agency have recently provided a £45m loan to accelerate the delivery by funding the provision of vital infrastructure including the main spine road.

NIC Discussion Paper: Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-
Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor

March 2017

Appendix two

Waterbeach Strategic Case

Quod report for Urban&Civic



WATERBEACH STRATEGIC CASE

February 2017

Contents

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY | 1 |
| 2 | CAMBRIDGE – A HUGELY SUCCESSFUL HIGH GROWTH CITY..... | 4 |
| 3 | THE CONTEXT FOR GROWTH – CAMBRIDGE PLANNING POLICY 1950-PRESENT | 9 |
| 4 | EMPLOYMENT GROWTH..... | 12 |
| 5 | POPULATION GROWTH..... | 23 |
| 6 | LOOKING FORWARD: FUTURE GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGE..... | 31 |

1 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cambridge's thriving economy boasts science and technology research and commercialisation capabilities with global significance; a highly-skilled labour force including some of the world's most qualified and cutting-edge scientists and entrepreneurs; high levels of investment from local, national and international businesses; and a quality of life for residents among the highest in the UK.
- 1.2 Underpinning this success, both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire local authority areas have experienced rapid and above-trend growth in both employment and population over the last 30 years.
- 1.3 The exceptional growth seen in Cambridge is all the more remarkable given that planning policy was for many years characterised by hostility to development within the city's boundary. From the 1950s onwards, spatial planning policy aimed to restrict development within Cambridge in order to protect the city's special character. Dispersing population and employment growth to locations well beyond the boundaries of Cambridge city, was a policy focus over this period.
- 1.4 A policy agenda advocating Cambridge's growth is therefore relatively recent – with the focus on dispersal having continued until the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Structure Plan was published in 2003.
- 1.5 In spite of this policy legacy, growth has been rapid, including in central Cambridge locations, revealing a strong market preference for the city centre and areas immediately surrounding it.
- 1.6 In terms of employment, distinct spatial patterns have emerged. The largest scale of activity, and the most significant growth, has been focused in three key clusters: within the city centre; and just outside – to the north at and around the northern Science Parks; and to the south at and around the Biomedical Campus.
- 1.7 Dispersal policy was only really successful in areas to the south of Cambridge where existing employment clusters in biomedical sciences, a high quality road network and rail links to the broader Cambridge, Stansted, London Corridor, enabled significant employment growth.

- 1.8 Employment growth to the north of Cambridge was more difficult due to the lack of road capacity and fewer links to other existing economic centres travelling north from the city, coupled with the clear severance between the north and south of the city.
- 1.9 The constraints faced by the north of Cambridge are demonstrated by the considerable enlargement in average household sizes in northern areas, relative to the south. This, paired with shorter average commuting distances, indicates the constraints faced by employees travelling to work in the north of Cambridge in addition to the insufficient housing supply in areas commutable for northern Cambridge employees.
- 1.10 Despite these less advantageous conditions, Cambridge's northern employment cluster has thrived, playing a vital part in the economic success of the city – driving its competitiveness and global significance. Between 2000-2015, the Northern Science parks cluster contributed exceptional growth, exceeding even that of the Southern Biomedical cluster that tends to have commanded more attention.
- 1.11 With market forces bolstered by a planning policy and infrastructure development agenda now more supportive of growth, significant further employment and housing is expected in Cambridge over the next 15 years. The 2014 Greater Cambridge City Deal¹ aims to stimulate growth in order to ***“unleash the next wave of the “Cambridge Phenomenon”... while maintaining ease of movement... and high quality of life”***.² The deal sets out ambitions to: create 45,000 new jobs; accelerate delivery of 33,480 planned homes and deliver 1,000 additional homes; and deliver significant infrastructure development. In total this agenda is expected to deliver £1bn of public sector, and £4bn private sector investment in Cambridge.
- 1.12 This policy agenda is cognisant of the importance of housing and good quality infrastructure to support the labour market growth necessary to realise the ambitious jobs and economic growth envisaged for Cambridge.

¹ The Greater Cambridge City Deal, (approved by central Government June 2014). Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership.

² Ibid.



1.13 Focusing on the key economic role played by the northern cluster employment area, this report will set out the vital importance of enabling growth of the cluster in order to support the City Deal vision of economic growth set out above. Investment in housing and infrastructure will be vital to: address the distorted development patterns brought about by policies of dispersal; and address emerging issues including high household sizes. In turn this will ensure the attractiveness of the cluster for employees and businesses, and in doing so secure its long-term competitiveness and success.

2 CAMBRIDGE – A HUGE SUCCESSFUL HIGH GROWTH CITY

a) The Cambridge Economy Today

- 2.1 Highly competitive with respect to a number of key economic indicators, Cambridge is among the UK's most successful regional economies. In 2016 it was ranked the UK's third most competitive city and with improved housing it would be even better³.
- 2.2 In fact the city's significance reaches beyond the UK. Leading-edge research and commercialisation within the technology and bio-science sectors have established it as an "international hub for the knowledge economy"⁴, boasting global significance.
- 2.3 This success reflects the high numbers of innovative and tech industries, as well as key public research institutions that have invested, and subsequently grown, in the area. Cambridge today has the highest rate of patents granted per resident across all UK cities; the highest proportion of residents with higher qualifications across all of Europe; and an internationally regarded University consistently ranked in the global top five.
- 2.4 Supporting its economic success is Cambridge's desirability as a place – to live, visit and do business. The city boasts impressive quality of life rankings and a visitor economy with international significance. Its desirability is reflected in its position having the second highest average house prices of all areas in England (behind only London).
- 2.5 These economic and social strengths combined have enabled Cambridge to compete economically on a global scale and attract both the labour force and private sector investment that have sustained its continued success.
- 2.6 Distinct spatial patterns of growth have emerged – with employment concentrated in three key employment clusters:

³ UK Competitive Index, 2016. The index is based on a number of economic indicators. Although housing development is not an indicator, levels of housing provision underpin performance against several other indicators relating for example to business performance, skills and GVA.

⁴ SQW, 2011. Cambridge Cluster at 50 The Cambridge Economy: Retrospect and Prospect.

- i. North Cambridge cluster – organic growth driven by the Trinity Science Park and a culture of start ups and high growth tech companies
- ii. Central Cambridge – dominated by the University and education sectors
- iii. South Cambridge cluster – bio-medical cluster underpinned by public investment (led by the NHS and Medical Research Council) and inward investment.

b) Cambridge – a high growth city

2.7 The economic success described above has been accompanied by rapid population and employment growth over the last 30+ years. The population of the Cambridge area (Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire – as shown in Figure 1) has grown by 46% since 1985 – over double the rate of growth across England over the same time period (22%). Population growth has been highest within Cambridge City (53% growth), while South Cambridgeshire grew by 41%.

Figure 1 – Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Context Map



2.8 Employment growth has also been significantly above trend. Across Cambridge the number of jobs grew by 70% 1985-2015 – compared to 37% across England over the same time period.

2.9 The highest rate of employment growth was in South Cambridgeshire where there were two and a half times more jobs in 2015 compared to 1985. In absolute terms however the largest proportion of jobs has continued to be located in Cambridge City – with approximately 100,000 jobs in Cambridge City local authority area in 2015, compared to just over 75,000 across South Cambridgeshire local authority⁵.

⁵ BRES/ABI, 1985-2015.

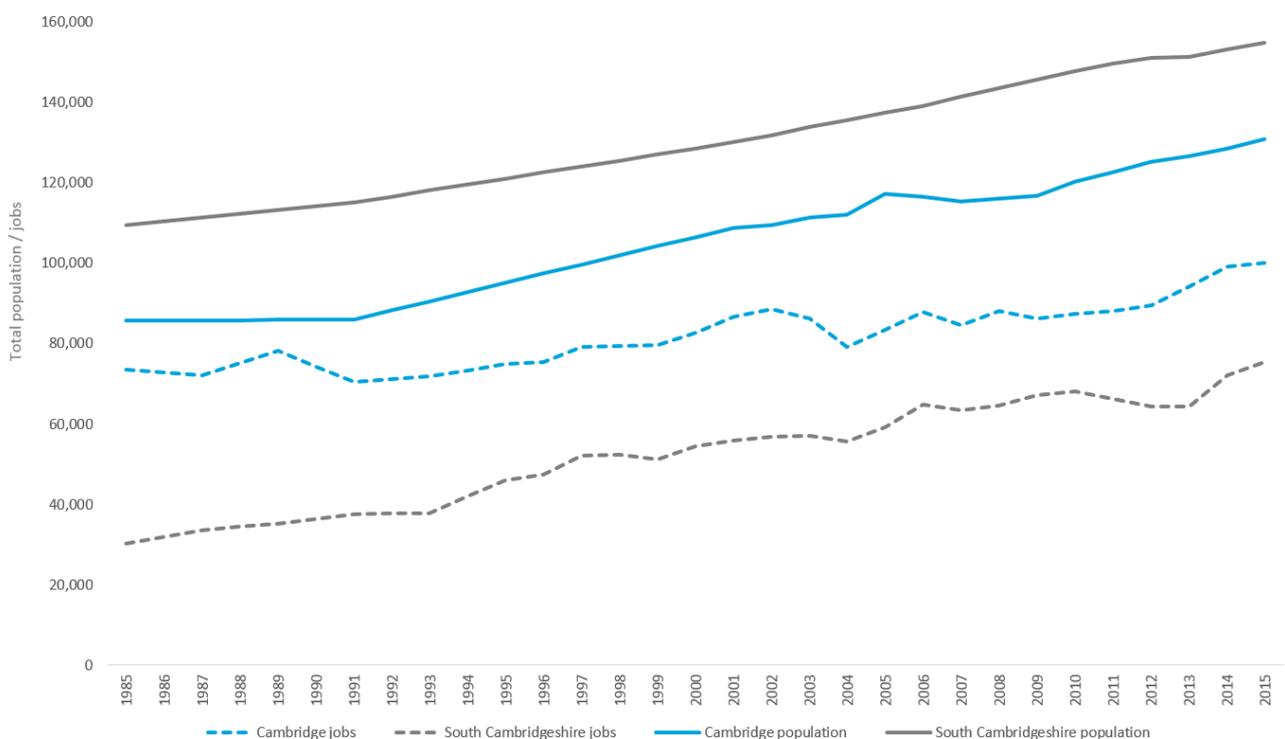
Table 1: Growth in Employment and Population – Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and England 1985-2015

| Growth 1985-2015 | Population | Jobs |
|---|------------|------|
| Cambridge City | 53% | 26% |
| South Cambridgeshire | 41% | 150% |
| Cambridge (Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire) | 46% | 70% |
| England | 22% | 38% |

Sources: ONS Mid-year population estimates; Census population data; BRES; ABI.

2.10 Figure 2 shows the total population and jobs in Cambridge and South Cambridge from 1985-2015 – demonstrating the exceedingly high and consistent growth in both areas across this time period.

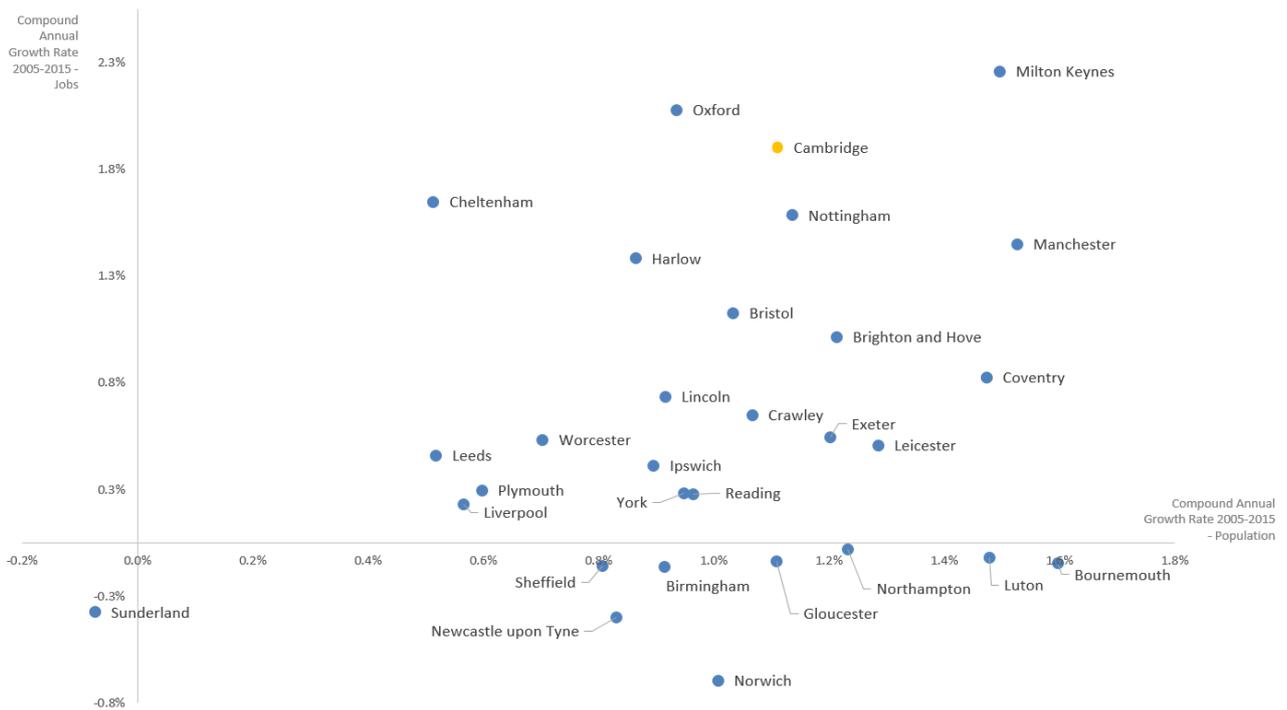
Figure 2: Population and Jobs in Cambridge 1985-2015



Sources: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2002-2015; Census 1981, 1991, 2001; BRES; ABI

2.11 Comparing growth in Cambridge with other competing UK cities over the last 10 years demonstrates the extent of the city’s outperformance – as shown in Figure 3. Only the most successful of the New Towns – Milton Keynes – has seen faster growth in both employment and population.

Figure 3: Jobs and Population Growth – UK cities 2005-2015



Sources: ONS mid-year population estimates 2005 and 2015; BRES 2015; ABI 2005

3 THE CONTEXT FOR GROWTH – CAMBRIDGE PLANNING POLICY 1950-PRESENT

- 3.1 This growth has taken place despite planning policy that has not always aligned with a growth agenda focused on the city.
- 3.2 The paragraphs below set out the planning policy context in which rapid growth has taken place – demonstrating that planning policy aligned with a growth agenda is a relatively recent phenomenon in Cambridge. Policies supporting population and employment growth have evolved only over the last 10-15 years.
- a) **1950-2003 – Dispersal of Growth to Protect Cambridge’s Special Character**
- 3.3 SQW’s 2011 ‘Cambridge Cluster at 50’ report prepared on behalf of the East of England Development Agency, provides detailed analysis of Cambridge planning policy – dating back to the 1950s⁶.
- 3.4 The report shows that planning policy in Cambridge has not always been aligned with growth. Influential strategic reporting in the 1950s and 1960s including the Holford Report (1950) and Mott Report (1969) recommended a restrictive approach to development and growth in Cambridge City, and focused on the aims of protecting the special character of Cambridge as a university town in a rural setting, and safeguarding the Green Belt.
- 3.5 Planning policies over this time period (spanning approximately five decades) therefore supported the dispersal of population and employment growth beyond the boundaries of the city and limited development was permitted in the city centre (although the Mott Report advocated exceptions for development related to science and research-based industries).

⁶ SQW, March 2011. Cambridge Cluster at 50, The Cambridge Economy: Retrospect and Prospect.

b) 2003 – The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan – Reversal of Dispersal

3.6 Only as late as 2003 did this view alter. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan⁷, published jointly by Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, reversed previous policies of dispersal of residential and employment development, placing greater emphasis on growth including through urban extensions to Cambridge enabled by release of Green Belt land.

3.7 This change to local policy change was supported more broadly through emerging national-level policy including the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Sustainable Communities Plan. The plan advocated sustainable regional growth focusing on key areas outside of London. The 'London, Stansted, Cambridge Corridor' was one of the key growth areas identified.

c) 2014 – The Greater Cambridge City Deal – Supporting a Second Wave of the Cambridge Phenomenon

3.8 Despite historical planning restrictions, growth still persisted, albeit in ways not forecast at the time. As described above, policy is now "catching up" with growth, and seeking at the same time to retrofit development to achieve a more sustainable economy, housing market and commuting patterns.

3.9 The Greater Cambridge City Deal (2014) builds on and further reinforces the growth agenda set out in the 2003 Structure Plan.

3.10 The deal established an ambitious vision for economic growth in the city which aims to "***unleash a second wave of the Cambridge Phenomenon***"⁸. The strategy, supported by a partnership between Cambridge City, Cambridgeshire County and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, the University of Cambridge and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough, was approved by central Government in June 2014.

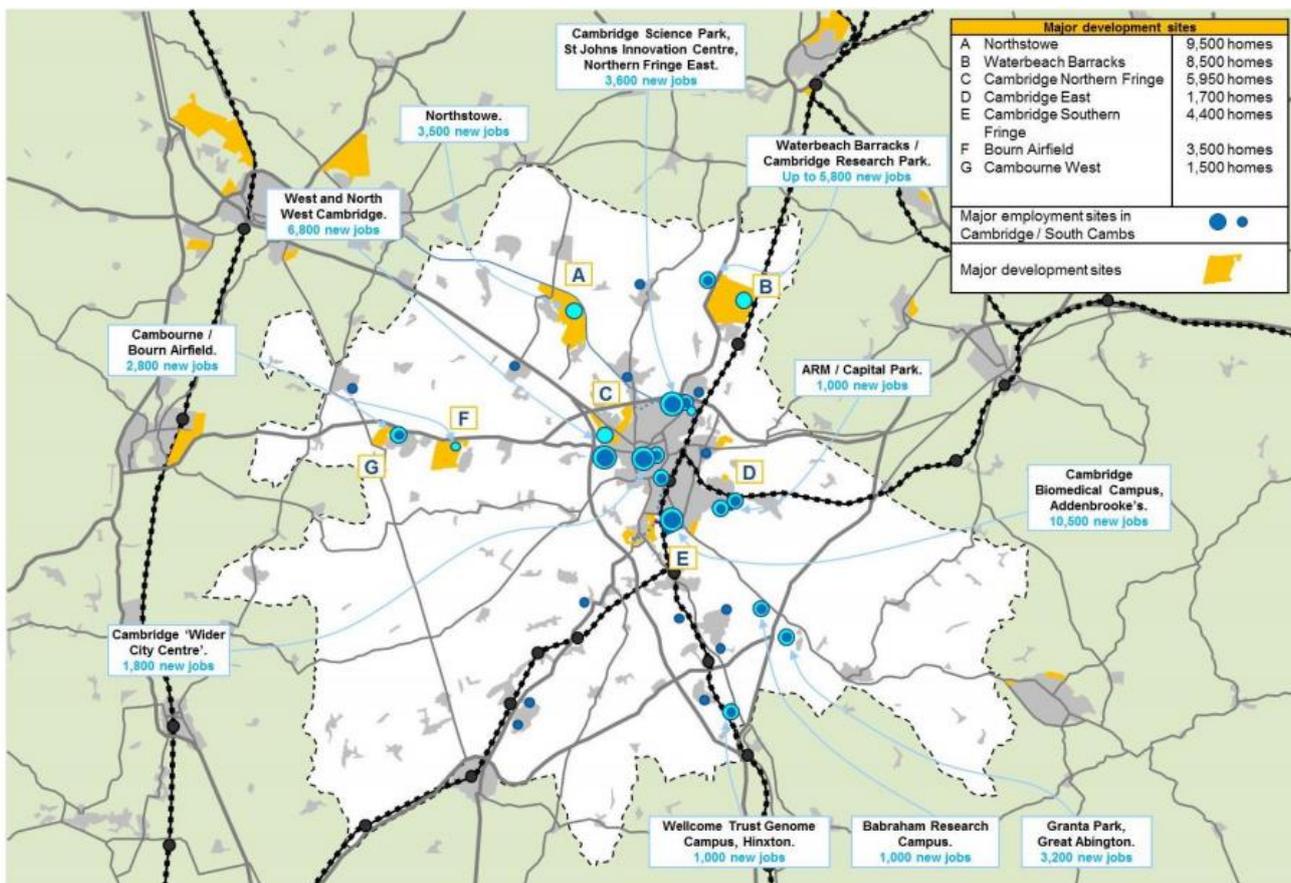
⁷ Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, 2014. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan.

⁸ Greater Cambridge City Deal, (approved by central Government June 2014). Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership.

3.11 In order to support significant economic growth focusing on the period up to 2031, the deal includes plans to: create 45,000 new jobs; accelerate delivery of 33,480 planned homes; deliver 1,000 additional homes; and implement significant infrastructure development.

3.12 In total the City Deal is expected to deliver £1bn of public sector, and £4bn private sector investment. An initial round of £100 million central government funding has already been secured in support of this vision, with a further £400 million forecast central government funding over the next 15 years.

Figure 4: GC City Deal 15 year vision



Source: Greater Cambridge City Deal, 2014. Housing and Business Growth Areas.

4 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

- 4.1 As set out above, employment development in and around Cambridge has a distinct spatial pattern with clear severance between the north and south.
- 4.2 Key to an understanding of spatial outcomes is recognition that despite strategic policy encouraging dispersal, the market has continued to show preference for locations close to the city centre, both for employment and residential development.
- 4.3 The opposing preferences for the location of homes and jobs in Cambridge in policy and market terms provide key context that informs the dynamics that have influenced spatial outcomes in Cambridge over the last 30+ years.

a) **Dispersal of Employment - The Growth of Out-of-town Business Parks**

- 4.4 Strategic planning policy up to as recently as 2003, aimed to disperse employment growth beyond Cambridge City in order to preserve what was regarded as the city's special character as a university town in a rural setting. This policy led to the development of employment floorspace in locations outside of Cambridge City where development was encouraged – and a significant number of city-fringe and out-of-town business parks were established across locations in South Cambridgeshire.
- 4.5 Figure 5 shows the locations of Cambridge's out of town business parks in fringe and peripheral locations across South Cambridgeshire.

Figure 5: Dispersal of Cambridge Employment Space – Development of out-of-town business parks



4.6 Strategic policy was successful in encouraging a dispersal of new employment space development across South Cambridgeshire, with the construction of many peripheral parks seeking tenants.

4.7 Notwithstanding, a clear pattern of tenant demand has been demonstrated subsequently. The successful, well-let parks are those in central/city peripheral locations, with large anchor tenants (for example the hospital at the Biomedical Campus), and/or a flexible approach to adapting to business and employee preferences for more mixed use employment spaces⁹. Generally the most successful

⁹ A number of parks have adapted to reflect the changing view of business as a social process rather than a narrowly economic one (SQW, 2011. Cambridge Cluster at 50, The Cambridge Economy: Retrospect and Prospect). Leading parks have increasingly introduced social spaces integrated with workspaces. Provision of social infrastructure such as

parks have also provided access to sustainable transport options – in a move away from the car dependence that was envisioned by planning policy in the 1960s and 1970s.

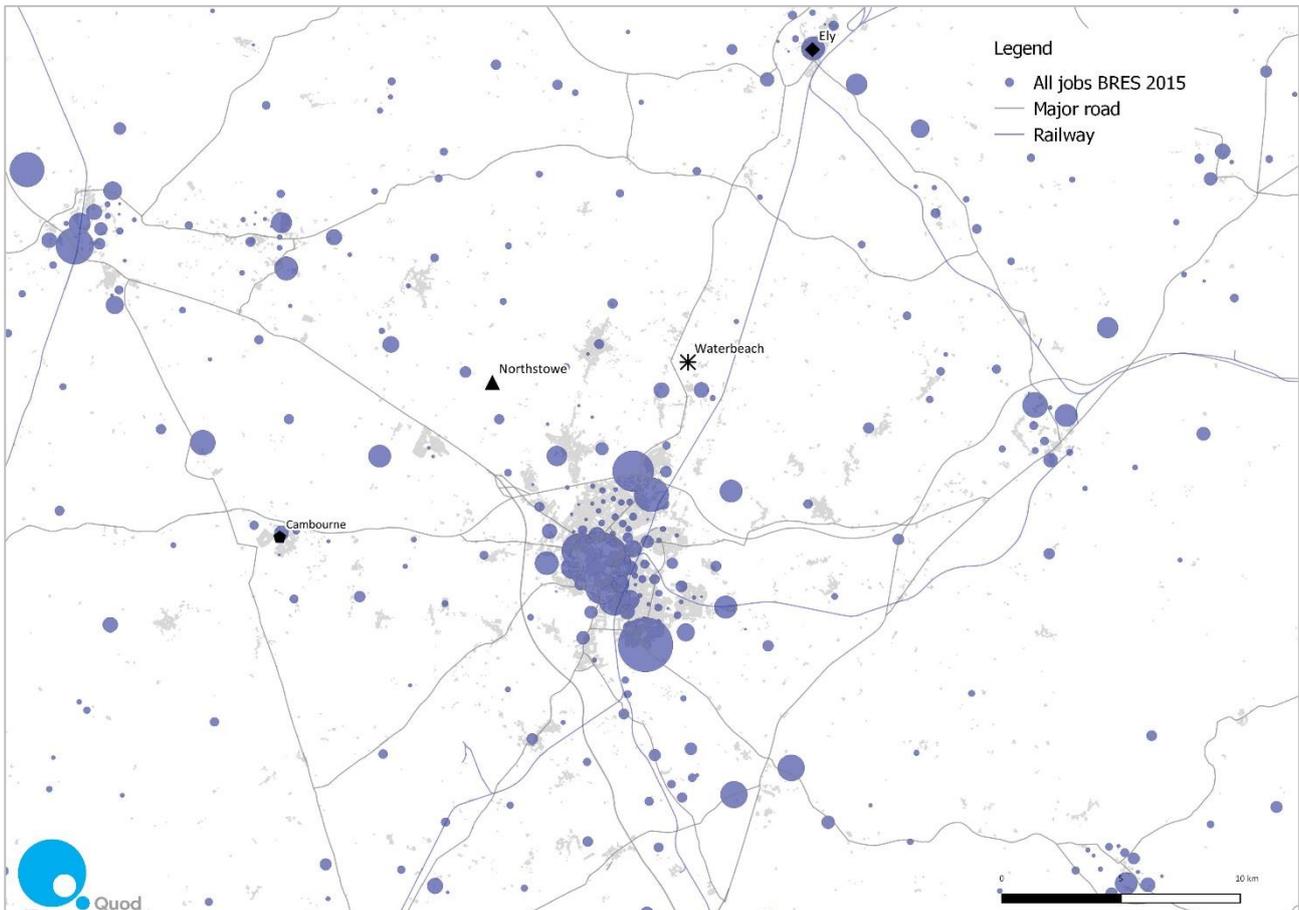
b) Market Preference – Employment close to the City Centre

- 4.8 As a consequence, not all business parks have performed equivalently. Other than parks to the south of Cambridge with strong technological and/or specialist research associations, the remaining peripheral parks typically remain low density and support materially lower levels of employment than envisaged. Most tend to be under-let with unimplemented planning permissions to expand.
- 4.9 Market demand for employment space has remained higher in the city centre and at the parks located closest to the city – this is reflected by the higher employment densities and higher rents in city centre locations. Qualitative research carried out by SQW found out-of-town locations are generally seen as less attractive to businesses “with some perception that businesses move there from necessity rather than preference”¹⁰.
- 4.10 Despite policy support for dispersal, Cambridge City Centre has maintained key significance as the main employment centre across the Cambridge area, and the volume of employment in the city centre has continued to grow.
- 4.11 Figures 6 shows the spatial distribution of Cambridge employment in 2015 demonstrating the high concentration of employment in and around the city centre.

cafes, gyms, childcare and retail alongside office and other workspace creates spaces with multiple uses that are more attractive to both businesses and employees.

¹⁰ SQW, 2011. Cambridge Cluster at 50, The Cambridge Economy: Retrospect and Prospect. (Paragraph C1.72).

Figure 6: Cambridge Spatial Distribution of Employment, 2015



Source: BRES, 2015

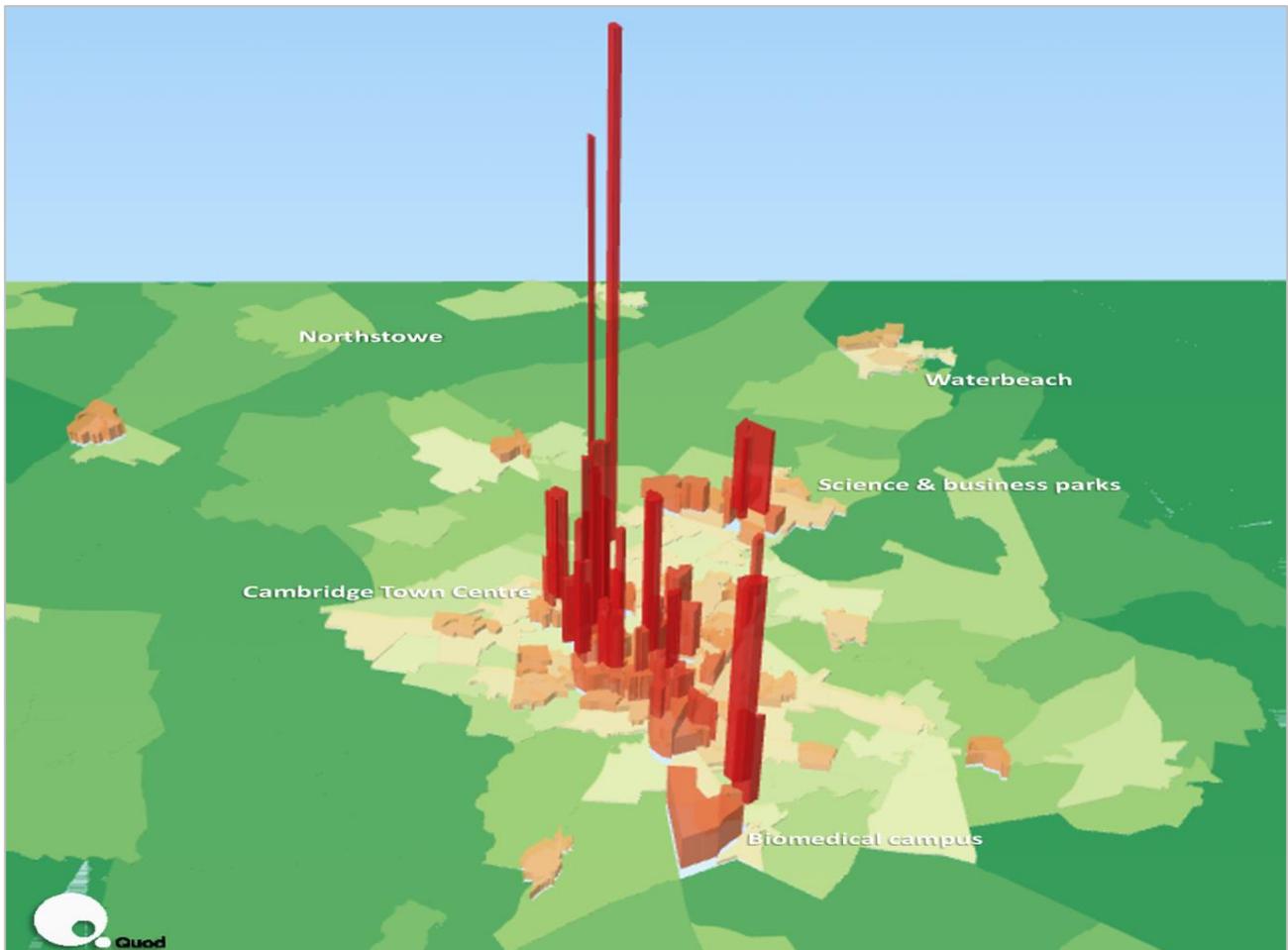
c) Cambridge's Key Employment Clusters

4.12 Jobs density analysis shows Cambridge's centralised employment is largely clustered in three key locations:

- Cambridge City Centre
- In and around the northern Science Parks – the 'northern science parks cluster'
- In and around the southern Biomedical Campus – the 'southern biomedical cluster'.

4.13 Figure 7 shows job density per square metre, showing the clustering of employment in central Cambridge, and the northern and southern clusters.

Figure 7: Cambridge jobs density, 2011



Source: Census 2011, Jobs density (jobs per sqm) – all jobs

- 4.14 Over the past 15 years in particular, employment growth within these clusters has been uneven with the highest proportion of growth concentrated in the fringes – 71% growth in the north and 60% to the south compared to just 7% growth in Cambridge city centre area (as shown in Table 2).
- 4.15 Approximately 40% of all jobs growth in Cambridge 2005-2015 was within the North Cambridge Science Parks and South Cambridge Biomedical campus clusters.

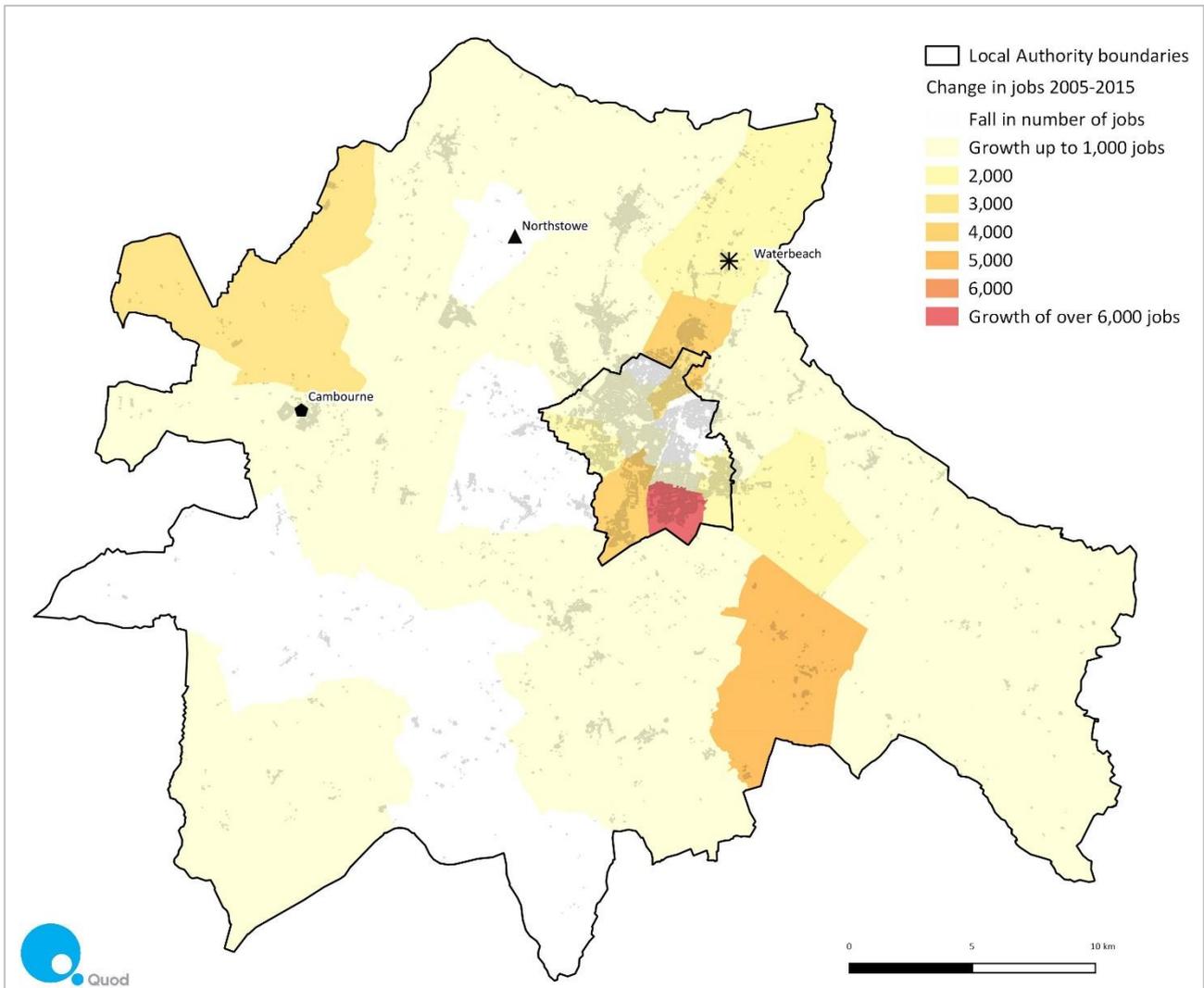
Table 2: Employment Clusters Growth 2000-2015

| | 2005 | 2015 | % Change 2005-2015 |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|--------------------|
| Cambridge City (LA) | 83,400 | 100,200 | 20% |
| South Cambridgeshire (LA) | 59,300 | 75,400 | 27% |
| Northern Science parks cluster | 12,500 | 18,300 | 71% |
| Cambridge City Centre area | 41,100 | 44,000 | 7% |
| Southern Biomedical cluster | 10,800 | 17,400 | 60% |

Source: BRES 2005, 2015; Employment areas based on 'best-fit' ward areas.

- 4.16 This pattern of growth is shown in absolute terms in Figure 8 which shows the change in number of jobs in each ward area across Cambridge over the 10 years 2005-2015.

Figure 8: Jobs Growth by ward area 2005-2015



Source: BRES 2005 and 2015

- 4.17 Again this figure demonstrates the particularly significant growth in the north and south employment clusters.
- 4.18 The business parks to the south have benefitted from the loosening of policy that has taken place so that several have grown over recent years, including Granta Park, the Babraham Institute and Hinxton Wellcome Campus. These parks have also benefitted from better transport and the increasing importance of functional links with London.

4.19 In addition there has been high growth at Cambourne business park, driven by South Cambridgeshire Council's relocation to the park as an anchor tenant. However a number of buildings remain under-let in Cambourne.

d) Cambridge's Northern and Southern Employment Clusters – Differentiated Dynamics of Growth

4.20 As outlined above, a significant proportion of employment in Cambridge is located within its northern and southern employment clusters, and both clusters have experienced rapid growth over the last 15 years.

4.21 However due to existing settlement patterns and infrastructure provision, the policy and economic processes that have driven growth at each location have been qualitatively different. Policies of dispersal benefitted the south disproportionately relative to the north as transport infrastructure, existing development, and links to broader economic hubs were more conducive to employment growth to the south of the city.

- *Northern Science Parks Cluster*

4.22 Trinity College applied for planning permission for the development of the formerly derelict land that is now the Cambridge Science Park in 1971, and the first business moved in in 1973. Companies were initially attracted to the Park due to its proximity to the research capabilities within the University. By the end of the 1970s there were already 25 businesses on site.

4.23 Over the last 45 years the park has adapted and grown and supported the changing needs of its tenants and allowed them to grow organically through private investment. This has driven the expansion of the park to include new buildings and on-site facilities including a conference centre, restaurant and fitness centre.

4.24 It has also led to a significant densification of the Park, allowing it to accommodate more businesses and jobs in a way that was not anticipated. The first generation of buildings were relatively low density one and two storey buildings with lots of car parking and low plot ratios. These are gradually being replaced by taller buildings with less parking and as a result, far from being "full" and dispersing growth to other locations, the Park is able to provide more floorspace. This reflects the strong market

demand to be in this location, rather than at the consented business parks that are dispersed around Cambridge.

- 4.25 A further sign of the strength of the area and its attractiveness for indigenous business growth, was the opening of the neighbouring St John's Innovation Centre in 2005. This provides dedicated start-up and incubation space and has provided many of the tenants for the Science Park (as well as other locations).
- 4.26 The Science Park and Innovation Centre have therefore played a central part in contributing to the success of the "Cambridge Phenomenon" and establishing Cambridge as an internationally competitive location for science and technology that has earned it a reputation as "Silicon Fen". They have enabled the development of a start-up culture in the north of Cambridge, supporting multiple start-ups and spin out enterprises.
- 4.27 Looking forward, further growth is planned within the cluster. Significant densification of uses including adding additional floors to low-rise buildings will increase employment floorspace and employment density on site.
- 4.28 Planning permission has been granted for a new hotel on site, and further plans for the densification of existing buildings will provide an increased quantum and modern employment space, create additional jobs growth on site, and foster the tangible research and economic benefits that the clustering of science and technology firms allows.
- 4.29 A brief history of key dates in the history of the development of the northern Science Parks cluster is set out in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Growth of North Cambridge Science Parks Cluster – Key Dates

- 1969 – Mott report recommends expansion of science-based industry in Cambridge to take advantage of concentration of scientific expertise/equipment
- 1970 – Science Park founded by Trinity College in north Cambridge – a move away from traditional low-development policy. The beginnings of what is now known as the Cambridge Phenomenon / Cluster / Silicon Fen
- 1987 – St John’s Innovation Centre founded
- 2000 – Expansion of Science Park with the Trinity Centre – including social infrastructure - a nursery, gym, restaurant and bar
- 2000 – Research partnership established between Cambridge and MIT
- 2002 – First Cambridge Research Park buildings constructed
- 2003 – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan published supporting more growth
- 2005 – Science Park Innovation Centre opened

- *Southern Biomedical Cluster*

- 4.30 The southern biomedical cluster has grown from the Addenbrooke’s hospital site – the hospital having moved to its current south of Cambridge location in 1962.
- 4.31 The process of growth to the south has been qualitatively different to the market-led growth in the north of Cambridge. Public planning policy, including the 2003 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, lent support to the growth of the area and public policy successfully advocated Council release of Green Belt land for the area’s expansion and growth.
- 4.32 Following this, development was driven largely by the NHS trust, which successfully attracted large-scale inward public investment and further investment by the Medical Research Council.
- 4.33 Its success has also been driven by inward investment and relocations, in contrast to the more organic nature of growth in the northern cluster. The area’s reputation as a bio-medical cluster has attracted significant private sector inward investment as firms have sought to benefit from clustering effects. Large scale investment includes investment by AstraZeneca which is due to open new headquarters on the campus site in 2016, while a new Papworth Hospital will relocate to the cluster and is due to open in Spring 2018.

4.34 Growth of this cluster has also been enabled by the high quality road network to the south of Cambridge that links the biomedical cluster with the broader Cambridge, Stansted, London Corridor. The impacts of these travel links on the success of the cluster are set out in further detail below.

4.35 Key dates in the development of the biomedical cluster are set out in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Growth of South Cambridge Biomedical Cluster – key dates

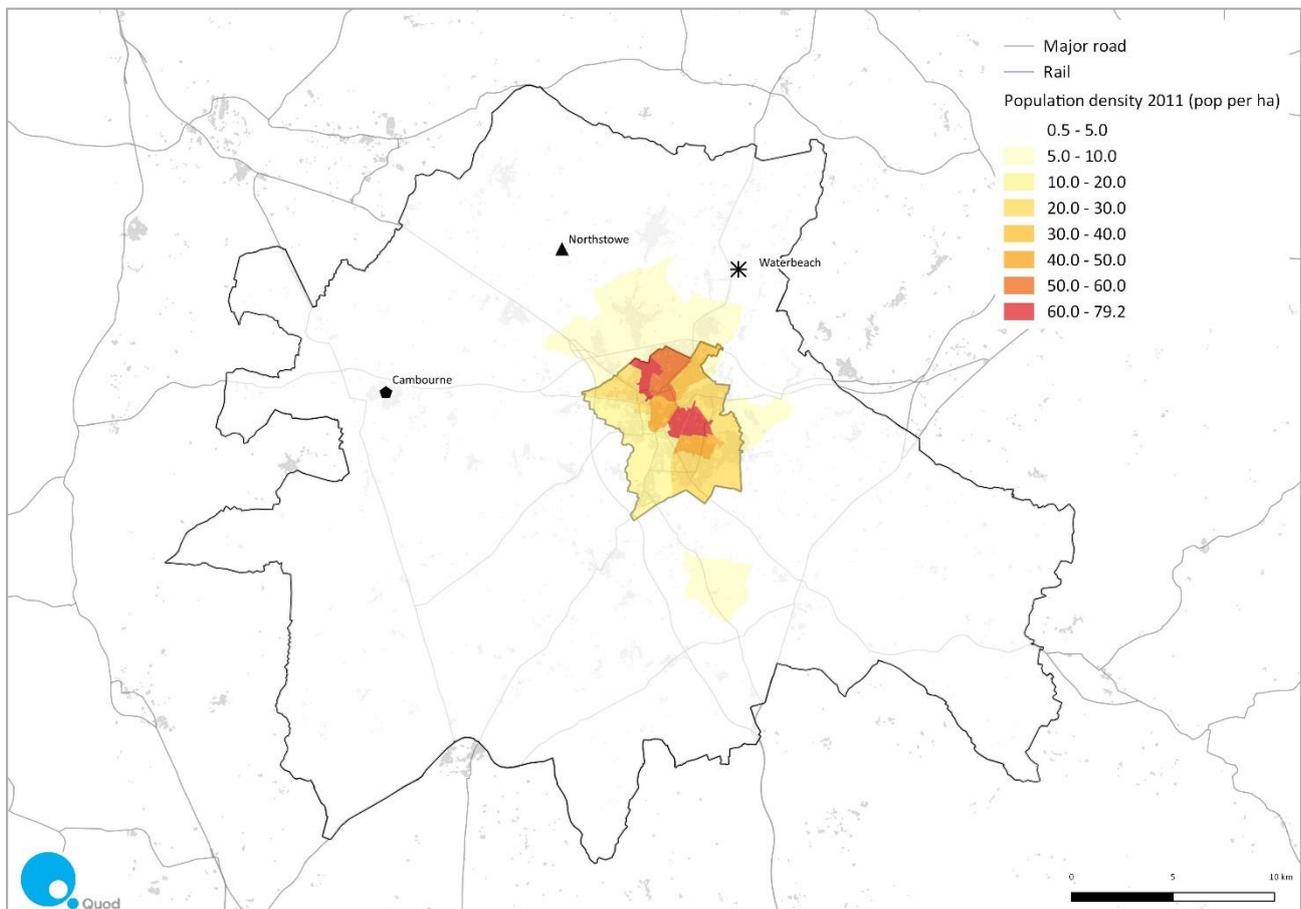
- 1962 – first phase of Addenbrooke’s hospital opens on site
- 1998 – Cambridge Institute for Medical Research (University of Cambridge) established
- 1999 – "Addenbrooke’s: the 2020 Vision“ published – advocating the extension of the hospital into Green Belt
- 2003 – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan incorporates the 2020 vision and development of the southern fringe
- 2006 – Council release of Green Belt for development and
- 2007 – planning permission granted for c. 215,000 sqm clinical, biomedical and research space
- 2015 – Plans for new Papworth hospital and AstraZeneca headquarters progressed

5 POPULATION GROWTH

a) Patterns of Housing and Population Growth

- 5.1 As well dispersal of employment growth, planning policy in Cambridge up to as late as 2003 encouraged the dispersal of the city's population growth beyond its boundaries. Policies focused on creating new settlements outside of the city centre. Despite this policy preference, analysis of the spatial dynamics of population growth demonstrates continued market preference for city centre homes with almost half (46%) of the area's population living within the relatively small area within Cambridge city's boundary.
- 5.2 As shown in Figure 11, the highest densities of population across Cambridge are within the city centre.

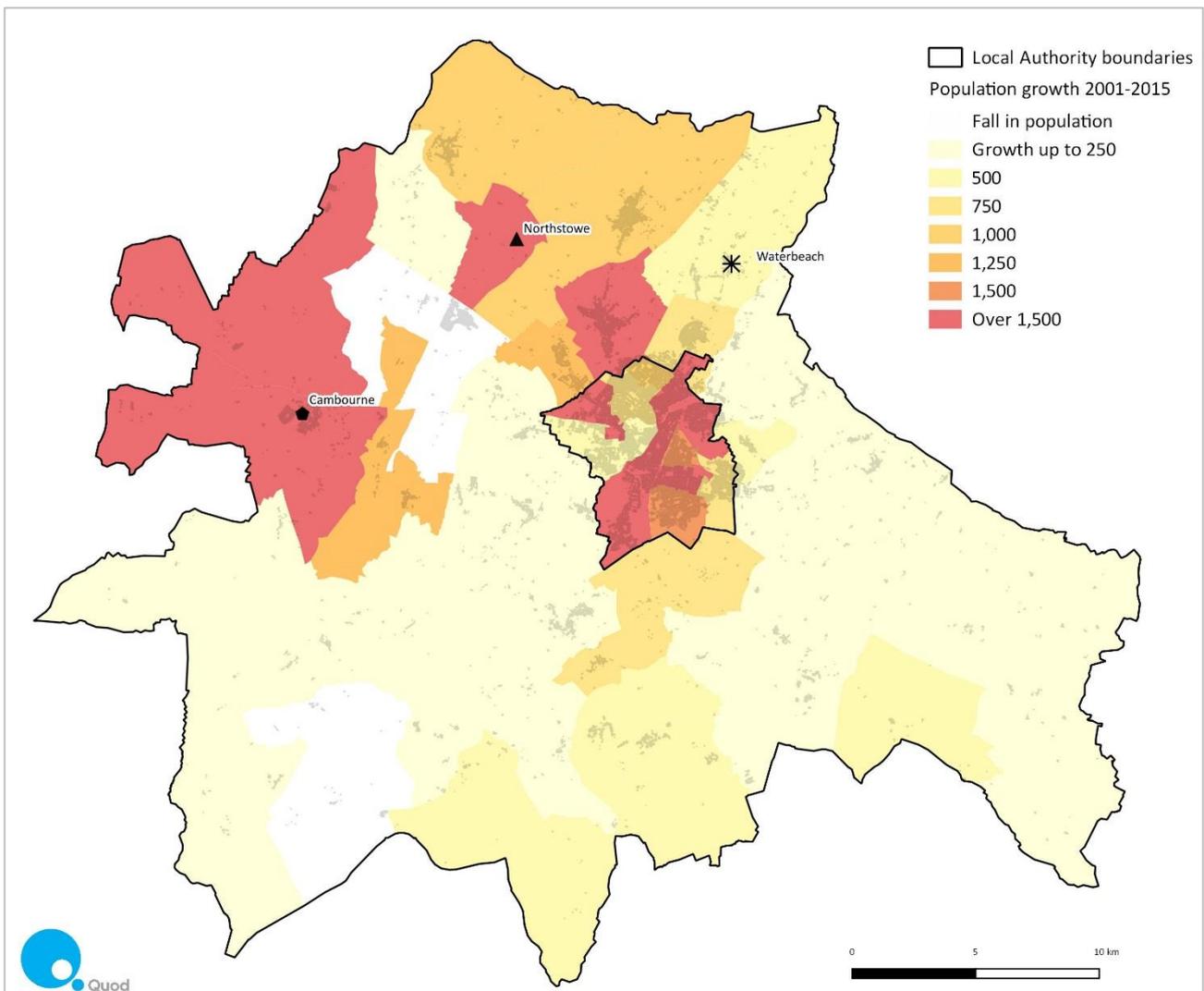
Figure 11: Population Density (population per ha), 2011



5.3 Population growth over the 10 years 2001-2011 (as shown in Figure 12) shows growth has been highest in:

- The city centre
- Areas to the north of Cambridge

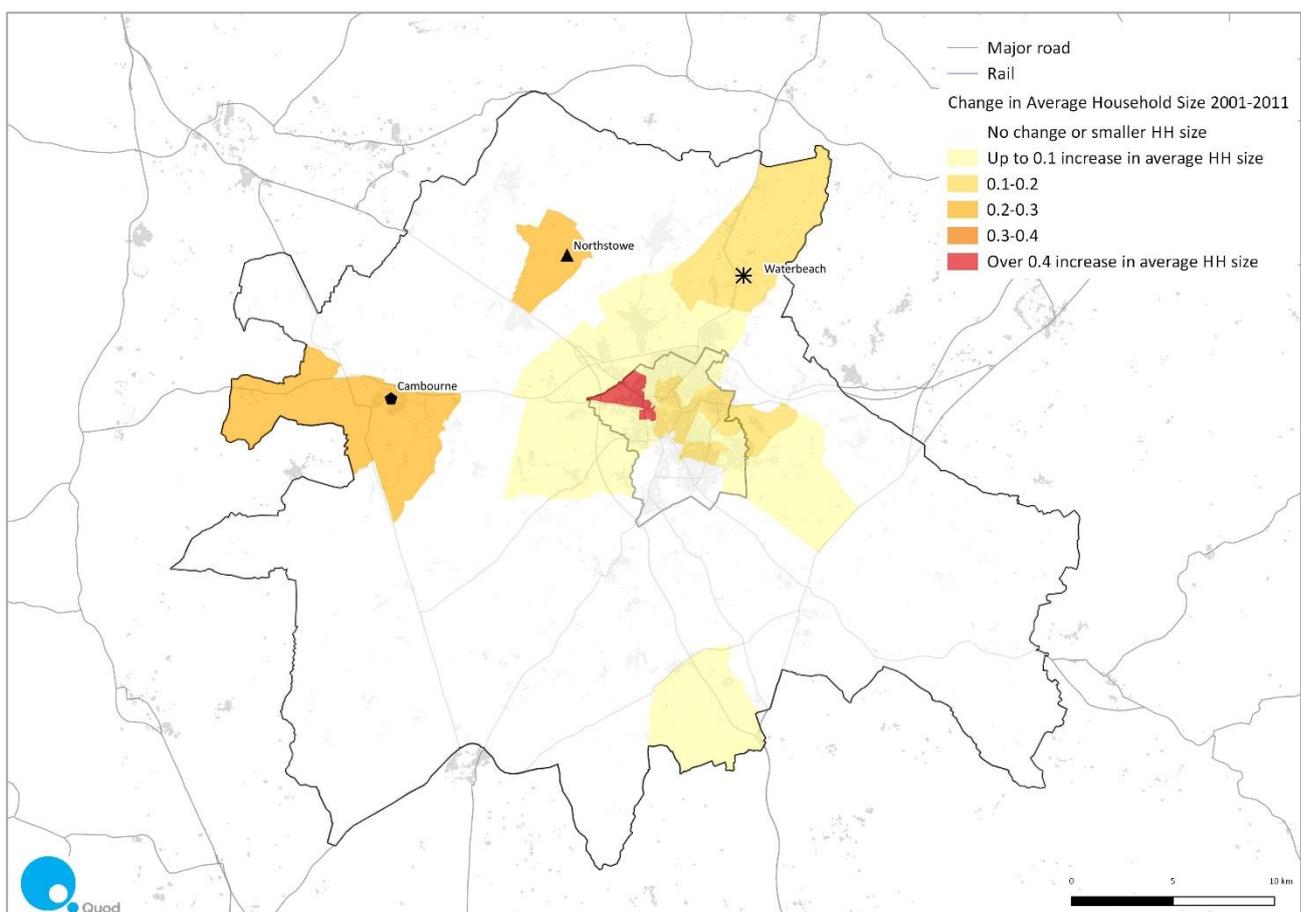
Figure 12: Population Growth by ward area 2001-2015



Source: Census 2001; ONS mid-year population estimates 2015.

