Coton Busway Action Group
Coton, Cambridge

Dear [Name of Councillor],

Vital information ahead of the Cambourne to Cambridge TWAO vote

At the Full Council Meeting on Tuesday 11th February, you will be asked to vote to confirm the submission of the Cambridge to Cambourne (C2C) TWAO, made on 12 November 2024. The proposal was approved at at a Council meeting in March 2023, but there have been material changes to both the proposal and to the circumstances since then.

We are therefore writing to suggest that you take a few moments to acquaint yourself with some of the significant issues that have arisen, and to consider whether approving confirmation of this submission would be in the best interests of the Council and all the communities it serves.

We remain in full support of the development of much-needed infrastructure and better transport links from the west of Cambridge into the city and other key destinations. But the evidence is clear: the GCP's proposed off-road scheme would be disastrous. Moreover, there is a viable, low-cost, and more effective on-road option.

Here are the critical points to consider:

The document originally approved by the Council in March 2023 was only a draft. The final submission in November 2024 differs in key respects, and circumstances have changed significantly in the intervening 20 months. It will therefore be irresponsible for the Council to confer approval without serious re-examination.

One significant change is the new Government's commitment to East West Rail (EWR). This development substantively alters the transport rationale and the business case for C2C.

Another fresh development is the proposed new service Reservoir at Madingley. This vital component in the plan to ensure water supply meets growing demand lies on the proposed C2C route, introducing further complexity, risk and extra costs.

A major shortfall in funding for C2C is inevitable – and the County Council will be liable. This, together with the existence of competing major infrastructure schemes, several £M for yearly maintenance, and questions over the ability of bus companies to provide an appropriate level of service, makes this project a serious financial and political risk.

Press interest in C2C and the campaign to Save Coton Orchard continues to escalate. This and other GCP transport projects are coming under heightened public scrutiny.

Further proof of the exceptional biodiversity in Coton Orchard and Tree Preservation Orders on some of its trees both add further legal and environmental considerations.

Local elections on 1 May will be critical. In the current political climate, voters are looking to Councillors to demonstrate careful, intelligent stewardship of public funds and responsiveness to evolving circumstances.

The underlying detail on these issues, and the on-road alternative, can be found on our website.

For the avoidance of any doubt, we are not against buses or infrastructure schemes, but are deeply concerned for the responsible handling of public money, the environment and other resources.

We appreciate that time and attention is scarce, but we hope you'll find this summary helpful and give it due consideration. If you would like to discuss any of these issues with us, do get in touch via email: emailcbag@gmail.com

Yours faithfully,

The Coton Busway Action Group

CC:
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