
The Cambridge South East Transport Order

Transport And Works Act 1992

Transport And Works (Applications And Objections Procedure) (England And Wales) Rules 2006

Planning Statement

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Date	January 2025

PLANNING STATEMENT

Cambridge South East Transport Phase 2

Prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of GREATER CAMBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP

January 2025

Site Name: Cambridge South East Transport Phase 2

Client Name: Greater Cambridge Partnership

Type of Report: Planning Statement

Prepared by: JM

SP

Approved by: CM

Date: January 2025

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APPENDIX C - CONSIDERATION OF GREEN BELT ISSUES (2024) PREPARED BY LDA DESIGN

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), through Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as lead authority ('the Applicant'), to support an application to the Secretary of State for an Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 (TWA) (the draft Order). The TWA relates specifically to transport projects to construct and operate railways, tramways and other guided transport systems, and works which interfere with navigation rights. The proposed scheme, Cambridge South East Transport Phase 2 (the Proposed Development), employs a guided busway system using sensor and kerb guidance which is road based and falls under the definition of a 'guided busway system' within the draft Order.
- 1.2 This application is accompanied by a request for a Planning Direction under Section 90 (2A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990) for deemed planning permission. If authorised, the resulting Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) and deemed planning permission together will provide the relevant powers, permission and planning conditions for the construction, maintenance and operation of the Proposed Development.
- 1.3 This application seeks deemed planning permission for all development provided for in the draft Order and within any of the limits or any of the places authorised by the draft Order. The development is described in detail in chapter 2 of the Environmental Statement (document reference CSET-10-02-00) (ES) (referred to in the ES as the Proposed Development), which in summary comprises:

"...the construction and operation of a guided busway system using sensor and kerb guidance which is road and track based, an emergency and maintenance access track which also serves as a multipurpose active travel path (Service Track) and travel hub".

"The Proposed Development will be located to the south east of Cambridge within a corridor between the A1307 to the east, the A1301 to the west, the A11 to the south and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus to the north. The route will connect to the existing guided busway at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. There are three proposed intermediate bus stops along the route at Great Shelford, Stapleford and Sawston. The route terminates at a new travel hub facility (the A11 Travel Hub), south east of the village of Babraham and immediately to the west of the A11 at the Fourwentways Roundabout. The Proposed Development includes both the physical infrastructure of the new busway, and its use for the bus services which will continue beyond the busway into Cambridge city centre and surrounding villages".

- 1.4 For the purposes of this statement, when describing the full extent of the Phase 2 development, it will be referred to as "the Proposed Development".
- 1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with other key documents, including the ES and relevant plans which also accompany the submission.
- 1.6 The deemed planning drawings are set out in the Request for Deemed Planning Permission (document reference CSET-14-00-00) at Schedule 2. That document also defines the Site as the land within the Order limits which is set out in the deemed planning drawings.

1.7 This statement sets out:

- Overview and background to the Proposed Development;
- A description of the Site and its surroundings;
- Details of the Proposed Development;
- The planning policy context, against which the Proposed Development is to be assessed;
- A planning assessment of the main issues associated with the Proposed Development; and
- Conclusions to summarise why the development accords with the Development Plan and National Planning Policy.

Overview and Background

- 1.8 The GCP is the local delivery body for a City Deal with central government, bringing powers and investment, worth up to £1billion over 15 years, facilitating vital improvements in infrastructure, supporting and accelerating the creation of 45,000 new jobs, 33,480 new homes and 400 additional apprenticeships. The GCP consists of five partners, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership, CCC, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and the University of Cambridge.

Existing Challenges

- 1.9 Cambridge is strategically important for attracting international investors into the UK and maintaining the UK's international competitiveness. However, this relies on Cambridgeshire continuing to offer strong links between businesses, training campuses and housing developments. Population growth, rapid business creation and the number of businesses choosing to locate in Cambridgeshire has increased pressure on the existing transport network. Businesses may be deterred from investing if access to employment sites is difficult for their workforce. Planned development may not come to fruition at the rate anticipated in the Emerging Local Plan (defined below) if transport infrastructure is not in place to support development and expansion. Planned employment space may be left vacant if routes to access the sites are deemed unattractive and inaccessible by the potential workforce. These issues are highlighted in detail within the Future Growth Technical Note (FGTN) (CSET-21-06-00-Future Growth Technical Note) appended to the Outline Business Case Strategic Dimension Refresh (SDR) (CSET-21-01-00-Strategic Dimension Refresh).
- 1.10 Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are net importers of people for work purposes. Cambridgeshire has a large proportion of people working in professional, scientific and technical activities compared to the national average. Employers in Cambridgeshire therefore recruit from outside of the immediate area in order to find individuals who meet the specific requirements of job roles on offer. As a result, a large number of individuals work in Cambridgeshire but live outside of the area, leading to a high number of peak time commuters. The transport network, however, is not equipped to accommodate the number of inbound commuters.
- 1.11 Despite Cambridgeshire's existing Park & Ride network, the facilities currently in place are not well positioned to serve the demand associated with growing economic hubs across south-east Cambridge in particular. Ongoing development across south-east Cambridge will place increased pressure on the Babraham Road Park & Ride site. The Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC), located beside Addenbrookes Hospital and the start of the route, employs a large number of people

and is a significant generator of travel demand¹. Around 40% of staff at CBC access the site from the south-east, using the A1307, resulting in congestion and delays at peak times. Existing businesses may struggle to attract labour from outside of the local area as journey times are long and unreliable.

- 1.12 Cambridgeshire must ensure that sustainable modes of travel are attractive to an ever-increasing number of users. A high number of collisions (over 33 in the 6-year period of analysis²) have been recorded along the A1307 between Addenbrooke's Hospital and A1307/A11 and may be associated with high volumes of traffic for some sections of the route and congestion and delay. A number of recorded collisions may be associated with high vehicle speeds for some parts of the route. This may contribute to the perception that the route is not safe for pedestrians and cyclists and discourage uptake.
- 1.13 There is a lack of continuous active travel routes in the A1307 corridor. The area particularly lacks connections to/from more rural settlements to south-east Cambridge. Alternate routes which are intended to connect south-east Cambridge to central Cambridge do not adequately serve demand. Crossing points along the A1307 are few and far between and inadequately designed for Non-Motorised Users, forcing users to cross high speed traffic unsafely. It is likely that inadequate active travel provision along the A1307 corridor for cyclists and pedestrians is a factor in low uptake of active travel modes along this route.

The Scheme

- 1.14 The Proposed Development emerged from the consideration of various measures to improve sustainable transport provision, bus priority, active travel infrastructure and road safety along the A1307 corridor between Cambridge and Haverhill. Initially the Proposed Development was consulted on as one project until it was divided into Phase 1 and Phase 2 at the 2018 public consultation.
- 1.15 Phase 1 comprises road safety, walking, cycling and bus priority measures along the A1307 between Haverhill and Cambridge. A number of the Phase 1 proposals have already been implemented. The main components of Phase 2 (the Proposed Development) include a new guided busway with a mostly segregated route used for emergency maintenance access which will also be used for walking and cycling and for most of the route provision for horse riders) (Service Track), new travel hub (A11 Travel Hub), three new bus stops and associated infrastructure work.
- 1.16 Routine maintenance will be required along the length of the busway. The Service Track will provide access for workers, vehicles, equipment, and materials to enter any part of the Proposed Development without interrupting the bus service. Maintenance paths have been provided to pond locations which form part of the drainage strategy for the scheme.
- 1.17 The landscaped areas will require regular maintenance, including activities such as grass cutting and hedge trimming, to ensure that the quality of the proposed habitats is maintained. The Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) (Volume 3, Appendix 2.2) (CSET-10-05-00-

¹ A Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC) Transport Needs Review conducted by Atkins in 2018 highlighted that the site was expected to generate 67,500 daily trips by the year 2031¹. Of these daily trips, 46,400 are predicted to be made by car if current travel patterns continue.

² 2015-2019 and 2022-2024: Chapter 5 CSET-00-00-19 Transport Assessment

Landscape and Ecology Management Plan) sets out the proposed maintenance regime for the landscaped areas.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.18 The procedural requirements for the TWAO application are set out in The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (as amended) (the Application Rules). The Application Rules, as amended by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Miscellaneous Amendments Relating to Harbours, Highways and Transport) Regulations 2017 provide that an application for a TWAO shall (unless the Secretary of State has made a direction under Rule 7(3)), be accompanied by an ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement). The request for a Planning Direction to be made under the TCPA 1990 (as amended), Section 90(2) is subject to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Both the Environmental Impact Assessment (Miscellaneous Amendments Relating to Harbours, Highways and Transport) Regulations 2017 and the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 contain very similar provisions and for the purposes of this application may be considered as one set of regulations.
- 1.19 A formal request for a scoping opinion and a scoping report, dated 13 October 2020, was submitted to the Department for Transport on 15 October 2020. A scoping opinion was issued by the Secretary of State on 27 November 2020 (Scoping Opinion) – (CSET-10-12-00- Scoping Opinion). Subject to the comments in paragraphs 10 to 39 of the Scoping Opinion, the Secretary of State agreed with the scope of the ES outlined in the submitted scoping report (CSET-10-11-00- ES Scoping Report). The scope of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) as set out in Scoping Report was for the following disciplines to be examined:
- Air Quality
 - Biodiversity
 - Climate Change
 - Community and Human Health
 - Historic Environment
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Land Use and Land Take
 - Soils, Geology and Land Contamination
 - Water Resources and Flood Risk
 - Major Accidents and Hazards
 - Traffic and Transport
 - Material Resources and Waste
- 1.20 An ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) which examines the above disciplines accompanies this application.

Pre-Application and Public Engagement

- 1.21 Both Phase 1 and the Proposed Development (Phase 2) have been subject to extensive consultation. A Consultation Report (CSET-05-00-00) produced by Atkins, which forms part of this

application submission, has been prepared to demonstrate what was done, when and the feedback received at each stage of each phase. Below is a summary of the consultation.

- 1.22 Public consultation on initial concepts was undertaken in 2016. Consultation leaflets and a questionnaire were delivered to over 14,000 residential properties and businesses in the A1307 area. The consultation leaflet and further information were also made available online and the online survey was widely publicised. Across the Haverhill to Cambridge area awareness-raising activities were carried out including emails to stakeholders, library displays, bus stop posters, leaflets at Park & Ride sites and advertising on bus tickets, buses and social media including Facebook advertising targeting the Cambridge and Haverhill area. Public Consultation Events were held in seven local venues and feedback was recorded and used to help inform the proposals.
- 1.23 In 2018, the Proposed Development entered a second period of public consultation, where different route strategies were presented for comment. The consultation adopted a multi-channel approach to promote and seek feedback, including through traditional and online paid-for, owned and earned media, community engagement events in key or high footfall locations along the route and through the widespread distribution of around 22,000 consultation leaflets.
- 1.24 A further public consultation on three travel hub site options, proposed bus stops, and five shortlisted route alignments was held in 2019. Again, the consultation adopted a multi-channel approach to promote and seek feedback including through traditional and online paid-for, owned and earned media, community engagement events in key or high footfall locations along the route and through the wide-spread distribution of around 18,000 consultation leaflets to local residents and key stakeholders, such as landowners, statutory consultees and active travel working groups. In addition, drop-in events were held in Cambridge, Stapleford, Sawston, Great Abington and Haverhill to maximise exposure of the consultation and enable people to engage in-person and ask questions.
- 1.25 A Joint Projects Working Group, made up of the scheme promoters and appointed consultants of local major transport projects, was established in 2019. The purpose of the group was to identify and discuss interfaces between the major transport projects in the area, namely East West Rail, Cambridge South Station, Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM), Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C), and the Proposed Development.
- 1.26 In autumn 2020, the emerging preliminary design and initial environmental assessment findings were presented at a further public consultation where comments were invited from statutory consultees, non-statutory consultees and members of the public. This consultation ran for eight weeks between 19 October and 14 December 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic social distancing restrictions, the consultation was hosted online via a virtual exhibition. During the consultation period 1,412 unique users visited the virtual exhibition site. Two online webinars were advertised publicly and held by Zoom so the project team could present the scheme's proposals to consultees that signed up to attend.
- 1.27 A further consultation was then undertaken in the summer of 2022 having regard to a proposed route alignment change in Stapleford. This followed on from proposals for a retirement village and a country park in Stapleford being allowed on appeal (under appeal reference APP/W0530/W/21/3280395) on the 29 December 2021. The original preferred route, subject to earlier consultations, would have dissected the proposed retirement village. The consultation in the summer of 2022 consulted on the re- alignment of the route to avoid dissecting the retirement village.

- 1.28 The Proposed Development has been subject to detailed consultation with the statutory and non-statutory consultees. This has included a number of meetings with the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSPS) and the County Planning Authority. Specialist officers from both authorities have also been engaged, including relevant landscape, ecology, environmental health, air quality, lead local flood authority and highway authority officers. Detailed engagement has also been held with statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and Natural England and non-statutory consultees such as Cam Cycle and the Wildlife Trust.

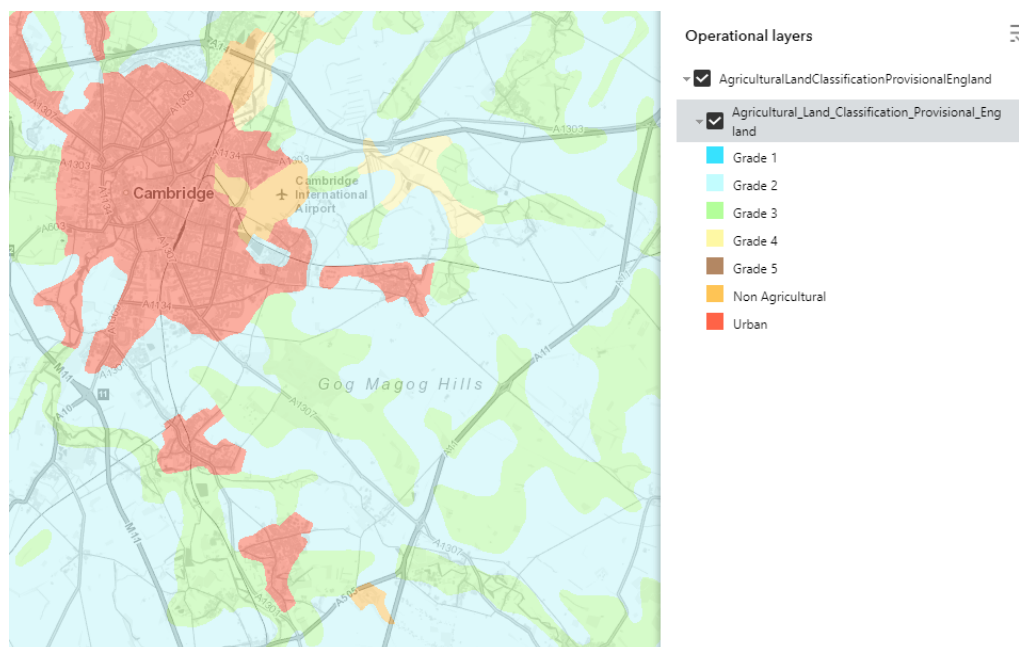
2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Site comprises all the land within the red line boundary required for the acquisition of permanent interests for delivery of the physical infrastructure, landscaping, and mitigation for the busway route, as well as temporary interests required for construction. The Site is approximately 9.2 km long and 115 ha in area and is linear in nature, running from CBC and Francis Crick Avenue (FCA) to Babraham, the A11 and A1307 where it finishes at a new travel hub.
- 2.2 A comprehensive description of the site and surroundings is set out in Chapter 3 (The Site and Surrounding Area) of the ES (CSET-10-02-00).
- 2.3 The Planning Statement (CSET15-00-00) provides an overview of key statutory designations having regard to the Proposed Development.

Current Use of Land

- 2.4 The majority of the Proposed Development including the guided busway and proposed A11 travel hub would be located on land currently used for agricultural purposes (largely arable). A smaller section of the route would be located within the CBC, including along Francis Crick Avenue. A large proportion of the agricultural land used would be Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land, as illustrated by the image below.

Figure 1: Agricultural Land Classification
(Source: DEFRA, 2021)



A11 Travel Hub

- 2.5 The A11 Travel Hub is located approximately 0.3 kilometres to the south east of the village of Babraham (Figure 2). To the north of the A11 Travel Hub site is Babraham Road (A1307), to the east is the A11, to the south is the River Granta, and to the north-west is agricultural land, beyond

which is the village of Babraham. The A11 Travel Hub site includes an area for a new proposed access onto the A1307, and land for the Service Track from the A11 Travel Hub to Babraham and Granta Park. The site currently is used as agricultural land.

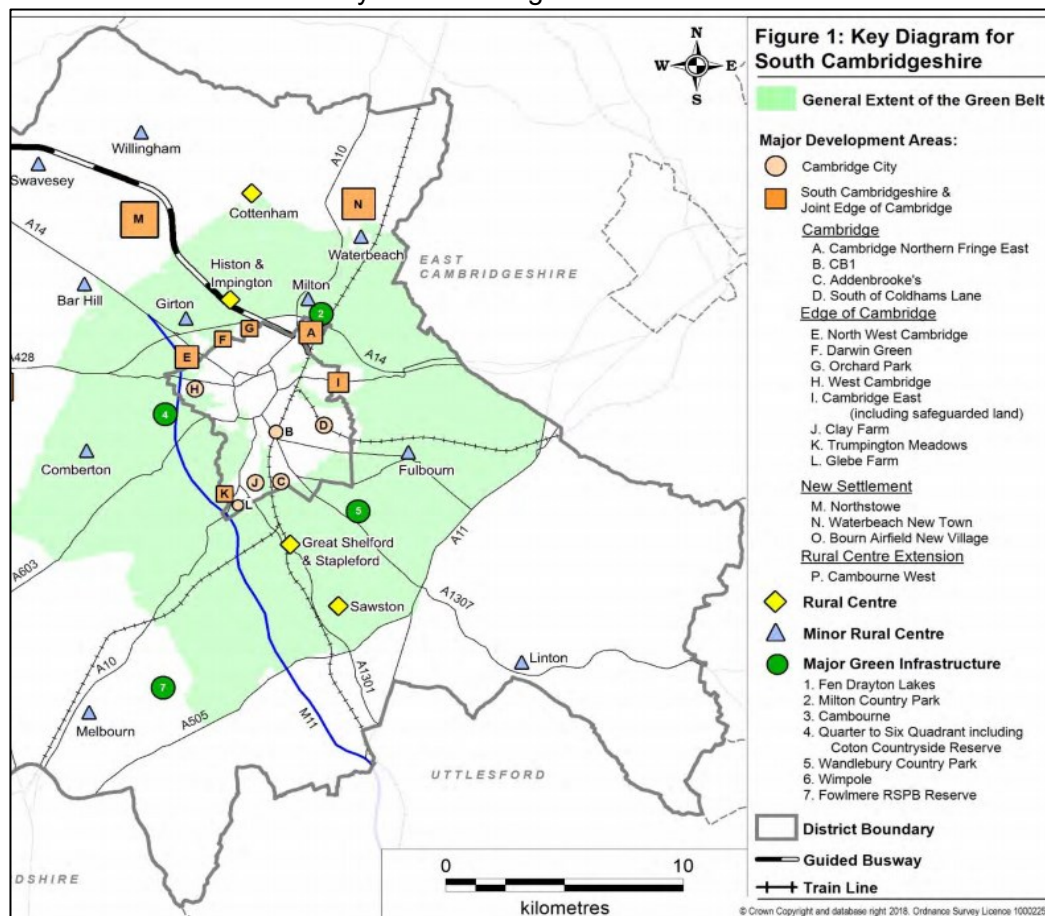


Figure 2: General Extent of the Green Belt

(Source: South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018), page 29)

Guided Busway

- 2.6 The busway is approximately 8.5 kilometres long linking the CBC to the new A11 Travel Hub. Part of the route would run alongside the existing railway line and adjacent to the approved Cambridge South Station before tapering away. The busway then passes to the north-east and east of the villages of Great Shelford, Stapleford, and Sawston. The route is also proposed to cross over the River Granta. See Figure 2.1 of Chapter 2 of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) for the proposed route alignment including bus stop locations and A11 Travel Hub.

Green Belt

- 2.7 The busway and A11 Travel Hub, until it reaches the CBC, is within the Cambridge Green Belt (Figures 2 and 3). Once the busway reaches the CBC it will lie within Cambridge City Council's administrative boundary as defined by the Cambridge Policies Map 2018, within the Adopted Cambridge City Local Plan (2018). Once the busway is within CBC it continues along FCA until the junction of the existing guided busway with FCA.