- 5.4 Whilst some of the growth to the north of Cambridge is a result of housing development in planned new settlements (including at Histon, Longstanton and Cambourne) – a significant amount of population growth is a result of increases in average household size in areas such as Waterbeach where average household size increased from 2.45 to 2.63 between 2001-2011. In many areas north of Cambridge the increase in household size has been much more rapid than the change across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire as a whole – where household size increased by 0.04 (from 2.52 to 2.56) over the same period.
- 5.5 A trend towards larger household sizes in the north of Cambridge is indicative of demand exceeding supply which leads to more shared households.
- 5.6 The change in household size across all ward areas between 2001-2011 is shown in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13: Change in Average Household Size 2001-2011

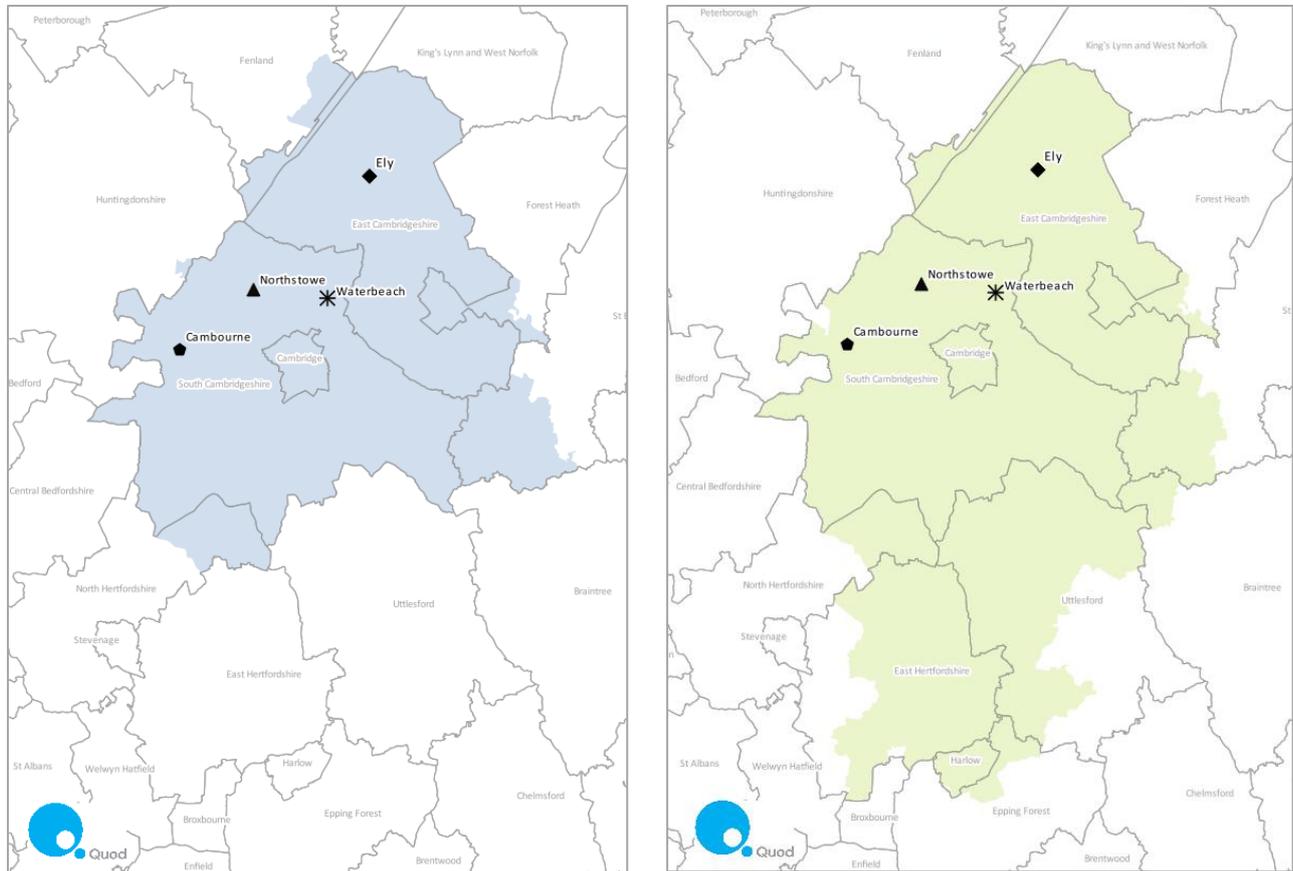


b) Commuting Patterns

- 5.7 Of key relevance to the spatial dynamics of population growth set out above is analysis of Cambridge's commuting patterns. All things being equal, employees generally prefer to live closer to their place of work. This preference is revealed in the concentration of Cambridge's population in its city centre, and the growth in populations living close to the northern and southern employment clusters as set out above.
- 5.8 Commuting patterns in Cambridge provide insight into the constraints employees face when travelling to work in Cambridge's key employment areas.
- 5.9 Analysis of the change in the Cambridge Travel to Work Area (TTWA)¹¹ over the 10 years 2001-2011 shows a growth in the spatial extent of the Cambridge labour market area to the south. The area has extended over the period 2001-2011, stretching further south beyond South Cambridgeshire and into the broader Cambridge Stansted London Corridor.
- 5.10 This increase in the size of the labour market catchment area to the south reflects increased commuting from Hertfordshire and Essex into to south Cambridge employment areas, and vice versa, indicating the growth in significance of the broader London / Stansted / Cambridge corridor – facilitated by the high quality road links and frequent rail services connecting these areas. Longer distance commuting into Cambridge from the south is likely to have increased further since the 2011 Census. The rail service from King's Cross was significantly upgraded in 2013 and this has brought more of London within a reasonable commuting time.
- 5.11 There has however been little change to the extent of the TTWA to the north of Cambridge. This, considered alongside the growth in household sizes in areas to the north of Cambridge between 2001-2011, suggests the north of Cambridge is constrained by the road network and lack of rail links serving areas to the north of Cambridge that would allow travel to the city from further afield.

¹¹ Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) are national statistics produced by the ONS to define areas where 75% of people live and work. These areas provide an approximation of the labour market areas across England and provide understanding therefore of the spatial dynamics of living and working across a given labour market.

Figure 14: Cambridge Labour Market Areas – TTWAs 2001-2011



5.12 The sustained tighter catchment area to the north is arguably more sustainable and more should be done to maintain rather than expand it. The aim should be to accommodate more people in decent housing within the existing commuting zone and as close to Cambridge as possible. At present, housing delivery is not keeping up. Northstowe is helpful, but the environment and market positioning in the initial phase of disposals to major housebuilders is squarely on family housing. The guided bus coming east from Huntingdon and St Ives provides access into the Science Park but cycling distances are longer. The road network takes traffic to the west of Cambridge. The proposed lakeside environment at Waterbeach, building upon the legacy of the Royal Engineers and within a village settlement, will provide for a materially higher proportion of PRS housing which accords more directly with the requirements of the younger, employment confident, population that the Science Park tends to support.

- 5.13 The A14/A10 Milton Roundabout is congested as a result of traffic turning off the A14 and heading south into Cambridge along the A10. The A14 improvements which are currently underway will improve journey reliability and may therefore increase commuting flows to and through the Milton Roundabout.
- 5.14 It is therefore essential that more journeys around the north Cambridge area are made by modes that avoid the junction altogether. This will be particularly important when the new North Cambridge railway station opens. Development at Waterbeach will support these requirements. Most residents can be expected not to travel by car to the Science Park and North Cambridge station – they will use the bus, or cycle as this will be the quickest route.
- 5.15 The labour market catchment analysis presented above is supported by commuting preferences of employees working in the North Cambridge Science Park and Southern Biomedical Campus employment clusters.
- 5.16 Analysis of 2011 Census commuting data shows a very clear picture:
- North Cambridge Science park employees are more likely to live in central Cambridge city locations or to the north of Cambridge City than in South Cambridgeshire;
 - Biomedical campus employees more likely to commute from the south, and further afield in southern areas of South Cambridgeshire and further afield.
- 5.17 The level of north south separation is extremely high and reflects the recognised commuting challenges within the city at present. Moreover, the existing practice of living in Waterbeach and working on the Science Park was already well established by 2011. The north south separation will have been exacerbated by recent planned housing growth on the southern fringe of the city.

Figure 15: Commuting to North Cambridge Science Parks

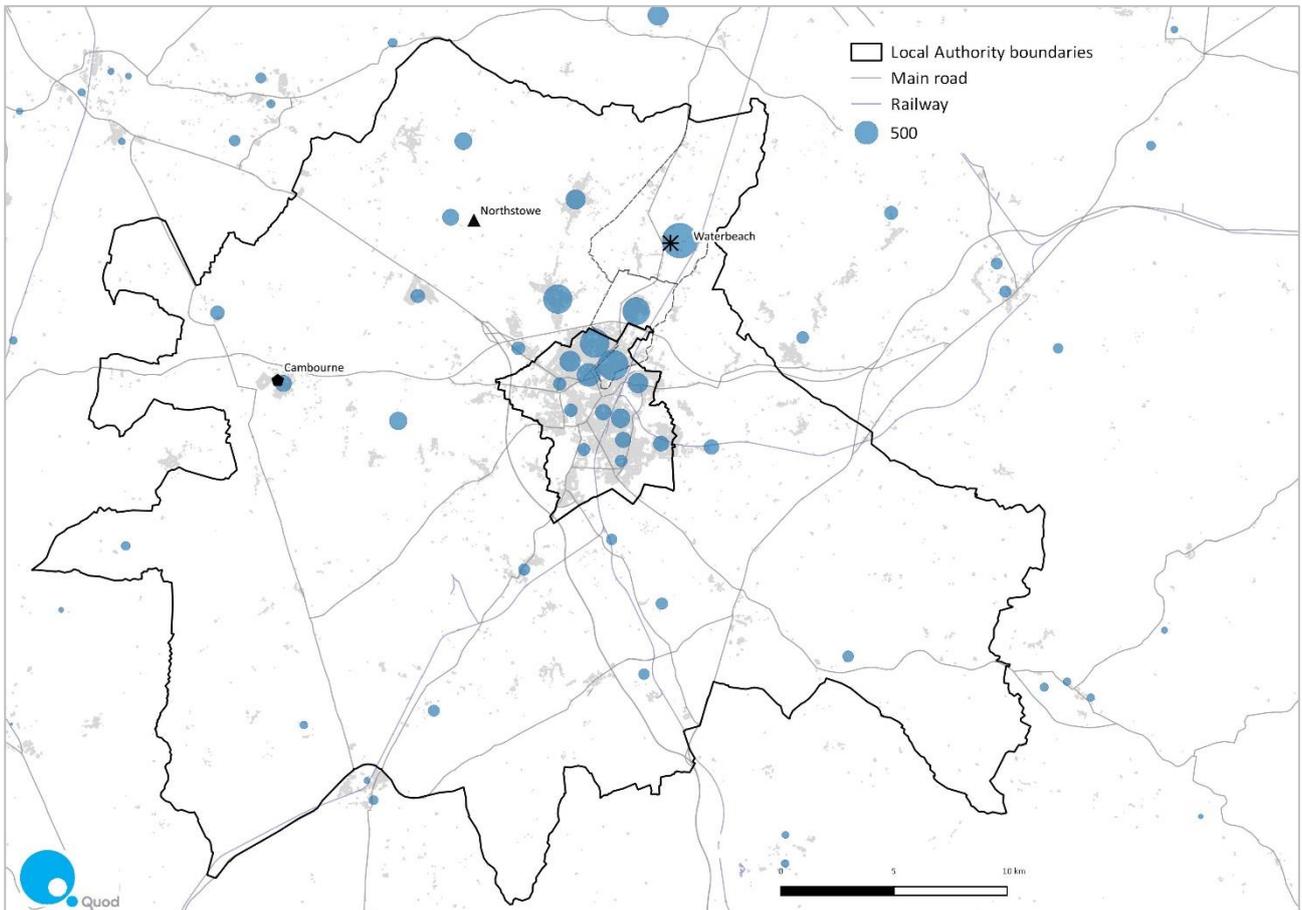
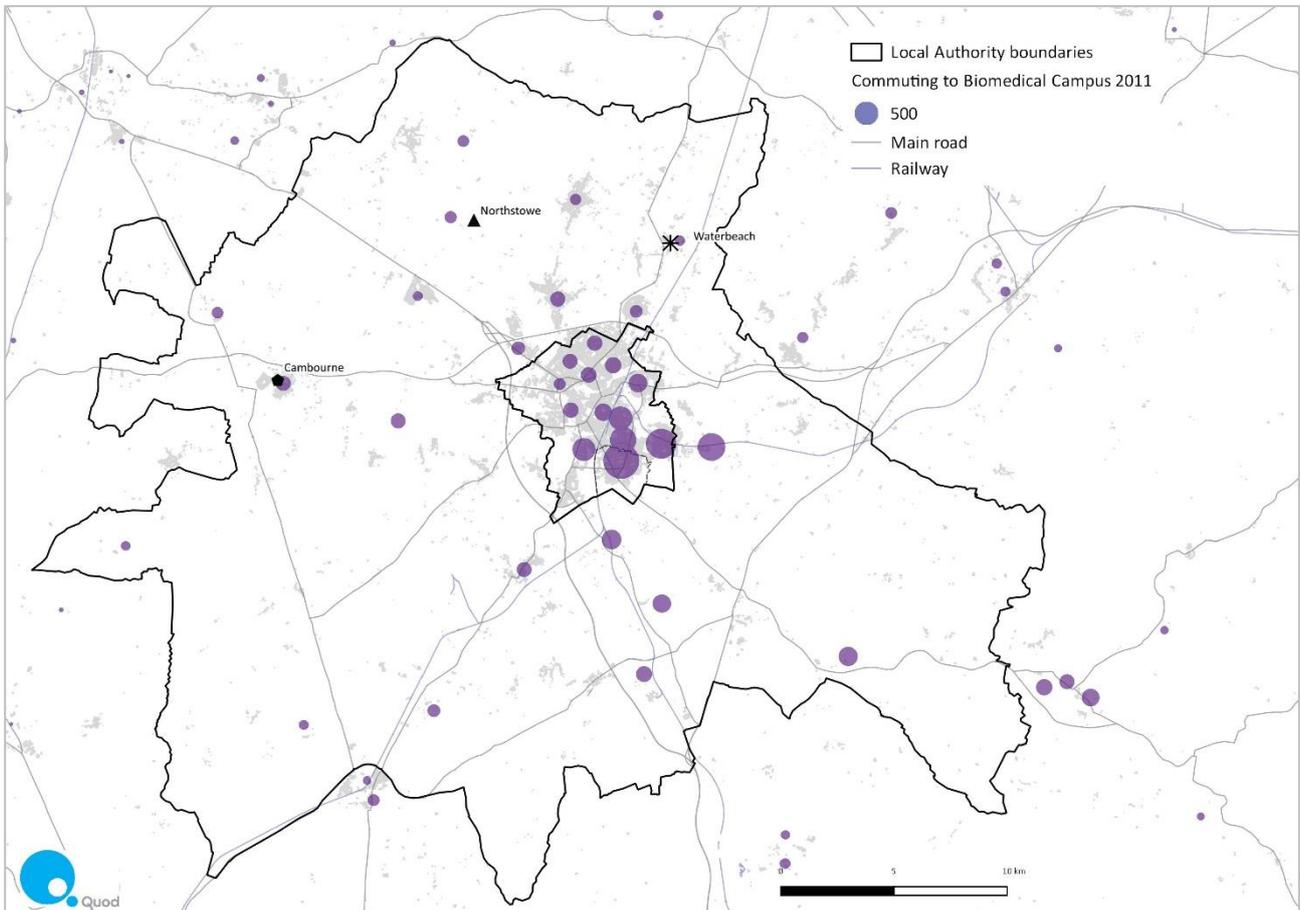


Figure 16: Commuting to South Cambridge Biomedical Cluster



5.18 The increasingly distinct commuting behaviours of North and South Cambridge employment cluster employees provide further evidence supporting the constraints imposed by the lack of transport infrastructure serving the north of Cambridge.

6 LOOKING FORWARD: FUTURE GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGE

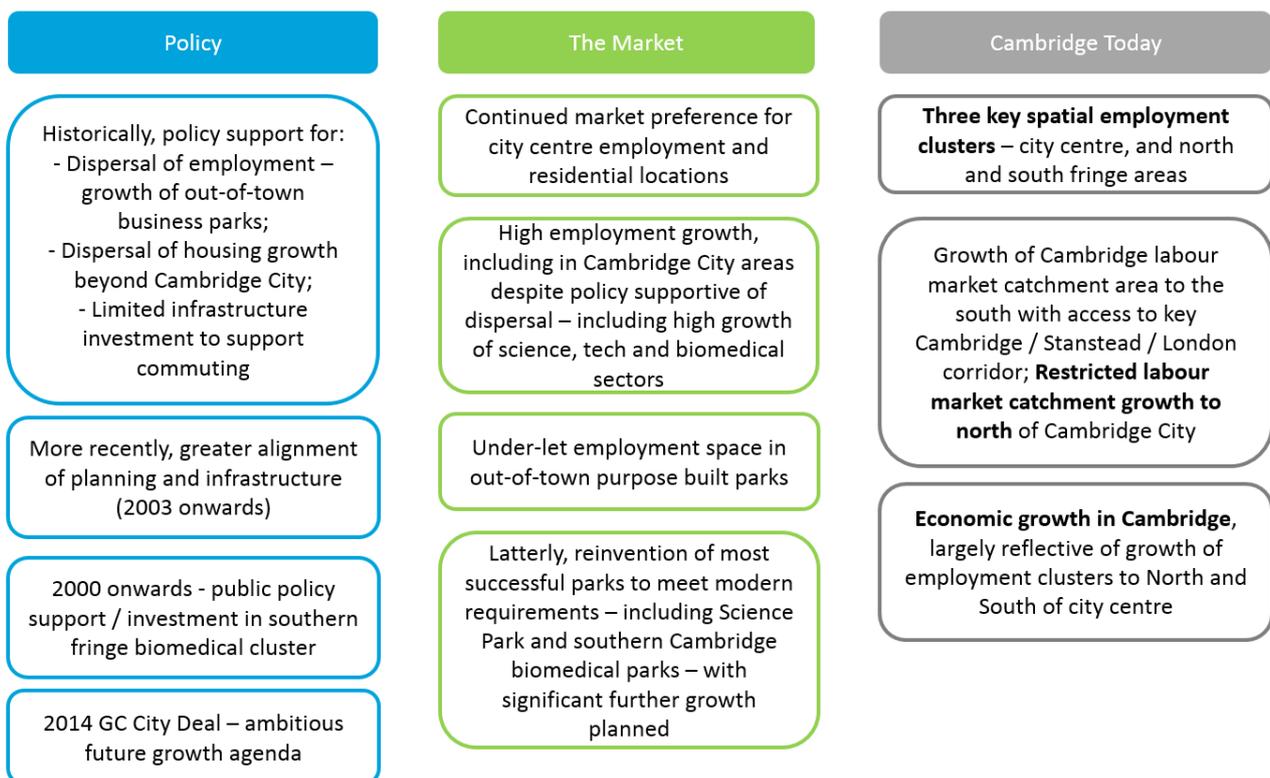
- 6.1 The interaction between strategic planning policy in and around Cambridge, provision of infrastructure and market-led development, have strongly influenced the spatial dynamics of growth in Cambridge over the last 30+ years. Business parks and new settlements in out of town locations have been established reflecting a policy focus on dispersal, but the market has consistently shown a preference for city centre locations and Cambridge City has continued to grow.
- 6.2 Three key central employment clusters have developed - in the city centre, a northern cluster in and around the science parks, and a southern Cambridge biomedical cluster – with growth over the last 15 years being focused in the latter two areas. Population growth has been focused in central and northern areas – some of which has been as a result of planned out of town settlements, however the north of Cambridge has also seen higher growth in average household sizes than elsewhere in the study area.
- 6.3 Infrastructure has also played a role in spatial development patterns, as revealed by analysis of commuting behaviour. The significance of the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor has increased over the years 2001-2011– with growth in the number of employees commuting across the corridor by road and by rail – in the main to southern and central Cambridge employment areas well-served by these links.
- 6.4 Commuting patterns to the northern employment cluster however are more constrained as a result of a lack of high quality road or rail infrastructure links into northern Cambridge.

6.5 Growth in Cambridge is projected to continue at a rapid pace over the next 25 years:

- Projected 20% growth in population (2014-2039)¹²
- 60,000 jobs growth (2009-31)¹³
- 34,480 new homes (2014-2031)¹⁴

6.6 There is now an opportunity to align spatial planning policy, the market and new infrastructure provision more closely to enable this growth to take place more sustainably and to promote a pattern of development that fills in some of the gaps that have arisen as a result of past choices.

Figure 17: Policy, the Market and Cambridge Today – Summary



¹² ONS 2014-based sub-national population projections, 2016.

¹³ Oxford Economic / SQW 'Cambridge Cluster at 50' report, 2010.

¹⁴ Greater Cambridge City Deal, 2014.

6.7 Policy is unambiguous with respect to the key role of delivering the households and employment space required in order to support economic objectives of achieving continued competitiveness in Cambridge and maintaining and growing the city's significance as a global economic hub. The north of the city needs policies that offer the opportunities to grow that the south has enjoyed for a longer period.

a) The Role of the North Cambridge Employment Cluster

6.8 Development in north Cambridge is key to realising the future growth required to underpin Cambridge's continued economic success. As one of the city's three key employment clusters, with status as a science and technology research and innovation cluster with global significance, protecting existing activity and enabling continued growth will be critical to the success of the broader Cambridge economy.

6.9 Future growth is already planned, with the original phase of development having recently been demolished with plans for new modern employment space with space for a higher number of businesses and employees. Planning permission has also been granted for a hotel on site. The cluster is expected to continue to attract international investment while also providing space for local businesses and university spinouts to develop.

6.10 Significant market-driven employment growth planned within the northern science and business parks will support the expansion of the city's leading-edge science and technology industries – and in turn its competitiveness and economic growth. However realising this growth requires significant growth in the housing supply, and infrastructure improvements to enable sustainable travel to the site.

b) Key Challenges

6.11 Historically the northern cluster has not benefitted from the levels of public investment and policy support that for example has supported growth at the southern biomedical cluster. Under-investment in the transport network in particular to the north of Cambridge has constrained the growth of Cambridge's labour market area to the north, and in combination with insufficient new housing development in accessible locations this has contributed a higher average household sizes in northern areas.

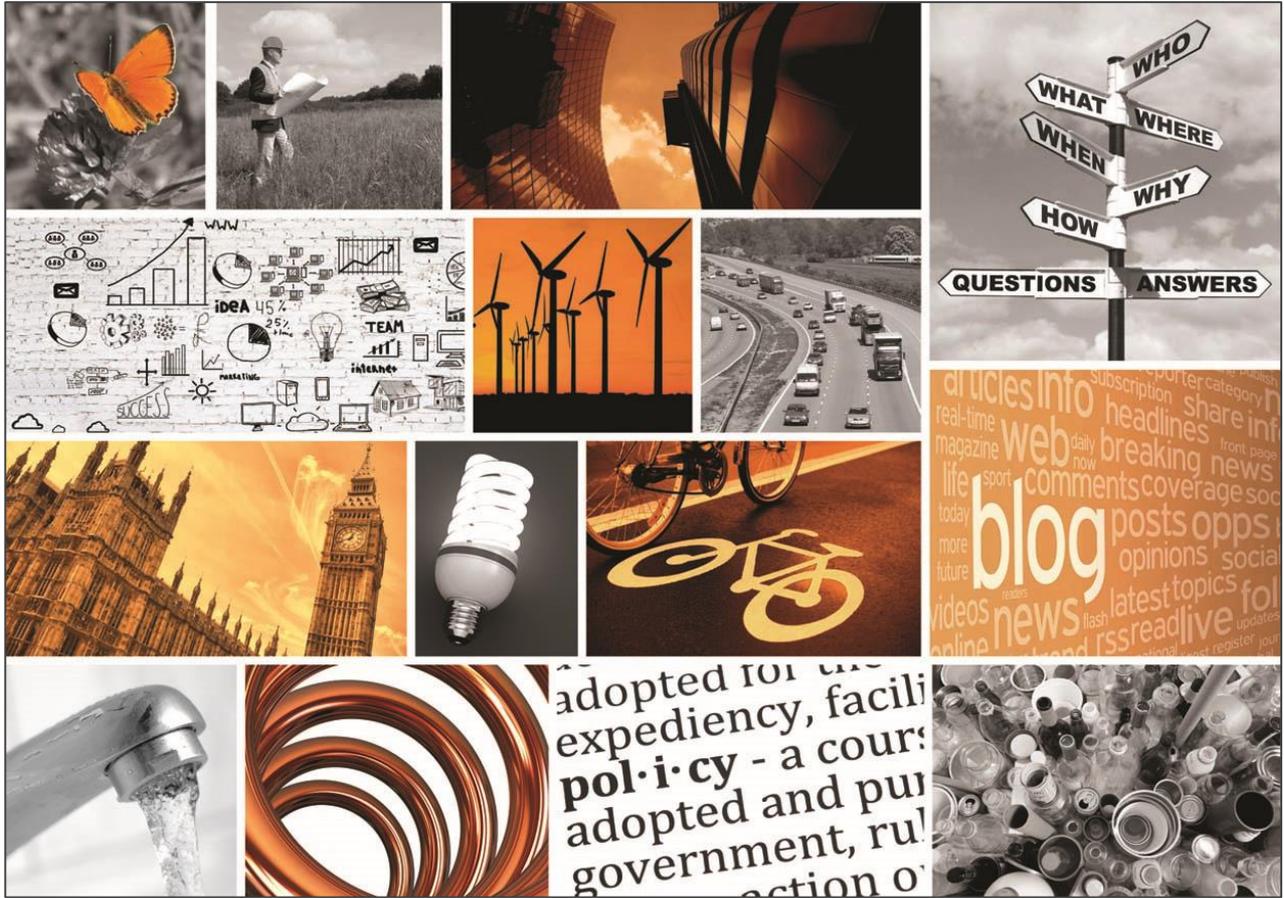
- 6.12 Key challenges for the cluster include a lack of high quality, affordable housing, and transport infrastructure that cannot support sustainable travel times to the site from residential areas north and north-west of Cambridge.
- 6.13 The difficulty in accessing the northern science park and lack of high quality available housing could in future, if it has not placed limits on growth already, harm the continued success of the park.
- 6.14 Planned growth in employment space will mean a higher number of employees will require affordable and/or suitable quality housing within a sustainable travel distance of the cluster. However, as evidenced above the housing market is already under acute demand. Additional supply is urgently required to meet need, and in order to ensure Cambridge is seen an attractive place to locate for highly qualified existing and future employees.
- 6.15 Ensuring the attractiveness of the area for businesses is also key. Sustained growth will require businesses to continue to choose Cambridge as a place to locate and invest. To achieve this Cambridge must be able to compete with alternative global locations.
- 6.16 Investment is therefore vital. Provision of more, good quality housing and better transport links is required to support continued growth.

c) Supporting Growth

- 6.17 Planned infrastructure developments will go some way to meeting this requirement, including the North Cambridge Station. Due to open in May 2017, the new station located to the east of the Science Park is expected to handle 3,000 passenger journeys a day – improving links between the Science Park cluster, central Cambridge and to London – enabling both commuting and increased business contact. However, while North Cambridge Station will support travel to the Science Park from the broader London Stansted Cambridge Corridor, it will not facilitate travel to the site from residential areas to the north of Cambridge, so other modes will be required.
- 6.18 A key improvement will therefore be to cycleways which will provide better links between North Cambridge and central areas (led by GC City Deal).
- 6.19 Alongside this there is a need for significantly more housing. As set out above, the area north of Cambridge has seen a significant increase in its average household size – a clear manifestation of

suppressed demand. The density of nearby residential occupation is increasing as employment in the key cluster is also increasing. Given the low initial building coverage and the established economic incentive to demolish first generation single storey Science Park buildings and replace often with three storeys and a larger footprint, the capacity for employment numbers to rise in line with international tenant demand is very considerable. Continued on campus employment growth shows no signs of abating, on the contrary the pace has increased in recent years. The practical limitation is not therefore on employment space capacity but on suitable and geographically accessible housing.

- 6.20 The proposed new housing at Northstowe will increase the overall supply of housing to the north and west of Cambridge and help to alleviate demand for accommodation in the area. Residential parcels have been sold recently to housebuilders and the pace of construction can be expected to quicken. However, the target at Northstowe is squarely for family accommodation which will only partly meet the requirements of a young and growing, employment self-confident workforce on the Science and Business parks.
- 6.21 Other sites will therefore be needed with better access to the employment cluster.
- 6.22 Waterbeach offers a sustainable location for new residential development with bus and cycle links to North Cambridge station and the Science Park. Highly accessible for employees working within the northern employment areas, housing at Waterbeach coupled with proposed infrastructure investment could help ensure commuting patterns are contained; and offer affordable homes and a mix of tenures, suitable for existing and future science and business park employees. The lakeside environment at Waterbeach and closer proximity to employment clusters and to the new North Cambridge station can be expected to appeal more directly to the profile of Science Park and Business Park employees.
- 6.23 As such residential development at Waterbeach is in alignment with broader policy aspirations focused on Cambridge's growth and continued economic success.



Copper Consultancy's response to the National Infrastructure Commission's discussion paper on Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor

May 2017

1. Overarching comments on the discussion paper

Copper welcomed the creation of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) in October 2015. Like the NIC, we recognise the importance of coordinating the delivery of infrastructure to ensure longer term success. A significant component of collaboration is understanding the views of the people who interact with the infrastructure during construction and once it is in place. Copper liaised closely with the NIC during the development of our Attitudes to Infrastructure research, which sought to understand what the people of Great Britain really wanted to see in regards to infrastructure development. In recognition of this report's importance, Lord Andrew Adonis, Chair of the NIC, provided a foreword for our final report.

With this in mind, our primary overarching recommendation to the NIC, in relation to the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford discussion paper, is for greater focus on the need for engagement with the communities living and working in the corridor – now and in the future.

While the discussion paper places emphasis on the need for close engagement between the various local authorities, LEPs, Central Government and other delivery partners, there is no reference to the need for engagement with individual people; the ones who will feel the greatest impact and potential benefit of a new approach to delivering infrastructure in the region.

Consideration of the views of local stakeholders will strengthen the collaborative approach outlined in the discussion paper.

Efforts to consult local people must be accompanied by a rich and positive communications campaign. The Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor scheme provides a superb opportunity to tell a story that reaches beyond the physical infrastructure to discuss the benefits it will bring. The discussion paper shows that thought has already been given to this concept, with point 16 highlighting the need to ensure the strategy for new infrastructure is “not developed in isolation”. Furthermore, the basis for strong local and wider messaging has been teased out in the document, with points 26d and 27 outlining some of the key benefits. It will be important to frame these in a positive, clear, relatable and simple way so that they are tangible to the people living in the corridor. For instance, 335,000 new jobs by 2050 is great in principle, but this needs to be explained in terms of what type of jobs these will be, i.e. the type of people they will be for.

We have seen the benefits to telling a detailed and inclusive story to both local and national stakeholders on the A303 Stonehenge project. Our messaging has been about more than building a tunnel and a road. It's been about unlocking economic opportunities in the South West of England through improved connectivity to London and the South East, enhancing the World Heritage Site (which is much larger than just the stones), and easing congestion on the road network for local residents and businesses. The outcome is a narrative which stretches beyond the physical infrastructure, but focus on the impact and benefit of the scheme.

2. Responding to specific questions

Below, we have provided our thoughts in relation to the questions given at the end of the discussion paper.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;*
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and*

c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

We agree with the concepts outlined in points *a* and *b*. Often, when seeking to deliver large infrastructure projects, particularly linear schemes such as transport links, differing agendas between local authorities can lead to delays.

In coordinating a plan with the involvement of all affected authorities, we would expect to see the barriers they can often present addressed. For instance, limited resources at local planning authorities, along with the challenge of retaining local knowledge when officers move on, can slow down the planning process. By drawing on a larger pool of talent and identifying the most relevant expertise from within the entire corridor, these issues can start to be overcome. For instance, officers with experience on transport can support the east-west links, while those with a background in housing can handle that aspect.

Whilst an integrated, strategic approach to planning is likely to be the most effective method for achieving the creation of a single corridor, the paper should place greater emphasis on discussing this concept at an early stage with local communities. The phrasing of point *c* implies an erosion of identity and individuality which, for some people, will not be acceptable. The perceived change of identity in an area is a challenge we have faced on a number of our projects, particularly when the development is planned for a locally iconic or cherished site. This can be overcome, however. For instance, on the project to dismantle the gasholder at the Bury St Edmunds gasworks site, we used an approach which focused on capturing positive memories of the site's operational past to lay the foundations for progressive discussions around the site's potential future uses. Our positive communications campaign took concentration away from concerns regarding a change to the local skyline and potential construction disruption. In doing this, the scheme received no stakeholder complaints and enhanced our client's reputation in the area.

It will be essential for the constituent authorities to develop a strong set of positive messages at an early stage which highlight the benefits of a corridor to the people that already live and work there and address the potential concerns they might have. This relates to our comments made in section 2 of our response.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

As outlined in our previous comments, we believe that the suggested approach to strategic planning would benefit from a robust stakeholder (community) engagement programme at the early initiation stage. Understanding the views of members of the public early on will help to deliver an approach that is considered acceptable by the people who will feel the impact most. By obtaining community buy-in, the strategic plan will be de-risked from a stakeholder opposition aspect and this will, in turn, result in a smoother implementation.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;*
- b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and*
- c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?*

Putting a long term, strategic plan in place will give confidence to infrastructure providers and house builders and will, therefore, support a collaborative approach. The important role they have to play must

be clearly articulated from the outset and they must have an opportunity to use their expertise and help direct the plan and identify potential challenges. We would recommend a formal forum for sharing ideas and discussing challenges.

We have seen the value of collaboration with multiple infrastructure and service providers on the extensive work to replace medium pressure gas mains in west London. We have developed a close working relationship with the Bi-Borough network management team at Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. In collaboration with this team, we established a working group which included National Grid Gas Distribution (now Cadent), tRiIO, Transport for London, emergency services, Chelsea Football Club, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital and the Metropolitan Police. Close liaison with group members supported the effective gas mains replacement work and minimised inconvenience to all affected stakeholders.

Developing relationships with key players not only supports a strong planned approach, but supports the requirement to react effectively to unforeseen challenges. Having communications channels and the right relationships in place will support the quick implementation of mitigation measures.

Having the support of Central Government undoubtedly adds weight to the scheme. Government will be able to identify, drive and promote the wider benefits of the corridor; essential components in the 'story' that needs to be told. That said, local authorities must maintain overall control to deliver a scheme that works for the region and its constituent areas. In bringing these two components together and understanding how they complement each other, the proposed approach to strategic planning can provide a template for collaborative working on major infrastructure schemes.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

As part of a collaborative approach, we would like to see a set of guidelines to bring communications into the governance of the corridor and set the benchmark for community engagement agreed by all involved organisations. It goes without saying that we wouldn't expect engagement efforts to be exactly the same for all projects within the corridor, but agreed guidelines would provide a framework for best practice. This is beneficial to local communities as clear expectations can be set and, by showing a commitment to good engagement, the corridor scheme will also benefit through avoidable criticism.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for subregional collaboration?

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

We broadly agree with the points made in paragraph 41, although have made our comments below.

It is imperative that the geographical area of the corridor is well defined (point a). However, it is important for the constituent authorities to recognise the need to also engage and collaborate with neighbouring areas. The importance of looking beyond the defined boundary is something that has been identified in the Mayor of London's 'City for all Londoners' paper. Failure to identify synergies and

opportunities with adjacent areas could hinder the development of certain opportunities, particularly those relating to transport links which mustn't end simply because of an administrative boundary if there is a clear case for continuation.

In order for the plan to be 'representative' (point d) and 'protect the interests of communities' (point e), there must be provision for early, robust community engagement. We would like to see greater emphasis on the need to speak to people and understand their thoughts at this early discussion stage.

Minimising bureaucracy (point i) is likely to be welcomed. Indeed, the complex nature of the planning process can serve as a barrier to involvement for local people. It can be hard for members of the public to understand the planning process that needs to be followed and perhaps harder to see the light at the end of the tunnel when projects are so lengthy. Efforts to clearly articulate the planning process will help to drive increased involvement by local people, whose views are essential in ensuring that the strategic corridor plan is representative.

The concept of sub-regional collaboration raises some interesting points for discussion. Adding in more layers to the model runs the risk of hindering the attempt to streamline the decision making process, as well as potentially making it more confusing to members of the public. However, it will help to keep decision making more localised and, in turn, this would support the creation of more tangible and meaningful messaging for community stakeholders.

Sub-regional input will help ensure the strategic plan works for each individual area. Through robust community engagement, it will be possible to understand local needs and develop an approach to bringing forward the infrastructure in a way that is sensitive to local wishes.

To give stakeholders confidence that an informal model of collaboration could work, we would recommend setting a proactive and positive precedent from the outset. In clearly explaining the value of greater devolution, articulating this vision and seeking stakeholder feedback from the outset, confidence and buy-in can be obtained. This provides the foundation for a sustainable long-term collaborative approach.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

Early progress can be made through informal engagement with stakeholders and the public. In line with suggestions in point 49 of the discussion paper, gathering of feedback from prospective development partners, residents, businesses and community groups would support the evidence base ahead of formal plan implementation (which should be subject to further consultation). The value of local knowledge should not be underestimated when developing this plan. This key to this is establishing a core narrative to tell the first few chapters of the route corridor story and build on this as the project progresses. The corridor is a major economic investment in the UK and should be recognised as such through a compelling narrative.

3. About Copper

Copper is a UK leader in specialist communications, stakeholder engagement and consultation for infrastructure and development.

In a rapidly-changing world, where development is something communities feel is done to them rather

than for them, poor communication and engagement is a serious project risk. So too are stakeholders with mixed messages who can quickly misinterpret the need case and benefits.

Projects need to start with a well-thought through communications and consultation strategy, which combines 'the vision' with the realities of stakeholder 'acceptability'. Failure to strike the right balance can cause delays and cost money, ultimately adding risk to a project.

Copper's approach to engagement centres de-risking a project through open, honest and meaningful engagement which subsequently builds stakeholder trust and allows for a progressive two-way dialogue.

We use intelligent story-telling to tie complex strands of information together on need, benefits, technical design, impacts, and legacy. We then turn this into meaningful engagement and consultation.

Our top-flight team is leading the challenge on placing effective stakeholder management at the heart of schemes to reduce project and reputation risk, build trust and increase certainty.

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: National Infrastructure Commission Discussion Paper

Sport England Response

Sport England believes that the approach to strategic planning explored in the paper could help to:

1. Provide clear direction that development in the area should proactively help to create healthy communities (eg by enabling participation in sport and physical activity)
2. Ensure appropriate social and community infrastructure, including provision for sport and physical activity, is planned for at a strategic level.

The Discussion Paper

Sport England would like to offer the following comments in response to the discussion paper. It is hoped that the comments help to inform the thinking of the NIC and its subsequent recommendations.

Strategy for Sport

Sport England's vision is for everyone, regardless of their age, background or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. Sport England's strategy¹ builds on the Government's strategy for sport² which seeks to deliver not only on increased participation but also on how sport and physical activity can change lives and be a force for social and economic good. At the heart of the Government's strategy for sport are five outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.

The importance of sport and physical activity in relation to these outcomes is clear. In 2010 sport and sport-related activity contributed £20.3 billion to the English economy, 1.9% of the England total. The contribution to employment is even greater with sport and sport-related activity estimated to support over 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, 2.3% of all jobs in England³. In terms of the health impact, physical activity including sport is linked to reduced risk of over 20 illnesses, including cardiovascular disease and some cancers. Taking part in regular sport can save between £1,750 and £6,900 in healthcare costs per person⁴.

The Government's strategy for sport highlights that for most people the type, suitability and quality of infrastructure and opportunity to take part have a huge effect in the chances of them trying a sport or activity for the first time and then coming back to it regularly. It also states that it is important for the wider built and natural environment to be designed to make taking part in physical activity safer and easier, making physical activity the easy choice.

¹ [Sport England Strategy 2016-2021 'Towards an Active Nation'](#)

² [HM Government 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation'](#)

³ [The Economic Value of Sport in England 2010 \(published in 2013\)](#)

⁴ [Culture and sport evidence programme](#)

The Planning System

The planning system has a vital role to play in the delivery of the Government's strategy for sport and achieving the five outcomes. By planning positively for sport and physical activity, the system can create and adapt environments which enable people to lead more active lifestyles and provide the right facilities in the right places to meet communities' needs. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises this role by stating that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. The NPPF also highlights that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Through its network of qualified town planners, Sport England engages with and supports the planning system to help it achieve this role. Alongside its statutory consultee status on planning applications affecting playing fields, Sport England assists Local Planning Authorities with strategic planning for sporting infrastructure (eg through the development of their evidence base and planning policy), and helps to ensure development is designed to enable people to lead more active lifestyles (eg the application of Sport England's Active Design⁵ guidance).

Promoting Active and Healthy Communities

Alongside providing for new homes, jobs and infrastructure the strategic approach explored in the paper offers an opportunity to set clear direction on the nature of development in the Corridor. It is noted that the paper and the interim report reference the importance of wider place making and the development of communities. Sport England would suggest that to help ensure the long term sustainability and success of the Corridor the NIC could usefully stress the need for wider place making factors to be put at the heart of development. In line with the NPPF (Section 8) this would include the need for development to proactively help to create healthy communities, eg by enabling participation in sport and physical activity.

The strategic approach could set clear direction and expectations of development in the Corridor pointing to good practice and guidance. It could also helpfully go further by suggesting development adheres to appropriate design guidance, and/or establish a design panel which looks at this area when assessing major developments across the Corridor. Setting such direction and expectations at a strategic level would help to shape the nature of development within the Corridor.

There is significant and increasing guidance and work in this area which the strategic planning of the Corridor could benefit from. This ranges from work the TCPA is leading under its Reuniting Health with Planning initiative (which includes a current project working with the development industry), the NHS Healthy New Towns Programme and Sport England's Active Design Guidance, which was developed in partnership with Public Health England. Sport England is currently working with Essex County Council who, on behalf of the 14 district councils, are leading the development of a new version of the Essex Design Guide within which the ten Active Design principles will be embedded.

Strategic Social and Community Infrastructure

Sport England appreciates that a focus of the paper is on certain infrastructure types (eg transport and utilities). However, when developing the approach to strategic planning in the Corridor, all relevant infrastructure to which it may be more beneficial to plan for at a strategic level should be included in order to support long term sustainable development in

⁵ [Active Design: Planning for health and well being through sport and physical activity](#)

the Corridor. This may include a range of social and community infrastructure. For sport and physical activity this could include key large scale sporting infrastructure and wider green infrastructure. Such provision is likely to draw users from a catchment greater than a single local authority and therefore require a joined up approach to maximise its use, along with the social and economic benefits it can bring to existing and new communities. Taking a strategic approach will help to make the best use of available resources and ensure individual facilities, and areas of green infrastructure, form part of a complementary and connected network of provision across a wider area.

Sport England has experience of directly supporting authorities with such strategic and joint authority work. Recent examples include:

- Greater London Authority - assessing the provision of key sports facilities across London through the application of the Facilities Planning Model⁶ to support the development of the London Plan.
- Greater Norwich Partnership (Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk Councils) - the three authorities worked together to develop Playing Pitch Strategies and Sports Facilities Strategies across the three districts that form the Greater Norwich Development Partnership. The three authorities have also developed a joint implementation group to deliver the outcomes of the strategies, working with partners including Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport and the County Sports Partnership.

Sport England is working with a number of the authorities within the Corridor to help them develop their evidence base for sporting provision which could form the basis of a more strategic approach.

Conclusion

The strategic approach explored in the discussion paper provides an opportunity to set clear direction regarding the importance of planning positively for improved health and well-being. In doing so the approach could help to bring significant social and economic benefits to the existing and new communities in the Corridor. Sport England therefore believes that any recommendations made by the NIC should recognise the importance of:

1. Providing clear direction that development in the area should proactively help to create healthy communities (eg by enabling participation in sport and physical activity)
2. Ensuring appropriate social and community infrastructure, including provision for sport and physical activity, is planned for at a strategic level.

Sport England would be pleased to discuss these comments in more detail along with the support we may be able to provide to the work of the NIC.

Response submitted by:

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⁶ www.sportengland.org/planningtoolsandguidance



National Infrastructure Commission
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Submitted by email only: GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

31st May 2017,

Re: Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor: A Discussion Paper

Introduction

This letter is in response to the current consultation on the 'Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor Discussion Paper'. Gladman Developments (from here on referred to as Gladman) welcome the opportunity to respond to this discussion paper as this corridor covers a number of locations within which Gladman are currently promoting a range of sites for residential development. Strategic planning across this corridor could result in significant growth and benefits both locally and nationally.

As a major UK strategic land promoter, Gladman have significant experience of the current planning system and are experts in delivering residential planning permissions. Utilising our wide-ranging expertise, we have gained planning permission for some 10,000 dwellings on 70 sites per year selling these sites to housebuilders and making an important contribution to the supply of new homes nationwide. We have significant experience of the planning application process and are also involved in the preparation of many Local Plans discussing issues such as Housing and Employment Needs Assessments, development strategies, site selection, general policy requirements and the deliverability of sites which ultimately contribute to the maintenance of a 5-year housing land supply.

Gladman are supportive of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) seeking to develop and deliver an integrated strategic plan for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor. This presents a key opportunity to deliver the homes, jobs and infrastructure needed to capitalise on the growth potential that this corridor currently offers.

The need for Strategic Planning

Gladman wholeheartedly support the need to consider infrastructure requirements at a strategic level and believe that within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor this is a fundamental component of economic growth and consequently should be considered carefully to ensure the best options are selected which will facilitate the necessary housing growth aligned to substantial economic growth. Gladman note a number of key quotes from the November 2016 Interim Report, specifically:

"The corridor connecting Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford could be the UK's Silicon Valley – a world renowned centre for science, technology and innovation. But its future success is not guaranteed..."

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The corridor faces a chronic undersupply of homes made worse by poor east-west transport connectivity...

Investment in infrastructure, including enhanced east-west transport links, can help to address these challenges, but it must be properly aligned with a strategy for new jobs, homes and communities, not developed in isolation...."

Gladman strongly support the economic growth potential that this corridor has to offer and that there is a need to plan strategically in this area in order to capitalise upon this potential. This location has an important role to play both regionally and nationally in the delivery of housing and economic growth. Transport investment in the form of the Expressway and East West Rail (EWR) is critical to its success.

It is important that any plans for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor take a long term view and also take into account the plans progressing in the individual emerging local planning authorities covering this area and compliments these. It is of fundamental importance that this process does not stifle planned sustainable growth from coming forward in these locations. A number of local plans are progressing with identified strategic allocations and the planned infrastructure and proposed integrated strategic plan needs to compliment not sterilize these proposals. It is also of critical importance that this becomes a statutory plan, ensuring that all LPAs are committed to this for the longer term and that political changes within a LPA cannot derail the process at any stage.

The White Paper

The Government White Paper ('Fixing out Broken Housing Market') issued in February this year is a very clear statement from Government on the importance of the delivery of housing to the wider economy. The Government are in no doubt that the housing market in Britain is broken which, according to the Prime Minister, is one of the greatest barriers to progress in the country today.

The White Paper highlights that growing businesses need a skilled workforce living nearby, and employees should be able to move easily to where jobs are without being forced into long commutes. Thus emphasising the need protect potential development opportunities which align with infrastructure improvements.

Section 2 - Towards and Integrated Strategic Plan

Section 2 of the discussion paper considers the criteria and scope for an Integrated Strategic Plan covering the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor. Gladman are supportive of the core function that this sets out, in particular part d) which states

"Maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure to unlock sites, improve land supply and co-ordinate patterns of development around transport hubs and interchanges. East West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway are once in a generation investments that will deliver substantial national benefits but which, if designed properly, can enable the development of new communities, and bring productive towns and cities closer together;"

Section 3 - Key Questions

The following provides Gladman's comments and responses in relation to the specific questions/themes set out in section 3 of the discussion paper.

An Integrated Strategic Plan

Question 1 – Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- Tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;
- Maximise the potential of major east-west infrastructure links; and
- Develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Through any integrated spatial plan it is of fundamental importance that the full housing and employment needs across the wider area are met. Gladman raise concerns regarding the absence of a coordinated assessment of housing needs across the south east using a consistent approach on key assumptions. The concern from this is that it is likely to result in an underestimation of housing need by the individual LPAs. Following on from this is the issue of 'unmet' housing needs, which is an issue affecting authorities within this sub-region (for example Oxford City). Whilst the duty to cooperate is intended to solve this problem, to date it has proved largely ineffective.

Many of the LPAs within the Growth Corridor may claim that they are planning to meet their full OAN, however Gladman do not believe this to be the case. The housing needs of these areas will need to be re-tested against the Government's new approach to assessing need once this is introduced, however it is clear that the LPAs within this corridor will need to be providing for a greater number of homes than the minimum numbers suggested by the DCLG Household projections.

If an ambitious vision is taken forward, adopted and implemented, then Gladman believe that through investments in the proposed infrastructure, EWR and the Expressway, this growth corridor could develop significantly providing a major economic corridor to the benefit of the region and the country as a whole. Strategic planning has a key role to play with regards to these cross boundary strategic issues, however this needs to be brought forward alongside the more local level, individual local plans. Gladman are supportive of the objectives of the growth corridor and the development of more lateral transport routes in the wider south east, this will help to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services and provide key opportunities for growth in locations along the corridor.

Gladman believe that as well as the constraints listed above, the strategic integrated plan should consider other constraints such as the Green Belt identifying key locations for significant growth across the corridor.

Question 2 – *How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?*

Gladman notes that the discussion paper considers that collective working through the duty to cooperate will be sufficient to achieve these aims. Gladman do not agree with this approach and think that the reliance placed on the duty to cooperate will prove ineffective. The duty to cooperate is not a sufficient governance mechanism to implement the aims of the Growth Corridor through a Strategic Plan. As has been experienced in many instances across the country the duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree.

Gladman strongly recommend that any strategic plan should be progressed as a statutory plan. This would mean that the plan would be fully examined in a rigorous and robust manner and would result in greater certainty regarding the individual LPAs commitment to this process. Gladman refer to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) in this respect which is a strategic plan, which is being prepared by the 10 Greater Manchester LPAs. This will be a statutory plan which will go through the Examination in Public process, which all the LPAs will have to sign up to and once adopted they will all need to be in conformity with. The individual local plans for the LPAs will then provide further detail such as non-strategic site allocations and development management policies.

This will help to de-risk the process, whereby any changes in politics further down the line once the plan has been adopted, will not completely derail the process, as the LPAs will still have to be in conformity with this higher tier strategic plan. Gladman believe this approach would strengthen strategic planning in the corridor and help to ensure that the key aims and objectives can be achieved.

It is also important to set out early in the process precisely which local planning authorities fall within the growth corridor and therefore which would be required to prepare local plans which implement the strategic plan and are in conformity with this.

New Opportunities

Question 3 – *Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:*

- *Housing developers;*
- *Infrastructure providers and investors; and*
- *Central government?*

Question 4 - *How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required from partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?*

In response to questions 3 and 4 Gladman believe strategic planning of this nature will result in opportunities for improved collaboration and engagement, however fundamental to this is the formalisation of the process and governance along with involvement of the private sector and key stakeholders. As such, Gladman recommend that to strengthen the process it is fundamental that any sub regional boards set up through the process should have private sector involvement from organisations as house builders and key businesses active within the corridor. It will be necessary for the house building industry to be properly represented within the new governance structures of the Growth Corridor.

Governance

Question 5 – *Do you agree with the design principles set out in paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision making?*

In relation to the formality of collaborative governance arrangements, Gladman do not believe a model based on informal collaborations between LPAs would be sufficient to support the delivery of an integrated strategic plan. The whole process requires as much certainty as possible, to ensure that any subsequent changes in politics do not result in the whole process and collaboration falling apart.

In terms of the two illustrative models within the discussion paper, Gladman's preference would be Illustrative model 2 due to the sub regional boards which are proposed as the tier above the individual local planning authorities. These sub-regional boards would then feed into the overall cross-corridor strategic planning board and provide the link between this and the individual LPAs.

Question 6 – *should any new cross boundary governance structure preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?*

Yes, Gladman believe it is necessary to preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration. Notwithstanding this, it should be the Growth Corridor Strategic Spatial Plan that undertakes the assessment of needs across the area and prepares an appropriate spatial plan that will accommodate these needs.

Question 7 – *Can the opportunity afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock in' collaboration over the longer term?*

As mentioned in previous answers it is of fundamental importance that any strategic plan covering the corridor has statutory status. Without this, the success and delivery of aims and objectives over the longer term is at a significant risk. The increased certainty provided through a statutory plan is necessary to gain buy in from the individual LPAs within the area. Without this, the purpose and role of the plan could quite rightly be questioned.

Question 8 – *If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint working will sustain over the longer term?*

Gladman do not believe that informal arrangements would be sufficient, as local politics could change and there would be nothing binding individual LPAs to either the strategic plan or continued joint working over the longer term. Furthermore, the duty to cooperate is a clear example where voluntary arrangements in relation to housing delivery across wider areas has proved largely ineffective.

Developing and Delivering an Integrated Strategic Plan

Question 9 – *How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?*

Gladman believe that early progress could be made on an informal basis through the development of Memorandums of Understanding. Whilst not the formal basis that is required to progress this strategic plan to adoption, this would help to enable initial joint working to take place, alongside the more formal governance structure being agreed.

