

# Planning Consents and Build Out Rates

- 2,542 new homes were completed in Greater Cambridge over the twelve months to September 2025, according to Energy Performance Certificate figures – a marked increase representing a 1.9% expansion of housing stock.
- The flow of new planning consents in Greater Cambridge shot up in Q3 2025, driven by a single very large consent and unlikely to be repeated consistently.
- The gap between planning consents and completions was 11% in Greater Cambridge over the past decade – below the England average of 24%, suggesting sites in Greater Cambridge are built out more quickly.
- Having slightly lagged regional and national benchmarks over the past five years, sales rates for private housing in Greater Cambridge have fallen sharply in recently months, which will slow the pace of market housing delivery.

This report looks at recent housing delivery and planning data across the Greater Cambridge area (Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire).

Planning consent was granted for nearly 4,600 homes in Greater Cambridge between June and September 2025. This was overwhelmingly made up of 4,000 homes that had previously received outline permission being granted full consent at Northstowe Phase 3A. A further 198 homes were also given full consent at Waterbeach Barracks.

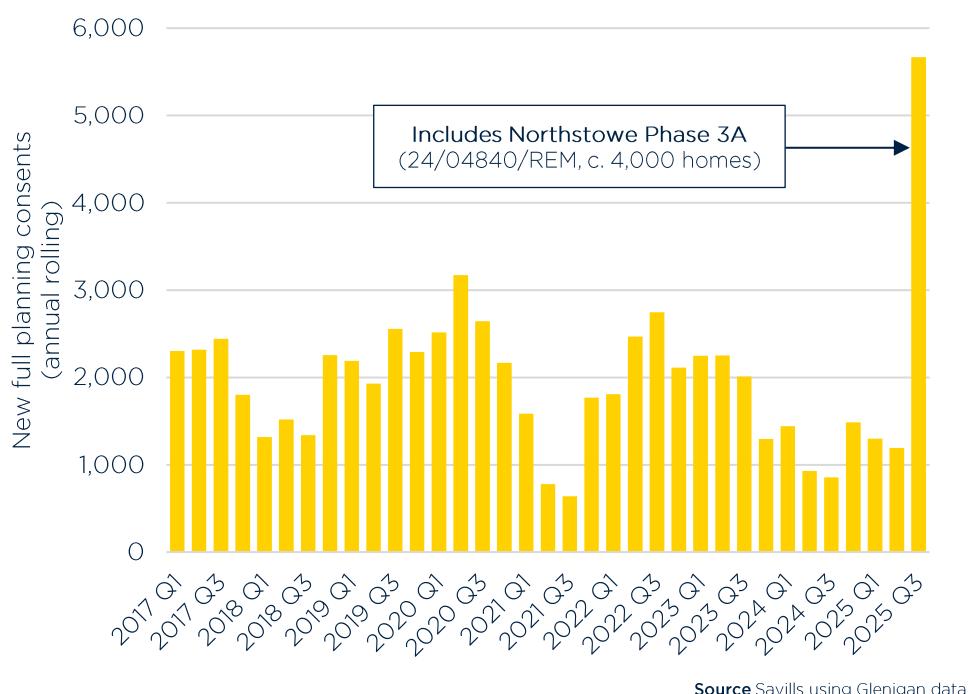
This takes the annual rolling figure for homes granted full permission in the 12 months to Q3 2025 to 5,666. Other schemes over that period include 203 homes at Swanley Park, west of Camborne and a further 91 homes at Marleigh Phase 3B, near Cambridge City Airport.

All of the trend series in Figure 2 are indexed to the average annual flow of consents during the Q4 2018 to Q1 2020 period, a period which saw a sustained peak in the number of homes gaining full planning consent nationally.

