



GCP CONSULTATION – A NEW ROAD CLASSIFICATION FOR CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE AHEAD RESPONSE

Cambridge Ahead's membership includes 51 of the largest employers in Cambridge and the surrounding region, representing a collective workforce of over 40,000 people. Cambridge Ahead (CA) advocates that **quality of life, across all communities, should be the guiding principle for the sustainable and inclusive growth** of the city region.

Cambridge Ahead supports the overall aims of the new road classification for the city to support quality of life by improving access to work, education, leisure, and green spaces and improving health and wellbeing through lower air pollution and creating an improved environment for physical activity.

The new road classification proposals form part of the GCP's wider City Access project. In February 2022 [Cambridge Ahead responded to the city access "Making Connections" consultation](#). In our response we expressed our support for the package of measures proposed and identified prioritising road space to enable significantly greater levels of active travel and public transport on our network as a key principle to be incorporated into the next phase of detailed development.

We support the role that modal filters can play on local roads and streets to stop through movements by private motor vehicles. In these instances, where only buses and exempt vehicles are given access to a street, we believe there is much opportunity to enhance the spaces we have in our city by expanding pavements, adding space for outdoor seating, trees, plants, and places for people to gather and interact.

The consultation sets out a transport mode hierarchy, setting out the level of access which would be allowed for different types of vehicles. We are broadly supportive of these proposals, in particular in their prioritisation of public and active travel modes. We also offer the following specific comments on other areas:

Micro mobility - The consultation fails to consider micro mobility, a mode which is playing an increasing role as a component of our transport system. This includes e-scooters, cargo bike and light electric vehicles. Micro mobility offers significant and novel opportunities to reduce emissions, congestion, and improve accessibility – if planned for and managed well. Micro mobility should be explicitly referenced within the proposals and given a higher priority than cars.

Please see our proposals on the role for micro mobility as Appendix A of this submission.

Cars - We agree with the proposal for motor vehicles being required to use main roads as much as possible to reduce through-trips on local roads and streets using point closures.

Taxis – Taxis and on-demand services will likely form an important part of our future transport system and provide a vital provision for some users and in particular for the night-time economy. It will be important that the GCP considers in depth how this role will be reflected in the road hierarchy and subsequent implementation, balancing the input of taxis and on-demand services with the need to prioritise road space as much as possible for public and active travel.

Buses - We recognise the limitations of buses operating out of Drummer St Bus Interchange if there is a significant increase in the number of buses operating in the city. While improvements to the city centre environment could be generated by restricting buses' access to some of the roads in the city centre, we would also suggest that to make bus services more attractive and convenient than cars, bus routes, their stopping points and interchanges should be located as close as possible to the city centre. This is directly related of course to the Making Connections proposals to fund services that are more frequent and reliable for suburban and rural communities in Greater Cambridge, which we are strongly supportive of.

Blue Badge Holders – Clarification is needed regarding the GCP's thinking on Blue Badge Access. Although the road classification proposals note that access to the city should be 'promoted', it is unclear whether distinction will be



made between access for residents and non-residents with Blue Badges. We are concerned that the issue of Blue Badge Holders as a cause of congestion and parking depletion is inflated. Our rough calculation is that there are around 6500 Blue Badge Holders in Cambridge¹, a fraction of the 87,000² journeys made daily. The number of car trips per person per year by a Blue Badge holder is also lower on average than that of non-Blue Badge holders³. The relative impact on restricting vehicular access for Blue Badge holders in comparison to non-Blue Badge holders is arguably greater, as the Road Hierarchy document recognises.

Delivery vehicles – since COVID-19, the use of online shopping and associated home-delivery services has dramatically increased. The paper discusses the need to consider if exemptions should be given to vehicles making combined deliveries. We would support interventions that encourage the consolidation of deliveries, thus reducing the volume of delivery traffic on Cambridge's roads.

¹ Calculated using [ONS data](#) on Blue Badges held by local authorities which records that Blue Badge holders as a % of population in Cambridgeshire is 4.3%. Against a population of 149,900 in Cambridge, this works out roughly as 6500

² Figures from <https://www.smartertransport.uk/how-many-cars/>

³ ONS Data '[Trips Per Person Per Year main mode](#)'