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[TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE](#)

Objection to Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway linking Cambourne to Cambridge
07 January 2025 08:49:42

I (Timothy Rufus Neal of [REDACTED]) am writing to make a formal objection to the “*Application for a Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway linking Cambourne to Cambridge*”, as submitted by the Cambridge Greater Partnership on 12 November 2024.

Although I am very much in favour of the aim of shifting people from cars to bikes, electric bikes, electric scooters (self-owned, not the pavement-litter variety), and/or to public transport, especially in Cambridge, I think the current Cambourne busway plans have obvious flaws which need addressing before the plan is approved.

In particular, the plan proposes building an environmentally destructive, highly-visible raised eyesore across Green Belt land, spoiling views for miles around, while a much less expensive alternative that will cause much less environmental and scenic damage has not been properly considered.

In particular:

The proposed off-road busway between Madingley Mulch and West Cambridge is not necessary. This section of the busway could be built alongside the public road far more cheaply with far less environmental impact.

This part of the scheme is clearly a waste of public money and will cause completely unnecessary destruction of animal habitats, green land, biodiversity and the scenic harmony of the Cambridge landscape.

This part of the scheme also goes through the middle of Coton Orchard, a country wildlife site and East Anglia’s largest remaining ancient orchard. This destruction is a permanent removal of something priceless for its historical as well as current environmental value. Yet the current proposal is to spend a large amount of public money to destroy this asset, rather than to spend much less to safeguard it.

I note also that given the plans for an East-West Rail link, the financial arguments for the busway are substantially eroded.

What I really object to most strongly to about the present proposal is that, like many of the grand ideas for ‘developing’ Cambridge, it seems to have been developed using criteria which have no other purpose than to maximise the amount of public money being given to the privately owned developers, not to maximise its financial, practical or environmental benefit to the residents of Cambridge. It seems to consider valueless what is actually valuable on a day-to-day basis to people living in Cambridge – the protection of what makes Cambridge such a desirable place to live, work and visit – which is its setting.

I stress that I am all in favour of schemes that try to shift people from cars to other forms of transport. However, I am not in favour of schemes like this one that spend far more public money than is necessary on environmentally destructive schemes that have not been properly thought through, which have not properly considered cheaper and less environmentally damaging alternatives, and which do not take into account the effect on cost-benefit of a project against other planned transport schemes (such as the East-West Rail link).

Timothy Rufus Neal
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