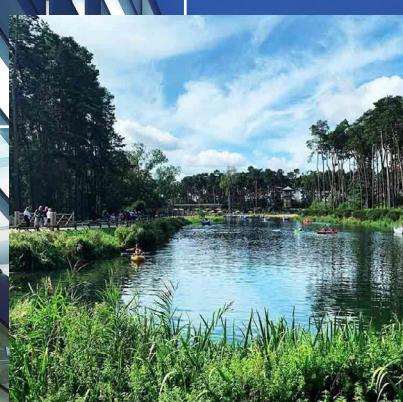


BeCentral Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire: The opportunity for investing businesses





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This is Central Bedfordshire

Our vision for sustainable growth

Welcome to Central Bedfordshire's inward investment prospectus, introducing our unique location opportunity for high-value investing businesses.

Strategically situated in the heart of England and between Oxford and Cambridge, our area benefits from a rapidly expanding, knowledge-based economy. In this context, Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to balancing growth with sustainability and quality of life – to deliver the best possible environment for investing businesses and the people who work and live here.

Our 2050 Vision sets out our ambitions – for Central Bedfordshire to develop as a great place to live and work, where prosperity, innovation and connectivity are complemented by economic inclusiveness, health, and safe and thriving communities. Our sustainability commitments to date include investing in carbon neutral and sustainable infrastructure, biodiversity, support for businesses through the energy transition, and a target of making our area carbon neutral by 2030.

All of these ambitions align with our aspiration to attract high-value and high-technology businesses, their employees, and their families to Central Bedfordshire. Many of the technologies and sustainability practices in which our world-class university and industry clusters lead the way will be key to delivering the UK's goal of net zero carbon by 2050.

Central Bedfordshire is open for business. We look forward to supporting your investments in our area, while creating an excellent environment for businesses to grow, and people to live and work.

Cllr Kevin Collins
Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration

The business investment opportunity

Central Bedfordshire presents one of the UK's most exciting opportunities for business investment, innovation, and growth in a highly strategic location.

The area is situated to the north of London and between Oxford and Cambridge – at the heart of a globally significant, high-growth knowledge corridor connecting the two university cities. Through large-scale strategic investments in transport infrastructure, employment sites, and new housing and communities, the area is projected to become a leading growth pole for the UK's high-technology, high-value industries.

For investing companies in sectors including high-performance technologies, advanced logistics, and digital technologies, Central Bedfordshire offers the potential to become part of this growth story. The area provides access to world-class knowledge, skills and supply chains, while benefiting from significant cost and connectivity advantages versus nearby technology hubs including Oxford, Cambridge and London.

A combination of beautiful towns and countryside, accessibility, and space for investment has also given rise to a thriving visitor economy. The area is increasingly recognised as a great place to visit and stay, with significant potential for further growth in this sector.

Central Bedfordshire's attractiveness to businesses across sectors is underpinned by a strategic location and superb transport and data connections. The area benefits from excellent road, rail and air links, and 98% super-fast broadband coverage, enabling fast communications with UK and international markets. Proposed infrastructure investments including the M1-A6 link road and East-West Rail will further strengthen the area's connectivity for the future.

This unique combination of knowledge, cost-effectiveness and connectivity makes Central Bedfordshire the informed location choice for high-value businesses seeking growth and competitive advantage.

Sites and accommodation for businesses

Future strategic development sites

- 1 Marston Gate
- 2 Holme Farm, Biggleswade
- 3 Sundon Rail Freight Interchange

Technology parks

- 1 Cranfield Technology Park
- 2 Millbrook Technology Park

Flexible / incubation space

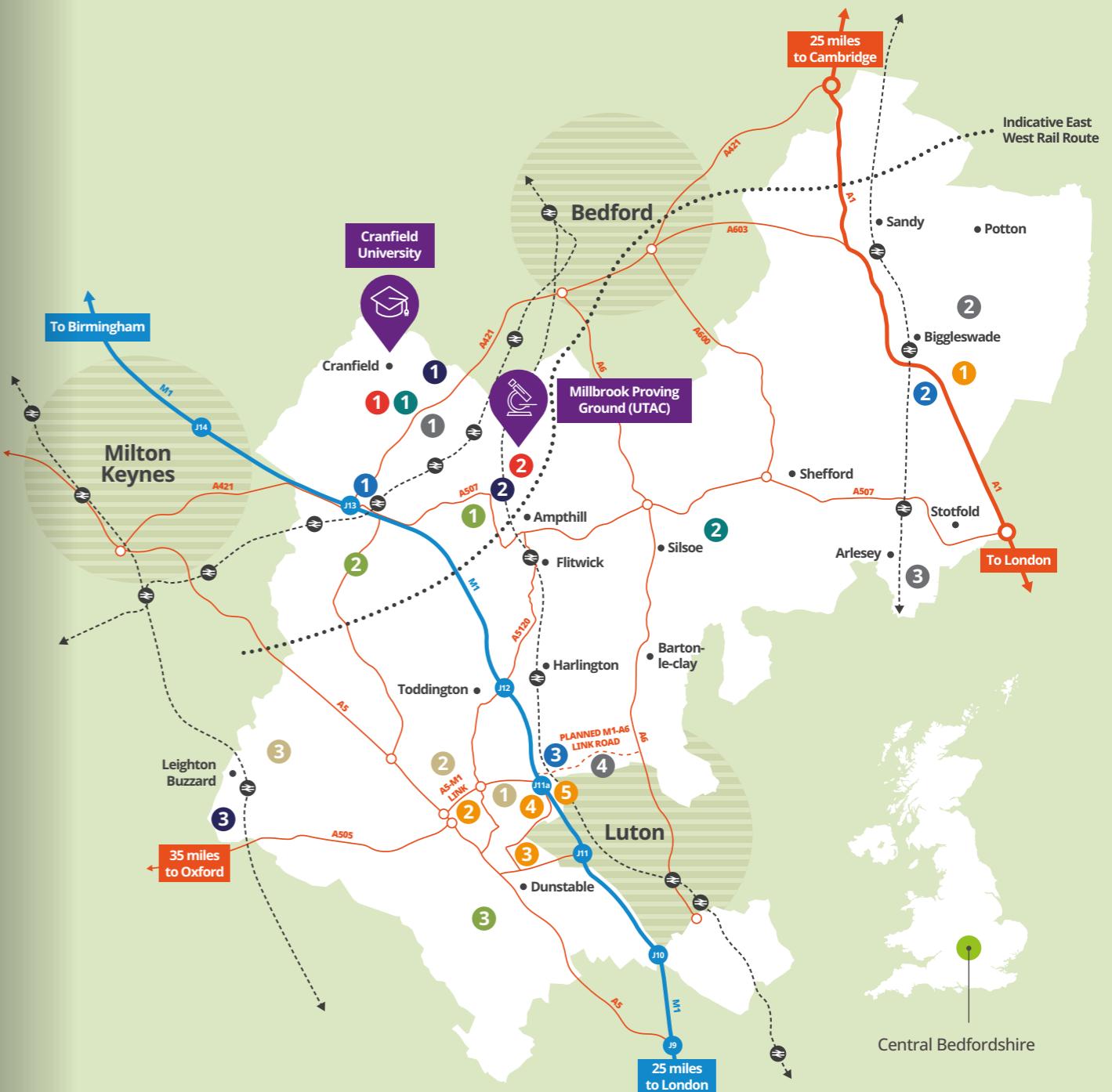
- 1 Cranfield Eagle Lab
- 2 Wrest Park Silsoe

Key housing developments

- 1 Marston Valley
- 2 East of Biggleswade
- 3 East of Arlesey
- 4 North of Luton

Strategic development sites

- 1 North Houghton Regis 1
- 2 North Houghton Regis 2
- 3 East of Leighton Buzzard



Major companies*

High-performance technologies

- 1 Nissan Technical Centre Europe
- 2 Lockheed Martin
- 3 Collins Aerospace

Advanced logistics

- 1 Co-op
- 2 Amazon (DLU2)
- 3 Amazon (LTN4)
- 4 Lidl
- 5 Ocado

Visitor economy

- 1 Center Parcs, Woburn Forest
- 2 Woburn Safari Park
- 3 ZSL Whipsnade Zoo

* Example companies only – not a complete list.

