

Cambridge South-East Transport Scheme

Report to: Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board

Date 02 October 2024

Lead Officer: Peter Blake - Interim Director of GCP

1. Background

- 1.1 The Cambridge South-East Transport scheme (CSETS) is one of four corridor schemes that form a key component of the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) sustainable transport programme. As the delivery body for the Greater Cambridge City Deal, the GCP is delivering an integrated programme of sustainable transport initiatives, working with local partners to create a comprehensive transport network to meet the needs of the area now and into the future.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the scheme following the funding announcement in the March 2024 Budget and to note subsequent discussions with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) following the July election.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Executive Board is recommended to:
 - a) Note the March 2024 Budget, and the funding allocation of £7.2m for promotion of the CSETS, together with the recent and ongoing discussions held with MHCLG;
 - b) Note the updated Business Case for the scheme;
 - c) Approve the commencement of the early delivery of the physical elements of the CSETS along Francis Crick Avenue, in order to support the opening of Cambridge South station;

- d) Approve the request to Cambridgeshire County Council for the submission of a Transport Works Act Order (TWAO), with the GCP working closely with Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highways Authority; and
- e) Approve the finalisation of the necessary documentation for a TWAO application, if approved by Cambridgeshire County Council.

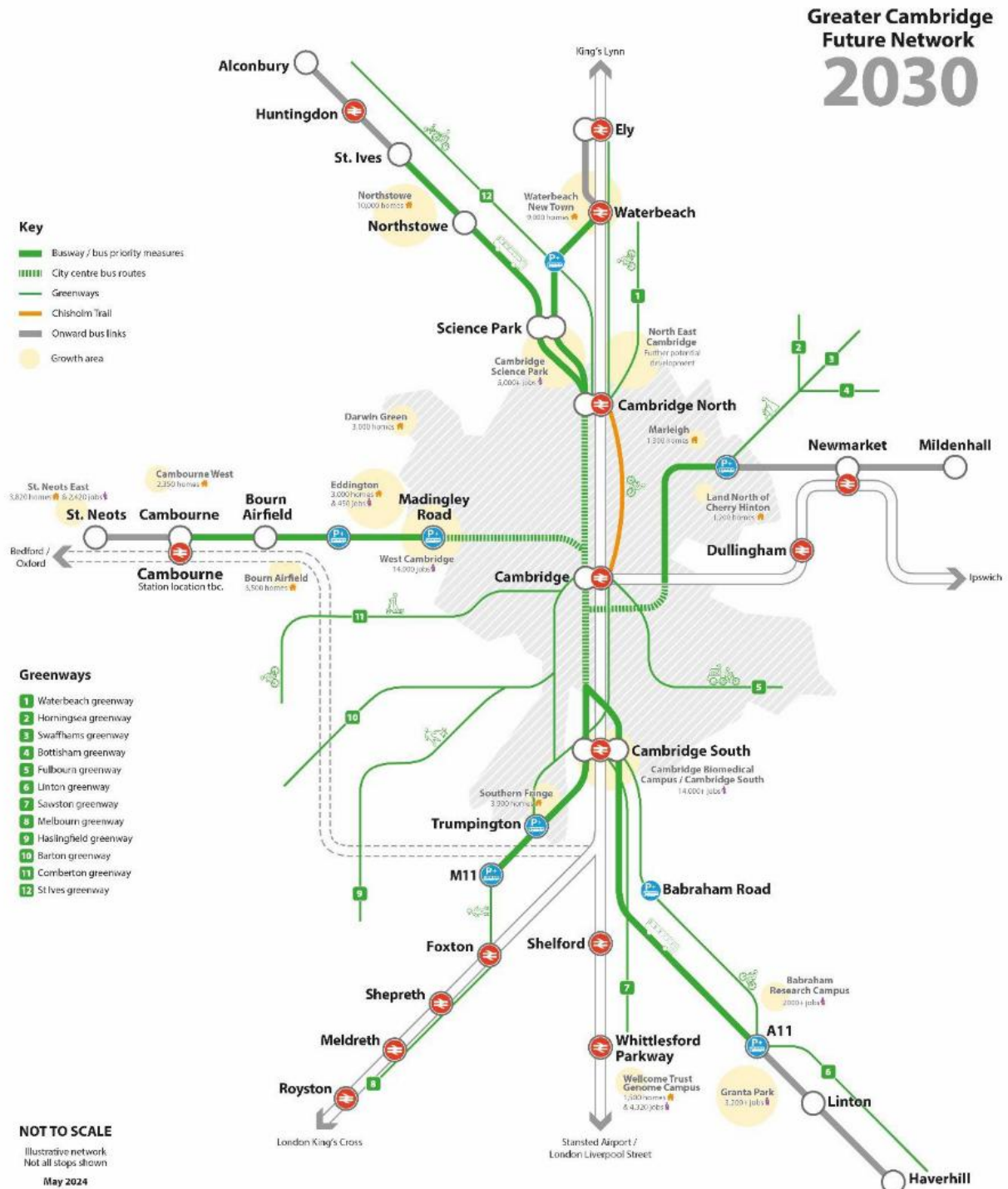
3. Joint Assembly Feedback

- 3.1. Members noted that various options have been reviewed during development of the scheme, including the Haverhill railway and light rail.
- 3.2. Members were keen for the Executive Board to review the Francis Crick Avenue element of the scheme. Officers agreed to set these out in more detail., attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Assembly noted the scheme had been paused in order to seek alternative funding. Following the £7.2m funding allocation as part of the Budget 2024,the Assembly was satisfied it was logical to pursue the next steps in the process through an application for a Transport and Works Order.
- 3.4 The Assembly also recognised the need to move forward on the Francis Crick Avenue proposals, as outlined in Appendix 1..

4. Scheme Development and Issues for Discussion

- 4.1 Figure 1 below sets out the GCP's future sustainable transport network for Greater Cambridge and how this will be substantially enhanced over the next decade, forming a cohesive network throughout Greater Cambridge and further afield.

Figure 1



- 4.2 The A1307 Haverhill to Cambridge corridor is one of the key radial routes into Cambridge and Haverhill is a key origin area for travel to work in Cambridge. Information from Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust reports around a quarter of their staff live in Haverhill and the surrounding area, making this corridor particularly key in supporting health service provision. The A1307 suffers considerably from congestion during peak times, particularly at the Cambridge end, at the junction with the A11 and around Linton, the largest other settlement on the corridor.

