



**GREATER  
CAMBRIDGE  
PARTNERSHIP**

Growing and sharing prosperity



# A new road classification for Cambridge

**A review of how roads and streets are categorised and used**

To find out more visit the web page at:

[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)

Closing date:

**midday on Monday 18 July 2022**



# What is the Road Classification for Cambridge?

The review of the Road Network User Hierarchy (road classification) is about the way that people and vehicles move around the city. It will consider how roads and streets are classified based on the type of vehicles and traffic that they are used by in the future.

Some roads act as the main routes into, around and out of the city and, therefore, carry high levels of all types of traffic from lorries, cars and buses to cyclists and pedestrians.

Other more minor roads act as routes that provide access to particular areas of the city. They carry less traffic and are used more by cars, cyclists and pedestrians. Some streets in the city centre have restricted access for motor vehicles to better cater for higher levels of walking and cycling. They are different types of roads and have different uses, so are categorised differently.

## What is the Greater Cambridge Partnership?

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is the local delivery body for a City Deal with the UK Government.

To date we have delivered major infrastructure projects including phase 1 of the Chisholm Trail, improvements to Histon Road in Cambridge and a cross-city cycling network – all of which enables people to have more choices about how they move around our area.

The partnership includes Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the University of Cambridge and the Cambridge and Peterborough Business Board.

The views gathered through this consultation will be considered alongside the Greater Cambridge Partnership's aims:

- to tackle the increase in traffic, congestion, and pollution in and around Cambridge
- to improve public transport, walking and cycling and offer people a better choice for their journeys.





# Have your say on the way that roads in Cambridge are used

We are consulting on a new road classification for Cambridge that would change the categorisation of roads in the city, and we want to hear your views to help shape it.

A new road classification for the city gives us an opportunity to make a major change to the way that traffic and people use roads and streets to move around the city. Space on the roads could be freed up for more frequent and reliable public transport. It could also create a safer and more attractive environment for people walking, cycling or using other methods of active travel.

## What is active travel?

Active travel is defined in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan, published in March 2020, as:

**“physically active modes such as cycling, walking, or horse riding. It also includes walking or cycling as part of a longer journey”.**

It aims to:

- support improved quality of life
- help meet the challenges of climate change
- help to create a sense of place as part of the highway network
- improve health and wellbeing by providing a nicer environment for physical activity
- lower air pollution
- improve access to work, education, leisure and green spaces.

Managing traffic in Cambridge provides an opportunity to develop a clear sense of place, particularly in the city centre, with more pleasant spaces to visit and spend time, cleaner air and a safer environment for all road users.





# Background and context

The GCP's public transport and city access strategy aims to address some of the major pressures on the local economy by reducing congestion and pollution, and by providing people with better, healthier and more sustainable options for their journeys.

Developing a new road classification in Cambridge to show how roads and streets are used and classified forms part of the GCP's wider City Access project. City Access looks at how people move around the city and encourages more use of public transport and active travel rather than the private car.

