



Cambridge to Cambourne Busway (A428)

Planning Appraisal

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Planning Appraisal has provided a high level overview in relation to key planning policy considerations in relation to the proposed Cambourne to Cambridge Busway Project, in relation to option 3A/3. It should be reviewed in conjunction with a number of other background reports prepared by Atkins and the Consideration of Green Belt Impacts Report, prepared by LDA. It specifically analyses the principle of the development.
- 1.2 The busway route is likely to be delivered under the TWA which relate directly to transport infrastructure projects. The TWA process will require a submission directly to the Secretary of State, rather than to the local planning authorities, although they will be key consultees.
- 1.3 The report has demonstrated that the transport and other objectives of the scheme are strongly supported in both Local and National policy. The busway proposals are also fully consistent with the economic and social objectives of the NPPF. The proposals seek to tie in with major employment and housing development along the A428 including Cambridge West Employment Site, Bourn Airfield and Cambourne West. In this regard transport modelling undertaken to date demonstrates that there is a direct relationship between residential growth, job growth and the busway proposals. The scheme would also facilitate significantly better and direct cyclist and pedestrian routes from Cambourne to Cambridge, which is strongly supported in planning terms.
- 1.4 The social and economic benefits of the scheme, need to be weighed against the impact in environmental terms, particularly accounting for the location of large parts of the proposed busway project route being situated within the Cambridge Green Belt. In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 90 of the NPPF, the busway has a required need for a Green Belt location in order to deliver the key transport objective of providing a fast, frequent and reliable route from Cambourne to Cambridge.
- 1.5 In addition, parts of the busway project route are defined as ‘not inappropriate’ development within the Green Belt on the basis that they will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and that the busway route will not conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt.
- 1.6 As set out within the Considerations of Green Belt Impacts Report, prepared by LDA, the busway can be delivered without compromising the openness of the Green Belt. This is with the exception of the green bridge ramp, which may conflict with the openness of the Green Belt, dependent upon the option chosen. It is the view of LDA that parts of the route options immediately to the west of Cambridge and to the north of Coton have a degree of conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. This specifically relates to national Green Belt purpose 4, and Cambridge Green Belt purposes 1 & 2. This has regard to preserving the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city; and the need to maintain and enhance its setting.

- 1.7 The LDA Report concludes that whilst parts of the route could be delivered as not inappropriate development within the Green Belt, very special circumstances would be required within the area of the Green Belt to the west of Cambridge City and to the north of Coton. The level of harm to the Green Belt will be dependent upon the final route option chosen, which in itself will need to be considered against other material planning factors, such as the transport objectives of the busway project. The LDA Report is considered to provide a worse case and conservative assessment of the impact that the busway scheme would have in terms of conflict with openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 1.8 Even accounting for the worst case and conservative approach taken by LDA, it is considered in planning terms that a strong case can be made for very special circumstances for the busway project. This accounts for the substantial transport benefits associated with the proposals and that the land will remain in the Green Belt following the completion of the development. The proposals will facilitate access to the Green Belt. This planning balance will be assessed in further detail dependent upon the final route chosen.
- 1.9 Overall it is therefore concluded that the principle of the busway from Cambourne to Cambridge is likely to be supported in planning terms when assessed against the Development Plan as a whole. It is consistent with the objectives of the NPPF, the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan (2006) and the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (2007).
- 1.10 In addition, work is being undertaken to assess the most suitable location for a park & ride site along the busway project route. The most appropriate location will be selected following a detailed assessment of different locations, having regard to a range of different planning matters.
- 1.11 A range of detailed work will be undertaken as part of the EIA process to establish a number of more detailed planning policy considerations related to the busway scheme.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this Report to provide an assessment of key planning policy considerations in relation to the delivery of the Cambridge to Cambourne Busway project adjacent to the A428. It specifically assesses the key matters that relate to the principle of the development in planning terms, including the location of the development within the Cambridge Green Belt. It has been prepared specifically in relation to route option 3a and option 3, which are off- road options. The predominantly online options of 1 and 6 or offline options 2, 4 and 5 have not been assessed as part of this report. Section 2 of this report provides background on the route options that have been/are being assessed as part of the busway project.
- 2.1.2 The report will be used to inform more detailed work and assessments as the project progressed.

