

**18th March 2021 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item**

	Questioner	Question
1	Mal Schofield	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvement and City Access Strategy</p> <p>In 3.1 “The Joint Assembly asks the Board to apply a bolder vision and speed up implementation, to get in place actions that can make a difference in relation to the 22nd June trigger point and in particular focussing on alternatives to this being a car-based recovery.”</p> <p>There is little evidence supporting a "car-based recovery", although the psychology of "social distancing" demands an urgent strategic review of travel behaviour and the certainty of a switch of working time from "office to home". See Harvard Business Review article, reference below *</p> <p>Present forecasts show that peak traffic flows in the UK, will be permanently lower irrespective of a return to higher economic growth.</p> <p>Question: what are the key infrastructure elements of the Board's "bolder" vision of the Cambridge travel to work area for 2022 -2030?</p> <p>Examples: a fully operational Girton interchange to eliminate traffic delays at the A1303:Madingley Road/M11 junction; East/West Rail to a new station at the Biomedical Campus; and high density "green" housing at Cambridge North East.</p> <p>* HBR article December 2020 states:</p> <p>The most visible effect of the shift to working from home (WFH) is a large decline in time spent commuting (41 minutes/day). ----- In our new WFH reality, no matter what shape it ultimately takes, organizations will need to actively help maintain a healthy separation between work and personal lives. ----- Curiously, this may involve virtually recreating the forced breaks between work and life that came with the now-bygone commute. In other words: the commute is dead! Long live the commute!</p> <p>Background Information: Milton Keynes Strategy 2050 Document: Home MK Futures 2050 Briefing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bcxksr8o6kA</p>
2	James Littlewood, Chief Executive Cambridge Past, Present & Future	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvement and City Access Strategy</p> <p>Cambridge Past Present and Future (PPF) is deeply concerned that the Travel Hubs report, as written, has set no meaningful boundaries on what may be built on sensitive greenfield sites, especially on sites within the Cambridge/South Cambridgeshire green belt. The wording used in the report, with minor variations, is:</p>

		<p>“Where travel hub sites are located in the Green Belt, planning policy and requirements are likely to restrict the choice of components to those which can be clearly identified as “local transport infrastructure”.</p> <p>and</p> <p>“Consideration must be given to the location of the travel hub site – where the site is in a sensitive location or green belt, the size and materials used must be appropriate to the surroundings.”</p> <p>This wording provides no specific limits or guidance, and therefore provides no reassurance that GCP will take seriously the need to choose travel hub sites and sizes that minimise their environmental, ecological, aesthetic and heritage impacts.</p> <p>That is especially the case for what were referred to previously as ‘Park & Rides’, with up to 2,000 car parking spaces. Cambridge PPF has seen no evidence to date – including in the planning application for the Park & Ride at Hauxton – that the benefits are sufficiently great to warrant the deep and permanent damage these will have on the landscape. The strategy of GCP and the Combined Authority to provide greatly improved active and public transport infrastructure and services throughout the region has much higher environmental and social benefit at lower monetary and environmental cost.</p> <p>Our questions to the GCP Executive Board are therefore:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which organisations or individuals were invited to comment on drafts of this report? 2. Why are officers recommending adoption of this report without public consultation? 3. Why is there no meaningful distinction in the design guidance between large-scale Park & Rides, and small-scale travel hubs serving individual and small groups of villages?
3	David Stoughton for Living Streets Cambridge	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvement and City Access Strategy</p> <p>Walking as zero carbon active transport is referred to in many clauses especially in 7.4, and priority for pedestrians has been a consistent policy. At Living Streets we set out to research residents’ perception of the walking infrastructure, especially as walking is one of the few ways to take exercise during this pandemic. So we’re conducting a survey about the condition of local pavement across the city. I attach an interim report from that survey.</p> <p>Whilst most respondents express a degree of dissatisfaction with the condition of local pavements, we are most concerned about wheelchair users, parents with pushchairs and the elderly, especially those who require a companion by their side at all times. These users report pavement that are too narrow; obstructed by pavement parking, street furniture or other barriers; lack dropped</p>

