



## PRESS RELEASE

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### THE “OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC” – AND ITS SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES

Less damaging and more sustainable alternatives to the “Oxford-Cambridge Arc” exist and they could beneficially be implemented in other parts of England, according to a new study.

Part 1 of Smart Growth UK’s report on *The Overheated Arc* looked at the reckless way the Arc proposals were developed and the damage they would do. Part 2, on Sustainable Alternatives, asks whether the arc concept, if it’s a sound one, could benefit other parts of the country without doing all the damage the five-county Arc is threatening.

The Arc proposal is based around the quality of its universities, its knowledge-intensive businesses, its workforce and its historic cities. But suppose, asks the report, we added four sustainability requirements too? Could arcs be developed which have the qualities claimed for the Arc, but also have brownfield development land, high-quality public transport, a need for economic regeneration and no acute housing shortage?

The report looks at five strong candidates and concludes the answer is plainly “yes”. All would meet the four original criteria and the four sustainability requirements too. They are:-

- Wolverhampton-Birmingham-Coventry
- Newcastle-Sunderland-Middlesbrough
- Nottingham-Derby
- Manchester-Salford-Bolton
- Leeds-Bradford-Huddersfield

Other “arcs of sustainability” are obviously possible and there’s no reason they should be restricted to England. But these five demonstrate both the potential, the need for growth and an ability to accommodate it, which the “Overheated Arc” in the five counties does not.

**Notes to editors:** The Part 2 report can be found at:-

[http://www.smartgrowthuk.org/resources/downloads/Arc\\_Report\\_2.pdf](http://www.smartgrowthuk.org/resources/downloads/Arc_Report_2.pdf)

[Smart Growth UK](http://www.smartgrowthuk.org) is an informal coalition of national and local groups and individuals who support the “Smart Growth” approach to spatial, transport and community planning. This promotes compact and functional urban areas and sustainable transport options and opposes urban sprawl and car-dependency.

**Press Contact:** Jon Reeds 0793 251 6094