Location and Regional Connectivity

Central Bedfordshire's optimal location delivers benefits for companies across industry sectors. Within a 1-hour drive time they can access:

- The high-technology and digital industry hubs of Oxford, Cambridge and London, and their world-leading universities
 - England's renowned high-performance technologies cluster, and three of the UK's leading-edge catapult technology and innovation centres
 - Major population centres, logistics hubs, and advanced manufacturing clusters in England's southeast and midlands
 - London's Luton and Heathrow airports and St Pancras international rail terminal (for services to continental Europe)

Leading technology-focused universities

- 1 University of Oxford
 - 2 University of Cambridge
 - 3 Imperial College London
 - 4 University College London
 - 5 University of Warwick

Catapult research and technology centres

- 1 Connected Places Catapult
 - 2 Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC)
 - 3 WMG Catapult (University of Warwick)
 - 4 Satellite Applications Catapult

Intermodal freight terminals

- 1 DIRFT (Daventry)
 - 2 Northampton Gateway



Credit: Cranfield University



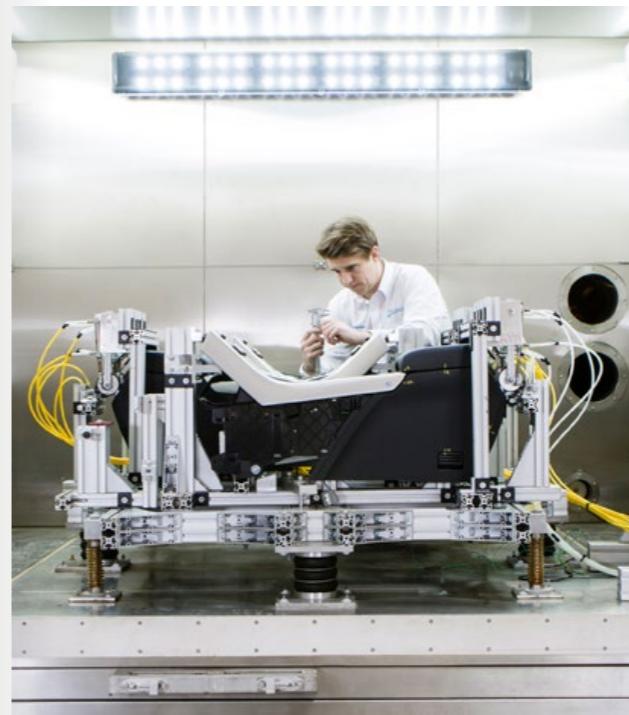
Sector Investment Opportunities

High-Performance Technologies

Strategically positioned at the heart of the UK's world-leading high-performance technologies cluster and between Oxford and Cambridge, Central Bedfordshire is ideally located for cost-effective advanced technology innovation, scale up and manufacturing.

The area is home to leading technology and engineering businesses including Nissan Technical Centre Europe, Collins Aerospace, and Lockheed Martin, along with a thriving cluster of innovative, high-growth businesses at Cranfield and Millbrook technology parks. Sectors served are characterised by significant R&D investment and high-performance demands, including advanced automotive, aerospace, defence and security.

Central Bedfordshire's businesses benefit from direct access to world-class research and technology capabilities. Cranfield University and UTAC (Millbrook Proving Ground) are leaders in design, collaborative R&D, and testing across advanced technology areas including Industry 4.0 (big data analytics, digitalisation, AI, robotics & automation), low-carbon propulsion, light-weighting, connectivity and sensors.



"We were locating ourselves at the sector's centre of gravity... the intersection of the country's traditional automotive engineering centres and its supply chain, enabling us to forge strong relationships with a range of expert companies."

Matthew Ewing
VP Vehicle Engineering at Nissan Technical Centre Europe (NTCE)

Millbrook hosts the UK's 5G test bed for transport, enabling the demonstration and testing of connected and autonomous vehicle capabilities.

Within just one hour, companies can access three of the world's top-10 ranked universities for engineering and technology, and three of the UK's catapult research and technology centres. These capabilities are complemented by a technically skilled research and advanced manufacturing workforce, and education providers - including Bedford College, Central Bedfordshire College and Cranfield University - partnering with businesses to deliver the skills they need.

Additional benefits for high-performance technology companies include available development land and state-of-the-art technology park accommodation. And the area combines these value-adding benefits with significant cost advantages versus Cambridge, Oxford, London and other southern England locations.

That's why Central Bedfordshire is the location of choice for businesses seeking to gain competitive edge, cost-effectively, in specialist areas including low-carbon transport, digitalised manufacturing, and advanced electronics.

Key location benefits for high-performance technology companies



Cutting-edge R&D, testing and innovation

Including three of the world's top-10 ranked research universities within one hour.



Flexible sites and properties for high-technology businesses

Development sites, technology parks, and flexible space.



World-class industry-focused education provision

Cranfield University – UK Top 5 for Mechanical, Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering. [8]

A skilled high-technology and advanced manufacturing workforce



29,200

Research, engineering and technology professionals [1] in Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area.



14,100

Advanced manufacturing workers [2] in Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area.

