

## The Need

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North West Cambridge will be instrumental in maintaining the University's long-term success and position on a global stage. It will provide the living and research accommodation needed to enable the University to maintain its world class research position and to continue its growth. It will encourage substantial investment in Cambridge and will help to recruit and retain the best staff and students from around the world. This will also benefit the Cambridge city region and will be good for the wider UK economy.

North West Cambridge is the University's only option to address its long-term development needs. These needs are grounded in a mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international level. The site will also contribute to the Government's desire for growth in the higher education sector and actively support the expansion of the knowledge based economy.

North West Cambridge will encompass four main forms of development, which make up a unified and coherent plan. First, it will provide rental accommodation for key University staff, with the majority of the accommodation being designed to be attractive to the increasing numbers of junior staff, particularly research staff who are crucial to the success of research and innovation in Cambridge. Secondly, North West Cambridge will provide Collegiate accommodation to meet the needs of the growing graduate student population within the University. Thirdly it will provide additional research space for sole academic use, and for the new forms of collaborative research that are increasingly being carried out within the University. Finally, to ensure that North West Cambridge is an environment in which University staff and students can feel part of a larger community, housing will be built for general use. The combination of these different forms of accommodation will bring a balanced extension of the City which the University can be proud of.

## **Key Worker Housing for University Staff**

In order to attract and retain staff and remain competitive internationally, the University needs to achieve a fourfold increase in its provision of housing for its key junior research and assistant staff. This need is urgent to deal with recruitment and retention problems arising from local house prices and rental levels. The need is also important for structural reasons, as the growth of research in the University has led to there being substantially more research staff than academic staff, with many researchers coming to Cambridge from outside the region. Indeed a significant proportion of those researchers stay for relatively short periods. It is important to the University to ensure that the accommodation on offer is attractive so that staff and their families can feel fully part of the Collegiate University and the wider community as quickly as possible. This will ensure that they can excel in their posts whilst also contributing to the wider University, and indeed general community. While some members of staff will move elsewhere after some years, perhaps to academic posts, the University hopes that others will wish to remain, and the provision of accommodation in North West Cambridge is therefore intended to be a bridge for those to settle in the City and surrounding region.

The accommodation also is important in reducing pressure on the overall Cambridge housing market. Staff not accommodated within University properties are typically housed in private rented accommodation (brokered either independently or via the University Accommodations Service). Where staff members are recruited from outside Cambridge, a failure of the University to meet their housing needs will create significant additional pressure in the local housing market, leading to continuing pressure on house prices and rents, and the further subdivision of family accommodation to provide multi-occupancy houses. Provision for key workers at North West Cambridge will relieve some of this pressure.

Evidence of Housing Needs for University and College staff is set out in the University's Housing Needs Study (2008), and was put forward to the Inspectors at the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan Examination.

## **Student Accommodation**

The development of student accommodation in North West Cambridge is essential if the current plans of the Collegiate University for graduate research and education are to be fulfilled. Graduate education is increasingly important, given the growing complexity of many fields, and is an area in which Cambridge must grow if it is to continue to maintain its international reputation. Collectively, Colleges will not deliver enough student housing if current rates of provision continue, partly due to limitations on space in central sites. The University, in partnership with Colleges and others, is best placed to fill that gap by bringing forward land for College-based student accommodation at North West Cambridge.

The University proposes the delivery of accommodation for approximately 2,000 graduate students at North West Cambridge. It is fundamental to teaching and research pre-eminence and in the national interest that the University and its Colleges maintain close to 100% housing provision for undergraduate students and reach 90% provision for graduate students in the foreseeable future.

The residential nature of collegiate provision with a high level of pastoral care and the intellectual stimulus of living in a community of scholars from all disciplines is a key element of Cambridge's academic culture. As competition for students between universities internationally increases, failing to maintain housing provision will damage Cambridge's reputation and reduce its attraction, which is economically important to the City as a whole.

## **Academic and Commercial Research**

The excellence of research at the University of Cambridge is the result of the major contributions of its staff and students. For this excellence to continue, appropriate resources and infrastructure must be provided. It should be noted that in recent years the main driver for growth of the University estate is research growth, with an 8% per annum growth in research income driving a 2% increase in the estate. Growth in the estate is variable and has been lower

(1.8% per annum) since 2005. Assuming future growth of the estate is lower at 1.5% indicates that the supply of space on existing sites (100,000 m<sup>2</sup>) will be used up by 2018. The supply at North West Cambridge would then be proposed for growth beyond then.

The University's research activities are increasingly carried out collaboratively with public and charitable sector research institutes, and industry. It is very important to develop environments where all of this activity can co-exist, for mutual benefit. The University needs to be able to provide a range of opportunities for such collaborations from small embedded units within academic departments to sites for major research facilities proximate to related University activities. Above all the University needs to be able to respond rapidly to opportunities arising from breakthroughs in research, technological advances and new funding sources.

With regards to commercial research, such activity is undertaken in offices, laboratories and production research space. Most of it requires offices. In Cambridge there is a great need for more facilities to support:

- Existing embedded businesses;
- Start ups within the University;
- Businesses located or potentially seeking to locate in the Sub-Region.

The ability to be able to respond rapidly to new developments is critical to success in research, and it will also allow Cambridge to attract funding from the public, charitable and industrial sectors, and draw in institutions and companies seeking to be proximate to University activities.

### **Market Housing**

The University recognises that any development of this scale should ensure that those working and studying within the University should be able to engage with and contribute to the wider community. The need for owner occupied market housing will be essential for the community balance. It will

also cross subsidise the University uses. North West Cambridge will not be viable if it relies purely on key worker housing, academic space, related research space, student and other related uses. Market housing will be of critical importance as this provides the necessary funding to end values to meet build cost inflation and capital deficit.

### **Supporting Uses and Facilities**

In developing a mixed-use amenity urban extension, it is critical that the full and appropriate range of facilities are planned to support the development needs identified above. A Local Centre, including a range of community facilities (primary school, nursery, primary health care, police touchdown), retail shops, a foodstore, and a hotel, is an essential complementary feature to support the facilities that will be required to achieve the University's objectives.