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HM Treasury



LGR Economic analysis – alignment of economic policies against options

Version No: 4

Issue Date: 5 September 2025





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Local Government Reorganisation - Economic analysis

1.1 Introduction

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities are working together with the objective of submitting a detailed proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). To MHCLG by the end of November 2025.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) along with Peterborough City Council (PCC) have appointed Local Partnerships to carry out a separate analysis and give an independent perspective on a short list of options being considered at the regional level.

These options are as follows:

Table 1. LGR Options being considered

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
<u>Unitary 1</u> Peterborough Fenland Huntingdonshire	<u>Unitary 1</u> Peterborough Fenland Huntingdonshire East Cambridgeshire	<u>Unitary 1</u> Peterborough Fenland East Cambridgeshire	<u>Unitary 1</u> Peterborough Fenland Huntingdonshire
<u>Unitary 2</u> East Cambridgeshire South Cambridgeshire Cambridge City	<u>Unitary 2</u> South Cambridgeshire Cambridge City	<u>Unitary 2</u> South Cambridgeshire Cambridge City Huntingdonshire	<u>Unitary 2</u> Fenland East Cambridgeshire Huntingdonshire
			<u>Unitary 3</u> South Cambridgeshire Cambridge City

The first stage of work was a financial analysis of the four options (Financial Options Appraisal 04 August 2025). This second part of the work is an analysis of the economic implications of the different options, looking at the implications for Huntingdonshire and Peterborough separately, along with the region as a whole.

HDC has asked Local Partnerships to look in detail at the implications of HDC merging with Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Councils (option C). PCC has asked Local Partnerships to consider the implications of forming a Greater Peterborough Council, with part of Huntingdonshire joining with PCC and part joining with Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Councils (option D). The specific criteria and more detailed questions that each council has asked Local Partnerships to consider are set out in detail below.

1.2 Links between the financial and economic analysis

The financial analysis advocates further investigation of options A and C. It advises caution with respect to option B, given its apparent financial divisiveness and the doubt it raises as to whether a unitary including two districts will deliver sufficient savings to pay back the transition costs over a satisfactory period. The analysis concludes that option D appears unworthy of further analysis, from a financial perspective, given the scale of transition costs relative to the savings in two of the three new councils proposed. The financial analysis acknowledges that finance represents one factor and that this economic analysis will need to be considered before drawing a final conclusion.

Although the economic implications of the options will consider different issues there will be some direct links between finance and economic implications. For example, the financial robustness of different options will impact on each authority's capacity to deliver

economic objectives and to prioritise economic development and growth alongside other services.

1.3 Methodology

We have divided our analysis into four stages

1. Scope the range of policies and strategies that will be used to provide the context for 'economic impact' and test the different options
2. Identify the critical success factors relating to LGR and the delivery of successful economic policies
3. Identify the evaluation criteria that the options will be tested against - to assess whether each option will deliver the critical success factors
4. Evaluate the different options

Section 1 of this report covers the scoping and identification of evaluation criteria (items 1 to 3). Section 2 is the analysis of the different options against the evaluation criteria. Section 3 summarises the analysis for each option.

The scoring could take into account opportunities for service redesign. This is not felt to be appropriate at this stage. Planning for redesign will take place either in the run up to LGR or after vesting, and these opportunities should be considered in the next stage of business case development. It is also understood that councils may be making changes to their organisation in advance of LGR. This has not been taken into account in this analysis.

1.4 Scoping the relevant policies

The first element of this work has been to define the main policy drivers that will be used to assess the LGR options.

We have considered policies at the following levels:

Table 2 - Policies being considered

Level	Policy Type
National	UK Government legislation, policies and strategies
Sub National	Infrastructure investment plans, Sub national plans including national transport plans
CA – Regional	Emerging Growth Plan, State of the Region, Infrastructure Delivery Pipeline, Investment pipeline, sector strategies
Local	Economic development strategies, Local Plans

Whilst the economic policies do reflect a clear direction of travel, the policies have been developed over several years by different organisations. The analysis of the options will therefore largely be based on judgment considering the relevance and status of different policies.

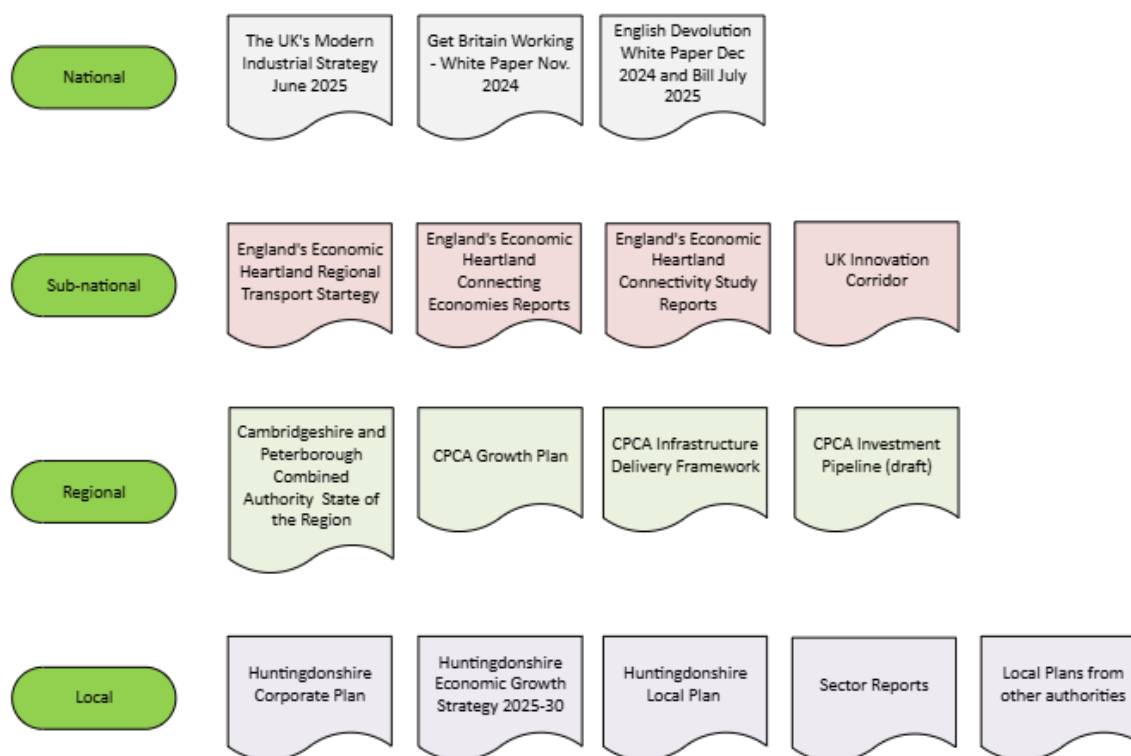
Judgement is also required to balance potentially contradictory elements of our work. There may be difference between what is in the interests of the existing councils and their residents and the best interest of the region as a whole.



