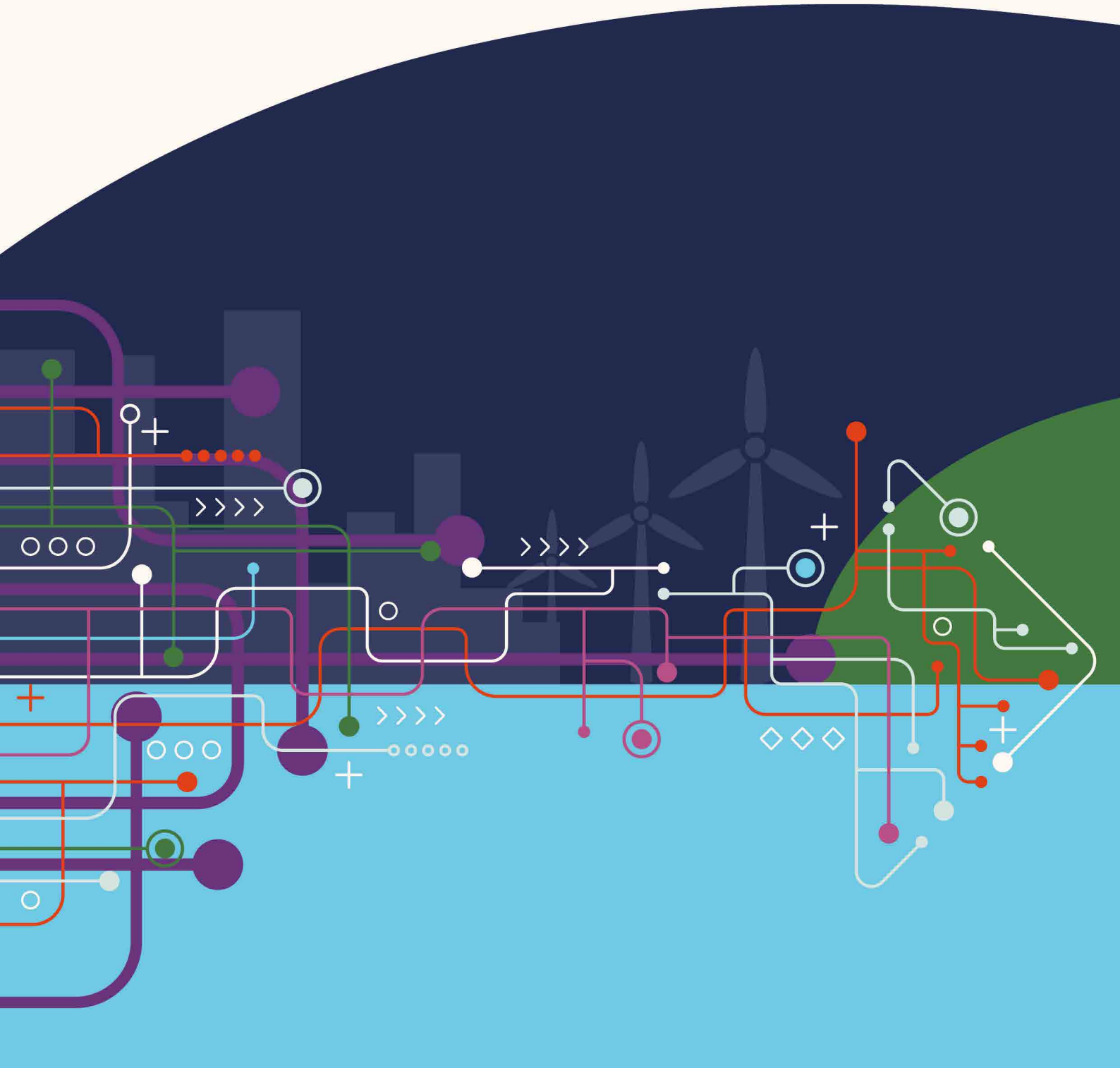
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY

PAUL BRISTOW
MAYOR OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

Get Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Growing

A Local Growth Plan with National Reach and Global Impact



Contents:

	Page
My Vision for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	6–7
Our Plan	8–9
Our Analysis	10–11
Our Logic Model	12–13
A Game-Changer – Our Local Growth Plan	14–15
Economic Overview	
The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Economy	18–19
The UK's Drive for Innovation	20–21
Driving UK Industry, Nationwide	22–23
Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor	24–25
East of England	26–27
Our Mature Ecosystem	28–29
An Inclusive Economy	30–33
Sector Relationship Network	34–35
Our Time is Now	36–37
An International Powerhouse Corridor	38–39
Our Priority Sectors	
Our Priority Sectors	42–43
Our Sectors Today	44–45
Our Sectoral Growth Analysis	46–47
Our Growth Model	48–49
Our Scale-up System	50–51
Our Spatial Sectoral Plan	52–53
The UK's Engine for Innovation	54–55
Europe's Science and Technology Supercluster	56–59
Life Sciences	60–73
Advanced Manufacturing & Materials	74–81
Digital Technologies	82–93
Defence	94–103
Agri-Food & Tech	104–113
Energy and Clean-Tech	114–121
Opportunity Zones	
Our Opportunity Zones	122–127
Peterborough Fast Growth City	128–131
Global City Cambridge	132–137
North Hunts Growth Cluster	138–141
Fens Growth Triangle	142–147
Action Areas	148–149
Special Economic Zones and MDCs	150–153
Shared Priorities and Enabling Infrastructure	
Our Shared Priorities	154–159
Water	160–165
Energy	166–169
Transport and Connectivity	170–175
Skills	176–183
Housing	184–187
Delivery Plan	188–191
Bibliography	192–193

Vision

Source: Lloyd Mann – University of Cambridge

My Vision for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

When I was elected in May, I made it clear that it was my job to get things done. I promised to get Cambridgeshire & Peterborough moving. This Local Growth Plan sets out how we do that, together with my Local Authority delivery partners.

I have good reason to know our region's potential. I grew up in the Fens, where my parents were NHS nurses. I was the MP for Peterborough, helping to secure investment in my city. I now live in a village, but have the privilege of seeing the global power of Cambridge as the Mayor.

The combined potential of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough has often been overlooked by government. It's also true that the region hasn't always spoken, planned or acted as one.

This Local Growth Plan is our opportunity for change. For the first time, I've set an ambition for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's economy to grow faster than any other region in the UK. Our constituent councils have schemes ready to deliver.

That's my offer to Government: working together to achieve our shared ambition of Growth. It's an offer of partnership, not a begging bowl. Alongside government funding, I want to maximise private investment to achieve this plan.

For all the previous Growth in our region, I know how much untapped potential remains. And because Growth brings so much, there is no time to waste. It brings jobs, homes and transport. It also brings health, wealth and happiness. Growth is good.

I have the ambition and we now have the plan. Let's drive Growth and make it a reality.

> This Local Growth Plan is our opportunity for change. For the first time, I've set an ambition for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's economy to grow faster than any other region in the UK.

Paul Bristow

Paul Bristow, Mayor, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority

Our Plan

This Local Growth Plan (LGP) sets out an ambitious, yet achievable, trajectory of Growth for one of the UK's most important and dynamic Mayoral Strategic Authorities areas.

An Independent Economic Review for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in 2018 suggested that without adequate intervention, economic Growth in our area would be effectively choked off due to a range of major constraints, to the detriment of the entire country's economy. This new plan therefore demands bold choices be made by national and regional partners in order to unlock our true potential as the nation's innovation 'powerhouse'. We must move away from modest organic Growth and ignite an accelerated pathway towards this powerhouse goal.

The difference between successful delivery of this Growth plan versus current, baseline forecasts is an additional £54.7bn GVA by 2050. This is the equivalent of adding the economic value of the cities of Birmingham and Coventry combined in today's economic output and this will take the size of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's economy to over £97bn by 2050.

This Local Growth Plan (LGP) is not just for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough but also for the rest of the country, helping achieve the national Growth mission and bolstering the UK's position as a business and science superpower.

Our plan starts with a baseline Growth forecast, and on top of this we project two further LGP Growth scenarios:

- **Baseline Growth,** or 'business as usual' would see the size of the economy grow to £42.5bn by 2050 – an annual Growth rate of 1.2%.
- **Doubling our Economy:** our core scenario – would see the economy double in size by 2050 to £62.3bn GVA.
- **Aspirational Growth:** our Growth ambition is to see the economy triple in size by 2050 to £97.1bn GVA, unlocking an economic powerhouse.

Both of these Growth scenarios have undergone rigorous modelling and can be deliverable by 2050 with the right levels of support and investment. However, to achieve a trebling of the economy in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, there would need to be an unprecedented level of Government support and funding, or fiscal instruments/freedoms to enable CPCA to retain more of the benefits that flow from the Growth to both borrow against and reinvest. In this context, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough could serve as a compelling pilot for fiscal devolution, testing how locally retained revenues and bespoke financial levers can accelerate and sustain regional transformation.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough is the UK's globally recognised centre of innovation – powering the Government's ambitions for Growth across the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and beyond. As a region, we stand on the global stage as the most innovative economy on this side of the Atlantic. Our competition isn't regional or even national, our key competitors include the global innovation hubs of Boston, Massachusetts and Silicon Valley, California.

We plan to achieve our targets by building on our legacy of innovation and by creating accelerated Growth in six priority sectors and their frontier industries. These sectors and industries reflect the unique economic strengths of the area: they have either unmatched intensity and history, or are emerging quickly due to the innovation eco-system and its power of proximity across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

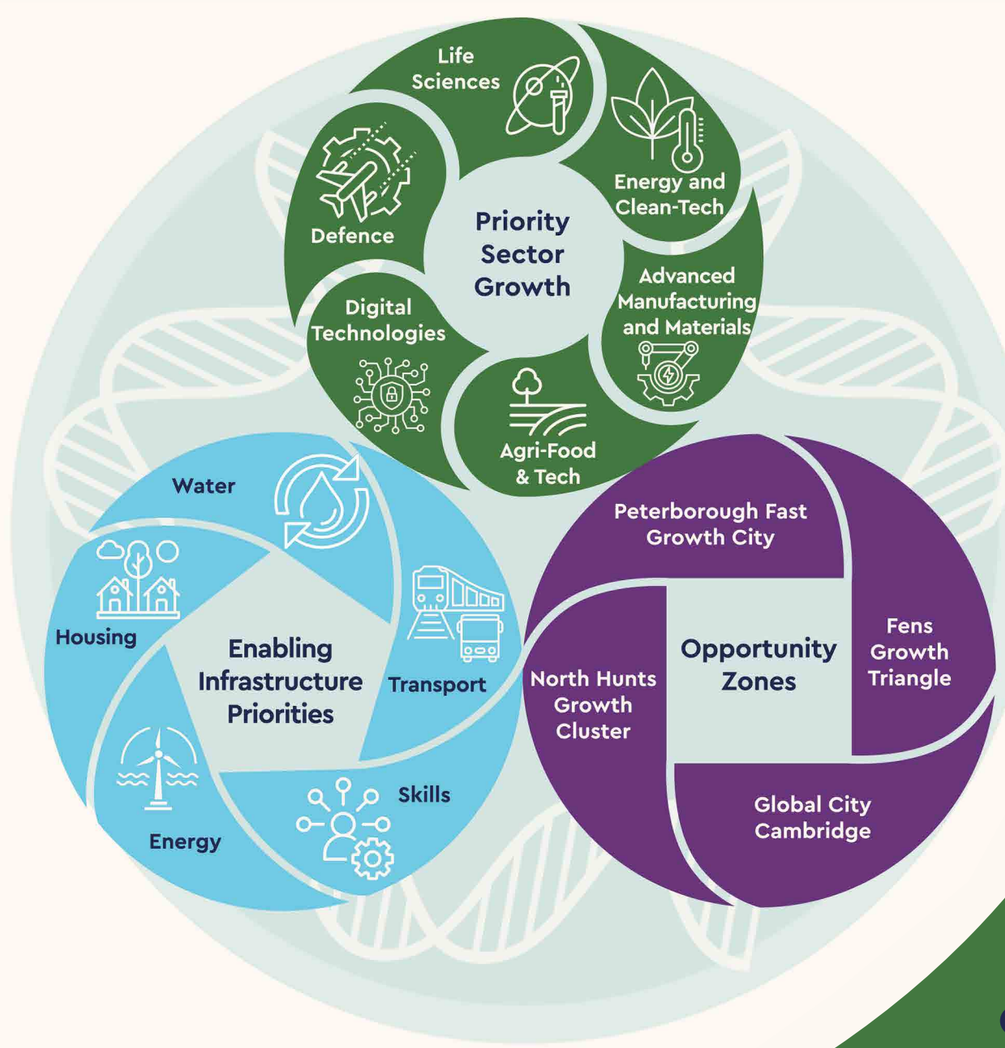
We will not stop there however, with a place-based approach to development, we will create 'Opportunity Zones' which seek to spread and embed high Growth enterprise across the entire area for the first time in the history of the region.

Our Opportunity Zones will create bespoke place-driven approaches to Growth in four key locations. With blended, tailored interventions, and informed by global competitor analysis, these Opportunity Zones will enable the Growth needed in six priority industry-sectors. Our exceptional Higher and Further Education institutions will supply these Zones with pipelines of new talent.

To ensure Growth is unconstrained, we will tackle urgent capital infrastructure barriers across transport, housing, energy and water as well as piloting Action Areas to uplift our most deprived communities, so that all can share in the full benefits of this plan.

Rob Bridge, Chief Executive

Plan Overview



Our Analysis

Based on an in-depth analysis of the current and historic economy of our region, we have identified a baseline Growth figure and projected two Growth scenarios to 2050. These have been developed in the context of our economic review in 2018 which suggested that the Growth of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would be 'choked off' if supply side barriers were not addressed. This economic scenario is now becoming a reality, with urgent action needed to address specific barriers such as water and energy supply alongside investment in transportation infrastructure.

- **Baseline Growth, or 'business as usual'** would see the size of the economy grow to £35.6bn by 2035 and £42.5bn by 2050 (an annual Growth rate of 1.2%).
- **Doubling our Economy** would see the economy double in size by 2050 to £62.3bn GVA, reaching £40.5bn by 2035.
- **Aspirational Growth** would see the economy triple in size by 2050 to £97.1bn GVA, and £46.6bn by 2035.

Delivering our core target will require strong collaboration with Government, and major investment in the area. To meet our committed Mayoral Growth ambition of tripling the economy we will need unprecedented commitment from Government. We will also need alignment to supercharge our sectors, a dramatic increase in private sector investment and to unlock the potential of all places in our area.

Baseline

This baseline projection reflects the current direction of travel in the economy – a 'business as usual' scenario. Events in recent years, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, high energy costs and slowing trade flows due to war in Ukraine, have constrained economic Growth due to their impact on macroeconomic factors, such as aggregate demand and trade. Therefore, this baseline economic projection reflects a picture of suppressed Growth, averaging only 1.22% for the next 25 years.

Whilst it is expected that economic conditions will eventually recover from recent shocks, our region's resource and infrastructure constraints could continue to hamper Growth – while global demand may recover, our regional constraints would continue to impinge on Growth and development if left unaddressed. The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Economic Report (CPIER) modelled this situation previously in 2017, showing how Growth can become even further constrained than our own projection, as strain on resources becomes more acute.

Therefore, we are utilising this projection to reflect our 'Business as Usual' situation: unless we take intentional and significant intervention in our economic region, this is the form of Growth we can expect. This projection is not a 'do nothing' – which would produce an even more pessimistic prediction, but reflects what we can expect if we do not actively deliver on this Local Growth Plan.

Core Target: Double the economy

This target projection reflects two key economic assessments, both of equal value:

- The long-term economic trend of our region's economy since 1982, and
- The Growth rate required to double our economy in 25 years' time: a long-standing CPCA target since the authority's inception in 2018.

These two complementary factors demonstrate a key element of our economic approach – to support the underlying direction of travel of our innovative economy. The long-term economic trajectory of our economy has been significantly higher than recent figures indicate – as outlined previously, global and national economic factors over the last decade or so have restrained the rate at which our economy has grown historically.

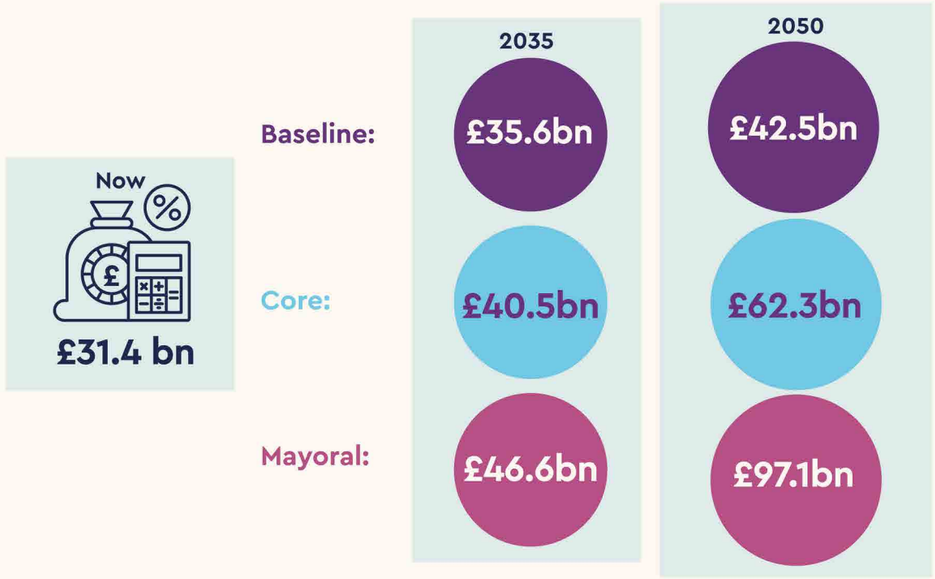
We can achieve this goal of doubling the size of the economy by addressing major constraints, allowing us to return to this competitive rate of 2.8%. By doing so, we will be able to achieve the central economic pledge of the CPCA from the initial devolution deal, ie to double GDP in 25 years.

This Growth projection relies on our existing drivers of economic development, namely our priority industry-sectors, to continue and accelerate their Growth trajectory. Central to this plan is supporting the economic conditions that enables our world leading industries to thrive.

Mayoral Target: Triple the economy

The much more aspirational 'Mayoral' target is to triple the size of the economy by 2050 – the most ambitious Growth target of any Combined Authority. Our historic Growth and track record demonstrate that we are one of only a few UK areas capable of achieving this magnitude of economic Growth.

This higher rate of Growth relies on setting a new direction for our economy, with targets set beyond any historical precedent. Achieving this outcome will require a number of coordinated economic interventions and a willingness to make Growth our key policy priority. The LGP sets out where Growth opportunities are most accessible and this target relies on 'supercharging' our priority sectors, removing constraints on their expansion and committing to critical pro-business interventions. This will require coordination between all decision-makers to unlock a transformational rate of Growth.



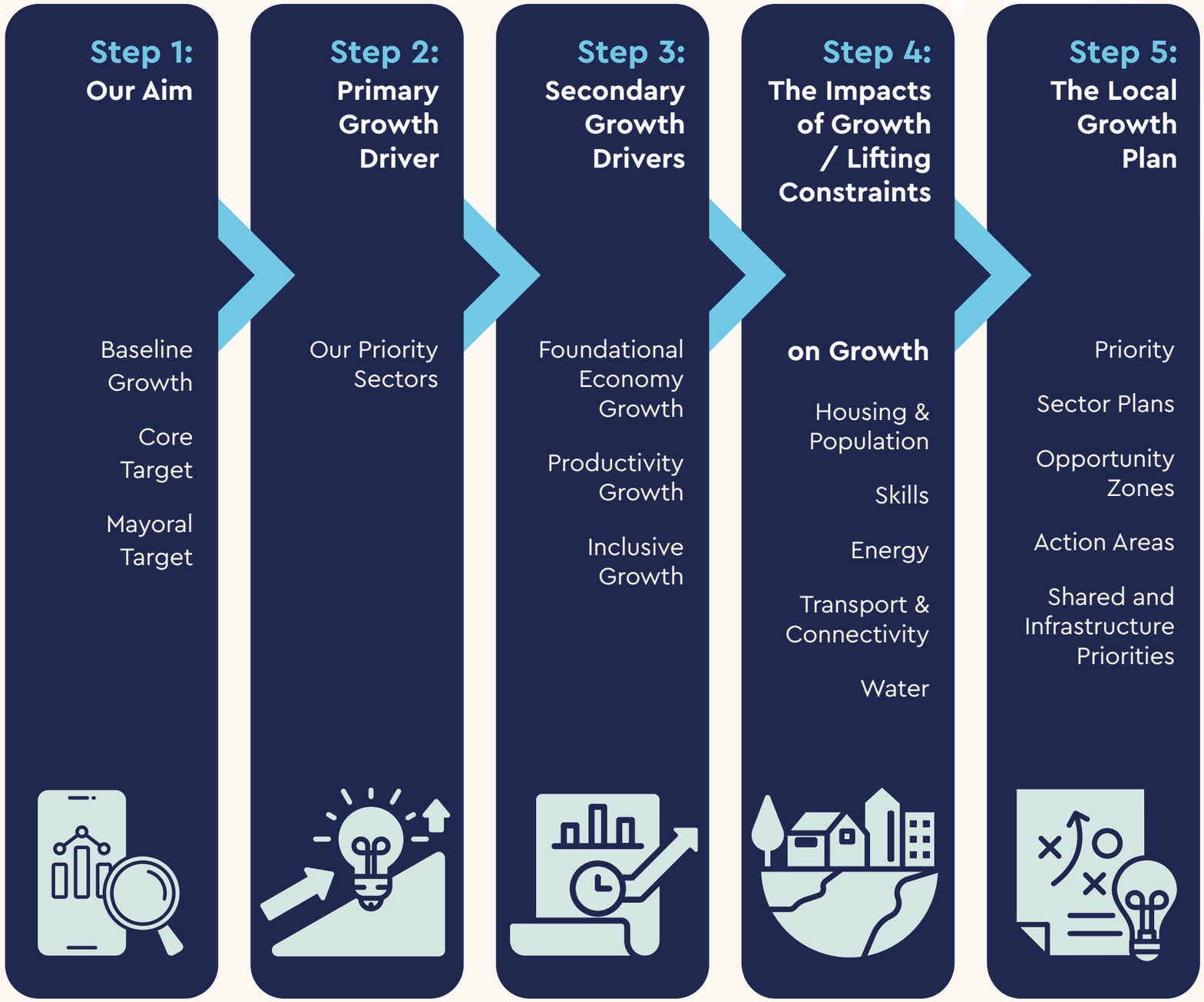
Our Logic Model

This Local Growth Plan provides a 'guiding star' for Growth in our region.

Our logic model is based on a number of factors including historic rates of Growth, current economic size, and rates of Growth both regionally and nationally. This sets out various scenarios for Growth alongside a 'business as usual' approach.

These are our Core, Mayoral and Baseline projections. We have a clear understanding of what we would need to do to achieve this Growth. This plan sets out how we could achieve this Growth through our primary and secondary Growth drivers.

Through this Growth analysis we can understand the scale of infrastructure, both social and economic, we must deliver to realise our Growth ambition.



A Game-Changer – Our Local Growth Plan

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a lynchpin of the UK's 'Golden Triangle', interconnecting two major Growth corridors: one stretching to London – the UK Innovation Corridor – and the other – the Ox-Cam Growth Corridor – stretching to Oxford.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is fundamentally a knowledge-intensive regional economy, that is both globally and nationally significant, with huge potential in future- facing industries. It includes two fast-Growth city conurbations that can drive economic development more widely across the East of England, plugging our area more fully into the Triangle.

The high rate of Growth we are planning for, will be driven by our region's science and technology innovation clusters, and industry-sectors directly aligned with the Government's National Industrial Strategy. This Growth is built on strong foundations of a highly innovative and knowledge-intensive economy. But this Growth is not just for those in the priority economy. The impacts of this Growth – through improved connectivity, place-making and skills development – will be spread across all of our communities.

In executing this plan, we will also deliver on shared priorities agreed with Government. Our priority sectors and potential contribution to the UK's frontier industries are readily acknowledged by Central Government. Our shared priorities with Government are therefore based on bridging infrastructure gaps, improving our transport connectivity and prioritising quality place-making, as already set out by the Deputy Prime Minister in the 'Remit Letter' to our Mayor.

This plan is a demonstration of our evolving role as a Mayoral Strategic Authority working closely with Central Government to deliver the national Growth Mission. The Local Growth Plan has been co-created with our Local Authority delivery partners, multiple Government Departments, arms-length bodies and our regional eco-system of wider public, private and third sector partners, including key infrastructure providers, investors and financial institutions. Our Local Growth Plan will not be delivered by one organization alone. Success will see the region working in unified partnership alongside Central Government.

The CPCA as the Strategic Authority will play a central leadership role: coordinating, collaborating and driving delivery by removing barriers to Growth and enabling our private sector to thrive.

What comes next?

This Plan means nothing without effective delivery. Our initial Delivery Plan is high level and strategic, based on initial, practical next steps. In the short-term, we will build on these foundations and develop more specific delivery plans, including strategic investment frameworks, technical business cases and delivery vehicles, incorporating new functions, powers and instruments, such as special economic zones. The Local Growth Plan acts as the 'guiding star' for all of our other statutory plans, ensuring its vision and direction sit at the heart of the Combined Authority's activity, including:

- The Get Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Working Plan
- The Local Skills Improvement Plan (refresh)
- The Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (refresh)
- The Spatial Development Strategy
- Priority Sector Plans

Of all these statutory plans and supporting strategies will need to be in place to deliver the Growth ambition contained within this LGP.

We will also seek to collaborate and work with other national, regional and local strategies and plans that impact on the area, embedding them into this delivery.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Growth Plan: The Guiding Star

Economic Overview

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Economy

Our strong base

From our historic towns, cities and universities, our economy has grown into the globally recognised science and technology superpower it is today. In the UK context, our economy is uniquely focused on knowledge-intensive industries, with nearly 28% of GVA driven by innovation sectors. The strong foundations of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough economy position it well for high Growth over the next decade and beyond. The region has exhibited high rates of Growth historically, driven by our high-productivity specialisms, and supported by expansion of our 'foundational' or 'every-day' economy.

To drive the economy in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We have analysed our region's economy in-depth to build a plan that can meet our Mayoral target of tripling our economy by 2050.

Our economy in a snapshot

GVA: £31.4bn

Population: 922,000

Average Growth Rate since 1981: 2.78%

Number of Unicorn Spinouts from Cambridge: 26

Nobel Prize winners from Cambridge University: 125

Active businesses: 38,175[2]

Europe's largest tech cluster employing over 250,000 people

Gross disposable household income: £22,816[4]

Employment rate: 79.4%[5]

A unique opportunity

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been named one of the best areas to work in the UK, demonstrated through one of the highest employment rates in the country and having Europe's largest technology cluster, employing over 250,000 people[6].

A leading region

The Combined Authority area has clear economic strengths, providing a strong base to drive future Growth. As a contributor to the UK's overall performance, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area shines with unique capabilities that will enable the whole country to strengthen its global competitive position.

GVA per hour worked

UK £37.30

CPCA £40.30[7]

GDP per head at current market prices

UK £31,016

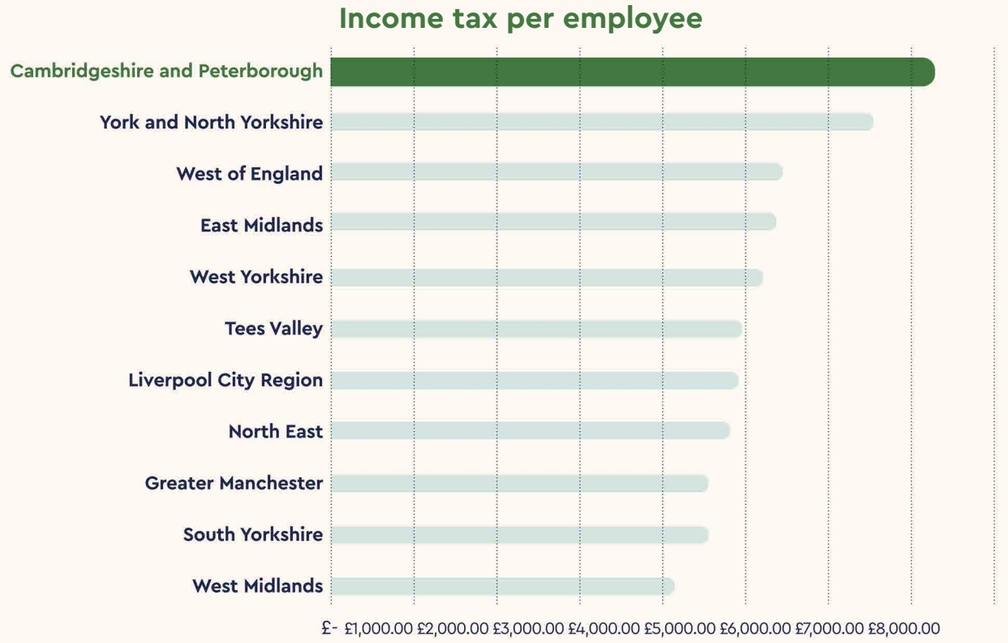
CPCA £40,723[8]

7.2% of people aged 16 years+ working in scientific research and development in Cambridge city

National average of 0.2%[9]

Return on Investment

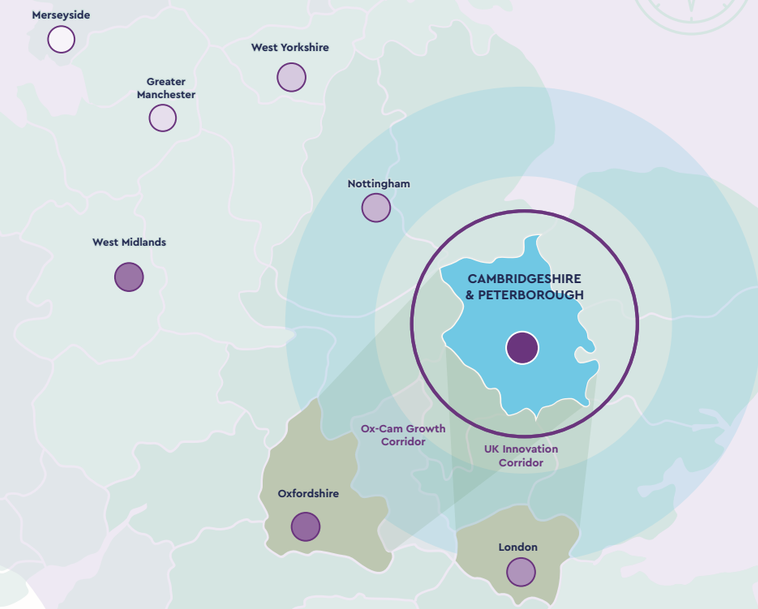
In terms of national tax receipts and contribution to HM Treasury, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough clearly outperforms all other devolved Combined Authority areas in the UK (excluding London). Per worker tax take, per annum, is £720 more in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough than the closest comparator (York and North Yorkshire) and £2,200 more than the average for all Combined Authority areas. This is an undeniable demonstration that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area presents a secure investment proposition for Government that will pay significant dividends.



The UK's Driver for Innovation

Our region's economy centres around our leading innovation-intensive sectors. We are the critical force of the UK's knowledge economy, pushing boundaries of science and technology across a variety of established and frontier industries, and driving the country forward as a global science superpower. With our mature technology and business eco-system and our strategic location within the Ox-Cam and Innovation corridors, we are uniquely placed to drive rapid Growth in key knowledge industries.

Our region is renowned for its knowledge assets. Our capacity for ideas, and turning these ideas into actionable patents and products, has never been stronger. The heat map shows the power of our region and the eco-system within our own CPCA area and with our close neighbours too.



Location	Density
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	2.75
Oxfordshire	0.98
West Midlands	0.71
London	0.42
Nottingham	0.31
West Yorkshire	0.23
Greater Manchester	0.19
Merseyside	0.07

Key
Colour of Circle = patents per 10,000 population

A global leader

Our area is both a UK and a global leader. Ranked as the most intensive Science & Technology cluster globally in 2024, the region ranks ahead of significant global competition including San Jose, San Francisco, Eindhoven, and Cambridge- Massachusetts[10]. This is coupled with our academic prowess, with Cambridge, UK producing the most academic articles per capita globally, at just over 35,000 per one million people in 2024[11]. It is clear from this global recognition for innovation that our region is central to the UK's global competitiveness in knowledge intensive sectors and frontier industries.

Furthermore, our region sits within the UK's Golden Triangle of innovation with London and Oxford. Our geographical vicinity is a key opportunity to further support high-value, leading-edge R&D in the UK. With Oxford ranked as the 4th most intensive Science & Technology cluster globally, the UK has an opportunity to build on this power of proximity and create our response to the USA's Silicon Valley[12].

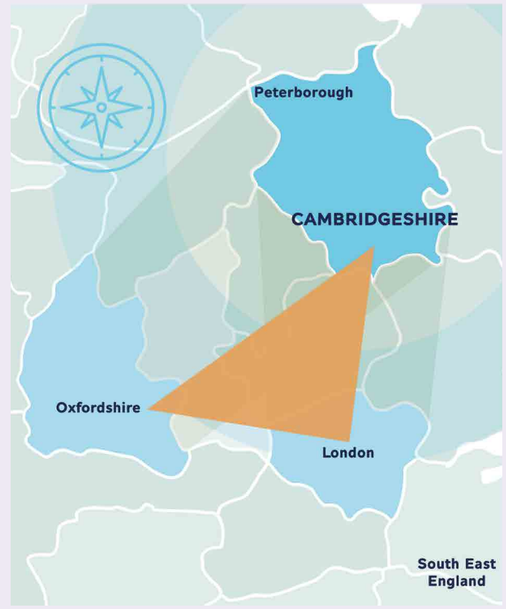
Top 5 Science & Technology clusters by S&T intensity, 2024

Rank per-capita	Cluster name	Nation	Top patent applicant	Top scientific organization
1	**Cambridge**	**GB**	**Arm**	**Cambridge University**
2	San Jose–San Francisco, CA	US	Google	Stanford University
3	Eindhoven	NL	Philips Electronics	Eindhoven University of Tech
4	Oxford	GB	Oxford University	Oxford University
5	Boston–Cambridge, MA	US	MIT	MIT

The Golden Triangle

Situated in a unique, strategic location, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough sits at the heart of two major innovation and Growth corridors. The Ox-Cam Growth corridor places huge emphasis on the symbiotic relationship between the leading academic powerhouses of the UK, driving forward innovation from our country's historic institutions. The Innovation Corridor connects London's talent base and global financial markets to our unique CPCA innovation economy. This Golden Triangle forms a formidable global cluster of innovation, academia, talent and economic activity, and our area is at its core.

We will continue to work with Government, the Cambridge Growth Company and the Supercluster Board to foster the UK's strategic Growth corridors, strengthening their international reach.



Driving UK Industry, Nationwide

As the UK's innovation leader, success in our region drives industry and Growth across the entire UK. Be it collaboration with Manchester's emergent life science sectors, spinouts embedding in London, or key advanced manufacturing technologies being used in wind turbine production in Hull, our region drives industry across the nation. Working in partnership with core industries nationwide, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough sits at the heart of UK PLC.

The total economic impact associated with the activities of the University of Cambridge's spinout and start-up companies alone in one academic year was estimated to be £18bn across the UK economy.

Place: Glasgow[26 27]

Sector: Life Sciences

Description: Research and Development in our region has strong synergies with the life science and biotechnology sectors in the city.

Place: Teeside[14 15]

Sector: Energy and Clean-Tech

Description: Research conducted in our region has the potential to support the development of Teesside's green hydrogen hub.

Place: Hull[16 17]

Sector: Advanced Manufacturing and Materials

Description: Technology developed in our region can be utilised for wind turbine manufacturing.

Place: West Midlands[21 22]

Sector: Advanced Manufacturing and Materials

Description: Our region develops computing chips for the automotive sector, a key manufacturing industry in the West Midlands.

Place: Manchester[13]

Sector: Priority Sectors

Description: Exchange of knowledge and ideas to support start-ups and scale-ups across innovative sectors.

Place: Norwich[18]

Sector: Agri-Food & Tech

Description: Bringing together world-class expertise and dynamic business clusters, supporting Norwich as a centre for agritech and food science research.

Place: Port Talbot[23 24]

Sector: Advanced Manufacturing and Materials

Description: Technology developed in Cambridge & Peterborough can support the Future Port Talbot project.

Place: Bristol[25]

Sector: Defence

Description: Organizations from Bristol in the digital security space are collaborating with initiatives driven and supported by our region to develop new technologies.

Place: Oxford[20]

Sector: Priority Sectors

Description: Development and exchange of innovative research drives the productivity of both our region and Oxford.

Place: London[19]

Sector: Digital Technologies

Description: Cutting edge cybersecurity companies based in our region support the functioning of London's corporate sector.

Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor

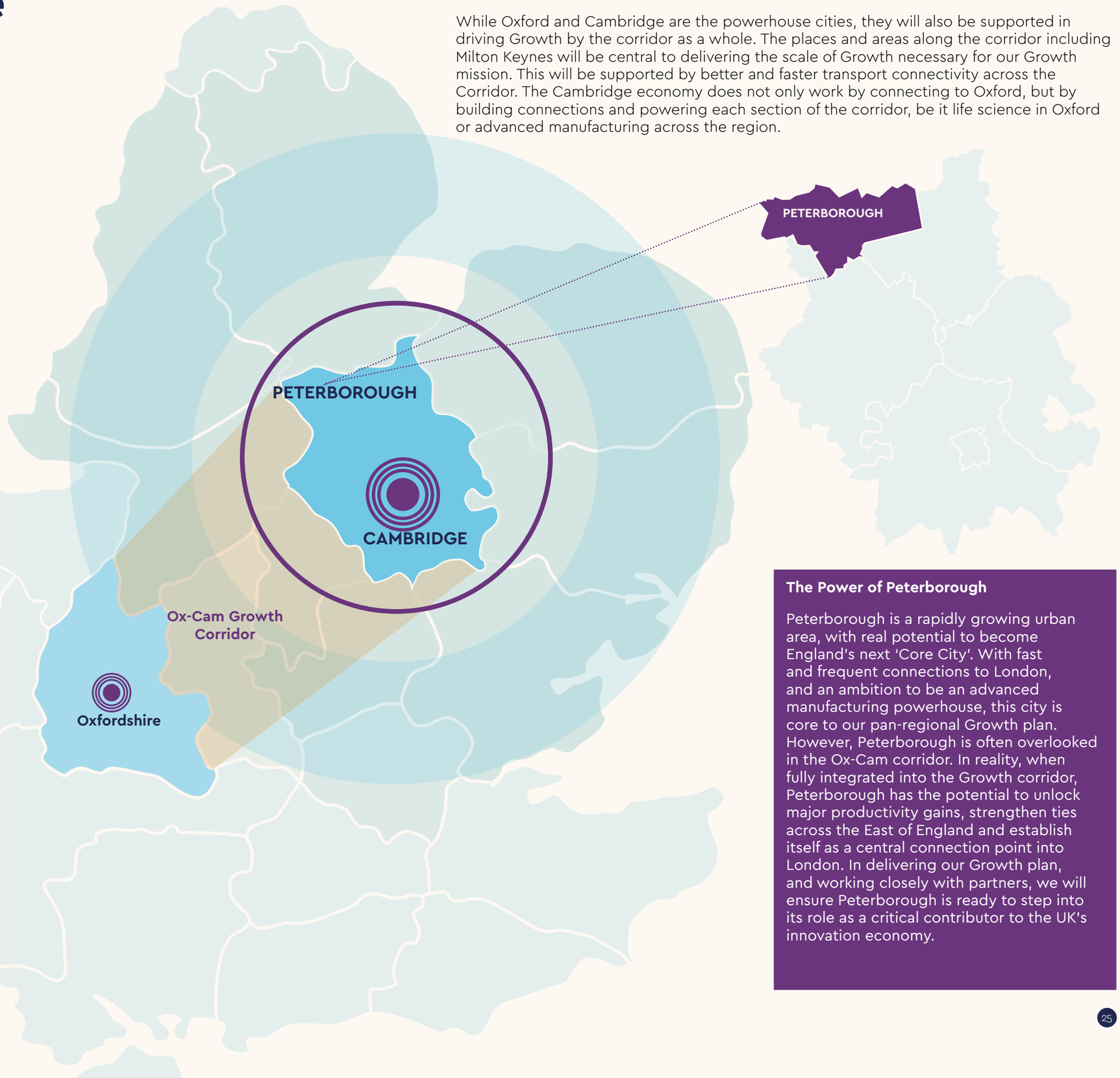
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is the UK's globally recognised centre of innovation, powering the Government's ambitions for accelerated, knowledge-intensive Growth across the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor and beyond.

