

APPENDIX 2 –DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Overall Perspective

1. Have we provided a clear and complete explanation of what the Local Transport Plan is?
Yes / No / Unsure
2. If No or Unsure please say why
However, the document is very repetitive and could be reduced in size to make it more accessible and quicker to digest.
3. Have we provided a clear and complete explanation of why Cambridgeshire and Peterborough require a new Local Transport Plan?
Yes / No / Unsure
4. If No or Unsure please say why
No further comment.

Objectives

5. You will see below the ten objectives of the Local Transport Plan. Please rate them in order of importance to you were 1 is the most important to you and 10 is the least important to you.
 - **3 - Housing:** Support new housing and development to accommodate a growing population and workforce and address housing affordability issues
 - **1 - Employment:** Connect all new and existing communities sustainably so that all residents can easily access a good job within 30 minutes, spreading the region's prosperity
 - **6 - Business and Tourism:** Ensure all of our region's businesses and tourist attractions are connected sustainably to our main transport hubs, ports and airports
 - **8 - Resilience:** Build a transport network that is resilient and adaptive to human and environmental disruption, improving journey time reliability
 - **10 - Safety:** Embed a safe systems approach into all planning and transport operations to achieve Vision Zero - zero fatalities or serious injuries
 - **2 - Accessibility:** Promote social inclusion through the provision of a sustainable transport network that is affordable and accessible for all
 - **4 - Health and Wellbeing:** Provide healthy streets and high-quality public realm that puts people first and promotes active lifestyles
 - **9 - Air Quality:** Ensure transport initiatives improve air quality across the region to exceed good practice standards
 - **7 - Environment:** Deliver a transport network that protects and enhances our natural, historic and built environments
 - **5 - Climate Change:** Reduce emissions to as close to zero as possible to minimise the impact of transport and travel on climate change

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6. To what extent do you agree with the overarching strategy in the Local Transport Plan?

Strongly Agree / **Agree** / Neither Agree or Disagree / Disagree/ Strongly Disagree / Don't Know

7. Please use the space below to provide any other comments you have about the Local Transport Plan. Is there anything we should have included but haven't, is there anything you think should have been omitted. Do you have any other general comments?

General Comments

The draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) needs to ensure that its aims, objectives and projects are interlinked with all Combined Authority Strategies and Local Plans. Together these strategies must ensure that they enable the right growth to come forward in the right places, for the right reasons and at the right time. The Non-Statutory Spatial Framework (NSSF) needs to articulate growth aspirations that have been tested for sustainability in order to mitigate against the risk of any inappropriate development. Consultation on the NSSF has not yet been undertaken, nor a draft Framework published, therefore the Combined Authority approach to growth has not yet been adequately addressed. The LTP must ensure that it comes forward in a coordinated way that supports the agreed aspirations of the NSSF; this will ensure that the various strategies that impact upon the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Area come forward as an aligned package with interlinking values and objectives.

The Council would value continued involvement in the development of further site, or infrastructure specific, Transport Delivery Plans especially those focussing on areas which involve or are in proximity to Huntingdonshire District Council Area. These include but are not limited to: The Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro Cambridge to Cambourne and St Neots route; the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and dualling of the A428, delivery of a new railway corridor between Bedford and Cambridge, Alconbury Weald transport and infrastructure improvements; A1 and A141 capacity enhancements, public transport enhancements, Wyton Airfield access, transport accessibility to St Ives and St Neots.

Huntingdonshire District Council's corporate objectives include:

- the facilitation and provision of opportunities for positive activities that support residents' health and wellbeing needs;
- prioritising accessible, high quality and well maintained open space, walking and cycling facilities on new housing developments; and
- improving the quality of the environment, by including infrastructure that supports people to walk and cycle.

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The Council supports district wide Huntingdonshire walking and cycling improvements as identified in Figure 3.3 and on page 111 of the draft LTP especially around Huntingdon where improved infrastructure and alternatives modes of travel to vehicle use on the ring road would be very beneficial. The development of Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans (LCWIPs) is welcomed and early engagement with the Council is encouraged to link LCWIPs with current and future growth objectives.

Consistent with the Council's corporate objectives it is agreed that modal shift should not be an add-on extra to the LTP. Opportunities to provide multi-modal transport corridors should be identified and promoted within the draft LTP. Additional focus should also be attributed to the 'first mile' and 'last mile' of journeys. Enabling multi-modal transport hubs and improved cycling, walking and public transport connections for residents and commuters is vital to encourage commuting and sustainable travel by providing a variety of travel options in both rural and urban areas.

Connectivity of cycling and walking routes within the district is limited outside key locations in Huntingdonshire. Greater emphasis should also be afforded to resolving missing links and capturing opportunities for longer distance cycle routes for commuting and recreation.