1.5 Testing the alignment at the different geographies

Scoping the key policies that the options need to be tested against formed an initial stage of our work. Fig 1 below illustrates the main policy documents that we considered both to identify the assessment criteria and extent of alignment between options and policies.

Fig 1- Policy and delivery context



1.6 Critical Success Factors and Evaluation Criteria

Outlined below are the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that act as guiding principles in the consideration of emerging options. The CSFs are important individually, but also collectively in terms of assessing economic environment that is created after LGR and the perception that this gives to investors and infrastructure providers. This is relevant at the combined authority level as well as the unitary level. In all instances, investors and funders have choices about what to invest and where to invest. In choosing and developing the preferred option the chance of success is likely to be increased by ensuring that public sector decision making is as clear and simple to access as possible and that it provides as much consistency and certainty after the decision has been made.

The simplicity and consistency can be enabled by the appropriate structures being set up. Delivering success will require a well-planned transition, the development of new organisational cultures and working relationships and a collective understanding by the new unitaries and combined authority of how to prioritise and meet the competing challenges across the region.

To work as an economic area the new structure will need to be capable of creating a brand identity for businesses and investors – one that can also be used to lobby and



influence. This needs to be aligned to a more granular local identity, reflecting the rural and urban characteristics that are recognised by the local residents and communities.

Any option will need to:

- represent a functioning economic geography (based on the most up to date and authoritative data sources available)
- provide opportunities to maintain and optimise current and future growth potential
- be deliverable based on the collective risk appetite of all partners and the ability to balance existing accountabilities alongside implementation of LGR
- provide opportunities to increase the credibility and reputation with HM Government and national stakeholders and further influence long-term infrastructure planning and funding (via the MCA, Sub-national Transport Body and working directly with national infrastructure partners)
- ensure broad parity for all parties with no undue or significant economic advantage or disadvantage for any part of the area
- enable agreement on a shared economic vision for the area by building on existing cross-LA collaboration
- represent a publicly identifiable arrangement
- represent a solution which is acceptable politically.

In an analysis of this kind, it is easy to define objectives in terms of the of larger authorities or higher profile national policy positions. This could easily underplay the unique advantages that Huntingdonshire could leave as a legacy to the new authorities and combined authority. Any successful option should also:

- take advantage of the strong legacy that Huntingdonshire will leave, in terms of its clear and robust economic vision, its leadership role and ability to deliver a complementary offer contributing to the region's economic ambition.

Table 3 – Evaluation criteria

Test area	Evaluation criteria – what will be measured
Overall economic growth and regeneration	• Option supports / maximises national growth ambition for the region • Option supports the subregional growth ambitions of existing councils • Option supports specific economic growth policies (i.e. Oxford Cambridge Corridor) • Balance of economic and housing opportunities within each area • Economic growth provides opportunity to reduce social – economic imbalance
Sector specific strategies	• Option aligns with the national sector strategies and clusters (e.g. Life science, medical science and defence) • Option aligns with strengths of different sub-economic areas
Transport policy other infrastructure	• Influence of transport strategy and funding (via MCA EEH and DfT) • Priorities that can align with Regional / sub national priorities. • Option aligns with planning areas adopted by other national infrastructure providers (Network Rail, Highways England, Water etc)
Delivery / implementation	• Option area aligns with operating area of a delivery vehicle/mechanism • Option provides necessary capacity and capability to prioritise economic growth alongside other high priority services • Option provides opportunity to reduce fragmentation of services (geographically and hierarchically) • Balanced housing and economic opportunities within authority area • Capacity of new councils to deliver efficient planning service • Extent of reduced fragmentation of planning for housing and infrastructure • Alignment with housing market areas and delivery mechanisms
Efficient movement / commuting	<i>Note: Drawing out specific elements for Huntingdonshire</i> • Option aligns with travel to work areas • Infrastructure aligns with movement patterns



Test area	Evaluation criteria – what will be measured
patterns supporting growth	Infrastructure and travel to work areas align with economic growth objectives and spatial strategies
Supports Peterborough City Centre regeneration and optimises HE opportunities	<i>Note: Drawing out specific elements for Peterborough</i> - Ability to deliver / support with City Masterplan (emerging) - Takes advantage of opportunity provided by Station Quarter - Takes advantage of opportunities provided by growing HE sector

1.7 Role of the Combined Authority

Unlike many areas currently undergoing LGR, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area has an existing Mayoral Combined Authority. The authority's area is underpinned and justified because it already represents a logical and functioning economic geography. As an organisation the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority has a fully operational structure for delivering economic policies across the region.

- It has strategic economic responsibilities, funding, and governance powers already in place.
- It aligns broad regional ambitions through strategies like the Local Industrial Strategy, LTCP, and Shared Ambition.
- It has mechanisms for delivery, including the Business Board and partnerships like the Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England.

All four options will have some disadvantages. The combined authority is in a position to mitigate risks and disadvantages that may be associated with the option that is taken forward.

Whichever option is taken forward, the existing councils should ensure that any conditions that are required to deliver economic and other priorities are reflected in both new council structures, resource plans and relationships with the Combined Authority.

1.8 Summary of Analysis

The table below is a summary table based on the more detailed analysis contained in section 3 of this report. The characteristics of each option were considered against their ability to meet the listed criteria. Five categories were used indicating the degree of alignment to the different category of criteria.

