



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**
Estate Management

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Dear Sirs

University Response to the Cambridge South East Transport – Better Public Transport Project

The University welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) consultation, Cambridge South East Transport - Better Public Transport Project (CSET project). We understand that the purpose of the consultation is to seek opinion on the proposed locations of the new travel hubs, the public transport route, including stops and facilities, as well as new walking, cycling and horse-riding connections.

The University welcomes the focus along the south east corridor and acknowledges the work undertaken to progress this project since the previous consultation in 2018. In particular:

- The implementation of measures along the A1307 for bus priority, and improvements for walking, cycling and road safety;
- The delivery of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) Transport Study, in which the GCP and the CBC partners have worked together to identify opportunities to further enhance the public transport improvements on offer through the development of this CSET project; and
- The work undertaken to ensure that the proposals are integrated in to the proposed Cambridge South Station, and local communities through the development of walking and cycling links.

As you will be aware, the University is a major employer in the Cambridge region and around 50% of our 12,500 staff commute to the city from outlying areas. This has resulted in door-to-door journey times that, for many, are in excess of 1.5 hours due to congestion on the highway, poor connectivity/services on public transport and/or inadequate links to suitable cycling and walking routes.

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Peak-time congestion and poor connectivity, therefore, has an impact on the productivity, health and well-being of our staff, and the environmental quality of our operational sites. This is particularly evident at the CBC where, within the past 12 months, we have opened two new buildings dedicated to healthcare research.

The University recognises that changes to the way people travel are dependent upon the provision of realistic opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport, and improvements to the use of technology. Transport networks surrounding Cambridge are often at capacity during peak times so solutions will need to be far-reaching and avoid simply shifting the issues to the periphery of the city and/or to more localised hotspots in the outlying towns and villages.

The 'Cambridge Biomedical Campus Transport Needs Study' published in March 2019 predicts that by 2031 there will be an expected 67,500 daily trips to the Campus with over half of these made by car if no interventions are made. Sustainable access to the CBC and other employment sites across the city is a key factor, alongside affordable housing, to ensure that the University can continue to attract and retain the best staff. With the further predicted growth in and around Cambridge as well as the predicted growth at the CBC, improved connectivity proposed by the CSET project is essential. The University would welcome assurances of timely delivery of this project.

The University supports the proposals presented as part of this consultation and further feedback is provided below.

The Proposed Route

- The University recognises that the proposed scheme will have an impact on the environment and, therefore, welcomes the work that has been undertaken to ensure that the impact on our greenspace and wildlife is limited by avoiding key conservation sites such as Wandlebury, the Gog Magog Hills and Nine Wells Nature Reserve. Accordingly, from an environmental standpoint, we endorse the proposed route alignment.
- Assurance that the final scheme will be integrated, as much as possible, into the exiting landscape to minimise impact and support improvements to biodiversity is welcomed - as is the commitment to deliver a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain with an ever-higher target of 20%.
- The University also welcomes that the proposals for river crossings would be sympathetically designed and that impact on flooding has already been studied with nil effect.
- The integration of the route within the CBC, along Francis Crick Avenue is welcomed. However, we are concerned about the width of the land available (to ensure adequate cycle routes, pavements, bus route and vehicle access) and ask for further thought to be given to drainage requirements. It is important that Francis Crick Avenue retains the design, treatment, ethos and vision as originally intended.
- The proposed route will increase connectivity and ease of travel not just to the CBC but to the other research and employment sites within the city. Integration with the proposed Cambridge South Station will be essential to deliver a truly multi-modal transport system in Cambridge.
- The University supports of the proposed connection with the local communities along this corridor, to include Sawston, Great Shelford and Stapleford. We would, however, welcome additional reassurances that the path network will be of high quality, with lighting provided at the point of inception and be integrated with the proposed greenways within the area.

Travel Hub location

- The University recognises the need for additional parking facilities to support mass transport solutions into the city from the south east and each of the proposed sites will offer a solution to

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this. However, having reviewed the options we believe Option C would best serve the needs of our staff and Cambridge as a whole for the following reasons:

- The site is unconstrained and, therefore, offers greater flexibility to meet the needs of our growing city;
- Being outside of the greenbelt it will have a lesser impact than the other sites; and
- The location also serves those travelling from either the east or south on the A11 or the A505. It is acknowledged that the installation of a crossing for the A11 will create challenges but the long term gain in terms of travel times into Cambridge are thought to outweigh the initial disruption.
- The University acknowledges that at this early stage in planning, the designs for the travel hub are not completed. However, we would welcome the establishment of a set of design principles to ensure that high quality facilities are provided. We would also welcome reassurances that sufficient cycle parking will be provided at the travel hub and key stops along the route.

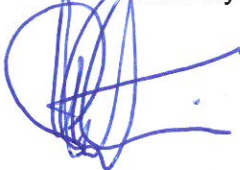
Bus stops and Connections

- The provision of a bus stop on the CBC (Francis Crick Avenue) and the potential for onward connection with the proposed Cambridge South Rail Station is welcomed. For the University, it is important that Francis Crick Avenue retains the design, treatment, ethos and vision as originally intended. We believe that with careful planning and implementation, this will be possible with these proposals. However, there remains some concern about the width of the land available (to ensure adequate cycle routes, pavements, bus route and vehicle access) and we ask that further thought be given to drainage requirements. We would welcome continued discussion with the GCP Project Team and our partners at the CBC to consider further the exact location of the stop on Francis Crick Avenue along with the detailed design of the route through the Campus.

The University is a committed partner of the Greater Cambridge Partnership and continues to invest in excess of £1m pa in transport services. The University also continues to invest in transport infrastructure on its estate, including the CBC, and through measures that reduce and mitigate the impact of transport from its developments.

The GCP's investment in transport infrastructure along the south east corridor will support existing and future investment by the University and others. It will help to ensure that Cambridge remains a growing and sustainable centre of excellence and a world-leader in the fields of higher education and research. It will help the city to nurture its growing industries and will facilitate a further expansion of its knowledge-based economy, while retaining the high quality of life and place that underpins our city and supports its standout economic success. It will help spread access to Cambridge's many opportunities to communities across its hinterlands and is essential for the University and the local authorities to deliver on their proposed commitments in the years and decades ahead. We believe that is the best option for meeting these goals and we look forward to future engagement with the GCP as it develops its plans in the months and years ahead.

Yours faithfully



Graham Matthews