



From  
{redacted} MA FCA  
Domestic Bursar  
&  
{redacted}  
Senior Bursar

Gonville & Caius College  
Cambridge CB2 1TA

Telephone 01223-332400  
email: domesticburar@cai.cam.ac.uk  
senior.bursar@cai.cam.ac.uk  
[www.cai.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cai.cam.ac.uk)  
[@CaiusCollege](https://twitter.com/CaiusCollege)

12 July 2022

### **Response in relation to the consultation Cambridge Road Network Hierarchy Review (Road Classification)**

The College has noted the GCP's proposals and, whilst it fully supports the desired outcomes, we have significant concerns in relation to the plans as proposed.

#### **1) Absence of evidence base or data**

The College's business is varied and comprises not only education and research, but also providing residential, catering and conference facilities and the renting of commercial and residential properties.

Colleges are integral to the economy of the centre of Cambridge and much of their expenditure is invested in the local economy through the procurement of services and goods and the employment of staff.

No data has been presented in the proposals to indicate the weight or timings of traffic to support the proposals. Whilst certain roads affected are recognisably traffic hot spots at a peak traffic times (often linked to school day timings) it is unclear to what extent each of the areas of restriction currently suffers from either pollution levels above recommended limits, traffic incident levels resulting in a "black spot" rating, or other issues of concern.

The College does not recognise the inference that many of the roads proposed for conversion to "area access streets" are particularly busy during the majority of each working day. It is inevitable that reducing the variety and resilience of the road network will worsen traffic on key routes into the city. If this is the authors' intention it will have significant negative consequences for those not resident within the city boundaries (see below).

#### **2) Impact on academic and non academic staff recruitment**

Cambridge already has problems which make it difficult to attract and retain staff working in the City Centre, notably high parking charges and restricted bus operating hours (including the park and ride schemes). The cost of living within active travel distance of the centre of Cambridge is increasingly prohibitive for support as well as academic staff. This is particularly the case for staff in catering and domestic roles, who often work unsocial hours, outside public transportation provision and when streets feel less secure. The implementation of the proposed road classification will increase journey times into Cambridge and fuel costs, and make working in the City Centre yet more unattractive and making a welcoming and lively historic city centre more difficult to achieve. We do not understand how the proposal achieves the aim "to improve access to work ....." for many of our staff.

To be a coherent traffic management plan, a much clearer vision of a comprehensive, affordable bus network around the City, inclusive of early and late service provision, is required. This is referred to in clause 5.2 but without clear plans, and clear long term funding for them, restrictions on other forms of traffic remain highly problematic and would be strongly opposed by the College.

The location of any additional bus interchange location is key to the success of any wider transport plan; no indications or suggestions are given for it.

Finally, it is noted that e-buses are already in place in Cambridge. It is unclear why their mandated use cannot reduce emissions whilst retaining the current, well placed, interchange site as *part* of future provision.

#### **3) Lack of recognition of existing changes in transport trends post pandemic**

The Covid pandemic has led to increases in remote attendance at meetings and flexible working. This will have reduced the number of vehicles coming into Cambridge throughout the week. It is unclear that this factor has been taken account of in preparing the proposals; no data was presented to indicate that this has been measured or considered.

There is a visible change in the mix of vehicle types using City streets, with a significant increase in use of smaller e-bikes and e-scooters for deliveries, and the general adoption of electric cars and vans. The College would welcome proposals that encouraged adoption and use of such alternatives; including sufficient and appropriate parking for smaller e-vehicles.

Concentration of vehicular traffic on fewer roads will increase air pollution on them, in conflict with your stated aim to “lower air pollution.”

#### **4) Operational constraints on a vibrant city centre**

Expanding the network of Civic Streets in the historic centre of Cambridge is not sensible when existing restrictions affect the day to day operation of Colleges and businesses in the City Centre.

Constraints on and the complexity of deliveries and access both for Colleges’ own teams and external service/contractor suppliers already increase prices and reduce availability of contractors willing to work in the City Centre. Some contractors insist that meetings are held at 8am before the current restrictions come into force. Emergency maintenance does not respect access hours!

Colleges already consolidate deliveries by using a select group of suppliers, especially in relation to daily catering deliveries. Caius has expressed support for a central site for delivery consolidation as long as flexible delivery and collection times remain possible.

The proposals will have a negative impact on our >25 retail tenants. We and they are concerned that extension of the restricted access hours will mean that staff will be expected to work longer hours to receive deliveries, resulting in further recruitment and retention issues.

College vehicles and specific named staff with formalised working roles in the College’s city centre site are currently exempt from the daytime access restrictions. We would require such exemption categories to continue under any new proposals.

#### **5) Worsening accessibility for those with mobility issues**

Blue Badge parking in the Centre of the City is already in limited supply for visitors and staff employed in the City Centre. This provision should be improved and holders exempt from restrictions. A system for taxis to enter restricted zones by virtue of the status of their *passenger* is of essential. The current system of “park at the Grand Arcade and use a mobility scooter” – which then itself cannot be parked anywhere for those who can still walk short distances – is inadequate. It is an extraordinary policy outcome that some college staff drive in currently because rules permit a Blue Badge holder to drive and park, but do not permit a taxi to transport them.

An Equalities Impact assessment is cited in the proposals and is strongly supported – along with further consultation. The idea of a zero emission shuttle service proposal in 5.7 is welcomed but more details are required.

#### **6) Maintaining accessibility to student accommodation**

The GCP must consider the impact on parents/guardians/others bringing students and their necessary belongings into their College accommodation at the start and end of each term, three times a year. The current arrangements are a significant challenge and can give poor first impressions of student life at Cambridge University. Rules for street parking permits requiring that someone must remain with a vehicle whilst it is loaded/unloaded are impractical and slow down unloading by reducing available labour. Some of the areas proposed for restrictions, such as Grange Road, support far more transient student residents than long-term domestic ones. Their needs should be prioritised accordingly. Clause 6.2 refers to time of day related restrictions, but it is unclear what timings are proposed, and these details are key to effective consultation.

Proctorial arrangements led by the University place limits on students bringing cars to Cambridge. This is an enormous institutional benefit to the traffic management in the city during terms. But unless public transport plans support students arriving at the university with the belongings for independent/semi-independent living, private delivery by car will remain the norm.

#### **7) Conclusion**

We see some benefits from these proposals to residents in Cambridge where vehicular traffic is diverted away from streets where they live, but it must not be at the expense of additional operational costs for businesses in central Cambridge, particularly the long-established ones, of which the Colleges are probably the largest group by residents and staff.

The College suggests strongly that an emissions control zone would make much more sense for the stated aims; and would tie with transition nationally to electric vehicle standards.

08 June 2022

{redacted}  
Domestic Bursar

{redacted}  
Senior Bursar