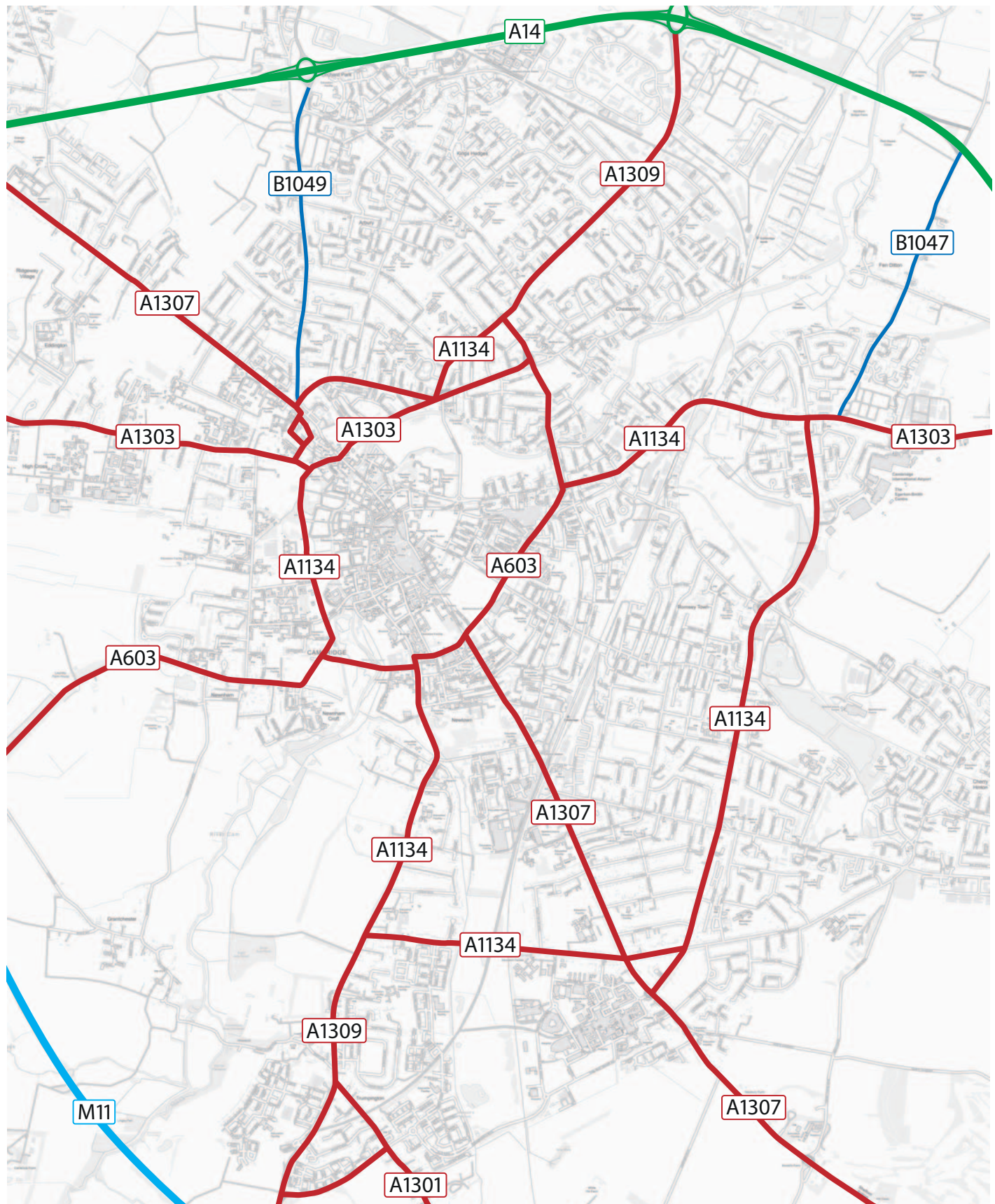
The recent Making Connections consultation considered how lower traffic levels could support improvements to public transport and active travel, as well as providing wider environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits, including through potential road user charging or parking charges. The extent to which a new road classification can be implemented will be, in part, dependent on how these measures are taken forward. If there is less traffic in Cambridge then there will be more opportunity to restrict cars and goods vehicles on some roads where more space needs to be given to public transport and active travel.





# The current situation

The current road classification in Cambridge was last reviewed in the early 1980s.



**Plan 1:** Current 'A' and 'B' road classification in the city



# Ambition

Our ambition is that trips by cars, vans and lorries would be required to use main roads for as much of their journey as possible to reduce traffic on local roads and streets.

This would mean that some local streets, which are currently used as through routes between main roads or used as rat runs to avoid delays on busy routes at peak times, would no longer be open to through traffic. Access to these local roads and streets would be made from the closest main road junction to reach their destination.

As a result, journeys by private motor vehicle might be less direct and more inconvenient. It will still be possible to drive around the city and access all streets but it might take longer to get to your destination. This means that in the future some busy streets would carry less traffic, with reduced

levels of noise, congestion and pollution. It does, however, mean that some main roads could see an increase in the amount of traffic as local roads and streets are closed to through trips. We will use traffic modelling to assess changes in traffic to consider what could be done to address any increases.

