

Executive Board Questions and Responses 20th September 2017

No.	Questioner	Question	Responder	Response
Item 6: Cambourne to Cambridge better bus journeys scheme				
6a	Kathy York	<p>"With reference to Option 1, we note that a 4.25m bus lane has been drawn which is within the highway boundary. There are pinch points on the section of the Madingley Road from the West Cambridge site to Lady Margaret Road where it would be impossible to accommodate designated cycle lanes as well as a bus lane. We have been very concerned by the current volume of bikes, and this is now due to increase significantly due to the 12,000 bike racks at Eddington. The Ridgeway trail from Eddington to Storeys Way will also contribute to a vastly increased volume of cycle traffic. My question is: without considerable land take (ie residents' gardens), how can Madingley Road accommodate rapid bus transport and cycle lanes?"</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>Land that is designated as public highway on Madingley Road would not be able to accommodate a bus lane, high quality cycle lanes and traffic lanes. Therefore if this proposal proceeded, some compromises would be needed – either to the bus and/or cycle facilities or additional land take would be required which could have environmental impacts and affect properties.</p>
6b	Chris Pratten	<p>Given that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A route across the West Fields is unlikely to be deemed "required" given the existence of routes that do not cross the West Fields green belt. • In the view of LDA in Appendix L1c, the routes across the West Fields are very likely to be considered "inappropriate". <p>The GCP will therefore need to demonstrate "very special circumstances" for any of the more destructive routes to be chosen. It seems unlikely that such circumstances can be demonstrated in the light of the other available options.</p> <p>Will the board instruct officers to further restrict the set of consulted routes to the east of the M11 to routes that are identified as appropriate in the LDA report?</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>It is important to recognise the stage of the process that the current plans are at. At this point, a range of potential route options has been prepared and are being presented to the Board. No final decisions are being made at this point and the current options have been subject to high level assessment and the options presented offer clear choices between different issues and impacts and therefore will support a transparent consultation process.</p> <p>When a final decision is made on the preferred route, all of the required detailed environmental assessment work will be undertaken. If any of the off road options are chosen, these will be considered through a Transport and Works Act Order inquiry where an Inspector will fully test the proposals against all relevant local and environment policies. It is therefore too early to rule out any of the specific proposals in the report.</p>

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6c	Ellen Khmelnitski	<p>Appendix L3 indicates that the southerly route options across the West Fields, that are proposed in the board papers, would cross a section of Bin Brook that is designated as a Main River. The flood zone at this point is some 30-40m wide. A safe busway crossing at this point would involve significant damage to the environment. The route would need to rise above the landscape at this point to a level well above the current ground which is prone to flooding. The analysis of Appendix N2 restricts itself to simple engineering concerns, thus avoiding a complete and transparent description of the structure that might be required. The LDA Green Belt analysis also avoids this question, assuming that the busway fits into the rather optimistic "Green Lane Concept".</p> <p>The residents of the Gough Way Estate have very significant concerns about any infrastructure that might lead to an increase in the risk of flooding to their homes. Will the Board instruct officers to ensure that consultation documents and future reports present a realistic view of what might be required at a Bin Brook crossing?</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>It is important to recognise the stage of the process that the current plans are at. At this point, a range of potential route options has been prepared and are being presented to the Board. No final decisions are being made at this point and the current options have been subject to high level assessment and the options presented offer clear choices between different issues and impacts and therefore will support a transparent consultation process.</p> <p>When a final decision is made on the preferred route, all of the required detailed environmental assessment work will be undertaken. If any of the off road options are chosen, these will be considered through a Transport and Works Act Order inquiry where an Inspector will fully test the proposals against all relevant local and environment policies. It is therefore too early to rule out any of the specific proposals in the report.</p>
6d	Carolyn Postgate	<p>Interim Transport Director's Report - "Madingley Mulch to Grange Road Journey Times"</p> <p>The table within the report claims a difference in journey times between Option 3 & Option 6 as 5 minutes. The cost difference between the two options is in the region of £40 million tax payers money.</p> <p>Is it really acceptable to spend an additional £40 million to reduce the journey time by 5 minutes when not time but reliability is of greater importance?</p> <p>Whilst the Officers appear confident with their assessment of journey times and cost, the report has no mention of the frequency of buses, how many people living in the west of the City actually want to travel into Cambridge during the peak period or where the bus will go once at</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>The value for money of a scheme is captured in the benefit:cost ratio. This compares the monetary benefits that would result from a scheme (for example journey time savings) against its cost. It is an established methodology for assessing the value to be gained from potential public investments. All schemes promoted by the Greater Cambridge Partnership will be assessed in this way and through this, we will need to show to government who are providing the funding that we are investing wisely. Therefore this question can only be answered when there is a clear scheme to consider. This will be an important consideration in any Public Inquiry into this scheme.</p> <p>The frequency of buses is an issue for the operators to decide. However, it is clear and experience demonstrates this, that if a scheme is provided that is attractive to the travelling public, bus operators will provide services.</p>

