

An aerial photograph of the Cambourne Business Park in South Cambridgeshire. The image shows several large, modern office buildings with extensive glass facades and flat roofs. The buildings are arranged around a central area that includes a large pond with a few sailboats, green lawns, and parking lots. In the background, there are more industrial-style buildings and a road with a roundabout.

Chapter 8 Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, South Cambridgeshire



Chapter 8 Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

- 8.1 This chapter sets out how the Council will assist the achievement of strong and sustainable local economic growth, where entrepreneurship, innovation and inward investment are actively encouraged.
- 8.2 During the last 30 years, the Cambridge Sub-Region has developed into one of the premier locations for high technology research and development in Europe. Planning policies favouring research and development and discouraging large scale office and warehouse development have helped foster one of the highest rates of job growth outside any of the UK's major cities.
- 8.3 The Council has an adopted [Economic Development Strategy](#) that seeks to maintain a progressive, modern, innovative, balanced and resilient economy and be open for new business. The Strategy was supported by an economic assessment, and developed through consultation with partners, stakeholders, businesses and residents. The findings and priorities of the Strategy have guided the Local Plan which aims to anticipate growth sectors and capture opportunities provided by planned growth areas including Northstowe, and the urban extensions to Cambridge.
- 8.4 Recent evidence suggests that the local high-tech cluster is 'maturing' and that growth in the research and development sector will be slower than in the past, and other sectors will account for a higher proportion of growth. New sectors are likely to include renewable technologies, the creative ICT sectors, digital, health/bioscience, high-technology manufacturing, professional business services, tourism and leisure.
- 8.5 The Local Plan provides more flexibility than recent past policies as part of delivering the objective to support economic growth by maintaining South Cambridgeshire's position as a world leader in research and technology based industries, research, and education by continuing to support proposals that build on the successful employment clusters; whilst alongside this providing opportunities for a wider range of other employment that supports sustainable economic growth through a suite of policies and the development of existing and new employment sites.
- 8.6 The Local Plan aims to ensure there is sufficient employment land available, in the right places to support the economy, and provide the right balance between supporting growth, whilst protecting the quality of the built and natural environment. The Council may prepare Local Development Orders to facilitate the effective implementation of new employment proposals.
- 8.7 The Local Plan also addresses issues which underpin economic development including delivering strategic infrastructure such as affordable homes and services, and considers transport issues by providing jobs close to people's homes, and where jobs can be accessed by means other than the car.

Key Facts:

- The district has a diverse high value economy with 81,200 jobs in 2011 (Source: Cambridge Econometrics).
- Sectors anticipated to grow in future include professional services, computing and business services, construction, and health.
- Unemployment at 1.4% is lower than national level of 4%, and median pay levels are higher.
- The area has proved resilient to the impacts of the downturn with a range of successful business and research parks including Cambridge Science Park, Granta Park, and the Babraham Institute.
- Despite policies protecting employment in villages there is a gradual loss of premises.
- There is a significant agricultural sector with many farms diversifying into other sectors, particularly tourism.
- There are a significantly higher proportion of micro businesses than regionally or nationally with 86% of businesses employing fewer than 10 people.
- Homeworking is growing, making access to broadband more important.
- Important local tourist attractions include Duxford Imperial War Museum, Wimpole Hall, the American Military Cemetery, Chilford Hall, Linton Zoo and RSPB Reserves at Fen Drayton and Fowlmere.
- Primary retail and service centres are outside the district (Cambridge and market towns), but some larger villages provide services to smaller villages, and village shops are a vital service. New High Street facilities are planned for Cambourne and Northstowe.

New Employment Provision

- 8.8 Policy S/5 establishes a target of 22,000 new jobs to be provided in the district by 2031.
- 8.9 South Cambridgeshire has a good supply and range of existing employment sites. Additionally existing commitments with planning permission provide a wide variety and types of employment development, including significant opportunities at research parks for high technology and Research & Development (R&D), including at:
- Granta Park,
 - Babraham Institute,
 - Wellcome Trust Genome Campus and

- Cambridge Research Park.

The Council will consider the case for removing restrictive planning conditions and planning obligations imposed under previous development plans which have served their purpose of supporting the embryonic high tech R&D sector and are not consistent with our current approach to local economic development.

- 8.10 At March 2012 planning permission had been granted for 238,298 m² (80.3 hectares) of employment uses. In addition, there are opportunities for significant further provision at:
- Northstowe (20 hectares of employment land), and
 - Cambridge University's North West Cambridge development (for 100,000 m² of research facilities, including up to 40,000 m² for research institutes and private research facilities linked to the University).

New Settlements at Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield

- 8.11 New settlements are allocated in the Local Plan for a new town at Waterbeach and a new village at Bourn Airfield. Area Action Plans (AAPs) will be prepared for both sites which will include employment provision appropriate to a town of 8,000-9,000 homes and a new village of 3,500 homes.

New Employment Provision near Cambridge

Policy E/1: New Employment Provision near Cambridge – Cambridge Science Park

Appropriate proposals for employment development and redevelopment on Cambridge Science Park (as defined on the Policies Map) will be supported, where they enable the continued development of the Cambridge Cluster of high technology research and development companies.