Point road closures – known as modal filters, such as in Carlyle Road and Silver Street – would be put in place on local roads and streets to stop through movements by private motor vehicles. Cyclists and, if on a scheduled route, buses would be allowed through the closure points to make these trips as reliable and convenient as possible.

**The city could look like the areas on the facing page.**







Photo: TfL



Photo: TfL



Photo: TfL





# What are we asking for feedback on?

There are a number of things we want to hear your thoughts on. You can find details of the survey on the consultation web page at: [www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)

## Access for vehicles

Some initial ideas on the level of access allowed for particular types of vehicle have been developed and these are set out in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Network accessibility by transport mode

Mode	Network accessibility	Detail
<b>Walking</b>	Access to whole network other than where road safety would be compromised.	Pedestrian access to be restricted or prohibited only where road safety would be compromised, e.g. bus station where reversing buses conflict with pedestrian safety.
<b>Cycling</b>	Access to whole network other than where road safety or pedestrian comfort and convenience would be compromised.	Access for cycling to be restricted or prohibited only where road safety or pedestrian convenience or comfort would be compromised and where a suitable alternative route is available e.g. in densely populated pedestrian streets where access for cycling may be limited by time of day.
<b>Bus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local bus services</li> <li>• School transport</li> <li>• Community transport</li> </ul>	Extensive network access other than on network street categories where bus movements are not permitted.	<p>Buses operating local services to be allowed access through network modal filtering points on those categories of street where through bus movements are permitted.</p> <p>Buses being used for school transport and community transport vehicles to be permitted through network modal filtering points on those categories of street where through bus movements are permitted.</p>







Mode	Network accessibility	Detail
<b>Cars</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private cars</li><li>• Taxis</li><li>• Motorcycles</li></ul>	Routing to maximise the use of distributor roads and minimise the use of other network street categories i.e. access and egress to/from city destinations should be made via the closest available distributor road junction(s).	Cars and motorcycles will not be allowed access through network modal filtering points.  Consultation will help shape any exemptions for taxis and/or other car users where the impacts from filtering traffic are disproportionate.
<b>Commercial vehicles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Light goods vehicles</li><li>• Heavy goods vehicles</li><li>• Coaches</li></ul>	Routing to maximise the use of distributor roads and minimise the use of other network street categories i.e. access and egress to/from city destinations should be made via the closest available distributor road junction.	Goods vehicles will not be allowed access through network modal filtering points.  Within streets subject to restricted access, goods vehicles will not be permitted access during the restricted periods other than for vehicles operating zero emission freight consolidation schemes.
<b>Emergency service vehicles</b>	Access to whole network.	Emergency service vehicles to be allowed access through network filtering points either through 'exemption-listing' at camera enforced filters or using keys at physically enforced modal filters.
<b>Vehicles used by blue badge holders</b>	Level of access to be determined through consultation.	The ambition is to promote access for disabled residents across the network.  Consultation will help shape the approach to delivering on this ambition.





# Road and street categories

We have also set out some early thoughts on how the road network could be broken down into various categories of road and street. This is based on the level of access and movement they provide within the wider road network (Table 2).

For each category of street some key characteristics have been identified.