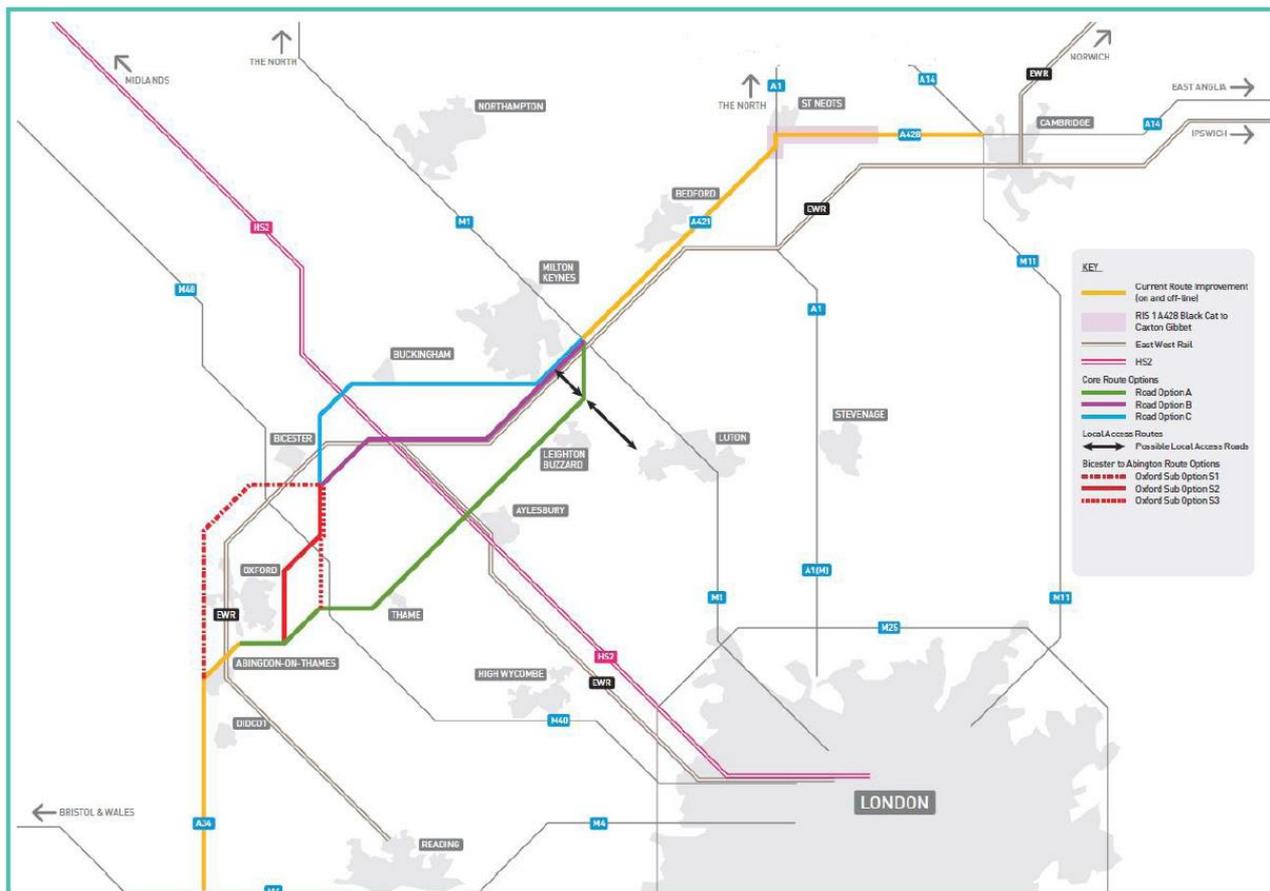
Question 10 – *How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated?*

Gladman believe that to ensure the success of an integrated strategic plan such as this it needs to be monitored at a sub-regional level on an annual basis. This could then help to establish any areas of concern which would then require a greater focus of attention and potential changes to be made. Timetables for the preparation and commencement of plans will need to be agreed and adhered to.

The first critical step will be the adoption of the Growth Corridor Strategic Plan. This plan must include as much detail as possible and not avoid tricky strategic decisions. It must include allocations for transport, business and housing and also set out broad locations for growth. Following on from this the subsidiary Local Plans for the individual LPAs will need to be prepared, examined and adopted.

Cambridge – Milton Keynes– Oxford Expressway – Route Options (Interim Report, 2016)

Gladman note Figure 12 of the NIC Interim Report (2016) (for ease of reference extract included below) which sets out the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Options.



Gladman supports Road Route Option A, which is the option which takes the most southerly course in close proximity to Leighton Buzzard, Aylesbury, Thame and Abingdon-on-Thames. This route option takes a southerly course just prior to Milton Keynes. Gladman believe this route to provide the most logical and direct route and should be progressed by NIC.

Gladman refer to paragraph 4.31 of the Interim Report *“As this work is taken forward, the delivery of new homes and communities should be recognised as a core objective of the scheme. The importance of this objective should be reflected in work to develop and assess route options...”* Gladman wholeheartedly agree with this statement and as such make the following comments regarding the Options B and C.

Gladman objects to Routes B and C which both follow a course along the south eastern extent of Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes Council (MKC) are currently consulting on the draft version of Plan: MK which sets out the Council’s preferred approach for development for the period up to 2031. Within this, MKC are proposing just one new strategic allocation for housing development, this is set out within policy SD13 ‘South East Milton Keynes’. Currently the draft plan identifies this area to deliver 1,000 dwellings within the plan period with additional development to follow post 2031. Gladman, working jointly with Gallagher Estates are actively promoting this site for development and believe this offers a logical sustainable location for significant housing growth on the south eastern extent of Milton Keynes. Development in this location is the Council preferred approach and it is crucial that the route of the Expressway does not act to sterilize this significant development opportunity.

The landowners of this site are signed up, and land promoters Gladman and Gallaghers are working collaboratively to bring forward a comprehensive residential led development in this location. South East Milton Keynes represents a sustainable location for significant growth which links well with the existing built up area of MK. This offers a significant opportunity for MK to deliver a substantial scale of housing through a comprehensive scheme to the south east of the Town.

Furthermore, running the route of the Expressway along the south eastern edge of Milton Keynes would potentially serve as a rat run for internal MK traffic and defeat the purpose of the expressway in the first place.

Routes B and C would act to restrict the delivery of significant number of dwellings within this location (1,000-2,000 dwellings) and effectively sterilize this proposed allocation, which is the sole remaining allocation proposed to deliver within the plan period in the draft version of Plan: MK. This approach goes against the objectives mentioned within paragraph 4.31 of the Interim Report as well as the Governments intentions as set out within the Housing White Paper, the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

Conclusions

Gladman welcome the opportunity to comment on this discussion paper. Strategic planning across the Cambridge-Milton Keys-Oxford corridor is of high significance, locally, regionally and nationally, therefore it is of critical importance that it is approached in a comprehensive manner and the choices made do not act to sterilize any emerging development opportunities.

It is fundamental that an integrated strategic plan is progressed as a statutory plan, that it is based on robust evidence, and undergoes sufficient scrutiny through the examination process. This plan will need to provide sufficient certainty to all the LPAs involved over the longer term and therefore a formal governance structure will be required. It is also of great importance that whilst developing this integrated spatial plan the private sector and key stakeholders are involved and consulted upon, they will be critical in the delivery of these key infrastructure projects and therefore need to be actively involved in the process.

If you would like to discuss any of the comments raised within this submission in further detail please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Gladman team.

Yours faithfully,

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

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31st May 2017

Dear Sirs,

Consultation response to *Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor: A Discussion Paper*

We are responding to the above consultation paper. We recognise that, in its own words “*The paper represents the start of a debate – not its conclusion.*” and also that “*the focus of the consultation is on developing a view on the appropriate governance for an integrated strategic plan for infrastructure, housing and jobs across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor*”.

However, we are concerned that, whilst the paper focusses on governance, this consultation provides the only opportunity to engage with the National Infrastructure Commission’s development of “*its final recommendations on the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.*” We have therefore taken this opportunity to respond not only to the questions set out in the consultation paper, but also to highlight our concern that the NIC needs to develop a clear approach to the natural environment of the proposed corridor in order to meet legal and policy requirements.

To comply with legal and policy requirements it is crucial that the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) considers, right from the outset, how its recommendations in respect of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor interact with the natural environment. Governance structures in respect of a spatial plan or plans for the area must incorporate mechanisms for the impact of proposals, positive and negative, on the natural capital of the corridor to be incorporated from the outset. A Green Infrastructure plan for the corridor should be developed in tandem with consideration of other infrastructure requirements.

Any recommendations made by the NIC in respect of the corridor should consider opportunities for growth in natural capital within the corridor that could be delivered alongside growth in economic and social capital. This will require a baseline consideration of the key natural capital assets, and modelling of the impact growth proposals on those assets. We are aware of the work proposed by the Local Nature Partnerships in the corridor, led by the LNP for Bedfordshire, in this respect, and would urge the NIC to engage fully with that work and to ensure that consideration of all aspects of growth are brought forward together, rather than considering natural capital impacts and opportunities after economic and social growth opportunities.

The need to consider natural capital in developing infrastructure priorities was recently reinforced by the Natural Capital Committee. In their fourth report to the Economic Affairs Committee they made a specific recommendation in respect of the NIC:

“8. The new National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) should incorporate natural capital, including its maintenance, restoration and recovery, into long term infrastructure plans; ensuring consistency with the objectives of the 25 Year Environment Plan;”¹

We are exceedingly concerned by the lack of reference to the natural environment in the consultation paper. The Chancellor’s brief, as quoted in paragraph 14 of the consultation document, was that the NIC should “...make recommendations [to government] to maximize the potential of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor as a single, knowledge intensive cluster that competes on the global stage, **whilst protecting the area’s high quality environment** and securing the homes and job the area needs.” [our emphasis]

The NIC’s initial report on the corridor², despite the specific mention of protection for the area’s high quality environment, fails completely to reference the natural environment at all in its seven recommendations. That failure appears to have subsequently led to a lack of consideration of the need for governance for the corridor to incorporate expertise on natural capital. It is vital, if the Chancellor’s express remit for the NIC in respect of the corridor is to be met, for this lacuna in the NIC’s thinking to be addressed.

The criteria set out in paragraph 28 of the consultation document **must** be revised so that any integrated strategic plan developed for the corridor has a clear remit to consider existing “high quality environment”. As they stand, a plan developed to meet the criteria would fail completely to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF is clear that “*The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*” inter alia “*providing net gains in biodiversity where possible*” and states that “*authorities should seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and net gains across all three.*”

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/585429/ncc-annual-report-2017.pdf

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/569867/Cambridge-Milton_Keynes-Oxford_interim_report.pdf

Criterion 1f, as set out in paragraph 28, provides, for example, the opportunity for environmental and social infrastructure to be incorporated alongside economic considerations. An integrated strategic plan for the corridor, and infrastructure delivery mechanisms developed to deliver the plan, could help promote and realise the principles set out in Professor John Lawton's review of protected areas, *Making Space for Nature*³, carried out for the then coalition government in 2011. Prof. Lawton and his panel recommended that enhanced ecological networks should be delivered around the principles of "*more, bigger, better and joined up*" natural areas. The first recommendation of the review group was that "*Local authorities should ensure that ecological networks, including areas for restoration, are identified and protected through local planning. Government should support local authorities in this role by clarifying that their biodiversity duty includes planning coherent and resilient ecological networks.*"

Responses to specific questions

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

As set out above, we feel that these are quite simply the wrong questions to be asked to fulfil the remit set by the Chancellor for the NIC. Q1 should have included "*and d. deliver the enhancement of the natural capital of the corridor*".

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Again, the questions only focus on a selective part of the remit set out for the NIC.

³<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402151656/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/201009space-for-nature.pdf>

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

Any new structure needs to consider how it integrates with the existing Local Nature Partnerships. These government established partnerships key role is in contributing to strategic planning and the consideration of natural capital.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

A key component of early work to contribute to a sustainable plan for the corridor must be the consideration of the existing natural capital assets, and a plan for maximising the improvement of natural capital in the corridor.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

Yours sincerely,

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
BBOWT

[email address redacted]

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
A company limited by guarantee and registered in England.
Reg. No. 680007 Reg. Charity No. 204330

[name redacted]
[job title redacted]
The Wildlife Trust BCN

[email address redacted]

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire
A company limited by guarantee and registered in England.
Reg. No. 2534145 Reg. Charity No. 1000412

Appendix 1 - Legal requirements in respect of the natural environment and the NIC

There are a number of legal and policy requirements that interact with the NIC's purpose.

As an Executive Agency of HM Treasury, the National Infrastructure Commission is a public body, and is therefore subject to the duties that arise from section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)⁴, which states that any such body *"must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity"*.

Similarly, Regulation 9A (8) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010⁵ as amended⁶ states that *"So far as lies within their powers, a competent authority in exercising any function in or in relation to the United Kingdom must use all reasonable endeavours to avoid any pollution or deterioration of habitats of wild birds (except habitats beyond the outer limits of the area to which the new Wild Birds Directive applies)."* Regulation 9(3) of the 2010 Regulations also states that *"Without prejudice to the preceding provisions, a competent authority, in exercising any of their functions, must have regard to the requirements of the [Habitats and Wild Birds] Directives so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions."*

The NIC is also a "28G authority" in respect of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981. Section 28G(3)(f) of the WCA states that:

"(1) An authority to which this section applies (referred to in this section and in sections 28H and 28I as "a section 28G authority") shall have the duty set out in subsection (2) in exercising its functions so far as their exercise is likely to affect the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest.

(2) The duty is to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the site is of special scientific interest.

(3) The following are section 28G authorities—

[...]

(f) any other public body of any description."

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/section/40>

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/part/1/made>

⁶ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1927/pdfs/uksi_20121927_en.pdf



Response of Warwickshire County Council- to the Strategic Planning in the Cambridge- Milton Keynes Oxford Corridor - discussion Paper

Economic advantages of opening up gateway connectivity between Coventry and Warwickshire and the Cambridge-Oxfordshire corridor

Warwickshire County Council supports the thrust of the strategic Planning discussion paper.

We wish to work in partnership with the Cambridge- Oxford corridor board to develop effective transportation links and open up unique economic linkages benefit in making the Oxford Cambridge corridor for mutual benefit and success. Therefore, we are responding to the discussion paper in this context. The County area can provide access to key high skills and geographical economic advantages. Consequently, we wish to work with the key partners to develop and deliver an integrated strategic plan for infrastructure, housing and jobs across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor

Not only does the Coventry & Warwickshire sub- region area have many economic similarities with the proposed corridor in terms of high performing economic area, strong concentration of innovative and R&D activity, identified clusters in advanced manufacturing and digital technology industries, and leading universities.

We have strong gateway connectivity with the West Midlands and the core corridor area that could be substantially improved to generate wider economic benefits and support the clear growth ambitions of this area.

The following sets out the rationale for this extension, and the benefits that could be gained from such an approach.

Transport connectivity

High quality connectivity between (Coventry & Warwickshire and the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor will be provide positive benefits for both areas economic areas. A strong, resilient transport network is critical to supporting good business to business connectivity for the key sectors which both areas are seeking to develop, and ensuring that they are well linked to local and sub-regional housing market areas.

The two areas have an established strategic road and rail network which provides a number of key connections, these being:

- Road: A14, M6/M1 and M40

- Rail: Birmingham – Leicester – Peterborough – Cambridge – Stansted Airport, Birmingham - Milton Keynes – London Euston (West Coast Main Line) and Birmingham – Banbury – Bicester – London Marylebone (Chiltern Line)

Improvements to the routes below would deliver enhanced connectivity in terms of reduced journey times, improved interchange opportunities and network resilience:

- Development of the A14 as an 'Expressway';
- Completion of Smart Motorways provision on the M6 and M1;
- Extension of Smart Motorways provision between Junctions 16 and 9 of the M40;
- Track and signalling improvements to allow improved journey times and service frequency enhancements between Birmingham and Cambridge;
- Delivery of Phases 3 and 4 of NUCKLE to provide new rail service opportunities between the East Midlands, Coventry, Leamington Spa, Oxford and the Thames Valley; and
- New and enhanced rail service opportunities on the 'classic' rail network post-HS2, particularly on the West Coast Main Line.

We request that we work together to develop joint evidence and coordinated lobbying in order to bring forward these improvements.

Housing & planning

The Coventry and Warwickshire Councils in their Duty to Cooperate on Strategic matters work together constructive on overall housing and the distribution of housing supply in the Sub- region. Some of this existing housing growth particularly close to the A14 corridor will have easy access to homes and jobs. There are potential opportunities to discuss on

- Links between key settlements and growth areas of economy
- New development sites to support growth of key industries?
Co-ordinated approach to support the overheating south east economy and facilitate growth and innovation.

Conclusion

The benefits of the joined up approach are;

- We wish to participate in supporting the Oxford and Cambridge growth areas by increasing the potential aggregate opportunities of the adjacent Warwickshire economic area.
- We wish to participate in identify any cumulative or aggregate investing in the knowledge base and support more choice for the workforce.

- We wish to participate in improving the interactions between the Coventry and Warwickshire technology, digital and manufacturing based in the along the corridor areas. Oxford and Cambridge corridor is the anchor for these areas.
- Improved connectivity and increased agglomeration into the Midlands Engine.

Response to the consultation questionnaire

We are responding to the consultation by responding to the specific questions with a supporting position statement and evidence of economic links.

Response to specific questions contained in the discussion paper.

| Questions contained in the discussion paper | Response of Warwickshire County Council |
|---|--|
| <p>An integrated strategic plan</p> <p>Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?</p> | <p>The Coventry and Warwickshire Councils in their Duty to Cooperate on Strategic matters work together constructive on overall housing and the distribution of housing supply in the Sub- region. Some of this existing housing growth particularly close to the A14 corridor will have easy access to homes and jobs. There are potential opportunities to discuss on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links between key settlements and growth areas of economy • New development sites to support growth of key industries? <p>Co-ordinated approach to support overheating south east and facilitate growth.</p> |
| <p>Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?</p> | <p>A collaborative partnership approach could be strengthen this strategic approach.</p> |
| <p>New opportunities</p> <p>Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term ‘infrastructure compact’?</p> | <p>Yes we support these , however, there are further benefits of a joined up approach with adjacent Councils that bring additional benefits including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the cumulative opportunities and capacity of the adjacent areas. • Investing in the knowledge base and support wider choice for the workforce • Interactions between technology, digital and manufacturing based in the along the corridor areas. Oxford and Cambridge are the anchor areas with adjacent cluster advantages. • Improved connectivity and increased agglomeration in the Midlands Engine. |
| <p>Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities? Governance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see response to Q3 |
| <p>Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration? National Infrastructure Commission</p> | <p>The Coventry and Warwickshire Councils in their Duty to Cooperate on Strategic matters work together constructive on overall housing and the distribution of housing supply in the Sub- region. Some of this</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>existing housing growth particularly close to the A14 corridor will have easy access to homes and jobs. There are potential opportunities to discuss on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links between key settlements and growth areas of economy • New development sites to support growth of key industries? <p>Co-ordinated approach to support overheating south east and facilitate growth.</p> <p>We propose that two areas work together to develop joint evidence and coordinated lobbying in order to bring forward these improvements.</p> |
| Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term? | Yes. Please refer to response stated to question 6. |
| Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to
a) their strategic plans, and
b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term? Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan | We suggest that there are process arrangements/communication to work with the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP. The impacts and opportunities could be considered for both. There are opportunities to align with the all the LEP aspirations. |
| Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements? | Please refer to the attached statement of highway schemes that will and could improve access to homes and jobs to the corridor. |
| Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned? | N/A |

Our position statement and evidence of economic links

Oxford-Cambridge corridor – Coventry and Warwickshire economic linkages

The Oxford-Cambridge corridor includes the following LEP areas: Oxfordshire, Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough, and South East Midlands.

Coventry and South Warwickshire (Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick) are recognised as important to the success of the Oxford-Cambridge corridor that includes: Oxford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Northampton areas.

Our similarities and economic linkages:

- Over a quarter (27.3%) of businesses registered in the C&W area are in knowledge-intensive industries. A slightly higher proportion of knowledge-intensive businesses (31%) are based in South Warwickshire – representing nearly a third of all business activity.
- The proportion of knowledge-intensive businesses exceeds the national average (25%) and is marginally higher than the O-C corridor average (26.8%).

- During 2009-14, jobs increased by 12% in the C&W area; exceeding the national average (8%) and achieving faster job growth than all LEP areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.
- IT professionals are the occupations most in demand across C&W and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor; representing 12-13% of total jobs advertised.
- C&W productivity growth during 2009-14 was fairly strong; achieving 17% growth and second behind Oxfordshire
- Coventry is only third behind the cities Oxford and Cambridge; where 34% of its population are aged 20-39 years. Although during 2010-15, there was 21% growth in Coventry's magic demographic population; doubling Oxford and Cambridge and outperforming the national average (2%)
- About half (51%) of South Warwickshire's population are educated at degree level or higher. This positions the area third behind Oxford and Cambridge (65% on average)
- Nearly a third (32%) of workers in C&W are employed in level 4 occupations (defined as managers and directors; professionals). This exceeds the national average and falling second behind Oxfordshire (44%). The employment trends are quite reflective at local level; with South Warwickshire in third place (45%) behind Oxford and Cambridge (51% on average).
- In 2014, the average price to buy a house in C&W was £183,042 – lower than both the national average and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor. With only 16% growth in C&W house prices during 2009-14 compared to 24% in areas along the corridor, this is attractive for both residents and businesses alike who wish to invest in the region.
- Employment growth similarities between C&W and the corridor: Electricity & gas, Transportation & storage, Professional services, Construction
- Employment breakdown similarities between C&W and the corridor: Wholesale & retail, Health & social care (both low-wage industries)
- While 9,352 residents in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor travel to work in C&W, 14,168 C&W residents commute to areas along the corridor for employment. This equates to 1 in 5 C&W residents (18%) who work in the corridor. Overall, this concludes that C&W has a greater economic benefit from improved strategic links to the Oxford-Cambridge corridor than vice versa.
- C&W has a strong dependence on LEP areas: Oxfordshire and South East Midlands for employment. This is represented by the high net commuting outflow rates; particularly to South East Midlands, due to the inclusion of key employment areas such as Northampton, Daventry and Cherwell.
- The C&W area has a business start-up density of 55 per 10,000 population; higher than the national average (39) and just second behind South East Midlands (61). The trend is mirrored in the business birth rate (proportion of start-ups in the total business stock) – where C&W's rate (13.9%) generally exceeds the corridor area (11.8% average)
- Locally, Stratford-on-Avon's business start-up density of 53 per 10,000 population is higher than all key areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor;

suggesting that the area has a larger concentration of business activity and therefore a stronger entrepreneurial rate. Stratford's density nearly doubles Oxford's.

- Coventry has the highest business birth rate of 11% compared to areas along the corridor; meaning that there are a larger proportion of start-ups here compared to the "innovation cities" in the corridor.
- See Scatterplot diagram

Knowledge-intensive cluster advantages

- Over a quarter (27.3%) of businesses registered in the C&W area are in knowledge-intensive industries. A slightly higher proportion of knowledge-intensive businesses (31%) are based in South Warwickshire – representing nearly a third of all business activity.
- The proportion of knowledge-intensive businesses exceeds the national average (25%) and is marginally higher than the O-C corridor average (26.8%). The corridor has a relatively strong cluster of knowledge-intensive activity based in Oxfordshire compared to Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough; and South East Midlands
- Over a third (34.5%) of businesses registered in Warwick is knowledge-intensive; exceeding Oxford, Northampton and Milton Keynes – but falls short behind Cambridge (36.6%)
- The representation of knowledge-intensive employment is reflective of businesses; although C&W falls below the national average (31%). C&W has the lowest proportion of workers employed in knowledge-intensive industries compared to all the LEP areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor
- Although both Coventry and South Warwickshire have a larger representation of knowledge-intensive employment than Northampton, the sub-region's key areas lag behind Oxford (48%), Cambridge (50%) and Milton Keynes (32%)

Jobs

- During 2009-14, jobs increased by 12% in the C&W area; exceeding the national average (8%) and achieving faster job growth than all LEP areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.
- Job density is relatively similar to the corridor area (0.88), both higher than the national average of 0.83. Oxfordshire has the highest density of 0.95
- At district level, both Coventry (12%) and South Warwickshire (11%) achieve slower job growth compared to Cambridge (13%) and Milton Keynes (17%). In terms of job density, Oxford and Cambridge have significantly high job densities compared to all areas; averaging 1.18
- IT professionals are the occupations most in demand across C&W and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor; representing 12-13% of total jobs advertised.

GVA and productivity

- The C&W area currently produces £24,249 per head; which is a measure of economic wellbeing. This falls behind the national average of £25,624 per head and all areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor
- The low GVA per head figure in C&W is driven by Coventry and Northern Warwickshire, as South Warwickshire has a higher rate when compared locally (£26,525 per head). This is higher than LEP areas: South East Midlands and Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough; but at district level, is substantially lower than key areas: Oxford, Cambridge and Milton Keynes
- GVA per job is a measure of productivity; where C&W performs relatively similar to economic wellbeing when compared against other areas. £46,639 is produced per worker in the sub-region; which falls behind the national average (£50,716) and all areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor. Despite this, C&W productivity growth during 2009-14 was fairly strong; achieving 17% growth and second behind Oxfordshire

Population

- During 2010-15, C&W's population increased by 5.1%; exceeding the national average (4.1%) and second to South East Midlands (6.6%). This is mainly driven by Coventry's high population growth (11%) – significantly greater than the growth rates achieved in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor
- C&W and areas included in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor have very similar proportions of working-age residents (aged 16-64 years); averaging 63%. Due to the universities, Oxford and Cambridge have a much larger representation of residents aged 16-24 – where nearly a quarter of the total population falls within the young demographic
- The magic demographic (aged 20-39 years) is recognised as important for future productivity and innovation in local areas. This represents over a quarter (28%) of C&W's population; higher than both the national average and South East Midlands (26%).
- Coventry is only third behind the cities Oxford and Cambridge; where 34% of its population are aged 20-39 years. Although during 2010-15, there was 21% growth in Coventry's magic demographic population; doubling Oxford and Cambridge and outperforming the national average (2%)

Skills

- Over a third (36.6%) of C&W's working-age population have a NVQ4+ qualification; equivalent to a degree and/or higher. This is marginally lower than the national average (36.8%); but higher than the South East Midlands LEP area (34.8%).
- Locally, the picture is fairly different; with about half (51%) of South Warwickshire's population educated at degree level or higher. This positions the area third behind Oxford and Cambridge (65% on average)

- Nearly a third (32%) of workers in C&W are employed in level 4 occupations (defined as managers and directors; professionals). This exceeds the national average and falling second behind Oxfordshire (44%). The employment trends are quite reflective at local level; with South Warwickshire in third place (45%) behind Oxford and Cambridge (51% on average). In contrast, Coventry has the lowest proportion of level 4 employment at 23%.

Digital-tech cluster

- 14% of businesses registered in C&W are in digital-tech industries; falling behind all areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor; although slightly higher than the national average (13%). This may be driven by lack of representation in Northern Warwickshire
- Locally, digital-tech activity is reflective of trends at LEP level. 16% of South Warwickshire's businesses specialise in digital-tech activity; which falls behind Oxford, Cambridge and Milton Keynes.
- The concentration of C&W employment in digital-tech industries is 20% lower than the England average; which equates to a location quotient of 0.80. This lags behind the Oxford-Cambridge corridor (0.97 average).
- Locally, Warwick performs strong; where digital-tech employment is 18% higher than national levels (1.18). Despite this, Oxford, Cambridge and Milton Keynes have significantly greater proportions of digital-tech employment – 70% more concentrated than the England average. This suggests that Warwick faces a competitiveness gap of at least 50%; in order to perform strongly against the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.

House prices and incomes

- In 2014, the average price to buy a house in C&W was £183,042 – lower than both the national average and the Oxford-Cambridge corridor. With only 16% growth in C&W house prices during 2009-14 compared to 24% in areas along the corridor, this is attractive for both residents and businesses alike who wish to invest in the region.
- The house price affordability ratio compares house prices to residential incomes to measure how affordable buying a house is across different areas. The average house price in C&W is 6.9 times the average earnings. This is much less than the Oxford-Cambridge corridor average of 8.1
- South Warwickshire currently has the highest residential earnings (£31,236) against key areas in the corridor; but relatively lower workplace earnings – suggesting that higher-earning residents are travelling elsewhere for work. Warwick in particular, has a house price affordability ratio of 8.3; higher than both Milton Keynes and Northampton.

Employment

- During 2010-15, employment in C&W increased by 9% in the post-recession era; higher than the national average (8%) but lagging behind the Oxford-Cambridge corridor. This is driven by a slight fall in employment experienced in Warwick (-0.1%)
- Locally, Northampton is the only area in the corridor to see a post-recession decline in employment (-3.2%); whilst Milton Keynes saw the highest growth rate of 15.6%.
- **Employment growth similarities between C&W and the corridor:** Electricity & gas, Transportation & storage, Professional services, Construction
- **Employment growth differences between C&W and the corridor:** C&W has unique strong growth in Manufacturing, Positive growth in IT services in the corridor but negative in C&W
- **Employment breakdown similarities between C&W and the corridor:** Wholesale & retail, Health & social care (both low-wage industries)
- **Employment breakdown differences between C&W and the corridor:** Higher concentration of Manufacturing employment in C&W, very high concentration of Electricity & gas employment in Warwick, Education employment in the corridor doubles C&W levels

Commuting and Functional Economic Geography

- C&W has a high self-containment rate of 74% - where about 3 in 4 residents live and work in the sub-region.
- While 9,352 residents in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor travel to work in C&W, 14,168 C&W residents commute to areas along the corridor for employment. This equates to 1 in 5 C&W residents (18%) who work in the corridor.
- C&W has a strong dependence on LEP areas: Oxfordshire and South East Midlands for employment. This is represented by the high net commuting outflow rates; particularly to South East Midlands, due to the inclusion of key employment areas such as Northampton, Daventry and Cherwell.
- The Oxford-Cambridge corridor has a higher self-containment rate of 84% compared to C&W. The corridor benefits from a high commuting inflow of workers who live in C&W – only 4% of residents who live in the corridor area travel to C&W for employment. Overall, this concludes that C&W has a greater economic benefit from improved strategic links to the Oxford-Cambridge corridor than vice versa.

Economic Forecasts

For this analysis, the “Oxford-Cambridge corridor” includes the following areas: Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale and Oxfordshire; due to a lack of available data

- The C&W area is forecast to see 5% job growth by 2022; slightly exceeding the national trend and equates to an increase of 23,328 new jobs created. The

industries to see the biggest changes in employment; will be Health & social care, Wholesale & retail and Transportation & storage

- By 2022, C&W will see strong clusters of employment in Manufacturing and Transportation & storage – over 40% higher than the national average. This provides C&W with a strong industrial competitive advantage against other areas.
- The Oxford-Cambridge corridor is forecast to see 7% job growth by 2022; higher than the C&W area and equates to an increase of 23,328 new jobs. The industries to see the biggest changes in employment; will be Health & social care, Wholesale & retail and Professional services.
- By 2022, the corridor will see stronger clusters of employment in service sectors such as IT and Professional services. This suggests that the Oxford-Cambridge corridor has a strong competitive advantage in higher-value, knowledge-intensive services when compared against other areas

Industrial Structure

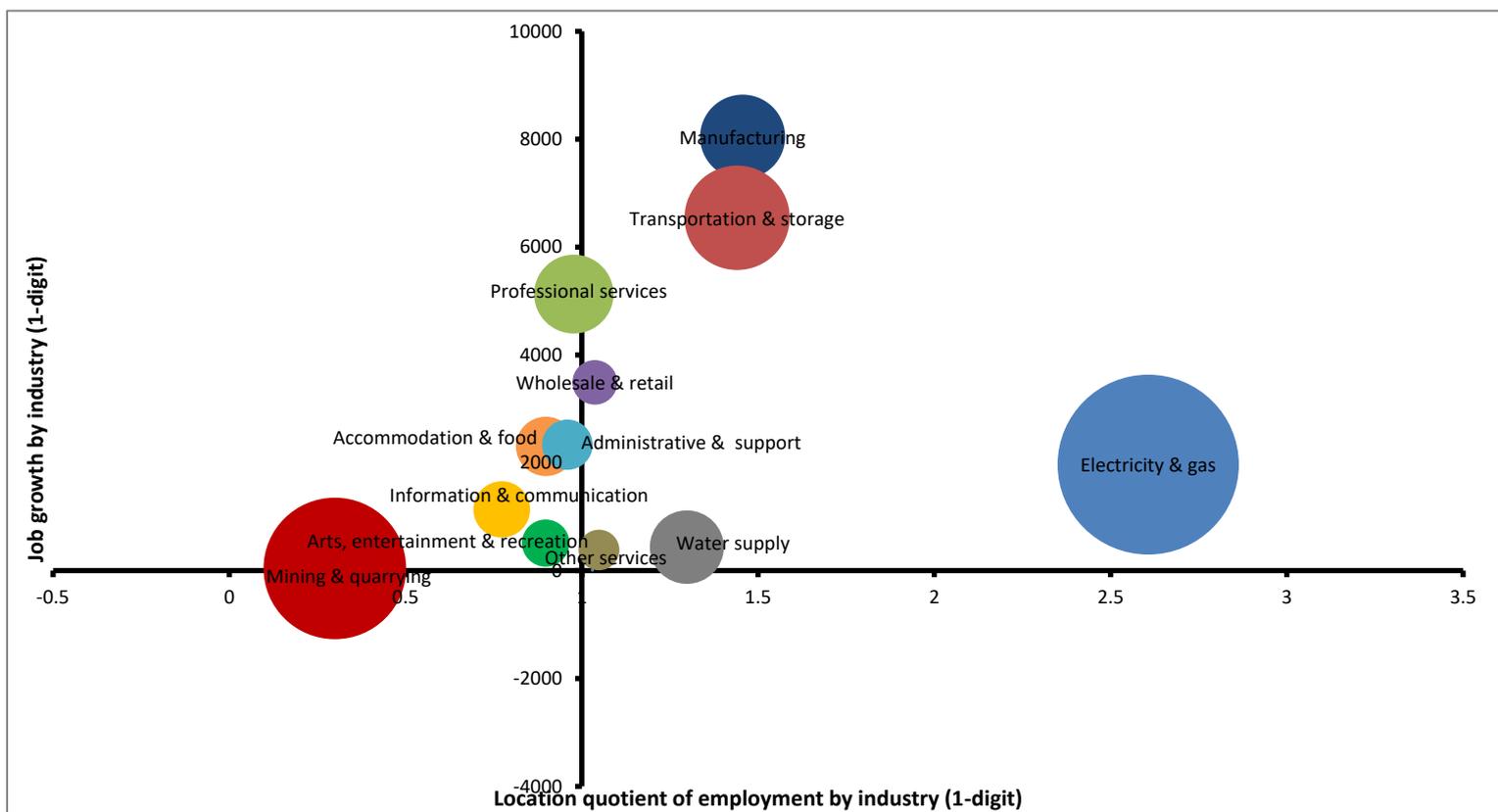
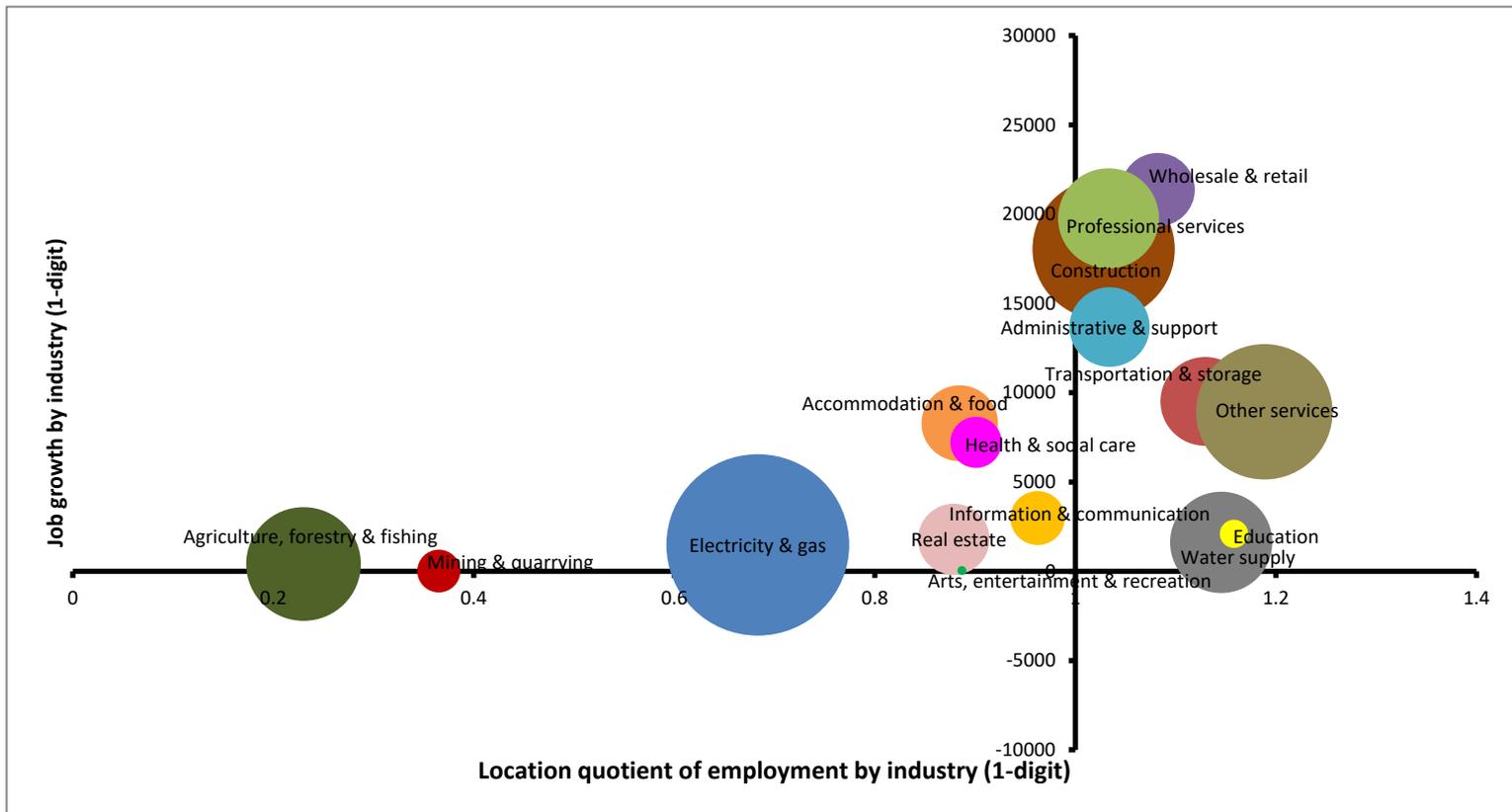


Figure 1: Industrial structure in Coventry and Warwickshire (2013-15)

Source: BRES

Figure 2: Industrial structure in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor (2013-15)

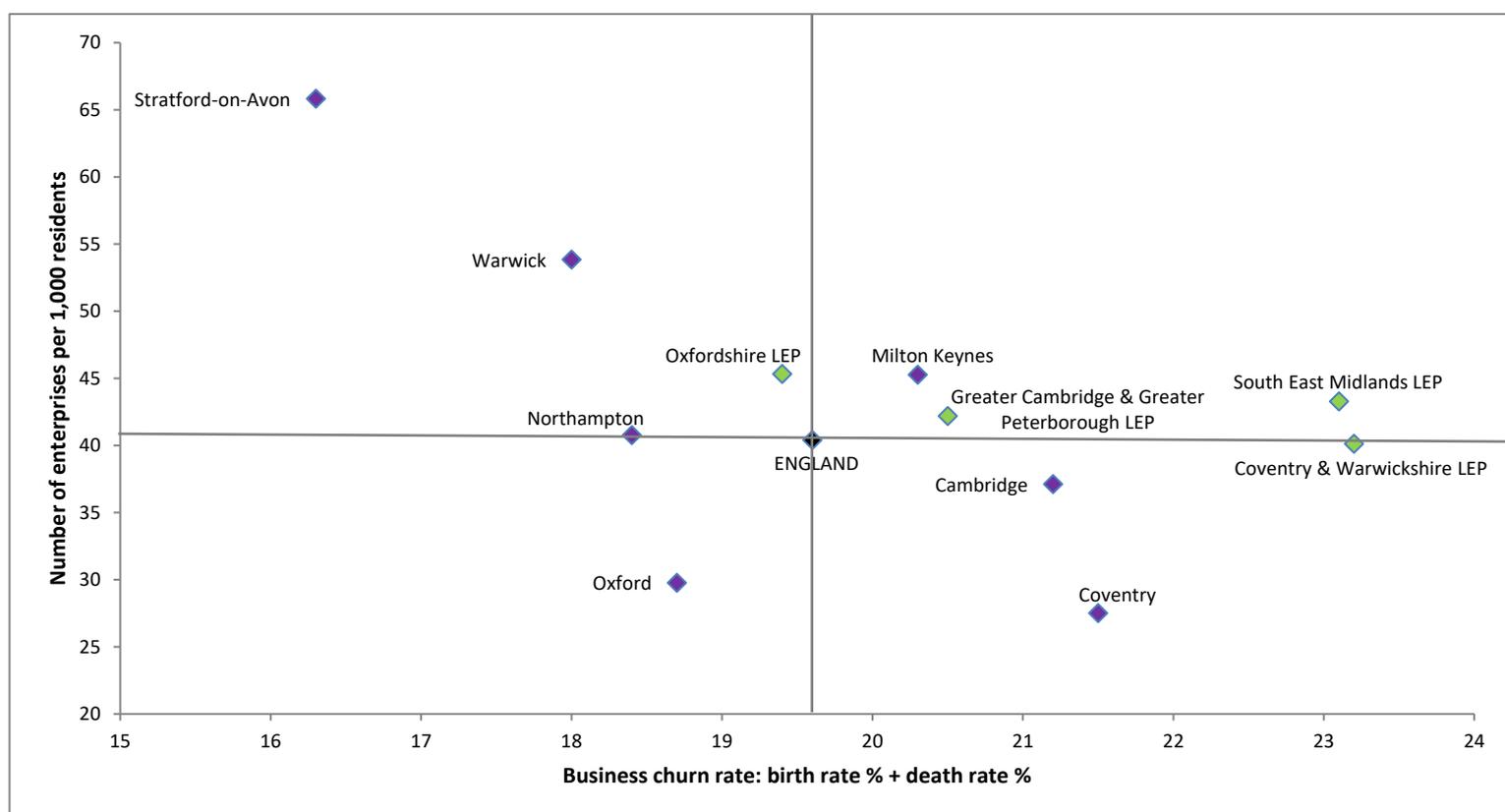


Source: BRES

Business Performance

- The C&W area has a business start-up density of 55 per 10,000 population; higher than the national average (39) and just second behind South East Midlands (61). The trend is mirrored in the business birth rate (proportion of start-ups in the total business stock) – where C&W’s rate (13.9%) generally exceeds the corridor area (11.8% average)
- Locally, Stratford-on-Avon’s business start-up density of 53 per 10,000 population is higher than all key areas in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor; suggesting that the area has a larger concentration of business activity and therefore a stronger entrepreneurial rate. Stratford’s density nearly doubles Oxford’s.
- Coventry has the highest business birth rate of 11% compared to areas along the corridor; meaning that there are a larger proportion of start-ups here compared to the “innovation cities” in the corridor.
- “Patents per 100,000 residents” measures innovation in a local area. Despite Coventry and Warwickshire having a 2007-11 average of 12.7 patents per 100,000 residents (exceeding the national average), this is 3-4 times lower than LEPs: Oxfordshire and Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough

Figure 3: Scatterplot of number of enterprises per 1,000 residents vs churn rate (2014-



15)

Source: ONS Business demography; NOMIS <http://www.mylocaleconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/REVIEW-OF-LEP-AREA-ECONOMIES-2014.pdf>

The 'churn rate' refers to the sum of openings (or births) and closures (or deaths) of enterprises. It indicates how frequently new firms are created and how often existing enterprises close down. In fact, the number of openings and closures of enterprises accounts for a sizeable proportion of the total number of firms in most economies. The indicator reflects an area's degree of 'creative destruction', and it is of high interest for analysing, for example, the contribution of firm churning to aggregate productivity growth.

- Higher-than average business activity and greater net economic value from radical innovations as their innovation replaces the "established way of doing things" - Milton Keynes, Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough; South East Midlands
- Lower-than average business activity, but greater net economic value from radical innovations as their innovation replaces the "established way of doing things" – Coventry & Warwickshire, Coventry, Cambridge
- Lower-than average business activity and smaller net economic value from radical innovations as their innovation does not fully replace the "established way of doing things" – Oxford

Higher-than average business activity, but smaller net economic value from radical innovations as their innovation does not fully replace the "established way of doing things" – Stratford, Warwick, Northampton, Oxfordshire

Appendix A - Transport connectivity

High quality connectivity between (Coventry & Warwickshire and the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor will be provide positive benefits for both areas economic areas. A strong, resilient transport network is critical to supporting good business to business connectivity for the key sectors which both areas are seeking to develop, and ensuring that they are well linked to local and sub-regional housing market areas.

The two areas have an established strategic road and rail network which provides a number of key connections, these being:

- Road: A14, M6/M1 and M40
- Rail: Birmingham – Leicester – Peterborough – Cambridge – Stansted Airport, Birmingham - Milton Keynes – London Euston (West Coast Main Line) and Birmingham – Banbury – Bicester – London Marylebone (Chiltern Line)

The following improvements to these routes would deliver enhanced connectivity in terms of reduced journey times, improved interchange opportunities and network resilience:

- Development of the A14 as an 'Expressway';
- Completion of Smart Motorways provision on the M6 and M1;
- Extension of Smart Motorways provision between Junctions 16 and 9 of the M40;
- Track and signalling improvements to allow improved journey times and service frequency enhancements between Birmingham and Cambridge;
- Delivery of Phases 3 and 4 of NUCKLE to provide new rail service opportunities between the East Midlands, Coventry, Leamington Spa, Oxford and the Thames Valley; and
- New and enhanced rail service opportunities on the 'classic' rail network post-HS2, particularly on the West Coast Main Line.

We propose that the two areas work together to develop joint evidence and coordinated lobbying in order to bring forward these improvements.

- Strong R&D presence / spend on innovation / geographic location of linked assets and universities.
- Advanced manufacturing, electric vehicles, intelligent mobility, etc.
- Digital cluster / links to "silicon fen" (or potential links)
- Strong knowledge base in terms of skill levels (particularly in south of county)

[name redacted], [job title redacted]
Warwickshire County Council.

Warwickshire County Council,
Tel: [telephone number redacted]
Email: [email address redacted]

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE–MILTON KEYNES–OXFORD CORRIDOR

1. This is a joint response from Local Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnerships across the sub-region including this Corridor. This joint response demonstrates our strong, positive and combined commitment to realising and shaping the once in a generation growth opportunity across the area. The organisations that have agreed this response are detailed in Appendix 1. This collective response may be supplemented by responses from individual organisations.
2. As a committed partnership of influential stakeholders and Leaders drawn from public and private sectors, we span an extensive and varied geography, but critically we are committed to putting in place effective governance and working arrangements that will provide the collaborative voice on matters of genuine strategic importance to the sub-region, including the Corridor, enabling sustainable growth and ensuring this growth strengthens our communities.
3. Across the sub-region including this Corridor, we are united in a shared ambition to capitalise powerfully on our area's potential, both domestically and internationally, across a wide range of key sectors where we lead markets and have identified opportunities for continued growth. It is this platform of a high performing economy across the whole area which will be the catalyst for further sector-led investment, skills and workforce capacity building, population and housing growth. We recognise the need to also work with those areas that are adjacent to our sub-region.
4. We support the Commission's position that this is "a once in a generation opportunity" of national significance. We are already working to deliver sustainable growth in our areas and are committed to delivering enhanced collaborative working reflecting all partners' interests across the sub-region including the Corridor to achieve our shared ambition. We require a similar level of commitment from the Government and in particular its commitment to work with us and invest alongside us, in improved infrastructure and services.
5. As Council Leaders, Elected Mayors and LEP Chairs we have identified and agreed the benefits of strategic collaboration. There is a shared ambition to:
 - a. Realise the transformational opportunity for a step change in economic growth and productivity across the area that enables businesses to prosper in global markets
 - b. Adopt a collaborative approach in order to maximise the benefits for both the national and local economies of planned growth (economic and housing)
 - c. Establish governance and co-ordination arrangements (in which Central Government is integral) that secure effective collaboration on strategic issues across the area and thereby provide the long-term clarity and stability that encourages investment
6. We have also identified and agreed twelve principles that will guide our strategic leadership for the area (Appendix 2). These principles have been used to help shape this response. Following this we have proactively proposed a robust governance structure to deliver our significant shared growth potential consisting of:-
 - a. A High Level Collaborative Framework.
 - b. A shared Economic Industrial Strategy.
 - c. A series of interlocking planning areas.
 - d. A Strategic Infrastructure Board.

These enhance and build on existing partnership structures and will form the basis of a focused engagement with Government to deliver the necessary enabling activities to realise our growth potential.

7. As Strategic Leaders we have also agreed the four key outcomes that we are looking to achieve, namely to:
 - a. Accelerate the delivery of planned growth across the area, where this is enabled by investment in infrastructure and services.
 - b. Provide the strategic leadership that will enable existing mechanisms and processes to plan for, and realise an economic transformation across the area and
 - c. Secure long-term benefits and opportunities for local communities.
 - d. Attract increased private sector investment.

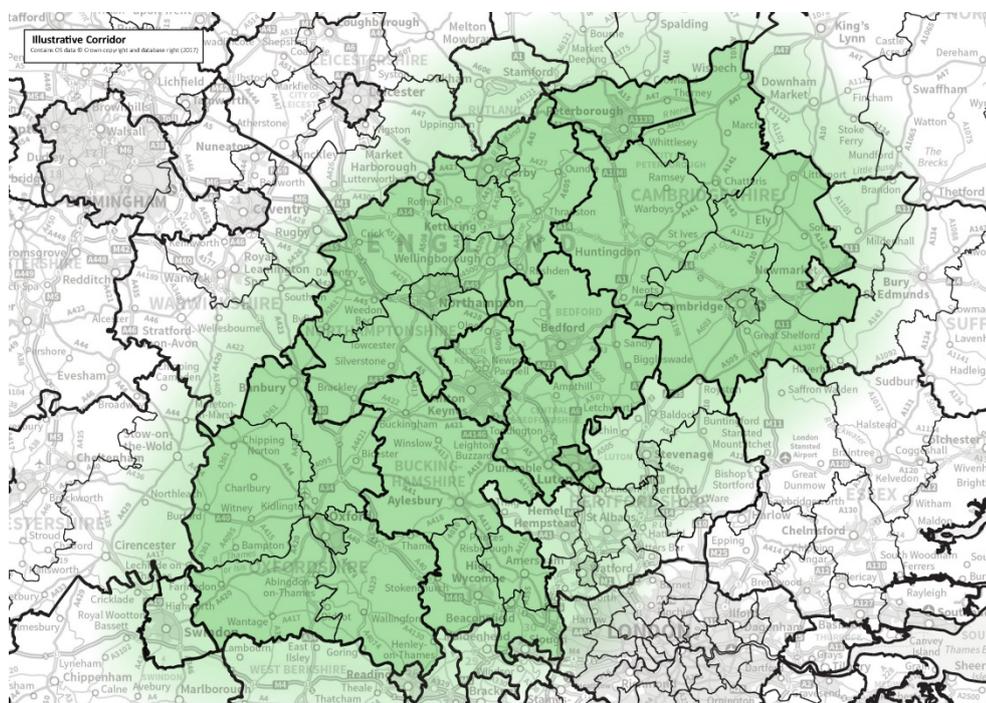
Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;**
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and**
- c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?**

8. We support a non-statutory plan for the sub-region including this Corridor based on the principles of enhanced strategic planning, closer collaboration, a High Level Collaborative Framework, a Strategic Infrastructure Board, interlocking common planning areas and a shared Economic Industrial Strategy. This builds on existing, proven partnerships, including successful Local Enterprise Partnerships, the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning, the Cambridgeshire/ Peterborough Combined Authority and Oxfordshire Growth Board and the creation of a Common Planning area or areas between the two, as well as the emerging proposals for a sub-national Strategic Infrastructure Board. It is important to ensure clarity of purpose to secure delivery and that only those functions that are of genuinely strategic importance are addressed at the sub-region including this Corridor level.
9. The Commission's Interim Report set out the critical importance of linking a strategy for infrastructure and homes with the area's strategy for skills and social infrastructure, as well as with the UK's wider Industrial Strategy.
10. The need to develop and enhance the distinctive nature of settlements and communities within the sub-region including the Corridor is fully supported by partners (and the challenge of addressing first-last mile connectivity by the NIC is welcome). Aligned to this is the recognised need that sustainable growth is beneficial to all areas but that it will need to minimise the environmental impact on the area. There are clear opportunities at pivotal transport interchanges (for example new stations and major interconnections on North/ South and East West corridors) to develop existing cities and towns as well as delivering new settlements, but these can only be facilitated through the early delivery of infrastructure, addressing recognised constraints and enhancing existing communities.
11. The Commission, through the various studies and reports, recognises the role that key infrastructure will play in delivering housing and economic growth. To tackle the current weaknesses we welcome the focus on the delivery of East West Rail and the "Expressway" but these alone will not address the Corridor's infrastructure deficits, identified through individual and joint Infrastructure plans at both Local Authority and LEP level. Although we welcome

these two key projects we need clarity on their routes and timing of delivery to ensure that opportunities are properly captured in the Collaborative Framework and Local Plans.

12. We would emphasise that wider infrastructure investment support is also required, including connectivity (road, rail, air, and telecoms), skills investment, business support and growth and environmental improvements. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the need to improve utilities infrastructure is essential to being able to secure the growth ambitions for the sub-region including the Corridor.
13. Partners are agreed on the broader need to focus on the delivery of sustainable economic and housing growth in unison. This issue has not been fully addressed in the Commission's discussion paper and the partners are clear of the need to consider the wider infrastructure needs for the area and critically the need to ensure sustainable economic growth to drive enhanced housing delivery.
14. Collectively, our economies represent a major driving force within the UK economy. Our ability to respond to our growth potential is directly coupled with a clear trajectory for a greatly enhanced economic impact, locally and nationally. Our sector strengths are unique for the UK economy and attract international investment. Our ambition is to realise growth in productivity. This depends on the commitment of us as partners – which we can demonstrate, the investment and engagement of Government – which is actively sought, alongside essential and powerful partnerships with the private sector, which together we will enable.
15. Comprising a committed partnership of influential stakeholders, we span an extensive and varied geography from Oxfordshire to Cambridgeshire. As highlighted below, we view the sub-region including the Corridor with permeable boundaries, working with partners so that we can realise our collective growth potential and addressing often cross boundary challenges.