- 8.12 South Cambridgeshire has a good supply and range of existing employment sites. Additionally existing commitments with planning permission provide a wide variety and types of employment development, including significant opportunities at research parks for high technology and R&D, including at Granta Park, Babraham Institute, Wellcome Trust Genome Campus and Cambridge Research Park. At March 2012 planning permission had been granted for 238,298 m² (80.3 hectares) of employment. In addition, there are opportunities for significant further provision at Northstowe, and Cambridge University's North West Cambridge development.
- 8.13 The [Employment Land Review](#) (2012) identified a particular need for office space in or on the edge of Cambridge. Opportunities have been identified on the northern fringe of Cambridge for additional employment development, taking advantage of the increased accessibility of the area as a result of by the Guided Busway and the planned Cambridge Science Park railway station. Cambridge Science Park has

played a crucial role in establishing and supporting the research and development and high tech sectors since the 1970's. Some of the early phases were built at low densities and are forty years old, and there is scope for intensification or even redevelopment. Proposals will need to demonstrate they are compliant with other policies in the Local Plan, particularly in relation to design and transport.

- 8.14 The area around the planned Cambridge Science Parks Station itself has been identified for a high density mixed employment led development, providing a new gateway to the northern part of Cambridge (Policy SS/4).

Policy E/2: Fulbourn Road East (Fulbourn) 6.9 hectares

1. Land adjoining Peterhouse Technology Park is allocated for employment use.
2. Development proposals will need to demonstrate how the site can be designed and landscaped to effectively mitigate impact on the wider Cambridge Green Belt. This will include excavation to achieve appropriate profile and setting against the Cambridge Green Belt and agricultural land, and the creation of landscaped buffers on the southern and eastern boundaries.

- 8.15 The Employment Land Review identified demand for employment land on the edge of Cambridge. The Inner Green Belt Study Review (2012) highlighted an opportunity to provide additional employment land next to the Peterhouse Technology Park which avoiding significant impacts on the Green Belt. There are also two areas allocated in the Cambridge Local Plan to the west of the existing development.

- 8.16 The Technology Park is cut into rising ground, and cannot be seen from higher ground to the south. Similar treatment will be required for this site. It is bound by an existing hedgerow, which should be retained and enhanced, together a new landscaped boundary to the south and east.

New Employment Provision at Villages

Policy E/3: Allocations for Class B1 Employment Uses

The following sites are allocated for employment development for uses within Use Class B1: Offices; Research and Development; and Light Industry:

- a. Longstanton: N of Hattons Road up to the bypass (6.7 ha.)
- b. Pampisford: West of Eastern Counties Leather, London Road (residue) (1.9 ha.)

Policy E/4: Allocations for Class B1, B2 and B8 Employment Uses

The following sites are allocated for employment development for uses within Classes B1: Offices; Research and Development, B2: Light Industry and B8: General Industry and Storage uses:

- a. Over: Norman Way (residue) (1.7 ha.)
- b. Papworth Everard: Ermine Street South (residue) (2.5 ha.)

- 8.17 These two policies carry forward employment allocations in villages from previous plans. Most form the residue of the original allocation where sites have been partially developed. The site at Longstanton forms part of the Home Farm development. They are included in the Local Plan to enable their completion.

Papworth Hospital

Policy E/5: Papworth Hospital

1. The reuse or redevelopment of the Papworth Hospital site, as defined on the Policies Map, will be permitted based on a sequential approach to finding replacement uses beginning with healthcare.
2. Only if a suitable healthcare use or uses cannot be found after the site has been marketed for healthcare for a period of no less than 2 years before the final closure and vacation of Papworth Hospital would other employment uses within the B1 Business Use Class compatible with this location in the centre of Papworth Everard be permitted.

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3. Any scheme must:
 - a. Maintain the vitality and viability of Papworth Everard village;
 - b. Maintain the housing and employment balance of the village;
 - c. Maintain the present setting of Papworth Hall; and
 - d. Preserve buildings on the site identified in the Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal that contribute to the setting of the village and history of the site.

4. New housing development and/or redevelopment for housing will not be permitted. Conversion of existing buildings of character for residential use may exceptionally be permitted where it would be the most appropriate use of the buildings and recreate the character of the original Papworth Hospital buildings fronting the historic landscaped parkland setting of Papworth Hall.

- 8.18 A policy for the reuse or redevelopment of the Papworth Hospital site was originally included in the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted January 2010). Papworth Hospital is the UK's largest specialist cardiothoracic hospital and the country's main heart and lung transplant centre. In 2005, Papworth Hospital decided to move to the Biomedical Campus at Addenbrooke's in Cambridge. This will provide new facilities for the hospital with the benefit of immediate access to a range of services, facilities and research that takes place there. The construction phase on the new site is expected to be complete by early 2016.
- 8.19 The Papworth Hospital site is within the Papworth Everard Conservation Area. The Papworth Everard Conservation Area Appraisal (June 2011) identifies specific buildings within the hospital site as buildings of local architectural or historic interest, and as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. The buildings identified include the Bernhard Baron Hospital Building and Princess Hospital Building (both are examples of hospital buildings designed specifically for tuberculosis patients with design features to ensure access to sunlight and fresh air) and the Sims Woodhead Building (Lakeside Lodge). Other buildings within the hospital site are identified as having a negative or neutral contribution to the conservation area either because views of the building are screened by modern development or due to their current unattractive appearance. The Appraisal sets out guidelines for any new development within or affecting the conservation area. For Papworth Hospital, any development proposals should seek to enhance the site, for example through enhancing the parkland, removing poor quality extensions or modern buildings, and by ensuring that new buildings are of a high quality that respond to the context.
- 8.20 Papworth Everard is synonymous with healthcare provision and medical facilities in the village have ranged from the treatment and convalescence of tuberculosis sufferers to the current provision of residential rehabilitation facilities for the disabled by the independent Papworth Trust, and the treatment of people with life

