

Greater Cambridge Partnership – Making Connections 2022
Consultation
Formal response
on behalf of
Histon & Impington Parish Council

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Histon & Impington (H&I) Parish Council resolved to delegate to its Land Assets & Infrastructure committee the response to the Making Connections 2022 consultation. The committee took the view that it would not adopt a position unequivocally for or against the Sustainable Travel Zone proposals but would use its response to the consultation as an opportunity to air all the issues, particularly as they impact residents of Histon and Impington.

Our view was that there are plenty of opportunities for individuals on either side, who live within the parish to make their respective views known through the consultation. Our job is to ensure that a well-rounded airing of issues is collated on behalf of the whole community. It is the best we can do in these circumstances and we may miss some issues as we will obviously not have the wisdom of the entire crowd. However, it is a reasonable attempt, and we hope that it is of some use to you as you formulate the next iteration of these proposals. The views of the entire Council were sought, and these have been summarised in the attached SWOT analyses.

The issues that are of particular relevance to Histon and Impington are as follows:

- The proposals chime with a key part of the H&I Neighbourhood Plan which is to encourage the use of public transport and active travel. We hope reductions in road traffic will encourage cycling and walking to and from local schools.
- We welcome the opportunities that the proposals would provide for investment in active travel in H&I. However, we are concerned that no detailed proposals for achieving this are presented in the consultation.
- The implementation of a charge may prompt some businesses to leave the City but in turn this may increase demand for commercial properties on the periphery of the zone, such as on Vision Park and the High Street in Histon which have a number of vacant properties.
- The level of initial consultation activity in Histon and Impington was disappointing, given its key location on the edge of the proposed zone, with little or nothing by way of leafleting and only latterly a public event.
- Our location on the very periphery of the zone creates a risk of increased traffic and fly parking, particularly around the Station Road / Guided Busway junction, which is already a point where the Citi 8 and Busway services cross and passengers can interchange. We would expect car commuters to drive to this point and use the village to access city bound buses. Consequently, it will be essential for the scheme to provide the traffic regulations and fund Civil Parking Enforcement staff, so as to avoid residents parking charges for those deployed to the village, to help manage that parking.
- The current proposals only provide for increased bus frequencies on the guided busway. It is essential that the future service overcomes the persistent problem of city-bound buses on this route being full by the time they arrive at the Impington stop. Currently much of the southbound service is inaccessible at peak times from the Impington stop. We also want to see an increase in the frequency of the Citi 8 service, particularly at peak times, as 74% of the village is within 400m of a Citi8 bus stop, with just 12% within 400m of the guideway stop.

SWOT on implementing the Sustainable Travel Zone

Strengths
Reduce congestion - Very effective
Lower emissions - climate target
Public/active transport - local neighbourhood plan
Funding stream for better buses
Funding stream for active routes
Timeline - improved buses first
Reclaimed road space further improves bus and active connections
full implementation 2027/8)
Saving lives by improved air quality
vehicle
Cheaper fares
New direct bus route to Cottenham along the B1049
One of the good things about the proposals is finally having fares that are better than any other option
Opportunities
Active travel investment in H&I
Better bus frequency and speed
Businesses leaving City may revitalise Vision Park/High Street
Passenger interchanging at second village hub (Cambridge Rd/ Busway junction)
More Civil Parking Enforcement staff to help manage parking in village
Encourages consolidation/increase of 'last mile' bicycle parcel delivery services
Encourages more active travel (cycling and walking) including to and from schools
Car Sharing reduces rate charge (done in other cities and countries)
Better provision on buses for pushchairs/buggies/wheelchairs
Better provision on buses for cycles
Electric buses
Increased driver recruitment and retention packages
Fare capping (multiple journeys within certain periods (day/week)
Better access to jobs, healthcare, leisure etc. for those with no access to a private vehicle
Finally having fares that are better than any other option
SWOT on Do Nothing / Not implementing the Sustainable Travel Zone
Strengths
Politically very easy to implement
Avoid hit on businesses currently at threat of losing customers during a cost of living crisis

Opportunities
Worsening congestion will ultimately reinforce the case for action.
Could allow for better ideas to come forward as a result of more consultation

Weaknesses
Devisive congestion charge -through the disproportionate impact on small businesses
Poorly thought through and inadequate exemptions
shopping trip to Aldi or churches across the A14
Poor messaging
No leaflets to outer villages
Relies on being effective, but not too effective
No clarity on multi bus trips
No commitment to the franchise model
Bus frequency increase only on Guideway and problems with these buses being full when reaching village during morning rush hour. Only 12%of village is within 400m of the Guideway
Lack of clarity on loation of bus tops on proposed new route to and from Cottenham on B1049
Risk of increased traffic and fly parking - people using village to access city buses. No mention of increased parking regulations and enforcement to protect residents.
Blue badge does not capture all disabled groups
Two exemptions may not cover paid and unpaid carers making multiple visits
Paying a charge may foster entitlement in drivers over cyclists and pedestrians
Bus services are monopolised by one provider
No indication of which will be the principal groups that would pay the charge. Will they be Addenbrooke workers and the most poorly paid who cannot afford to live in the city?
No clear indication on how much this scheme will cost to administer
Exemptions for social workers and care workers but it is not clear if volunteers for charities (e.g. those doing voluntary home/support visits for organisations such as Help the Aged or Mencap would be exempt)
Threats
Not ready to go active travel schemes
No increase in Citi8; but 74% of the village is within 400m of a Citi8 bus stop
required CPE staff
Increased demand could overwhelm any bus improvements; (see Busway/CRC problem).
Support for boundary villages only after monitoring - not when charge starts
Further expansion of Congestion Charge Area into Histon/Impington
Bus provider not agreeing with added routes, despite extra funding, as still not profitable for them
Bus provider not able to staff extra bus routes and higher frequencies (An issue that is already a problem); resulting in no change to travel times. (see recruitment and retention in Opportunities)
Shops may decrease in City centre pushing travel to other areas further away increasing pollution
Increase in charge with time unknown - noting that London charge has gone up by factor of 4 since launch
Despite extra funding enforcement staff are not increased as the need is not seen (especially when travelling as a family)
effective' above).
Threats to small business who may not be able to pass on costs, particularly in the current cost of living crisis.
Weaknesses
Winds down the clock on timescales within which effective action can be taken
Use of sustainable transport options will not increase, makingeven harder to tackle climate change
Without bus use increasing on some routes, risk of these services being withdrawn

policy change
Status quo continues
Threats
Will deliver congestion that will compromise local economy, health and contribute to climate change
healthcare, leisure opportunities etc. because buses are inadequate and unreliable
Bus services will decline even further