Low	= 1
Low – moderate	= 2
Moderate	= 3
Moderate – high	= 4
High	= 5

Table 5 – Scoring table

Criteria category	Evaluation criteria – what will be considered	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Alignment with economic growth and regeneration ambitions and policies	Option supports / maximises national growth ambition for the region	4	5	4	5
	Option supports the subregional growth ambitions of existing councils				
	Option supports specific economic growth policies (i.e. Oxford Cambridge Corridor)				
	Balance of economic and housing opportunities within each area				



Criteria category	Evaluation criteria – what will be considered	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	Economic growth provides opportunity to reduce social – economic imbalance				
Sector specific strategies	Option aligns with the national sector strategies and clusters (e.g. Life science, medical science and defence)	4	3	4	2
	Option aligns with strengths of different sub-economic areas				
Transport policy other infrastructure	Influence of transport strategy and funding (via MCA EEH and DfT)	4	4	4	2
	Priorities that can align with Regional / sub national priorities.				
	Option aligns with planning areas adopted by other national infrastructure providers (Network Rail, Highways England, Water etc)				
Delivery / implementation	Option aligned with existing local plan areas	4	4	4	3
	Realistic opportunity of delivering housing targets				
	Option area aligns with operating area of a delivery vehicle/mechanism or shared service				
	Option provides necessary capacity and capability to prioritise economic growth alongside other high priority services				
	Option provides opportunity to reduce fragmentation of services (geographically and hierarchically)				
	Ability to develop a strong relationship with CA and Government etc – to influence strategy and funding decisions				
Score		16	16	16	12
Efficient movement / commuting patterns supporting growth (See table in appendix 3)	<i>Note: Drawing out specific elements for Huntingdonshire</i> - Option aligns with travel to work areas - Infrastructure aligns with movement patterns - Infrastructure and travel to work areas align with economic growth objectives and spatial strategies	5	4	5	-

1.9 Conclusion

Options A, B and C are similar in terms of scores. At this stage it would be premature to discount any of these options because of this assessment. Option D scores lower and could be discounted at this stage. All options have the CPCA at the regional level and all will require the new councils to work together, developing new relationships and ways of working. All, with the exception of D, can be based on a two core city model with the Huntingdonshire area being a focus for the expansion of these growth areas. All, to some extent, are underpinned by assumptions around housing growth and the success of planning reforms.

Option A's two authorities are both large and capable of taking advantage of different regional economic opportunities. The northern authority could be focused on logistics and developing the area's strong industrial base. It could also take up identified opportunities relating to the defence sector, clean-tech and digital. In turn this would provide opportunities for continuing reduction in inequality ('levelling up') along with broader growth and regeneration.

The southern unitary, focused on Greater Cambridge, would be aligned to national growth policies around the Oxford to Cambridge Supercluster. It would be focused on

high value growth relating to the specialist sectors that are attracted to Cambridge, including life sciences, R and D, digital, AI and cyber.

The likely size and robustness of the two authorities will enable the appropriate de-risking of delivery issues. Whilst infrastructure is a constraint, the constraint applies at the regional level and applied to all options. Option A should provide the authorities with the opportunity to influence both the Combined Authority and other infrastructure providers and funders.

Risks could relate to the northern authority being disconnected from growth associated with the Supercluster and potential fragmentation along the M11 / A14 Innovation Corridor. Whilst all options rely on housing growth, this option relies on a smaller area.

Option A	
Unitary 1	Unitary 2
Growth prospect with clear differentiation. Necessary capacity	Strong growth focus centred on Cambridge. Questionable alignment in East Cambridgeshire

Option B includes two authorities of differing sizes. Both would be in the position to take advantage of their different economic opportunities. The northern authority focusing on similar sectors to Option A but also having to cover the opportunities associated with a larger rural area and smaller towns.

The scale of the northern authority provides the opportunity to counterbalance the globally significant Greater Cambridge and give some weight to dealing with the rural economic challenges.

The southern authority, covering Greater Cambridge, would be significantly smaller but with the opportunities aligned to the Supercluster and the sectors attracted to Cambridge. Prestige and global significance could overcome issues around scale. However there could be risks attached to this balance.

The difference in sectors would be greater compared to option A. On one hand this could be a benefit in terms of differentiation and focus. It could also reduce the growth opportunity and opportunity for 'levelling up' across the region as a whole.

The small size of the southern authority could bring with it the risk that economic growth is not prioritised to the same extent as a larger authority, because of competing high spend and risk service areas in the new council.

This option is reliant on an increase in the pace of housing delivery.

Option B	
Unitary 1	Unitary 2
Large authority with the likely capacity and capability to deal with growth opportunities and 'levelling up' challenge	Focus on growth but risks around delivery capacity

Option C's two authorities are both large with the largest being the southern authority. By including Huntingdonshire, the southern authority is financially stronger compared to



option A. The southern authority would be able to take advantage of the Cambridge opportunities strengthening the Innovation Corridor.

There is a risk that the dominance of the Greater Cambridge growth could overshadow Huntingdonshire focused growth. As an example, under the current HM Treasury methodology, investment in the Huntingdonshire area may not receive the same priority as Greater Cambridge, because of the likely lower benefit cost ratio (BCR) relating to investment values and outputs in the two parts of the new authority. Developing a methodology for prioritising projects across a diverse area would need to be a condition attached to this option and will need to be developed across the combined authority area which ever option is chosen.

The northern authority would not be as financially strong as in option A. There would be greater differentiation between the two authorities with the need of the northern authority to focus on logistical and industrial opportunities to ensure that economic inequalities are reduced. There is the risk that policies are fractured along the north south transport Corridors.

Option C	
Unitary 1	Unitary 2
Core city growth prospects potentially undermined by challenges of the wider area.	Growth prospect supported by complementary Huntingdonshire and Greater Cambridge strengths

Option D includes three small to medium sized authorities. Whilst this option has the ability to be aligned with the economic ambitions and challenges of the area, it is weaker in terms of delivery capacity and alignment with transport and sector policies. The economic positives of this option in part relate to the smaller size of the three authorities and their ability to be more responsive to the granular nature of economic opportunities and challenges to the east of Cambridge and Peterborough. Although the geography of the middle unitary aligns with specific rural and market town issues, the size of the authority and its significance in relationship to the other two, may mean that these issues are not prioritised at the regional level.