Sources: see page 35

Leading businesses, innovators and research organisations

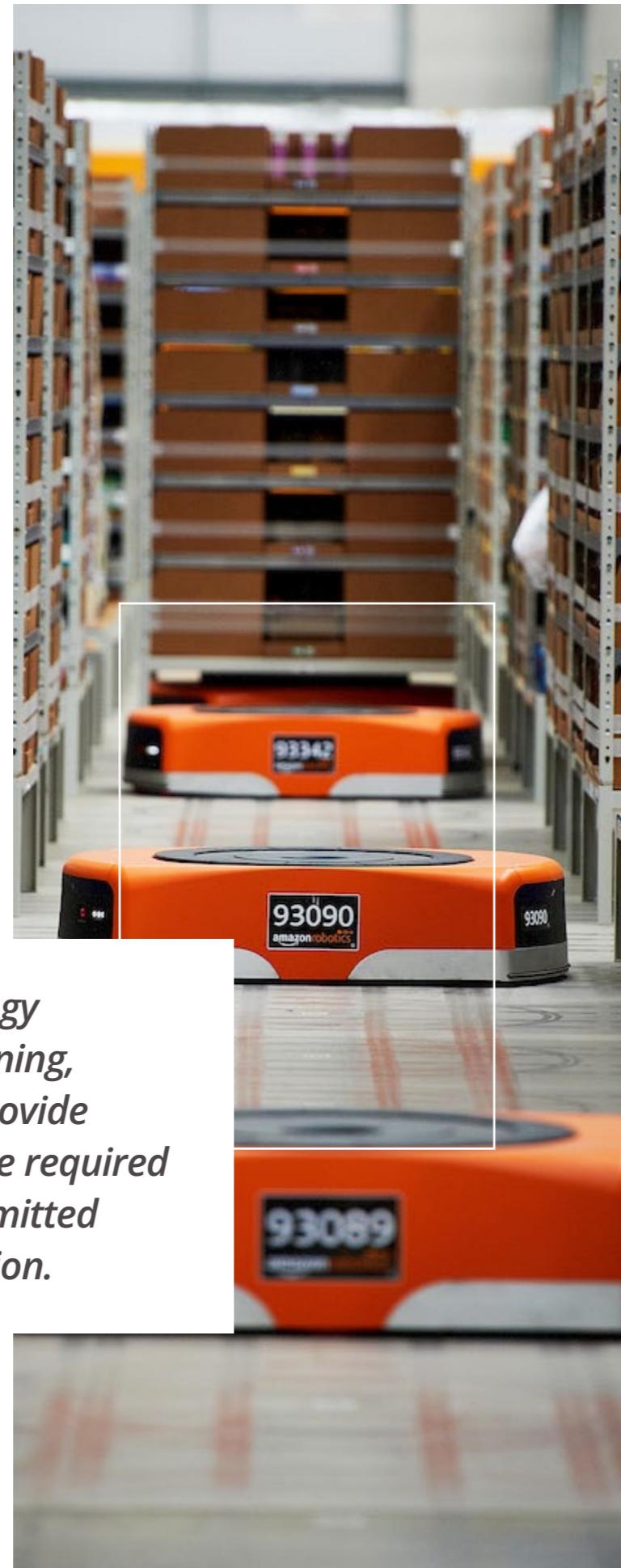


Advanced Logistics

Central Bedfordshire is the optimal location for logistics businesses seeking to combine fast access to UK and global markets with leading-edge digitalisation and automation solutions.

The area is well-established as a strategic UK logistics location. Spanning the M1 and A1 corridors, with east-west connectivity via the A421, Central Bedfordshire provides fast access to the high-income southeast of England, population centres across the UK, intermodal freight hubs including DIRFT (Daventry) and Northampton Gateway, and southern England's deep sea ports. The area welcomes advanced logistics businesses, with large-scale motorway or rail-linked sites available for development.

As a centre of high-technology industry and advanced learning, Central Bedfordshire can provide the technically skilled people required by logistics businesses committed to technology and automation.



Cranfield's Logistics and Supply Chain Management MSc is ranked

2nd in the UK and 11th worldwide.*

But Central Bedfordshire offers much more than space and connectivity. Cranfield School of Management's Centre for Logistics, Procurement and Supply Chain Management, and the school's supply chain 4.0 hub, have global reputations in the sector for advanced research and teaching. With Industry 4.0 expertise spanning engineering and logistics, the university is a leader in big data analytics, internet of things, AI, robotics and automation. This means that Cranfield University can partner with businesses to improve productivity, sustainability, resilience and profitability.

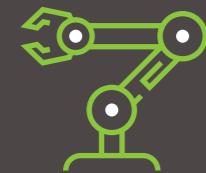
Central Bedfordshire can provide the technically skilled people required by logistics businesses committed to technology and automation. The area offers access to a substantial labour pool across specialisations including engineering, research, IT and process operations, as well as logistics and distribution. For higher level skills, Cranfield's Logistics and Supply Chain Management MSc is ranked second in the UK and eleventh worldwide.*

Combined with significant labour and property cost advantages versus competitor locations in South East England, these value-adding benefits explain why businesses including Ocado, Yusen Logistics, Amazon, and XPO Logistics have chosen to locate and expand in Central Bedfordshire.



*QS Business Masters Rankings, Supply Chain Management, 2021

Key location benefits for advanced logistics businesses and research centres



Leading-edge knowledge: supply chain 4.0 digitalisation and automation



Strategic motorway and freight rail-connected logistics sites



World-class industry-focused education provision

Cranfield University – World No.11
Logistics and Supply Chain MSc Course
Ranking (2021).^[8]

A skilled workforce in logistics and advanced technology specialisations



23,250

Logistics and distribution workers^[4]
in Central Bedfordshire's core
labour catchment area.



29,200

Research, engineering and technology
professionals^[1] in Central Bedfordshire's
core labour catchment area.

Sources: see page 35

Advanced logistics businesses and research centres



Digital Technologies

For digital technology companies and entrepreneurs, Central Bedfordshire presents a powerful business case combined with significant quality of life benefits.

Located at the heart of the UK's knowledge economy, the area offers fast access to the digital technology hubs of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Milton Keynes, enabling affordable business growth without compromise.

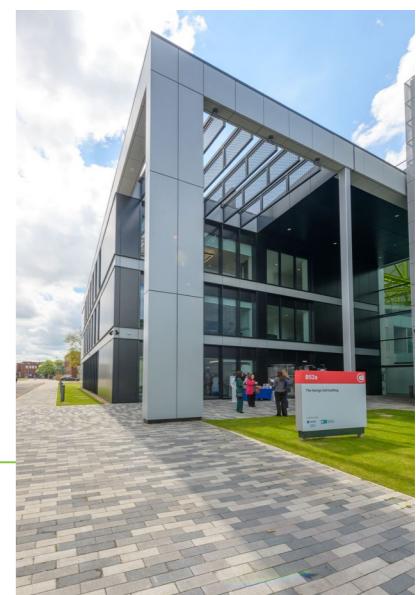
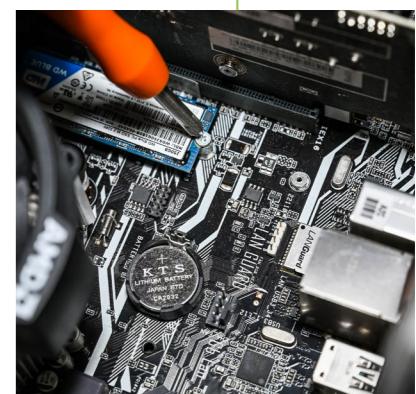
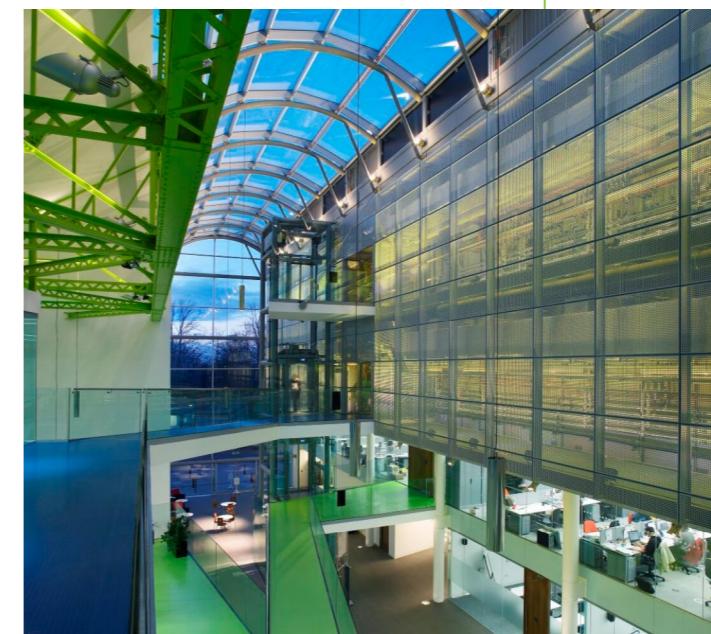
Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area provides a highly skilled digital technology workforce, including more than 14,000 people in computer programming and related occupations. With many commuting to work outside the area, the opportunity exists to provide attractive local employment for this local talent resource.