- 4.3 The route has seen significant increases in traffic over the last decade and large existing and proposed development sites along this corridor means pressure on already congested roads and the limited public transport service is set to rise.
- 4.4 The route along the A1307 Cambridge to Haverhill has been highlighted as a strategic project to help make travel by foot, bicycle and public transport more attractive than private car journeys, alleviating congestion and supporting the region's growth. The CSETS is therefore in compliance with the Local Transport Plan. The Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC), as one of the primary destinations of the route, continues to experience considerable growth including further planned hospital development. Access for workers to existing and planned development is a key consideration of the scheme.
- 4.5 The CSETS project consists of two phases: Phase 1 which comprises 16 discrete small to medium works packages currently under construction and development, aimed at achieving some journey improvements for cyclists and public transport on the existing A1307, mainly within existing highway boundaries. Phase 2, which is the focus of this paper, is a more significant intervention – providing dedicated, mainly off-road, routes for public transport, cycling and walking, aiming to make these modes the attractive and preferable choice for many.
- 4.6 The Phase 2 project is made up of three key elements: a dedicated public transport link between the A11 and the CBC, a new Travel Hub facility near the A11/A1307 junction and new cycling, walking and equestrian facilities.
- 4.7 The case for guided busways is built upon the considerable success of the existing St Ives to Cambridge scheme which, pre-pandemic, carried over four million passengers per annum. A guided busway solution provides significant benefits over bus lanes in terms of prioritisation, and therefore journey time savings, reliability benefits and attractiveness to passengers. These benefits have been outlined in the CSETS Outline Business Case (OBC) (available [online](#) the 2023 addendum OBC is in the process of being further updated). The proposals include improvements upon the existing St Ives scheme, including a less engineered solution reducing environmental impact and using the latest guidance technology, a fully designed segregated cycling and walking solution using the maintenance track alongside the guided busway, and modern, electric vehicles.
- 4.8 This public transport corridor has been designed to be future proofed allowing for future changes in design and vehicle type, and the proliferation of electric bikes and scooters.
- 4.9 The scheme will also take people out of the city by connecting the business parks at Granta Park and Babraham with the new Cambridge South station. This gives access to new talent and investment from across the region via the train network as well as links to London Stansted.

