

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

From	Question
<p>Josh Grantham on behalf of Camcycle</p>	<p>Agenda Item 7 - Public Transport and City Access Strategy</p> <p>In the Joint Assembly feedback, it was noted that ‘doing nothing was clearly not an option, particularly given the climate crisis, the current transport situation in Greater Cambridge and the cost-of-living crisis.’ The Assembly went on to recommend the need to listen to public feedback and how the consultation need to be wide-ranging and accessible, including ensuring input from those who have traditionally been less likely to participate.’ The importance of these statements cannot be overlooked.</p> <p>Last week whilst out promoting cycle parking we were speaking to two teenagers who had just started at Hills Road College. We began to speak about congestion charging and one of the students said, ‘yes, Cambridge needs one of those!’. We told him that now could be our best chance and spoke about the benefits of a scheme like this which include tackling climate change, building healthy lives and delivering safe cycle routes, topics these young adults felt very strongly about.</p> <p>This consultation presents an opportunity for Cambridge to ask the public about a once in a generational opportunity. To fully realise this opportunity, we must speak to people of all ages and backgrounds. Beyond just accessibility, the consultation process will need to engage and educate.</p> <p>How will the consultation reach people of all ages and demographics of society?</p>
<p>James Littlewood, CEO, Cambridge Past, Present & Future</p>	<p>Agenda Item 8 - Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge</p> <p>Notwithstanding the fact that the Board wanted the EIA to be undertaken so that you could understand the impacts of the scheme before you decided whether it should proceed, the report makes clear that the EIA is still underway and that surveys are still being carried out. It appears that both an environmental survey including a full ecological baseline and a landscape visual impact assessment are still to be finalised. The public have been told in the consultation that habitats are not expected to be sensitive. But we and you do not know this for sure.</p> <p>The report does briefly mention the significant impacts. At paragraph 4.36 and 4.52– the Coton Orchard, the City Wildlife Site, the Bin Brook, the presence of Barbastelle Bats. However, the report does not provide any information regarding the significance of the impacts of the scheme and how such impacts are to be avoided or mitigated.</p> <p>Members are being asked to agree progressing with the application to government in advance of knowing the full facts on the impacts of the scheme on wildlife and the landscape.</p> <p>This report is mostly about the EIA consultation and therefore it is clearly premature for the Board to be making a decision to proceed to the next stage without knowing what the significant impacts will be. We don’t understand why you are being asked to discuss this now rather than in November, when it is likely that such information would be available. A report in November would not hold up the progression of the scheme in any way. Please will you request that a report comes back to you in November which includes information about the significant impacts of the scheme and the plans to avoid and mitigate them?</p>

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<p align="center">Gabriel Fox</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>I brought to the Joint Assembly's attention recently the latest real-time bus journey data on the existing Citi 4 bus service between Cambourne and Cambridge. These data show that the service now runs freely at all times, including during school term and during morning and evening rush hours, with an average peak hours journey time of half-an-hour all the way to the city centre. If you subtract the dwell time at the more than 20 bus stops on the route, the journey is barely 25 minutes, which is actually better than GCP has predicted for its off-road route.</p> <p>Responding to my question, Mr Blake stated - without providing any evidence - that "the car is coming back". The data very clearly show that that is untrue, certainly as far as Madingley hill and the rest of the C2C route are concerned. The average weekday morning peak journey time down Madingley hill was 7 minutes in May, 7 minutes in June and 7 minutes in July.</p> <p>Residents all along the route have always supported the overall objective of better bus journeys, but have long and consistently argued for a sensitive, respectful and proportionate scheme - sensitive to our local environment, respectful of taxpayers' money and proportionate to the problem at hand.</p> <p>We now have incontrovertible evidence that the congestion that triggered this project has gone away and is not returning. Even with the additional housing planned, it is clearly not going to come back to anything like the same degree. Will the GCP Executive Board, therefore, at last agree to do right by the local community and discontinue an expensive and unnecessary off-road route along the Coton Corridor; and focus instead on the improvements on Madingley Road that will satisfy the Local Plan and provide all the future-proofing this scheme needs?</p>
<p align="center">Dr. Marilyn Treacy</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>We were dismayed to see that all Coton group responses to the EIA were misrepresented in the original WSP report (GCP C2C EIA Report Public v2 5). This included savage editing of the Parish Council's response. We are pleased that most of the errors have now been rectified but we are not satisfied with the explanation given for the original errors. It is disappointing that the GCP officers were presenting incorrect information to the public and the Joint Assembly.</p> <p>Coton is the village most affected by the off-road bus way so it is disappointing to see again that officers are omitting important information about the village. The board papers appear designed to airbrush Coton's importance as a necklace village. To give a few examples from section 4.</p> <p>Landscape, It is stated that C2C runs across a landscape of mostly low farmland - untrue, Madingley Hill is one of the most prominent raised areas in the Cambridge greenbelt visible from miles around and has National Trust Covenants. The importance of Madingley Hill as part of the setting of the American Cemetery is omitted.</p> <p>Heritage, The documents omit to reference that Coton has a 12th century Grade1 listed church and 12 listed buildings.</p> <p>Nature, The description of Coton Orchard omits to mention that it is a 100 yr. old ancient orchard, is the 8th largest in the country, and will be bisected and all but destroyed by this route.</p>