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	<p>Grange Road, other than, to quote Graham Hughes, “It will turn left or right”.</p> <p>Will the Board stipulate that before going to public consultation there should be a detailed employment survey of Cambourne residents, some idea of frequency of journeys, a joined-up plan as to how buses are going to get into the City centre and more importantly a coherent plan for how buses will get commuters to the main employment centres of Addenbrooke’s & Babraham in the south and the Science Park & Marshalls in the north?</p>	<p>Experience from the Busway shows this with frequencies more than doubling since opening as passenger demand has increased.</p> <p>There is already significant evidence that better bus services in this corridor are needed. There are large concentrations of population at Cambourne and St Neots and more planned at Bourn. The Biomedical Campus has over 15,000 jobs and the West Cambridge site has plans for up to 14,000 jobs. Currently many people travel between these and other areas by car, hence the congestion on Madingley Road.</p> <p>More specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wider ranging Automatic Number Plate Recognition analysis is currently underway to establish travel patterns in the area.• the consultation will pick up peoples demand for transport and destination.• The recent telephone survey did pick up that the St Neots – Cambridge corridor was very heavily used by people living along the corridor.• Consultation undertaken by Cambourne Parish council did identify Cambridge as the preferred destination for better bus services. <p>In response to a question raised at the Joint Assembly, officers agreed that for the consultation a clear plan showing potential links between employment sites and housing would be of benefit. It was also agreed that links from the potential off road routes (option 3) to the M11 should be shown.</p>
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6e	Allan Treacy	<p>There is a clear and urgent need to deliver people to the Addenbrookes site, the Bio Medical campus and beyond and not just Grange Road where virtually nobody goes to work.</p> <p>Option 6 would offer an economic, speedily implemented and efficient solution to this problem as it would permit connectivity with the M11.</p> <p>So why is connectivity with the M11 not a criteria in deciding whether to adopt option 1, 3a or 6?</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>All of the options before the Board have the potential to connect to the M11 either through the existing slip roads or through a dedicated new access from the potential new routes in option 3. In response to a question raised at the Joint Assembly, officers agreed that for the consultation a clear plan showing the links from the potential off road routes (option 3) to the M11 should be shown.</p>
6f	Alistair Burford	<p>When Officers were questioned as to why Crome Lea was not identified in the original public consultation document we were told that the original illustration “was only indicative”.</p> <p>The Officers have now recommended the Water Tower and Scotland Farm for public consultation. When questioned at the most recent LLF meeting about the exact size, location and any future expansion of the Water Tower site the Officers stated that the illustration “was only indicative” ... and the site was the same size as the current P&R at Trumpington.</p> <p>Given that plans are in place to extend the Trumpington P&R site, if in the future it is deemed necessary to extend the Water Tower site, where will it be extended to, south down the hill adjacent to Long Road or east towards Crome Lea?</p> <p>Will the Board give an undertaking that the Water Tower site will not be extended?</p> <p>Will the Board also given an undertaking that both sides illustrated in the public consultation document will remain in the same location and not end up 500 yards from where we are led to believe they are?</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>When the final site is selected and permission sought either through the normal planning process or Transport and Works Act Order, a clear site and size of site will need to be specified. Changes could only be made to that in the future by going back to the planning process where all of the normal checks in terms of policy and environmental impact will be followed.</p> <p>In any case from a practical point of view, the maximum effective size of site is around 2,000 spaces as above that size would encounter operational issues such as buses making multiple stops in the site or walk distances being too long.</p> <p>It is not expected that a site in this corridor will exceed this number of spaces.</p>

