

[REDACTED]

From: Helen Hale <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 19 February 2025 20:23
To: TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE
Subject: Objection to Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport,(DfT) for a new busway to the southeast of Cambridge

To the Secretary of State for Transport,

I, Helen Hale, of [REDACTED] am writing to make a formal objection to the “Application for a Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway to the Southeast of Cambridge”, as submitted by the Cambridge Greater Partnership on 9 January 2025.

My reasons for objecting are:

The consultation in 2018, when 3 routes were brought forward by GCP, resulted in a paltry 1900 replies. There was no further consultation - and at that point not many people knew about the project or had engaged with it. Surely such an expensive project with far-reaching effects should warrant more input from the public and from local bodies?

When the chosen cross-country route, compared to the rejected route (alongside the A1307 + a short busway into the biomedical campus), was revisited after the cancellation of the Cambridge CAM, the environmental impact and the noise levels were seen to be worse for the chosen route than for the A1307 route. The only benefit was for active travel - which is being addressed by the construction of the Greenways (see below).

Further advantages of the A1307 route compared to the chosen route:

The construction of 5 miles of new road through open countryside is unnecessary to deliver improvements in transport. Similar transport and economic benefits can be achieved by building a version of the scheme (first proposed by the GCP in 2018), of building sections of bus lane adjacent to the A1307 and just 1 mile of new road (busway) to get into the biomedical campus.

This alternative (A1307) would avoid building two large bridges over the River Granta chalk stream and one over Hobson's Conduit chalk stream, which will have a huge visual impact on the open views across the landscape.

This alternative would avoid creating a scar in the Gog Magog Hills landscape, one of the most important landscapes in the Cambridge area. Under the GCP route, the bus stop at Stapleford and the associated lighting, shelters, and tarmac would cut right across the open view from Haverhill Road up the hill at the edge of the village, a view that the Neighbourhood Plan (which is almost ready to be submitted) lists as a Protected View. The lighting will affect wildlife.

The GCP route would create worse air quality around the roads that the busway crosses, as traffic will be queuing at the crossing points. This will affect nearby houses. There will also be parking around the bus stops, as they are on the edges of villages.

The alternative route would avoid building a new road through a countryside park, to the detriment of its future users and nature. The new retirement village at the northern edge of Stapleford was only given planning permission because the landowner gave land for the adjoining countryside park, thus giving a big boost to local biodiversity. The proposed busway conflicts with this planning permission.

The alternative would avoid severing fields close to villages making them vulnerable to future development and further harm to the countryside.

This (A1307 + a short bus route into the CBC) alternative would better serve the planned expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) and serve more of the Campus. The GCP route comes into the western side of the CBC campus, but future expansion of the campus is due to be at the other side, nearer where the alternative route would come in.

Cycle routes in this area are already under construction and include the Linton Greenway which will connect Cambridge to Babraham, Granta Park and Linton; and the Sawston Greenway that will connect Cambridge to Sawston. Stapleford and Shelford are already served by the DNA cycle path. Thus it is not necessary to create further active travel options, which is one reason that GCP gives for picking their chosen route.

The cost of the proposed route is approx £160m, whereas the cost of the A1307 route is approx £60m. And the former is not usable until the whole thing is complete, whereas the alternative would be usable sooner, as sections were completed.

The proposed route takes up 53 hectares of best quality agricultural land, whereas the alternative takes much less.

The GCP route uses guided buses, which means no other vehicle can use the road eg other buses, or emergency vehicles. The alternative wouldn't be using guided buses, so any vehicle could use the bus lanes if necessary.

There are a number of disadvantages in adopting EITHER bus route:

The existing number 7 bus service, which serves the village centres of Sawston, Stapleford, and Great Shelford, would be under threat, as bus resources are diverted to a new busway. Under the GCP route, there is already a proposal to divert one of the buses each hour up to the park and ride hub near the A11, away from the villages.

The park and ride site is only for 1250 cars. £160m is a lot of money to get those people into the CBC or town. Can the cash be spent on providing lots of buses on lots of routes, giving an incentive for people to get out of their cars and to use a bus, thus clearing congestion, and avoiding the need to build new busways?

The proposed buses only take 40 people. There will be 6 an hour at peak times. That's only 240 people per hour, which will create very little impact on congestion.

If there has to be a busway, opportunities for mitigation measures should be taken, for example:

The park and ride is proposed to have 1250 spaces. Only 150 of these will have solar panels over them. Surely it makes sense to cover all 1250, and put excess electricity back into the grid, or use it to charge buses?

If the GCP plan goes ahead, the country park it goes through in Stapleford will lose land, which reduces biodiversity. Thus there should be compensatory land and/or biodiversity gain, over and above the statutory biodiversity gain required of any building project.

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs) Helen Hale

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