

I agree that, as the Notice states, a “busway will provide a much-needed and desired public transport option to Cambridge West” and that as such it “aligns with the University’s vision for the site”. The main three options for the route of a busway have been discussed for many years: one off-road, one on-road (dual bound), and another on-road (inbound only) option added later (alongside several variants of these which were dismissed over time). The off-road option requires the use of this land for which approval for disposal is sought.

All options are well known to the University through the work of the Strategic Projects group within the Estates Division and through the University’s (non-voting) membership of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) over many years. There is a huge amount of information in the public domain which has been accumulated by the GCP¹ and others over the ten or so years that this project has been under consideration. This includes much credible information and data supporting the inbound on-road option as a simpler, cheaper and environmentally more sustainable solution, including reports from Cambridge Past Present & Future (CPPF) in 2021² and from Mott MacDonald (MM) in 2019³. Either of the extant on-road options can provide access to the University’s West Cambridge site for bus passengers (as can the offroad) by utilising current routes through the site as does the U bus.

The University has supported the off-road option for many years and, as mentioned in this Notice, taken steps ‘to actively promote the route through the site’. For example, at a meeting of the GCP Executive back in July 2021, the University’s member stated that the University supported the off-road solution rather than the on-road solution and spoke to justify the resultant transection of the greenbelt⁴ whilst accepting the environmental impact as inevitable. At that meeting the GCP decided to approve (only) the off-road solution⁵ and accordingly submitted their report⁶ to a meeting of the Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) in March 2023 recommending that the GCP’s proposal for the off-road option be agreed (and taken forward for an order authorising its construction). The CCC after a long debate agreed the GCP’s proposal, despite an amendment being tabled even as late as this in process, which repeated hitherto ignored requests for an impartial evaluation of the inbound on-road and the offroad option⁷. This decision by the CCC was far from evidence-based.

¹ <https://www.gretercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/public-transport-schemes/cambourne-to-cambridge>

² <https://www.gretercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/Sustainable-Transport/Public-Transport/Cambourne-to-Cambridge/Independent-Audit/Submissions/First-Batch/250221-Cambridge-PPF.pdf>

³ <https://www.gretercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/Sustainable-Transport/Public-Transport/Cambourne-to-Cambridge/C2C-LLF/C2C-LLF-Technical-Note-Madingley-Road-Quick-Wins-14-05-2019.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nPewwgf7Lk> at 4:21:0

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https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=udkvWux0crzWgDuLtlwaNNR%2bUHyxcWnBctW%2bnNCb0baWpKEG71%2fy2Q%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWctPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFfIUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFfIUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlOtS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJff55vVA%3d

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https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=asxZp9KCTTNLbalyYYHBzpPF%2bqLKKiAQvdrzVRNryrkpsUVgLq9SgQ%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWctPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFfIUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFfIUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlOtS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJff55vVA%3d

The GCP Chair put the GCP's proposal to the CCC beginning "you have been lied to"⁸ and later, in summarising the debate, stated that she had become "intolerant of falsehoods being offered"⁹. Yet the GCP Chair has continuously repeated the GCP mantra¹⁰ that the GCP has properly assessed the alternatives citing the GCP commissioned audit of May 2021 by Amey Consulting¹¹. In the meeting, the Chair of the GCP repeats the misleading claim that it is "false" to say that "no-one has ever properly compared the on-road route with the offroad route"¹². At the end of the debate one Councillor rehearses the falsehood that "the on-road route has been examined over many years and would have a significant impact on trees"¹³ – some on-road options have been examined but not the inbound on-road option which the CPPF proposed.

Tangled up within these discussions has been the effect on Madingley Wood, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and on the American Cemetery which has been referred to many times as a reason why "an on-road solution" would not work. This claim has been made by the GCP and its Chair¹⁴ who stated that it is "false" to claim that "the on-road route would not result in the removal of any trees"¹⁵. That is misleading: both the 2019 MM and the 2021 CPPF reports concluded that an inbound on-road busway could be accommodated without any take of land or impact on these sites, such as the removal of trees.

An independent report (an examination of facts leading to conclusions or recommendations) is very different to an audit (an examination of whether or not due process has been followed by an organisation). The Amey audit does not evaluate the inbound on-road option but audits the GCP's governance of the process, as indeed the audit states: "the remit of this audit is not to evaluate the merits or otherwise of specific route alignments"¹⁶; the University's member similarly explained its purpose to the GCP Executive as so¹⁷. No GCP report has concluded that the inbound on-road option would "result in the removal of any trees".

Why does the GCP continue to refuse to commission an independent report to evaluate the offroad together with the inbound on-road (as has they have done for dual bound on-road and offroad)? Instead the Chair continues to claim¹⁸ that the Amey audit is sufficient to justify their rejection of the inbound on-road option (whilst the audit report itself itself states within it, that it didn't evaluate that option at all).

