



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Homes
England

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Dear Chief Executive

We are writing to tell you that we have commissioned consultants AECOM to explore the contribution that new or expanded settlements could make to maximising the economic potential of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. In his letter to council Leaders in July, the Housing Minister signalled the Government's plans to undertake such analysis and commitment to working closely with local partners. We want to work in partnership with your authority and others, and the Local Economic Partnerships, so that the analysis is informed by the work you are doing locally to respond to the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendations.

We are writing to all council, Combined Authority and LEP Chief Executives within the Arc to ensure you have clarity on the scope and purpose of this work: our teams are available to answer any questions you may have.

The overarching objectives of the commission are to first test and evidence the strategic case for delivering significant new housing in realising the economic potential of the Arc. Second (subject to the earlier findings) explore the potential opportunities for employment and housing growth in new or expanded settlements across the Arc. The analysis will consider both infrastructure opportunities and requirements. It will consider the potential environmental, ecological and biodiversity effects of options for housing growth and explore opportunities for net gain, at a pan-Arc scale.

This work builds on the Government's discussions with a number of councils in the Arc about housing deals. The Housing Minister has invited local authorities to begin a conversation on new and expanded settlements to better understand what would need to be in place and by when, to realise local ambitions. We see this work providing an evidence base that can help inform our ongoing discussions with you on a shared vision for the corridor and the action that needs to be taken to implement that vision.

We and the AECOM team would like make contact with individual local authorities to take forward this work. If you would also like to meet and discuss this subject as a group of partners, or in some other configuration, then please do let us know. In the meantime, you or your team can contact our contract managers for the work on our dedicated email address: oxcanalysis@communities.gov.uk.

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