

Proof of Evidence of Mr Alex O'Byrne

The Beehive Redevelopment

Socio-Economic Proof of Evidence of Mr
Alex O'Byrne

for the Applicant

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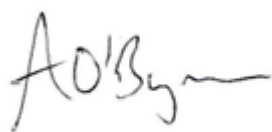
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1. Introduction / summary

Qualifications and experience

- 1.1 My name is Alex O'Byrne. I am a partner at Volterra Partners LLP ("Volterra"). Volterra is an economic consultancy specialising in appraising the economic, social, health, and equality impacts of property development and infrastructure.
- 1.2 I have been with Volterra for over 10 years, during which time I have specialised in evaluating the social and economic impacts of major developments, including regeneration projects and transport schemes. I hold a BSc in Economics from the University of Manchester.
- 1.3 Particularly relevant to this scheme, my experience includes assessing the economic impacts of numerous major R&D developments such as Royal Street in Lambeth; Spires II, Trinity House, and Eastpoint Business Park in Oxford; and development around St Mary's Hospital in Paddington. Additionally, I have provided socio-economic analyses related to employment, skills, health and community impacts at 210-240 Cambridge Science Park, Vitrum and Trinity Hall Farm Industrial Estate, Cambridge.
- 1.4 Beyond these specific projects, I have worked on various major mixed-use schemes, including Battersea Power Station, Westfield Stratford City, and Olympia London. I also have experience evaluating socio-economic impacts of developments designed to expand existing clusters, such as the west London film cluster at Marlow Film Studios, creative clusters at Truman Brewery, and tech development at 99 City Road. My expertise includes developing economic impact models and identifying strategies to optimise developments to meet local needs.
- 1.5 I am instructed in this case by the Applicant to provide expert socio-economic evidence and confirm that my evidence to this Inquiry has been prepared to the best of my knowledge and understanding. I believe that the facts stated within this proof of evidence are true and are relevant to the opinions that I have expressed. The opinions expressed in this proof of evidence reflect my true and professional opinions and the Inquiry's attention has been drawn to any matters which would affect the validity of those opinions.
- 1.6 The evidence presented is based on the most current information available and employs appropriate models and methodologies. The assessment of socio-economic impacts inherently requires professional judgment; where applied, I have provided clear justifications, grounded in my over 10 years of industry experience.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AO'Byrne" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex O'Byrne

The Proposed Development

- 1.7 The Proposed Development is a state-of-the-art commercial-led scheme near Cambridge city centre, comprising ten principal buildings. Nine buildings will include commercial spaces for offices, laboratories, and local centre uses, and one building will accommodate a multi-storey car park with space for community

and local centre uses at ground level. The scheme includes extensive public realm with flexible spaces for retail, services, leisure, health, wellbeing, and community uses.

Scope of evidence

1.8 This Proof of Evidence sets out my professional view on the socio-economic impacts that the Proposed Development can provide to Cambridge, wider businesses, and its role in meeting national growth priorities. The Proof of Evidence is structured as follows:

- **Context:** in this section, I outline the national, regional, and local policy frameworks that support the need for growth, alongside the relevant socio-economic context.
- **Economic impacts:** in this section, I set out my estimates of the jobs, expenditure, gross value added (GVA) and tax impacts which would arise from the Proposed Development.
- **How the Proposed Development will maximise benefits:** this section summarises the commitments the Applicant is making towards employment and skills and social impact, and considers how they respond to local issues.
- **The need for high quality space and additionality:** in this section, I outline the importance of providing high-quality, centrally located commercial space in Cambridge and demonstrate how this will generate growth which is additional to the UK economy.
- **Conclusions:** this section provides my concluding opinion on the socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development and their importance.

1.9 Wherever I utilise sources or methodologies, these are footnoted within the main evidence and I elaborate on certain aspects in the Appendix.

Summary of benefits

1.10 I believe the Proposed Development would make a significant contribution to the economy, supporting nationally significant industries and the government's plans to continue to build the Cambridge cluster at the same time as supporting local residents into employment. The table below summarises my professional view of these benefits.

Benefit	Detail / rationale / basis
Direct jobs	The redevelopment will support approximately 6,445 jobs onsite, delivering an uplift of 5,590 jobs compared to the existing site. This uplift alone constitutes 25% of Cambridge's job creation target by 2031.
Skill levels	The development will significantly boost employment across various skill levels, generating an additional 520 entry-level and 1,070 mid-level skilled jobs compared to the existing site.
Net additional jobs	After accounting for displacement and incorporating indirect and induced economic impacts, the proposal will support up to 7,130 net additional jobs at the regional level. Approximately 4,640 of these jobs would directly benefit Greater Cambridge residents.
GVA	The Proposed Development will contribute an additional £600 million annually in GVA, which is equivalent to a significant 18% of Cambridgeshire's total GVA in professional, scientific, and technical activities.
Tax	It will lead to tax revenues of between £180m and £240m each year.

Benefit	Detail / rationale / basis
Social impact	The Proposed Development will deliver comprehensive social initiatives responding to identified local infrastructure gaps. It includes a community hub, inclusive and safe open spaces designed in collaboration with Make Space for Girls, skatable areas co-designed with Cam Skate, active frontages, and dedicated STEM educational spaces.
Skills development	The Applicant has volunteered an Employment and Skills Strategy (CD 2.05) which among other things provides a commitment to working with contractors and tenants to maximise the use of the Real Living Wage, delivering STEM engagement opportunities, prioritising local jobs, supporting earn and learn qualifications, setting targets for diversity and inclusion and providing a dedicated employment and skills coordinator. Delivery is expected to be supported through prospective partnerships with local stakeholders — such as Abbey People, Form the Future and Marshall Skills Academy — where mutually beneficial programmes can be agreed. The Applicant has committed to establishing a dedicated STEM educational space. This initiative will actively involve tenants in engaging local primary and secondary schools, strengthening educational pathways into the life sciences sector.
Supporting UK growth ambitions	Economic growth remains the primary objective of the Labour government, and the Proposed Development directly aligns with this mission by delivering substantial economic activity, providing essential high-quality spaces for sectors identified as national priorities (life sciences, digital, and technology), and building on Cambridge's unique strengths to contribute significantly to the UK's growth ambitions.
Meeting quantitative and qualitative unmet need	There is a shared understanding with Cambridge City Council that there are significant challenges in meeting identified need for key sectors. In my judgement those needs are greater than published evidence suggests and the current pipeline is less certain. Nevertheless, we agree that the Proposed Development – through its scale, flexible design and edge-of-centre location – offers a rare opportunity to deliver the modern office and laboratory floorspace the city urgently requires. The scheme meets Iceni's locational and accommodation criteria for life-science and Information Communication Technology (ICT) occupiers by creating a critical mass of wet-lab, dry-lab and office space in an accessible central position, complemented by extensive amenities and high-quality workspaces that reinforce the Cambridge cluster. It widens genuine market choice, is committing to a strategy for supporting start-ups and scale-ups, and is deliverable. Because it is centrally located, amenity-rich and deliverable, it offers occupiers something many consents do not. The floorspace targets should therefore be read not as caps but as way-markers within a fluid economy in which appropriate combinations of site, location, and offer stimulate take-up and job creation. As such, it addresses the qualitative and quantitative shortfall of modern lab and office space in central Cambridge.
Additional economic benefits	The significance of the Cambridge cluster in supporting R&D and the international competitiveness of the industry means Cambridge is competing on a global scale for the best occupiers. Coupled with limited high quality stock in the right locations, a high proportion of the economic benefits that the Proposed Development would support would be additional at the UK level. This makes them all the more valuable to the economy and in contributing to growth targets.

2. Context

- 2.1 This section sets out the national, regional, and local policy context underpinning the need for economic growth, identifying key sectors critical for achieving these objectives, and emphasising the importance of delivering such growth inclusively. The context sets the scene for the rest of my proof where I will show that the Proposed Development directly aligns with and significantly contributes towards achieving national productivity objectives, addressing planning and sectoral priorities, and ensuring that growth benefits are shared widely.

National economic and growth context

- 2.2 The UK has struggled with poor productivity growth since the 2008 financial crisis. While this was true for most countries, the impact on the UK has been particularly severe.¹ The Resolution Foundation found that in the 12 years following the crisis, labour productivity grew by just 0.4% per year in the UK, less than half the average rate of 0.9% in the richest OECD countries. The productivity gap between the UK and France, Germany and the US has doubled since 2008, reaching 18%, costing the UK £3,400 in lost output per person annually.²
- 2.3 Productivity growth is key as it is a primary driver of long-term economic growth and improvements in living standards.³ As productivity increases, society can produce more goods and services with the same amount of work, leading to higher incomes and enhanced quality of life.
- 2.4 For this reason, economic growth is the number one mission of the Labour government (CD 9.29).⁴ The government is aiming for the highest sustained growth in the G7, supporting more people in good jobs, higher living standards and driving productivity growth in every part of the UK (CD 9.29).⁵

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.5 Chapter 6 of the NPPF (“building a strong, competitive economy”) emphasises that “decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt” and states that “[s]ignificant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”⁶ Paragraph 87 is clear that decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, making provision for “clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries” and “the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”
- 2.6 The NPPF further notes that planning policies should “pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories” and should have “regard to the national industrial strategy” which priorities sectors for growth and support including life sciences, digital and technology businesses and professional and business services.

¹ Resolution Foundation (2023), Ending Stagnation: A New Economic Strategy for Britain

² Resolution Foundation (2023), Ending Stagnation: A New Economic Strategy for Britain

³ House of Lords Library (2023), Economic growth, inflation and productivity.

⁴ Prime Minister’s Office, 2024. Missions and Foundations: Kickstarting Economic Growth

⁵ Prime Minister’s Office, 2024. Missions and Foundations: Kickstarting Economic Growth

⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024), National Planning Policy Framework.

