

Transport Position Statement: Approach to planning applications on the A10 northern corridor

Transportation Assessment Team

Our Ref: 1492
Author: David Allatt
Date: May 2020

Purpose

To outline the approach to be taken by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as the Highway Authority and the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in the consideration of planning applications on the A10 corridor between Stretham and Cambridge. (Whilst a shared planning service, the two authorities have their own planning responsibilities). This relates particularly to the North East Cambridge (NEC) area ahead of the adoption of an Area Action Plan (AAP). This area includes Cambridge Science Park and the area between Milton Road and the River Cam to the east.

CCC has established its position to ensure that development proposals within the above area, that come ahead of the NEC AAP submission, do not prejudice or frustrate the delivery of the strategic transport solution or wider development aspirations of the NEC AAP area. Fundamentally the position highlights that:

- The authorities will not consider future development proposals unless they (i) present proposals as part of a clear area-wide transport strategy, and (ii) accord with the key development principles set out at the end of this statement.
- Future developments will need to (i) adopt an innovative approach to sustainable transport, parking and demand management, and (ii) - will be subject to a clearly defined trip budget. These matters will be informed by the AAP transport evidence and are summarised below.
- Applications that do not satisfy the above requirements will not be supported by the LPA or Highways Authority.

Background

North East Cambridge is one of the last remaining major brownfield sites in Greater Cambridge and it has long been an ambition of the local councils to take advantage of the opportunity this site affords to regenerate this part of the city and to support the continued economic success of the local economy. The Government announced in

March 2019 the allocation of £227M from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the relocation of the Water Recycling Centre.

The NEC area continues to make an important contribution to the Cambridge cluster of research and high-tech. The A10 corridor is to the north of Cambridge and suffers from peak time congestion between Ely and Cambridge. Towards Cambridge the A10 is at capacity between the A14 interchange and the Kings Hedges Road junction. This can have an impact on the surrounding network in both peaks and leads to congestion exiting the Science Park in the PM peak.

In terms of noise from the A14, an assessment that includes noise mitigation along the A14 stretching beyond the River Cam has concluded that daytime decibel levels of between 50-55dB are achieved and are acceptable for an edge of urban area in close proximity to the A14.

The on-going air quality modelling assessment indicates that traffic related air pollution is not a significant constraint to the development based on the current National Air Quality Objectives, however it is recommended that sensitive development / relevant receptors are not introduced to areas that are shown to (or are forecast to) exceed the NAQO's. Such receptors include residential dwellings, schools, hospitals and external amenity space. Average modelled concentrations range between 18-25µg/m³. With the highest levels recorded alongside the A14, Nuffield Road and Milton Road. Should the NQO of 20µg/m³ be introduced as the recently enacted Environment Bill, parts of the study area may be unsuitable for sensitive developments, in particular residential dwellings, schools, hospitals and external play areas / amenity space. The areas that are forecast to be impacted by this are as follows:

- Cambridge Science Park and area of Cambridge Regional College (in its' entirety)
- St John's Innovation Park (a portion of St John's Innovation Centre) and
- A strip of land in the southwest of the CNFE area close to the Milton Road carriageway

Cambridge Guided Busway services are frequent but are overcrowded at peak times, and serve only the Northstowe to St Ives corridor. Since the opening of Cambridge North railway station in May 2017 the number of passengers using the new station has risen substantially, with half a million passengers using the station in the first year of opening. In 2018/19 this has increased to 813,000 entries and exits. The introduction of 8 carriage trains in 2020 will significantly increase rail capacity on the London to Kings Lynn corridor.

Barriers to easy pedestrian and cycle connectivity to this area include the mile distance between Cambridge North railway station and much of the Science Park, the severance impact of Milton Road, Cambridge Guided Busway, inward facing and fenced off business parks, the A14, River Cam. These will be only partly addressed through the completion of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Milton Road corridor cycle and bus improvements, and the Chisholm Trail cycle route connection to central Cambridge.

Overall mode share for the NEC is 71% by private car with half of employees having no viable public transport option, (90% of these people travel to the site by car). The abundance of parking with few demand controls in place strengthens the link between parking and car use.

NEC Planning policy

The North East Cambridge area is mostly made up of land to the east of Milton Road and the Cambridge Science Park to the west. The planning policies for NEC are set out in both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans (2018) as a high quality mixed use employment-led development with a range of supporting uses. The Local Plans state that appropriate proposals for employment development and redevelopment on Cambridge Science Park will be supported, where they enable the continued development of the Cambridge Cluster of high technology research and development companies. Proposed development within NEC will also be required to reflect guidance set out in the 2020 Sustainable Construction SPD.

The boundary of the new NEC area, along with the amount of development, site capacity, viability, time scales and phasing of development will be established through the preparation of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the area.

SCDC and Cambridge City Council have approved a Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out a programme for the development of an Area Action Plan (AAP) that covers NEC. However, the programme has been delayed due to the 2019 Elections and the revised programme envisages the draft Area Action Plan being consulted on in summer 2020 with the anticipated adoption of the AAP in 2023. The LDS will be updated shortly.

