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**From:** David Seilly <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 07 March 2025 18:57  
**To:** TRANSPORTINFRASTRUCTURE  
**Subject:** Objection to Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway to the southeast of Cambridge Cambridge

David Seilly,  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to make a formal objection to the "Application for a Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway to the southeast of Cambridge", as submitted by the Cambridge Greater Partnership on 9 January 2025.

The grounds for this objection are the following:

The construction of 5 miles of new road through open countryside is unnecessary to deliver improvements in transport. One of the major problems of dedicated cross-country busways, is that the busway has a strong tendency to be where it is least needed, as in general the traffic congestion is lowest on the cross-country roads. When the buses travelling on the new proposed cross-country busway arrive in the urban areas, such as Cambridge, they tend to leave the Guided Busway and join the general traffic where most of the congestion is or avoid this by running along dedicated urban busways.

Making the busway a Guided Busway is non-sensical as a dedicated conventional road would work just as well. No one is claiming it is not possible to run buses along what has been derogatorily describes as concrete gutter but making it a Guided Busway will not improve the journey times which is what busways are meant to be about. To be blunt about this the general consensus in the Cambridge Area on the existing Guided Busway is that, it is disliked and is seen a bit of a white elephant. It is also seen as dangerous, due to multiple crashes, involving the "derailment" of the buses, two people have been killed by the Guided Buses along with many pet dogs. The buses are very quiet, and because of the constraints of the Guided Busway they cannot swerve. There is also the constant frequent occurrence of cars being "caught" on the busway when these make a wrong turn, which shuts the busway for hours. The original Guided Busway has been made unnecessary by the de-trunking of the old A14 by the new road which has freed up the cross-country road spaces for the buses. (It is debatable whether the Busway was originally needed, as a Public Enquiry was held into this, and it was rumoured the inspector somehow lost his report. I can't remember whether the inspector ever found his report, but the suspicion was that The Guided Busway failed at the Public Enquiry and was forced through at a higher Government Level. Perhaps you could check this story out.)

I have a particular loathing of the Guided Busway design, because of the way it functions as a cruel linear pitfall trap for small animals such as migrating frogs and toads, rodents such as wood mice, bank and water voles, shrews and hedgehogs. All of which I have personally rescued from the original Guided Busway before it opened. The design is like a Ha-ha. On the outer side of the busway the soil

is banked up to the top of the busway track so any small creatures can easily climb onto the busway, but once inside the high walled smooth guided busway track, are incapable of climbing back out again. The unfortunate creatures are trapped, in this linear pitfall trap, and have a very slim chance of escaping before being killed by a passing Guided Bus. I have seen birds such as Lesser Black Backed Gulls dead by the Busway and my friend has seen a dead Tawny Owl. Most of the animals are nocturnal and the carnage happens at night, under the cover of darkness.

I am very knowledgeable about the severe impact, the Guided Busway between Impington and Histon, had on the very large colony of breeding toads in the nearby Chivers Lake there. In spring 2010, I checked the busway and found around 700 toads at lunchtime, trapped against the outside of the Busway Track. I and a friend collected these in buckets and transported these to the lake. (On the previous night we had high numbers of Toads at the Madingley Toad Rescue. I checked the Busway for Toads.) My friend personally rescued and carried 5000 toads across the Busway that year, I seem to remember rescuing a couple of thousand myself. Professional ecologists were employed by the Council to attempt to mitigate the effect of the Busway on the toads and these rescued several thousand toads as well. I estimate that the size of the Toad Colony to be around 10,000 or more, this is a very large colony by UK standards.

To summarise briefly: The Common Toad is a BAP species. The professional ecologists and the Busway contractors excavated several tunnels under the Busway to enable the Toads to migrate under the busway and were meant to work out, how to enable the meta-morph toads, (tiny few month-old toads,) get back under the busway. A councillor decided the ecologists were too expensive at a time of economic crisis and got rid of them (i.e. ceased to employ them.) Meta-morph Toads are very good at climbing and climbed onto the Guided Busway in their tens of thousands, instead of being channelled into the toad tunnels under the busway. Unsustainably high numbers of toad meta-morphs died on the Guided Busway, presumably by being directly run over by the buses or desiccation and perhaps being killed by the Busway cleaning machinery. As a direct consequence of the building and opening of the Cambridge Guided Busway, a major UK toad colony collapsed, mainly due to lack of recruitment of juvenile toads, to the population. (The loss of toads on the outward migration would not have helped.) In other words the Guided Busway wiped out a massive toad colony, which probably could have been saved if it was a conventional road.

For reasons I have given above, I strongly object to a new Guided Busway of any length being built, any Busways that would be constructed should be of conventional road. Perhaps a very short length of Guided Busway could be used to keep this dedicated to buses. This has been done near the Cambridge North Railway Station.

The construction of 5 miles of new road through open countryside is unnecessary to deliver improvements in transport. Similar transport and economic benefits can be achieved by building a version of the scheme first proposed by the applicant in 2018. This would involve building sections of bus lane adjacent to the A1307 and 1 mile of new road (busway).

This alternative would; avoid building two bridges over the River Granta chalk stream and putting Hobson's Conduit chalk stream into a culvert. Avoid creating a scar in the Gog Magog Hills landscape, one of the most important landscapes in the Cambridge area. Avoid building a new road through a countryside park, to the detriment of its future users and nature. Avoid severing fields close to villages making them vulnerable to future development and further harm to the countryside.

This alternative would better serve the planned expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and serve more of the Campus.

Cycle routes in this area are already under construction and include the Linton Greenway which will connect Cambridge to Babraham, Granta Park and Linton; and the Sawston Greenway that will connect Cambridge to Sawston. Stapleford and Shelford are already served by the DNA cycle path.

Other people suggest that instead of running a Busway along the A1307, the buses should simply travel on the A1307 like all the other traffic. If there is some sort of capacity and congestion problem on the A1307, then the entire road should be upgraded . Perhaps as much of the proposed bus route as possible, should stay on the A1307.

Finally, I wish to remind you that the financial situation in this country is now dire. Future climate change will mean that the farmland around Cambridge will be desperately needed for food in the future. The expansion of Cambridge is in this context is a dangerously bad idea, because we need the surrounding farmland for food security, (Britain nearly starved during the Second World War and things are going wrong. Now.)

Best regards,

David

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