Many statements made to the CCC (and indeed to the GCP including by its Chair) are falsehoods and are misleading. The 55 Councillors were, at GCP Chair's own admission, "lied to"; indeed they were deliberately misled or, if not, certainly confused including by the GCP Chair. Over many years there have been endless reports,

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https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=hmL7%2bM%2f7UVTiPJkKHwPwkkUg5SaA%2fAKFawPhglCYGJqYlBw0TA0%2bg%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWctPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTlbCubSFfXsDGW9lXnl%3d%3d=hFfUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFfUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAjvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlOtS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJf55vVA%3d&WGwmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJf55vVA%3d&WGwmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJf55vVA%3d

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwbAi8Q9e5Q> at 1:40:45

⁹ Ibid at 2:27:48

¹⁰ Ibid at 43:09, 43:28, 36:20, 47:20 and at 52:57 etc

¹¹ <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/Sustainable-Transport/Public-Transport/Cambourne-to-Cambridge/Independent-Audit/C2C-Independent-Audit-FInal.pdf>

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwbAi8Q9e5Q> at 2:27:55

¹³ Ibid at 2:25:55

¹⁴ Ibid at 36:20

¹⁵ Ibid 2:28:05

¹⁶ <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/Sustainable-Transport/Public-Transport/Cambourne-to-Cambridge/Independent-Audit/C2C-Independent-Audit-FInal.pdf> \$6.1 p57

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nPewwgf7Lk> at 4:21:48

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwbAi8Q9e5Q> at 43:09

confusing terminology and ambiguous use of the term 'on-road busway' thereby obfuscating which option is being addressed at any time. How could Councillors be expected to distil the truth from the mountain of ambiguous evidence? As one Councillor summed it up¹⁹: "there is so much misinformation going on".

And why does this matter to the University? Because the Notice and decision before us comes as the result of the above flawed processes within other bodies (the GCP & CCC), one of which the University has Board membership of.

The University now has to make a decision on a matter consequent upon all this. The University must not be complicit and similarly misled; it must take an evidence-based decision using our well-established principles and processes of good governance.

How can the University continue to 'actively promote' and facilitate an option which will lead to the destruction of acres of land with a colossal, well-evidenced environmental impact, which is opposed by a large number of the University's external stakeholders²⁰ and do so without first seeking an independent analysis to evaluate all the factors between the offroad and inbound on-road options? The inbound on-road option leaves the green belt untouched, is environmentally sustainable and delivers the University's desired aim of access to West Cambridge (and is also cheaper).

Coincidentally a draft report is circulating within the University from the Working Group (CESRWG) on Climate & Environmental Sustainability Research Strategy Options²¹ seeking comments; the report highlights the need for the University to

- 'respond to its wider societal responsibilities' and 'address societal needs';
- 'connect with external audiences' ... and for there 'to be a consistent narrative for the University as a whole';
- ensure that 'there must be *credibility* with our stakeholders';
- be 'sustainable across all our activities' and 'actively engaged' ... 'with internal and external stakeholders';
- have 'a whole-of-institution approach to sustainability, which includes the University's estate and operations'

In summary, over many years the University has relentlessly pursued the off-road option dismissing and ignoring options put forward by other credible stakeholders who have sought for an independent enquiry into the relative merits of each of the offroad and on-road inbound options. One of the underlying principles of a university is to be an organisation whose decisions and outputs are based upon evidence-based principles – why not so here?

I urge the University to pause before proceeding and

- to reflect hard on their current approach of promoting and facilitating one option without an evidence base, the provenance of which option is questionable, one which is contrary to their published values, and one which ignores the views of many stakeholders;
- to take serious note of the huge amount of environmental data cautioning against an off-road busway;
- to commission, contrary to its position to date and with or without the agreement of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, an independent report which assesses the offroad and the inbound on-road options for a busway including in terms of relative costs and environmental impact;
- and for the University to abide by its principles (as exemplified in the CESRWG report) and grasp this opportunity to demonstrate that we practise what we preach.

¹⁹ Ibid at 1:20:0

²⁰ For example <https://www.cambridgeppf.org/Pages/Category/campaigns>

²¹ https://universityofcambridgecloud.sharepoint.com/sites/RO_ResearchOffice-ClimateandEnvironmentalSustainability/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FRO%5FResearchOffice%2DClimateandEnvironmentalSustainability%2FShared%20Documents%2FCESRWG%20Options%20%2D%20Consultation%20Version%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FRO%5FResearchOffice%2DClimateandEnvironmentalSustainability%2FShared%20Documents&p=true&ct=1719503459355&or=Outlook-Body&cid=7D4CBA37-8D33-4268-AC5D-817BCD0CFA44&ga=1 (University Account required).