



Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP

Secretary of State

Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government

2 Marsham Street

LONDON SW1 4DF



Dear Secretary of State

**Greater Cambridge Partnership Cambridgeshire Proposal for Busway through Coton Orchard area
Severe Dangers to Nature and Biodiversity**

I recently visited the Cambridge area and was appalled to be informed of the threat to biodiversity and nature of the proposed route for a busway from new developments to Cambridge City

This will shortly come to your Department for planning clearance.

I am writing this letter to seek your Department's intervention to stop the egregious destructions of an area of supreme biodiversity - including examples of seriously endangered species - particularly when the planning and transport objectives could more effectively - and significantly more cheaply - be achieved by alternative means.

This concerns the proposal by Cambridgeshire County Council (using £200m of the central government funded Greater Cambridge Partnership money) to build a busway connecting the new developments at Cambourne and Bourne with Cambridge City and science parks. Application for a Transport and Works Act Order is shortly to be proposed - which would probably require a Public Inquiry.

The proposed route would run through protected landscape and destroy the world leading biodiverse Coton Orchard site which contains a wide range of diverse species some of the rarest of which have only recently been identified as being present

The objective - to improve bus services into the city from the new developments - is sensible - providing access to jobs and reducing car traffic and pollution.

But the route proposed is appalling - and unnecessarily expensive : a £200m off road busway, destroy the largest traditional orchard in East Anglia, cutting a swathe through a landscape protected by the National Trust for over a century; and also encroaching on Madingley Hill - site of the US World War II military cemetery.

Local Communities and parish councils all oppose the scheme as proposed and have shown how bus services could be delivered by building a bus lane along the existing road. ***I attach a copy of their alternative approach.***

LORD WHITTY



But the County Council have not listened. Conservative Ministers were warned of the potential waste of public money but were not interested.

I attach a list of recent visitors who, like me, do not dissent from the objective of providing public transport links between the new and expanding villages and the centre of Cambridge but are appalled by the destruction of such a high value biodiversity site when there is a cheaper and dramatically less nature damaging route that could more easily be built more rapidly as well as more cheaply. Several of them would also be interested in meeting your ministers or officials.

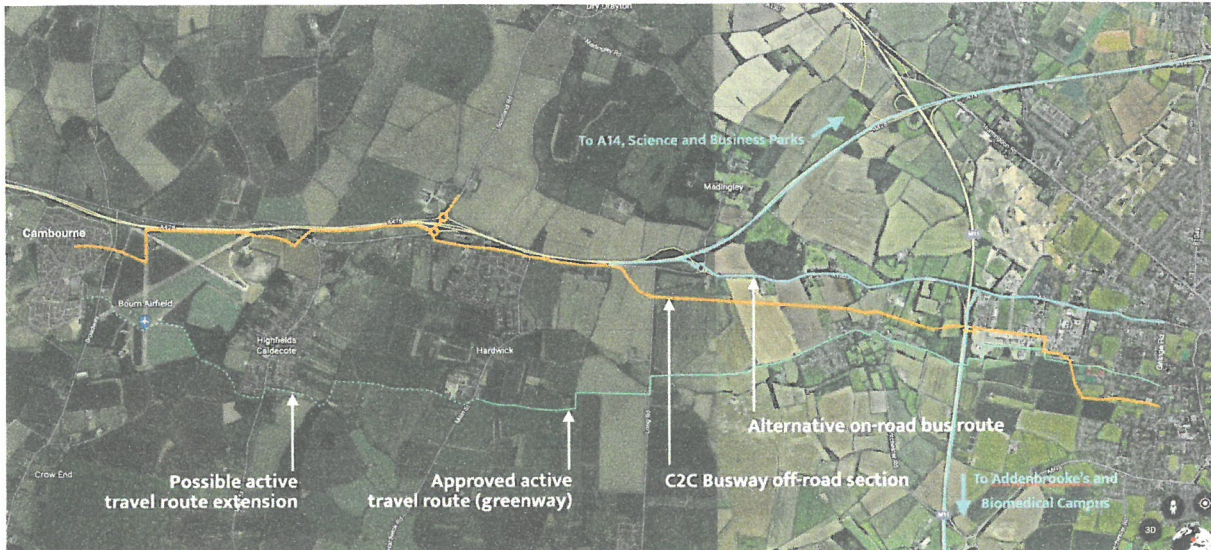
Best wishes

LORD WHITTY

I am copying this letter to the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, because of the public finances and to Steve Reed at Defra because of the biodiversity and environmental threats; and also to Daniel Zeichner MP who has constituency as well as ministerial interests.

Cambridge, Past, Present and Future has commissioned a **report** that demonstrates that there are other solutions which deliver similar transport and economic benefits and can be achieved quickly, at significantly less cost, with less impact on the environment, green belt and local communities.

Full report found here: <https://www.cambridgeppf.org/cambourne-cambridge-busway>



Supporters who have visited the site;

- **Jack Taylor**, lead campaigner at the **Woodland Trust**
- **Dr Claire Wallace**, ecologist with **Butterfly Conservation Trust**
- **Sir David King**, Founder & Chair, Centre for **Climate Repair**, **University of Cambridge**
- **Steve Oram**, Biodiversity Officer **People's Trust for Endangered Species**
- **Cllr Neil Reeve**, East of England Orchards Project
- **Brian Eversham**, Chief Executive at **Wildlife Trust BCNP**
- **Jenny Jones & Natalie Bennett**, Green Peers
- **Claudia Clemente-Benfield** Planning Adviser at **National Trust**

Other supporters;

- **Sir Partha Dasgupta**, Nobel Laureate Economics
- **Chris Packham**, Naturalist and BBC Presenter
- **Baroness Rosie Boycott**
- **Iolo Williams**, Ornithologist and BBC Presenter
- **Dr Merlin Sheldrake**, biologist and author of *Entangled Life*
- **Nick Gates**, Producer/Director *Wild Isles* & Author of *'The Orchard, A Year in England's Eden'*

Petition; **21,264** as at 10/09/2024 <https://www.change.org/p/save-the-green-corridor-cambourne-to-cambridge-bus-lane-not-busway>

For complete list of supporter or more information;

- **Dr Marilyn Treacy**, Coton Parish Council (marilyn.treacy@cotonpc.org)
- **Anna Gazeley**, Coton Orchard (anna@cotonorchard.com)