As the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlined in her January 2025 speech:

"Oxford and Cambridge offer huge economic potential for our nation's Growth prospects. It has the potential to be Europe's Silicon Valley. The home of British innovation."

This corridor, containing the UK's most historic knowledge generating institutions, alongside advanced industry eco-systems developed over decades, is un-matched in the UK. If the true potential of this corridor is unlocked, with effective collaboration and investment, it will become the world's leading location for innovation.

Cambridge can, and should be, the driving force behind the corridor's Growth. Alongside the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area, we stand ready to deliver these ambitions, working together with Government and all our partners across the corridor. With our Growth plan focusing on accelerated Growth, and Government delivering critical interventions such as East West Rail and new towns, the creation of 'Europe's Silicon Valley' is well into delivery.



The Power of the Entire Corridor

While Oxford and Cambridge are the powerhouse cities, they will also be supported in driving Growth by the corridor as a whole. The places and areas along the corridor including Milton Keynes will be central to delivering the scale of Growth necessary for our Growth mission. This will be supported by better and faster transport connectivity across the Corridor. The Cambridge economy does not only work by connecting to Oxford, but by building connections and powering each section of the corridor, be it life science in Oxford or advanced manufacturing across the region.

The Power of Peterborough

Peterborough is a rapidly growing urban area, with real potential to become England's next 'Core City'. With fast and frequent connections to London, and an ambition to be an advanced manufacturing powerhouse, this city is core to our pan-regional Growth plan. However, Peterborough is often overlooked in the Ox-Cam corridor. In reality, when fully integrated into the Growth corridor, Peterborough has the potential to unlock major productivity gains, strengthen ties across the East of England and establish itself as a central connection point into London. In delivering our Growth plan, and working closely with partners, we will ensure Peterborough is ready to step into its role as a critical contributor to the UK's innovation economy.

East of England

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region does not sit in isolation. Located in the fast-growing East of England, our region has a clear opportunity to draw on the assets and resources of neighbouring places, including access to important international gateways. Our economy benefits from and contributes to this wider network, helping us stay competitive, but also reinforcing the economic potential of many other towns, cities and economic assets across the east of the country. With our region's own strengths in priority sectors of key importance to the National Industrial Stratgey, our geography means we are well placed to seize new opportunities, share benefits of Growth, and support sustainable long-term development.

In combination, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's knowledge and industry assets, alongside the wider area's upcoming major developments and initiatives, provide a unique investment proposition for the UK.

Luton Airport

Luton Airport is a key international gateway, handling 19 million passengers and 28,000 tonnes of cargo every year. The airport plans to expand operationally with the granting of a Development Consent Order and new routes to east coast USA and the Middle East will start to feature in its global network. This expansion will enhance international connectivity on our region's doorstep, while helping build local supply chains and attracting further investment into the wider area.

Norwich

Norwich is an attractive, fast-growing technology hub, with close ties to our region. Through the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor collaboration, we are embracing synergies across our high-potential region to maximise Growth.

Freeport East

Freeport East is one of 12 freeports in the United Kingdom, positioned on the east coast of England and encompassing parts of Suffolk and Essex, two counties renowned for their economic strengths and quality of life. The freeport covers over a thousand square kilometres in total, attracting investment and jobs, and facilitating innovation and decarbonisation. The Freeport provides access to international markets for companies in the region, therefore attracting investment and promoting Growth.

Universal Studios

Universal Studios' planned theme park and resort in Bedford is a key economic opportunity for our wider area. Situated half an hour from the west side of our region, the park is expected to generate nearly £50 billion of economic benefits and create 28,000 jobs, from catering to construction to logistics. This new leisure destination will significantly enhance the visitor experience of the region, with important spillovers into cultural, tourism, retail and hospitality industries that make up important elements of our 'everyday' economy.

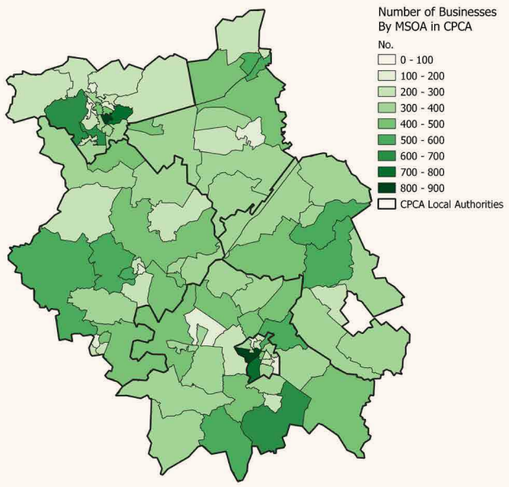
Stansted Airport

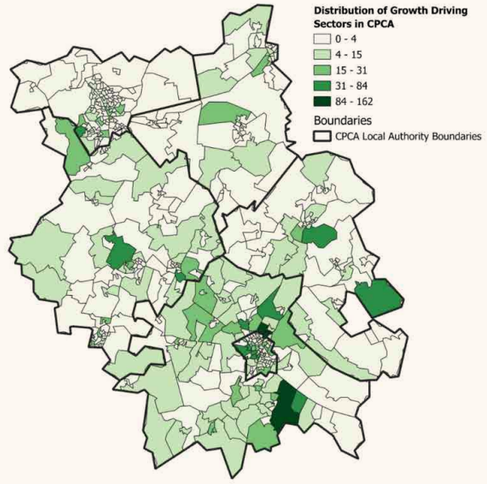
Stansted Airport is our closest international gateway, and serves almost 30 million passengers every year. In 2023, Stansted Airport announced a £1.1 billion expansion plan including a £600 million extension of the terminal and facilities, to increase its capacity to serve up to 43 million passengers per year. Further plans were shared last year, which would take the airport's capacity to 51 million passengers per year. Research from the airport has shown that routes to the US could unlock nearly £200m in investment into the region[57].

Our Mature Ecosystem

Our businesses

Our region is home to over 36,000 businesses, ranging from sole traders to the UK's largest company by market capitalisation, AstraZeneca28. Our enterprises are primarily concentrated around our two cities, with other hotspots around Huntingdon and south Cambridgeshire. Our priority sector businesses are further concentrated around Cambridge, with emerging and growing clusters elsewhere in the region.





26
unicorn companies produced

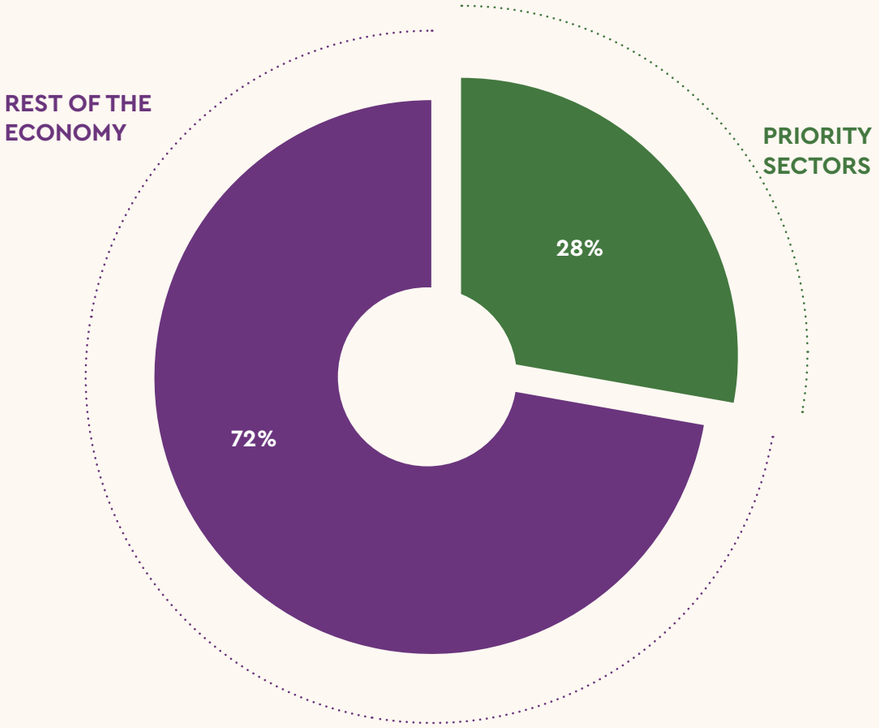
1-Year Business Survival Rate:
91.4%

Due to our strong innovation ecosystem and business infrastructure, our region has evident attraction for large and innovative global companies, as exemplified by the presence of businesses such as AstraZeneca, Arm and Darktrace. The region also has an effective start-up and scale-up environment, powered primarily by spin-outs from the University of Cambridge and further supported by an eco-system of enterprise hubs, science parks, industry networks and centres for excellence across the region.

Home to some of the UK's biggest companies	
AstraZeneca	AstraZeneca, the UK's largest business[29].
arm	Arm, the UK's 5th biggest business, and UK's most valuable tech company[30].
DARKTRACE	DarkTrace, the UK's largest ever university spinout[31].

Our knowledge economy

Our region is celebrated as the UK's centre of knowledge and innovation industries. In our region we can boast exceptionally intense industry hubs, together with dedicated institutions, centres of excellence and frontier enterprises. Alongside these knowledge intensive industries there is of course a large 'foundational' or 'everyday' economy that is equally vital to the continued development, wellbeing and resilience of our area. The health of this foundational economy is crucial therefore to efforts to maximise economic inclusion and shared prosperity across our area's communities, especially those places more remote from our cities and larger settlements. Currently, our priority sectors represent 28% of the region's economy.

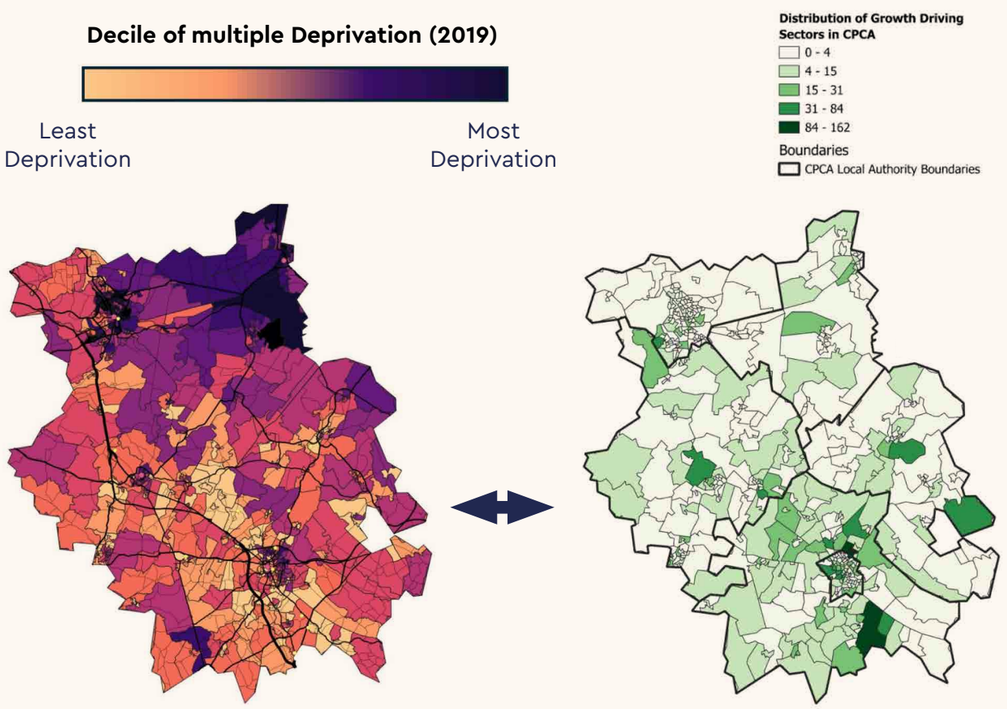


Our region benefits from key synergies between the knowledge and foundational economies – for example, our leading life sciences sector benefits from proximity to a substantial health and social care sector and vice versa. Our sectors are highly interactive and connected, allowing innovation in one sector to spillover across the region, the country, and the world.

An Inclusive Economy

The aspiration is to develop an innovative, high-Growth economy that offers opportunities for all our citizens, wherever they may be in the combined authority area. Although on average, economic outcomes for individuals in our sub-region are better than the UK average, these are generally unequally distributed across our area, as they are in most parts of the country. Where communities are constrained in accessing economic opportunity, deprivation-related issues are more likely to exist and to persist.

Our area has a clear divide between north and south in terms of economic inclusion and prosperity. Locations around Cambridge and south Cambridgeshire exhibit significantly lower volumes of deprivation than those in Peterborough and Fenland. The divides also exist within our urban areas, with Cambridge actually being identified as the most unequal city in the whole of the UK. For these reasons, future Growth must be as inclusive as possible, generating opportunities for all of our communities.



Economic Inactivity

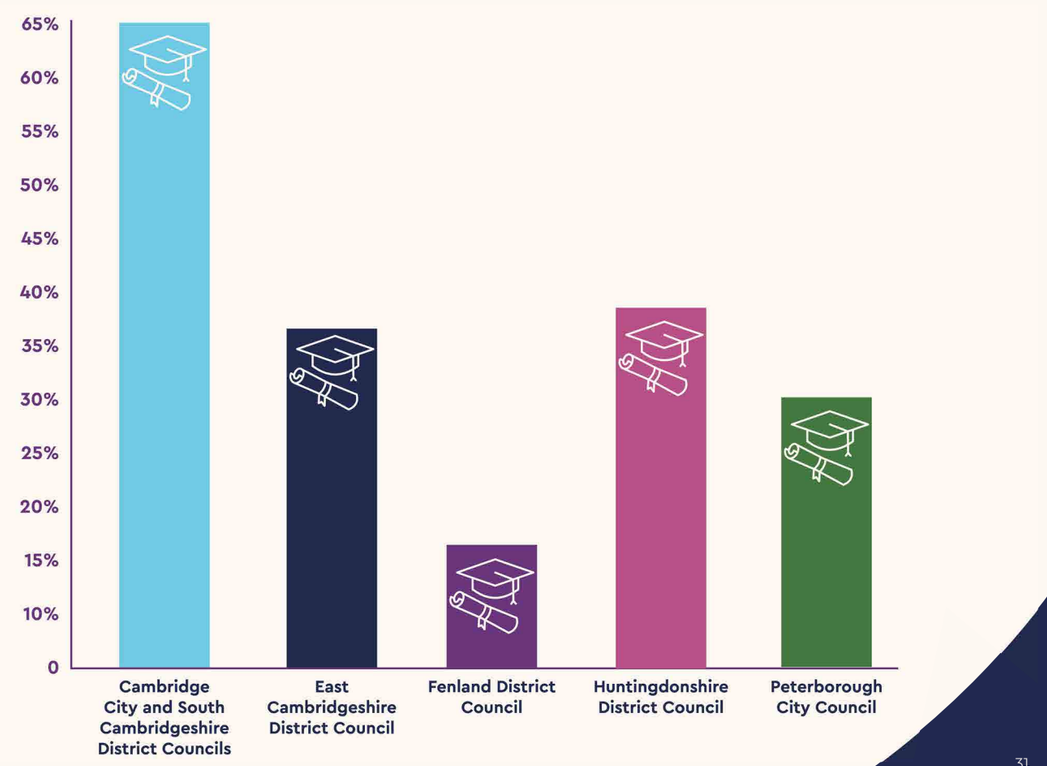
Unlike much of the UK, our region has not experienced the well-evidenced national decline in economic activity rates post Covid-19. Our region has remained around 17% inactive, a slight decrease from 19% in 2019. This falls well below the national average economic inactivity rate of 22%, and the average of all English combined authorities of 23%.

However, this does not apply in Fenland, where 28% of the population is economically inactive. Our Growth plan ensures the Fenland area will have targeted measures that directly address this, driven by our Opportunity Zones interventions and an Action Area to drive forward skills and opportunities for those in the Fenland area. These interventions will help facilitate the spread of opportunity from our target Growth sectors into the wider area through new learning opportunities, more well-developed progression pathways and new supply chain opportunities for local businesses.

Skills

Skills are key to inclusive economic Growth, so making sure the widest cross section of our citizens have the requisite skills for expanding sectors will be paramount. Our region roughly matches the UK average for skills and qualification levels, with 42.9% of the population at RQF4+ (just 0.8% below the UK average). However, this varies significantly across the area: Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire have significantly higher proportions with RQF4+ qualifications, at 65% and 64% respectively, compared to Fenland with only 16%. Upskilling specific locations and communities within our sub-region will establish the labour market we need to staff our priority sectors, while enhancing the ability of as many local people as possible to take advantage of these new opportunities.

CPCA Constituent Authorities RQF4+ Rate



Local & Global Talent

The University of Cambridge is one of the world's pre-eminent universities, with a global reputation across many subject areas, including Biological Sciences, Chemical Engineering, Electrical & Electronic Engineering and Mathematics. To support a healthy knowledge ecosystem, it is vital that Cambridge graduates have a clear option to stay in the region. This relies on the regional business environment and overall quality of life remaining competitive with global alternatives, such as Paris, Boston, Singapore and San Francisco.

Through our commitment to supporting good jobs across our priority sectors and frontier industries, our plan will ensure that our leading talent has a reason to stay in the region. We will strive to ensure that graduates are retained in the area, highly skilled people seek to move in, and that communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are equipped to engage in the economy at all levels.

The Everyday Economy

Critical to maximising economic activity and participation, is a strong foundational or 'everyday' economy. The Everyday Economy includes everything outside of our six priority sectors. It is the machinery that sits around those sectors, in effect employing the majority of our workforce. This aspect of our economy is very large and spans a plethora of industries, employing people of all skill levels, from health and social care, to construction, to retail and hospitality, to public administration and leisure services. Achieving positive outcomes for those working in our Everyday Economy – or for those seeking to make their way into it – are key to ensuring our future Growth impacts the lives of all our residents.

Although expansion of our Priority Sectors sits at the heart of our Growth strategy – these sectors are really the key levers that will unlock an ambitious and unprecedented level of Growth. However, this will only ever be a part of our economy: understanding the wider context of our economic ecosystem is essential to ensure we achieve our vision. A healthy and successful Everyday Economy will not only result in positive outcomes for those working within 'foundation' sectors, but will support an interconnected and effective regional economy as a whole. Through a focus on Opportunity Zones and Action areas, we will ensure that priority sector Growth affords opportunities for skills development, new enterprise, and progression, as a reality for everyone in our area.

Our core vision relies on a significant rate of Growth – around 2% per year on average across the whole economy. This will require approximately a 4% average yearly Growth rate specifically in our priority sectors. The whole economy will only grow if inclusion sits at the heart of our plan and Growth in priority industries is transferred effectively into the wider Everyday Economy.

Our Sectors

FOUNDATIONAL SECTORS	Number of employees (nearest 100)
Education	58,800
Health	45,700
Retail Trade	35,000
Construction	27,400
Residential & Social Care	22,700

FOUNDATIONAL SECTORS	Number of employees (nearest 100)
Wholesale Trade	20,600
Public Admin & Defence	16,800
Warehousing & Postal	14,300
Logistics	11,000

Our Interconnected Economy

Our Everyday and Priority Sectors do not exist in a vacuum, significant synergies already lead to economic 'spillovers' and collaboration through supply chains and ongoing workforce development.

Life Sciences and Healthcare Sector – New research and technology developed and tested in healthcare facilities.

Advanced Manufacturing and Materials and Logistics – Supply chains rely on an effective and efficient logistics sector.

Digital Technologies and Education – Our region's leading Ed-Tech subsector relies on the intersection of digital and education.

Skills for our Everyday Economy

Meeting the skills requirements of sectors within the Everyday Economy is at the heart of supporting positive, inclusive outcomes across the economy as a whole. We must ensure that learning and training opportunities are designed and delivered to help local people at all levels of the economic spectrum – supporting people with complex needs to enter the labour market for the first time, while simultaneously embedding global-level talent within highly specialised technology industries. This will be driven through our Higher Education and Further Education institutions, as well as Adult and Community Learning. To support the Everyday Economy, we will specifically focus on:

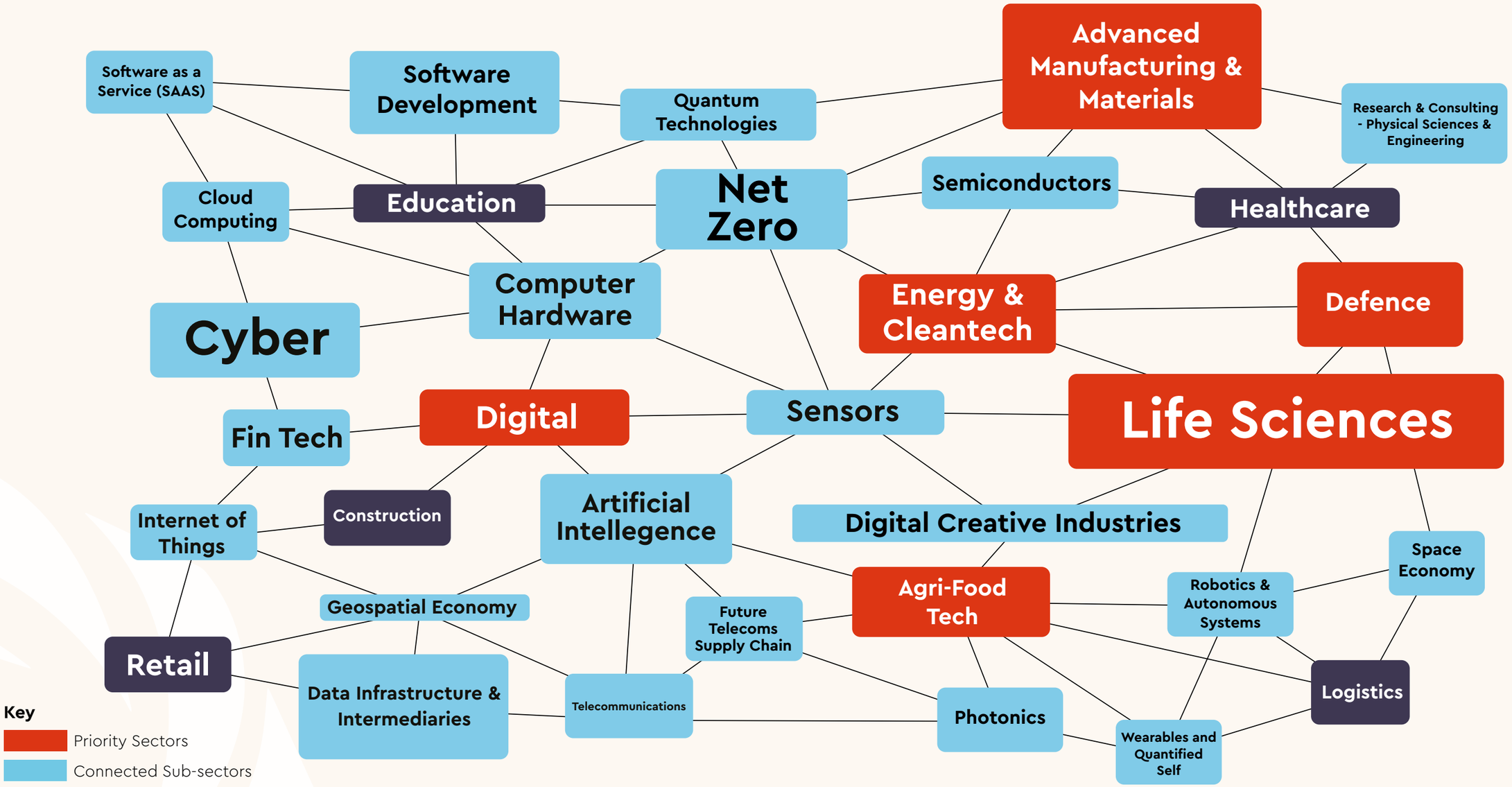
- Widening access to education and training, with a focus on the most in-demand skills.
- Supporting industry eco-systems to ensure they continue to benefit from synergies.
- Ensuring those working in our Everyday Economy can upskill within their sectors at a time and place most conducive to long-term participation and inclusion in our economy.

Sector Relationship Network

As our region provides a concentrated hub for a range of different high-value sectors, there is a large network of relationships across such sectors. Where one sector is growing, it supports the Growth and development of another through interconnected industries, talent pools and supply chains. With many different innovation parks, academic resources, research facilities, and manufacturing operations in such close proximity in our region, the sector relationship network is dense and strong. This drives Growth by allowing easier collaboration, knowledge sharing, and synergies that provide a multitude of high level jobs attracting investment and in turn more innovation.

Sub-sector Networks

This network is incredibly dense, meaning that spillover effects are likely throughout our region, the UK, and globally. Spillover effects in terms of innovation and investment mean that Growth in one evolving sector or sub sector can positively impact another. For example, for artificial intelligence R&D to continue spreading across different facilities in our region, it relies on the Growth of the digital, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences sectors. Therefore, where there is increased investment into one sector, it supports the development of another, assisting, reinforcing and expanding our overall Growth trajectory.



Our Time is Now

Historically, our region has grown at a strong rate, and we have recovered well from major economic shocks in the past. Today, we can exploit a number of core factors to drive forward our Mayoral Growth ambition. Three of these leading factors are: our fast growing cities, our significant opportunity for growing companies with competitive real estate prices, and our globally recognised brand as an investable location.

Home to the UK's fastest growing cities

Our economic centres of Cambridge and Peterborough are the 1st and 4th fastest growing cities in the UK respectively[32]. Our fast-growing settlements offer significant opportunities when paired with active regional skills development, especially as the nation's population ages. This opportunity is clear: to provide extensive labour markets to businesses looking to establish themselves and grow quickly in the region. The Get Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Working Plan, including the Connect to Work Programme and the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer and the Skills Improvement Plan are being developed to do just that.

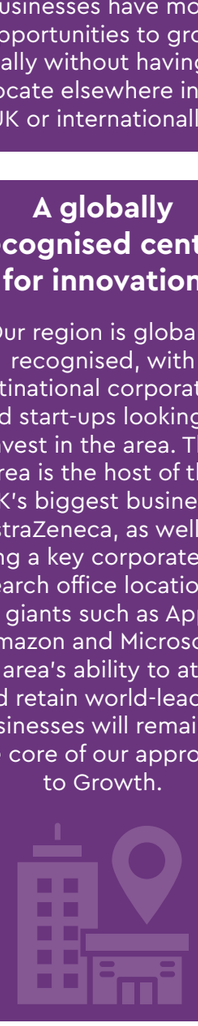
Rank	City	Population percentage change, 2013-2023(%)	Population 2013	Population 2023
1	Cambridge	17.3	127,819	149,963
2	Exeter	15.2	118,994	137,050
3	Milton Keynes	14.9	259,672	298,270
4	Peterborough	14.0	192,488	219,509
5	Telford	13.5	169,014	191,915

Diverse real estate opportunities

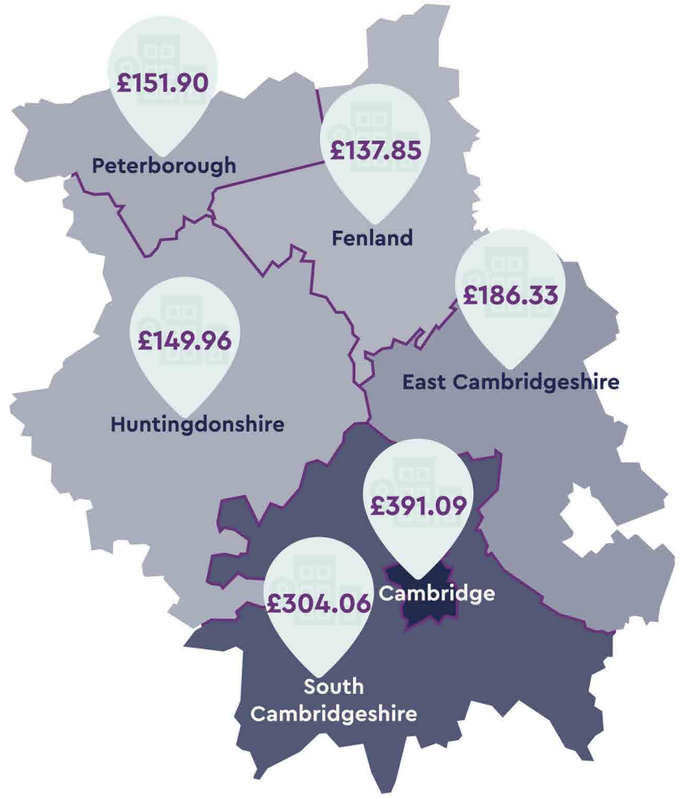
Our region's productive industries are primarily found in key Growth centres that benefit from proximity to innovation ecosystems. Previously, limited options outside these areas restricted expansion. Now, with new innovation hubs emerging in competitively priced areas such as Peterborough and Huntingdonshire, and improved transport links, businesses have more opportunities to grow locally without having to relocate elsewhere in the UK or internationally.

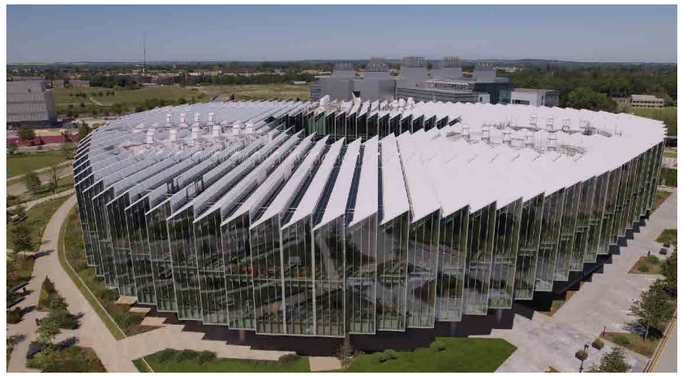
A globally recognised centre for innovation

Our region is globally recognised, with multinational corporations and start-ups looking to invest in the area. The area is the host of the UK's biggest business, AstraZeneca, as well as being a key corporate and research office location for US giants such as Apple, Amazon and Microsoft. Our area's ability to attract and retain world-leading businesses will remain at the core of our approach to Growth.



Office Market Asking Rent per sqm



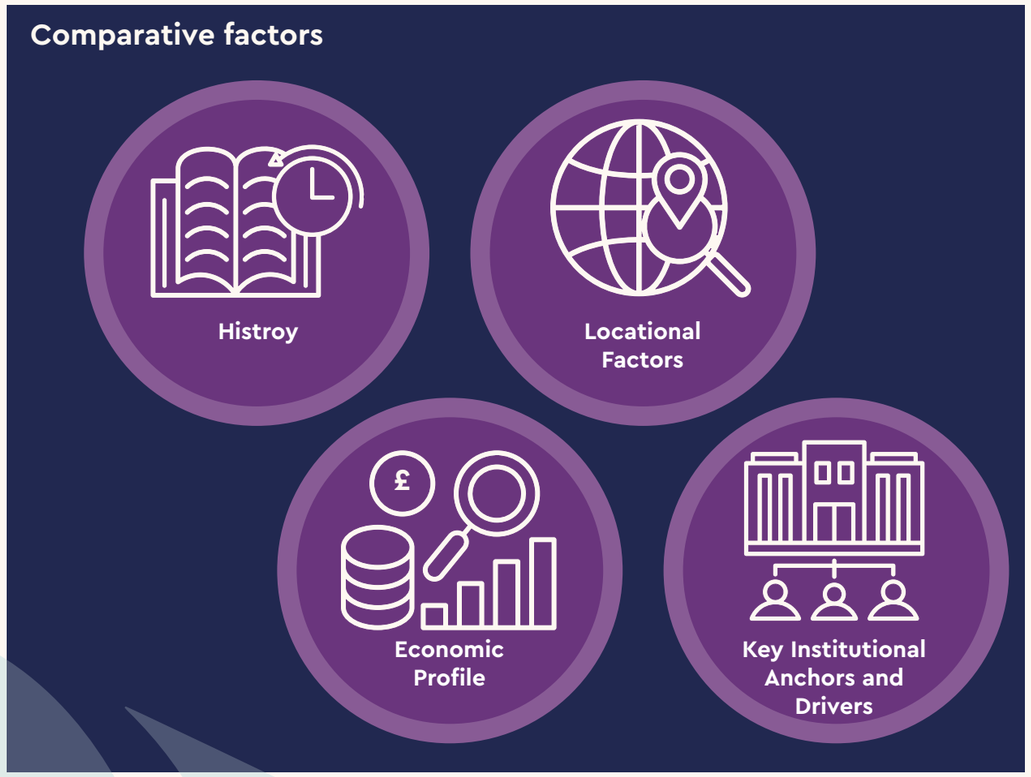


Case Study: AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca is one of the world's leading biopharmaceutical companies and the largest by market capitalisation on the FTSE 100 index[33]. In 2013, AstraZeneca announced its decision to move their global headquarters to Cambridge's world-class innovation ecosystem, constructing a state-of-the-art R&D facility on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus[34]. The region's largest life sciences employer, they employ approximately 4,000 people in Cambridge and are involved in 200 science-led partnerships across the region[35].

An International Powerhouse Corridor

Our area has the potential to be one of the world's leading science, technology and innovation clusters. We already have the requisite inputs in terms of knowledge and skills, but this must be supplemented with infrastructure, housing and regional connectivity, maximising the benefits of our nexus point across the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor and the Golden Triangle. This makes us unique in the world as an innovation powerhouse, with our only real rival being Silicon Valley USA.



Understanding our Global Competition

The success of Silicon Valley is driven by a unique combination of cultural, institutional, and economic factors. Replicating this in Cambridge, UK – regularly dubbed Silicon Fen – is possible, but requires strategic alignment across several dimensions. Silicon Valley does in fact provide some useful lessons for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, especially in how to scale up innovation Growth capacity quickly, instead of relying on more gradual, organic forms of economic expansion.

In Silicon Valley's case, proximity to top universities has also been key – Stanford and UC Berkeley provide a steady stream of talent and research. Strong university-industry collaboration then fuels new innovation and commercial spin out. Their venture capital ecosystem is strong and forms a dense network of investors willing to fund high-risk, high-reward ideas. Early-stage funding is more abundant in Silicon Valley, thus enabling rapid scaling. This is a characteristic we must replicate quickly in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, in order to assert our competitive position as robustly as possible in key technology markets worldwide.

One other area where we can learn from the Silicon Valley experience is their culture of risk-taking, where boldness and speed in decision-making are encouraged as part of the innovation process. Supportive Infrastructure such as incubators, accelerators, and co-working spaces foster startup activity in Silicon Valley, with legal, financial, and technical services tailored to digital enterprises and tech industry needs. We also have many of these factors partly in place already.

However, if they are balanced with enhanced connectivity, improved energy and utilities provision, affordable housing and an excellent quality of life, the possibilities for sustainable Growth become fully unlocked. Our aim is to better Silicon Valley's network effects, with an even denser clustering of talent, firms, and investors, creating a globally unrivalled self-reinforcing ecosystem.

Cambridge already has many ingredients for scaled up Growth and success. Strengthening the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor will enhance collaboration between two world-class universities and tech clusters. While Venture Capital (VC) investment in UK life sciences and digital tech is growing, it still lags behind Silicon Valley, therefore a boost to venture capital access would cement the power of this corridor. Policies to attract global investors and incentivise domestic VC funds are crucial.

Delivering World Leading Power-house Growth

Examining the attributes and characteristics of our main global rival assists our Growth mission, as it raises the ambition of what we can achieve and gives us an understanding of how this Growth can happen. Specifically, we see how to maximise and scale up the potential of economic corridors that link our cities of Cambridge and Peterborough with other powerhouse connection, whether these be Oxford or London.

Peterborough has not only an opportunity to nurture significant advanced manufacturing in more complex sectors, but to become a manufacturing hub due to more competitive property prices, a history of sophisticated industrial products, and the advantages of a strategic location. As does the Fens, with many research facilities existing in neighbouring Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which could be assets to the Growth of the manufacturing and Agri-Tech sectors in Fenland.

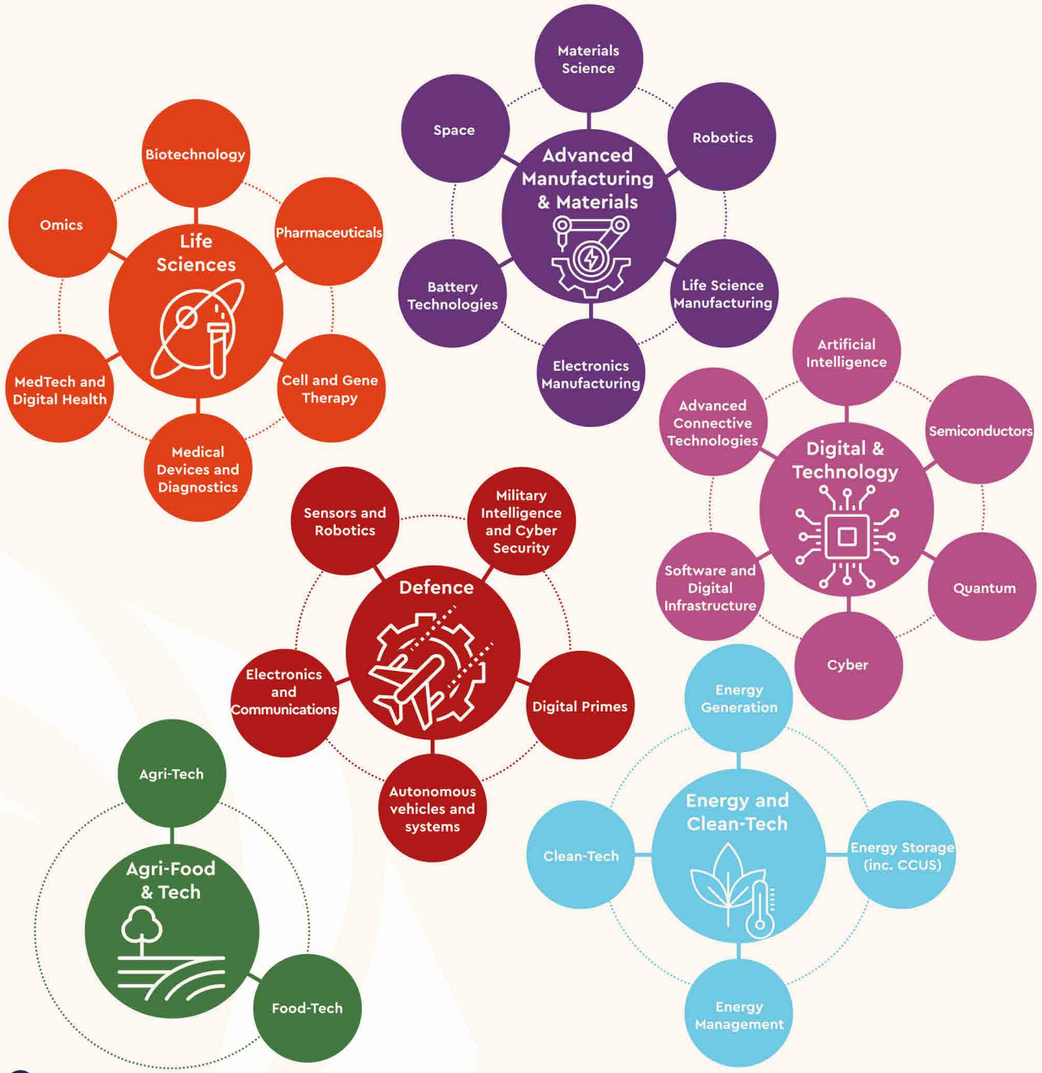
By having such great connectivity between both Cambridge and London, Peterborough has the opportunity (along with other competitors) to take advantage of proximity to the nearby life sciences corridor in Cambridge. Many research facilities exist already in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough but neither exploit the asset and sectoral connectivity to the same extent as our global rival Silicon Valley. Taking these lessons onboard will allow us to truly deliver the Growth objectives outlined in the overall vision for our region.

