

18 July 2022

Greater Cambridge Partnership
PO Box 1493, Mandela House
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Cambridge
United Kingdom
Cambridgeshire
CB1 0YR

Submitted via email only: consultations@greatercambridge.org.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

A new road classification for Cambridge – A review of how roads and streets are categorised and used Representations on behalf of Universities Superannuation Scheme

On behalf of our client, Universities Superannuation Scheme Limited (USS), we are writing pursuant to the consultation on the brochure titled '*A new road classification for Cambridge*', published by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) for comments until 18 July 2022.

Background

USS is a major investor and landowner in Cambridge. Its assets include Grand Arcade Shopping Centre and Clifton Road Industrial Estate. USS is therefore committed to supporting the city centre and ensuring its vitality and viability while creating beautiful and safe spaces.

USS previously submitted representations to the GCP on 14 October 2019 to the '*Making space for People Interim*' consultation. USS then re-submitted its comments to the GCP to the '*Making Connections*' consultation on 20 December 2021. To date, USS has not received responses from the GCP. Therefore, USS is submitting representations to the current consultation to reiterate its previous comments.

USS does not consider the current consultation format by the GCP presents a formal engagement opportunity for dialogue with businesses in Cambridge. Given the scale of changes proposed to restrict city centre traffic, and the potential impact on local businesses, USS urges the GCP to respond to the previous representations submitted in 2019 and 2021, and begin a dialogue formally with local businesses for such an important transport strategy.

'A new road classification for Cambridge'

USS is generally supportive of the aspirations set out in the brochure titled '*A new road classification for Cambridge*' which aims to promote road safety by reducing congestion and encouraging walking and cycling in Cambridge city centre.

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However, we note that the strategy set out in the brochure proposes restrictions on cars and goods vehicles on some roads. Page 6 states *'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'*. The proposed strategy may restrict access to the car park at Grand Arcade Shopping Centre which currently acts as a major car park in the city centre and provides 953 car parking spaces. This is because the car park entrance is located on Corn Exchange Street which is proposed to be classified as partially a civic street and a local access street, as indicated in *'Plan 2: Indicative road classification'* of the brochure. However, it is unclear as to which classification the car park entrance would fall under. If the car park entrance was located on a civic street, vehicle access would be limited to residents, those with limited mobility and for deliveries/servicing only and the Grand Arcade car park would become inaccessible for visitors.

Figure 1 shows that Corn Exchange Street located to the west of Grand Arcade Shopping Centre (indicated by a red dot) is partially proposed to be a civic street and a local access street.



Figure 1 Extract from Plan 2: Indicative road classification of *'A new road classification for Cambridge'*

It is proposed in the strategy that civic streets would become pedestrian and cycling priority streets, including St Andrew's Street which is where existing bus services begin or end their routes. St Andrew's Street is located within the Primary Shopping Area, as set out in the adopted Cambridge Local Plan Policies Map (2018). The bus stops on St Andrew's Street currently provide major public transport access to Grand Arcade Shopping Centre and many other local businesses in the city centre. The bus services also provide major access to the city centre from multiple Park and Ride sites across Cambridge, including the sites at Milton and Maddingley Road.

Without alternative bus routes, the proposed restrictions on buses in the city centre would undermine the Park and Ride services which are encouraged by the adopted Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018). Park and Ride sites are supported by planning policy as a way of reducing traffic congestion in the city centre. However, the effectiveness of these site would be significantly limited without access to the city centre via buses, which appears to be inconsistent with the adopted planning policy.

Whilst USS understands the rationale for controlling access by private vehicles to the city centre, it believes that restricting buses in the Primary Shopping Area would significantly affect the accessibility of the area and would have a negative impact on the city centre retail. Restrictions on the use of private vehicles and buses on civic streets would significantly reduce footfall in the Primary Shopping Area, which would be harmful to the vitality and viability of the wider city centre. The proposals would also limit commercial and residential deliveries to certain times outside busy periods which in turn, would affect the operations of local businesses, as well as residents in the city centre.

We note that the brochure makes no reference to the Covid-19 pandemic which fundamentally changed high-street footfall. The long-term picture of recovery post-pandemic remains unclear. Therefore, the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic need to be fully appreciated and analysed with empirical evidence and modelling.

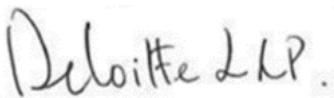
Summary

USS is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on this consultation and requests to be informed on the progress of the proposed transport strategy. USS' wider concerns about the proposed strategy have been set out in previous representations, which are appended to this letter.

USS would welcome the opportunity of a meeting with the GCP to discuss the proposed transport strategy in more detail, including alternatives to the existing road network priorities to ensure access to local businesses is not unduly affected.

We trust that the information provided is clear. Should you require any further information please contact Ellie Bird (ebird@deloitte.co.uk / +44 20 7007 3891) or Christy Ng (christyng@deloitte.co.uk / +44 20 7303 4702).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deloitte LLP." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Deloitte LLP