

## **Response to A new road classification for Cambridge: Consultation 2022**

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/road-network-hierarchy-2022>

To: Greater Cambridge Partnership, Partnership Executive Board, Lead Officer Peter Blake  
Cc Richard Preston, Project Manager, Major Infrastructure Delivery, Cambridgeshire County Council

From: sent on behalf of Cllr Bryony Goodliffe, Chair of Cambridgeshire County Council's Children & Young People's Committee

Date: 14 July 2022

### **1.0 Purpose**

To respond to the consultation regarding the potential impact on service users that travel in and out of Cambridge City on contracted transport and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) fleet vehicles and budgets.

### **2.0 Background**

The consultation is seeking views on developing a new road network hierarchy for Cambridge which aims to reallocate road space in favour of public transport and active travel. 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.

#### **2.1**

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. Coldhams Lane, a widely used route into Cambridge by private road users and CCC contracted vehicles, is one of the routes into Cambridge which is being considered to have point road closures applied to it.

### **3.0 Context**

The Social Education Transport Team (SETT) provide client transport for those that are resident in Cambridgeshire. It is the role of SETT to ensure that it meets its statutory duties and complies with local policies in respect of the provision of free and subsidised transport for entitled children and Vulnerable Adults.

There are currently approximately 1,400 contracts which operate under contract to taxi and bus operators on a daily basis throughout Cambridgeshire. A number of these operate in and out of Cambridge City. In addition, SETT operate a small fleet, mainly used on adult routes and have approximately 35 volunteer/private car users.

#### **3.1 Service User – Young People**

A high number of Young People using contracted transport in Cambridge City are receiving specialist transport. There are a number of journeys into special schools in the city (Table 1) and a number of students travelling out of the city to other placements. All transport provision for young people with

special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) is currently door to door on contracted car and minibus transport. Most contracts operate at the beginning and end of day, but there are young people that have part time timetables and attend After School Clubs.

Taxi provision is also provided for mainstream students into City primary schools on medical grounds and when there is no local provision due to lack of space, which results in pupils needing to be transported to other schools, if they live more than 2 miles away from their offered provision.

**Table 1**

<b>SEND City Schools</b>	<b>Mode of Transport</b>	<b>Number of routes incoming to City</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Castle Special School, Courtney Way & new feeder school The Fields, Galfrid Road	Contracted Taxi/minibus	All (Approx. 30)	Substantial number of routes feed into school from Cherry Hinton, South side of City via Coldhams Lane
Gretton School. Girton	Contracted Taxi/minibus	4	From Cherry Hinton, Coldhams Lane area
Cambridge Regional College	Contracted Taxi/minibus		All City routes
Mayfield Primary (and Hearing Unit)	Contracted taxi	2	City routes
The Cavendish Special School, Impington	Contracted taxi	5	City routes
<b>SEND Schools, out of City</b>	<b>Mode of Transport</b>	<b>Number or routes outgoing from City</b>	
Granta Special School, Linton	Contracted taxi/minibus	10	From City and Coldhams Lane area

### **3.2 Service User – Social Care**

There are a number of clients that need ad hoc or long-term transport to either their foster home, or for contact or respite visits. Where possible CCC Volunteer Drivers and taxis assist with this transport. Transport can be required at various times of the day and operating under a demand responsive model.

### **3.3 Service User – Young Person and Adults**

There are a number of adult service users that require transport to bases, Day Centres  
Transport can be required at various times of the day and with little notice. (Table 2)  
In addition, we have a number of Care/Nursing homes and Hospital discharge arrangements that take place within Cambridge City under a demand responsive model and operated by Private Ambulance and Contracted Transport.