Our Priority Sectors

Cambridge Biomedical Campus
Source: Astrazeneca

Our Priority Sectors

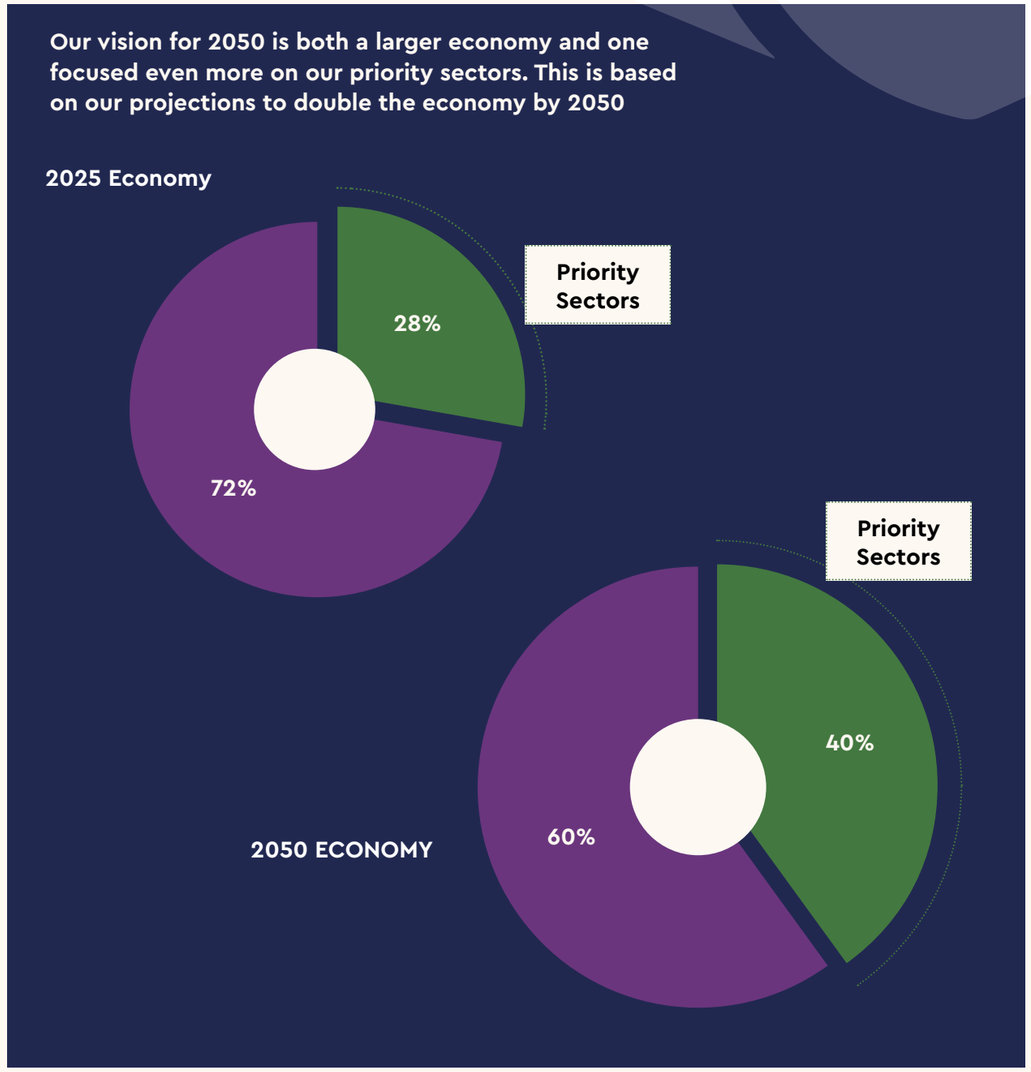
Our analysis of the region has identified six priority sectors that have the potential for high Growth until 2035 and beyond. These priority sectors will be the key drivers to growing our economy and meeting the Mayoral ambition of tripling the economy. These sectors are a priority for Growth in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as they represent some of our region's key economic strengths with significant potential to scale up and attract investment if the right enabling conditions are met. Within these priority sectors, we have identified key frontier industries that each sector can drive and that we could embed within the region. These sectors and industries are heavily interlinked as they utilise shared locations, as well as relying on a similar skills base. For example, Energy and Clean-Tech need to collaborate with the manufacturing sector and can improve their outcomes through effective integration with digital technologies. Part of the success of our sectors is that they can benefit from the Growth of adjacent and complementary sectors within our area.



Sector driven Growth

Advancing our priority sectors is at the heart of our Core and Mayoral Growth ambitions. We do not only want to grow the economy by 2050 but plan to proportionally increase the size of our priority sectors within the wider economy as well. The high productivity of these sectors, their clusters, and supply chains will uplift and grow the associated and larger foundational economy at the same time.

We are aligning with Government's National Industrial Strategy and the associated National Sector Plans to ensure we, as the UK's leader in innovation industries, continue to drive UK Industry, nationwide.



Our Sectors Today

Our sectors are large and impactful with space to grow further in the region. They also have key emerging frontier industries embedded within them that drive Growth as they continue to innovate and expand.

A snapshot of our sectors

Sectors	Turnover	Employment
Life Sciences	**£16.5bn**	**48,000**
Advanced Manufacturing and Materials	**£13.0bn**	**35,000**
Digital Technologies	**£13.0bn**	**35,000**
Defence	**£2.7bn**	**13,300**
Agri-Food & Tech	**£922m**	**2,500**
Energy and Clean-Tech	**£740m**	**2,100**

Source: DataCity 2025

Our sectoral environment

The priority sectors in this Growth Plan are all established, largely globally renowned clusters of business with an established eco-system, supply chain, talent pipeline and interested pool of private and institutional investors. Our sectors have both multi-national household names and spinouts hiring their first staff members. We can also boast that all of our sectors contain emerging frontier industries that can lead the world in Intellectual Property (IP) creation and have the potential of embedding the key innovation sectors for the second quarter of the 21st century in the UK.

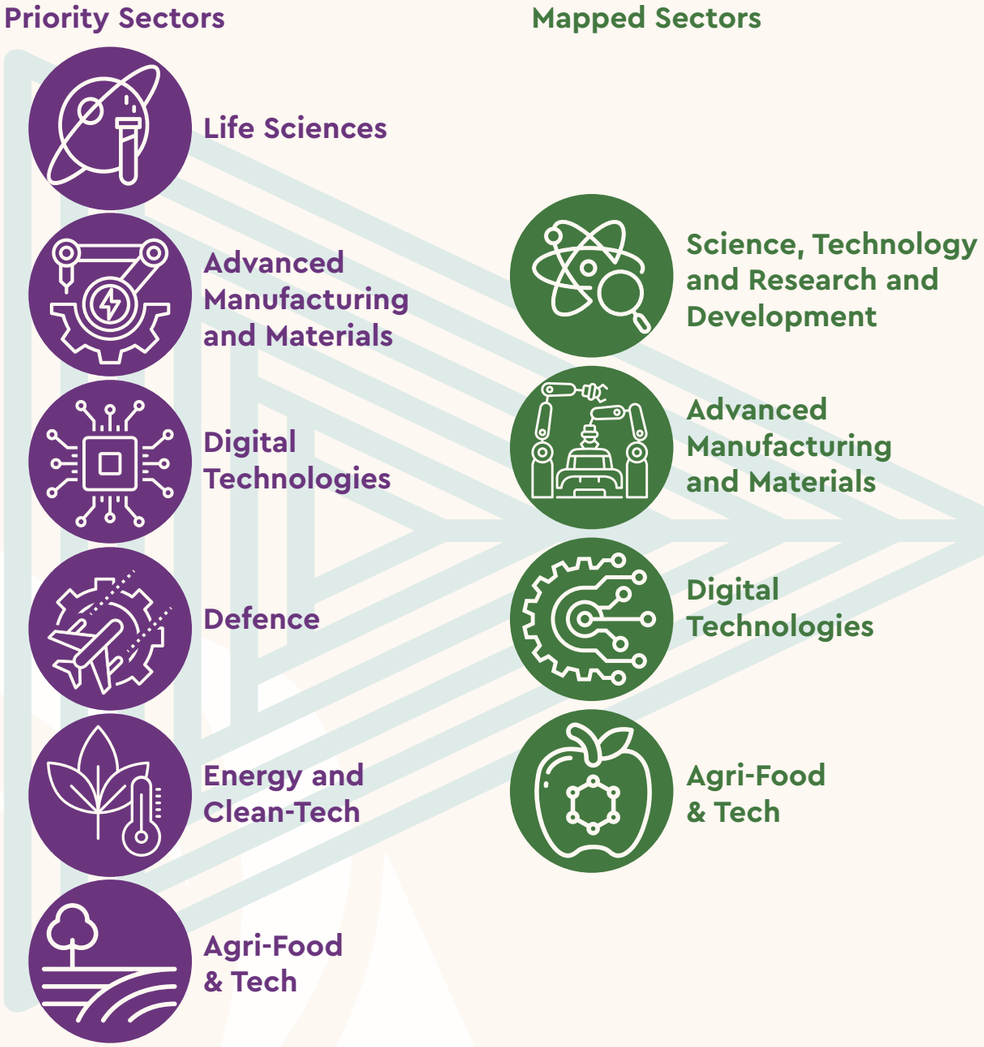
Highlights

AstraZeneca	The largest listed company in the UK and one of the world's largest biomedical and biopharmaceuticals companies with their headquarters on the Cambridge Biomedical campus.
CMR	CMR Surgical, founded in 2014, is a global medical robotics company and the developer of Versius®, a surgical robot used in routine clinical practice to deliver minimal access surgery. The company has grown rapidly, helping surgeons advance surgical techniques and broaden access to high-quality care around the world.
Paragraf	The first company in the world to mass produce graphene-based electronic devices using standard semiconductor processes. The firm is a spinout from Cambridge University, with bases in Huntingdonshire and have since raised £64m in funding across three rounds[45].
DarkTrace	A leading global cybersecurity firm with a focus on AI-driven threat analysis. The firm is the largest spinout from any UK university, founded in Cambridge, and selling for £4.3 billion in 2024[46].
Arm	Founded in Cambridgeshire in 1990, Arm has become a world-leading chip design company and compute platform at the heart of the global digital economy. Arm now underpins billions of devices and provides the architecture powering the next generation of intelligent systems.
TWI	TWI has decades of experience in providing support to the defence industry, both through its work alongside the Ministry of Defence and with its Industrial Member companies in this sector.
Cambridge Consultants	As the global deep tech powerhouse of Capgemini, Cambridge Consultants develop leading-edge dual use technology, products and services for defence and security providing operational advantage for its clients.
Niab	A leading centre for agricultural and horticultural science, Niab provides cutting-edge research, precision breeding expertise and specialist facilities that underpin major advances in crop productivity, resilience and sustainable farming across the UK.
Nyobolt	Nyobolt is a Cambridge University spin-out and battery technology innovator that develops ultra-fast-charging, high-power lithium-ion systems that cut recharge times to minutes while extending battery lifespan, enabling next-generation electric vehicles, robotics and energy-storage platforms.

Our Sectoral Growth Analysis

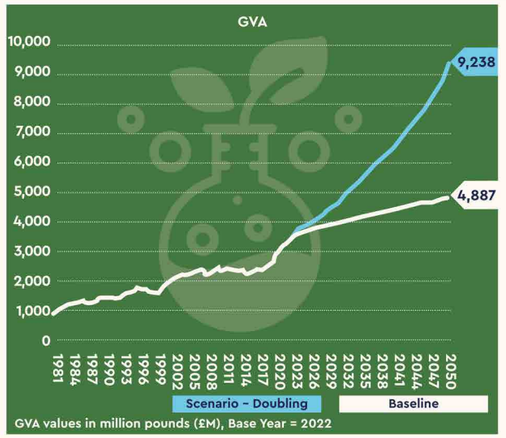
Our approach

We have modelled the level of Growth needed in the key knowledge economy sectors to achieve our overall GVA targets, including the Core doubling target and the Mayoral tripling target. To create these economic projections requires historic sector GVA data based on consistent sectoral definitions, which are represented by standard industrial classifications (SIC). While this means new and emerging sectors (including those among our priority sectors), cannot be individually modelled in the projections, it also means their activity is captured within the broader economic SIC categories used in the projections, which encompass activity in our priority sectors. This allows for cross-fertilisation between knowledge sectors, such as agriculture and science, to be captured, even though agri-tech specifically is not identified within the SIC classifications.



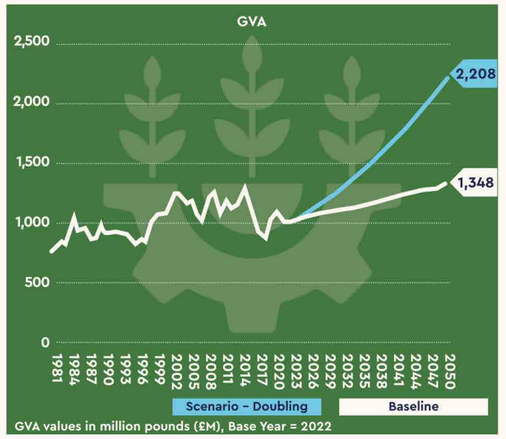
Science, Technology & Research and Development

This sector of the economy includes our Life Sciences and Energy & Clean-Tech sectors, reflecting the value and Growth potential within these industries. Our projection maps Growth of £5.7bn by 2050, reflecting a 164% larger sector. Alongside this, we expect to see employment Growth in the sector of 79,800 a 135% increase from now.



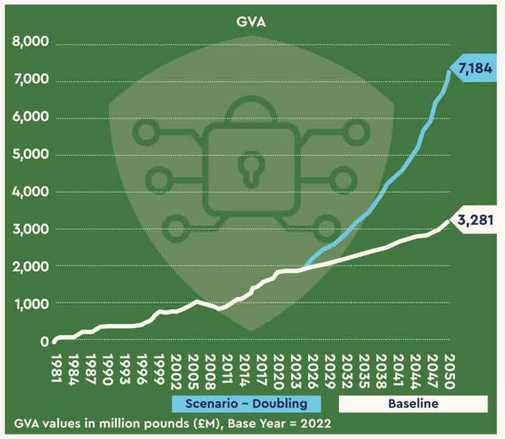
Agri-Food & Tech

This sector of the economy reflects our Agri-Food & Tech priority sector, demonstrating the value and Growth potential within the industry. Our projection maps Growth of £1.2bn by 2050, reflecting a 110% larger sector. Alongside this, we expect to see employment Growth in the sector of 7,700 a 57% increase from now.



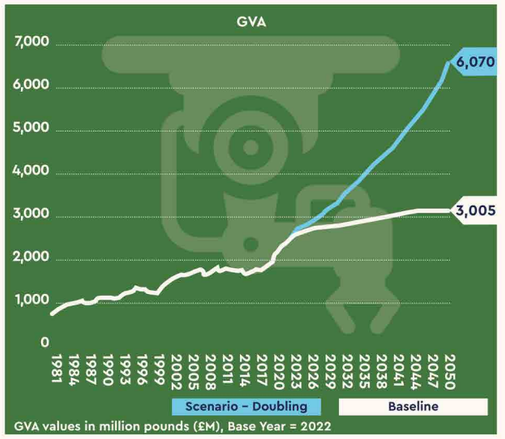
Digital Technologies

This sector of the economy reflects our Digital priority sector, demonstrating the value and Growth potential within the industry. Our projection maps Growth of £5.1bn by 2050, reflecting a 243% larger sector. Alongside this, we expect to see employment Growth in the sector of 50,000 – a 165% increase from now.



Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

This sector of the economy includes our Advanced Manufacturing & Materials sectors, reflecting the value and Growth potential within these industries. Our projection maps Growth of £3.9bn by 2050, reflecting a 178% larger sector. Alongside this, we expect to see employment Growth in the sector of 10,600 a 60% increase from now.



Our Growth Model

There are three drivers of private sector Growth:

- Spinouts and new company formation
- Growth of existing companies
- New foreign direct investment coming into the region.

The Combined Authority has a clear role to play – working with partners in each of these areas.

Focusing on these three pillars of Growth acts to ensure a positive feedback loop of innovation to sustain continued competitiveness and, if delivered appropriately, strong benefits across all stakeholders in the local community. Spinouts are an indicator of excellence in basic research and a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. Corporates are attracted to a location with many spinouts as this connects them to new ideas. Existing companies benefit from the talent which stems from both corporates and new businesses. The mix provides long term stability and mitigates against the risk of becoming over reliant on one model of Growth.

Failure to plan for the right economic mix can result in a non-sustainable over dependence on one engine of Growth, or not putting in place the required infrastructure to enable all elements of Growth. For example, spinouts require a different space proposition to larger companies.

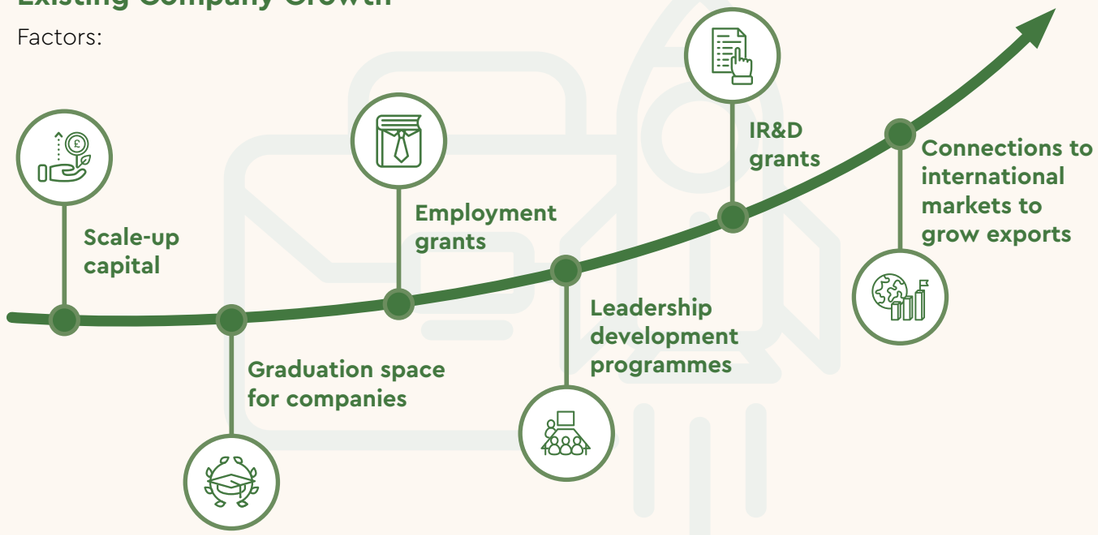
Spinouts and New Company Formation

Factors:

- Early-stage venture capital investment
- Venture building capability
- Shared early-stage lab infrastructure
- Innovation ecosystem activation
- Acceleration programmes
- Incubation programmes
- Mentoring programmes
- Early stage company – corporate partnership programmes
- International gateway programmes

Existing Company Growth

Factors:



Examples: Bicycle Therapeutics, CMR Surgical

Attracting new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Factors:

Marketing of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough globally,

- Technically savvy people who can sell the innovation and research potential of the region to global business and investors
- A ready to go partnership package between our key innovation assets (including our universities) and businesses
- A team to help identify key executives to lead a business here
- Experienced mentors for new companies
- A concierge service to remove friction for new companies

Continued infrastructure investment – housing, public infrastructure, ready to go development sites, etc

Skills investment

R&D tax credits, employment grants

Examples: Altos Labs, Danaher (following acquisition of AbCam)

Our Scale Up System

Our area is an exceptional location to take an idea into a commercial setting and to scale that business. This eco-system is historically centred around the R&D capabilities and talent of the University of Cambridge. However, the wider area can now boast an eco-system that acts as its own flywheel to become even stronger with each innovative business created in, or in the case of AstraZeneca, moving to the area.

Our start-up and spin-out ecosystem also benefits the rest of the UK with ideas and business spreading out past the boundaries of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. As the area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough competes not only within the UK but with global hubs such as the United States it is the globalisation of business that is the key area of competition with areas such as Boston. Creating positive fiscal environments, including access to venture capital, is key to incentivising relocation.

R&D: The intellectual property at the heart of our innovative businesses is produced at exceptional rates through our leading academic institution, the University of Cambridge. An established and globally reputable name in science and technology, and driving Cambridge to produce more academic papers per person than any other innovation cluster in the world, the University is key to seeding businesses in the region49.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Spinout: The area has a strong spinout environment driven by academic institutions. In 2024, 26 new companies spun out of the University of Cambridge – the most of any University in the UK. Spinouts are braced with an established eco-system, support from originations such as Cambridge Enterprise and investment opportunities from companies such as Cambridge Angels Investments.

reclinker

Reclinker is a Cambridge spinout transforming cement recycling to cut global construction emissions.

Scale-up: Businesses in the region looking to scale and expand have attractive options. Trinity College in Cambridge developed the UK's first science park in 1970, driving Cambridge into becoming a leading global innovation ecosystem with over 5,000 research intensive companies active52. Businesses also take advantage of emerging centres and clusters with their own localised innovation ecosystems, close access to Cambridge, London and Oxford, and competitive real estate for expanding businesses.

PARAGRAF

Paragraf, an advanced manufacturing firm, manufactures graphene in two locations in Huntingdonshire.

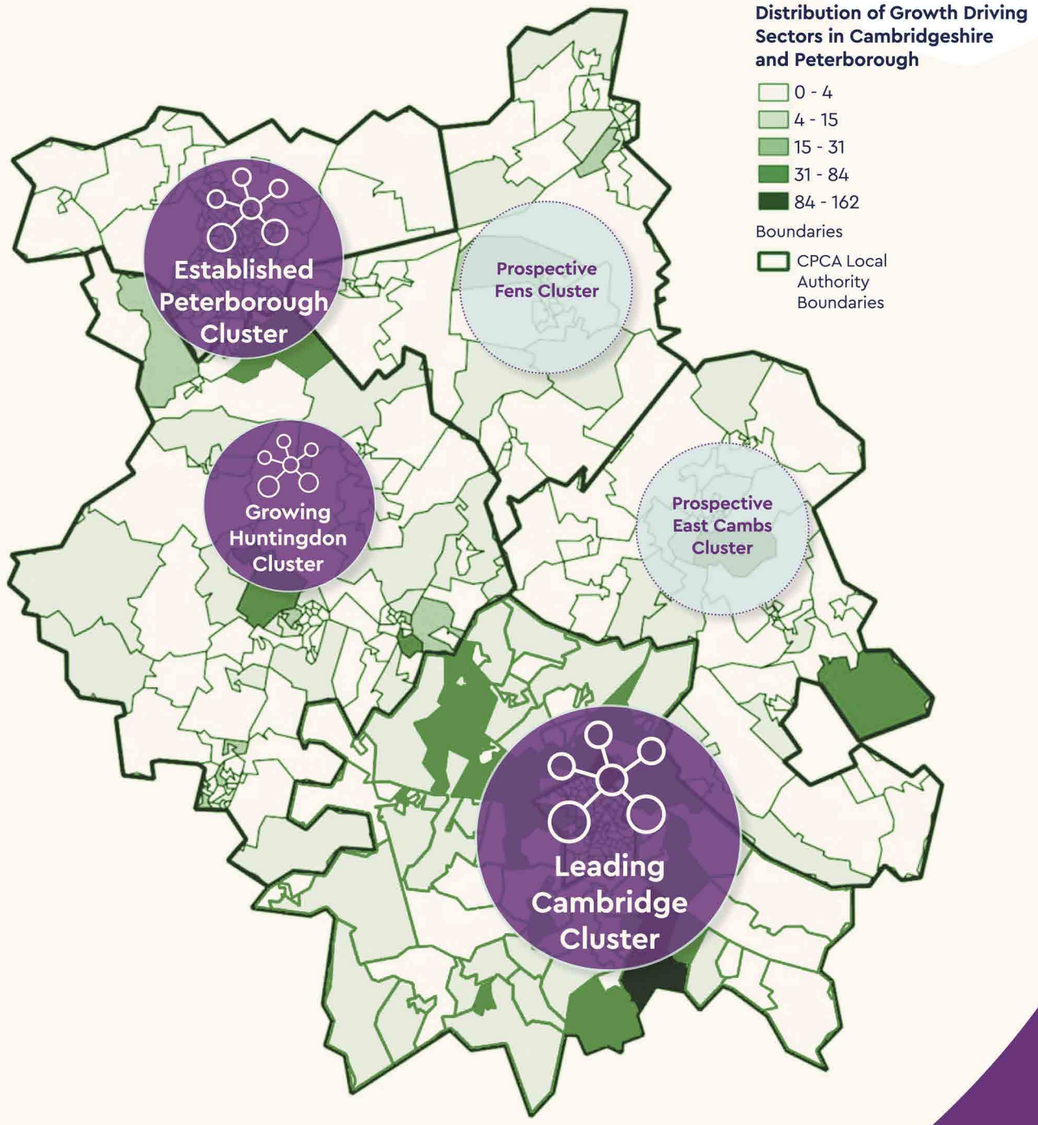
Globalise: The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area has created 26 unicorn companies who have scaled to more than a billion pounds valuation53. The area also hosts a number of international corporations who chose to re-locate to the area for its innovation eco-system. We continue to be the UK's centre for knowledge intensive companies seeking global expansion, but we – and therefore the UK economy faces competition from other international hubs and risk losing businesses, IP, talent and subsequently Growth without a favourable business environment.

DARKTRACE

DarkTrace, a leader in the cybersecurity sector and a Cambridge Spinout, was sold into private ownership for £4.2bn[54].

Our priority sector locations

Our priority sector businesses are concentrated in certain areas, with Cambridge the main driver and both smaller established clusters and emerging centres elsewhere. The power of Cambridge is global, and this plan will turbo-charge it, creating even more intensity. We can be confident both from our projections and international comparisons that this will give the area the ability to grow our established, smaller clusters and create new high Growth clusters in new areas across the region. This plan is not a choice of growing Cambridge or our other areas, it is harnessing the power of the whole to create better outcomes for all, including the wider UK.



Our Spatial Sectoral Plan

We have a clear strategy for supporting Growth across our priority sectors. Whilst each sector will have its own interventions to address key constraints, the overarching plan is to grow these sectors at incredibly high rates. To do this, we will be focusing on a plan to concentrate the nationally significant specialisms of our current clusters, while diffusing this power across our region. This will create natural spillover that will join our sectors across our places and functional economic market areas, creating an economic powerhouse which can drive national Growth.

Concentrate

Consolidating the strength of our clusters as global investment locations within our priority sectors, requires continuous development of the places and business environments in which they are situated. This will attract both investment and global talent. Moreover, we must continue to embed high Growth business within them to keep the eco-system buoyant and improving. We will focus on concentrating our priority sectors in the global city of Cambridge, which has strong representation across all priority sectors. We will also focus on concentrating smaller and emerging hubs across our sub-region such as advanced manufacturing in Peterborough & North Huntingdonshire and Agri-Food & Tech in the Fens.

- Supporting leading institutions
- Retaining globally leading companies
- Attracting world-beating talent

Spillover

There is, and historically has been, natural spillovers from the concentration and expansion of our clusters. As we continue to support the Growth and concentration of our priority sectors within key locations, there will be opportunities to exploit the natural market spillover into surrounding areas. This will involve supporting the development of strategic new employment locations across the C&P region, alongside the delivery of the enabling infrastructure required to connect our key clusters of economic opportunity.

- Expanding and growing business parks
- Improve transit within clusters
- Unlock housing supply

Diffuse

We will grow our priority sectors by supporting emerging and new clusters and embedding our high value sectors into them. This will, alongside new infrastructure, power our eco-system to run across our entire sub-region for the first time. Our interventions will not just enlarge but mature the area's eco-system by forming hyper-local institutions and specialities that can cross-fertilise with other sectors and support emerging frontier industries. This will breakdown functional economic market areas and allow the rapid Growth of sectors we are aiming for.

- Incentivising new business clustering
- Driving skills development
- Investing in regional connectivity

Concentrate

Cambridge Business Park: The Crown Estate have unveiled bold proposals to regenerate Cambridge Business Park and create a new innovation ecosystem in Northeast Cambridge. The £1.5bn project will create over 8,000 jobs and deliver a range of housing types to support a mix of individuals and families, totalling up to 210 new homes and between 200 and 250 coliving units – creating a place that supports skills, celebrates science, and brings people together. It is a bold example of how densification and diversification of development in established clusters within our region can accelerate the future Growth of our priority sectors.

Spillover

Paragraf: Founded as a spin-out from Cambridge University's Centre for Gallium Nitride, Paragraf launched its first site in Somersham in 2018. Since then, it has expanded rapidly, growing from 3 employees to over 110 within 6 years. In February 2023, Paragraf expanded with a brand new manufacturing facility, in Huntingdon, positioning the company for further accelerated Growth and innovation. This is a success story for how our region is retaining and scaling highly productive and innovative businesses.

Diffuse

CMR Surgical: CMR Surgical is a worldwide surgical robotics business that manufactures in Ely. CMR Surgical's global manufacturing facility in Ely designed and manufactured Versius, a surgical robotic system designed to assist surgeons to perform keyhole surgery. The Combined Authority played a key role in supporting CMR Surgical's decision to establish its global manufacturing facility in Ely, providing the infrastructure and incentives needed to attract this world-leading company to the region.

The UK's Engine for Innovation

Europe's Science and Technology Supercluster

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough our priority economy, is centred around innovation. This innovation creates not only ideas but huge economic impact. In Cambridge alone there are 5,500 knowledge intensive businesses generating revenues in excess of £20bn per annum, making it Europe's science and technology superpower.

Our sectors and frontier industries interact through this innovation eco-system. The innovation does not stop at sectoral boundaries, rather it crosses them to find new areas of collaboration, development and markets.

Our eco-system is already unmatched in the UK, looking at the University of Cambridge alone, its innovative research, spinouts and startups produce around £30bn of economic impact annually. In the last decade they have curated nine unicorn businesses, and its spinout companies have raised over £3bn of investment from private venture capital. Cambridge companies account for 20% of the total valuation of UK tech firms and have delivered £12.66 for every £1 invested — more than three times the national average.

To develop this eco-system further we need planned interventions that create the environment for innovation and rapid Growth. Internationally, our closest competitors in Paris and Boston have both developed national innovation centres that act as beacons for global talent and capital. We now need our own innovation centre, our equivalent to Station F in Paris or Lab Central in Boston. Building on our world beating reputation and accomplishments a national innovation centre in Cambridge, with the right backing, would be the go-to location in Europe, if not the world, for early-stage deep tech and life science companies.

The University of Cambridge projects that a scheme such as this would double:

- the rate of unicorns produced,
- the amount of venture investment delivered,
- the number of new companies formed.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

In Cambridge ideas and industries change the world. From life-saving gene therapies and cancer breakthroughs to next-generation quantum technologies, clean energy and ethical AI, we generate pioneering ideas and companies that drive Growth at scale and pace.

The University of Cambridge is a powerful magnet for talent, creating a priceless resource of brilliant people committed to succeeding and seeking new challenges. This intellectual and entrepreneurial talent makes the region a global epicentre where minds converge, ideas flourish, and impact grows.

We are Europe's leading University for spin-outs with 26 created in 2024 alone. This reflects our deliberate, long-term strategy: world-class research underpinned by enabling knowledge-exchange activities, an enlightened IP policy, dedicated seed funds and strong support organizations. Looking ahead, we are accelerating innovation-led Growth for the UK, including a flagship Innovation Hub to attract global talent and capital.

Realising the ambitious Growth vision set out in this plan will require us all to work together. The University will bring its unique, globally leading capabilities to bear in close partnership with civic, academic and industry collaborators ensuring this region continues to thrive and set the pace for the world.

- Professor Deborah Prentice,
Vice-Chancellor, Cambridge University

Cambridge Innovation Hub

CPCA, alongside the University, propose the development of an internationally leading Innovation Hub in Cambridge that will be the nucleus of national innovation and economic growth in the science and technology sectors. The multi-sector Hub will host accelerator and entrepreneurship programmes, high-growth and high-potential tech and life science companies, venture capital firms, global corporates, professional services and national funding agencies.

The space will be the anchor of the UK's innovation economy and the go-to destination in Europe to connect rapidly scaling companies with entrepreneurs, investors, corporates and our STEM talent.

The proposal essentially shifts our eco system from an organic one, to one planned, at scale.

The Chancellor, in her Economic Growth Speech 2025, backed the Hub.

The University has identified and controls an exceptional city centre site, is developing a clear vision and compelling business case and is progressing conversations with potential developers and operators. With cornerstone Government funding of £15 million now confirmed, the University of Cambridge is positioned to advance this project at pace and with ambition.

The Site

The 2.7-acre site is situated in the very heart of one of the world's greatest innovation ecosystems, minutes away from the University's core academic research sites in science and technology and close to the R&D hubs of major companies such as Microsoft, Apple, Google, Amazon and Siemens. The site is a few minutes' walk from Cambridge Railway Station (about 45 minutes to London and 35 minutes to Stansted International Airport). As well as being an important hi-tech employment destination, Cambridge is also a high-quality place to live, offering museums and theatres, excellent schools, restaurants, shops and sports facilities.

Life Sciences

"

Cambridge is the hub of an incredible ecosystem, one of the leading pools of talent for tech and science in the world. For CMR the local innovation-based economy, based on both large multi-national companies and the local technology consulting companies that do so much research and innovative product development, has been a critical factor in our success.

Luke Hares, Chief Information Officer and Co-founder

"

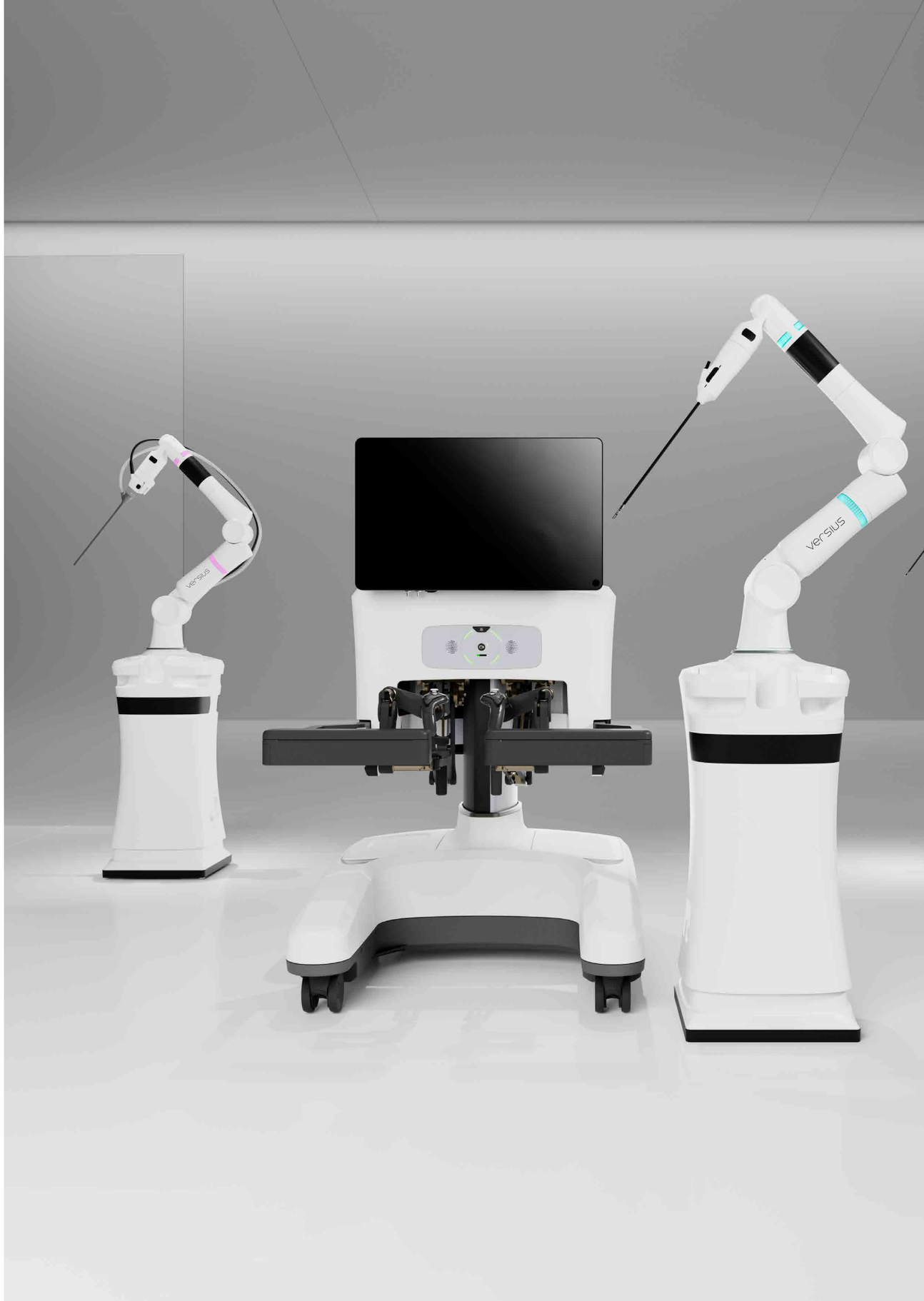
The Tech ecosystem around Cambridge is often referred to as "Silicon Fen" or the "Cambridge Cluster" – a name that draws a parallel with Silicon Valley. CMR Surgical has always believed that the concentration of innovation intensity, startup mentality, deep tech R&D and the population resident here that contributes to the cluster were features that helped to develop the company.

Mark Slack, Chief Medical Officer and Co-founder

"

CMR Surgical has always believed that the concentration of innovation intensity, startup mentality, deep tech R&D and the local talent here in the 'Silicon Fen' or the 'Cambridge Cluster' were features that helped to develop the company.

Markus Bauman, Chief Corporate Strategy Officer and Chief Legal Officer

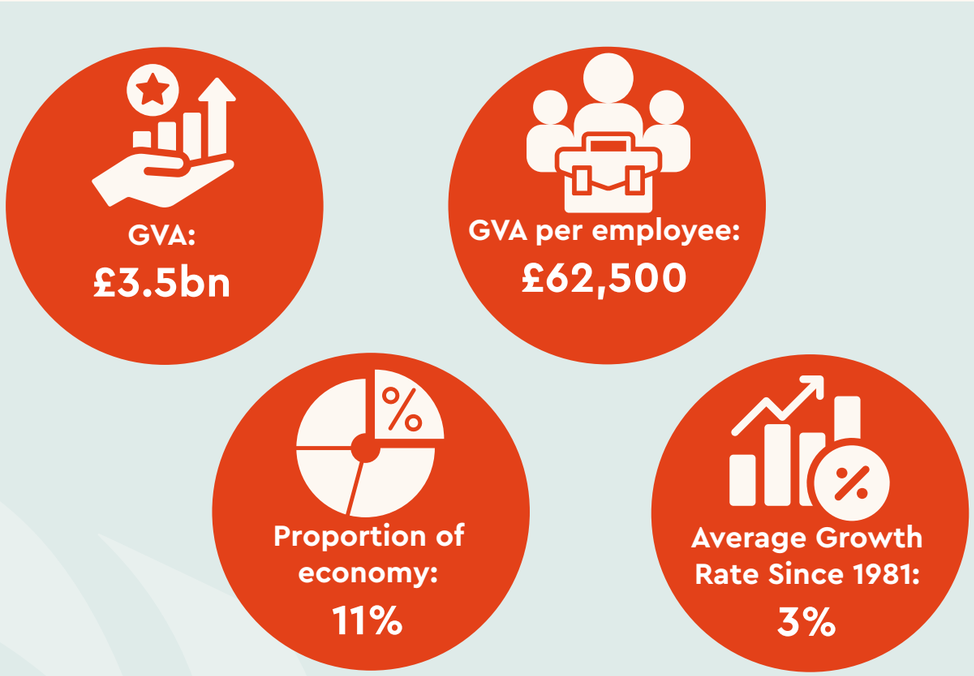


Life Sciences

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is home to one of the UK's most mature, collaborative life science ecosystems and is playing a vital role in addressing global health challenges.

Our region has produced some of the most impactful and groundbreaking research across life sciences and translational medicine. This includes the discovery of the structure of DNA, the development of monoclonal antibodies, advancements in DNA sequencing and phage display antibody production.

Today the sector is evolving to expedite therapeutic discovery and provide data-driven healthcare solutions. Across our region, there are over 1,100 companies employing an estimated 48,000 people, the sector generates approximately £16.5bn in revenue annually. This includes global giants like AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Abcam.



* Science, Technology and Research and Development Sector

The success of our research environment is a clear competitive advantage for the sector and a key driver of Growth – not just locally, but for the whole UK economy. Since 1998, the C&P Life Sciences sector has attracted a combined £4.9 billion of private sector investment and £182 million of Innovate UK Funding. Investment is highly concentrated within 71 university spin-out companies that have acquired 51% of total investment, illustrating the importance of cluster-based collaboration between academia and industry.

Cambridgeshire's Life Science Parks

Cambridgeshire's life science's sector is primarily dispersed across an extensive number of science, technology and research Parks, inclusive of Cambridge Biomedical Campus, Cambridge Science Park, St John's Innovation Park, Cambridge Research Park, Babraham Research Campus, Granta Park, Wellcome Genome Campus, and Melbourne Science Park.

These Parks have nationally significant facilities such as the Sanger Institute at the Wellcome Campus, a world-leading site for genomics research and responsible for sequencing millions of COVID-19 genomes to track the spread of the virus and identify threatening new variants. Additionally, we have some of the most established bio-incubators in the UK, providing space and support for early-stage innovations to scale up. The Cambridge Biomedical Campus hosts global giants AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Abcam, as well as the Royal Papworth Hospital, one of the world's leading cardiothoracic hospitals and the UK's main heart and lung transplant centre.

These Parks collectively enhance the region's capacity for Growth and innovation in the sector, contributing significantly to the UK's position as a global force in Life Sciences.