Despite policy alignment, there are additional risks relating to the middle authority. It has poor connectivity, relatively low wages and is like to to be affected to a greater extent that other areas by climate change including increasing flood risk.

Although under all options unitaries are created under the 500,000-population size, under option D none of the new authorities get anywhere near the optimum council size suggested by the Government. Whilst this analysis is not only focused on the Government's criteria for LGR, the optimum size is a reflection on the features of a council that would make it financially robust; and ability to resource the councils' priorities Experience from past LGR would suggest that three smaller councils would find it more difficult to deliver economic and growth priorities when compared to larger authorities with greater capacity and capability and influence.

A greater number of smaller authorities carries the risk that they will have less influence on prioritising policies and the investment being made by the combined authority, Government or national infrastructure providers.



Option D		
Unitary 1	Unitary 2	Unitary 3
Focus and capacity to deliver growth	Significant issues around connectivity and deprivation without capacity to deliver change	Focus on growth but risks around delivery capacity

2 Detailed analysis against evaluation criteria

2.1 Economic Analysis

The table below sets out the detailed analysis of each option against the evaluation criteria explained above. The assessment is reflected in Table 5 above.

Table 6 – Economic analysis by option

Economic Growth and Regeneration				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Option supports / maximises national growth ambition for the region	Cambridge-led unit drives high-tech innovation, research, and knowledge-intensive growth. Northern unitary can focus on housing supply, local employment, and logistics. Risk that growth is focused on global science sector to detriment of others.	Northern unitary large enough to attract investment Cambridge unitary compact but misses East Cambridgeshire Corridor Southern unit (Cambridge + South Cambridgeshire) maximises high-tech and knowledge economy output. Aligns national innovation and regional development ambitions; potential for coordinated transport and infrastructure planning within the Supercluster.	Cambridge Corridor split Fragmented planning; the two unitaries split growth areas, weakening Corridor coherence. Cambridge innovation potential maintained, but northern unitary may struggle to compete nationally; growth benefits risk being uneven.	Dedicated Greater Cambridge authority aligns fully with Cambridge 2040 Greater Peterborough supports Levelling Up - Rural unitary ensures inclusive delivery and potential growth across the whole region Separates Cambridge innovation hub, Peterborough/Levelling Up priorities, and rural housing, allowing tailored strategies and targeted investment.
Option supports the subregional growth ambitions of existing council	- Cambridge unitary supports	- Northern unit can drive growth	- Eastern unit can focus on	- Greater Cambridge unit fully



Economic Growth and Regeneration				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	Cambridge 2040 and South Cambridgeshire growth ambitions - Peterborough unitary allows focus on local housing & infrastructure targets	across multiple northern councils' plans - Southern unit delivers Cambridge 2040 targets	Peterborough & East Cambridgeshire housing growth - Western unit supports Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire ambitions with Huntingdonshire's sector focus complimenting Greater Cambridge.	aligned with Cambridge 2040 / South Cambridgeshire housing & transport ambitions - Greater Peterborough supports local economic growth and housing targets - Rural unit preserves subregional rural growth plans
Option supports specific economic growth policies (i.e. Oxford Cambridge Corridor)	- Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire + East Cambridgeshire form a coherent part of the Cambridge hub in the Arc - Northern unit can promote local economic growth in Peterborough, Fenland, and Huntingdonshire	- Northern unit (Peterborough + Huntingdonshire + Fenland + East Cambridgeshire) can coordinate regional logistics, transport, and business investment for Supercluster connectivity - Southern unit (Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire) focused on high-tech growth	- Eastern unit can support Peterborough + Fenland economic policies - Western unit supports Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire innovation policies	- Greater Cambridge unit can fully deliver Supercluster science/tech objectives (housing, innovation campuses, transport links) - Greater Peterborough unit strengthens northern logistics, green energy, and business growth - Rural Mid-Cambridgeshire can focus on agriculture, water, and supporting infrastructure
Balance of economic and housing opportunities within the authority area	- Cambridge unit can drive high-value tech, life sciences, and innovation economy while delivering South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire housing targets - Peterborough unit can focus on local economic development and market town housing	- Northern unit integrates Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, Fenland, and East Cambridgeshire: can plan housing, industrial estates, and transport together - Southern unit focuses on Cambridge hub economic growth and associated housing	- Eastern unit: Peterborough + Fenland + East Cambridgeshire housing growth supported but economic coordination limited - Western unit: Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire economic growth supported	- Greater Cambridge: concentrated economic growth and housing delivery for Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire - Greater Peterborough: integrates housing, logistics, and business development - Rural Mid-Cambridgeshire: can manage rural housing and infrastructure, supporting economic spread
Economic growth provides opportunity to reduce social – economic imbalance	- Cambridge unit delivers high-value jobs, housing, and infrastructure - Northern unit (Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, Fenland) can target local employment and regeneration	- Northern unit combines Peterborough + Huntingdonshire + Fenland + East Cambridgeshire: scope for coordinated investment in logistics, skills, and housing to uplift lower-income communities - Southern unit (Cambridge + South Cambridgeshire) generates high-value jobs	- Eastern unit (Peterborough + East Cambridgeshire + Fenland) can support local housing and some employment schemes - Western unit (Cambridge + South Cambridgeshire + Huntingdonshire) delivers high-tech jobs	- Greater Cambridge focuses innovation-driven growth and housing - Greater Peterborough addresses northern urban/rural inequality through integrated housing, transport, and jobs - Rural Mid-Cambridgeshire targets agricultural/rural employment, connectivity, and services



Economic Growth and Regeneration				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Verdict	Moderate to high	High	Moderate to high	High

2.2 Sector Strategies

The table below sets out the detailed analysis of each option against the sector evaluation criteria explained above. The assessment is reflected in Table 5 above.