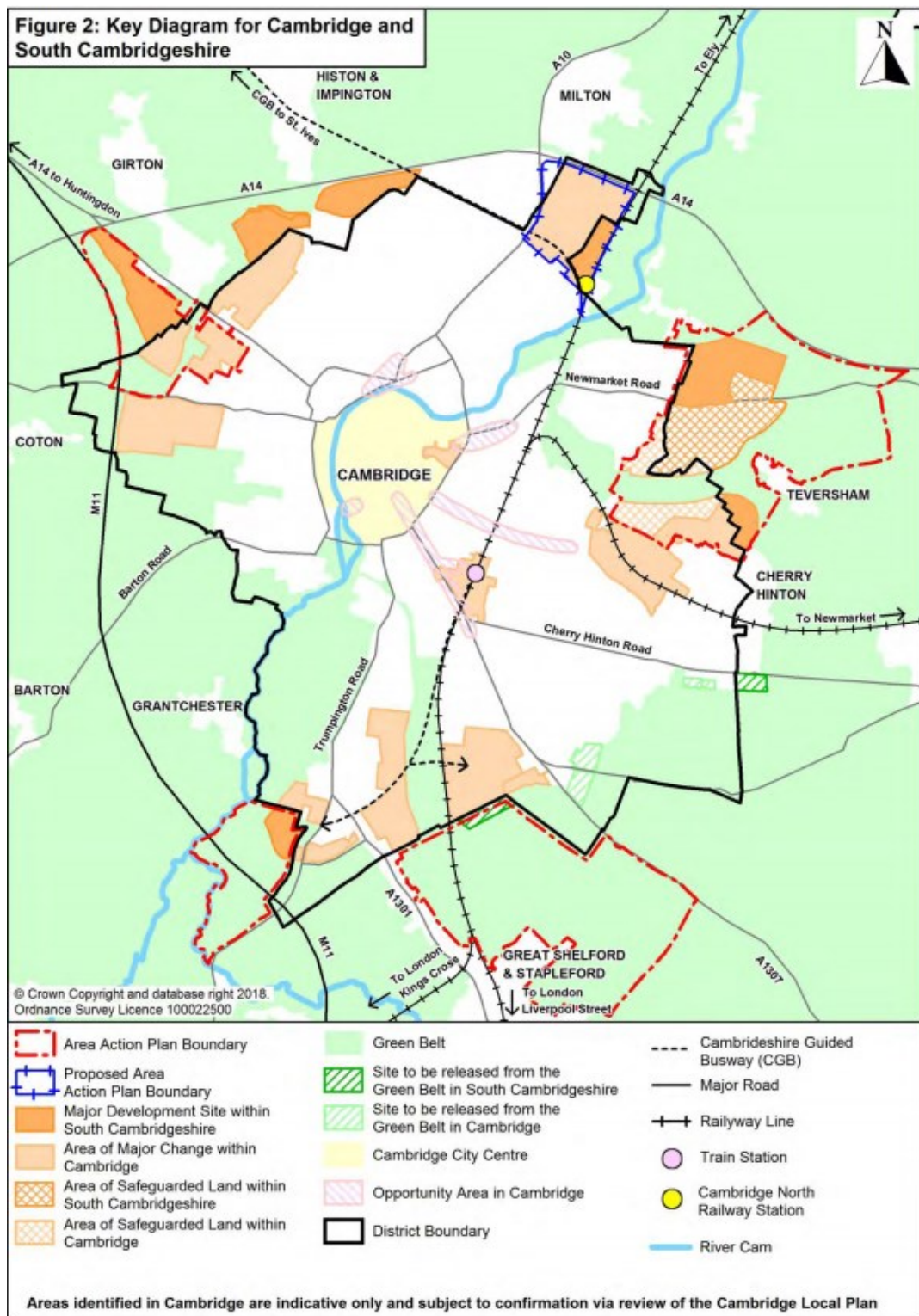


Figure 3: Key Diagram, including Green Belt
(Source: South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018), page 30)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021 Designations

- 2.10 The busway is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) (Figure 5) for chalk (light blue) and sand and gravel (yellow). The A11 Travel Hub is located within a MSA for sand and gravel. The busway also crosses through a Waste Management Area (WMA), Consultation Area (CA) at the CBC, and skirts the north of a Water Recycling Area (WRA) as it passes between Stapleford and Sawston.

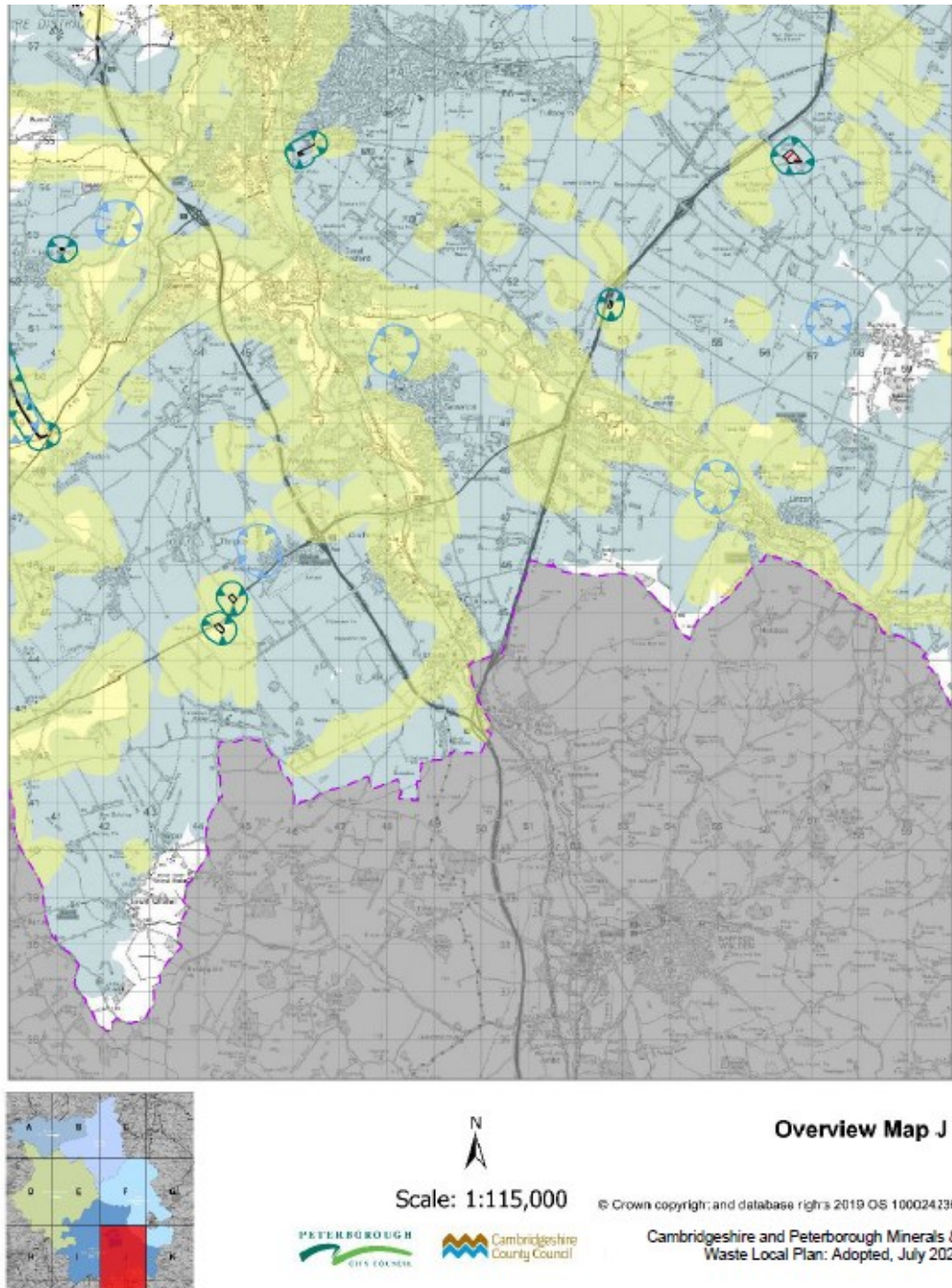


Figure 5: Minerals and Waste Constraints

(Source: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021))

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

- 2.11 There are a number of SSSI within the wider proximity of the Site. These include the following:
- The Cherry Hinton Pit SSSI is located approximately 2 kilometres north-east of FCA.
 - The Gog Magog Golf Course SSSI is located approximately 1.2 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Hinton Way.
 - The Dernford Fen SSSI is located approximately 1 kilometre south-west of the busway, at its closest point, between Stapleford and Sawston.
 - The Sawston Hall Meadows SSSI is located approximately 1 kilometre south-west of where the SPTL crosses Sawston Road.
 - The Roman Road SSSI is located approximately 2.2 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Hinton Way, and approximately 1.8 kilometres north-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub.
 - The Alder Carr SSSI is located approximately 2.4 kilometres south-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub.
 - The Furze Hill SSSI is located approximately 3.2 kilometres south-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub.

Local Nature Reserves

- 2.12 The Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve is located approximately 75 metres east of the busway, at its closest point, between the CBC and Great Shelford.
- 2.13 The Beechwoods Local Nature Reserve is located approximately 1.6 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Hinton Way.

Heritage

- 2.14 The heritage chapter of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) provides a detailed overview of heritage considerations.

Scheduled Monuments

- 2.15 There are a number of scheduled monuments within the area. Their proximity to the Proposed Development is outlined as follows:
- The site revealed by aerial photography West of White Hill Farm Scheduled Monument is located approximately 25 metres to the west of where the busway runs alongside the railway linking Cambridge to Great Shelford.
 - The Causewayed Enclosure at Great Shelford Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.4 kilometres south-west of where the busway crosses Granham's Road.
 - The Settlement complex N of Hauxton Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.8 kilometres south-west of where the busway crosses Granham's Road.
 - The Settlement NW of Little Shelford Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.9 kilometres south west of where the busway crosses Granham's Road.

- The Causewayed enclosure and bowl barrow at Little Trees Hill Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1 kilometre east of the busway, at its closest point, between Great Shelford and Stapleford.
- The Wandlebury Camp Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.7 kilometres north-east of the busway, at its closest point, between Great Shelford and Stapleford.
- The Woodworm Hill tumulus Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.9 kilometres east of the busway, at its closest point, between Great Shelford and Stapleford.
- The Borough Hill Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.8 kilometres south-west of the busway, at its closest point, between Stapleford and Sawston.
- The Bowl barrow on Copley Hill Scheduled Monument is located approximately 3.1 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Public Right of Way 12/10 (restricted byway).
- The Long barrow and enclosure 870m ENE of Copley Hill Farm Scheduled Monument is located approximately 2.3 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Public Right of Way 12/10 (restricted byway).
- The two moated sites 150m east of College Farm Scheduled Monument are located approximately 1.2 kilometres south-west of where the busway crosses the High Street south of Babraham.
- The Brent Ditch Scheduled Monument is located approximately 1.2 kilometres south of where the busway crosses the High Street south of Babraham.
- The Worstead Street (via Devana) near Cambridge Scheduled Monument (also known as the Roman Road SSSI), is located approximately 2.2 kilometres north-east of where the busway crosses Hinton Way, and approximately 1.8 km north-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub.

Listed Buildings

2.16 In terms of listed buildings, the following are within proximity to the Proposed Development:

- The Nine Wells Monument, Grade II Listed Building, is located in the Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve. The listed building is located approximately 130 metres east of the busway, at its closest point, between the CBC and Great Shelford.
- Dovecote at Granham's Farm, Grade II Listed Building, is located approximately 0.35 kilometres south-east of where the busway crosses Granham's Road.
- 32-38, Granham's Road, Grade II Listed Buildings, are located approximately 0.57 kilometres south-east of where the busway crosses Granham's Road.
- Middlefield and Garden Wall, Grade II* Listed Building, is located approximately 0.3 kilometres north-east of the busway, at its closest point, on the section linking Hinton Road and Haverhill Road.
- Galewood Pinewood The Towers, Grade II Listed Building, is located approximately 0.5 kilometres north-east of the busway, at its closest point, on the section linking Hinton Road and Haverhill Road.
- The Church of St Andrew, Grade II* Listed Building, is located approximately 0.8 kilometres south-west of the busway, on the section linking Hinton Road and Haverhill Road.
- The White House, Grade II Listed Building, is located adjacent to the east of The Church of St Andrews, approximately 0.8 kilometres south-west of the busway, on the section linking Hinton Road and Haverhill Road.
- Church Farmhouse, Grade II Listed Building, is located approximately 0.24 kilometres north of the busway, at its closest point, on the section linking Sawston Road and the High Street south of Babraham.

- The Home Farmhouse, Grade II Listed Building, is located approximately 0.4 kilometres north-west of the busway, on the section between the High Street south of Babraham and the proposed A11 Travel Hub.
- The Temple Cafe and Restaurant, Grade II Listed Building, is located approximately 0.1 kilometres east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub.

Registered Parks and Gardens

- 2.17 Sawston Hall, Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 1 kilometre south-west of where the busway crosses Sawston Road.
- 2.18 Pampisford Hall, Grade II* Listed Registered Park and Garden is located 1 kilometre south of where the busway crosses the High Street south of Babraham.
- 2.19 See Figure 12.1 of Chapter 12 of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) for the location of designated heritage assets.

Highways and Public Rights of Way

- 2.20 The Proposed Development will affect six highways and six Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which will remain open during operation but may require temporary closure or diversions during construction. The PRoW plans accompany the application.
- 2.21 The six highways are:
- FCA (only the roundabout at the junction of FCA, Dame Mary Archer Way and Addenbrooke's Road are publicly maintainable highway with the remainder being a private road);
 - Granham's Road;
 - Hinton Way;
 - Haverhill Road;
 - Sawston Road; and
 - The High Street south of Babraham.
- 2.22 The PRoW crossed are:
- 39/47 footpath running along FCA and Dame Mary Archer Way;
 - 12/12 bridleway from Stapleford to Babraham to north of the River Granta at Stapleford;
 - 12/10 restricted bridleway running north east from Sawston towards the River Granta;
 - 12/9 footpath from Sawston to Babraham to south of Sawston Road;
 - 12/4 footpath from Babraham to the centre of the A11 pedestrian bridge (this is also a permissive cycleway); and
 - 4/3 from the centre of the A11 pedestrian bridge to Newmarket Road (this is also a permissive cycleway).

Gas Main

- 2.23 A gas main running north east to south-west is located approximately 20 metres north-west of the proposed A11 Travel Hub, at its closest point. The gas main passes under the A1307 in the area

where works are proposed to form a new access to the A11 Travel Hub. The Proposed Development would also cross over the gas main approximately 70 metres from where it joins the proposed A11 Travel Hub.

Water Crossings

- 2.24 The busway will cross Hobson's Brook once and the River Granta twice. A number of un-named ditches will be crossed by the busway as well.

Floodplain

- 2.25 The majority of the busway is located in Flood Zone 1 (Figure 6). There is an area of Flood Zone 3 associated with Addenbrooke's Road. The busway passes through areas of Flood Zone 3 and 2 where it crosses the River Granta between Stapleford and Babraham, and where it crosses the River Granta south of Babraham. An area of the south-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub is in Flood Zone 3 and 2.

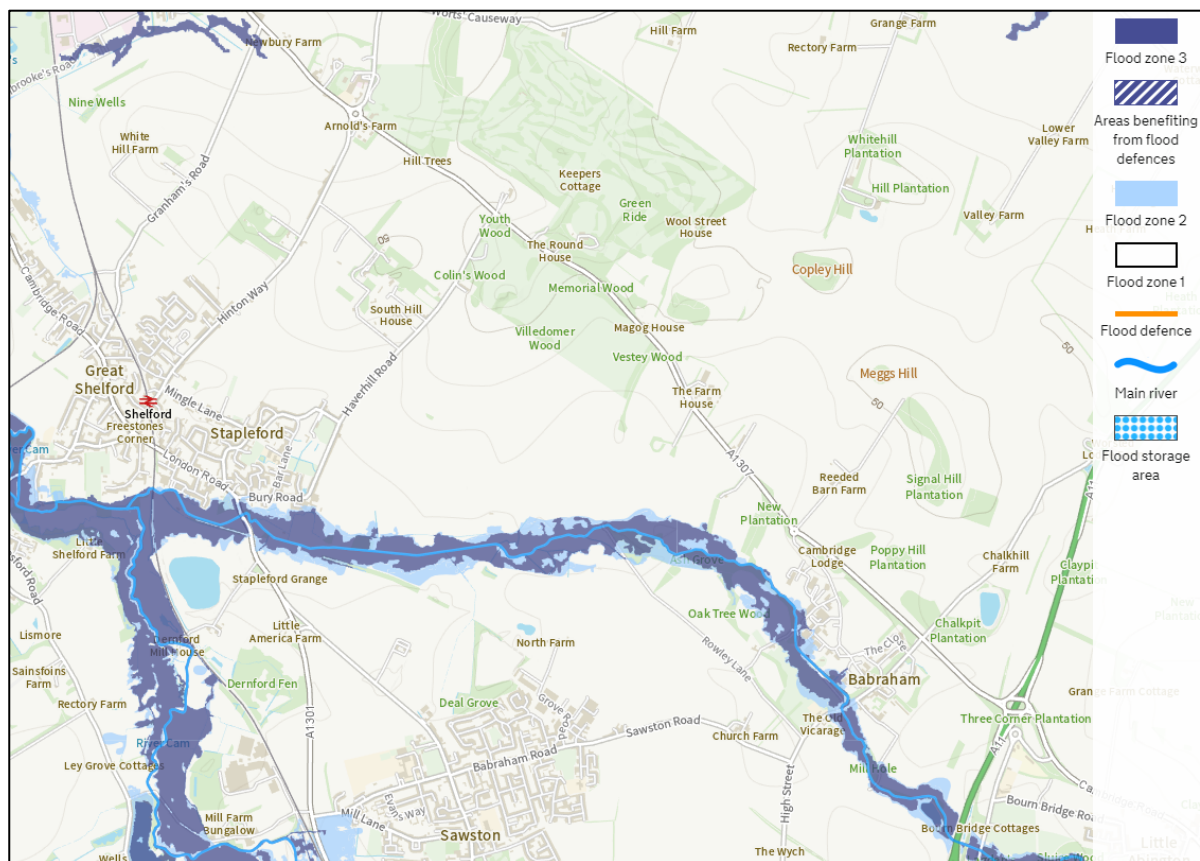


Figure 6: Flood map for planning
(Source: Environment Agency, Flood map for planning)

Sensitive Receptors

- 2.26 There are no noise important areas (NIA) located within 600m of the A11 Travel Hub or busway.
- 2.27 The main community areas located near the Proposed Development include Babraham, Sawston, Stapleford, Great Shelford, Trumpington and Cambridge. The majority of noise sensitive receptors

within these community areas comprise residential properties, although non-residential receptors include Addenbrooke's Hospital, healthcare and research facilities within the CBC, community facilities (e.g. sports and recreational grounds including Stapleford Pavilion, Cambridge City Football Club and Cantabs RUFC grounds), designated sites (i.e. Nine Wells LNR) and educational facilities. A Noise and Vibration assessment has been carried out as part of the ES which identified the representative sensitive receptors for the construction and operational phases and their distances from the scheme. These representative receptors are shown in Chapter 7 Section 7.5 of the ES. The closest representative sensitive receptors include the AstraZeneca building which would be located approximately 45 metres away from the construction work for the Proposed Development.

Local Landscape Character

- 2.28 The report, *Cambridge South East Transport – Consideration of Green Belt Issues*, April 2021 provides a local landscape character assessment of the study area. The study area is broken into Green Belt Assessment Sectors, the proposed route of the busway, and location of the proposed A11 Travel Hub, and is shown in Figure 7. It crosses two landscape character areas (LCA) identified in the report: the Granta Valley LCA and the Gog Magog Chalk Hills LCA.

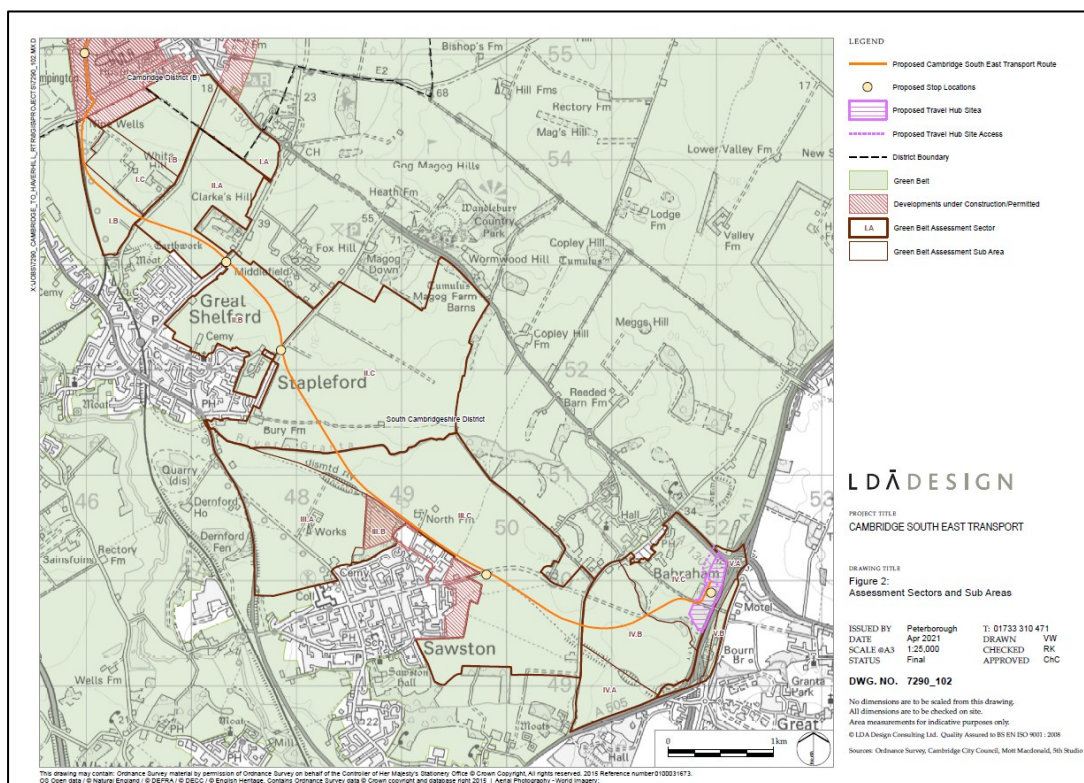


Figure 7: LDA Study Area, Proposed Route of Busway, and Location of A11 Travel Hub (Source: Map extracted from *Cambridge South East Transport – Consideration of Green Belt Issues*, LDA Design, April 2021)

Levels

- 2.29 The topography and drainage features of the busway and site of the A11 Travel Hub are detailed in Figure 8.