threatening cardio-vascular problems by the Papworth Hospital NHS Trust. Healthcare provides a breadth of employment opportunities and the hospital employs a large number of local residents from the unskilled to highly specialised doctors and therefore the decision to relocate Papworth Hospital to Cambridge is a major threat to the future viability of the village and the maintenance of a sustainable community.

- 8.21 Healthcare is therefore the preferred use for the site following the relocation of Papworth Hospital. This could include a continued role within the NHS or could include private healthcare facilities trading on the world renowned Papworth Hospital name. A long-term approach will need to be taken to securing a healthcare future. If it is necessary to consider other forms of employment use for the Papworth Hospital site, then a mix of uses within the B1 Business Use Classes would be the most appropriate in this historic parkland setting.
- 8.22 Residential development would not be acceptable other than for the conversion of any existing buildings which would not be suitable for healthcare / employment uses or which would make the most appropriate contribution to enhancing the historic setting of Papworth Hall. Residential redevelopment as an alternative to healthcare / employment uses is not compatible with the long term strategy to make Papworth Everard a sustainable village and would make the village a dormitory settlement unrelated to the main focus of jobs growth in and on the edge of Cambridge

Imperial War Museum at Duxford

Policy E/6: Imperial War Museum at Duxford

1. The Imperial War Museum site at Duxford Airfield will be treated as a special case as a museum which is a major tourist / visitor attraction, educational and commercial facility.
2. Proposals will be considered with regard to the particular needs and opportunities of the site and any proposals involving the use of the estate and its facilities for museum uses or non-museum uses must be complimentary to the character, vitality and sustainability of the site as a branch of the Imperial War Museum.
3. Details of projected increases in noise will be required with all proposals which would lead to an increase in commercial or flying activity and details concerning the scale, form and design will be required to accompany any outline planning application.

- 8.23 The Imperial War Museum Duxford (IWMD) is an integral element of the multi branch Imperial War Museums and is a major tourist / visitor attraction, educational and commercial facility based on a long established airfield. It is established as the

European centre of aviation history together with restoration, conservation, storage and research functions. There is a working airfield and the visitor offer is unique in combining static and dynamic aircraft exhibits through its own activities and those of its onsite partners. IWMD receives some 440,000 visitors per annum and has a key remit to provide a substantial educational programme for both formal and informal learners. The site also includes a memorial to honour soldiers from the Royal Anglian Regiment who have lost their lives since 1959. IWMD sees its long term future as a vibrant, sustainable and effective visitor attraction, education provider and commercial venue with jobs and investment beyond the direct effects of the museum and its partners.

- 8.24 Given its national significance, the District Council will give IWMD special consideration within the context of protecting the quality of the surrounding landscape in this sensitive site on the edge of the Cambridge Green Belt.

Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals

Policy E/7: Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals

1. The redevelopment of the existing built footprint of the Ida Darwin Hospital into a different configuration, comprising residential redevelopment on the eastern part of the Ida Darwin site and the transfer of part of the building footprint to the Fulbourn Hospital site for new mental health facilities will be permitted.
2. Redevelopment will create a green wedge on the western part of the Ida Darwin site to provide a compensatory enhancement to the openness of the Green Belt in this location. This green wedge will also provide enhanced public access to the countryside.
3. Developers will be required to undertake ecological surveys and monitoring prior to the commencement of construction, and propose a Biodiversity Strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity that establishes which areas will be protected and enhanced, and appropriate mitigation measures.

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4. An investigation into land contamination will be required prior to the granting of any planning permission. Should this indicate that remediation should be undertaken, this must be done to a standard agreed with the Council and conditions will be imposed on any planning permission to ensure that development takes place in accordance with a programme which takes account of remediation work.
5. Appropriate investigation of noise and vibration in relation to the adjoining railway line will be required, and attenuation measures may be secured by condition as necessary.
6. Development Briefs for this sensitive location in the Green Belt between Cambridge and Fulbourn are required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to granting of planning permission.