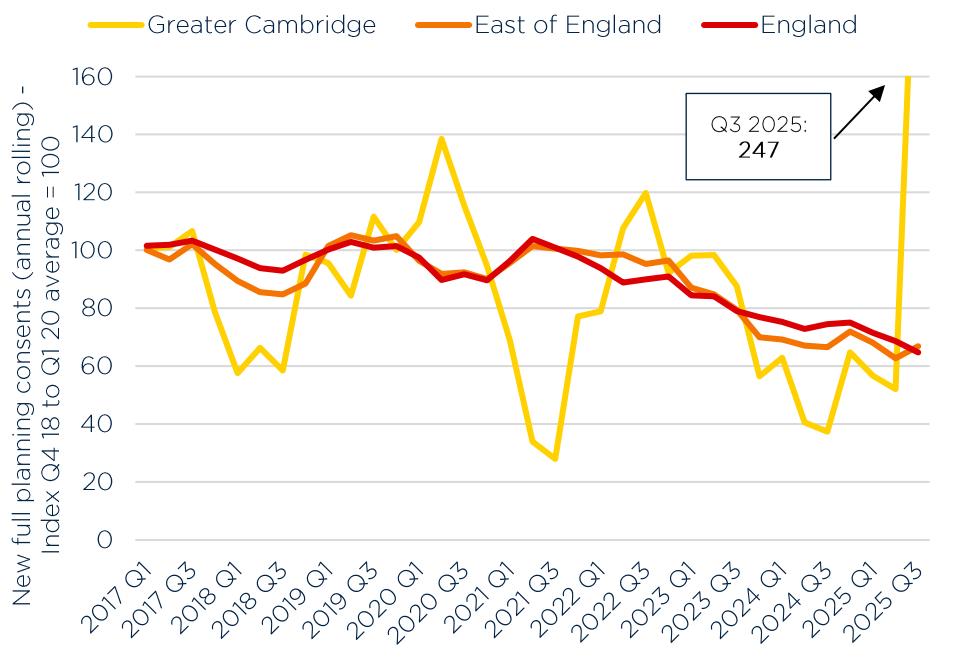
Since then (albeit with more volatility due to reflecting a smaller area), Greater Cambridge consents have broadly followed a wider decline in consents seen nationally.

Consents in Greater Cambridge were over 280% above the national trend in the year to Q3 2025, but this has been driven by a single very large consent in Q3, and is unlikely to be repeated. The wider trend seen across the rest of the year to Q3 saw consents in Greater Cambridge continue to decline at a faster rate than national and regional trends.

**Figure 1** New full planning consents in Greater Cambridge



**Figure 2** New full planning consents in a national and regional context



5,666 new homes gained planning consent in the year to September 2025, considerably above the 1,675 homes per annum targeted by the Local Plan. This is driven by a single large full consent at Northstowe, and comes after a period of consents falling below the target.

With 2,542 new homes built in the year to September 2025, completions were above the currently adopted Local Plan target, and surpassed the emerging Local Plan target of 2,295 for the first time in several years.

Annual growth in housing stock was 1.9% for the year to September 2025, above the 1.2% seen in 2024, and in line with the 1.8% recorded in 2023. It remains firmly above the England-wide trend of 0.8%.

Net Additional Dwellings (NAD) and Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) offer two ways of measuring new home completions.

The NAD figures show 1,592 new homes were completed across Greater Cambridge in the year to March 2024. Delivery fell 32% from peak of 2,339 completions in 2023, representing a greater drop than the 6% fall in completions seen across England.

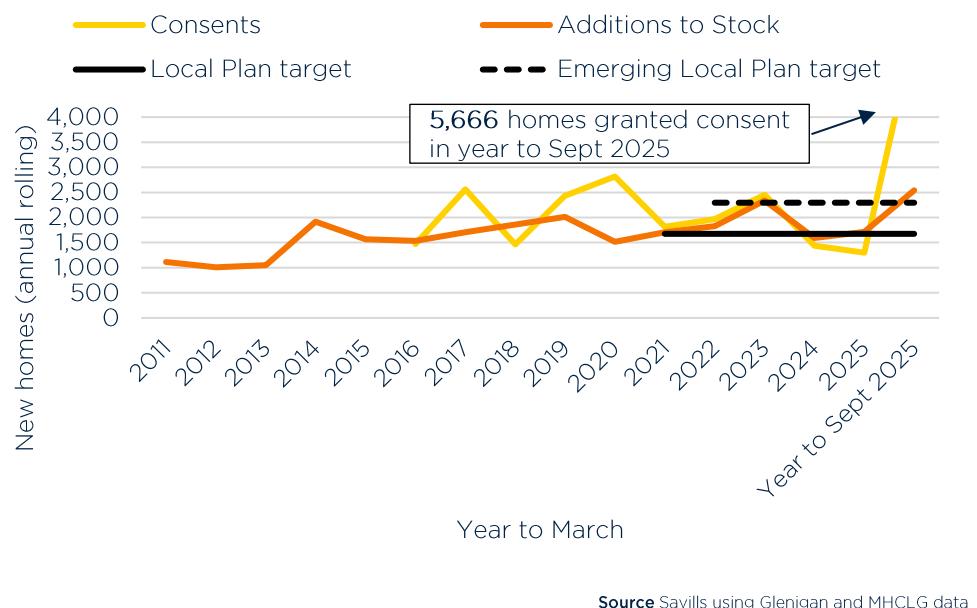
More timely EPC figures report different overall figures due to recent revisions, but suggest that delivery rebounded in the second and third quarters of the year. Annualised new EPCs rose by around 48% between March 2025 and September 2025, with 2,542 homes built in the year to September 2025.