It is worth noting Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mineral and Waste Local Plan contains a number of policies that concern parts of NEC. These include the safeguarding of two rail heads for the transportation of materials into the county. Both the rail heads and the HGV movements onto Milton Road to access the wider highway network, need to be accommodated as part of future development of the site. Development adjoining or near to the rail heads needs to be suitable so not to prejudice this land use. (Note, The Minerals and Waste Local Plan is currently being updated, due to be adopted November 2020. The rail heads are proposed to be retained.)

Transport issues

The NEC area is complex with a variety of developer interests, all with aspirations for developing their sites. The Ely-Cambridge Transport Study Preliminary Strategic Outline Business Case, which concluded in January 2018 specifically considered this area and made a number of recommendations which included:

- Providing a form and mix of development that enables access to many services and facilities by residents, workers and visitors to be made locally or without the need to travel by car.

- Provision of significantly lower levels of car parking than has been traditionally provided, particularly for employment;
- A policy of demand and parking management for developments in the area;
- A move away from the traditional approach of predicting the level of unrestrained trip generation and then providing highway capacity mitigation to accommodate the predicted level of trip making; and
- A move towards a vehicular trip budget for the A10 Corridor and NEC area which will help to control the number of vehicular trips accessing the sites.

These recommendations have been investigated further through work to provide a specific transport evidence base to support the AAP. This report is titled North East Cambridge Area Action Plan Transport Evidence Base (September 2019). This report examined several future growth scenarios which are summarised in the table below.

	Existing	HIF Scenario	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Jobs	12,000	18,900	18,200	23,200	27,000	23,200
Dwellings	n/a	9,200	5,500	6,650	7,600	8,700

Trip Generation and Trip Budget

It is clear that the only way that the comprehensive and sustainable delivery of the AAP can be achieved is if sites **significantly reduce their vehicle trip generation, below current levels.**

To achieve this, developers will be subject to a strict trip budget which will limit the number of external trips allowed to and from each site. Development will not be permitted if proposals exceed the trip budget, and exceedance of the trip budget would halt development. **This trip budget accords with baseline movements to ensure that new development does not produce a net-vehicle increase.**

The vehicle trip budget for the NEC area, to ensure a no-net increase on the baseline is:

- **AM Peak: 3,900 two-way trips**
- **PM Peak: 3,000 two-way trips**

Of the AM budget the inbound employment based trips are 2,882 with most of these inbound and 1,018 residential with most of these outbound.

The trip budget will be proportioned amongst the NEC area in accordance with the total anticipated size of each area (current and future).

With the exception of relatively minor highway works at Milton Road accesses the scenario above does not require major highway mitigation. To achieve the above there will need to be significant investment in enhancing the sustainable travel options.

Parking

As the transport evidence shows, this significant new urban quarter cannot be sustained with a 'traditional' approach to trip generation and parking. We have therefore adopted an innovative approach to accommodate the scale of development desired by the landowners. This will require a significantly restrictive and carefully managed approach to car parking.

The Evidence Base report indicates that, in order to comply with the trip budget, when fully built out the area should not provide total employment parking in excess of 4,185 spaces. Factoring in a maximum utilisation rate of 85% this equates to a total provision of **4,800** employment related parking spaces across the area (maximum).

The total parking budget will be proportioned amongst the NEC area in accordance with the total anticipated size of each area (current and future).

The Evidence Base report includes an overall parking standard for the area as a range, which is dependent upon the growth scenarios. **It is essential that (i) each of the existing areas significantly reduce their existing parking allocation / occupancy and (ii) areas of growth take a restrictive approach to car parking, in order to achieve the AAP growth objectives.**

Development Principles

The following development principles will guide future applications and ensure that the piecemeal development of the area does not prejudice the future development of neighbouring sites or frustrate the delivery of the development aspirations for the wider NEC AAP area.

1. Highway capacity is 'maxed-out', so any future growth will need to be delivered in a way that does not add additional car trips to the network. This will require developments to come forward with significant sustainable travel enhancements, demand management measures and adherence to a strict 'trip budget' for an area. If an area shows no signs of being able to meet its trip budget then development within an area will halt until this is resolved.
2. Applications within the area must seek to reduce or at worst equal current peak hour vehicle trip generation, and should include measures to further reduce this over time.
3. Applications in the area must have a significantly reduced parking allocation / ratio for employment and housing. Guidance on parking ratios is provided within the Transport Evidence Base report.
4. Developers for an area should submit a NEC or sub area-wide Transport Strategy that demonstrates how their individual application fits into the wider masterplan for the sub area or NEC area as a whole (including reductions in

overall parking provision as necessary). This approach has been used successfully in Broad Concept Masterplan areas, which require a masterplan and Transport Assessment for the whole area before individual elements can come forward.

5. Proposed development must not lead to unacceptable air quality

Proposals that fail to comply with the above principles will not be supported by the LPA or Highway Authority.

The LPA and Highway Authority will not support proposals that fail to consider principles outlined in the Planning Policy Position Statement and Environmental Position Statement.

For more information please contact the following:

Transport	David Allatt	david.allatt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Noise Cambridge City	Greg Kearney	Greg.Kearney@cambridge.gov.uk
Noise SCDC	Nick Atkins	Nick.atkins@scambs.gov.uk
Air Quality Cambridge City	Adam Finch	Adam.Finch@cambridge.gov.uk
Air Quality SCDC	Soraya Hashemi	Soraya.hashemi@scambs.gov.uk