Description of Proposed Busway Project

- 2.1.3 It is understood that for option 3a/3 the busway will be a two way hard running surface with a central grass section and a maximum width of 15 metres excluding any additional land for landscape and ecological mitigation, such as hedgerow planting. Adjacent to the busway (and within 15 metre width) would be a 4m wide maintenance track. The maintenance track would be available to use by emergency vehicles and would be made available as public rights of way in the form of a bridleway for use by pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists. The scheme would be designed to accommodate exiting public rights of way that either cross or run adjacent to it.

Lighting

- 2.1.4 Lighting will not be included along the busway or cycle track between junctions. At traffic signalled controlled junctions with the public highway, street lighting will be provided in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges . This will provide the safest means of negotiating the junction (e.g Cambridge Road, Coton). Light pollution will be reduced by design including but not limited to the use of cut off screens.

Means of Enclosure

- 2.1.5 The busway will not be fenced, except where it is required to be for safety reasons, such as bridges or culverts. Where appropriate, boundary treatments would be of a native species hedging. The development of scheme of landscape mitigation will incorporate proposed such planting measures, where considered appropriate and beneficial.
- 2.1.6 For the purposes of this report, the scheme will hereafter by described as the 'busway project.' The busway project for the purposes of the report comprises of the development proposals described in paragraphs 1.1.3- 1.1.5, to be located on land within option 3a/3. Please refer to appendix A for the area of study for route option 3a/3.

2.1.7 In addition the Greater Cambridge Partnership are also undertaking a review of suitable sites for a park & ride to be located along the busway route between Cambridge and Cambourne. This report contains a very high level review, related to the planning policy considerations having regard to park & ride locations. For the purposes of this report, the park & ride falls outside the definition of the 'busway project', however it is analysed separately at the end of section 4.

2.2 Overview of City Deal and Consultant Team

2.2.1 This report has been written by Strutt & Parker, with input from Atkins on behalf of the Greater Cambridge Partnership City Deal partners.

2.2.2 The Greater Cambridge Partnership is an agreement that has been set up between a partnership of local organisations and central government, to help secure future economic growth and quality of life in the Greater Cambridge City Region. The Greater Cambridge Partnership are responsible for promoting and securing the delivery of the proposed busway. The Greater Cambridge Partnership consists of the following organisations:

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- University of Cambridge
- Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership

2.2.3 Tranche 1 of the Greater Cambridge Partnership includes those schemes which will facilitate the early delivery of development in the A428 corridor between Cambourne and Cambridge. The vision for the deal is to make it easier to travel in, out and around Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire by public transport, cycle or on foot, and reduce and maintain lower traffic levels to ease congestion, which the busway project could form part of. Further information on the City Deal, can be found on the Greater Cambridge Partnership City Deal website.

2.2.4 The current technical supporting team assisting the Greater Cambridge Partners on the promotion of the busway consist of the following organisations:

- Transport and Highways- Atkins Global & Skanska
- Landscape and Visual Assessment- Atkins Global
- Green Belt- LDA
- Noise- Acoustic Associates
- Planning- Strutt & Parker LLP
- Legal- Pinsent Masons LLP

2.2.5 As the proposals progress, further consultants will be appointed to undertake detailed work on other relevant planning and environmental considerations. Further information on this is provided within section 5 of this report.

2.3 Timetable

2.3.1 The proposals for the busway are currently still at feasibility stage, although there is commitment from the Greater Cambridge Partnership for promotion of the scheme. Based on the current programme consent for the project would be sought in 2019, with the commencement of work in 2020, subject to the grant of the required consent. Further information on the process is contained within section 3 of this report.

3. THE PROPOSALS AND ROUTE OPTIONS

3.1 Location of the Proposed Development

- 3.1.1 The Busway Project is proposed to provide a bus priority scheme along the A428 and A1303 corridors and also improve cycling and walking links. The proposed study area, subject of this report is located from Caxton Gibbet Roundabout, west of the Cambourne, to Cambridge City Centre in the east. The study area also encompasses villages such as Dry Drayton, Madingley, Hardwick and Coton.
- 3.1.2 It is proposed that Cambourne will be the origin of the busway project and that services originating here will facilitate connections to and from St Neots to the west.
- 3.1.3 In addition a number of sites along the route have been considered having regard to the location of a park & ride, which would be served by the proposed busway. The reviewed locations of the park & ride sites are set out in the Stage 2 Park and Ride Report, prepared by Mott McDonald. Based on the recommendations within this report the two preferred sites are at Scotland Farm and the Water Works site. The location of the two sites, are set out in detail within the Park & Ride Report, prepared by Mott McDonald.

