

Waterbeach Parish Council

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**The Old Pavilion
Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road
Waterbeach
Cambridge
CB25 9 NJ**

10th December 2020

To: Mr. Paul van de Bulk, Senior Delivery Project Manager Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership

Dear Mr van de Bulk,

Waterbeach Parish Council's comments in respect to the Waterbeach to Cambridge GCP consultation

The above consultation has been discussed at a number of Parish Council planning committees and full Council meetings where members of the public used the opportunity to feed in their views and concerns. There is a significant degree of agreement between all of the members of the public who spoke and the view expressed by members of the Parish Council.

COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS ITSELF

The consultation was made on a very limited number of options and was entirely predicated on the assumption that a large infrastructure project is necessary and justified. The Parish council is disappointed that notwithstanding the current Covid 19 situation and the difficulties that communities have in mobilising interest; the GCP refused to extend the consultation period. The questions posed in the consultation were closed and binary in nature which does not enable open discussion. Members voiced specific points in relation to the practicality and ability for routes to fit along the alignments show in the consultation (pinch points). It appears that not all residents received the consultation doc.

LACK OF COORDINATED APPROACH

It is not at all clear how the proposals would interface/ complement existing U&C and (planned) RLW commitments within the new town. The planned improvements to the A10 and the Cambridge to Ely corridor in conjunction with the improvements and upgrades incorporated into the Waterbeach New Town project should be given time to be implemented before commencing on new and potentially unnecessary infrastructure works. U&C already have plans for a 3-metre cycle and pedestrian route to Milton as an early condition of its major planning application. The proposal goes back on assurances made to the Parish Council in relation to transportation matters pursuant to the New Town. The Council believes that until firm proposals and financing are available for the upgrade of the A10,

further major infrastructure projects should not be implemented. The GCP should also ensure it is consistent in its terminology – as recently as October the agenda item tabled at the GCP Executive Board meeting on 1st October was Better Public Transport – Waterbeach – NE Cambridge.

ADVERSE IMPACTS

The Council believe that the proposals presented all have unjustifiably adverse impacts on residents of Waterbeach.

- People living near, or on the three proposed routes to the west of Waterbeach will suffer significantly, especially inhabitants of Cooke’s Field, Cambridge Road, Glebe Road and users of the allotments and footpath network including the Back Stiles (Footpath no???)
 - Some of these houses may have to be demolished
 - Bus routes squeezed through the pinch point between Glebe Road and Cambridge Road will lead to traffic chaos as 2-way working will be impossible and significant pollution is likely to be generated
- Adverse impact on green belt-will be inevitable, including the loss of the allotments and green space which during the recent pandemic have proved to be very important to the health and wellbeing of the village residents.
- The proposals do not provide any public transport improvements to the main Waterbeach village - on the contrary they are likely to cause existing services to be removed.
- The financial viability of the plans is not presented. While the development of the relocated station proposed by RLW is still on hold, and the upgrading of the A10 is still in question, these proposals are premature.
- The proposals all have a negative impact on current Bus Services through the Village i.e., Milton Tesco, Cambridge City Centre and Addenbrookes. The current bus service is free for disabled and aged residents.
- The environmental impacts of all of the schemes have not been properly assessed.

In open sessions many concerns have been voiced by Councillors and Residents. These include the following:

- The proposal has no benefits to the exiting residents of Waterbeach.
- Lack of clarity as to what was actually being proposed or why it is necessary for Waterbeach- as the impacts for the New Town are addressed in the SPD and planning permission.
- Lack of transparency as to the impacts of the various options in terms of amenity, ecology, heritage, green belt and possible compulsory purchase orders.
- The need for the proposal has not been justified.
- Lack of detail in terms of cost and funding.
- Could be better met through improvements to existing public transport bus and rail.
- The proposals are offering a radial route only, and do not provide options to go around Cambridge - without first going into it which will increase urban congestion.
- Likely to lead to further urbanisation along the route.
- The proposal lacks supporting evidence - without a fact-based evaluation, it would be an awful lot of money and inconvenience spent on a presumption.
- Would this really create jobs within Cambridge to support the need for this type of transport from Waterbeach New Town?
- Can a new bus service really compete against the train at less than £2 return?

To conclude, Waterbeach Parish Council strongly **OBJECTS** to this ill-conceived proposal and deplores the ill-defined consultation process. The Council considers it is premature to progress any of these proposals until there is greater clarity on the timing, viability and links to other infrastructure projects in the vicinity (e.g. the relocated railway station, A10, build out of Waterbeach New Town).

Attached are some of the comments received from residents which support the Council's concerns.

Kind Regards,

Shelley Mason
Parish Clerk