Scheme Development

- 4.10 The scheme has been in development since 2015 and advanced in accordance with Department for Transport major scheme guidance.

- 4.11 The Transport Strategy for Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire (TSCSC) was prepared in parallel with the submitted Local Plans and adopted in March 2014. The strategy provides a plan to manage the rising population and increasing demand on the travel network by shifting people from cars to other means of travel, including public transport, walking and cycling. Policy within the TSCSC requires a range of infrastructure interventions on the Cambridge South-East corridor as a key part of the integrated land use and transport strategy, responding to levels of planned growth. Cambridge South is one of the key growth areas identified in the plan. The Local Plan policies for the strategic development sites along the corridor requires a High Quality Public Transport to link new homes to employment and services in and around Cambridge.
- 4.12 The CSETS was originally conceived as the Three Campuses to Cambridge scheme. The Three Campuses project was reviewed by the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) in 2017, prior to public consultation on the key route options. Over the course of 5 workshops, the LLF refined the options into 3 possible strategies for the scheme, on and off road, expressing a preference for an off-road solution that served the local villages.
- 4.13 The three strategies were then subject to public consultation at the end of 2017. Strategy 1, the entirely off-road solution was the preferred solution. It also had the strongest business case of the three options, a key component of the prescribed assessment process. It was the only option that served the local communities along the corridor, in particular Sawston, Stapleford and Great Shelford, a preference of the LLF.
- 4.14 The Joint Assembly endorsed the option in 2018 noting in particular that it served local villages, as well as the three campus sites. The Executive Board adopted the off-road option as the preferred solution at its meeting in October 2018.
- 4.15 The project was next presented to the Executive Board in June 2019. The key conclusions of the OBC in relation to the preferred high quality public transport, walking and cycling route as well as the travel hub location were endorsed, and it was agreed that officers undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the route and prepare a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) application.

Environmental Impact Assessment Consultation

- 4.16 A full statutory, EIA was completed. The Executive Board noted the results of the public consultation and in particular, that feedback from the EIA consultation has been used to inform the development of the design for the preferred option, with the project team considering all comments received during the consultation. These comments had led to a number of refinements in the scheme's design and the project team undertook to continue to refine the scheme to minimise potential impacts of the scheme. The Environmental Statement has been published online [here](#). The Environmental Statement continues to be monitored and a further update is in the process of being prepared.
- 4.17 The Executive Board has approved the proposal to move the scheme to the next stage and the submission of a formal TWAo application. It was noted that this application would likely result in a full public inquiry.

Executive Board Approval

- 4.18 At the Executive Board meeting in September 2023, the Executive Board approved the Cambridge South East Transport Scheme, in particular it resolved to:
- (a) Note the response to the Stapleford Consultation;
 - (b) Approve the minor variation to the preferred route; and
 - (c) Agree to formally pause the scheme and, should funding become available, make a formal request to Cambridgeshire County Council to submit a TWAO application as the relevant Highways Authority for the area.

