



Heidi Allen, MP Submission to Cambourne to Cambridge, Better Public Transport Project, Phase 2 Public Consultation, 29th March 2019

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Cambourne to Cambridge Better Public Transport Consultation which builds upon the submission I made in January for Phase 1 of this project. I would be grateful for a prompt response to my concerns from the Consultation Team at CGP.

This consultation sets out three key aims which expand upon the stated intention of Phase 1. This project now aims to improve accessibility to support the economic growth of Greater Cambridge, deliver a sustainable transport system that connects Cambourne and Cambridge and contribute to enhanced quality of life by relieving congestion and improving air quality. People lie at the heart of these intentions – notably, the people of South Cambridgeshire and the Greater Cambridge region. People who may derive benefits from this scheme but upon whom the burden will also fall.

The Local Liaison Forum has accurately represented the view of local people in its recent submission and I echo their comments here. However, whilst I agree that a broader and bolder approach needs to be taken, I diverge from the LLF in taking an opinion about the options on offer in this consultation. If this project has reached consultation stage, we need to give serious consideration to the options put before us as a constituency to ensure we get the right choice.

Briefly, I support the Scotland Farm Park and Ride option along with the majority (54%) of respondents to the previous consultation. This site offers a better long-term solution to congestion and is more accessible to local residents wishing to cycle or walk to the Park and Ride.

With regard to the options for the bus route between Cambourne and Cambridge I again support the majority of respondents in seeking an on-road solution (65% vs. 22% who prefer off road). Option 2 is the on road option that best delivers solutions now whilst minimising impact.

The consultation response to the last exercise highlighted respondent concerns about the literature missing important cost information and I am troubled that the Phase 2 literature refers to Estimated Costs *excluding* land and risk costs. I cannot find a reasonable explanation for this decision in light of the feedback received from Phase 1. Constituents deserve to know that the off road option is costed at £75 - £100m whilst the on road option is costed at £39 - £50m. There is a substantial difference in these figures which could potentially impact residents' preferences. Better transparency enables residents to make informed choices about the future of their communities. It would also have allowed a sensible discussion about whether the on-road solution could be adapted to offer short term relief whilst the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro vision is developed.

In my opinion, an additional £50m spend for a potential 3 minute journey time differential is a disproportionate and unreasonable cost¹. If Phase 2 is actually a preparatory spend for the CAM then residents deserve a proper choice as advocated by the LLF – between properly considered route options that run north and south of the A428. At present, this consultation risks the response being an amalgam that satisfies and serves no one.

¹ Page 4 – Cambourne to Cambridge Better Public Transport 'Option 1, Estimated future journey time Cambourne to Cambridge city centre Drummer St 32 – 39' minutes vs. 'Option 2 Estimated future journey time Cambourne to Cambridge city centre Drummer St 35 – 42 minutes'

If we are looking to develop a short term, immediate solution, Option 2 (the on road option) is the only reasonable choice. Plans to develop the CAM must be developed in isolation, to better serve the communities on whom the impact is made and felt.



Heidi Allen
MP for South Cambridgeshire