16. We are a dynamic partnership with permeable boundaries, which recognises the fluidity of economic centres over time and the need to respond to changing drivers and patterns of growth.
17. Our economic potential exists right across the sub-region including this Corridor but it is not restricted to one particular (East-West) corridor. We agree with the Commission that East West

Rail and the “Expressway” represent a ‘once-in-a-generation’ opportunity to create a multi-modal spine that links the area in ways that do not currently exist. However, connectivity to/from the spine are just as important, as are some of the ‘north-south’ corridors across the area, wider digital connectivity and ensuring all our settlements and communities can benefit from growth. However, it is necessary to have absolute confidence that government funded (or part funded) investment will be delivered to an agreed timescale

18. In summary, we believe that the proposals set out in the Commission’s discussion paper only partially address the fundamental issues that are adversely impacting on investor and business confidence and which by extension then impact on delivery of planned growth.
19. We are committed to developing our own new model of governance and working arrangements to secure delivery. These will be based on enhancing the extensive range of existing delivery vehicles that reflect local functional economic and housing market areas. We invite the Commission and Government to work with us in this endeavour.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

20. The economic opportunity identified by the Commission in its Interim Report is one that is truly transformational. We welcome it and wish to embrace the challenge. We should not look to drive such an agenda solely through the local planning system, though recognising the essential role strategic planning has to play in achieving enhanced delivery.
21. Partners are already demonstrating their willingness to collaborate on the delivery of growth, including some areas delivering unmet need from neighbouring authorities and developing spatial plans tailored to local needs. Such plans are already advancing in Cambridgeshire and Oxfordshire. Further to this there already exists a range of pan authority strategic partnerships driving planning and economic growth including collaboration between our Local Enterprise Partnerships. In order to strengthen this partnership to ensure continued collaboration, the benefits of additional growth must be felt locally, through long term confirmed investment in key infrastructure and services, delivered up front or alongside new growth. This crucially will also provide increased certainty to private sector investors and businesses.
22. Delivering this economic growth will be a key driver in stimulating market demand for housing, which will play a positive role in stimulating additional housing delivery thus creating a virtuous circle. Partners recognise that investor confidence in housing and commercial markets is inextricably linked with the certainty of delivery of the public sector’s commitments to deliver infrastructure and services to agreed timescales.
23. We support the Commission’s view that the area has unmet economic potential. This is best reflected in the need for an Economic Industrial Strategy for the sub-region including the Corridor that complements the Government’s Industrial Strategy by setting out how the area will:
 - Invest in science research and innovation.
 - Develop skills and innovative business practices.
 - Improve productivity.
 - Support business to start and grow.
 - Improve procurement .
 - Encourage trade and inward investment.
 - Deliver energy security and clean growth.
 - Grow our key sectors.
 - Deliver for all our communities .

24. Our commitment – as set out in this response and supported by our statement of principles for new governance and working arrangements – means that the Commission and Government can be confident we will provide the strategic leadership required for the area. We believe that by working 'with the grain' we can enhance existing governance and working arrangements.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

a. housing developers;

b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and

c. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

25. Partners recognise that certainty of planned development is key to improving collaboration with the above groups. However, this can be best delivered through the existing strong relationships developed by partners, and the proposed enhancements to existing governance.
26. The extent of unimplemented planning permissions across the sub-region including the Corridor reflects the constraints that exist within our infrastructure and services 'offer'. Secondly, and in particular, in relation to the delivery of new homes, the current business model for private sector house building is broken – a fact already acknowledged by Government and we welcome a discussion with Government on delivery of consented development.
27. The delivery of transformational 'once-in-a-generation' infrastructure – such as East West Rail and the "Expressway" – will change both housing market and functional economic area geographies. The realisation of a step change in (21st century) economic growth means that the nature of our future connectivity (both physical and digital) and housing needs are also likely to change, further highlighting the need for a wider consideration of infrastructure needs than the commission is currently exploring.
28. The potential of an infrastructure compact is welcomed; this concept would require significant further development. The need for the area to present a clear and agreed infrastructure priority list, is understood and agreed, and in fact examples of such actions are already in place, such as the Local Enterprise Partnership's prioritising of Local Growth Funding. This could be further developed across the sub-region including the Corridor, building on existing shared work on key projects. Furthermore, Government must provide long term funding commitments with sufficient capital and revenue funding, using grant and loan finance where appropriate, for the detailed development and delivery of schemes, and crucially agree that these would be prioritised locally.
29. Utility companies and other providers of community infrastructure, such as NHS, should also be considered through a compact mechanism as strategic investment over this scale and timeframe does not align with the current delivery cycles and there must be a requirement on them to support longer term planning and delivery of growth. Furthermore, partners would welcome the opportunity to work with the Commission and Government on utility funding, specifically to address the often high marginal costs of incremental growth.
30. The Local Transport Authorities across the area are already working on strategic transport issues (in the form of the Strategic Transport Forum), as part of which they are developing a proposal to establish a Sub-national Transport Body. Partners across the area are committed to build on this to create a Strategic Infrastructure Board which, working with the Government, will develop shared priorities for the area, to provide certainty for local communities and private sector investors, ultimately supporting the delivery of sustainable growth in the sub-region including the Corridor.

31. We share the Government's desire to look for ways in which to work with the construction sector, including support for encouraging new entrants and the use of new technologies such as Modern Methods of Construction and Zero Carbon Modular Design. Indeed we would ask Government to consider the area as an exemplar for this field and would welcome the opportunity to work with the HCA in this regard.
32. We seek a number of additional planning freedoms and flexibilities. In particular the removal of housebuilders' ability to challenge on viability grounds. These will enable greater delivery in line with Government requirements, in particular improved delivery of consented schemes.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

33. We welcomed the Commission's acknowledgement in its Interim Report that the area is of national significance to the long-term future of the UK economy. We share that view.
34. Given its acknowledged importance to the UK it is therefore imperative that there is strong Governmental support for the sub-region including the Corridor. The benefits of strategic leadership within Government for other initiatives – such as the Northern Powerhouse – are clear and should be replicated and resourced appropriately. However, such is the scale of transformation required in order to realise the economic opportunities across the area, there will be a need for some additional resources. This is not a 'business as usual' scenario: it cannot therefore be delivered using solely existing resources.
35. In terms of relationships with house builders, these will play a central role in delivering the housing growth across the sub-region including the Corridor. Our proposals in Q3 will be essential to remove potential blockages to delivery from the private sector.

Governance

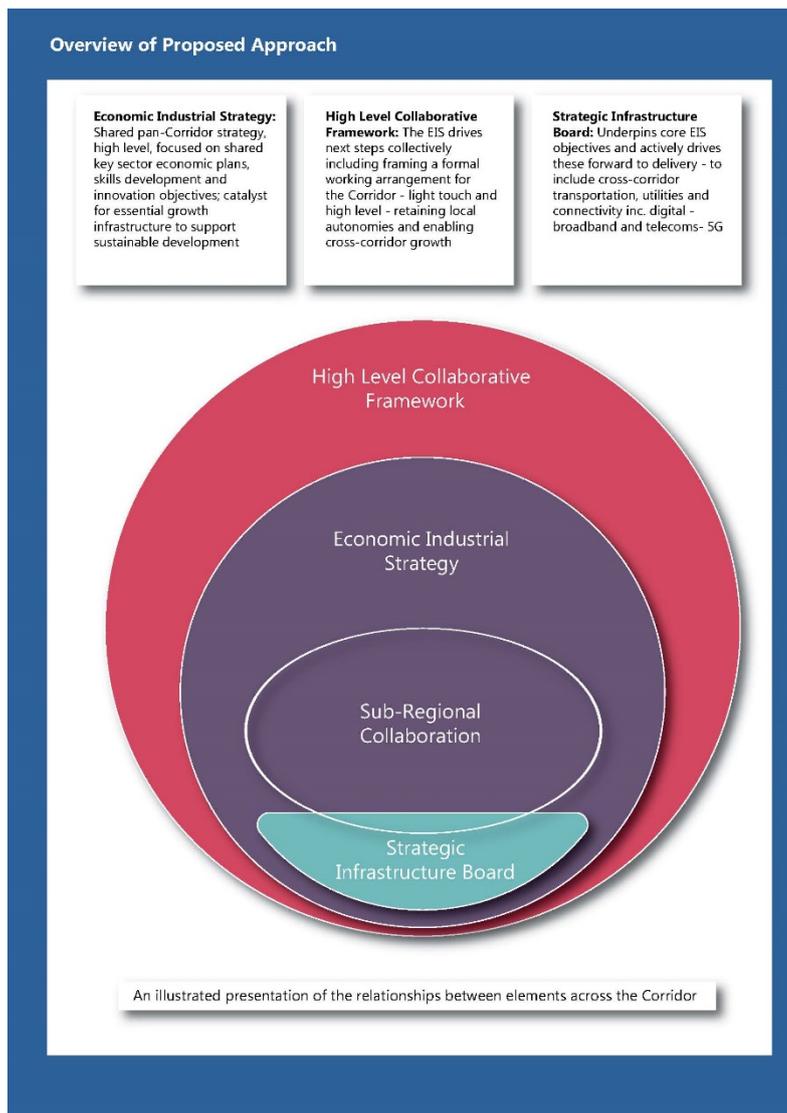
Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

36. The General Principles set out within the Commission's discussion paper are consistent with best practice, and partners are keen to ensure high levels of democratic accountability and transparent decision taking reflecting the needs and opportunities of all partners across the sub-region including this Corridor at all spatial levels and 'going with the grain' to enhance existing working arrangements and provide a focus on strategic issues where needed.
37. Given the transformational nature of the opportunities identified by the Commission in its Interim Report, it is highly likely that the boundaries for collaborative working will evolve over time. In developing our proposal for new governance and working arrangements, we will not look to constrain collaborative working to one particular spatial geography, whilst recognising that three parts of the sub-region are already advancing joint planning proposals. Nor will we look to require that all policy issues have to be addressed on the same spatial geography. We seek a permeable geography to reflect the often cross boundary infrastructure needs in order to be flexible to market opportunities and challenges and to maximise potential impact in the sub-region including this Corridor.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

38. Partners believe an alternative approach to the two models suggested in the consultation document is required, as neither of these properly meet the needs and desires of the Corridor area. As noted throughout this response, we are working together on an emerging Governance

Structure that will provide Government with the single conduit for engagement on strategic issues.



39. This approach builds on the guiding principles set out in Annex 2.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

40. We have set out in this submission our commitment to work collaboratively in addressing issues of strategic importance.

41. We believe that our (non-statutory) approach will deliver the 'lock-in' sought by Government. This is clearly demonstrated through existing examples such as the Cambridgeshire/ Peterborough Combined Authority, the Oxfordshire Growth Board and North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and emerging proposals for a sub-national Strategic Infrastructure Board. Partners will work with government through the High Level Collaborative Framework model. We will develop a shared Economic Industrial Strategy and seek to secure an Infrastructure Compact with Government that binds partners together, to realise benefits for all that we would not be able to achieve individually. Our Strategic Infrastructure Board will ensure a long term focus on the key infrastructure needs for the area, and Government commitment to supporting the delivery of shared priorities will be a key part in locking in long term growth.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

42. Through this submission we are setting out our commitment to put in place the governance and working arrangements that will provide the strategic, collaborative leadership required.
43. As noted above, the Oxfordshire Growth Board, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Plan and a Memorandum of Understanding being developed covering other areas, alignment of Local Plan reviews and a shared Economic Industrial Strategy all have long term strategic aims and joint working at their core. Furthermore, the proposed infrastructure compact with Government, with committed funding and long term strategic planning with utility and community infrastructure providers would also provide a long term commitment from the area in terms of shared infrastructure and growth priorities. Our shared agreement to a High Level Collaborative Framework demonstrates our commitment to long term joint working.
44. At the strategic level, the momentum generated with the work of the Strategic Transport Forum is an example of the partners (both local transport authorities and local enterprise partnerships) identifying the need for collaborative working at scale. It is also an example of those partners making resources (both technical staff and cash) available to take the work forward as an agreed collective priority over the longer term.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

45. There already exist proven and democratically accountable governance structures across the sub-region including the Corridor. Partners recognise and support the enhancement of such mechanisms and the need for a governance structure across the sub-region including the Corridor to bring together existing arrangements. Partners welcome an early opportunity to engage with Government on developing an Infrastructure Compact and also active engagement in developing a shared Economic Industrial Strategy for the sub-region including the Corridor.
46. There is clear evidence of the commitment of the partners to press ahead with establishing effective collaborative working arrangements where there has been a clear need identified.
47. The initiative that led to establishing the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the creation of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit are examples of sub-regional collaborative working being taken forward.
48. Subsequent to the Commission publishing its discussion paper there has been a step-change in collaborative working at the sub-region including this Corridor level. Local Authority leaders and LEP Chairs have met on three separate occasions and have further meetings scheduled.
49. Regular meetings of the Chief Executives from all the partners have led the development of this submission. That group is taking forward the work to develop our proposal for new governance and working arrangements at the sub-region including this Corridor level
50. Our actions demonstrate our commitment and our ability to work collaboratively. This submission sets out our clear focus on addressing the barriers to the delivery of planned growth and to enabling investors to decide to locate in this area against the backdrop of an ever more competitive global market place.

51. Our initiatives locally already place us well down the path towards realising the step-change in collaboration as local partners. We are now looking for central Government to match our commitment

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

52. Both the High Level Collaborative Framework and all sub structures will consider the effective monitoring of delivery across the sub-region including the Corridor. A shared monitoring and evaluation framework over the sub-region including the Corridor is supported. This could include an annual monitoring report covering housing, economic growth and productivity growth. Furthermore, this could be further developed to include a shared joint evaluation/ cost benefit analysis tool kit (following for example New Economy Manchester and Leeds City Region tools). In addition to high level monitoring, robust monitoring of all infrastructure projects would be undertaken and considered at a sub-region including this Corridor level through the Strategic Infrastructure Board.

**THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN AGREED BY THE SIGNATORIES LISTED IN APPENDIX 1:
IT HAS NOT YET BEEN CONSIDERED THROUGH ANY ORGANISATION'S FORMAL
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES**

List of Signatories

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*In signing, this is on behalf of ALL constituents Authorities within the Combined Authority

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE–MILTON KEYNES–OXFORD CORRIDOR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Context

- 1.1. The area has been identified by the National Infrastructure Commission as having the potential to be the UK's Silicon Valley – a world renowned centre for science, technology and innovation. It has a major role to play in the future of the UK economy, although future economic success cannot be taken for granted.
- 1.2. The Commission has set out the need for a step-change in collaboration and commitment at all levels of government. They argue this requires a fundamental shift in the scale at which local authorities collaborate on planning and infrastructure and a new model of strategic leadership.
- 1.3. The Commission's discussion paper on future strategic planning emphasises the importance of a shift in bottom-up collaboration. Without it the paper suggests that Central Government intervention may be required in order to secure the economic benefits of a globally competitive growth area.

2. The Benefits of Strategic Collaboration

- 2.1. As Council Leaders and LEP Chairmen there is a shared ambition to:
 - a) Realise the transformational opportunity for a step change in economic growth productivity across the area that enable businesses to prosper in global markets
 - b) Adopt a collaborative approach on issues of strategic importance in order to maximise the benefits for both national and local economies of planned growth (economic and housing)
 - c) Establish governance and co-ordination arrangements (in which Central Government is integral) that secure effective collaboration on strategic issues across the area and thereby provide the long term clarity and stability that encourages investment

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1. Council Leaders and LEP Chairmen (the 'partners') will provide the strategic leadership required for the area: they will be guided by the following principles:

[Note: the principles are numbered for ease of reference – the order does not infer a priority]

- a) There will be an overall framework that provides an agreed (non-statutory) long-term vision of the economic and housing potential of the area.
- b) The framework will be used to set out and deliver a collaborative approach to issues of strategic importance - an economic industrial strategy, future skills requirements, strategic transport, connectivity and utility infrastructure – thereby ensuring local requirements are reflected in national programmes.
- c) The partners will be collectively responsible for the development and delivery of the framework.

- d) Individual partners will remain sovereign in terms of their existing powers, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- e) Individual partners will ensure that the plans they are responsible for are aligned with the long-term vision set out in the framework.
- f) Collaborative working at the sub-region level will respect and build upon working arrangements (statutory and non-statutory) at the local level and will not necessarily be limited to a single spatial geography.
- g) Individual partners will actively use their statutory powers to deliver their contribution towards the long-term vision set out in the framework.
- h) The framework will be underpinned by an agreed evidence base: the same evidence base will provide context for the preparation of detailed proposals at a local level e.g. Local Plans, Local Transport Plans, Strategic Economic Plans.
- i) The partners will look to agree an 'infrastructure compact' with Central Government that reflects the coverage of the framework, and through which both parties are held accountable to the other for agreed deliverables.
- j) The 'infrastructure compact' will set out the long-term funding envelope for the area and investment pipeline agreed as being required to deliver the framework.
- k) The partners are committed to implementing these principles quickly and will make available the resources (staff and funding) required in order to achieve this.
- l) The partners will ensure that the support for the governance and working arrangements are kept lean and cost effective.

4. Outcomes

4.1. The Council Leaders and LEP Chairman are looking to:

- a) Accelerate the delivery of planned growth across the area, where this is enabled by investment in infrastructure and services.
- b) Provide the strategic leadership (a single voice) that will enable existing mechanisms and processes to plan for, and realise an economic transformation across the area.
- c) Secure long-term benefits and opportunities for local communities.

WINSLOW TOWN COUNCIL

28 High Street, Winslow, Buckinghamshire, MK18 3HF

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

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National Infrastructure Commission
(by email)

31st May 2017

Strategic Planning in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor - A Response

At this early stage, there needs to be recognition and appreciation of the scale of growth that is potentially being proposed. Currently, the population of the 'corridor' is about 3.3 million. Paragraph 27 advises "the area could support a further 700,000 jobs by 2050." This would equate to a potential increase of about 1 million new homes representing a population growth of 2.3 million, a 70% increase, to give by 2050 a 'corridor' population of 5.6 million, which is larger than the combined current populations of Greater Birmingham and Greater Manchester of 5.5 million. The population of Birmingham itself, the UK's second largest city is 1.1 million.

Up to date Local Plans covering the corridor are either already in place or will shortly be in place and these take us forward for about 15 years. The imposition of the above scale of growth being suggested in this discussion paper would mean significant revisions to those Local Plans at the first review date and in all probability, could potentially derail many of those Plans because of very significant housing growth, not only for the LPA area in question, but also very significant unmet need (overspill) from other Authorities.

It is vital that the stated aim of "integrated strategic planning" is born in mind at all stages in progressing this concept and the enabling of "bottom up" collaboration. Potential sites both for commercial and residential development must be identified locally and not imposed in a top down planning system, incorporating Local Plans and engaging with the community. At the same time the environment must be protected and housing, and most importantly, employment are delivered. The latter where there is currently a severe shortage - this will, of course, reduce the over reliance on the use of cars. Forward thinking must be evidence based on well thought out plans that constantly take into consideration and review the ever increasing, changing housing numbers and employment.

None of this can happen in a meaningful way without the input of existing businesses within the corridor, their vision of how the connection can influence further development. What additional services, connections, enterprise and skills are currently lacking within the corridor. Strip development along the corridor with the coalescence of settlements must not be an option; an urban sprawl must be avoided at all costs, such that settlements retain their character and are safeguarded in order to protect their interests.

For what will be a huge project, it is naïve to believe a bottom up approach alone can work with the multiplicity of Local Authorities that would be involved. Realistically, there must be some robust top down oversight to achieve what the ultimate strategic plan sets out by its target date.

The Expressway and East-West Rail should not run so close to each other such that car use deprives the railway of passengers and does nothing to reduce potential traffic in the area and fast journey times between the major centers. More and larger roads have meant more people and vehicles using them. Trains in themselves are good but there needs to be more connections to stations, where cars are not needed, as there are better, quicker and convenient connection to home and places of work.

If the roads take a direct line with the railway, then people will end up driving, even though they may not have somewhere sensible to park. If more parking is provided then we consume excessive amounts of agricultural land and open countryside. It may be necessary to look at 'new' modes of transport and connectivity from the current thinking, if a sustainable and forward looking plan is to be put into place. An enhanced East-West transport link is welcomed but not as a standalone entity but with radiating spokes of public transport, such that rural roads are not overwhelmed by increasing numbers of cars. The transport infrastructure needs careful planning with innovative solutions that integrate the various forms of public transport and road use.

Therefore, there must be alternative modes of transport, at the railway stations, to access towns and offices quickly and efficiently. We need quick, regular and reasonably costed connections that allow movement, while reducing delays, due to excessive numbers of people or vehicles travelling.

The corridor is one of the driest parts of the UK and the discussion paper makes a fleeting reference in para 28e of the need for the evaluation of provision of water. New reservoirs will take many years to deliver and there is no recognition of the inevitable huge growth needed in sewage and waste water disposal.

Communities along the route of East-West Rail are understandably frustrated with the on-going delays and uncertainties as to when the new service will commence, having not so long ago being promised it would be operational at the end of this year. Therefore, communities will undoubtedly be insistent that such major infrastructure projects must be in place before such massive growth takes place.

Winslow Town Council



The Civic Society for Milton Keynes

National Infrastructure Commission
Growth Corridor Evidence
5th Floor, 11 Philpot Lane, London EC3M 8UD

31st May 2017

National Infrastructure Commission

Consultation response by Milton Keynes Forum to the National Infrastructure Commission's 'Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor: discussion paper'

Milton Keynes Forum is the Civic Society for Milton Keynes, with membership open to local residents, organisations and businesses. It has contributed to constructive thinking about the development of the Milton Keynes area for almost three decades.

This is Milton Keynes Forum's submission to contribute to the debate initiated by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) in its March 2017 discussion paper on 'Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor' (SPCMKOC).

We have also noted, as context:

- the NIC's previous report, 'Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor Interim Report' (CMKOCIR) issued in 2016;
- the Department of Transport and Highways England report: 'Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Strategic Study: Stage 3 Report' (November 2016);
- and we await with interest the outcomes of the initial report on East-West Rail that the chairman of the new East-West Rail authority was required to submit to the Secretary of State for Transport in March 2017.

Our response is set out below with an executive summary up front, followed by a discussion of the key issues, with evidence from Milton Keynes' experience and responses to some of NIC's specific questions.

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MK Forum is registered with Civic Voice

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NIC's discussion paper, 'Strategic Planning in the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor' sets out a massive challenge to bring about substantial development along this corridor as a kind of 'silicon valley'. Milton Keynes Forum's response sets out our main responses to this discussion.

- 1) Proposals for large-scale development need to contain many reasons for local people to want them to happen. They must see what wider benefits these would bring.
- 2) Although this is described as the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor, it is far broader than a single corridor: it is a semi-region.
- 3) Oxford and Cambridge have been highly successful at generating new businesses in technology, bioscience and medical innovation. Development elsewhere along the corridor needs to be done in ways that ensure that other areas prove attractive to such businesses and do not become merely living places for out-commuters.
- 4) Crucial to Milton Keynes's future will be substantial higher education developments that provide for undergraduate as well as postgraduate and research institutions to underpin its economic development.
- 5) A clear and attainable shared vision of the future is needed to inspire collaboration across local authority boundaries and by all those involved in development of housing, employment and infrastructure.
- 6) There are clear roles for Development Corporation structures to enable rapid development of well-rounded and attractive places to live and work.
- 7) As well as an integrated strategic plan for the whole 'Corridor' area, planning at the scale of travel-to-work area could provide a practical basis for collaboration across local authority boundaries.

KEY ISSUES

A. The challenge

1. There is an apparent simplicity to the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor challenge, which has been presented as:
 - *"Development of a major economic corridor"* (SPCMKOC p6)
 - Delivery of East-West Rail
 - Planning and construction of an East-West Expressway
 - Increasing the number of jobs in the Corridor by between 335,000 and 700,000 by 2050 (SPCMKOC p7) and therefore of employment land and buildings for these.

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In the absence of a housing figure in that report, we have estimated that this would require provision of housing to match the jobs of about 220,000 to 460,000 by 2050 – that is between 6,600 and 14,000 houses a year.

2. Before addressing the core questions of this consultation – about integrated strategic planning and the form of governance to underpin this – we consider that there are crucial missing elements which need addressing first. These challenges are, of course, to those who live and work in this ‘Corridor’ who are being invited to accept a massive scale of housing and commercial development in order to serve national as well as local needs. This scale of change will need far more to make it attractive to current residents than the prospect of a renewed east-west rail route and a potential expressway. Both these transport proposals have purposes well beyond improving movement between towns along their route between Cambridge and Oxford. These will become important diagonal connections to the existing rail and road routes running radially from London across Britain, and will enhance rail freight and passenger movements nationally. Other benefits would need to be in prospect to persuade a public that these days consistently resist significant development near them. It will need more than placing proposed types of development on a map to persuade existing residents that they could gain significantly from this.
3. The ‘Plan for Milton Keynes’ of 1970 is still shaping aspects of Milton Keynes’ development forty-five years later. For some, in the pre-existing towns and villages, it was a threat but those who stayed with it have gained: a regional shopping centre of a scale found nowhere else in the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor; a much enhanced employment market; a university of international importance; a major enlargement of sporting, cultural and leisure opportunities; a very special landscape of 6,000 acres of linear parks, lakes and woodlands; a considerable range of attractive housing and local facilities, and much else. These were all outlined in the Plan. Unless the existing towns and villages can expect to see benefits of these kinds they may be unconvinced about the challenge. So this must be about more than: 1) a Government objective; 2) The need for integrated strategic planning for the semi-region; and 3) Changes to the form of local governance. It must be about exciting local people and their elected local authorities with prospects of future benefits.

B. The context

4. The Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor has been described by the NIC as “a 130 mile band from Cambridgeshire to Oxfordshire” encompassing places such as Daventry and Wellingborough and “bounded on its southern fringe by Luton, Stevenage and Aylesbury Vale” (CMKOCIR p17). We have noted that the direct distance between Cambridge and Oxford is only 66 miles, but that 78 miles is the approximate distance between Didcot, near the south-western boundary of Oxfordshire, and Newmarket on Cambridgeshire’s eastern boundary, so the 130 mile band this describes must extend from Ipswich to well west of Oxford and is broader than a single transport corridor. This much broader band is said to have a population of 3.3 million in an area of 3,900 square miles (CMKOCIR p17).

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5. The 'Illustrative Models' in SPCMKOC (pages 15 & 16) indicate that the broader area defined as The Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor is covered by about thirty planning authorities. This appears to describe the entire area covered by the geographical areas of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire and more. So this is not so much a single corridor as a sizeable 'semi-region' that crosses previous regional boundaries. The local spatial planning complexity of this broad area is exacerbated by the variety of types of local authority. There are five Unitary Authorities, those for: Milton Keynes, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton, and Peterborough, with Bedford having an elected Mayor. There are also sixteen district authorities with planning responsibilities within the five 'county' areas. So we assume that the Illustrative Models must include planning authorities from areas further west, east and south of the five 'county' areas. There is a recent added complexity that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is now a Combined Authority and has an elected Mayor for an area with a distinct north-south axis in relation to an east-west corridor (with new strategic powers over: economic growth, housing, transport infrastructure improvement and maintenance, integration of health and social care, and local employment and training services). Of the seven constituent councils of that Combined Authority, some are probably not considered part of the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor.
6. For economic development of this area, the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor is served by six Local Economic Partnerships, those for: Oxfordshire (OXLEP), South-East Midlands (SEMLEP), Northamptonshire (NEP), Buckinghamshire & Thames Valley (BTVLEP), Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough (GCGPEP), and Thames Valley Berkshire (TVBLEP).
7. In terms of Journey-to-Work Catchment areas, there are effectively three larger ones covering the main east-west band (Greater Cambridge, Milton Keynes & Bedford, and Greater Oxford) with Luton, Northampton and Peterborough having their own broad areas for Journey-to-Work overlapping with these.
8. A recent attempt has been made by four county councils (Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire) to pull together local authority and economic interests across these broad areas. It has been made by calling together what they called 'England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance' which claims membership by four of the five unitary authorities (not including Central Bedfordshire), four county councils and four Local Enterprise Partnerships, but none of the district councils whose planning remit is crucial. It is questionable whether the role of county councils is central to finding new governance solutions for the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor.
9. The main concentrations of urban populations over 50,000 are:
 - Milton Keynes urban area: 231,000
 - Northampton: 212,000
 - Luton: 203,000
 - Peterborough: 195,000
 - Oxford City: 150,00

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- Cambridge City: 124,000
- Bedford: 79,000
- Corby: 65,000
- Aylesbury: 56,000
- Kettering: 51,000
- Wellingborough: 50,000.

10. A major premise of the NIC's work on the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor is that Oxford and Cambridge have huge pressures to provide land for business and housing to meet employment needs and reduce housing market pressures, even with new and expanding settlements in surrounding areas such as those around Cambridge, for example: Cambourne and Northstowe
11. We recognise that this is the overall – and extremely intricate – context within which agreement needs to be reached about where housing and industrial development and transport and other infrastructure should be located to achieve growth on a scale and at a pace never before achieved in this broad area.
12. As well as the integrated planning of all this area, there will need to be a considerable increase in the pace of development on the ground to meet what at present are largely Government aspirations. For such diverse and widespread local authorities to come together to agree a growth plan on this scale for the entire Corridor will require each of them to find local benefits as well as shared benefits from doing so, and for such development to be achieved in ways that are not detrimental to existing towns and villages, but beneficial.

C. Spreading the benefits of planning across the sub-region

13. The NIC's considerations about East-West Rail and a potential Oxford to Cambridge Expressway are relatively straightforward. By their nature, intra-regional transport links need to be considered in terms of 'corridors' The concept of corridors does not accord so well with what is being considered, which is a much wider area than a single transport corridor.
14. We recognise that there is evidence of a "*chronic undersupply of homes*" in the Oxford and Cambridge areas and ongoing demand for housing and employment land in areas between these two cities, but these need to be considered in relation to what in similar terms could be seen as a 'chronic need to disperse employment' from some locations. What is needed is for the benefits of economic development, and the drivers behind them, to be more widely dispersed to locations where there is more scope for new housing. Otherwise, the proposed east-west transport links will induce substantial increases in commuting rather than strengthening other employment areas and self-contained towns. What is needed is for towns and cities in the East-West Corridor to have balanced developments of housing and employment to enable as short commuting distances as possible, and to have strong further and higher education and training opportunities, with research and development, more widely dispersed along the Corridor. Alongside this, improved transport east-west will enable more

efficient movement where this is valuable for interactions between research and education and businesses.

15. One consequence of improved east-west transport on Milton Keynes and other areas along the Corridor could be to exacerbate the current pressures to provide more land for warehousing and logistics rather than to expand their technology sectors and business innovation. The main drivers of these sectors for Oxford and Cambridge are the universities and the associated science parks. Higher education and research and development need to be strengthened elsewhere along the Corridor. Cranfield University postgraduate specialisms do contribute to business developments in surrounding areas, but Milton Keynes's main higher education institution, the Open University, has no resident undergraduates and it has a worldwide focus. An important aspect of business and housing expansion will be substantial expansion of higher education in Milton Keynes and other areas for resident undergraduate, postgraduate and research and development sectors; and science and innovation and technology parks to facilitate application of the knowledge sectors to business innovation.
16. Another potential benefit of planning at the scale of a semi-region would be the scope to develop a transport authority with the scope of a body such as Transport for London, to ensure that public transport will be improved strategically.

D. Development across local authority boundaries

17. There is an inbuilt obstacle to collaboration between local authorities in respect of their planning powers and responsibilities. In the absence of a regional planning framework, the 'Duty to Cooperate', under the Localism Act 2011 Section 110, in relation to 'planning of sustainable development' is not an adequate substitute. In practice, local authorities have many other pressures that run counter to the kinds of collaboration over plan-making that would lead to effective planning of development across their boundaries. If a local authority proposes development at the edge of its own area in such a way that this development would be dependent on services and employment provided within the neighbouring area, this is unlikely to be welcomed by the neighbouring authority; not least because Council Tax and other local income from the new development would be retained by the home authority, but some pressures on local services and costs would be borne by their neighbouring authority.
18. A planning proposal has been submitted unsuccessfully more than once for a large housing development within the area of Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) abutting Milton Keynes's south-west corner. In its larger iteration this was Salden Chase, flanking the East-West Railway. In two more recent proposals this has been a smaller, but still large area called South-West Milton Keynes which would be to the north of the Railway and connect directly to Milton Keynes' grid-road system, effectively part of Milton Keynes urban area but subject to the governance of AVDC.
19. Milton Keynes Council, a Unitary Authority, has substantial urban boundaries that abut directly against the boundaries of: Aylesbury Vale District Council, Central

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Bedfordshire Council, and South Northamptonshire Council. MK has potential land for development elsewhere, within and beyond the current urban edges of Milton Keynes, so is able to identify land for development that does not require cross-boundary collaboration over potential sites where housing and employment areas might cross local authority boundaries, even though these might be better in terms of regional requirements and good planning practice. Of course, local authorities will go through all the requirements of Section 110, but the outcomes in shaping their Plan will not achieve what is required, which is planning across boundaries to achieve better solutions that serve regional and national purposes alongside local objectives.

E. The Milton Keynes development model

20. Much can be learned from the development of Milton Keynes over the last 50 years, while acknowledging that the context in the 21st century differs in many ways. We provide an overview of these achievements in an Appendix below.
21. There can be advantages to scale. MK was designed to become a city of quarter of a million in population, physical scale, facilities and culture. This enabled it to build over 1 million sq ft of retail space all in the first stage of The Shopping Building and to attract five department stores, develop 35 employment areas, numerous schools, build a theatre and gallery, establish a central railway station and bus station, attract numerous hotels, a wide range of retail, office and industrial premises, leisure and hospitality businesses, and a 32,000-seat stadium. It also attracted the Open University in its opening stages. The key elements to this are set out in the Appendix at the back of this note.
22. The original population target for Milton Keynes was to reach 250,000 by the early 1990s, based on an existing population of 45,000. By the time that the Development Corporation had been wound down in 1992 the population of the city had reached around 190,000, an increase of 145,000 over less than 25 years (about 6,000 a year). In 2017, 50 years after designation, Milton Keynes Council's entire area reached a projected population of 272,000 and the main urban area now has an estimated 231,000, with an additional 16,000 in adjoining Newport Pagnell. Population increase over the New Town's second 25 years was about 50,000, which is about 2,000 a year compared to 6,000 a year while there was a Development Corporation. This exemplifies some of the benefits of a Development Corporation.
23. Three of the four largest towns and cities in the Corridor area were developed under New Towns legislation: Milton Keynes, Northampton and Peterborough. These demonstrate that Development Corporations are well-adapted to expansion of existing areas and not just to the creation of entire new towns. Three towns in the Corridor, Aylesbury, Bletchley and Huntingdon used Town Development Act 1952 legislation to achieve 'growth area' and 'expanded town' development. Since then Aylesbury tried a new mechanism to guide development, Aylesbury Vale Advantage LDV, which did not prove as successful as has been achieved since then through the local authority (according to a DCLG review report of 2008).

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24. There are many advantages of local Development Corporations. They establish a board and a body whose entire focus is on urban development and the integration of housing, employment, education, infrastructure, retail, culture, leisure, landscape and much else, over a long time-span. They can focus on these without distraction by the many other priorities of local authorities. They ensure representation of the interests of future incomers alongside those of existing residents. They can and must take the long view, avoiding frequent upheavals and changes of directions that tend to feature within local authorities. They can sustain a clear long-term vision and readily accelerate the pace of development, while providing greater certainty to utility providers, housing developers and growing businesses. They draw in skilled staff attracted by a creative culture and demonstrable progress on the ground. Their core skill is coordination. They function around a Masterplan which provides long-term clarity and averts endless battles over each proposed addition to development land. They are able to function across local authority boundaries.

F. An Integrated Strategic Plan

25. We suggest that an Integrated Strategic Plan should be regarded as a semi-region framework around which more specific Masterplans would be developed for locations identified for more substantial expansion. These might be stand-alone new towns, new villages, or even a new city. They would also apply to expansion of many existing towns and villages.

26. We suggest that specific Masterplans that follow agreement on the Integrated Strategic Plan should have a 50 year timeframe so that uncertainty is reduced once this has progressed through public consultation and planning inquiry.

27. Answering the NIC's specific questions:

Q1. "Can the approach to strategic planning in this paper help to:

- tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;*
- maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links;*
- and develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?"*

A1. Our response is that:

- An integrated strategic plan for the entire semi-region would help to fill the void left by abolition of regional plans and should enable planning for areas within the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor to progress in ways that take fuller account of regional challenges and opportunities.
- We welcome the perspective that this should lead to development of "*distinct towns and villages*" – and, we suggest, even a new city – with each contributing to the economic strength of the 'Corridor'.

Q2. "How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?"

A2. Our response is that:

- An integrated strategic plan has the potential to enable a wide range of local authorities and other bodies to establish clearer roles and priorities for development in their areas.
- We suggest that the proposal (Para 26d of the SPCMKOC Discussion Paper) that the integrated strategic plan could “*coordinate patterns of development around transport hubs and interchanges*” is an over-simplified view. We see no necessity to cluster housing around transport interchanges as this would suggest that these residents should be focused on commuting out of their home town. We do see that there is a case for industrial and commercial developments being close to transport hubs.
- We consider that the proposed scale of housing could only be achieved if a special purpose body or bodies are created to achieve major aspects of integrated urban development.

Q3. “*Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:*

- *housing developers*
- *infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) central government – through, for example, a new, long-term ‘infrastructure compact’.*”

A3. A 50-year time-frame would enable housing developers and infrastructure providers to plan for the long-term.

G. Strategic governance

28. Learning the lessons of the past suggests that previous failed approaches to the ‘Oxford-Cambridge Arc’ are not worth repeating. These were (CMKOCIR p37):

- 1) Proposed establishment of a “*joined-up new strategy for the Arc overseen by a permanent steering group*”
- 2) A proposal for appointment of an Executive Director to deliver a coherent strategy for the Arc, by working across three Regional Development Agencies that existed at that time.

Principal reasons for these not working were said to be (CMKOCIR p37):

- a) Disjointed leadership
- b) Cross-boundary working issues
- c) A lack of resources
- d) Lack of enthusiastic support by stakeholders in Oxford and Cambridge.

29. We assess the following possibilities to achieve strategic planning and development across the Corridor:

- 1) An East-West Development Committee comprised of a representative of each local authority. This would be unwieldy, would tend to sustain existing conflicts along party political alignments, and would have difficulty in fairly representing large and small populations, as the local authority urban areas are of widely different sizes.

- 2) Travel-to-Work Area sub-regional planning groups, with each representing all local authorities in each area (for example: Greater Oxford, Milton Keynes &

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Bedford, and Greater Cambridge). These could also be represented on a single East-West Board. This could achieve strategic planning at a manageable scale, brought together within an over-arching strategic plan.

- 3) Integration of plan-making and development within a single body or bodies. This kind of vertical integration was one of the strengths of New Town Development Corporations. The plan-makers were also the plan implementers and coordinators.
- 4) A single land acquisition Development Agency operating over all of the Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford Corridor in co-operation with each local authority (using updated New Towns legislation to achieve acquisition at Open Market Value; upfront funding to achieve infrastructure before expansion; ongoing recycling of betterment to ensure wider benefits; strategic green corridors designation to achieve protection of agriculture and accessible 'green infrastructure' parklands).
- 5) Creation of several local Development Corporations to achieve integrated development of each newly-designated New Town, which could also be applied to town expansion. These would be actively involved with utilities and housing and commercial developers to achieve attractive and beneficial outcomes, while ensuring that public benefits would be at the core.
- 6) Individual local authorities negotiating more actively with neighbouring authorities over cross-border development, with the Government devising a compensatory financial regime to ensure that 'cuckoo developments' just outside a local authority boundary contribute financially to the local authority whose service costs it adds to, and that residents of these new areas are well-served.



APPENDIX: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILTON KEYNES

We consider that much can be learned from the development of Milton Keynes over the last 50 years, while acknowledging that the context in the 21st century differs in many ways. We provide an overview of these achievements below.

There can be advantages to scale. MK was designed to become a city of quarter of a million in population, physical scale, facilities and culture. This enabled it to build over 1 million sq ft of retail space all in the first stage of The Shopping Building and to attract five department stores, develop 35 employment areas, numerous schools, build a theatre and gallery, establish a central railway station and bus station, attract numerous hotels, a wide range of retail, office and industrial premises, and leisure and hospitality businesses, and it now has a 32,000-seat stadium. It also attracted the Open University in its opening stages. The key elements to this have been:

- Designation of Milton Keynes in 1967 under New Towns Act legislation, with specific objectives and targets set by the UK Government
- A defined Designated Area, following a Planning Inquiry and the Inspector's recommendations to the Minister
- A Development Corporation board appointed by the Secretary of State, with a mix of local people and others, with each bringing particular expertise and experience to its work
- Land purchased by the Development Corporation at Open Market Value which contained initial development costs for infrastructure and development and later contributed to the return to the Government of its investment, and more, after land and developments were sold on
- A Master Plan with six clear goals:
 - a) Opportunity and freedom of choice
 - b) Easy movement and access, and good communications
 - c) An attractive city
 - d) Public awareness and participation
 - e) Efficient and imaginative use of resources
- The Master Plan was produced by a team of nine national consultants and consultancies in direct collaboration with the staff of the Development Corporation and Buckinghamshire County Council
- A Development Corporation of skilled staff worked corporately across professional boundaries to: plan, design, facilitate, coordinate or construct: roads and a wide range of infrastructure, housing, factories, offices, schools, health facilities, sports, leisure and community facilities
- Forward funding of engineering, services and landscape infrastructure
- Provision of strategic lakes and urban drainage systems to minimise flooding and provide attractive places for public access
- Planning, design and planting of linear parks and extensive landscaped spaces to create 'the countryside within the city' which epitomises the character and connectedness of the 'city'
- Integrating all of this with economic and social development to attract new employers and residents and support them to establish the economy, culture and life of a new city

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- Public rented housing made available to prospective residents with a job in the New Town, most coming from the London conurbation
- Private housing developed in partnership with developers under the commissioning and design guidance of the Development Corporation's Private Housing Unit.
- Between 1970 and 1993 Milton Keynes Development Corporation (MKDC) attracted over 80,000 jobs, oversaw the construction of 44,000 houses and planted 14 million trees and shrubs
- 25 years of planning, design and development by Milton Keynes Development Corporation, 1967-1992, at the end of which they formed bodies such as The Parks Trust and the Milton Keynes Community Foundation and endowed them with property and financial endowments to enable these to be self-funding in perpetuity for all their core activities, so that the benefits of landscapes and open spaces and of investment in the community would be sustained long-term
- After the winding up of the MK Development Corporation, national Government agencies worked alongside the local authority to continue the development of Milton Keynes. These were a series of national bodies: the Commission for New Towns, English Partnerships, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), from which was formed a subsidiary, Milton Keynes Partnership with representation from Milton Keynes Council. In 2014 some of the final Milton Keynes assets of the HCA were transferred to the local authority and are now managed and developed for them by the Milton Keynes Development Partnership, though the HCA continues to oversee development of the remnants of its land ownership in MK.
- Further expansion areas were agreed by the Secretary of State in 2004 for the Eastern Expansion Area, the Western Expansion Area, and smaller northern expansion areas.

The original population target for Milton Keynes was to reach 250,000 by the early 1990s, based on an existing population of 45,000. By the time that the Development Corporation had been wound down in 1992 the population of the city had reached around 190,000, an increase of 145,000 over less than 25 years (about 6,000 a year). In 2017, 50 years after designation, Milton Keynes Council's entire area reached a projected population of 272,000 and the main urban area is an estimated 231,000, with an additional 16,000 in adjoining Newport Pagnell a total of 247,000. Population increase over the New Town's second 25 years was about 50,000, which is about 2,000 a year compared to 6,000 a year while there was a Development Corporation.

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National Infrastructure Commission

BY EMAIL:

GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

27212/CO/RS

31 May 2017

Dear Sir or Madam,

RE: RESPONSE TO STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE-MILTON KEYNES-CORRIDOR DISCUSSION PAPER

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the National Infrastructure Commission's work relating to the strategic planning of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor.

Please find enclosed our response to the discussion paper relating to strategic planning and governance. We have set out our views on the topics raised in the key questions and also identified other opportunities and options.

Below we have set out how the sections of our response correspond to the relevant questions set out in discussion paper.

Question 1

Our response to how an integrated strategic plan can help tackle major constraints, maximise potential and develop the area into an economic corridor is addressed throughout but most specifically in pages 4 – 17.

Question 2

We have identified how the approach to strategic planning can be strengthened in pages 14-17

Questions 3 and 4

We have set out our response to whether the approach to strategic planning can improve long term collaboration at Page 16 and also identified how this could be achieved in the proposed structures set out at pages 19-21. We have also drawn out two comparators to identify how others have achieved this at pages 22 and 23.

Questions 5 -8

We have set out at pages 18-21 our response to these questions. This includes an approach to governance that is a hybrid of the approaches set out on pages 15 and 16 of the discussion paper. We consider this balances the need to respect the bottom up approach of Localism and ensure accountability and delivery.

Questions 9 and 10

Inevitably setting up of the Governance arrangements and gaining appropriate buy-in will take some time but at Page 24 of our response we have set out our initial thoughts on how a start could be made now to begin progressing the strategic planning of the corridor.

We hope you find our response helpful. We would be happy to discuss these initial thoughts with the NIC and contribute to how the strategic planning of the corridor is progressed. Therefore, if you wish to discuss our comments further or seek clarification on anything we have suggested, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

[signature redacted]
[name redacted]
[job title redacted]



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CAMBRIDGE – MILTON KEYNES - OXFORD CORRIDOR

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Preface..... | 3 |
| Context..... | 4 |
| Key principles..... | 5 |
| SWOT Analysis | 6 |
| Opportunities..... | 8 |
| Common Challenges | 12 |
| Should there be a strategic plan?..... | 14 |
| What should the plan include?..... | 16 |
| Governance key principles..... | 18 |
| Role of Government..... | 19 |
| Potential Governance structure..... | 20 |
| Key points on Governance structure..... | 21 |
| Comparators..... | 22 |
| Making a start now..... | 24 |

Today, the country is facing an increasing challenge as to the way we plan for growth. We need to think creatively about how the economic potential of areas can be maximized through an approach that enables us to compete and maintain our economic competitiveness on the world stage.

Devolution, changes in the way infrastructure is funded, ongoing changes to the planning system and an ever-growing housing crisis are all challenges that require both new solutions and coordination. As acknowledged by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC), this corridor is an area with huge economic importance today and even greater potential in the future. It is one of the few areas that is a net contributor to the UK economy – putting more in than it draws out. This could be increased with the right investment and co-ordination.

The corridor is not an island and investment here will have wider benefits. There are opportunities for spin-off's and positive leakage of economic benefits to the wider area. The pressures of London and Birmingham converge at the corridor and growth and investment in strategic infrastructure will alleviate pressure on movements between the South Midlands, East Anglia and London. Although constraints exist along the corridor, when you take account of its scale there are minimal national designations along it.

We strongly believe that cross-border strategic planning is essential to ensure the opportunity for transformational growth that links infrastructure and investment is delivered and managed into the future. The mechanisms put in place need to survive beyond political cycles. This can be done in a way that compliments and enables localism by providing the confidence and certainty about investment that empowers local action. This leaflet sets out our opinions on how this planning process and accompanying mechanisms could work to bring game changing growth.

The concept of the corridor has been around since the 1990s but struggled to move forward in part due to a lack of leadership, spatial focus on the corridor by the regional agencies involved at the time and appetite of all parties across the corridor.

The NIC in their recent work have moved the issue along much further than previous reports. The evidence produced identifies that although area is not functioning today as an economic corridor there is huge potential for it to do so. The spheres of influence of the key cities and towns along the route show the potential for greater integration. The key is to unlock the barriers to enable this to happen and support growth.

The qualitative evidence from key parties shows a real appetite for strategic planning to help overcome some of the major challenges along the corridor including infrastructure, affordability and delivery.

The NIC evidence demonstrates the need for increased housing, jobs and infrastructure, including strategic transport improvements, to ensure the region is not “left behind its international competitors”.

The Chancellor supported this in the Autumn Statement, outlining plans for “£110m of funding for East West Rail, and a commitment to deliver the new Oxford to Cambridge Expressway”.

He went on to say “this project can be more than just a transport link. It can become a transformational tech-corridor, drawing on the world-class research strengths of our two best-known universities.” He said that he welcomed “the Commission’s continuing work on delivery model options”, adding that “the government would carefully consider its final recommendations in due course.”

- **Co-ordinated transformation** - The plan should bring forward transformational economic growth and infrastructure needed to support it that could not otherwise be achieved through individual plans. This should have a wildfire effect with benefits spilling out beyond the boundaries of the plan creating wider growth opportunities.
- **Consistent content** - At the heart should be the alignment of vision, planned growth, infrastructure needs and investments informed by scenario planning and evidence on impacts.
- **Achievable timeframe** - We believe this must be truly long-term – a 50-year plan for transformational change.
- **Resilient mechanisms** - The governance structures and the plan must have the ability to survive political cycles. Without this the plan will not provide the certainty for the investment and commitment needed. Central Government need to ensure the main board is appropriately empowered to hold all to account.
- **Authentic Involvement** - Governance arrangements must be embedded in localism and enable a bottom up process. All representatives should actively engage in analysing issues, scenario planning, generating visions, actions and monitoring outcomes. However, Central Government need to be embedded in these arrangements and have the ability to step-in if agreements are not reached.
- **Accountable implementation** - the process will need strong independent leadership. Central Government should play a key role in ensuring the process stays on track and that the plan achieves the objectives. This needs to ensure that responsibilities for carrying out the plan are clearly stated and carried out.
- **Responsible Localism** – all local plans should take account of, connect with, and support the strategic plan for the wider corridor.
- **Equitable interventions** – ensure that the planned investments are aligned to achieve the best results for the UK economy.

Strengths

- Oxford and Cambridge Universities have a global reputation and are in the top 5 world universities
- Strong market demand
- Strength of University presence along the corridor
- High-tech employment across the corridor
- High productivity in Oxford, Cambridge and MK.
- Strong record of start-ups that have evolved into large businesses
- Highly skilled – Oxford & Cambridge have highest levels of degree educated residents in the country
- Many smaller successful places along the corridor
- MK fastest growing town in the country

Weaknesses

- Highest house prices outside London (Oxford and Cambridge), with Oxford being the most unaffordable City in the country.
- Poor connectivity between parts of the corridor
- Corridor doesn't yet exist, physically or in people's minds.
- Poor connectivity to major airports
- Northampton and Cambridge have a weaker tourism attraction
- Pockets of deprivation along the corridor
- Hard to coordinate so many local authorities, counties and LEPs along the route.

Opportunities

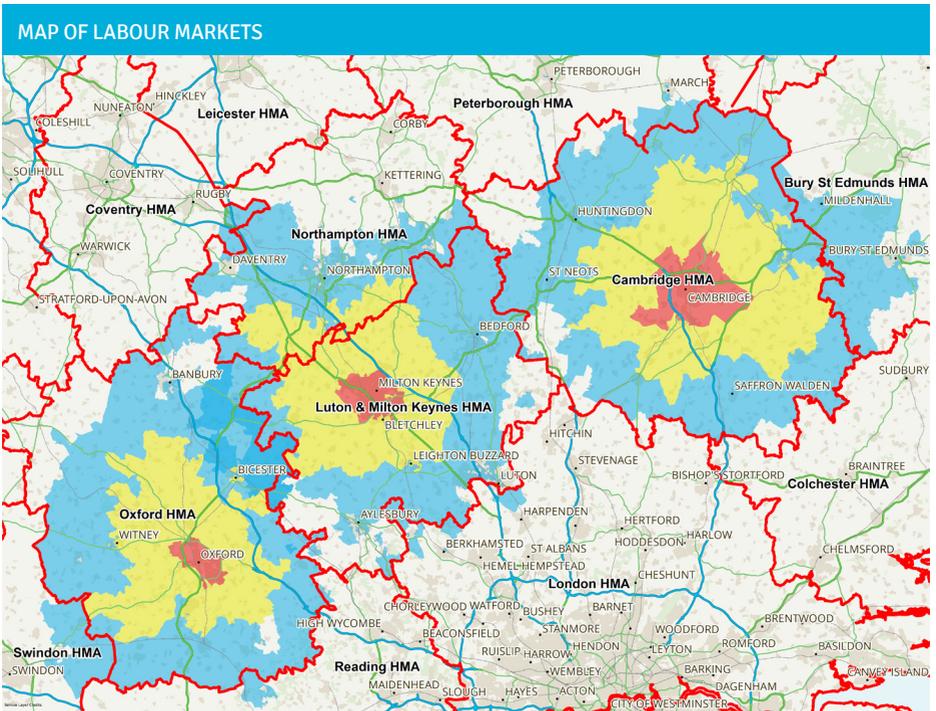
- Deliver transformational growth that provides high and sustained GVA benefits to the UK
- Improve connections to Heathrow (as it is expanded)
- Improve connections to other corridors (e.g. A34 / M11)
- Provide key worker housing integrated to a wider transport strategy
- Address deprivation issues through a well-considered strategy to growth
- Development corporation(s)
- Wider spinoff joint strategies e.g. skills, culture and tourism
- Develop a comprehensive data highway (5g along the route, superfast broadband etc)
- Marketing of corridor for investment

Threats

- Potential competition / pull from London
- Oxford and Cambridge are key but need to make sure it doesn't become focussed on the two poles.
- Lack of connection to an international airport.
- Connectivity to ports is currently lacking (ability to ship products)
- Constraints on the freight network
- Unaffordability could drive away those who are needed to support job growth.
- Lack of commitment over the long term
- Uncertainty surrounding Brexit could increase challenges for gaining local commitment to the growth.
- Political cycles could de-rail process

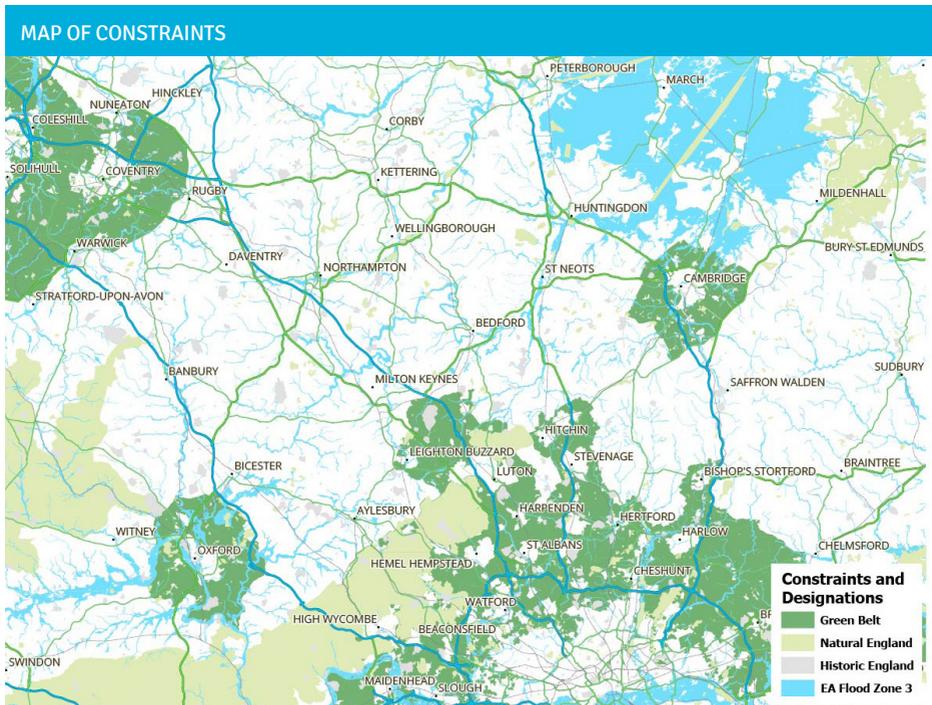
Opportunity to better integrate labour markets

Oxford, MK and Cambridge have very distinct labour markets, with very little overlap – perhaps unsurprising given current transport connectivity. A more co-ordinated approach to infrastructure, planning and investment could improve this.