AstraZeneca	CMR Surgical	Wellcome Genome Campus
AstraZeneca	CMR SURGICAL	WELLCOME GENOME CAMPUS
The largest company in the UK, and key global player in the pharmaceuticals development sector.	A medical robotics firm that manufactures in Ely.	A scientific research campus based south of Cambridge, home to leaders in Genome technologies.

Wellcome Genome Campus – A World Leading Life Science Campus

The Wellcome Genome Campus is one of the world's leading research centres for genomics and biodata research, emanating from the Wellcome Sanger Institute and the European Bioinformatics Institute of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL-EBI).

From leading the UK contribution to the Human Genome Project and the first complete sequencing of the human genome, to identifying and tracking the spread of COVID-19 virus variants, Campus researchers make and apply genomic discoveries that improve human health and benefit society.

The world leading institutes, companies and global collaborations now based at the Campus use cutting-edge biological, computational and imaging techniques to understand how genetics affect humans, plants and animals. This is essential to advances in disease prevention, food security and biodiversity.

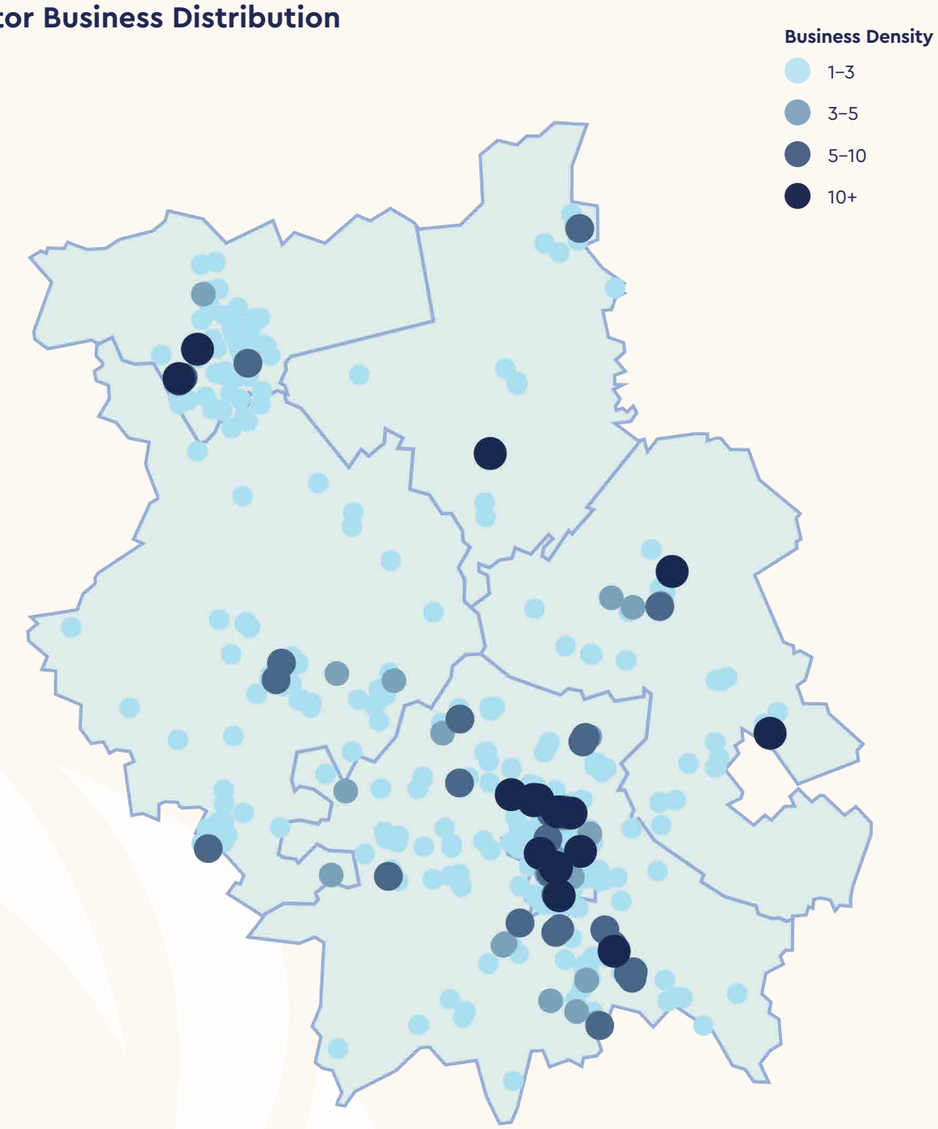
Since its inception in 1992, the Campus has seen significant investment from the Wellcome Trust, in the order of £3bn. Wellcome has firmly committed in investing several hundred million pounds more in its approved expansion plans to further enhance the campus capabilities. It is growing the Campus into a truly global destination for research organizations, innovative companies and scientific talent. Over the next few years, the overall size of the Campus will grow from 125 acres to 440 acres and the number of people working on it is expected to increase from around 3,000 to between 7,000 and 9,000. This expansion is one of the most significant contemporary investments in the UK life sciences sector.

The Campus will also host the recently announced national health data research service (HDRS), a £100 million investment by Wellcome and £500m from UK Government aimed at simplifying secure access to health data and open up opportunities to develop prevention, diagnosis and treatment tools for diseases. The HDRS represents a major opportunity to unlock the full research and innovation potential of UK health data.

Our Life Sciences Growth Plan

The Life Sciences sector has a high intensity by global standards in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. We will increase this intensity by supporting the sector with interventions, that will be detailed in our sector action plan, unlocking capital infrastructure constraints, and key site interventions outlined in the Global Cambridge City Opportunity Zone.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

We have identified the following sectoral opportunities, supporting the dual aim of improving health outcomes within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and driving economic Growth. A life sciences sector action plan will be developed as part of the delivery of the LGP and will set out how we will capitlise on our unique sector opportunities.

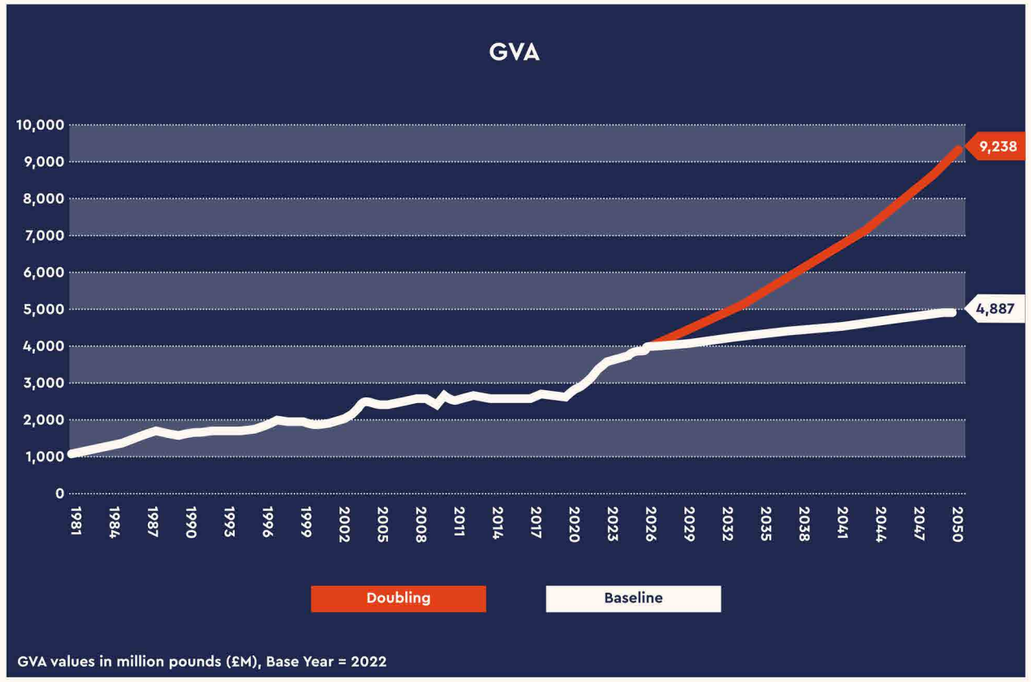
1. **The use of advanced technologies to accelerate the discovery, design and development of next generation therapeutics** – Our region is at the forefront of therapeutic innovation, particularly in areas most debilitating to human life such as oncology. With a strong concentration of biotech firms leveraging innovative health platforms such as cell and gene therapies, RNA-based treatments, multi-omics profiling, synthetic biology, and AI-driven drug discovery to accelerate the development of next-generation medicines.

2. **Strengthening of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's position to become a regional and national hub for diagnostic innovation** – Our strengths in omics, biomarker discovery, and next-generation sequencing (NGS) support the development of advanced diagnostics that enable early detection and personalised treatment. Researchers at the University of Cambridge have developed a game changing AI technology which will predict how patients will respond to cancer treatments before they receive it.

3. **Adoption of digital & data analytics to improve how healthcare is delivered, monitored and optimised** – The C&P region is home to a growing ecosystem of businesses working on solutions that integrate real-world data, wearables, electronic health records, and predictive analytics. These technologies enable more efficient clinical workflows and personalised treatment plans. With the increasing convergence of life sciences and digital technology, we have a strategic opportunity to lead the development of scalable, data-enabled healthcare solutions that improve outcomes and reduce the global healthcare burden.

Our Growth vision

By 2050, we aim to both consolidate and accelerate our world-leading Life Sciences sector, building on key strengths in order to intensify activity in the sector across the region. Not only will the industry produce significantly more data, research, and innovation by 2050, it will also employ many more residents and improve outcomes across the region. Our vision for the sector is transformational Growth, delivering £5.7bn more GVA from Science, Technology and Research and Development by 2050. This will mean 79,800 more people employed in the Science, Technology and Research and Development sector by 2050.



Strategic Opportunity

Development of an AI Empowered Life Sciences Digital Health Data Innovation Centre:

There is huge untapped potential in utilising NHS Data and advancements in AI to simulate trials and discover treatments. There is an opportunity for C&P to develop a national centre for Digital Health Data Innovation, combining NHS patient data access, AI driven analytics, digital twins for clinical trial simulation, and applying generative AI for drug and diagnostics development.

How will we support Growth in the Life Sciences sector?

1. We will establish a talent and opportunities hub to pinpoint the most critical skills shortages and recommend targeted mitigating actions including outreach programmes, training schemes and educational courses that will provide a pipeline of talent to fill those gaps.
2. We will establish a public finance accelerator unit to provide hands-on support for start-ups and SMEs with funding grant applications.
3. We will promote cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly between our life sciences and digital technologies sector to catalyse investment opportunities within emerging health-tech sectors.
4. In alignment with the Cambridge Cluster Life Science Strategy, we will develop a sector strategy for the whole C&P region.
5. Connect Cambridge Science Parks through investment in sustainable transport networks to directly link globally significant life science campuses throughout the Cambridge cluster.

We will engage with Government's Sector Plan for Life Sciences

To supercharge our sectors, we will align our approach to the Government's industrial strategy, including:

- Support our high potential, high Growth companies to access the newly proposed dedicated support service by HMG.
- Work with HMG, Office for Life Sciences (OLS) and our life science businesses to secure investment from the Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund (LSIMF).
- Contribute to the Government's proposed AI-ready health data platform.
- Engage with DHSC, DBT and OLS to make the East of England a trailblazer region for the proposed Regional Innovation Zones with MSA embedded at the heart of Europe's leading life sciences cluster.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

The delivery of key infrastructure will drive the sector forward and provide our businesses with the necessary tools, assets and commercial space to achieve their Growth potential. Our priority investment projects include:

- **Cambridge Innovation Hub** a multi-sector Innovation Hub fuelled by the academic and research excellence of the University of Cambridge and intimately linked to the technical and vocational expertise of ARU Peterborough and further education colleges across the region.
- **The Cambridge Biomedical Campus Cluster Project** includes four vital facilities that will provide additional medical, research and incubator space. This includes the **Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital, Life Sciences Incubator, Cambridge Children's Hospital and Cambridge Brain Institute.**

The Cambridge Biomedical Campus – the beating heart of European life sciences

The Campus is the largest centre for commercial and academic life sciences and health research in Europe, and home to AstraZeneca, Abcam, the MRC's Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cancer Research UK, three NHS Hospital Trusts, the University of Cambridge's Clinical School and multiple research institutes looking at hearts, lungs, stem cells and more. As a global destination for life sciences talent and investment, the Campus attracts world-class researchers, clinicians and industry scientists, along with significant investments.

In February 2020, the Biomedical Campus was designated as one of six Life Science Opportunities, receiving UK Government support to attract inward investment. It is Cambridge's biggest employment site and our ecosystem generates £4.2bn GVA a year for the UK economy. The Campus is central to this Government's plan to deliver the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, transition to a truly world-leading scientific region, and boost the UK economy by up to £78 billion by 2035.

There is scope for significant expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The 2024 Spatial Framework for the site sets out how this can become 1,600,000sqm by 2050, driving job creation by attracting and growing new life science business, capturing internationally mobile investment, including multinational R&D headquarters and building the world's most research activated healthcare infrastructure. The projected Growth in jobs is an additional 23,000 jobs by 2050.

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

"

After spinning out from the University of Cambridge, Paragraf had the freedom to establish its operations anywhere in the UK. We were fortunate to find our home here in Cambridgeshire, first in Somersham and later expanding to Huntingdon.

The region's excellent transport links and access to world-class technology talent have been instrumental in enabling Paragraf's Growth into a global business. Our success stands as a testament to the strength and potential of British deep tech, while remaining rooted right here where our journey began."

Simon Thomas, Paragraf CEO

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

The Advanced Manufacturing & Materials sector in our region combines our expertise in innovation with our rich manufacturing history. Firms in our area are on the cutting edge of the industry and support the advancement of broader sectors, such as automotive and engineering. Our specialisms span several subsectors, including material science, robotics, life science manufacturing and electronics manufacturing. We are home to several major global companies, with nearly 750 businesses in the sector across our region, together employing an estimated 35,000 people and generating £12.8 billion in revenue.

Manufacturing accounts for 16% of total employment in our region, more than double the UK average of 7%. Advanced manufacturing also represents 28% of all knowledge-intensive employment. This density is an important strategic asset, reflecting the depth of our industrial base and the strength of our skilled workforce. It creates a multiplier effect, amplifying the impact of targeted investment, accelerating the adoption of innovation, and delivering greater returns on skills and infrastructure programmes.

CASE STUDY: Paragraf

Paragraf is a spin-out from the Centre for Gallium Nitride group of Professor Sir Colin Humphreys in the Department of Materials Science at the University of Cambridge. It produces high-performance graphene-based electronic devices, specialising in next-generation sensors and semiconductor technologies. Paragraf's "world's first 2D foundry" is the first industrial-scale manufacturing platform designed to deposit single-atom-thick, two-dimensional materials (such as graphene) directly onto semiconductor-compatible wafers using standard cleanroom processes — enabling mass production of high-performance graphene-based electronic devices.

The C&P area contains world-leading research driving industrial innovation

We are proud to be home to a globally recognised ecosystem of research excellence that fuels industrial innovation across advanced manufacturing and materials. The Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) at the University of Cambridge is a world-leading hub that integrates cutting-edge research, education, industry collaboration, and policy influence to transform manufacturing globally. Its research in advanced production technologies, digital manufacturing and data analytics, supply chain resilience and sustainability have real world impact.

The IfM Engage programme extends this expertise by providing business support, consultancy and executive education based on research conducted at IfM. The Institute collaborates with businesses of all sizes across various sectors, helping them develop strategies and enhance their capabilities. This work is part of a wider network of excellence across the University of Cambridge, including the Department of Engineering, the Department of Material Science and Metallurgy, the Cambridge Graphene Centre and the Maxwell Centre. Together, these institutions underpin our region's leadership in advanced materials and manufacturing innovation.

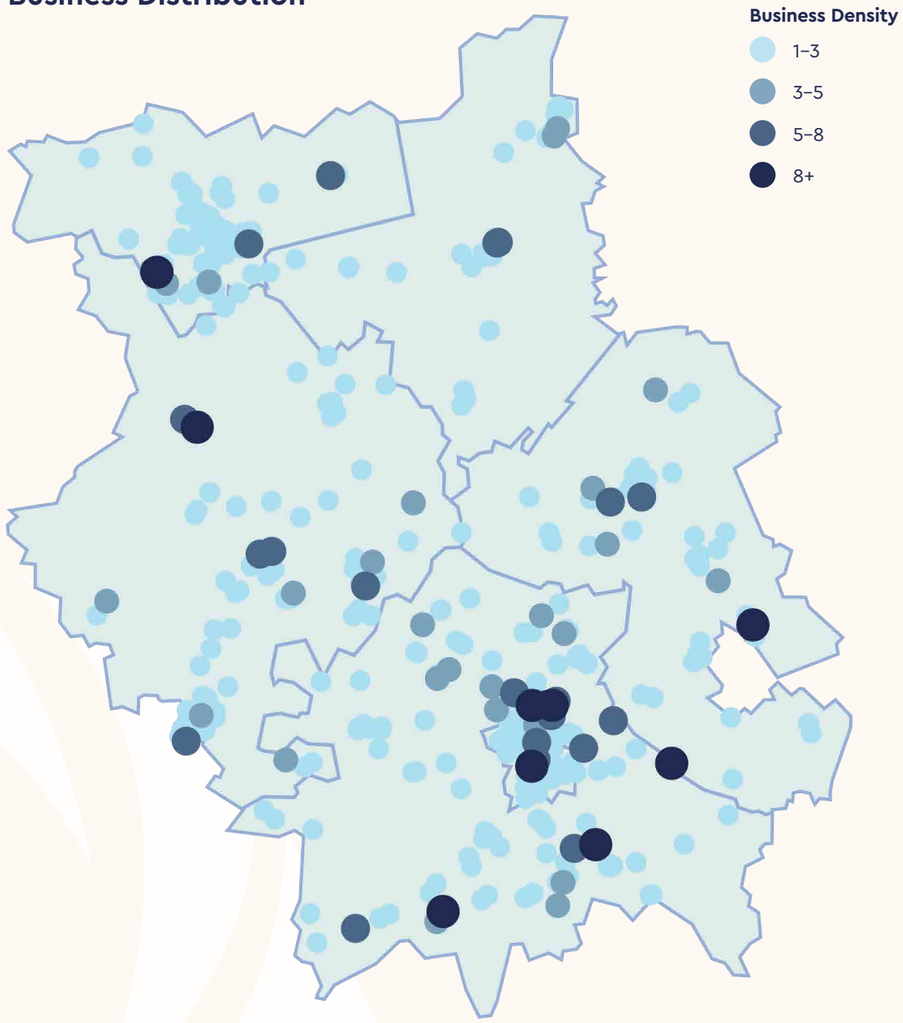
Peterborough also has a significant concentration of advanced manufacturing businesses, including Peter Brotherhood, Perkins Engines, Baker Perkins, and Stainless Metalcraft whos legacies in the area span from 80 up to 150 years. These manufacturers are at the forefront of digitisation, with companies such as Photocentric who secured funding to open a 3D printing centre of excellence in Peterborough and is leading on the development of novel autonomous 3D printing processes using recycled materials.

Paragraf	Marshall Group	Institute for Manufacturing – University of Cambridge
PARAGRAF	MARSHALL	IfM
A Cambridge University Spinout, the world's first mass-producer of graphene-based electronic devices, now with bases in Huntingdonshire.	Aerospace & defence precision manufacturing, based on site at Cambirdge City Airport.	Educating the manufacturing leaders of tomorrow as well as assisting companies in developing life-changing products and foster innovation.

Our Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Growth Plan

Our region has several key clusters of Advanced Manufacturing & Materials enterprise situated around, but not within our fast Growth cities due to the large site requirements. Compared to other priority sectors, Advanced Manufacturing & Materials is more geographically diffused and concentrated. Growing this priority sector is not only necessary to meet our Growth target of tripling its size by 2050 but to support and grow our broader R&D sectors. A clear outcome of international comparator analysis is that this sub-region lags behind its global competitors in its Advanced Manufacturing capacity. To grow this sector and support the Growth of others that need manufacturing capacity, we will concentrate centres of Advanced Manufacturing & Materials while also diffusing their Growth across the area.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

Growth in the advanced manufacturing and materials sector, both in the UK and globally, is being driven by the urgent need to enhance productivity and reduce costs in an increasingly competitive and fast-changing environment.

Building on our strong heritage in traditional manufacturing, the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials sector is evolving from its industrial roots. Currently, approximately 35% of firms in the manufacturing sector are classified as advanced, while the remaining 65% operate within traditional manufacturing. This presents a major opportunity to support traditional manufacturers in adopting advanced technologies and practices, unlocking substantial Growth and innovation. Our region's world-class research and development institutions provide a strong foundation for this transition, offering a comparative advantage that reinforces the UK's leading role in the sector.

Key Growth opportunities include:

1. **Building on our strength in knowledge-intensive industries and academic links** - particularly in materials science, robotics, additive manufacturing and life sciences manufacturing, with growing strengths in medical technologies. We will continue to develop a pipeline of talent and encourage cross sector innovation, drawing on assets such as iMET, TWI, IfM and ARU Peterborough.

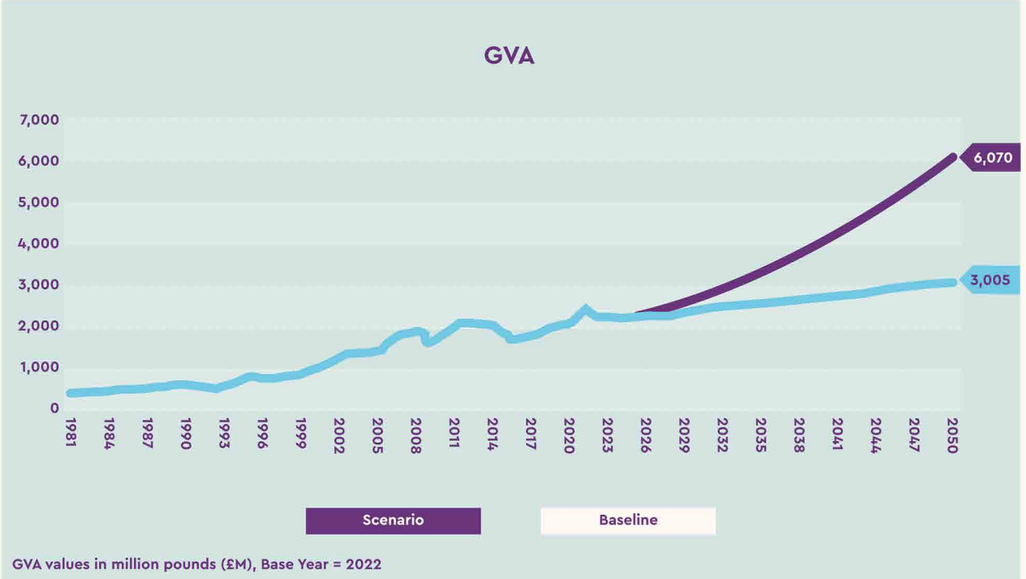
2. **Capitalising on rapidly growing sectors such as defence, space, and digital technologies**, that are creating new opportunities across the manufacturing landscape.

3. **Supporting a growing cluster of green manufacturing and engineering firms**, particularly in emerging areas like battery technologies.

Beyond its own Growth potential, the sector acts as a powerful enabler by driving productivity gains across traditional industries through technology diffusion and process innovation.

Our Growth vision

By 2050, we want to see the sector expand, with more of the supply chain being delivered within our region. At present, the area is a key driver of R&D, but lacks significant manufacturing capacity. Our mission is to support firms to design and manufacture within our region, utilising our historical expertise in manufacturing to increase output. Our vision for the region's economy sees the sector triple in size by 2050, growing by £3.9bn by 2050. This will lead to an increase of employment in the sector by 10,600.



Strategic Opportunity

National Medical Device – Rapid Prototyping Centre:

The C&P region has strong academic and NHS infrastructure to support the development of a dedicated centre which could integrate rapid additive manufacturing, regulatory navigation, digital simulation, and in situ clinical trial staging to attract med-tech companies and reduce the 'time to market' for manufacturers. This builds on the wealth of assets the region hosts including the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, the University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) which is pioneering in medical device innovation and manufacturing excellence, the NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre and the presence of high Growth, innovative companies such as the Cambridge Design Partnership, TTP and Owlstone Medical.

How will we support Growth in the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials sector?

1. We will support the creation of new affordable commercial floorspace aimed at the AMM sector, including the development of dedicated incubation or accelerator facilities, co-located with research assets and major employers.
2. We will identify interventions to promote the sector within schools and colleges to bolster the talent pipeline and change perceptions of careers in advanced manufacturing and materials. This includes promotion of STEAM initiatives and programmes aimed at increasing the diversity of the AMM sector.
3. Establish a cross-sector taskforce to identify and exploit synergies with related sectors to strengthen the region's manufacturing capabilities, particularly within med-tech, green manufacturing and engineering activities.
4. We will address infrastructure constraints including improving water supply, digital connectivity and engaging with NESO to address power supply issues.
5. We will work with all HE/FE providers including ARU Peterborough to embed academic excellence across the region.

We will engage with Government's Sector Plan for Advanced Manufacturing

To supercharge our sectors, we will align our approach to the Government's industrial strategy, including:

- Supporting our SMEs to engage with the new Manufacturing Commission and continue to support Made Smarter adoption across C&P.
- Utilise the Government's new scheme to offer competitive energy prices to advanced manufacturers.
- Advocate for businesses in our region to benefit from the targeted Government Upskilling and Reskilling programme.
- Work with Government to secure funding via the £2.8bn research fund for innovation.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

The successful delivery of key investment pipeline projects is vital to unlocking the full potential of the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials sector across the region. Priority Investment Pipeline projects include:

- **Lancaster Way Business Park** - a growing industrial hub near Ely in East Cambridgeshire, supporting over 85 businesses with a focus on Advanced Manufacturing. Notable companies based at the Park include CMR Surgical, Thorlabs (now extending within the site) Deanta (extending their manufacturing facility) and Cambridge Commodities. This cluster reflects our region's growing strength in medical technologies, and with 30 acres of development opportunity available there is potential to expand the size of the Park in the future.
- **IWM Duxford Av-Tech** - a planned advanced aviation innovation cluster near Cambridge, focused on the research, development, testing, and manufacture of low and zero-carbon aircraft technologies. It will serve as a national hub for next-generation aerospace innovation.
- **Chatteris Advanced Manufacturing Park** - The Park will be the focal point for innovation cluster development, creating a unique opportunity to stimulate Growth in the advanced manufacturing, research and supply chain sectors and encouraging greater collaborations on research and technologies.
- **Brampton Cross** - the 945 acre site will provide a world class employment site for sectors such as advanced manufacturing and materials, including dual-use industries aligned with the defence cluster in North Hunts.

Digital Technologies

"

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been the ideal place for Darktrace to grow from a pioneering start-up into a global leader in AI for cybersecurity. The region combines world-class academic excellence with a vibrant ecosystem of technology companies and talent, which has enabled us to innovate at pace and attract exceptional people. Our success is a testament to the strength of this community, and we are proud to continue investing in a region that fosters both cutting-edge research and global business Growth.

Carolyn Esser, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Darktrace

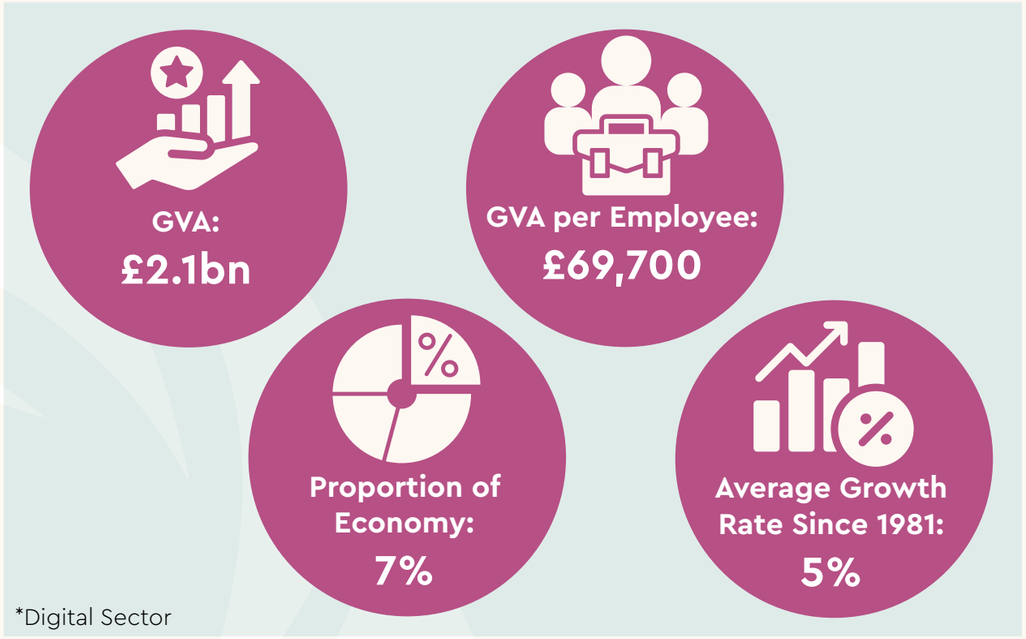
Digital Technologies

The C&P region is home to one of the most established and fast-growing digital sectors in the country. We are Britain's leading hub for Semiconductor, Artificial Intelligence, and supercomputing research, putting our area at the heart of a burgeoning global cluster. Delivering on AI's potential is a key opportunity for the UK to unlock national productivity – our region has the tools to be at the heart of reaching that ambition.

The region has a unique portfolio of assets including world-class academic institutions, a highly qualified talent pool, a hub of multinational research and development centres, an advanced ecosystem and excellent facilities and support for networking. This makes the C&P region one of the best positioned global centres for technology development and adoption. As an enabling sector, the digital products and services developed within our region both underpin and are a catalyst for Growth and productivity across our other priority sectors and hence the wider UK economy.

Across our region, there are approximately 2,000 companies in the sector, employing an estimated 36,000 people and generating £13.4 billion in revenue. The sector encompasses businesses focused on the creation, development and application of digital technologies. This includes numerous businesses within our other Growth driving sectors, making digital a critical facilitator of knowledge transfer and cross-sector innovation and diffusion.

The sector has attracted approximately £3 billion of public and private sector investment since the turn of the century, driven by our Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Semiconductor businesses which have secured £2 billion in private sector investment and demonstrate our importance in the development of next-generation technologies.



*Digital Sector

High Performing Digital Technology Clusters

Cambridge has long been a hot spot for digital technology firms. This cluster, as part of New Palo Alto, hosts several globally and nationally significant businesses. Notable examples include Darktrace, a leading Artificial Intelligence (AI) cyber security firm, Raspberry Pi Foundation, a global educational charity with the mission to enable young people to realise their full potential through the power of computing and digital technologies and Arm, the world leader in Central Processing Unit (CPU) technology. We also host DAWN, the UK's fastest supercomputer, which is an asset of national importance, and alongside the Isambard-AI machine in Bristol, forms the UK's 'AI Research Resource'. Additionally, in the last decade, tech giants Apple, Meta, Samsung and Google have opened AI research centres in Cambridge, further demonstrating Cambridge's attractiveness as a hub for technological innovation and research excellence.

The University of Cambridge is also a key contributor to the sector and is currently working with the UK Atomic Energy Authority on providing digital and artificial intelligence design for 'Digital Twin' simulation. This initiative aims to enable the build and commissioning of the first new STEP Fusion Power Station in the world, located in the UK.

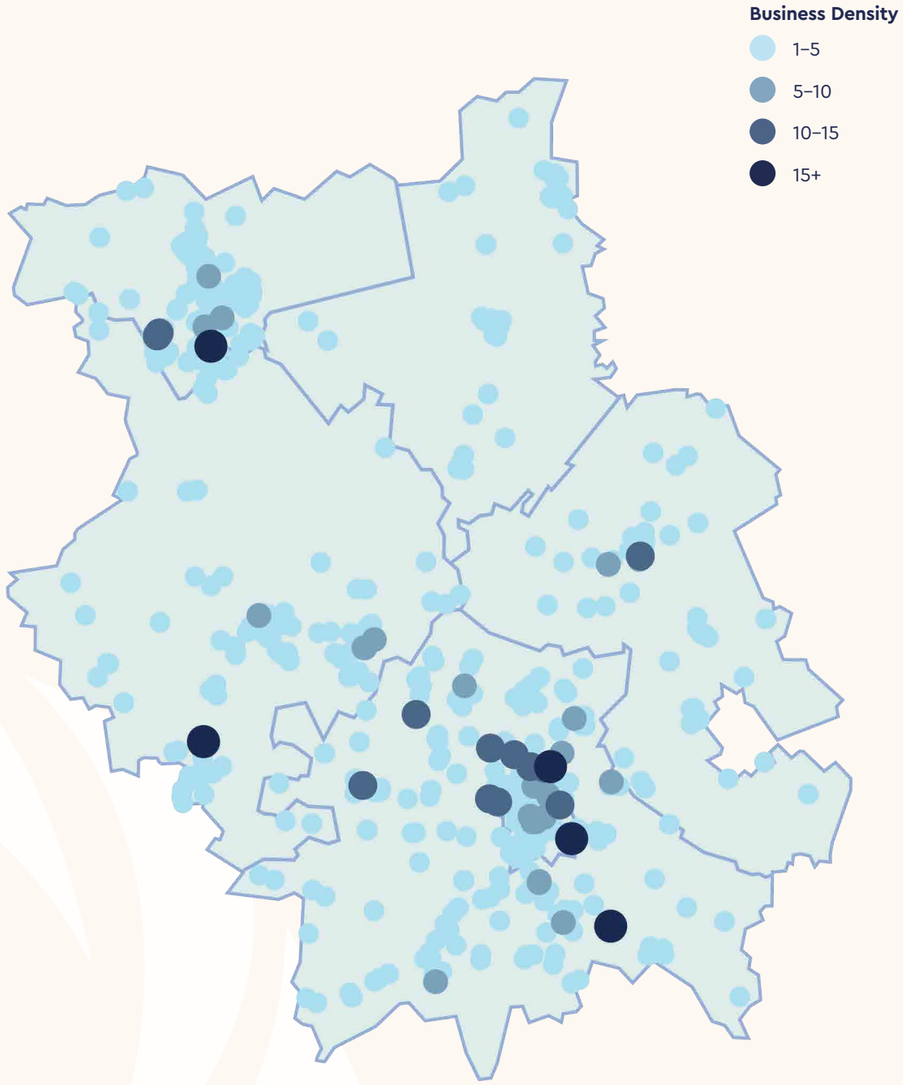
Peterborough also boasts an established and ever-growing presence in the tech sector. Recognised as 'Smart City of the Year' in 2015 today, Peterborough hosts numerous world-class businesses that utilise robotics and automation to enhance efficiency across various sectors. Notable examples include the work of food manufacturers OAL and Baker Perkins, as well as the collaboration between Lawrence David and Amazon, which led to the creation of a new smart haulage system, improving transit efficiency and optimising routes.

Darktrace	Arm	Raspberry Pi Foundation
DARKTRACE	arm	Raspberry Pi Foundation
Cambridge University spinout, and unicorn, an industry leader in cybersecurity.	The fifth largest company in the UK, in the last year, 30 billion Arm-based chips were shipped.	Enables young people to realise their full potential through the power of computing and digital technologies.

Our Digital Technologies Growth plan

Digital Technologies is concentrated primarily in Cambridge itself, with smaller emerging clusters around Peterborough, North Huntingdonshire and Ely. We will aim to establish the startup and scaleup environment in the sector, utilising the power of proximity within our geographies to maximise the Growth trajectory of this key industry.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

Globally, the Digital Technologies sector is undergoing a period of unparalleled evolution and technological discovery, driven by the advances in artificial intelligence, machine learning hardware advancements, connectivity & networks, data explosion & cloud & edge computing. Across all industries there is a race for digital transformation and adoption of next-generation technologies to gain a competitive advantage. This presents infinite Growth potential within the C&P region as we lead on the discovery and adoption of technologies across our economy.

Our specific Growth opportunities include:

1. **Development and application of Artificial Intelligence to strengthen our Growth sectors and drive productivity across the region –** Our connected ecosystem allows us to create, test and adopt AI in a coordinated way that leverages the unique capabilities of different parts of the region. This collaborative approach will underpin our ambition to become a global hub for AI innovation, aligned with initiatives such as the AI Opportunities Plan, AI@Cam, and the recently announced Tech First Programme.

2. **New semiconductor chip design to create innovations across the digital economy –** Cambridge's strengths in chip design, intellectual property, compound semiconductors, and world-class research give the UK a unique edge in next-generation technologies. Delivering high-value IP, advances in materials such as GaN and GaAs for critical sectors, with rapid translation of research into impact, enabling the UK to secure a differentiated, resilient, and globally leading role in the semiconductor value chain.

3. **Application of Quantum Technology to accelerate our research capabilities and computing powers –** Cambridgeshire is a global hub for quantum innovation, combining pioneering businesses and world-class research in quantum computing, software, hardware, networking, qubit modalities, error correction, algorithms, photonics, and engineering.

4. **Accelerate our capabilities in Cyber Security to counter the increasing threat from advanced technologies –** Cambridgeshire strengthens national sovereignty by combining world-class cybersecurity research, advanced cyber computing, secure communications, and a skilled talent pipeline to protect critical infrastructure and digital assets against evolving threats.

The key Growth opportunity and our competitive advantage lies within technological convergence, specifically within the preceding identified Growth areas and cross disciplinary innovation. The integration of AI with other technologies like quantum computing can lead to novel applications within key industries and subsectors such as life science, defence and cyber security.

Leading the Way into the Age of the Semiconductor

Cambridge stands as the UK's semiconductor future — a place where world-class design talent, unrivalled IP development, and a deep culture of innovation converge.

Home to a world leading ecosystem harnessing the unique combination of semiconductor design, materials science, and fabrication research, Cambridge enables rapid translation of university research into industry application and technological impact.

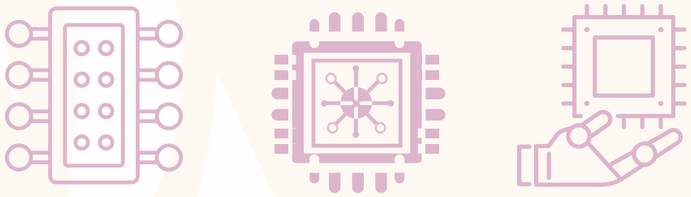
This is exemplified by the presence of globally significant players including:

- Paragraf: Pioneering scalable, high-performance graphene manufacturing, Paragraf is positioned to transform applications in sensors, diagnostics, and advanced electronics.
- Pragmatic Semiconductor: Specialising in flexible integrated circuits, Pragmatic has secured a record £182 million investment to expand its UK-based manufacturing capabilities.
- Aixtron: A world leader in deposition equipment, Aixtron is recognised for its cutting-edge manufacturing systems for compound semiconductors, underpinning advances in optoelectronics and power electronics.

By supporting Cambridge's already world-class ecosystem, the UK can accelerate breakthroughs in chip design that strengthen UK sovereignty within global supply chains. This is not just about technology, it is about trust, identity, and resilience — and Cambridge is the anchor from which the UK can build a semiconductor future that is both globally competitive and authentically grounded at home.

The strength of the Semiconductor sector in Cambridge is exemplified by the presence of Arm, an established semiconductor IP firm employing over 2800 in Cambridge whose energy-efficient compute solutions are now found across the technology we use every day, from the smallest IoT sensor, to smartphones, laptops, and the data centres powering AI. It partners with global companies, including AWS, Google, Nvidia, Microsoft and in the last year alone over 30 billion Arm-based chips were shipped.

As demonstrated across prominent technology hubs, including Silicon Valley , it is the presence of anchor firms like Arm that play a significant role in attracting international talent to Cambridge and develop the human capital necessary to drive the sector forward.



Innovation Infrastructure and Manufacturing

Maintaining UK technological leadership and protecting national security requires keeping manufacturing closely integrated with research and development. Offshoring production risks losing control of advanced technologies and undermines economic sovereignty.

For example, Paragraf invested £1 million of venture capital on power alone, illustrating the significant infrastructure demands of cutting-edge innovation. If Cambridgeshire aims to host both manufacturing and R&D, addressing these challenges presents a clear opportunity to strengthen the region's innovation ecosystem. Cambridge can leverage its expertise in industrial policy and DSIT collaborations to unlock funding and coordinate cross-department efforts to support the continued Growth of the sector in the region.

We have identified a number of strategic opportunities to continue the success of this sector:

1. We will establish the **UK–Cambridge Semiconductor Design Advisory Council,** aligning national strategy with Cambridge's world-leading strengths in chip design, IP, and innovation. Bringing together government, industry, and academia will secure the UK's semiconductor future by shaping policy, establishing supply chains, developing talent, and strengthening global competitiveness — ensuring strategy is rooted in both local excellence and national ambition. This will support deeper links between semiconductor hubs in the UK, namely Bristol and Manchester and support the UK Semiconductor Centre.