Table 7 - Sector analysis by option

Sector specific strategies (Please refer to sector specific maps extracted from DSIT Innovation Clusters Map and EEH Connecting Economies report – annexed to this report)				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Option aligns with the national sector strategies and clusters (e.g. Life science, medical science and defence)	Strong alignment in U2 option with Agriculture, Food Technology, Telecommunications and Artificial Intelligence Sector Clusters	U2 option aligns with Sector Clusters found in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire but fails to acknowledge sectoral clusters covering northern local authorities (e.g. via Life Sciences and Net Zero Sector Clusters)	Life Sciences Sector Cluster covers geographies in both U1 and U2 options. Strong alignment in U2 option with Advanced Materials, Advanced Manufacturing, Photonics, Quantum, Medical Technologies, Pharmaceutical and Omics (branch of Biology) Option U2 broadly reflects the Innovate UK boundary of investment across South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire.	Option U2 does not reflect current sector clusters. U3 aligns with Sector Clusters found in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.



Sector specific strategies (Please refer to sector specific maps extracted from DSIT Innovation Clusters Map and EEH Connecting Economies report – annexed to this report)				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Option aligns with strengths of different sub-economic areas	Option U1 acknowledges the connecting economies between Peterborough, Fenland and Huntingdonshire (in particular, the prime sectors of Logistics and Freight, Circular Economy, Agricultural Food and Advanced Physics and Engineering identified by EEH). Option U1 retains integrity of North Huntingdonshire Supercluster/Growth Cluster (focus on Defence) Option U2 does not acknowledge the connecting economies Huntingdonshire has with South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City	Option U1 reflects the connected economies Peterborough has with Fenland (including the prime sectors of Logistics and Freight and Circular Economy). Option U1 retains integrity of North Huntingdonshire Supercluster/Growth Cluster (focus on Defence) Option U2 aligns with Cambridge and Cambourne connecting economies albeit in a tightly defined geography. Fails to acknowledge South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City sectoral footprint evident across Huntingdonshire,	Option U1 acknowledges connecting economies between Peterborough, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire (including the prime sectors of Logistics and Freight, Agricultural Food and Circular Economy). Aligns with enabling sectors identified by EEH including Chemical and Materials and Wood Products (found across Fenland) Option U2 acknowledges connecting economies with Cambridge/Cambridgeshire. Aligns with foundation sectors identified by EEH including Business Support Services and Public Administration. Option U2 retains North Huntingdonshire Supercluster/Growth Cluster (focus on Defence)	Option U1 acknowledges Peterborough and Fenland connecting economies. Options U2 fails to acknowledge connecting economies between Peterborough to the North and Cambridge/Cambridgeshire to the South. Options U1 and U2, risk the integrity of North Huntingdonshire Supercluster/Growth Cluster (focus on Defence) if location is split.
Verdict	Moderate to High Option U1 demonstrates current sectoral clusters in the north especially between Peterborough and Fenland but fails to acknowledge the overlapping of current sectoral cluster patterns found across Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire and parts of East Cambridgeshire.	Moderate Option U2 fails to reflect the sectoral clusters patterns outside the core of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.	Moderate to High Option U1 and U2 closely align with current sector concentrations and connecting economies at the sub-regional level in particular the sectoral footprints of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire across Huntingdonshire. Both Options U1 and U2 highlight similarities in prime, enabling and foundation sectors.	Low to Moderate Options are too small, with a potential North/South division, to adequately reflect current sectoral cluster patterns.



2.3 Transport and infrastructure strategies

The table below sets out the detailed analysis of each option against the transport evaluation criteria explained above. The assessment is reflected in Table 5 above.

Table 8 – Transport and infrastructure analysis by option

Transport and infrastructure strategies – please refer to LP Analysis of CPCA Pipeline				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Influence of transport strategy and funding (via MCA EEH and DfT)	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayoral Combined Authority responsibility for strategic transport (e.g. Very Light Rail, AVs, Bus Rapid Network, Freight, Strategic Road Network and Strategic Rail) and infrastructure remains unchanged under this option. Equally, sub-national transport body role remains unchanged. Significant infrastructure projects would remain on CPCA pipeline and submission of business cases seeking central government funds would continue to go via CPCA for endorsement and oversight. Strategic engagement with National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England and National Wealth Fund would need to continue in partnerships with CPCA via existing governance arrangements.	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayoral Combined Authority responsibility for strategic transport and infrastructure remains unchanged under this option. Equally, sub-national transport body role remains unchanged. Significant infrastructure projects would remain on CPCA pipeline and submission of business cases seeking central government funds would continue to go via CPCA for endorsement and oversight. Strategic engagement with National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England and National Wealth Fund would need to continue in partnerships with CPCA via existing governance arrangements.	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayoral Combined Authority responsibility for strategic transport and infrastructure remains unchanged under this option. Equally, sub-national transport body role remains unchanged. Significant infrastructure projects would remain on CPCA pipeline and submission of business cases seeking central government funds would continue to go via CPCA for endorsement and oversight. Strategic engagement with National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England and National Wealth Fund would need to continue in partnerships with CPCA via existing governance arrangements.	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayoral Combined Authority responsibility for strategic transport and infrastructure remains unchanged under this option. Equally, sub-national transport body role remains unchanged. Significant infrastructure projects would remain on CPCA pipeline and submission of business cases seeking central government funds would continue to go via CPCA for endorsement and oversight. Strategic engagement with National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England and National Wealth Fund would need to continue in partnerships with CPCA via existing governance arrangements.
Priorities that can align with Regional / sub national priorities.	Split of current CPCA pipeline projects by options (excludes multiple cross-LA projects)	Split of current CPCA pipeline projects by options (excludes multiple cross-LA projects)	Split of current CPCA pipeline projects by options (excludes multiple cross-LA projects)	Split of current CPCA pipeline projects by options (excludes multiple cross-LA projects)

Transport and infrastructure strategies – please refer to LP Analysis of CPCA Pipeline

Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	Option U1: 60% of pipeline projects; 52% total jobs; 94% total floor space; 51% of dwellings; 78% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 29 Option U2: 40% of pipeline projects; 48% total jobs; 6% total floor space; 49% of dwellings; 22% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 16	Option U1: 70% of pipeline projects; 52% total jobs; 94% total floor space; 54% of dwellings; 79% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 34 Option U2: 30% of pipeline projects; 48% total jobs; 6% total floor space; 46% of dwellings; 21% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 11	Option U1: 51% of pipeline projects; 0% total jobs; 3% total floor space; 24% of dwellings; 77% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 27 Option U2: 49% of pipeline projects; 100% total jobs; 97% total floor space; 76% of dwellings; 23% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 18	Option U1: 34% of pipeline projects; 21% total jobs; 31% total floor space; 32% of dwellings; 4% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 19 Option U2: 31% of pipeline projects; 21% total jobs; 33% total floor space; 15% of dwellings; 75% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 15 Option U3: 35% of pipeline projects; 58% total jobs; 35% total floor space; 53% of dwellings; 21% of project value (£) Infrastructure projects: 14
Verdict	Moderate to High Justification and strategic alignment of existing and proposed local and strategic transport projects remains irrespective of option configuration. LA-specific and cross-LA transport and infrastructure projects are included in CPCA pipeline tracker. Prioritisation of projects based on any option configuration will be required based on the risk appetite and available resources, capacity and capability of new local government arrangement and the desire to progress a significant	Moderate to High Justification and strategic alignment of existing and proposed local and strategic transport projects remains irrespective of option configuration. LA-specific and cross-LA transport and infrastructure projects are included in CPCA pipeline tracker. Prioritisation of projects based on any option configuration will be required based on the risk appetite and available resources, capacity and capability of new local government arrangement and the desire to progress a significant	Moderate to High Justification and strategic alignment of existing and proposed local and strategic transport projects remains irrespective of option configuration. LA-specific and cross-LA transport and infrastructure projects are included in CPCA pipeline tracker. Prioritisation of projects based on any option configuration will be required based on the risk appetite and available resources, capacity and capability of new local government arrangement and the desire to progress a significant	Low to Moderate Justification and strategic alignment of existing and proposed local and strategic transport projects remains irrespective of option configuration. LA-specific and cross-LA transport and infrastructure projects are included in CPCA pipeline tracker. Prioritisation of projects based on any option configuration will be required based on the risk appetite and available resources, capacity and capability of new local government arrangement and the desire to progress a significant

Transport and infrastructure strategies – please refer to LP Analysis of CPCA Pipeline

Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	number of projects at early/concept development stage.	number of projects at early/concept development stage.	number of projects at early/concept development stage.	number of projects at early/concept development stage.

2.4 Delivery and Implementation

The table below sets out the detailed analysis of each option against the delivery evaluation criteria explained above. The assessment is reflected in Table 5 above.

Table 9 - Delivery analysis by option

Delivery and implementation				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Option aligned with existing local plan areas	Moderate to High New unitary boundaries align with existing local plan areas. There will be a long-term requirement to align policies and programmes as this brings together three local plans in one unitary and two in the southern unitary.	High New unitary boundaries align with the existing local plan areas. The southern unitary area is coterminous with that of the emerging Greater Cambridge local plan and shared planning service For the other unitary There will be a long-term requirement to align policies and review programmes of the 4 separate local plans	Moderate to High New unitary boundaries align with existing local plan areas. There will be a long-term requirement to align policies and programmes as this brings together three local plans in one unitary and two in the southern unitary.	Low to medium The southern unitary area is coterminous with that of the emerging Greater Cambridge local plan and shared planning service The other two unitary councils will each contain part of the Huntingdonshire. This is likely to require more complex disaggregation of supporting evidence and any work currently underway in Huntingdonshire. This may also lead to abortive work.
Realistic opportunity of delivering housing targets (completions 23/24 compared to new method target) Note: For option D in Huntingdonshire completions and targets were divided by 2.	Moderate to High For U1 the difference between completions and the new method target is low (211 units)	Moderate to High For U1 the difference between completions and the new method target is low (230 units)	Moderate to high For U1 the difference between completions and the new method target is low (336 units)	Low to moderate For U1 completions exceeded the target (+19)



Delivery and implementation				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	For U2 the difference is moderate at 681 units	For U2 the difference is moderate at 642 units	For U2 the difference is moderate at 606 units	For U2 and U3 the difference was large considering the smaller size of each authority (627 and 624)
Option area aligns with operating area of a delivery vehicle/mechanism/shared service (including specific housing delivery vehicles)	Moderate to high Homes England CPCA Strategic Place Partnership aligns with all options. Angle Developments (East) Ltd aligns with all options. U2 shared planning service would need to be adapted to cover larger area. C3 (shared services) may need to be disaggregated or amended Homes England's Cambridge Growth Company aligned with U2 area.	Moderate to high Homes England CPCA Strategic Place Partnership aligns with all options Angle Developments (East) Ltd aligns with all options. U2 planning service coterminous with area. C3 would need to be disaggregated or amended	Moderate to high Homes England CPCA Strategic Place Partnership aligns with all options Angle Developments (East) Ltd aligns with all options. U2 shared planning service would need to be adapted to cover larger area U2 aligns with 3C providing building control and other support services	Moderate to high Homes England CPCA Strategic Place Partnership aligns with all options Angle Developments (East) Ltd aligns with all options. U3 planning service coterminous with area. C3 would need to be disaggregated or amended Homes England's Cambridge Growth Company aligned with U3 area.
Option provides necessary capacity and capability to prioritise economic growth planning and delivery alongside other high priority services	This option has two large authorities. The size and financial robustness of both should ensure that they have the inherent and inherited capacity to deliver economic, growth and delivery functions alongside their other high priority and big spend services. The two authorities are likely to have a degree of resilience to respond to opportunities and potential threats.	U1 is a large authority of a size well over the LGR figure. This authority is likely to have the robustness, resilience to prioritise economic and growth ambitions alongside its other services. U2 is significantly smaller than the size included in the LGR guidance. There is a risk relating to prioritisation, resourcing and availability of senior leadership time that other service areas will be prioritised above economic and growth ambitions.	This option has two large authorities. The size and financial robustness of both should ensure that they have the inherent and inherited capacity to deliver economic, growth and delivery functions alongside their other high priority and big spend services. The two authorities are likely to have a degree of resilience and ability to respond to opportunities and potential threats.	U1 is relatively large authority but smaller than that included in the LGR guidance Authorities U2 and U3 is significantly smaller than the size included in the LGR guidance. There is a risk relating to prioritisation, resourcing and availability of senior leadership time that other service areas in these two authorities could be prioritised above economic and growth ambitions.
Extent of reduced fragmentation of planning for housing and infrastructure	This option brings together two tiers of government and planning across a large area.	This option brings together two tiers of government and planning across a large area	This option brings together two tiers of government and planning across a large area	This option brings together different tiers in terms of spatial and infrastructure planning. Geographically, because there are three council areas this option does