3.2 Aims and Objectives of Busway Project

- 3.2.1 The aims and objectives of the busway project, are consistent with the objectives of the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership City Deal, which seek to achieve the following:
- Bring vital transport improvements to key transport corridors into Cambridge City and reduce congestion.
 - Connect existing and new residential and employment areas with high quality public transport networks. Further detail on committed and likely future developments, is provided within section 3 of this report.
 - Provide more sustainable ways for people to travel between their homes and places of work, through a comprehensive network of pedestrians.
- 3.2.2 It is recognised in that achieving the above aims and objectives, **the proposals need to give due and detailed consideration to a number of detailed planning and environmental considerations. This includes accounting for the following:**
- To protect and safeguard the objectives of the Green Belt and protect the character of the countryside.
 - **The need to protect the historic setting of Cambridge and other heritage assets, such as the setting of Coton Conservation Area.**
 - The need to minimise the impact of the scheme on the wider landscape
 - The need to protect existing residential amenity.
 - Consideration of other material planning considerations, such as ecological, arboricultural, light and noise pollution considerations.
- 3.2.3 This list is not exhaustive and it is the intention to undertake detailed work on a wide range of environmental and planning matters. This will inform whether the busway

project in the area of search is acceptable in planning terms and it will also inform the most appropriate route for the busway

3.3 Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

3.3.1 The Cambourne to Cambridge Better Bus Journeys Scheme is informed by the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway as an example of bus priority in the area.

3.3.2 The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB) began operating on 7th August 2011. The busway scheme was implemented to connect Cambridge to settlements in Cambridgeshire such as Huntingdon and St. Ives. The CGB Statement of Case identifies the objectives of the scheme:

“The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB) will be a high quality public transport system from Huntingdon via St Ives to Cambridge city centre and then to Trumpington and Addenbrooke’s Hospital via Cambridge Railway Station. It consists primarily of guideways constructed on two sections of disused railway complemented by elements of on-street running.”

3.3.3 The CGB is a combination of physically separate busway and on street bus-priority consisting of dedicated lanes. Private vehicles are prohibited from entering the busway which results in a reliable service. To enforce the ban on private vehicles, car traps are set along the physically separate busway sections. A maintenance track allows emergency vehicles to enter if there is an emergency. Each stop is timetabled to have a service stopping every seven minutes which means there is a constant flow of commuters arriving into the city. Reliability is also increased by off-board ticketing to reduce dwell time at each stop.

3.3.4 Within the first year of operation 2,500,000 trips were made on the CGB, 40% higher demand than first predicted. 60% of CGB trips are for commute to work or education which suggests that there is a propensity to use public transport if the origin and destination locations are appropriate. Demand for the CGB is also likely to increase as Northstowe new town is built out and completed. Due to the amount of trips made and consequently the reduction in congestion and emissions, the CGB is considered to be a successful public transport system of which the scheme should aim to follow to meet policy requirement.

3.4 Route Options for Busway Project

3.4.1 There have been six route options that have been assessed in order to inform the decision of preferred route. In October 2016, a recommended area of search for the busway, was presented to the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, who agreed in principle, that a segregated route between Cambourne and Cambridge meets the strategic objectives of the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

3.4.2 In October 2016, officers were given approval to undertake detailed assessment work on Option 3A, with option 3 as an alternative if option 3A proved to be unviable. Option 3A is a proposed area of search for the busway scheme on land to the south of the A428 (please refer to appendix A of this report). Option 3A/3 has been endorsed as the preferred route for the busway project, ahead of options 2, 4 and 5,

all of which are also offline options located within the Cambridge Green Belt. In addition to option 3a and 3, the Greater Cambridge Partnership are also assessing the feasibility of option 1 and option 6, which are predominantly on road options.