Funding Provision

- 4.19 Funding of £7.2m was announced in the Budget of March 2024. This was to ensure that the CBC, the world-leading life sciences cluster in the south of the city, had the right public transport links by providing £7.2 million to progress connectivity schemes. Discussions with the then Government and the Cambridge Delivery Group confirmed that the £7.2 million grant is intended to enable the promotion of the CSET2 TWAO and to provide for active travel improvements.
- 4.20 Following the General Election in July 2024, further discussions are ongoing with MHCLG regarding funding for the substantive delivery of the scheme. Discussions to date have been positive.

Broader Context

- 4.21 The Government has awarded funding to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service ([Government funding for 'Planning Supersquad' awarded to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning - Cambridge City Council](#)) so it can establish a 'Planning Supersquad'. The intention of the funding is to make the planning process even more efficient so development decisions can be sped up.
- 4.22 Further funding discussions are also being led through local partners as part of the development of the Local Growth Plan.
- 4.23 A wider commitment to Greater Cambridge is also reflected in Matthew Pennycook's letter of 23rd August 2024 - <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66cdf3f68e33f28aae7e1f67/housing-minister-letter-to-greater-cambridge-leaders.pdf>

Government Grant

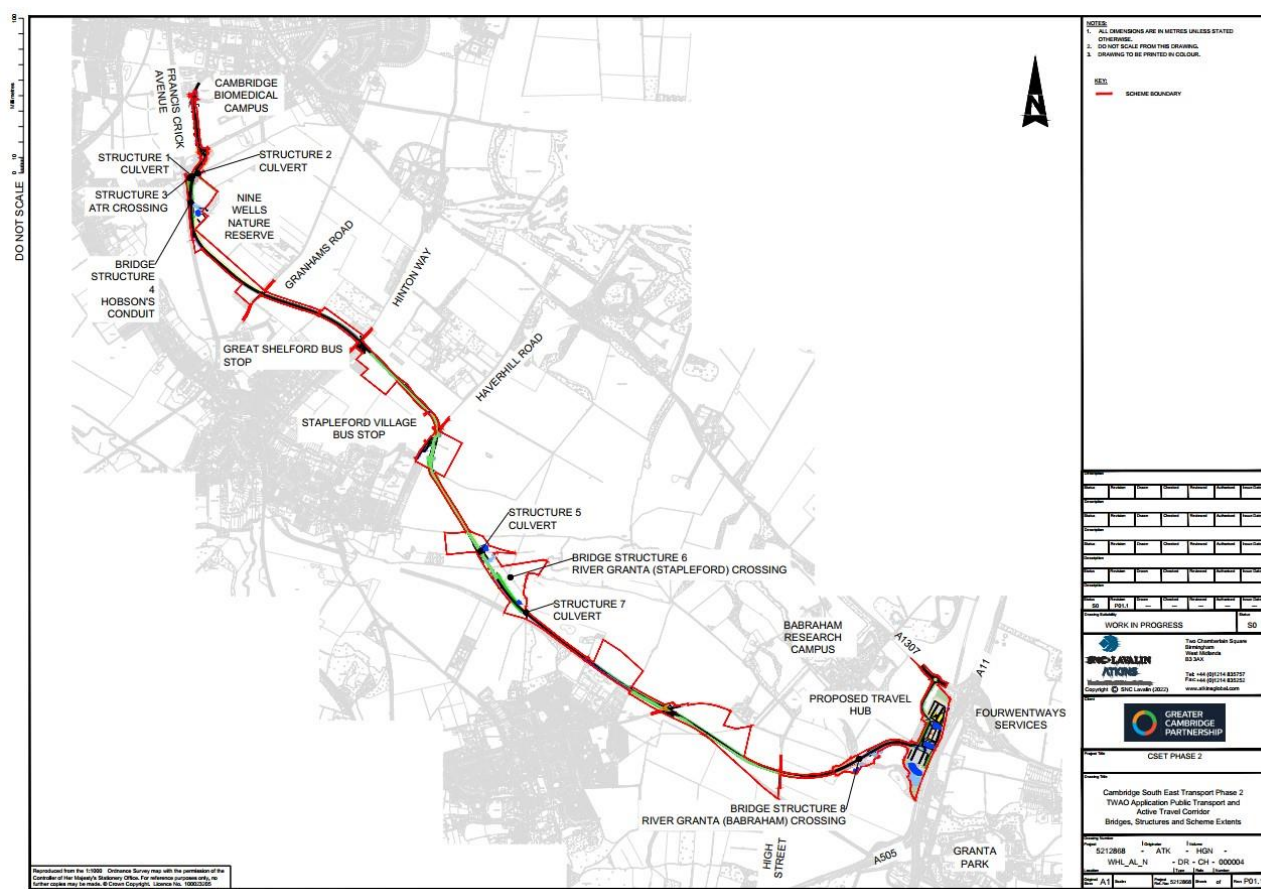
- 4.24 The CSETS was approved, and formally paused as part of the Future Investment Strategy proposals approved by the Executive Board in September 2023. Officers were tasked with exploring funding opportunities for the scheme.
- 4.25 The grant award of £7.2m will enable the "un-pausing" of the scheme with two principal activities:

