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Greater Cambridge Partnership Eastern Access consultation

Camcycle is a volunteer-led charity with over 1,550 subscribed members. We work for more, better and safer cycling, for all ages and abilities in and around Cambridge.

We support the intention of the GCP's proposals to improve public transport and associated active travel routes into Cambridge from the east of the City, subject to the caveats and details outlined below.

The Eastern Access initiatives must prioritise active travel improvements along strategic routes including Newmarket Road as well as other key routes not indicated in the consultation. The Eastern Access proposals have been debated in the Camcycle members' forum and we have provided a summary of our recommendations for the improvements required to increase the number of people walking and cycling. Many of these changes, outlined in our Camcycle Eastern Access Recommendations document, should be implemented as soon as possible. The Department for Transport's Cycle Infrastructure Design Guide (Local Transport Note 1/20) must be applied to all new infrastructure and the existing road and cycling network should be assessed and then brought up to LTN 1/20 standards.

These are our views on the specific proposals put forward by the GCP:

<p>Option A1: Newmarket Road Improvements</p>	<p>Overall, we support this proposal. The improvements must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dutch-quality segregated and protected cycleways with priority over side roads. ● Remove all shared-use provision, restoring this properly to pedestrian use ● Replace the Newmarket Road/Barnwell Road roundabout with a Dutch-style intersection that is safe and convenient for people walking and cycling ● Improve all junctions to ensure cycling and walking journeys are prioritised with separation in time and space and with better management of signals. <p>In comparison to all of the above, we do not regard consideration of any new routes across Coldham's Common (such as that suggested to connect development at the airport site to the Chisholm Trail) as a priority. It is more important that improvements to existing routes (both on and off road) are delivered with some urgency, and investment focussed on these.</p>
<p>Option A2: Newmarket Road Improvements + P&R move</p>	<p>We do not have a position on the relocation of the Park & Ride. If the Park & Ride is moved it must include sufficient secure and accessible cycle parking, cycle routes between the Park & Ride and the city, and links connecting with cycle routes to major employment sites as well as the local area and any nearby residential and employment sites.</p> <p>Note that all the improvements listed under Option A1 should also be applied.</p>
<p>Option B1: High Quality Public Transport via Coldham's Lane</p>	<p>Coldham's Lane must be made safer for walking and cycling with improvements to the pavement, provision of separated and protected cycleways and junctions, or by implementing a bus gate. Road space should be reallocated from on-street car parking and turning lanes at the Cromwell Road junction and Coldham's Lane Sainsbury's roundabout.</p>
<p>Option B2: High Quality Public Transport via the Tins</p>	<p>If there are any public transport links via this route they must preserve and enhance the Tins cycleway and the important active travel link via Brookfields which is an essential part of both the Snakey Path and Fulbourn Greenway routes as well as the Tins.</p>
<p>Option B3: Long term Rail Opportunity</p>	<p>Any rail infrastructure must be integrated with the cycling network and must preserve and enhance any existing cycling infrastructure. Lessons must be learned from recent railway station developments to ensure stations are safe and accessible to people walking and cycling to and through</p>

	the area and that sufficient secure and accessible cycle parking is included.
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There are other Eastern Access interventions that we recommend

We urge the GCP and the Combined Authority to consider our Eastern Access recommendations list and to begin these improvements while more infrastructure-heavy proposals are considered. The cycling infrastructure in many of the areas considered is deadly (a cyclist died in a collision on the Newmarket Road/Barnwell Road roundabout this year). Improvements will save lives and cannot come too soon.

The Eastern Access proposals from the Greater Cambridge Partnership are unnecessarily restricted to journeys along particular transport corridors – Newmarket Road and/or a new public transport route – and fail to consider properly either the wider range of start points and destinations in the east of Cambridge itself or the different ways people will be travelling into Cambridge from the surrounding villages. None of the current or proposed major cycle routes (e.g. the Chisholm Trail, The Tins path, Barnwell cycleway, NCN 51, Bottisham/Horningsea/Swaffham/Fulbourn Greenways) are marked on the maps and there is no reference to the East Barnwell Framework for Change consultation going on at exactly the same time.

The GCP needs to look more closely at all journeys in the area, considering the needs of other eastern access routes such as Coldham's Lane and Mill Road and prioritising urgent changes to junctions such as Newmarket Road/Barnwell Road Roundabout and Coldham's Lane/Barnwell Road roundabout. Upgrades need to be made to the existing Barnwell Road cycleways (on both sides) and to existing routes into and around the Abbey Leisure complex which will connect up with the Chisholm Trail. Work needs to be integrated with existing GCP projects (such as the Greenways) but also projects from other transport authorities such as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority which has plans for a Dutch-style roundabout at Coldham's Lane/Barnwell Road.

Improving public transport in this area is clearly of high importance, but this goal must not damage the concurrent aim to rapidly increase the number of people choosing to walk and cycle for their journeys. New public transport routes should not damage existing cycleways and the first priority in the east overall should be to improve existing dangerous roads and junctions for those travelling by sustainable transport. This project also needs to be closely linked with city access schemes as reducing the number of car journeys will free up the roadspace needed for better footways and cycleways and more reliable bus journeys. Working with Stagecoach is also important to restore services in this area – many have been considerably cut in recent years meaning people living in villages such as Lode, Bottisham and the Swaffhams have very limited choices in terms of public transport. These maps do not make clear what would happen to the High Quality Public Transport Route after it reaches the Stow cum Quy junction from Cambridge. Those living in rural locations should not be expected or required to drive to Park & Ride sites as this will further lock in car dependency when better bus services and active travel options should be being provided, particularly for those villages closest to the city.

We must emphasise that car dependency harms everyone. Providing more ways that people can get around without using a car is beneficial to us all and reduces the costs that high usage

of motor traffic impose on individuals and our communities in terms of health, pollution, road danger, carbon emissions and lack of independence for children, older people and those with mobility issues. While it is important to improve accessibility for everyone with protected characteristics we should not assume that private cars are the answer - of course, they will be the correct solution for some people, but we need to remove as many unnecessary car journeys from the city as possible and invest in walking, cycling, bus and train services as well as new options such as community or on-demand shuttle buses and taxis.

In addition to this, all cycleways and footways should be designed to be accessible, comfortable and convenient for those using a variety of ways to get around including wheelchairs, mobility scooters, handcycles and tricycles. Designs for cycleways must follow the government guidance laid out in LTN 1/20 published this year.

Camcycle members would also like to make it clear that this has been a poor and confusing consultation missing crucial information and not allowing for important context and nuance.

The consultation has made it difficult for people to consider the proposals in context. The existing cycling infrastructure has not been included on the maps so that people cannot assess the cycling routes and connections. The proposals have not made it clear whether the 'B' options will remove, change or improve the existing cycling infrastructure of the Tins route. The proposals also fail to provide information about what is being considered for other infrastructure in the area either by the GCP, the County Council or the Combined Authority, for example the Coldham's Lane 'Sainsbury's' roundabout, the Chisholm Trail, the Greenways and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. There is also no reference to the East Barnwell Framework for Change consultation or the proposed move of the Abbey Football Stadium.

The survey has made it very difficult for people to consider concerns about different aspects of the environmental impact of each scheme - for example, carbon emissions, pollution, biodiversity or noise - as there was only the broad and ill-defined question about 'environmental impact'. We would like to know what exactly the GCP is trying to measure here and how they will interpret these results. Are they considering the positive environmental impacts of a reduction in car traffic or the negative impacts of loss of green space? How will meaningful feedback be gathered when the questions are so vague?

Yours sincerely,

Roxanne De Beaux
Executive Director

Camcycle