- 2.7 Given Cambridge's internationally recognised strengths in life sciences and technology (described in paragraph 2.12), the NPPF's explicit support for clusters of high-tech, data-driven, and knowledge-intensive industries is directly applicable.

Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

- 2.8 The Industrial Strategy sets out the government's plan to support investment in high growth sectors to drive the UK's economic mission (CD 9.13).⁷ It aims to address barriers in the highest potential, highest growth driving sectors. A driver for this approach is that, over the past 25 years, "a third of our highest productivity industries were responsible for generating nearly two thirds of our economy's entire productivity growth."
- 2.9 The strategy identifies eight growth driving sectors, many of which could feasibly be supported at the Proposed Development, though the key sectoral focus in this location is life science and digital and technology. Crucially, the strategy specifically recognises that "planning constraints hold back growth, including in high-performing life sciences clusters like Cambridge."

Regional economic and skills priorities

- 2.10 The UK government has revived plans for the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, building on earlier proposals that aimed to develop the region's extensive knowledge economy (CD 9.28).⁸ The work underpinning the government's announcement suggests that unlocking its full potential could add up to £78bn to the UK economy by 2035.
- 2.11 Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority's economic and skills strategy documents emphasise sustainable growth, targeting an ambitious doubling of GVA by 2040, whilst addressing inequalities and enhancing productivity through investment in innovation, infrastructure, and skills development.⁹ The CPCA Skills Strategy further highlights the necessity of creating an inclusive, world-class skills ecosystem tailored to the distinct economic characteristics of Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough, and the Fens.¹⁰

Local growth and skills strategies

- 2.12 Greater Cambridge is one of the UK's most vital economic assets, home to the largest life sciences cluster in Europe, world-class research institutions, and emerging sectors like AI, genomics, and semiconductor design (CD 9.14).¹¹ The Greater Cambridge economy generates over £50bn annually, represents Europe's fastest-growing technology sector, and supports vital enabling industries, including manufacturing, data storage, and logistics. The economy is a net contributor of £1bn to the Treasury, making it a global hub of innovation and a cornerstone of the UK's growth strategy (CD 9.30).¹²

⁷ Department for Business & Trade (2024), Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy.

⁸ HM Treasury, 2025. Reeves: I am going further and faster to kick start the economy

⁹ Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (June 2022), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Economic Growth Strategy.

¹⁰ Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (2022), Employment and Skills Strategy 2022.

¹¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (March 2024), The Case for Cambridge.

¹² Collection of Cambridge leaders, 2025. Open letter ahead of spending review.

This notes that businesses headquartered in Greater Cambridge turn over "over £50 billion a year" and that the area is a "net contributor of around £1 billion" to HM Treasury. The £50 billion is gross sales revenue before any costs are deducted. After deducting operating costs, only profits, wages and other taxable flows remain; these generate the bulk of

- 2.13 The current adopted local plans for Greater Cambridge collectively plan for 44,000 jobs between 2011 and 2031, split equally between Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (22,000 jobs each).
- 2.14 In 2023, the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning “Development Strategy Update” identified a higher employment need, projecting 66,600 additional jobs for the period 2020–2041 (CD 9.15 paragraph 2.6).¹³ This reflects updated evidence (in 2023, prior to the Labour Government’s growth plans) and highlights the growing ambitions for the region’s economic development.
- 2.15 The Government stated on 28 August 2024 that Greater Cambridge has a vital role to play in this Government’s mission to kickstart economic growth. The Cambridge Growth Company has been tasked with identifying the growth capacity of the city region (CD 9.19).¹⁴ The Cambridge Growth Company is currently developing this evidence base, but a letter from Matthew Pennycook says that the plans are to go further than the local plans, in terms of scale, ambition and timescale (CD 9.19).¹⁵
- 2.16 Cambridge City Council recognises the city’s world-class clusters of high-growth businesses within the digital, information technology, and life sciences sectors. While many residents directly benefit from this economic prosperity and experience a high quality of life, the Council acknowledges that these advantages are not universally felt. Significant disparities remain, with concentrated pockets of deprivation and inequality.¹⁶ For example, Abbey ward, which the site falls within, contains some of the most deprived super output areas in Cambridge – and in the country.¹⁷ As a result, the council’s strategic focus, summarised in the Community Wealth Building Strategy, is on ensuring future growth is inclusive, to ensure all residents have the opportunity to benefit from growth in the city.

tax receipts (corporation tax, PAYE/NIC, VAT, etc.). HM Treasury then subtracts the public spending it directs back into Greater Cambridge (NHS, schools, transport, local government, etc.). The residual is a net fiscal surplus of c. £1 billion. ONS regional public-sector finance tables show that only a handful of regions (principally London, the South East and parts of the East of England) record such surpluses; most UK regions run a net fiscal deficit.

¹³ Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (January 2023), Greater Cambridge Local Plan Strategy Topic Paper, Development Strategy Update (Regulation 18 Preferred Options)

¹⁴ Appointment of Cambridge Growth Company Chair: Letter from Matthew Pennycook MP. Published 31 October 2024.

¹⁵ Appointment of Cambridge Growth Company Chair: Letter from Matthew Pennycook MP. Published 31 October 2024.

¹⁶ Cambridge City Council (March 2024), Community Wealth Building, strategy and approach.

¹⁷ MHCLG, 2019. English indices of deprivation 2019.

3. Economic impacts

- 3.1 In this section of my evidence I outline the direct, indirect and induced socio-economic contribution of the Proposed Development. This includes the economic impacts created during both the construction and operational phases.
- 3.2 Industry standard approaches are used to estimate the economic impacts. This is supplemented with publicly reported data.
- 3.3 I demonstrate that the operational phase impacts will result in permanent economic benefits, making a significant contribution to the economy. In *Bewley Homes plc vs SSLUHC*, the court found that the weight given to economic benefits should vary based on each case's merits.¹⁸ My calculations clearly show that the Proposed Development will generate substantial employment growth, significant increases in local spending, and considerable uplifts in GVA and tax revenues, collectively representing major economic benefits. Mr Kaddish applies the appropriate planning weight within his planning evidence.

The Proposed Development

- 3.4 Once completed, the Proposed Development is anticipated to deliver 88,752 sqm (NIA) of commercial floorspace across multiple uses, including office, lab, lab-enabled office, retail, and community spaces.¹⁹ I have considered two scenarios for potential delivery:
- **Illustrative scheme:** under this scenario, blocks 2, 3, 5, and 6 will be designated as wet lab-enabled space, totalling 47,375 sqm (NIA). This space is equally divided into lab and lab-enabled office space, based on the Applicant's experience, reflecting the most likely configuration for future end-users. Lab spaces typically require adjacent office (or "write-up") areas for data analysis, result recording, and other administrative functions. Because lab spaces generally support lower employment densities compared to offices, this analysis conservatively assumes a higher proportion of lab space within the Proposed Development.
 - **Office scheme (maximum):** this alternative scenario assumes the Proposed Development consists entirely of office space, without any lab provision. In this case, the total commercial floorspace would amount to 91,851 sqm (NIA). Given that office spaces support higher employment densities, this scenario represents a high-end sensitivity test.
- 3.5 The economic impacts presented in this report focus primarily on the most probable scenario – the illustrative scheme – which assumes a balanced provision of wet lab and dry lab-enabled office spaces within the lab-enabled buildings. For completeness, the implications of the maximum office scheme are included in section 1 of the Appendix. Additionally, the socio-economic Environmental Statement (ES) chapter (CD 1.05e) examines a further scenario representing the most conservative employment density (minimum employment yield) according to the Employment Densities Guide (CD 9.05), details of which are also provided in section 1 of the Appendix.²⁰ Both alternative scenarios are considered less likely, given their reliance on less realistic assumptions — either complete office usage or minimal employment density

¹⁸ *Bewley Homes PLC v Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities & Anor* [2024] EWHC 1166 (Admin) (16 May 2024).

¹⁹ The Statement of Common Ground sets a cap only on Gross External Area (GEA); there is no formal cap on Gross Internal Area (GIA) or NIA. Any GIA or NIA reference in the analysis is an indicative conversion from the agreed GEA cap, not a separate constraint.

²⁰ Homes and Communities Agency (3rd edition), November 2015, Employment Densities Guide.

configurations. As demonstrated in section 1 of the Appendix, substantial economic benefits persist even under the most conservative scenario, reinforcing the robustness of the economic case.

Construction phase

Construction employment

- 3.6 The construction of the Proposed Development would result in additional economic activity in terms of construction jobs and spending. An industry standard method of estimating the number of construction workers likely to be needed to deliver the development is to divide the expected cost of construction by the gross value added (GVA) of the average construction worker.²¹
- 3.7 Applying this method to the estimated construction cost, I estimate the Proposed Development would support an average of 870 construction jobs over a 96-month construction period, totalling 6,945 years' worth of construction jobs.²²

Construction worker expenditure

- 3.8 I estimate that these construction workers would spend an average of £1.3m each year in the local area, which is equivalent to a total of £10.5m locally over the duration of the construction period.²³ I explain my approach to estimating this here. This is again industry standard, but I have adjusted the method down in order to be conservative and not to overstate these potential benefits.
- 3.9 Data on daily expenditure of different workers is not something which is reliably and consistently recorded. YouGov published a survey which found that UK workers spent £6 in the local area on average in 2005. The GLA recently published a study which estimated London based office worker expenditure of £13 per day in 2020.²⁴ As there is uncertainty about these figures and the site is not in London, I have conservatively applied the YouGov estimate but adjusted this to reflect increase in average earnings data over the time and sectoral differences. I have applied an earnings differential of 90% to reflect an increase in average weekly earnings across all sectors of £379 in January 2005 to £721 for construction workers in January 2024.²⁵ Applying this to the £6, I estimate construction worker expenditure of £11.42.
- 3.10 To be conservative, I have assumed that 60% of workers spend £11.42 for 220 days a year.
- 3.11 I have estimated this impact for completeness, but I view it only as a small benefit to local businesses.

