

Viability Typologies the Councils do not consider should be subject to further testing

1. Strategic Residential Developments

Submissions made by Lichfields on behalf of Hill Residential state that further viability testing of strategic residential developments is required. Part of the reasoning is "...that the Uttlesford CIL Viability recommends a nil rate for strategic scale sites". During the hearing Bidwells suggested that a strategic development site comprises 500 dwellings because that is what was used by Peterborough City Council.

The Councils do not agree that strategic residential sites should be subject to further testing.

The reasons why the Councils do not propose exempting strategic sites is explained in the Consultation Statement (page 25 Doc ref 5.1).

In Uttlesford CIL is proposed funding **all** infrastructure with the adopted residential rates 2.5 times higher than that proposed in Greater Cambridge. Uttlesford made an informed decision to exempt strategic sites to negotiate a comprehensive planning obligation. The examiner's report says "DSP consider that it is unlikely to be appropriate to introduce a CIL that adds a significant fixed cost to strategic scale development and that it would be best to continue using s106 to directly provide specific infrastructure requirements on strategic sites".

In Peterborough the Council also uses CIL to fund **all** infrastructure with residential rates on developments of 15 or more dwellings reaching £108.11. The Council decided to exempt CIL from 'Residential development comprising 500 or more dwellings'. This approach could be adopted because the Council has a specific planning policy relating to developments of 500 dwellings or more (Policy LP5: Urban Extensions).

Planning guidance says the if the evidence shows that the area includes a zone, which could be a strategic site, which has low, very low or zero viability, the charging authority should consider setting a low or zero levy rate in that area. The same principle should apply where the evidence shows similarly low viability for particular types and/or scales of development.

Comparing our approach with Uttlesford or Peterborough fails to reflect the very different circumstances in this case both in terms of the purpose of the CIL (to unlock growth including on strategic sites through strategic transport infrastructure) and the rate itself. For Councils proposing to fund most of their infrastructure needs through the CIL, and with a much higher CIL rate than proposed here, there are good grounds for exempting CIL on strategic development sites entirely so that a holistic planning obligation can be negotiated. In Greater Cambridge the CIL is proposed funding a single item of infrastructure and not all items on the infrastructure delivery plan. This is an important distinction that should not be overlooked.

When we look at how CIL is applied the testing undertaken and evidence before the examination demonstrates a negligible impact. This is because our proposed rates are proportionate to the contribution that those strategic sites are currently making to strategic transport. It has therefore already been demonstrated that strategic sites can afford to pay CIL for strategic transport infrastructure without the need to run hypothetical viability appraisals.

Finally, there is no planning policy threshold of 500 dwellings in either the Cambridge City Local Plan or the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan meaning here is no policy basis to apply a different approach to strategic sites than other residential developments. Moreover, it is for the Council, rather than the developer, to determine how offsite strategic infrastructure should be funded.

The viability assessments of these sites has been proved but this can be evidenced as follows.

Broadly speaking the proposed Greater Cambridge CIL is comparable to £3,000 per each new dwelling on all major developments. This is because affordable housing and self-build housing is exempt from paying it. We have already undertaken analysis of 8 strategic development sites. These were edge of Cambridge sites at Marleigh, Springstead Village and Darwin Green and new communities further away from Cambridge at West Cambourne, Bourn Airfield, Genome Campus, and Waterbeach.

This analysis shows that the strategic transport contribution secured previously for Cambridge urban extensions is equivalent to £3,000 per dwelling when indexed to today. This demonstrates that for urban extensions there is no impact arising from the introduction of CIL.

Strategic scale residential led mixed use developments (new settlements) in rural areas are currently contributing between £4,000 and £6,000 per dwelling through a section 106 agreement. On face value these sites are better off with CIL but the shortfall would be made up from the CIL contributions from non-residential floorspace such as offices and retail that is provided within these mixed use communities.

This analysis shows introducing CIL will not worsen the viability of these developments and, as the Growth Company noted in their consultation response, specific CIL policy tools such as the use of land and infrastructure payments in kind, would be more effective than removing CIL liability. The Councils agree.

Table 1: Transport costs per dwelling indexed to January 2026.

