

2030 Vision Business and Retail Workshop

21st November 2011

Key Issues and debates

Growth and Development

Starting point : must have growth. BUT:

- How and where? Can not grow forever. Cambridge running out of room once peripheral developments complete (Addenbrookes, Univ etc)
- What kind of growth?
 - A business led growth strategy for Cambridge unlikely to significantly alter high job density (e.g. Addenbrookes 2020 = 9,000 new jobs, south city housing developments = >4000 homes.)
 - Result that residual housing demand likely to continue to be met in settlements such as Cambourne and Ely, housing costs in the city unlikely to significantly reduce (view expressed by property experts)

Containment vs dispersal?

- Arguments for both
- Possible to contain employment development originating from city clusters (university related, R&D, Addenbrookes etc), e.g.
- Wider development of sub region requires dispersal.
- Dispersal already happened (outer villages, Cambourne, Ely) - economic imperative arising from housing costs.
- Dispersal to form part of wider economic development strategy?
- Need to support development of economic sectors based on strengths in outer districts rather than by trying to place city clusters further out.
E.g Agriculture and agricultural tech and food processing in the north; equine, sports science in Newmarket and East; manufacturing in Hunts and Peterborough etc...

Transport and Infrastructure

- Should relate to dispersal approach, with development concentrated at key transport corridors – rail routes, guided bus route (Northstowe, potential CGB spur to Alconbury)
- Need to include transport professionals (particularly rail) in dialogue.
- Rail infrastructure east of Cambridge to Newmarket/Bury very underused due poor service (1 train/hr vs 5 trains/hr to Ely)
- Service north has opposite problem - good frequency but close to capacity at peak times – further developments at Waterbeach and Ely will need to be supported by station upgrades, longer platforms (Waterbeach), north Cambridge station etc
- Further development of cycle networks should be considered with road and rail – high quality cycling infrastructure such as that alongside CGB has potential to link much more than just city and to effect considerable modal shift. Is this fully appreciated within transport planning?

Marketing Cambridge

Much better job needed for marketing Cambridge. How?

- Define what is being marketed
 - LEP area? Cambridgeshire? Cambridge City Region?
- Understand various offers in the area.
 - Science/tech/R&D – City/South
 - Manufacturing – Hunts, Peterborough
 - Pharma – City/South/East, Newmarket
 - Agriculture/Food – Fenland/East
 - Engineering – City, Fenland
- Co-ordination of resources – district and county authorities, private sector.
- Can we get resources towards this on a pro-bono basis, for good of business community? CPPF to scope possibility? Marketing value for a company building a website for this purpose

‘Quality of Life’

Declining vs maintained

First workshop attendees identified that QoL was declining. Second workshop attendees did not believe so. Why?

- Likely distinction between resident’s experience of Cambridge and worker’s experience.
- First workshop attendees more from business community, possibly more representative of non-resident workers who suffer the high costs of housing and stretched transport infrastructure in a way that residents do not.
- Residents are largely able to avoid transport problems associated with getting to and out of Cambridge.

How can/should business community contribute to society?

- Significant section of society has not benefited from economic success for which the area is known – this has been explored in more detail at the CPPF Skills workshops.
- Clear that business has a role in addressing this, particularly in working with education to support people to access their sectors.
- Rebalancing of economy towards more productive economic activity, with greater emphasis on engineering, manufacturing, agriculture, clean/green tech likely to present greater range of vocational opportunities.
- In turn this provides opportunity to better spread benefits of Economic development to all, not just those with university education.
- Point made about excellent work already done by some major businesses with long history in, and connection to, the local community e.g. Camb University Press, NW Brown
- Other newer multi-national companies perhaps do not have this connection.