²¹ ONS, 2024. Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) by industry, 2022; ONS, 2024. Business Register and Employment Survey, 2022. While employment data for 2023 is available, the 2022 data has been used for both jobs and GVA figures because 2023 GVA data was not available at the time of writing. This ensures consistency between both datasets by covering the same period.

²² This is slightly lower than the average of 990 jobs estimated in the 2024 planning application. The reduction reflects the use of updated construction GVA per job data, ensuring that this assessment relies on the most current available information.

²³ These figures have fallen slightly since the 2024 planning application which found that the workers would spend a total of £11.9m in the local area over the duration of the construction period (£1.5m per annum). This is due to the reduction in construction jobs due to the updated GVA per construction worker figure. I have also updated the construction worker daily spend estimate but this change was not material.

²⁴ GLA, 2020. Lost worker vs. tourism expenditure in the Central Activities Zone (CAZ).

²⁵ ONS, 2024. EARN01 Average Weekly Earnings - total pay, Great Britain (seasonally adjusted).

Operational phase

Gross direct employment

3.12 Once operational, I estimate the Proposed Development would support 6,445 jobs, equivalent to 5,755 FTEs, after accounting for part time workers.²⁶

Table 3.1 - gross direct employment

Use	Floorspace (sqm)	Density (by floorspace type)	Density (sqm per FTE)	FTEs	Jobs
Lab (wet lab)	23,688	NIA	50	475	515
Lab-enabled office (dry lab)	23,688	NIA	12	1,975	2,150
Office	36,328	NIA	12	3,025	3,400
Retail	4,852	NIA	17.5	275	385
Events / community	246	GIA	125	0	5
Total	88,801			5,755	6,445

NB: figures are rounded to the nearest five and figures may not sum due to rounding.

3.13 These estimates are based on the following employment densities from HCA guidance (CD 9.05):²⁷

- Lab (wet lab) density based on mid-point of R&D density of 40-60sqm per FTE;
- Office density of 12 sqm per FTE, which is at the lower end of the recommended office range (8–13 sqm per FTE). This is a conservative employment density to reflect the lower densities seen following the pandemic. This density has also been applied to dry lab spaces, as their occupancy is expected to be similar to office spaces.
- Retail density based on the mid-point of the 15-20sqm per FTE recommendation; and
- Events / community space based on a density of 125 sqm per job, as advised for a “mixed-use venue” in the densities guide. The density of this space type is uncertain, but it supports relatively few workers.

Existing jobs

3.14 The site is a mid-sized retail park with mixed uses and associated ground level car park. The total site area is 7.58 hectares (ha), which supports approximately 21,791 sqm (NIA), predominantly retail floorspace.

²⁶ Jobs have been estimated using the standard assumption of one full time equivalent employee (FTE) is equivalent to two part time workers, and using the part time split of employees for each industry reported by the Business Register and Employment Survey, as reported in section 2 of the Appendix. $\text{Jobs} = \text{FTE} / (1 - 0.5 \times \text{PT split})$.

²⁷ Homes and Communities Agency (3rd edition), November 2015, Employment Densities Guide.

3.15

As shown in **Table 3.2**, there are 17 units within the Beehive Centre. In the same table, I provide two alternative head-count estimates: (i) a JLL survey for the Applicant and (ii) a calculation that applies HCA (2015) employment densities to VOA (2023) floorspaces data. The latter method results in an estimated 855 jobs, which is higher than the JLL estimates of 730 jobs. The largest discrepancy is due to employment in the Asda. To ensure a reasonable worst-case assessment of the loss of jobs, I take forward the higher estimate of 855 jobs to assess this impact.

Table 3.2 - employment estimates for existing businesses onsite

Tenant name	Floorspace type	Jobs (Volterra estimates)	Jobs (JLL estimates)
Subway	Food and beverage (F&B)	5	10
Everlast Fitness	Gym/leisure	25	25
Gymfinity Kids	Gym/leisure	30	30
Dreams	Retail warehouse	15	10
Tapi Carpets & Floors	Retail warehouse	10	10
Carpetrigh	Retail warehouse	15	15
Next Home	Retail warehouse	25	30
Go Outdoors	Retail warehouse	25	40
B&M	Retail warehouse	45	50
Hobbycraft	Retail warehouse	15	30
Pets at Home	Retail warehouse	25	30
Costa Coffee	F&B	10	15
M&S food	Retail food store	85	100
Asda	Retail food store	415	200
Homesense TK Maxx	Retail warehouse	50	80
Wren Kitchens	Retail warehouse	35	30
Porcelenosa	Retail warehouse	15	15
G4S Security	Security	5	5
Total		855	730

3.16

The 855 jobs is equivalent to approximately 670 FTE jobs, after accounting for part time workers.

3.17

I acknowledge community concerns regarding the potential loss of affordable onsite retail options, as highlighted in the Social Life report (CD 1.17). Such losses could negatively impact some residents. However, the Applicant is in detailed negotiations with a number of the major Beehive retailers to relocate to nearby Cambridge Retail Park (CRP) on Newmarket Road, which is also under the Applicant's ownership. The Applicant has currently agreed Agreement for Lease/Heads of Terms with a number of them. Furthermore, a diverse range of comparable retail options are already available in close proximity, as detailed in section 3 of the Appendix.

Gross additional jobs

- 3.18 When compared to the existing site, I estimate the Proposed Development would support 5,590 gross additional jobs (5,080 FTEs). The gross additional jobs support 25% of Cambridge's job target to 2031 (22,100 net additional jobs between 2011 and 2031), outlined in the Cambridge local plan (CD 4.04).²⁸

Occupational breakdown

- 3.19 I apply the average occupational distribution by sector for the East of England to the jobs at both the existing site and the Proposed Development, in order to estimate their occupational breakdown. The dataset used, released in 2015 by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, provides occupational distributions by sector at the regional level.²⁹ For example, it differentiates between managerial and professional occupations versus elementary occupations, as well as the other occupational categories shown in the table below. This occupational breakdown has been applied to relevant sectors such as professional services and retail to estimate the occupational breakdown of both the existing and proposed jobs.
- 3.20 The results are presented in the table below. I estimate that the Proposed Development would result in an uplift in jobs at all occupational levels compared to the existing site. Specifically, the uplift would be approximately 4,010 high-level jobs, 1,070 mid-level jobs, and 520 entry-level jobs.

Table 3.3 - skills distribution, existing and proposed

	Occupation	Existing site	Proposed Development	Uplift
High-level	Managers, directors and senior officials	130	965	4,010
	Professional occupations	75	2,035	
	Associate professional and technical	95	1,315	
Mid-level	Skilled trades occupations	65	240	1,070
	Administrative and secretarial	80	790	
	Caring, leisure and other service	5	195	
Entry level	Sales and customer service	265	355	520
	Process, plant and machine operatives	50	110	
	Elementary occupations	85	440	
Total		855	6,445	5,590

(figures may not sum due to rounding)

²⁸ Cambridge City Council, 2018. Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

²⁹ UK Commission for Employment and Skills (June 2015), Working Futures.

Worker expenditure

3.21 I estimate that operational workers at the Proposed Development would spend an estimated £10.7m annually in the local area, an uplift of £10.1m compared to the existing site which supports an estimated £0.6m.³⁰ This uses the same methodology as described in the context of construction worker expenditure, but for sectors relevant to the operational uses.³¹

Net additional employment

3.22 The Homes and Communities (HCA) Additionality Guide provides a framework that allows for the estimation of the net additional impacts of a development (CD 9.03).³² It is industry standard practice to use this guidance to estimate benefits of proposed developments.

3.23 The MHCLG appraisal guidance (2025) has superseded the HCA Additionality Guide for value for money appraisal (CD 9.21).³³ The MHCLG guide reflects the revised Green Book, providing additional advice on how to rigorously assess value for money and a greater focus on spatial and distributional impacts. However, in the context of additionality, the guidance is not as detailed in terms of specific assumptions around additionality. Therefore, the HCA Additionality Guide remains the most applicable and robust guidance and I consider it appropriate based on my experience to utilise it to assess the additionality for the purposes of the Proposed Development. However, I draw on information from both documents.

3.24 I factor in displacement and the multiplier effect, which I explain below, in order to estimate net additional FTEs at the national level.

3.25 The results of the net additional employment using the assumptions above are shown in **Table 3.4**. The Proposed Development is expected to create net additional jobs of 7,130 across the East of England. Based on 2011 commuting patterns, approximately 40% (around 2,850 jobs) would go to Cambridge residents, and 65% (around 4,640 jobs) would go to Greater Cambridge residents.

Table 3.4 - net additional employment

Employment type			Total
Jobs		A. Gross additional	5,590
	= A * (1 - 25%)	B. Net direct (following displacement)	4,190
	= B * (1.7 - 1)	C. Net indirect (multiplier)	2,940
	= B + C	D. Net additional	7,130
		E. Net additional (FTEs)	6,480
Jobs	= D * (0.4)	to Cambridge residents	2,850
	= D* (0.65)	to Greater Cambridge residents	4,640

³⁰ This is slightly higher than estimates presented in the 2024 material, which found that the workers would generate an additional £9.6m (£10.2m in total) of worker expenditure each year. The difference is due to the use of updated data on earnings.

³¹ This assumes a daily worker expenditure of £14.40 for office and lab employees and £7.00 for retail and events/community jobs. To be conservative, it is assumed that 60% of workers spend this 220 days a year.

³² HCA, 2014. Additionality Guide: Fourth Edition.

³³ MHCLG, March 2025. MHCLG Appraisal Guide. Third edition.

