

Statement to Cambourne–Cambridge LLF

Position with respect to City Deal proposal

Smarter Cambridge Transport supports the City Deal's intention of achieving a modal shift away from private cars towards greater use of public transport, cycling and walking. This should apply to commuting into Cambridge as well as local trips between villages to access schools and other local amenities.

Smarter Cambridge Transport does not support the City Deal's decision to progress the Option 3/3A busway proposal for Cambourne-Cambridge because it fails to:

1. Improve the end-to-end experience of bus travel, focusing only on a marginal improvement to journey times to Grange Road.
2. Link up coherently with other schemes in the Councils' transport strategies.
3. Enhance the built and rural environment of the city and surrounding countryside for the benefit of current and future generations.

More specifically, our chief objections to Option 3/3A are:

1. It destroys valuable green spaces and interrupts habitat corridors.
2. It does not provide much-needed improvements for cycling and walking along Madingley Road, or into the city centre (via Northampton Street or via Burrell's Walk, Garret Hostel Lane and Senate House Passage).
3. It is hugely expensive (£221 million, including maintenance and bus subsidies) and has an unacceptably low cost-benefit ratio (of 0.21).
4. The busway provides significant benefit only to peak-time bus users.
5. Traffic delays are almost entirely confined to the stretch of road between Madingley Mulch roundabout and the M11 junction, and during the morning peak.
6. There is no justification for creating a new road parallel to the A428 and St Neots Rd.
7. Connection to any future Western Orbital needs to be designed now, not retrofitted.
8. The bus route from Grange Road has not been identified. (The implied route via Silver St, Pembroke St and Downing St is unsuited to full-size buses.)
9. Planned national infrastructure, including [East-West Rail link](#) and the [Oxford–Cambridge Expressway](#), could render the busway prematurely redundant.

[Key questions](#) put to the City Deal Executive Board remain unanswered. [bit.ly/SCT-CamBusQs]

Smarter Cambridge Transport alternative

Smarter Cambridge Transport proposes a radical and realistic alternative, offering a more complete, effective and sensitive way of delivering the objectives. Rather than building new road capacity, we recommend that the City Deal develop a proposal that:

1. Makes better use of existing roads.
2. Serves the wider needs of the local community and businesses.
3. Provides the basis for an attractive and affordable public transport service.
4. Integrates public transport, walking and cycling.
5. Does not ignore the needs of people who have no choice but to drive.

To that end we recommend that the City Deal (in partnership with Highways England and the National Infrastructure Commission on point 1):

1. Remodel the [Girton Interchange](#) to least provide connection in both directions between the A428, M11 and the A1307 (Huntingdon Rd).
2. Once the A428 and M11 are connected, ban right-turns from the A1303 onto the M11 at Junction 13 (allowing removal of the right-filter lane).
3. Build a [Park & Ride](#) site at the [Girton Interchange](#).
4. Build a high-quality [bus station](#) at Cambourne and [express bus stops](#) serving Bourn Airfield (once developed), Highfields Caldecote and Hardwick.
5. Arrange peak-time express bus services between Cambourne and Cambridge.
6. Extend the Cotton cycle/footway through Hardwick, Highfields Caldecote, Bourn Airfield and Cambourne, connecting with travel hubs and local amenities.
7. Add traffic lights at the Madingley Mulch roundabout and A1303–Cambridge Rd junction.
8. Co-ordinate all lights to regulate traffic flows and prioritise approaching buses.
9. Use [Inbound Flow Control](#) on the A1303, comprising an additional inbound queuing lane and a bypass/bus lane from the Madingley Mulch roundabout up to Madingley Wood (about 500m). This would eliminate congestion on Madingley Hill in the morning peak, and give buses effective priority.
10. Install a bus gate on Northampton Street to prioritise buses and improve safety for those cycling and walking.

Conclusion

Smarter Cambridge Transport believes that the Girton Interchange is where we need major new infrastructure for the long-term benefit of the region. We do not support building large-scale infrastructure that is inherently compromised or unlikely to have at least fifty years of beneficial use, be it bus roads, bus lanes or car parks.

In the short term, the focus should be on small-scale interventions that, in combination, will make bus travel and cycling attractive and viable for many more people without severely penalising those who have no choice but to drive.

We will not participate in workshops designed to refine Option 3/3A, but will be willing to participate if the aim is to identify and develop alternatives.