- 3.4.3 Option 3a would provide a predominantly segregated route from Cambourne to Cambridge running south of the existing A428/ A1303 corridor. The route would travel on road through Cambourne until Stirling Way where it becomes segregated and a BRT link would be provided between Cambourne and Bourn Airfield. The route would continue through the proposed development at Bourn Airfield, before adjoining the existing St Neots Road highway corridor east of the development. From Bourn Airfield a segregated bus route would be provided adjacent to the existing St Neots Road corridor to the Madingley Mulch roundabout. From the Madingley Mulch roundabout a new offline dedicated bus route would be provided, running north of Coton and parallel to Madingley Road and Madingley Rise, with a connection to the West Cambridge site. The route would connect to the existing highway and Grange Road and continue on road into the City.
- 3.4.4 The difference between option 3a and option 3, is that option 3a would use the established transport corridor adjacent to St Neots Road, and has the potential to be designed to provide similar segregation to option 3, but with a reduction in cost over providing an entirely new corridor between Cambourne and Madingley as proposed under option 3.
- 3.4.5 Option 1 would provide improvements to bus services, which run along existing roads, no bus priority is proposed on the existing A428 dual carriageway, signalisation of Madingley Mulch roundabout will take place. This includes online eastbound bus lanes from the A1303/A428 junction along Madingley Rise and Madingley Road to Lady Margaret Road. Option 6 is an alternative option put forward by the Local Liaison Forum and comprises of an unsegregated tidal bus lane aligned to the centre of the A1303 Madingley road as a variation of option 1.
- 3.4.6 Further information on the different route options and the rationale for pursuing option 3a/3, is contained within the A428 Options Appraisal Report, prepared by Atkins (October 2016). This document and associated documents regarding the proposed development can be found on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Website.
- 3.4.7 For the purposes of this report it has been assumed that option 1 would score well on any Green Belt analysis given that it would be works within the public highway. In addition, option 6 would score better in terms of Green Belt impact, but would still involve some development within the Green Belt, such as gantries and highway widening. Of the three options, Option 3/3A will have the highest impact in Green Belt terms and is therefore the option that is assessed as part of this report.
- 3.4.8 It is acknowledged that when selecting the most appropriate route option a clear analysis of why the preferred route has been chosen against the alternatives will need to be provided as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process. This will include a full assessment of the different route options against adopted Development Plan policies, their benefits in transport terms and the impact that they would have in Green Belt terms.

3.5 Option 3A

- 3.5.1 Within Option 3A a number of different alignments for the busway route have been assessed, as detailed within the Green Lane Concept Report prepared by Atkins, Atkins and the Considerations of Green Belt Issues Report prepared by LDA. In particular, different route options have been assessed having regard to the most appropriate location to provide a green bridge across the M11 and the most appropriate route to provide a connection onto Grange Road, to the west of Cambridge. Four options have been identified for a connection onto Grange Road, to include options for a connection from Adams Road, Hershel Road, to the north of Cambridge Rugby Club or Cranmer Road. Three options for a green bridge across the M11 have been identified.

3.6 Connectivity between Key Centres and Status Committed Developments

- 3.6.1 The delivery of the busway scheme is directly linked to the need to provide better transport facilities between Cambourne and Cambridge, as demonstrated by transport modelling work undertaken by Atkins to date. It is also linked to a number of committed developments and new developments being delivered along the Cambourne to Cambridge corridor. These include the following proposed new developments:

South Cambridgeshire

- 3.6.2 **Cambourne West-** Outline Planning application submitted for the erection of up to 2,350 dwellings, together with formal and informal open space, new community and retail facilities and new infrastructure (Planning Application Number: S/2903/14). This application has a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the signing of a Section106 agreement on behalf of MCA Developments Ltd.
- 3.6.3 **Bourn Airfield-** This has a draft allocation within the emerging South Cambridgeshire Local Plan under policy SS/6 for a new village including approximately 3,500 dwellings. The busway route would travel directly through this new settlement. Through proposed modifications submitted to the Local Plan Examination the Council have proposed to produce a Supplementary Planning Document to guide the preparation of subsequent planning applications for the development. This strategic site is being promoted on behalf of Countryside Properties Ltd. They have prepared their own emerging framework for the site, but at this stage their masterplans proposed for Bourn Airfield have not been formally adopted or approved by the Council. In planning terms, the allocation of the site within the emerging Local Plan, is a material planning consideration given the advanced stage of the Local Plan (refer to section 3 for further detail), although the masterplan itself is only of limited weight. .