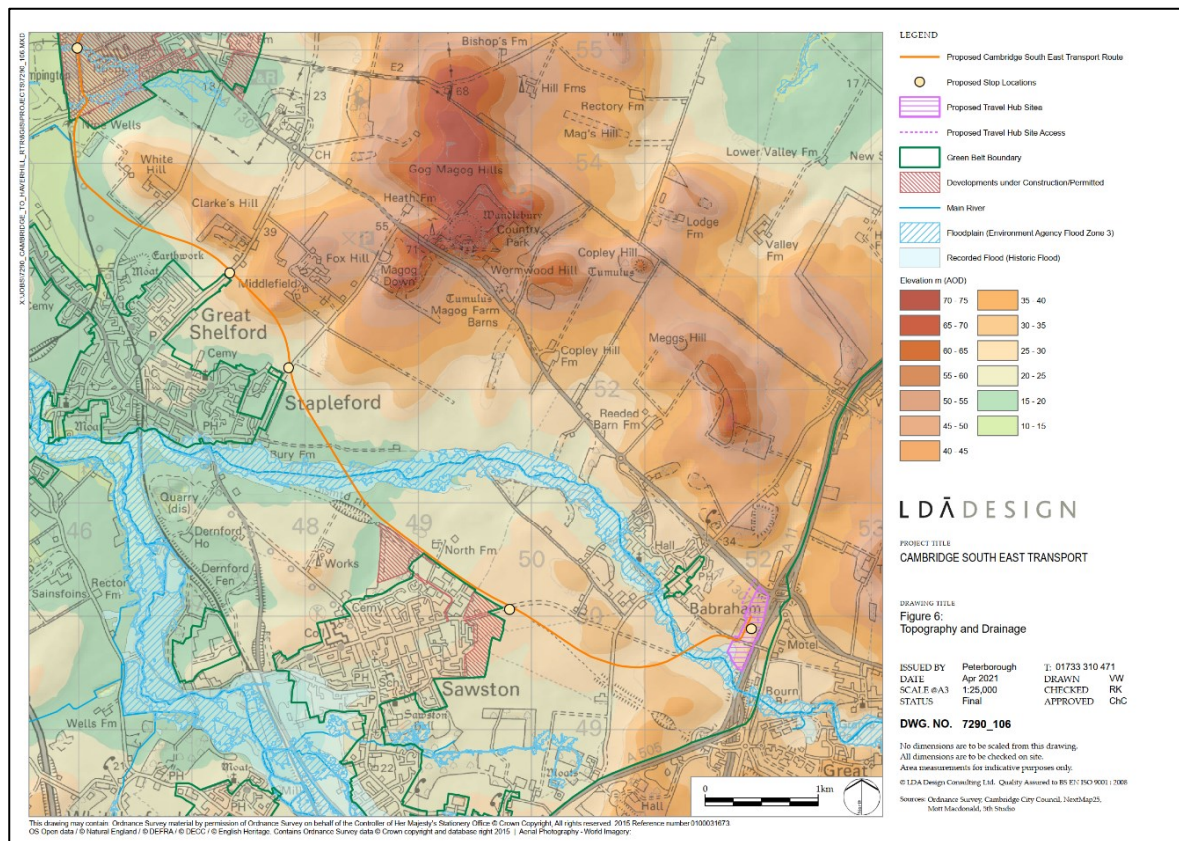


Figure 8: Landform Features in Cambridgeshire (Source: Map extracted from Cambridge South East Transport – Consideration of Green Belt Issues, LDA Design, April 2021)

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The draft Order seeks planning permission for the Proposed Development described in paragraph 1.3 above. The Proposed Development includes both the physical infrastructure of the new busway including Service Track which will provide a footpath and cycle path and a travel hub (A11 Travel Hub) with 1,250 car parking spaces. The bus services will continue beyond the busway into Cambridge City Centre and surrounding villages. The detailed description of the Proposed Development is contained in Volume 2 Chapter 2 of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement).

Guided Busway

- A guided busway including a Service Track linking the CBC to a new A11 Travel Hub comprising an active travel path and emergency and maintenance access provision;
- 3 no. new bus stops proposed at each public road crossing, namely: Hinton Way (Great Shelford Stop), Haverhill Road (Stapleford Stop) and Sawston Road (Sawston Stop). Each stop includes a pick up and drop off point for passengers, shelters for waiting passengers, 40 cycle stands, and 5 disabled parking spaces;
- Signalised junctions with priority for the busway vehicles where the busway crosses existing roads;
- Three new bridges;
- Works to highways;
- Lighting;
- CCTV;
- Hard and soft landscaping; and
- Sustainable (Urban) Drainage Systems (SuDs) features.

A11 Travel Hub

- 1,250 parking spaces;
- 10 coach bays;
- 63 blue badge holder parking bays;
- 29 bays for drop off parking;
- Motorcycle parking;
- 70 secure cycle lockers, 50 cycle stands and 80 two tier cycle racks. In the northern car park, approximately 150 bays will be covered by solar panels to power the A11 Travel Hub. It is planned that there will be car charging facilities;
- Hard and soft landscaping;
- SuDs features;
- Lighting;
- CCTV; and
- Works to highways including vehicular access onto the A1307.

Guided busway route

- 3.2 The guided busway will be between 3.65 metres and 7.3m wide to cover two tracks in both directions. The busway paving is governed by condition and should be less noise emitting than concrete. The busway would accommodate a guided system using sensor and kerb guidance which is road based. The busway will start at the southern end of FCA at its roundabout junction with the highway of Addenbrooke's Road, turning south-westwards towards the railway line known as the West Anglia mainline.
- 3.3 As the busway approaches the railway, it curves south, running parallel with the railway, and joins with the diverted cycle track between the Medipark and Great Shelford, and crossing Hobson's Brook, before turning south eastwards around the north eastern fringes of Great Shelford, crossing the highways of Granham's Road and Hinton Way.
- 3.4 The busway continues in a south-easterly direction around Stapleford before curving southwards as it crosses the highway of Haverhill Road and continuing to Sawston. As the busway approaches Sawston it crosses the River Granta and curves slightly eastwards to pass around and adjacent to the north eastern outskirts of the village before crossing the highway known as Babraham / Sawston Road. The busway in this area dissects a proposed country park, which is currently agricultural land, but has planning consent for a retirement village including associated country park under appeal reference APP/W0530/W/21/3280395. This planning permission has not yet been implemented.
- 3.5 Continuing in a south-easterly direction, the busway crosses the highway of High Street south of Babraham before curving eastwards, and slightly to the north, crossing the River Granta and on towards the new A11 Travel Hub. The A11 Travel Hub comprises the southern-most extent of the physical infrastructure of the Proposed Development and is located on a plot of land adjacent to the A11 and A1307, at the Fourwentways junction.
- 3.6 The Service Track will generally be made up of the following components (from the edge of the busway working away from the kerb):
- 2m wide grass verges separating the busway from the Service Track;
 - 3 metre side hard surfaced path (increasing to 3.5 and 4 metres in certain locations);
 - 2.5 metre wide grassed corridor for emergency refuge for busway passengers (if required) and for equestrians;
 - Solar studs will be installed along the length of the Service Track to increase night-time safety and provide a natural line of vision for future busway vehicles;
 - Noise barriers that are approximately 70 meters long and 2 metres high at Great Shelford. Refer to the ES Chapter 7 (Noise and Vibration) (CSET-10-02-00) for further details.
- 3.7 The implementation of the busway will involve:
- The roundabout at the southern end of FCA will be enlarged and reconfigured to include a northbound lane passing through the centre of the roundabout with partial signal control. The junction with the existing bus guideway will be modified to deal with the expected vehicle movements and improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

- A route along FCA down to the junction with Dame Mary Archer Way with changes to a footway on the eastern side of FCA and a segregated pedestrian/cycleway route on the western side of FCA. There will be a stop for passengers to alight to gain access to Cambridge South Station or CBC.
- A route from the Dame Mary Archer Way/FCA roundabout leaving CBC southwards, parallel to the railway line, towards Granham's Road. Along this section there will be access tracks to enable Network Rail to gain access to the railway corridor and for the landowner to maintain access to their land. There will also be a realignment of part of the DNA Cycle Path so it is joined to the Service Track running along the route. This Service Track would revert back to the DNA Cycle Path and join FCA on the western side.
- As the busway approaches the railway it curves south, running parallel with the railway, and joins with the diverted cycle track between the Medipark and Great Shelford, and crossing Hobson's Brook, before turning south eastwards around the north eastern fringes of Great Shelford, crossing the highways of Granham's Road and Hinton Way.
- The busway continues in a south-easterly direction around Stapleford before curving southwards as it crosses the highway of Haverhill Road and continuing on to Sawston. As the busway approaches Sawston it crosses the River Granta and curves slightly eastwards to pass around and adjacent to the north eastern outskirts of the village before crossing the highway known as Babraham / Sawston Road.
- Continuing in a south-easterly direction, the busway crosses the highway of High Street south of Babraham before curving eastwards, and slightly to the north, crossing the River Granta and on towards the new A11 Travel Hub. The A11 Travel Hub comprises the southern-most extent of the physical infrastructure of the Proposed Development and is located on a plot of land adjacent to the A11 and A1307, at the Fourwentways junction.

Guided Busway Landscaping

- 3.8 The section of the busway within the CBC starts at the roundabout between Robinson Way and FCA and runs down the length of FCA. The verge separating the busway from the northbound and southbound carriageways will be 3.3-3.8 metres wide. It will be planted with amenity grassland with fastigiated trees. The high-level landscape design for this area is shown on the deemed planning drawings (CSET-12-DP4A-00 to CSET-12-DP4C-00 Drawing no. 5212868 ATK GEN WHL_AL DR ZL 000001 Sheet 1 vP02.9)
- 3.9 Beyond the CBC, landscaping of the busway would maintain the existing openness of the landscape by using tree-lined hedgerows to screen the busway, but not to screen vehicles, as that would require woodland belts that would close existing long views over the landscape. Around the stops, trees and hedgerows are proposed to screen the car and cycle parking and to tie the stops into the pattern of hedgerows in the surrounding farmed landscape and the trees and woodland-edge planting found around the outskirts of the villages. Similarly, the woodland and tree planting at the River Granta crossings will tie the crossing approaches into the tree-lined river corridor. The proposed high level landscaping designs for the busway are shown on the deemed planning drawings submitted with this application. The proposed soft landscaping will consist mainly of native species, appropriate to the local landscape character and growing conditions.

A11 Travel Hub

- 3.10 The A11 Travel Hub plan including high-level landscaping is shown on drawing no. 5212868-ATK-GEN-WHL_AL-DR-ZL-000015 vP02.8. The A11 Travel Hub is split into three main sections. To the north is a car parking/coach parking area. Towards the centre of the site is a new building providing a waiting area, welfare facilities and shelter for passengers, and additional car parking spaces. To the south of the site is an additional car parking area and ecology ponds. A new access onto the A1307, and associated roundabout, are proposed to the north of the A11 Travel Hub site. The layout of the A11 Travel Hub is intended to permit future expansion; however, any future expansion falls outside the scope of this Order. More detail of the A11 Travel Hub layout can be found in the Design and Access Statement (CSET-16-00-00).

Photovoltaics

- 3.11 Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels will be installed over the car parking area on the northern part of the A11 Travel Hub site. The PV panels will be on roofs over parking areas, approximately 5 metres above ground level. The extent of the car parking spaces with PV panels is shown on the plan for the A11 Travel Hub (CSET-12-DP4A-00 to CSET-12-DP4C-00 Drawing no. 5212868-ATK-GEN-WHL_AL-DR-ZL-000015 vP02.8) and further details are contained in the Design and Access Statement (CSET-16-00-00-Design and Access Statement).

A11 Travel Hub Landscaping

- 3.12 Within the A11 Travel Hub trees will be planted around the car parking spaces and there will be wildflower meadow grass planted in most grassed areas. In the central area, where passengers will get on and off the busway, there will be hard landscaping and amenity grass with trees. Trees and hedgerows will line the footpaths that take passengers from the car park areas to the central area.
- 3.13 An increased buffer between existing woodland will be planted to the east of the A11 Travel Hub, in an area between the A11 Travel Hub and the A11. Additional woodland will be planted in areas to the west of the A11 Travel Hub to provide screening.
- 3.14 Hedgerow with trees will be planted on the north side of the access road from the A1307 to the A11 Travel Hub to screen views in the long term from Babraham village.
- 3.15 Towards the River Granta, species rich grassland will be recreated in the flood plain and around the proposed detention basin and ecology ponds.

Drainage

- 3.16 The existing drainage features along FCA will need to be locally altered due to changes to the busway layout although the existing swales will be retained. The drainage from FCA will then discharge into the existing pond west of the roundabout at the junction of Addenbrooke's Road, Francis Crick Avenue and Dame Mary Archer Way. This existing pond is where drainage currently discharges to, and this will be controlled to the same rates as currently used.
- 3.17 Drainage features along the busway will include discharge to surface water bodies, detention basins, filter drains, conveyance swales and surface water pipes.

- 3.18 Surface water from the A11 Travel Hub will be collected through permeable paving, conveyance swales and filter drains, into surface water pipes which will discharge into detention basins before running into the River Granta.
- 3.19 There will be two detention basins in the central area of the A11 Travel Hub and one larger basin on the southern edge of the parking areas. The outflow from the southern basin will be at rates controlled to replicate Greenfield runoff rates.

Lighting

- 3.20 Street lighting will be installed along FCA and around the roundabout at the junction of Addenbrooke's Road, FCA and Dame Mary Archer Way. No street lighting is proposed south of the roundabout on FCA. No lighting is proposed along the route of the busway apart from near the three crossings. Solar studs will be installed along the Service Track.
- 3.21 Lighting of the A11 Travel Hub will be provided by 6 metre high lighting columns. There is no lighting proposed outside of the footprint of the car parking areas except along the access road from the A1307, and on the new roundabout on the A1307. The busway and A11 Travel Hub will also include CCTV.

Construction compounds

- 3.22 During the construction phase, a number of construction compounds will be needed along the route and at the A11 Travel Hub site. The compounds are expected to include offices and welfare facilities, parking for site staff and plant, and storage of materials, all within secure fenced boundaries. The compounds would be lit at night. In addition, there will be a number of materials storage areas along the public transport route.
- 3.23 Given the size of the compounds and storage areas, their visibility and the likely level of activity, it is considered that they would cause a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt, but this would be for a relatively short duration (two to four years), following which the compounds would either become permanent stops along the route or be reinstated to agricultural use. Given that NPPF paragraph 142 states that one of the essential characteristics of Green Belt is permanence, it is considered that greater emphasis should be given to longer term considerations and that consequently any temporary reduction in openness during the construction phase is consistent with preserving the openness of the Green Belt in the longer term for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 155.
- 3.24 Since construction compounds, materials storage areas and construction activities will be temporary and are a relatively common occurrence in rural areas, it is considered that they will not give rise to any conflict with Green Belt purposes. The LDA reports therefore do not consider

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section considers the relevant national, regional and local planning policies and material considerations that are considered specifically relevant to the application.
- 4.2 The section considers National Planning Policy Framework and guidance before reviewing the Development Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.3 The NPPF was published in 2012, and the latest update was published in December 2024 (NPPF24). The following sections are the most relevant to the determination of this proposal:
- Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development
 - Chapter 4: Decision-making
 - Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
 - Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport
 - Chapter 11: Making effective use of land
 - Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places
 - Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land
 - Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 4.4 There are several paragraphs and chapters within the NPPF which are of direct relevance and will provide the key basis at national level for determining the suitability of the Proposed Development. The key parts of the NPPF, having regard to the principles of the Proposed Development, are discussed within section 5 of this report.
- 4.5 Paragraph 10 sets out that, at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF also sets out within Paragraph 8 that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development, namely: economic, social and environmental. The definitions of the three objectives are set out as follows:
- a) **Economic** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) **Social** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- c) **Environmental** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.6 The NPPF is clear that the above objectives are interdependent, and development should pursue them in mutually supportive ways to ensure that development achieves net gains across each one.
- 4.7 Paragraph 11 states that: *'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.'* It states for decision taking this means:
- c) *"Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
 - d) *Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - i. *The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination".*
- 4.8 In Chapter 4, Paragraph 39 states that *"local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible".*
- 4.9 Chapter 9 of the NPPF sets out detailed guidance in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport. Paragraph 109 states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, engaging with communities so that impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed, opportunities from proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised, opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued, environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and other transport considerations are integral to the design and contribute to making high quality places.
- 4.10 Paragraph 110 states that *"the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health."*
- 4.11 Paragraph 111 states that planning policies should be *"prepared with active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned."*

- 4.12 In Chapter 13, Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that *"inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances"*. When considering the acceptability of the principle of development within the Green Belt, the key policy criteria is set out within paragraph 154 of the NPPF which states the following:

'Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are: ...

h) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location...'

- 4.13 In Chapter 14, Paragraph 181 states that *"when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:*

- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;*
- b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;*
- c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;*
- d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and*
- e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan."*

- 4.14 New paragraph 182 confirms that applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. These should provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible, through facilitating improvements in water quality and biodiversity, as well as benefits for amenity.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- 4.15 In addition, the NPPG, which is a web-based resource bringing together all planning guidance into one place, is a relevant consideration. This identifies matters that may need to be taken into account when assessing the impact of proposals on Green Belt, including:

- the fact that openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;

- consideration of the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and
- awareness of the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.

The Development Plan

- 4.16 The Proposed Development is located within the administrative areas of South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City. As such, this is a cross-border application and the adopted and emerging Development Plan of both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council apply. In addition, relevant policies within the Cambridgeshire County Council Adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plans are also of relevance.
- 4.17 It is important to note that with this development being submitted under the TWAO, unlike a planning application made pursuant to the TCPA 1990, it is not required to be in accordance with the development plan. However as provided for in paragraph 1.28 of the TWA Procedures Guidance, *"in line with the plan led system for determining planning applications, projects that conflict with relevant policies in the development plan are unlikely to be authorised, unless material considerations indicate otherwise"*. Therefore, an assessment of the proposals in relation to the development plan, and in particular an assessment in Green Belt terms, is an important material consideration.

South Cambridgeshire District

- 4.18 The Development Plan for South Cambridgeshire District Council includes the following relevant documents:
- The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan September 2018 (SCLP 2018);
 - SCLP 2018 Adopted Policies Map September 2018
 - Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan February 2008;
 - Cambridge East Area Action Plan 2008;
 - North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (emerging);
 - North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009);
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan July 2021.
- 4.19 The policies considered most relevant to this application within the SCLP 2018 are also listed below:
- Policy S/2: Objectives of the Local Plan
 - Policy S/3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy S/4: Cambridge Green Belt
 - Policy S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
 - Policy S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031
 - Policy S/7: Development Frameworks
 - Policy S/12: Phasing, Delivery and Monitoring
 - Policy CC/1: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
 - Policy CC/3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
 - Policy CC/4: Water Efficiency
 - Policy CC/6: Construction Methods
 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality

- Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy CC/9: Managing Flood Risk
- Policy HQ/1: Design Principles
- Policy HQ/2: Public Art and New Development
- Policy NH/2: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
- Policy NH/3: Protecting Agricultural Land
- Policy NH/4: Biodiversity
- Policy NH/5: Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
- Policy NH/8: Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt
- Policy NH/14: Heritage Assets
- Policy SC/2: Health Impact Assessment
- Policy SC/9: Lighting Proposals
- Policy SC/10: Noise Pollution
- Policy SC/11: Contaminated Land
- Policy SC/12: Air Quality
- Policy SC/14: Odour and Other Fugitive Emissions to Air
- Policy TI/2: Planning for Sustainable Travel
- Policy TI/3: Parking Provision
- Policy TI/7: Lord's Bridge Radio Telescope

Cambridge City

4.20 The Development Plan for Cambridge City includes the following relevant documents:

- Cambridge Local Plan October 2018 (CLP 2018);
- The Adopted Policies Map October 2018;
- Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan February 2008;
- Cambridge East Area Action Plan 2008;
- North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (emerging);
- North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009);
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan July 2021.