2. We will promote Cambridge as a **global hub for semiconductor design,** and support international city-to-city partnerships with other global hubs, including Austin and Bangalore.

Case Study: Arm – The Foundation of the UK's Sovereignty in AI

Founded in Cambridgeshire in 1990, Arm has become a world-leading chip design company and compute platform at the heart of the global digital economy. Arm now underpins billions of devices and provides the architecture powering the next generation of intelligent systems.

Power-efficient compute at global scale

Arm's historic focus on power-efficient compute has enabled its technology to dominate the connected world. Arm's architecture and IP is found across virtually every segment of modern life — smartphones, connected consumer devices, vehicles, cloud infrastructure, and the data centres now driving artificial intelligence. In the last year alone, over 30 billion Arm-based chips were shipped worldwide. Arm is now the UK's most valuable tech company with annual revenue over $4 billion.

A catalyst for UK innovation and global influence

Arm's licensing business model allows global partners — from start-ups to leading semiconductor firms — to build and commercialise innovative products on its architecture. This approach has created a dynamic ecosystem of technology partners, fuelling a hub of semiconductor design and research around Cambridge and beyond.

Through its compute platform and ecosystem partnerships, Arm enables sovereign capability across industries that depend on secure, efficient, and scalable compute — from energy systems to next-generation AI. As nations seek technological sovereignty in the era of AI, Arm provides the strategic architecture layer on which sovereign innovation can be built.

A UK success story with global impact

Arm today employs around 3,000 at its Headquarters on Fulbourn Road, Cambridge, with additional offices across the UK in Manchester, Sheffield, and Bristol. These centres reflect the UK's growing regional clusters of excellence in semiconductor design, software, and advanced engineering — a living example of how world-class talent and long-term investment can create globally significant enterprises.

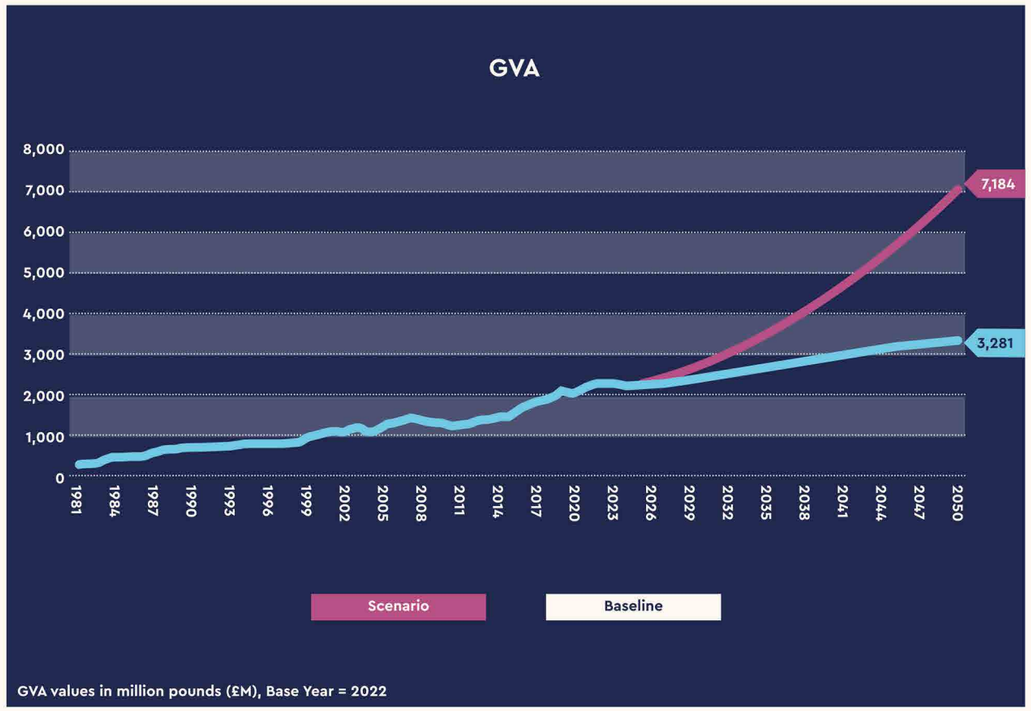
Impact and legacy

Arm's story illustrates how British science, design, and engineering leadership can translate into enduring global advantage. Its technology empowers industries and consumers alike while strengthening the UK's global position in compute, AI, and digital infrastructure. Arm represents sovereignty through innovation — a company born in the UK that enables the world's computing future, delivering both global reach and enduring national value.

arm

Our Growth vision

By 2050, we will expand this sector, engaging and leading in the dynamic international landscape. Our Growth ambition for this sector is the most ambitious, as we aim to specialise and lead in key frontier industries, primarily Artificial Intelligence. Being on the leading edge in this sector will allow our region to grow at unprecedented rates. Our vision for the sector by 2050 is to grow the digital sector in our region by £4.9bn, an increase of 243%. This Growth would also lead to 50,000 more people working in the sector, an increase of 165%.



Strategic Opportunity

Quantum and Photonics Hub for Life Sciences, Future Telecoms, Advanced Manufacturing and Materials:

The C&P region already leads in optics, photonics, and quantum engineering and includes key assets such as Cambridge University Quantum Optical Materials & Systems Research Centre and its Centre for Photonic Systems, as well as Toshiba's Cambridge Research Laboratory. The proposed Hub will complement the NQCC at the other end of the Ox-Cam Corridor, but will unlock innovation with two unique Quantum capabilities in Cambridge which don't exist anywhere else in the country.

How will we support Growth in the Digital Technologies sector?

1. We will conduct a skills and talent forecast, encompassing our Frontier Industries and 10 year future focus, that we will update annually to ensure alignment between business needs and our talent pipeline.
2. We will support AI@Cam and other industry leaders in the creation of artificial intelligence partnerships and collaborations that centre on societal interests.
3. We will conduct a feasibility study on the prospect of developing an AI Growth Zone (AIGZs) within the region, as outlined in the Government's AI Opportunities Action Plan.

We will engage with Government's Sector Plan for Digital and Technologies

To supercharge our sectors, we will align our approach to the Governments industrial strategy, including:

- Access relevant skills initiatives, including the TechFirst programme and semiconductor skills programme.
- Partner with the Global Talent Fund to attract the world's best research talent.
- Converse with and contribute to Government thinking around AI regulation.
- Support our defence and digital sectors to collaborate and enhance areas of dual-use technology applications including support them to access funding.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

The success of our digital technologies sector is dependent on the delivery of essential infrastructure, both digital, commercial and social infrastructure. Our priority Investment Pipeline projects include:

- **The Cambridge West Innovation District –** A world-leading innovation environment providing the first opportunity for industry to co-locate at scale with the University of Cambridge.
- **Peterborough Substation -** A new 240MW substation which will help meet the need to triple grid capacity to support Growth in the digital technologies sector.

Defence

Defence is a critical sector for the CPCA region, combining our world-class research base with advanced manufacturing and engineering expertise. The evolving global security landscape demands resilient, sovereign technologies, and the innovations developed by organizations such as TWI are central to ensuring the UK maintains its leadership in defence capability.

The CPCA region hosts a unique combination of deeptech excellence and industrial strength, with a rapidly expanding defence and dual-use technology cluster. This ecosystem is driven by the proximity of innovative SMEs, global primes, and internationally recognised research centres, creating a powerful environment for collaboration and Growth.

At TWI, we have a long-standing track record of supporting the Ministry of Defence and our Industrial Members across all domains — land, sea, air, and space. Our expertise in materials performance, structural integrity, coatings, polymers and composites, additive manufacturing, robotics, and advanced inspection technologies provides the foundation for next-generation defence systems. These capabilities are already being applied in partnership with leading defence companies to deliver resilient, high-performance solutions that strengthen the UK's sovereign capability.

Building on our proud history as The Welding Institute, established in Cambridge in 1946, TWI Certification Ltd also provides internationally recognised certification for both companies and individuals, embedding the highest standards of competence and quality across the defence supply chain.

Our work ensures that new processes and components can be deployed with confidence, while also enabling faster, more efficient production of critical systems. Alongside this, our training and knowledge-transfer programmes help to equip the workforce with the expertise needed to deliver the next generation of defence technologies.

A distinctive strength of TWI lies in our industrial membership model, which brings together over 500 organizations across the supply chain, including a significant number of SMEs. This diverse community allows us to draw on a wide range of skills and perspectives, accelerating innovation and ensuring that solutions developed in the CPCA region are both practical and scalable.

TWI is proud to contribute to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's vision for a significant expansion of the defence sector, leveraging the region's unique ecosystem of research, innovation, and industrial application. By bridging fundamental science with deployable defence technologies, we can ensure that the UK's armed forces and defence industry remain at the forefront of innovation, while creating high-value employment and economic Growth for the region.

The Welding Institute | TWI

The global deep tech powerhouse of Capgemini, developing leading-edge dual use technology, products and services for defence and security providing operational advantage for our clients.

The need for innovation in Defence has never been stronger. CPCA region has a worldwide reputation in research and innovation in both commercial and defence industries, with a strong eco-system of academia, start-ups, venture capital, SMEs, and defence suppliers, and with a rich pool of talent, making it an ideal location to establish and grow a global defence business, alongside the support of the East Regional Defence & Security Cluster.

The strength in digital (AI, cyber, IT services, robotics, wireless, semiconductor and quantum), physical and life sciences, ensures coverage across the range of defence capability areas.

Cambridge Consultants was founded to harness the expertise of Cambridge University to develop technology directly and through the formation of start ups for the benefit of UK industry. For over sixty years we have created substantial value through our spin-outs, and product and service innovations for our global clients, many of which are in day to day use in consumer, industrial, energy, medical and wireless industries. This enables rapid technology transfer between industries including dual use technology for Defence.

We have over 100 labs covering more than twenty thousand square metres providing facilities for complete end to end product and service developments. Our experience also places us in a unique position to offer advisory services based on deep technology and market knowledge.

cambridge consultants
Part of Capgemini Invent

Defence

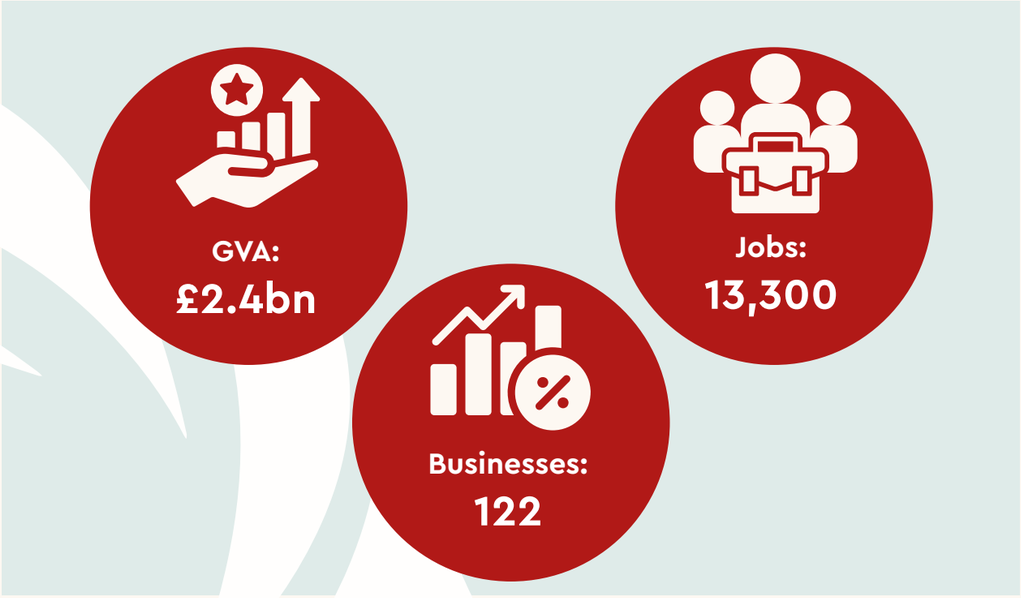
C&P's defence cluster is a critical driver of high-value employment and innovation in the region. Our core research and commercialisation strengths in space, AI, quantum, cyber, materials, manufacturing, semiconductors, engineering biology, and advanced connectivity technologies make C&P a nationally critical place for defence and dual-use innovation.

There is a growing concentration of defence activity driven by a cluster of firms and skilled employment: with over 120 private companies in the C&P region, employing approximately 13,300 people and generating an estimated revenue of £2.7 billion.

Cambridgeshire is rapidly establishing itself as a national and global leader in deeptech innovation, with regional expertise driving progress in quantum technologies, advanced materials, photonics, and precision engineering. These capabilities are increasingly applied within the defence sector, supporting breakthroughs in secure communications, resilient sensor systems, and next-generation navigation and timing solutions.

Our defence cluster encompasses a broad and diverse range of private and public sector activities across the entire defence supply chain. Our capabilities include advanced manufacturing of high-performance defence components such as graphene-based sensor systems, to resilient communication hardware and space applications. Defence-related manufacturing and technical services contribute significantly to the local economy's output. Our long-standing manufacturing base (historically in machinery and composites) now produces advanced components for aerospace, defence, and security technologies.

We are also witnessing applications of biotechnology such as multi-omics profiling within defence applications. C&P is the only region with this unique set of capabilities and R&D abilities. This makes collaboration with our defence cluster and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) critical for national security and our sovereign defence capabilities.



Innovation and dual-use technology – founded in C&P – is a core driver of the Global Defence Sector

Research excellence from the University of Cambridge, coupled with a unique cluster of technology consultancies, is enabling our region to become world-renowned for defence-relevant R&D in AI, quantum, materials science, and cybersecurity. This is leading to the rapid concentration of digital primes within the C&P region. These capabilities make us uniquely placed to expand our cluster of high-Growth, private sector digital primes that will invent the next wave of critical defence technologies.

The C&P region also has a proven track record in high-value manufacturing, precision engineering, and composites through firms like Marshall Aerospace and TWI. This base provides rapid prototyping and scalable production capacity for critical systems – from sensors and robotics to UAV components in defence related applications.

With its world-class R&D ecosystem, investment infrastructure, a growing cluster of quantum, biotech, AI, and advanced materials startups, and proximity to RAF bases and defence primes, Cambridgeshire can act as a national innovation testbed — bridging early-stage science with dual-use venture capital and deployable defence capability.

This eco-system of companies and innovation assets is leading Cambridgeshire to be one of the key hubs for venture capital (VC) funding in defence, security and resilience investment in Europe, bettered only by Munich. Cambridgeshire has attracted $509m USD in VC funding in 2024, and $1.2bn since 2019.

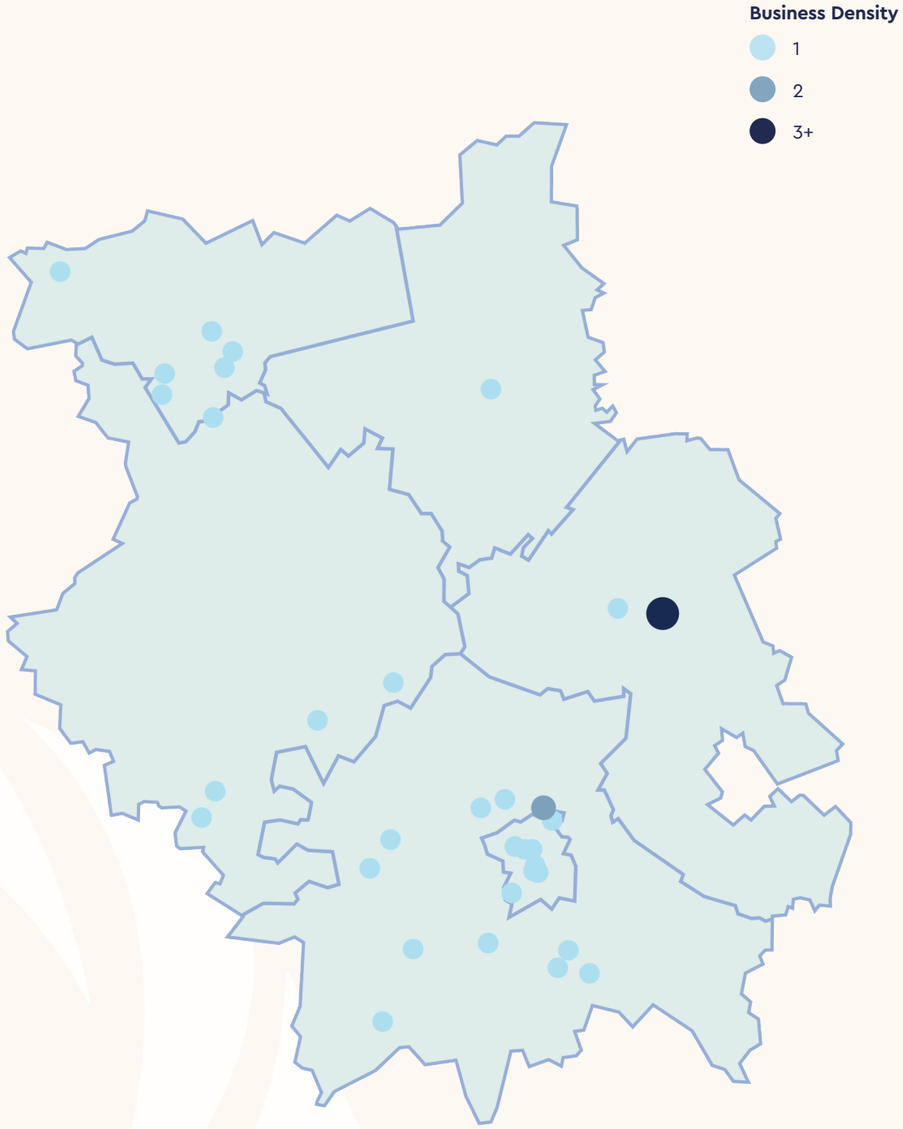
The region also plays a central role in the UK's defence infrastructure and hosts four strategic MoD sites, notably RAF Wyton, a major Defence Intelligence hub, home to the National Centre for Geospatial Intelligence and the NATO Joint Intelligence Centre at RAF Molesworth, alongside RAF Alconbury (a US-European intelligence facility) which is part of the 501st Combat Support Wing and RAF Wittering in Peterborough.

Marshall Aerospace	Cambridge Consultants	TWI
MARSHALL	cambridge consultants Part of Capgemini Invent	TWI
A subsidiary of the Marshall Group, producing a wide range of products across applied engineering services and technologies.	A long-standing, deep-tech innovation consultancy with over 100 labs providing facilities across defence capability areas.	TWI provides defence research and development to support both the MoD and with Industrial Member companies in this sector.

Our Defence Growth Plan

Defence enterprise is concentrated in several areas in our region, including Cambridge and Huntingdon, with a smaller emerging cluster around Peterborough. We also have defence resources in the form of airbases, including RAF Wyton. We aim to deliver on our potential by connecting our intense innovation clusters with our centres of defence industry, thereby fostering an efficient sector within our region.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

The Defence sector is set to undergo substantial evolution, driven by the private sector and technological innovation. The rise in global threats has made national security a primary concern for the UK Government and our strategic partners.

With the UK's most established and fast-growing digital sectors, and a strong heritage in manufacturing, C&P is uniquely placed to capitalise on this evolving global landscape. By 2050, we aim to grow the Defence sector significantly, establishing it further as a key regional industry and integrating it within the growing knowledge economy.

We have identified the following Growth opportunities in the Defence Sector:

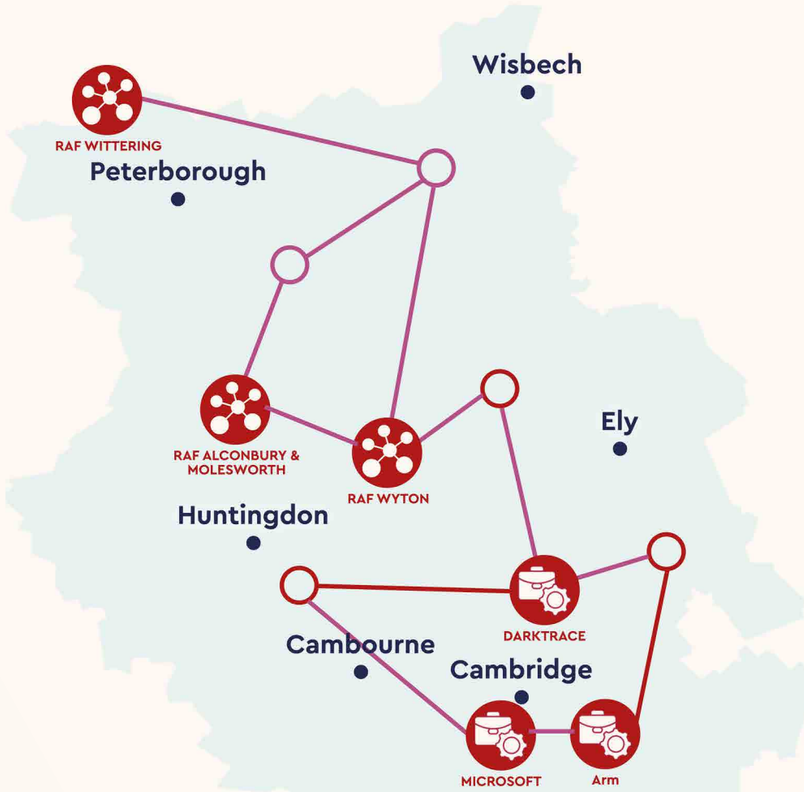
1. **By harnessing regional strengths in AI, cyber security, and advanced digital technologies, the UK can enhance its national defence posture.** The region's expertise in algorithmic design, cryptography, secure networks, and real-time data analysis positions it as a critical enabler of AI-powered defence solutions and end-to-end threat management. In collaboration with the UK's national intelligence functions, the region acts as a force multiplier, driving joint ventures, cross-sector R&D, and dual-use commercial applications.

2. **Further expansion of Advanced Defence Manufacturing to capture high-value segments of the defence value chain.** The advanced manufacturing cluster can expand to supply a greater number of high-performing components for defence needs. Semiconductors, aerospace and unmanned systems are prime areas of opportunity. The presence of R&D-rich companies suggests strong potential for prototyping and producing high-performance parts for the MoD, ranging from novel graphene-based sensor systems to resilient communication hardware and space-based applications.

3. **Enhanced collaboration between SMEs and our Armed Forces and Intelligence Services.** With the anticipation of UK SME prioritisation in future defence procurement, now is the time to promote these partnerships to accelerate innovation cycles and bring skilled employment to the region.

Our Growth vision

By 2050, we aim to grow the Defence sector significantly, establishing it further as a key regional industry and integrating it within the growing knowledge economy. Defence has unparalleled synergies with our other priority sectors, especially Advanced Manufacturing & Materials and Digital Technologies, where technologies developed in one sector can have remarkable cross-applicability.



Strategic Opportunity

Defence (Dual-Use) Technologies Innovation Test Bed:

There is a strategic opportunity to establish a national defence–civil innovation campus within the C&P region that combines advanced manufacturing (eg battery, robotics, hardened materials), dual-use AI systems, and high-speed prototyping for drones, secure communications, and sensors.

Our defence cluster is anchored in Cambridge, where we have significant concentrations of defence related, high-Growth businesses operating within dual-use digital and advanced manufacturing sectors including a number of digital Primes. These businesses are complemented by a number of strategic MoD assets within C&P including RAF Wyton.

How will we support Growth in the Defence sector?

1. We will position Cambridgeshire & Peterborough as a Strategic Innovation & Manufacturing Hub for defence within the MoD's Industrial Strategy, with targeted investment and policy support to scale dual-use innovation, boost supply chain resilience, and reinforce sovereign capability.
2. We will work with UK Strategic Command at RAF Wyton and MoD to maximise technology and cyber capabilities from our digital Primes for defence purposes. These Primes are predominantly concentrated within Cambridge.
3. We will work with UK Defence Innovation and the new Defence Exports Office to ensure our innovative SME base has early access to the annual £400m budget ringfenced for Growth in the defence, security, and dual-use technology sectors.
4. We will continue to engage with the Regional Defence and Security Cluster (RDSC) to support our SMEs and related supply chains to transition into new defence markets, enabling greater technology transfer and dual use activity.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

The concentration of defence assets across the region offers the opportunity to create dedicated spaces for companies serving the defence sector to build on unique development opportunities which can attract defence Primes and facilitate an increase in defence start-ups. This includes:

- **Brampton Cross -** There are proposals for a UK Battery Research and Future Fuels Research and Development Centre (UKBRDC) to be bought forward at the site, to deliver a research, testing and certification facility with applications within defence but also non-military settings.
- **RAF Wyton – Digital Defence Cluster –** A unique investment opportunity to establish a defence-focused digital innovation cluster and conference centre at RAF Wyton, aimed at advancing frontier, dual-use technologies and securing strategic and sovereign advantage. This initiative will harness the presence of the National Centre for Geospatial Intelligence, leading OEMs, and digital primes to drive the development of our regional defence sector.

Agri-Food & Tech

Agriculture is a key sector for the CPCA region. It is facing unprecedented challenges from climate change, emissions reduction, population Growth and rising input costs. The innovations brought by Agritech companies are key to addressing these issues and continuing to meet the Uk's food security needs whilst minimising the impact of the industry on the environment.

The CPCA region hosts a unique combination of the most vibrant science and technology cluster in Europe and some of the most productive agricultural land in the world. This has led to a rapidly growing agrifood technology hub forming in the region, drawn by the proximity to both innovative growers and world-class research centres.

Within the region there is a very strong agricultural sector including not just growers but seed breeders, agricultural research centres, and agrochemical companies. The food sector is equally strong with major food processors in Peterborough, Huntingdon and other sites across the region. Agrifood companies in the region are further supported by strength in the adjacent sectors of life sciences, IT, robotics, electronics, AI and advanced manufacturing.

In Agritech, rapidly maturing technologies such as precision breeding, along with the new UK regulatory environment, can be applied to accelerate the development of the industry. Niab has invested to develop a national capability in this space through our Precision Breeding Centre. We are keen to partner with CPCA to drive a significant expansion of this capability which is already leading within Europe with regard to scale and quality. Through this move we can better leverage the fundamental research carried out by our partner, the Crop Science Centre at the University of Cambridge, and the world-class translational research undertaken by Niab.

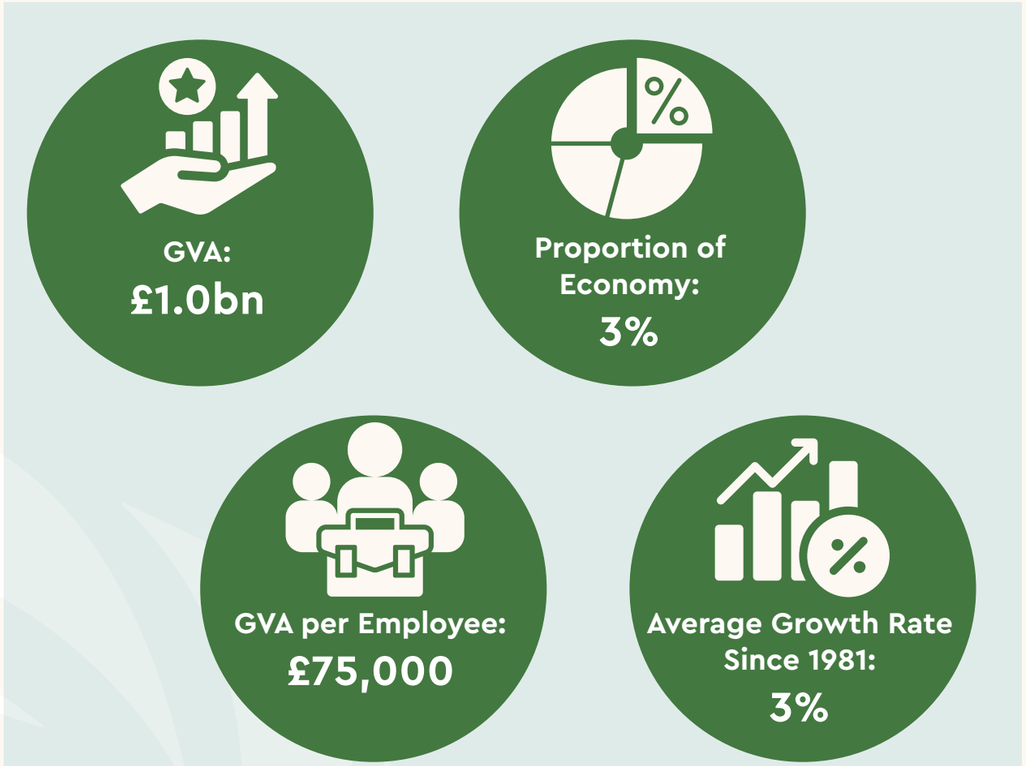
In addition to providing research, translational and regulatory services in agriculture and horticulture, Niab provides facilities including laboratory, office and glasshouse space to Agritech companies through incubator facilities on its Cambridge site. Alongside this, Agri-Tech E offers award winning networking support to the sector. The underlying infrastructure offered by these organizations, coupled with proposed developments for scale-up space both at Niab and other facilities across the region provide the potential for rapid Growth in the sector.

NIAB

Agri-Food & Tech

Our Agri-Food & Tech sector uses science, innovation and technology to develop the value chain from farm production to final consumption. Our purpose is to integrate technology to support the management of agriculture and food practices, helping meet challenges related to changing climate, increasing input costs, food security and improvements in nutrition. C&P hosts several global food production and robotic companies that collaborate to drive efficiencies, leading to Growth in exports. This is shown by Nestle's £150 million investment to automate its facility in Fenland.

The Agri-Food & Tech sector in C&P employs 3,500 people across 115 companies, generating approximately £1billion in revenue. Our Agri-Food & Tech businesses benefit from excellent land quality for farming, world-renowned academic institutions, a strong supply chain in terms of international food processing, food packing, distribution and logistics, and world-leading R&D facilities.



Collaboration and clusters

There are a number of networks and clusters for the Agri-Food & Tech sector located within C&P, that bring together world-class research and sustainable policy initiatives.

Niab is one of the oldest agricultural science research centres in the country, established in 1919. Niab specialises in genetics and breeding, varieties and seeds as well as agronomy. It has actively contributed towards the development of seed testing and certification as well as the adoption and advancement of modern field trial techniques.

At the forefront of Agri-Food & Tech innovation is the University of Cambridge who operate the Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) and Sainsbury Laboratory (SLCU). The SLCU is a research institute who focus on the regulatory systems underlying plant Growth and development. The sector is further supported by Fenland SOIL Initiative, a non-for-profit initiative focused on sustainable land use, carbon reduction and biodiversity.

Commercial strength is provided by companies such as Hutchinsons, a major agronomy firm headquartered in Wisbech, and AB Agri, the agricultural division of Associated British Foods, which includes British Sugar's operations and RSK ADAS, the UK's largest agriculture consultancy.

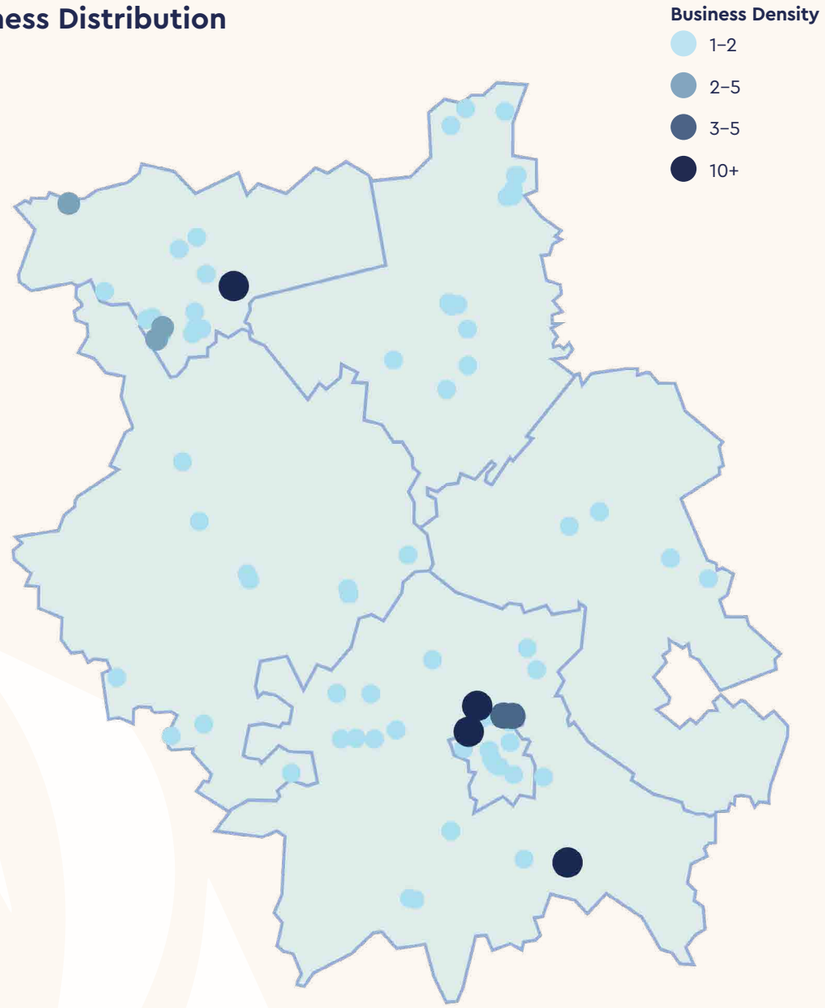
Agri-Tech E, an international not-for-profit organization with members across the UK and in 12 countries internationally, brings together farmers, researchers, technologists and entrepreneurs to stimulate innovation in agriculture and horticulture. In its first 10 years, the platform has garnered substantial interest, driven significant levels of international collaboration and fostered connections that have shaped the industry's future.

Agri-Tech E	Hutchinsons	OAL
Agri-TechE	HUTCHINSONS Crop Production Specialists	OAL
An independent not-for-profit organization, supporting agri-tech innovation.	Hutchinsons are a leading agricultural and horticultural input advice and supply company	OAL helps food manufacturers on their automation journey with cutting-edge solutions including autocoding, label verification and bespoke robotic systems.

Our Agri-Food & Tech Growth Plan

Agri-Food & Tech has two key clustering patterns in the region. The first, clustering around our innovation-heavy population centres, primarily Cambridge. The second, clustering with direct proximity to the fertile Fenland soil, these clusters can be seen in area's such as Wisbech. We will focus on concentrating these clusters in both Cambridge and Fenland. To grow this sector, we will harness the crossover potential between advanced manufacturing and Agri-Food Tech — embedding technologies from drones to DNA analysis into the innovation pipeline. This includes supporting the diffusion of these capabilities into Peterborough and North Hunts, ensuring regional uptake and impact.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

Growth in the Agri-Food & Tech sector, both within C&P and globally, is driven by a need to reduce the environmental impact of agriculture and food production while supporting the livelihoods of farmers and local producers and managing the impacts of climate change.

With our R&D and innovation capabilities, the C&P region has the opportunity to accelerate the integration of technology into farming supply chains, within our region and across the UK and globally.

Our specific Growth opportunities include:

1. **Better integration of our agri-science research and technical capabilities to deliver innovative agricultural solutions:** By connecting research institutions with agri-tech firms and farming communities, we can accelerate advances that enhance productivity, sustainability, and resilience across the sector.

2. **Use of automation in food production to streamline supply chains and mitigate labour shortages:** Leveraging our strengths in R&D and advanced manufacturing, the C&P region can lead the design and development of cutting-edge technologies, whilst transforming our farms to drive productivity and innovation within traditional agriculture and food production.

3. **The transition to regenerative farming to secure the long-term future of our farming communities:** Our region has the opportunity to be a market leader in soil health mapping through our expertise in technology and biology to support the restoration of soil health and reduce reliance on expensive fertilisers and pesticides.

4. **The digitalisation of the sector to improve decision making and mitigate climate impacts:** The integration of technology, such as IoT sensors and satellite imagery, to gather and analyse data can help support farmers make data-driven decisions and enhance productivity whilst increasing resilience to climate variability.

Given the technical capabilities within our region, we are well-positioned to lead the design and development of advanced Agri-Food technologies. It is of strategic imperative we use these technologies to generate efficiencies, reduce energy use across the supply chain and ensure UK food production is on a more sustainable and competitive future. By supporting local businesses in integrating these innovations into farming practices, we can also maximise the Growth potential of traditional agriculture.

Our Growth vision

Our vision for the Agri-Food & Tech sector involves connecting our technical sectors to our agricultural heartlands. Boasting both the most intense R&D cluster and the best agricultural land in the UK, our area has an opportunity to lead the Agri-Food & Tech Sector globally. This will also mean 7,700 more people working in the sector by 2050.

Strategic Opportunity

Opportunity: Engineering Biology Agri-Tech Scale Up Test Hub:

The C&P region is already the UK's Agri-Tech Innovation Capital, with an existing biotech ecosystem which supports precision agriculture, synthetic biology, and food innovation. There is an opportunity to further support the Growth of this dynamic ecosystem and support the national Growth agenda for this sector through the creation of an agri bio prototyping and scale up centre which can support the development of synthetic biology, climate resilient crops, cell cultivated proteins, and biomanufacturing, including downstream translation to near-market trials. The focus of the test hub would be on precision fermentation, alternative proteins and smart farming inputs.

How will we support Growth in the Agri-Food & Tech sector?

1. Develop a multidisciplinary skills taskforce to support our food manufacturing businesses to upskill and encourage the adoption of digital technology and automation technology within local production and processing.
2. Support the development of Agri-Food Tech testbeds for piloting automation, robotics and digital solutions in agriculture and food production.
3. We will leverage our expertise in agri-science as a catalyst for achieving our Net Zero objectives by deploying innovative nature-based solutions that enhance sustainability and reduce agricultural emissions across the region.

We will engage with Government's Sector Plan for Agri-tech

To supercharge our sectors, we will align our approach to the Government's industrial strategy, including:

- Support regional businesses to access the £200m Farming Innovation Programme up to 2030.
- Utilise the new Agri Tech Export Accelerator Programme to improve access to international markets.
- Influence with Government around the evolving regulatory environment.
- Support the collaboration of our other Growth sectors and Agri-Food & Tech.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

Driving Growth within the Agri-Food & Tech sector will require continuous development of infrastructure, including specialist start-up facilities. CPCA's Investment pipeline will support the commercialisation of research ideas and enable businesses to scale.

Our priority Investment Pipeline projects include:

- **Peterborough Science and Technology Park**, located in Fenland could be a natural home for our region's Agri-Food & Tech businesses due to its proximity to the region's farmland. The proposal is a transformation of the former brickworks site in Whittlesey into a net zero science and technology park.
- **Water Infrastructure:** The Agri-Food & Tech sector demands investment in key infrastructure, particularly water supply. The C&P region is a water-stressed area, with water scarcity posing a significant barrier to development in regions supplied by Cambridge Water. This issue will persist until strategic infrastructure projects like the Fens Reservoir and Grafham Transfer schemes are implemented.

Energy and Clean-Tech

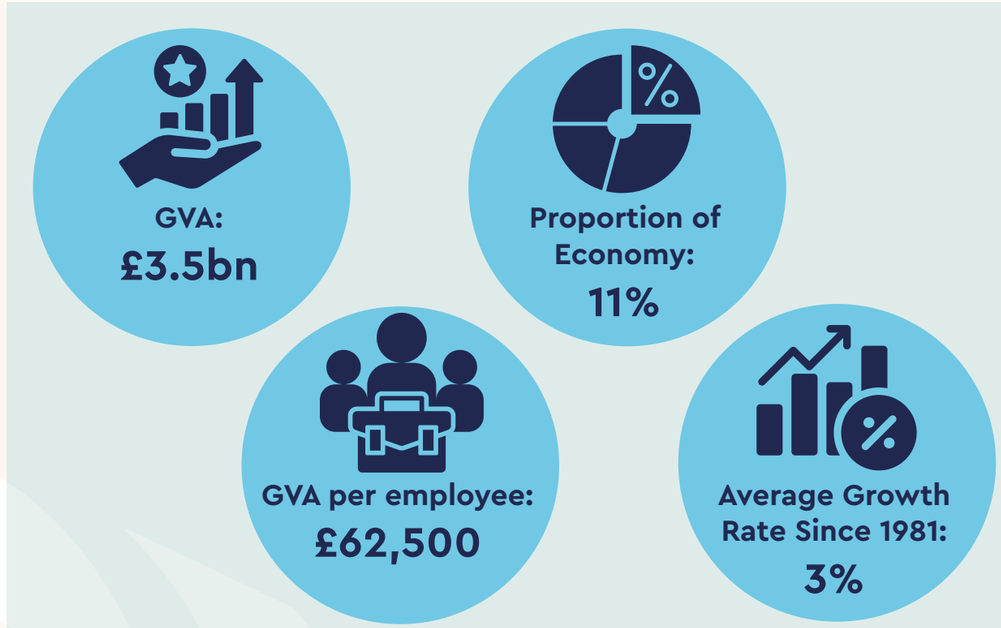
"We chose to establish Nyobolt's global headquarters in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough because of its world-class deep tech ecosystem, which fosters innovation, investment, and scale-up. This environment — bolstered by strong venture capital networks, startup support, and close ties to the University of Cambridge — has been instrumental in our journey from spinout to global solutions provider."

