



Cambridge Area Bus Users

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Friday, 27 March 2026

Response by Cambridge Area Bus Users to the Draft Community Infrastructure Levy Public Consultation

Dear Greater Cambridge Shared Planning,

Cambridge Area Bus Users was formed to stand up for the interests of bus passengers in and around Cambridge. For more information on the group, view the [group's website](#) and [read about its priorities for bus travel](#). Please find our response to the Draft Community Infrastructure Levy Public Consultation (CIL) below.

Summary

Cambridge Area Bus Users supports the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Greater Cambridge. Surveys have consistently shown that people in the area would like to use public transport and active travel more, however the infrastructure and services required to make sustainable travel a genuine option for everyone is not in place.

A lack of funding to deliver new infrastructure and services is a key barrier to achieving the sustainable transport our communities require, and a CIL would raise some of the money required every year. Local authorities are best placed to plan and deliver new transport infrastructure when funding mechanisms are long-term and under their own control; CIL funding fulfils both of these criteria.

The consultation greatly underestimates the transport infrastructure funding gap, however, and the CIL charging schedule proposed is not sufficiently ambitious. Developers could reasonably be asked to contribute more towards transport infrastructure. Greater Cambridge Shared Planning should introduce a CIL, but Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council should increase the amount developers are obliged to contribute.

Our responses to specific questions follow on subsequent pages.

Question 1: Who are you responding on behalf of?

Other

Cambridge Area Bus Users, a voluntary, not-for-profit organisation.

Question 2: Do you wish to participate in the CIL examination?

No

Question 3: Do you agree that the Council should introduce CIL?

Yes

Surveys have consistently shown that people in the area would like to use public transport and active travel more, however the infrastructure and services required to make sustainable travel a genuine option for everyone is not in place. A lack of funding to deliver new infrastructure and services is a key barrier to achieving the sustainable transport our communities require, and a CIL would raise some of the money required every year.

When local authorities are required to bid for limited central government funds, longer-term planning is difficult or impossible. Local authorities are best placed to plan and deliver new transport infrastructure when funding mechanisms are long-term and under their own control; CIL funding fulfils both of these criteria.

Question 4: Do you agree that the Council has demonstrated a funding gap?

Yes

Cambridge Area Bus Users agrees that the Council has demonstrated a funding gap, however the consultation vastly underestimates its size. Please refer to our detailed response to question 5, below.

Question 5: Do you agree that the Council has used appropriate evidence to inform the proposed rates?

No

Cambridge Area Bus Users does not consider that appropriate evidence has been used to inform the value given for the proposed infrastructure funding gap. Whilst the Council has demonstrated a funding gap, its size is greatly underestimated.

The consultation indicates a funding gap of £275 million, however this is only the gap relating to the Greater Cambridge Partnership's current projects. The consultation therefore doesn't take into account the sums required to bring about the additional projects Cambridgeshire County Council considers desirable to support the existing Local Plans for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. It also doesn't put a value on the funding required to fulfil Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Bus Strategy and Bus Service Improvement plan in Greater Cambridge.

The transport infrastructure necessary to ensure the viability of developments in the forthcoming Greater Cambridge Local Plan will undoubtedly increase the funding gap yet further in the future.

Question 6: Do you agree that the Council has struck an appropriate balance between additional investment to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments?

No

Cambridge Area Bus Users believes that developers could reasonably be asked to pay higher rates than are set out in the charging schedule.

The rate proposed for residential developments in Greater Cambridge – £60 per square metre (/m²) is much lower than those charged by neighbouring planning authorities.

Huntingdonshire District Council charges £152/m². East Cambridgeshire District Council charges £70/m² in Littleport and Soham, £123/m² in Ely and £159/m² in the rest of the district. The proposed rate is also less than half of the rate (£125/m²) which was proposed in 2014 for Cambridge City.

The justification for such a low rate – compared to historic Cambridge City proposals and to neighbouring planning authorities – is hard to understand.

Question 7: Do you agree that it is clear how CIL will operate alongside Section 106 Planning Obligations?

No

Various bus services in Greater Cambridge (e.g. Route 100 from Waterbeach New Town to central Cambridge) are currently supported by S106 funds. It is not evident whether S106 or the CIL will be used to support the bus services that will be required to enable residents of new developments to have a genuine alternative to car travel from the day they move in.

It is also not clear whether the local transport infrastructure required for new developments (e.g. new bus shelters, cycle parking) will be supported by CIL or S106 contributions.

This needs to be fully considered and set out in publicly-available documents.

Question 10: Do you have any comments on how you feel the neighbourhood portion should be distributed?

It is essential Cambridge City doesn't miss out on its neighbourhood portion due to the absence of Parish Councils within the city. The neighbourhood portion could help to improve the quality of bus stop infrastructure in the city, and fund improvements around Drummer Street bus station. It would be beneficial if transport advocacy groups, including but not limited to, Camcycle, Cambridge Area Bus Users and Cambridge Living Streets were consulted alongside Residents Associations in Cambridge on how neighbourhood portions should be spent.

Kind regards,

Peter Griffin
Chair, Cambridge Area Bus Users
On behalf of the Cambridge Area Bus Users Executive Committee