As one of the UK's highest ranking technology-focused research universities, Cranfield University provides expanding businesses with access to leading-edge knowledge, graduates, and innovation support across digital specialisations including big data analytics, AI, autonomous systems, simulation and modelling. And companies investing in Central Bedfordshire can access a range of flexible property solutions, including technology parks, business incubators, and serviced accommodation.

In Central Bedfordshire the lifestyle dividend is substantial. Residents benefit from more cost-effective housing, high-performing schools, beautiful countryside and a thriving cultural scene, while the area's new, sustainable communities enable flexible, convenient living and working. For digital technology businesses and entrepreneurs, that means an enviable mix of productivity and quality of life.



Credit: Cranfield University



Key location benefits for digital technology companies



A strategic location: fast access to key digital technology hubs



Access to world-class digital technology knowledge



Flexible property solutions for expanding digital businesses



Lifestyle benefits: reduced costs and enhanced quality of life



Work-life balance: productivity and flexibility

A skilled digital and high-technology workforce



14,250

Computer programming and related professionals ^[10] in Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area.



29,200

Research, engineering and technology professionals ^[11] in Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area.

Sources: see page 35



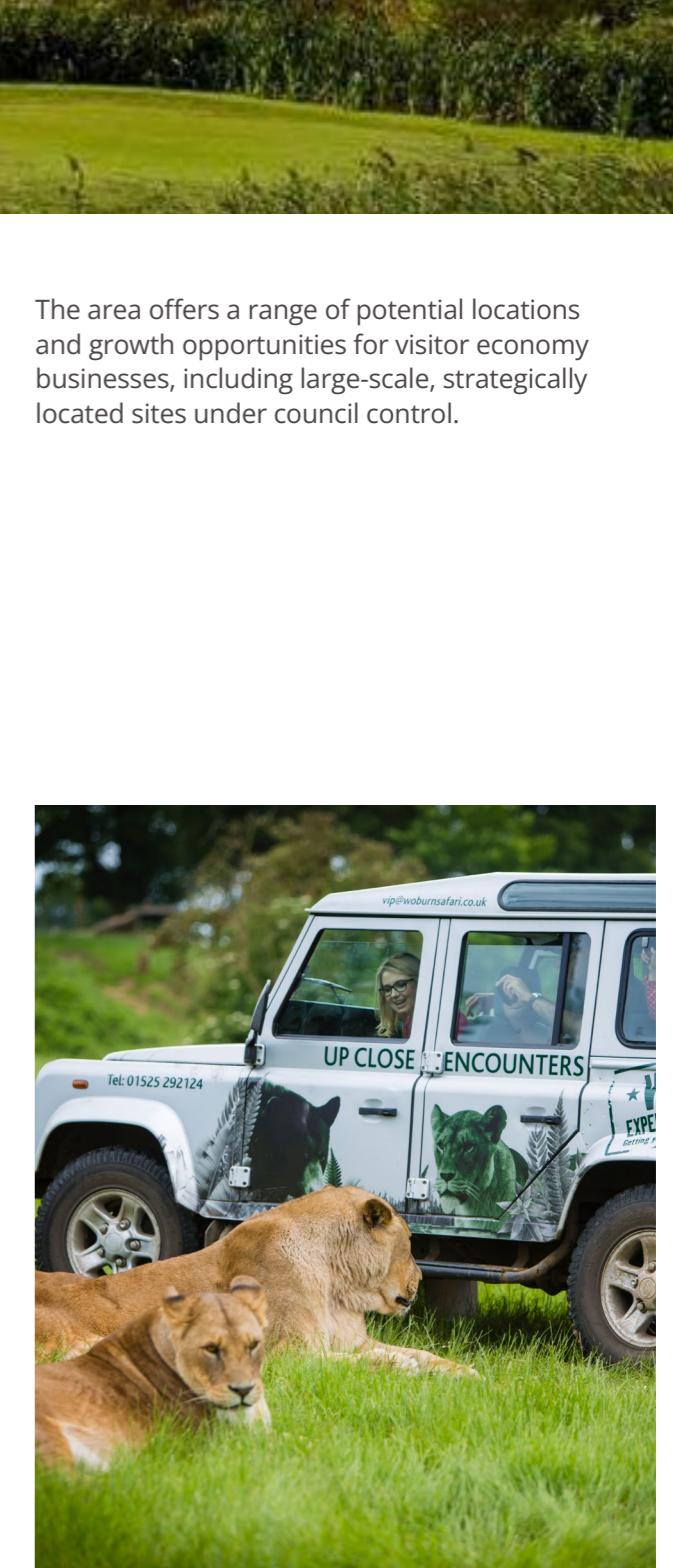
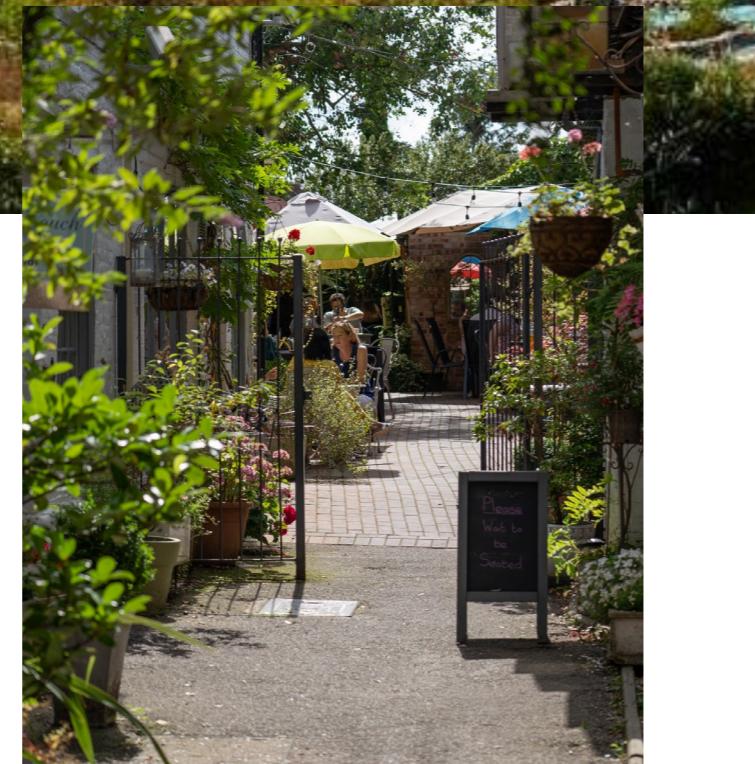
The Visitor Economy

With a track record of successful visitor economy investments and a growing reputation as a great place to visit, Central Bedfordshire offers significant potential for further expansion in the sector.