4.21 In addition to the above relevant policies from the SCLP 2018, the policies considered most relevant to this application within the CLP 2018 are listed below:

- Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy 2 on Spatial Strategy for the location of employment development
- Policy 3 on Spatial strategy for the location of residential development
- Policy 4: The Cambridge Green Belt
- Policy 5: Strategic transport and infrastructure
- Policy 8: Setting of the city
- Policy 17: Cambridge Biomedical Campus (including Addenbrooke's Hospital) Area of Major Change
- Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
- Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
- Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
- Policy 32: Flood risk
- Policy 33: Contaminated Land
- Policy 34: Light pollution control
- Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration
- Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
- Policy 39: Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory, Lord's Bridge

- Policy 55: Responding to context
- Policy 56: Creating successful places
- Policy 57: Designing new buildings
- Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
- Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
- Policy 62: Local heritage assets
- Policy 65: Visual pollution
- Policy 69: Protection of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance
- Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
- Policy 71: Trees
- Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
- Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
- Policy 82: Parking management
- Policy 85 on Infrastructure Delivery

Emerging Local Plan

- 4.22 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are in the process of preparing a new Greater Cambridge Local Plan which is at relatively early stage of its preparation (Emerging Local Plan). A 'First Conversation' consultation (Issues and Option stage) inviting responses/comments on big themes such as housing, employment and infrastructure was held in January and February 2020. Initial evidence-based findings and development strategy options assessments were published in November 2020. On 1 November 2021, a First Proposals consultation was launched setting out the preferred approach to the level of growth that should be planned for, and where it should be planned.
- 4.23 In January 2023, the GCSPS produced a Development Strategy Update (January 2023) as part of the Regulation 18 Preferred Option stage of the Emerging Local Plan. The Strategy Update paper provided an update on the number of jobs and housing required for Greater Cambridge over the plan period arising from updated employment and demographic data. The Strategy Update paper identified an additional 66,600 jobs over the plan period compared to 58,500 and 51,723 new homes over the same period compared to 44,400 homes as originally forecast. This demonstrates that the council had underestimated the amount of employment and housing growth required for Greater Cambridge.
- 4.24 In March 2024, the GCSP published an addendum to the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS made no commitments in relation to when work on the Emerging Local Plan will start again until the government has published new regulations and guidance for the new plan-making system. However, the LDS makes clear that an indicative timetable for a local plan under the new system, based on current understanding, is to start the formal 30-month process of preparing a Local Plan by autumn/winter 2025.
- 4.25 Recently, the emerging GCLP went to Council Members on the 4 and 5 November 2024. The timetable is now as follows³:

"The draft timetable for submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination is December 2026, with adoption subject to the progress of the independent examination. The local

³ <https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s137228/Greater%20Cambridge%20Plan-making%20Timetable.pdf>

planning authorities have indicated that a formal update to the Local Plan Timetable is anticipated in Spring 2025.”

- 4.26 In the meantime, therefore, whilst the draft policies have been through a consultation process, they have limited weight in planning terms.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021)

- 4.27 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP 2021) was adopted by CCC and Peterborough City Council on 28 July 2021.
- 4.28 The MWLP 2021 sets the framework for all minerals and waste developments until 2036. It also makes strategic allocations for long-term mineral and waste management development, as well as designations such as MSAs.
- 4.29 The policies considered most relevant to the Proposed Development within the MWLP 2021 are listed below because they are closest to the scheme.

- Policy 5: Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs)
(MSAs) are identified so that known locations of specific mineral resources of local and/or national importance are not needlessly sterilised by non-mineral development.
- Policy 16: Consultation Areas (CAs)
These are identified as a buffer around Mineral Allocation Areas (MAAs), Mineral Development Areas (MDAs), Waste Management Areas (WMAs), Transport Infrastructure Areas (TIAs) and Water Recycling Areas (WRAs). The Mineral and Waste Planning Authority must be consulted on all planning applications within CAs. Development within a CA will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the development will not prejudice the existing or future use of the area and not result in unacceptable amenity issues or adverse impacts to human health.

Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority (Combined Authority) Local Transport Plan 2020

- 4.30 As the Strategic Transport Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the Combined Authority published the Cambridge & Peterborough Local Transport Plan in January 2020 (LTP 2020). The overarching vision of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan is to:

“Deliver a world-class transport network for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that supports sustainable growth and opportunity for all”.

- 4.31 Figure 9 (below) shows the Combined Authority’s priority transport schemes. These have been designed to align with the major development sites across the region which are sites that transport investment will help unlock to recognise the economic potential of the region.

Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority (Combined Authority) Bus Strategy (March 2023)

- 4.32 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CA Bus Strategy’s vision is to improve bus services to deliver the goals and objectives of the Combined Authority’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan

and GCP's transformation of the public transport network. The aim of the Bus Strategy is to deliver a bus network that is convenient, attractive and easy to use.

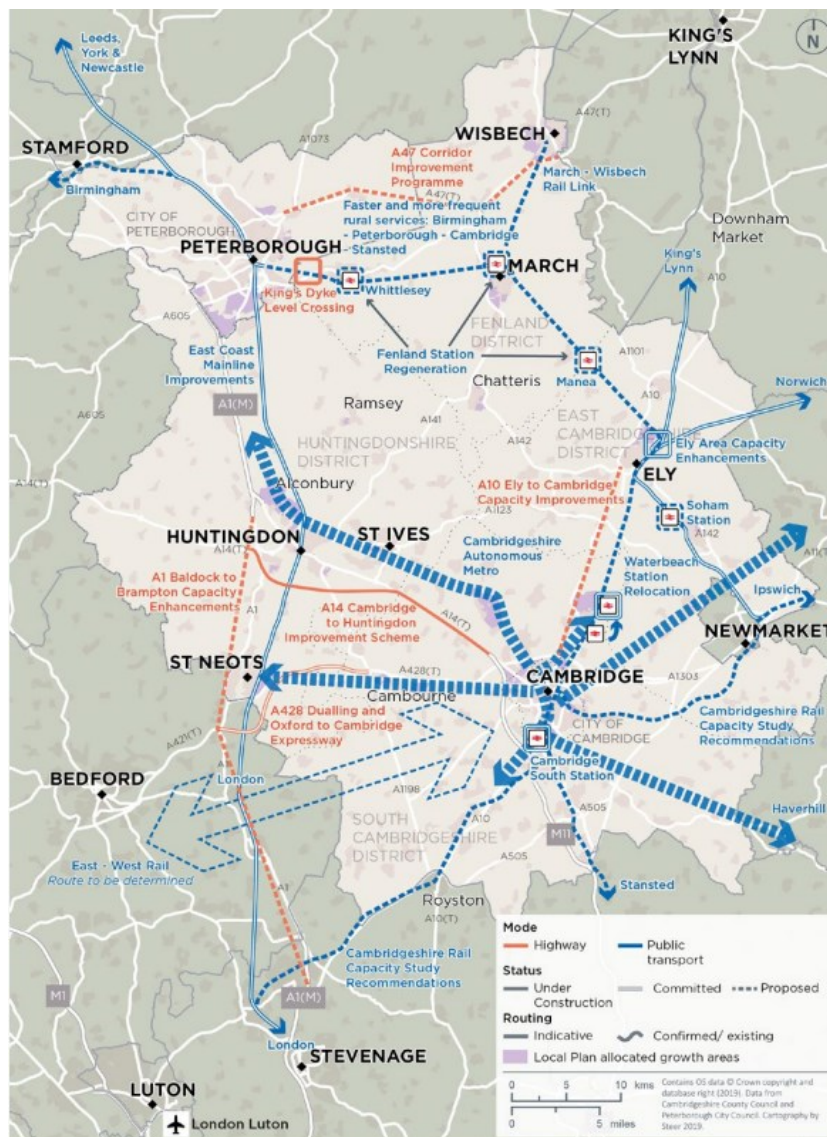


Figure 9:
Key projects for
Cambridgeshire and
Peterborough (Source:
Cambridgeshire and
Peterborough Local
Transport Plan)

- 4.33 The LTP 2020 promotes a segregated public transport corridor to the south-east of Cambridge. The Proposed Development would constitute a key part of this corridor, delivering the busway from the CBC to the A11. The Proposed Development will also deliver an extension of the route from Linton to Haverhill. The LTP 2020 states the Proposed Development will deliver a segregated public transport corridor from Granta Park to the CBC and a new Park & Ride site near the A11, which will form part of the CAM network at opening. This will be combined with additional bus priority measures along the A1307 corridor to Haverhill, and a segregated path for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- 4.34 A TWAO to construct a new station to serve the CBC was approved by the Secretary of State for Transport in December 2022 to improve connectivity in Cambridgeshire and beyond. The station is under construction and is scheduled to open in 2025.

Other Material Considerations

Cambridge Biomedical Campus

- 4.35 CBC issued an updated vision document in July 2024⁴, "Cambridge Biomedical Campus Vision 2050: Creating a life sciences quarter for Cambridge" (CBC Vision 2050), which sets out their ambitions for CBC to 2050. CBC estimate that by 2031 total employment on site will be 26,000 (up from 17,250 in 2017), with 25,100 visitors (up from 14,500 in 2017). The allocation will result in a further 9,510 jobs being created by 2041 and further visitor trips. CBC Vision 2050 identifies the Proposed Development as a critical part of their overall strategy to facilitate this growth and reduce the current assumption that at least 30% of the additional trips to CBC will be made by car.
- 4.36 Subsequent to that, a draft Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was put to Council Members on 5 November 2024⁵. The SPD sets out guidance on the implementation of policies within the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) regarding future development at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The SPD sets out planning principles to guide future development proposals at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and provides a planning framework for consideration when determining planning applications. Officers sought agreement to carry out a public consultation prior to a final version being brought back to members for consideration and adoption.

National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN)

- 4.37 The NPSNN sets out the government's policy relating to strategic road and rail infrastructure. Whilst the Proposed Development is not a strategic road project (or indeed a nationally significant infrastructure project for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008, and therefore is not directly subject to the guidance contained in this National Policy Statement), it is a linear scheme and there are some useful guidance statements in the NPSNN, such as the guidance on the role of good design in developing a scheme.
- 4.38 The NPSNN states that functionality, fitness for purpose, sustainability and cost should be key factors in considering the design of new infrastructure. A good design will also be one that sustains the improvements to operational efficiency for as many years as practicable, taking into account capital cost, economics and environmental impacts.

Guide to Transport and Works Act Procedure 2006 (Updated 2023)

- 4.39 The publication "Department for Transport- A Guide to Transport and Works Act Procedures 2006" (latest update November 2023) advises in paragraph 1.28 that *"in determining an application for a TWA order to authorise works, and any related application for deemed planning permission, the Secretary of State will have regard to, amongst other things, relevant national, regional and local planning policies... In line with the plan led system for determining planning applications, projects that conflict with relevant policies in the development plan are unlikely to be authorised, unless material considerations indicate otherwise."*

⁴ [CBC-VISION updated Sept24.pdf \(cambridge-biomedical.com\)](#)

⁵ [https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s137231/Appendix%20A%20-%20DRAFT Greater Cambridge Cambridge Biomedical Campus SPD 2024.pdf](https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s137231/Appendix%20A%20-%20DRAFT%20Greater%20Cambridge%20Biomedical%20Campus%20SPD%202024.pdf)
[https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s137230/Cambridge%20Biomedical%20Campus%20Supplementary%20Planning%20Docum ent%20SPD%20Draft%20for%20Consultation.pdf](https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s137230/Cambridge%20Biomedical%20Campus%20Supplementary%20Planning%20Document%20SPD%20Draft%20for%20Consultation.pdf)

Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener

- 4.40 In October 2021 the UK government published 'Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener' pursuant to Section 14 of the Climate Change Act 2008. The strategy sets out how the government will transition from carbon forms of power to carbon free alternatives forms of power generation for a greener economy.
- 4.41 Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) in January 2019, CCC have published a Climate Change Strategy (2021-2026) and a supporting Carbon Management Plan. The latest version of this focuses efforts on reducing GHG emissions in line with the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. One of the key priorities within this area, relevant to this assessment, is on low carbon transport and prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and supports the uptake of electric vehicles.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This section of the Planning Statement explains why this scheme will deliver significant economic, social and environmental benefits and, as such, why it represents sustainable development which, in line with the NPPF, should be approved without delay.
- 5.2 Based on the relevant planning policies and adopted guidance described in section 4, the following chapters consider the key planning issues relevant to the determination of this Order:
- Chapter 6: Other Technical Matters – an assessment of technical planning matters such as air quality, noise, ecology, heritage and water resources and compliance with policy.
 - Chapter 7: The Effect of the Proposals and Green Belt Very Special Circumstances Case.

Need for the Proposed Development

Future Growth

- 5.3 The following transport challenges associated with future growth in the Cambridge Sub-Region to 2031 were identified within the Cambridge Clean Air Zone feasibility study (2018) by Ricardo Energy & Environment on behalf of the Greater Cambridge Partnership:
- Traffic in Cambridge will increase by over 30% in the morning peak by 2031;
 - Traffic in South Cambridgeshire will increase by almost 40% in the morning peak by 2031; and
 - The time spent in congestion will more than double.
- 5.4 Greater Cambridge is expanding rapidly, which is driven by employment growth, particularly within life sciences. As detailed within the HM Government's Case for Cambridge (March 2024) and reflected in the Future Growth Technical Note (FGTN) (CSET-21-06-00-Future Growth Technical Note), employment growth within the Greater Cambridge Area (Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire) has been substantially greater than housing delivery year on year since 2012, and there is additional evidence that this dated back from the 1990s. It has also been clear that in the past, the number of jobs being created within the Greater Cambridge Area has been significantly underestimated and the international importance of Cambridge, particularly for life-sciences has resulted in employment growth being substantially above predicted levels within adopted local plans.
- 5.5 As set out within the SDR (CSET-21-01-00-Strategic Dimension Refresh) and FGTN (CSET-21-06-00 Future Growth Technical Note), this has in turn resulted in very high house prices to earnings ratios, with staff having to commute further between where they live and where they work. There has been a strong trend of increased commuting from East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and West Suffolk into Cambridge.
- 5.6 Substantial employment and housing growth is also planned as part of the Greater Cambridge Emerging Local Plan, which will increase congestion in and around Cambridge. The growth includes, in addition to the housing and employment sites that are allocated in the adopted 2018 Local Plans and sites which already have permission, 19 new sites which may be allocated to meet the area's housing and employment needs up to 2041 (Greater Cambridgeshire Planning, 2021).

- 5.7 Under the Emerging Local Plan, as originally drafted and consulted on ('First Proposals'), draft policy S/JH (New Jobs and Homes) stated that 58,500 new jobs and 44,400 new homes would be required to meet the objectively assessed need for development within the plan period (2020 to 2041), as required by paragraph 11 of the NPPF. The growth strategy was also informed by the need to support the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of new homes and to support economic growth and productivity, particularly to continue to strengthen the Greater Cambridge economy, which is of national importance for new jobs and homes.
- 5.8 This is supported by the following key points from the Future Growth Technical Note (FGTN) (CSET-21-06-00-Future Growth Technical Note), which clearly supports the notion of higher growth trends in the future:
- The most recent Emerging Local Plan is proposing provision of 51,723 dwellings from 2020 up to 2041. Using an average household size of 2.44, this would result in an increase in population within Greater Cambridge of 126,204. This is substantially in excess of the population increase predicted within the adopted Local Plans.
 - 66,600 new jobs are proposed as part of the Emerging Local Plan between 2021 and 2041, which again provides a substantial increase in jobs above the existing commitment within the adopted local plan.
 - Some 32,259 jobs were created in the Greater Cambridge Area between 2016 and 2022.
 - Using the Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update - Employment Land, Economic Development and Relationship with Housing Report produced by Icen Projects Ltd on behalf of the Cambridge Shared Planning Service in 2023, the number of jobs forecast to 2041 is set to increase to 280,000+. Therefore, even accounting for the higher housing growth, the 126,204 population increase as a result of nearly 52,000 dwellings planned over the same period, would be below employment growth.
 - Life sciences have been expanding at a very quick rate. CBC is predicted to accommodate 30% of life sciences growth within the short term. A 'Greater Cambridge Growth Sectors Study: Life science and ICT locational, land and accommodation needs' by Icen Projects Limited (on behalf of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning) (September 2024), identifies the locational and accommodation demands of this sector.⁶ One of the report's findings is the need for clusters and access to good public transport.
 - The allocation to expand CBC within the Emerging Local Plan is consistent with the CBC Vision 2050 summarised in the previous section.
- 5.9 The Transport Assessment (CSET-19-00-00-Transport Assessment) identifies particularly acute pressures on transport infrastructure to the south-east of Cambridge. For example, of the five 'inner' bus-based Park & Ride sites that serve Cambridge, figures show that weekday demand and occupancy is highest at Trumpington Park & Ride and Babraham Road Park & Ride, which are the two sites closest to the proposed A11 Travel Hub.

⁶ <https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2024-09/EBGCLPGSSep24v1Sep24.pdf>

- 5.10 Outside of Cambridgeshire, it is likely that trips to and from the Proposed Development from the settlements of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill have been significantly underestimated by the regional assumptions within the CSRM2 model, which is the Cambridge Sub Regional Transport Model used for the Cambridge and South Cambridge Local Plans. The two settlements combined have an allocation for over 19,000 new houses within the adopted/emerging West Suffolk Local Plan. We consider patronage from both settlements to the Proposed Development is likely to be high as the park and ride adjacent to the A11 is likely to provide an attractive option for commuting to CBC.
- 5.11 With all the land around Cambridge being designated as Green Belt, there is a fair possibility of a new settlement being delivered in areas outside of the Green Belt to the south-east of Cambridge, in proximity to the A11 Travel Hub.
- 5.12 Based on past trends, there is a strong case to make that future growth will be substantially higher than the predicted level of growth within emerging local plans. This is backed up from research from leading groups including CBC, CPIER, Cambridge Ahead, Bidwells and Knight Frank.
- 5.13 As set out above, the level of expected future growth in terms of population and employment for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire provide evidence that existing transport systems do not have the resilience to cope with forecast growth across South-East and Central Cambridgeshire. Without further action, existing public transport deficits will lead to further congestion issues resulting in delays to travel time, road safety concerns and increased carbon emissions. Therefore, there is need for a step change in providing an adequate and sustainable public transport system to meet current and future demand and continue to make the Greater Cambridge area an attractive place to work and live.
- 5.14 To tackle these challenges, GCP identified five scheme specific objectives, namely:

Objective 1 - Improve connectivity to employment sites in South East Cambridge and central Cambridge

1. Provide improved access to the Granta Park, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge Biomedical Campus and a number of other employment sites in South East Cambridge.
2. Increase modal options for commuters travelling to and from employment sites in South East Cambridge and central Cambridge by delivering a high quality public transport network and improved active travel routes for users.

Objective 2 - Support the continued growth of Cambridge and South Cambridge's economy

3. Deliver journey time savings for commuters travelling by public transport to job opportunities in South East Cambridge and central Cambridge.
4. Improve journey time reliability for users of the A1307 corridor.
5. Provide the transport infrastructure necessary to sustain economic growth.

Objective 3 - Improve road safety for all users of the A1307 corridor

6. Reduce the number of accidents at identified accident clusters along the corridor.
7. Reduce the number of speed related incidents along the corridor.
8. Improve the safety of crossing movements for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians.

Objective 4 - Relieve congestion and improve air quality in South East Cambridge

9. Encourage use of sustainable transport modes for journeys through South East Cambridge and into central Cambridge.
10. Enhance quality of life by relieving congestion and improving air quality in South East Cambridge.
11. Relieve pressure at network pinch points.

Objective 5 - Improve active travel infrastructure and public transport provision in South East Cambridge

12. Deliver a high quality public transport offer between Cambridge and Haverhill.
 13. Increase frequency of public transport services during peak periods.
 14. Reduce severance for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians.
 15. Increase uptake of sustainable transport modes for commuter journeys.
- 5.15 Further growth beyond that originally identified in the Emerging Local Plan is now being mooted, with the recent government announcements referred to in the Future Growth Paper for Cambridge to 2050.

Compliance with Planning Policy

- 5.16 The principle of the Proposed Development is supported politically at national and local level. The scheme forms part of a wider network of similar public transport projects being promoted by the GCP and other transport providers in the area, including Cambridge South Station and the guided bus network.
- 5.17 Section 9 of the NPPF sets out detailed guidance in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport in terms of policy development and consideration of development proposals. Paragraph 109 explains that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals, so that:
- a) *The potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
 - b) *Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage, are realised - for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
 - c) *Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
 - d) *The environmental impact of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account - including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and for net environmental gains; and*
 - e) *Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design or schemes and contribute to making high quality places.*
- 5.18 Paragraph 110 states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth to promoting the objectives of sustainable modes of transport. It goes on to state that by doing this it can help to reduce congestion and emissions, which would improve air quality and public health. In terms of considering development proposals, paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds following mitigation if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety taking account of future realistic scenarios.

- 5.19 In this context, paragraph 117 states that application for development proposals should give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements to facilitate access to and encourage the use of public transport; address needs for people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all transport modes; create places that are safe, secure and attractive and respond to local character and design standards; allow provision for efficient delivery of goods, and access by services and emergency vehicles; and designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles, in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- 5.20 Policies 80 and 81 of the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan (2018) and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan (2018) set out support for the promotion for walking and cycling, infrastructure improvements and promotion of sustainable transport. This is cross referenced to the objectives of the adopted high level Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2014).
- 5.21 The Proposed Development will make a valuable contribution to achieving objectives and visions set out within national and local planning policies as set out in section 4 of this statement.

Supporting the short- and long-term growth of CBC

- 5.22 The Proposed Development will provide sustainable connections to CBC - including Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth Hospital - and Cambridge City Centre which will complement the growth strategy of this area. This in turn will support future development at CBC, which is expanding rapidly, has an allocation within the Emerging Local Plan and could grow beyond this. The busway will help relieve congestion in and around the campus by providing another sustainable transport option alongside Cambridge South Station and the existing guided busway.
- 5.23 The Emerging Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document states that the councils are committed to doubling the economic output of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the next 25 years. Whilst this document only has very limited weight in planning terms, it does set out the direction of policy for the GCSPS. Therefore, the established employment hotspots of CBC, Babraham Research Campus and Granta Park are expected to grow to meet this objective. The Proposed Development will help to reduce congestion to these sites during peak times and improve capacity on the highway network.

Supporting longer term housing growth

- 5.24 The Proposed Development will serve existing residents along the corridor to commute into and out of Cambridge, easing their existing journeys. The Emerging Local Plan identifies that 51,723 new homes are needed. The Proposed Development will therefore serve projected housing need, particularly where this growth is likely to be targeted, in the settlements of Linton and Sawston for example. Outside of Cambridgeshire, it is likely that trips to and from Greater Cambridge, from the settlements of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill will increase significantly. The two settlements combined have an allocation for over 9,000 new houses within the adopted/emerging West Suffolk Local Plan. Patronage from both settlements to the Proposed Development is likely to be high.