- 8.25 A policy allowing the redevelopment of the Ida Darwin Hospital and Fulbourn Hospital sites for residential development and new mental health facilities was originally included in the Site Specific Policies DPD. Fulbourn Hospital and Ida Darwin Hospital lie within the Cambridge Green Belt which in this locality separates Cambridge from Fulbourn village and forms part of the setting of the city. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Mental Health Foundation Trust who own and operate both sites intend to rationalise health care provision on the sites, including relocating some existing uses from the Ida Darwin site to the Fulbourn Hospital site. They will no longer require the majority of buildings on the Ida Darwin site.
- 8.26 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, except where the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.
- 8.27 The Ida Darwin Hospital site adjoins the western end of Fulbourn village. As a previously developed site which is developed at a relatively low density in landscaped grounds it has a physical relationship with the village but a significantly different character which justifies its location in the Green Belt. Redevelopment of the built footprint in a different configuration as a residential area would change the character of the site and its relationship with Fulbourn, but there is potential for this to have positive implications by the removal of all buildings from the western part of the site, and the creation of an area of open countryside character which could help increase the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.28 The residential development potential would depend on how the existing Ida Darwin site built footprint were redistributed across the whole site. It is anticipated that the Ida Darwin site could deliver 250 to 275 dwellings, although the total would depend

on any buildings that would remain on the Ida Darwin site, and the amount of additional healthcare development required on the Fulbourn Hospital site.

- 8.29 Fulbourn Hospital Conservation Area was designated in December 1992 to preserve and enhance the setting of the group of 19th Century former asylum buildings. The boundary of the conservation area includes the important parkland setting which was fundamental to the building's purpose as one of the first 'open asylums' in the country. Any additional development will need to consider the historic pattern of development and parkland settlement.
- 8.30 A Biodiversity Strategy will be required to accompany development proposals, which should consider features worthy of retention. The redevelopment of the Ida Darwin site will provide significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, particularly on the western part of the site which is proposed to revert to open countryside.
- 8.31 A single line railway runs adjacent to the north of the Ida Darwin site. Although it is not a main line, railway noise will need assessment in accordance with the [NPPF](#) and associated guidance. Noise and vibration mitigation and/or attenuation on site and noise insulation measures to buildings may be required to provide external and internal noise levels that are acceptable for future residents.
- 8.32 There appears to have been a landfill area to the north west of the Ida Darwin site, and the site itself has historical use as a hospital. These are potential sources of land contamination. This is a material consideration that will require investigation and remediation as necessary so that land is suitable for use in accordance with the [NPPF](#) and associated British Standards / guidance.
- 8.33 The Ida Darwin site is located immediately to the south of a Roman settlement considered to be of national importance and subject to statutory designation (Scheduled Monument 95). Further evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement is known to the east of the scheduled monument and the settlement area is likely to extend into the Ida Darwin Hospital site. This will require appropriate investigation, although development of the hospital itself may have removed some or all remains.
- 8.34 The Ida Darwin site is within a groundwater protection zone and appropriate measures would therefore need to be provided so as to ensure the water environment is protected from contamination. The area is known to have a high water table, and this will need to be considered in a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.
- 8.35 Residential development will be designed and landscaped to minimise impact on the character of the Green Belt. Strengthening the existing boundary tree planting, particularly the southern boundary will help mitigate the impact of a denser development on the character of the Green Belt. This will also allow two storey houses and three storey extra care accommodation to replace those parts of the Ida Darwin Hospital, which are large single storey without adversely affecting visual amenity.

- 8.36 A comprehensive Construction Environmental Management Plan will be required for all phases of development and the development should be carried out in accordance with Policy CC/6.

Mixed-Use Development in Histon & Impington Station Area

Policy E/8: Mixed-Use Development in Histon & Impington Station Area

1. To create an attractive and vibrant gateway to the settlements from the Guided Busway stop, redevelopment of land around Station Road in Histon and Impington, as shown on the Policies Map, will deliver mixed-use development, including:
 - a. Commercial uses – workshops, retail, café / restaurant (in Use Classes B1, A1 and A3);
 - b. Community uses;
 - c. Residential development including work / live units.
2. Development proposals for the sites known as former Bishops Hardware Store site, Old Railway Good Yard, and Kendall Court should include commercial and/or community uses in addition to any residential development.
3. The former station building and the Railway Vue public house are of local importance and should be retained and reused as appropriate for commercial or a community use.
4. All schemes must integrate with surrounding uses, respect the character and maintain the vitality and viability of Histon and Impington village centre, and retain the significant wooded area known as 'The Copse'.

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5. Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals where the applicant can demonstrate that their proposals will contribute to achieving the objectives for the area outlined above. The preferred approach would be through masterplanning the whole policy area, in consultation with landowners and stakeholders.
6. A Supplementary Planning Document may be produced to support the application of the policy.

- 8.37 Histon and Impington Parish Council has aspirations to rejuvenate the area around the former railway station in Histon and Impington to create a vibrant gateway into this community. The southern section of the settlement lacks a focus, with no key points and few shops to generate the footfall for success. The Guided Busway provides an opportunity to create a second local focus for the village, not simply a gateway but a destination in its own right.
- 8.38 The aspiration is to make better use of vacant and underused land to provide a wider mix of uses to attract more use of the area at different times of the day, including outside of the peak hours. These uses could include small (artisan) workshops, small scale retail and destination shops (e.g. for craft made items, specialist foods) as well as food outlets including café / restaurants. The new uses should complement facilities offered elsewhere in the village and should not detract from or undermine them.
- 8.39 There are several development opportunity sites including; the warehouse site, Kendall Court and the old railway goods yard to the north west of the former station building. These should be redeveloped for mixed-use development, including commercial and retail uses, to try to rebalance the ratio of employment uses to residential in the village as this ratio has halved in six years. Small and Medium Enterprises are the villages' (and the nation's) growth engines for new jobs and there are currently few start up premises or work and live opportunities in the village.
- 8.40 The opportunity for new residential development will be limited but attractive due to the proximity to the Guided Busway and convenience of other local facilities. The opening of Chesterton station with Busway access will increase its attractiveness and provide an opportunity for sustainable living with minimal reliance upon the private car.
- 8.41 The two Victorian buildings; the former station building and Railway Vue public house are landmark buildings which are important to the local community. Located in key positions they should be retained in commercial use or as a community asset.