The Council approves of the Combined Authority's ambition to provide faster, more reliable digital connectivity, with digital infrastructure such as fibre ducting delivered alongside transport infrastructure where appropriate. However, there is very little information to support this objective, or the identified infrastructure projects. Faster and more reliable digital infrastructure is a key component to achieving alternative working behaviours such as home working and video conferencing which can decrease the need to travel and contribute towards reducing congestion on our roads.

Specific Comments

Scheme selection

In paragraph 1.89 the Combined Authority commits to identifying the process through which new schemes can come forward for development and investment decisions. Currently, the Combined Authority, Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, and the Greater Cambridge Partnership have different processes for scheme prioritisation. The draft LTP notes that the feasibility of a single process` will be investigated as part of the Combined Authority's budget setting and the business plan process for capital and revenue investment in schemes and policies. The Council would encourage further district consultation when options for scheme prioritisation have been identified.

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Funding

Paragraphs 1.90 to 1.92 of the draft LTP identify a number of potential funding sources for new transport schemes and existing projects. The Council agrees that investigation into funding sources is an important step towards the progression and implementation of identified infrastructure schemes.

It is recommended that more thought should be given to assess the impact of any potential new financial burdens on the viability of development coming forward. It is anticipated that some of the suggested funding streams such as Land Value Capture mechanisms could detrimentally slow development, reduce availability of sites and the appetite for development if profit margins are reduced significantly. In some cases this could halt development completely if land is already under option; this is likely to be more prevalent given the existing public knowledge of the Cam-OX corridor.

It is essential that the impact on housing delivery is minimised and that development comes forward in the right way. Any benefits from improved major infrastructure could be diminished if additional financial burdens impact upon viability or pre-determined profit margins. In particular, valuable infrastructure such as affordable housing, or open/green space could be affected. Affordable housing in many districts is already particularly vulnerable to financial pressures and therefore the impact upon this provision should be adequately assessed before a funding solution is chosen. As noted in earlier comments all Combined Authority strategies and district Local Plans must inform and interconnect to achieve the agreed growth objectives, therefore it would also be prudent to consider how the Combined Authority would tackle or accelerate affordable housing provision if funding for infrastructure impacts upon its delivery.

The benefits of new or improved transport corridors and infrastructure will not solely be realised along the route where it is established. Better transport connections will provide benefits to areas further afield potentially accelerating growth nearby. When assessing funding options for new infrastructure it is recommended that the Combined Authority consider what mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that all areas that could benefit from infrastructure provision fairly and proportionately contribute towards its implementation depending on which funding option is chosen.

Business Rates have become an increasingly important part of the Council's budget, any supplement to business rates should assess the impact that this may have on the retention and growth of businesses and the effect that this may have on the Combined Authority's vision to double GVA over 25 years.

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Strategy Overview

Paragraph 2.7 focusses on decreasing journey times in order to increase the geographical catchment from which to draw growing workforces, enabling businesses to grow. It is agreed that decreasing journey times enables better commuting and provides more accessible job opportunities for our residents. However, the overall strategy, aims and objectives of the draft LTP fail to address the issue of future business investment. Emphasis should also be placed on providing an effective transport network that can spread prosperity within the Combined Authority area by making areas attractive to new business investment and enabling business relocation into the region. This would be achieved as a result of improved ease of movement across the Combined Authority area and a greater choice of transportation options.

Environment

Paragraph 2.43 of the draft LTP includes objectives to deliver a transport network that protects and enhances our natural, historic and built environments. Ideas include linking to high quality open space, integrating environmental considerations including biodiversity net gain throughout development of the future transport network and ensuring that all new transport schemes cause minimal disruption to the environment both during construction and operation. Some of these actions may be supported by Local Plan policies, especially those relating to the conservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment. It is noted however that the draft LTP provides little information to expand on how this would be achieved from a Combined Authority perspective and what may be expected from local councils. The Council recommends further detail or an identified course of action to expand on this aim.

Paragraph 2.44 also aims to ensure that transport initiatives improve air quality across the region by investigating the electrification of local taxi fleets and running buses on sustainable fuels. There is mention within the document of a trial of electric and hybrid buses in Cambridge to understand and examine their operation on the local network, rapid electric vehicle charging points in Peterborough and the inclusion of high quality electric vehicles on the Cambridge Autonomous Metro network. However it is unclear when further projects would be identified to achieve this objective. It is suggested that a next step is identified to underpin this objective.

Huntingdonshire Local Strategies section 3

Paragraph 3.94, bullet three includes Wyton Airfield in the St Ives Spatial Planning Area. Wyton Airfield was removed from the St Ives Spatial Planning Area in the 'Submission' and now 'Adopted' Local Plan. Although removed from the St Ives Spatial Planning Area the Council confirms in Huntingdonshire's Plan to 2036 that it still considers that the site could provide the opportunity to make a positive

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contribution to meeting future needs of the district. Any infrastructure to facilitate this aim is supported by the Council.