	Transport per dwelling	Indexed to Jan 2026
Marleigh	£1,978	£2,875
Springstead Village	£2,025	£2,499
Darwin Green phases 2/3	£1,375	£1,452
West Cambourne	£4,309	£5,883
Bourn Airfield	£6,052	£6,632
Genome Campus	£4,828	£5,958
Waterbeach 1	£1,522	£1,845
Waterbeach 2	£4,541	£4,701

Marleigh S/2682/13/OL

Planning permission for 1300 homes at land north of Newmarket Road was issued on 30 November 2016 subject to a section 106 agreement completed on the same day. An additional 91 dwellings have been approved with additional contributions secured via a supplemental deed. The combined deeds secured £2,752,500, equivalent to around £1,978 per dwelling for offsite highways and transport improvements.

Springstead Village 18/0481/OUT

Outline planning permission for 1200 homes at Land North of Cherry Hinton, Coldhams Lane, Cambridge was issued on 18 December 2020 subject to a section 106 agreement completed on 14 December 2020. The deed secured £2,430,474, equivalent to £2,025 per dwelling for off-site highways and transport improvements.

Darwin Green phases 2 and 3 22/02528/OUT

Outline planning permission for 1000 homes at Cambridge Road, Impington was allowed by an Appeal Decision issued on 25 September 2024 subject to a s106 agreement completed 15 February 2024. The deed secured £1,375,000 equivalent to around £1,375 per dwelling for off-site highways and transport improvements.

West Cambourne S/2903/14/OL

Planning permission for 2350 dwellings and other uses at land west of Cambourne was issued on 29 December 2017 subject to a section 106 agreement completed on the same day. The agreement secured £10,128,041, equivalent to around £4,309 per dwelling for offsite highways and transport improvements.

Bourn Airfield S/3440/18/OL

Outline planning permission for 3500 homes at Bourn Airfield, St Neots Road, Bourn was issued on 30 July 2024 subject to a s106 agreement completed on 29 July 2024. The deed secured £21,181,749 equivalent to around £6,052 per dwelling for off-site highways and transport improvements.

Genome Campus S/4329/18/OL

Outline planning permission for up to 150,000 sqm of flexible employment uses and up to 1500 residential dwellings at The Wellcome Genome Campus was issued on 18th December 2020 subject to the section 106 agreement completed on 17 December 2020. The agreement secured £7,241,960 equivalent to circa £4,828 per dwelling for off-site highways and transport improvements.

Waterbeach Western part S/0559/17/OL

Outline Planning Application for up to 6500 dwellings, business retail community leisure and sports uses, a hotel, new schools at Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield site 27th September 2019 subject with a section 106 agreement completed on 25th September 2019. The agreement secured £9,893,717 equivalent to £1,522 per dwelling for off site highways and transport improvements.

Waterbeach eastern part S/2075/18/OL

Outline planning permission for up to 4500 dwellings business retail community leisure and sports uses new schools and sixth form centre at land adjacent Waterbeach Barracks was issued on 17th December 2024 subject to the section 106 agreement completed on 20th December 2024. The agreement secured £20,436,000 equivalent to circa £4,541 per dwelling for off-site highways and transport improvements.

On face value the Western part will be charged more through CIL than section 106 but this is not true because instead of contributions, the developer is providing infrastructure directly:

- Construct a new segregated cycle route across the A10 via a new cycle pedestrian and equestrian bridge and a route to Landbeach and from here along the Mereway to Cambridge Science Park. The route is approximately 5 miles long with 3 or 4m wide tarmac path and a 4m wide bridge over the A10
- Widen a 1.5m 2 mile path alongside the A10 between Denny End Road to Milton to 3.5m
- Improve the junction of Car Dyke Road with the A10 and installed a new toucan crossing over the A10 at this location
- Install a new toucan crossing over the A10 at Cambridge Research park
- Install a revised junction to increase capacity at Denny End Road with the A10
- Introduce a new bus route 100 to serve the new town with a 30 min frequency
- Undertake works near Waterbeach station for a bus to be able turn around at Waterbeach boat club
- Improve capacity on the A10 between Butt Lane and the A14
- Signalise the junction of A10 with Landbeach Road to improve safety.

2. Strategic Commercial Developments (i.e. Campuses)

Participants requested that the Council carry out a review relating to strategic commercial developments showing the viability across the whole campus.

On behalf of Cambridge Biomedical Campus Ltd ("CBC Ltd") Newmark say "CBC Ltd proposes an additional Offices/R&D sensitivity, a Life Science campus typology, to sit alongside the science park laboratory typologies already agreed". Table 1 provides the 'Proposed Life Science campus indicative typology'. On behalf of the Consortium Bidwells say "It may also be necessary to test a strategic scale R&D typology, as requested by Cambridge Biomedical Campus at the Hearing".