- 8.42 The Copse is an attractive wooded area which provides an important informal amenity and recreation area for local residents, and has been designated a Local Green Space. Many of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 8.43 An exemplar of 21st Century design, redevelopment will be based on the highest standards of sustainability and latest architectural styles in a way that will co-exist in harmony with its surroundings whilst creating an area that is visually striking. It will maximise opportunities for local access on foot and by cycle, as well as by public transport, reducing reliance upon the car.

Promotion of Clusters

Policy E/9: Promotion of Clusters

1. Development proposals in suitable locations will be permitted which support the development of employment clusters, drawing on the specialisms of the Cambridge area in the following sectors:
 - a. Biotechnology and biomedical;
 - b. Computer services;
 - c. Electronic engineering;
 - d. High-technology manufacturing;
 - e. Information technology / telecommunications;
 - f. Healthcare, teaching and research;
 - g. Research and development;
 - h. Clean Technology;
 - i. Other locally driven clusters as they emerge.
2. Employment land allocations especially suited for cluster development are Northstowe, North-west Cambridge, and the new employment provision on the edge of Cambridge (Policies E/1 and SS/4). These areas will be expected to include provision of a range of suitable units, including for start-ups, SMEs, and incubator units.

- 8.44 The [NPPF](#) requires local planning authorities to plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries. The Council's [Economic Development Strategy](#) identified a particular need for premises to support start-ups and enterprise, and low cost lab/office space.
- 8.45 Previous development plans for the district have included policies which selectively managed employment development, restricting the occupancy of new employment buildings to firms that can demonstrate a need to be located in the Cambridge area. The purpose has been to recognise the Cambridge areas role as a world leader in research, manage development pressure by reserving land for uses needing a Cambridge location, and encourage uses that do not need to be close to Cambridge to locate elsewhere.

- 8.46 Recent evidence in the Employment Land Review, building on the [Cambridge Cluster at 50 Study](#), suggests that the high tech cluster is maturing. Greater flexibility is needed to support its diversification enabling associated high tech manufacturing and headquarters functions. A significant element of future growth in the district is expected to come from other office sectors, which could be restricted by previous policies.
- 8.47 Many local businesses take risks to innovate and a high number of business start-ups and failures is one of the characteristics of the Cambridge high tech sector and there is a risk that a more flexible policy could affect the future of the sector, by increasing competition for land and buildings, and increasing rents. However, there is now a larger amount of employment land that is available than in the past, and policy E/4 seeks to ensure major sites continue to deliver land and buildings suitable for the future development of the high tech clusters.
- 8.48 On balance the evidence suggests the benefits of removing the policy currently outweigh the costs. It will however be important that the impact on the district economy, and particular the high technology research & development clusters, is closely monitored, and a policy reinstated through plan review if evidence indicates harmful impacts.

Shared Social Spaces as part of Employment Areas

Policy E/10: Shared Social Spaces in Employment Areas

Small-scale leisure, eating and social hub facilities will be permitted in business parks and employment areas where:

- a. The use is ancillary or complementary to existing or proposed B-Use Classes, and supports the functionality of the employment area;
- b. The use will not have unacceptably adverse effects on existing businesses or future business use of the site;
- c. The facility is intended primarily to meet the needs of workers in the business park, and does not attract significant levels of visitor traffic into the area.

- 8.49 The [Cambridge Cluster at 50](#) identified that some business parks were considered isolated, and the lack of a social aspect could be making them less attractive places to locate to. It highlighted the importance of social spaces for doing business.
- 8.50 The policy supports the development of complimentary facilities in order to help develop the social milieu of free standing business parks which are not close to existing comparable village facilities. The need for such complementary facilities will vary according to the location of individual business parks. In smaller employment areas facilities are likely to be available nearby, such as in village centres.

Large Scale Warehousing and Distribution Centres

Policy E/11: Large Scale Warehousing and Distribution Centres

Large scale warehousing and distribution centres will not be permitted in the district.

- 8.51 This element of the 'Selective Management of Employment' policies for the Cambridge area warrants retention. These uses require a large land area, but generate relatively low numbers of jobs. They could quickly reduce the available land supply, and increase pressure on transport networks, which could harm the continued prosperity of the high technology clusters. Whilst proposals for warehousing supporting other employment uses or meeting local needs will be supported subject to other policy requirements, large scale proposals serving a wider regional or national function will not be supported.

New Employment Development in Villages

Policy E/12: New Employment Development in Villages

Within development frameworks in villages, planning permission will be granted for new employment development (B1, B2 and B8 uses) or expansion of existing premises provided that the scale of development would be in keeping with the category and scale of the village, and be in character and scale with the location.