Delivery and implementation				
Evaluation Criteria	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
				not deliver the same benefit as the other two options.
Ability to develop a strong relationship with CA and Government etc – to influence strategy and funding decisions	This option with 2 large constituent unitary authorities has the ability to influence the CPCA, Government and infrastructure providers and funders.	This option with 2 constituent unitary authorities has the ability to influence the CPCA, Government and infrastructure providers and funders. The size of one of the authorities comes with a risk that less resource could be put into engagement. This is a risk that can be easily mitigated	This option with 2 large constituent unitary authorities has the ability to influence the CPCA, Government and infrastructure providers and funders.	It would be difficult for three smaller authorities to engage with and have as much influence with the CA and Government when compared to two larger authorities. It would be more difficult for these authorities to ensure that their priorities are reflected at the regional and national level.

3 Detailed economic commentary

3.1 Option A

Unitary 1 – Peterborough, Fenland, Huntingdonshire population 509,112:

Strong industrial base with opportunities around logistics linked to its transport corridors.

Unitary 2 – East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City population 409,970: Focused on high value sectors attracted to Greater Cambridge. Nationally important growth area linked to the Oxford to Cambridge Supercluster.

Unitary 1: This provides an industrial base with significant housing potential. Peterborough has an industrial and logistics hub. Northwest Cambridgeshire has smaller towns and a mixed rural economy. This option supports industrial/logistics sectors and the regional workforce. Maximising economic opportunities is dependent on co-ordinated delivery of housing, skills and industrial growth. Compared to other options there would be less flexibility to tailor growth strategies for Fenland/East Cambridgeshire separately. The northwest unitary sits just outside the core of the Supercluster but can benefit through improved transport connectivity. Needs co-ordination to ensure linkage with the Supercluster.

Unitary 2: Significant opportunity with Cambridge as a world-leading knowledge economy, centred on innovation and life sciences, AI, high tech clusters. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire are at the heart of the Supercluster, supporting government ambitions for growth. East Cambridgeshire is a small, rural district, which could benefit from being incorporated with the other two; this base is kept intact with surrounding areas to make a strong place for national science and innovation. There is the opportunity to develop the Oxford- Cambridge Supercluster boosting economic opportunity in less prosperous areas such as East Cambridgeshire.

High value innovation concentrated here aligns with national goals. Ensuring housing and infrastructure support for economic expansion. SE Cambridgeshire: suburban/rural support for Cambridge innovation. Impact on national ambition: Concentrates high-value growth in Cambridge. Housing constraints may limit workforce expansion. There is land for housing growth which allows Cambridge to be paired with nearby areas to absorb housing pressures which are important for expansion

3.2 Option B

Unitary 1 - Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire population 600,578: Focus: Levelling Up, logistics, agriculture, manufacturing, and housing delivery.

Unitary 2 - Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire population 318,504: Focus: Innovation, research, high-tech, and knowledge economy at the heart of the Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster.

Unitary 1 – this creates a relatively large unitary focused on Peterborough's sectors in terms of logistics, industrial, and manufacturing hubs. Linked with Fenland and Huntingdonshire the area can provide housing and industrial growth capacity. It supports workforce supply for high-value jobs in the south and provides space for industrial

expansion, infrastructure, and housing to sustain Corridor growth. This option helps could regional inequalities along with the ability to create growth Corridors.

Unitary 2 - South Cambridgeshire & Cambridge City: complementary to Unitary 1 being very focused on the innovation aspect and economic growth with less distraction than other options: Cambridge: globally significant innovation cluster (AI, life sciences, research). South Cambridgeshire: supports Cambridge's innovation economy with suburban housing and office/industrial land. With a concentration on high-value economic growth, it provides the opportunity to maintain international competitiveness and driving innovation along the Supercluster and Innovation corridor. This option will require careful management to ensure Cambridge's growth agenda stays central to the southern unitary and that the unitaries complement one other.

3.3 Option C

Western Unitary - Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire population 504,570: Focus: High-tech growth, innovation, and Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster Corridor links. This is just under the Government target but has global significance.

Eastern Unitary - Peterborough, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland population 414,512: Focus: Levelling Up, housing delivery, logistics, and agri-tech. Also below the target, so may have questionable long-term resilience but provides strong housing capacity.

The western unitary anchors the UK's innovation and R&D economy, fully aligned with the Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster ambitions. Cambridge provides a globally recognised hub for science and high-tech.

The eastern unitary fits well with the focus on urban regeneration, housing delivery, logistics, and agri-tech. Cambridge provides global R&D strength, Huntingdonshire provides land for housing and business parks. There is opportunity to expand innovation-led growth into Huntingdonshire if transport (A14, East-West Rail) is enhanced

However, this fragments the Supercluster growth Corridor. Cambridge (West) and Peterborough (East) are separated into different units, weakening the strategic case for joined-up planning and investment across the Corridor. National government may see this as creating two mismatched authorities, one highly prosperous and one more deprived, without a balancing mechanism.

Fragmented Economic Narrative: West unitary will be seen as “wealthy Cambridge-led,” East unit as “Levelling Up dependent.” This could exacerbate inequalities rather than reduce them. Eastern unitary is below the Government preference, potentially lacking capacity to deliver major infrastructure projects. Growth of Cambridge (West) may not be matched by housing delivery in the East unless strong cross-boundary agreements are made.