**Table 2:** Draft street categories and characteristics

Category	Typical movement functions	Typical place characteristics
<p><b>Primary Distributor Roads</b> (Main roads that all traffic could use)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main roads for all traffic moving to/from/around the city</li> <li>• 'A' or 'B' roads that connect to smaller roads</li> <li>• Used by all (residents, commuters &amp; visitors) and all vehicle types</li> <li>• Main arterial roads and the designated ring road, linking to the M11 &amp; A14</li> <li>• Generally no restrictions on access</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where space permits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Segregate pedal cyclists and buses from other traffic (e.g. bus and cycle lanes) with priority for pedestrians and cyclists at side road junctions</li> <li>• Provide green landscaping through trees and verges</li> </ul> <p><b>Parking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-street parking provided for cyclists, local servicing and blue badge holders as a priority</li> <li>• General car parking restricted to layby or off-road, limited-stay spaces</li> <li>• Residents' parking only considered where no alternative in neighbouring streets</li> </ul> <p>Controlled crossings for walking and cycling at all major junctions and intersections.</p> <p>Generally, a 30mph speed limit or 20mph where the road layout warrants it.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Distributor Roads</b> (Other roads that all traffic could use to get to and around the city)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the primary distributor road network</li> <li>• Help traffic move to/from villages and fringe areas near the city boundary</li> </ul>	







Category	Typical movement functions	Typical place characteristics
<p><b>Area Access Streets</b> (Roads that provide access to large areas of the city)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give access to, from and within large areas of the city</li><li>• Generally 'C' roads linking distributor roads to local access streets</li><li>• Used by all vehicle types</li><li>• Not generally subject to restrictions on access unless suitable alternative route is available</li><li>• Do not allow movements between distributor roads other than by public transport, cycling and walking</li></ul>	<p>As Primary Distributor Road and Secondary Distributor Roads but:</p> <p><b>Parking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General car parking limited to short stay</li><li>• Should avoid blocking/limiting pedestrian movement</li></ul> <p>Generally have a 20mph speed limit.</p> <p>Street environment and layout should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support local economic activity and social interaction near shops and businesses</li><li>• Provide amenity areas and seating to support the community</li><li>• Support safe and convenient pedestrian movement by providing formal and informal kerb free/level crossing points</li></ul>
<p><b>Local Access Streets</b> (Roads that provide access to smaller areas of the city)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As Area Access Streets but give access to, from and within smaller areas of the city</li></ul>	<p>Where adjacent to green open spaces the street should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide convenient and safe crossings to link key walking and cycling routes</li><li>• Reduce the impact of passing traffic by softening the changes between pavements and green areas</li></ul> <p>Keep on-street parking to a minimum.</p>



