



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

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Bridget Smith  
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Mike Davey  
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**Matthew Pennycook MP**  
*Minister of State*

**Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government**  
4th Floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

23 August 2024

Dear all,

## **REALISING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF GREATER CAMBRIDGE**

Over the past year Cambridge has been at the centre of debates about economic growth, productivity, housing delivery and infrastructure provision. These issues are key priorities for the Government as we work to boost prosperity and living standards across the UK. I am therefore writing to set out the approach we will take, working with local partners, to support the sustainable growth of Cambridge.

We believe that the recent focus on Cambridge and its untapped economic potential are entirely warranted. The city's strengths in knowledge-intensive businesses and its unique innovation ecosystem are well documented, with strong connections between investors, researchers, businesses and local government. The economic growth of Cambridge has been a phenomenal success and we should seek to maximise the potential contribution that Greater Cambridge could make to the UK economy.

Cambridge is of course more than an economic asset. It is home to tightknit communities who are proud of their city, but justifiably, have some concerns about its future. Success has clearly come with costs; expensive housing, traffic jams and air pollution are daily concerns for many residents and risk deterring those who want to live, work and study in the city. Cambridge is also one of the most unequal places in the UK, a sign that the benefits of its economic success have not been shared by all.

I know that local partners in Greater Cambridge share the Government's high ambitions for sustainable economic growth. While I recognise that in recent years much has been delivered, there remain significant barriers to realising the area's full potential. The Deputy Prime Minister and I are determined to help remove them and overcome the issues that have held up planned development for essential housing and laboratory space. The excellent work that has taken place over recent months has demonstrated what can be done and I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your contribution. Action to tackle water scarcity, for example, has shown what can be achieved when local authorities, central government and public bodies work in partnership on nationally significant priorities.

Greater Cambridge has a vital role to play in this Government's mission to kickstart economic growth. However, we realise that many crucial decisions remain to be made about the precise form that ambitious and high-quality sustainable growth takes in the area. I am determined that

we take a collaborative approach to them, appreciating as I do that your insights about the city, its surrounding area and the communities you serve need to fully inform the Government's thinking.

I therefore want to take the opportunity to reset the work and the relationship between central government and local partners. An early in-person discussion with you to that end would be extremely beneficial and I hope it can take place as part of a visit to Cambridge in the near future. My officials will be in contact with you and your offices in the hope you are able to meet with me when I do. I look forward to speaking with you all soon.

**Best wishes,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', written in a cursive style.

**Matthew Pennycook MP**  
**Minister of State for Housing and Planning**