**Table 2**

<b>Adult Centres</b>	<b>Mode of Transport</b>	<b>Number of routes incoming</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Horizon Centre (LD) Coldhams Lane	Minibus / Taxis	8	Contracted vehicles, various pickups surrounding Cambridge and surrounding area  In house fleet base (5 vehicles) these are used to support centres and provided for other centre operations around Cambridge as well as respite journeys and vehicle
Birches Centre (OP) Coldhams Lane Cambridge	Minibus / Taxi	2	Pick-ups in Cambridge city
Hester Adrian Centre (LD) Hawthorn Way Cambridge	Minibus (16 seats)	1	Provided by in house from Horizon centre base – pick-ups in Cambridge City
Russell St – Respite (LD) Russell St Cambridge	Minibus / Taxi	2	LD – respite stay centre – (In house Minibus x1)
Owl Centre Abington (LD) Abington	Minibus	2	Pickups within Cambridge
CRC – King Hedges (LD)	Taxis	6	Various pick-ups in Cambridge City
Histon Day Centre (OP) Station Road Histon	Minibus	1	In house vehicle from Horizon centre
Rowen Humberston (LD) Humberston Road Cambridge	Taxi	6/7	Pickups Cambridge City and surrounding area
The Poplars – Respite Station Road Histon	Minibus / Taxis	As required	Transfers from day centres / home addresses
Darwin Nurseries Newmarket Road	Taxi (Vol drivers)	5/6	Pickups within Cambridge City and surrounding area
Eddies Art Works Waterbeach	Taxi	3	Pick up within Cambridge City

### **3.4 Service User – Contracted Bus passenger**

External providers from various areas in East Anglia are contracted to operate buses for schools within the City. St Bedes Secondary School and Cambridge Regional College (Further Education (FE) college) are two of the main procurers for this mode of transport.

## **4.0 Assessment of potential impact to client transport under changes to the Cambridge Road hierarchy**

### **4.1 Increase in client journey time**

CCC's current policy/best practice, is to keep the journey time to 45 minutes for a primary age pupil and one hour for secondary. This includes collecting the client and where necessary using any supporting equipment or wheelchair equipment. New road classifications could result in longer journey times which would not be suitable for client needs and would result in extra vehicles needing to be provided at additional cost and creating further pressures on the network.

### **4.2 Accessibility for client group**

Many of the client group require door to door transport and some of these arrangements will fall outside the beginning and end of the school day. Adult service users often require demand responsive transport at various times of the day. Transport will need to access the outside of the client's property.

### **4.3 Free Access for Volunteer Drivers & Parental Transport Budget Providers**

SETT use volunteer drivers for vulnerable adults and children. These volunteers not only provide excellent service but are more cost effective than contracting a taxi company. Volunteers operate between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and use their own vehicles. They would require free access to be able to continue to offer a demand responsive service.

SETT also provide Parental Transport Budgets to some parents whose children attend city SEN schools. Their access to these schools is vital as they are being paid a Parental Transport Budget under the criteria that this is either the safest arrangement for their children due to their medical needs or that it is the most cost- effective solution for the Council.

### **4.4 Free Access for contracted bus, taxi and minibus operators**

SETT procure transport through a dynamic purchasing system and have a number of contractors on the system from both inside and outside Cambridgeshire. Buses and taxis are not just licensed from within Cambridgeshire. There will need to be access for these vehicles, which may not be operating the same vehicle on a contract on a daily basis.

### **4.5 Financial implications**

The transport industry has been heavily impacted by various issues, including the pandemic, fuel increases and lack of drivers. Many taxi drivers have found new jobs in the driving industry and are no longer attracted to the taxi trade. This has had significant impact on the industry, along with

rising fuel costs and has meant that Transport Teams all over the country have been impacted and local authorities are seeing an increase in costs and are struggling to cover contracts.

In addition, there are more students waiting for placements in schools and pressure to reduce further the journey time for young people. Changes to the road hierarchy could result in extra vehicles needing to be procured or additional costs added to contracts for longer journeys and extra mileage. The average cost of a vehicles going into City schools is increasing steadily. (Table 3)

Table 3: Example cost of individual additional vehicles at Castle School

<b>SEN School</b>	<b>Mode of transport</b>	<b>Average cost per day</b>
Castle School, Cambridge	Current average cost of wheelchair accessible minibus with Passenger Assistant	£155 a day
	Taxi with Passenger Assistant	£110 a day

## 5.0 Summary

The Social Education Transport Team (SETT) is experiencing significant increases in demand for transport services, especially for children with SEND. Work is ongoing to address the continued pressure on costs, improve contract performance, streamline systems and processes and improve the overall outcomes for young people whilst, ensuring best value for money.

Whilst officers in the Education and social care directorates understand the need to review the city road network, the proposal needs to consider the following:

- Local Authority statutory guidance and legislation
- Needs of service users, both young people and adults, including journey times
- Exemption arrangements for a large number of contractors (taxi & bus)
- Exemption arrangements for volunteer drivers
- Accessibility to allow service users to be collected from their homes
- Financial implications for CCC transport budgets

## 6.0 Key Documents

Consultation document: <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/road-network-hierarchy-2022>