The area is well-established as home to some of England's most popular visitor attractions, including Woburn Safari Park, ZSL Whipsnade Zoo (the UK's largest zoo), and The Shuttleworth Collection of vintage aircraft and vehicles. Recent major investments have included Center Parcs Woburn Forest, a premium holiday village, highlighting the area's growth potential.

For visitors, Central Bedfordshire offers breathtaking countryside, including the Forest of Marston Vale, Greensand Ridge and the Dunstable Downs, and beautiful, historic market towns and villages. Big city facilities can be accessed in Milton Keynes, just 20 minutes away by car, and London, just 32 minutes away by train.

Central Bedfordshire offers breathtaking countryside and beautiful, historic market towns and villages.



With direct access from the M1 and A1 motorways, the area is easy to reach from England's largest and most affluent population centres, in the South East and Midlands. Air and rail connectivity is also excellent, including via the nearby cities of Luton, Bedford and Milton Keynes.

Central Bedfordshire visitor economy already comprises around 650 businesses and employs more than 9,000 people. Which means that businesses investing in the area can access expert service providers, potential partners, and an established sector workforce.

The area offers a range of potential locations and growth opportunities for visitor economy businesses, including large-scale, strategically located sites under council control.

Key location benefits for visitor economy businesses



A strategic, easily accessible central England location



Beautiful towns, villages and countryside



Space for new investment projects

A thriving visitor economy sector



650

Visitor economy businesses*



9,000+

Sector employees*

Successful, established visitor attractions



*Source: Central Bedfordshire Council

Strategic Sites and Properties for Investing Businesses

Central Bedfordshire is open for business, with available sites and properties, technology parks, and flexible accommodation to suit investing businesses of all sizes.

Strategic development sites

The area offers large-scale, strategic, motorway and freight rail connected development sites for businesses in sectors including high-performance technologies, advanced manufacturing, and advanced logistics. A range of property solutions and tenancies are available.

Council-owned strategic sites

Central Bedfordshire Council owns large development sites. We welcome enquiries relating to high value-added developments or business investments.

Technology parks

Central Bedfordshire's technology parks provide high-performance technology businesses with specialised, high-quality accommodation and direct access to world-class expertise, R&D and testing facilities.

Flexible accommodation and business incubation

For start-ups and SME's, the area offers flexible, serviced accommodation with shared facilities, attractive easy in/out tenancies, and expert mentoring for high-tech and high-growth businesses.

Central Bedfordshire Council maintains an accurate database of available commercial properties in the area. Visit our [website](#) or contact us at info@becentralbedfordshire.co.uk to start your property search.



Strategic sites and properties for investing businesses

1. Marston Gate

Promoted by Prologis, Marston Gate is allocated for up to 30 hectare (74 ac) of employment land, offering direct access to the M1 at junction 13. With B2 (industrial), B8 (warehousing and distribution) and associated E (commercial) planning consents, the site is suitable for expanding businesses in sectors including high-performance technologies, advanced logistics and advanced manufacturing.

prologis.co.uk

2. Holme Farm, Biggleswade

Holme Farm, Biggleswade comprises 63 hectares (156 ac) of development land with direct access to the A1 – up to 38 ha (94 ac) for strategic warehousing and up to 25 ha (62 ac) for other business uses. Controlled by Central Bedfordshire Council, the site may be suitable for a range of high-value business activities. Occupation could potentially be from 2025 onwards, subject to agreeing occupier terms, planning and construction.

3. Sundon Rail Freight Interchange

Sundon Rail Freight Interchange offers 40 hectares (99 ac) of strategic employment land, with a 5 ha (12.4 ac) rail freight interchange on site and direct access to the M1 at junction 11A.

Allocated in the Adopted Local Plan, the site is potentially suitable for expanding businesses in the advanced logistics sector.

4. Millbrook Technology Park

Millbrook Technology Park is a key site in the UK's advanced automotive and engineering sectors, enabling companies to co-locate with a leading automotive industry research and development facility. Property solutions include buildings, office space and workshops for long- or short-term rent, situated alongside the proving ground's tracks and test facilities.

millbrook.co.uk

5. Cranfield University Technology Park

Located on the Cranfield University campus, the Technology Park provides a range of property solutions tailored to the needs of start-up and growing technology businesses. Options include virtual, flexible and serviced offices with easy in/out rental terms, and high-quality office suites. Services include meeting and conference facilities, reception and administrative support.

cranfieldtechnologypark.co.uk

6. Cranfield Eagle Lab

Located on the university campus, Eagle Lab is a partnership between Barclays and Cranfield University, providing space and support for aerospace and aviation technology innovators. Services designed to enable business scale-up include Barclays expert mentoring, access to Cranfield's world-class specialists and facilities, and business funding assistance.