- Submission of a TWAO application and associated activities to progress an application (if approved by Cambridgeshire County Council); and
- Delivery of physical works along Francis Crick Avenue on the CBC to complement the opening of Cambridge South Station, including public transport, active travel and highway safety measures.

Submission of TWAO

- 4.26 As set out in the paper approved by the Executive Board in September 2023, the updated Business Case for the scheme, reflecting the costs outlined in the Future Investment Strategy paper is outlined [here](#). The preferred route is shown at Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Preferred Route



- 4.27 The previous CBC Transport Needs Assessment demonstrated that without the CSET2 scheme as part of a wider package of interventions, there will be a significant increase in car trips to and from the campus, creating further congestion challenges and stifling future growth ambitions.
- 4.28 The grant award will enable the scheme to progress to submission of the TWAO application, subject to approval by Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 4.29 More broadly, there is an expectation that the scheme will be fully funded, hence the proposal to progress to a TWAO application which, as above, MHCLG has provided funding for.

Delivery of Physical Works along Francis Crick Avenue

- 4.30 Cambridge South Station is set to open in 2025 and it is imperative that measures are put in place prior to or at opening to provide excellent walking, cycling and bus links to the station, both in terms of onward connectivity into the CBC and in terms of access to the station for surrounding communities. The station will have very limited car parking provision and these measures will help to prevent congestion and the attendant traffic issues such as poor air quality.
- 4.31 As the largest employment site in Cambridge, which is rapidly expanding including the new Cambridge Children's Hospital, the new Cancer Research Hospital, and in due course, a wider redevelopment of the CUH site plus research and private sector growth, a comprehensive public transport network providing fast, accessible, and regular access to the hospitals is needed.
- 4.32 Thus, it is proposed that, alongside submission of the TWAO application (subject to approval by Cambridgeshire County Council), the additional funding is used for early delivery the Francis Crick Avenue element of the CSET2 scheme. This work would be separated from the TWAO application.
- 4.33 The proposals for Francis Crick Avenue include a segregated active travel route on the west side of the road, safety and capacity improvements to the junction with the busway, and new bus stops to provide interchange facilities with Cambridge South Station. The proposals have been discussed and are supported by key stakeholders on the Biomedical Campus. The details are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 4.34 As well as delivering the Francis Crick Avenue improvements, GCP officers will continue to work closely with partners including the County Council, Network Rail and the Combined Authority to support the successful opening of Cambridge South station.

5. Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1 Consultation and engagement has been a key feature of the CSETS development.
- 5.2 The GCP carried out comprehensive consultation on the proposed scheme. The consultation process included five formal rounds of consultation in 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2022 with both key stakeholders and the local community. The purpose of these consultations was to ensure statutory bodies, landowners, members of the public and other stakeholders understood the CSET2 Scheme and the potential environmental effects. It provided them with a series of opportunities to comment on the proposals at key stages of development and for the project team to ensure these responses were considered as part of scheme design and construction planning.
- 5.3 Each round of consultation was well publicised to ensure a wide range of individuals and organisations had the opportunity to comment. It was also iterative; issues raised informed the CSET2 scheme development and were thereby carefully considered as part of each subsequent round of consultation. Engagement with

stakeholders and the wider community has been undertaken, is ongoing and will continue post-submission and up to public inquiry. A full report on each of these consultation exercises, along with details of other consultation activity is included in the consultation report [here](#).

6. Recommendations

6.1. The Executive Board is recommended to:

- a) Note the March 2024 Budget, and the funding allocation of £7.2m for promotion of the CSETS, together with the recent and ongoing discussions held with MHCLG;
- b) Note the updated Business Case for the scheme;
- c) Approve the commencement of the early delivery of the physical elements of the CSETS along Francis Crick Avenue, in order to support the opening of Cambridge South station;
- d) Approve the request to Cambridgeshire County Council for the submission of a Transport Works Act Order (TWAo), with the GCP working closely with Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highways Authority; and
- e) Approve the finalisation of the necessary documentation for a TWAo application, if approved by Cambridgeshire County Council.

7. Alignment with City Deal Objectives

7.1 The CSETS project forms an important part of plans that will enable the GCP to deliver against the objectives that were set out in the City Deal. The scheme will seek to connect people to places of employment and allow communities to grow sustainably in the coming years, by creating better and greener transport networks, reducing congestion, and making better use of limited road space by prioritising sustainable transport.

7.2 In addition the proposals set out in this report will support the realisation of a series of benefits, including:

- Securing the continued economic success of the area through improved access and connectivity.
- Significant improvements to air quality and enhancements to active travel, supporting a healthier population.
- Reducing carbon emissions in line with the partners' zero carbon commitments.
- Helping to address social inequalities where poor provision of transport is a contributing factor.
- Wellbeing and productivity benefits from improving people's journeys to and from employment.

8. Citizen's Assembly

8.1 Citizens' Assembly members developed and prioritised their vision for transport in Greater Cambridge. The CSETS supports a number of those priorities, namely:

- Be environmental and zero carbon.
- Be people centred – prioritising pedestrians and cyclists.
- Enable interconnection.
- Have interconnected cycle infrastructure.
- Provide transport equally accessible to all.

8.2 The Citizens' Assembly voted on a series of measures to reduce congestion, improve air quality and public transport which aligns with the aims of the CSETS.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 Costings for the scheme were updated in line with changes to the design (Design Freeze 3) and inflation and were submitted to the Executive Board in September 2023. The current OBC budget for the scheme is £161m.

9.2 The £7.2m grant funding already secured is sufficient to cover promotion of the scheme through the TWAO process, and also to deliver those initial elements of the scheme associated with Francis Crick Avenue.

9.3 As noted in paragraph 4.20, further discussions are ongoing with MHCLG regarding funding for the substantive delivery of the scheme..

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance - Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

10. Next Steps and Milestones

- 10.1 The next steps in the development of the project include the key elements set out in the table below:

Task	Commentary	Timescale
Seek Approval to submit TWAO	Approval will be sought from CCC Full Council to submit the TWAO	October 2024
Submit application for statutory consent	The power to construct the scheme will come from a TWAO which would be determined by the Secretary of State for Transport. This process is likely to include a Public Inquiry directed by an independent Inspector. The Inquiry may recommend amendments to the scheme in order to address concerns raised.	Submit application Autumn 2024 with a determination period estimated of around 18 months – completed early 2026
Delivery of physical measures on Francis Crick Avenue	Delivery of improvements for active travel and bus interchange, supporting the opening of Cambridge South Station.	Early 2025

Background Papers

Source Documents	Location
CSET Webpage	https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/public-transport-schemes/cambridge-south-east-transport/cambridge-south-east-transport-phase-2-background