From: [redacted]
To: TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE
Subject: Cambourne to Cambridge Busway TWAO-CCC 2024-11-12 - Objection
Date: 07 January 2025 11:11:15

I wish to lodge an objection to the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) planned route of the Cambourne to Cambridge Busway on the following grounds:

- **Environmental Impact**. It will have significant adverse environmental effects on four wildlife sites. In particular, destruction of a significant number of trees in the ancient Coton Orchard, a Priority Habitat and County Wildlife Site, will effectively destroy it as an important biodiversity habitat, containing not only trees but also hedges, meadow and scrub. The fauna here interact in an intricate way across it and with surrounding areas and their communication will be seriously disrupted. The planned offsetting of this damage by planting elsewhere will not come anywhere near reproducing its long-established integrated benefits.
- **Agricultural Impact**. It will also bisect valuable "best and most versatile" agricultural land, reducing food production and putting at risk the viability of the farm and the livelihoods of the farmers.
- **Flood Risk**. The 2.5m-high embankment proposed across the West Fields and along Rifle Range Road will act as a dam to water flows in the Bin Brook, its catchment and flood plain. There is insufficient evidence in the submission that increased flooding risks to properties in areas either side of the busway have been ruled out, as statutorily required. This is contrary to Para 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It appears that the model used may not be the most up-to-date one from the Environment Agency or have been approved by them.
    - The areas likely to be affected by flooding include the Gough Way estate to the south where I live, which has been subject to eight flood warnings in the last twelve months and at least two major flood events in the past. These include one in 2001 which took place despite the construction of the relief culvert around the estate boundary in response to an earlier one. The map presented only shows the very northern extent of the estate, not including the areas flooded in the past, so it is not clear that the applicant has properly considered the likely impact of their proposal.
    - There is no evidence in the submission that the effects of a blockage of the Bin Brook bridge under the busway have been properly assessed or any mitigation proposed. That would be likely to put areas to the south at serious risk during a flood event if trees were uprooted and washed downstream.
    - *The applicant needs to show no impact to water levels upstream and downstream of the busway embankment, state the likely peak flow rates along Bin Brook, especially through the proposed bridge, and address the risk of bridge blockage events*.
- **Minimal reduction in delays because of poor onward, and worse return, access.** The proposed route will not offer significant reductions in delays to buses reaching or leaving the city centre, so the cost-benefit ratio will be poor. The terminus of the dedicated busway will not be in the city centre at all, as suggested by GCP, but in Grange Road, one mile away, with very poor onward access. There are few options there for reaching other destinations either. It is effectively ‘a busway to nowhere’. GCP have not apparently commented on this major obstacle and seem to be trying to ignore it. Because of the configuration of the junction of Rifle Range Road and Grange Road the buses will have to leave towards and arrive from the south. The likely route from there to the centre would be along Silver Street, a narrow medieval thoroughfare. It is totally unsuited to and unable to accommodate the 16 extra buses per hour, as the eastern half of the street is not wide enough for them to pass each other. They would have a serious impact on safety and amenity of the many hundreds of pedestrians and cyclists who also use it every day. From there buses would go into town along Pembroke St and Downing St but they are one-way. The return route out of the centre would be much longer and subject to significant traffic delays at many times of the day, wiping out the time savings created by the busway. GCP have not apparently stated how this will be resolved.
- **Viable alternatives**. Cambridge Past Present & Future (PPF) and others have made a good case for a viable on-road alternative along Madingley Road, which would be as effective, involve only a few minutes longer travel time, but be much cheaper to construct. It could be shared with other buses and emergency vehicles and would also provide easier access to the City centre along Magdalene Street. It is not clear that GCP have assessed this properly.
    - Another solution to congestion in Madingley Road, which would make the busway redundant and also have other more wide-ranging benefits, would be provided by an upgrade of the Girton Interchange to allow east-bound traffic on the A428 to turn directly south onto the M11, and vice versa, avoiding Madingley Road altogether. The planned East-West Rail will also duplicate the route from Cambourne to Cambridge, reducing the benefits of the busway.
- **Unnecessary.** Cambridge Sustainable Transport clearly showed that in 2019 the only significant delays

to buses on Madingley Road occurred eastbound in the morning rush hour. Spending £millions and creating all the adverse impacts mentioned, to improve a small proportion of journeys, is not cost-effective or justifiable. There is evidence that there have been reductions in traffic since the Covid pandemic permanently altered commuting patterns, further reducing the scheme's utility.

- **No contribution to Active Travel**. The planned route will not facilitate active travel by bicycle because it includes the steep Madingley Hill. The Comberton Greenway will provide a better alternative.

Dr Antony Warren
[redacted]

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