The Councils do not agree that testing to determine the viability of a new campus typology is necessary when considered against existing and committed work for the examination.

The Cambridge science and research parks have evolved over the decades and will continue to do so. The typologies used by Quintic Advisory reflect this.

1970s–1990s: The original template

The modern era begins in 1970 when Trinity College decided to develop the UK's first science park on its land north of the city: Cambridge Science Park (CSP). The move, inspired by U.S. precedents, created the first European park of its kind and set the template that others would copy. Early tenants like Laser-Scan (1973) demonstrated how university research could commercialise in place.

A complementary piece arrived in 1987 with St John's Innovation Centre (SJIC), Europe's first innovation centre of its type. SJIC added hands-on incubation and entrepreneur services to the park model, tightening the spin-out pipeline and anchoring the "Cambridge Phenomenon" in real buildings and mentoring.

Meanwhile, in the south, Babraham evolved from an institute estate into a true research campus, co-locating early-stage companies alongside institute labs, an early "bench-to-business" blueprint that would prove powerful for biotech.

1990s–2010s: From parks to platforms

The 1990s saw genomics explode at Hinxton. The Wellcome Trust set up the Sanger Centre (now Wellcome Sanger Institute), which went on to sequence roughly a third of the first human genome, cementing Cambridge as a global genomics hub and showing how "big-science" institutes can seed entire sub-clusters. The Wellcome Genome Campus and EMBL-EBI became enduring attractors for talent, data infrastructure, and industry partnerships.

As the 2000s rolled in, the city's south consolidated around healthcare and translational research. What is now the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) grew into Europe's largest concentration of medical research and health science, co-locating hospitals, university institutes, charities, and critically industry. AstraZeneca's decision in 2013 to move its global HQ and R&D to the campus, culminating in the Discovery Centre opening in 2021, crystallised the "clinic-adjacent R&D" model. The lesson: put discovery, patients, and manufacturing-minded R&D within walking distance and collaboration accelerates.

Source: South Cambridge Science Centre <https://www.scambssc.com/articles/the-evolution-of-cambridge-science-parks-lessons-and-thoughts-from-1970-to-2030>

Whilst noting that these campus have continued to evolve and expand/intensify, the pattern of this development across each of the parks comprises largely piecemeal and incremental delivery, in some cases reflecting planned and unplanned vacancy's, lease expiry or external strategic decisions on a company by company basis (such as Astra Zeneca's decision and more recently GSK decision to locate at Cambridge Biomedical Campus).

Importantly neither the current Local Plans or the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan propose a new campus further demonstrating the testing the CIL viability of such a scenario unnecessary.

The Local Plan Employment Strategy in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan highlights the policy centres on extending existing employment sites. It says:

- *To support the continued flourishing of our internationally renowned knowledge intensive sectors that are identified as priority sectors within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Growth Plan, in particular life sciences and ICT, we propose:*
 - *Significant additional space for continued growth in laboratory and office employment (Use Class E(g) at our existing cluster centres, including at North East Cambridge which incorporates Cambridge Science Park, West Cambridge, Wellcome Genome Campus, Melbourn Science Park;*
 - *Release of land from the Green Belt at Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Babraham Research Campus to meet future needs at these important facilities;*
 - *Further space at sustainable locations providing opportunity for the growth of new clusters in the longer term, particularly at Cambridge East, but also at Cambourne;*
 - *Continued support for laboratory and office employment (Use Class E(g) at adopted allocations in sustainable locations within and on the edge of Cambridge, and at the emerging new settlements of Northstowe and Waterbeach; and*
 - *Additional housing in locations that can be connected by sustainable means to cluster centres.*
- *To meet our emerging needs for mid-tech space (Use Classes E(g)/B2/B8), particularly where companies develop prototypes emerging from our knowledge intensive sectors, we propose allocations on the edge of the urban area, including at Eddington and Cambridge East, with longer term provision at an expanded Cambourne.*
- *To meet our immediate need for industrial floorspace and local needs for logistics floorspace (Use Classes B2/B8), we propose two substantial new allocations in the A14 corridor, with longer term provision at an expanded Cambourne. We also propose land at several of our mixed use allocations for general industrial space (Use Classes B2/B8).*

Even if it was decided that some further testing is required there is no single typology to reflect the nature, characteristics and location of such a proposal. To emphasis this point Map 1 has been produced to show location of existing and allocated employment sites.

Map 1 showing location of existing and allocated employment sites