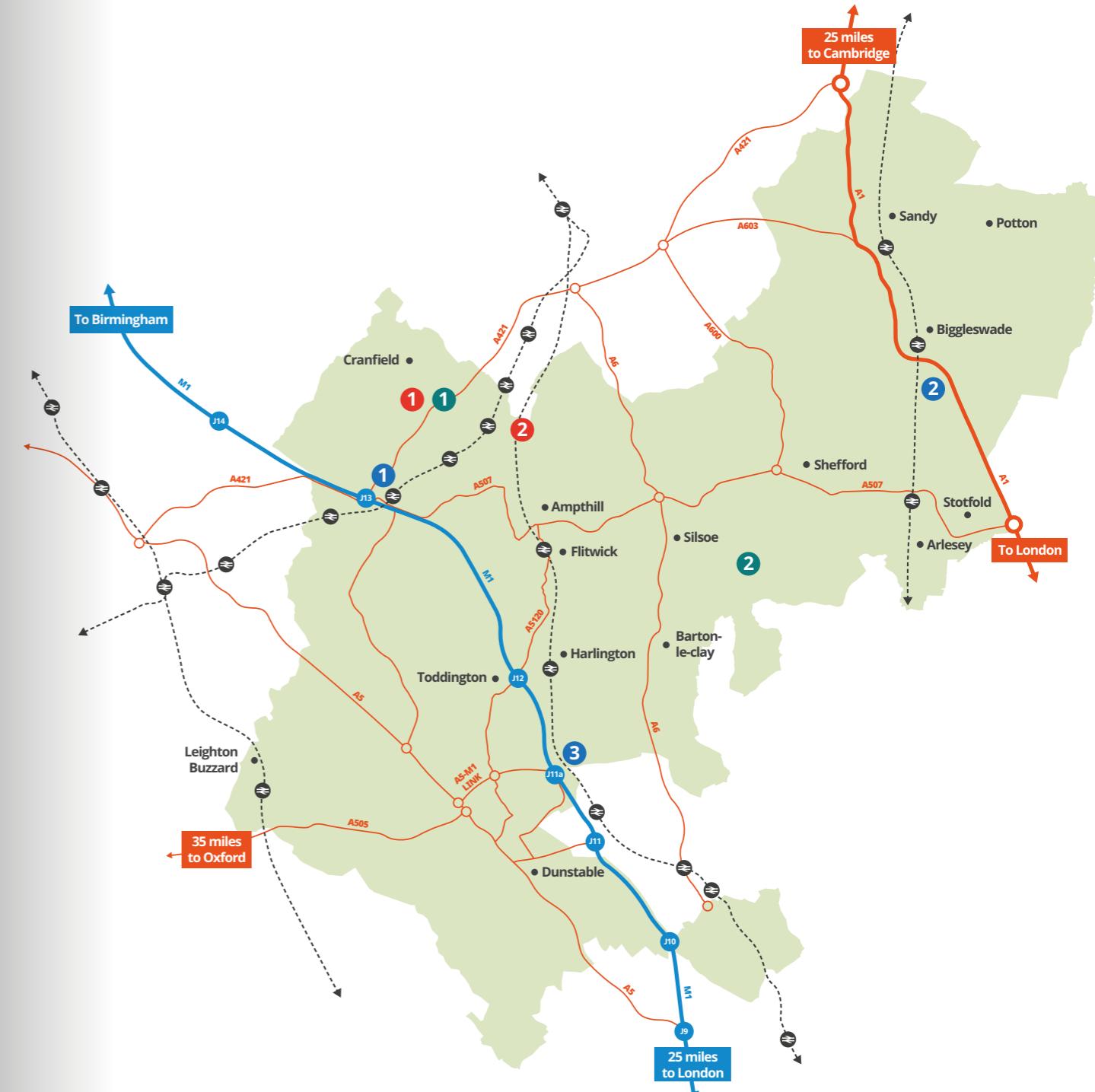
cranfield.ac.uk

7. Wrest Park Enterprise (WPE), Silsoe

WPE offers prestigious, cost-effective and flexible accommodation for start-ups and SMEs, with easy in/out terms. Workplace solutions include virtual, serviced, and co-working offices, office suites, warehouses and workshops, complimented by on-campus meeting & training facilities. WPE can also serve as a central hub for businesses operating innovative hot-desking and hybrid working models.

wrestparkenterprise.co.uk

This list is not comprehensive.