Improving journey times in the A1307/A11 corridor

- 5.25 Overall, the Proposed Development will noticeably increase the number of public transport boarders in the corridor with the boarding demand anticipating increasing by 170% (or 1.7million passengers per year by 2041) due to the scheme when compared to the 2041 Do Minimum scenario without the scheme in place (CSET-19-00-00-Transport Assessment). The daily figures from the CSRM2 model forecasts include 2,900 guided bus and 1,400 daily Park and Ride users, giving a total of 4,400 users per typical weekday. This results in approximately 1.1 million annual passengers during weekdays, which then needs to be uplifted to include weekend trips.
- 5.26 Furthermore, modelling of public transport journey times between the A11/A1307 roundabout to CBC using current bus services, versus the Proposed Development, indicate total journey time saving in the AM peak hour for the busway leg of a trip, compared to a Do Minimum scenario, is over 20% at approximately 12 minutes, whilst in the PM peak hour it is nearly 30%, at approximately 16 minutes (Transport Assessment) (CSET-19-00-00-Transport Assessment).
- 5.27 This level of demand is accommodated by the 6 proposed services per hour that will route directly between the A11 Travel Hub and the CBC. This in turn will result in a significantly reduced number of car trips between the A11/A1307 junction westbound into the city in the morning peak. It will have a similar benefit in the PM peak. As confirmed in Section 8 of the Transport Assessment (CSET-19-00-00-Transport Assessment), the Proposed Development is not expected to have any severe impact on the local highway network and would in some instances improve operation of the junctions closest to the proposed A11 Travel Hub.
- 5.28 The Proposed Development aims to help facilitate fast, frequent, and reliable journeys by bus between Cambridge and Haverhill in order to accommodate trips from new and existing developments, as well as to encourage modal shift for those already travelling along the A1307 and other routes by private car. The modal shift from private car to sustainable transport modes is essential in ensuring Cambridge and this part of South Cambridgeshire continues to attract world class industries and support housing growth. The proposals will lead to reduced private car congestion entering Cambridge from the east along the A1307 corridor from Haverhill and beyond. This will lead to economic benefits through providing better connections between where people live in villages and where they work as well as improving the environment.
- 5.29 In summary, the Proposed Development therefore has the potential to not only contribute towards unlocking the identified housing and employment growth strategy for the area but also futureproof against future growth in the long term. Without the Proposed Development, the surrounding settlements such as Haverhill, Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds could struggle to access CBC, which would add pressure to alternative roads.
- 5.30 The SDR (CSET-21-01-00--Strategic Dimension Refresh) makes a clear case for the Proposed Development which would form part of a public transport system to manage travel in and around Cambridge. The Proposed Development will therefore specifically make a significant contribution towards relieving congestion along the A1307 corridor providing a fast, reliable, and high-quality mode of sustainable transport option which would also achieve the strategy transport objective of the LTP 2020. It would also be fully consistent with Section 9 of the NPPF, CLP 2018 policies 1, 17, 18, 80 and 81 and SCLP 2018 policies S/2, E/2, S/3 and TI/2.

Walking and Cycling

- 5.31 The Proposed Development includes a cycling and walking facility along the busway and improvements to existing transport routes. Cambridge has a well-established and growing cycling culture; therefore, it is considered that cyclists are a major target user group when implementing the scheme. Pedestrians should also be encouraged to walk to bus stops to further reduce environmental impacts.
- 5.32 There are networks of footpaths and bridleways, within Little and Great Abington, Sawston and Great Shelford that are likely to promote walking to the three Proposed Development bus stops. A Service Track will run alongside the busway providing access along its entire length and will also be used to for any maintenance activities including emergency refuge for passengers and staff. The Linton Greenway (the Greenway), which forms another part of the GCP's sustainable travel proposals, will provide this. Although this project falls outside the scope of this TWAO, the two are interlinked. The Greenway is an off-road route for cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrian users, connecting Linton with CBC. The Greenway forms part of the Phase 1 works and most of the work has already been completed including the junction improvements on the A1307 with Linton High Street. The Proposed Development will complement the Greenway by delivering a new A11 Travel Hub, which will give the ability to cycle along the Service Track adjoining the busway (as well as use public transport) to gain access to the CBC and Cambridge City Centre. The new route will enable easier sustainable travel and encourage the walking and cycling activity in the area.
- 5.33 Up to 200 cycle parking spaces (a combination of lockers, standards and two-tier racks) will be provided with the A11 Travel Hub and a further 40 spaces will be provided at each of the three bus stops. One of the key aims of the scheme is promote the use of sustainable modes of transport through improved public transport infrastructure and active travel facilities.
- 5.34 In terms of cycle trips generated to and from the A11 Travel Hub, in the AM peak, the A11 Travel Hub would be expected to generate around 68 cycle trips, and in the PM peak, the A11 Travel Hub would generate around 52 cycle trips (see Transport Assessment) (CSET-19-00-00-Transport Assessment).

Conclusions

- 5.35 The transport benefits of the Proposed Development are fully consistent with the policy objectives set out within section 9 of the NPPF and policies 80 and 81 of the CLP 2018 and policy TI/2 of the SCLP 2018 and are a strong material consideration in favour of the proposals.
- 5.36 Overall, the transport benefits of the scheme, which will significantly reduce car trips into Cambridge, result in increased modal share of public transport and cycling which is considered to have substantial weight in planning terms.

6. OTHER TECHNICAL MATTERS

6.1 This section considers the following matters:

- Landscape
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Water Resources
- Air quality
- Noise
- Ecology and BNG
- Lighting
- Contaminated Land
- Minerals and Waste

Landscape

6.2 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)”

6.3 Policy NH/2 of the SCLP 2018 focusses on Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and requires development to respect and retain or enhance local character or the local landscape and individual National Character Areas.

6.4 Policy 59: Designing Landscape and the Public Realm of the CLP2018 contains a requirement for existing features to positively contribute to the quality and character of an area and these include the trees, boundary treatments and natural habitats. Tree and plant species should be selected to enhance biodiversity.

6.5 Policy CSF/5 Countryside Enhancement Strategy of the Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan (AAP) explains that as a result of the scale of development in the Cambridge Southern Fringe, substantial mitigation measures over a wide area of countryside to the south of the built-up area is required to mitigate the impact of development.

6.6 One of these in CSF/5 2) explains:

“A Countryside Enhancement Strategy will be prepared for the area bounded by the Cambridge City boundary, Babraham Road, Haverhill Road, and the edge of the built up area of Great Shelford and Stapleford. The Strategy will comprise: f. New copses on suitable knolls, hilltops and scarp tops. g. Management and creation of chalk grassland. h. Management of existing shelter belts. i. New mixed woodland and shelter belts. j. Creation of a landscape corridor along Hobson’s Brook. Reinforcement and planting of new hedgerows. l. Roadside planting. m. New footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways creating routes through the area and linking to Wandlebury Country Park / The Magog Down.

- 6.7 This strategy is outstanding as it has not been implemented. The current landscape in the area is open fields in a slightly elevated position. The introduction of access roads and hard engineering into the landscape will have an adverse impact as assessed within the landscape chapter of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement). The assessment found that there would be residual significant temporary effects on the landscape during the construction phase, during the daytime and night-time. In relation to the scheme's operational phase, the assessment found that operational effects on the landscape would decline from year 1 to year 15, as mature mitigation planting becomes more established, but that some residual significant effects would remain in year 15 (again during both the daytime and night-time).
- 6.8 The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (CSET-10-05-00- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) in Volume 3, Appendix 2.2 provides the detail of what the landscape design entails and how it has been developed to mitigate landscape and visual effects. The aim is to:
- Minimise the impact of the Proposed Development on the landscape through sympathetic planting design
 - Where practical to maintain and enhance existing landscape character and visual amenity
 - To ensure successful establishment and continued success of each landscape element through maintenance operations
 - To ensure that landscape enhancements are managed effectively and for the benefit of amenity and visual screening
- 6.9 In respect of the area covered by Policy CSF/5 2), Nine Wells to Hinton Way (works areas 2-4 in the LEMP) (CSET-10-05-00- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan), the aim is to provide landscape and ecological enhancements not currently provided, including:
- Woodland
 - Tree planting
 - Hedgerow planting
 - Amenity grassland
 - Wildflower meadow
 - Enhanced grass margins
- 6.10 This is then replicated along the route with tree planting, hedgerows and wildflower meadows. provide landscape integration and visual screening. The new trees and hedgerows will also provide wildlife corridors, maintaining and improving the integrity of the hedgerow network and avoiding habitat fragmentation following construction in the long term. There are further opportunities for landscape mitigation to be planted to screen the A11 Travel Hub, so they have less impact on the landscape in this location.
- 6.11 All the construction activities will be carried out in accordance with a CEMP (CSET-10-08-00 -Construction Environmental Management Plan that will include mitigation measures such as the following:
- Lighting during construction will be designed to minimise light pollution at night and prevent light spill.
 - Existing trees and vegetation to be retained will be protected during construction.
 - The topsoil would be stored according to guidance to maintain its quality.

- 6.12 The design of the busway will be carried out in a manner that minimises visual intrusion and protects landscape character, this would be achieved by changing the vertical profile of the busway and sensitive planting along the busway. The proposed landscape strategy ensures that the surrounding landscape character is protected and enhanced in a way that respects the local character, as per Policies NH/2 of the SCLP 2018, Policy 59 of the CLP 2018, Policy CSF/5 2) of the AAP and paragraph 187 of the NPPF.

Heritage and Archaeology

- 6.13 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states:

“Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place”.*

- 6.14 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF explains that where development is proposed on site with heritage assets with archaeological interest, appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, field evaluation should be carried out.
- 6.15 Policy NH/14: Heritage Assets of the SCLP 2018 supports proposals when they sustain the special character and distinctiveness of villages and countryside and create high quality environments with a strong sense of place, responding to local heritage character. Decisions on development proposals must be based on a good understanding of how the proposals will affect heritage assets. In addition, Policy 61 of the CLP 2018 requires decisions on development proposals to be based on a good understanding of how the proposals will affect heritage assets.
- 6.16 The scoping exercise for the ES identified 1.5km study area and heritage assets outside of this area are not considered likely to result in likely significant effects and therefore have not been considered further in the assessment. There are known archaeological remains of regional and potentially national significance within the footprint of the proposed busway corridor. The scheme will be assessed using aerial photographic interpretation, geophysical surveys and trial trenching to better understand the buried archaeology along the busway as construction progresses. This will increase knowledge and understanding in particular of the setting around Wandlebury and the Magog Scheduled Monuments. The mitigation strategy including a heritage mitigation plan and Written Scheme of Investigation will be secured via condition. The ES acknowledges that significant effects, arising during construction, remain in the footprint of the busway, after mitigation.
- 6.17 Where above ground heritage impacts are experienced, these will be in the setting of the heritage assets. The assessment considers whether these changes within the setting of the assets impact the ability to understand the heritage value of the assets.

- 6.18 The following high value assets were identified as potentially being affected by the Proposed Development – the Grade II listed assets at Nine Wells Monument, Granhams Farm group of buildings, the Northern Stapleford group of buildings, Church Farmhouse and Babraham Hall together with the Grade II* listed Middlefield and Garden Wall and Church of St Andrew and Grade I listed Sawston Hall.
- 6.19 The ES confirms that during construction the archaeological and heritage impacts range from not significant to significant depending on the asset. No significant effects to heritage assets are predicted during the operational phase. The proposal is considered to comply with national guidance set out in the NPPF (2024) and SCDCLP (2018) Policy NH/14 and CCCLP (2018) Policy 61. The impact on archaeology during construction causes harm to a number of below ground heritage assets. This will be weighed up in the planning balance assessed later in this report.

Water Resources

- 6.20 SCLP 2018 Policy CC/4: Water Efficiency is relevant as the welfare facilities in the Travel Hub will be expected to meet the requirements of this policy given water scarcity issues.
- 6.21 Policy CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems of the SCLP 2018 requires development proposals to *'incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site'*. In addition, Policy 31 of the CLP 2018 requires development to manage surface water 'close to its source and on the surface where reasonably practicable to do so' and features for managing surface water should be 'commensurate with the design of the development in terms of size, form and materials'.
- 6.22 Policy 31 of the CLP 2018 also requires surface water management features to be multi-functional wherever possible, in the case of the A11 Travel Hub, it is proposed that the drainage ponds will act as habitats for wildlife.
- 6.23 The scheme aims to achieve 3 BREEAM Wat01 credits for the welfare facilities in the Travel Hub to address Policy CC/4. It is expected this will be secured through a planning condition.
- 6.24 A drainage strategy has been prepared for the site and accompanies this application submission.
- 6.25 The majority of the busway is located in Flood Zone 1. There is an area of Flood Zone 3 associated with Addenbrooke's Road. The busway passes through areas of Flood Zone 3 and 2 where it crosses the River Granta between Stapleford and Babraham, and where it crosses the River Granta south of Babraham. An area of the south-east of the proposed A11 Travel Hub is located in Flood Zone 3 and 2.
- 6.26 The Proposed Development crosses the flood plain of the River Granta and is within the footprint of the Source Protection Zone 2 of groundwater fed public water supplies. The scheme design that crosses the River Granta will ensure that there is no increase in flood risk arising from the construction of the bridge(s) over the river through their design and provision of flood compensation measures. There is opportunity to create water related habitat to compensate for lost flood storage in the River Granta flood plain. The Proposed Development will have SuDS drainage installed along the busway and in the A11 Travel Hub – this will ensure run-off does not contribute to flood risk whilst also ensuring runoff discharged to

infiltrate into the ground does not affect the quality of groundwater that is used for public water supplies.

- 6.27 For the above reasons, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policies CC/4 and CC/8 of the SCLP 2018 and Policy 31 of the CLP 2018.

Air Quality

- 6.28 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF advises that opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications.
- 6.29 Policies SC/12 Air Quality of the SCLP 2018 and Policy 36: Air quality, Odour and Dust of the CLP 2018 state that developments that will have unacceptable air quality standards will be refused and development that does not lead to significant adverse effects on health will be permitted.
- 6.30 SC/14: Odour and Other Fugitive Emissions to Air of the SCDC Local Plan states development that generates malodours and emissions to air will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it will not have a significant adverse effect on health; amenity of existing or proposed sensitive end users and wider environment.
- 6.31 The ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) includes a chapter on Air Quality which reports the effects associated with air pollutants during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.
- 6.32 Around 63% of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire's workforce commute by car or van resulting in congestion and associated air quality issues across many of central Cambridge's key radial routes. Vehicle exhaust and other emissions can have an impact on air quality, increasing NO₂ and PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations that can be harmful to human health if they exceed certain levels in the atmosphere as set out in air quality regulations SI 2019 No. 7417 and SI 2020 No. 1313. Public Transport (PT) schemes are considered to have lower environmental impacts because they are able to move a greater number of people per unit of pollutant emitted. This scheme will encourage fewer private vehicles entering Cambridge where there is an air quality management problem, by providing high quality public transport. A medium-term move to electric or other non-fossil fuel powered public transport vehicles will reduce NO₂ emissions.

Greenhouse Gases

- 6.33 Government policy requires all development to deliver net zero carbon at the national level, which requires changes at every level in society. The NPPF para 161 refers to the planning system supporting the transition to a low carbon future and helping to shape places in ways that contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 6.34 The Proposed Development will lead to greater use of public transport in vehicles that are likely to be electric or other zero carbon powered vehicles in the medium term. Thus, the scheme should support GCP's move to meet government policy. Landscape planting will provide a small amount of offsetting potential by carbon sequestration where belts of trees are

planted as part of the scheme. Whilst the Proposed Development is likely to lead to temporary losses in Natural Capital stock during the construction phase, landscaping elements of the scheme are proposed to reverse these temporary losses. As such, post-construction, the scheme is anticipated to generate 7.23ha of woodland, of which 2.79ha intersects the floodplain, not only having lasting impacts on air pollutant removal and climate regulation but also contributing towards flood prevention.

- 6.35 The construction of the Proposed Development involves the use of bulk materials which have embodied carbon values, as well as the transportation of these materials and then the emissions from construction plant and equipment constructing the Proposed Development. Emissions generated will lead to an increase in concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. During the construction phase, greenhouse gas emissions are anticipated due to the embodied carbon of the materials, transport of materials to site and the emission from construction plant. The emissions, however, are very low and unlikely to have a material impact on the UK government reaching their targets.
- 6.36 Mitigation to reduce emissions further has been taken on board during construction and operation in light of the climate emergency and commitments to net zero. Design refinements, for example, reducing the width of the two bridges across the River Granta floodplain results in reduced embodied carbon.

Noise

- 6.37 Paragraph 198 NPPF says that development should mitigate and reduce to minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.
- 6.38 During construction, significant adverse effects are predicted to arise at some receptors. The mitigation measures to reduce the impacts so the effects are not significant will only be known to work once the contractor is on Site. The scheme is located in a largely rural environment which will experience some increases in noise along the busway and adjacent to the A11 Travel Hub in operation. Noise mitigation in the form of earth bunds or acoustic barriers are included in the design to minimise noise intrusion on sensitive receptors close to the busway or A11 Travel Hub. These are not expected to be significant. However, the the new buses on the existing busway result in significant adverse effects at some properties between Cambridge Station at Hills Road, between Hills Road and Long Road, and between Long Road and Francis Crick Avenue. In addition, some residential properties and a Downing College building are predicted to experience a significant effect due to changes in road traffic on Regent Street. The ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) confirms that these changes in noise are unavoidable, as mitigation measures would be difficult to install due to the existing tight urban location of the route.

Ecology

- 6.39 Policy NH/4 Biodiversity of the SCLP 2018 outlines that development proposals with the primary objective *‘to conserve or enhance biodiversity will be permitted’*. New development must aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity through the creation or enhancement of wildlife habitats and natural landscape. Where a development may affect a protected or priority species or habitat, the extent of the potential impact must be provided as part of any planning application.

- 6.40 The third overarching objective in para 8 of the NPPF: **an environmental objective** refers to the need to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 6.41 Policy 69: Protection of Sites of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance of the CLP 2018 states that development will be permitted if a planning application does not have an adverse impact on or lead to the loss of a site of biodiversity or geodiversity importance as shown on the related Policies Map. Development that is permitted must minimise harm, secure achievable mitigation and enhance the nature conservation value of a site through habitat creation, linkage and management.
- 6.42 As detailed within the biodiversity section of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement), an assessment of both on-site and off-site impacts in biodiversity terms has been undertaken. An assessment has also been made of both temporary and permanent impacts. The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment (Volume 3 of the ES, Appendix 10.12) (CSET-10-42-00-Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment) shows that the biodiversity value of the habitats within the landscape design is improved, compared to the habitats that are being replaced, however, BNG for the rivers and streams metric has been calculated as -1.32%. It is unlikely to be possible to achieve the 20% target that GCP aspire to for rivers and streams, and in order to meet this, biodiversity credits would need to be purchased.
- 6.43 There are Habitats of Principle Importance (HPIs) along the proposed busway corridor which have the potential to be fragmented or isolated. This could cause an adverse impact on a range of protected species. There are opportunities for biodiversity net gain along the proposed busway corridor by planting ecologically valuable habitats. There are opportunities to develop wildlife corridors by prioritising linking current areas of habitat together. The immediate fields around the Nine Wells Nature Reserve are likely to be acquired by the scheme and would be planted up to increase biodiversity value around the reserve.
- 6.44 The CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) will outline mitigation methods required during construction to safeguard legally protected and notable species and will include locating equipment away from sensitive habitat and species, undertaking construction activities to avoid sensitive periods, and implementation of mammal ladders in open excavations.
- 6.45 Paragraph 192(b) of the NPPF requires policies and decisions to *'identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'*.
- 6.46 A LEMP (CSET-10-05-00- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) has been prepared and accompanies this application submission and outlines a number of measures to support and protect key species such as the below:
- Tree planting;
 - Hedgerow planting including transplanting important hedgerow;
 - Wildflower meadow creation;
 - Enhanced grass margins;
 - Ecological pond for water voles;
 - Bird boxes;
 - Kingfisher nest tunnels;

- Hibernacula; and
- Transplanting important hedgerow.

6.47 The main ecological objectives for the Proposed Development are as follows:

- To minimise, as far as is practicable, the impacts of the Proposed Development on protected and notable species identified within, and in proximity to, its area;
- To maintain and enhance habitat connectivity within, and in proximity to, its area;
- To replace or provide compensation measures for the loss of ecological features and habitats, i.e., hedgerows, trees and grassland;
- To ensure successful establishment and continued success of the ecological mitigation and its continued suitability through appropriate maintenance; and
- To enhance the overall ecological value of the Proposed Development area.

6.48 CCC will be responsible for the implementation of this LEMP (CSET-10-05-00- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan). The precise mechanism for completing the management works during operations will be determined once the construction programme is finalised and the LEMP (CSET-10-05-00-Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) is submitted to discharge the pre-commencement planning conditions. Further details on the precise mitigation and enhancement measures are set out in the LEMP (CSET-10-05-00-Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) contained in the ES Volume 3 Appendix 2.2.

6.49 As a result of the combination of the enhancement of the overall ecological value of the area and LEMP (CSET-10-05-00-Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) to provide mitigation, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with paragraph 192(b) of the NPPF, Policy NH/4 of the SCLP 2018 and Policy 69 of the CLP 2018.