Sai Shivareddy, CEO Nyobolt

Energy and Clean-Tech

Our region is rapidly emerging as a key player in the UK's Energy & Clean-Tech landscape, driven by a growing ecosystem of innovation, collaboration, and commercial opportunity. The Energy & Clean-Tech sector encompasses technologies that help mitigate climate change impacts, reduce emissions, enhance resilience, and foster sustainable development, such as clean energy innovation, circular economy, the built environment, and smart infrastructures.

Our Energy & Clean-Tech sector spans multiple industries and stages – from R&D to software to recycling – making it a cross-cutting, high-Growth opportunity driven by the global shift towards a low-carbon economy. There are almost 250 companies in the C&P area, employing almost 2,500 people and generating an estimated revenue of £750 million. The sector has enormous potential to grow, supported by world renowned academic institutions, several cutting-edge corporations and industry partners, as well as a number of fast-growing start-ups.



* Science, Technology and Research and Development Sector

Across our region, there are a number of disruptive Cleantech companies that are making significant contributions across various sectors. This includes Pragmatic, based at Cambridge Science Park, who are pioneering flexible semiconductor technology and Generation Phoenix in Peterborough.

Our region is also home to numerous innovative start-ups and SMEs. For example, Aqdot specialises in supramolecular chemistry to capture and remove broad ranges of odours and pollutants, while Nyobolt, based in Cambridge, develops ultra-fast EV charging stations to minimise the time taken for motorists to recharge their vehicles.

Institutes and Initiatives

There are a number of networks and clusters for the Energy and Clean-Tech sector located within C&P. This includes a number of important initiatives and organizations dedicated to fostering innovation and sustainability within the sector.

Additionally, the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University have established several internal institutes and initiatives to drive Growth in the Energy & Clean-Tech sector. This includes Cambridge Zero, whose mission is to drive systemic change by fostering innovation, building green skills, and shaping solutions that benefit individuals, communities, and the global economy.

Furthermore, the Global Sustainability Institute, an organization of researchers within Anglia Ruskin University, is dedicated to developing practical solutions to sustainability challenges on both local and global scales through research and education.

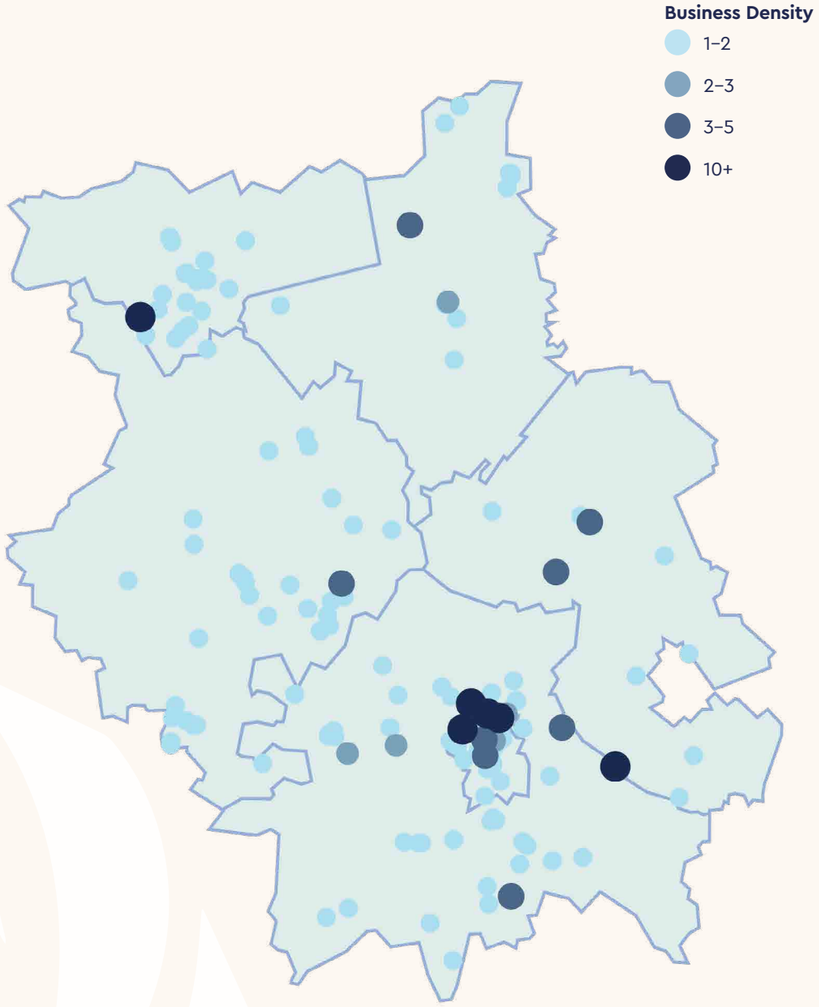
A newly opened £13.5 million Green Skills Centre at Peterborough College aims to equip learners with the technical expertise and vocational training needed to support the transition to a low-carbon economy. Alongside this, the newly built £4 million Green Skills Centre at the College of West Anglia in Wisbech further demonstrates our region's commitment to expanding green skills infrastructure.

Reclinker	Nyobolt	Energy @Cambridge
reclinker	nyobolt	UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Innovative spinout producing the reactive component of cement without emissions.	Focused on high-power, integrated energy systems that enable mission-critical uptime across a wide range of sectors including AI data centres, autonomous robotics, commercial and passenger EVs, grid infrastructure and heavy industrial fleets.	An interdisciplinary research centre that brings together over 250 academics working in all aspects of energy related research.

Our Clean-Tech Growth Plan

Energy & Clean-Tech enterprises are distributed across the region, with key innovations and R&D clusters being developed in Cambridge, and green energy firms also clustering around Peterborough. Our plan is to consolidate mature centres of excellence that leverage our broader innovation economy, promoting co-location within our sub-region alongside other Growth sectors that naturally align with clean technology.

Sector Business Distribution



Our Growth Potential

Our region plays a vital role in supporting research, innovation, and skills development that underpin energy resilience and sustainability. Together, these forces position Energy & Clean-Tech as a critical and fast-growing pillar of the UK economy. Battery innovation and the battery supply chain are emerging as key strengths for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. With our expertise in advanced materials and energy systems, we are well-placed to lead in this space.

This momentum presents a major opportunity for our regional economy. With world-class research institutions and innovation hubs, the region is well-placed to lead in Energy & Clean-Tech development, with its existing strengths in areas like battery technology, sustainable materials, and smart energy systems.

Insights from sector leaders and data analysis have highlighted key Growth opportunities across the Energy & Clean-Tech ecosystem that support the dual goals of economic Growth and environmental sustainability. This includes:

1. **Unlocking major opportunities in the built environment** through the development of AI-driven design tools, digital twins, and green construction materials. Our strengths in advanced materials are also driving progress in green cement, bio-based products, and next-generation batteries.

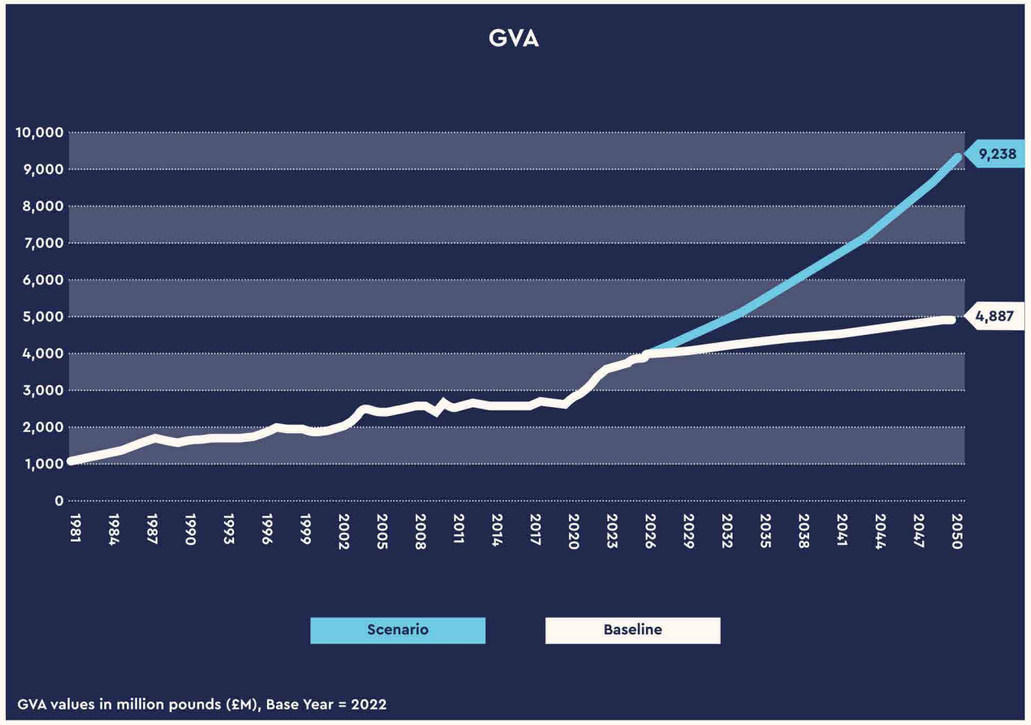
2. **Advancing innovation in Agritech and water management** by developing sensor technologies that support sustainable food systems, efficient water use, and flood resilience.

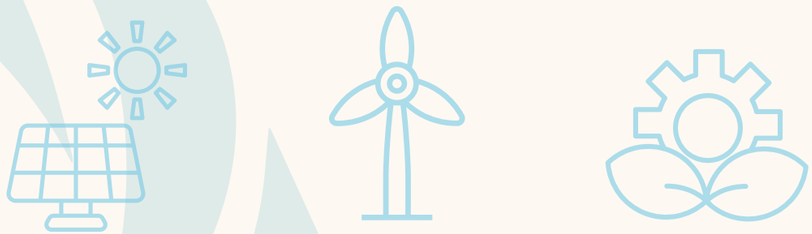
3. **Development of digital platforms** that underpin energy and water management.

4. **Advancing the circular economy** as a driver of clean Growth, with innovation in waste processing, material reuse, and circular product design.

Our Growth vision

By 2050, we aim to mature this sector significantly, driving it from a spinout centred economy to a scaled-up, established industry. This will be achieved by combining our knowledge economy with key players in clean energy and manufacturing, where the applications for our technologies are wide-reaching. Our vision for the sector is transformational Growth, delivering £5.7bn more GVA from Science, Technology and Research and Development by 2050. This will mean 79,800 more people employed in the Science, Technology and Research and Development by 2050.





How will we support Growth in the Energy & Clean-Tech sector?

1. Invest in Skills and Workforce Development: Expand green skills programmes and establish a Clean Energy Skills & Innovation Hub. Align with the upcoming Clean Energy Workforce Strategy and national funding for Technical Excellence Colleges.
2. Accelerate Innovation and R&D: Create an energy & clean-tech accelerator programme to support our start-ups in the commercialisation of vital clean-technologies. We will also support the development of future phases at ARU Peterborough including an industrial research facility and promote regional R&D in CCUS and smart energy systems.
3. Strengthen Supply Chains & Manufacturing Capacity: We will attract investment through the Clean Energy Supply Chain Fund and National Wealth Fund.
4. Unlock Strategic Sites & Infrastructure: We will use the Strategic Sites Accelerator to prepare industrial land for clean energy clusters.
5. Boost Exports & Global Positioning: We will launch a Cleantech Export Accelerator to support C&P-based SMEs.

We will engage with Government's Sector Plan for Clean Energy Industries

To supercharge our sectors, we will align our approach to the Government's industrial strategy, including:

- Ensure our region's Green-Tech firms can access the £1 billion Clean Energy Supply Chain Fund allocated under Great British Energy.
- Engage with the Clean Energy workforce strategy and fund regional skills pilots, curriculum development and workforce transition programmes.
- Access the Strategic Site Accelerator to access funding available for unlocking clean energy zones and infrastructure including support for grid access.
- Establish a centre of excellence for Energy & Clean-tech in the north of the C&P region.

Our Investment Pipeline will catalyse our Growth ambition

Our priority Investment Pipeline projects include:

- Creating a net zero innovation and enterprise hub at **Brampton Cross**. A net zero enterprise centre designed to attract high-tech, low-carbon businesses.
- **ARU Peterborough Phase 4 – Industrial Research Facility:** Development of an industrial R&D centre to support the future Growth of the hydrogen, CCUS, nuclear and defence sectors.
- Establishing a **national centre of excellence through the UK Battery and Future Energy Research and Development Centre**, which will support R&D in battery technology for mobility, defence, and aerospace.
- **Cambridge Business Park**, the 20-acre site will be transformed into a mixed-use ecosystem of new lab and office developments including space for climate innovation and Cleantech companies.

Opportunity Zones

Our Opportunity Zones

To achieve our Mayoral Growth Target of tripling our economy we are focusing on growing our priority sectors. To do this we will ensure we can embed them across our entire area, unlocking, for the first time in our area's history, the full potential of our sectors and places.

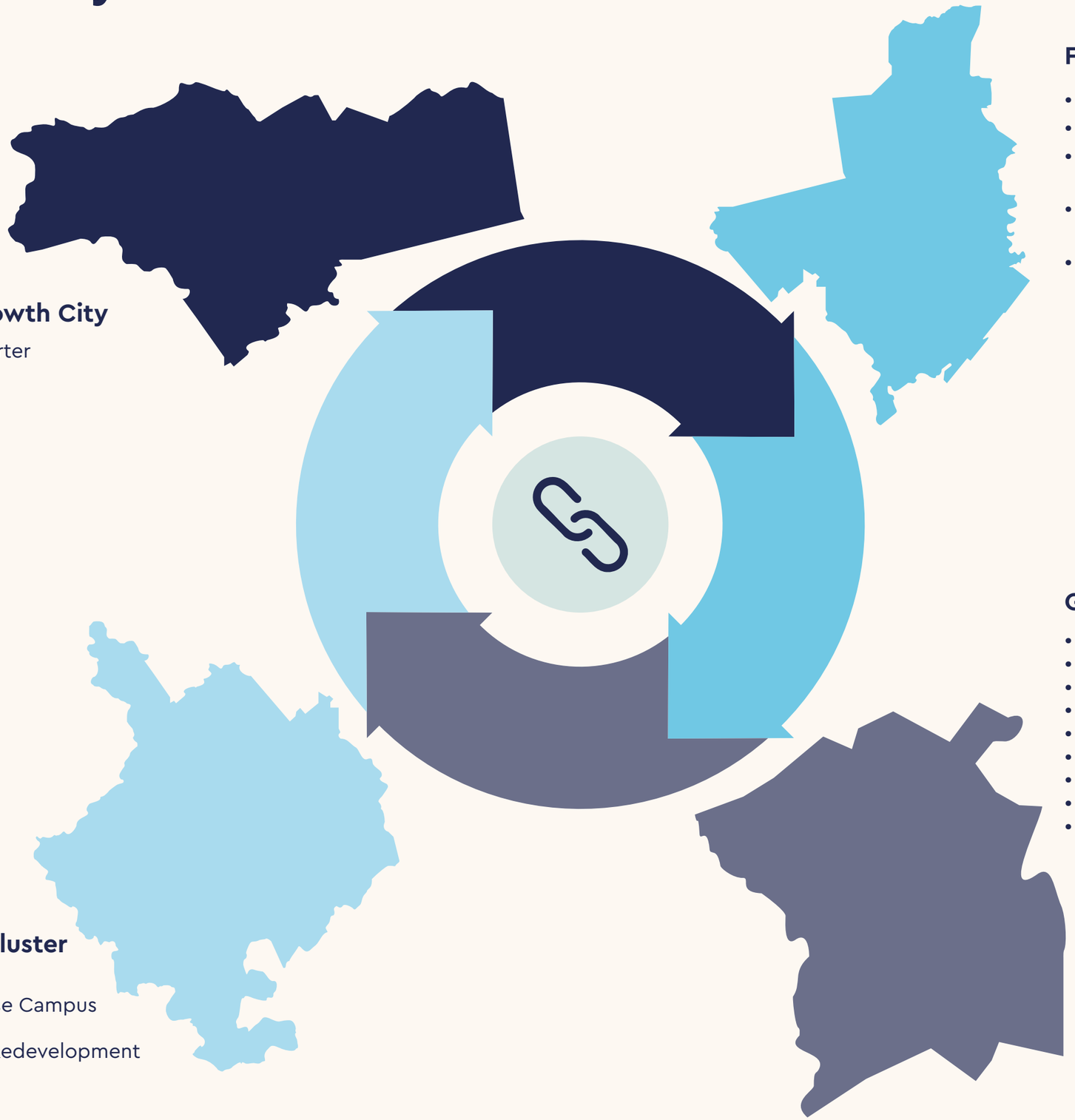
This place-based approach will ensure that this economic Growth is also purposeful and that it creates benefits for all in society.

Our Opportunity Zones are designed to crowd in investment to areas, allowing the embedding or Growth of priority sectors. This will drive forward both the foundational economy and the priority sector economy of each area – while also driving the whole CPCA economy. It will also create investment, jobs and re-generation across our entire area. We will also be trialling action areas for places with high measures of indices of deprivation to focus on creating skills and opportunities in those areas.

Our Opportunity Zones will

- Embed priority sectors
- Crowd in investment
- Meet our housing need
- Create new opportunities for the area
- Regenerate our cities and towns

Our Opportunity Zones



Peterborough Fast Growth City

- Peterborough Station Quarter
- North and South Stations
- Community Stadium
- ARU Peterborough
- City Centre Master Plan
- Sports Quarter
- A47 Dualling
- Mass Transit

Fens Growth Triangle

- South Wisbech Investment Zone
- Wisbech Rail
- Peterborough Science and Technology Park
- Chatteris Advanced Manufacturing Park
- Fens Reservoir Visitor Experience

North Hunts Growth Cluster

- Alconbury Weald Station
- Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus
- Brampton Cross
- Hinchingbrooke Hospital Redevelopment
- RAF Wyton
- A141 improvements

Global City Cambridge

- Cambridge Biomedical Campus
- Cambridge West Innovation District
- Cambridge Innovation Hub
- Mass Rapid Transit
- North East Cambridge
- Cambridge East
- Cambourne
- Convention Centre & Concert Hall
- A10 improvements

Peterborough Fast Growth City

Peterborough is a unique city with huge potential for Growth. It boasts one of the UK's fastest growing populations. It also sits within two of the UK's most important economic corridors – the UK Innovation Corridor to London and the Ox-Cam Corridor, while also having excellent connectivity to the Midlands. Furthermore, in our sub-region, Peterborough has the potential to benefit significantly from Growth in priority sectors. International comparators who, like Peterborough, have close access to innovation hubs akin to Cambridge, have seen significant Growth in recent decades when given the right support.

The Opportunity Zone

The Peterborough Fast Growth City Opportunity Zone is one of the most important strategic locations of Growth in our area. Peterborough is primed for rapid Growth that will be achieved by genuinely embedding our Growth sectors within the city and joining its economic power together with the wider sub-region. The Zone will drive this forward, with a focus on fostering the business conditions to supercharge three of the Growth sectors with economic and place-based interventions. This includes eight strategic projects to unlock significant economic development within the city and surrounding areas. The Zone also addresses regional housing pressures, builds on the city's existing connectivity advantage, and supports a growing knowledge economy.

Zone Specific Sector Focus

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

Through investment into skills and fostering a supportive business ecosystem, we will build on Peterborough's rich manufacturing history to develop a modern Advanced Manufacturing & Materials cluster.

Agri-Food & Tech

Through proximity to the scientific capabilities of Cambridge and the fertile agricultural land of the Fenlands, Peterborough has potential to lead the national Agri-Food & Tech sector when the business environment is supportive.

Energy and Clean-Tech

Peterborough is scaling up the innovation environment for Clean-Tech. This will be supported by projects to intensify academic activity through the concentration on Clean-Tech Growth.

Sports Quarter
A comprehensive sports facilities development, with a public swimming pool.

Peterborough Community Stadium
A new home for Peterborough United, and Peterborough's first concert venue.

Peterborough Station Quarter
A new double-sided redevelopment of Peterborough station, unlocking significant housing and commercial space.

Peterborough University Quarter (ARU Peterborough)
Four further phases of development for the new university for Peterborough.

Mass Transit
Connecting the city with key business spaces and residential developments.

City Centre Master Plan
This plan will be regenerating Peterborough City to make it a great place to live and work.

A47 Dualling
Widening improvements to the A47 to improve connectivity and unlock Growth.

North & South Stations
Potential new mainline stations on the outskirts of the city that will increase viability for future commercial developments and improve connectivity.

Interventions

Special Economic Zone

This Industrial Strategy Zone will focus on securing knowledge intensive industries, specifically advanced manufacturing.

Designate a Robust Delivery Mechanism

Designate a robust delivery mechanism for the acceleration of regeneration such as a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).

Secure Designation as a Core City

This designation will reflect Peterborough's growing scale, particularly following Local Government Reorganization, and strategic importance to the nation. This would also establish Peterborough as the East of England's first & only Core City, solving a long standing regional inequity in the Core Cities.

Develop a Centre of Excellence

Continue the award-winning successes of the ARU Peterborough by creating a centre of excellence embedded within the University to support knowledge intensive sectors in the area.

Spinout Support

Set up a satellite to support spinouts and scale ups similar to Cambridge Enterprise.

Pilot an Action Area

This area will focus on up-skilling to deliver the skills needed for knowledge intensive industries.

Peterborough Station Quarter

Global City Cambridge

Cambridge is renowned not only for academic prowess but also its large research, design, and innovation capacity. It is key to the UK Innovation Corridor and the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, both of which place Cambridge in a unique position at the heart of innovation, academia, and economic activity.

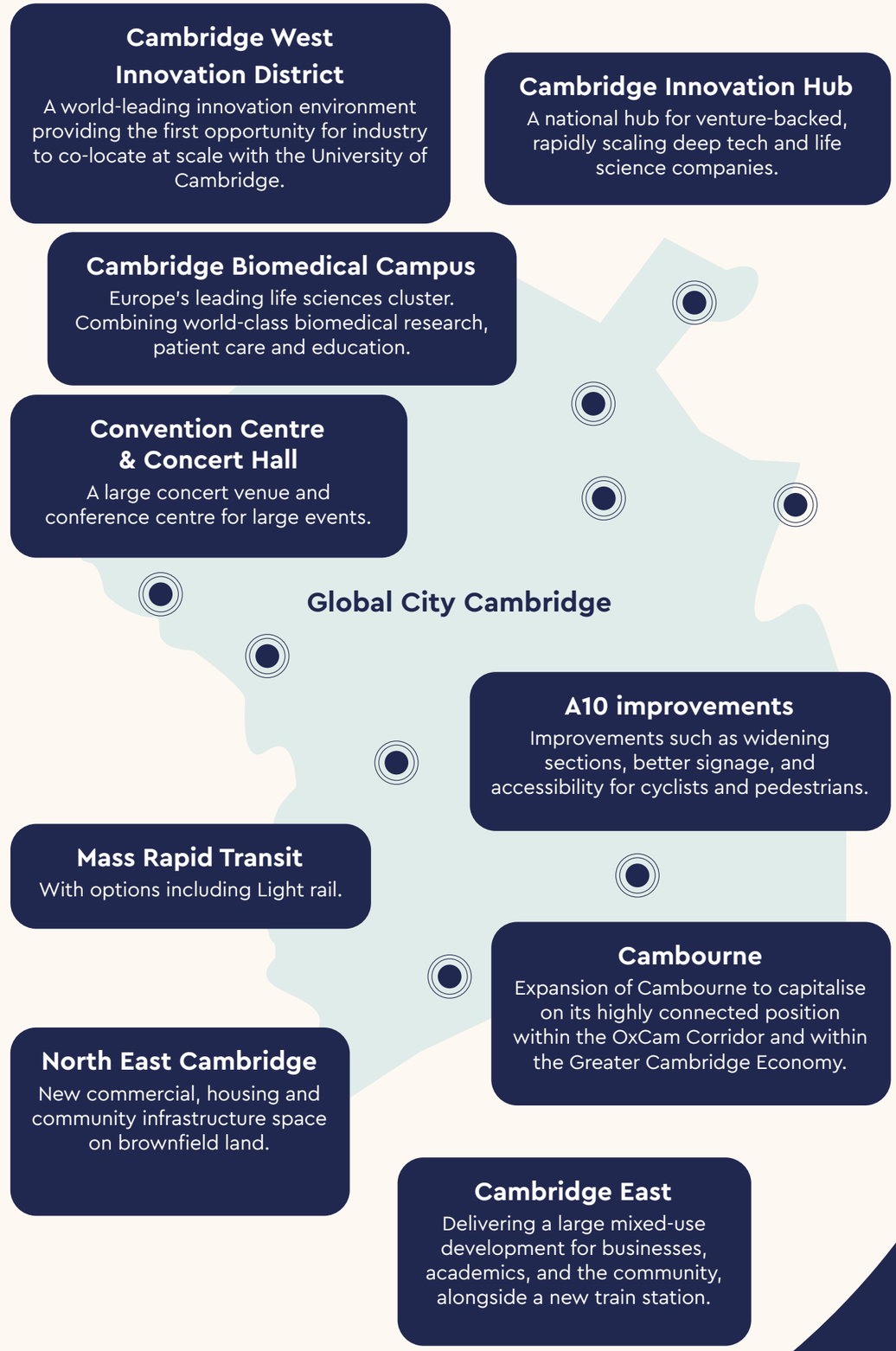
As the world's most intense innovation cluster, the city is key to the UK's position as a global science superpower, and the region's economic Growth potential[55].

The Opportunity Zone

The Global City Cambridge Opportunity Zone is focused on turbocharging an already globally recognised industry. This Opportunity Zone will continue to concentrate priority sectors in Cambridge while unblocking key infrastructure gaps with a focus on our shared priorities with Government. Comprised of nine key projects, and interventions focused on making Cambridge as globally competitive as possible, this Opportunity Zone is of the utmost strategic importance, not only for the area, but for the nation.

Zone Specific Sector Focus

	Life Sciences With its leading academic institution of the University of Cambridge, and world-leading enterprises such as AstraZeneca, Cambridge's potential for Growth in Life Sciences is globally unique.
	Advanced Manufacturing & Materials At the cutting edge of developing new technologies, Cambridge has the potential to drive new methods and approaches in the sector, revolutionising productivity.
	Digital Technologies Digital sectors sit at the heart of the regional economy, enabling all innovation sectors to optimise and expand. Having already fostered thriving businesses in the sector, continued support will drive further investment and enterprise.
	Defence Cambridge has the necessary innovation capabilities to drive forward our region's defence sector, powering the productivity of firms through sectoral R&D.
	Agri-Food & Tech With productive agricultural land in the vicinity, and a strong knowledge base in the natural and biological sciences from the University and the world-class translational research undertaken by Niab, this Zone has significant potential to lead innovation in the sector.
	Energy and Clean-Tech With the large number of projects and industry developments taking place, Clean Tech has been a large focus for research, construction, and implementation. Cambridge is home to several Clean-Tech companies and academics working hard to be at the forefront of this newer industry.



Interventions

Special Economic Zone

This Industrial Strategy Zone will focus on securing global industries into Cambridge, meeting our sectoral aim.

Establish an Ox-Cam Institute for innovation led Growth

This institute will develop research into how best to grow the corridor, acting as a key advisor to the area regarding creating high value Growth.

Explore Venture Capital

Analysis of the Venture Capital market in Cambridge and its global competitiveness, with the findings aiming to support a globally competitive Venture Capital offer in the city.

The Cambridge Growth Company

"The Local Growth Plan sets out a bold and ambitious vision for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – one that recognises the region's extraordinary potential and the urgent need to unlock it through infrastructure-led, inclusive development. By convening expertise, aligning investment, and tackling barriers to Growth, the Cambridge Growth Company is committed to working with partners to ensure that Cambridge becomes a global exemplar of sustainable placemaking."

- Peter Freeman

Effective Delivery Partnerships

The Combined Authority will work in collaboration with the the Cambridge Growth Company (CGC) to unlock Growth within the Global City Cambridge Opportunity Zone. The CGC is a subsidiary of Homes England, set up to advance the government's Growth ambitions for Greater Cambridge.

The CGC's role is to identify solutions to complex constraints on Growth, supporting cross-government engagement to unblock development and provide the right incentives for successful development in the long term. Its priorities are to enable and accelerate existing developments and unlock stalled sites, work with local partners to establish the evidence base for a long-term, ambitious plan to bring forward the housing, transport, water and wider sustainable infrastructure needed for Cambridge to realise its full economic potential, and lay the foundations for a long-term delivery vehicle. Alongside its Board, the CGC established an Advisory Council comprising the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, elected leaders of Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council and subject matter experts.

Cambridge Business Park
Source: The Crown Estate

North Hunts Growth Cluster

North Hunts is a key driver for our region's growing economy, with existing and expanding clusters of innovative, Growth-driving enterprise. This regional cluster has strong potential to support businesses looking to scale up. This is evidenced by Paragraf, an Advanced Manufacturing firm, who were founded as a University of Cambridge spinout and are now based in the region.

Alongside historic market towns such as St Neots and Huntingdon, new residential and commercial real estate developments are driving the economic potential of the area. As further commercial real estate is delivered, more businesses in innovative and high-productivity sectors will be able to expand their enterprise in the area.

The Opportunity Zone

The North Hunts Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone is composed of six key projects, with the key aim of supporting its growing and evolving economy. It holistically addresses development, with investments in housing, commercial and connectivity combined to deliver on the region's potential.

The Zone will develop existing resources in defence and life sciences, as well as delivering new opportunities across the region. These will all be tied together through strategic interventions in connectivity.

Zone Specific Sector Focus

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

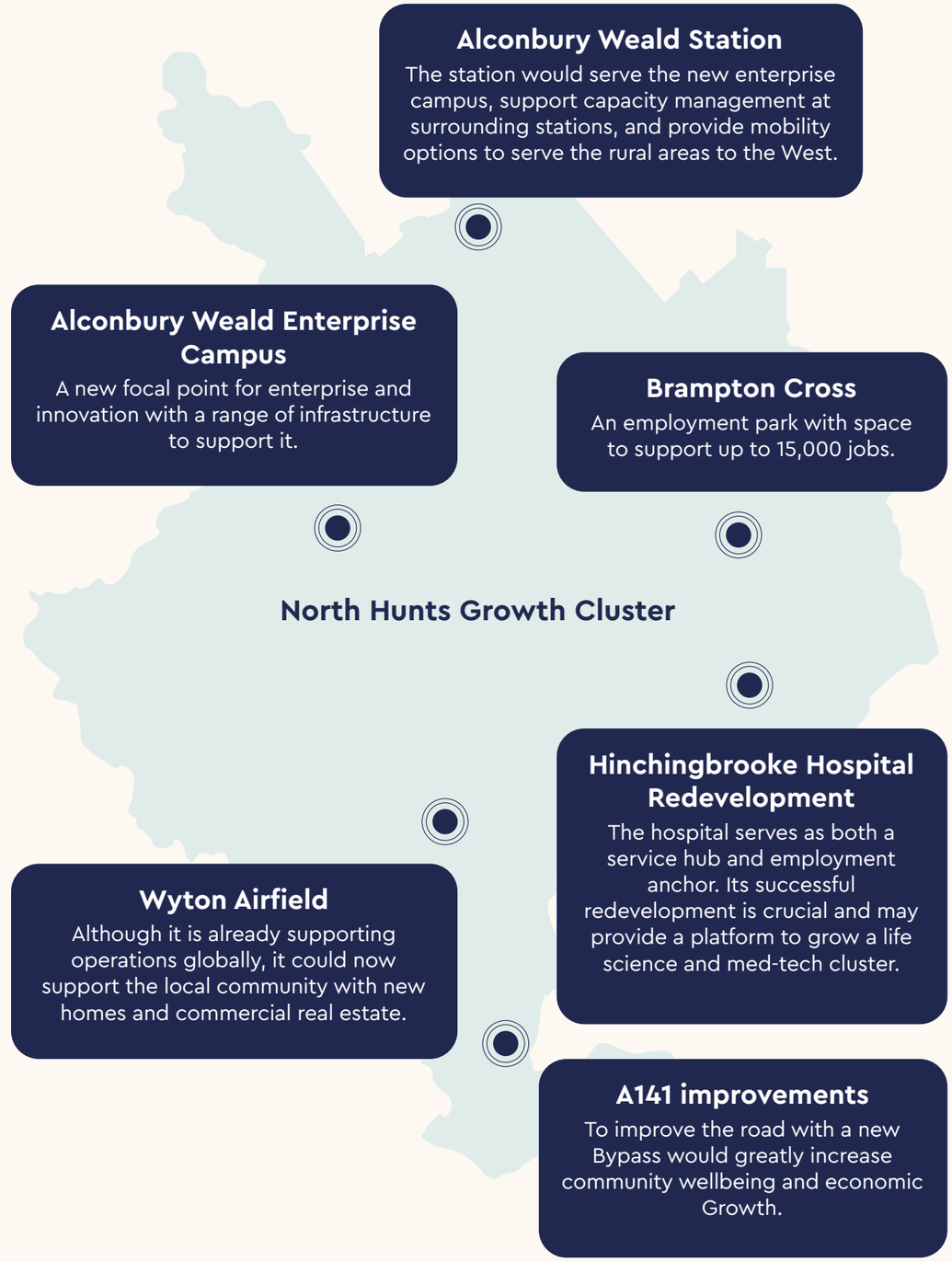
By providing technically focused commercial space, the region can foster its existing Advanced Manufacturing cluster into a key player on a national stage.

Defence

We will support the burgeoning regional cluster by building on existing defence industry, and modernising through integrating new technologies developed in the region.

Life Sciences

Through upgrading key legacy infrastructure in the healthcare sector, we will support a strong economic ecosystem.



Interventions

Create a defence centre

Create a defence centre that focuses on advising high value business in knowledge intensive sectors on how to engage with the defence sector to drive cross fertilisation of priority sectors.

Infrastructure engagement

Work with the Local Planning Authority and Government to advocate for the delivery of key infrastructure including stations on East-West Rail to support the zone and it's development.

Designate a Robust Delivery Mechanism

Designate a robust delivery mechanism for the acceleration of regeneration such as a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).

Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus.

Fens Growth Triangle

Fenland is an evolving part of the region, rich in natural assets and growing innovation strengths. The Fens offer a significant opportunity to attract investment to the north of the region, capitalising on the abundance of available land for development and a network of distinctive market towns.

Fenland is well placed to support future Growth in Agri-Tech, Clean Tech, and Advanced Manufacturing. Building on a strong agri-food and manufacturing base intersecting with emerging technologies, precision agriculture, sustainable farming solutions, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing create fresh opportunities to boost productivity and diversify the local economy.

The Opportunity Zone

The Fenland Growth Triangle Opportunity Zone is composed of five key projects, with the potential to unlock new sectoral Growth across the region. These projects will support our vision to create places where people and businesses can thrive by delivering affordable, sustainable homes, linked by improved transport and digital connectivity to support a skilled and mobile workforce. The development of new employment and innovation sites focused on Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-Tech, and Life Sciences will help to meet regional demand for new floorspace and stimulate Growth within the Fens economy.

Zone Specific Sector Focus

Agri-Food & Tech

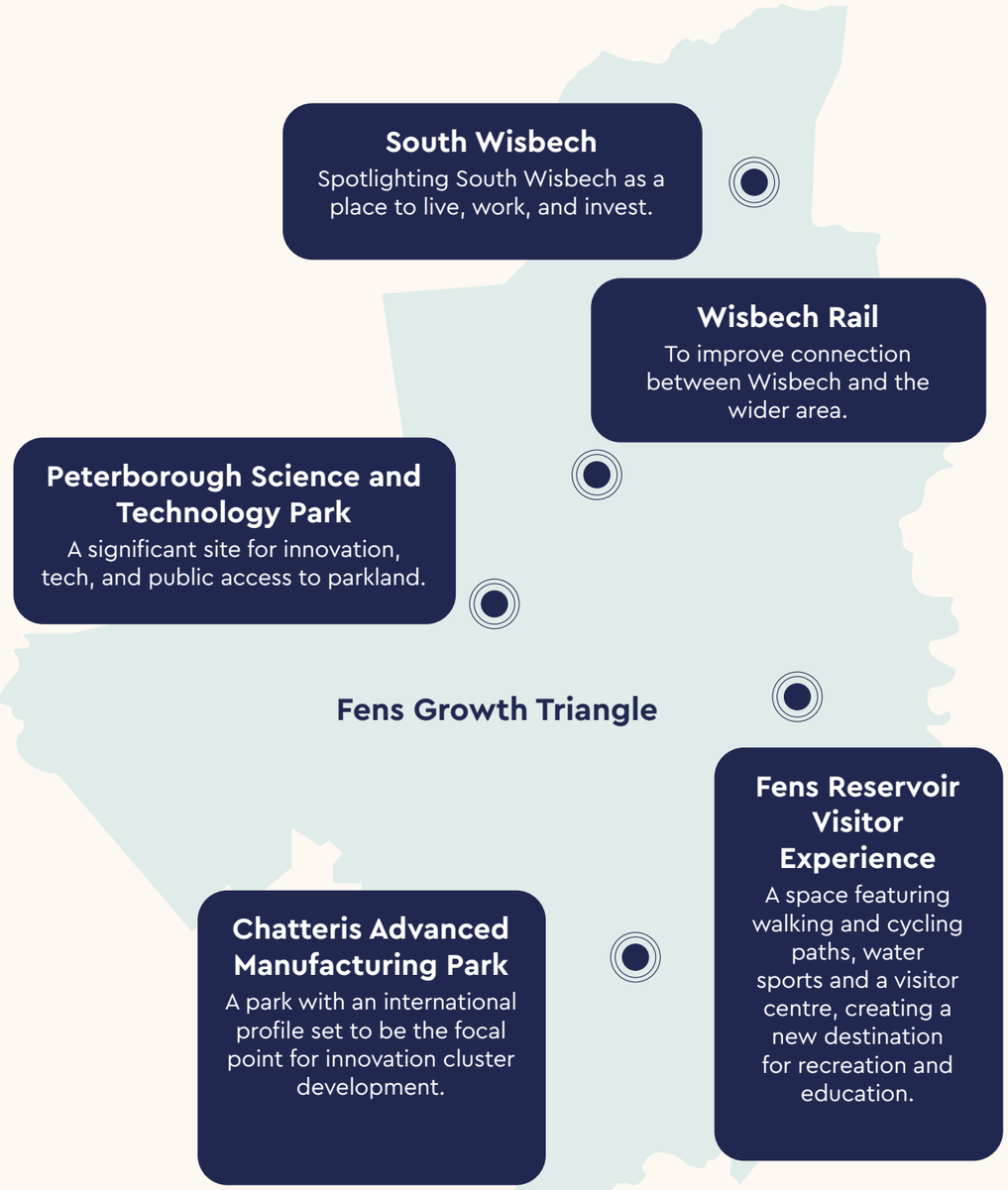
The region has significant potential to develop a leading Agri-Food & Tech cluster, drawing on expertise from our innovation clusters and embedding them within our fertile agricultural land.

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

Through development of fit-for-purpose commercial real estate and investment into connectivity, advanced manufacturing enterprise will diffuse across the region.

Life Sciences

With new lab and technical space being developed across several strategic locations, the region will be an attractive prospect for start-up enterprises from established clusters looking to scale up.



Interventions

Pilot an Action Area

Trial the largest action area in the sub-region. This action area will focus on increasing economic activity via up-skilling and joining people to jobs.

Set up a Fen's Taskforce

Set up a taskforce to work on supporting the cross fertilisation of knowledge insensitive industries into the sector of Agri-Food & Tech.

Develop a Satellite Centre of Excellence

Develop a satellite centre of excellence to support high value business Growth in Agri-Food & Tech in the area.

Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme

An initiative to support the long-term productivity and sustainability of the farming sector.

Peterborough Science and Technology Park – Artist Impression
Source: BondBryan

Unlocking the full potential of our Opportunity Zones

Our Opportunity Zones will assist the delivery of our economic Growth ambitions as well as supporting the development of our Spatial Development Strategy which will set out the spatial dimension and impact of our Local Growth Plan.