		<p>kerbs, or are too slopping, rutted, or potholed for their use, especially after dark.</p> <p>Not only is this portion of the populace disadvantaged by the poor condition of pavements, they are forced back into cars even for local shopping, leisure or recreation. As pavements deteriorate further and traffic increases again the number of residents affected will increase. This threatens to undermine the active travel policy and adds unnecessarily to congestion and pollution. Whilst considerable progress is being made on priority routes, much of the infrastructure for walking in the city is left to decay.</p> <p>Will the Greater Cambridge Partnership collaborate with councils to prioritise safe walking as an issue and find budget to repair or upgrade pavements, remove obstructions, and enforce parking restrictions, hedge cutting and bin collection?</p> <p>[Background information attached: Living Streets local street survey: exploring the findings from Phase 1 and 2]</p>
4	<p>Vincent Poole Arbury Road resident</p>	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvement and City Access Strategy</p> <p>In relation to Agenda Item 7, City Access Strategy Recommendations, Part (b) 'Agree to prioritise road space for sustainable transport and make it a more competitive choice, by discouraging car use through..'</p> <p>It is very encouraging to see all the hard work going on through the GCP Agenda and Reports, but I would contest that Cambridge is the cycling city that people imagine but rather a car drivers city and the people who cycle do so despite the cars.</p> <p>For most days of the week the East end of Arbury Road is choked with idling traffic waiting to turn on to Milton Road.</p> <p>Now as my children return to school, two on bicycles and one on foot, one still affected by long Covid symptoms there is traffic queuing as far as the eye can see from my house, the road effectively blocked for cyclists.</p> <p>We are being encouraged to take up active travel, but I worry about the quality of the air we breathe in, as well as the safety aspect. This is especially awful to see at school time, this road is heavily used for active travel by people of all ages. But at school times it is the parents with young children and babies in trailers, or the children and students themselves who must either sit in the traffic queue and breathe in the fumes, retreat to the pavement or get off and wheel their bikes.</p> <p>The abrupt ending of the protective cycle lane just after North Cambridge Academy does a disservice to all the people who ride bikes as a method of travel. It really says, 'ok you're on your own</p>

		<p>now, good luck!</p> <p>When will the Arbury Road cycle lanes be completed all the way down to Milton Road? It makes no sense as a safe cycling route otherwise and I have seen data to show that it is very heavily used by cyclists.</p>
5	Nicholas Knight	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvement and City Access Strategy</p> <p>Pursuant to Agenda Item 7, and the reference to various public consultation exercises undertaken therein, does the Chair accept that the GCP has a duty of care to ensure that all relevant information is provided to the public on a timely basis and that any communication with the public in the context of the public consultation exercises should be accurate and most importantly truthful at all times?</p>
6	Edward Leigh Smarter Cambridge Transport	<p>Agenda Item 7: Public Transport Improvements and City Access Strategy</p> <p>Regarding the Travel Hub Design Principles report produced by Mott MacDonald:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much did this report cost? 2. Why was it commissioned when CoMoUK (referenced in the report) has already published detailed guidance on 'mobility hub' design, case studies and accreditation? 3. What questions did it answer that GCP officers could not answer without it? 4. What will change as a result of this report being written? <p>There are serious omissions, including in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net change to carbon emissions from construction and use of travel hubs. • Ecological impacts on greenfield sites, in particular from loss and disruption to natural habitats and water flows, and polluted rainwater run-off. • Safety needs and concerns of women and girls using travel hubs. • Needs of disabled people and their carers, e.g. 'changing places' toilets. • Design guidance for buildings and infrastructure in the greenbelt. • Data collection (e.g. site usage, car and cycle park occupancy rates) • Free WiFi provision, especially in locations where mobile phone coverage is poor. • Supplementary uses, e.g. for mobile library, health screening and other services; farmers' and craft markets.

And, specifically in relation to large Park & Ride sites:

- Abstraction of bus passengers from local to Park & Ride services.
- Public health impacts of air pollution in villages from vehicles accessing Park & Rides.
- Localised road congestion.

Using the term 'travel hub' to cover all permutations of facilities from a 2,000-space Park & Ride to a village bus station does not aid public understanding. By rebranding Park & Rides (which are well understood) as 'travel hubs', GCP is obscuring the scale and impact of the planned car parks at Hauxton (1,614 car parking spaces), Babraham (up to 2,000 spaces) and Scotland Farm (1,438 spaces) – all greenfield sites in the green belt.

Living Streets local street survey: exploring the findings from Phase 1 and 2

Context

Living Streets is a national organisation focused on improving conditions for all pedestrians. In late 2020, a Cambridge branch of Living Streets was set up and is registered on the national Living Streets website. The Cambridge branch website can be found at <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups/cambridge>

In December 2020, Cambridge Living Streets launched a pilot survey to begin the task of understanding local views and concerns about being a pedestrian in Cambridge. 98 responses were received in this initial phase, mainly from SE Cambridge. The survey was then extended in early 2021 to other areas and, in total, 242 responses have now been made. This second report analyses all the responses so far and considers next steps in the light of the findings.