3.4 Option D

Greater Cambridge Unitary - Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire population 318,504. Focus: Science, innovation, and high-tech growth (core of the Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster).

Greater Peterborough Unitary - Peterborough + part of Huntingdonshire
population 287,214: Focus: Levelling Up, skills, jobs, housing growth, logistics, and agri-tech.

Mid-Cambridgeshire Unitary - Part of Huntingdonshire + East Cambridgeshire + Fenland
population 313,364: Focus: Rural housing, market towns, balanced growth, transport Corridors.

Each unitary is smaller than the government's preferred 500k+ range, but:

Greater Cambridge is justified by its global significance in innovation and the Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster while Greater Peterborough aligns with Levelling Up and could attract government support.

Because of their size, resilience must still be determined for both of these as well as Mid-Cambridgeshire.

Greater Cambridge: anchors the UK's innovation economy (life sciences, AI, green tech). Directly supports the Oxford–Cambridge Supercluster and government ambitions to grow global R&D hubs.

Greater Peterborough: aligns with Levelling Up by focusing on urban regeneration, housing delivery, skills development, and agri-tech/logistics industries.

Mid-Cambridgeshire: provides housing capacity and market town renewal, supporting balanced regional growth.

There is innovation & productivity growth (Cambridge cluster) driving UK productivity; attracting global investment. Potential to expand into East Cambridgeshire/Fenland if planned housing/infrastructure supports growth. Potential to release land for housing, easing pressure on Cambridge. It supports sustainable development if transport Corridors (A14, A10, East-West Rail) are improved. However there are risks of fragmentation of Economic Strategy. Without strong cross-unitary coordination, the region may struggle to present a single voice to Whitehall or investors. Also may struggle to finance major infrastructure projects without combined structures and that Cambridge focused policies overshadow Peterborough or rural priorities, unless governance ensures balance.

Appendix 1 - DSIT Innovation Clusters Map - Attached to the email

Appendix 2 - Analysis of CPCA pipeline – attached to email

Appendix 3 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Commuting Patterns

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMMUTING PATTERNS						
Criteria	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	U1	U2	U1	U2	U1	U2
Internal containment rate %	77.5	81.0	79.4	80.7	75.2	79.7
Job self-sufficiency rate %	77.9	67.9	72.9	61.2	66.0	68.5
Internal daily commuters	107,919	75,746	155,013	56,952	111,227	93,911
Outbound daily commuters	31,279	17,730	40,129	13,603	36,657	23,902
Top outbound destinations	South Cambridgeshire 4,590 Cambridge 4,386 South Kesteven 2,505 North Northamptonshire 2,354 Bedford 2,239	West Suffolk 4,197 Huntingdonshire 2,718 North Hertfordshire 1,505 Uttlesford 1,342 Peterborough 975	South Cambridgeshire 12,860 West Suffolk 3,745 South Kesteven 2,566 King's Lynn and West Norfolk 2,522 North Northamptonshire 2,418	Huntingdonshire 2,207 West Suffolk 1,472 North Hertfordshire 1,421 East Cambridgeshire 1,352 Uttlesford 1,146	South Cambridgeshire 9,384 Huntingdonshire 7,574 West Suffolk 3,595 King's Lynn and West Norfolk 2,457 South Kesteven 2,430	Peterborough 4,648 Bedford 2,313 North Hertfordshire 1,812 East Cambridgeshire 1,740 West Suffolk 1,622
Top inbound sources	South Kesteven 5,690 South Holland 4,430 King's Lynn and West Norfolk 3,592 North Northamptonshire 3,274 South Cambridgeshire 2,026	West Suffolk 8,943 Huntingdonshire 7,208 Fenland 2,866 North Hertfordshire 2,148 Uttlesford 1,881	South Cambridgeshire 16,881 West Suffolk 6,081 South Kesteven 5,745 King's Lynn and West Norfolk 5,025 South Holland 4,488	Huntingdonshire 6,820 West Suffolk 6,782 East Cambridgeshire 6,720 North Hertfordshire 2,132 Uttlesford 1,830	South Cambridgeshire 15,204 Huntingdonshire 8,280 West Suffolk 5,946 South Kesteven 5,312 King's Lynn and West Norfolk 4,877	East Cambridgeshire 7,231 West Suffolk 6,917 Peterborough 5,231 Fenland 3,458 North Hertfordshire 2,280



CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMMUTING PATTERNS

Summary	• Excellent internal integration - most residents work within the Unitary area • Moderate job self-sufficiency • Multiple external employment relationships - may indicate fragmented economy	• Excellent internal integration - most residents work within the Unitary area • Moderate job self-sufficiency • Multiple external employment relationships - may indicate fragmented economy	• Excellent internal integration - most residents work within the Unitary area • Moderate job self-sufficiency • Multiple external employment relationships - may indicate fragmented economy
Conclusion	• Highest containment rate across the two authorities • Highest job self-sufficiency across the two authorities	• Least balanced because of different population and areas of U1 and U2	• Highest internal daily commuters • Middle in terms of internal containment rate and job self sufficiency

Appendix 4 – Data sources

- **DSIT Innovation Clusters Map**
 - Data : <https://www.innovationclusters.dsit.gov.uk>
 - Methodology: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identifying-and-describing-uk-innovation-clusters>
- **EEH Connecting Economies report**
 - Data : <https://eehdata.com/data-explorer>
 - Reports : <https://englandseconomicheartland.com/publications-and-papers/publications>
- **Population**
 - Data : <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>
 - Data : https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021
- **CPCA Pipeline**
 - Data : Provided by participating councils
- **Commuting Patterns**
 - Report : <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusorigindestination/>
 - Data : https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_od
 - Methodology : <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/traveltoworkqualityinformationforcensus2021>
 - Year : 2020/21
- **GIS boundaries**
 - Data: <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/>
- **Additional Information:**
 - Data: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-local-statistics/areas/E47000008-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough>

Contact details

Simon Bandy Senior Strategy Director, Local Partnerships
Email: simonbandy@localpartnerships.gov.uk

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