In order to progress the implementation and delivery of our Opportunity Zone ambitions we will:

- Work with the businesses in the Opportunity Zones in our key sectors to assist them to exploit their Growth potential.
- Support our partners including constituent authorities, further and higher education, investors and developers with the development of Strategic Business Cases which define project benefits including place making and contribute to detailed funding bids.
- Work closely with Government Departments and Agencies including the National Wealth Fund to unlock funding sources towards the implementation of these investment opportunities and to address constraints to Growth.
- Through our Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England focus on identifying and delivering housing Growth opportunities.
- Convene our key infrastructure partners including but not exclusively Anglian Water, National Energy Systems Operator, Great British Energy, Network Rail, the Highways Agency and the Department of Transport to ensure that our infrastructure constraints and the economic opportunities unlocked by addressing these are fully understood.
- Explore innovative funding solutions to all of the above including forward funding of infrastructure through, private finance mechanisms such as Land Value and Value Capture, Tax Increment Financing, Business Rates Retentions and potentially a major community infrastructure levy.
- Continue to explore with Government the designation of delivery vehicles such as Mayoral Development Corporation status and additional fiscal and financial incentives measures such as those contained in Industrial Strategy Zones.

Sites identified in our Opportunity Zones such as Northstowe, Alconbury Weald, Cambourne and Waterbeach as well as Lancaster Way in East Cambridgeshire have retained Enterprise Zone status. We continue to work with our constituent authority and investor partners at these locations to maximise the economic benefit of such status.

Lancaster Way Business Park, Cambridge

Action Areas

Our regional challenge

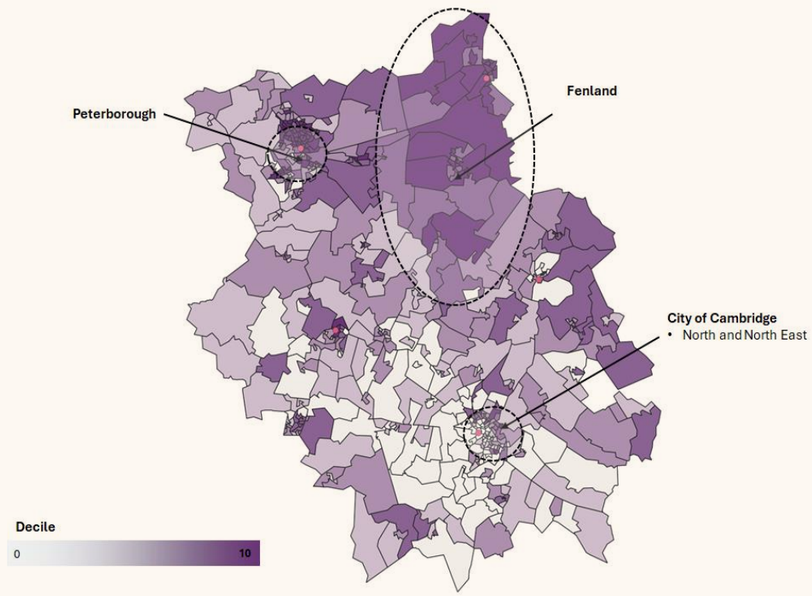
At a national level, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough has a strong and successful economy, which supports a good quality of life for its residents. However, our region also faces significant inequalities, with concentrations of persistent deprivation where economic activity, skills and health outcomes are significantly worse than both the regional and national average.

In some of our most deprived areas of the C&P region, over one in three working age residents don't have any qualifications and one in five are economically inactive. This includes areas of Fenland, Peterborough and Cambridge City. Addressing these spatial inequalities throughout the C&P region will be critical to achieving inclusive Growth and unlocking the latent potential of our people and communities.

Our plan for opportunities

As we grow the economy, we want to ensure that all areas and populations benefit from improved outcomes. Our Growth plan focuses on growing our priority sectors, this will in turn drive Growth in the everyday economy from supply chains to service industries. We must ensure that this Growth creates good jobs and opportunities for all who want them. While we will focus on creating good jobs, and high-quality places which people want to call home, we must also focus on skills and specifically looking at the areas that have historically been left behind.

We will begin to do this with a targeted focus on Action Areas. These areas will be specific locations in our region that currently face challenges around skills, employment and deprivation, focused on existing communities and neighbourhoods, as opposed to wards or singular LSOAs. In these areas, the CPCA will convene key decision-makers and stakeholders to improve skills provision and target direct impacts of deprivation with a coordinated approach, as well as utilising its direct powers.



First steps for our action zones

Identifying the areas will combine data driven approaches with local knowledge. The initial pilot action areas will sit within three areas identified as facing key challenges where greater support and intervention is required to address the barriers holding back our residents. Within these action areas we will focus on:

- **Skills:** maximising the delivery of flexible and inclusive learning pathways and training processes which meet the economic needs of an area's main industries, but also supports positive outcomes in terms of social mobility, community prosperity and overall wellbeing.
- **Employment:** designing tailored solutions to tackling barriers which are preventing our residents from entering employment and securing good, long-term jobs. This will include a focus on health inequalities, particularly health related economic inactivity.
- **Health:** Build on the introduction of our Integrated Neighbourhoods to create coordinated and effective service provision which provides proactive and integrated care to keep local people well, reduce health inequalities and address poor health outcomes in local communities.

Implementation

- **Identify** key challenges on an area-by-area level, including skills shortages, economic inactivity, and crime.
- **Coordinate** decision-makers on key issues – CPCA, Local Authority, members of the community, a further education provider, a major intuitional business and a higher education provider and specific charities.
- **Implement** interventions to boost outcomes across skills, employment and health.

Following the successful implementation of our initial Action Areas, the CPCA will look to roll out the concept more widely, working closely with Local Authorities in partnership to identify further areas across the region.

Special Economic Zones and MDCs

Introduction

Special Economic Zones, areas of bespoke fiscal and regulatory policy, play a key role in the UK Government's Growth Mission, encouraging regional clusters to thrive and expand. The Industrial Strategy Zones Action Plan has three key tenets: creating investible spaces, landing investment and supporting local businesses, and growing clusters that support local Growth. These are equally central to our own region's Growth mission: we believe the active application of this policy tool in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough can support, and indeed accelerate, achievement of our ambitious Growth vision.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough provide a solid foundation for fostering economic Growth for both the regional and national economy. However, the area does not currently have an Industrial Strategy Zone, despite the substantial and world-leading research and industrial capabilities it has to offer. Businesses in the CPCA area already engage – and in many cases are leaders – in high-value sectors supported by the UK Government's Action Plan for Industrial Strategy Zones. These include advanced materials manufacturing, life sciences, defence, clean energy industries, and semiconductors

A missing piece in the UK Growth mission?

Special Economic Zones have been recognised as beneficial for regional Growth, with examples already in place across the UK. However, despite significant concentrations across the Midlands and the North, current distribution avoids any locations in the corridor between Bristol and Norwich – the central corridor for driving Growth within the UK. This misses a significant opportunity to deliver and accelerate powerful Growth, both for local residents and for the whole UK economy.

Leveraging these world-class capabilities on a global stage requires the type of 'world-class investor journey' that Industrial Strategy Zone status affords. It is true that Cambridge, as part of the 'Golden Triangle' (Cambridge, Oxford and London) already enjoys substantial funding and investment. Cambridge University provides world-class research and has numerous global centres of excellence and this has enabled spinoff technology companies to prosper.

However, while these small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) have successfully unlocked start-up investment, many need to scale-up to meet growing demand. Without adequate strategic and financial support to scale up, and associated inward investment, many entrepreneurs choose to sell or 'exit' their companies rather than grow them. This is against a backdrop of the UK's drive to help UK-owned spinoffs and start-ups to scale up. Healthy business incentivisation through Industrial Strategy Zone status can potentially stimulate new investment and attract venture capital away from global competitors and into the UK through Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Unlocking the Potential of our Region

We will engage with Government to designate a new Industrial Strategy Zone in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, drawing on the Government's Strategic Sites Accelerator to secure development funding, removing barriers to development and unlocking key sites for investment aligned with our priority Growth-driving sectors.

Mayoral Development Corporations

An additional form of zonal intervention, which could be highly complementary to an Industrial Strategy Zone, is the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC). A proven delivery vehicle for complex regeneration: MDCs are statutory bodies (Localism Act 2011) with general development powers, including to acquire/assemble land, construct infrastructure, fund delivery partners, and exercise planning functions within a defined boundary, they can also grant discretionary business rates relief. They are accountable to metro mayors, operate across local authority boundaries, and typically face less acute budget pressure than local authorities.

Cambridge

Consolidating our world-leading knowledge sector

Cambridge is the UK's leader for innovation and is vital to the country's competitiveness on a global scale. Encouraging the expansion and intensification of the knowledge and innovation cluster through accelerated inward investment and private scale-up funding is essential for maintaining the UK's status as a global scientific superpower.

Key Outcomes

- Attracting global companies to set up UK bases in Cambridge and retaining those already based here.
- Supporting an effective startup and scaleup ecosystem, allowing the commercialisation of cutting-edge technologies.
- Concentrating our talent and businesses to allow our priority sectors to drive Growth symbiotically.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough play a key role in the UK's Life Sciences sector and capabilities, and the area is considered "home to currently the most mature centre of life sciences outside the United States". Industrial Strategy Zone status could help Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to harness an already successful model, to plug into the network of UK Industrial Strategy Zones, and to catapult the UK Life Sciences sector further into the global arena. This includes increasing connectivity between a CPCA Industrial Strategy Zone with that of West Yorkshire Investment Zone (HealthTech focus including Life Sciences and Digital) and Liverpool City Region Investment Zone (a Freeport and Investment Zone, also focused on Life Sciences).

Additionally, an appropriate Development Corporation in Cambridge could work effectively in alignment, supporting the planning and delivery of infrastructure and housing to support Growth, and acting as an intervening enabler of private investment into new business space and mixed-use development.

By leveraging Cambridge's global recognition and supporting its Industrial Strategy Zone status in Life Science, a Development Corporation could yield benefits in global positioning of other life sciences hubs across the UK as a whole.

Peterborough

Supporting Peterborough's Growth into a nationally competitive centre for industry

Peterborough, with its manufacturing history and power of proximity, has significant potential to deliver much stronger economic output. Supporting those looking to invest through favourable regulation and fiscal policy will unleash the potential of the city.

Key Outcomes

- Incentivise the creation of new commercial real estate, facilitating new and expanding businesses to be based around the city.
- Attract significant enterprises within our priority sectors to invest in the city, exploiting the proximity to key locations.
- Regenerate the city and reestablish Peterborough as a leader in manufacturing, while capitalising on regional innovation capabilities to modernise the sector.

While Industrial Strategy Zones focus on incentives for attracting businesses and investment specifically, Mayoral Development Corporations (MDC) provide an invaluable opportunity for local authorities to promote urban regeneration and transformative economic development at a local level. This may be an appropriate vehicle to accelerate the regeneration and development process in Peterborough, with a particular focus on the city centre and the rapidly evolving University Quarter.

MDCs have a defined geography (which can span several local authorities) and are responsible for constructing infrastructure (or funding partners who can do so) as well as for land and property holdings. They can also grant discretionary relief from business rates and are said to enjoy relatively less budgetary pressure than local authorities.

An MDC and an Industrial Strategy Zone working in tandem in Peterborough could completely re-position the city as one of the nation's most critical Growth poles, enabling the development of space for both new residents and new investors in advanced manufacturing and other knowledge intensive industries.

Shared Priorities and Enabling Infrastructure

Our Shared Priorities

To achieve our Mayoral Growth Target of tripling the economy, we must create an environment that supports rapid private sector expansion. Supporting our priority sectors and frontier industries with the business and innovation space they need for Growth will be particularly important. We must equally support our foundational economy's evolution and create a region where people and businesses are not constrained by the infrastructure available to them.

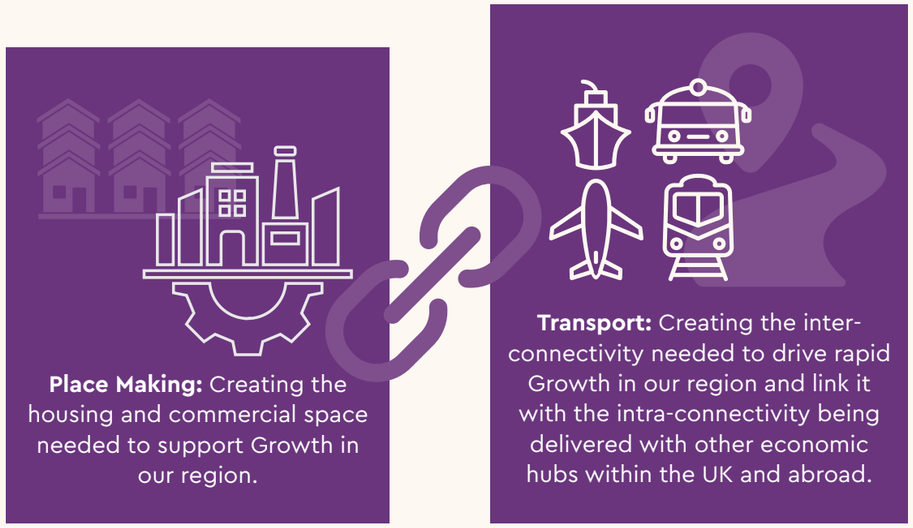
Supercharging the economy will require a proportionate and scaled response to addressing our infrastructure gaps and constraints. This response must solve short term pressures while also future-proofing our region's infrastructure platform – economic and social – to support our Mayoral Growth ambition up to, and beyond, 2050.

As outlined in our first Independent Economic Review published in 2017, our current infrastructure is beginning to 'choke off' Growth in our region. The effects of this are real and constraining Growth today. Housing and infrastructure development are caught up in planning processes or subject to viability issues, while equity investors look to Europe or North America due to a lack of faith in our region's ability to scale their companies quickly.

To achieve the Growth set out in both our Core and Mayoral targets, we must enable businesses to invest and grow rapidly, and must therefore create an environment in which the infrastructure they need is in a state of readiness to facilitate Growth.

In our negotiations with Government we have agreed shared priorities to focus delivery and to tackle our enabling infrastructure priorities.

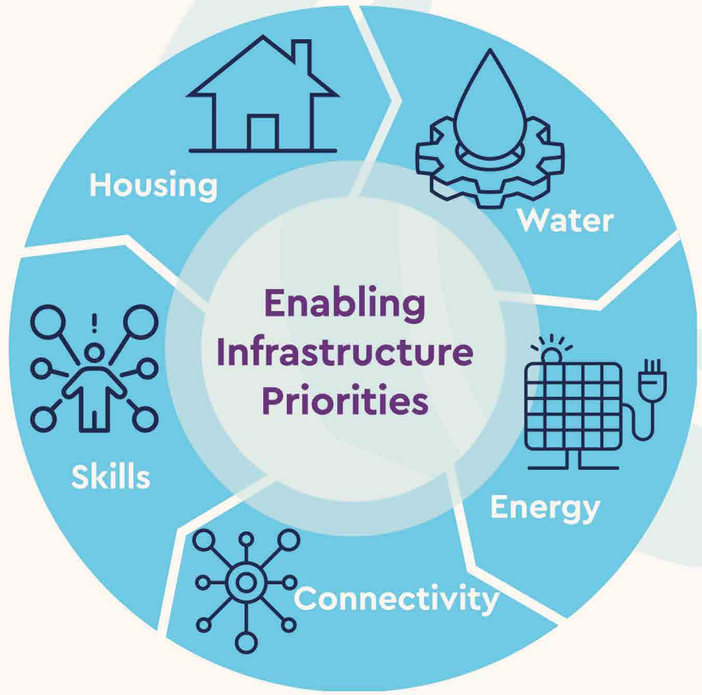
These shared priorities are:



To deliver these shared priorities we will address five key areas of infrastructure, four focused on capital projects and one on skills. When delivered together, and at an appropriate scale, these infrastructure priorities will enable our businesses to grow, unconstrained by capital infrastructure beyond their direct control.

Our enabling infrastructure priorities are:

- Housing
- Water
- Energy
- Connectivity
- Skills



There will of course be further critical infrastructure delivered across the sub-region in the period to 2050 that are not in these five categories. This plan does recognise their critical importance, for example Healthcare provision, but focuses on the five critical areas that are currently thought to be 'choking off' economic expansion and that will continue to do so if not resolved.

Across our five infrastructure priorities we have projected the additional supply need created by both our core and Mayoral Growth targets. Our current infrastructure pipeline as it stands, even if delivered in full, would still fall short in each of our infrastructure categories. If we are to compete on the world stage for investment, we need to provide a world class environment. This means ample supply of water and energy for housing development and data intensive industries, a well-connected region that can move people and ideas around without unnecessary delay, and a region building an ever-deeper skills base.

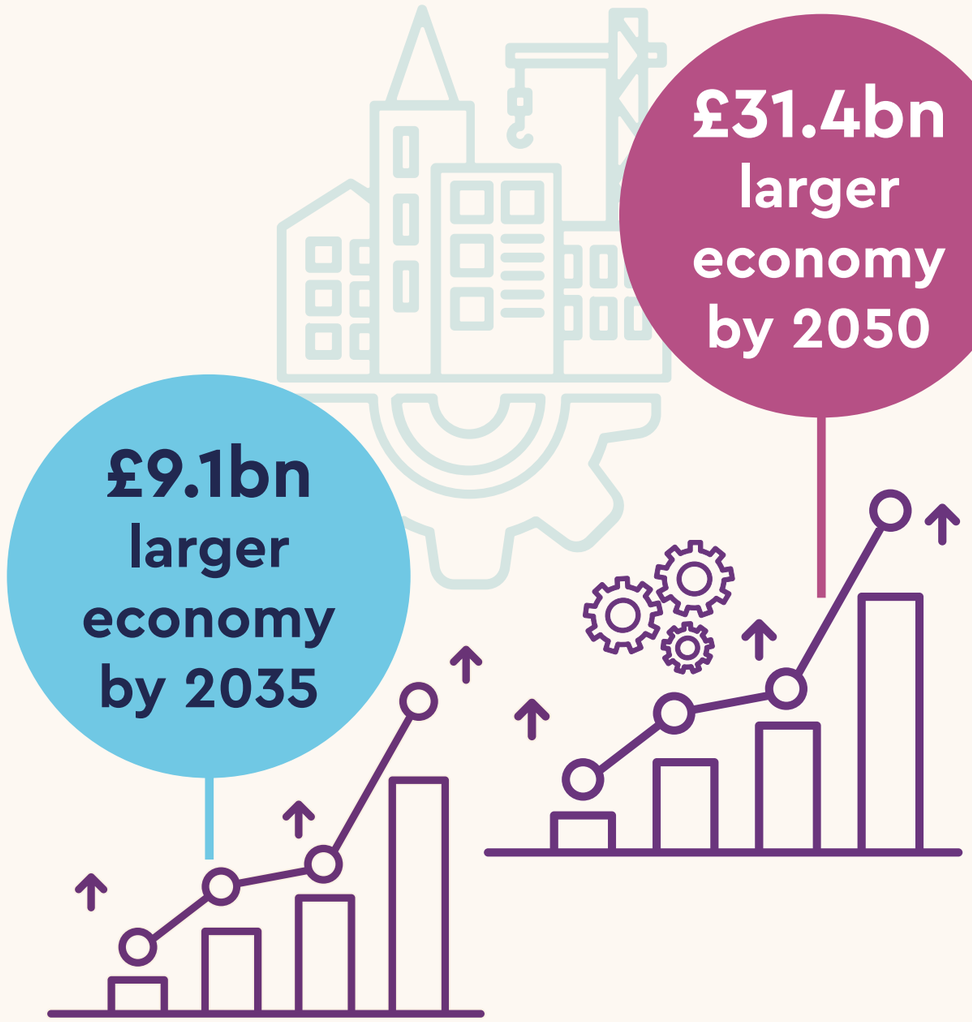
To achieve this, we must deliver current pipelines at pace, however, we must also develop credible system-wide transformation to serve our region, proportionate with the long-term Growth rates we have forecast. This may be mass-transit in our two fast Growth cities, innovative water supply and use systems, major grid upgrades, or a rapidly expanded Further Education sector in our learning and training 'cold spots'.

To deliver Growth we will seek Government investment with new assessments of place-based HM Treasury Green Book business cases while exploring and delivering public private partnerships and new finance options. We are, and will continue to, work collaboratively to explore finance and delivery models with the British Business Bank, the National Wealth Fund, institutional investors and key delivery partners.

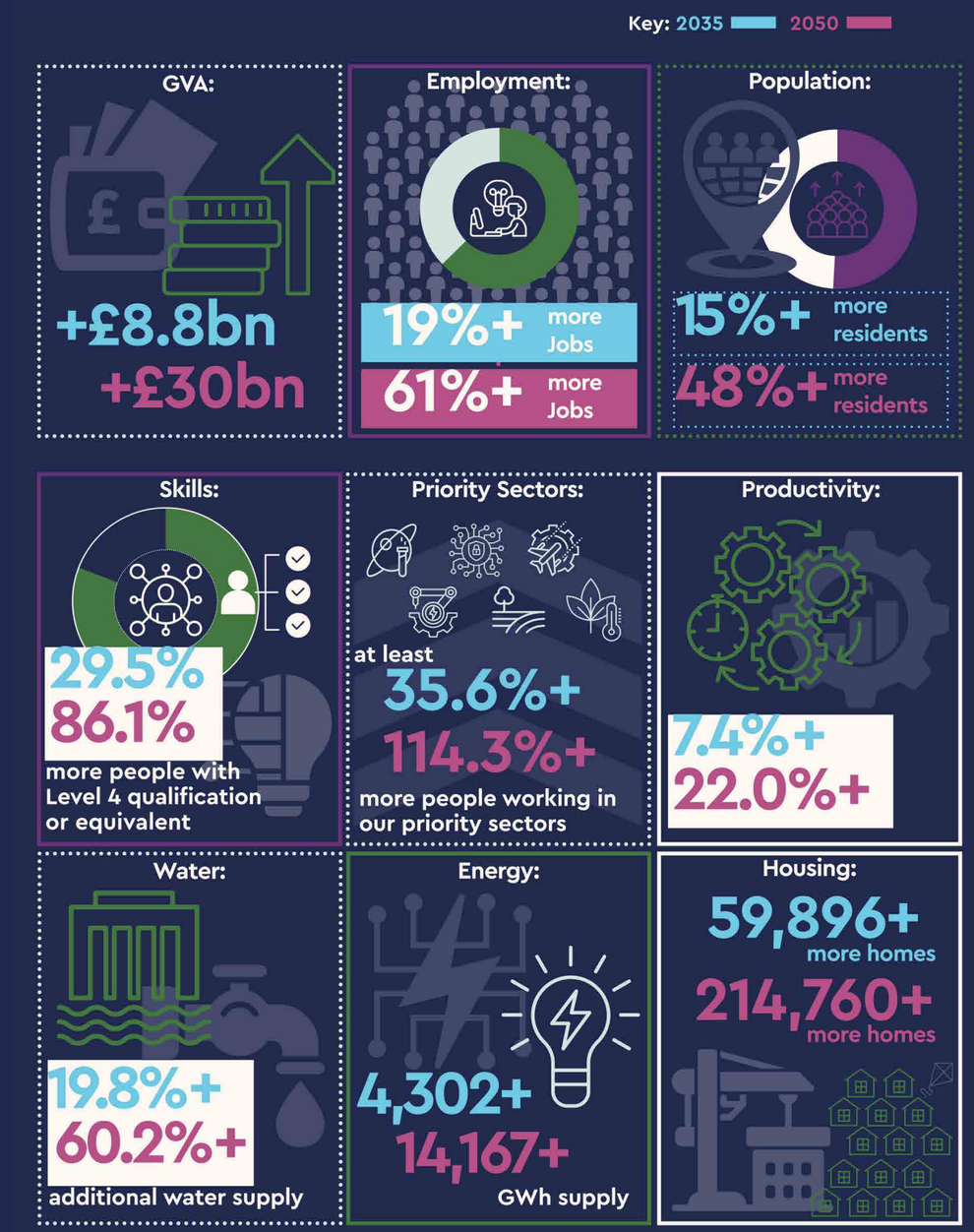
We will work alongside all of our key delivery partners to ensure effective delivery of our biggest and most impactful infrastructure projects and programmes.

Our core vision for Growth is to double the size of our economy by 2050

This rate reflects the trajectory of our economy since 1981, a period when our region grew and developed significantly faster than the UK average. Achieving this core target will require alignment and coordination with the Government and private sector, as well as a focus on addressing economic barriers that have slowed our rate of Growth in recent years. This goal is a core, underpinning commitment for the CPCA and is key to supporting prosperity in years to come.



Doubling our economy by 2050 means:



The implications for social infrastructure, including healthcare facilities (such as hospitals and GP surgeries), education provision (schools, colleges, early years settings), emergency services, and community centres, will all need to be carefully considered and integrated into the delivery planning and implementation mechanisms to support sustainable population and economic Growth.

Water

It is well known already that our region will require a significant upgrade to its water supply infrastructure to grow our economy and population. The capital infrastructure required for the supply of drinking water, dealing with wastewater, and supplying commerce and agriculture, whilst meeting environmental standards, is no longer purely an issue in the medium to long term: it is stifling Growth today.

To create an enabling environment where the region can collectively achieve its Growth ambitions, we must essentially re-imagine our water system: from efficient water use built into development, to user innovations including agricultural reservoirs, to the delivery of capital projects planned to go beyond meeting essential short term capacity.

In our region this means:

- Delivering our short-term investment pipeline urgently, to unblock Growth today.
- Working to fund innovations that can change the picture of demand and supply.
- Ensuring Government and providers are planning and delivering capital projects proportional to our growing needs.

Our water usage forecast:

To ensure capital project planning remains proportionate to our evolving needs, our Strategic Authority has modelled the impact of our core Growth ambition on future water supply. The projected demand rises steadily to 2035, followed by a sharper acceleration through to 2050. These forecasts currently assume no offsetting efficiencies in supply or usage, creating scope for innovation and the application of best practice to delay or reduce the scale of major infrastructure requirements. In the shorter term, there is already a supply constraint projected to 2032, for which a range of mitigation measures are proposed—including a water credits scheme.

Our projections show that if we are to meet our core target, we will need to increase water supply by:

2035 – 19.8%

2050 – 60.2%

Our regional context

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough face several significant water issues, including critical water scarcity, as well as wastewater treatment and flood risk issues.

The region faces water scarcity today, which is already creating barriers to Growth. This scarcity is set against a backdrop of a Strategic Authority region aiming for rapid Growth in its priority sectors, and to support the continued development of two of the UK's fastest growing cities, Cambridge and Peterborough.

The region finds itself in a unique position, with rapidly growing cities in comparison to other areas of the UK while also facing some of the lowest rainfall in the UK, rising temperatures and ageing infrastructure. This has put pressure on the region's resource capacity, leading to restrictions on new development. Within the region, scarcity is already a particular issue in the southern geography of the Combined Authority that is reliant on groundwater abstraction from a chalk aquifer.

This water scarcity is already having a direct effect on Growth, stalling or even blocking new development schemes. The Environment Agency has raised several statutory objections to a number of major housing developments in recent years. If we are to deliver Growth and our shared priorities with Government, in particular place-making, we need a new approach to water supply planning and delivery.

The potential introduction of a water credits scheme will help to address some of our constraints in the short term, however, the introduction of a credit system will be a short-term fix that does not address our underlying water supply issues. Cambridge Water and Anglian Water have confirmed investment in both the Grafham Pipeline Transfer (2032) and Fens Reservoir (2036–39) to manage existing water demand and increase water supply for customers and businesses in the region. This would be a first step, but will not create the supply needed to meet our Growth forecasts overall. A proactive approach to planning for and investing in long term water supply options is required

Flood resilience and water management

A significant part of the region, approximately a third, is actively managed every day to control tidal inundation and river flood risks. Much of this land is at, or even below, sea level. Thousands of assets, from sea defences to pumping stations, are part of this system. This protects many businesses, infrastructure and communities, and maintains the highest concentration of best quality farmland in the country. Beyond the obvious impact on the Agri-Food Sector, the resilience of this area is fundamental to all of the Opportunity Zones. As part of the national flood and coastal defence strategy the government commissioned the Environment Agency to review the readiness of these water management assets for the next seventy five years. This Fens 2100 work is ongoing and will be crucial in identifying how this area should be managed, with appropriate investment to support the Growth ambitions. Economic opportunities will be maximised from this investment.

Our project pipeline:

This pipeline contains the initial list of projects that must be delivered as planned, if not extended, to increase capacity at pace. The pipeline projects will not come close to solving the water supply issue, but will include some of the first steps to achieving this goal. Each project will be assigned a lead in the combined authority to ensure cross-working and delivery.

Grafham Pipeline

This essential new water supply infrastructure will enable housing and commercial Growth in the Greater Cambridge area. It will supply a significant proportion of the additional water demand required to meet currently planned Growth needs in Greater Cambridge before the Fens Reservoir is operational later in the decade.

Fens Reservoir

The Fens Reservoir is a proposed major infrastructure project in the East of England, designed to meet rising residential and commercial water demands. It aims to provide a secure, sustainable water supply for future generations. Beyond water security, the Fens Reservoir will be transformational with business use, housing unlocked, and travel and tourism opportunities opened up – all set within an outstanding, accessible natural landscape.

Lincs Reservoir

Anglian Water is also proposing a new reservoir in Lincolnshire to help meet the growing demands on water supply in the East of England. The new reservoir is at the heart of a whole new water supply project. Together with the associated water infrastructure needed to transfer water to the reservoir, and from the reservoir to homes and businesses, it will secure a reliable water supply for generations to come.

Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

Existing capacity to deal with sewerage/wastewater is likely to need expansion within the next five-ten years. A key project is the Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is proposed to be relocated and upgraded to support housing and employment Growth within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

Agricultural Reservoirs Network

East Cambridgeshire District Council are currently exploring the potential for a network of agricultural reservoirs to address the region's urgent water security challenges. The development of mid-sized reservoirs—built in partnership with farmers and linked to existing drainage systems—could capture surplus winter water and store it for use during the dry summer months.

Our First Steps to Delivery

1

Re-make and promote the case for the necessary funding for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant's delivery, including working with other funders to explore options.

2

Commission a major water assessment looking to 2050 following the forecast Growth scenarios shown in this plan, that can be used to inform the Regional Water Plan and hold water companies accountable for sufficient and timely provision.

3

Develop a credible flood resilience strategy that works for the long term, which also addresses the findings of the Fens 2100 review of water management for the Fens.

4

Assign a 'sponsor' to support each major project and ensure the Strategic Authority is holding delivery to account while helping to unblock major issues.

5

Build on the success of the existing Cambridgeshire Development Forum to create a live and ever evolving understanding of blockers to development, with a specific focus on water. This will also include initiatives to promote behavioural change for the region's customers and businesses and exploring new standards for water efficient development focused on integrated water management strategies.

Whittlesey Washes Reserve – Fens

Energy

As our region grows, our expanding economy will require substantial upgrades to energy infrastructure. Without investment in energy supply and grid connectivity, we will not be able to power our key Growth industries in the long term. A lack of energy capacity is already especially acute in the Greater Cambridge area, where high demand-side pressures are driven by its rapid Growth and science-based real estate, namely laboratories. These sectors are key to driving the Growth in our region, so enabling further investment in energy is vital to executing our Local Growth Plan interventions. However, a lack of forward investment in energy supply across the region is a general constraint on Growth, with pressures evident in Peterborough and the other Opportunity Zones.

The level of upgrade needed to our energy system will require steps across the short, medium and long term.

Our energy use forecast:

To ensure capital project planning remains proportionate to our evolving needs, our Strategic Authority has modelled the impact of our core Growth ambition on potential energy demand. This projection shows the total impact of Growth, incorporating the expansion of our industries, as well as increased demand from a larger workforce, population and housing stock. The projected demand rises steadily to 2035, followed by a sharper acceleration through to 2050. These forecasts currently assume no offsetting efficiencies in supply or usage, creating scope for innovation and the application of best practice to delay or reduce the scale of major infrastructure requirements. We are currently engaged in regional energy planning, which will update and refine the required projects and investment pipeline. The following pages therefore represent only some of the key works required.

Our projections show that if we are to meet our core target, we will need to increase energy supply by:

2035 – 37%

2050 – 121%

Our regional context

Increasing energy resilience within the Combined Authority region is a key enabler of Growth and will give investors the confidence to develop their high skill, highly energy intensive businesses in our region.

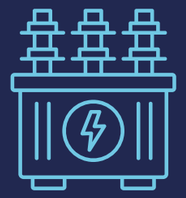
Electricity infrastructure and grid capacity are identified as key constraints to Growth in some parts of the C&P region, with demand headroom close to, or below, 5%. This demand is forecast to increase, with large scale housing, population Growth and commercial development exacerbating demand, driven up further by forecast increases in uptake of electric vehicles and heat pumps.

Local Area Energy Plans have been developed, or are in the process of being developed, to assist with the longer-term planning of electricity infrastructure and supply. This is paired with engagement with UKPN to ensure adequate levels of investment in energy assets. At present, electrical infrastructure associated with allocated housing and commercial sites within emerging local plans is not in the infrastructure pipeline for UKPN. This represents a significant risk to delivery of future sites if additional capacity is not planned, permitted and delivered in advance.

CPCA is currently participating in the development of the first Regional Energy Plan (REP), coordinated by the National Energy System Operator (NESO) for Central England. The REP, which is part of a new approach to energy planning, will provide a whole system approach to the strategic planning of local energy network infrastructure.

Our Project Pipeline:

This pipeline contains the initial list of projects that must be delivered as planned, if not extended, to increase capacity at pace. This pipeline will not come close to solving the energy issue, but will however include some of the first steps to achieving this goal. Each project will be assigned a lead in the Combined Authority to ensure cross-working and delivery.



Peterborough Substation

A new 240MW substation is a key project to unlock Growth for the West of Peterborough. It will deliver a huge amount of power to homes and businesses and allow for the expansion of the business ecosystem in Peterborough with more reliable energy.

Central England Regional Energy Plan

The delivery of a Regional Energy Plan is essential to ensure that local energy needs are met whilst aligning with national decarbonisation goals. Implementation of the strategy will present opportunities for further investment into our region with a strong long-term vision for both the community and the planet.

Sunnica Energy Farm

Proposals for development of a new 500MW energy farm with solar photovoltaic (PV) and energy storage infrastructure in East Cambridgeshire was granted in July 2024. Sunnica's project covers over 2,400 acres of land near Burwell, Isleham, Chippenham, Fordham, Kennett and Snailwell in East Cambridgeshire as well as areas of West Suffolk. It will connect to the national grid at the Burwell National Grid Substation.

Our first steps to Delivery

1

In the short term ensure that key infrastructure upgrades to energy delivery are prioritised for approvals and investment, such as the Peterborough sub-station. These distribution upgrades should not be held back by speculative requests for new supply-side connections.

2

Work with the National Energy System Operator, through the Central England Regional Energy Plan, to ensure that the Growth ambitions of the area are recognised. To determine appropriate proposals to inform Strategic Investment Needs to enable faster and more targeted network upgrades.

3

Guidance to energy infrastructure providers needs to take into account the ambition for rapid and sustained Growth in our key sectors. This means the regulatory guidance to energy infrastructure providers should encourage the development of business plans for such investment in advance of formal approval of specific Growth sites.

4

Ensure the Combined Authority is recognised in the governance of the RESP Regional Strategic Boards.

Transport and Connectivity

Our Strategic Authority area already has elements of best-in-class transport and connectivity. We can boast fast rail links, with regular services to London from both of our fast Growth cities. We have two airports in close proximity, with one looking to establish links to our North American counterpart, Boston. We also have strong road and rail links with the Midlands and the North as well as to the major ports of the UK's east coast.

Despite this, there is compelling evidence that the transport infrastructure gap across the region is holding back productivity and economic Growth. To achieve our Growth ambitions, enhanced transport connectivity will be essential. Strengthening links across the region will enable Cambridge and Peterborough to compete more effectively with other globally connected city-regions, helping us attract new investment and open up opportunities for sustainable, inclusive Growth.

We want our region to be globally renowned as forward thinking and progressive in mobility and movement. Both intra- and inter-regional transport improvements are essential to drive Growth. Key to our economic mission is connecting and diffusing our priority sectors across the region. To form a truly connected interactive economy, we will invest in our regional and local transport infrastructure, allowing businesses to collaborate efficiently, alongside digital connectivity upgrades. This will also support our growing demand for talent – building an effective transport network will fuel our leading industries with the necessary skills and resources. Beyond our region, improved transport links will unlock new trade corridors, help create new supply chains and help grow the national economy. Innovations in our region already support industry nationwide and improving transport will push this further and faster.

Government supports this ambition and has designated Transport as a Shared Priority that both Government and the Combined Authority will work to improve on together.

Equally important is the need for better digital connectivity. Reliable high-speed broadband, strong mobile coverage, and accessible public Wi-Fi are fundamental to enabling Growth, productivity and social inclusion, ensuring that all communities can participate fully in Growth. For businesses, improved digital infrastructure enhances productivity, reduces transaction costs, and supports innovation, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors. By strengthening both physical and digital networks, we can create a truly connected region that supports efficiency, inclusivity, and resilience.

Our transport usage forecast:

For our Strategic Authority to ensure the planning of capital projects is in line with projected Growth and demand, we have explored the level of increased passenger usage our transport system may see. This can be overlayed with housing demand later on, when the Spatial Development Strategy has been developed. It is clear, however, that we must focus on both transport and digital connectivity within our major conurbations, how we connect each of them together and how we fit into a wider regional and national transport picture that connects all major economic hubs.

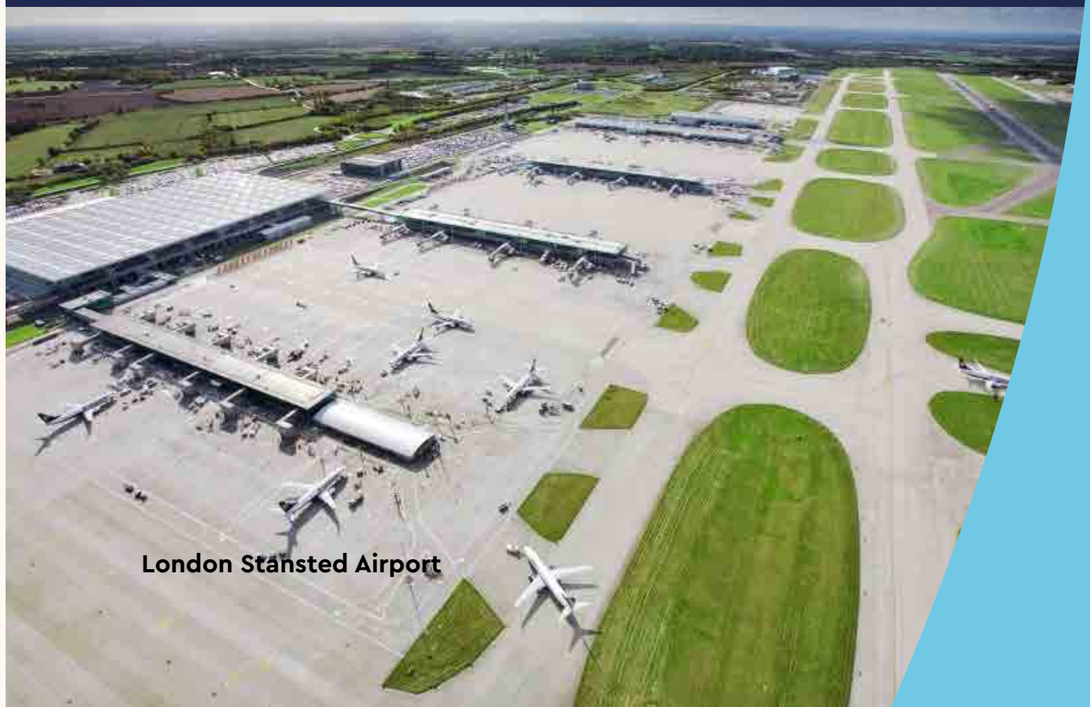
International Connectivity

London Stansted Airport (LSA) is the international gateway for Cambridge and the East of England, powering the regional visitor economy, connecting local businesses to global opportunities, and driving sustained economic Growth.

As the UK's fourth-largest airport, LSA offers unparalleled European connectivity and is expanding its reach to long-haul markets. The airport already offers direct services with Emirates to Dubai, and from spring 2026, Turkish Airlines will start services to Istanbul – opening doors to more emerging markets and high-Growth economies via these global hubs.

There is great potential and strong demand for further air connectivity, particularly with North American hubs on the east cost of the USA. Independent research indicates that a direct Cambridge–Boston route could bring 25,000 new visitors, £95 million in new investments, and £45 million in additional exports each year. Additional research by Manchester Airports Group (MAG) and WPI Economics demonstrates that the fastest-growing sectors of the UK economy (including life sciences and advanced manufacturing, in which Cambridge specialises) are particularly reliant on air travel. Increasing that connectivity further is a key enabler of Growth in the East of England.

LSA is uniquely positioned in the South of England to deliver these opportunities, with ready capacity for new routes and a £1.1 billion investment programme underway to expand and enhance its facilities over the next five years. By unlocking these connections, London Stansted will strengthen the East of England's role on the global stage, supporting innovation, trade, and the Growth of world-leading industries.