Approach and focus

The focus of the on-line survey is on people who regularly used their local streets. Questions were shaped by anecdotal comments on access and usage and by media reports. We wanted to understand how people used their streets and what they saw as the major issues in doing so. The survey did not define 'local streets'; respondents identified these themselves.

To engage, someone had to click on the link, and complete the form online. The survey was initially posted on the NextDoor Petersfield site and was available for two weeks (in Dec, 2020). It mainly attracted responses from residents of Petersfield, Romsey, Coleridge and Cherry Hinton. Subsequently, the survey was distributed online during January and February 2021, via residents' associations, to other areas of Cambridge: Abbey, Arbury, Newnham and Trumpington. During most of this period Cambridgeshire, including Cambridge city, was either in national lockdown or in COVID-19 tier 3.

The set up makes it likely that we attracted a sub-set of people with a pre-existing interest and views about walking in their local area. They would be able to work online and have time to complete the survey. This self-selection will have shaped the range and type of responses so results cannot be seen as representative of the whole range of pedestrians' views. However, they are very helpful in flagging some key issues for further investigation.

Findings

Q1: Do you walk regularly around local streets?

100% of people responded 'yes' to this question (n=242), which is not surprising as people not using their local streets would be unlikely to be interested in taking part.

The survey provided people with four categories to define how they used their local streets: shopping, work, social activities/local amenities and recreation/exercise. Many people selected more than one category, the most popular being using local streets for local recreation/exercise. Over half also used local streets for shopping and amenities/social activities. Results are shown below in Table 1:

Table 1: Use of local streets

Category use of local streets:	Used for shopping	Used for work/journey to work	Used for social activities/ local amenities	Used for recreation and exercise
Number of respondents (total = 242)	132	118	176	225
Responses as a %	54.54%	48.76%	72.72%	92.97%

There were some differences between responses across the different areas, depending on their local lay out and amenities. In the Mill Road area (Petersfield and Romsey), for example, the most heavily reported uses of local streets related to shopping and social activities/amenities whereas in Trumpington the most widely reported use was for recreation and exercise.

Q2: Are you generally happy with your experience as a pedestrian in Cambridge?

This was the opening question in a series that focused on specific aspects of the pedestrian experience. The choice of aspects reflected those previously reported anecdotally by residents or noted in media coverage. Three categories were included for this initial response: Yes, No and It Depends. As Table 2 sets out, overall, less than 6% were happy with their experience as a pedestrian. 94% were either not happy and or replied that it depended on the circumstances.

Table 2: Overall pedestrian experience

Are you generally happy with your experience as a pedestrian in Cambridge?	Overall YES	Overall NO	It depends
Total of responses = 242	14	153	76
Responses as a %	5.78%	63.22%	31.40%

People were then invited to comment on their experience in particular areas, in all cases reporting on '*pavements they regularly used*'. These were about the quality of pavements (whether they were uneven, sloping, cracked, potholed) and obstructions on pavements (by parked vehicles, waste bins, traffic signs or other street furniture).

People commented on their local streets and also on streets that were used as thoroughfares (such as Queen Edith's Way) or offered a range of local shops and amenities (such as Mill Rd and Anstey Way). Worn and uneven surfaces were particularly mentioned as hazardous to walkers:

'Alpha Terrace has been getting progressively worse as the surface becomes worn away. The metal rain water drains then become a trip hazard. The surface is very uneven and is due a revamp.' (Trumpington respondent)

'Anstey Way at the junction with the High Street.....lots of small manhole covers, uneven patched repairs...' (Trumpington respondent)

Several long roads, such as Grange Rd, also attracted adverse comment for pavement quality. Mill Rd was reported for its narrow sections of pavement which made wheelchair

and pushchair access dangerous and for the numbers of parked vehicles obstructing the pavement. People mentioned a range of concerns and identified particular parts of longer roads, for example:

‘Milton Rd from the nail bar, Viking , Chesterton carpets right up to the co-op, we have to dodge speeding cyclists and large vehicles blocking most of the pavement’ (Arbury respondent)

Interestingly, the range of concerns was very similar across all areas. Older parts of Trumpington attracted more criticism in terms of pavement quality than more recent developments. Pavement parking was a source of annoyance in all areas but reported most frequently on busy shopping streets. In all areas the impact of contractor works on streets, and in some cases poor reinstatement of surfaces, was mentioned. Whilst signage, overhanging foliage and bins were a nuisance to some, the over-riding complaint was about the decay of pavements to the point where they had in some places become a real hazard. Table 3 sets out headline results.

