

Re: TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992 (“TWA”): APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED CAMBOURNE TO CAMBRIDGE ORDER

Further to our correspondence of 7 January 2025 to the Secretary of State for Transport objecting to this application, we - Geoffrey and Jaqueline Gay Meeks, of 11, Clarkson Road, Cambridge, CB3 0EH – wish to add two points to our submission in the light of new information.

1. Comment on the relation of our objection to Representation [CD2 REP-03 North Newnham Residents Association \(H Du Quesnay\)](#).

Our strongly held objection (essentially on the grounds that the potential benefits of the busway are (a) dwarfed by its hefty financial and environmental costs and (b) have not been appropriately compared with the cost-benefit ratio of the most viable alternative designed to achieve the same objectives) comes from two longstanding, indeed founder members, of the North Newnham Residents Association. We therefore read with consternation and distress the unqualified opening statement in CD2 REP-03, namely that ‘North Newnham Residents’ Association, which represents residents in the North of Newnham Ward, **fully supports** the plans of the Greater Cambridge Partnership for the Cambourne to Cambridge busway’. The Association Chair, long knowing of our opposition to the plans, writes to one of us that **‘we must agree to differ’**. Just so. But then the representation to the Inquiry should have reflected the fact that there is a degree of disagreement among the membership. We are not alone among members in objecting to the plans.

The Association’s constitution. Article 2, states that ‘The purpose and function of the Association shall be to represent **the interest** of residents of member households on all matters of common concern to them, and to do all such other things as may be reasonably incidental to that aim’. But to represent the interests fairly must surely require finding out from members what those interests are. There was no systematic canvassing of opinion before the representation was made; no draft was shared with members; and nor has the full text been circulated even yet. A brief account of the case for the busway was sent round after the representation had already been submitted, but there was no accompanying coverage, or even mention, of the case against. In spite of repeated requests, we are not allowed to see the minutes of committee meetings. There is some updating at the AGMs but not all members are able to attend these meetings to express views when retrospective reports on committee actions in the previous year are summarised. Still, the minutes of the 2024 AGM did note differences of opinion, saying of the GCP preferred busway route that ‘the committee is aware that not all members are happy with this plan’. It is regrettable that recognition of diverse views on C2C has not been carried through to the Inquiry representation that has been made.

We understand that in the most recent years the committee itself has been unanimous in supporting the plans. This was not so in the first years when the busway proposals were put forward (one of us was a committee member at the time), as committee minutes ought to show. There was disquiet over the snags of bringing the busway to a termination on Grange Road, objection to the high cost in relation to benefit especially if the main benefit might be secured by other means, and disagreement over whether welcoming the Rifle Range route was a necessary tactic in defending cycle-heavy

Adams Road from busway use. However, there was full committee agreement on the objectives of easing congestion, offering sustainable travel choices, connecting communities and making significant improvements in journey times through improving public transport routes in from the west. The question at that stage was, and to our mind still is, what is the best way of achieving this.

2. Continuing changes to traffic flows and infrastructure affecting the background to the busway plans.

Our objection noted that current and likely future travel circumstances and infrastructure developments affecting the relative merits of the busway application keep changing fast. Alongside the Government's prioritization of Cambridge as a growth area, ambitious plans from the Mayor and changing post-Covid work patterns, there are two recent changes in the West Cambridge area to which we now want to refer.

The first is the ongoing construction of the Comberton Greenway, an active travel route between Hardwick and Cambridge (which could be extended further west) that is already close to being in place, weakening the benefits of the further active travel route planned alongside the busway. A particular aspect of the Greenway is its role in the case for establishing Adams Road as the country's first 'Cycle Street' - where frequent buses would be inappropriate; and work on this cycle street is scheduled to commence in August 2025. However, the many cyclists projected to use this route between the west and the city centre will also flood onto Grange Road. This road became much friendlier to cyclists after traffic calming measures were introduced along it decades ago, with a 20mph speed limit more recently; but there will soon be many more of them to accommodate. The official Greenway route heads west along Grange Road towards Sidgwick Avenue, meeting the projected Rifle Range exit for the busway at an awkwardly narrow and disjointed point. The frequent buses would then cross the cycle route if they turned onto West Road. It seems undesirable to load an attractive Greenway route with the extra bus traffic, running deep into the night, by bringing these additional buses onto Grange Road at all. [This is the more so when, as previously argued, the buses' onward journey into the congested city centre is bound to be tortuous and does not connect well with either the Science Park or the Biomedical Campus employment centres.]

The second is the expected increased expansion of the University's West Cambridge site. This will be another influence on cycling growth, while also meaning that there will be a somewhat greater centre for employment on the western fringe of the city than originally thought – though not on the major scale of the key employment hubs located to the north and south of the city which may be better reached by means other than the busway. But if many of the jobs people would be travelling in to from the western settlements are to be on the West Cambridge site, the need for the busway to continue through to Grange Road, with the cluster of problems that involves, appears debatable.

Yours sincerely,

Prof G Meeks and Dr J G Meeks