Figure 5 show the ratio between additions to stock and full planning consents. A number above one means more new homes were built than were granted full consent in that year.

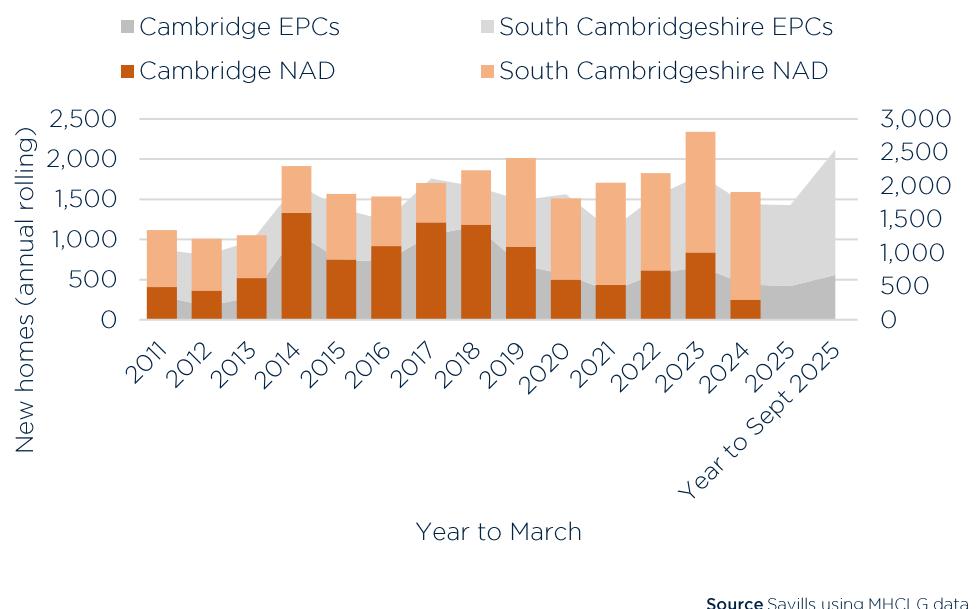
Over the ten years to March 2025, the gap between the number of homes being granted consent and additions to stock in Greater Cambridge was 11%, compared to 24% for England. This suggests that sites in Greater Cambridge have on average been built out more quickly and with less attrition in development than seen across the rest of England over the past decade.

The gap in Greater Cambridge expanded to 55% in the twelve months to September 2025 due to one very large consent.

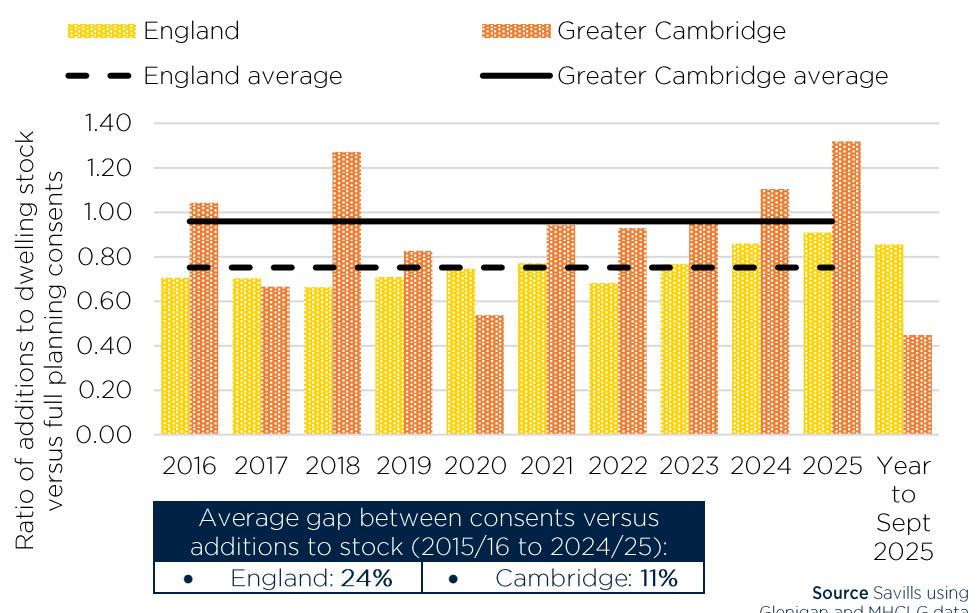
**Figure 3** Consented and completed new homes in Greater Cambridge



