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From: Isobel Smith <[redacted]>
Sent: 22 February 2025 20:22
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 Cambridge

Objection to Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway to the southeast of Cambridge Cambridge

I 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 address is [redacted] I live near the proposed park and ride site in Babraham.

My grounds for this objection include:

Building a bus route along the A1307 would be much cheaper
The construction of 5 miles of new road through open countryside is not needed to deliver a second park and ride service from Babraham to the Biomedical Campus. Similar transport and economic benefits could be achieved by building a bus lane from Babraham, along the A1307 together with one mile of new road (busway) at the end of the route, to allow buses to bypass congestion near the Addenbrookes roundabout. The GCP itself proposed this scheme back in 2018.

One of the main benefits of routing the busway along the A1307 would be a huge reduction in the cost of the scheme. The figures I have seen are that the proposed cost of the busway is £162 million. The route along the A1307 would cost much less, some estimate savings would be of £100 million. Surely cost should be an issue and tax payers' money should be spent wisely?

My understanding of the scheme is that the Park and Ride car park will be built first and opened with bus services travelling along the A1307 until the off-road bus route is completed. This illustrates that the A1307 scheme is feasible.

The A1307 route would have less environmental impact
The route along the A1307 would avoid creating a scar on the Gog Magog Hills landscape. This is an important part of the Cambridge Green Belt and an important rural landscape close to the city. This green space is part of what makes Cambridge a pleasant city to live in. The risk is that once the busway is built, then infill development will follow, and Cambridge will lose its rural character and just become another sprawling city.

Surprisingly, the rural view of the landscape may also improve patient outcomes and relieve stress in healthcare workers. There is an area of scientific research called Environmental Psychology that explores the impact of nature on health outcomes and perceived levels of stress. Magog Down is very visible from the Biomedical Campus / Addenbrooke's site. If it is developed and built on in the future, the loss of rural outlook will affect staff and patients who work on the site. Published scientific studies have shown that patients in hospital, have shorter postoperative hospital stays and take fewer analgesics if they can look out on nature. Recent articles discuss how views of nature can reduce stress and burnout in healthcare workers.

The route along the A1307 would also avoid building two bridges over the River Granta chalk stream and putting Hobson's Conduit chalk stream into a culvert.

There are existing cycle routes between Babraham and the Biomedical Campus

There are two existing cycle routes that connect Babraham to the Biomedical Campus. I used to work at Abcam which is on the Biomedical Campus and cycled home to Abington along them. There is a cycle path over Gog Magog hill or cyclists can go along the DNA cycle path through Shelford and Stapleford and connect to the cycle path that goes to Sawston and then on to Babraham and Abington. There are plans to build the Sawston Greenway that will connect Cambridge to Sawston. There is no need to build a fourth cycle route to the Biomedical Campus. It is the long distance and long duration of the journey that deters people from commuting by bike.

The proposed bus route does not serve the Babraham Research Campus
The application letter lists Objective 1 - Improve connectivity to employment sites in South East Cambridge and central Cambridge. Although the proposed scheme would provide a park and ride service to the Biomedical Campus on the Addenbrooke's site, it would bypass the Babraham Research Campus as it is diverted away from Babraham towards Sawston. The Babraham Research Campus is home to 60 companies, 2,000 employees and 300 academic researchers and is situated along the A1307. If the alternative A1307 bus route was used rather than the proposed cross-country route, the Babraham Campus would be better connected to central Cambridge than at present. Many people live in Cambridge and need to travel out to Babraham for work.

Impact on the Stagecoach 13 bus service
Objective 5 of the application letter is - Improve active travel infrastructure and public transport provision in South East Cambridge. The proposed bus route duplicates an existing bus route. The Stagecoach 13 service runs along the A1307 to connect Haverhill and neighbouring villages, including my village, Abington, with Addenbrooke's and Cambridge city centre. It has never been made clear how the pricing strategy for the proposed new park and ride bus would protect the Stagecoach 13 service. But the risk is that if the new park and ride bus is priced so that it is cheaper than the existing 13 bus service, then commuters who currently use the 13 bus from Haverhill may switch to the new park and ride bus, and drive down the A1307 to Babraham. The GCP will want commuters to use the new park and ride bus, so I suspect that they will have to offer a low price. But that could well impact the bus service to my village, Abington, resulting in a reduced number 13 service to Abington residents. Evidence from studying new park and ride sites in York and Oxford have shown that commuters do switch away from conventional bus services to use park and ride buses.

Please do consider my objections.

With best wishes,

Isobel Smith

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