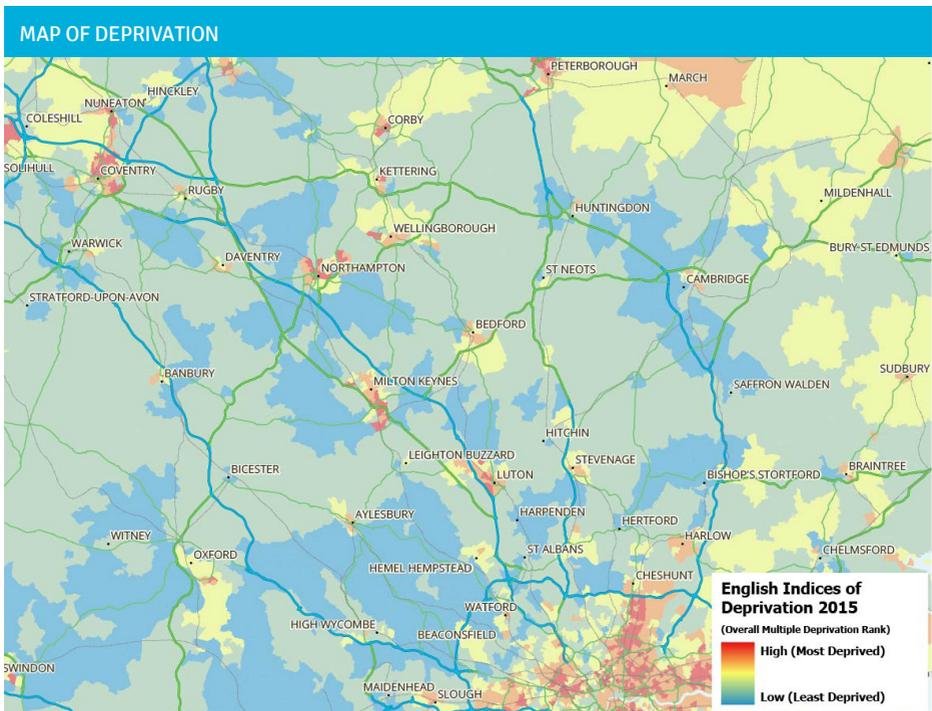
Limited national constraint for such a large geography

Apart from the Oxford and Cambridge green belts and areas of flood risk, the corridor is relatively unconstrained. This suggests there will be great opportunities to capitalise on the new infrastructure through new settlements and major employment sites

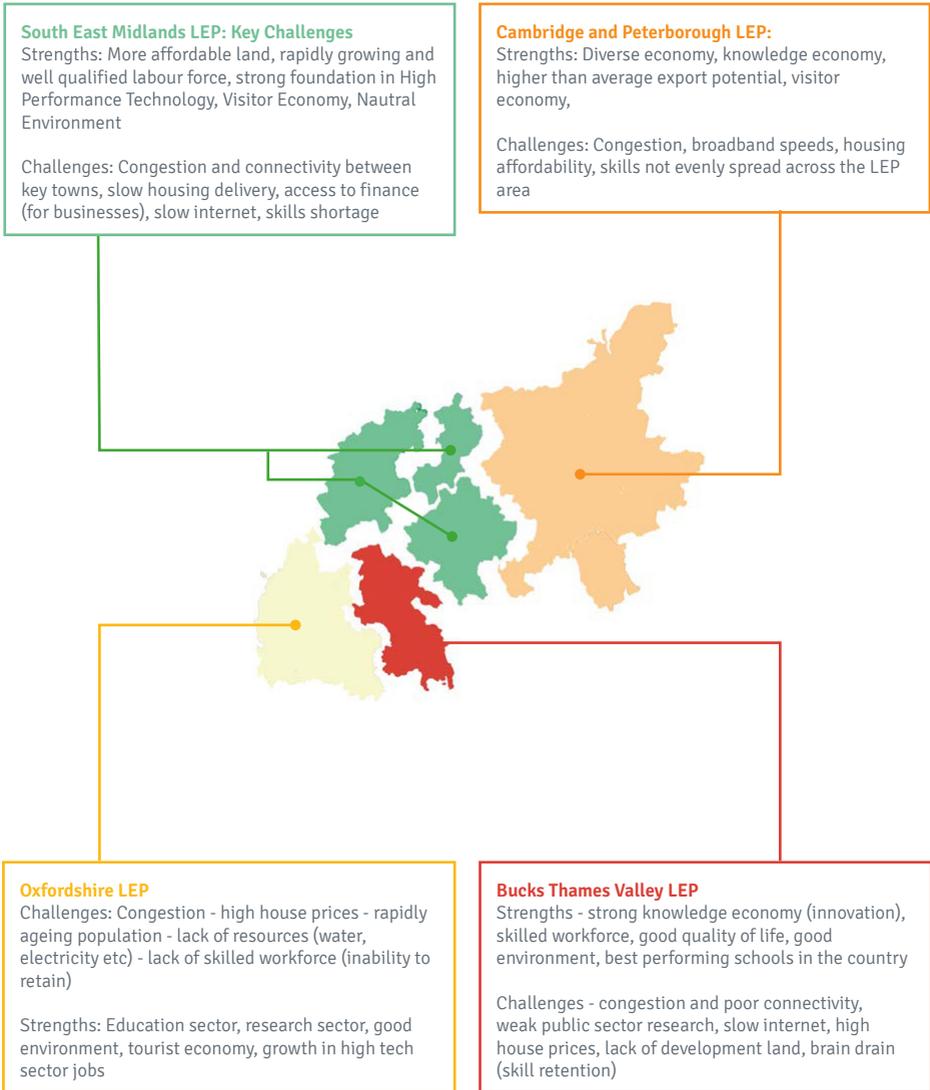


Opportunities to address deprivation

The corridor does include areas of deprivation. The most affected are those in the middle of the corridor (MK and Luton, the latter of which will benefit indirectly). These areas will benefit from better access to the high-tech, highly skilled economies of Oxford and Cambridge and improvements to social infrastructure that will accompany growth.



Common issues of affordability, skills shortages and poor connectivity be addressed strategically identified in strategic economic plans



Strategic Economic Plans across the corridor identify need to work across borders to address strategic issues

CONSISTENT IDENTIFICATION OF NEED TO WORK ACROSS LEPS

South East Midlands & Northamptonshire LEP

The area's place on the "innovation triangle" formed by the university centres of Oxford, Cambridge and London is valuable

Our local authorities are now focussing on taking the East-West Railway Line across from Bedford to Cambridge and ultimately linking with the East Coast ports. It will be essential to ensure that there is no loss of momentum as the focus moves to the central section of the East West Rail project from Bedford to Cambridge

Greater Cambridge and Peterborough LEP

A key aim of the strategy will be to improve east west rail connectivity across the Peterborough - Cambridge / London Oxford Triangle and to strengthen links between related business and scientific clusters

Improved East West rail links and access along the A428, A47 and A14, will enhance economic growth opportunities and connectivity with Milton Keynes, Oxford, Luton & Bedford and the East Coast Ports



Oxfordshire LEP

Develop a programme of strategic infrastructure improvements linking and supporting the planned growth of housing and employment

Work with partners in England's Economic Heartland to develop strategies to improve the capacity of transport corridors across Oxfordshire and into surrounding areas, including towards Cambridge

Bucks Thames Valley LEP

Buckinghamshire sits at the heart of the Golden Triangle, linking Oxford, Cambridge and London and is intersected by the Oxford to Cambridge Arc

Opportunities for development linked to national infrastructure investments such as the Oxford to Cambridge Study

As an area of unique economic potential, BTVLEP welcomes the NIC review of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc

SHOULD THERE BE A STRATEGIC PLAN?

We believe that a strategic plan that takes a truly long-term view to delivering transformational growth in this area is long overdue. We feel strongly that this should be a statutory plan in order for it to have 'teeth' and deliver.

This plan should not be about planning for projected 'needs' as this should already be happening. The plan should be informed by scenario planning that aims to deliver transformational growth that unlocks the economic potential and game-changing investment in infrastructure.

We consider that the plan needs to be a 50-year plan rather than a plan to 2050. This time period would open up a much wider conversation about strategic investment and the growth and infrastructure needed to support it and ensure there is a strategic approach to phasing and monitoring to deliver the best value for money and impact for the economy whilst minimising disruption. The plan should set out milestones for intermediary period for example what are the strategies to 2030, 2050 and 2070?

A strategic plan offers the opportunity to produce a joint evidence base that comprehensively looks at cumulative impacts and benefits.

The NIC review commissioned by the former London Mayor into whether Cross Rail 2 can achieve its claimed economic benefits concluded that it can, but only where local authorities work together to plan for housing and the associated growth. This is likely to require a "form of multi-local authority plan that aligns housing delivery with infrastructure investment." The same is true of this corridor.

Infrastructure need is driven by people and where they live and work. The plan needs to consider spatially where growth is going to ensure that the investment strategy for all forms of infrastructure is fully aligned. Conversely infrastructure investment and connectivity influences housing delivery and land values. Without the integrated approach the sustainability of future growth and the benefits it could bring will not be maximised.



WHAT SHOULD THE PLAN INCLUDE?

The focus should be the transformational growth in key areas of the corridor that is linked to the strategic infrastructure and investment. This would need to be subject to independent examination and critically form part of the development plan for all authorities within the corridor.

The plan needs to be guided and supported through a series of evidence, scenario analysis and appraisals that inform the level of growth to be planned and its distribution.

The evidence can help breed confidence across all scales and sectors. Understanding issues and where investments are being made across sectors is extremely difficult at a sub-regional level due to a lack of accessible data sources and this plan will bridge this gap. The plan could provide open source information that can support wider co-ordination and planning.

The plan needs a spatial dimension that identifies at least broad locations, but preferably specific sites for this growth. It also needs to include an investment phasing and delivery strategy.

Opportunity for long term collaboration and engagement

Strategic planning provides clarity and certainty at all levels. It can open up opportunities for capacity building during its preparation and provide a framework for long term collaboration and engagement between a wider range of stakeholders including house builders, investors, business, infrastructure providers and central government. To achieve this, the governance approach needs to incorporate sub committees that are sector or topic specific that advise and feed into the board.

This is more than consultation. It is private and public collaboration. Without this the plan will struggle to maximise the benefits of growth. This is shown in our diagram of Governance. Localism is not confined to local authorities and local residents it is about local business and service providers too. It is imperative that these organisations are represented and influence proposals.

50 YEAR PLAN

RESEARCH

- Drivers of growth
- Future Needs
- Constraints / Issues
- Funding Mechanisms
- Governance Mechanisms
- Scenario Planning/ Testing
- Socio economic Research
- Environmental Testing

APPRAISAL

- Economic & Cost Benefit
- Social
- SEA/SA
- Environmental
- Options

CONTENTS

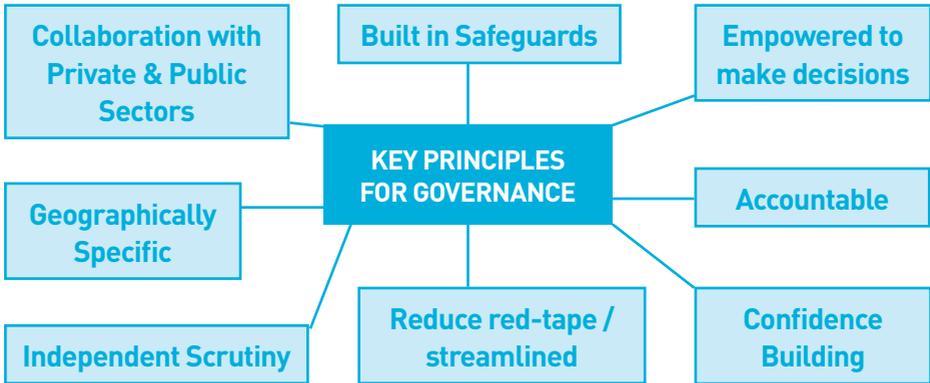
- Vision
- Identification of strategic needs & Overall Strategy
- Key Principles for Place Based Approach
- Distribution of strategic homes, jobs & Infrastructure Needs
- Broads Locations for Strategic Growth
- Confirmation of infrastructure needs and locations
- Investment Strategy
- Phasing

INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY & PHASING PLAN

- **Clear identification of what, where, who and when** - Phasing principles need to be set so if the one element accelerates approach can be made.
- **Approach to pool funding towards strategic infrastructure**
(Capital Investment, CIL, S106)
- **Approaches to capture Funding Streams for Re-investment**
(Strategic Land Trusts, Land Value Capture, New Homes Bonus, Enterprise Zones, Business Rates, Department Corporations)



INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION
ADOPTION OF PLAN AS PART OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN
MONITORING



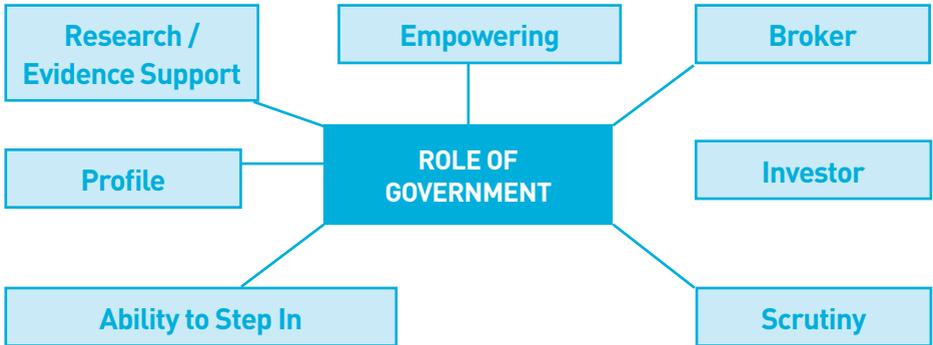
Making it work with localism

Previous attempts for planning this corridor were reliant to a degree on multiple regional development agencies that had much wider spatial priorities. The corridor fell on the edge of these agencies and therefore was never a key focus for them.

This is why localism with appropriate safeguards, could be a major benefit to strategic planning of the corridor. Local stakeholders, directly affected by the challenges are best placed to drive forward this agenda. Co-operation geographically and thematically is essential.

The strategic plan is focussed on transformational change not locally derived need. Local Plans, whether prepared jointly within the sub regions or individually by the local planning authorities, will continue to be focussed on the locally derived needs and supporting thriving communities in their areas. This also leaves the opportunity to support Neighbourhood Plans to deliver local sites and specific policies for their individual communities.

The strategic plan will need to form part of the development plan for authorities within its geographical scope. It will be important that all local plans take account of, connect with, and support the strategic plan for the wider corridor. This is to ensure that all elements are aligned and complement one another. Most importantly it is to ensure that one does not preclude the other in terms of intervention or investment.



Ensuring the objectives are delivered

Government needs to ensure that whatever approach is taken to strategic planning of the corridor that it can survive political cycles.

Whilst empowering a bottom up joint approach Government must be heavily involved to bring their expertise but also act as broker. Inevitably some challenging decisions need to be made and Central Government need to ensure these are not avoided. Government must ensure that participation is accountable and not de-railed by competing agendas.

To do this from the start Central Government must be clear about “Who, what, how and when.”

The arrangements must enable Central Government to be part of the process throughout. They must have embedded the ability for Government to step in if it goes off track to ensure objectives are achieved of public money will be wasted.

KEY POINTS ON GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Strategic Planning Board

- Independent chair to set up structures, monitor, broker and link back to Central Government
- Statutory status
- Made up of Chairs/Vice Chairs of sub regional boards and representatives of key sectors
- Overall responsibility for the plan – needs to be resourced.
- Overall responsibility for the consultation and engagement – need to bring people along with this process.

Sub regional boards

- Could be defined by evidence on housing and labour markets
- Local authorities at core with other representatives – members should be empowered to make decisions
- Members of board can vote for representative to sit on strategic board to feed into plan
- Do not need to be formally constituted – could work with combined authorities or partnership arrangements like Oxfordshire Growth Board
- May be supported by theme based or technical groups

Strategic Delivery Board

- Delivery and implementation will have wider focus to planning and need different skills
- Membership must be broader than Local authorities and include representation from treasury
- Can be separate to planning board working alongside and advising on technical delivery considerations during plan making. Could lead on the investment and delivery plans.
- Continue beyond the adoption of the plan.

London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)

Five-year strategy of LLDC:

- Live: Neighbourhoods where people want to live, work and play.
- Work: Grow a diverse range of high quality businesses
- Visit: Create a sustainable visitor destination
- Inspire: Create a cross-sector innovation in technology, sustainability, education, culture and participation
- Deliver: Deliver excellent value for money and champion new standards

LLDC's Planning Committee (under the London Mayor):

- 3 x LLDC members
- 4 x Independent Members (Chartered Surveyors and Planners)
- 5 x Councillors from 'host' London Boroughs – 2 from Newham and 1 from Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Local Development Plans – Legacy Communities Scheme:

- Approved in 2012 for development of new neighbourhoods
- Eg. Chobham Manor – Developed by Chobham Manor LLP (joint venture between L&Q, a Housing Association, and Taylor Wimpey)

Public and private sectors in partnership – International Business Quarter:

- The International Business Quarter is being developed by Lendlease (urban generation specialists) and LCR (a Government-owned company that specialises in the management, development and disposal of property assets within a railway context).

The LLDC provides an example of various public and private stakeholders working together to provide the overall vision of the area and the planning committee being made up of various political and independent members under the overall leadership of the Mayor.

Infrastructure-led development in Denmark

One of the Danish Government's aims is to better integrate infrastructure and spatial planning.

Governance:

Denmark has more of a 'localism' agenda in its urban planning system than other European countries. There are 98 municipal councils in the country who have the responsibility for planning. In the first two years of a local election cycle (every four years) the Council adopts a political strategy and states how it will change the local plans. These are prepared regularly and when needed. There are also minimum public participation levels throughout the planning process. The municipal plan provides a comprehensive overview of the development of a municipality and the plans for all forms of development.

A municipal plan comprises:

- Overall objectives for development and land use in the municipality
- Guidelines for land use; and
- A framework for the content of local plans for the specific parts of the municipality.

The Danish planning system also has a regional spatial development plan, produced by the regional councils but a collective project between the municipal councils and private sector businesses. The Regional Plan describes the relationships between future spatial development and the state and municipal spatial planning for infrastructure. The specific location of some infrastructure projects can be influenced by regional and local planning policy.

However, central Government does have the power to promote nationally important projects through national planning directives, superseding regional and municipal directives. For example, for Fenharmbelt link road between Denmark and Germany, the Government passed an Act to approve its construction in 2015, bypassing regional and municipal plans.

- Don't have to wait for all mechanisms to be put in place to begin moving in the right direction.
- Local Authorities (LAs) could make a start by putting in place the regional elements needed and ensuring their constitutions are enabled to accommodate this strategic plan. Some have already started this process.
- It is important that any structures put in place now have in mind the future plan and do not obstruct it.
- The process does not want the plan to inadvertently slow down growth. LAs can focus on getting the basic needs met in their areas through the Local Plans that have started. Draw a line under those commitments and then work together for this next more strategic plan. Local plans will need to keep in mind the bigger picture emerging so not to preclude it.
- Being positive and starting to raise public awareness of the opportunity – marketing opportunity on a world stage.
- Continue what the NIC has started in gathering a shared evidence base.

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UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

GIVING FOR LOCAL GOOD

ABOUT US

The Community Foundations for Bedfordshire and Luton, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Milton Keynes, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire have formed a partnership to look at the opportunities for their communities provided by the National Infrastructure Commission, through the strategic planning for the Cambridge- Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor.

The six Foundations are part of the national network for accredited Community Foundations across the country. We help people and organisations to invest in local communities where it is most needed and where it will make most impact. We envisage a society where communities will be able to support all those in need.

WHO WE ARE

Each Community Foundation covers its own geographical areas and we have an unparalleled reach into local communities. Each Community Foundation has an in depth understanding of their local area, what the priority needs are and how best to address these issues. The work of Community Foundations is supported by a vast array of donors and working with their donors, they are able to fund causes that they are not only passionate about but that will make a real difference.

WHAT WE DO

Community Foundations support local projects on a range of issues such as community building, poverty alleviation, emergency crisis response and youth engagement. Our primary aim is to work with philanthropists and others, including businesses and statutory organisations, to help build endowment whilst distributing “flow through funds” to our local voluntary and community sector.

The group of Foundations that are forming this partnership distribute approximately £7 million annually to their communities from endowment investments, flow through funds, and rent subsidies. Collectively, they hold community property, land and grant making endowments totalling £56 million. As fully accredited members of the Community Foundation network there is a formal agreement and commitment to grow that

endowment. We work with our donors to build a mixture of funds so that we can give out funding to address problems and issues that exist in our communities now and to build endowments as a sustainable source of funding to tackle the social issues and challenges of the future. As public sector funding continues to decline it is vital that Community Foundations hold sustainable funding to support the future of our communities.

We want to be the voice of and the partner for community development and see ourselves as key agents that the NIC should include when developing and delivering the strategic plan.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION – A CALL FOR IDEAS

The Community Foundations working together are in a unique position to represent and support community development initiatives within the whole project area. We have agreed to operate as one across traditional unitary boundaries to ensure the best possible outcomes for the existing and the proposed new communities. We are skilled at developing effective partnerships that deliver cross sector, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience from the Voluntary, Community and Charitable sectors enabling communities to thrive.

Of note to the Commission, Milton Keynes Community Foundation has over 30 years' experience of managing and developing community land assets, buildings and facilities on over 50 designated Community land sites throughout the new town. This enables community organisations to develop facilities as they are required and to support emerging communities to grow and mature over time.

KEY QUESTIONS

An integrated strategic plan – We support an integrated strategic planning approach whilst recognising undersupply of homes and weak transport infrastructure are indeed a major constraint to economic growth. We also recognise an important missing element is a commitment to build community infrastructure. This cannot be left to chance or as an afterthought to other infrastructure elements. The designation of community land assets, alongside an investment to ensure these sites can be developed and managed in perpetuity, is essential to attracting investment and creating a sense of place in these new communities. Whilst it is recognised that local authorities and other statutory bodies will deliver many of these elements, Community Foundations are uniquely placed to deliver a non-political, long-term investment and community development role.

New Opportunities – Community Foundations have been established to support communities in perpetuity. Our endowment funds and our aim to develop philanthropy

enables us to invest in communities for the long term. Community Land Assets in Milton Keynes are available to community organisation under a 125 year lease agreement and are offered at a 75% land value discount. This coupled with our grant making and community investment programmes (often in partnership with corporate, individual and statutory funders) enables opportunities to be realised in a way that is not normally available through traditional funding routes. Endowment funds ensure long term investment into communities and flow through funding enables new initiatives to be prime funded to get new community initiatives started.

Community Foundations have an excellent track record of working with housing developers and associations, utility suppliers, renewable energy developers, Highways England, the Police, Fire and other public bodies, as well as managing specific local, regional and national government programmes.

Community Foundations are locally based and focused whilst working in collaboration across the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor. We therefore know the community, voluntary, health, art and culture sectors well and are adept at creating partnerships that deliver.

Governance - The Community Foundations are committed to working sub-regionally, providing one voice and a united mechanism to engage with the community sector. We therefore support the proposal detailed in paragraph 41. We would welcome the opportunity to represent the Community Sector appropriately at sub-regional level as we have experience within the network of working with and on Development Corporation structures. Our raison d'être is to operate in an open and collaborative manner that is inclusive and transparent. Working with Community Foundations would ensure strategic planning benefits are 'locked-in' over the long-term.

Investing in Community Land Assets and long-term Community Endowments would support and give confidence to wider stakeholders of a commitment to their strategic plans whilst building in long-term sustainability.

Developing and delivering an intergraded strategic plan – The six Community Foundations operating across the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge area have developed a memo of understanding to engage regionally. However, each Community Foundation has well-established and effective local authority relationships and we are experienced at working cross sector and at all governmental levels. Having established a regional operational approach with an agreed goal and set of objectives the Community Foundations will be able to demonstrate the strength of working collaboratively. We will be able to learn from each other's local connections and be able to develop approaches that bring the best examples to

the fore. We will benchmark against each other and across partnerships to build in continuous learning.

We seek to bring forward our learning as Community development agents to the process, build on our strong performance as community development funders and look to emulate the Community land asset model developed by the MK Development Corporation. We believe this model has delivered effective community development in the long-term that is there in perpetuity and can be continuously adapted to support communities as they develop and change in the future.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with the NIC and the emerging regional agencies/bodies and look forward to playing a key strategic role in this priority national initiative.

This submission is sent on behalf of:

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STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE - MILTON KEYNES - OXFORD CORRIDOR A DISCUSSION PAPER

Response from the Common Futures Network (CFN) : May 2017

Summary of Response

The CFN welcomes the NIC initiative to establish a long term strategic planning context for the improvement of transport links between Cambridge-Milton Keynes – Oxford (CAMKOX). This is important not only in ensuring that the major new infrastructure investment is itself plan-led but also in optimising its contribution to the national agenda set out in the CFN *Prospectus*.

To be effective an integrated land-use transportation strategy for CAMKOX should be based on the principles that underpin effective strategic planning, in particular:

- the integration externally with the *wider national and sub-national context* within which it operates;
- the creation of the *institutional capacity* internally to work across boundaries and functional responsibilities of local stakeholders.

The key challenge is that CAMKOX Initiative seeks to promote a national agenda through local mechanisms. Although this challenge can be met in various ways, international experience (e.g. OECD) is that the most effective approach to balancing these two perspectives is to base strategic planning on a devolved approach, focussed on key issues and set within the context of national and subnational spatial frameworks. A light-touch collaboration with central government with an emphasis on incentivising action (as in other devolved settlements) is more likely to ensure that CAMKOX generates its maximum potential contribution to national GDP and achieves local ownership of the strategic goals, processes and outcomes.

The NIC Consultation Document itself, however, is recognition of the need for any strategy to have a traction. This would be achieved through:

- A strategic plan with statutory status which has explicit regard to local interests
- A delivery plan building on, extending and incentivising combined and joint governmental arrangements.

The scope of the strategy for CAMKOX therefore should set out:

- The relative scale and role of combined and joint authorities of the key city regions within CAMKOX, using the new strategic plan together with existing local and neighbourhood planning methods in conformity with each other;
- Potential transformative national flagship projects which can be delivered through a CAMKOX board using existing mechanisms such as the 2008 Planning Act and new powers in the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017;
- A joint action plan, for example using Combined Authority powers including planning, housing, transport, business development, digital infrastructure, energy and rural policy to deliver specific programmes using CPO and Development Corporation powers where necessary
- Key improvements in terms of internal accessibility to complement and maximise the enhanced levels of connectivity regionally and nationally that the new rail links will provide;
- The external relationships required with the surrounding Combined authorities and the Midlands Engine which could be arranged through a new Committee (e.g. House of Commons Select Committee)

Context

This response to the CAMKOX strategic planning discussion paper has been prepared by the Common Futures Network (CFN). The CFN has been established in response to a perceived need for a more explicit understanding of the spatial dimension in setting national priorities, particularly for England, which lacks any form of national development framework.

The CFN is independent of political, business or other sectional affiliations and our members include professionals with extensive experience in UK planning practice and consultancy, economic development, regeneration, transport planning utility planning and academia, across the UK and internationally.

Our recommendations arise from a symposium held in December 2016 following which the CFN has published a [Prospectus](#) which sets out eight key propositions for tackling short and longer-term national spatial priorities. A summary containing these Propositions is at Appendix 1, and a copy of our **Prospectus** is attached as supplementary evidence.

This **Prospectus** sets out a *New Agenda for England and the UK* which has direct implications for the CAMKOX initiative including:

- The need to secure the global role of the nation through flagship projects which re-engineer the nation's infrastructure and assist the rebalancing of opportunities within the Nation;
- A devolved development programme building on sub-national strengths
- The need to deliver a new urban agenda designed to support and nurture the inherent growth potential of the networked system of cities outside of London
- A new rural agenda to connect with the rural hinterland and secure the natural capital of England.

More specifically the **Prospectus** recognises the potential role of the CAMKOX Corridor in the fourth of its eight key propositions, namely,

Proposition 4: Building Networked Systems of Cities

Understanding and maximising functional linkages between cities, building upon, but not confined to, the three existing trans-regional priorities (Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, and the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor), and other nationally significant opportunities (e.g. Heathrow-Swindon-Bristol), as well as the HS2 corridors."

Proposition 5: Securing the Global Role of London also recognises the need to rebalance the focus from being solely on London to one which also supports linkages between its network of outer centres, as demonstrated in the [Polynet](#) studies of the late Professor Sir Peter Hall.

Response to Consultation

The CFN therefore welcomes the NIC initiative to establish a long term strategic planning context for the improvement of transport links between Cambridge-Milton Keynes – Oxford (CAMKOX). This is important not only in ensuring that the major new infrastructure investment is itself plan-led but also in optimising its contribution to the national agenda set out in the CFN **Prospectus**. The views of the CFN set out in this response are therefore made in support of this basic approach.

The key challenge is that CAMKOX Initiative seeks to promote a national agenda through local mechanisms. This challenge can be met through various administrative arrangements. Whatever one is adopted governance and accountability needs to be clear and unequivocal whilst balancing these competing perspectives. A devolved approach would be in line with that proposed by the OECD in supporting national growth through sub-state alignment between strong democratic leadership and functional economic areas (Ahrend et al 2014, OECD; <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/OECD-LEED-Local-Economic-Leadership.pdf>). This implies that, where possible, there are in place joint local

arrangements along the corridor area to make this work, to allow accountable and manageable groupings of leaders to represent what is currently a polycentric set of functional economic areas. This approach supports the New Urban Agenda agreed by the UK government at UN Habitat III in Quito in 2016 which supports “*territorial systems that integrate urban and rural functions into the national and subnational spatial frameworks and the systems of cities*”¹.

The following response by the CFN therefore focuses on identifying the principles that should be used in determining the most appropriate way for taking forward the proposals for an integrated land-use transportation strategy for CAMKOX, as set out in the Consultation paper. This response draws on the principles that underpin effective strategic planning. These apply whatever administrative arrangements are adopted, in particular:

- the need for integration externally with the **wider national and sub-national context** within which it operates;
- the need to create the **institutional capacity** internally to work across boundaries and functional responsibilities of local stakeholders.

The Wider Context

The primary case for the new rail line has been linked to promoting housing development and ‘solving’ the acute housing market conditions that exist in the Wider South East region, and will be driven by migration, especially from the London region. If this is not to be purely a commuter based demand, the proposed scale of new housing needs to be more clearly related to an enhanced economic base of the area. Higher levels of growth will therefore need to be set within wider sub-national and national frameworks. This rationale needs to be established early on since it critically affects the shape of the strategic plan and the required governance.

Key challenges in establishing the right model for preparing a strategy for the CAMKOX Corridor must therefore take account of the following key factors relating to its external/national role and its internal coherence:

- **National Role:** Without a wider agreed context, internally generated aspirations will in effect be an ad hoc ‘programme bid’. The current justification for the level of investment proposed is that it will unlock greater scales of development (especially housing). These levels of new development are not yet fully defined and are untested but they certainly will not be trend driven. If they are to be more than mere aspirational targets they cannot be determined from a bottom-up perspective alone. They need to be grounded in a national perspective of the balance and drivers of change. Supply-side opportunities can be identified and tested locally but they will need to be set within wider sub-national and national frameworks, for example, in terms of the aggregate demand arising from the core growth potential of each city-region along the corridor and the re-engineering of the nation’s infrastructure to create greater flexibility and resilience in the face of uncertainty.
- **Internal Coherence: The coherence of the plan area in socio-economic terms:** Critical to most successful strategies has been the coherence of the area in terms of it being a functionally interdependent urban region in terms of the area within which people do business (e.g. service supply chains), travel to work, search for houses and jobs and recreate. Strategies prepared for arbitrary regions rarely have buy-in politically, have limited technical analytical logic, and find making key decisions difficult.

¹ Refer paragraphs 49-52 UN HABITAT Quito :

<https://www2.habitat3.org/bitcache/97ced11dcecef85d41f74043195e5472836f6291?vid=588897&disposition=inline&op=view>) .

The CAMKOX corridor at present does not represent a functional economic area. There is limited day-to-day interlinkages along the corridor (e.g. in terms of the flows of people, goods and services) in comparison with the links to London and south Midlands. This is in part because there are no high-quality transport links between the three main towns. Therefore, it should be assumed that the corridor will derive its strength in the first instance from unlocking the distinct potential of the three core city regions and associated combined authorities, even if in the longer term, businesses and community interactions operate as a single integrated functional region. The CAMKOX strategy should therefore be based around the functional urban regions of the three cities and their links for example to the South Midlands towns and the Midlands Engine.

A key part of the strategic thinking will need to be the identification of potential latent and future synergies between the three city regions in addition to the national economic role of the corridor. The scope for new interlinkages are seen as being based, inter alia, on the fact that a global economic growth and innovation is increasingly knowledge driven and science based. In this context the potential to harness agglomeration benefits along this corridor exist, for example, through developing globally competitive knowledge-intensive and cultural clusters, for example,

- The emerging role MK as a national regional centre for high order functions comparable to Manchester Leeds, Bristol and Birmingham
- The three Universities building on existing cooperation in key fields in which they excel globally and the emerging MOOC which the OU has led on (as a competitor to MIT)
- Cultural and tourism linkages (three spires model)

In addition, the wider context for the CAMKOX corridor proposals includes the following relationships which need to be taken into account - the Cambridge-Stansted Corridor, Milton Keynes-Northants and Oxford-Thames Valley. There are also relationships between the CAMKOX transport infrastructure and north south infrastructure, especially HS2 and the London and Birmingham airports.

Any arrangement to provide such a wider perspective needs to be established on a long-term basis. A potential approach is set out in the response to *Question 9* as a means for starting the development of such overview. Immediate action is however needed to provide the context for the wider south-east. The existing liaison arrangements for the Wider South East may offer a launching pad but it needs to be recognised that the infrastructure and development coordination arrangements need widening since they currently exclude the East Midlands part of this corridor, and discussions are focused essentially on growth corridors out of London.

Institutional Capacity

If any strategy for CAMKOX is to be sufficiently ambitious and transformative it must be focused on key issues and does not seek to be all encompassing. It needs to be related to matters which can only be resolved at this strategic level (i.e. leaving as much as possible to local determination). Its geographic focus should have a core area within which policies and proposals bite, and a wider area of context within which it sits and engage dependent on circumstance and issue (e.g. transport, economic development or green-network). It must therefore operate within a multi-layered governance structure and flexible geography.

The strategy also needs to be linked to policies and programmes of delivery agencies. For example, the benefits of improved access between the three city regions of CAMCOX will only be fully realised if it is integrated with improved connectivity and ease of movement within them. This is critical especially to Oxford and Cambridge city regions which have major internal transport challenges. To do so any strategy must have an action plan than not only identifies committed resources (which is the current norm) but enables additional resources to be harnessed such as some equivalent, if not better, form of agreements, or *Contrats* as used in France, between state and local government. This,

for example, could link governance structures with a combined development company that also allows access to private capital including sovereign wealth funds under 2011 Localism Act powers.

A key question is whether local government has the capacity to deliver major development programmes in terms of the resources, continuity of application, or skills, to take this project forward and to supply leadership, skills, resources and continuity over a 20-30-year time frame. New ways are required for capturing the land value increases and managing assets and to de-risk the environment to bring in international funds. This might be helped by some form of development corporation(s), as agents of local authorities and alongside development companies with the power to acquire land within its designated area or areas at existing use value, with safeguarding powers to safeguard the strategy (as in the case of the GLA).

The key is to create of vertical and horizontal integration through quasi contracts at all scales of government working on a common strategy and contributing investment, projects and leadership to the whole. In practical terms, therefore this would deliver horizontal integration of the CAMKOX core axis to its peripheral and neighbouring relationships periphery to the core. Similarly, vertical integration would see the NIC proposals within the context of 'Corridors' rather than routes/lines e.g. the Cambridge busway as part of the A14 corridor.

The strategy for CAMKOX therefore should focus on identifying:

- Establishing an institutional format similar in nature to but wider than Transport for the North with greater focus on devolution and less control by central government as in other devolved settlements in order to ensure that CAMKOX generates its maximum potential contribution to national GDP (see OECD discussion below) within a sustainable context;
- The relative scale and role of each of the combined authorities within CAMKOX using a new strategic plan together with existing local and neighbourhood planning methods in conformity with each other;
- The transformative potential national flagship projects which can be delivered through by the CAMKOX board using existing mechanisms such as the 2008 Planning Act and new powers in the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 for declaration of new towns and garden suburbs;
- The CAMKIX Board will have Combined Authority powers including planning, housing, transport, business development, digital infrastructure, energy and rural policy that it will deliver through the use of specific programmes using CPO and Development Corporation powers where necessary
- A key focus will be on improvements in terms of internal accessibility to maximise the enhanced levels of connectivity regionally and nationally that the new rail links will provide;
- The external relationships to the surrounding Combined authorities and the Midlands Engine will be arranged through a new Committee possibly reflected in the House of Commons as a Select Committee

The institutional capacity to undertake, sustain and implement such a strategic planning agenda depends on a range of key factors. Leadership is key. Collaboration based on liaison is often driven by the pace of the slowest and the minimum common agenda. It is rarely transformative. There needs to be clear champions (political and professional), accepted by the wider community, with continuity of leadership of programmes over a long-term period. As implicit in the NIC Consultation Document itself this is requires that an informal partnership.

In addition, there are specific organisational factors which will determine success, relating to:

- The status of the Strategy: A strategic plan can be prepared by any one of the following governance models – top-down national body, dedicated statutory body, non-statutory committee, bottom-up joint body, an ad hoc public private consortium or an advisory

variation on any of these. They are all capable of 'working' if their individual limitations are offset in some way. In the context of CAMKOX and the current planning system the most effective planning process is for the strategy to be a high-order formal document. This, for example, could be achieved by being recognised through secondary legislation but more effectively as a joint spatial strategy for the three city-regions / combined authorities, and supported through a light-touch formal national/local agreement (e.g. MOU) for its implementation over the longer term.

- **The technical capacity of the organisation:** The very nature of the proposed strategy for Cambridge-MK-Oxford (CAMKOX) must be transformative. It is critical that the technical basis of the strategy should not be trend-based. This means it should have an independent technical capacity to develop fresh thinking, challenge the established norms and planning evidence basis (e.g. ONS projections and CBA analysis). To do this it must have a dedicated resource to prepare and maintain / monitor / review the strategy. It is worth noting that the relative effectiveness of the GLA and the Greater Manchester are related to the relatively substantial technical resource they have to hand, whilst the slower progress and impact other areas of strategic initiatives is related to the very limited technical capacity. In the words of the old paradigm "*If you wish the ends you must wish the means!*". During the set-up period, it would be helpful for this to be supported by tapered matched government funding

Implications

In order to build institutional capacity to make and deliver strategic decisions it is essential that there is Horizontal and Vertical Integration between different levels and across sectors. The governance implications for the planning of the CAMKOX Corridor are threefold:

- (i) **An agreed national context** in terms of
 - the scale and nature of the contribution that CAMKOX Corridor should make to building the national economic, social and environmental capital.; and
 - the relationship to the parallel strategic relationships (e.g. the London Plan, the Stansted Corridor or the links to the South Midlands and the wider Midlands Engine). At the national level this requires the articulation of a national framework.

This cannot be generated bottom-up, but requires a national spatial framework. This is reflected in the Quito 2016 New Urban Agenda to which the UK Government is a signatory. The CFN *Prospectus* sets out the basis for preparing such a framework.
- (ii) **Maximising local ownership of the strategy:** In addition to local input to all stages, strategic planning needs (for both the processes and outcomes) to be seen to take account local interests. This need to ensure democratic accountability has been addressed in the formulation of arrangements for the new combined Authorities. The majority model is that the directly elected mayor operate their powers and in this case, there is no need for individual local authority approval unless specially stated in the order like Manchester, where there is a directly elected mayor who are democratically elected to make executive decisions for their whole area.
- (iii) **Build strategic thinking and mechanisms from the three core functional city regions outwards:** Cambridge, MK and Oxford have distinctive national and sub-national roles, relationships and needs. They each need their own coherent strategic framework, and much is in hand to do this. These local initiatives at joint working should be boosted and incentivised. This does not however require a single detailed comprehensive strategy. What is needed is that they have a common frame of reference in terms of not only the national agenda but timescales and scenarios, and the identification of those issues where specific collaborative working has the potential to generate genuine additionality in economic performance, a value-added strategy.

Responding to the Questions

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to:

- a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure;
- b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and
- c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

Answer Question 1

- a. Not necessarily for two reasons. Firstly, An explicit strategic plan cannot of itself deliver investment and development. If transport investment funding is secured to improve both intra and inter urban connectivity, it can be targeted to unlock the housing potential of particular areas. But for high-quality mixed tenure development to take place at scale and at speed, a wider range of delivery models are needed. To guarantee housing output there will need to be some direct enhanced delivery by local authorities and potentially other public bodies. Local authorities are starting to deliver housing again and a current research project being undertaken by UCL funded by the National Planning Forum and RTPI is investigating the scale across the whole of England by each local authority of this activity and over 50% of local authority leaders are committed to establishing a housing company and over 125 local authorities have already done this. (Data for the 30+ local authorities in the corridor area will be available to the NIC from this project by the end of 2017). Current numbers are small but are likely to grow quickly in some locations. These housing companies are building for all tenures and will be the only way to guarantee at least some of the proposed housing is delivered. This approach to direct delivery appears to have been adopted for directly elected mayors for combined authorities so this approach could also be used here, although it would need to be aligned with the adopted governance model (see below).

Secondly, any strategy for the CAMKOX corridor needs an agreed sub-national and national context. At present, there is no body responsible for setting this wider context. To fill this gap in the short term, it would be desirable for the NIC to convene an ad hoc consultative forum to act as an advisory group to set out wider trans-regional and national scenarios within which the strategy is drawn up and tested.

- b. The maximising of the potential of east west links will depend on the models used for public transport and particularly integrated ticketing. An approach such as that used for Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (<http://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans>) would provide an initial step. This would also need careful travel planning support and investment for existing and new settlements/housing. Projects such as that undertaken in Darlington and LB Sutton would be useful softer measures to align with a more strategic delivery approach.
- c. Strategic plans could support the development of distinct towns and cities but this would need public investment.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

Answer Question 2 : **The NIC's own report on best practice on Strategic Infrastructure Planning prepared by the OECD suggests that a top down approach is the most successful. However, it says less about local democracy and devolved decision-making that would be proposed as a strong approach from other parts of the OECD to support economic growth (Ahrend, R., et al. (2014), "What Makes Cities More Productive? Evidence on the Role of Urban Governance from Five OECD Countries", *OECD Regional Development Working Papers*, No. 2014/05, OECD Publishing, Paris; *Urban policy and metropolitan reviews* <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/urbanmetroreviews.htm>).**

The integration of investment programmes and funding streams in multi-layered areas of governance (such as CAMKOX) is essential. Such an approach has been most recently adopted in the England and Scotland for example in relation to strategic planning in Cornwall (<https://www.cioslep.com/assets/file/Cornwall%20and%20IOS%20ITI%20Strategy.pdf>). This structure has the benefit of being a vertical institutional and contractual framework across tiers of governance from central to local and comprises a strategic plan and associated action plan to deliver it. This combined approach offers some of the strengths being sought in this NIC approach and a model that is being used elsewhere, so has some familiarity and opportunity to compare experience as its use develops. ITI also have many purposes in their institutional construction that have a strong sympathy with the NIC's objectives for CAMKOX viz: preparing integrated strategies where they do not exist; • promoting territorial dialogue; • developing coordination with other local, regional and national strategies; • introducing a multilevel governance system; • promoting partnership with territorial development stakeholders such as local governments, other public bodies, business, NGOs and representatives of local community groups; • bringing about experimentalism and flexibility; • encouraging more effective management and implementation of public policies; • building monitoring and evaluation capacity, etc.

In the scenario approach to using ITI, one of the four models might be applicable to CAMKOX – that for a sub-region (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/pdf/iti_en.pdf).

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and:

- a. housing developers;
- a. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and
- b. central government - through, for example, a new, long-term 'infrastructure compact'?

Answer Question 3 a,b & c : Only if there is a legal entity established for the area. An approach such as that adopted for the creation of Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) has shown that a combined approach based on a joint committee using s101 of 1972 Local Government Act can go a long way to support working together but this has the potential weakness that any member can drop out following a resolution of their council.

Taking the current Greater Manchester approach would suggest a series of layered institutional relationships (for example, with the LEP as one of the 'subsidiary' bodies. might be a better proposition that would include a joint committee. with development company powers under the provisions of 2011 Localism Act, as suggested in the NIC's note this could also be added the STB. This approach could also reinforce the role of LEPs as one of the "subsidiary" bodies in this layered

relationship/hierarchy. For example, the South Midlands LEP deserves credit for having kept alive the concept of East-West Rail following the abolition of regional planning

The idea of agreeing an indicative long-term infrastructure pipeline with government (for social as well as physical infrastructure) is innovative and highly welcome. For transport spending it is much easier to see how this could work where both the STB and the cross corridor strategic planning board were made up of all combined authorities, or a mix of combined authorities, unitaries and county groupings with new strategic planning powers.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

Answer Question 4: As above

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

Answer Question 5 : Yes these all seem sensible

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub regional collaboration?

Answer Question 6 : We are not sure what this question means? If combined authorities could be established for Oxford and its wider area, and MK and its related south Midlands area, then all three mayors could work together more efficiently. What is important though, is that these arrangements represent the three major cities involved in the corridor if the approach is not to become distanced and a lack political engagement at the level required.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

Answer Question 7 : No. The current duty to cooperate arrangements are woefully inadequate. Merely setting up an informal partnership or joint committee at cross corridor level will not be sufficient to give stability and confidence for investment for the longer term. But it depends what you mean by 'statutory' – this can either be using existing powers to create institutional frameworks i.e. company or a joint committee or creating a new recognisable area under a statutory instrument or through wider legislation. The key rests on the status of the strategy – as the NIC consultation itself states this requires more than an informal partnership This will be most effective if it has statutory status through the devolved powers to local strategic authorities. Other less effective or efficient top-down mechanisms are possible to give it weight as a material consideration (e.g. by ministerial guidance or through the NPPF) but central government endorsement and commitment is important in linking the strategy to delivery programmes and incentivised local action.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

Answer Question 8 :Informal models of collaboration have no proven track record for the delivery of specific targets, programmes and projects of the type being promoted by the NIC.

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Answer Question 9: The key would be to build strategy thinking and mechanisms from the 3 core functional city regions outward. A first step could be to move towards establishing a joint planning conference for the whole area and then appointing a technical team to lead the work. However, the level of commitment by local authorities will depend on the safeguards and additionality. What is the scope of the Conference and its competences? What will be reserved for local decision-making? What is the added value? It will need some significant effort and would be helped by the offer of government match funding for capacity building (as was previously provided to Regional Planning Bodies in their early stages).

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

Answer Question 10: There are a range of examples. Current ones include the annual reports for such places as Greater Manchester and Sheffield. See also the former Regional Assembly annual monitoring plans as examples, based on aggregated data from individual local authorities and other bodies including the former RDAs and the EA, and their own analysis e.g. of labour market

CONTACT

This submission was prepared on behalf of CFN by [name redacted], [name redacted] and [name redacted], taking into account the proceedings of the symposium held on 6th and 7th December 2016, the Interim Prospectus "*A New Agenda for England and the UK*" and comments received subsequently in the consultation undertaken with members and has the broad support of Common Futures Network

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APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY PROPOSITIONS OF COMMON FUTURES NETWORK

Towards a Common Future

The nation needs vision, determination and a plan to drive growth and jobs up and down the country - from rural areas to our great cities to create an economy that works for all.

These ambitions require an integrated framework of action, which gives confidence to those who want to invest in the future of the country. The empowerment of local communities through the devolution and localism agenda needs to be strengthened, by providing a clearer context for local decision-making. Business development needs confidence in the longer-term future for investment.

There exist the foundations of such an integrated approach for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as set out in their respective national development frameworks - but there is no equivalent for England. The recent consultations on a National Industrial Strategy and a National Infrastructure Assessment were therefore welcome but not sufficient to be successful in delivering this agenda in full.

The Common Futures Network (CFN) has therefore come together to respond to the interlinked challenges of inequality, low productivity, economic imbalance, and social and political cohesion. It seeks to transform rhetoric into action through a consensual, forward-looking and independent Agenda for shaping the future of England over the next 50 years.

Opportunities for Change

The following opportunities to rebuild the nation need a national framework of action:

- A better national balance of investment, research, culture, people and jobs, both urban and rural
- An economic strategy that harnesses the UK's full potential as a global mega-region
- An urban policy which sets out the roles of the major cities and their regions
- Securing the global role and functioning of the Capital Region of London
- Enhanced relationships between devolved administrations
- An infrastructure framework that underpins these, including movement and energy.

These challenges are overlain by the impacts of climate change and the potential implications of BREXIT. They are also hampered by fragmented administrative areas, and short-term outlooks. We need to change the way we do things!

A New Agenda for England and the UK

We need to build on the existing initiatives by harnessing fully the potential opportunities created by England's position as a *global economic region*. A fresh national agenda will help unite the nations of the UK by expressing their separate but interlinked identities, needs and ambitions. A new agenda is needed to translate government objectives into their spatial implications throughout England. Conversely, we need to consider geographical implications much more explicitly than at present when national policy decisions are taken, including those related to mainstream funding.

The immediate actions to tackle the short-term and longer-term national development priorities are therefore set out in the following eight Propositions. These could be informed by an independent body (comparable to the Office of Budget Responsibility).

The Propositions

Proposition 1: Creating a New Agenda for England to promote a portfolio of actions recognising geography based on:

- The global role of the London mega-region within the UK
- A new devolved development programme building on sub-national strengths
- An urban agenda to support the networked systems of cities
- A new rural agenda as a basis for connecting the rural hinterland of England
- Securing the natural capital of England
- An integrated infrastructure strategy rebalancing opportunities within England as part of the UK.

Proposition 2: Introducing a Place-based Industrial Strategy to harness the agglomerative capacity of the UK, and England in particular, as a global mega-region, and a refreshed regional development programme reducing peripherality, identifying areas of industrial specialisation, linking research and development, and setting priorities and goals for underperforming parts of the country.

Proposition 3: Integrating Infrastructure to move the agenda beyond re-engineering the nation to rebalancing opportunities within England; also, opening up new development areas required to meet the additional 9m population by 2040.

Proposition 4: Building Networked Systems of Cities: Understanding and maximising functional linkages between cities, building upon, but not confined to, the three existing trans-regional priorities (Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, and the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor), and other nationally significant opportunities (e.g. Heathrow-Swindon-Bristol), as well as the HS corridors.

Proposition 5: Securing the Global Role of London: Ensuring action throughout the London Capital Region supports the commercial, labour and housing markets upon which the future of London as a global city depends, through a high level non-statutory public – private forum, and also strengthening London’s relationships with other major UK cities.

Proposition 6: Facilitating Devolution: Reinforcing the potential created by the emerging framework of Combined Authorities through a more structured and incentivised basis for collaborative action, whilst retaining a safety net for vulnerable towns.

Proposition 7: Identifying the Components of a Framework: Based on these propositions identifying the key issues that must be decided at a national level for England in terms of the *National Economic Hubs, Corridors and Networks* in support of the *National Flagship Projects* and the *National Priorities for Collaborative Action*.

Proposition 8 : Linking Devolved National Frameworks through the British Irish Council’s Working Group to provide a common context for cross-border cooperation, creating synergies and identifying cross-boundary and external relationships and nation-wide approaches to increasing self-sufficiency in food, raw materials and energy

The Next Steps

These Propositions have been taken forward (and amplified) in a Prospectus for ‘*A New Agenda for England and the UK*’. The form of follow-up will be responsive to and in liaison with partners, and be seeking cross-party support.



TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND & THE UK

INTERIM PROSPECTUS OF
THE COMMON FUTURES NETWORK



MAY 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| SUMMARY PROPOSITIONS | 2 |
| TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE | 2 |
| OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE | 2 |
| A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND | 2 |
| THE PROPOSITIONS | 3 |
| THE NEXT STEPS | 3 |
| CONTEXT FOR A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND AND THE UK | 5 |
| TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE | 6 |
| THE NEED FOR CHANGE | 8 |
| THE NATION'S CHANGING GLOBAL ROLE | 10 |
| BUILDING ON THE CURRENT MOMENTUM | 12 |
| CHANGING HOW WE DO THINGS? | 13 |
| AN AGENDA FOR ENGLAND AND THE UK | 17 |
| ORCHESTRATING CHANGE | 18 |
| THE PROPOSITIONS | 19 |
| PROPOSITION 1: CREATING A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND | 20 |
| PROPOSITION 2: INTRODUCING A PLACE-BASED INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY | 22 |
| PROPOSITION 3: INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE | 24 |
| PROPOSITION 4: BUILDING NETWORKED SYSTEMS OF CITIES | 26 |
| PROPOSITION 5: SECURING THE GLOBAL ROLE OF LONDON | 28 |
| PROPOSITION 6: FACILITATING DEVOLUTION | 30 |
| PROPOSITION 7: IDENTIFYING THE COMPONENTS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND | 32 |
| PROPOSITION 8: LINKING DEVOLVED NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS | 34 |
| WAY FORWARD | 36 |
| APPENDICES | 37 |
| APPENDIX 1: EU CONTEXT SUMMARY BACKGROUND NOTE | 38 |
| APPENDIX 2: EXISTING NATIONAL SECTORAL FRAMEWORKS | 38 |
| APPENDIX 3: ILLUSTRATIVE COMPONENTS OF A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND | 39 |
| APPENDIX 4: A COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND | 40 |
| APPENDIX 5: TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURES NETWORK | 42 |

SUMMARY PROPOSITIONS

TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE

The nation needs a vision, determination and a plan to drive growth and jobs up and down the country - from rural areas to our greatest cities to create an economy that works for all.