Displacement

- 3.26 Displacement is the proportion of jobs that would otherwise have been supported elsewhere. The HCA Additionality Guide notes that “displacement arises where the intervention takes market share [...] from existing local firms and organisations” (CD 9.03).³⁴ The MHCLG Appraisal Guide (2025) further clarifies that minimal displacement is associated with interventions that have a strong strategic rationale (such as enhancing industry clusters), and involve sectors characterised by low displacement with few local competitors.
- 3.27 Given this guidance, I consider a low displacement rate (25%) to be justified for the Proposed Development, for the following key reasons:
- **Strong strategic rationale:** the development is part of an innovation cluster specifically targeting life sciences and technology sectors. Co-location is vital for productivity and innovation in these sectors, meaning that comparable alternative investments in other locations are unlikely, thus reducing displacement.
 - **Specialisation and scale of provision:** the Proposed Development is tailored to accommodate specialised R&D, laboratory, and innovation spaces that are distinct from typical commercial offerings in the local market. Such highly specialised spaces are limited in central locations, further reducing potential displacement of existing jobs.
 - **Global competitiveness and network effects:** Cambridge's innovation ecosystem operates on an international rather than merely local or regional scale, attracting global investment and talent. Strengthening this ecosystem through critical mass and network effects is likely to generate genuinely additional employment, drawing economic activity into the region rather than displacing it from elsewhere within the UK.
- 3.28 Given Cambridge's highly skilled and specialist economy, I anticipate additional investment and skilled labour to be attracted from abroad, reducing any displacement of jobs from elsewhere in the country.

Multiplier

- 3.29 The multiplier accounts for the creation of additional employment opportunities through expanded supply chains and worker incomes. It reflects the wider economic benefits indirectly supported by direct activity at the Proposed Development. The HCA Additionality Guide identifies two primary sources of multiplier effects: the supply linkage multiplier, which arises from additional business-to-business expenditure within local and regional supply chains; and the income (or consumption) multiplier, resulting from increased local spending of employee incomes.
- 3.30 The Proposed Development justifies the use of a high multiplier at the regional level (around 1.7) due to the following factors:
- **Strong supply chain linkages:** the Proposed Development's emphasis on knowledge-intensive sectors, specifically life sciences, technology, and professional services, inherently generates strong regional supply linkages. These sectors typically procure significant proportions of goods and specialist services locally or regionally, supporting a wide network of high-value businesses within Cambridge and its surrounding areas.
 - **High-income worker spending:** the Proposed Development will support high-skilled, high-wage jobs (in labs, offices, and R&D facilities) which will boost local consumer expenditure. Employees in these

³⁴ HCA, 2014. Additionality Guide: Fourth Edition.

sectors typically spend larger proportions of their incomes on local goods and services, particularly given the high-quality local amenities and retail offers, both on site and in Cambridge and its immediate region.

- **Critical mass and cluster dynamics:** the Proposed Development strengthens an existing internationally recognised innovation cluster, creating regional economic benefits through reinforcing networks and attracting additional firms, skilled labour, and investment to the region. These clustering effects substantially enhance both the indirect (supply linkage) and induced (income-related) multiplier impacts within the regional economy.

Gross value added

3.31 GVA is the additional value generated by economic activity. I estimate the GVA impact of the Proposed Development by multiplying the number of jobs in each sector by the annual GVA per job in that respective sector. The following GVA per job figures were used for this analysis, which are largely based on ONS data on GVA and jobs, apart from the office related values which are from an estimate of GVA per head in the life science sector:³⁵

- Life science GVA per job of £104,000 applied to the wet lab, dry lab and office jobs.
- Retail GVA per job of £58,250.
- Average F&B GVA per job of £13,860 applied to the events and community space jobs.

3.32 When compared to the existing Site, the Proposed Development would lead to an additional output in GVA of an estimated £600m per year —³⁶ equivalent to 18% of Cambridgeshire's total GVA within the professional, scientific and technical activities sector in 2022.³⁷

Tax receipts

3.33 By comparing national statistics on GVA in the years 1997 to 2017 with public sector receipts in each year, it can be estimated that tax revenues typically account for between 30% and 40% of GVA, through business rates, VAT, corporate and income tax (among other smaller taxes).³⁸ It is standard practise to apply this range to GVA estimates to arrive at estimates of tax receipts.

3.34 Using this approach, I estimate that the Proposed Development would result in additional tax revenues of between £180m – £240m each year.

³⁵ ONS, 2024. Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) by industry, 2022; ONS, 2024. Business Register and Employment Survey, 2022. While employment data for 2023 is available, the 2022 data has been used for both jobs and GVA figures because 2023 GVA data was not available at the time of writing. This ensures consistency between both datasets by covering the same period. Life science job data from CPCA (2021), Life Science Strategy for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

³⁶ While this figure is based on updated GVA per job calculations from 2022, the number of jobs and the associated GVA impact has not changed (after rounding).

³⁷ ONS, 2022. Regional GVA (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions. The £600 million-per-annum figure is derived by applying sector-specific GVA-per-job benchmarks to the additional jobs expected once the scheme is fully occupied. The majority of around 95% of those jobs (wet-lab, dry-lab and lab-enabled office roles) are within the professional, scientific & technical activities sector, which generated about £3.364 billion of GVA across Cambridgeshire in 2022. The comparison is offered purely to give a sense of scale: while most jobs will be in this sector, not every job created by the development will register in that single SIC code, so the figure should be viewed as contextual rather than a direct projection of uplift within the sector.

³⁸ ONS, 2024. Gross value added (income approach) and ONS, 2019. Public sector finances.

Business rates

- 3.35 Business rates have been estimated by applying rateable values per sqm specific to the types of commercial space in Cambridge. The different proposed uses have been closely aligned with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) primary description categories.
- 3.36 The business rates calculation is based on estimated rateable values multiplied by the business rate multiplier. Data on current rateable values for existing properties in Cambridge was used to derive per sqm metrics, which were applied to each use proposed at the Development, as follows:³⁹
- An average rateable value of £266 per sqm for lab space in Cambridge (applied to both wet lab and dry lab spaces).
 - An average rateable value of £233 per sqm for office space across the CB1 postcode area.
 - An average rateable value of £213 per sqm for retail space within the CB1 postcode area.
 - No estimate was calculated for the events/community space due to insufficient comparable data.
- 3.37 While forecasting business rates involves inherent uncertainties, the approach adopted provides an estimate based on existing valuations. It is considered conservative, as the Proposed Development will be of a higher quality than existing benchmarks.
- 3.38 On this basis, the Proposed Development would generate a total of approximately £11.4m per annum in business rates, representing an additional £8.5m annually compared to the existing site. Of this additional amount, around 40% (£3.4m) would be retained by Cambridge City Council.⁴⁰

³⁹ Valuation Office Agency, 2022. Draft summary valuations 2023

⁴⁰ Cambridge City Council's 2023/2024 unaudited accounts imply that retained business rates were around 40%.

4. How the Proposed Development will maximise benefits

- 4.1 While Cambridge has a strong and growing economy in many sectors, not everyone has been able to benefit from this. There are pockets of deprivation, residents who experience poverty and more who face challenges due to a high cost of living. Persistent inequalities exist, including disparities in educational attainment and skill levels. Addressing these local challenges has been central to the Applicant's considerations from the outset. In this section I summarise the commitments which aim to directly respond to local issues, support local benefit and reduce inequalities.

Employment and skills commitments

- 4.2 There is a targeted commitment to promoting education and employment for local people through skills development and career support as presented in the volunteered and bespoke Employment and Skills Strategy (ESS) accompanying the Application (CD 2.05). The ESS identifies local shortfalls and skills gaps and outlines an action plan to proactively address these gaps.
- 4.3 Employment and Skills Delivery Plans for the construction and operational phases will be submitted prior to commencement of development and prior to occupation of any commercial unit respectively. These plans will outline the plan during construction and operation, respectively, for delivering the outline commitments in the ESS. An appointment of a dedicated Employment and Skills Coordinator will be vital to this – they will be the point of contact between the council, principal contractor and tenants. This person would be responsible for the delivery of the employment and skills commitments outlined in the s106 agreement and would also be responsible for:
- Ensuring key elements of the strategy is understood between all parties;
 - Developing stakeholder relationships, such as with education bodies and other partners; and
 - Ensuring the monitoring, management and reporting of commitments.
- 4.4 While the precise outcomes of the ESS will be subject to market conditions and evolving local needs, the Applicant has committed to pursuing the following broad objectives, which apply to both the construction and operational phases, unless stated otherwise:
- Work with contractors and tenants to maximise use of the Real Living Wage;
 - Deliver STEM engagement opportunities (eg career talks, job fairs, curriculum support);
 - Prioritise job opportunities to the local community;
 - Include outreach programmes for apprenticeships and earn and learn positions during the construction and operational phases;⁴¹
 - Include targets to improve diversity and inclusion within the R&D sector once operational;
 - Provide significant construction employment opportunities with specific targeting and training of local people through apprenticeships; and
 - Involve a working programme of partnerships.
- 4.5 The employment and skills commitments extend beyond outreach and job creation. The Applicant has committed to establishing a dedicated STEM educational space. This initiative will actively involve tenants in

⁴¹ Earn and learn describes routes into employment which combine study with practical experience, such as apprenticeships, graduate training programmes, sponsored students, and T level placements.

engaging local primary and secondary schools, strengthening educational pathways into the life sciences sector.

- 4.6 Depending on community needs and stakeholder preferences at the time, local groups such as Abbey People or Cambridge Youth Panel may also utilise youth and community spaces provided within the Proposed Development.

