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Dear Rachel

Greater Cambridge Partnership - Newmarket Road improvements and Park and Ride relocation

The University of Cambridge welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Greater Cambridge Partnership proposal for improved access from the east (Newmarket Road area) and supports the ambition to develop more sustainable travel solutions to address the social, environmental and sustainable growth challenges across Greater Cambridge.

Recent ONS census data has demonstrated that our area is experiencing a significant rate of population growth. In Greater Cambridge, the population increased by 8.9% in South Cambridgeshire from 2011-2021 and by 17.6% in Cambridge. In fact, the high level of growth is being experienced across the East of England and, therefore, managing transport demand in this context presents significant challenges.

The University staff and student travel survey results for 2022 suggest that travel and working-from-home habits are starting to settle, and we are now able to better understand how these have changed since 2019 and its impact.

The vast majority of students and over 60% of our staff continue to use sustainable modes for their journey to study/work. However, for those who live outside of Cambridge, this percentage reduces and we anticipate that in the future more staff will be travelling from outside of Cambridge.

For staff travelling into Cambridge, many have limited public transport options that are reliable. Therefore, improvements to services, increased frequency, reliability and operating hours, including the increased capacity at the park and ride sites and interchange facilities, are all to be welcomed.

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The remainder of our response provides feedback to the consultation questions and highlights a number of areas the University believe require further consideration to deliver the proposals and the desired changes to create a better place for our staff, students and wider society to live, work and socialise.

- It is critical to the University that our staff have the opportunity to live within reasonable **door-to-door travel times**. Proposals need to enhance homes-jobs connectivity across the Cambridgeshire area and beyond, thus widening the net of affordable homes for the Cambridge labour market. This includes **integrating existing transport systems** which will be critical for achieving access to Cambridge's key employment and research sites, including West Cambridge, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus to the south and Granta Park and Babraham Research Campus to the south east.

- In addition to infrastructure improvements, first/last mile sustainable travel solutions for existing and new communities along the corridor to facilitate door-to-door sustainable travel will be imperative. This should be achieved through route design and interchange locations. The new park and ride site, in addition to providing access to public transport options, must enable walking and cycling interchange and seamless connectivity to the wider existing and emerging active travel networks.

- The quality of the urban realm will be essential to enhancing **people and place** thus improving quality of life. We support the natural capital approach to delivering improved air quality, biodiverse spaces and the use of green and blue infrastructure to create environmental resilience. We would welcome reassurance that the natural spaces will be developed in a way that supports the long-term ambitions of 20% biodiversity net gain (BNG) and do not become small pockets of space that are unprotective and unmanageable.

- To enable people to transition to a new way of travelling as the transport system evolves, a comprehensive package of support will be required. It is essential that as many people as possible feel physically able, confident and comfortable, and that travel solutions being developed are **accessible and equitable.**

- It is recognised that for some, the transition to a new way of travelling will be simple, but for others, additional support and advice may be required. We would, therefore, encourage the GCP and its partners to provide a package of **behavioural change** support for individuals, communities and businesses to understand the choices available. This should include measures such as employer travel plans, personal journey planning services, real-time information and guidance on what services are available and how to access and use them.

- The use of existing and emerging data will be essential to ensuring that GCP and its partners are delivering for the future needs of Cambridge and we encourage the incorporation of cutting-edge data, transport technologies and emerging innovations to deliver the scheme's ambitions. From the outset, it is important to **understand what success looks like** and that the impacts of the proposals are monitored. This will enable an adaptative and innovative approach as new habits and patterns of travel become embedded and new opportunities come forward to the east of the city and the wider Greater Cambridge region.

- Delivering the Newmarket Road improvements will require a **collaborative approach** across a range of partners to ensure, infrastructure, services and facilities are delivered, monitored and maintained. We would welcome further information on how this will be achieved and who has the responsibility to ensure this collaborative approach is taken and ultimately the long-term success of the proposals are realised. This will also enhance public confidence at a time of considerable change and disruption to public transport services.

Overall, and in line with previous consultation responses, the University welcomes the package of measures proposed by the GCP in advancing the transport vision for Greater Cambridge. It will ensure that Cambridge remains a growing, evolving and sustainable centre of excellence and will support existing and future investment by the University and others. It will enable the city region to nurture its industries and will facilitate a further expansion of its knowledge-based economy while retaining the high quality of life and a place that underpins our city and supports its standout economic success. It will ensure the spread of 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 the opportunity to change the transport offer in Cambridge should not be missed and that future generations will be thankful for decisive action to deliver these proposals.

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 sincerely

Graham Matthews