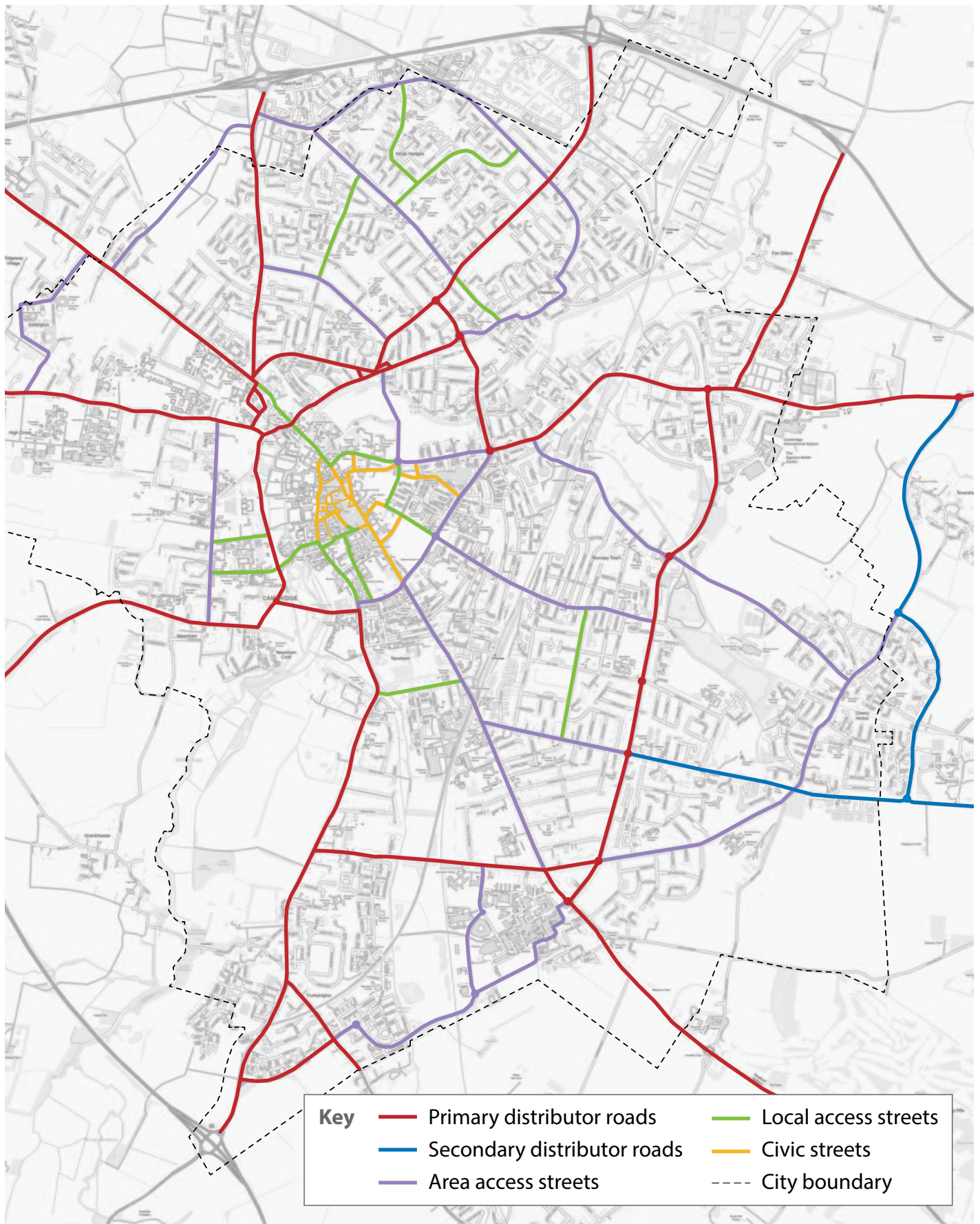




Category	Typical movement functions	Typical place characteristics
<p><b>Civic Streets</b> (Mainly small streets in the city centre. Access for vehicles would be restricted)</p>	<p>Provide access to main shopping, entertainment and leisure areas of the city.</p> <p>Priority given to walking and cycling.</p> <p><b>Motor vehicle access:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited to residents, those with limited mobility and for deliveries/servicing</li><li>• Only allowed at certain times outside busy periods</li><li>• Buses not normally allowed; smaller buses could be allowed access to link to the wider bus network</li></ul>	<p>Often historic narrow streets within shopping, tourist and leisure areas.</p> <p>Large numbers of pedestrians spending time rather than passing through.</p> <p>High-quality public space appropriate to the area.</p> <p><b>Street design:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow for street trading to encourage people to spend time in support of retail, leisure and tourism</li><li>• Allow for street performance and community/cultural events</li><li>• Help pedestrians and cyclists to use the area safely, with alternative routes provided for cyclists to avoid congested streets</li><li>• Street operations to reflect economic and social importance of the streets and address security aspects</li></ul> <p>On-street cycle parking at various locations for short stays.</p>
<p><b>Neighbourhood Streets</b> (Access for vehicles would be allowed but through movements would be restricted)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide access to properties in local neighbourhoods</li><li>• Through movements to the wider road network only allowed by walking and cycling</li></ul>	<p>Typically, residential streets that reflect patterns of development that have grown up over time.</p> <p>Motor vehicle access is generally unrestricted. Significant space may be allocated to on-street parking for local residents with cycle parking provided to satisfy local need.</p> <p>Parking for car club vehicles would also be a common feature of the street scene to promote an alternative to car ownership.</p>

The GCP is currently preparing an integrated parking strategy, which will set out how parking will be managed and operated and the priorities for future area-based parking schemes to help support the GCP's transport objectives. The parking aspects of the road classification review will be aligned with this strategy.

Plan 2 shows how the various categories of road and street shown in Table 2 could be applied to the road network in Cambridge.