Social value and community infrastructure commitments

- 4.7 An independent social enterprise, Social Life, conducted a comprehensive Social Infrastructure Assessment at the outset of the project, focusing on Abbey, Romsey, and Petersfield wards. The assessment provided valuable insights into community needs, current usage, and accessibility of the existing Beehive Centre (CD 1.17).
- 4.8 The assessment found a social infrastructure gaps, including limited green spaces, lack of night-time activities, insufficient gathering spaces, inadequate youth facilities, and social divisions between Abbey and Petersfield wards. The local community emphasises preserving affordable amenities amid economic pressures, enhancing safety through active and continuous use of spaces, and providing unique yet complementary features in the redevelopment. There is strong demand for interactive community spaces to support social cohesion and facilitate interactions between local residents and workers onsite.
- 4.9 A Social Infrastructure Strategy supports the Application (CD 2.07). It summarises the key social initiatives that the Proposed Development will deliver to address identified shortfalls and needed facilities that have been identified through stakeholder engagement with local organisations, the community and delivery partners. The strategy, secured through planning conditions and obligations, includes:
- Ongoing community work, engaging with local delivery partners;
 - Establishment of a Community Steering Group comprising diverse local stakeholders to guide the use and programming of community spaces;
 - Flexible community space, creating a Community Hub with spaces to host a range of activities;
 - Ensuring inclusive, safe, and welcoming open spaces, informed by collaborations with organisations such as Make Space for Girls;
 - Design principles to include for Skatable spaces, with key inputs from Cam Skate to co-design skatable streets and furniture within parts of the hard landscaping scheme.
 - A STEM-oriented educational resource space, providing hands-on learning space.
 - An educational programme, providing skills so that people can access new local job opportunities.
 - Active frontages coordinated with open space to create clear legibility as set out in the Outline Wayfinding Strategy.
- 4.10 Prior to occupation of any commercial building, the Applicant will submit a Community Outreach Strategy, developed in consultation with key stakeholders, for approval by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). This strategy will define commitments regarding public and community spaces, support educational and on-site activities for local schools and stakeholders, and outline an annual monitoring framework for ten years.
- 4.11 The Applicant will also submit a Meanwhile Use Strategy for LPA approval, detailing temporary uses beneficial to the community throughout the construction period, until demolition is complete.

Summary

4.12

In my view, because these measures are specific, enforceable, and long-term, they carry positive weight in the overall planning balance when assessed against NPPF paragraph 81 and Cambridge's inclusive economy objectives. They demonstrably go beyond standard industry practice and directly address the deprivation and skills challenges identified in the evidence base. While their delivery depends on third-party engagement and the commitments themselves are largely process-based (creating some uncertainty regarding precise outcomes), they nevertheless represent a robust and proactive approach that would positively impact the local economy.

5. The need for high quality space and additionality

- 5.1 In this section, I outline why providing high-quality space in Cambridge is critical, focusing on the concept of additionality, which refers to creating net new economic activity in the UK rather than simply displacing existing activity. I will demonstrate Cambridge's unique economic contribution, explain why specific types of space in particular locations are crucial, and illustrate how delivering such space directly supports the UK's national economic objectives.

Contribution to national and regional economic growth

- 5.2 I have previously highlighted that Greater Cambridge significantly contributes to the UK economy. It is Europe's largest technology cluster, with over 5,000 high tech firms (CD 9.14).⁴² As of 2024, 24 businesses born in Cambridge have reached \$1bn 'unicorn' status.⁴³ Cambridge earned the title of the 'unicorn capital of Europe', with 47.9 unicorns per million inhabitants, far outpacing Luxembourg (17.4) and Oxford (12.9) (CD 9.18 paragraph 2.6).⁴⁴
- 5.3 This concentration of research-intensive businesses and talent – often termed the “Cambridge Cluster” – has been built over decades around the University of Cambridge and associated institutes.
- 5.4 Due to this, Cambridge attracts significant investment. In 2024, Cambridge attracted £517 million in venture capital funding, marking an 83% increase from the previous year (CD 9.27).⁴⁵ This positioned Cambridge among the top 10 European cities for funding.
- 5.5 The uniqueness of its economy is well documented and it has several attributes that enable the cluster to thrive:
- Access to a highly skilled labour pool and source of entrepreneurs related to the universities;
 - Knowledge spillovers and informal learning facilitated by the scale of the sector clustering and interaction between academics, institutions and business; and
 - Depth of the supporting supplier base across the range of professional services, such as financial and legal.

Why continued growth in Cambridge is essential

- 5.6 Greater Cambridge's innovation ecosystem and high-value sectors have long played a critical role in driving the UK's productivity and global competitiveness. However, in order for the region to sustain and enhance this position, continued growth is fundamental for several reasons:

⁴² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (March 2024), The Case for Cambridge.

⁴³ Written evidence submitted by the University of Cambridge (IGR0080), Science, Innovation and Technology Select Committee Inquiry: Innovation, growth and the regions

⁴⁴ Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (September 2024),

Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs.

⁴⁵ City AM, 2024. UK sweeps a third of European tech funding in 2024 as London and Cambridge boom

- **Maintaining global competitiveness:** Cambridge's unique strengths in life sciences, AI, and semiconductor design have placed the region at the forefront of the UK's industrial strategy. If firms cannot expand locally they will likely divert investment to rival global clusters – Boston, the Bay Area – rather than to another UK city.
- **Supporting the UK's economic and fiscal health:** Cambridge's economy contributes over £50bn a year and provides £1bn directly to the Treasury. Continued expansion of high-value industries will deliver a multiplier effect throughout the national economy, creating quality jobs, stimulating supply chains, and boosting exports. Constraining growth would limit these benefits and weaken the UK's overall economic resilience.
- **Addressing emerging societal and technological challenges:** from clean energy and healthcare innovations to AI-driven productivity gains, the firms born in and attracted to Cambridge are developing critical solutions to today's biggest challenges. Growth in Cambridge's R&D-intensive sectors accelerates the pace at which new technologies and treatments can be translated into real-world impact.
- **Ensuring a sustainable talent pipeline:** by nurturing a thriving ecosystem, Cambridge can continue to attract and develop a highly skilled workforce drawn from both its universities and global talent pools. As emerging industries demand specialised expertise, enabling growth secures the future of this talent pipeline and, in turn, sustains the region's long-term innovation capacity

5.7 Sustained growth in Cambridge is crucial not only regionally but for the UK's global leadership in knowledge-intensive industries. If that growth cannot be accommodated here, firms are far more likely to expand in competing overseas clusters – Boston, Silicon Valley, emerging European hubs – than to move elsewhere in the UK, so the investment, talent and tax revenues would be lost nationally (discussed in more detail at paragraphs 5.54–5.57).

The geography of innovation

5.8 Innovation has historically been concentrated in suburban clusters like Silicon Valley, with isolated campuses and limited emphasis on quality of life. Recently, innovation districts – urban clusters of knowledge-intensive organisations – have emerged as the dominant model. Traditional out-of-town science parks remain important but are increasingly viewed as legacy models.

5.9 The significance of geographic clustering in economic theory is widely recognised, particularly through the influential work of Michael Porter.⁴⁶ Porter defines clusters as geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, suppliers, service providers, and institutions in a particular field, which enhance productivity, innovation, and competitiveness. These clusters provide substantial economic benefits, including improved access to skilled labour, knowledge spillovers through informal interactions, and efficiencies from shared infrastructure.

5.10 The UK Government recognises the importance of clusters, stating they are the key to Britain's success.⁴⁷ A key aim of the Industrial Strategy is to grow the UK's high potential clusters (CD 9.13).⁴⁸ The strategy specifically identifies life sciences and technology as high-growth sectors and cites "high-performing life science clusters like Cambridge."

5.11 Scale is an important factor in effectiveness of clusters. Research from the Brookings Institution highlights that achieving a 'critical mass' of organisations within an innovation district can significantly accelerate knowledge exchange and investment, intensifying the network effects that drive innovation.⁴⁹ This is also

⁴⁶ Harvard Business Review, Clusters and the New Economics of Competition by Michael E. Porter.

⁴⁷ Labour, 2023. Power and Partnership: Labour's Plan to Power Up Britain.

⁴⁸ Department for Business & Trade (2024), Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy.

⁴⁹ Bruce Katz and Julie Wagner (2014), The Rise of Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation in America.

recognised in recent evidence for GCSP, which notes that (CD 9.18 paragraph 0.13) there is a need to establish:⁵⁰

A significant critical mass to create a community that can attract and retain a concentrated labour pool on site, creating a network and community of workforce, as well as a viable offer of facilities, both technical and amenity focused.

- 5.12 There is a positive relationship between city size and productivity, known as agglomeration. Evidence shows that agglomeration can have a 4.4% uplift on productivity as city size doubles, but in more knowledge intensive businesses it is significantly higher at 8.3%.⁵¹ Expanding the local employment base in knowledge intensive industries, through schemes such as the Proposed Development, should increase overall productivity across Cambridge in line with the knowledge-sector uplift.
- 5.13 The Bidwells/YouGov R&D Business Survey (2021) found that over half of life sciences R&D businesses stated that their ideal location would be in a city district, which are amenity rich and have strong public transport links.⁵²

Locational and accommodation requirements

- 5.14 It is important to understand the specific locational and accommodation needs of Cambridge's key growth sectors to appreciate why tailored, high-quality space in a central location is essential.
- 5.15 Paragraph 87 of the NPPF notes that “[p]lanning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for: clusters or networks of knowledge... [and] the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”
- 5.16 The locational, land and accommodation needs report on Greater Cambridge's growth sectors of life science and ICT found that both fields require integrated, “place-based” locations that combine high-quality premises, strong transport links (including public transport), and a broad amenity offer (CD 9.18 paragraph 0.8).⁵³ For the life science sector, sufficient “space and scale” is particularly important, as facilities are typically lower density and need room for specialised operations. Businesses also value clustering and a critical mass onsite to support collaboration, interaction, and a viable array of technical and social amenities. Smaller and start-up life science firms often require proximity to research institutions – particularly in clinical fields – to access affordable space and specialised expertise.
- 5.17 For ICT, the study highlights a preference for premium locations (city centre or high-quality science parks) with convenient transport options. Start-ups and smaller businesses in ICT similarly seek incubator-style support and flexible hot-desking, while larger businesses draw on the region's skilled workforce rather than immediate physical co-location. Across both sectors, the cost and availability of housing is a concern, demonstrating the importance of broader place-making strategies that ensure sustainable transport and viable living options.
- 5.18 The report also found that, in reference to life sciences, the “need for scale-up space (particularly from 500 – 1,000 sqm and up to 2,500 sqm) has been particularly acute and less well provided for, with Cambridge's

⁵⁰ Icen Projects Limited on behalf of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (September 2024), Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs.

