



Secretary of State for Transport
Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

7th January 2025

Via email to: transportinfrastructure@dft.gov.uk

Guided busway from Cambourne to Cambridge: objection

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed Transport and Works Order submitted by Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, to build a guided busway from Cambourne to Cambridge.

I am objecting in a personal capacity. I live in central Cambridge at the address above and have resided in the city for the majority of the past 25 years. I am absolutely in support of the need to improve public transport links into Cambridge.

The impact of the proposed busway would be *disastrous on the local environment*, especially near Coton, where an ancient orchard is at stake. These habitats cannot just be recreated and every effort should be made to preserve them. This is especially the case somewhere like Cambridge where so much effort goes into studying the natural environment. Moreover, *the cost is astronomical*, running I understand to two hundred million pounds. I myself put this into context by comparing against the recent Government decision to withdraw funding to the tune of just eighty million pounds for work to help reopen various railway lines around the country. The benefit to cost ratio does not add up for this busway either qualitatively or, so I have read, quantitatively.

My understanding is that a viable route on or alongside existing roads, which would be far less environmentally destructive and also very much cheaper, was proposed to the Greater Cambridge Partnership by a local charity after expert consultation. I further understand that this route was given little or no consideration by the Partnership. This is absolutely unacceptable, especially for such a contentious and expensive project: it would seem to point towards overconfidence and a lack of due diligence. However I would say that this seems in line with the other works of the Partnership that have materialised in Cambridge recently. The remodelling of several junctions appears to have resulted in overly-complicated schemes verging on profligate, rather than careful targeted interventions maximising value for the public purse.

The endpoint of the busway at Cambridge, on Grange Road, seems clearly inappropriate. For one thing, it is not close to the city centre or any transport interchange: routes on existing major roads would do better. Furthermore this is a quiet area (20mph speed limit) which has many cyclists and pedestrians owing to the proximity of several Colleges, their accommodation, and University departments (in particular the Sidgwick Site). The busway will destroy the tranquility of this area and seems likely to put these road users at risk. One should take note of the fact that there has already been at least one fatal accident on the busway to the south of Cambridge railway station.

Finally it should be noted that the proposed East West Rail scheme, which as far as I know is being progressed by the Government, would provide a much more satisfactory solution for connectivity between Cambridge and Cambourne — in addition to allowing journeys to the west. It seems quite unlikely to me that the proposed on-road busway route mentioned above, combined with this railway service, is insufficient. As such the proposed busway should not be built and the monies used elsewhere, even if they have to be returned to national funds.

My great grandfather was the late Lord Shinwell, minister in Clement Attlee's government after the second war, who I think might have been aghast at a proposal to spend and destroy so much for such little gain. I hope I can put faith in the ministers of the current Labour government to reject this busway, in favour of a cheaper on-road option, together with the addition of East West Rail in the future.

Yours sincerely

(signed electronically)

Mark R. Shinwell MA PhD (*Cantab*)

email: 