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

	<p>My question, chair, is: How can you have confidence in the material that you are being presented with in this headline EIA report when important facts are omitted or misrepresented?</p>
<p>Anna Gazeley on behalf of the directors of Coton Orchard Ltd, landlord for Blue Diamond Garden Centre at Coton Orchard and the landowner [being asked by Marilyn Treacy]</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>My question refers to page 80, section 5.8 of the GCP Executive Board Agenda for Wednesday 28th September 2022, which states: “Following discussion with the landowner and ecological surveys, the alignment is being reviewed to seek to avoid the few surviving original trees within the Orchard.”</p> <p>While we have made written objections, and other submissions in response to public consultations, there have been no discussions with us pertaining to the alignment of the GCP preferred off-road C2C busway. The original trees from 1922, plus hundreds of mature fruit trees that will shortly reach ‘veteran’ status, span the breadth of the Orchard. Given that the proposed scheme is for a 20m width of roadway bisecting the land, plus further clearance to allow for building works, please can you explain, precisely, how you will avoid these trees?</p>
<p>Sam on behalf of 'Bonkers Busway Cambs' [being asked by Marilyn Treacy]</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>As published in the Cambridgeshire County Council’s most recently available audited Statement of Accounts. £180 million of ‘City Deal’ government grant funding has been received as to 2021. Given the comprehensive income and expenditure statement shows an “expenditure”, i.e., deficit, of £173 million, we extrapolate that those funds have been spent.</p> <p>The Mott MacDonald Outline Business Case Financial Case 2020 estimates a build cost for the preferred option of the Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C) Project to be £160 million. Adjusting for inflation using the Office for National Statistics indices, and assuming a 2023 start, this would equate to between £220 and £436 million. Far in excess of the remainder of the second tranche payment, receivable from 2022 – 2025, of £120 million.</p> <p>Where will the money come from to complete the C2C project should it be progressed today?</p>
<p>Sue and Terry Spencer</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>In the summer of 2021, the superintendent of the American Cemetery submitted a note to the GCP executive. The GCP executive dismissed his concerns. His note stated:</p> <p>“The Madingley Hill landscape is a place of beauty that has been valued by many generations and is worthy of preservation. Its stunning viewshed extends north towards Ely Cathedral, east towards King’s College Chapel, south over Red Meadow Hill, and beyond; with the picturesque villages of Coton and Madingley nestled either side.</p> <p>“In 1945, Major-General Lee of the US Army requested Madingley Hill to become the site of a permanent commemorative cemetery and memorial to honour fallen US service personnel of the Second World War specifically because of its natural beauty and unparalleled viewshed. The US Government asked for this specific terrain – no other terrain would do – because the viewshed was the key “selling point” then, as it is now.</p> <p>“Today, the Cambridge American Military Cemetery is a world-renowned monument and a Grade 1 listed landscape by Historic England. Extending south, the unspoilt open countryside, located in the Green Belt, is extensively protected by National Trust covenants.</p>