⁵¹ Graham DJ., Gibbons S., and Martin R. Imperial College London. Transport investments and the distance decay of agglomeration benefits, Working paper. (2009).

⁵² Bidwells/YouGov R&D Business Survey (2021).

⁵³ Icen Projects Limited on behalf of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (September 2024), Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs.

portfolio historically better placed for smaller start-ups and more mature businesses.” Generally it expects the need for high quality start-up and scale-up space to remain in demand across the office market.

- 5.19 In addition to these points, recent market evidence shows that occupiers now actively seek buildings with outstanding ESG credentials. For example, Savills reports that within Cambridge “[t]he corporate occupier preference remains for best in class office space that is amenity rich and ESG compliant.”⁵⁴ This echoes JLL’s 2024 finding that high-quality, sustainable offices are “vital to the recruitment process” for skilled staff.⁵⁵
- 5.20 Although the illustrative master-plan assumes c. 47,000 sqm of wet-lab-enabled floorspace (Blocks 2, 3, 5 & 6), the outline consent seeks up to 91,851 sqm (NIA) of commercial floorspace. This head-room means that, if market conditions changed, the scheme could be delivered as an all-office configuration. In practice that outcome is considered unlikely: current evidence described below shows there is demand for lab space as well as office. Modern R&D workflows blur the boundary between lab and office, scientists move from experiment to data-write-up within the same working day, so providing interchangeable lab/office plates is critical. Cutting edge science and tech research can be undertaken at office developments, such as Microsoft, Apple, Samsung and Amazon all doing AI research at CB1. Retaining the flexibility therefore ensures the development can respond dynamically to demand.

Unmet need

Need

- 5.21 The Iceni report provides an analysis of Greater Cambridge’s commercial space requirements based on job forecasts, historical completions, and market signals. It is estimated that there is a need for 1.09 million square metres of commercial floorspace between 2020 and 2041, with R&D space accounting for over half of this need (CD 9.12).⁵⁶
- Office – 289,700sqm.
 - R&D – 600,000sqm.
 - Industrial/warehouse – 200,000sqm.
- 5.22 In my opinion, while the Iceni report provides important insights into Greater Cambridge’s commercial space requirements, it likely underestimates true need for several reasons.⁵⁷
- 5.23 First, it does not fully account for government ambitions for Cambridge, clearly evident in the Cambridge Growth Company’s remit to exceed local plan targets in scale, ambition, and timeframe (CD 9.19).⁵⁸
- 5.24 Second, the underlying job forecast, a major driver of the floorspace estimates, appear conservative. Iceni projects employment growth of 66,600 jobs from 2020 to 2041. The expectation from the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) (2018) was for growth of 115,500 between 2021 and 2041, which compares to 63,800 expected by Iceni over the same period. The Cambridgeshire Futures Modelling Team at the University of Cambridge noted that the “the growth trend in jobs as expected in the

⁵⁴ Savills’ Spotlight: Golden Triangle – Offices & Laboratories (August 2024).

⁵⁵ JLL (October 2024), European office market seeing green shoots.

⁵⁶ Iceni, 2023. Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update

⁵⁷ I focus on the need for office and R&D given the proposals.

⁵⁸ Appointment of Cambridge Growth Company Chair: Letter from Matthew Pennycook MP. Published 31 October 2024.

Joint Local Plan consultation is itself a modest one.” Their view is the CPIER “could be regarded as a fair and level-headed assessment of the employment growth potential of the city region.” (CD 9.17 page 4) ⁵⁹

- 5.25 This opinion is consistent with more recent evidence from the Centre for Business Research at the University of Cambridge on behalf of Cambridge Ahead, which indicates an annual job growth rate of 4.0% between 2018 and 2024 – significantly higher than the Office for National Statistics (ONS) projection of 1.5%.⁶⁰ The ONS data is based on survey methods, which can introduce inaccuracies, whereas Cambridge Ahead’s commissioned research uses Companies House data, verified through direct checks with local employers, and is therefore likely to be more accurate and robust. Iceni’s forecast employment growth (66,600 jobs, equivalent to an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 1.3%) thus appears conservative when compared with this recent, more reliable evidence from Cambridge Ahead.
- 5.26 Iceni’s employment forecasts are based on the Cambridge Econometrics Local Economic Forecasting Model (LEFM), which itself is calibrated to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). As discussed above, the BRES data under-reports employment growth in Greater Cambridge. Although Iceni acknowledges the Cambridge Ahead data in their Employment and Housing Evidence Update report, which suggests considerably higher employment growth, they do not incorporate this evidence into their modelling, and instead rely on the less accurate and lower growth estimates from the ONS. It is difficult to know what impact this has on the figures as they combine multiple datasets, but it further indicates that their figures are on the conservative side.
- 5.27 Third, the floorspace projections in the Iceni report do not sufficiently account for suppressed demand. Over the past decade, the commercial property market in Greater Cambridge has been supply-constrained, particularly for high-demand sectors like R&D and life sciences. This constrained supply has suppressed demand and prevented the market from meeting its full growth potential. The concept of suppressed demand arises when a market operates below equilibrium, meaning there is unmet demand that would have materialised had adequate supply been available. Net completions over the past decade fail to capture this suppressed demand, as they only reflect the constrained market environment.
- 5.28 The equilibrium vacancy rate refers to the level of vacancy that is expected in a well-balanced market where supply meets demand. It represents a healthy market condition where there is enough vacancy to allow for tenant movement and choice without causing significant upward or downward pressure on rental prices. A regularly used figure for the equilibrium vacancy rate is 8%.⁶¹
- 5.29 The figure below clearly shows vacancy rates for office and R&D space consistently below equilibrium. This is particularly pronounced in Cambridge city centre, highlighting significant suppressed demand and greater need centrally.⁶² The suppressed demand is evident in rental growth of 4.1% for offices and 3.2% for labs between 2023 and 2024, as well as ongoing pre-lets of key buildings, such as Arm securing the entirety of British Land’s recently completed building on Peterhouse Technology Park, the Optic.⁶³

⁵⁹ Cambridgeshire Futures Modelling Team, Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies. Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge. Measuring the impacts of the housing and transport infrastructure gaps on employment growth in the Greater Cambridge city region (Version 3c; August 2024).

⁶⁰ Cambridge Ahead, CBR, Growth in the Cambridge economy 2018-24. March 2025.

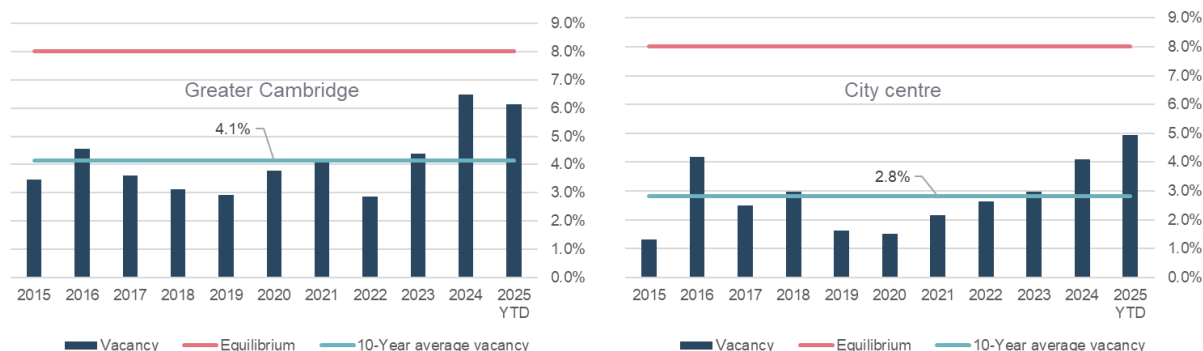
⁶¹ This figure was used in the London Office Policy Review 2017, which notes that past London Plan EiPs have recommended adding 8% additional to the floorspace projections to allow for a frictional rate of vacancy. This is broadly consistent with Greater Cambridge evidence (Iceni, 2023, Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update) where 7.5% is added to need to allow for choice and churn.

⁶² CoStar define the city centre as the prime central and city centre periphery. A map of this area is presented in section 4 of the Appendix.

⁶³ Bidwells (February 2025), Cambridge Offices & Labs Databook.

Figure 5.1 – More office and R&D floorspace is required space in Cambridge to meet its equilibrium vacancy rate, suggesting that there is suppressed demand

R&D vacancy rate in Cambridge relative to equilibrium vacancy rate



Source: CoStar (2025).

5.30

Fourth, the forecasts in the Iceni report do not sufficiently reflect the need to replace stock. The Iceni forecasts are expressed in net terms which record the balance after losses from demolition, conversion or change in use. Net figures are useful for tracking the change in total stock but they do not represent the amount of new development that must actually be delivered. A dynamic commercial market requires gross completions to run ahead of net growth so that ageing or obsolete premises can be renewed and occupiers retain genuine choice.

5.31

The Iceni report acknowledges that a dynamic market requires a higher level of gross completions to sustain net growth. The report presents data from 2011/12 to 2020/21 which has been annualised and projected forward to the 2020-2041 period. This shows that gross completions for R&D and B1 mix space in Greater Cambridge exceeded net completions by 15% and 21%, respectively (CD 9.12).⁶⁴ The table below summarises gross and net completions for different sectors, showing that gross completion have been much higher than net for some sectors. Gross completions for office is less than half the net position, suggesting recycling or lost sites. Maintaining a dynamic market requires significantly higher gross completions.

⁶⁴ Iceni (2023), page 84, table below paragraph 5.19.