**Figure 4** Net additional dwellings and Energy Performance Certificates



**Figure 5** Consents and Build Out Rates



Housing supply is heavily reliant on homes sold to individuals for owner-occupation. Sales rates – the speed at which homes are sold – are determined by relative affordability and local demand. They influence the pace at which developers build out homes for private sale.

Greater Cambridge achieved average sales rates of 0.63 over the 5 years to Q2 2025, in line with 0.67 seen across the East of England, despite more limited affordability. This indicates demand for housing in Greater Cambridge was sufficiently strong as to absorb sales even at relatively higher prices.

Sales rates have fallen in recent months, due to economic uncertainty and higher mortgage costs impacting less affordable markets.

As part of its emerging Local Plan, Greater Cambridge has identified an ideal mixture of home sizes by tenure. How closely has recent development matched this?

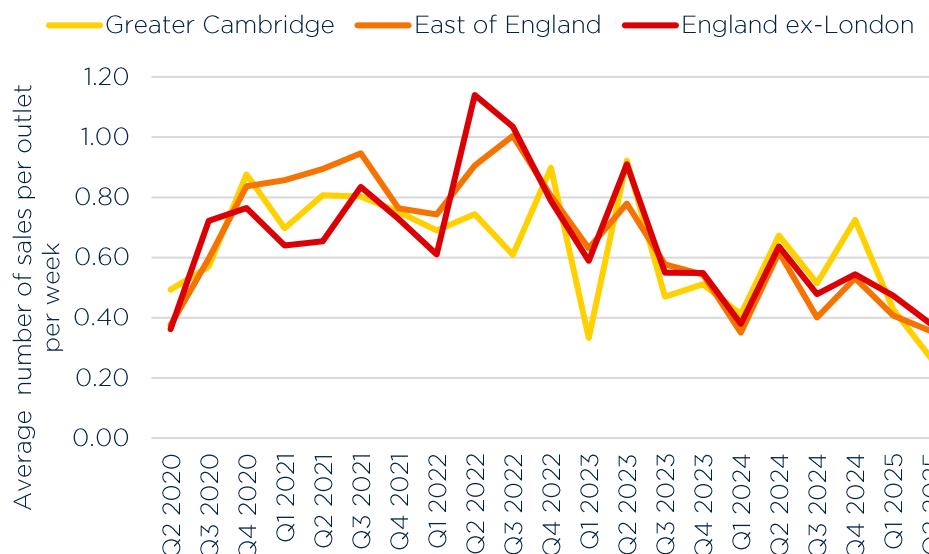
Over the 5 years to Q2 2025, sales of larger market housing has exceeded the modelled proportion. Homes with 4 or more beds made up 38% of sales over the period, compared to 22% identified in the modelled mix.

Conversely, all other sizes of homes were lower than the modelled mix, with 2 and 3 beds making up 55% of sales compared to an identified mix of 69%. Sales of 1 beds were very slightly below what was identified (7% vs 8%), suggesting private development is aligned with the identified mix for small homes.

Over the ten years to March 2024, 5,238 new affordable homes were completed in Greater Cambridge. Delivery rates were fairly consistent across the period, with at least 500 homes delivered per annum eight years out of ten. Over the same period, a relatively small proportion of homes (7%) were offered as social rent, while 64% were some form of affordable or intermediate rental product. 29% were for affordable ownership.