Sites and accommodation for businesses

Future strategic development sites

- 1 Marston Gate
- 2 Holme Farm, Biggleswade
- 3 Sundon Rail Freight Interchange

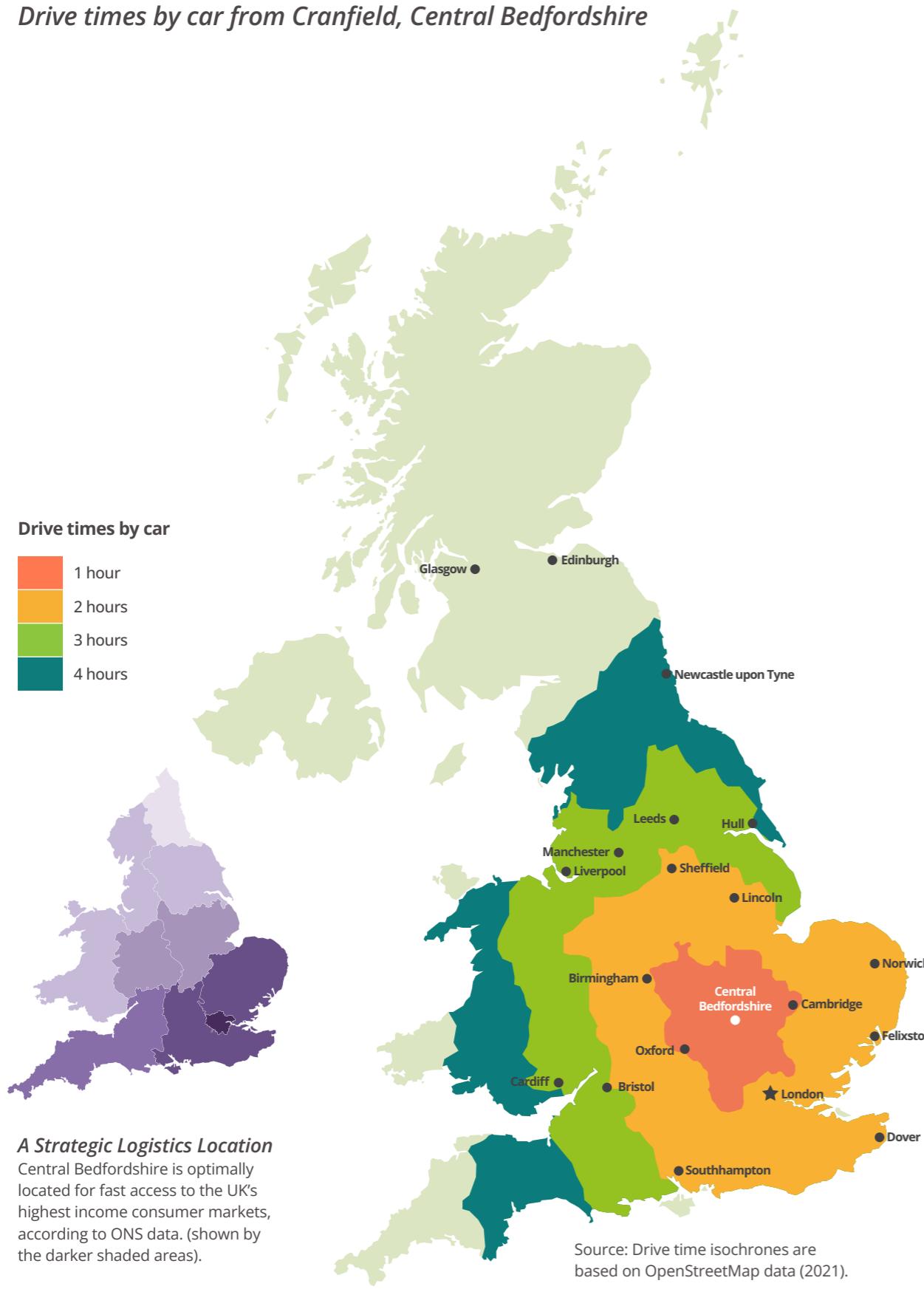
Technology parks

- 1 Cranfield Technology Park
- 2 Millbrook Technology Park

Flexible / incubation space

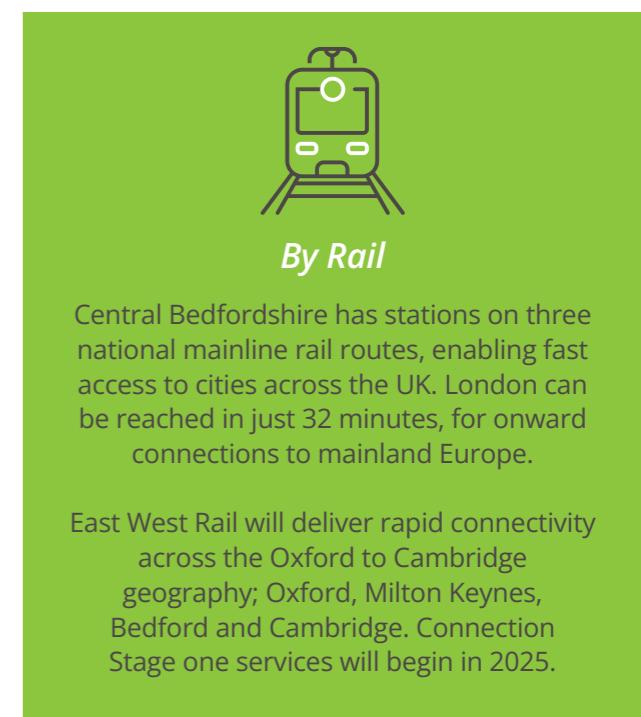
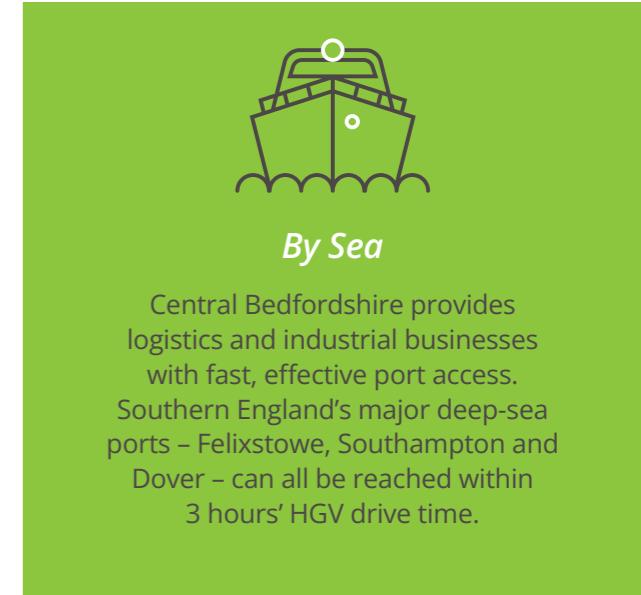
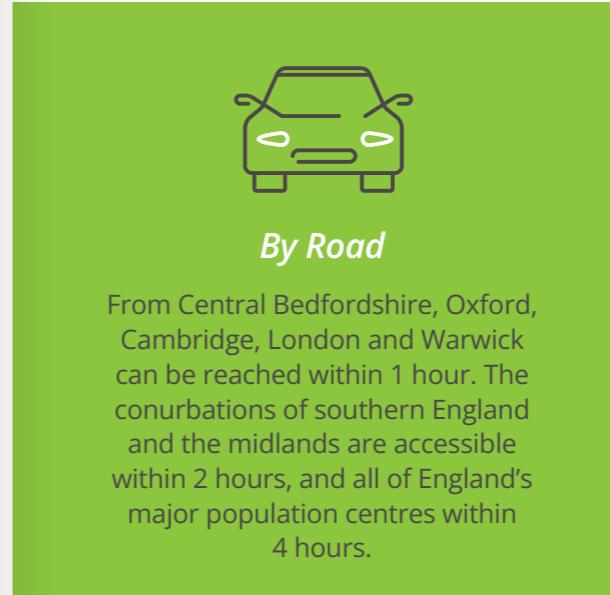
- 1 Cranfield Eagle Lab
- 2 Wrest Park Silsoe

Drive times by car from Cranfield, Central Bedfordshire



UK and international market access

Central Bedfordshire's optimal location enables fast access to and from UK and international markets, by road, rail, air and sea.



Key Location Data for Investing Businesses

Central Bedfordshire provides investing businesses with access to a high-quality, skilled workforce in the area's key industry sectors, combined with world-class, industry-focused education and highly competitive labour costs.*

High-technology and advanced manufacturing workforce



29,200

Research, engineering and technology professionals.^[1]



14,100

Advanced manufacturing workers.^[2]



33,000

Manufacturing workers.^[3]

Digital technology workforce



14,250

Computer programming and related activities.^[10]



Advanced logistics workforce



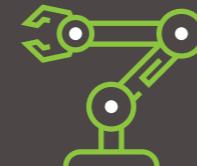
23,250

Logistics and distribution workers.^[4]



x2

vs Great Britain average
Logistics workforce % of total.^[4]



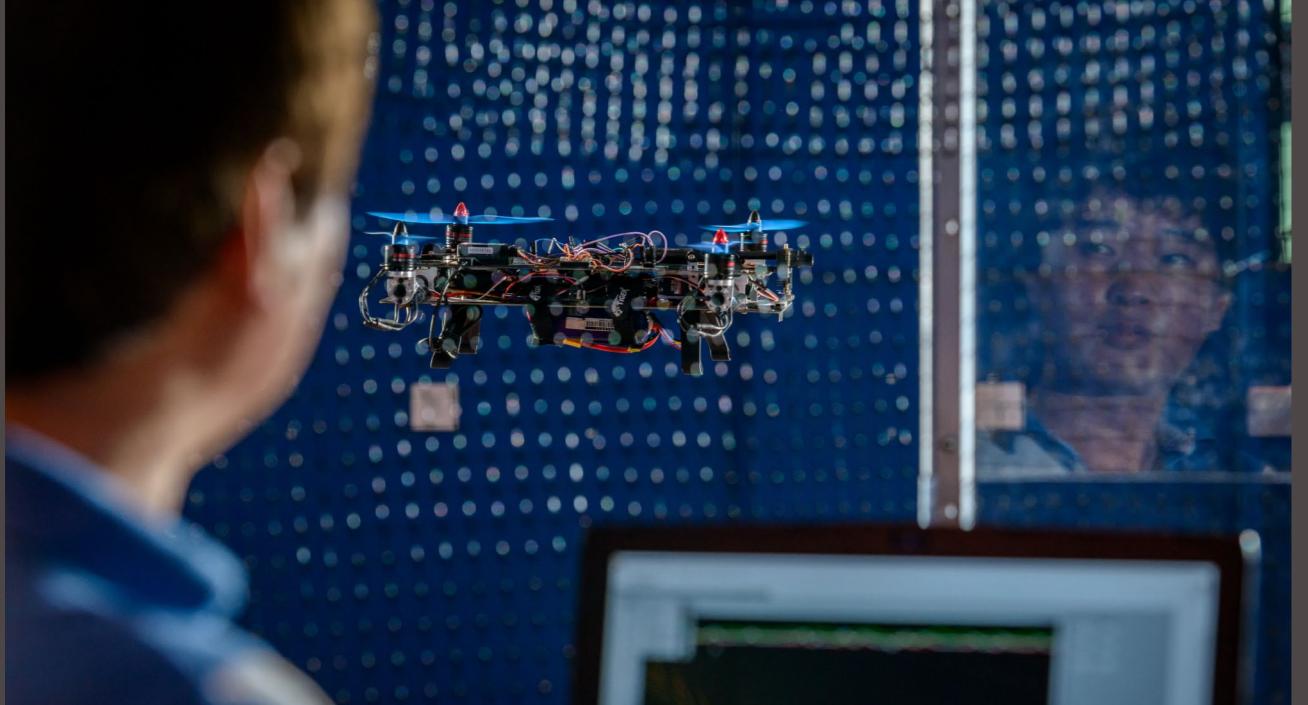
22,900

Process, plant and machine operative workers
(Re. Automation).^[5]

*Workforce data is for Central Bedfordshire's core labour catchment area, comprising Central Bedfordshire and the immediately adjacent cities of Milton Keynes, Bedford and Luton. From this area, employment locations across Central Bedfordshire can be reached within approximately 30 minutes by car. By excluding other neighbouring districts, data for this catchment area understates the actual sector labour forces that can be accessed by business located in Central Bedfordshire.