Table 5 – Floorspace requirements 2020-2041, completion trends: gross completions exceed net completions for all floorspace types

Sector	Net completions	Gross completions	Gross-net % uplift
B1 mix	149,800	181,300	21%
Office	159,000	434,600	173%
R&D	494,800	570,500	15%
Light industrial	3,000	54,300	1,710%
Industrial	-34,700	143,900	—
Warehousing	60,400	181,100	200%
Total	832,200	1,565,700	88%

Source: Iceni, 2023. Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update

- 5.32 Despite this, the Iceni report does not recommend incorporating a replacement allowance, citing positive market outcomes and viability in Cambridge. This position appears inconsistent with the historic data, which highlights the importance of replacing space in sustaining growth and meeting future demand. Many employment need studies will apply a replacement allowance of 25% to 50% on top of stated needs.
- 5.33 Projecting forward Iceni's historic gross completion rates yields requirements of c. 774,000 sqm for R&D (including 50 % of B1 mix) and c. 615,000 sqm for office/B1 mix over 2020-2041 (CD 9.12 page 90). The R&D figure is already above Iceni's identified need and does not capture any suppressed demand. The office figure is more than double the net office need. Incorporating an explicit replacement allowance would therefore better reflect the volume of development that must be enabled to sustain Greater Cambridge's economic growth trajectory.

Employment trajectory and supply

- 5.34 The Iceni analysis provided a trajectory of employment floorspace commitments as of October 2024, based on a comprehensive review of planning permissions, local plan allocations, and completions between 2020–2023 (CD 9.20).⁶⁵ These are categorised by space type (office, wet lab and dry lab) and sector (ICT, life sciences).
- 5.35 The following table summarises the demand and supply balance presented in the Iceni report, with their conclusions:
- **Office space:** there is an estimated 25% undersupply of general office space. However, when factoring in the supply of office/dry lab space aimed at ICT and life sciences, there appears to be a potential oversupply. This suggests a strong general office pipeline but highlights a possible longer-term need for more high-quality office provision. Upcoming sites like North East Cambridge and Cambridge East are expected to supplement future supply.
 - **Dry labs (ICT and physical sciences):** the forecast indicates a significant oversupply of dry lab space, particularly in West Cambridge, which may cater more to advanced manufacturing needs than ICT/tech. However, short-term supply has reportedly been limited.
 - **Wet labs (life sciences):** wet lab demand and supply are considered broadly balanced for the near term, following a surge in permissions granted through 2023 and 2024. While there was limited delivery between 2020–2023, the pipeline for 2025–2030 is stronger, with some projects likely to be brought

⁶⁵ Iceni (October 2024), Greater Cambridge Office and Laboratory Employment Trajectory.

forward post-2030. Despite this, additional wet lab space will likely be needed in the 2030s, reinforcing the importance of new Local Plan allocations at key sites like CBC, North East Cambridge, Babraham, and Cambridge East.

- **R&D stretch:** the R&D stretch component is above “labour demand models” to allow flexibility and market choice. There is a need for sites to come forward post 2030 but Iceni expect future local plan sites to meet this need.

Figure 5.2 – Demand and supply estimates presented by the Iceni report, October 2024

Type	Demand 2020-41 (sqm)	Floorspace supply commitments (sqm)	Completions 2020-23	Balance
Office (inc losses)	265,300	161,591	33,006	-81,611
Dry lab / ICT / physical science inc. West Cambridge	28,500	286,751	23,031	277,152
Office / dry lab (dedicated to life science)	24,400	145,369	17,744	103,225
Wet labs (including CBC / genomic dry labs)	423,800	371,820	44,388	-46,678
Mix / not categorised	–	206,135	–	206,135
R&D stretch	147,700	–	–	-147,700
Total	889,700	1,171,666	118,169	310,523

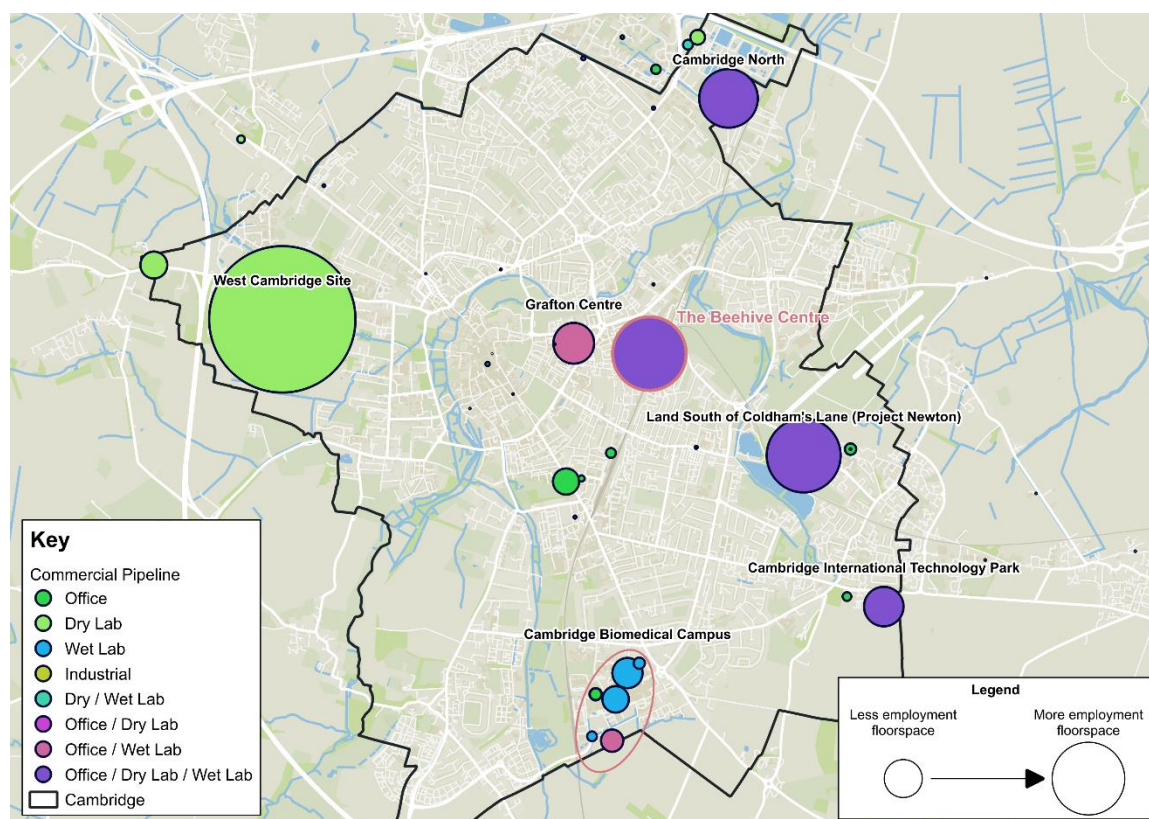
Source: Iceni, October 2024. Greater Cambridge Office and Laboratory Employment Trajectory. These figures have been updated, as reported in the Topic Paper, as there was double counting in the wet lab category.

- 5.36 However, in my view, while comprehensive, the above conclusions appear overly optimistic as they do not adequately consider practical delivery challenges. Obtaining planning consent is only the first hurdle; developers must secure vacant possession, assemble and, where necessary, remediate land, discharge pre-commencement conditions, line-up funding and pre-lets, and contend with increasing construction costs and broader economic uncertainties. Any one of these factors can stall delivery.
- 5.37 This results in a large gap between permissions and what is onsite. The council's Annual Monitoring Report records 267,497sqm of office and R&D space with full or reserved matters consents at March 2024, yet only 51,211sqm or 19% was under construction.⁶⁶
- 5.38 The pipeline identified is reliant on very large schemes: the ten biggest account for 55% of all outstanding floorspace commitments, and the top twenty for three quarters. If only a handful stall or down-size, the headline-supply picture changes materially. Many of these are large complex projects which make delivery difficult.

⁶⁶ Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (2025), Annual Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge covering the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024. Appendix 2 has tables and charts which breaks down the figures. I have used the tables titled “Net amount and type of committed employment floorspace (square metres) by status” and calculated the figures for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and summed B1, B1a and B1b to estimate office and R&D floorspace. The B1 figure may include a bit of light industrial (B1c) space but this is not expected to materially affect the numbers.

- 5.39 The largest site West Cambridge, which is 170,000sqm (14% of the pipeline), secured outline planning permission in June 2024 (first submitted in 2016 and resolved to grant in 2021). In the intervening period development has relied on a series of individual “drop-in” consents, which have delivered new faculty and research buildings but no commercial floorspace to date.
- 5.40 Turning to spatial distribution, **Figure 5.3** maps Iceni-identified schemes within Cambridge City. Bubble size denotes proposed floorspace. The Proposed Development stands out as one of the few larger, centrally located, mixed-use schemes – exactly where occupier demand is strongest. Many larger pipeline sites sit on the urban fringe or beyond, where demand and public-transport accessibility are weaker.

Figure 5.3 - Map of Iceni identified sites in Cambridge City



- 5.41 In summary, although the Iceni reports provides a helpful foundation, it likely underestimates the scale of future demand and overstates delivery certainty. Suppressed demand, the need to replace ageing stock, and challenges in delivery all suggest that Greater Cambridge faces a greater shortfall in employment floorspace than currently anticipated. I therefore believe that while there has been a recent uptick in the pipeline after a severe shortage of lack space, there remains unmet, identified need in Greater Cambridge and the Proposed Development would make significant contribution to supporting high quality employment space in the right location.
- 5.42 This is consistent with the council's view in the Committee Report:

“...there is also a shared understanding in that there are (and will continue to be) significant challenges in achieving a balance between the needs of the life science and ICT sectors and the relative availability of suitable sites that can be delivered across the Cambridge region. Therefore, adopting a flexible approach to decision making (on a case-by-case) basis will be necessary so

that a resilient and flexible supply pipeline can be provided throughout the different economic cycles.

