

MHCLG launches OxCam Arc consultation

The government is consulting on the long term development of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc as part of ministers' plans to create a Spatial Framework for the area to 2050.

People across the Arc – taking in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire – and those with an interest in the area have been invited through [a digital platform](#) to express their views on the plan, which the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) said would have sustainability “at its core”.

Input into the public consultation will also help guide local planning and investment decisions in four areas: the environment, the economy, connectivity and infrastructure and placemaking. The consultation is the first of three that will shape the new Spatial Framework over the next two years.

Through the consultation, which closes on October 12, MHCLG is also seeking views on the initial work it has undertaken on setting the scope of its Sustainability Appraisal for the Arc, as part of its intention to embed sustainability within the Spatial Framework.

And ministers have announced a new expert panel to advise on sustainable economic and housing growth in the Arc. Chaired by development and regeneration expert Emma Cariaga, MHCLG said the panel would guide the government on issues including design and sustainability through to delivery and investment models.

The panel will focus primarily on the area between Bedford and Cambridge, “where the government is examining opportunities to bring forward well-designed, inclusive and sustainable places”.

Housing minister Christopher Pincher said: “Today is a big step forward for the OxCam Arc as we have launched an innovative digital consultation with the public, including those that live and work in the Arc, so that everyone has a chance to have their say.

“This is a fantastic opportunity for people across the Arc to make their voice heard and help create the future for their community that they want to see.

“Both the Spatial Framework consultation and Expert Advisory Panel will help us to ensure the Oxford-Cambridge Arc will be a great place to live and work – now and in the decades to come.”

The digital platform describes the Oxford-Cambridge Arc as a “globally significant area” between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge consisting of five ceremonial counties, forming an “Arc”.

In February, MHCLG published a policy paper setting out how it intended to develop a Spatial Framework “to help us realise our ambition to support sustainable economic growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc”.