London Stansted Airport

Our regional context

Developing a unified transport strategy across an area of approximately 340,000 hectares presents significant challenges. Our region is distinctive compared with most other combined authority areas, with a patchwork of rural and urban landscapes rather than a single dominant economic centre. This diversity brings acute connectivity pressures, most visibly between Cambridge and Peterborough, where journey times are comparable to those between Peterborough and London. As the region sits within the Oxford–Cambridge Growth arc, these challenges will intensify: east–west and north–south strategic routes are already constrained, and demand for reliable, sustainable intra-city commuting options is set to grow rapidly. Meeting this dual challenge, improving inter-urban links while enabling efficient, low-carbon travel within our cities, requires innovative, integrated transport solutions that connect our communities and unlock the potential of regional Growth.

Traffic congestion in our urban centres is the most frequently cited form of disruption to the region's transport network, resulting in lost productivity, poor air quality, and detrimental impacts on residents. Beyond the visible queues, unreliable and often excessive journey times further undermine business efficiency, constrain access to jobs and services, and erode confidence in the network. These pressures pose a significant risk to the C&P region's future Growth and prosperity — risks that will only be compounded by the delivery of new employment and housing schemes needed to meet our Growth ambitions.

There is an opportunity to enhance our transport system so that people have real choice in how they travel, by public transport, autonomy, private car, or active travel. By creating efficient, integrated networks, we can provide a wider range of attractive transport options, supporting sustainable, active travel while enabling people to select the mode that best suits their needs.

A core focus is movement of people around the region, to and from homes and employment sites. We have world class companies located throughout our region, particularly at our life science and advanced manufacturing hubs such as the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. We must ensure these locations are even more accessible to a greater proportion of residents. Our aim is to unlock commercial and housing sites within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough so that all residents can easily access a good job within 30 minutes travel by public transport, thus spreading the region's prosperity further. This in turn will help improve productivity and retain talent in the region, providing businesses with the opportunity to access a highly skilled workforce.

Investment in our bus network will be an important part of our transport system. They are the most widely used form of public transport in the region, and franchising provides a significant opportunity to reshape the network around people's needs, improve reliability, and better integrate services with rail and active travel. By using franchising powers to create a more cohesive and connected system, we can ensure that new housing and commercial sites are properly linked to jobs, education, and services, maximising the impact of wider transport investment and delivering inclusive Growth.

Integration of transport modes is vital, particularly with regard to first and last mile connectivity. Whilst individual modes of travel may have extensive reach throughout our region, challenges remain around how these modes connect to one another and to key centres of employment and housing. Building on the region's strong track record and reputation in active travel, there is a clear opportunity to embed walking, wheeling, and cycling as the backbone of these connections — linking seamlessly with rail, bus, and shared mobility. Improvements to integrated ticketing and better-designed multi-modal transport hubs and interchange facilities will further strengthen this network. Delivering such an integrated system will not only support residents but also create a more accessible and sustainable region for visitors, helping to boost the visitor economy and reinforce our identity as a leader in active travel.

Finally, a key challenge of the region is the connectivity within, from, to and through our rural areas. Our market towns and network of rural villages and hamlets experience poor public transport availability. This reduces opportunities for our rural communities to access employment, skills and training, key services, and amenities. Improving links between rural market towns and larger urban centres is critical.

Projects

Mass Rapid Transit in Cambridge

An emerging proposal for a mass rapid transit system serving Cambridge and the surrounding area and addressing intra-connectivity issues within the city. Mass rapid transit will not only ensure connectivity between researchers and knowledge-focused businesses but widen the potential area where workers can commute to and from.

A10 improvements

The A10 between Cambridge and Ely is under significant pressure, with traffic congestion, unreliable journey times, and road safety concerns compounded by planned Growth along the corridor. The Waterbeach New Town development and the Cambridge Research Park are expected to increase travel demand further, placing additional strain on an already constrained route. Proposed measures focus on capacity enhancements, improved junctions, and the delivery of complementary active travel and public transport infrastructure to support sustainable Growth.

A141 improvements

The A141 is operating significantly over capacity and the local area suffers from traffic congestion, unreliable journey times, road safety issues, and poor noise and air quality conditions. The proposed measures include a bypass from Spittals Interchange to RAF Wyton Airfield and several new active travel corridors.

Wisbech Rail

The Wisbech link is a proposed transport connection aimed at improving accessibility between Wisbech and the wider regional transport network, which could support Growth in the area and alleviate road congestion. The focus of current discussions is on connecting Wisbech, improving regional connectivity, and unlocking local Growth potential. In parallel, it will be important to examine the alignment around access to the potential Fens Reservoir and Chatteris, ensuring that the scheme is designed to maximise wider benefits, including opportunities for sustainable travel, enhanced accessibility, and integrated Growth across the corridor.

East Coast Mainline Stations

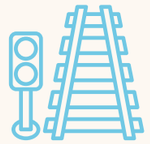
As Peterborough and the wider sub-region continue to grow, pressure on the existing transport infrastructure will intensify, potentially constraining both housing delivery and economic expansion. Strategic investment in new rail capacity is therefore essential to unlock the next phase of sustainable Growth. Two additional stations on the East Coast Mainline serving Peterborough, alongside a new station at Alconbury, will significantly enhance regional connectivity.

The Peterborough stations will relieve pressure on the city's existing transport network, while broadening the range of accessible sites for housing and employment development. In parallel, a new station at Alconbury, serving the mixed-use Growth area, will be critical to ensuring that this emerging community is well connected to the wider region without over-reliance on road transport. Equally important will be the delivery of a high-quality interchange at Tempsford. By enabling smooth transfers between north–south services on the East Coast Main Line and east–west connections on EWR, such an interchange will provide a step-change in regional accessibility, allowing residents and businesses to reach jobs, housing, and markets more efficiently.

Together, these interventions will open up further commercial and residential land for development, create high-quality jobs for local people, and maintain competitive land values to attract new business investment.

Snailwell Loop

The Snailwell Loop is a proposed new section of railway infrastructure north of Newmarket, designed to unlock capacity and improve connectivity across the eastern rail network. By diverting traffic away from the congested Ely Junction, the Loop would improve reliability, reduce journey times, and support a shift from road to rail.



East-West Rail

East-West Rail (EWR), as a nationally significant infrastructure project, represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen the east–west corridor. Its delivery will unlock the potential of the Oxford–Cambridge Arc, with the capacity to boost the regional economy by £6.7bn of GVA annually by 2050. Together with the East Coast Main Line, EWR will position the area at the heart of the UK's innovation economy, providing world-class connections across the wider corridor and reinforcing the region's role in driving national prosperity.

The government's recent announcement confirming Tempsford as the preferred location for the new station presents a major opportunity to maximise benefits for the C&P region. With up to 25,000 new homes planned in and around the Tempsford area, integrating the station effectively with north–south and east–west routes will be critical to supporting sustainable Growth. A station at Tempsford has the potential to transform accessibility, reduce journey times, and broaden labour markets. In particular, there is a compelling case for delivering a spur that enables trains from the north to travel eastbound to Cambridge, significantly improving connectivity between Cambridge and Peterborough and addressing one of the region's most persistent transport challenges.

Following this initial phase of EWR, the next step must be to look eastwards. This should prioritise provision for a new station at Cambridge East, enabling sustainable access to site-specific locations and catalysing Growth in one of the city's most strategically significant areas. Complementary investment in the dualling of the Newmarket Line will be essential to improve capacity and resilience, enhancing connectivity from the east and unlocking the full economic and social potential of the Greater Cambridge area.

To maximise these benefits, it is vital that the key 'legacy' elements of EWR, including station developments and wider community and business benefits, are brought forward early. By aligning infrastructure delivery with development, we can unlock Growth now, attract investment, and ensure the region remains globally competitive while supporting inclusive, sustainable communities.

Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE)

A limiting factor for our region's rail capacity, Ely Junction, is a key focus area for our rail intervention. The EACE will provide additional capacity through Ely, improving frequency and reliability for passenger services while meeting the demand for more rail freight between the Port of Felixstowe, the West Midlands and the North.

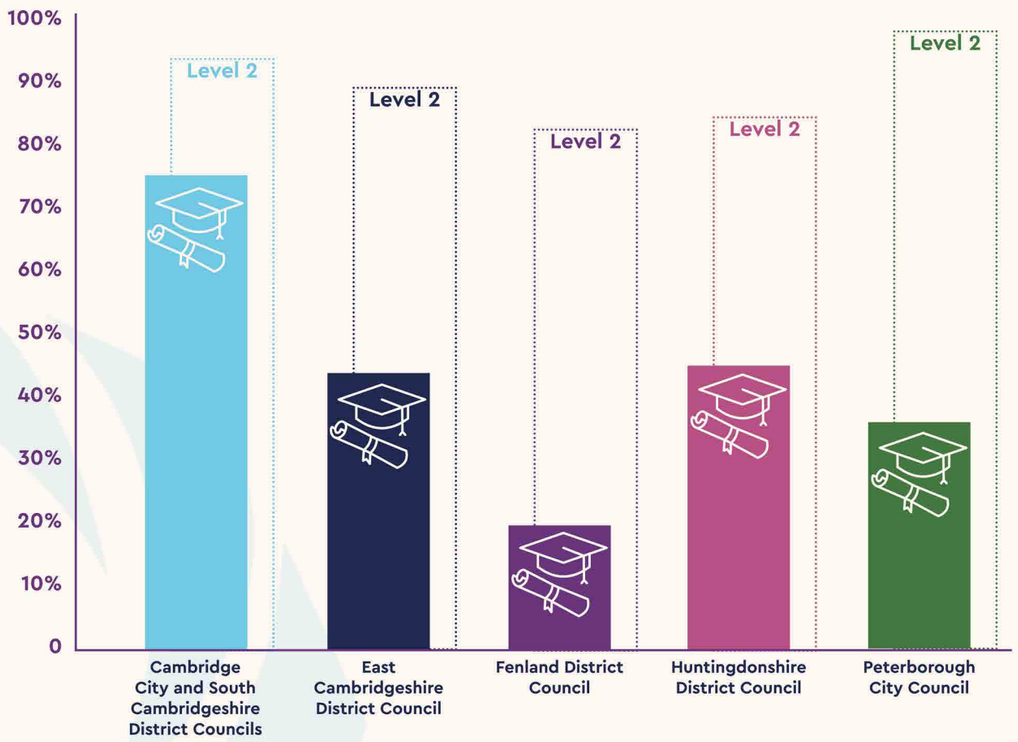
Skills

The skills and talents of our people are the foundation of our economic and social prosperity. As with physical infrastructure and housing, economic Growth cannot be achieved without a high-quality and adaptable skills base, with characteristics and qualities inherent to the needs of the local economy, including advanced, specialised industry sectors.

Creating a highly skilled workforce, however, is not merely about increasing productivity and generating a greater rate of GVA Growth. It also contributes to tackling inequalities, supporting positive outcomes in terms of social mobility, community prosperity and overall place-based health and wellbeing. It does this by stimulating a thriving labour market, where everyone has the opportunity for good work and to progress in their career.

Our region already benefits from a highly skilled population that drives forward our innovation economy, with 43% of our working-age residents holding a degree-level qualification, a rate which is only bettered by one other MCA area. However, there are significant regional disparities in skills levels and achievement. For example, In Cambridge, 66% of working-age-adults hold a degree, compared to just 17% in Fenland . Furthermore, the share of working-age-adults with high level qualifications in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has reduced in the past year (2024–25), with Fenland and Peterborough having some of the lowest rates in England and disadvantaged young people have lower Level 3 attainment rates than nationally in all areas outside of Cambridge.

Level 2 qualification and degree level achievement 2025



Our Growth ambition indicates that by 2035 we will need significant numbers of additional workers qualified to degree level. A key challenge for the C&P region will therefore be ensuring that our residents have access to high-quality further education (FE) and higher education (HE) provision, to ensure that businesses within our region have access to a pipeline of talent.

This will necessitate addressing existing barriers and challenges our residents face, particularly within specific areas of C&P, as well as ensuring that there are a range of pathways for progression to higher-level skills. Of critical importance will be the role our FE colleges and Independent Training Providers play in the delivery of vocational and technical learning, particularly the delivery of Level 3 qualifications, the demand for which will increase with the evolving specialisation of our economy.

Without suitable and accessible pathways to skills attainment within our region, our residents will not be able to fully benefit from the higher wages and access to good jobs which will be driven by Growth within our economy.

In addition to significant employer investment in skills, the region benefits from a devolved adult skills fund in the region of £12m, focused on the delivery of skills provision for learners aged 19+ from entry level up to and including Level 4. As well as being used to deliver the national legal entitlements of English, Mathematics and digital skills, the utilisation of this funding will continue to be strongly aligned to our regional skills priorities, with additional incentives in place for both employers and training providers to deliver sector specific vocational and technical education at Level 2, 3 and 4.

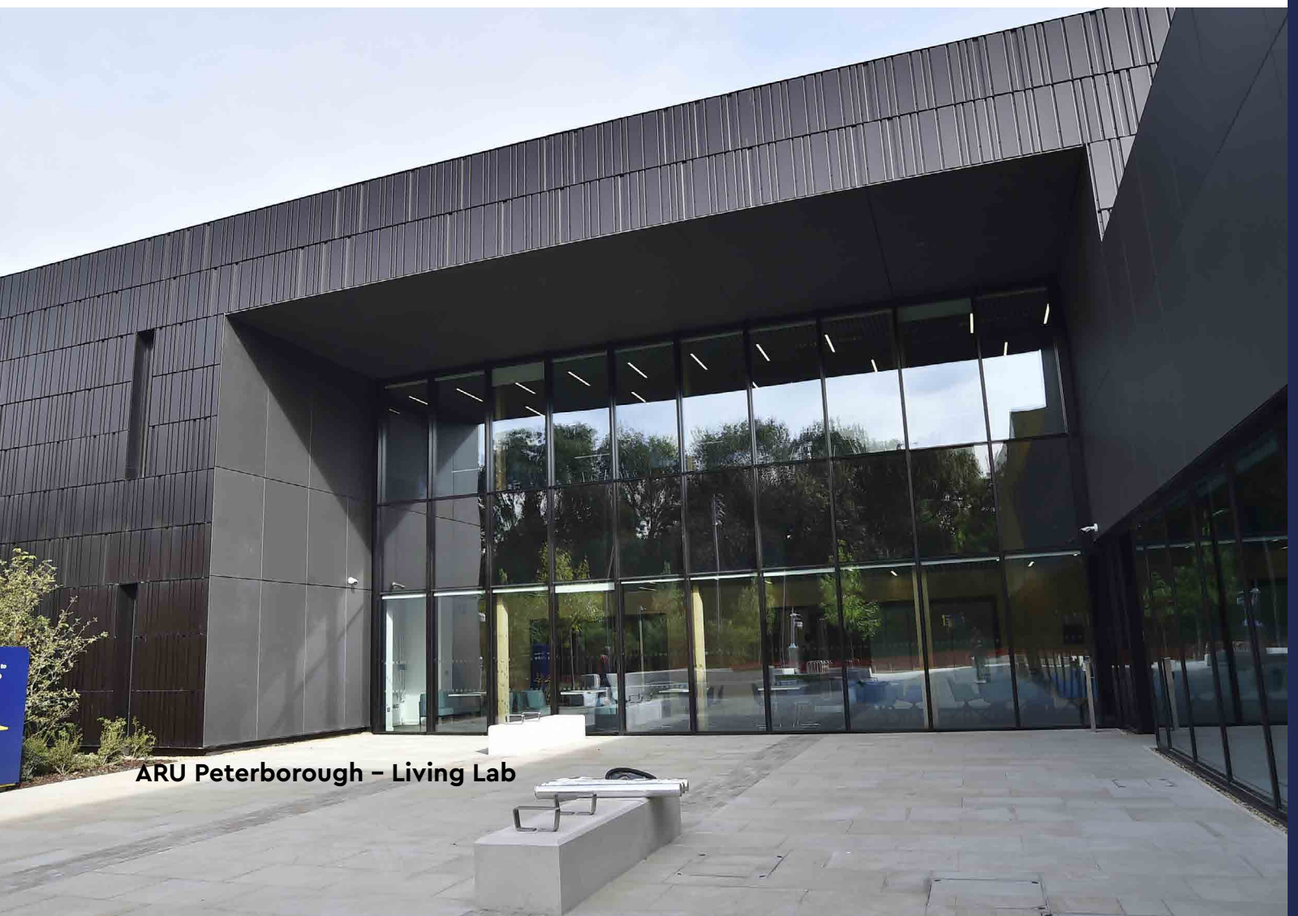
ARU Peterborough

Case Study – ARU Peterborough

Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) Peterborough campus has been a particular success story for the area. The first building, University House, opened in September 2022. This teaching building marked the beginning of ARU Peterborough's presence in the city. The Peterborough Innovation and Research Centre was then completed in 2024 and houses the eXtended Reality Peterborough (XRP) facility, enhancing research and innovation capabilities. "The Lab" is a £32 million building that includes specialist biomedical sciences and engineering facilities, a microbiology lab, tissue culture lab, and various engineering workshops. It also features a Living Lab, an interactive science facility accessible to the public, designed to inspire learning in STEM fields.

Peterborough City Council has revealed a 10-year expansion programme for the ARU campus, aiming to further develop and enhance the university's facilities. These developments reflect ARU Peterborough's commitment to providing high-quality education and fostering innovation in the region.

The recently opened Centre for Green Technology at Peterborough College is a cutting-edge facility dedicated to training the next generation of sustainability professionals. It represents a £13.5 million investment and offers training in renewable energy, sustainable construction, electric vehicle technology, and environmental technologies.



ARU Peterborough – Living Lab

Our skills vision:

The skills and talents of our people are the foundation of our economic and social prosperity. Our vision is to stimulate a thriving labour market, where everyone has the opportunity for good work and to progress in their career, and where we work towards achieving the goal of an 80% employment rate.

We will address skills imbalances and drive increased participation in learning and employment to underpin economic Growth and social prosperity. We will tackle ill-health economic inactivity and high numbers of young people NEET and create a sustained pipeline of talent that will attract, grow, and support new and existing businesses in our priority sectors and the broader economy.

Our objectives:

Inspire: We will inspire young people and adults to join the local economy and support them all to reach their untapped potential.

Attract: We will ensure we attract the global talent needed, both through world class universities and HE provision and directly into the workforce, to support the rapid Growth in our priority sectors.

Include: We will work to include more young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in our economy and support economically inactive adults, due to ill-health or disability or those at risk of inactivity, to fully participate in employment.

Support: As we grow and our economy evolves, we will support our residents to re-train and up-skill into the jobs of the future.

Understand: We will continue to convene industry and government to ensure skills needed in our everyday and priority sectors are understood and ultimately filled

Our Skills and Employment Opportunities:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have a strong skills ecosystem with industry at its heart. Through strong and effective partnerships and collaboration, the system will achieve much more together than one single organisation or Government can alone.

Initial focus areas:

- Tackle labour and skills shortages that are holding back economic Growth and undermining living standards with a focus on sectors with the highest skills shortages, including Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Tech, Digital, Life Sciences, Construction and Health and Adult Social Care.
- Close the sub-regional L3 attainment gap and HE access gap with a focus on Fenland and Peterborough.
- Address both FE Cold spots – where residents cannot easily access further education and FE Hot Spots, where expansion of FE provision is required to support a growing 16–18yr old population.
- Convene employers and educators to inspire young people and adults to better understand career pathways in our priority sectors.

Projects

Inspire Education Group (IEG) Peterborough College Masterplan Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Peterborough College Masterplan includes the delivery of a new four storey teaching block which will significantly expand the college's provision of engineering, science and healthcare and digital innovation teaching space. The project encompasses four floors of differing provision with a new block at Peterborough College to address condition liability and provide capacity to meet student demand over the next five years whilst growing a provision which supports national and regional Growth and is in high demand with a 35% increase in applications compared with 24/25. The project will enable the College to increase its capacity by 1,500 learners, meeting the demand from a growing 16–19 year age old cohort in Peterborough.

Chatteris Construction Skills Hub

The project is focused on delivering a site next to North Cambridgeshire Training Centre (NCTC) to deliver construction skills required to service major infrastructure projects in the region including groundworks, plant, steel fixing, pipework, utilities for example.

Cambridge Regional College Expansion

This project involves expansion of the CRC Cambridge campus to accommodate new teaching spaces and an increase in teaching capacity. There are proposals to create a new reception and student services hub, which would free up additional space elsewhere to increase learning capacity, whilst improving the visitor experience. There are also proposals to create a new TV studio within the Campus to improve the ability of the college to enhance its media studies courses.

Our First Six Priorities for Growth

1. **Adopt and deliver the Get Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Working Plan.** This will set out a clear plan for how CPCA and its partners will address barriers to economic inactivity within the region, increase access to training and apprenticeships and improve the health and wellbeing of its residents to achieve an employment rate of 80%.

2. **Update and implement the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).** The current LSIP will be re-set in the coming year and will focus on identifying the skills needed for our key sectors.

3. **Engage and lobby Government for enhanced devolution of skills and employment,** including devolution of Skills Capital Funds, 16–18 study programmes, employment support and Careers.

4. **Extend the FE estate across the CPCA area.** With a particular focus on outlying locations across CPCA, funding should be sought to both extend and upgrade FE level provision, including additional funding to recruit specialised teaching staff with expertise linked to our target sectors.

5. **Delivery of ARU Peterborough Phase 4.** The ARU Peterborough Strategy 2025–2030 states that the Phase 4 development should comprise an 'industrial research facility' - it will be important that this fully complements the existing activities on campus, ensuring that the university's impact is extended and deepened in the right ways and in adherence to academic, economic and regeneration objectives.

6. **Establish Action Areas:** Our action areas, embedded in our opportunity zones will focus on tackling pockets of high deprivation and low skills, bringing direct and focused interventions to those communities who need it most.

ARU Peterborough – The Lab

As an institution created to meet the needs of the region, ARU Peterborough plays a vital role in the success of the Local Growth Plan. By equipping local people with advanced skills and fostering research aligned to our priority sectors, ARU Peterborough will help to drive innovation, economic transformation, and social mobility across the region. Our partnerships with business and the wider community ensure that opportunities for Growth and progress are accessible to all, supporting a thriving and resilient regional economy.

Professor Ross Renton,
Principal and Chief Executive
ARU Peterborough

Housing

Our Strategic Authority region is already growing quickly, we have the first and fourth fastest growing cities in the UK, expanding in population over the period between 2013- 2023, by 17% and 14% respectively. Our plan drives a large increase in GVA by growing our priority industry-sectors rapidly, which impacts our projected population Growth and therefore housing demand.

While we project significant population Growth, we do this to enable availability of the right workforce to meet our Core and Mayoral Growth ambitions. We are focused on securing this Growth, while ensuring our region can develop responsibly, creating good homes and sustainable communities for those who call Cambridgeshire and Peterborough home.

Housing Growth has been a core tenet of Government plans for the last decade and remains at the heart of our Shared Priorities agreed with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. To achieve our collective ambition, we will work closely with key partners, including our local authority delivery partners, Homes England via our Strategic Place Partnership and of course developers.

The CPCA will also create a new Spatial Development Strategy that will translate the ambition of this plan into spatially-led delivery. This Spatial Development Strategy will be a statutory plan.

Our housing forecast:

We have forecast the impact of our Core Growth ambitions on housing demand. The projected demand rises steadily to 2035, followed by a sharper acceleration through to 2050. The forecast creates a projection for total housing need overall and does not indicate specifically where new housing should be delivered.

Our projections show that if we are to meet our core target,we will need to increase housing supply by:

2035 – 15%

2050 – 54%

Homes England Strategic Place Partnership

CPCA and Homes England have entered a Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) which is an approach developed by Homes England to enable greater collaboration and partnership working at a subregional scale, recognising those places with Mayoral proposals for place-based Growth and regeneration.

It is a shared understanding and way of working tailored to local priorities that can be jointly resourced to accelerate new housing delivery.

The partnership is focused on delivering a step change in housing Growth in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, accelerating delivery to support key Growth locations, and exemplifying many of the benefits that can be achieved by working with places in this way. This will require

- **Accelerated new homes and additional affordable homes** – including homes for affordable and social rent.
- **Place based engagement and resource alignment around key priorities** with key partners, both local and national.
- **A collective view of housing delivery opportunities** across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and what is required to unlock them.
- **Addressing connectivity and infrastructure issues**.

An initial draft pipeline of housing led opportunities has been worked up between Homes England and CPCA.

In addition, Homes England has provided financial support to undertake business case development and a master planning approach in key locations to support the ambitions of the Local Growth Plan.

These have included housing development in Cambridge, the Master Planning Peterborough City Centre and now unlocking the potential of the LGP's Opportunity Zones as follows

- **North Hunts Growth Cluster** – an analysis of how infrastructure issues which are constraining economic Growth (such as the A141) can be best addressed, together with a master planning approach to delivery of key sites including Alconbury Weald and Wyton Airfield.
- **Fens Growth Triangle** – assessing the case for essential transport infrastructure, both road and rail, required and funded to unlock and accelerate economic Growth.

Projects:

As a result of the region's rapid Growth the existing Local Plans have already made provision for an extensive range of new towns and expanded urban areas. Many of these have progressed through planning permission into early stages of delivery. Three examples are highlighted below.

Waterbeach New Town

Waterbeach New Town aims to build 11,000 new homes on the outskirts of Cambridge – the project is underway. To support the significant increase in population, the train station will be moved to more effectively accommodate new residents and travellers.

Northstowe New Town

A new town project, north west of the City of Cambridge - this project is underway and has consent for 10,000 new homes, and the delivery of employment space, as well as social and community infrastructure.

Great Haddon

This in-progress development scheme to the south west of Peterborough will deliver 5,350 new homes, 9,000 jobs, four schools, three shopping centres and a sports facility.

Our first steps to Delivery

1

Develop and adopt a Spatial Development Strategy to shape Growth, future planning policies and support delivery of Local Growth Plan priorities.

2

Use our Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England to maximise housing delivery and regeneration, prioritising new housing around railway stations and other key sites. Develop business cases that tackle barriers to delivery for locations in the Opportunity Zones.

3

Attract investment to accelerate the rate of new homes supply. Explore new opportunities, such as Mayoral Development Corporations and the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy. Work with the Cambridge Growth Company to maximise the potential of Cambridge and the wider region.

4

Develop an affordable housing programme which builds on the success of the previous programme which ran from 2017 to 2022 and leverages the new £39bn Social and Affordable Homes Programme announced by Government.

5

Develop a Resilience Plan to ensure our homes and workforce are prepared for a changing future.

Delivery Planning

The Mayor and the Strategic Authority will lead on the implementation of this Local Growth Plan, in partnership with our constituent councils, businesses and wider stakeholders across the region.'.

The role of the Mayoral Strategic Authority will be to provide place-based system leadership for the area and its Local Growth Plan, as its statutory Strategic Plan.

This will entail speaking with a single voice to Government, and to all of our communities, and taking responsibility and accountability for the region. This responsibility and accountability will be extended to the delivery of this Plan.

To kickstart delivery a series of Roundtables will be convened by the Mayor to mobilise key partners around the Key Deliverables. These Roundtables will be designed to use the Mayor's convening power to help bring together all of the key stakeholders and key interests to optimise our impact and outcomes.

This will enable the Plan to build on the existing foundations whatever development stage the planning is already at. It will also help clarify clear lead and clear supporting partners for delivery.

A Delivery Plan will be published alongside the final Local Growth Plan. This will be a living document — developed, monitored, and kept under review over time — with the ongoing monitoring of the Local Growth Plan itself to ensure it also remains live and responsive.

As set out at the beginning of this Plan the approach is built on the LGP being the 'guiding star' plan of all plans. This means the deliverables will be set at multiple levels. There will be interdependencies between them.

Plan Level

There are a number of key Delivery Plans that CPCA itself will need to develop, align or readjust to the LGP:

- The development of a Spatial Development Strategy that handles the spatial consequences of the LGP
- A refresh of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan
- The alignment of the emerging Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Working Plan
- The refresh of the Local Skills Improvement Plan

We are also developing six Priority Sector Plans.

Major Programmes

There are also a number of major programmes that will need delivery plans.

- Opportunity Zones
- Action Areas – starting with a Pilot
- Enabling Infrastructure priorities and project level business case development

Existing and New Delivery Vehicles

As part of the case made in the LGP there will be a need to support and engage with new and existing delivery models and vehicles. This could include the creation of new Mayoral Development Corporations to deliver strategic regeneration opportunities across our region.

We will be working closely with Cambridge Delivery Group and the Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster Board to unlock our region's potential and catalyse the delivery of strategic infrastructure required to deliver our Growth ambition.

Our Plan also includes delivery support for two Special Economic Zones, with bespoke models that speak to the very different economic conditions.

Major Projects

There are also multiple major projects that will sit within both the Plans and the Programmes.

These include everything from sector and frontier industry propositions, through to major projects such as the potential for Light Rail for Cambridge.

CPCA and Partners Delivering the Plan

CPCA will be reviewing and establishing the appropriate structures to be responsible for, take forward and deliver the LGP with partners. This will align to the change next year of becoming a Mayoral Strategic Authority, applying for the designation of 'established', and working towards an integrated settlement with Government.

We will also develop a strong dialogue with Government to take forward our shared priorities. Our focus will be on:

- **Place-Making:** increasing the availability and affordability of housing and commercial sites to support the expansion of our priority sectors and increase the region's attractiveness to workers and investors.
- **Transport:** improving transport to making connectivity, including commuting, more efficient, affordable and effective, connecting housing, business and industrial development sites across the region.

Capacity and Capability

The scale and scope of work facing delivery of the Local Growth Plan means that CPCA will be seeking to develop further capacity and capabilities to deliver.

This could include:

- A new Institute to specialise globally in regional economic issues, including clusters, sectors and innovation corridors, using our region as the pilot lab space
- A new interface with both HE and FE to enable one stop shop pro-activity, coordination and collaboration
- A private sector-led case-making and proposition development Panel to help accelerate ideas into practice
- Case-making for secondments and cross fertilisation of staffing

Funding

The CPCA will continue to engage with all the key funding opportunities.

This includes full scale embracement of the Comprehensive Spending Review announcements, the National Industrial Strategy and its eight Sector Plans, the national Infrastructure Strategy opportunities, and continuing dialogue and discussions with HMG towards a new settlement and ultimately by demonstrating good progress and earning autonomy, an integrated settlement.

We will continue to embrace the British Business Bank, the National Wealth Fund and continue to seek to develop opportunities arising from our Pension Funds. We are planning to take advantage of new powers, including infrastructure levy opportunities, retention of business rates and are seeking special economic zones to secure targeted fiscal instruments to unlock and accelerate cluster developments. We will also use our Strategic Investment Fund (£26M) as early leverage to kickstart delivery. As a net contributor to the exchequer, we can secure greater economic Growth and higher returns to HMT to enable our future as a country to be affordable. Tax incremental financing works for our economy as would more fiscal devolution bringing greater returns to the whole of the UK economy.

This is why it is so important to back this Plan. It is a Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. But more than that, it is a Plan for the future of the UK economy as a whole and will unlock the Government's Growth Mission.

> This plan is unashamedly ambitious. The Government wants Growth and knows the unique potential of our region. This plan shows how, by working together, the right investment here will deliver for the UK

Paul Bristow

Paul Bristow, Mayor, Cambridgeshire
& Peterborough Combined Authority

Bibliography

[1] Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission. 2017. "CPIER – Final Report." Cpier.org.uk. 2017. https://www.cpier.org.uk/final-report/.
[2] Office for National Statistics. 2025. "Local Indicators for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough." Office for National Statistics. Office for National Statistics. July 30, 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-localstatistics/areas/. E47000008-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough/indicators.
[3] SRG. 2024. "Relocating for STEM: 7 Reasons to Move to Cambridge for Work | Science, Engineering & Life Science Recruitment, Jobs & Staffing | SRG." SRG. 2024. https://www.srgtalent.com/blog/7-reasons-tomove- to-cambridge-for-work.
[4] Office for National Statistics. 2025. "Local Indicators for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough." Office for National Statistics. Office for National Statistics. July 30, 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-localstatistics/ areas/ E47000008-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough/indicators.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Glassdoor. 2020. "Best Cities for Jobs UK." Glassdoor. 2020. https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/List/Best-Cities-for-Jobs-UK-LST_KQ0.
[7] Office for National Statistics. 2025. "Local Indicators for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough." Office for National Statistics. Office for National Statistics. July 30, 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-localstatistics/areas/ E47000008-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough/indicators.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Office for National Statistics. 2025a. "Industry Current – Census Maps, ONS." Ons.gov.uk. 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/work/industry-current/industry-current-88a/72- scientific-research-and-development?ew=K04000001.
[10] WIPO. 2024. "Global Innovation Index 2024 Unlocking the Promise of Social G Entrepreneurship." https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/global-innovation-index-2024/assets/67729/2000%20Global%20Innovation%20Index%202024_WEB3lite.pdf.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Uk Research and Innovation. "New Cambridge-Manchester Partnership to Boost Regional Growth." Ukri.org, 9 June 2025, www.ukri.org/news/new-cambridge-manchester-partnership-to-boost-regional-Growth/. Accessed 12 Aug. 2025.
[14] Institute for Energy & Environmental Flows. "Hydrogen Electrolysis – Institute for Energy and Environmental Flows." Cam.ac.uk, 2025, ieef.cam.ac.uk/research/energy-efficiency/hydrogen-electrolysis/.
[15] EDF. "Tees Green Hydrogen." EDF Renewables, 2025, www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/tees-hydrogen/.
[16] Energy Interdisciplinary Research Centre. "Engines and Turbines | Energy." Cam.ac.uk, 2025, www.energy.cam.ac.uk/directory/research-themes/conversion/Enginesandturbines.
[17] UK Government. "Wind of Change for the Humber Region." GOV.UK, 2021, www.gov.uk/government/news/wind-of-change-for-the-humber-region.
[18] https://techcorridor.co.uk/about.
[19] https://www.featurespace.com/customers.
[20] NIH Oxford-Cambridge Scholars Program. "Home | OXCAM." Oxcam.gpp.nih.gov, 2025, oxcam.gpp.nih.gov/.
[21] Arm. "Markets: Automotive." https://www.arm.com/markets/automotive.
[22] West Midlands Growth Company. "Automotive | Invest West Midlands." Invest West Midlands, 16 Oct. 2024, www.investwestmidlands.com/set-up-in-west-midlands/why-the-west-midlands/key-sectors/futuremobility/automotive/.
[23] Energy Interdisciplinary Research Centre. "Engines and Turbines | Energy." Cam.ac.uk, 2025, www.energy.cam.ac.uk/directory/research-themes/conversion/Enginesandturbines.
[24] Future Port Talbot. "Future Port Talbot | Mott MacDonald." Mott MacDonald, 12 Sept. 2024, www.mottmac.com/en/projects/future-port-talbot/. Accessed 12 Aug. 2025.
[25] https://www.digicatapult.org.uk/about/press-releases/post/eight-companies-join-digital-catapults-cybersecurity-programme/.
[26] University of Cambridge. "Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology." Www.ceb.cam.ac.uk, 2025, www.ceb.cam.ac.uk/.
[27] Scottish Development International. "Scotland's Chemicals and Industrial Biotech Industry Opportunities." Sdi.co.uk, 2019, www.sdi.co.uk/business-in-scotland/find-your-industry/chemical-industries. Accessed 12 Aug. 2025.
[28] Companies Market Cap. 2025. "Largest UK Companies by Market Cap." Companiesmarketcap.com. 2025. https://companiesmarketcap.com/gbp/united-kingdom/largest-companies-in-the-uk-by-marketcap/#google_vignette.
[29] Companies Market Cap. 2025. "Largest UK Companies by Market Cap." Companiesmarketcap.com.2025. https://companiesmarketcap.com/gbp/united-kingdom/largest-companies-in-the-uk-by-marketcap/#google_vignette.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Beauhurst. 2025. "Spotlight on Spinouts 2025 – Beauhurst – Royal Academy of Engineering." Beauhurst. March 26, 2025. https://www.beauhurst.com/research/spotlight-on-spinouts-2025/.
[32] Statista. 2025. "Population Growth in UK Cities 2020." Statista. 2025. https://www.statista.com/statistics/380171/Growth-of-cities-in-the-united-kingdom/.
[33] Companies Market Cap. 2025. "Largest UK Companies by Market Cap." Companiesmarketcap.com. 2025. https://companiesmarketcap.com/gbp/united-kingdom/largest-companies-in-the-uk-by-marketcap/#google_vignette.
[34] AstraZeneca. 2013. "AstraZeneca Selects Location for New Global R&D Centre and Corporate Headquarters in Cambridge, UK." Www.astrazeneca.com. 2013. https://www.astrazeneca.com/mediacentre/press-releases/2013/astrazeneca-new-global-research-development-centre-corporateheadquarters-cambridge-uk-18062013.html#.
[35] ———. 2022. "Our UK Sites | AstraZeneca UK." Astrazeneca.co.uk. 2022. https://www.astrazeneca.co.uk/about-us/uk-sites#acc-cambridge-sec-item-223fc3c094.
[36] ———. 2025b. "Local Indicators for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough." Office for National Statistics. Office for National Statistics. July 30, 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-localstatistics/areas/E47000008-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough/indicators.
[37] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2019. "English Indices of Deprivation 2019: Mapping Resources." GOV.UK. September 26, 2019. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/english-indices-ofdeprivation-2019-mapping-resources.
[38] Centre for Cities. 2017. "Cities Outlook 2017 – Centre for Cities' Annual Healthcheck of 63 UK Cities." Centre for Cities. 2017. https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/cities-outlook-2017/.
[39] Office for National Statistics. 2021. "Economic Activity Status – Census Maps, ONS." Www.ons.gov.uk. 2021. https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/work/economic-activity-status/economicactivity-status-3a/economically-active.
[40] ———. 2021b. "England and Wales Level 4 Qualifications or Above." Office for National Statistics. 2021.https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/education/highest-level-of-qualification/highestqualification/level-4-qualifications-or-above-degree-ba-bsc-higher-degree-ma-phd-pgce-nvq-level-4-to-5-hnc-hnd-rsa-higher-diploma-btec-higher-level-professional-qualifications-for-example-teachingnursing-accountancy.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Complete University Guide. 2024. "Top UK University League Tables and Rankings 2024." Thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk. 2024. https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/leaguetables/rankings.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Companies Market Cap. 2025. "Largest UK Companies by Market Cap." Companiesmarketcap.com. 2025. https://companiesmarketcap.com/gbp/united-kingdom/largest-companies-in-the-uk-by-marketcap/#google_vignette.
[45] Paragraf. n.d. "About Paragraf." Paragraf. https://www.paragraf.com/about-paragraf/.
[46] Beauhurst. 2025. "Spotlight on Spinouts 2025 – Beauhurst – Royal Academy of Engineering." Beauhurst. March 26, 2025. https://www.beauhurst.com/research/spotlight-on-spinouts-2025/.
[47] Agri-TechE. 2025. "About Agri-TechE – Agri-TechE." Agri-TechE. February 5, 2025. https://www.agri-teche.co.uk/about-agri-teche/.
[48] WIPO. 2024. "Global Innovation Index 2024 Unlocking the Promise of Social G Entrepreneurship." https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/global-innovation-index-2024/assets/67729/2000%20Global%20Innovation%20Index%202024_WEB3lite.pdf.
[49] Beauhurst. 2025. "Spotlight on Spinouts 2025 – Beauhurst – Royal Academy of Engineering." Beauhurst. March 26, 2025. https://www.beauhurst.com/research/spotlight-on-spinouts-2025/.
[50] Preqin. 2025. "Preqin | Alternative Assets Data, Solutions and Insights." Preqin.com. 2025. https://www.preqin.com/data/profile/asset/barocal/471888.
[51] Cambridge Science Park. 2025. "Cambridge Science Park." Www.cambridgesciencepark.co.uk. 2025. https://www.cambridgesciencepark.co.uk/.
[52] Cambridge Innovation Capital. 2025. "Ecosystem – Cambridge Innovation Capital." Cambridge Innovation Capital. February 17, 2025. https://www.cic.vc/commitment/ecosystem/.
[53] Beauhurst. 2025. "Spotlight on Spinouts 2025 – Beauhurst – Royal Academy of Engineering." Beauhurst. March 26, 2025. https://www.beauhurst.com/research/spotlight-on-spinouts-2025/.
[54] WIPO. 2024. "Global Innovation Index 2024 Unlocking the Promise of Social G Entrepreneurship." https://www.wipo.int/web-publications/global-innovation-index-2024/assets/67729/2000%20Global%20Innovation%20Index%202024_WEB3lite.pdf.
[55] National Grid. 2025. "The Great Grid Upgrade." Www.nationalgrid.com. 2025. https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade.
[56] Stanstead Airport. 2022. "Report reveals long-haul benefits for the region. https://mediacentre.stanstedairport.com/reports-reveals-long-haul-benefits-for-the-region/.