- 8.52 Sensitive small-scale employment development can help sustain the rural economy, and achieve a wider range of local employment opportunities. It can enhance the vitality of Rural Centres, and reduce the need to travel. There is also potential for cluster related firms to develop on an appropriate scale. Proposals must be in scale with the location. This means that larger proposals are more likely to be considered favourably in Rural Centres, whilst only very small scale proposals are likely to be acceptable at Group or Infill villages.

New Employment Development on the Edges of Villages

Policy E/13: New Employment Development on the Edges of Villages

Subject to Green Belt policy, new development for employment development (B1, B2 and B8 Use Classes) will be permitted on sites adjoining or very close to the development frameworks of villages where:

- a. It is demonstrated that there are no suitable buildings or sites within the settlement or nearby, or suitable buildings to reuse or replace in the countryside nearby.
- b. The site comprises previously developed land. If greenfield sites are proposed they will need to demonstrate no suitable previously developed sites are available.
- c. The proposal is justified by a business case, demonstrating that the business is viable.
- d. There is a named user for the development, who shall be the first occupant. A planning condition will be attached to any permission to this effect.
- e. The proposal is logically related to the built form of the settlement, the scale and form of the development would be in keeping with the category and scale of the village.
- f. The proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and in particular the village edge, and is in scale with the location.
- g. The site can be easily accessed on foot or cycle.

- 8.53 Sensitive small scale employment development can help sustain the rural economy, and achieve a wider range of local employment opportunities. Where it can be demonstrated there are no suitable buildings in the area, the Council will support development on the edges of villages in appropriate circumstances.

Loss of Employment to Non-Employment Uses

Policy E/14: Loss of Employment Land to Non Employment Uses

1. The conversion, change of use or redevelopment of existing employment sites to non-employment uses within or on the edge of development frameworks will be resisted unless one of the following criteria is met:

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- a. It is demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for any employment use to continue having regard to market demand. Applications will need to be accompanied by documentary evidence that the site is not suitable or capable of being made suitable for continued employment use. Evidence would be required that the property has been adequately marketed for a period of not less than twelve months on terms that reflect the lawful use and condition of the premises.
 - b. The overall benefit to the community of the proposal outweighs any adverse effect on employment opportunities and the range of available employment land and premises.
 - c. The existing use is generating environmental problems such as noise, pollution, or unacceptable levels of traffic and any alternative employment use would continue to generate similar environmental problems.
2. Redevelopment proposals which propose the loss of all employment uses will need to be accompanied by clear viability or other evidence as to why it is not possible to deliver an element of employment development as part of the scheme.

- 8.54 Employment sites at villages are a scarce resource, which should be retained. Making best use of existing employment sites reduces the pressure for development of new sites, including new sites in the countryside. It also provides a greater range of employment opportunities and reduces the need to travel. Sites should be retained to provide local employment, unless specific factors indicate otherwise.
- 8.55 The Council will require robust evidence that a site or building is no longer appropriate for employment use. Any marketing exercise should include extensive advertising. Both freehold and leasehold options should be made available without restrictive covenants preventing reuse as an employment use. All details of offers should be provided to the Council during the marketing period together with full reasons as to why any offer has not been accepted. The facility should only be marketed at an appropriate value agreed by the Council and an independent assessor for its existing use.

Established Employment Areas

Policy E/15: Established Employment Areas

1. In defined Established Employment Areas, redevelopment of existing buildings, and appropriate development for employment use will be permitted.
2. The following Established Employment Areas are defined on the Policies Map:
 - a. Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne;
 - b. Brookfields Business Estate / Park, Twentypence Road, Cottenham;
 - c. Land at Hinxton Road, South of Duxford;
 - d. Granta Park, Great Abington;
 - e. Wellcome Trust Genome Campus, Hinxton;
 - f. Cambridge Research Park, Landbeach;
 - g. Site to North of Cambridge Research Park, Landbeach;
 - h. Daleshead Foods Ltd, Cambridge Road, Linton;
 - i. Eternit site, Meldreth;
 - j. Norman Way Industrial Estate, Over;
 - k. Former Spicers site, Sawston;
 - l. Buckingway Business Park, Swavesey;
 - m. Convent Drive / Pembroke Avenue site, Waterbeach.
3. Permission will be refused where there would be a negative impact on surrounding countryside, or landscape character.

8.56 South Cambridgeshire contains a number of 'Established Employment Areas', which are identified on the Policies Map. The policy provides a context for considering planning applications on these sites, to support their role and function as employment sites.

8.57 Within these areas, appropriate development and redevelopment will be permitted, subject to consideration of land supply across the district, and other policy concerns. This will enable more efficient use of the sites, and allow them to be adapted for the needs of existing and future users.

8.58 The sites identified are outside development frameworks, and not in the Green Belt. Employment sites created from the conversion of agricultural buildings have not been included, as these were permitted through specific policies, and are not intended for extension.

Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside

Policy E/16: Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside

Subject to Green Belt policy, and outside the areas listed in Policy E/15, the expansion of established existing firms which are outside development frameworks will be permitted where:

- a. The proposal is justified by a business case, demonstrating that the business is viable, and has been operating successfully for a minimum of 2 years.
- b. There is a named user for the development, who shall be the first occupant. A planning condition will be attached to any permission to this effect.
- c. The proposal is of a scale appropriate in this location, adjacent to existing premises and appropriate to the existing development.
- d. There is no unacceptable adverse impact on the countryside with regard to scale, character and appearance of new buildings and/or changes of use of land.
- e. Existing buildings are reused where possible.
- f. The proposed development would not (by itself or cumulatively) have a significant adverse impact in terms of the amount or nature of traffic generated.

8.59 There are many existing businesses located in the countryside, which play a valuable part in the economy of the district. Whilst the Local Plan generally restricts new development in the countryside, the expansion of these firms will be supported if certain conditions are met. A business case will be required, to demonstrate the proposal will secure jobs or create new jobs.

8.60 The scale of growth must not conflict with other policies in the Plan, and must not result in an unsustainable level of development in a particular location.

Conversion or Replacement of Rural Buildings for Employment

Policy E/17: Conversion or Replacement of Rural Buildings for Employment

1. The change of use or adaptation of buildings in the countryside for employment use will be permitted provided the following apply:
 - a. The buildings are structurally sound, not makeshift in nature and are of permanent, substantial construction;
 - b. The buildings are capable of re-use without materially changing their existing character or impact upon the surrounding countryside;
 - c. The form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings.
2. The replacement of suitably located, existing buildings of permanent design and construction in the countryside for economic development purposes with well-designed new buildings will be permitted where it would bring about environmental improvement, and result in a more sustainable development.
3. Any increase in floor area must enhance the design, and ensure the building remains in scale and character with its rural surroundings.
4. Incidental uses such as car parking and storage should be accommodated within the group of buildings, or on well related land where landscaping can reduce the visual impact of the new site.
5. Employment generated must be in scale with the rural location. Developments resulting in significant numbers of employees or visitors must only be located near to larger settlements or accessible by public transport, cycling, or walking. Proposals which would have a significant adverse impact in terms of the amount or nature of traffic generated will be refused.

8.61 The [NPPF](#) requires that Local Plans support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.

Farm Diversification

Policy E/18: Farm Diversification

1. Well-conceived diversification schemes to support agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, will be permitted if:
 - a. They are consistent in scale with their rural location;
 - b. Existing buildings are reused where possible, and if not replaced, in accordance with Policy E/17;
 - c. Any new development is part of an existing group of buildings.
2. Applications must include a Business Plan, to demonstrate how the proposal will support the continued operation of the agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

- 8.62 Agriculture still makes an important contribution to the South Cambridgeshire economy, but increasingly farms are diversifying into non-agricultural activities, for the business to remain viable. This could include planting of woodland, farm shops, farm-based food processing and packaging, craft workshops, sporting facilities, fishing lakes, equestrian businesses, nature trails, holiday accommodation or renewable energy infrastructure. In order to protect the quality and distinctiveness of the local landscape, the Council wishes to prevent uncoordinated development in rural areas and the piecemeal stripping of assets from farms without regard for the viability of the holding.
- 8.63 It is important that diversification proposals are well founded in terms of effectively contributing to the agricultural business and the rural economy and integrating new activities into the environment and the rural scene. Farmers are required to submit a Business Plan with any planning application for diversification. This should include details of existing farm activities, the need for diversification, details of the proposal and implications of the proposal on, for example, the rural economy and the environment.

Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

Policy E/19: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

Proposals for new or extended tourist facilities and visitor attractions (excluding accommodation) in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. The development utilises and enhances the areas existing tourism assets;
- b. There is an identified need for a rural location, and all opportunities for reuse / replacement of existing rural buildings have been explored appropriate to the proposal;
- c. There would be no significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- d. The scheme is in scale with its location, particularly in relation to the amount and nature of traffic generated;
- e. The proposal maximises sustainable travel opportunities, including walking, cycling and public transport. Proposals which would have a significant adverse impact in terms of the amount or nature of traffic generated will be refused;
- f. The proposal does not require on site accommodation (e.g. for security).

- 8.64 Within the district, there are a number of assets which have become major tourist visitor attractions, such as the World War II airfield at Duxford which is now home to the Imperial War Museum, and Wimpole Hall which is owned by the National Trust. Facilities such as these can only be developed where the assets exist.
- 8.65 The [NPPF](#) requires support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. Tourist facilities and attractions could include visitor and information centres, toilets, tea rooms, or picnic sites. The policy is intended to support the districts existing attractions and assets. It is not the intention of the policy to encourage new major tourist attractions.

Tourist Accommodation

Policy E/20: Tourist Accommodation

1. Development which will provide tourist accommodation within development frameworks will be supported where the scale and type of development is directly related to the role and function of the centre.
2. Outside development frameworks, development to provide overnight visitor accommodation, holiday accommodation and public houses will be permitted by the change of use / conversion / replacement of suitable buildings and by small scale new developments appropriate to local circumstances.
3. Development of holiday accommodation will be limited to short term holiday lets through conditions or legal agreement. Permitted development rights may be removed in the interests of amenity.

