UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Estates Division

Graham Matthews BSc MBA FRICS
Director of Estates

Cambridge County Council
Active Travel Strategy Team

Via Email: transport.plan@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

25 November 20222

Dear Cambridgeshire County Council

Active Travel strategy from Cambridgeshire: Response from the University of Cambridge

The University of Cambridge welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Cambridgeshire County Council Active Travel Strategy and supports the vision set out within the document to "embrace active travel across all transport policy, projects, investment and development" and to create a "well-connected, safe and inclusive active travel network that will become the go-to travel option for many journeys."

Recent ONS census data has demonstrated the significant rate of population growth our area is experiencing. In Greater Cambridge, the population increased by 8.9% in South Cambridgeshire from 2011-2021 and by 17.6% in Cambridge. Managing transport demand in this context presents a significant challenge and active travel has an essential role to play in enabling this growth to be as sustainable as possible.

The County Council's vision for active travel aligns closely with the University's own Transport Strategy, which sets out the measures we will take to improve people's experience of cycling and walking and encourage them to travel more sustainably. We believe that a greater role for active travel in Cambridge and the surrounding region can facilitate convenient travel to University sites, make a positive contribution to the well-being of our staff and students, and minimise environmental impact.

Cambridge and the surrounding area should embrace the ambition to be an exemplar cycling city, not just in the UK but globally. The majority of University staff travel to work by non-car modes and students predominantly, when at University, walk or cycle between sites. Therefore, improvements to the network for these movements will be highly beneficial. We are currently undertaking detailed travel surveys of both staff and student travel habits and we will be happy to share the results of these with the County Council as appropriate to support improvements to the network.

Greenwich House
Madingley Road
Cambridge
CB3 0TX

Tel: 01223 337806
Email: Graham.Matthews@admin.cam.ac.uk
www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/em

In urban areas such as Cambridge, there is a significant opportunity to enable and encourage more people to make local journeys by foot or cycle. Within key areas of the city where space is restricted due to the density of people movements, poor air quality and conflict between modes are significant. We, therefore, support the application of a road user hierarchy, putting those who walk or cycle at the top of this hierarchy. We recognise the close links which exist between this consultation and the Greater Cambridge Partnership Cambridge Road Classification review and the Making Connections proposals which could redefine how the city will feel for different road users.

The University recognises its own role in the existing network and welcomes a collaborative approach with regional partners to deliver against the Vision identified.

At Eddington, a new district created by the University in North-West Cambridge, carefully planned sustainable transport infrastructure supports cycling and walking while removing the need for car ownership. As a result, 93% of residents' trips, both work and non-work travel, are made using sustainable modes of transport.

We welcome proposals to <u>enhance</u> the existing network of roads, pavements and cycleways. This should include improvements to junctions, greater provision of segregated facilities and speed/traffic reduction measures. The County Council should also consider how the maintenance of active travel infrastructure can be prioritised.

Improvements to walking routes and spaces for people would also be welcome, in particular, to ensure footpaths are inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities or additional mobility needs, that they are well-lit, they provide safe and convenient crossing points and that seamless interchange between modes are supported.

We must continue to be ambitious to <u>expand</u> the high levels of cycling we see within Cambridge outward to South Cambridgeshire and the rest of the county. The future of active travel in the region should continue to build on the investment we have seen to date. This includes the network of active travel improvements currently being delivered across the Greater Cambridge area by the GCP and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). An active travel network must integrate seamlessly with infrastructure in neighbouring counties and with roads managed by National Highways, across local authority boundaries and be of a high quality and designed to the latest DfT guidance: Local Transport Note 1/20.

Multi-modal trips such as car-cycle or cycle-train-cycle can contribute greatly to providing sustainable transport options across the County. It is important to provide safe and direct links to railway stations and travel hubs. It is also important to have secure cycle storage at stations and park & ride sites to enable multi-modal trips to be an option for people.

New micro-mobility technologies offer the opportunity to significantly lengthen the distance many are willing to travel by active modes, but this will only happen if supported by appropriate infrastructure. We, therefore, support the County Council in being ambitious in grasping this opportunity and promoting the roll-out of innovative technologies that support the use of e-bikes, e-scooters and a range of e-cargo bikes and adapted cycles.

Increasing active travel uptake is not just about improving infrastructure but also <u>encouraging</u> behavioural change. We would welcome improvements to the resources available for journey planning, including multi-modal journeys which combine active travel with other modes, we also support an expansion in funding for training and education activities. Within the University community, thousands of new students arrive in the city each year and wish to cycle, but many have not done so before. There is a steep learning curve for people to learn, or to be confident cycling in the city environment.

The University provides a support package for staff and students which includes: cycle training, Dr Bike sessions, cycle maintenance webinars and a borrow-a-bike scheme. These simple, low-cost initiatives could be considered in other settings across the county.

We fully support and remain committed to the overriding ambitions of the Transport vision for Greater Cambridge and other city partners to provide a connected, inclusive and affordable transport system that is fitting for our City and our communities. This task is more important than ever if we are to sustain Cambridge's pace of growth and ambitions for sustainability.

The investment in active travel infrastructure is welcomed and will support existing and future investments by the University and others. We look forward to working with officers at the County Council and other partners to further develop proposals set out in the Active Travel Strategy.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the points raised in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Graham Matthews