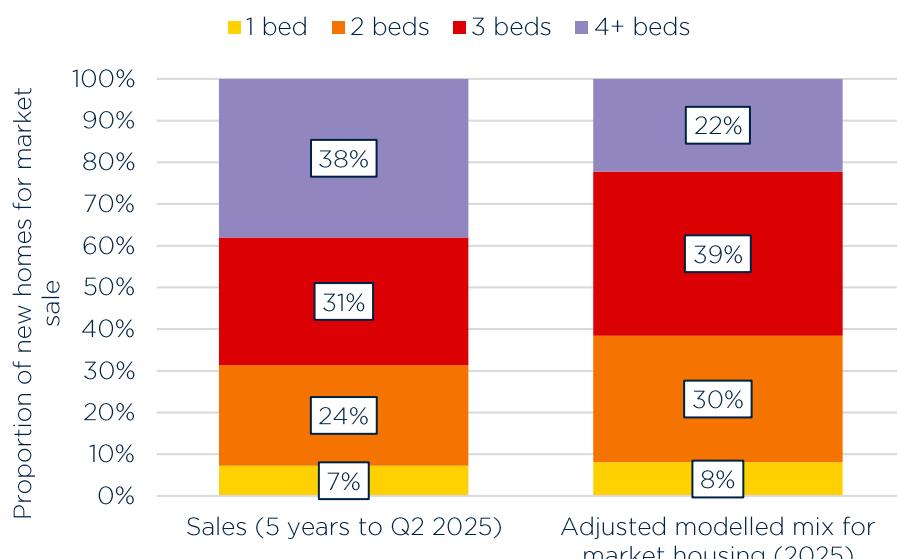
68% of new affordable homes were provided via Section 106 over the period, reaching 87% in 2020-21. This is higher than the trend seen across England in recent years, where c. 50% is typically provided through S106. This suggests S106 has been successful in capturing higher development values in Greater Cambridge.

**Figure 6** New build private sales rates on sites with 20+ homes



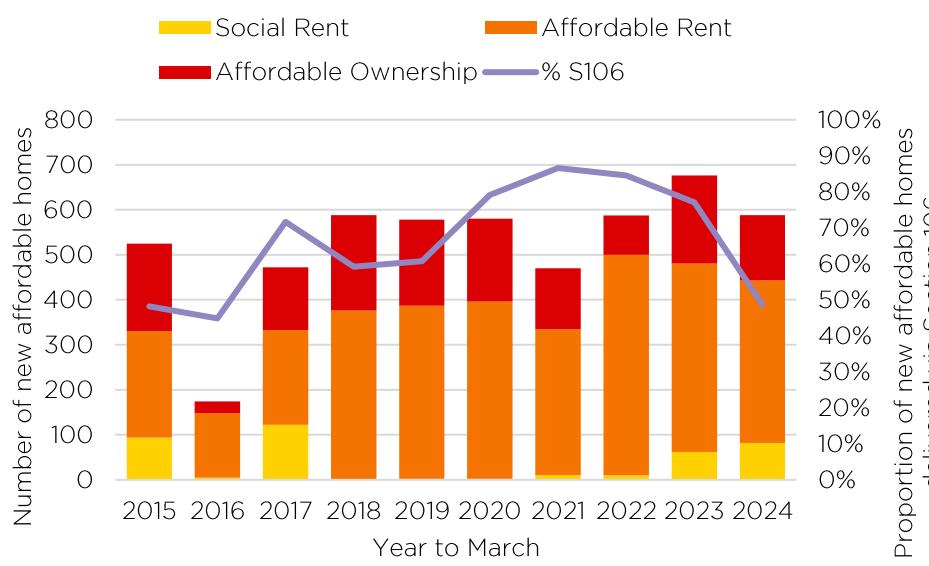
Source Savills analysis of sales data NB London is excluded as predominantly flat development distorts sales rates

**Figure 7** The size of homes delivered for market sale



Source Housing Needs of Specific Groups in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2025), Savills analysis of sales data

**Figure 8** Affordable housing delivery in Greater Cambridge



Source MHCLG Live Table 1011

## Important Note

Finally, in accordance with our normal practice, we would state that this report is for general informative purposes only and does not constitute a formal valuation, appraisal or recommendation. It is only for the use of the persons to whom it is addressed and no responsibility can be accepted to any third party for the whole or any part of its contents. It may not be published, reproduced or quoted in part or in whole, nor may it be used as a basis for any contract, prospectus, agreement or other document without prior consent, which will not be unreasonably withheld.

Our findings are based on the assumptions given. As is customary with market studies, our findings should be regarded as valid for a limited period of time and should be subject to examination at regular intervals.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in it is correct, no responsibility can be taken for omissions or erroneous data provided by a third party or due to information being unavailable or inaccessible during the research period. The estimates and conclusions contained in this report have been conscientiously prepared in the light of our experience in the property market and information that we were able to collect, but their accuracy is in no way guaranteed.