These ambitions require an integrated framework of action, which gives confidence to those who want to invest in the future of the country. The empowerment of local communities through the devolution and localism agenda needs to be strengthened, by providing a clearer context for local decision-making. Business development needs confidence in the longer-term future for investment.

There exist the foundations of such an integrated approach for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as set out in their respective national development frameworks - but there is no equivalent for England. The recent consultations on a National Industrial Strategy and a National Infrastructure Assessment were therefore welcome but not sufficient to be successful in delivering this agenda in full.

The Common Futures Network (CFN) has therefore come together to respond to the interlinked challenges of inequality, low productivity, economic imbalance, and social and political cohesion. It seeks to transform rhetoric into action through a consensual, forward-looking and independent Agenda for shaping the future of England over the next 50 years.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

The following opportunities to rebuild the nation need a national framework of action:

- » A better national balance of investment, research, culture, people and jobs, both urban and rural
- » An economic strategy that harnesses the UK's full potential as a global mega-region
- » An urban policy which sets out the roles of the major cities and their regions
- » Securing the global role and functioning of the Capital Region of London
- » Enhanced relationships between devolved administrations
- » An infrastructure framework that underpins these, including movement and energy.

These challenges are overlain by the impacts of climate change and the potential implications of BREXIT. They are also hampered by fragmented administrative areas, and short-term outlooks. We need to change the way we do things!

A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND

We need to build on the existing initiatives by harnessing fully the potential opportunities created by England's position as a global economic region. A fresh national agenda will help unite the nations of the UK by expressing their separate but interlinked identities, needs and ambitions. A new agenda is needed to translate government objectives into their spatial implications throughout England. Conversely, we need to consider geographical implications much more explicitly than at present when national policy decisions are taken, including those related to mainstream funding.

The immediate actions to tackle the short-term and longer-term national development priorities are therefore set out in the following eight Propositions. These could be informed by an independent body (comparable to the Office of Budget Responsibility).

THE PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 1: Creating a New Agenda for England to promote a portfolio of actions recognising geography based on:

- » The global role of the UK in London and beyond
- » A new regional development programme building on sub-national strengths
- » An urban agenda to support the networked systems of cities
- » A new rural agenda as a basis for reconnecting the rural hinterland of England
- » Securing the natural capital of England
- » An integrated infrastructure strategy rebalancing opportunities within the Nation

Proposition 2: Introducing a place-based Industrial Strategy to harness the agglomerative capacity of the UK, and England in particular, as a global mega-region, and a refreshed regional development programme reducing peripherality, identifying areas of industrial specialisation, linking research and development, and setting priorities and goals for underperforming parts of the country.

Proposition 3: Integrating Infrastructure to move the agenda beyond re-engineering the nation to rebalancing opportunities within England; also, opening up new development areas required to meet the additional 9m population by 2040.

Proposition 4: Building Networked Systems of Cities Understanding and maximising functional linkages between cities, building upon, but not confined to, the three existing trans-regional priorities (Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, and the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Corridor), and other nationally significant opportunities (e.g. Heathrow-Swindon-Bristol), as well as the HS2 corridors.

Proposition 5: Securing the Global Role of London

Ensuring action throughout the London Capital Region supports the commercial, labour and housing markets upon which the future of London as a global city depends, through a high level non-statutory public – private forum, and also strengthening London’s relationships with other major UK cities.

Proposition 6: Facilitating Devolution Reinforcing the potential created by the emerging framework of Combined Authorities through a more structured and incentivised basis for collaborative action, whilst retaining a safety net for vulnerable towns.

Proposition 7: Identifying the Components of a Framework Based on these propositions identifying the key issues that must be decided at a national level for England in terms of the National Economic Hubs, Corridors and Networks in support of the National Flagship Projects and the National Priorities for Collaborative Action.

Proposition 8: Linking Devolved National Frameworks through the British Irish Council’s Working Group to provide a common context for cross-border cooperation, creating synergies and identifying cross-boundary and external relationships and nation-wide approaches to increasing self-sufficiency in food, raw materials and energy.

THE NEXT STEPS

These Propositions will be taken forward (and amplified) in a prospectus for a Framework for England. This will include seeking cross-party support. The form of follow-up will be responsive to the outcome of liaison with sponsors and partners.

Common Futures Network, May 2017

SECTION 1

CONTEXT FOR A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND AND THE UK

TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE

THE NEED FOR VISION

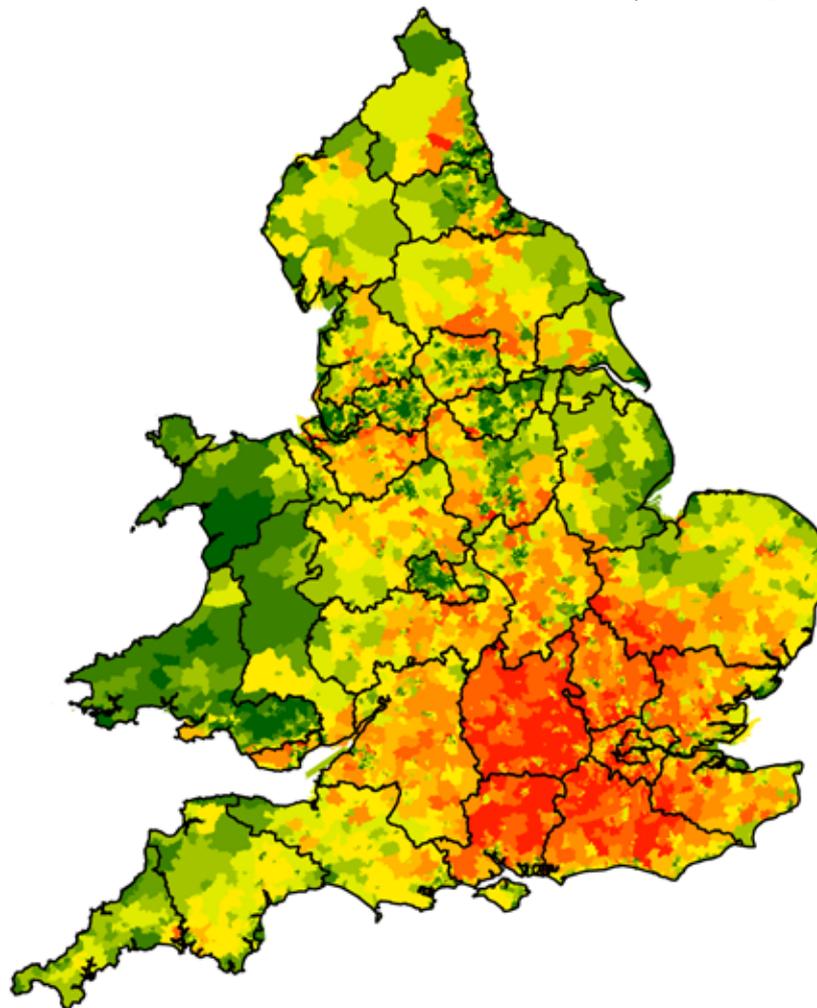
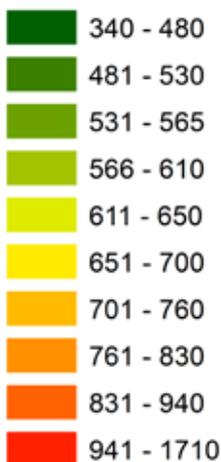
The nation needs a plan to drive growth and jobs up and down the country - from rural areas to our great cities. This requires us to tackle some of the economy's structural problems that hold people back. Things like the shortage of affordable homes. The need to make big decisions on and investment in our infrastructure. The need to rebalance the economy across sectors and areas in order to spread wealth and prosperity around the country.

This has been talked about this for years. But the trouble is that this kind of change will never just happen by itself. These ambitions are cross-party.¹ If they are to be achieved they require the vision and determination to see them through.

These ambitions seek an integrated framework of action. This will give confidence to those who want to invest in the future of the country. As a result, the empowerment of local communities through the devolution and localism agenda will be set in a clear context for local decision making. Business will be given greater confidence through a more secure environment for investment. It is a win-win – localism and global competitiveness can both be strengthened.

INCOME PER CAPITA (CASA ANALYSIS)

Average Weekly Household Income (GBP)



¹ These ambitions are set out in one form or another by all major parties' policies and manifesto pledges

THE NEED FOR ACTION

The Common Futures Network has been formed in response to this challenge. We set out here propositions for shaping the future of the country on which it seeks a cross-party support.

Economic growth and ensuring that its benefits are fairly shared across the nation are over-riding goals for the nation. A more integrated approach to Housing and Industrial Strategies and National Infrastructure will be central to ensuring that the nation is ready for the challenges ahead.

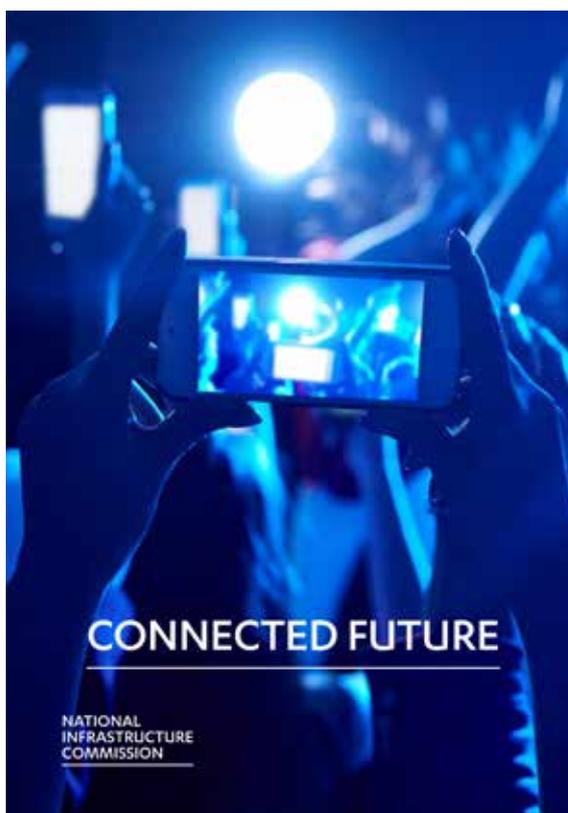
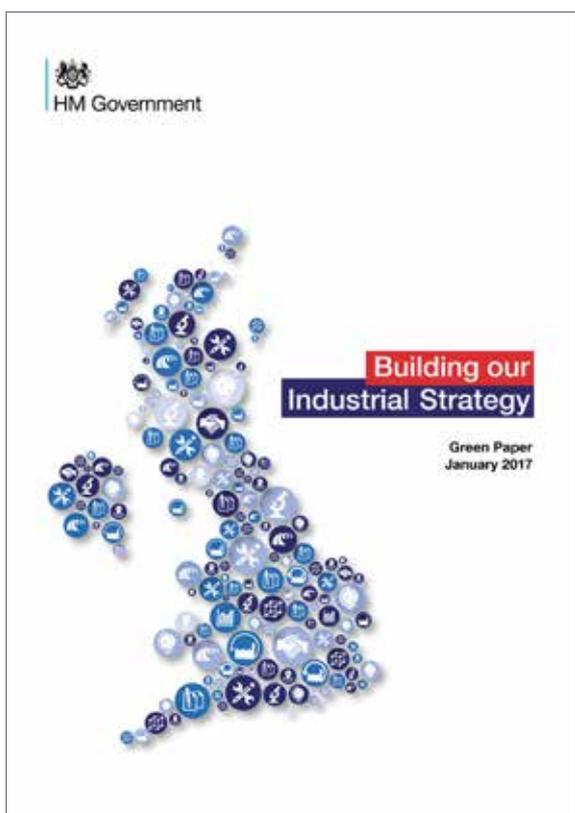
An Industrial Strategy must be place-based. The recommendations from the National Infrastructure Assessment – covering sectors such as energy, transport and broadband – will need to be designed to help its implementation. Both should support a general aim to rebalance the economy and wealth of the nation. However, there is also a need to transform the availability of affordable housing. Therefore, these initiatives need to be integrated into the wider agenda of social, economic and environmental change. In each of the devolved nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland there is an existing basis for a national development framework. But there is no equivalent for England.

A PROSPECTUS FOR COMMON FUTURES

This Prospectus sets out an immediate Agenda to fill this gap in England to benefit all communities - from rural areas to our great cities. It also forms a starting point for setting out a basis for developing a longer-term National Development Framework for the nation, and its implications for cross-border collaboration.

It represents a response to the radically changed circumstances in which the nation finds itself and the radical choices that must be made. The prospectus highlights some of the difficult choices and important collaborations involved. This particularly involves negotiating and navigating between 'rebalancing' an economy and a society at a time when successes need to be supported. It also involves making trade-offs between the triple bottom-lines of sustainable development.

NIC'S VISION FOR A DIGITAL BRITAIN



THE NEED FOR CHANGE

NATIONAL AGENDA FOR CHANGE

Our current national baseline trajectories have widely different impacts throughout England. The Prime Minister – in her comments of August and October 2016 – recognises that the pattern of development in Britain has to change if we want a fair society in which all prosper. Continuing uneven success will continue to undermine the nation’s future.

The State of the Nation needs an overhaul. It needs to be re-engineered for the 21st century and structural upgrade. This is reflected in the aims for the Government’s Industrial Strategy which seeks:

- » *“An upgrade in our infrastructure so that we have smart and modern connections – physical and electronic.*
- » *An upgrade in our education and training system so that we can benefit from the skilled workforce that we need in the future.*
- » *An upgrade in the development and regeneration of those of our towns and cities that have fallen behind the rest of the country.*
- » *An upgrade in our standards of corporate governance and in the relationship that government has with businesses of all shapes and sizes.”*

Rt.Hon. G Clark Secretary of State September 2016

UNLOCKING THE BARRIERS

The agenda for change will require policies which unlock the barriers to change. This is acutely reflected by the inherited patterns of capital values and creation, and which creates disparities in entrepreneurial activity, local taxation and value capture opportunities.

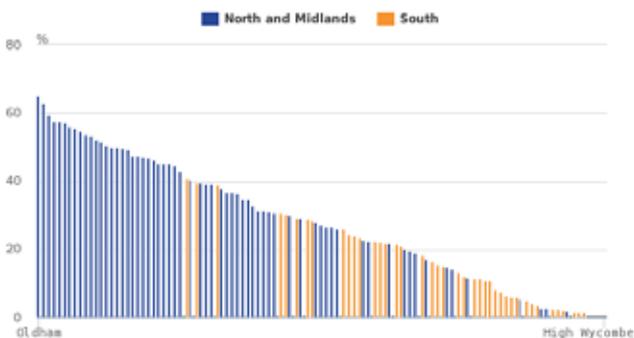
UNITING THE NATIONS

Whatever the outcome of the BREXIT negotiations, the global position of the UK will change. We are in a change of era and not just an era of change. From experience, it is valuable to have a clear vision of how the nation should be shaped where it faces existential shifts.



The Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish development frameworks allowed each of these countries the opportunity to set the agenda for coping with new powers and responsibilities. The same now should apply to the UK generally and England in particular, by explicitly identifying interlinked identities, need and ambitions.

% LEVEL OF DEPRIVATION IN TOWNS & CITIES (ONS-CLG 2015)



REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN VALUE OF HOUSING (SAVILL'S RESEARCH)

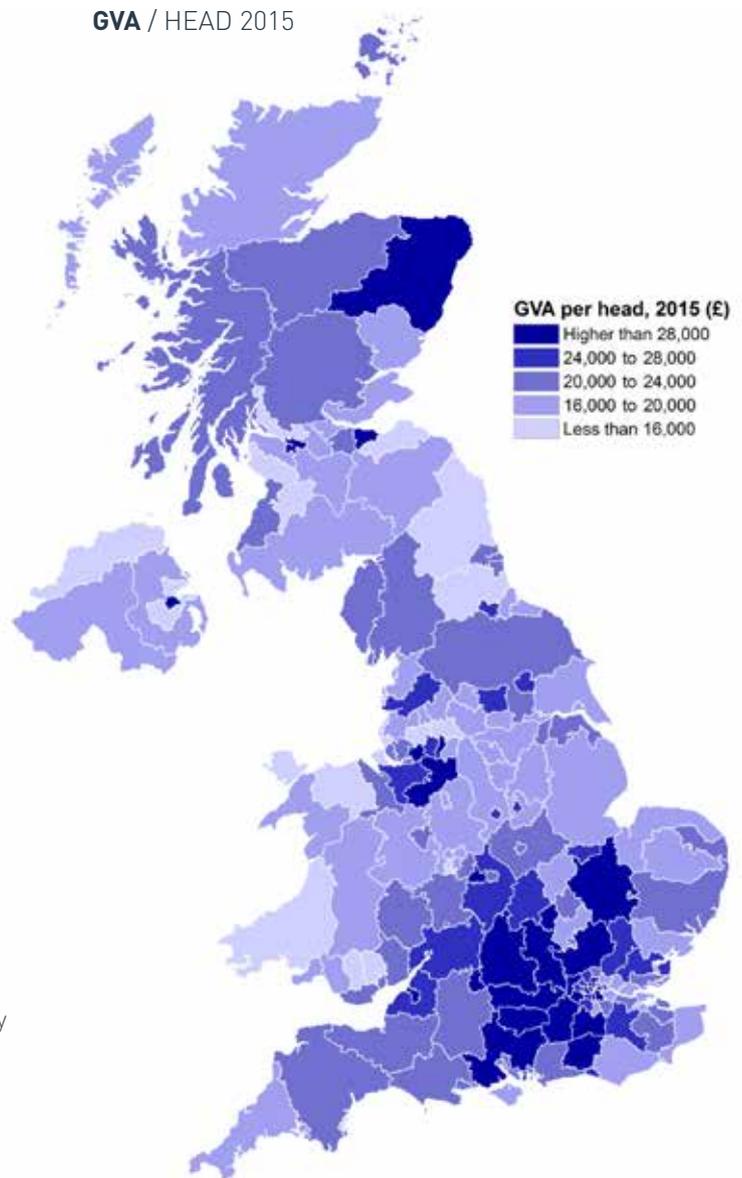
| | £Billion | | Population ('000S) |
|---------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| | 2015 Value | 5-Year Change | |
| Capital Region | 3,418 | 975 | 19,308 |
| Midlands Engine | 691 | 62 | 10,135 |
| Northern Powerhouse | 896 | 11 | 14,933 |

DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE

It is therefore critical that the underlying directions of change are addressed in terms of their varying implications for different parts of the country.

- » **Economic and social change requires some 9 million additional population to be housed by 2040 (ONS projections for England).** There is no clear framework for accommodating this level of rapid urban growth. However, on existing trends over 50% of this growth is anticipated in London and the south east which will increase the strain on high cost housing and commercial markets and infrastructure which would curtail that growth.
- » **The impacts of economic growth are unequal.** Social divisions have increased and, even within London, many households remain disadvantaged despite the economic success of the city. Growing social division is reinforced by the gap between the core areas of growth and more peripheral communities
 - between south and north;
 - between major and secondary cities;
 - between town and country; and
 - within regions and major cities.
- » **Climate Change overlays these economic and social changes** with differential impacts across the country affecting vulnerable communities in areas prone to flood risk, drought or overheating, and with predicted sea level changes also having serious longer term implications for many coastal communities. Climate change could also potentially affect food production and energy generation, and threaten the resilience of our ecosystems. Achieving targets for reducing our carbon footprint depends on radical changes in urban management.
- » **The new economies require clean and resilient environments.** However, those areas of need suffer despoiled natural assets. The future lies in restoring and managing these, if they are to flourish. In particular, we need to restore the link between the major metropolitan centres with their rural setting e.g. through developing a national urban park system.

GVA / HEAD 2015



THE NATION'S CHANGING GLOBAL ROLE

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

The UK will have to reposition within a rapidly changing global market place. A key part of this are the emerging major urban complexes of the networks of cities – the mega-regions – which are the engines of growth and are transforming the global economy. They are harnessing the benefits of agglomeration in terms of labour, markets, capital, research and logistics.

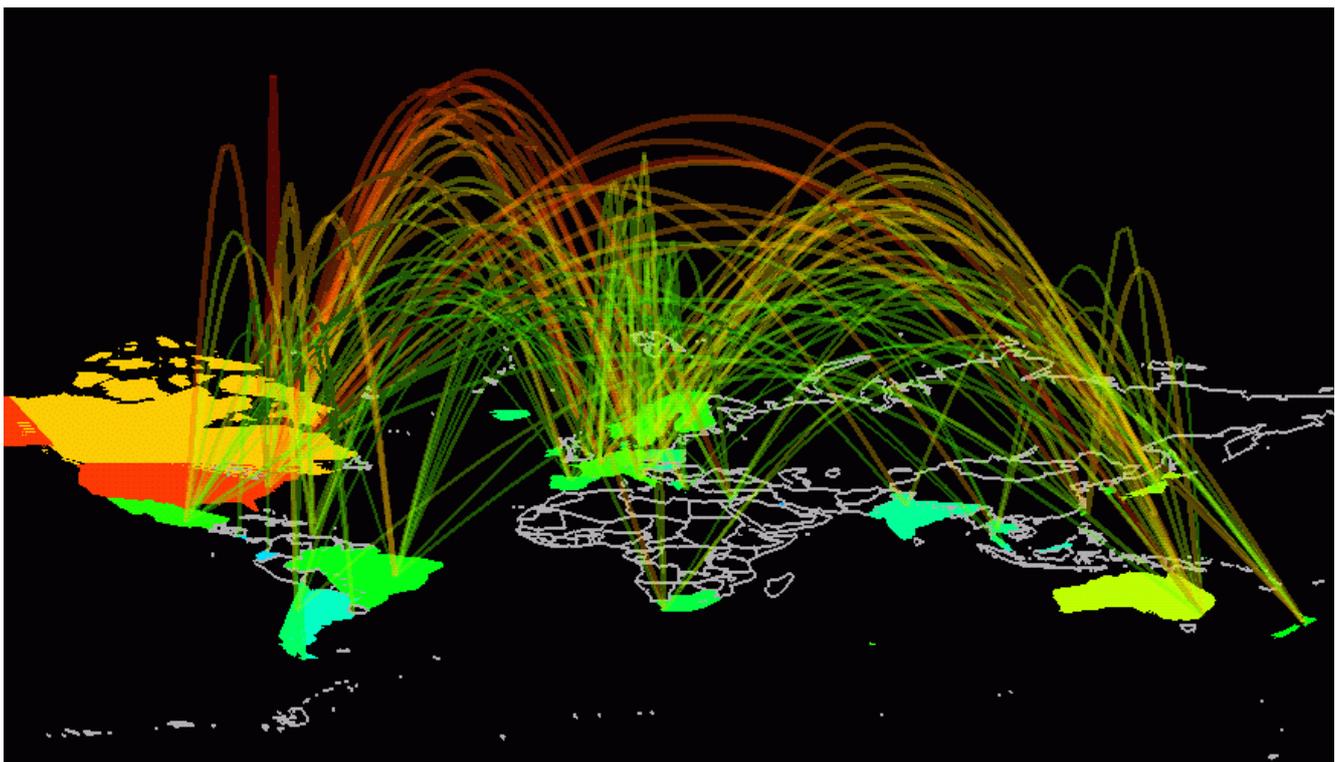
The UK, and England in particular, should therefore be seen through this global lens. It is a networked global economic region comparable in scale and clout to the Boston-Washington axis in the United States, eastern seaboard. However not all parts of it contribute their full potential, and therefore reduce the potential national output and opportunities for their residents.

THE IMPERATIVE FOR A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The impetus for change has been made more urgent by the BREXIT decision

- » **The BREXIT vote highlighted the social divisions in society.** Marginalised cities, towns and regions expressed their detachment from the benefits of recent growth through their rejection of the European Project that was in fact meant to safeguard their interests.
- » **The prospect of tighter border controls will have implications for labour supply.** However, some of the labour demands arising from economic growth could in part be met by rethinking regional development so as to increase activity rates and productivity;
- » **'The baby must not be thrown out with the bath water'.** Many parts and sectors of the British economy benefited from EU funding, policies and its related activities (e.g. EIB).
 - urban and rural regeneration that the EU underpinned needs to be translated into a fresh range of regional development programmes (refer Appendix 1).
 - University research and collaboration which cannot be replicated by maintaining funding alone.
 - environmental protection is closely intertwined for example with European Directives and the Natura 2000 network.
 - infrastructure frameworks e.g. TEN-T, TEN-E and eTEN.

ATLAS OF CYBERSPACE - MARTIN DODGE & ROB KITCHIN

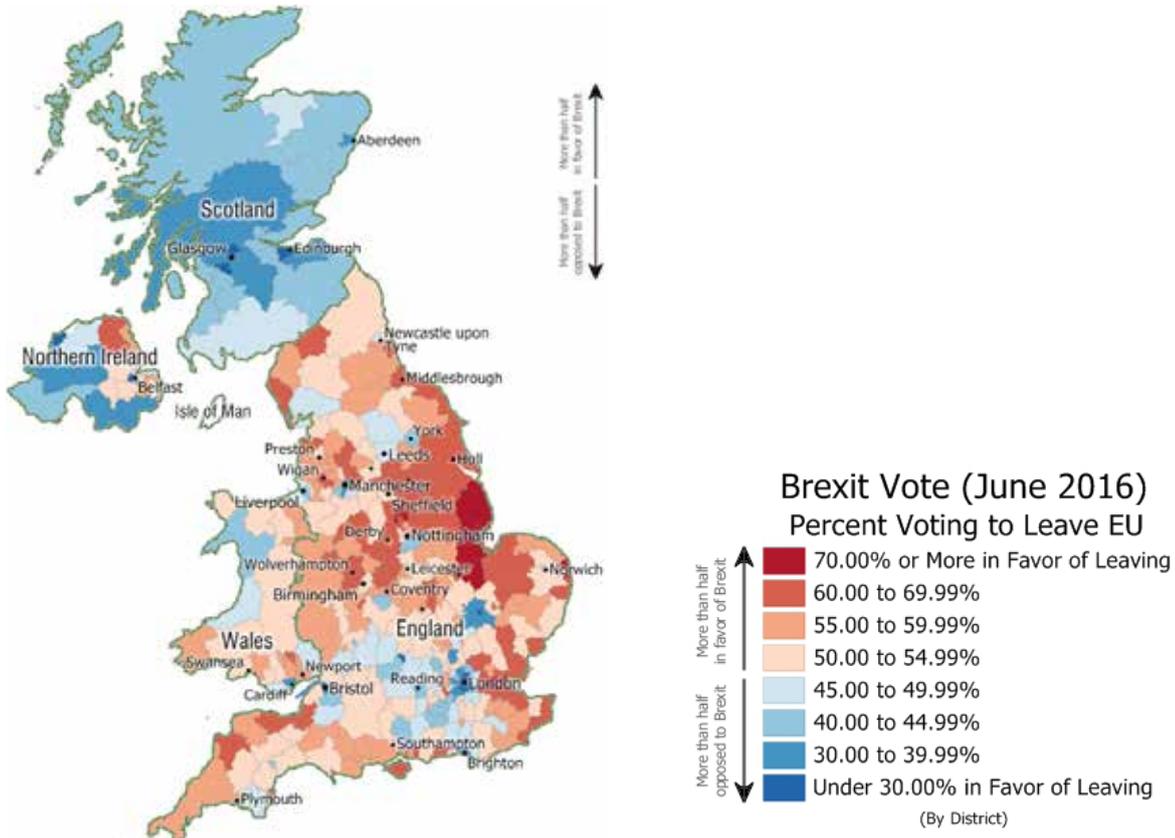


RESPONDING TO BREXIT

Whatever views are held on the referendum, the post-BREXIT era will create the following opportunities:

- » To improve on the delivery of funding in key areas, including
 - agriculture and rural development,
 - urban regeneration, and
 - university-based applied research;
- » To empower regions and combined authorities not just with strategic responsibilities, but the taxing and investment powers needed to deliver strategies;
- » To upskill and expand the local workforce, alongside significant productivity improvements, and thereby reduce the dependency on migration as a major means of meeting the demand for labour in a growing economy (especially within our bypassed communities);
- » To proceed with strategic investments required to strengthen physical and economic links between English regions and their counterparts in the rest of the UK.

GEOGRAPHY OF VOTING IN EU REFERENDUM



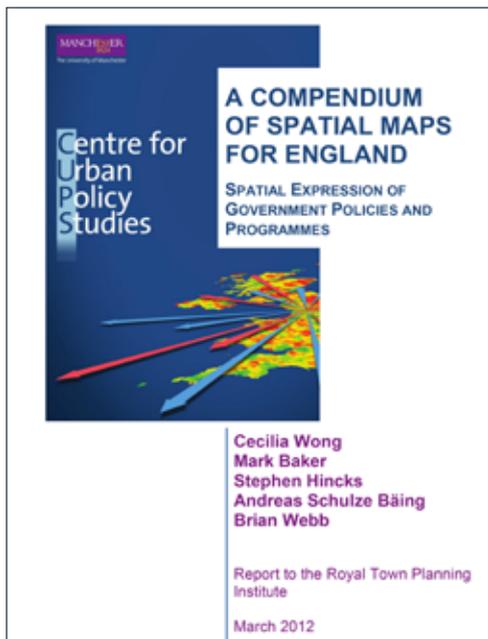
BUILDING ON THE CURRENT MOMENTUM

THE EXISTING CONSENSUS

There is significant scope to deliver the change agenda by building on the existing consensus and the momentum of current initiatives. It is accepted that:

- » future economic recovery needs to be much broader-based in terms of who benefits;
- » there must be a rebalancing of the distribution of development, which an unregulated market will not achieve; and
- » there is a need to upgrade infrastructure, skill levels, housing affordability, and the resilience of energy supplies in the longer term, especially in our towns and cities.

These are embedded in the government's commitment to a range of over-arching policy objectives, especially in terms of climate change agreement, and the industrial and infrastructure strategies. This consensus needs to be sustained but also enhanced, through a clear spatial understanding and expression of policy, as highlighted in the Compendium produced by Professor Wong et al of Manchester University.



EXISTING SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Some key existing priorities are explicitly aligned with this agenda. These include the new combined authorities and the sub-national/trans-regional priorities for the Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine and Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor and the HS2 Corridors. All these priorities however require an explicit spatial context. This is being developed for the Northern Powerhouse in the IPPR – RTPI report 'The Great North Plan'. Whilst the NIC is seeking to place the Cambridge -Milton Keynes - Oxford transport proposal within "a joined-up plan for housing, jobs and infrastructure across the corridor".

EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORKS

Investing in Natural Capital is key to the future national well-being. There is already a range of existing protected environmental resources. Our landscapes, habitats, historic heritage, agricultural systems, river basins, regional and national parks, forests and greenways should be seen as a national ecosystem of environmental assets and no longer a set of disparate protective designations. These Blue-Green Networks provide a range of socio-economic services to all communities in addition to their immediate environmental value, and should be seen as integral to the Industrial Strategy.

EMERGING NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

There is also a wide range of national sectoral frameworks upon which to build an Agenda for England (refer Appendix 2). These will be given added focus by the emerging Industrial Strategy and the National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA) by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC). The consultations being undertaken by the NIC and BEIS need to be rooted in a clear spatial framework.

In addition, the need to integrate the nation through new transport links is recognised in the Crossrail and HS2 and 3 proposals. This however needs to be extended and reinforced in terms of:

- » the national development agenda for all areas.
- » being better linked to development priorities, for example, to the areas that could be opened-up for major new housing growth.
- » being expressed as an integrated programme and not just as a set of projects; and
- » greater local input.

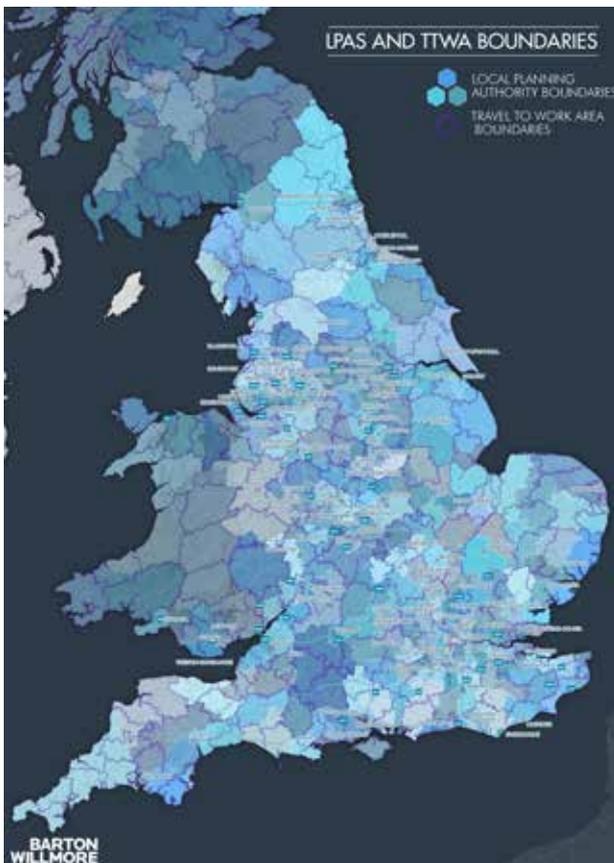
CHANGING HOW WE DO THINGS?

AN INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

There is an urgent need for a Framework for England which spells out the contribution that each part of the country will play. This is both nationally and at a sub-national scale, e.g. within the greater south east region or within the northern regions of the Northern Powerhouse. This also needs to take account of the mismatch between the economic and administrative geographies of the country.

Similarly, Industrial and Infrastructure strategies must be based on achieving a better balance of people and jobs and not be based upon the current trend-based projections and thus related cost benefit analyses) which lock-in historic patterns of change and reinforce national inequality of opportunity. It is also important to anticipate and plan for spill-over benefits and impacts that areas of development can have for other areas, so that communities are no longer 'left behind' in the growth of the nation.

A new agenda is therefore needed to translate government objectives into their spatial implications throughout England. Geographical implications need to be considered much more explicitly than at present when national policy decisions are taken, including those related to mainstream funding. It is also considered that the rebalancing should also be considered in relation to government investment and spending on government research institutes, culture, and the arts.



THE ADMINISTRATIVE PARADOX

There is a need for new tools to deliver transformative change to ensure that the future of the country is fair, inclusive and sustainable. The UK's strong central monetary control however is not sufficient to deliver this. As the Chief Economist to the Bank of England has made clear:

"The UK is towards the bottom of the league table within Europe in terms of the difference across regions,... ..,the Bank of England lacks the tools to tackle the problem,

... (they) tend to work by lifting all boats across the whole of the UK,"

Andy Haldane (December 2016)

We need programmes of action that deliver better outcomes, harness new resources and allow full engagement of all. This will not be achieved through centralised short-term project based decision-making. It needs programmes of action that are sustained beyond election cycles. They also need to take account of the inter-relationship between, and wider impact of individual budgets and projects.

We all need to 'change how we do things', if we are to get the best out of investment, whether this is in transport, housing or environmental action. If we are to deliver the potential of the nation, change is required in how we do things. This must not be just another shifting of the 'administrative deck chairs'. It is about trusting and enabling communities to create genuine win-win opportunities, and delivering greater international influence and local benefits.

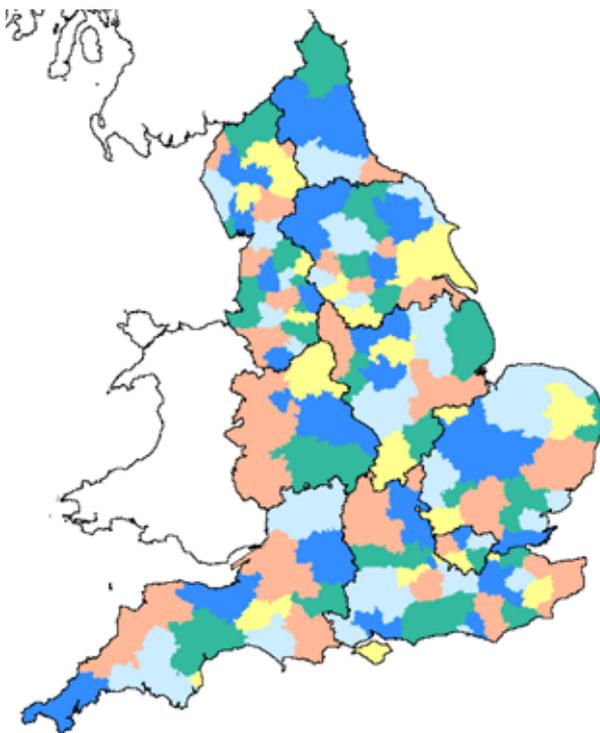
THE SCOPE FOR INTEGRATED ACTION

The need for a more integrated framework of local and national administration is reflected in the government's goals for greater subsidiarity and devolution (e.g. combined authorities). It does not however address the need for better integration of those decisions that have to be decided nationally.

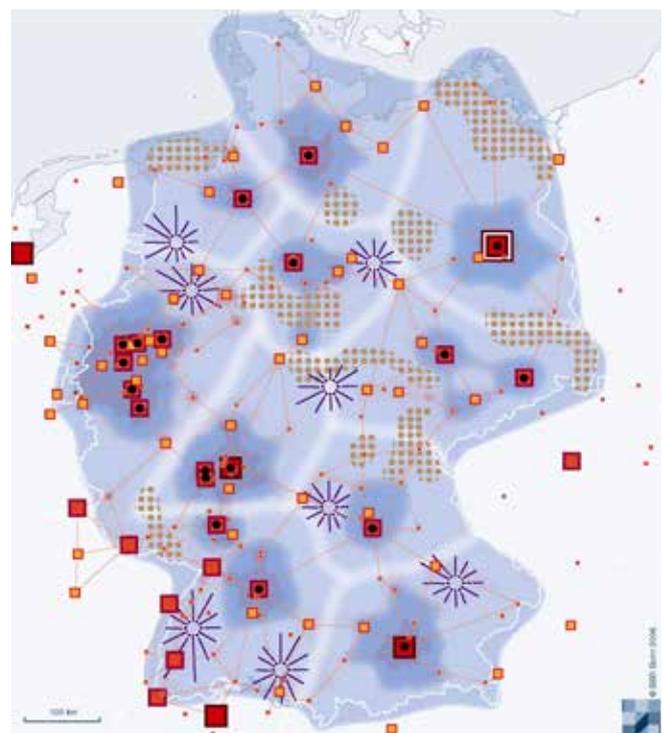
The scope for integrated action and better integration of policy lies in recognising where there are mutual interests between existing departmental silos and private and NGO sector groups, and where administrative boundaries have little relationship to the socio-economic geography within which people live and work. This requires a more proactive approach to identifying where sub-national collaboration is required across areas and sectoral boundaries.

There are examples of this (e.g. Northern Powerhouse) which would benefit from being applied nation-wide more systematically. The methods of analysis are already being developed (e.g. strategic housing market areas) and impact tools (e.g. CASA-Catapult studies). There are also examples of applying this type of analysis at a national level (e.g. Germany and France) with area-wide interlinking of the individual metropolitan authorities as well as the regional governments.

STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT AREAS (CLG: GEOGRAPHY OF HOUSING MARKET AREAS: 2010)



PRINCIPLE: GROWTH AND INNOVATION CLASSIFICATION: GERMANY



COMMON HORIZONS

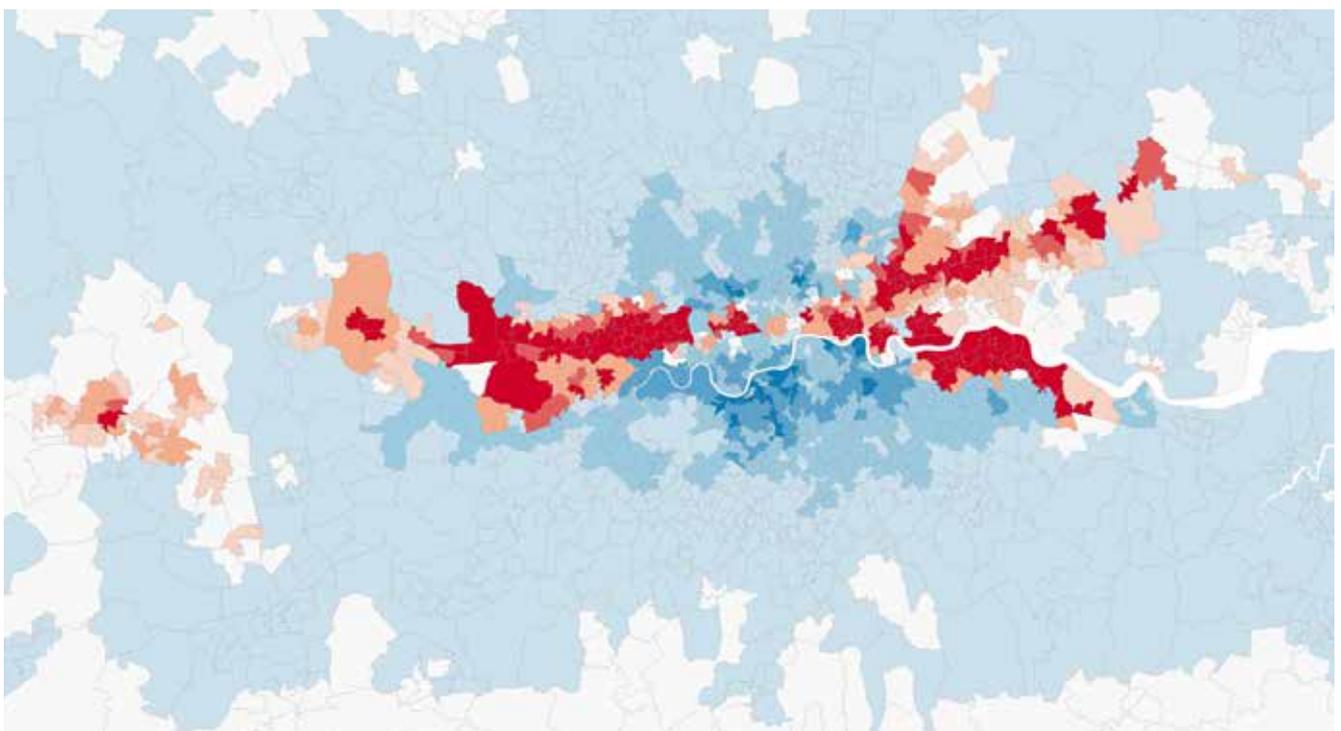
There is also a need to address the differing national long term horizons and assumptions used in differing policy areas. There is no common horizon used for national policy development. Although demographic analysis has a 25-year horizon, there is no agreed economic context for these. Most are merely driven by past trends thereby reinforcing the very problems that are supposed to be addressed. For example, the ONS projections have built assumptions about continued shift to the south and movement out from the inner urban areas, despite the priority given to reversing these.

In the change of era that we face we need to be prepared to respond to a range of possible futures. The degree of uncertainty that we face is not marginal. This is reflected in the range of between 0 to 30 million population growth in the UK by 2050, set out in the ICE National Needs Assessment Vision. There are existing tools that could be developed and used for building and testing future scenarios (see CASA diagram)

The longer strategic horizons extend over many electoral cycles. Common and agreed analytical frameworks and future perspectives are required which sets out the present and future State of the Nation. This should include a form of National Development Balance Sheet of the scale and form of development that is aspired to over the longer term. (refer Appendix 3). This would be facilitated by an independent body (comparable to the role of Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) on policy or the ONS on analysis or DATAR (Délégation Interministérielle à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Attractivité Régionale) and the CGET (Le Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires), in France.

| National Planning Horizons | | |
|----------------------------|------------|-------|
| Economic | 15 years | (HMT) |
| Demographic | 25 Years | (ONS) |
| Transport | 35 Years | (DfT) |
| Climate Change | 50 years + | (EA) |

MODE SHIFTS IN EMPLOYED POPULATION ALONG CROSSRAIL FOR LONDON & THE SE (CATAPULT & CASA PREDICTING URBAN FUTURES)



SECTION 2

AN AGENDA FOR ENGLAND AND THE UK

ORCHESTRATING CHANGE

THE OPPORTUNITIES

A new national Agenda for England is not only based on tackling the deep-rooted problems undermining the balance of development in the country but also harnessing the following key opportunities and strengths:

- » Its position as a global economic region;
- » Its highly-developed network of cities;
- » Its framework of environmental resources;
- » In responding to BREXIT; and
- » Uniting the nations of the UK.

NATIONAL INFLUENCE & LOCAL BENEFITS

Whatever the model that is used to develop a Framework for England it will reap benefits in terms of national influence and local benefits.

A national Agenda for England is needed to address existing weaknesses and deliver a wide range of benefits (refer Boxes). It does not replace national sectoral initiatives or programmes of action but gives them greater impact by aligning them within a common framework.

Similarly, a national Agenda for England will also have demonstrable local benefits. It will provide confidence that actions taken locally will be supported and not undermined by action taken elsewhere.

THE NATIONAL BENEFITS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

- » Provide a shared ambition across sectors and interest groups
- » Set long-term priorities for the nation for the next 30 years
- » Bridge the silos of Government to ensure the contribution of all sectors – health, social welfare, education, etc.
- » A shared evidence base to support key policy decisions at national and local levels to leverage the greatest economic, social and environmental benefits
- » Increase clarity and certainty for future national and international investment
- » Provide coordination and support for devolved powers making local decisions and plans better and more effective
- » Capture the greatest “bang for your buck” for infrastructure and public and private investment
- » Avoid the confusion and missed opportunities of an uncoordinated and unplanned England.

THE LOCAL BENEFITS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

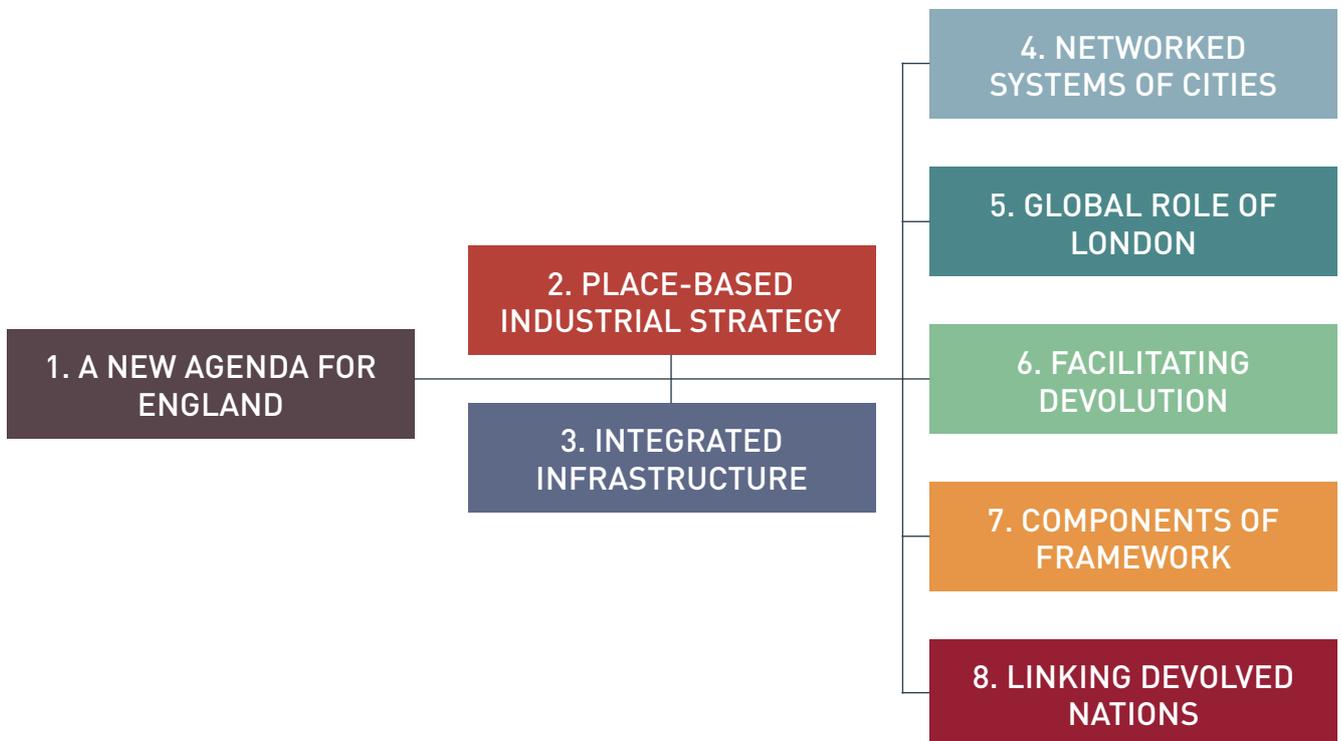
Policies and investments for regeneration and growth that benefit local communities through:

- » Local and regional transport systems that connect to national and international transport modes;
- » Strengthened research universities and teaching hospitals, and create technology transfer institutions to ensure that technologies in these places benefit the local, regional and national economy;
- » Empowered local and metropolitan governments to innovate and invest in these activities and in improved education and other public services that open up new opportunities for people, locally;
- » Protection of valuable and cherished places and spaces that are of more than local significance within a wider economic and social context.

THE PROPOSITIONS

The Common Futures Network proposes to initiate a national discussion to take forward the creation of a longer-term framework for England. This will seek to tackle the above issues. We propose that a Prospectus making the case for a development framework for England be prepared urgently in collaboration with a wide group of partners drawing on the knowledge and expertise of concerned and knowledgeable individuals from across the country and sectoral interests.

The short-term and longer-term action to tackle the national development priorities are set out in the following eight Propositions. There are also matters which need to be addressed immediately. Therefore, the following sections also set out matters that need to be taken into account now by the Government and others players.



PROPOSITION 1: CREATING A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND

CONTEXT

The following goals of Government need to be translated into explicit spatial frameworks of action for England and within the Government's guiding principles of sustainable development:-

- » To create the best possible conditions for British business in the long term.
- » To build on our strengths and potential, especially those based on advanced manufacturing, low-carbon energy, the universities, professional services and creative industries.
- » An economy that works for everyone, especially those most vulnerable.

- » Regeneration, innovation and job creation should not be in separate policy silos.
- » An urban agenda built around coherent city regions and an understanding of networks of cities, responding to the potential of each area.
- » Opportunities need to be opened up to rural communities and smaller towns, including former industrial and coastal, as well as the major cities.



PROPOSITION: A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND

A new outward looking agenda is needed, setting out an integrated approach to tackling the three overarching issues of rapid urban growth, increasing social polarisation and climate change. It should address the spatial consequences of government policy and expenditure based on the following:

- » Europe's only global mega-region and top-ranked global city to deliver the full benefits of an urbanised agglomeration of 60m+ population, comparable to Boston-Washington and the Shanghai mega-regions.
- » A new regional agenda based on the nested functional areas, unlocking potential (as opposed to the historic agenda based upon problem areas).
- » Economic specialisation of the major urban areas, need for regeneration and environmental priorities in the context and needs of potentially an extra 9m urban population.

- » Reconnecting with the rural hinterland - integrating town and country and responding to the potential impact of removing CAP.
- » Restoring and managing the environmental wealth of the nation on sustainable principles and responding to the need to meet climate change targets.
- » Connecting the nation through linked core physical, social, cultural, and environmental infrastructure frameworks for the whole country.

This should be set within an understanding of the present and future State of the Nation. For this to have a general acceptance it needs to be have a level of independence and longer term status, equivalent to the role of the OBR and ONS in their respective areas of working.

PROPOSITION 1: CREATING A NEW AGENDA FOR ENGLAND

To promote a portfolio of actions recognising geography based on:

- » The global role of the UK and London;
- » A new regional development programme building on sub-national strengths;
- » An urban agenda to support the networked systems of cities;
- » A new rural agenda as a basis for reconnecting the rural hinterland of England;
- » Securing the Natural Capital of England through developing the national Green-Blue Network;
- » A integrated infrastructure strategy rebalancing opportunities within Britain; and
- » State of the Nation prepared independently, overseen by an 'OBR'-style body.

PROPOSITION 2: INTRODUCING A PLACE-BASED INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

CONTEXT

England is in effect a major global mega-region, which can harness the benefits of agglomeration associated with interconnected labour markets, research capacity and production. This allows labour markets to work with greater flexibility without general commute catchments being extended. This is enhanced through its links to Ireland and the other nations of the UK.

Its full potential is, however, not being optimised. The imbalance of opportunities and living standards that characterise 'the state of the nation' represent major untapped social and economic capital. It represents a major 'opportunity cost' that is not factored into policy debate sufficiently. It has been estimated that the Northern Powerhouse underperforms in GDP/capita by 25%, but that it has the potential for creating a significant number of jobs from within an upskilled existing workforce. If this was harnessed it would radically reduce the pressure of in-migration nationally.

These numbers, however, hide the synergy that could be created by integrating and incentivising the various networked systems of towns and cities. Combining and making available information systems in spatial format would be a useful step here. England has the potential to be more effective and harness the benefits of agglomeration, including:

- » A much more diverse and flexible labour pool;
- » A greatly increased internal market; and
- » Extended supply chains and cooperative ventures (e.g. in R&D).

The industrial strategy should support cities and towns majoring on production and services in which they can excel (although not to the exclusion of other activities or other city regions), (see Box).

