Evidence/Supplementary information

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Transport Evidence Report (TER)

The Transport Evidence Report, developed by Cambridgeshire County Council in 2021 is available here. It is to be read alongside a second document from 2025 that continues the report (see p3 for explanation of relationship between the two documents).

References to City Access/City Access proxy in the Transport Evidence Report (TER)

The modelling used to demonstrate that the Greater Cambridge Local Plan's development strategy can be accommodated on the region's transport network assumes that certain schemes would likely be in place by 2041 to mitigate the levels of development proposed. These include City Access (Greater Cambridge Local Plan Transport Evidence Report: Preferred Option Update, p13)

The footnote to this page explains:

> "*Some of these schemes are at an early stage of development and therefore they are represented in the model by "proxies" to represent the impact of the proposed scheme on the wider transport networks*."

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan's Transport Evidence Report (Part 4): Draft Plan Update then concludes (p43):

> *"There is further work needed to refine the mitigation package, but there is nothing in the modelling results to suggest that the development locations and quantum included in the Emerging Preferred Development Strategy for Draft Plan cannot be accommodated on the transport network* ***providing mitigation commensurate with the city access proxy*** *within the model runs is delivered"* [our emphasis]

What is City Access?

City Access is a Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) programme. While its exact programme has varied over the years, its cornerstones include a) an expanded bus network, made feasible by bringing in measures to fund it on an ongoing basis (e.g. a road charge, workplace parking levy) and b) demand management measures to obtain space on Cambridge's roads so buses can run freely and more priority can be given to walking, wheeling and cycling (e.g. a circulation plan, traffic filters, a road charge).

In 2016, the GCP ran a consultation under its Cambridge Access programme on measures including peak congestion control points (traffic filters) and a workplace parking levy. Cambridge Access later became City Access.

For example, in 2021, when the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Transport Evidence Report: Preferred Option Update that mentions City Access was published, the GCP ran a public consultation under its City Access programme called Making Connections 2021. The

measures consulted on included an expanded bus network, a zonal road charge and higher parking charges (Making Connections 2021 Consultation Report).

The following iteration of City Access was the Cambridge Sustainable Travel Zone road charge, which was predicted to provide £50 million per year to fund a transformed bus network and cut the number of car journeys in Cambridge by up to 50% (Making Connections 2022 consultation brochure p4; available via the Internet Archive site Wayback machine or at https://cambstravelalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Making-connections-brochure-1.pdf).

'City Access' and 'City access proxy' in the Transport Evidence Report therefore likely refer to a package of measures including a) a scheme to generate ongoing funding for an expanded bus network and services and b) demand management schemes which reduce the overall numbers of motor vehicles on Cambridge's streets.

Agenda item 6 from the GCP's September 2023 Executive Board meeting describes the GCP's City Access Programme (paragraph 2.30 onwards).

Are measures commensurate with City Access included in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan?

Neither the Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, nor the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (including its Draft Capital Delivery Programme (p92 to107) identify measures that would generate revenue funding to support an expanded bus network on an ongoing basis. Measures considered for this purpose under the GCP's City Access programme include a workplace parking levy and a zonal road charge (see Agenda Pack, September 2022 GCP Executive Board Meeting, Agenda Item 'Public Transport and City Access Strategy').

The anticipated funding source for the new bus routes and services in new developments is instead identified in the Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan as S106 contributions from developers (Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Table 18-2 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule). S106 contributions are usually time-limited, typically needing to be spent within a period of 5 to 10 years. S106 contributions will therefore not be available to support an expanded bus network on an ongoing basis.

Neither the Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, nor the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (including its Draft Capital Delivery Programme (p92 to107) identify specific demand management schemes to obtain space on Cambridge's roads so sustainable modes can run freely commensurate to those considered by GCP under its City Access scheme, e.g. 'peak-time congestion control points' (see Agenda Pack, June 2016, GCP Executive Board Meeting, Item 9; 'Cambridge Access' was later changed to 'City Access') or a zonal road charge (see Agenda Pack, June 2023, GCP Executive Board meeting, Item 10).

The Draft Interim Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy does not propose road charging

"*Congestion charging is not proposed as part of this Strategy*" (Draft Interim Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy, p1)

Measures proposed under City Access have been rejected by Mayor Paul Bristow

The Mayor's manifesto states:

> "*Labour's Mayor has an official target to force 15% of cars off all local roads by 2030 …. So I'll scrap this absurd target on day one and rule out any road or congestion charging, road closures or local access-only schemes*."

The GCP's Executive Board is no longer progressing the most effective City Access schemes

The GCP Executive Board is no longer progressing the Sustainable Travel Zone road charge for Cambridge. See the Decision Summary from the September 2023 GCP Executive Board Meeting:

> "6) *Agree that the proposals* [the Making Connections 2022 proposals, as outlined in Agenda Item 6 of the September 2023 GCP Executive Board meeting, p40-393], *are not at a stage to enable recommendations to be made to the Highways & Transport Committee of the County Council (as Highways Authority) to endorse the Outline Business Case and to progress the Making Connections proposals to the Full Business Case stage."*

The GCP Executive Board had also previously decided not to develop proposals for a Workplace Parking Levy or pollution-based road charge (paragraph 2.37, Agenda Item 6 of the September 2023 GCP Executive Board meeting).

CPCA report predicting that over a third of bus services in the region may need to be cut

A recent report to CPCA's Transport Committee also predicts that unless solutions are found to close the funding gap that exists for buses, the bus network across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough could contract further by more than a third by 2035 (Independent Review of Implementation Pathways for Bus Franchising) (Table 5.7: Service reductions by service type (2035))

Reducing congestion was identified by Leon Daniels OBE when he spoke at CPCA Transport Committee in June 2026 as one means of reducing the costs of providing bus services. (Webcast for item 18; transcript by Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance)

Measures such as road charging and a workplace parking levy have no dependable policy basis in Greater Cambridge, and so cannot be relied upon to be delivered

Neither the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, nor the Interim Draft Greater Cambridge Transport strategy supports road charging, traffic filters (such as those currently in place in Oxford) or a workplace parking levy.