Lighting

6.50 Paragraph 198(c) of NPPF states that developments should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

6.51 Policy SC/9 Lighting Proposals of the SCLP 2018 requires development proposals including external lighting to ensure they are of minimum levels for public safety, crime prevention, working and recreational purposes with spillage and glare minimised. The lighting proposals at the scheme have been carefully designed to be in line with Policy SC/9 and Policy 34: Light Pollution Control of the CLP2018 as the site will need to be lit within the evenings for safety and security.

Contaminated Land

6.52 Policy SC/11 Contaminated Land of the SCLP and CLP 2018 Policy 33 Contaminated Land refer to development being permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that there will be no adverse health impacts to future or surrounding occupiers and there will be no impact to future and surrounding occupiers from on-site and off-site gas migration.

6.53 A draft CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) has been prepared and forms part of this application. The draft CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) sets out the guideline of responsibilities regarding compliance with legislation, statutory controls, Best Practice guidance and conformance with the environmental policy requirements in relevant local plans. The CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-

Construction Environmental Management Plan) is to be developed by the Principal Contractor upon award of works.

6.54 The draft CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) forming part of this application submission includes sections on the following elements of the scheme:

- Project Description Site Location
- Project Programme
- Training and Awareness
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Internal and External Communications
- Security and Housekeeping
- Environmental Register
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Protecting Air Quality and Managing Noise
- Protecting Biodiversity
- Protecting the Historic Environment
- Landscaping and Vegetation Clearance
- Noise and Vibration
- Protecting Water Resources and Managing Flood Risk
- Managing Construction Site Waste and Materials
- Protecting Soil and Managing Contaminated Land Risks
- Preventing Pollution Storing Hazardous Materials

6.55 Once the TWAO application is approved, this CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) will be updated as part of the detailed design and construction planning works, to be secured by condition. The update will take into account all the requirements set out in the TWAO granted by the Secretary of State (including all mitigation set out in the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) and planning conditions (CSET-14-00-00-Request for Deemed Planning Permission) attached to the TWAO. The updated CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) will need to be approved by GCP/CCC and relevant local planning authority officers. The CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains valid and reflects the significant changes in equipment, scope of work, risks, organisational changes, circumstances, and arrangements for managing current activities on site.

Minerals and Waste

6.56 In places, the Site lies within Sand and Gravel and Chalk Safeguarding Areas which are safeguarded under Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) (MWLP). Policy 5 of the MWLP seeks to prevent mineral resources of local and/or national importance being needlessly sterilised. Given the nature of the proposal, the MWPA has confirmed it is content that prior extraction is not feasible. The Proposed Development includes measures in the CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan) to ensure that best use is made of any mineral extracted incidentally as part of the development. It is considered the overriding need for the Proposed Development addresses Policy 5.

- 6.57 Parts of the proposed development also fall within Consultation Areas (CA) for two safeguarded waste management facilities as shown on the Policies Map for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021 (MWLP). These sites are known as:
- South west of Addenbrooke's Hospital, between Robinson Way and Addenbrooke's Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, (the Addenbrookes clinical waste incinerator)
 - Sawston WRC (a waste water recycling centre / waste water treatment works)
- 6.58 The Addenbrookes clinical waste incinerator is located to the north of Dame Mary Archer Way, approximately 75 metres north-east of where the Proposed Development rejoins that road. The Sawston WRC is located approximately 300 metres south-west of an unnamed temporary construction area. Policy 16 of the MWLP seeks to safeguard waste management facilities. It states that development within a CA will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the development will not prejudice the existing or future use of the area, i.e. the waste management site for which the CA has been designated; and not result in unacceptable amenity issues or adverse impacts to human health for the occupiers or users of such new development, due to the ongoing or future use of the area for which the CA has been designated.
- 6.59 Given the nature of the Proposed Development, the consultation response from the MWPA is that it is content that the proposed development is unlikely to affect or be affected by its proximity to these sites.

7. THE EFFECT OF THE PROPOSALS AND GREEN BELT VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES CASE

7.1 This section is set out as follows:

- i) Policy and material considerations;
- ii) Requirement for a Green Belt location;
- iii) Preservation of openness and purposes of including land within the Green Belt;
- iv) Assessment of whether the proposals are inappropriate development in the Green Belt;

7.2 This addresses harm if the development were to be considered inappropriate, what benefits arise from the Proposed Development and if they constitute a 'very special circumstances' case.

i) Policy and Material Considerations

7.3 The Proposed Development, except for a small section of the busway in the CBC, is located within the Cambridge Green Belt. The Green Belt has a strong protection at both National and Local Level. Policy 4 of the CLP 2018) and Policy S/4 of the SCLP 2018 states new development will only be approved in line with Green Belt policy in the NPPF. However, policy NH/8 of the SCLP 2018 provides a further requirement for new development than policy S/4. It states that any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed to avoid having an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Where development is permitted, landscaping will be used to ensure the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.

7.4 It is important, therefore, to establish whether or not the Proposed Development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and to demonstrate a need for its Green Belt location. The NPPF states that the government attaches great importance to areas of Green Belt and their essential characteristics are their openness and permanence. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is by its definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances'.

7.5 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that: *"When considering planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."*

7.6 One of the key paragraphs to consider in relation to the proposed development, is Paragraph 154 of the NPPF which states the following [emphasis added]:

"...h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- i. mineral extraction;*
- ii. engineering operations;*
- iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location...."*

- 7.7 The Proposed Development falls within the definition of part c) a local transport infrastructure project (Transport Infrastructure Project) and therefore falls within the list of developments within paragraph 154, if it can be considered to demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location, and it can be shown that it would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and avoid conflict with the purposes of Green Belt designation.
- 7.8 Paragraph 154 also states that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate within the Green Belt. The Proposed Development includes provision for a small new building within the A11 Travel Hub, which is limited to essential facilities, including toilets and a modest waiting area. The paragraph refers to facilities including buildings associated with a change of use which would be an exception if they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the relevant purposes.
- 7.9 Policy 4 (The Cambridge Green Belt) of the CLP 2018) and Policy S/4 (Cambridge Green Belt) of the SCLP 2018 states new development will only be approved in line with the Green Belt policy in the NPPF.
- 7.10 Policy NH/8 (Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt) of the SCLP 2018 states development must be located and designed to not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Where development is permitted, particularly on the edge of settlements, it must be of high-quality design and landscaping conditions will be attached to ensure the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.

ii) Requirement for a Green Belt Location

- 7.11 The starting point for consideration of the acceptability of the Proposed Development within the Green Belt, is whether the proposed development has a requirement for a Green Belt location.
- 7.12 In planning terms, as Cambridge is surrounded by Green Belt, it would not be possible for a new off-road public transport route and travel hub to be provided without a Green Belt location in some form. As part of the business case for the Proposed Development, a thorough assessment of alternative sites was undertaken for on and off-road schemes (see paragraphs below and Chapter 4 of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement)).
- 7.13 GCP undertook a series of studies and workshops to develop and assess a range of strategic options and sift these down to a single preferred option to achieve the set objectives.
- 7.14 GCP commissioned WSP to prepare a 'A1307 Haverhill to Cambridge Corridor – Draft Concepts Report' in 2016 which identified eleven concepts for further evaluation and consideration. The concepts were focused on transport infrastructure investments and upgrades. The concepts short list was consulted on to refine a final options short list with feasibility designs for assessment as part of the outline business case. The results from the public consultation showed a preference for on-highway solutions to minimise potential environmental impacts.
- 7.15 The GCP Executive Board accepted the Preferred Options Report, but recommended consultation be delayed until a series of workshops could be held with the Local Liaison Forum (LLF). The LLF identified a need to consider other strategic transport studies and growth within the wider area to ensure a more holistic approach. A total of 49 options were scored, including environmental considerations, during three workshops. The options were then assessed in a

multi-criteria assessment framework, based on WebTAG guidance, and included environmental considerations as one of the criteria. The 20 highest scoring options were taken forward into one of eight transport strategies for further consideration.

7.16 This resulted in the publication of the A1307 Study Options Addendum Report. The three best performing strategies were identified as follows:

- Strategy 1 – Busway via Sawston with A11 Park and Ride
- Strategy 2 – On highway bus lanes with A11 Park and Ride plus bus only link to Cambridge Biomedical Campus
- Strategy 3 – On highway bus lanes with A11 Park and Ride

7.17 All three strategies included upgrades and interventions to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety along the A1307 which became part of the Cambridge Southeast Transport Phase 1 (CSET1) project, currently under construction.

7.18 Public consultation on the three strategies occurred in the spring 2018 with the majority of respondents preferring Strategy 1 Off highway via Sawston with A11 Park and Ride¹¹. The GCP Executive Board approved Strategy 1, albeit it had the highest cost and greatest environmental impact, but that it would also generate a significantly higher economic benefit than the other two strategies and result in a greater modal shift away from car journeys. Strategies 2 and 3 were primarily located within the existing highway corridor along the A1307, so it was considered likely that there would be reduced environmental impacts for these strategies, compared with Strategy 1. However, Strategies 2 and 3 were not able to deliver the scheme objectives as successfully as Strategy 1 and so were not selected as the preferred option.

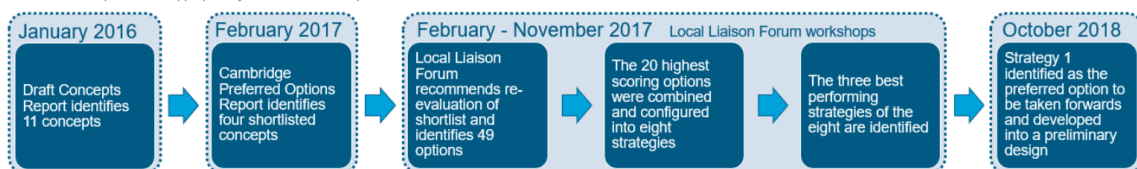


Figure 10: Timeline showing the stages undertaken to identify a preferred strategic option (Source: Atkins Environmental Statement 2024)

7.19 Following the selection of strategy 1 as the preferred strategic option, Mott MacDonald was commissioned to produce an Outline Business Case (OBC) to make a case for securing funding for CSET2. The OBC included an Options Appraisal Report (OAR) which identified the different route alignments and travel hub options that could be taken forwards to deliver strategy.

7.20 To identify the preferred route for the busway in the Green Belt, the length of the route along the study area between the CBC and the A11/A1307 Fourwentways junction was split into six segments.

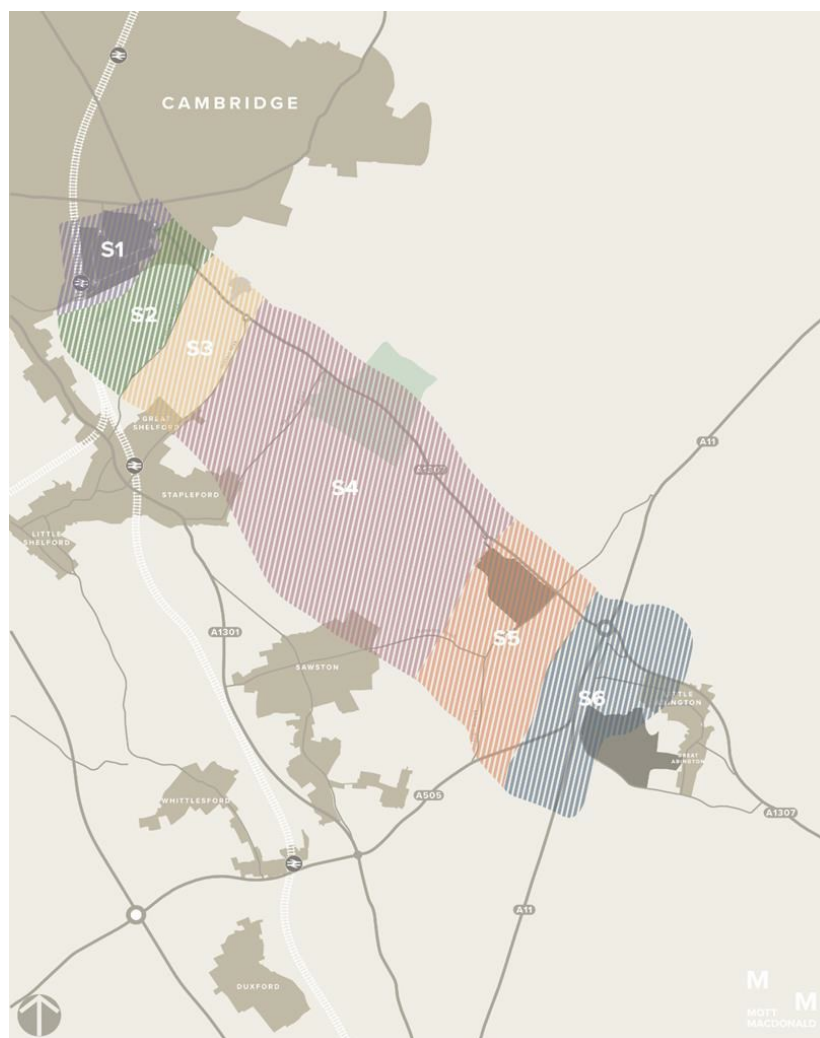


Figure 11: Route alignment options segments
 (Source: Map extracted from Mott Macdonald Environmental Statement NTS 2022)

- 7.21 In terms of the A11 Travel Hub options, 11 sites were initially identified, 5 of which were within Green Belt land (Figure 12). These were selected based on their location, capacity, accessibility, compatibility with other emerging strategic transport and structure schemes, and their constraints.

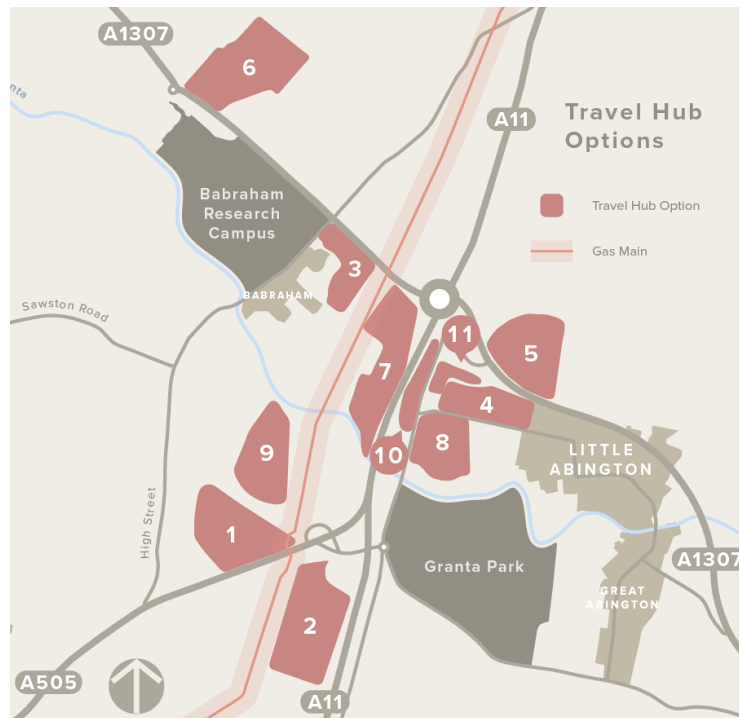


Figure 12: A11 Travel Hub Options

(Source: Map extracted from Mott Macdonald Environmental Statement NTS 2022)

- 7.22 A detailed list of the constraints associated with each proposed A11 Travel Hub location is available in the Outline Business Case 2020 (CSET-20-00-00-Outline Business Case). The following list provides a summary of these constraints:

- Many of the sites required new junctions off either the A505, the A11 or the A1307.
- Sites 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 are located in the Green Belt.
- Sites to the east of the A11 (4, 5, 8, 10 and 11) would require a new bridge over the A11 to access them if an alignment for the busway was not along the A1307.
- Site 2 was in close proximity to the Grade II listed Pampisford Hall and on the boundary of the adjacent Grade II* Registered Park and Garden of Pampisford Hall.
- Sites 1, 2, 3, 7 and 9 were all in close proximity (and thus constrained as to their potential layout) of the exclusion zone around a high-pressure gas main.
- Site 4 was located on an organic farm and close to a school and residential properties in Little Abington.
- Site 3 was very close to residential properties in Babraham.

- 7.23 Using a gateway assessment, the hub options and route options were sifted from 231 options to 90 possible options. The longlist of 90 options was further sifted to a shortlist of seven options. The longlist sift was undertaken by scoring each option against the following themes, each with multiple criteria and sub-criteria:

- Transport user benefits
- Environment

- Deliverability
- Social impacts
- Wider economic impacts
- Alignment with objectives
- Policy alignment

7.24 The main criteria within the environment theme were consistent with the Department for Transport (DfT)'s Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) approach, with the addition of Green Belt, as follows:

- Visual impact
- Noise
- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Heritage
- Green Belt
- Water / flood risk

7.25 These 9 were refined to 5 options (Figure 13) and taken forward for quantitative appraisal against the same themes and criteria as the longlist sift. The OAR identified the highest scoring option, following quantitative appraisal, as the brown option. For all options, Moderate and Major environmental effects were assessed. All 5 of the options scored the same for each environmental criteria so there was no environmental preference for any of the options.

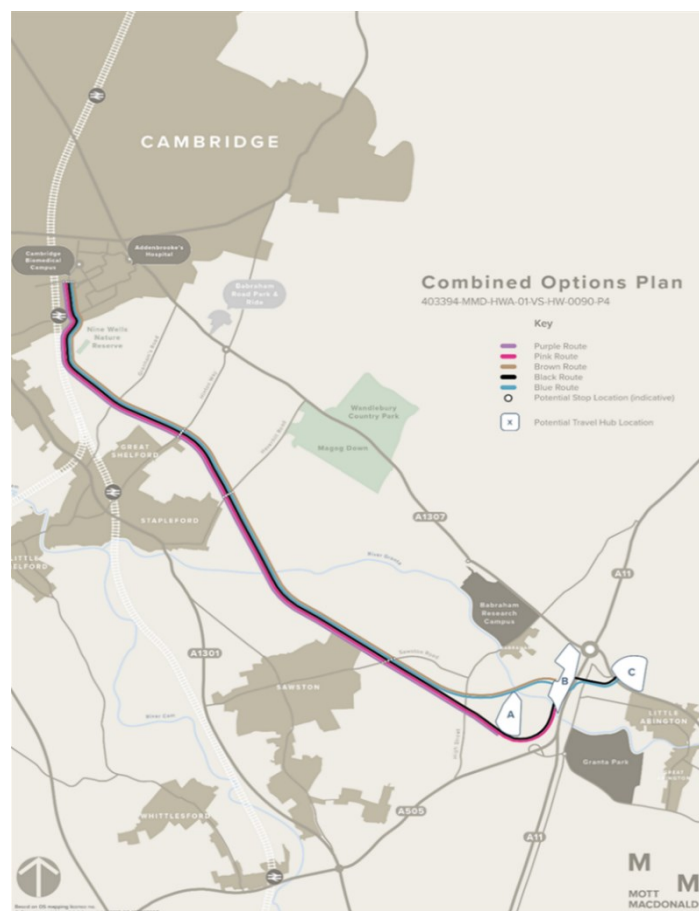


Figure 13: Route and Travel Hub Options
(Source: Atkins Environmental Statement, Cambridge South East Transport Scheme 2024)

7.26 The 5 shortlisted options were publicly consulted on in autumn 2019. The consultation responses did not identify a clear preference for any of the five options but did raise a number of comments requesting additional options to be considered. One of the options was an alignment that follows the disused Shelford Railway Line. A feasibility study of this option was undertaken which discounted it from further consideration because of a need to demolish properties, increased noise impacts, increased journey times resulting in reduced patronage, and a significant increase in cost.

7.27 Responses from the autumn 2019 public consultation also included requests to consider six amendments to the main route alignment as shown in Figure 14 below. The requests came from various stakeholders and members of the public and were based on concerns over impacts to the openness of the greenbelt and landscape, loss of specific habitats such as hedgerows, and severance of agricultural fields. Route alignment amendments 1 and 4 were discounted because they failed to deliver the same scheme benefits (amendment 1) and would cost significantly more, whilst also increasing adverse impacts to the greenbelt and landscape (amendment 4). Amendments 2, 3, 5, and 6 were taken forwards and incorporated into the Proposed Development for the following reasons:

- Amendment 2 – Reduced severance of fields between Granham's Road and Hinton Way, minimising the amount of agricultural land that would cease to be commercially viable.
- Amendment 3 – Retention of an important hedgerow south of the Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve
- Amendment 5 – Alignment would be moved closer to the villages to improve connectivity. It would reduce the impact on some badger setts but would increase other impacts such as noise at residential properties, and loss of some habitats.
- Amendment 6 – Reduced visual impact and encroachment into the Green Belt.