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF CITY SPECIALISATION (G CLARK: URBANIST AND STRATEGIC POLICY ANALYST)

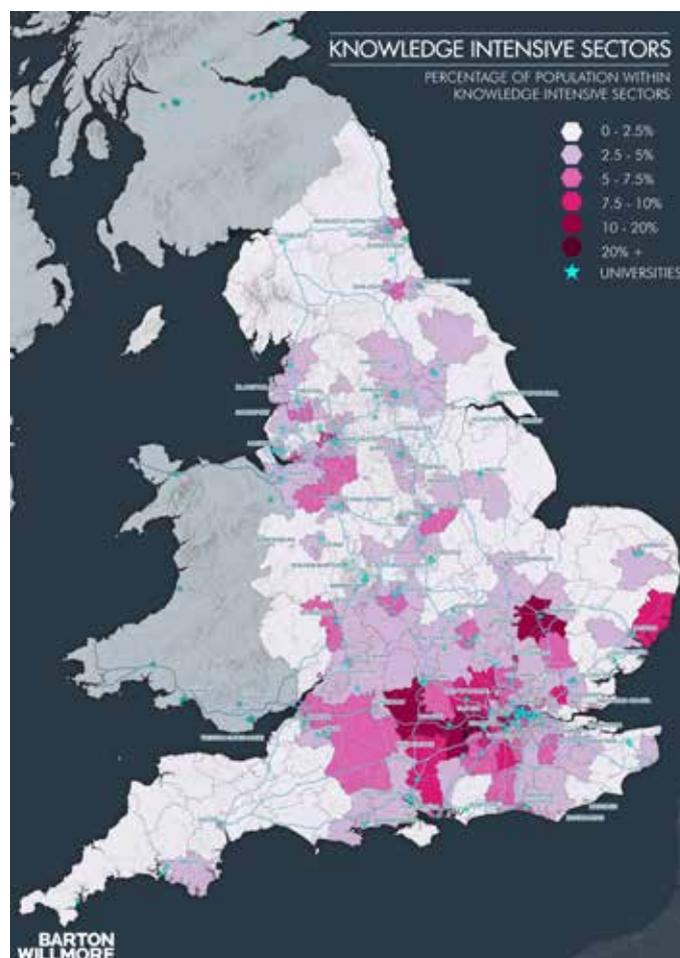
- » World-class business location over 5-10 business cycles (London)
- » Regenerated industrial cities (Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Birmingham)
- » Development of knowledge and creative economy (London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol, Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford)
- » Development of knowledge and creative economy (London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol, Cambridge and Oxford)
- » Openness. Management of social and ethnic diversity (London, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Leicester)
- » Sustainable development (Bristol, Newcastle, Brighton)

PROPOSITION: A PLACE-BASED INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

The Government's industrial Strategy green paper sets out 10 pillars to drive economic growth. Three key physical development strands are of particular relevance here, which would benefit from a more integrated approach:

- » The promotion of higher productivity, through science and research;
- » Delivery of infrastructure projects and increased house building; and
- » Continued support for regional development of cities and other economic areas outside London.

This agenda requires a clear spatial context. It is therefore proposed that an Industrial Strategy for the UK should develop the place-based agenda, including the actions indicated in Proposition 2 below.



PROPOSITION 2: INTRODUCING A PLACE-BASED INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY: HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF AGGLOMERATION

The Industrial Strategy should be place-based, including:

- » Identification of the areas of industrial specialisation that should be promoted by individual city regions.
- » Development of a network of innovation zones (comparable to the Sheffield AMID) linking the network of world-ranking universities to production ecosystems;
- » Promoting projects which reduce peripherality between and within the economic regions of England;
- » Establish a refreshed regional development programme based on the potential of regions not just on ameliorating their inherited problems; and
- » Setting priorities and goals for education and skills uplift for specific underperforming parts of the country, beyond the national baselines and giving combined authorities the means to deliver against these.

PROPOSITION 3: INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE

CONTEXT

The quality and capacity of the transport and IT networks will be key to the shaping of our towns and cities. The NIC provides a fresh opportunity to take an overview of infrastructure needs and priorities. However, transformational change must not be constrained by historic patterns of demand nor inherited constraints on capacity, either in development or in the opening up of new markets for business and housing.

With the notable exception of HS2 and 3, this results in greater bias towards areas of demand rather than to areas which need to be transformed in terms of their connectivity. There is therefore a tendency to reinforce the problems of peripheral areas – whether north / south, secondary towns / major city / and rural v urban. These divisions highlight the need to be more explicit about the balance between meeting foreseeable demand and capturing overlooked opportunities.

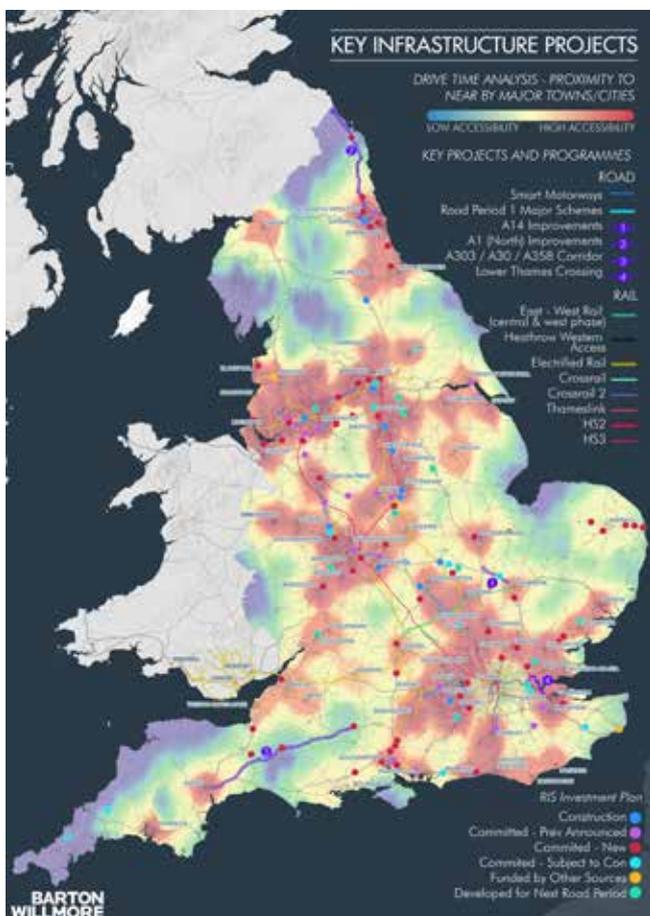
NEW CHOICES

The shopping list of potential schemes will always be greater than available resources (in the past this has been estimated to be by a factor of 300%). Without a clear strategy to rebalance the distribution of people and jobs there is a risk of ad hoc selection on a project by project basis.

Similarly, the time horizon used for transport planning goes well beyond any agreed basis for economic change. Without a national framework in which to set new infrastructure investment, it is impossible to demonstrate that new transport investment decisions are being made on a consistent basis with other national policy. Nor is it possible to demonstrate that they will result in net economic growth as opposed to diversionary or displaced development.

In the past, national choices have been:

- » At risk of delay whilst national priorities have been set in the absence of a wider development framework (e.g. airport capacity in the south-east); or
- » Trapped in consultative processes which are unnecessarily confrontational because of the ad hoc nature of the project justification; and
- » Often unable to fully exploit synergies at project interfaces (e.g. between Crossrail and HS2); and
- » Without an agreed understanding of cumulative impact and benefit, because of the project-based (and trend based) assessment processes involved.



PROPOSITION: INTEGRATING INFRASTRUCTURE

The NIC represents a major opportunity for a more integrated approach to land-use and transport, but it is constrained in its formal remit. Infrastructure planning needs to respond to development needs and open up opportunities in areas of greatest need rather than be driven solely by the 'bow wave of past demand'. It also needs to recognise that investments can lead to opportunities, e.g. the Channel Tunnel Rail Link eastern approach to London ultimately led to the Olympics, Westfield and other regeneration investment at Stratford. Agreed national outcomes and goals rather than extrapolated trends should be the basis for investment.

The need for an agreed 'context' of future opportunities and risks is therefore critical to major investment decisions. A key mechanism for doing so, is for the NIC's needs assessment to be explicitly linked to the Industrial Strategy. This would mean that infrastructure investment was policy led rather than trend led. In the short term, this could be addressed through the approach being advocated in Proposition 3.



UK INTERNET NETWORK (ATLAS OF CYBERSPACE - MARTIN DODGE & ROB KITCHIN)

PROPOSITION 3: INTEGRATING INFRASTRUCTURE

The National Infrastructure Assessment should recognise the need to reshape the economic and social geography of England and to be explicitly linked to the Industrial Strategy by:

- » Being set within and serve trans-regional development frameworks which provide for the anticipated future rebalancing of development in England, and open up new development areas required to meet an estimated additional 10m population by 2050;
- » Reinforcing the connectivity of the network of cities, including London, (Propositions 4 & 5) in terms of the speed and capacity of their high speed virtual and transport links;
- » By reducing delay and conflict through an indicative framework of preferred development areas for renewable and other energy supply and infrastructure;
- » Being phased in advance of anticipated growth not retrofitted;
- » Being assessed within an England-wide evaluative framework for the overall programme of infrastructure; and
- » Basing decisions on helping to create new markets for development that better serve areas of need.

PROPOSITION 4: BUILDING NETWORKED SYSTEMS OF CITIES

CONTEXT

Cities are essential for national success, and have their greatest potential impact when operating as a networked system of cities. Cities or even groupings of cities are no longer stand-alone entities. They are interlinked, for example, in terms of labour, logistics and capital flows. This is especially true within England where many cities are closely related already. It will be even more important with the international 'catch-up' in technological communications sought by government (e.g. the NIC goals and Catapult programme).

However, even the most successful cities remain dependent on national funding and frameworks. This has been illustrated recently in the success of IT around Cambridge and advanced manufacturing in Manchester and Sheffield. It is desirable to have clarity about their respective national roles, alongside national funding decisions which give support to their role.

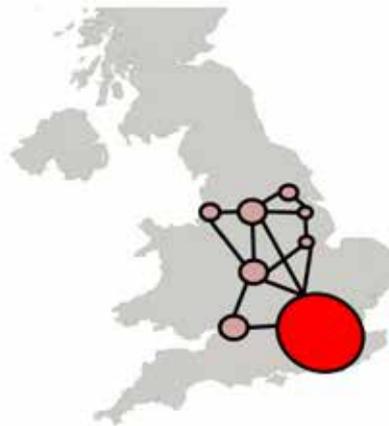
In this context, the efficiency of national systems of cities is critical. This is characterised by some, often larger, cities being more diversified and service-oriented, with high rates of business formation, and others cities specialising within an 'industrial ecosystem', whilst being centres of innovation in their own right.

There are however a range of possible strategic policy directions that could be developed. The Government's Future of Cities project used three contrasting reference points for considering the long-term future of, amongst other things, the national system of cities. This thinking requires to be taken forward through a national framework.

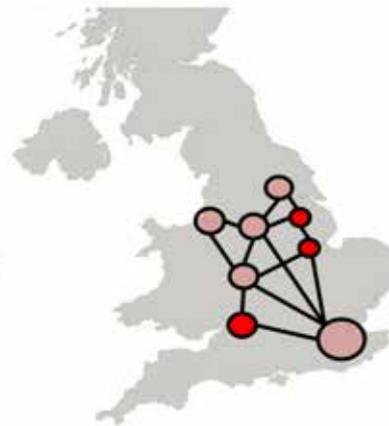
ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIOS FOR UK SYSTEM OF CITIES



MAJOR CITY
EMPOWERMENT



LONDON-CENTRIC



SMALLER CITIES
FOCUS

PROPOSITION: BUILDING NETWORKED SYSTEMS OF CITIES

An explicit strategic framework building on the functional linkages between groupings of cities would seek to increase opportunities for investment, and for graduate retention and attraction. Therefore, trans-regional action needs to be applied comprehensively to all nationally significant corridors of growth.

This agenda should be championed and incentivised by the Government, although bodies like Transport for the North, Midland Connect or the NIC as appropriate, may have a useful role in seeking consensus and agreement.

The four current initiatives express the national importance and potential for promoting networked cities on a trans-regional basis:

- » The Northern Powerhouse
- » Midlands Engine
- » Cambridge-Milton Keynes- Oxford Corridor
- » The HS2 Corridors

These existing initiatives would be strengthened and their full potential realised by taking explicit account of:

- » The relationship between them;
- » The relationship between core cities and the related secondary towns;
- » Social and green infrastructure, in addition to those matters remitted to the NIC; and
- » The intra-regional relationships e.g. between South Yorkshire and the East Midlands.

There are other national corridors which have similar potential that might also be recognised nationally. In addition to the two corridors related to Gatwick and Stansted (subject of earlier studies), these include

- » The Extended Thames Gateway
- » The Heathrow -M4-Bristol Corridor
- » The Oxford-Thames Valley corridor
- » Bristol-Severn-South Wales
- » Atlantic Gateway

PROPOSITION 4: BUILDING NETWORKED SYSTEMS OF CITIES

In order to harness the full benefits of urban agglomerations it is proposed that:

- » the longer-term benefit of current trans-regional initiatives should be supported through joint non-statutory spatial frameworks;
- » the TfN and NIC remit should be considered as possible means to enable and expedite the process;
- » a comprehensive approach to networked cities and towns should be developed nationally; and
- » the role of secondary cities and towns needs explicit consideration in the development of programmes and policies across these trans-national regions.

PROPOSITION 5: SECURING THE GLOBAL ROLE OF LONDON

CONTEXT – THE CAPITAL REGION

London is the world’s leading financial and cultural centre. Its competitiveness, however, cannot be taken for granted, particularly post BREXIT. It needs to be diversified and be less polarised. In addition, its future viability is highly and increasingly interdependent with its wider Capital Region – each equally affected.

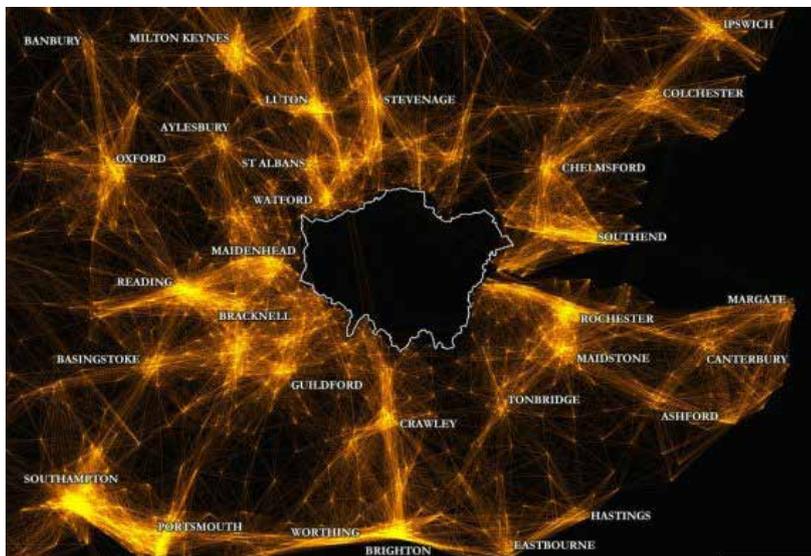
The scale of interaction within this Capital Region is reflected in the 1 million people commuting cross boundary daily, with increasing length of the average commuter trips and a net 70,000 annual net domestic out-migration of residents from London. These flows combined with the level of under-delivery of housing completions. As a result, there are acute problems of affordability and social polarisation. The challenge is to reverse these adverse impacts without damaging London’s overall economic success and to invest in transport without generating house price inflation, in the context of the whole Capital Region.

In particular, the wider London region has increasing constraints upon its capacity to absorb the further pressures of growth anticipated from within London and local demands in the surrounding region. Infrastructure (road and rail, water and drainage and social and health services) is increasingly at or over capacity, depending on the area.

The major options for London-related growth lie within growth corridors three of which are of national significance requiring an economic-led approach to development: -

- » Thames Gateway including Ebbsfleet Garden City and beyond, with centres out to Medway and Southend;
- » London-Stansted-Cambridge linking Crossrail 2 and upgrading the West Anglia main line, with centres at Harlow, Cambridge and Huntingdon;
- » The Western Wedge, linked to Heathrow’s future growth in employment upon which it is partly dependent;
- » The London-Milton Keynes-South Midlands corridor with growth potential unlocked by additional capacity along the WCML released by HS2.

COMMUTING IN LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST 2011 (ALASDAIR RAE: LONDON THE SUPERNOVA CITY)



GLOBAL CITY RANKING GLOBAL POWER CITY INDEX (GPCI) 2016 REPORT



PROPOSITION: LONDON'S GLOBAL ROLE

There is, however, no forum for debating and managing these relationships within the Capital Region which involves well over 100 statutory bodies and councils. To quote the Aecom report London 2065

"To effectively balance London's growth and make informed choices about priorities for infrastructure investment we need to look at London differently as one of the UK's city regions – looking beyond current administrative boundaries."

Growth of the London Capital Region lies also in the economic drivers arising from the networked towns which are not dependent on commuting into London. This has created a level of disconnect from the wider housing needs, with housing often only accepted in these areas if it meets local needs. The Capital region needs to rebalance the focus from being solely on London into recognising its network of outer centres, as demonstrated in the Polynet studies of Professor Peter Hall, and to revisit its relationships with other major UK cities.

The need for a comprehensive approach to this Capital Region also recognises risks that:

- » London will end up in a 'housing-lock' which so excludes labour that it undermines its economic potential;
- » Key quality of life factors including air quality will suffer on current trajectories; and
- » The communities outside London are unable to absorb necessary levels of new homes through normal planning processes.

The nearest comparator is arguably New York, in terms of its role, size and ageing infrastructure, and participatory democratic processes. There the long-term strategic planning of the greater New York tristate region has been managed through a non-statutory Regional Plan Association of private sector and public interest. This approach is light touch and strategic.

PROPOSITION 5: SECURING THE GLOBAL ROLE OF LONDON

A high level non-statutory public – private forum should be created with the express remit of preparing a strategy for the London Capital Region in order to:

- » secure the global role of London
- » create the capacity for the potential scales of future growth
- » ensure that all London's residents and workforce benefit from its economic success;
- » rebalance the focus from being solely on London to one including its network of outer centres, and
- » relate its economy and growth, to the planned changing connectivity to the rest of the country.

PROPOSITION 6: FACILITATING DEVOLUTION

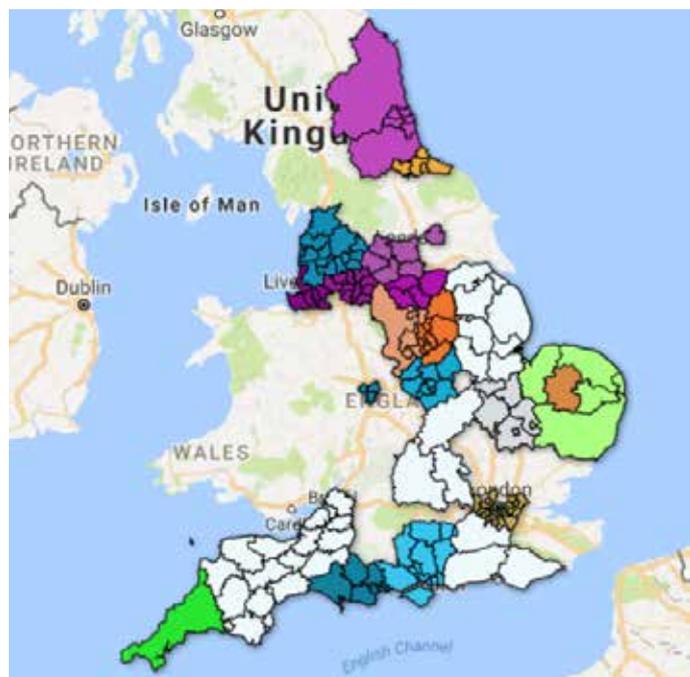
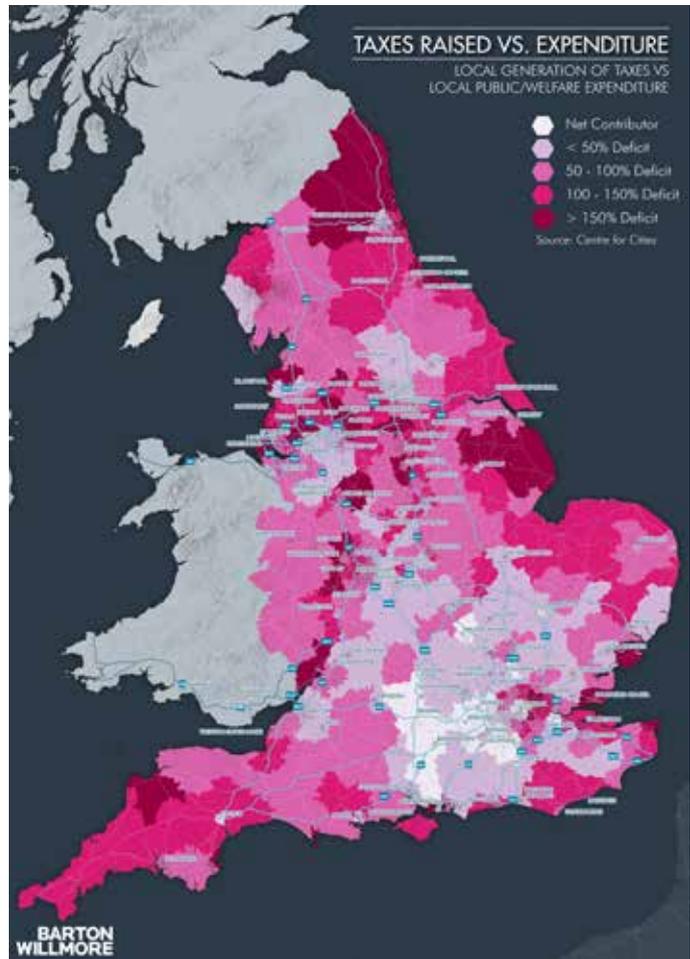
CONTEXT

The re-empowering of local communities through devolution is long overdue. City regions are the natural building block of devolution, Therefore, the creation of Combined Authorities is a major step forward in re-establishing the capacity of local councils to make strategic decisions for the future of their areas.

Devolution will be most effective where the areas of joint working:

- » relate to the functional areas within which people live and work – especially the housing market and journey to work areas which have been defined nationally; and
- » have the confidence that they will be supported by, and not frustrated by, the decisions taken in 'another place'.

In this context, there are two issues that need to be addressed. Firstly, where the boundaries of Combined authorities are arbitrary it is desirable for their operational programmes to demonstrate how they relate to the nationally agreed socio-economic regions within which they sit. Secondly, many of the worst failures on duty to cooperate are on the fringes of metropolitan areas or around smaller economically buoyant cities, which the current combined authority boundaries do not address.



DEVOLUTION MAP: COMBINED AUTHORITIES
(LGA: JANUARY 2017)

PROPOSITION: FACILITATING DEVOLUTION

The devolution of power and responsibilities to strategic governance partnerships is of national importance in the core metropolitan city regions because they are at the heart of the economic future of the nation. This shift needs accelerating through incentivisation and advocacy rather than government diktat.

It is therefore recommended that an even more proactive and place-based approach to devolution would yield real benefits in the pace of change. This is about providing a context for future devolution deals, for example by identifying where and how to fill the current gaps in collaboration. However, responsibilities cannot be devolved effectively without greater power over money and powers (e.g. raising revenues locally). Other towns and areas outside the main city regions however will often still need a safety net from central funding. Experience from the integration of Eastern Germany post reunification, shows the benefit of the Federal state ringfencing part of the national transport budget for this -to avoid a cost benefit analysis/market driven approach focusing spend on the established areas of the former West Germany.

PROPOSITION 6: FACILITATING DEVOLUTION

In order to secure the full benefits from the programme of devolution to Combined Authorities, it is recommended that the development of the Devolution agenda should be set within the context of agreed functional areas in order to provide a framework for:

- » Enabling a more structured basis for interpreting the duty to cooperate;
- » Incentivising cooperative joint action;
- » Identifying key gaps in the pattern of joint working; and
- » Identifying national priorities for intervention.

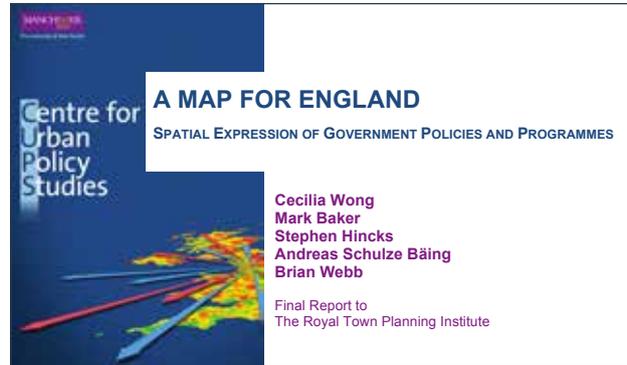
PROPOSITION 7: IDENTIFYING THE COMPONENTS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

CONTEXT

Currently, national policy interest is contained in a wide range of documents. The RTPI Map for England has illustrated the extent of spatial advice that exists (implicit as well as explicit) in a wide range of sectoral policy. It has also demonstrated that when these are brought together they are not always consistent. This complexity and lack of clarity undermines the confidence necessary for local action.

A nationally agreed Framework would set out the contribution each area should make to delivering the national agenda (i.e. not seen as a bottom up process). Experience shows that without such guidance there is a real risk of delay and conflicting priorities.

It is, however, equally important that local entrepreneurial culture is not undermined by excessive or centralised micro-management. It is therefore critical that explicitly spatial national guidance relates to those matters that hold the nation together and drive it forward. This includes not only the core infrastructure systems and networks but also investment and spending on government research institutes, culture, and the arts.



PROPOSITION: THE FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS

A Framework for England will be an enabling framework of action. It should be light-touch, updateable and indicative and not proscriptive.

It is essential that any framework is focussed on those issues which can only and must be decided at a national level. Appendix 3 sets out an illustrative content.

The Common Futures Network proposes to take this conversation forward nationally during 2017. In order to assist these discussions, an outline approach will be prepared arising out of the 2016 London symposium discussions.

PROPOSITION 7: IDENTIFYING THE COMPONENTS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

The scope of the Prospectus should focus on the national interest characterised in:

- » The National Economic Hubs and Corridors which drive and secure the future of Britain e.g. Innovation zones or new settlements, or linked cities,
- » The National Networks upon which all communities are dependent for accessing the national hubs and major urban centres;
- » The National Flagship Projects which will transform the competitiveness and quality of life of England.
- » The National Priorities for Collaborative Action where the level and scale of change is of national significance in terms of their potential) or from being at risk from either failing economies or physical threats e.g. sea level rise.

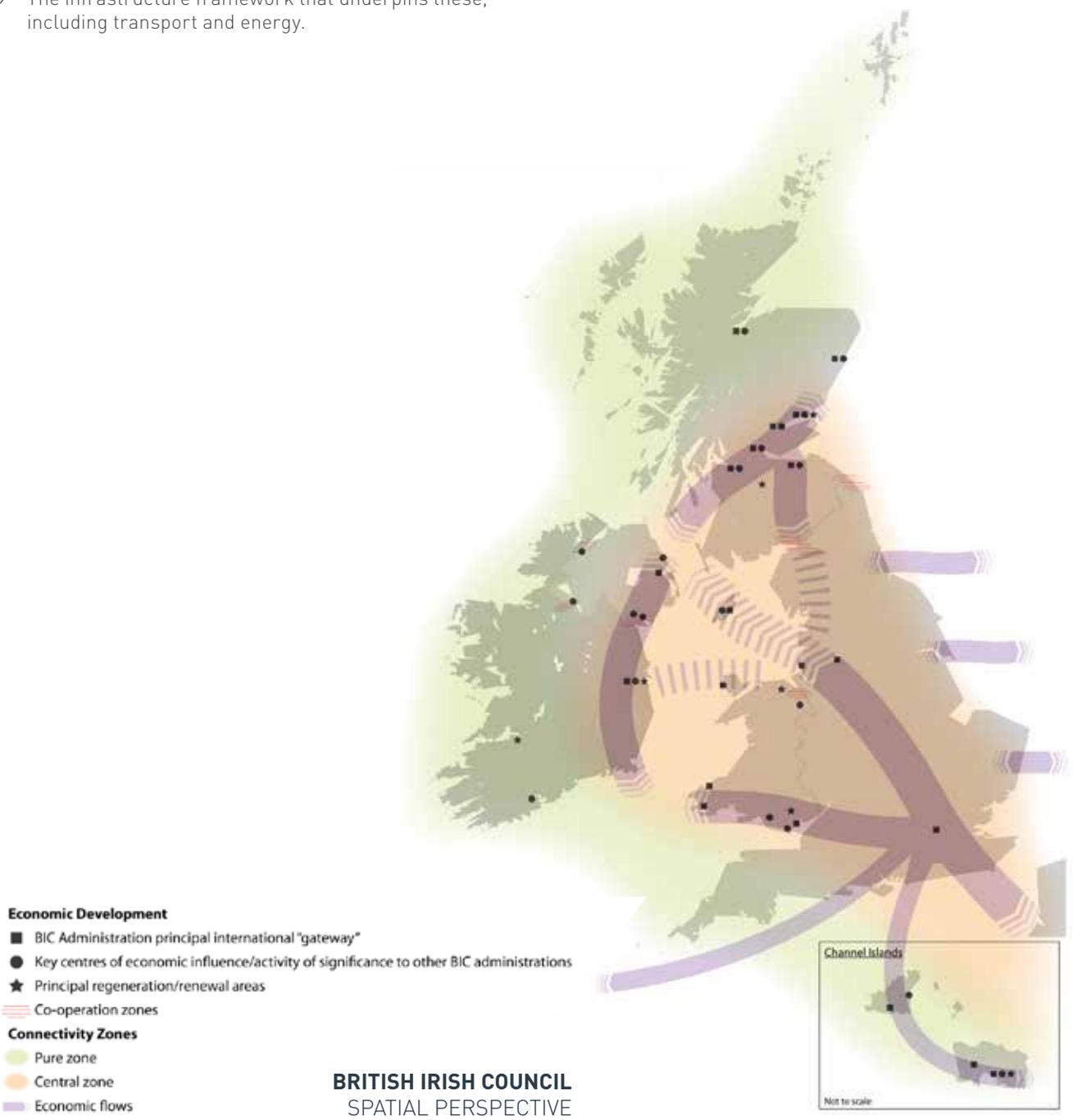
PROPOSITION 8: LINKING DEVOLVED NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

CONTEXT

There are already approved spatial frameworks for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, (refer Appendix 4). These have a consistent set of issues based around the following key themes:

- » A better national balance of people and jobs, both urban and rural;
- » The function of cities and their regions;
- » Environmental protection and enhancement; and
- » The infrastructure framework that underpins these, including transport and energy.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own plans. However, they are often critically dependent on high level infrastructure in England (such as deep sea ports, energy, international airports and specialised services); as well as overland infrastructure to English markets and the continent. For all of this, and more, no equivalent plan exists in England. There are a range of component elements of national spatial frameworks which will help in creating a development framework for England.



SCOTLAND

Scotland has a well-developed national framework, the third National Planning Framework (NPF3) which includes key themes – sustainable, low carbon, natural resilience and connected. It sets out the Government's priorities over the next 20-30 years and includes 14 national flagship developments.

WALES

The Wales Spatial Plan identifies 6 sub-regions in Wales and aims to deliver sustainable development through area strategies. It sets out cross-cutting national spatial priorities as a context for national and regional policies for specific sectors, such as health, education, housing and the economy, reflecting the distinctive characteristics of sub-regions of Wales and their cross-border relationships.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland has a Regional Development Strategy which aims to take account of the economic ambitions and needs of the Region, and put in place spatial planning, transport and housing priorities that will support and enable the aspirations of the Region to be met.

PROPOSITION: LINKING NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

It will be important to clarify how a Framework for England should relate to the frameworks for the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Rather than propose an over-arching UK spatial perspective, it may be more appropriate to build on the Britain and Ireland institutional framework already in place. This could be achieved by charging the British Irish Council's Working Group on Collaborative Spatial Planning to report on the framework of mechanisms and incentives necessary to support cross-border co-operation.

While the Framework for England should be set in the devolved UK-wide context, there are specific issues that need to be addressed, including:

- » Identifying cross-boundary and external relationships such as movement and economic growth;
- » Nation-wide approaches to increasing self-sufficiency in food, raw materials and energy; and providing a common context for all four national frameworks for example on terms of international / global relationships.

PROPOSITION 8: LINKING DEVOLVED NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

In order to strengthen the individual work of the devolved nations, it is proposed that there should be an explicit consideration of their interdependencies in terms of:

- » the role of the major airports and ports serving Europe, the Americas and Asia;
- » the relationship of north and south Wales to Merseyside /Cheshire and the Bristol/Severn estuarine areas, respectively;
- » the links between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and transport links;
- » the development of knowledge networks between the main universities;
- » core understanding on such matters as international migration and other factors;
- » The British Irish Council's Working Group to be asked to report on a framework to support cross-border co-operation.

CONTEXT

This Interim Prospectus seeks to start a wider conversation about the future of the nation. It wants to engage the wider policy community in this. It therefore does not set out a blue print of how it should be taken forward nor advocate a specific model of who should lead it. From experience this is best done through dialogue and not setting out a prescription at this stage. There are many governance models and they all have strengths and weaknesses, but can all work if their latent weaknesses are compensated in the associated checks and balances.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY

In this change of era there needs to be an overarching vision that provides the place-based glue to stitch together projects and guide decisions about future investments (capturing synergy and interactions). The priority is in England which has no national development framework akin to the other home nations. This glue would run through an integrated set of policies to deliver "A New Agenda for England".

NEXT STEPS

It is therefore proposed that the next steps in making the case for a national development framework for England will be as follows:

1. Make submission to the consultations on the NIA and the Industrial Strategy green paper, and liaise with NIC and BEIS
2. Publicise and consult on this Interim Prospectus
3. Seek cross-party discussions and support
4. Open up the network to membership and support
5. Liaise with potential hosts for network website (domain registered)
6. Prepare a draft discussion document at Symposium 2 by mid-2017
7. Undertake wider consultation by end 2017.

The future form of follow-up will depend on the outcome of liaison with sponsors and partners.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: EU CONTEXT SUMMARY BACKGROUND NOTE

(This summary is based on a fuller paper prepared for the Network by Professor Janice Morphet)

The EU has been a major and increasing influence on spatial, investment and planning policy in the UK over the last 40 years. Key areas where EU policy and programmes have been delivered in the UK include strategic transport routes and nodes; energy; housing and planning; the environment; maritime and ports policy. A revised version of Europe 2020 is now currently under preparation. An important part of the work towards a Framework for England should therefore be to assess how far these EU policies and actions impact on the strategic spatial strategy for England and the UK. As a corollary if the UK leaves the EU, the question remains about how physical links between the EU member states including Ireland will be managed.

Regardless of the outcome of BREXIT, the geographical and trade links between the EU and the UK make these continuing relationships inevitable. The EU is now preparing a strategic framework to run to 2050 that will guide investment and wider territorial policy. Therefore, it is important to be clear about what its implications are for England, and the UK more generally. In a risk mitigation approach, it is desirable to consider how the NIC infrastructure assessment includes explicit EU policy frameworks that are procedurally committed.

In principle the infrastructure needs assessment being undertaken by the NIC should be a major contribution to this, but at present there is concern that it will not be spatial enough – i.e. clear about the needs and demands of all communities and the options for managing these to address the imbalances in the distribution of needs and demands for new development. A key mechanism for doing so, is for the NIC's infrastructure needs assessment to be explicitly linked to the Industrial Strategy.

APPENDIX 2: EXISTING NATIONAL SECTORAL FRAMEWORKS

The following are examples of what is already available. These are only illustrative and others have been documented in 'The Map for England':

- » The Catapult Programme which provides a network of centres designed to transform the UK's capability for innovation
- » Food Security: 'Securing food supplies up to 2050: the challenges faced by the UK';
- » Water Stress: e.g. as highlighted in the Environment Agency report 'Water for People and the Environment' 2009;
- » Water resources: Water resources long-term planning framework 2015-2065, Water UK, 2016;
- » Flood Risk: Flooding in England: A National Assessment of Flood Risk;
- » Impoverished Biodiversity: 'Lost life: England's lost and threatened species';
- » Sustaining Ecosystems Services: refer recent report 'Draft synthesis of current status and recent trends';
- » Energy & Climate: Low Carbon Transition Plan: national strategy for climate & energy;
- » Renewable Energy: the 2009 UK Renewable Energy Strategy;
- » Climate change adaptation: The National Adaptation Programme: Making the country resilient to a changing climate, Defra 2013.

APPENDIX 3: ILLUSTRATIVE COMPONENTS OF A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

Based on experience elsewhere the components of a Framework could include the following illustrative examples.

A. A 'balance sheet' and 'future business plan' for the development of the nation, which would summarise the key components of the National Development Balance Sheet, for example as follows:

a. A State of the Nation Report setting out:

- i. The aggregate capacity for development;
- ii. The underused capacities in our national stock (e.g. housing) and infrastructure systems;
- iii. The pinch points in our national infrastructure;
- iv. The scale and any identified priorities for urban regeneration; and
- v. Monitoring of the natural environment (e.g. level of risk).

b. The 'Shifts' in the Nation setting out:

- i. The economic, social and environmental trends;
- ii. The national flows and goods, services and people; and
- iii. The external relationships.

c. The National Perspectives on:

- i. The directions and distributions of change; and
- ii. The potential 'futures' that should be accommodated and enabled.

B. The National Economic Hubs which drive and secure the economic and social future of the nation. These would include amongst other things the following key hubs:

- » Airports
- » Ports
- » Inland freight terminals
- » Knowledge/ research centres of excellence
- » Metropolitan commercial, cultural and city centres

C. The National Networks upon which all communities are dependent for accessing the national hubs and major metropolitan areas, including, inter alia:

- » Rail (passenger and freight)
- » Road
- » Canals/river systems
- » Power grids
- » Telecommunications
- » The Water Catchment / Ecosystem Framework of England
- » Green Grid, e.g. Mersey Forest initiative and including a network of urban national parks

D. The National Flagship Projects to transform the competitiveness and quality of life of England which are recognised as national economic, social and environmental priorities, and could include for example:

- » Internationally important projects e.g. The Olympics/ Commonwealth Games
- » Transport projects of national significance e.g. HS2, Crossrail
- » Sectoral priorities which have a strong spatial expression e.g. deprivation issues including health, skills, housing etc.
- » Brown priorities – i.e. regeneration priorities (e.g. UDCs and MDCs) or new town, garden cities or equivalent projects
- » Green-Blue priorities e.g. new national parks or national forestry projects

APPENDIX 4: A COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

(This note is based on advice received from Scottish planning colleagues)

BACKGROUND

There are already approved spatial frameworks for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In contrast the NPPF for England has no spatial dimension. In addition, there are established policy frameworks affecting the whole of the UK which have clear spatial implications - in particular these include EU regional and transport policies, and the range of environmental designations.

SCOTLAND

Scotland has a well-developed national framework. It sets out the Government's development priorities over the next 20-30 years and identifies national developments which support the development strategy.

The third National Planning Framework 3 approved in 2014 which includes key themes and specific national development projects:

- » A successful sustainable place – supporting economic growth, regeneration and the creation of well-designed places
- » A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change
- » A natural resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural cultural assets and facilitating their sustainable use
- » A connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity
- » National development priorities, 14 developments are identified to deliver the strategy and set a regional context for local development plans.

WALES

The Wales Spatial Plan was last updated in 2008 and is less specific. It identifies 6 sub-regions in Wales without defining hard boundaries, reflecting the different linkages involved in daily activities. It seeks to:

- » make sure that decisions are taken with regard to their impact beyond sectoral or administrative boundaries and that the core values of sustainable development govern everything we do
- » set the context for local and community planning
- » influence where we spend money through understanding the roles of and interactions between places
- » provide a clear evidence base for the public, private and third (voluntary) sectors to develop policy and action.

The Wales Spatial Plan aims to deliver sustainable development through its area strategies in the context of a Sustainable Development Scheme. It sets out cross-cutting national spatial priorities. These provide the context for the application of national and regional policies for specific sectors, such as health, education, housing and the economy, reflecting the distinctive characteristics of different sub-regions (areas) of Wales and their cross-border relationships. Work on a next stage of the Spatial Plan is under consideration.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland has a Regional Development Strategy. The strategy aims to take account of the economic ambitions and needs of the Region, and put in place spatial planning, transport and housing priorities that will support and enable the aspirations of the Region to be met.

ENGLAND

The English NPPF is however very different in nature and role. The NPPF sets out a framework of criteria based policies that need to be applied consistently across English local council areas. It is not however a spatial framework to lead change and to secure the required development of England.

EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

Within the EU, support is provided for cross-border, transnational and inter-regional co-operation in furtherance of Territorial Cohesion Policy. The INTERREG and ESPON programmes provide a framework for joint actions, policy exchanges and spatial data sharing between national, regional and local actors from different Member States. The budgets allocated to these programmes incentivise voluntary participation in projects designed to further their objectives. Parts of the UK and Ireland fall within two of the macro-regions established as a framework for European territorial co-operation: the North Sea Region and the Atlantic Arc.

The framework for cross-border co-operation provided by the EU has been important in facilitating collaboration on spatial planning between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It is anomalous, but perhaps a consequence of the ad hoc and asymmetric way in which powers have been devolved in the UK, that there is no equivalent framework to support collaboration on matters of common interest between its various administrations. Liaison between administrations on planning matters takes place on a Britain and Ireland basis through the Five Administrations meetings of the Heads of Planning and the British Irish Council Working Group on Collaborative Spatial Planning. The Five Administrations meetings are primarily concerned with sharing experience on practice and process and do not have a strong spatial focus.

TRANS-NATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Scotland's first National Planning Framework (2004) identified opportunities to strengthen knowledge economy links around energy and off-shore expertise on the East Coast corridor between Aberdeen and Newcastle. The Regional Strategy for the North East of England recognised the economic influence of the Edinburgh City Region on the North East of England and included a commitment to improving accessibility and efficiency of movement along the East Coast corridor. Several meetings were held between officials in Scotland and the North East of England with a view to developing a strategic agenda for the East Coast corridor, but with the abolition of the English regions these links were severed. Following the UK General Election in May 2010, discussions took place between DCLG and Scottish Government officials with a view to agreeing a memorandum of understanding on co-operation between planning authorities on either side of the Scotland – England border, but these came to nothing.

During Scotland's independence referendum, Northumbria University published an interesting report urging local authorities in the North of England to develop collaborative links with Scotland in areas such as renewable energy and tourism whatever the constitutional outcome. It received a positive response from Scottish politicians. We should be aiming to develop mechanisms to support collaboration between the nations and regions of these islands on matters like spatial planning which are robust and flexible enough to remain effective however constitutional relationships may change in the future. Interestingly, in an article published in *The Independent* shortly after the referendum, the Conservative MEP, Daniel Hannan, suggested a bigger role for the British Irish Council in such matters.

BRITISH IRISH COUNCIL WORKING GROUP

The British Irish Council was established as part of the multi-party agreement reached in Belfast in 1998. Its membership comprises representatives from the Irish Government; UK Government; Scottish Government; Northern Ireland Executive; Welsh Government; Isle of Man Government; Government of Jersey and Government of Guernsey.

At its Summit in Cardiff in February 2009, the British Irish Council agreed to ask the Northern Ireland Executive to lead a work sector to examine the benefits that could be gained from collaboration on Collaborative Spatial Planning. This work sector brings together officials from each of the Member Administrations who are responsible for national, island and regional development strategies. The group meets biannually to exchange information and perspectives on current spatial planning challenges.

At the Glasgow Summit in June 2016, Ministers asked officials to focus on the spatial planning aspects of housing delivery. A report on the outcome of this work will be presented to Ministers at a meeting in 2017.

As an expert group drawing representation from all the administrations of Britain and Ireland, it is well placed to develop formal mechanisms to support collaboration on strategic spatial planning between the administrations of these islands.

APPENDIX 5: TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURES NETWORK

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John Godfrey, No. 10 Policy Unit, Director of Policy

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Director

Mark Baker, University of Manchester, Reader in planning

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Via email to
GrowthCorridorEvidence@nic.gsi.gov.uk

Please ask for: [name redacted]
Direct Dial No: [telephone number redacted]
Email: [email address redacted]
Date: 31st May 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Swindon Borough Council response to the Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor: A Discussion Paper consultation

Swindon Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the 'Strategic Planning in the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor: Discussion Paper'.

The Council has made previous representations to the NIC on the subject of strategic planning along the corridor and with respect to governance arrangements. The Council is broadly supportive of the proposals in the document and is satisfied that comments made to the NIC have largely been taken into account.

The response below is an officer response based on previous submissions, reiterating comments that have been made by the Council before, including relevant points that remain unaddressed in the Discussion Paper. The response has been approved by the relevant Heads of Service and has been structured to directly answer the questions included at pages 18 and 19 of the Discussion Paper.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper help to: a. tackle major constraints on future economic growth – i.e. the undersupply of homes and weaknesses in east-west transport infrastructure; b. maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and c. develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

The Council believes that the approach to strategic planning outlined in the discussion paper is appropriate and fit for purpose, and agrees with the criteria at Paragraph 28 of the document about the scope of the plan and the benefits listed in 29-32.

The Council agrees that strategic planning along transport corridors, at the Housing Market Area and Functional Economic Market Area scale, is appropriate, and considers that above that a corridor-wide strategic plan would help to ensure that collaborative and co-ordinated planning along the corridor would be 'greater than the

sum of its parts'. Encouraging authorities to work together at the sub-regional scale would encourage pro-growth authorities which are underbounded to plan at the appropriate scale with their neighbours to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared. The national investment in East-West infrastructure is very welcome and opens up major opportunities for economic and housing growth within and beyond the corridor.

The Council would like to make a number of interrelated points about the approach to strategic planning along the corridor, which are considered to improve the effectiveness of a strategic plan in the corridor and take full advantage of planned infrastructure improvements.

The Council considers that inclusion of two other Fast Growth Cities, Swindon and Norwich, in the corridor would assist with the plan and maximise the economic potential of the corridor. The Fast Growth Cities Network is a group of five medium sized cities with fast growing economies, comprising Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Norwich, Oxford and Swindon. The cities are amongst the UK's most successful and strongest performing, most productive economies and share an ambition for the delivery of large scale housing and jobs growth, supported by enhanced infrastructure and access. Collectively they are of major international significance for UK plc. Whilst Swindon and Norwich are outside the NIC review area they act in economic terms as extensions to the corridor and also share the growth ambitions of the cities within. The functional and physical relationship between Swindon and Oxford is of particular importance.

The National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC) interim report into the Cambridge-Milton Keynes - Oxford corridor recognises that connectivity between and within the city regions in and beyond this corridor is lacking. In order to optimise the growth of the high value, knowledge-intensive clusters in the corridor, investment will be required to complete East-West strategic connectivity. This needs to include the full extent of the Fast Growth corridor, from Swindon and Bristol in the west through Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge to Norwich, Ipswich and the East Coast ports in the east.

Whilst appreciating that the focus of the Commission's study has been on the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor, it is remiss to omit in entirety the links between Swindon and Oxford. Specifically, whilst we are supportive of the Commission's recommendation that funding be brought forward to advance progress on the design and delivery of the Western Section of the East – West Rail scheme, we feel that the advantages that would result from introducing direct rail services from Swindon (and the West of England) to Oxford and the East of England should be recognised within the interim report.

Swindon has significantly cheaper house prices than the rest of the corridor and an historically strong record on housing delivery, but suffers from poor east-west transport links to Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. The 2017 Swindon Functional Economic Market Area Assessment (FEMAA) identifies strong linkages between the economies of Swindon and Oxfordshire, with a FEMA extending far into Oxfordshire, despite the existing poor east-west connections. For these reasons we believe the corridor-wide plan should consider how best the opportunities presented by Swindon can be harnessed. Swindon Borough Council would welcome the opportunity to work with the NIC and authorities along the corridor with the

production of a strategic spatial plan that extends beyond Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge to other Fast Growth Cities.

The Council accepts, and supports, the need for improved East – West strategic road connectivity to relieve the M4 / M25 / M11 motorways, and to free up capacity on these routes for their core purpose of providing strategic access to London and the South East. Swindon's residents and businesses rely on the M4 as a key route to London and the South East, and any project that protects its capacity for this function is to be supported.

This is why the Council, in its evidence to the Commission, identified a strong business need for the A420 Swindon to Oxford road to be included within the Expressway Study. The current Expressway proposals effectively finish at Oxford, utilising the A34, which is already a congested route, to reach the M4. This would effectively channel more traffic onto the strategic routes linking the Midlands and the South Coast (the A34) and the West of England and London (the M4).

The A420 has a role to play over and above its current function of linking Swindon with Oxford. Our local business community relies on the A420 as a strategic route linking the West of England and the East of England via Oxford and Milton Keynes, as well as providing access to the A419 which provides connectivity north to Birmingham.

The recent Rees-Jeffreys report on the *Major Road Network for England* identifies the A420 between Swindon and Oxford as a strategic route of equal importance to that linking Oxford and Milton Keynes. This strategic role, which could potentially be enhanced further, added to the road's function as a spine route linking the Swindon and Oxford housing market, justifies, in our view, the inclusion of this route within the Highways England Expressway work.

Within the Interim Report, the Commission highlights that this investment in East – West Rail would reduce rail commuting times between Milton Keynes and Oxford to 41 minutes (paragraph 4.6 in the Interim Report). However, the provision of direct rail services between Swindon and Oxford would reduce rail travel times between the two centres to around 30 minutes. This, allied to the planned housing growth in Swindon town centre focussed on the railway station (as set out in our Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Plan) and to the relative affordability of housing in Swindon when compared to Oxford and the surrounding area (as is highlighted within the Interim Report – Figure 7), means that Swindon potentially has a stronger role to play in addressing the housing constraints experienced in Oxford than other areas included within the Corridor.

With these points in mind, to maximise the effectiveness of the strategic plan and infrastructure investment we consider that the geographic scope of the corridor-wide strategic plan should be drawn more widely to include consideration of links beyond the corridor, including a continuation, westwards, of East-West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The following two points are of critical importance to tackling major constraints to growth in the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor and the south-east as a whole:

- At a regional scale, capacity improvements for the Great Western Mainline and re-instating a direct service from Swindon to Oxford and beyond would, in

tandem with East-West rail, allow journeys from Bristol and the South West to Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge to be achieved without the need to travel through London, reducing overcrowding on the Great Western Main Line to Paddington and on Transport for London services.

- The Oxford – Cambridge Expressway Study options should include consideration of the A420 route connecting Oxford and Swindon as an alternative to the A34 route South of Oxford. As with the rail corridor, parts of the A420 are dual carriageway, but much of the route is slow and single-track. Upgrading the route to Expressway standard would support growth of the corridor and allow links from the Oxford-Cambridge expressway to the west, providing a reliable alternative to and reducing pressure on the A34 and M4.

The corridor-wide strategic plan should be able to take advantage of such opportunities, and should not be drawn so narrowly as to focus on Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge alone. Oxford-Swindon represents a logical extension to the nationally significant Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor. Swindon has the potential to make a significant contribution to achieving national objectives for the corridor, both in terms of overcoming housing availability and affordability risks and providing the land to deliver economic growth.

Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

Oxford to Cambridge is a nationally significant economic and transport corridor. Infrastructure investment will unlock development opportunities and economic growth within and beyond the corridor, and the relationships to the wider area should be fully taken into account. The point has already been made under Question 1 that the geographic scope of the strategic plan should be widened to include the Fast Growth Cities of Swindon and Norwich, including how investment in transport infrastructure have the potential to improve the resilience of the transport network by offering alternative routes, and also would free up capacity on road and rail infrastructure that diverts through journeys via London stations and the M25.

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: a. housing developers; b. infrastructure providers (e.g. in the telecommunications and utilities sectors) and investors; and c. central government – through, for example, a new, long-term ‘infrastructure compact’?

The Council agrees that the approach explored in the paper would improve collaboration and engagement between partners and stakeholders along the corridor. The approach is appropriate given Swindon’s significant experience in delivering major development schemes and urban extensions. The Council particularly supports the idea of a collaborative ‘infrastructure compact’ across partner organisations. This sets out roles and expectations of the relevant parties and ties them in to a set timetable to ensure deliverability, providing certainty to partners and investors. It is vital that infrastructure providers, developers, Local Planning Authorities, the Government and public sector work together on such strategic development projects.

The 'infrastructure compact' concept is essential to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure to unlock development. The costs of delivering infrastructure can be so significant, particularly where on and off-site infrastructure is required such as motorway junctions, that development is unviable. With large urban extensions, issues of 'scale' arise. For example, with New Eastern Villages in Swindon (at between 8,000 and 10,000 homes, one of the UK's largest urban extensions), the total infrastructure costs are in excess of £300 million which is three times the size of the authority's annual revenue budget.

In order for development to start, infrastructure often needs to be in place. This raises two issues:

- Who funds it? If the local authority funds the infrastructure, it takes the risk that a) the housing won't be built and b) the developers will cry foul of viability and won't pay retrospectively.
- Planning gain (the uplift in land values that happen when planning permission enhances land values), often happens before infrastructure funding is found. This means that landowners benefit from the planning gain, whilst the burden of paying for infrastructure falls to developers and the local authority. There needs to be a mechanism whereby infrastructure costs are levied, at least in part, from planning gain.

Additionally land ownership is complex. Large sites are parcelled into smaller development parcels, and individual developers will argue that 'their development' doesn't incur an infrastructure burden. Why should they pay for infrastructure that is not related to their development? It is difficult and time consuming (and not always possible due to legal challenge) to elicit payment from developers towards the costs of strategic or off-site infrastructure.

Joint Ventures are a collaborative approach to unlocking development along the lines of an 'infrastructure compact', which the Council supports. The following case study summary on Wichelstowe in Swindon illustrates the problems identified above, and shows how delivery can be assured through joint working between Councils, developers and infrastructure providers. Officers would be happy to meet with the NIC to discuss in greater detail if this would assist.

Wichelstowe, Swindon

Historically, Swindon has been characterised by poorer quality housing stock. Our aim is to increase the quality of housing stock to attract the highly skilled workers that our knowledge-based businesses need. However, housebuilders will generally look to the local market before deciding on the quality of build, and so a 'vicious circle of development' can arise which tends to result in more low quality housing being offered. It is difficult to make the case for demand for quality housing, where existing settlements are predominantly low quality.

The Wichelstowe site

- The masterplan below shows the housing on the peach sites: 3,500 homes are planned on a site in south Swindon with the M4 defining its southern boundary

- 800 homes have been built on east Wichelstowe (as at October 2016)



What were the barriers / issues?

1. The initial Wichelstowe Masterplan (dated 2005) was unviable because of high infrastructure costs and needed to be reworked. This resulted in considerable delays to the development. In 2012, the masterplan was reworked to reduce the infrastructure burden and this decreased infrastructure costs significantly.
2. Even with a much reduced infrastructure burden, the development was still unviable. We were fortunate to secure funding from central Government, but obtaining this funding took time (1 – 2 years) and delayed development. Eventually, SBC obtained funding from LGD (DfT retained scheme) to pay for the Western Access route to link development sites that straddled the M4; and local growth fund GPIF¹ loan funding for Junction 16 improvements on the M4.
3. Raising the quality offer. When SBC tested the market, it was obvious that house-builders believed that there was no demand for high quality homes in Swindon. To demonstrate there was market potential, SBC secured Waitrose as the Wichelstowe anchor tenant to get house-builders on board and raise the quality offering.

What problems did we face in attracting investment from developers?

The biggest issue was how to attract investment for a development that was marginally viable, at best. As SBC was the landowner, there were two options available:-

Option 1: SBC offered land for sale to developers

SBC owned the Wichelstowe site, so one option would be for the authority to act as 'master developer' putting the infrastructure in place and selling off land parcels to individual house-builders. However the value that would have been generated from the

¹ Growing Places Infrastructure Fund

sale of land parcels would not have made enough profit to recoup the infrastructure spend, costs of site servicing and fees.