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

	<p>“We are concerned that GCP’s proposal to build a tarmac bus road across the south side of the hill would irreparably damage this unique and precious landscape, compromising the setting of the American Military Cemetery, severing historic community access routes, and paving the way for further urban encroachment in its vicinity.”</p> <p>Could the chair of the Executive Board please explain why the above concerns were dismissed?</p> <p>It should be noted that the on-road bus lane down Madingley Hill which has been proposed by CBAG as an alternative to the off-road solution will not encroach onto the American Cemetery land.</p>
Carolyn Postgate	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>For six years I have attended Joint Assembly and Executive Board meetings to ask questions. In all that time I have been trying to convey to the Board the essential fact that the off-road section of the C2C busway from Madingley Mulch to the M11 is entirely unnecessary. This section is now almost the only section that is truly off-road, yet will cost far more, and will involve more land-take of green belt and covenanted land, than any other section.</p> <p>Over the years we have proved beyond doubt (contrary to the assertions made by your officers) that an inbound-only bus lane on Madingley Road is viable without land-take. In addition, journey time for on-road buses on this section of the route is directly comparable, and possibly slightly better, than GCP’s own estimates for the off-road route. Buses travelling along Madingley Road are much more easily routed to places of work or education than from Grange Road. Moreover, an on-road route satisfies the requirements of the Local Plan, enables development to continue at Bourn Airfield, and requires no expensive land-take.</p> <p>You have listened to the residents of Hardwick and decided that an on-road option is viable on St Neots’ Road.</p> <p>You have listened to “a stakeholder request” and have re-routed the off-road busway away from the Waterworks site.</p> <p>It is within your power to stop the destruction of productive arable farmland on Madingley Hill and the devastation of irreplaceable wildlife in Coton orchard.</p> <p>It is within your power to stop the irreversible damage to a precious landscape and village by keeping the bus on Madingley Road.</p> <p>Will the Board listen to the residents of Coton before it is too late?</p>
Debbie Whitton Spriggs [being asked by Allan Treacy]	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>The traditional orchard at Coton is the largest in Cambridgeshire and the eighth largest in the UK. These orchards are priority habitats because they are very similar to the indigenous wood and scrub once found in the British Isles – which produces much higher levels of biodiversity than might otherwise be expected.</p> <p>The proposed 20-metre-width of busway that will run right across the orchard, along with further clearing required for construction, will fragment this precious natural resource to such an extent that it is effectively removed. Contrary to the claims of the GCP proposal –</p>

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

	<p>and as the Orchard Biodiversity Officer for the People's Trust for Endangered Species has stated – no amount of new grass or tree planting will mitigate this loss.</p> <p>What possible justification can there be for this destruction?</p>
Alistair Burford	<p>Agenda Item No. 8: Better Public Transport: Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>I find it surprising that today the Officers are asking the Board for approval to progress the C2C scheme to the TWA stage despite the fact that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been fully completed.</p> <p>Over the last 5 years, at every stage of the scheme, I have heard the Joint Assembly and the Board asking to see an EIA before progressing this scheme. Indeed, I believe it is a requirement that an EIA be carried before requesting approval for a TWA. We are being told that some of the EIA is complete, but the critical part of the EIA which runs through the Ancient Orchard has not.</p> <p>Evidence gleaned by local residents indicates a strong presence of both Soprano Pipistrelle & Common Bent Wing bats within the Orchard which will most likely be confirmed within the EIA. If or when the EIA confirms the presence of bats within the Coton Orchard, what would happen next? Will the route be revised to avoid this sensitive area and will this mean the route goes north towards Polhill Garden Centre, south towards Coton village centre or is there another route?</p> <p>I would therefore ask the Board members (not the officers) given they are the decision makers today;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain how they can feel comfortable progressing the scheme without having all of what may be vital information? 2. If the Board does progress the scheme without this information and the route has to be moved, will there be another public consultation.
Josh Grantham on behalf of Camcycle	<p>Agenda Item No. 8 - Better Public Transport - Cambourne to Cambridge Project</p> <p>The Cambourne to Cambridge --project extends to where the route meets Grange Road, yet all of the buses using the route will have to travel along Grange Road to West Road. This is the most constrained section of Grange Road and the required improvements to facilitate this should be brought within this project. Opportunities to amend the junction location on Grange Road should be explored as well as increasing the corridor width between the existing track by the University Rugby Club and West Road. Without improvements, this section of Grange Road will put off many travelling actively as well as compromising the quality of the public transport provision.</p> <p>Will the GCP extend the project scope to encompass this short section of Grange Road?</p>
James Littlewood, CEO, Cambridge Past, Present & Future	<p>Agenda Item 9 - Better Public Transport: Cambridge Eastern Access Project</p> <p>Consultation on possible locations for a park and ride site was conducted in December 2021. The site selection and appraisal report appended to this report was published in May 2022. I can see no record of the Executive Board having discussed the site selection process until now. However, you are being asked to "note the preference for Option 1 Park and Ride". Agreeing this recommendation will result in the Outline Business case being prepared without the opportunity for members to ask questions and debate the site selection process. Option 1 results in development in the Green Belt. Options beyond the inner greenbelt boundary have been dismissed. By default, therefore Members are being</p>

