



Secretary of State for Transport
c/o Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
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London SW1P 4DR
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6th January 2025

Dear Sirs,

Objection to Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway, linking Cambourne to Cambridge, as submitted by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) on 12 November 2024.

I would like to register an objection in the strongest possible terms to the above application by the GCP and the Cambridgeshire County Council. I understand that objections will trigger a public enquiry, but I believe, in the first instance, that the Department, and the Secretary of State, should reject the application and send it back to the GCP and the County Council for reassessment as being unfit for purpose. This would save the enormous cost of a Public Enquiry into a scheme which, on any number of criteria, flouts or ignores the guidelines for infrastructure works.

My grounds for stating this would also be my main grounds for objection, so I do provide them here.

Cambridge Past Present and Future (CPPF) have published a detailed, fully evaluated alternative scheme that would provide a bus lane (in highway) alternative for this off-road section. The alternative scheme would be considerably less expensive and enormously less environmentally damaging. The GCP have never conducted their own appraisal of this scheme, nor given any valid explanation for rejecting it, despite numerous calls for them to do so at both GCP Executive and County Council meetings. Instead, they have made comparisons only with other, obviously less viable on-road alternatives.

Secondly, the GCP have used outdated, pre-pandemic, models to support their proposals and have thus overstated the case for their scheme. The independent audit of the GCP's scheme carried out in 2022 confirmed the effect of the pandemic, and suggested that the scheme should be looked at in the light of new working patterns post-Covid. This has not been done.

Thirdly, the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the GCP's off-road scheme has been variously quoted as between 0.43 and 0.48, and this is before removing their double counting from EWRail in terms of patronage and land-value uplift. (These figures cannot be counted in both business cases and GCP

have done no modelling on this.) A BCR of >2 is generally required for a public-sector project to receive government approval, while a BCR <1 is regarded as poor value for money.

In contrast, the CPPF scheme, with construction cost of approximately £60 million as opposed to £180 million, would have a BCR of at least three times that of the GCP scheme.

Finally, the GCP have never produced any calculations for the current cost of their scheme. Like the modelling their budget figure of £200 million was obtained pre-pandemic and before the massive escalation in building costs which we have seen in the last few years. It beggars belief that they can come to the Department of Transport with figures which are eight years out of date.

I hope for all these reasons that the application is rejected prior to the expense of a public enquiry. If that does not happen I believe that the public enquiry will be necessary in order to examine these, and the many other factors, which make this scheme financially and environmentally disastrous.

Yours faithfully

Jeremy Whitton Spriggs