8.66 The Cambridge area draws large numbers of visitors every year generating significant demand for visitor accommodation. The primary attraction is the City of Cambridge. Cambridge City Council has undertaken a study of the [need for hotel accommodation for Cambridge](#), and the Local Plan addresses the need for City Centre accommodation. Taking account of existing and planned facilities in and on the edge of the city, additional need is limited. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan therefore does not allocate any specific sites for new hotel accommodation. Holiday accommodation will be limited to no longer than 4 week lets to ensure it is retained as tourist accommodation and not used as long term or permanent residential accommodation.

Retail

Retail Hierarchy

Policy E/21: Retail Hierarchy

A retail hierarchy of preferred centres will be taken into account in considering proposals for retail development. Any proposals for new retail provision in these centres should be in scale with their position in the hierarchy. The hierarchy of centres in South Cambridgeshire is as follows:

- a. Northstowe and Waterbeach (new towns) town centres;
- b. Rural Centres' village centres;
- c. Other village centres (Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages and Infill Villages).

- 8.67 The [NPPF](#) requires Local Planning Authorities to recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality. To assist this they should define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes.
- 8.68 Cambridge is the relevant city centre in the local hierarchy while the ring of market towns just outside the district represent town centres.
- 8.69 The centres at the new towns of Northstowe and Waterbeach will also be considered as town centres in the hierarchy. For both new towns, there will be a need for convenience and comparison floor area provision of a scale necessary to ensure that the settlements are sustainable. However, the Council does not intend that either new town should perform a sub regional shopping role that has a significant impact on the role of Cambridge.
- 8.70 The village centres in Rural Centre Villages can fulfil the role of local centres but are not appropriate locations for shopping development to serve larger/dispersed catchment areas. Rural Centres are the appropriate location for shopping development to serve their local catchment area only. The same principle applies to Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages and Infill Villages, which serve even smaller catchment areas than Rural Centres and cater for very localised shopping needs. It is not practicable to define the extent of local centres on the Policies Map due to the dispersed distribution of most town centre uses in our villages.

Applications for New Retail Development

Policy E/22: Applications for New Retail Development

1. Proposals for new shops, redevelopment or extension of existing shops, or the change of use of buildings to shops within a development framework will only be permitted where the size and attraction of the shopping development is of a scale appropriate to the function and size of village. Wherever possible retail uses will be located in close proximity to each other in the centre of villages, unless serving very local catchments e.g. corner shops.

(continued)

2. Proposals involving additional retail floorspace resulting in a retail unit in excess of the following thresholds should be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment:
 - a. Rural Centre village centres 500 m² (gross)
 - b. Outside such centres 250 m² (gross)
3. Proposals for retail developments up to and including the above floorspace thresholds will generally be regarded as being of a scale that would not result in significant adverse impacts.
4. Where impact assessments indicate significant adverse impacts on an existing town or village centre, development will be refused.

- 8.71 Village shops play a vital role in achieving sustainability in villages, reducing the need for residents to travel to meet everyday needs. In smaller villages they also play an important community function, supporting those who have difficulty travelling further afield, and forming a hub to village life. The Council will, wherever possible, support provision of new shops and facilities of an appropriate scale to the village. Wherever possible retail uses will be encouraged to locate in close proximity to each other in order to allow for easier access and provide for greater convenience, thereby strengthening existing provision.
- 8.72 The [NPPF](#) sets a default threshold of 2,500 m² gross retail floorspace above which impact assessments would be required. Only the very largest superstores in the district would reach this threshold. Given the rural nature of the district it is likely that a much smaller development could impact on the viability of other village centres. A higher threshold is included in the village centres of Rural Centres, reflecting that these often include small scale supermarkets. However, the location of such a facility on the edge of the village, or in or on the edge of smaller village, could impact on the viability of village centres, and therefore a lower threshold has been included for proposals outside these areas.
- 8.73 In order to explore future needs for retail development, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council commissioned the [Cambridge Sub-Regional Retail Study](#) 2008. This showed that retail in Cambridge was performing well and provided an assessment of the need for new floorspace for both comparison goods (items not generally purchased on a frequent basis e.g. clothing, shoes, electrical goods, furniture, books.) and convenience goods (everyday and essential items e.g. food and drink) to 2021. It identified that additional needs were generally related to serving the planned major developments such as Northstowe.
- 8.74 New major developments will require retail development of an appropriate scale to meet the needs generated. Northstowe will require convenience and comparison floor area provision of a scale, which ensures that the settlement is sustainable. However, the Council does not intend that Northstowe should perform a sub regional shopping role that has a significant impact on the role of Cambridge.

Further guidance on proposals for convenience and comparison retail in Northstowe is contained in the [Northstowe Area Action Plan](#).

Retailing in the Countryside

Policy E/23: Retailing in the Countryside

1. Planning permission for the sale of goods in the countryside will not be granted except for:
 - a. Sales from farms and nurseries of produce and/or craft goods, where the majority of goods are produced on the farm or in the locality; or
 - b. Exceptionally, the sale of convenience goods, ancillary to other uses, where proposals, either individually or cumulatively, do not have a significant adverse impact on the viability of surrounding village shops, or the vitality of Rural Centres or other village centres.
2. Where permission is granted, conditions may be imposed on the types of goods that may be sold.

8.75 Sporadic development for retail uses in the countryside could result in unsustainable patterns of development, and could harm the vitality and viability of village centres.