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

	asked to rule out consideration of other options. When will members be given the opportunity to discuss the site selection process and alternatives to providing a Park and Ride/travel hub site in the Green Belt?
Josh Grantham on behalf of Camcycle	<p>Agenda Item No. 9 - Better Public Transport - Cambridge Eastern Access Project</p> <p>The outline designs for this project have made many positive steps forward, yet concerns remain and several areas for improvement exist. For example, there would appear to be a lack of flexibility within the County Signals team, which is resulting in many sub-optimal solutions for users. In order to deliver a successful scheme, all stakeholders must align behind a common goal and look beyond minimising their own siloed objectives. In the recent meeting of the non-motorised user group, the design team said they will shortly be undertaking junction assessments in accordance with LTN 1/20 and completing a RSA which is welcome.</p> <p>Will these assessments be shared with stakeholders and will the GCP table the designs with Active Travel England to ensure the best possible outcome?</p>
James Littlewood, CEO, Cambridge Past, Present & Future	<p>Agenda Item 10: Greater Cambridge Greenways</p> <p>Cambridge Past Present and Future are engaging with the GCP in trying to ensure that the design of the Greenways is sensitive to heritage, landscape and ecology. The greenways pass through conservation areas in the city and villages, through open landscapes and past woodlands and hedgerows.</p> <p>We are concerned that Cambridgeshire County Council decided to implement a policy that red (two shades thereof) are the only colours that should be used on new cycle tracks for consistency. This conflicts with the Historic England's "Streets for All" advice on cycle infrastructure and design, that states that specific colours are not a requirement.</p> <p>We were pleased to hear in response to our question to the GCP Joint Assembly that landscape character assessments will be undertaken for all the routes to ensure they are appropriate to their location. We are however concerned to have since learnt that conservation officers from Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Services, who have specialist expertise and local knowledge, have not been consulted in the design of the greenways. Can you please tell us why this has not happened and confirm whether specialist officers from the shared planning service will have early input into the design of the greenways prior to public consultation.</p>
Josh Grantham on behalf of Camcycle	<p>Agenda Item No: 10 - Greater Cambridge Greenways</p> <p>Camcycle has attended many Greenway workshops in which the latest Greenway alignments and designs are shared and discussed in detail with a variety of stakeholders. In many of these discussions we are told many of the major pieces of infrastructure needed to complete these routes and make them safe for all ages and abilities are being compromised due to budget constraints. For example: no underpass on the Barton Greenway, no tunnel under the A14 to the Waterbeach Greenway and no underpass on the Haslingfield Greenway to name but a few. We understand that some design options will not be possible based on the current budget, but this decision-making process must be transparent and considered in the context of all the Greenways in order for the funding to be spent wisely. Many opportunities exist to reduce costs in other parts of the Greenway, for example a modal filter on Grantchester Road would remove the need for the Bulk Path and the shared route alongside Grantchester Road, saving millions of pounds and carbon emissions.</p>

28th September 2022 Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board
Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

	Will the GCP provide greater clarity on the budgets with stakeholders and ensure that they are engaged in the decision making process in terms of infrastructure prioritisation so the best outcomes are to be achieved?
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