In the instance of this planning application, it is considered that the proposals would assist in meeting some of the anticipated (and growing) needs that are currently being identified, and especially for the following reasons:

- Demand for high quality office space is likely to outstrip short-term supply in the City;
- Lab space availability is currently underprovided in the City; and
- Start-up and scale-up space remains acutely underprovided across the Cambridge region.

The current outline planning application through its scale, design and edge of centre location, provides an important opportunity to secure an identified need for office and lab floorspace in the City. Supporting the proposals in this instance recognises the inherent challenges in delivering physically available and viable floorspace in the short to medium including the contribution it can make in order to maintain the Cambridge region as a national and global destination for life sciences and ICT research in the much longer term."

- 5.43 The next section explains how the Proposed Development's central location, scale and flexible mix of uses uniquely address this quantitative and qualitative shortfall.

How the Proposed Development meets these requirements

- 5.44 The majority of Cambridge's laboratory and R&D spaces are currently located on peripheral or out-of-town sites, limiting their accessibility, sustainability, and appeal to occupiers. While increased provision at these out-of-town sites partially addresses demand, particularly in some key campuses and businesses parks where there is a key anchor (such as hospitals and clinical research centres at CBC), some of the proposals will fall short in key areas such as connectivity, ESG credentials, and opportunities for collaboration and innovation. This mismatch between available supply and occupier needs directly undermines Cambridge's ability to compete globally, and therefore to secure additional economic growth for the UK.
- 5.45 Below I outline some of the key reasons why the Proposed Development meets occupier needs, aligning with the evidence outlined in the Iceni life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs report.
- 5.46 **Location.** The Proposed Development occupies an edge-of-centre brownfield site within walking and cycling distance of Cambridge's historic core and main rail station. As one of the few sizable, centrally located mixed-use opportunities, it meets occupier preferences for proximity to businesses for collaboration and innovation, amenities and public transport links. Businesses will have different locational requirements – some will want to be in close proximity to clinical research centres such as Cambridge Biomedical Campus, but as noted in the Iceni report, urban settings are "increasingly popular being connectivity and amenity rich but need to achieve sufficient scale / critical mass as well as urban integration" and "edge of urban locations can offer greatest scale, flexibility and connectivity." It therefore represents one of the most sequentially preferable locations for high-quality R&D space within Cambridge.
- 5.47 **Scale and on-site ecosystem.** At 88,752sqm NIA, the scheme is large enough to establish its own onsite ecosystem. The masterplan is flexible to respond to need and the illustrative scheme deliberately mixes wet-lab, dry-lab and office space, with retail, food and beverage and community facilities. That mix creates a self-supporting ecosystem with a critical mass of shared space for start-ups to locate with global firms, and different uses that support activity throughout the day, unlike a single use development which is quiet

outside of working hours. The mix of uses would create a place that would promote meetings and chance encounters between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

- 5.48 **Specification and flexibility.** The buildings are designed for up-to-Category 2 laboratory use and can be divided into smaller or larger units as needed. Because the floorplates can be split in different ways, and the scheme offers a range of unit sizes, start-ups and growing companies can move in, adjust their space easily, and expand on site as they develop.
- 5.49 **Best in class sustainability.** This commitment to sustainability extends beyond building design to transport strategies, landscaping, provision of green areas, and a wide selection of amenities, ensuring it meets investors and employees requirements.
- 5.50 **Support for start-ups and scale-ups.** Ahead of first occupation the Applicant will submit a dedicated strategy for start-up and scale-up spaces, including where appropriate identifying specialist workspace providers. This requirement directly responds to Cambridge's shortfall in high-quality spaces tailored to the needs of emerging businesses.
- 5.51 **Market resilience and choice.** The availability of a range of sites and flexible floorspace configurations remains vital to ensure genuine occupier choice and resilience in the market. This is especially important given the highly specific operational requirements and preferences of leading R&D and technology occupiers. The Proposed Development addresses this directly by significantly expanding the opportunities available to occupiers, creating greater flexibility and choice through more consented space.
- 5.52 **Deliverability.** Unlike many pipeline sites, the Beehive site has a clear pathway to delivery to meet the phasing and programme requirements. It is anticipated that demolition will be carried out in a single phase, and the land is free of major contaminants or infrastructure constraints. This means the Proposed Development can be delivered to suit the market rather than external constraints.
- 5.53 Taken together, these features ensure the Proposed Development directly addresses the qualitative and quantitative shortfall of modern lab and office floorspace in central Cambridge.

Why this supports additional growth at the national level

- 5.54 Where knowledge intensive businesses cluster, the spatial area in which they are happy to locate is tightly bounded.⁶⁷ Companies that are looking to locate or have to move away are choosing between clusters where a critical mass of academia, industry and government provides access to the knowledge and skills required to innovate.
- 5.55 The Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) notes that for some knowledge intensive sectors in the UK Cambridge is the only viable cluster. The Cambridgeshire Futures Modelling Team at the University of Cambridge also finds that "tech hubs that are competing most strongly with the Greater Cambridge city region are all outside the UK, due to the specific specialisms in research, development and education" (CD 9.17 page 12).⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (September 2018), final report.

⁶⁸ Cambridgeshire Futures Modelling Team, Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies. Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge. Measuring the impacts of the housing and transport infrastructure gaps on employment growth in the Greater Cambridge city region (Version 3c; August 2024).

- 5.56 This demonstrates Cambridge's additionality to the UK economy. Without adequate provision of high-quality spaces, these businesses risk relocating abroad, with significant economic implications.
- 5.57 Cambridge's growth is therefore genuinely additional at a national level. Due to its unique global positioning, it attracts investment and talent that would otherwise locate in competing international clusters such as Silicon Valley, Boston, or emerging European hubs. By providing the right high-quality, strategically located spaces, the Proposed Development ensures these critical economic activities are anchored within the UK, capturing substantial economic, fiscal, and innovation benefits that are truly additional rather than displaced.

6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 In this proof of evidence I set out my professional view on the socio-economic impacts that the proposed development will have. I have done this by:
- considering the national, regional and local context;
 - assessing the economic impacts;
 - considering how the proposed development will maximise benefits;
 - considering the need for high quality space and additionality;
 - before reaching my conclusions on the socio-economic impacts.
- 6.2 The Proposed Development has been designed to be a state-of-the-art commercial-led development nearby to Cambridge city centre. I believe it will make a positive contribution to the UK economy, increase competitiveness in key sectors, strengthen the Cambridge cluster and have a meaningful impact on outcomes of local people through social and employment and skills initiatives.
- 6.3 The UK risks losing globally competitive, knowledge-intensive firms to international innovation hubs if Cambridge cannot provide suitable, high-quality R&D space. By securing critical investment and talent that would otherwise relocate overseas, the Proposed Development will deliver socio-economic benefits genuinely additional to the UK economy.
- 6.4 The Proposed Development presents significant positive opportunities:
- **Securing investment and talent** – providing high quality, well located R&D spaces ensures Cambridge continues to attract global businesses, supporting local and national economic growth.
 - **Supporting jobs and skills** – the Proposed Development will deliver around 7,130 net additional jobs, including opportunities in emerging technologies and life sciences. The dedicated Employment and Skills Strategy, featuring a dedicated STEM educational space, proactive local outreach, Real Living Wage commitments where practicable, and an Employment and Skills Coordinator, will significantly enhance local employment and training, especially benefiting disadvantaged residents.
 - **Addressing unmet needs** – directly meets unmet need for office and R&D in an excellent, accessible location. It broadens genuine market choice and explicitly supports start-ups and scale-ups, aligning with NPPF priorities for knowledge-intensive sectors.
 - **Injecting competition and optionality into the Cambridge market** – by adding a highly accessible, mixed-use R&D hub that aligns more closely with the qualitative demand than many pipeline schemes, the Proposed Development offers a preferable and deliverable choice for occupiers. This competition between locations keeps the market fluid, accelerates delivery and reduces the risk that foot-loose firms divert investment overseas. Accordingly, the quantitative targets and Icen analysis should be viewed not as caps but as reference points within a dynamic economy, where a diversity of site, location and offer combinations is essential to satisfy demand and maximise job creation.
 - **Strengthening the Cambridge Cluster** – continued investment in high-quality wet lab, dry lab, and office capacity reinforces Cambridge's status as a globally significant innovation ecosystem, directly enhancing productivity through network effects and knowledge spillovers. It secures investment and global talent that would otherwise be attracted to international competitors such as Boston and the Bay Area, fully supporting the government's ambition for growth in the Oxford–Cambridge innovation corridor.
 - **Economic and fiscal benefits** – delivering approximately £600 million annually in additional GVA and £180m–£240m in tax revenue.
 - **Capturing strategic opportunities** – life science and technology sectors are key priorities identified in the Government's 2024 Industrial Strategy. The Proposed Development strengthens the UK's position at the forefront of these critical, high-growth industries, which not only creates immediate economic impacts but supports long-term innovation capacity and global competitiveness.

- **Delivering social value** – the local community will benefit from substantial social infrastructure improvements, including youth facilities, inclusive open spaces, active community hubs, and initiatives designed with local stakeholders such as Abbey People and Make Space for Girls, enhancing social cohesion.

- 6.5 The strategic and economic case for the Proposed Development is compelling. It would support Cambridge's global innovation cluster and the Government's objectives to strengthen UK productivity and international competitiveness by building on sectoral and geographical strengths.
- 6.6 This location is right at the centre of one of the UK's most valuable economic assets, where research, innovation and technology come together. Demand for high-quality, centrally located R&D space in Cambridge with ESG credentials and amenity offer is high, and is vital to ensuring that Cambridge can compete against other global competitors.
- 6.7 Cambridge has a significant comparative advantage in attracting high value investment in life science and technology. However, this advantage will erode without provision of appropriate, accessible and strategically located spaces such as those proposed.
- 6.8 In my professional opinion, this proposal represents a vital opportunity to deliver strategically significant socio-economic benefits to the UK economy, complemented by meaningful local commitments to support local jobs and address inequalities.

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