Option 2: Joint Venture

A joint venture agreement with a house-builder allowed SBC to deliver housing, recover costs and get a share of development profit. SBC provided the land and some capital whilst the partner matched the Council's input and provided funding for the on-site development (primary, secondary roads, landscaping etc). Any 'profit' would then be shared between partners on an equitable basis. This approach allows a site that would otherwise be unviable for not providing a 'competitive return' to a developer to go ahead.

Conclusion: Large scale land ownership by the public sector and access to grant funding to upgrade the strategic transport network to accommodate large urban extensions is essential in order to make development viable. Joint ventures help to de-risk the venture to both partners, reducing agreed margins.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

The Council endorses the approach at Option 2, a corridor-wide spatial vision supported by robust sub-regional planning. The Council considers that a series of sub-regional plans at key 'nodes' along the corridor is appropriate and proportionate. This approach allows sub-areas to influence of the corridor-wide plan 'above' and also Local Plans produced by individual Local Planning Authorities 'below'.

The Council considers that enhanced CPO powers, including streamlined processes such as a simplified compensation code, and greater clarity on values to allow sites to be purchased at existing value, rather than post-planning values would be helpful in bringing development forward in line with the strategic plan.

Amendments to infrastructure funding would also help ensure that the growth identified in the corridor-wide plan is delivered. A critical improvement would be the removal of S106 pooling restrictions and better-enabling Local Authorities to forward fund the provision of infrastructure to unlock development. A tariff approach to funding infrastructure, for example the Milton Keynes Tariff, would also be of assistance to capture the uplift in land values to fund delivery, whilst providing greater certainty to landowners, developers and investors regarding infrastructure funding and development costs. A tariff approach to infrastructure could be considered along the corridor or in strategic plans developed at the sub-regional level.

Governance

Q5. Do you agree with the design principles set out at paragraph 41? How might these be developed or amended to better enable collective decision-making?

The Council agrees with the design principles set out at paragraph 41, however would make the point that the geographic scope should be for local authorities to determine, based on FEMAs, HMAs and the will to work together. Such an approach would better take into account wider opportunities in the sub-region.

The Council endorses the approach at Option 2 of the Discussion Paper, i.e. a corridor-wide spatial vision supported by robust sub-regional planning. The Council considers that a series of sub-regional plans at key 'nodes' along the corridor is appropriate and proportionate, and will be most effective in enabling the conditions for sustainable and smart growth. This approach allows sub-areas to influence of the corridor-wide plan 'above' and also Local Plans produced by individual Local Planning Authorities 'below'.

The NIC's interim report recognises that the corridor "hosts some of the most productive, successful and fast growing cities in the United Kingdom". The review outcomes must enable our cities to continue to thrive and act as hubs for spreading productivity gains more widely. Better connecting successful places through improved infrastructure is part of the answer, as is delivery of more new homes, but governance solutions should be tested against how they can strengthen, rather than dilute, ambition and opportunity to deliver growth.

Q6. Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration?

The Council endorses the approach at Option 2, a corridor-wide spatial vision supported by robust sub-regional planning. The Council considers that a series of sub-regional plans at key 'nodes' along the corridor is appropriate and proportionate. This approach allows sub-areas to influence of the corridor-wide plan 'above' and also Local Plans produced by individual Local Planning Authorities 'below'.

A corridor-wide perspective is necessary but we believe this is best achieved through integrated strategic plans created by groups of local planning authorities. Such groupings should not be so large as to lose the shared sense of "place" and economic interests.

Securing community support is an essential component for both planning and delivery of new housing developments. This is best orchestrated by local planning authorities, either individually or collectively, that can engage local communities and create shared visions for their places.

Assembly of multiple investment streams, infrastructure and services is best done through the lens of "place" and an understanding of local communities. Any new governance arrangements proposed should balance this with wider area considerations.

In Localis's report, *The Making of an Industrial Strategy*, it was identified that all five of the Fast Growth Cities are 'stifled places'², "places that are growing quickly but whose growth is restricted by their boundaries" and which require the power to grow. The argument to help those 'stifled' places has been further reinforced by the work of

² Localis, *The Making of an Industrial Strategy: Taking back control locally*

Centre for Cities in their Trading Places 2 report³, which identifies the need to take a place-based perspective, building on the strengths that individual places have and the challenges they face.

Q7. Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to ‘lock-in’ collaboration over the long-term?

The Council agrees that it is essential to ‘lock-in’ collaboration over the long term to provide certainty to stakeholders and the public. Statutory governance would likely assist in this regard, but ultimately there needs to be agreement amongst authorities whatever approach is taken.

Government should support locally-designed institutions, rather than imposing solutions from above. Powers should be devolved to genuine locally accountable bodies, so that local business needs and community aspirations can be taken into account fully and appropriately.

If all authorities benefit equally then it should be in all authorities’ interests to work together. Close relationship between Local Authorities, sub-regional bodies and the cross-corridor Strategic Planning Board should assist in this regard, providing opportunities for concerns of individual Councils to be raised and resolved.

Q8. If informal models of collaboration are to be sufficient, how can local authorities give confidence to wider stakeholders that their commitment to a) their strategic plans, and b) joint-working will sustain over the long-term?

If all authorities benefit equally then it should be in all authorities’ interests to work together. Close relationship between Local Authorities, sub-regional bodies and the cross-corridor Strategic Planning Board should assist in this regard, providing opportunities for concerns of individual Councils to be raised and resolved.

Creating the conditions for local authorities to work together to define an agreed solution should allow for local buy-in and ownership of strategic plans, which would then be translated into statutory Local Plans or sub-regional strategies, which should provide the necessary certainty.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

Local Authorities should begin sub-regional work to build the evidence base and explore potential options for strategic plans. Many authorities across the country are doing this anyway through Duty to Cooperate for Local Plans. Joint commissioning of evidence base studies, including for example sub-regional Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments (SHELAAAs), Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAAs), Employment Land Reviews (ELRs) and Functional Economic Market Area Assessments (FEMAAs), would create a robust footing for

³ Centre for Cities, Trading Places 2

strategic planning at the sub-regional scale to take place, and ultimately inform the corridor-wide plan.

Transitional funding could be made available to allow local authorities to recruit additional officers and take on additional strategic plan-making responsibilities, or to commission joint evidence base documents, to allow early progress to be made.

Q10. How can progress against the plan be assessed and the effectiveness of the plan monitored and evaluated? Are there examples of good practice from which lessons can be learned?

There is the potential to do this through monitoring of individual Local Plans and/or Strategic Plans to a consistent monitoring framework, to allow for data aggregation across the corridor. Other options include monitoring against development trajectories in agreed Local and Strategic Plans; and monitoring progress against deadlines agreed through any 'infrastructure compacts'.

Yours faithfully

[signature redacted]

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

Swindon Borough Council



NIC Discussion Paper:
Strategic Planning in the
Cambridge to
Milton Keynes
to Oxford
Corridor

March 2017

A Response from David Lock Associates

May 2017

Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the NIC Discussion Paper and have been heartened to see that the points made in our previous submission¹ have been reflected in the points and recommendations made in the Discussion Paper.

As a planning and urban design consultancy located at the hub of the Corridor in Milton Keynes, DLA can contribute to the discussion based on our extensive experience in strategic planning over the last 30 years along the Corridor and in other parts of the UK, but also offer insights from a practitioner's perspective for designing and helping to deliver 'good growth' within the Corridor.

We have focused our comments around the questions posed. We have also included some thoughts on what might result from a more joined-up approach to strategic-scale spatial planning and what might result from support for transformational growth across the Corridor.

The wealth of evidence provided to the NIC in 2016 demonstrates that the Corridor already exhibits many characteristics common to a single functional economic area and that major identified constraints on growth in terms of infrastructure and housing affordability/delivery are common throughout the area.

We also recognise the benefits of an integrated strategic plan (ISP) as set out in paragraphs 29–31. Whilst we feel the NIC may be overly optimistic about using a single Plan as a *“mechanism through which local authorities can reach agreement on the distribution of development across administrative boundaries”* (there are lots more factors at play than forward planning in this particular equation), the introduction of an Integrated Spatial Plan as a bridge between central government policy objectives/investment priorities and local decision making and planning activity is a wholly sensible and practical concept.

There are no easy answers to compelling buy-in to what will be a non-statutory Plan, and there are a number of outside influences—nationally, politically, economically and functionally—which may complicate consensus over the content and implementation of a single ISP. Nevertheless, the principle of a **single integrated strategic plan** for infrastructure and growth across the Corridor is a sound one.

¹ [Greater Cambridge Submission to the National Infrastructure Commission's Cambridge–Milton Keynes–Oxford 'growth corridor' call for evidence. 5 August 2016.](#)

What do we need from an ISP?

The ISP should:

- Be clear and concise (understood by stakeholders and local communities, not a detailed policy document only understood by those involved in planning and infrastructure);
- Include a clear and ambitious spatial vision (of which more later);
- Be long term (to 2050 as a minimum or extending beyond the next 2 local plan periods).

The ISP should identify:

- scale and distribution of growth only at the highest level (akin to the key diagrams of RSS/Structure Plans) with appropriate justification or reference to background evidence;
- the 'rules' within which growth should happen – what are the 'terms' under which those delivering development will be permitted to do so (eg. 'partnerships' or 'contracts' between government and the development sector) to engender certainty around each party's obligations for effective delivery of growth;
- any 'imperatives' which development in specific locations will be expected to build in to secure consent (eg. safeguard routes for future infrastructure proposals; deliver cross boundary access/connections; include strategic green infrastructure elements);
- areas of 'strategic reserve' for longer term growth, so that upfront or early investment in infrastructure can be fully realised (recognising that in some instances, infrastructure does take time to happen).

Those preparing the ISP should:

- Map geographies;
- Agree long term objectives (less politically sensitive than specific or immediate proposals);
- Agree complementary rather than competing priorities;
- Develop good justifiable scenarios (based on geographical capacities tested with and without infrastructure);
- Work out what absolutes are needed to unlock growth; what to safeguard for the future; and what should be protected.

It should not:

- be subject to wholesale or frequent review to reflect short term trends (as this runs the risk of watering down both the process and unravelling agreed objectives);
- preclude new opportunities arising over the life of the Plan (from future innovation or investment as yet unknown?), bearing in mind these opportunities should be seen as additions to the core objectives of the plan so as not to undermine its core elements and revert to uncertainty.

Setting a Spatial Vision for the Corridor

Level of Ambition

In our view, a Spatial Vision is central to the ISP but does not start with the somewhat ‘plannerly’ criteria set out in paragraph 28. As a general comment, following the criteria set out in points (a) to (f) would be too narrow an expression of a Vision and run the risk of creating ‘more of the same’.

To achieve the transformational growth sought by central government in terms of a return on its investments), the ambition and aspirations for the Corridor should not be set by local authority planning departments but evolve through working with independent experts and reflect wider national, sub-national and local policy objectives (which may or may not have a spatial element).

Rather than starting from conventional homes and jobs targets and fixing recognised urban typologies—this tends towards extrapolating past trends and delivery rates and limits the vision to ‘trying to do a bit better’—the Vision should be an expression of a long term economic and social future for the corridor.

Local authorities can test these transformational growth scenarios against background trends and drivers, but a strategic plan must aim higher in terms of the quality and scale of growth in its widest sense. Aiming higher and analysing the spatial, economic and environmental ‘capacity’ for growth in each part of the Corridor would be a better starting place for a strategic plan. Mapping this to 2050 (and beyond) then ‘working back’ would allow the effects and implications of short term decisions, or early infrastructure delivery, to be tested against the ‘end game’ Vision.

Mending the ‘Disconnect’ between Planning and Transport

One of the primary purposes of setting a common Vision for the O2C Corridor would be to mend the ‘disconnect’ between ‘Strategic Growth Planning’ and ‘Strategic Transport Planning’.

The NIC offers a view that an ISP could “*maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure to unlock sites, improve land supply and co-ordinate patterns of development around transport hubs and interchanges ... which, if designed properly can enable development of new communities*”.

This is an admirable objective which should be entirely deliverable. At a strategic level, planning for transport and growth should go hand in hand; at the end of the day, one needs the other in order to succeed. But since the demise of regional planning this has lost its way. The seemingly impenetrable plethora of organisations currently responsible for the planning of strategic infrastructure projects—evidenced in spades in this Corridor—is likely to work against this objective.

As an example, two years of DLA involvement with the East West Rail project in and around Milton Keynes/ Bedfordshire—specifically, trying to synergise the thinking between line improvements, stations, crossing points, interchanges and where these could dovetail with known and future growth and development projects—has met with universal in-principle support for the logic and benefits of our thinking but a singular inability to action any of the co-ordinated activities needed! Trying to engage and share thinking on strategic growth opportunities with those responsible for the work on the OC Expressway project—to explore whether route and design decisions being progressed on the road project can be linked with those being explored on the rail network—has so far proved impossible.

A lack of clarity and confidence in EWR (specifically, in committing the funding for the Western Section Phase 2 to Bedford but also moving forward with certainty over the Central Section routing between Bedford and Cambridge) is already resulting in development opportunities alongside the rail line moving forward without joined up or informed infrastructure design, or able to rely on the provision of such infrastructure to secure modal shift for new developments. As a minimum, this means that benefits of locating growth alongside railways are not able to be realised (as no one can commit to a decision or timescale over routes and stops), and at worst, any developer contributions which might have secured more sustainable rail-based transport improvements or been used to joint fund road/rail interchange improvements have to be restricted to road-based improvements on the basis of ‘worst case’ car borne transport modelling work. Without firm commitments on funding, routes and delivery, emerging DfT transport proposals are at worst ignored, and at best guessed at, by the private sector as it attempts to design in their benefits into development opportunities.

In the same way that some Corridor authorities are starting to prepare joint growth strategies (eg. Cambridgeshire CA), some are also grouping together to undertake strategic transport planning (eg. England’s Economic Heartland’s Strategic Transport Board). But there are very different drivers for the design, role and function of this infrastructure, and the cost-benefit analysis which underpins any funding or route decision is miles apart from the wider economic, community, design and indirect growth benefits which might arise from combining or integrating transport and wider infrastructure investment.

A ‘motorway type experience’ (the current brief for the Oxford–Cambridge Expressway) ‘works’ best if it bypasses and is remote from urban areas and has limited interchanges. However, this works against linking development proposals and the Expressway—and securing added value from it through development—schemes will not pay for or benefit from strategic infrastructure simply because they sit alongside it!

There are undoubtedly benefits in combining thinking on opportunities for growth with improvements in infrastructure. But this is not happening well or often enough, and a real benefit of the spatial aspect of the ISP is that it provides a platform to facilitate better engagement.

Fixing Typologies and Lines on Plans

Vision documents approved by local communities or politicians in the current planning regime tend to be only accepted as a Vision because they do not have a drawn spatial aspect to them: one cannot underestimate the difficulty of common agreement once you start putting lines on plans!

The currently proposed criteria in paragraph 28 for the spatial vision seek to map the general distribution of ‘jobs’, ‘homes’ and ‘population’. At the scale and time horizon envisaged for the ISP, we consider that a fixed differentiation between ‘types’ of growth in any one area is not helpful and will undoubtedly work against universal buy-in.

A preferable way of setting a spatial vision in ‘drawn form’ would be to identify locations for ‘growth and investment’ in its widest sense—uncoupling the current view that ‘jobs’ growth is good whilst ‘housing growth’ is bad—and resulting in a series of **‘locations for growth’** which can be seen to work in a complementary rather than competitive way along the Corridor.

The danger with identifying and defining urban typologies (as proposed in point (c) of paragraph 28) is that within the life of the ISP, we may choose or be compelled to live, work and travel differently than we do now, and maybe in ways that we do not yet know. Setting fixed roles and characters for each place—presumably based on current functions or known aspirations—may limit innovation, adaptability and entrepreneurial endeavour over the life of the ISP. Identifying broad locations for different types of development is sensible, but we suggest that the common ‘conditions’ for growth in a particular location should also be set out: what elements of “good growth” would any development in that location need to satisfy?². This will prevent piecemeal, short term and uncoordinated growth which whilst it might be in the right location or an acceptable land use (and therefore difficult to resist by pressured local authorities), does not maximise the spatial benefits or infrastructure connections arising at that location.

‘Place’ means different things to different people: those involved in the built environment industry focus on certain aspects of how a place functions or what it looks like and this determines certain measures of ‘success’. To others, it is about neighbours, or facilities, or space, comfort, tranquillity or diversity; and to more it is something less definable.

The perceived loss of distinctive places experienced in recent years is less to do with specifying roles, functions and aspirations of places and more to do with the ever-narrowing field of players in the UK’s housebuilding industry. It would be misguided to try and correct this structural issue by dictating fixed roles and characters for places within the Corridor over a 25–30 year plan: the ISP should simply insist on an excellent quality of development (this is after all a valued and valuable part of the UK for the jobs and housing markets), which builds in issues of ‘larger than site, or local’ importance and contributes to more than the sum of its parts.

² “Good growth” could be expressed as that which has built-in “wider than site” benefits to help secure identified regeneration, connectivity, inclusivity, environmental or community improvements as identified in the Plan.

Whose Plan is it?

Authoring of the ISP

If it is agreed that the Corridor operates as a single functional economic area and that the types of constraints on growth in terms of infrastructure and housing affordability/delivery are also common to all areas, one could assume that those in charge of each part of the Corridor would be happy to work effectively together to secure better and more investment for the Corridor as a whole, recognising a complementary role for each part of the area in delivering better overall growth.

However, despite much rhetoric about collaborative working from the authorities within the corridor (and despite the Duty to Co-operate), the ‘administrative’ geography of parts of the Corridor remains a fundamental constraint to the realisation of universal integrated, complementary and mutually supportive growth. At best, this results in growth happening but in a piecemeal and uncoordinated manner (thereby reinforcing local communities’ views that “growth is bad” and does nothing to solve wider infrastructure shortfalls), and at worst, has provided an excuse for local communities or politicians to prevent planned growth from happening for years and in some instances decades.

Examples include:

- ***Milton Keynes—South Midlands Strategy included strategic cross boundary growth allocations a decade ago. Since revocation of the RSS, these sites have been de-allocated as strategic growth locations and are now coming forward piecemeal if at all;***
- ***A421 upgrade in 2008 (HA scheme, central government funded) resulted in traffic traveling faster through the area (transport objective met) but strategic growth linked to this investment has not yet been realised despite attempts by the development industry and national government to bring forward strategic growth here.***

Production of an ISP will require a step change from the narrow terms of reference for Duty to Cooperate activity and collaboration between local authorities. As such the drafting of the plan should not be driven by local authority planning departments but should require wider input from other (non-planning) bodies, investors and businesses as imperatives to shape future growth.

Whilst every authority undoubtedly will have a role to play, the drafting of the ISP would be best served by a small team of experienced senior individuals with tenacity and an appreciation of the long term goals³, with a responsible Cabinet Minister as their trouble-shooter. In order to maintain appropriate democratic accountability, the terms of reference, reporting arrangements and emerging plan material should be transparent and publicised but should not result in additional layers of bureaucracy.

Conditions for Collaboration

We need to understand more fully what the conditions are which govern the willingness or ability to effectively collaborate within the Corridor. At present, there is a tendency amongst certain different administrative authorities to ‘compete’ to secure the most jobs (jobs being seen as ‘a good thing’ to attract to your area) whilst resisting plans to secure the most housing (on the grounds that housing is seen as a ‘bad thing’ imposed on your area). Cross border battles over ‘edge of area’ development—either over an allocation or, if the principle of growth is accepted, battling over s106 contributions and housing numbers for one area when the development clearly draws on the services and infrastructure of the adjacent area—are frequent and well documented. The consequent delays and resentment over growth colour both the acceptability of the scheme and local appetite for further cross boundary collaboration.

However, if being part of a single ISP helps authorities to ‘problem-solve’ a common or universal issue for the Corridor, a more holistic and collaborative position might be reached when planning for growth. A single high-level ISP may help in this regard by identifying the scale of growth needed across the Corridor but also aligning this growth much closer with the receipt of central government investment and forward funding of strategic infrastructure, and thereby linking the risks and rewards much more clearly and closely.

Beware ‘Plan Fatigue’

It is entirely sensible for authorities to combine forces and ‘commission’ a representative group of stakeholders to lead strategic visioning activity within the Corridor or parts thereof. But those responsible for shaping the plan need to be much wider than local authorities, and this leads us to another dilemma. We already have a Mayoral Combined Authority for Greater Cambridge and Peterborough embarking upon a spatial plan for its area. Authorities in the western part of the Corridor are working together from the ‘bottom up’ to prepare a joint plan for housing, albeit numerical rather than spatial at this stage. Milton Keynes is following up plans based on its vision for 2050 set out in last year’s Vision Commission report. Needless to say, the various geographies of these plans do not neatly match that of the Corridor!

The relationship of the ISP with these and other long term spatial plans needs to be set out clearly, including the ‘order of precedence’ against which to test emerging and future local plan growth proposals and other policy documents.

³ See the [Vision Commission for Milton Keynes](#) – a small group of independent specialists appointed to a clear brief to write a Vision for 2050 based on crosscutting policy objectives and transformational change, engaging a wide range of stakeholder interests along the way.

Appraisal Framework

Whilst site-specific environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal as part of detailed development proposals can be beneficial in shaping proposals, our experience in strategic planning suggests that, leaving aside the need to meet NPPF and EU policy requirements, undertaking a whole raft of additional analysis, assessment and appraisal in addition to the huge amount of data and knowledge that local authorities already have for their area (and the Corridor as a whole) takes a disproportionate amount of time and resources and is unlikely to result in any significant changes to the pattern or scale of strategic growth already obvious by looking at the geography of an area.

Good places to build do not change. One only has to look at the past RSSs and sub-regional studies to see that the same areas of search/development locations identified 20 years ago remain good places to develop today.

Transformational change within the O2C will occur by taking known growth locations and embedding them with strategic infrastructure to deliver better and wider benefits, or building strategic infrastructure upfront to unlock further growth in and around already identified growth locations.

Bottom Down vs Top Up

We recognise that the current government remains in favour of a localist agenda to deliver growth which is locally acceptable. In specific areas where growth is seen as stimulating investment and regeneration, or where an enlightened body recognise the relationship between scale of growth and funding of specific facilities, we have seen great things being secured by local communities and neighbourhood plans. However, we have also seen just how effective localist policies can be in thwarting any sort of open discussion about how strategic planning and investment might help to solve local issues, justified by the need to protect the status quo or fulfil local short term political agendas.

The majority of large scale developments now being built out in the Corridor—and much vaunted as success stories—were initially identified in scale and location through the now defunct RSSs. Without similar ‘larger than local’ consideration the next decade will see a further decline in delivery rates (especially of housing needed to support economic investment) as these schemes are not generally being replaced with a similar number of well-planned strategic growth proposals in emerging local plans (and those authorities that do make bold allocations are finding it extremely heavy going through the current local plan and JR regime).

The Localism Act 2011 provides for a bottom up approach to strategic planning through the requirements around Duty to Cooperate. A number of authorities within the Corridor have combined forces to prepare joint evidence bases and to consider how growth needs of one administrative area might be met in adjacent areas. This is not without challenge—even those authorities attempting to agree shared housing numbers are finding it hard to get universal agreement through MoUs (cf Oxfordshire Growth Board), let alone starting to seek consensus on ‘blobs on plans’.

The current lack of skills and resources in local authorities means that very few authorities now have any strategic planning function or experience, and more often than not the private sector has to drive forward development locations, either through standalone applications won on appeal against 5 year housing land arguments, or through ‘competitive’ site selections through the local plan Call for Sites process, where packages of local/site benefits (arguably very appealing and important to local communities) carry more weight than considerations of wider influence on strategic and sustainable growth and investment.

These factors all combine to work against local political buy in to any ‘larger than local’ planning on a “bottom up” collaborative basis (as set out in paragraph 48), particularly as the ISP will be a non-statutory plan under the current regime.

We therefore suggest there may need to be a ‘stick and carrot’ approach to enable the “*shift in bottom up collaboration*” sought by the NIC if an effective strategic plan is to be developed (paragraph 25 refers).

Governance Models

The Discussion Paper puts forward two illustrations of the ways in which the ISP could be made to work within current governance structures. We tend towards the second of the two models, but in either option we question whether without the introduction of another layer of statutory planning there is any real way of avoiding individual authorities derailing the strategic planning process.

It is unlikely that we will have a return to statutory regional or sub-regional plans in the foreseeable future. As such, the ISP will be a non-statutory document but with some weight as a material consideration in the making of local plans and development decisions. This in itself will not be sufficient to tie every authority to the plan over the medium to long term. Therefore, we support the NIC assertion that there must be a strong link between the ISP's **Spatial Vision** and a **Corridor-wide Wide Investment Strategy**.

Effective Delivery

Put simply, central government's role is to invest in, rather than forward fund, infrastructure in the Corridor. The 'return on its investment'—in terms of making an important part of the UK self-sustaining in its delivery of transformational change and economic growth, able to pay for supporting local infrastructure whilst attracting wider investment as a result of the initial outlay—should be economic benefit enough to satisfy any cost-benefit analysis.

The level of up front investment in infrastructure—and the need to make it certain—can only come from the Treasury. Given the economic potential of the Corridor, central government's commitment to the outlay of investment in infrastructure would unlock greater levels of growth whilst still allowing growth to fund its own needs locally through s106/CIL in terms of the supporting infrastructure needed to secure much-needed local education, health and environmental improvements.

The wording of Criteria 2 that local authorities, LEPs and other partners can fund/forward fund "key enabling infrastructure" seems to suggest that central government may not be minded to provide 100% funding for strategic infrastructure. But local authorities are increasingly risk averse to upfront or long term borrowing, and any financial contributions to strategic infrastructure sought from development—from CIL/S106 or another model—simply diverts finance away from other expenditure. Development, and land, does not have an infinite value. The idea mooted under Criteria 2 that land value capture can fund strategic infrastructure only works if there is no 'hope value', or if the infrastructure authority owns the surrounding land in the first place and is willing to forgo developer profit in favour of longer term returns on investment through an uplift in land value.

Landowners in this part of the world—both public and private sector—are very well aware of its growth potential. One only has to look at the scale and number of sites being put forward for development through the Call for Sites process to release that the vast majority of environmentally unconstrained land in the Corridor already has 'hope value' attached. Land trading agreements, development companies and landowner consortia are already in place—including international investors—to promote land, and are competing with each other to secure a favourable response from local authorities in local plans or 'early wins' through speculative applications against the lack of local five-year housing land supply shortages.

In principle, this is a positive position: investing in infrastructure where there is established market interest and investment should appeal to the risk averse within central government. However, because of the hope value already in place (not least generated by the dismantling of advanced RSS allocations and long delays in plan making in this area), conventional models of CPO/Development Corporation delivery based on uplift from EUV are unlikely to release the scale of land value capture needed to forward fund or recoup the full cost of the sub-national infrastructure already programmed as well as the local infrastructure required to support developments.

An Infrastructure “Compact” with Central Government or “If you build it, they will come”

There are two aspects of strategic planning which have a positive impact on the market. The first is certainty. If the ISP confirms and fixes the routes, timing, funding and delivery mechanism for EWR and the OCE—and central government signs up to the Plan—then both local authorities and the development sector can move forward faster.

The second is confidence in the process. In order for the ISP to be effective it will need to ensure universal and long term buy in from the authorities and infrastructure delivery bodies in the Corridor responsible for delivering growth plans. In the absence of the ‘stick’ of a statutory plan, we consider that the best ‘carrots’ are those which incentivise local authorities to lead the charge: rewards for enabling or leading ‘good growth’ (rather than ‘any growth’).

We are nervous about ideas around central government intervention for non-performing authorities: it can be a double-edged sword which leads to competition rather than collaboration and for the worst-performing authorities, responsibility may be willingly abdicated so as the ‘blame’ for the ‘imposition’ of development on an area lies at central government’s door?

Instead, if the ISP becomes the document upon which central government makes its investment decisions—the second part of the document comprising the Corridor-Wide Investment Strategy—then this may be the most effective way of securing buy-in to ‘larger than local’ growth.

| SOME HEADS OF TERMS FOR AN ‘INFRASTRUCTURE COMPACT’? | |
|--|--|
| Central Government/DfT/HE | Local Authority/Combined Authority |
| Confirms infrastructure improvements/ routes already identified | Maximises economic benefit by allocating growth related to improvements/routes (including cross border agreements) |
| Expedites decisions on new infrastructure/ routes (working not in silos but with other agencies and organisations responsible for delivering growth to ensure wider economic benefits) | Identifies funding mechanisms to link strategic infrastructure commitments of central government with local infrastructure/ interchanges etc through local plans |
| Undertakes to commit and release funding for key infrastructure to an agreed timetable (ringfencing funding to ensure long term certainty) | Commits to effective partnership working arrangements with the private/other sectors to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expedite approvals for development schemes which confirm to ISP’s ‘good growth’ principles and infrastructure delivery; achieve agreed minimum build rates once approved |

The ISP should identify, enable and commit mechanisms for delivering the infrastructure upfront, ahead of growth; it is then for the local /combined authorities to progress and approve the major growth identified in the ISP in each local plan, but in a co-ordinated manner, to a common framework, and on the back of the infrastructure delivery.

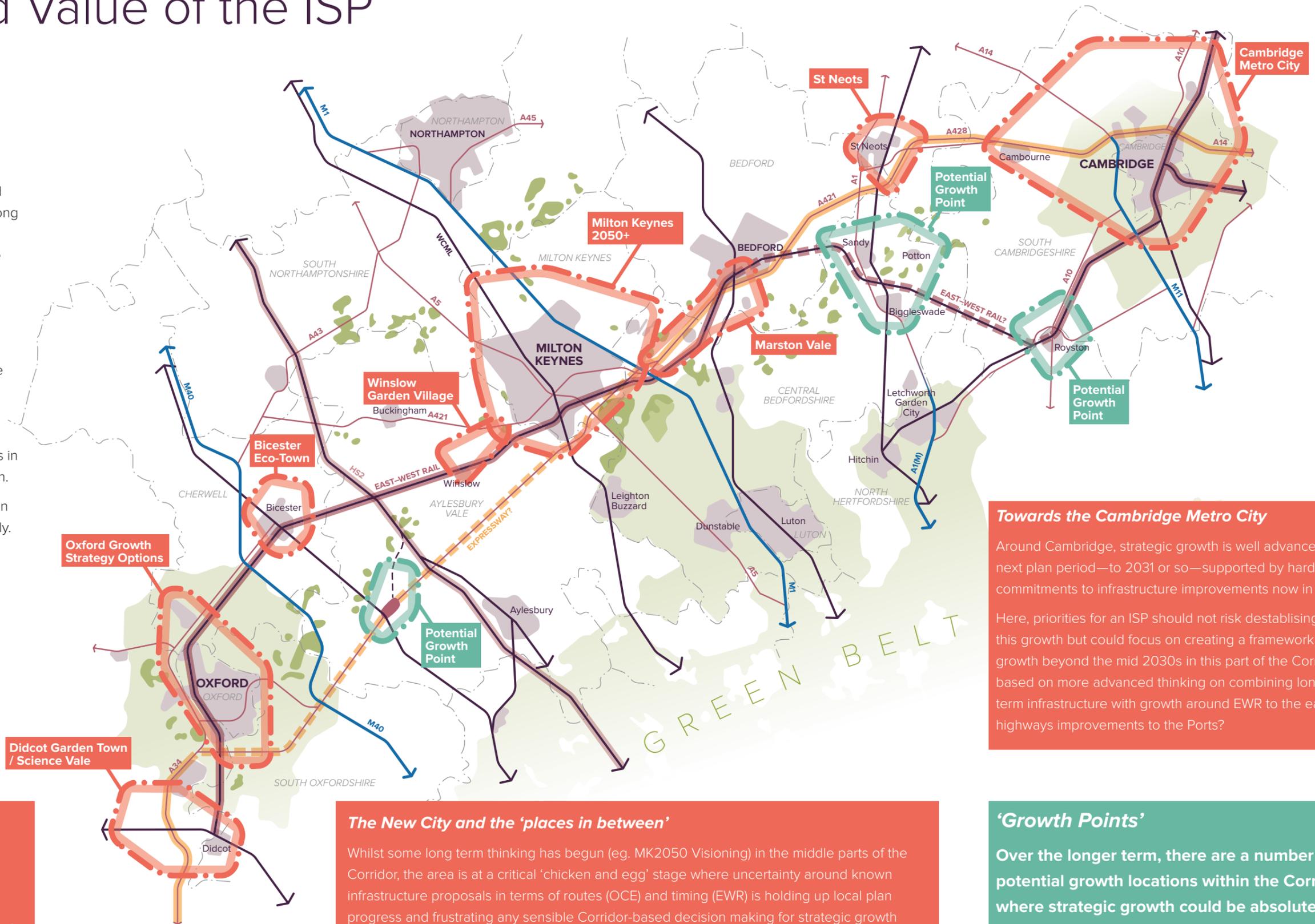
Because there are already a number of priorities on central government funding in the corridor, care needs to be taken to ensure that the ISP does not cut across these funding arrangements. Commitment to funding projects identified through the SEPs currently being refreshed by the LEPs through Growth Deal funding, plus commitment to funding the newly formed Combined Authorities, means that the ISP may compete with or overlap with these commitments. The ISP should not divert existing funds but should enable additional central government funding to achieve the step change in delivery it is designed to enable.

The Added Value of the ISP

This plan indicates how an ISP might draw together thinking on growth and infrastructure across the Corridor to shape long term patterns of growth, and through joint working on shaping and fixing routes and timing of planned strategic infrastructure, could identify long term growth opportunities arising from the juxtaposition of these infrastructure connections and capacity for growth.

The priorities for the ISP differ along the Corridor to the extent that a 'one size fits all' approach to cross-corridor planning may not work. Thus, whilst the ISP's **Spatial Vision** could be a single plan, there may be a need for two or three linked **Strategic Spatial Plans**, produced by groups of local authorities in conformity with the single Spatial Vision.

In any scenario, the single Spatial Vision should be produced and agreed quickly.



Combining forces to plan for growth

Oxfordshire authorities are working together to jointly solve their common growth challenge. Evidenced-based growth options are already being tested to meet the growth needs of and beyond the City, but more certainty about known infrastructure proposals would add value to this work and could better explore strategic growth locations as yet untested.

The New City and the 'places in between'

Whilst some long term thinking has begun (eg. MK2050 Visioning) in the middle parts of the Corridor, the area is at a critical 'chicken and egg' stage where uncertainty around known infrastructure proposals in terms of routes (OCE) and timing (EWR) is holding up local plan progress and frustrating any sensible Corridor-based decision making for strategic growth beyond the first part of any new local plan period (less than 10 years). This part of the Corridor experiences cross boundary sensitivities around perceived 'imposition' of growth from the 'cities' into the 'shires' in the middle parts of the Corridor.

The priority for the ISP in this part of the Corridor would be to fix routes and timing of new planned infrastructure to confirm emerging thinking on associated growth areas which may or may not be cross boundary. The constituent authorities could then embark upon collaboration (or negotiation) within a common and agreed spatial framework.

Towards the Cambridge Metro City

Around Cambridge, strategic growth is well advanced for the next plan period—to 2031 or so—supported by hard-won commitments to infrastructure improvements now in place.

Here, priorities for an ISP should not risk destabilising this growth but could focus on creating a framework for growth beyond the mid 2030s in this part of the Corridor based on more advanced thinking on combining long term infrastructure with growth around EWR to the east, or highways improvements to the Ports?

'Growth Points'

Over the longer term, there are a number of potential growth locations within the Corridor where strategic growth could be absolutely embedded with the design of infrastructure. The ISP could help unlock this growth potential.

NIC Oxford – Cambridge consultation

May 2017

[name redacted]

School of the Built Environment

Oxford Brookes University

[email address redacted]

Spatial conception and vision

In a previous response, I argued that I did not see a good case for the study in its existing form. The logic for this was that the corridor is not a reality, and to make it a reality such as to bring worthwhile economic dividends would be a very expensive and also socially and environmentally damaging way to secure those dividends, as against the much more straightforward, with the grain, approach of solving the problems of the existing sub-regions in the corridor. This means that I do not see a case for the preparation of an integrated strategic plan for the corridor – despite reading all the material being produced by and for the study.

I should emphasise, in case this is needed, that I am a strong supporter of such plans where they will achieve worthwhile aims. I suspect some planners are supporting this plan proposal in the hope that it will be the first in a “return to strategic spatial planning”; but I am concerned more that preparing an ineffective plan will more likely bring the activity into disrepute than revive it. We will see.

At any rate, I still think it worthwhile responding to this phase of the consultation, even if some of what I say will be seen as not answering the questions asked. Even an apparently “negative” argument may help those steering the study, serving as in some degree a warning about the governance difficulties in particular that the approach chosen is going to meet: these difficulties in my view constitute a further argument against a corridor approach, in addition to the one given above. That does not of course mean that I do not see value in the study reaching conclusions, given where it is now. These can still be highly beneficial for the future of this part of England. I just think those conclusions need to address the reality as it is, and propose the most cost effective pathways to long term change.

I will write most of what follows in two modes, one accepting the proposal for a corridor approach, one (less developed, as I think it is fairly self evident what is needed) largely advancing by bolstering the functioning of the more or less successful urban sub-regions in this part of England. The latter can actually deliver on housing, economic and environmental goals, as against the first which I judge will struggle and cost far more.

The views here are, as in the past, based on long experience of study of regional and strategic planning and governance, nationally and internationally, not on particular research which I can refer to in the form of attached documents or links, to back up specific points¹. There is of course a wealth of planning literature over decades on precisely these kinds of questions, which can be found in well known texts on regional and strategic planning and contemporary governance debates.

Integrated strategic planning

If there is to be an integrated strategic plan, its best chance of making sense and sticking for the long term (essential to have real effects) is for it to be based around very few elements, primarily those related to central government funding. It would not necessarily have all the characteristics described in the current document, as this would be too demanding for most parties. It would be extremely limited and light touch, as democratic legitimacy would be lacking for any more breadth and detail. It would largely indicate project funding, above all commitments to funding over several years, for transport and housing schemes, mainly. In other words it would not be a strategic or regional plan in the sense that those existed in the early 2000s in England.

Perhaps the nearest relatively recent comparator would be the Thames Gateway document of 1995, RPG9aⁱⁱ, which, had it been given proper support by central government, could have provided the drive needed for long term implementation in that case; and at the times when support was partially there, in the early 2000s with a cabinet committee pulling department commitments together, things were achieved. It is true that this is much more detailed and longer than I would envisage in this case, rather more like an integrated sub regional plan, but its core elements could have been boiled down to relatively few projects, big sites and commitments. Of course this did have consistent local authority commitment, and this may not be forthcoming in the present era of stressed-to-the-limit local government (under spending cuts and other policy drives attacking its very *raison d'être*). But the light touch strategic compact would of course need support from the core local authorities implicated – something arguing strongly for the limited nature of the compact. (I think compact is a good way to describe this – echoing the French *contrat de ville* or region, without using the rather heavy sounding word, contract; but the word needs to be considered when the exact formula is decided on, to catch the force involved). Real land use planning will have to remain with the relevant authorities, whether those are districts, counties or combined authorities, in whatever form of statutory plan they can agree on.

In my second mode (no corridor plan), clearly no such compact will be needed, but it will nevertheless be a wonderful outcome of the study if several such compacts can be drawn up for the real existing entities in the corridor (generally seen as the urban regions around Bedford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford, maybe Northampton as well). These could be tighter and fuller than a corridor compact, as democratic legitimacy will be more accessible (though hardly simple to negotiate in one or two cases), and links to statutory plans can be much less fraught. I would argue for the institution of such a system of compacts (as against weak and rather distracting short term “Deals” used in recent governments).

New opportunities

This very much depends on what investment is finally proposed. If the main project is simply East West Rail, then this generates some (not many) opportunities round new stations, some unfortunately only in the quite long run. This will be for several forms of urban development, depending on the location. The local authority for the area should take the lead, assembling sites and circulating value uplift. Unfortunately it is rumoured that sites along the route are already optioned by developers, generating the normal dysfunctional British development model. I think the study should recommend giving the lead role to councils. I do not favour creating new “mixed” vehicles or Development Corporations, as these lack the legitimacy to plan long term and with social equity. This is where the compacts with the 4 or 5 sub-regions

come in, as central government will have a strong hand to secure responsible as well as legitimate partners, if councils are the vehicles.

I do not favour a new motorway or expressway, as this is the last thing this corridor needs, from a sustainable transport perspective. The worst congestion now occurs at the edges of urban areas on this route (as well as sometimes within the urban areas), above all on the edges of Oxford, Bedford, Cambridge and to a lesser extent Milton Keynes. A new motorway will simply worsen these jams, generating further traffic and making the functioning of these sub-regions worse and further threatening their economic success. The study should propose the measures needed to start the curing of these poorly functioning urban regions (many proposals already exist, but resources are lacking).

Clearly an expressway would generate development opportunities, and would need management in each of the sub-regions. But this would be wide open to the typical bad type of development which has occurred round so many motorway and trunk road junctions in poorly planned parts of England (and round the world). Experience shows that local authorities are quite often not good at resisting this kind of development pressure, and I cannot think of what new governance model would make them any better at resisting in the future. Certainly a more general resourcing settlement for local government would reduce the increasing incentives to forget “good planning” and approve all projects offered, good and bad.

Governance

I have already said much on the governance implications of the corridor plan model and the alternatives. To sum up, I am supporting an extremely pared down version of your illustrative model 2, if the corridor plan model goes ahead. That is to say, I would argue for a one off agreement of a corridor wide compact between central and local governments, and simply a monitoring body which managed the progression of this compact. Such a monitoring body would naturally be shared by the signatories of the compact, and be steered by the local authority leaders and relevant departmental ministers (and officials). Regular progress reports would be needed.

There would not therefore, in my view, be any need for anything as strong, staffed and continuous as a strategic planning board. Given the absence of legitimate regional planning, strategic planning would fall to the sub-regions, however constituted, working on the basis of the compact (no doubt as revised every few years). Such strategic sub-regional planning must involve statutory plans and the ability to implement these plans. Both are largely missing along most of the corridor at present, so it is vital that the conditions needed for the building up of such capacities is argued for by this study. These include above all resourcing. It needs to be understood that the massive cutting of councils and especially planning functions means that little effective will happen if this stripping of capacity is not addressed.

It may be worth commenting briefly on one other option that may be promoted from some quarters, that of producing a full scale statutory plan, building on the foundations of the Sub National Transport Bodies now emerging. Evidently England’s Economic Heartland is presenting itself to take on the SNTB role for this part of England, and whilst I doubt very much if it would wish to promote a regional plan for its area (covering much more than the corridor in the precise sense, but arguably picking up spatial connections that would boost the value of the corridor). But again the difficulties are in part about governance, as SNTBs are

only set up to represent a collaborative input, with some technical capability, and so engage with the real deciders, central government transport departments and agencies. A regional planning role would need something much better founded in its region and with democratic legitimacy – a directly elected regional assembly, not now under discussion. So I think that EEH, whether or not it becomes a formally constituted SNTB, could not take on this role with any effectiveness.

Early progress

The difficulty is that there are many schemes in these sub-regions already held back by lack of resourcing in cases very similar to those that may be generated by corridor investment. It is therefore hard to get credibility for bringing together local authorities to give real commitments for even more schemes in the future for which implementation conditions would be lacking. For example the expansion of Bicester has been intricately planned over the last decade or more, but is in slow motion mode, in part due to the lack of public sector resources, despite all the now existing strategic conditions, such as the completed rail scheme from Oxford to Bicester. It could help if central government could show its ability to support schemes which already exist, to generate early progress. This is not about governance change, as the councils in many cases have progressed schemes competently (with local plans completed or finally in sight) and do not need governance changes.

ⁱ The book on English Regional Planning which I edited in 2012 with [redacted] and [redacted] is perhaps the nearest to relatively recent coverage of regional planning in the UK.

ⁱⁱ

file:///C:/Users/tcm2/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/ON4H4IPI/The%20Thames%20gateway%20planning%20framework.pdf



Date: 31/5/2017

Please ask for: [name redacted]

Telephone: [telephone numbers redacted]

National Infrastructure Commission
Letter via email

Dear Colleague

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CAMBRIDGE–MILTON KEYNES–OXFORD CORRIDOR - RESPONSE FROM OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultation paper regarding the future options for strategic planning across the Oxford to Cambridge corridor area.

Oxford City Council is a signatory to the joint response from Local Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnerships across the sub-region including this corridor area. The council confirms its support for the approach set out in the joint response but also wishes to affirm the council's commitment to realising and shaping the once in a generation growth opportunity across the corridor area and specifically within Oxford and Oxfordshire.

The council is committed to securing effective governance and working arrangements with partners that will provide the collaborative voice on matters of genuine strategic importance to Oxford, Oxfordshire and the sub-region, including the Corridor, enabling sustainable growth and ensuring this growth strengthens our communities. We look for a similar level of commitment from the Government and in particular its commitment to work with us and invest alongside us, in improved infrastructure and services.

There has already been a step-change in collaborative working at the sub-region including across the corridor, with a clear focus on finding ways to deliver greater strategic collaboration and our shared ambitions. The Oxfordshire Growth Board has confirmed its commitment to strategic planning in our area through the commitment to the development and delivery of a new joint plan for Oxfordshire.

The council supports the identified benefits of strategic collaboration and the shared ambition now and in future to:

- a. Realise the transformational opportunity for a step change in economic growth and productivity across the area that enables businesses to prosper in global markets
- b. Adopt a collaborative approach in order to maximise the benefits for both the national and local economies of planned growth (economic and housing) including supporting our interlocking planning areas
- c. Establish governance and co-ordination arrangements (in which Central Government is integral) that secure effective collaboration on strategic issues across the area and thereby provide the long-term clarity and stability that encourages investment

We do not support the development of a formal integrated strategic plan for the Corridor. However the principles of enhanced strategic planning, and closer collaboration set out in the joint response are fully supported. It is important to ensure clarity of purpose to secure delivery and that only those functions that are of genuinely strategic importance are addressed at the Corridor sub-region including this Corridor level.

The need to develop and enhance the distinctive nature of settlements and communities within the sub-region including the Corridor is fully supported (and the challenge of addressing first-last mile connectivity by the NIC is welcome). The Commission, through the various studies and reports, recognises the role that key infrastructure will play in delivering housing and economic growth. To tackle the current weaknesses we welcome the focus on the delivery of East West Rail and the "Expressway" but these alone will not address the Corridor's infrastructure deficits, identified through individual and joint Infrastructure plans at both Local Authority and LEP level. Although we welcome these two key projects we need clarity on their routes and timing of delivery to ensure that opportunities are properly captured in Local Plans and long-term transport strategies. It is also important to remember that the corridor is a dynamic one with permeable boundaries, which recognises the fluidity of economic centres over time and the need to respond to changing drivers and patterns of growth. Oxford's function as a node not a book end in the western end of the corridor needs to be appreciated.

We agree with the Commission that where there is an investment being made in strategic infrastructure then it is appropriate to look to secure contributions from those that benefit from it being available. However, for this to be realisable it is necessary for local partners to have absolute confidence that government funded (or part funded) investment will be delivered to an agreed timescale. We have made these same observations in our responses to the first mile/last mile investigations with your colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

[signature redacted]

For and on behalf of Oxford City Council,
[name redacted], [job title redacted]

31st May 2017
L 170524 DJ NIC call for evidence - Uni Col



Growth Corridor call for evidence
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Dear Sir / Madam

‘Strategic Planning in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor’ A Call for Ideas

Savills is instructed to make representations on behalf of the University of Oxford as well as Christ Church, Exeter, Magdalen, Merton, Nuffield and St John’s Colleges.

The University & Colleges have agreed to act in concert with the aim of ensuring that the position of Oxford as a world leading centre for knowledge-based business and education is protected and indeed enhanced for the benefit of the wider region and the UK as a whole. This submission is therefore informed by the role that the University & Colleges have in contributing to Oxfordshire’s economy and the wider regional and national economy, particularly in the growth of knowledge-based business, as well as the social and community benefits of facilitating academic access.

The University & Colleges have actively participated in the planning process locally with the objective of ensuring that the Local Plans that are currently being prepared in Oxfordshire aim to meet in full the requirement for new jobs and homes across the county and specifically the needs arising from Oxford in its role contributing to the wider economy. In this context, the University & Colleges welcome the work of the NIC on the ‘Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor’ and the context it provides for future planning of the sub-region. The investment in infrastructure that is proposed presents an opportunity to achieve more ambitious growth targets as long as an integrated and joined-up approach to planning is taken both at the strategic and local level and that this has the backing of Government.

The University & Colleges therefore welcome the discussion paper on the scope of work to develop an integrated strategic plan and have addressed the questions in the paper below.

An integrated strategic plan

Q1. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in the discussion paper help to tackle major constraints on future economic growth, maximise the potential of major new east-west infrastructure links; and develop distinct towns and cities into a major economic corridor?

The University & Colleges welcome the proposal for an integrated strategic plan for the whole C-MK-O Corridor. The Oxfordshire economy, and its contribution to ‘UK plc’ success, is being challenged by capacity constraints in key infrastructure including road, rail, availability of housing that is affordable and availability of suitable business space. These issues need to be addressed on a wider than local scale if they are to be overcome; at a level that is above the realm of local plans. Only in this way can co-ordination be achieved between investment in new road / rail and the emerging planned pattern of development to deliver sustainable and much-needed homes and jobs. The Oxfordshire local authorities are presently beginning to make key decisions through their local plan processes that will establish the pattern for growth in the county for the next 20 years. It is therefore essential that whatever strategic plan framework is established, it should be formulated promptly so as to achieve the fully joined-up approach that is necessary.

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

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Q2. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims?

The work of the Oxfordshire Growth Board (OGB) has gone some way, in an informal structure, to provide a broad, county-wide context for the preparation of local plans. The OGB process has been successful in creating a level of agreement and understanding between the authorities on key objectives to be achieved, notably the total housing requirement based on a robust economic plan and the distribution of the unmet housing requirement arising from Oxford. However, it is also apparent from that process that there are areas that require strengthening if the outputs are going to meaningfully shape outcomes across the county and deliver growth in a co-ordinated and truly sustainable form (see below).

New opportunities

Q3. Can the approach to strategic planning explored in this paper provide a basis for improved long-term collaboration and engagement between the corridor and: housing developers; infrastructure providers and investors; and central government?

The University & Colleges agree that the approach to strategic planning set out in the discussion paper has real advantages in terms of achieving a joined-up approach to the planning and delivery of infrastructure and growth. What is required to best achieve this objective is a process that can quickly draw together the technical work that has already been started by the NIC, the emerging work of the local authorities on where growth should best take place and the input of those living in the corridor.

This should be a 'light-touch' process that can quickly establish an agreed framework within which each local authority can then take forward its local plan process, including the allocation of specific sites to meet job, housing and other development requirements. Importantly, Local Plan processes that are underway and which will facilitate the delivery of sites to support the economic growth of Oxford – and other key locations in the corridor - should not be delayed whilst awaiting the formulation of a strategic plan given the national importance of the city to the regional and national economy.

Q4. How could the approach to strategic planning be amended or strengthened to better achieve these aims? What else will be required for partners across the corridor to develop these relationships and exploit these opportunities?

The Government in its Housing White Paper has set out procedures for strengthening the ability of the planning process to address cross-boundary issues, including requiring local authorities to prepare joint Memoranda of Understanding. The Government is also proposing to amend national policy so that local authorities are expected to identify the development opportunities that investment in new infrastructure funding creates (Housing White Paper, paragraph 2.20). Such measures are welcome as would other initiatives that reinforce the importance of cross-boundary co-ordination and the delivery of regional and national growth objectives on a collective basis.

There is not as yet a simple, single forum within which local planning authorities can make collective decision-making on corridor-wide basis. Such structures do exist in parts and are beginning to produce outcomes; including the OGB and the combined approach to plan-making undertaken by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Councils. Whilst both of these processes have informed formal plan-making processes, neither is without its deficiencies. Furthermore, the greater part of the corridor does not benefit from such co-ordinated processes, particularly the central portion of the corridor including Milton Keynes.

A single forum should be established to start to get the process for preparing a strategic plan underway as quickly as possible, including the commissioning of research studies (see below). As a first step towards this process the geographic extent of the corridor should be defined and confirmed by Government in order to determine those local authorities that should participate in this process.

Governance

Q5-8 Do you agree with the principles for collective decision-making and how might these be developed or amended? Should any new cross-corridor governance structures preserve a role for sub-regional collaboration? Can the opportunities afforded by strategic planning, be exploited without statutory governance structures to 'lock-in' collaboration over the long-term?

The collective governance arrangements set out in the discussion paper do cover the broad scope of what is required to achieve a strategic plan that meets the objectives of being transparent and open in its processes and credible and robust in its outcomes. The process should allow for continuation of sub-regional processes, such as that of the OGB, as these can add local interpretation to the high-level strategic plan.

The experience of the OGB is informative in terms of the robustness of the process to enforce outcomes. Whether the output is a statutory or non-statutory plan, it is essential that the governance structures do 'lock-in' all participants so that they are bound by the collective decision-making of the combined authorities and that this provides structure and direction for local planning decisions and emerging policy. In Oxfordshire, it has been too easy for local authorities who disagree with the outcomes to disengage from the process and seek to revert to individually-led more inward looking decision-making. This is clearly unsatisfactory, particularly where there has been joint-working throughout the process leading to an outcome that all parties have had the opportunity to contribute towards.

The statutory process has benefits in terms of establishing formal governance and producing an outcome that is binding. These benefits however are set against the potential implications of such a process, particularly in terms of time taken to generate outcomes. Whichever route is pursued, the University & Colleges would want to see a close working relationship between Government and local authorities to ensure that strategic planning outcomes and local plan objectives are aligned with national decisions on infrastructure investment and economic objectives.

Developing and delivering an integrated strategic plan

Q9. How could local authorities make early progress in the development of an integrated strategic plan, prior to the development of any new collective governance arrangements?

In the first instance, the University & Colleges would recommend that a forum is established within which the local authorities and other relevant stakeholders within the defined extent of the corridor can start to engage on a collective basis to identify and address key issues. As stated earlier, at present the focus of any strategic inputs to the plan-making process are at the two ends of the corridor in Oxford and Cambridge. The level of engagement needs to be extended to the full length of the corridor either by adapting existing structures or creating new ones. .

Importantly, the outcomes to the process must have the weight and backing of national government, which should be clearly communicated, and must be the starting place for local planning decision-making to ensure that the strategic needs of the region and national objectives are achieved.

I trust that this submission is a useful contribution to the work of the Commission. Please do contact me if you have any questions or require any further information.

Yours faithfully

[signature redacted]

[name redacted]

[job title redacted]

cc: *University of Oxford, Christ Church, Exeter, Magdalen, Merton, Nuffield, St John's.*