Cambridge Futures 2 What transport for Cambridge

Stephen Platt

Reference:

Cambridge Architectural Research Ltd
There were also opportunities for the survey by filling in a tear-off slip in the local newspaper, the Cambridge Evening News, and 38 students completed the survey during a Geographical Association sixth form conference on transport for Cambridge.

The survey formed part of an exhibition, which was launched in the Cambridge Lion shopping centre before going to the Central Library, Addenbrooke’s Hospital and other venues in the region. Using panels, a video and a brochure, the exhibition explained the aims of Cambridge Futures and described the five transport options in detail.

The survey was self-selected, the indications are that they are representative of Cambridge people rather than any pressure group. We conclude that this is a sufficiently good sample to have confidence that it reflects public opinion in and around Cambridge.

There is very little difference in preference between age groups. The 21-40 age group marginally prefer public transport and dislike the orbital highway while 65+ year olds marginally like the orbital highway option. These differences, although statistically significant, are small.

The 21-40 age group marginally prefer public transport and dislike the orbital highway, while 65+ year olds like the orbital highway option more than average. Students like cycling/walking, public transport and the combined option more than average, while the retired favour the orbital option more than average.

The majority of respondents are working adults (59%) aged 26-65 and 57% have jobs. 29% are students which reflects the children at 6th form college that answered the survey. 65 and 57% have jobs. 29% are students which reflects the 6th Formers 12%.

In the Cambridge sub-region, the views of the public have been sought and analysed. People were asked what they thought of five transport options, and whether they agreed or disagreed with ten statements about the future of the region. People voted in a five-point scale from strongly like to strongly dislike. Some clear messages emerged.

The popular view seems, therefore, to increase public acceptance.

Support for action
People are ambivalent about congestion charging. They accept that it is likely to be effective in reducing car use and city congestion but they don’t want to pay. 66% agree that ‘Congestion charging will reduce car use’ but the option to introduce a congestion charge in Cambridge is liked by only 45% and disliked by 47%.

Combined option
Marginally more people like this option than dislike it. It was liked by 48% and disliked by 35%. Including the orbital option and congestion charging with the other options seems, therefore, to increase public acceptance. Nevertheless many of the people who object to these two options also dislike them when combined.

The popular view
The main support is for proposals that reduce the need to use a car. The majority think that ‘If there was high quality public transport people would use it’. They don’t think ‘Major road building will reduce traffic congestion’.

Orbital highway
There is fairly strong support for a ring road that would reduce cross-town traffic. Marginally more people like than rather than dislike the orbital highway option. It was liked by 54% and disliked by 52%. But there is also opposition to new road building. Only 28% agree and 54% disagree that ‘Major road building will reduce traffic congestion’.

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**OPTIONS**

**Cycling/walking**
- Clearly the preferred option. Liked by 74% of people and disliked by only 10%.

**Inference**
- Given this degree of support better provision needs to be made to encourage more people to cycle as the City expands.

- There is also strong support for public transport. Liked by 60% of people and disliked by 23%.

**Inference**
- The preferred solution for reducing car use for longer journeys. In Cambridge Future’s previous study in 1999, 84% of people thought ‘More should be invested in public transport than in roads’.

- Marginally more people like rather than dislike this option. Liked by 45% of people and disliked by 37%.

**Inference**
- There is some support for a ring road to reduce cross-town traffic but there is also opposition from those who think new roads will quickly fill up.

- Almost equally liked and disliked. Liked by 45% of people and disliked by 47%.

**Inference**
- Opinion about congestion charging is polarised, yet two-thirds of people believe that it will reduce car use. Opposition must be to paying rather than likely impact on traffic.

- Marginally more people like this option than dislike it. Liked by 48% of people and disliked by 33%.

**Inference**
- Combining the options may reduce opposition, but some people who object to orbital highway and congestion charging also dislike them when combined.

**Public transport**
- Expansion of the guided bus network to east Cambridge; underground interchanges at Drummer Street and railway station connecting routes from north, south and east of the City.

**Orbital highway**
- Creation of a charging zone during peak hours 7-10am and 3:30-6:30pm. No charge for cars entering edge locations of park and ride sites and Addenbrookes.

**Congestion charging**
- ‘More people think something can be done to alleviate traffic congestion than think whatever we do Cambridge will end up being congested.’ Clearly people value quality of life yet many also want the benefits of growth. Traffic congestion is probably seen having a big impact on quality of life.

**Behaviour**
- More people think something can be done to alleviate traffic congestion than think whatever we do Cambridge will end up being congested. But the options are not only seen as transport interventions. Reducing journeys is also seen as an option. Two-thirds of people think that it would be desirable if we lived nearer to work and school so that we could walk or cycle more easily.

- Public transport
  - People are very positive about the public transport option. 78% of people think ‘If there was high quality public transport people would use it’ while only 37% of people think that ‘People will never give up their cars to use public transport.’

- New roads
  - Building new roads is not seen as the solution to congestion. Only 26% think ‘Major road building will reduce traffic congestion.’

- Congestion charging
  - Most people think that congestion charging will be effective in reducing traffic. Only 12% think ‘Congestion charging will reduce car use.’

**Discussion**
- The ten statements have been arranged in pairs, the top row reflecting a less interventionist and the bottom row a more interventionist approach or attitude.

**Growth**
- Whilst most people (71%) agree ‘Quality of life is more important than economic development’ over half (57%) also believe ‘The region must be allowed to grow.’ Clearly people value quality of life yet many also want the benefits of growth. Traffic congestion is probably seen having a big impact on quality of life.

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