Sources:

- [1] ONS 2021: SOC21 Science, Research, Engineering & Technology Professionals
- [2] ONS 2021: SOC52 Skilled Metal, Electrical & Electronic Trades
- [3] ONS 2019: SIC C Manufacturing (all)
- [4] ONS 2019: SIC 52 Warehousing and support activities for transportation
- [5] ONS 2021: SOC8 Process, Plant and Machine Operative Workers
- [6] ONS 2020: Median Gross Weekly Pay
- [7] HESA 2018/19
- [8] QS World University Rankings 2021
- [9] ONS 2021
- [10] ONS 2019: SIC 62 Computer Programming, Consultancy and Related Activities

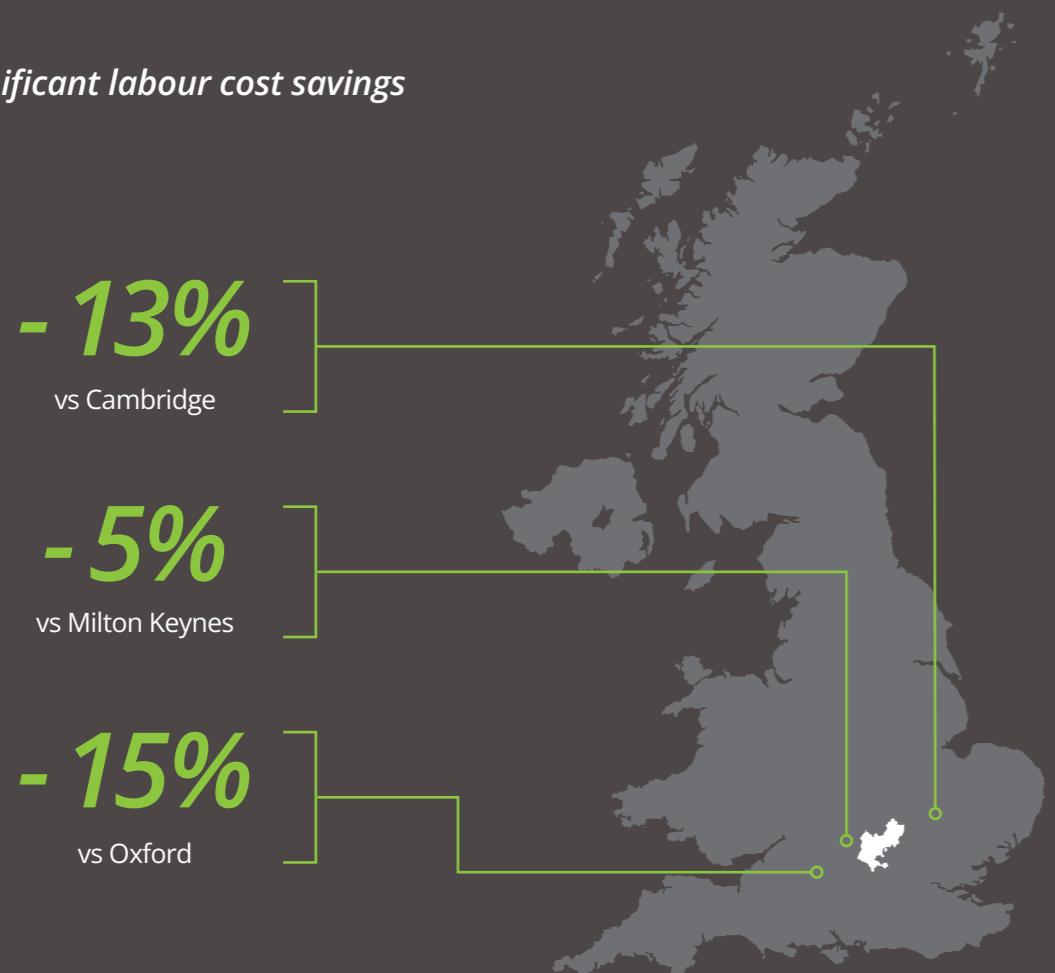


Credit: Cranfield University

Central Bedfordshire combines the skilled workforce advantages of a southeast England technology hub location with highly competitive labour costs.

The area offers significant labour costs savings versus the technology hubs of Oxford, Cambridge and Milton Keynes, and cost advantages versus regional centres including Luton, Bedford and St Albans, as well as the Great Britain average.^[6]

Significant labour cost savings



Sources: see page 35



Higher Education: Cranfield University



Credit: Cranfield University

As one of the UK's top business, technology and research-focused universities, Cranfield provides businesses investing in Central Bedfordshire with access to UK-leading graduates in technology-focused disciplines.

The university performs highly in UK and worldwide rankings for education and research, in subject areas including engineering, manufacturing, logistics and supply chain.

Cranfield School of Management is one of an elite group of Schools worldwide to hold the triple accreditation of: AACSB International (the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and AMBA (the Association of MBAs).



1st in the UK

for engineering masters
students (No's).^[7]

for aerospace engineering
masters students (No's).^[7]

for transport and automotive
post-graduates (No's).^[7]

2nd in the UK and 11th in the World

for logistics and supply chain MSc course ranking (2021).^[8]

Top 5 in the UK

for engineering courses: mechanical,
aeronautical and manufacturing.^[8]

Top 10 in the UK

For commercial research, consultancy
and professional development.^[7]

Central Bedfordshire has a higher percentage of people with Higher Education qualifications than the GB average (78,600 people with NVQ 4+).^[9]

Sources: see page 35

Support for Investing Businesses

Central Bedfordshire Council's Support Service for Investing Businesses

Central Bedfordshire Council provides a range of dedicated services for businesses investing, growing or establishing their business in the area, including:

- Dedicated account manager and single point of contact within the Council
- Access to workforce recruitment, education and training solutions

- Help to find the right commercial property and advice on relocation benefits
- Access to local supply chains, business networks and events
- Introduction to business support organisations to access finance, grants and advice
- Specialist advice on health and safety and statutory services

- Bespoke economic research on data and intelligence
- Opportunity to maximise on your business PR via e-newsletters, social media and dedicated presence on our inward investment website www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk
- Access to our Annual Business Leaders' event
- Access to current fully funded wider business support programmes, delivered through our business partners.

The council's inward investment team is available and ready to help investing businesses identify the right site or property and deliver their projects.

Our proactive approach to planning is designed to make the process as business-friendly as possible, to facilitate investment, economic growth and job creation in the area.



Meet the team



Andrew Davie
Assistant Director
Development and Infrastructure



Sayma Khanom
Business Investment Manager



Anna Bosworth
Head of Investment
Employment and Skills



Sue Glantz
Business Investment Officer





*BeCentral***Bedfordshire**

Central Bedfordshire: The opportunity for investing businesses

Contact us to find out how we can support
your business relocation or expansion project.

Tel: +44 (0) 300 300 8272

Email: info@becentralbedfordshire.co.uk

LinkedIn: [Be Central Bedfordshire –
Economic Growth Partnership](#)

Twitter: [@BeCentralBeds](#)

Website: www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk