

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Report to Haslingfield Parish Council June 2019

M11 Junction 11 Park & Ride

The Greater Cambridge partnership (GCP) is progressing proposals for increasing P&R capacity at junction 11 through a new site on the Hauxton side of the junction, on the north side of the A10. It is disappointing to say the least that this is where we are, the result of a whole series of poor decisions over many years that has effectively ended with the need to outsource the car park of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) a few miles down the road. That said, the risk of not putting in new P&R capacity now is that the junction will lock up at peak times, making traffic even worse for the communities along the A10.

Designs involving tunnel access from the M11 to improve traffic flow along the A10 have been dropped due to the Mayor's stipulation that new P&R capacity around Cambridge be temporary. Officers believe that access can still be designed to minimise impact on the flow of traffic – we are curious to see what that looks like to put it mildly. The GCP has committed to work with local communities in the detailed design phase to mitigate impact, in particular through phased delivery (to try to avoid any supply induced demand traffic), environmental enhancements and walking and cycle links to the hub.

Cambourne to Cambridge Phase 2 Consultation Report

The GCP has reported the results of the consultation on phase 2 (Cambourne to Madingley Mulch roundabout). The Scotland Farm site for the P&R was still strongly favoured, and a busway separated from the main carriageway was also favoured (as opposed to on-road / road widening), although it is worth noting that its support was almost equal to that of the two on-road variants. This consultation feedback will feed into final proposals for the complete scheme to be brought before the executive board in the autumn.

On phase 1, the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) Technical Group continues to meet regularly with officers and the GCP drafted technical notes on these discussions which were shared at the A428 LLF meeting on 6th June. After presentations both by GCP and Mott MacDonald and in response by members of the LLF technical group, the LLF resolved to ask for work to be done on a further optimised hybrid on-road & off-road route.

Greater Cambridge Partnership – Choices for Better Journeys

The GCP Joint Assembly also met on 6th June and considered the feedback from the “Choices for Better Journeys” consultation. There are some interesting results from the consultation, including significant support for either a pollution charge or congestion charge, provided money generated by any scheme is directed into significant improvements in public transport so that it can provide a genuine alternative to the car, particularly for those in South Cambs who have seen the bus service slowly decline over many years.

The next steps are for the GCP executive board to outline the principles that will guide officers in developing outline proposals, including the fairness and equality of any scheme which are particularly important to us. We are also seeking more clarity on the public transport improvements we can expect to see in our communities.

Local Transport Plan Consultation

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be going out for consultation soon (probably starting later this month and running for about 12 weeks). The plan will cover the years to 2050 and should support the growth targets of Local Plans across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, as well as provide context for projects like the CAM Metro, Cambridge South rail station, dualling of the A10 and work on the bus network. Expect to see some consultation events and online engagement – more details when we have them.

Marshall's Site

Marshall have announced plans to move the Aerospace and Defence Group operations, opening up the Cambridge Airport site to be redeveloped as part of the next Local Plan. The airport site was submitted previously by Marshall as a site option for the last Local Plan but was withdrawn because the company decided at that time to continue its operations on the airport and adjacent sites. At this stage there is nothing formal to consider but it is positive to see recognition from Marshall in their initial announcement that any development would need to feature 'integrated, high-speed public transport connections' for the site. Duxford is one of three sites the company is looking at to relocate its existing staff and operations to and the council is also keen to explore with Marshall and the local communities the impact and opportunities of that.

Hinxton Agritech Park

Concerning interference by the Mayor in the proposal to build a huge business park at Hinxton that the applicants say will help to build up an agritech sector. The planning application is currently on appeal, having been rejected by the South Cambs planning committee, and the Mayor has written to the planning inspector urging the decision be overturned.

There is very little evidence to show that there is an economic need for what is a speculative application or that it will contribute significantly to the growth of the particular industries that Greater Cambridge is specialising in. The recent CPIER report suggested promoting agritech as a complement to the agricultural industry in the Fens, so it seems strange that the Mayor is so keen for the site to be approved. Questions have been asked about the context of this intervention given that James Palmer's local Conservative Association received a £20,000 donation from one of the partners in the proposal two years ago, just before he was elected as Mayor.

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