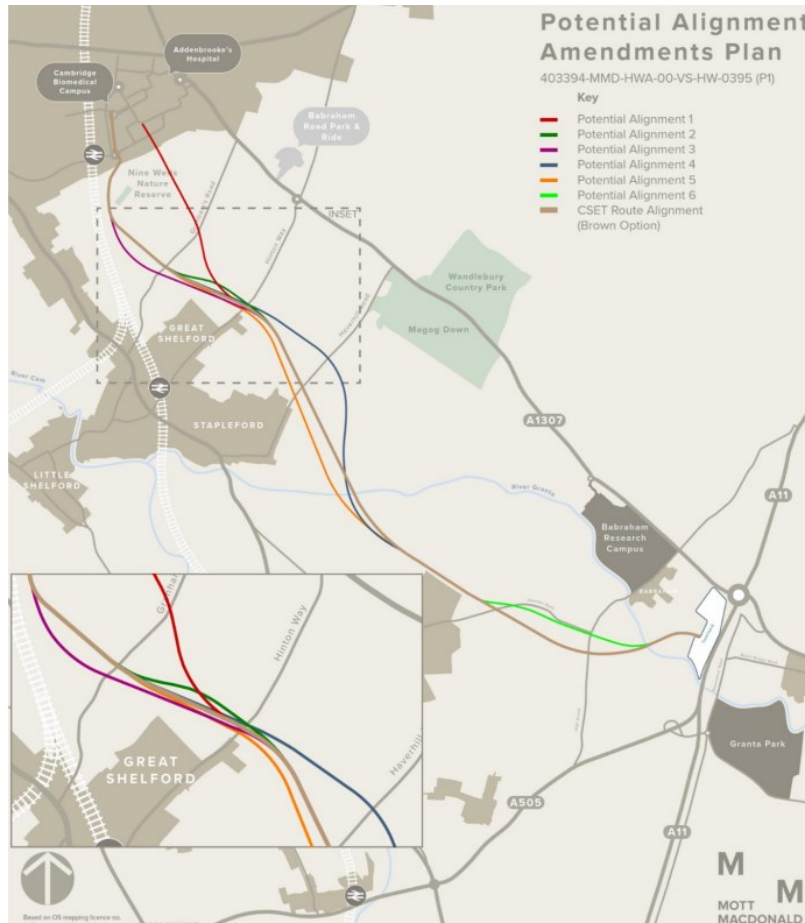


Figure 14: Amendments to the route alignment considered following public consultation in 2019 (Source: Mott Macdonald Environmental Statement NTS 2022)

Further variations

- 7.28 A consultation exercise was undertaken on a draft EIA in 2020. This resulted in consideration of an additional alignment alternative between the pink and brown routes. This was called the pink route variant, but the assessment concluded that the brown route offered reduced journey times compared to the pink route variant, whilst there was no difference in environmental impacts between the two options.
- 7.29 In Autumn 2021, Atkins was commissioned to undertake a review of the emerging design for the Proposed Development to identify areas for value engineering to reduce costs. The review identified that the two bridges crossing the River Granta and the design along Francis Crick Avenue as two key areas where costs could be reduced without negatively impacting the performance of the scheme. The latest design on Francis Crick Avenue greatly improves the traffic congestion issues and reduces the potential impact on emergency services accessing the hospitals at Cambridge Biomedical Campus.
- 7.30 Proposals for a retirement village in Stapleford were approved on appeal by the Government's Planning Inspectorate in winter 2021. The approved plans conflicted with the route alignment of the Proposed Development requiring an amendment (Figure 15).



Figure 15: Alternative route options around Stapleford Retirement Village
(Source: Atkins Environmental Statement, Cambridge South East Transport Scheme 2024)

- 7.31 Informal consultation with the Hobsons Conduit Trust identified concerns that the Trust had with the proposed access routes to Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve (LNR), mainly that the scheme did not allow for continuous access on foot along Hobsons Conduit to the centre of

Cambridge which has long been an ambition of the Trust. The design was amended to accommodate this.

- 7.32 For the reasons set out above, and in the absence of any available and better alternative options outside of the Green Belt which would achieve the objectives and benefits of the scheme, the Proposed Development is compliant with paragraph 154 of the NPPF and the requirement for a Green Belt location in so far as the route needing to be delivered on Green Belt land.

iii) Preservation of Openness and Purposes of including land within the Green Belt

- 7.33 Notwithstanding the conclusion set out above, in order to determine whether the Proposed Development is ‘not inappropriate’ development, and therefore harmful, the key determining factors (in addition to establishing need for the location in the Green Belt) as set out in paragraph 154(b) of the NPPF, are whether the scheme:

- Preserves the openness of the Green Belt; and
- Does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

- 7.34 Paragraph 142 of the NPPF sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

- 7.35 Paragraph 143 sets out the national purposes for including land in the Green Belt are:

1. *To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built- up areas;*
2. *To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
3. *To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
4. *To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
5. *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

- 7.36 In addition to the 5 purposes of the Green Belt at national level, it is important to consider the three purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt, which are defined within Policy 4 of the adopted CLP 2018 and in the explanatory text (paragraph 2.30) related to Policy S/4 in the SCLP 2018, as follows:

1. *Preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre;*
2. *Maintain and enhance the quality of its setting; and*
3. *Prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city.*

- 7.37 It is clear that in policy terms, paragraph 154 of the NPPF seeks to define local transport infrastructure as 'not inappropriate' within the Green Belt, if it is possible to deliver that infrastructure within the Green Belt which neither affects openness nor the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. If permission is granted for the Proposed Development, the land will remain Green Belt.
- 7.38 To inform the impact of the Proposed Development in terms of openness and purposes of including land within the Green Belt, a detailed Consideration of Green Belt Issues Report (2021) was prepared (refer to Appendix B – LDA Green Belt Issues Report). This report contained a detailed analysis of the impact the Proposed Development will have and provided an assessment of the route options and A11 Travel Hub options.
- 7.39 The Green Belt Study (2002) prepared by LDA for South Cambridgeshire District Council formed part of the evidence base for the CLP 2018 and SCLP 2018 which are the relevant development plans for assessment of this scheme. LDA used this study to inform their assessment of the Proposed Development as set out in Appendix B, and, for consistency, used the same methodology which was used to assess the route options and A11 Travel Hub sites for the Cambourne to Cambridge busway scheme.
- 7.40 The LDA Report in Appendix B assessed if the Proposed Development preserves the openness of the Green Belt or conflicts with the purposes of the Green Belt. The report concluded that the degree of harm to the Green Belt from the Proposed Development, in terms of both Green Belt openness and conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt, would be between Moderate to Moderate-minor to Minor with the mitigation of appropriate planting and when assessed in the context of the surrounding environment. This resulted in the study's conclusion that openness would not be preserved, and that there would be conflict with Green Belt purposes.
- 7.41 It should be noted that since completion of the LDA Report 2021, there have been some minor changes to the Proposed Development, in relation to the proposed alignment of the route at Stapleford. There have also been some minor changes to the bridge design over the River Granta and removal of the route/bridge over the A11. Furthermore, changes to the NPPF since the first report was carried out has resulted in LDA being commissioned to undertake a review of their report. As a result, an updated Consideration of Green Belt Issues Report has been (refer to Appendix C) prepared (hereafter referred to as LDA Report 2024).

Planning assessment of Green Belt

- 7.42 The LDA Report 2024 divides the assessment area of the busway into five sectors (sector I, II, III, IV and V) and each sector has sub-areas. Each sector and sub-area within them have been assessed to determine the impact on the openness and purposes of the Green Belt and degree of conflict with the Green Belt.

Sector I

- 7.43 Sector I is split into three sub-areas (I.A, I.B and I.C). This sector extends from the railway line to the west to the A1307 to the east and up to Hinton Way to the south-east. The busway passes directly through sub-areas I.B which forms two areas split by sub-area I.C, and sub-area I.A which is located adjacent to the south-west boundary of the A1307. I.A is located adjacent to the Gog Magog SSSI and Thatched Cottage which is a Grade II Listed Building close to the roundabout. Sub-area I.C is sandwiched between sub-area I.B and contains the

Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The route of Sustrans National Cycle Route 11 follows the eastern edge of the railway line along the western edge of the sector, before turning along the northern boundary of the sector. This provides a well-used cycle linking the city centre and Great Shelford.

- 7.44 The stretch of the busway that is located within the CBC site is located outside the Green Belt. This includes a bus stop location west of Addenbrooke's Hospital. As these elements are located outside the Green Belt, they have no impact on the Green Belt.
- 7.45 In terms of openness, the busway would then cross undeveloped countryside from the point it exits the CBC and would require minimal cut and fill operation. The LDA Report 2024 notes that the bridge and culvert over the ditch on the Green Belt boundary and the bridge over Hobson's Brook would introduce a volume of new development within sub-area 1.B. Whilst the volume of development is likely to be relatively small, the LDA Report 2024 notes that there would be a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt in this location due to the creation of these structures and therefore a Minor degree of harm. It is considered that this reduction would not prevent the preservation of openness of the Green Belt when viewed as a whole.
- 7.46 This sector plays an important role in the setting of the south of Cambridge, located immediately adjacent to the existing urban edge and adjacent to the key green approach to the city from the south along the railway line. It forms an area of Supportive landscape, an important feature for the setting of the city. The sector is visible from the approaches to Cambridge along the railway and along the A1307. It also forms the separation between the edge of Cambridge and the foothills of the Gog Magog Hills, with White Hill forming the most north westerly part of the foothills.
- 7.47 The sector also forms part of the rural setting to Great Shelford, preventing sprawl of Cambridge further south and further coalescence to the north east of the village. In terms of the purposes of the Green Belt, the LDA Report 2024 finds that overall, the busway would not conflict with any of the purposes of the Green Belt in this Sector.
- 7.48 With regards to the degree of harm on the openness and conflict with the Green Belt purposes, the LDA Report 2024 concludes that the proposed bridge, culvert on the Green Belt boundary and the bridge over Hobson's Brook (and any associated round approaches as part of the proposed route), would have a Minor degree of harm to the Green Belt resulting in permanent reduction in openness. It is considered that this reduction would not prevent the preservation of openness of the Green Belt as a whole.

Sector II

- 7.49 Sector II covers the areas north of Great Shelford and Stapleford extend up to the A1307 to the north. This sector is split into three sub-areas II.A, II.B and II.C. Sub-area II.A is north of Great Shelford. Sub-area II.B covers the area between Hinton Way and Haverhill Road. Sub-area II.C covers the area north-east of Great Shelford and Stapleford, avoiding the new retirement village development at Stapleford. The busway passes through each of the three sectors in turn.
- 7.50 In sub-area II.A, the busway would utilise an existing gap in the hedgerow between Great Shelford and Clarke's Hill thus minimising removal of vegetation. However, whilst relatively little hedgerow removal will be required, it is required across all sectors. Replacement hedgerow planting is proposed to provide screening and enhancement along the route.

- 7.51 The LDA Report 2024 states that the route minimises the visual impact of the busway preserving the openness of the Green Belt in sub-area II.A. and also through sub areas II.B (with the exception of the bridge embankment) and II.C.
- 7.52 However, the LDA Report 2024 also finds that the proposed stops and associated infrastructure (bus shelters, signage, hard surfacing, lighting and road markings) at Hinton Way and Haverhill Road would introduce a volume of development which would reduce the openness of the Green Belt within sub-areas II.B and II.C.
- 7.53 In addition, a bridge is proposed in sub-area II.C to cross the River Granta. The bridge will require the removal of some vegetation along the river to introduce the built structure with a span of 118m and a deck height of approximately 5.5m with ramped approaches. The LDA Report 2024 finds that although the volume of development would be substantial within sub-area II.C it would have limited visibility from the surrounding area due to vegetation. It does, however, conclude that the embankment would have a Minor-Moderate conflict with the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.54 In terms of the Green Belt purposes, the LDA Report 2024 advises that the busway and stops in Sector II would result in some conflict with Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4 in the vicinity of the foothills of Gog Magog and Supportive landscape. However, the bridge over the River Granta, and associated ramps, in sub-area II.C, would have no impact on the setting of the villages and would not conflict with Green Belt purposes in that regard.
- 7.55 According to the LDA Report 2024, the busway would result in Minor alteration to the setting of Great Shelford resulting in a Minor degree of harm to the Green Belt due to the conflict with Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4. The degree of harm has the potential to be reduced through appropriate landscaping along the western side of the busway. The degree of harm would also apply to sub-areas II.B and II.C.
- 7.56 The introduction of stops along the busway would result in a Minor degree of harm to the Green Belt due to the reduction in openness and conflict with Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4. The LDA Report 2024 also finds that planting could mitigate the impact but if lighting is installed, a Minor degree of harm on openness would remain.
- 7.57 The proposed bridge and approach ramps over the River Granta would introduce a volume of development in the countryside which could impact the openness and result in a Moderate-minor impact to the Green Belt.

Sector III

- 7.58 Sector III covers the area to the north and east of Sawston which extends either side of the dismantled railway. The sector contains three sub-areas; III.A covers the area south of the dismantled railway line and north-west of Sawston; III.B covers the housing development area; and III.C covers the area north of the dismantled railway line up to River Granta and to the north and east of Sawston. This part of the route is characterised by farmland.
- 7.59 The busway passes through sub-area III.C along the northern side of the dismantled railway line over Sawston Road north of the new housing development. III.C includes a stop on

Sawston Road adjacent to a housing allocation (H/1b) recently completed by Hill Group (housebuilder). No part of the busway would fall within sub-areas III.A or III.B. Therefore, the focus for the purposes of the Planning Statement is on sub-area III.C.

- 7.60 In terms of preserving the openness, the LDA Report 2024 concludes that whilst the busway would extend across underdeveloped countryside and at grade rather than elevated, it would preserve the openness of the Green Belt in this sub-area. The visibility of the proposed bridge and proposed stop, which will include bus shelters and a covered cycle store, would reduce over time with planting but it would remain visible in the short to medium term. This would result in a reduction in openness of the Green Belt within sub-area III.C. The introduction of associated signage, lighting and road markings near the proposed road junction are not considered to affect openness when viewed as a whole.
- 7.61 The bridge over the River Granta also spans into this sector and the LDA Report 2024 recommendations are consistent with its recommendations for section II, that is there would be a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt within sub area III.C due to the creation of the bridge.
- 7.62 In terms of Green Belt purposes, the LDA Report 2024 reports that the busway within this sub-area would not affect the character of the village and would not affect the separation between Sawston, Stapleford and Babraham. As a result, there would be no conflict with the Green Belt purposes within this sector. The proposed stop in sub-area III.C adjacent to a recent development area on the eastern side of Sawston would not affect the character of the village or its wider setting. As a result, the LDA Report does not consider the stop would conflict with the Green Belt purposes. In terms of the crossing over River Granta, the LDA Report 2024 confirms that there would be no conflict with Green Belt purposes within this sector.
- 7.63 In terms of the degree of harm, the proposed stop is judged to have a Minor degree of harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed river crossing is also considered to have a Moderate-minor degree of harm on the openness of the Green Belt.

Sector IV

- 7.64 Sector IV covers the area south of Babraham between the A1307, A505 and A11. Sector IV is split into three sub-areas IV.A over the area south of the dismantled railway line, IV.B covering north of the railway and south of Babraham, and IV.C which covers the area south of A1307 and west of A11. The busway passes through IV.B and into IV.C where the A11 Travel Hub is also located. There is limited built development within sector IV which consists predominantly of open farmland with the Home Farm complex located within sub-area IV.C on the southern edge of Babraham. The sector also contributes to the physical separation between Babraham and Little Abington/Granta Park east of the A11. The A11 Travel Hub proposal includes improved shared access routes and upgrading of existing routes.
- 7.65 The A11 Travel Hub would introduce hard surfacing and ancillary facilities including a ticket office and/or bus shelter which would add to the built development within the Green Belt. The proposed access road and roundabout into the A11 Travel Hub would be relatively flat and there would be minimal requirement for cut and fill operations. This means that there would be no significant volume of development to affect the openness of the Green Belt. The location of the site on lower ground and the existing woodland block would minimise its visibility from the north and west and could be further reduced by landscape planting. The introduction of increased signage, lighting and road markings near the proposed A505 roundabout is not

considered to affect openness when viewed as a whole. However, the LDA Report 2024 finds that the A11 Travel Hub itself would result in a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt within sub-area IV.C.

- 7.66 The cut and fill required within sub area IV.B, would be relatively modest and balanced through careful design. The alignment of the route would be visible from the north and west. This visibility could be reduced over time by appropriate planting. The introduction of traffic management related works at the proposed High Street junction is not considered to affect openness.
- 7.67 The proposed bridge over the River Granta will require the removal of some vegetation along the river and would introduce a built structure and approach ramps into the Green Belt. The presence of the structure would introduce a volume of new development within sub areas IV.B and IV.C. It is considered that this volume of development would be substantial but would have limited visibility from the surrounding area due to the vegetated character of the sub area.
- 7.68 On balance, the LDA Report 2024 considers that whilst there would be a reduction in openness arising from the busway in sub-area IV.B and IV.C, the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved.
- 7.69 In terms of conflict with Green Belt purposes, the LDA Report 2024 concludes that the A11 Travel Hub would conflict with National Green Belt purpose 3, Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4. However, it fits relatively well in its landscape context, being close to the A11 and at a low elevation. The sites would also be far enough away from the existing settlement to prevent merging; avoiding conflict with Cambridge Green Belt purpose 3 and National Green Belt purpose 2.
- 7.70 In terms of the degree of harm, the A11 Travel Hub would result in a Moderate degree of encroachment into undeveloped countryside, resulting in a Moderate degree of harm to the Green Belt due to the impact on openness and a conflict with National Green Belt purpose 3, Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4. Planting around the perimeters of the A11 Travel Hub could reduce this conflict over time to a Moderate-minor degree of harm to Green Belt purposes.
- 7.71 The busway would require a bridge over the River Granta. This would introduce a volume of development into the countryside and reduce openness. This would result in a Moderate-minor harm to the Green Belt.

iv) Assessment of whether the Proposed Development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt

- 7.72 Paragraphs 7.42 to 7.71 have provided an assessment of the proposed impact on the Green Belt for each of the sectors of the route. It is, however, also important to consider if the Proposed Development in its entirety will harm the openness of the Green Belt or conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. This is considered further within the section below with consideration of relevant case law. The assessment has separated out the busway and A11 Travel Hub elements of the scheme:

Case law

- 7.73 There have been several appeal decisions relating to the interpretation of inappropriate development within the Green Belt. These are of particular relevance, having regard to whether the Proposed Development can be considered to be not inappropriate development within the Green Belt or whether 'very special circumstances' are required to apply.

Relevant Green Belt appeals decisions

High court challenge and subsequent Supreme Court Challenge brought by Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and Oxtan Farm against North Yorkshire County Council and Darrington Quarries Ltd – Jackdaw Crag Quarry, Strutton, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, LS24 9BE ([2020] UKSC 3 On appeal from: [2018] EWCA Civ 489)

- 7.74 This is a case involving minerals in which visual impact was considered. The site is a Magnesian Limestone quarry. Permission was approved for an extension of it. The permission was challenged by Samuel Smith and Oxtan Farm initially in the high court, which was then quashed in the Supreme Court. The High Court considered that the case officer of the Council misdirected the committee on the policy for mineral development in the Green Belt. This resulted in the committee approaching the decision on the basis that the proposal was not for inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore did not have to be justified by 'very special circumstances'.
- 7.75 The argument was that the case officer had not considered the visual dimension of openness. The officer had considered visual impact under a separate section to the Green Belt considerations and found that there would be visual harm but that this was outweighed by social and economic benefits. In the Green Belt discussion, the officer considered openness in purely spatial terms and did not consider visual impacts on openness.
- 7.76 Related to this high court judgement is the Supreme Court judgement (R (on the application of Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and others) (Respondents) v North Yorkshire County Council (Appellant) (February 2020) for the same case, in which it was confirmed that:
- "There was no error of law on the face of the report. Paragraph 90 [146] does not expressly refer to visual impact as a necessary part of the analysis, nor in my view is it made so by implication. As explained in my discussion of the authorities, the matters relevant to openness in any particular case are a matter of planning judgement, not law." (Paragraph 39)*
- 7.77 Importantly, in relation to the interpretation of the then paragraphs 89-90 of the NPPF, the Supreme Court judgement references that they replace the fuller statement of policy for the "Control of Development" in section 3 of the Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2). It is stated in the Supreme Court judgement that section 3 of PPG2 covers substantially the same ground respectively as NPPF 89 and 90 (2018), but in rather fuller terms. In the view of the Supreme Court:
- 'In the shortened version of the NPPF these categories (within section 3 of PPG2) have been recast in para 90, and brought together under the same proviso, including the requirement to preserve openness.*
I do not read this as intended to mark a significant change of approach. If that had been included, one would have expected it to have been signalled more clearly. To

my mind the change is explicable as no more than a convenient means of shortening and simplifying policies without material change.’ (Paragraphs 11 – 12)

7.78 Therefore, whilst this case does not alter the existing interpretation of the NPPF, it is a helpful reminder of the principle that discretion should be given to decision-makers. In addition, given the lack of available case law on transport infrastructure projects within the Green Belt since the publication of the NPPF, it also provides a clear steer that PPG2 is a very helpful reference point to define whether a Transport Infrastructure Project can be considered as not inappropriate development within the Green Belt⁷.

7.79 Recent planning appeals decisions have also established that openness should be assessed both in terms of visual impact and spatial impact and provided interpretation with regard to paragraph 154 of the NPPF. The relevant decisions, which are not assessed in detail here, are as follows:

- *TURNER V SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ANOTHER [2016] EWCA CIV 466 – LAND AT BARRACK ROAD, WEST PARLEY, FERNDOWN, DORSET.*
- *EUROPA OIL AND GAS LTD V SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ORS [2013] EWHC 2643 (ADMIN) (25 JULY 2013) – BURY HILL WOOD, COLDHARBOUR LANE, HOLMWOOD, SURREY, RH5 6HN.*
- *RJD LTD AND GOWLING WLG TRUST CORPORATION LIMITED V SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (4 APRIL 2019) – LAND AT WARE PARK, WADESMILL ROAD, HERTFORD.*

7.80 Some commentary on the above case law and its relevance to the Proposed Development is set out below. This is particularly in relation to the recent Supreme Court judgement on the Samuel Smith case, and the reference to use of PPG2 to assist the case of whether proposals can be considered as not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

a) Appropriateness of the Proposed Development

7.81 In assessing whether the Proposed Development is inappropriate or not in the Green Belt, it is important to consider the degree of harm and whether the Proposed Development includes elements that fall outside the scope of infrastructure that is reasonably necessary for the scheme.