**Plan 2:** Indicative road classification

Should you wish to view this plan in more detail, you can do so by visiting the consultation website ([www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)). It is saved in the Documents section.



# Key issues for consideration

## Traffic displacement

Preventing some roads and streets being used as through routes could mean that some traffic moves to other roads and streets instead. Bringing in a new road classification at the same time as the Making Connections proposals, if approved by the Executive Board later this year, for traffic reduction and investment in a new bus network could reduce overall traffic levels in the city. This would reduce the amount of traffic using other roads and streets and would mean more opportunities to reallocate space on the roads for walking, cycling and public transport or other active travel.

## City centre bus routes

The Making Connections proposals, if approved by the Executive Board later this year, would see a significant increase in the number of buses operating in the city, and it might not be appropriate for buses to use some of the roads in the city centre they run on at present.

The St Andrew's Street, Drummer Street and Emmanuel Street area, which is where many of the existing bus services begin or end their routes, is at capacity and would struggle to take the proposed increased number of services. There is no space to increase capacity at this main bus interchange, so we need to think about how to relocate bus routes away from this area and, therefore, we would need to look at the options available for alternative bus interchanges. Given that walking distances could increase as a result, which could impact on people with mobility needs in particular, we would also need to look into providing some form of zero-emission shuttle bus service that links up with places people want to access in the city centre.

## Pedestrian and cycling priority

Cambridge City Council's Making Space for People vision document proposes making central Cambridge more 'people focussed' by increasing pedestrian and cycle priority and reducing access by motor vehicles. This would help to create the right conditions to change the way that streets and open spaces are used. The document can be found on the consultation website ([www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)) in the Documents section.

The initial ideas for a new road classification suggest giving priority to walking and cycling in more streets in the city centre. Moving bus and taxi routes further out provides an opportunity to increase the area that could be limited to pedestrian and cyclist access only. Motor vehicle access would be restricted by time of day and limited to essential needs.

This would benefit both pedestrians and cyclists, but in some streets at busy times the interaction between walking and cycling can cause delay and friction. Therefore we could also look at creating alternative routes to give cyclists the choice to avoid these streets.

If the area of pedestrian priority was to be extended, it will be important to ensure that the longer walking distances are not a barrier for people with disabilities and/or mobility needs. This would be done by providing alternative ways to get around the city centre, such as enhanced shop mobility or exploring a form of zero emission shuttle bus service to link up the whole area. Restricting access to some streets to pedestrians, cyclists and other active travellers could help to improve safety for everyone.

**See Plan 3:** Bus routes and pedestrian / cycling priority on facing page.







## Taxis

Taxis contribute to congestion and have an impact on air quality in the same way as other motor vehicles do. However, they are the only viable transport option for some people.

Since the 1990s, taxis (hackney carriages and private hire cars) have been permitted to use bus lanes and bus gates in the city, and they are exempt from some access restrictions in the city centre. Since that time the number of taxis has increased significantly and this approach may not be appropriate in future.

Under a new road classification, taxi journeys could be treated in the same way as other car journeys. We also need to consider whether hackney carriages and private hire cars should be treated in the same way. We want to know what you think about this.

## City centre deliveries

Further restrictions on access to the city centre for motor vehicles would mean that deliveries to businesses would need to be made in a different way. Combining deliveries where possible for the final part of the trip would help reduce the number of goods vehicles that need to get into and around the city centre. Using low emission vehicles or e-cargo bikes would help to reduce congestion and improve air quality in the city. Allowing easier and more frequent access for these types of vehicle could encourage businesses to combine their deliveries.

## Road safety

Road safety is a key consideration for a new road classification for Cambridge. As part of the wider City Access project, a new classification could encourage people to use public transport and active travel more than they do at the moment. This would help to reduce overall traffic levels in the city, making city roads and streets safer.



## Vehicle and user exemptions

All trips made by car or other motor vehicles contribute to congestion and have an impact on the environment, including those made by Blue Badge holders.

Changing the way that traffic moves around the city by bringing in a new road classification will impact upon all drivers.