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6g	Dr Marilyn Treacy	<p>The first round of consultation on the Cambourne to Cambridge busway did not conform to the Gunning Principles and this may be just one of the aspects of GCP process to be challenged at Judicial Review.</p> <p>We were informed at the Joint Assembly last week that a consultation is not a referendum which is true however we were also informed that public opinion would play no part in future MCAF scoring for the preferred option of a Park and Ride site or the route to take forward for full outline business case development.</p> <p>May I remind the Executive that compliance with the Gunning principles requires that a decision maker gives "conscientious consideration" to the outcome of the consultation process.</p> <p>Put simply the public authority must be able to show that it has considered the outcome of the consultation process carefully and be prepared to change course in response to the outcome of consultation if appropriate.</p> <p>If MCAF scoring is used and the outcome of the consultation is not fed into the scoring process then the Gunning Principles are not being upheld.</p> <p>Q. If the outcome of the forthcoming consultation is going to play no part in MCAF scoring for the preferred option are we to assume that MCAF scoring will not be used? If that is so will the Executive explain at this stage what form the assessment of options will take.</p>	Graham Hughes	<p>We are satisfied that the work we are doing is within the Gunning Principles. To give us assurance of this we have been working with the Consultation Institute as our plans have developed.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that when a final decision on a route is made by the Executive Board, it will need to balance a number of factors of which the consultation response is only one alongside the MCAF scoring and other factors. This is normal process for decisions such as this as there is not one single factor that needs to be considered in making the decision.</p>
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<p>6h</p>	<p>Stephen Coates</p>	<p>Can the Board explain why GCP officers may be distorting perception by playing potentially misleading facts into public debate over the Cambourne Cambridge busway scheme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the record comments from GCP officers wrongly claimed in the Cambridge News (1 September) that new routes sidestep the West Fields by running along the border. And in the Cambridge Independent (6 September), officers claimed new routes address concerns over “potential in-fill and building on the West Fields” by St John’s College. Remaining routes still cross Grange Farm, which St John’s says makes development there more sustainable. 2. GCP documents claim that a new road through the West Fields will increase biodiversity. They claim arable fields have little biodiversity value and that new planting along the busway will increase biodiversity. James Cadbury, ex Head of Research at the RSPB, has said your analysis is wrong because many declining species (of birds, animals and plants) depend on open, arable countryside and thrive on the West Fields. Skylarks, grey partridge, yellow hammers, barn owls, brown hare are examples of species that need open fields, are distinct from species that reside in woodland or urban habitats. Up to 30 buses an hour will eventually use this road creating a wildlife barrier and pollution. The busway will enable large scale housing development, leading to the loss of these precious nature habitats on the edge of our historic city. 3. The GCP claimed in the Cambridge News on 9 August that a potential bus terminus on Silver Street was only last looked at in 2015 when it was in fact looked at in Spring 2017. You have still failed to clarify how so many buses will access the City centre through Silver Street. You have also used the press to wrongly undermine the reputation of SWF. 	<p>Graham Hughes</p>	<p>GCP officers have sought to be open and honest about the routes being proposed for consultation. In doing so, it has been important to explain that the proposed alternative routes have now reduced and that some of the impacts are therefore different to what they would have been. The map showing the proposed alignments has been shared with the media and there has been no attempt to distort or mislead in that process.</p> <p>The full statement we issued to the Cambridge News is as follows:</p> <p><i>We acknowledge the strength of feeling shown to these developing plans. However, a number of different options are being put forward and, subject to approval from the Executive Board, these will be tested with the public during consultation in the autumn.</i></p> <p><i>With more than 8,000 homes and 15,000 jobs planned along the A428 between St Neots and Cambridge in the next 15 years, fast and reliable public transport will be key to ensuring more and more people can get to and from the city and without putting additional pressure on the already congested road network.</i></p> <p><i>Bus services can address these challenges in the short to medium-term but that doesn’t preclude tunnels or light rail - or any another solution - in the future. Our joint study with the Mayor and Combined Authority on this will report early findings in November.</i></p> <p><i>Final decisions on this scheme are still some way off and will be made in the wider public interest taking all information, including residents’ views, into account.</i></p> <p>And in GCP’s original press release (which can be seen on the GCP website), the only reference is that a ‘more southerly route is no longer being proposed’ – the West Fields are not referenced directly.</p> <p>Subject to the Board’s decision, we will have a further</p>
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