7.82 With a requirement for a Green Belt location being identified as the most appropriate for the Proposed Development as 'local transport infrastructure', it is also important to consider whether the remaining criteria of paragraph 153 of the NPPF apply so that the Proposed Development can be considered as 'not inappropriate' development within the Green Belt. Otherwise 'very special circumstances' will need to be demonstrated.

7.83 The degree of harm to the Green Belt of each component in the Proposed Development has been carefully assessed in the LDA Report 2024. The report concludes that the degree of harm on the Green Belt from the Proposed Development, in terms of both Green Belt

⁷ GCSP has recently approved a new Park & Ride at Trumpington and road link in the Green Belt. Brentwood BC has recently approved a spine road linking M25 Junction 29 with A127 in the Green Belt

openness and conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt, would be between Moderate to Moderate-minor to Minor with appropriate planting and when assessed in the context of the surrounding environment. Therefore, with careful and robust landscaping and retention of as much of the existing vegetation as possible, the harm to the Green Belt would be minimised.

- 7.84 The Proposed Development being promoted by the GCP will not result in significant development above the ground level, other than the stops, bridges and a degree of cut and fill development. In this regard and having regard to the relevant case law (*Samuel Smith* case), it is considered that, provided suitable mitigation is supplied, the visual impact of the development would not be so significant for the development to be considered as inappropriate within the Green Belt. It is therefore considered that the proposals could be considered as not inappropriate development within the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' would not need to be demonstrated. However, even if the test of 'very special circumstances' was required to be met, the Proposed Development would do so with reference to section vi) below.

A11 Travel Hub

- 7.85 In respect of the A11 Travel Hub, the Supreme Court ruling on the *Samuel Smith* case is particularly relevant. Accounting for this ruling, the guidance on Park & Rides within PPG2 is of relevance.
- 7.86 An analysis of the proposals against paragraph 3.17 of PPG2 is set out as follows:

Park and ride development is not inappropriate in Green Belts, provided that:

- (a) *a thorough and comprehensive assessment of potential sites has been carried out, including both non-Green Belt and, if appropriate, other Green Belt locations, having regard to sustainable development objectives, and the need to be flexible about size and layout;*

Response:

Whilst the Proposed Development is not a Park & Ride, the Travel Hub and linear nature of the proposals are similar and therefore the guidance is relevant. A detailed assessment has been undertaken of three proposed A11 Travel Hub sites. Two of the three sites were within the Green Belt. The third site (option C) was located outside of the Green Belt, and would involve a new bridge, which is within the Green Belt in order to operate. The selection of Site B was justified as it was able to demonstrate clear sustainable development objectives over site C, which is outside of the Green Belt.

- (b) *the assessment establishes that the proposed green belt site is the most sustainable option taking account of all relevant factors including travel impacts;*

Response:

This was established as part of the OBC 2020.

- (c) *the scheme will not seriously compromise the purposes of including land in Green Belts, as set out in paragraph 1.5;*

Response:

The LDA Report 2024 established that the degree of conflict with the Green Belt purposes for A11 Travel Hub Site B would be a Moderate-minor over time and have a degree of conflict with 2 of the 5 purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Accounting for the fact and degree test (and subject to detailed design), this degree of conflict is not considered to be significant enough to 'seriously compromise' the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

- (d) *the proposal is contained within the local transport plan (or in Greater London the Local Implementation Plan) and based on a thorough assessment of travel impacts; and*

Response:

The Proposed Development is contained in the Cambridgeshire Transport Delivery Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22 which forms part of the Local Transport Plan. It is one of the transport projects that will be brought forward by the GCP. The travel impacts of each option have been considered in terms of accessibility, which is a significant factor for consideration.

- (e) *new or re-used buildings are included within the development proposal only for essential facilities associated with the operation of the park and ride scheme.*

Response:

Any new buildings or structures that serve the A11 Travel Hubs will be limited to that which are essential to enable the safe functioning of the A11 Travel Hub for its users. Detailed design of the A11 Travel Hub and associated ancillary provisions will be carried out once a preferred site option has been chosen, see commentary above about travel hub options.

- 7.87 The Proposed Development is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, however, if it is considered to be inappropriate, then very special circumstances do exist, as demonstrated in the following paragraphs.

b) Inappropriate Development

- 7.88 This section addresses the alternative scenario whereby the development is deemed inappropriate. This deals with assessing Green Belt harm and any other harm, what benefits arise from the Proposed Development and if they constitute a 'very special circumstances' case.
- 7.89 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states "*When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*" Substantial weight is therefore attached to any harm identified to the Green Belt.

- 7.90 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF also requires that an assessment of 'very special circumstances' considers 'any other harm' from a proposal. The following matters have been identified as causing some additional harm that must be considered in this balance.

Loss of agricultural land

- 7.91 The NPPF identifies that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The NPPF defines the best and most versatile agricultural land as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.
- 7.92 The proposed route is shown to be split between ALC Grade 2 ('Very Good', covering 43%), Grade 3a ('Good', covering 49%) and Grade 3b ('Moderate' covering 8%). The proposed site of the A11 Travel Hub is shown to be split between ALC Grade 2 ('Very Good', covering 30%), Grade 3a ('Good', covering 51%) and Grade 3b ('Moderate, covering 19%).
- 7.93 For the purposes of this assessment, and in order to consider the worst-case position, it is assumed that the Proposed Development will result in the loss of agricultural land which is categorised as the best and most versatile land.
- 7.94 It has been demonstrated that alternative route options to achieve the Proposed Development's objectives are not as optimal. This route, and therefore the inherent use of agricultural land, is the most appropriate option. A soil management strategy will form part of the mitigation, together with any land temporarily acquired during construction and not required for soft landscaping will be restored to its original capability. However, the extent of mitigation is limited because of the location and nature of the Proposed Development.
- 7.95 Given the statement above on mitigation, it is considered that the loss of some of the best and most versatile agricultural land carries **Moderate weight** in relation to harm to the Green Belt.

Landscape

- 7.96 The NPPF attaches importance to landscape and visual issues. The Cambridge Local Plan refers to protecting and enhancing the landscape setting of the city (Strategic Objective 6) and Policy 8 reiterates this. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Policy NH/2 advises that development must respect and aim to retain or enhance the character of the local landscape and the National Character Area (NCA) in which it is located, and Policy NH/6 confirms proposals should aim to conserve and enhance existing green infrastructure (GI), link new and existing GI and create new GI and enhance public enjoyment of it.
- 7.97 During construction there will be significant residual landscape effects to the Granta Valley LCA and significant residual visual effects at a number of viewpoints.
- 7.98 The physical extent of the Proposed Development will include necessary mitigation in accordance with a landscape strategy which has been adopted, and which implements various mitigation measures to minimise or compensate for predicted adverse effects to landscape, visual, and ecological receptors. The landscape design seeks to soften the appearance of the hard infrastructure and integrate the Proposed Development into the surrounding landscape. The landscape design also provides replacement and compensatory habitats required to mitigate loss during construction and improve connectivity through the landscape.

- 7.99 The Proposed Development will cross two hedgerows classified as 'Important Hedgerows'. Hedgerows within the area required for construction will be transplanted to a new permanent location within the Site boundary.
- 7.100 After 15 years, landscape planting will have been established, offering screening to visual receptors, and providing integration by softening the appearance of the Proposed Development within the wider landscape. There will remain a Moderate Adverse and significant landscape effect to the River Granta LCA, and Moderate Adverse and significant visual effects at a number of representative viewpoints.
- 7.101 Given the conclusions of this assessment, and whilst there are limited effects of the Proposed Development upon the landscape character of the wider area and these are reduced through mitigation in the local landscape, the visual impacts of the development are afforded **Moderate weight**.

Construction

- 7.102 As identified in the accompanying ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement), there will be a degree of temporary and short-term impact as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development. These impacts will relate to noise and vibration associated with construction activity, construction vehicle movements and potential air quality impacts regarding the generation of dust during construction activities.
- 7.103 The relevant Chapters of the ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) identify the appropriate mitigation and the residual effects of these impacts during the construction phase. Through the use of a CEMP (CSET-10-08-00-Construction Environmental Management Plan), and other appropriate conditions regarding responsible construction practices, the temporary residual harm from the construction of the Proposed Development is of **limited weight** in relation to harm to the Green Belt.

Loss of trees

- 7.104 Policy 71 of the Cambridge Local Plan states: *"Development will not be permitted which involves felling, significant surgery (now or in the foreseeable future) and potential root damage to trees of amenity or other value, unless there are demonstrable public benefits accruing from the proposal which clearly outweigh the current and future amenity value of the trees."*
- 7.105 Approximately 6.5 ha of woodland and scrub will be included in the landscape scheme comprising protection and improvements to existing woodland, planting for new woodland to provide landscape integration, visual screening and connectivity between existing and proposed new habitats. The planting mix has been selected to provide a wide variety of species to improve the resilience of the woodland to climate change and disease.
- 7.106 The Proposed Development will provide additional mitigation for the loss of any trees, through the introduction of a significant uplift in replacement trees and woodland across the Site in the proposed landscaping strategy. Accordingly, the harm caused by the loss of trees within the Proposed Development is of **limited weight** in relation to harm to the Green Belt.

Other considerations

7.107 In order to establish whether very special circumstances exist to justify development in the Green Belt, paragraph 153 of the NPPF requires an assessment of 'other considerations' which weigh in favour of the proposed development. These 'other considerations' relating to the Proposed Development include:

- Overall assessment demonstrates that the core scenario for Proposed Development would have a benefit to cost ratio of 1.53 (Present Value Cost: £127,357,000 and Present Value Benefits: £203,313,000) (see Figure 12 below). Economic benefits relate to Transport User Benefits, Wider Economic Benefits, Reliability Benefits, Active Modes (AMAT) Benefits, and Natural Capital Benefits.

Proposed Development Present Value of Benefits (PVB) Summary (£,000 2010 prices) 60 Years

Benefit	Monetised Benefit	Appraisal Period (Years)	PVB (£,000)	% of Total PVB
Level 1	Transport User Benefits	60	£165,414	81.4%
	Wider Economic Benefits	60	£20,086	9.9%
	Reliability Benefits	60	£13,163	6.5%
Other	Active Modes (AMAT)	30	£4,546	2.2%
	Natural Capital Benefits	60	£104	0.1%
			£203,313	100%

Figure 16: Source: Outline Business Case Addendum, Mott MacDonald (2021)

- Improved active travel infrastructure along the corridor will encourage increased uptake of cycling and walking, contributing to improved wellbeing and quality of life.
- Reducing congestion along the A1307 should reduce the number of accidents identified at accident clusters along the corridor.
- Increased public transport capacity and choice.
- Improved journey time savings and journey time reliability for users for all modes.
- Possibility to integrate staff bus services to key employment hubs into the public transport network.
- Improve existing and future accessibility to key employment sites, including Babraham Research Campus, Granta Park and CBC, encouraging investment and supporting businesses.
- Support the required housing and employment growth along the A1307 corridor. This is required to meet the objectively assessed housing and employment needs of Greater Cambridge.
- Opportunity to link together existing major housing and employment areas. This will include providing reliable journeys to work and access to leisure and travel beyond.

- A sustainable transport network will allow Cambridgeshire to continue its success in academia, technology, and research through close ties between campuses enabling knowledge sharing and innovation.
- Cambridge has a large student population who are more likely to use public transport and cycle modes of transportation. Enhancing the sustainable transport options will benefit the future growth of the Universities in Cambridge, enabling Cambridge and in turn the UK to maintain its international competitiveness.
- A greater number of people living in the area will create indirect and induced economic impacts, spending their incomes locally and using local services, resulting in growth in the local economy.
- The Proposed Development will also create a number of jobs during construction and operation both directly and indirectly.

7.108 It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development could constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and that, in accordance with paragraph 153 of the NPPF, the Proposed Development will only be allowed if 'very special circumstances' exist, and if these clearly outweigh the Green Belt harm and any other harm.

7.109 The Courts⁸ have established that, in assessing the harm to the Green Belt, the NPPF does not *'require a particular mathematical exercise nor do they require substantial weight to be allocated to each element of harm as a mathematical exercise with each tranche of substantial weight then to be added to a balance. The exercise of planning judgement is not to be an artificially sequenced two-stage process but a single exercise of judgement to assess whether there are very special circumstances which justify the grant of permission notwithstanding the particular importance of the Green Belt.'*

7.110 This section has set out the weight of the harm that has been identified from the Proposed Development, including to the purposes of the Green Belt. It has also identified the extensive range of benefits resulting from the Proposed Development, which constitute the 'very special circumstances' relating to the development.

Sustainable Development

7.111 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It must be demonstrated that the Proposed Development constitutes sustainable development.

7.112 Sustainable development can be defined within three overarching and interdependent objectives (as set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF); the economic, social, and environmental, which need to be pursued in a mutually supportive manner:

NPPF objectives definition	Response
an economic objective	<i>The Proposed Development will make a substantial contribution to economic competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in</i>
	<i>growth of local, high quality job opportunities</i>

⁸ *Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government* [2021] EWHC 1082 (Admin) (07 May 2021), Paragraph 34. HH Judge Eyre QC.

NPPF objectives definition	Response
the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;	<i>giving better access to the 178 commercial businesses within 500 m of the route. Providing quick, reliable public transport will increase productivity in the region as people will be able to spend time working rather than sitting in traffic. It will also directly support the growth and innovation of life sciences and technology. Indirectly, providing infrastructure gives access to new housing areas in which to meet local housing need.</i>
a social objective to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful, and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;	<i>The Proposed Development makes a strong contribution to social sustainability. The Proposed Development will better link existing villages and towns through affordable public transport and new cycling and pedestrian networks. It will support the emerging Local Plan's ambition for new homes, which contribute to the needs of Cambridge for the present and future generations.</i> <i>The Proposed Development will link up existing research facilities and support the growth in capacity in this area. This research capability will make a significant social contribution to the wellbeing and health to people in Cambridgeshire, the UK, but also through the export of research and treatments globally.</i>
an environmental objective to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.	<i>Whilst the Proposed Development will utilise Green Belt land, it does so to meet the important social and economic requirements for the area in achieving the Proposed Development's objectives and vision. Despite the use of greenfield land, the Proposed Development will be as efficient as possible; it will achieve a biodiversity net gain; and will incorporate design and technologies that move towards a low carbon economy, with waste and pollution minimised.</i>

- 7.113 Sustainable development is defined through three dimensions; none with more weight than the others. The Proposed Development contributes to all three elements of sustainable development and importantly will also enable the long-term sustainability of the Cambridge region itself.

Summary

- 7.114 Having established that the Proposed Development is 'inappropriate development' as it will not preserve the openness of the Green Belt and conflicts with certain purposes of including

land within it with reference to the LDA Belt Report 2024, it is necessary to consider whether 'very special circumstances' exist to support the development.

- 7.115 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF 2024 refers to 'very special circumstances' as not existing unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 7.116 The judgement of what comprises 'very special circumstances' and the weight that should be attached to them, and whether that weight is sufficient to clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposal is up to the decision maker but some interpretation has been provided by the Courts as referenced above.
- 7.117 The degree of harm and benefits have been considered above which constitute 'very special circumstances' to weigh against this harm. The table below summarises the weight which this report concludes can be applied to each of the identified harms and the benefits of the Proposed Development:

Harm	Weight
Green Belt (harm by reason of inappropriateness, harm to openness, and conflict with Green Belt purposes)	Substantial
Loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land	Moderate
Landscape character	Moderate
Construction process	Limited
Loss of trees	Limited
Benefits	Weight
Medium-cost benefit ratio	Substantial
Increased public transport capacity and choice	Very Substantial
Improved journey time savings and journey time reliability for users for all modes.	Very Substantial
Improve existing and future accessibility to key employment sites, including Babraham Research Campus, Granta Park and CBC, encouraging investment and supporting businesses.	Very Substantial
Support the required housing and employment growth along the A1307 corridor meeting identified housing and employment needs	Very Substantial
Opportunity to link together existing major housing and employment areas. This will include providing reliable journeys to work and access to leisure and travel beyond.	Very Substantial
A greater number of people living in the area will create indirect and induced economic impacts, spending their incomes locally and using local services, resulting in growth in the local economy.	Substantial
The Proposed Development will also create a number of jobs during construction and operation both directly and indirectly.	Moderate
Improved active travel infrastructure - increased uptake of cycling and walking, contributing to improved wellbeing and quality of life.	Moderate

Benefits	Weight
Reducing congestion along the A1307 should reduce the number of accidents identified at accident clusters along the corridor.	Moderate
A sustainable transport network will allow Cambridgeshire to continue its success in academia, technology, and research through close ties between campuses enabling knowledge sharing and innovation.	Moderate
Possibility to integrate staff bus services to key employment hubs into the public transport network.	Limited
Attract students and support Universities in Cambridge, enabling Cambridge and in turn the UK to maintain its international competitiveness.	Limited

- 7.118 It is considered that strong ‘very special circumstances’ exist for the delivery of the Proposed Development. The very special circumstances relate to the compelling need for the scheme, are set out in detail within the SDR (CSET-21-01-00 Strategic Dimension Refresh) and the scheme objectives. In addition, the transport benefits provided by improving the public transport connections into Cambridge reduces pressure for the release of Green Belt land to meet the housing needs of the area. The infrastructure provided by this scheme will assist with facilitating housing growth outside of the Green Belt and will be beneficial in protecting the Green Belt in this regard.
- 7.119 In addition, there are substantial economic benefits, related to shorter journey to work times, subsequent investment in the area and environmental benefits of delivering sustainable development at scale. The benefits of the Proposed Development can only be realised by a Green Belt location, and this is considered to provide very special circumstances.
- 7.120 In addition, paragraph 151 of the NPPF relates to Green Belts, and sets out that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access. The Proposed Development will provide increased connectivity within and across the Green Belt, promoting opportunities for recreation within the Green Belt e.g., use of the Service Track, and providing net gains for biodiversity. The proposed cycle and pedestrian routes along the Proposed Development are a strong material planning consideration in favour of the proposals.
- 7.121 The benefits of the Proposed Development are extensive, and the residual effect of the identified harm is of a lesser scale. In undertaking this balancing exercise, the harm to the Green Belt identified from the Proposed Development, when considered with the identified mitigation schemes, is demonstrably and substantially outweighed by the significant and wide-ranging benefits of the Proposed Development. Accordingly, very special circumstances do exist to justify a grant of permission for the Proposed Development if it should be found to be inappropriate.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of the GCP, through CCC as the lead authority for the Proposed Development.
- 8.2 The Proposed Development will provide a quick, reliable off-road busway and link to the A11 Travel Hub to provide an improved connection between where people live and where they work. As set out in detail within this Planning Statement, employment growth in Cambridge is significantly outstripping the pace of house building. As a result, there is an acute demand for housing and soaring house prices in Cambridge, which is an ongoing trend. From research undertaken this trend is very unlikely to change in the short to medium term and therefore there is a clear need for improved transport infrastructure to facilitate this growth. CBC is one of the largest employers within Cambridge and it is expanding rapidly. It also benefits from a draft allocation within the Emerging Local Plan for further substantial growth. The Proposed Development will assist with facilitating this growth at CBC and it is one of several transport interventions that are needed to support economic growth and maintain the position of Cambridge as an international leading place for life sciences and research and development.
- 8.3 In addition to the benefits of the busway itself, the Service Track adjacent to the busway will provide an improved network and access for pedestrians and cyclists to access CBC and Cambridge City from the villages of Great Shelford, Sawston and Babraham.
- 8.4 The principle of the Proposed Development is strongly supported by key strategic policies within both the Adopted South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge Local Plans (2018), which seek to reduce congestion and tackle climate change. It is also strongly supported by the NPPF, which is clear about the need to front-load transport related issues so that potential impact of developments on transport networks can be addressed. The Proposed Development will help facilitate the emerging Local Plan objectives and contribute to the government's aspirations for the growth of Cambridge to 2050 and beyond, in particular, providing a genuine choice of transport solutions to encourage a modal shift in travel. It will support CBC, other employment locations; support access to existing villages and planned housing sites and assist with resolving congestion and capacity on the transport network.
- 8.5 The vast majority of the Proposed Development is situated within the Cambridge Green Belt. A robust assessment of alternatives was considered to justify the need for a Green Belt location. In addition a detailed assessment of the impact of the scheme on the Green Belt, in terms of the purposes for including land within the Green Belt and openness of the Green Belt was undertaken via the LDA Report 2024. National policy is clear that transport infrastructure projects can be considered as not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, provided that they preserve openness and do not conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. Using a fact and degree test it is considered that the Proposed Development is not inappropriate development within the Green Belt. If it was considered that very special circumstances are required, then it has been demonstrated that the necessary very special circumstances exist, namely a compelling need for the busway as well as a lack of alternative options together with social, environmental and economic benefits which significantly outweighs any harm
- 8.6 In conclusion, considering the Proposed Development in the planning balance weighs in favour of the proposals. This Planning Statement and accompanying ES (CSET-10-02-00-Environmental Statement) also demonstrate that there are no other material planning

considerations which would warrant refusal of this proposal. Therefore, it is requested that deemed planning consent be granted for the Proposed Development.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A – OPTIONS APPRAISAL REPORT (OAR),
DOCUMENT REFERENCE NUMBER 403394-MMD-BCA00-RE-BC-
0024-D**

APPENDIX B – CONSIDERATION OF GREEN BELT ISSUES REPORT (2021), PREPARED BY LDA DESIGN

APPENDIX C - CONSIDERATION OF GREEN BELT ISSUES (2024)

PREPARED BY LDA DESIGN