We have a population which is ageing, and the number of people needing Blue Badges can be expected to increase in future years.

Access exemptions are usually issued to specific vehicles, but a Blue Badge is issued to an individual rather than to a specific vehicle. This can make enforcement difficult as Blue Badge holders may use more than one vehicle to get around.

For some disabled people who hold a Blue Badge, using a car can make getting around easier even when journeys involve using longer

routes. For others with more severe with more severe health conditions or impairments the inconvenience of making longer trips could cause increased distress and discomfort.

There are other people who might need to get around the city for their work or to provide public services, such as health and social care or waste collections.

There would need to be some flexibility to address the disproportionate impacts on some drivers and types of motor vehicle. We want to know what you think about possible exemptions for some groups of people and or types of vehicle, such as:

- Blue Badge holders, based on the level of disability
- Care workers
- Health workers
- Public service vehicles, such as refuse collection vehicles
- Delivery vehicles making combined deliveries.





# Links to other projects

## Making Connections

Seeks to transform public transport and active travel into and around Cambridge. The key focus is an extended bus service, with longer running hours, more frequent buses, reduced fares, better rural connections and new routes to growing employment sites. To free up road space and help us invest in these improved services, we are looking at ways to fund improved public transport through possible parking charge increases or some form of road user charging. Reduced traffic would make walking and cycling safer and easier as well as enabling us to provide high-quality public spaces.

Find out more on our website:

[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/making-connections-2021](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/making-connections-2021)

## GCP Corridor Schemes

Four new public transport routes to the north, south east, east and west of Greater Cambridge connecting key areas of growth with the city, complemented by travel hubs and cycleways to encourage Park & Ride journeys and walking and cycling.

Find out more at:

[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/public-transport-schemes](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/public-transport-schemes)



## Cambridgeshire County Council transport projects

There are a number of Cambridgeshire County Council schemes that relate to the GCP's Road Classification and City Access projects:

- The Active Travel Strategy looks at how to achieve safer and more effective travel for people who walk, cycle or use another form of active travel.
- School Streets is supporting communities that want to restrict vehicle access around schools during drop-off and pick-up times.
- Bringing in 20mph schemes to help improve safety, active travel and sense of place in built-up areas.





# Project timeline

The project timeline is indicative and is subject to change

## July 2022

Consultation on road classification principles closes

## Winter 2022/23

GCP Executive Board and Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and Transport Committee recommendations on a new road classification

## Spring 2023

Final consultation on delivery proposals

## Implementing a new road classification for Cambridge

A new road classification for Cambridge would take several years to put in place and it would need to be brought in through a number of stages.

The feedback from this consultation will help us to put together a plan for bringing in a new road classification. Subject to approval from the GCP Executive Board and Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways and Transport Committee, there would be a separate consultation on a proposed plan.





# Your views and next steps



Fill out the online survey:

[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)



If you would prefer not to complete the consultation survey online, please telephone **01223 699906** and a member of our Contact Centre will add your responses to the survey for you.



Email your views to [consultations@greatercambridge.org.uk](mailto:consultations@greatercambridge.org.uk)



If you would prefer a hard copy of the consultation brochure and survey please telephone **01223 699906** and a copy will be posted to the address you give us.



If you require a copy of the consultation brochure and survey in large print, Braille, audio tape or in another language please call **01223 699906** or email: [consultations@greatercambridge.org.uk](mailto:consultations@greatercambridge.org.uk)



Attend one of our public meetings.  
For details of dates and times, see below.



Further information can be found at:  
[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)



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The consultation closes at **midday** on **Monday 18 July 2022**.



Scan here to  
visit the website

## GCP public meetings

We will be running public events as part of this consultation.

- **Wednesday 15 June** 5-7pm Public Zoom surgery
- **Wednesday 29 June** 6-8pm Public Zoom meeting
- **Monday 4 July** 6.30-8.30pm Public meeting – Fenners Gallery, Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall

To book these, and for further information, visit:

[www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/RoadClassification2022)