Table 3: Pavements: quality and obstructions

Nature of problem	Numbers/ percentages reporting this	Range of concerns
Pavements that are sloping, uneven, cracked or potholed	224 = 92.56%	Deterioration of pavements and inadequate patching mentioned by majority; impact of road works such as laying cables and pipes with poor quality reinstatement
Pavements blocked by parked vehicles	174 = 71.90%	This was noted across the area but most frequent report was about Mill Rd. Contractors’ vehicles seen as hazards in some cases.
Pavements blocked by waste bins	150 = 61.98%	Some concerns, seen as temporary, usually a day or so only after collection day
Traffic signs and street furniture obstructing pavements	106 = 43.80%	Reports linked together obstructions and the width of the road.
Hedges protruding onto pavements	129 = 53.30%	Reports from several areas and also tree root damage and slipping on wet leaves

Any other issues?

Finally, respondents were asked to comment on any other issues that concerned them. Many flagged earlier concerns, emphasising the dangers they saw. Alongside this, people added points about flooding of parts of roads after rain, puddles that never dried up through the winter, dog mess, lack of dropped kerbs for buggies and wheelchairs and the dangers for pedestrians of adults cycling on pavements.

Poor lighting quality made walking on uneven pavements after dark more dangerous. There were several reports of dangers for wheelchair users and of slips and falls; some individuals

did not use their local streets because of such dangers. The following comments reflect widespread concerns about the poor state of local pavements.

‘Someone should regularly try a wheelchair around Cambridge – lots of crooked pavings, lack of dropped kerbs and obstructions’ (Petersfield respondent)

‘Pavements just in a bad state from weather and being dug up; easy to trip on cracks, holes, hardware’ (Petersfield respondent)

‘We are both coping with a degree of mobility issues and often resign ourselves to walking in the roads, dodging traffic rather than risking tripping up and falling on pavements’ (Cherry Hinton respondent)

‘Terrible holes and dark patches, where you cannot see if there are holes at night’ (Petersfield respondent)

Reflections

No final conclusions can be drawn from what remains work in progress, drawing responses from a sub-set of interested local residents across Cambridge. But we must recognize that our 242 respondents identify real problems for themselves as pedestrians. Those accessing local streets in wheelchairs or using walking aids encounter hazards and even dangers that must concern any organization focusing on ‘living streets’.

The overall response to the question ‘Are you generally happy with your experience as a pedestrian in Cambridge?’ was that 94% of people either replied ‘no’ (63.22%) or ‘it depends’ (31.40%). This suggests a high degree of dissatisfaction with the quality of some city pavements. Responses to later questions in the survey provide more detail of the types of concerns people have, with large numbers (n=224) reporting cracked and damaged pavements, over 50% noting obstructions of various kinds and many reporting the problems they raise.

Ways forward

Emerging findings from this study suggest that particular groups of people find negotiating local streets difficult: for example, those pushing children in pushchairs, those in wheelchairs or experiencing some degree of difficulty in mobility.

Recommendation 1

In any future extension of the survey it would be helpful to be able to group respondents more easily by area and perhaps by age and health status.

This recommendation was made after the analysis of data gathered in December 2020. When the survey was extended to five further areas of Cambridge, three questions were added: a request for the first part of the respondent’s postcode; for their age group (>65 or 65>, with a no-disclosure option); and a question about whether they considered themselves to have a disability that made walking more difficult. The results for the 144 people who gave their age group details are as follows:

- Under 65 years of age = 64.8%; Above 65 years of age = 34.5%
- Reporting a level of disability = 32%
- Postcodes reported: CB1, CB2, CB3, CB4, CB5

Recommendation 2

It would be useful to explore the impact that pavement quality may have on people's decisions about which shops and amenities to use.

This recommendation was also made after the initial phase of the survey. It remains very challenging for Living Streets as a newly created local branch to follow up all the concerns raised by this survey. It will take more work to create a persuasive case that might lead to real improvements but this more extensive report underpins and extends the learning from the December 2020 pilot phase.

Recommendation 3

The data already gathered could be used to plan a more forensic assessment of a limited number of widely-used streets to help build a case for improvement.

Living Streets, Cambridge decided to extend the survey before undertaking this work as the initial returns were from a limited part of the city. The second phase has enabled the response to more than double in size (242 responses as against 98) and to be gathered from a much wider geographical area. There is now more varied and robust data to use to build a case for improvement.

LJJ 1st phase report, 5.1.21

LJJ 2nd phase report 11.3.21