The Council welcomes reference to tackling congestion at key junctions such as the Buckden Roundabout in paragraph 3.96. Local capacity and safety improvements to the Buckden roundabout are also identified in 'Appendix A: High Level Delivery Plan'. It is recommended that the local capacity and safety improvements at Buckden should extend to multi-modal means of travel improving connectivity along the A1 corridor and reaching the more isolated small settlements to the East of Buckden. Such enhancements should also be considered alongside infrastructure improvements to the St Neots – Cambourne – Cambridge corridor.

The Council endorses the Combined Authority's intention to continue investment in the highways network and sustainable alternatives as identified in paragraph 3.102. It is recommended that additional focus should also be attributed to the 'first mile' and 'last mile' of journeys to encourage commuting and sustainable travel by providing a variety of travel options in both rural and urban areas and making them more desirable to get to and from by bicycle

Paragraph 3.103 identifies that the bus network is key to delivering greater connectivity throughout the Combined Authority area linking larger market towns with some smaller villages through more frequent local routes and establishing frequent services for core inter-urban routes. Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 identifies Ramsey as a Spatial Planning Area and one of four market towns within Huntingdonshire suitable for sustainable growth. The Spatial Planning Areas are responsible for providing approximately three quarters of the district's objectively assessed need for housing and the majority of employment and retail growth. The draft LTP has not identified any interventions, improvements or projects for the Ramsey area and the Council would support the inclusion and opportunity to improve infrastructure in and around this market town.

In order to work towards a local community and demand responsive public transport the Combined Authority must ensure that it not only works in partnership Huntingdonshire District Council but also key sector partners. This intention should be included in paragraph 3.104.

It is agreed that all forms of public transport should be integrated to provide a comprehensive rural transport network as mentioned in paragraph 3.105. Integrated ticketing systems and rural travel hubs will enable rural areas to benefit economically and socially from enhanced public transport opportunities. Schemes identified to improve rural transport infrastructure should also include projects to join up cycling infrastructure where missing links exist creating a comprehensive cycle network and

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the establishment of longer routes that could be used for both recreation and commuting.

It is agreed that additional highway capacity and improved accessibility (identified in paragraph 3.107) are important to support and accelerate the delivery of homes and jobs at Alconbury Weald. The Council believes that a railway station will also provide benefit to the area. Enabling a north-south rail connection will bring benefits to residents, workers and businesses within the new development and create valuable links to other economic hubs.

Section 3.109 on page 111 of the draft LTP states that continued support for electric vehicles, in partnership with local districts and national government, will help to tackle carbon emissions and improve local air quality. Little information is provided to expand on how this would be achieved and what is expected from local councils. The Council recommends further detail or an identified course of action to expand on this aim.

‘Figure 3.3 Summary of Key projects in Huntingdonshire’ displays proposed infrastructure improvements from St Neots to Cambridge through the Cambridge Autonomous Metro and the dualling of the A428. Multi-modal transport infrastructure should also be illustrated in this area in order to reflect the Combined Authority’s objectives and Huntingdonshire District Council’s commitment to including infrastructure that supports walking and cycling.

Huntingdonshire District Council supports the intention to improve the A1 corridor and the need for upgrades at Brampton. Improvements at Buckden should also be included in paragraph 3.113 to mirror identified infrastructure projects set out in Appendix A of the draft LTP.

Paragraph 3.115 states that the Combined Authority will work with the East West Rail Company and the Department for Transport to deliver a new railway corridor linking Cambridge, Bedford, Milton Keynes and Oxford and to ensure that it best serves Huntingdonshire, including provision for new or expanded stations at St Neots. This is supported by the Council.

The A428 improvement scheme identified in paragraph 3.116 is one of a number of key strategic transport schemes within the district. A previous consultation was held in 2017 on the preferred route options and proposals for the Black Cat roundabout. The Council supports the ‘Orange’ route with the incorporated minor changes to move it slightly further south-west from St Neots where it crosses Potton Road and the B1046.

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The draft Local Transport Plan includes the dualling of the A428 between Cambourne / Caxton Gibbett and the Black Cat Roundabout, as part of the delivery of the wider Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The existing A428 near to St Neots and Caxton Gibbet is the only remaining stretch of single carriageway between the two key economic hubs of Cambridge and Milton Keynes. The road is regularly congested and causes significant delays to the public and businesses. The Black Cat roundabout, where the A1 meets the A421 and the A428 near St Neots is a daily source of delays and congestion – currently in the top 20% nationwide.

Huntingdonshire District Council responded to the recent A428 consultation which closed on the 28 July 2019. The Council encourages the Combined Authority to take note of the submitted comments in the progression of this project and within any future Transport Delivery Plans.

The proposed local transport schemes for Alconbury Weald identified in paragraph 3.117 should also include a railway station. Enabling a north-south rail connection would benefit residents, workers and businesses within the new development and create valuable links to other economic hubs.

Paragraph 3.120 recognises St Neots as the largest Market Town in the District of Huntingdonshire. The town would benefit from a rail connection to Cambridge. The Council supports the inclusion of a North-South / East-West rail interchange with the East Coast Main Line.