Cambridge City

- 3.6.4 Within Cambridge City an Outline Planning Application for the following has been submitted for **West** Cambridge under Application Reference 16/1134/OUT by Cambridge University. This application is an outline application with all matters reserved of up to 383,300m² of development comprising 370,000m² academic and

commercial floorspace, of which no more than 170,000m² would be commercial floorspace. This application is currently pending determination by Cambridge City Council. It also benefits from an allocation (Site No. 7.06) within the adopted Cambridge Local Plan (2006). Policy 18 of the emerging Local Plan 2014 provides the updated position.

3.6.5 The West Cambridge application is subject to a number of parameter plans and an illustrative masterplan, which show the proposed road layout for the new development. The layouts have at the time of writing have not been subject to formal approval by Cambridge City Council. A comprehensive set of amendments to the outline application is expected to be submitted at the end of August and will be subject to public consultation.

3.6.6 One of the key challenges and objectives of the busway proposals, is to serve the new committed developments, but at the same time ensure that the busway scheme provides quick journey times for those passing through. This has been a factor when undertaking an initial assessment of the proposed bus route options. In addition, based on the background modelling undertaken by Atkins to date, the need for the busway project would exist, independently of the committed developments, but the committed developments underscore that need.

3.6.7 Associated documents can be found on the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership City Deal Website. Relevant documents include, but are not limited to: A428 Options appraisal report;

- A428 Alignment Assessment;
- Interim Report;
- P&R Locations;
- Cambourne to Cambridge Option Study Rectory Farm Bridge;
- Considerations for Corridor Option Plans;
- Cambourne to Cambridge Strategic Outline Business Case;
- Green Lane Concept Report June 2017
- Considerations of Green Belt Issues Report, July 2017
- Executive Board Report July 2017; and
- Executive Board Report October 2016
- Width/length and land take of the bus route.

4. DETAILED PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section sets out the key planning policy considerations that are relevant to the busway project and an overview of the planning process.

Planning Process

4.1.2 If a segregated busway forms part of the preferred option for the busway project, subject to the technology selected the intention is to deliver the busway under an Order (referred to as a TWAO) made under the Transport and Works Act 1992 (TWA). The TWA relates specifically to transport projects to construct and operate railways, tramways and other guided transport systems, and works which interfere with navigation rights. In this regard if the proposed busway scheme employs a guided system, it will fall under the definition of a guided transport system within the scope of the TWA.

4.1.3 The process for TWAOs is different from the usual planning process of applying for applications to the relevant local planning authority. Decisions on applications for TWAOs are made by the Secretary of State, rather than to local planning authorities, but the local planning authorities will still be a key consultee. All interested parties have the opportunity to have their say and are fully consulted on the proposals, prior to any decision being made.

4.1.4 In a TWAO application, it is likely that the proposals will be considered at public inquiry, where interested parties will have the opportunity to have their say. Following any public inquiry the Secretary of State will take into consideration the representations made, in accordance with national and local planning policy.

4.1.5 As a next stage further consultation will be undertaken with the general public and a range of statutory consultees prior to any submission of a Transport for Works Act application. This will include commencing work on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process (refer to section 5 for further detail on the EIA process). It is likely that linked to the TWA process, the Secretary of State will be asked to direct that planning permission for the Busway Project is deemed to be granted

4.2 Overview of Development Plan

4.2.1 The section has been prepared having regard to Section 38(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), which states that if regard is to be had for the development plan for the purposes of determination to be made under the Planning Acts, determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2.2 The busway project is a cross-border project that is located within the jurisdiction of both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council authority areas. Therefore, the adopted and emerging Development Plan relates to both Authorities.

Adopted Development Plans

- 4.2.3 The adopted Development Plan for the two authorities that is of relevance to the busway principally consists of the following documents:
- South Cambridgeshire Adopted Core Strategy (2007)
 - South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies (2007)
 - Cambridge City Council Local Plan (2006)
 - Cambridgeshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2011)
 - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals Map (2012)
- 4.2.4 The adopted North- West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009) relates to land to the north of Madingley Road and the south of Huntingdon Road, which is located in relatively close proximity to, but outside of the area of search for the proposed bus route.
- 4.2.5 A high number of policies from both plans are of relevance to the busway scheme, the key policies are set out in appendix B of this report. In addition, both authorities have also adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents that are also of relevance to the proposals.
- 4.2.6 Cambridgeshire County Council have also adopted the the Local Transport Plan for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (LTP3) (2015), which is of particular relevance. The LTP3 sets out the overarching issues and strategy upon which the local transport strategies and policies are based.

Emerging Local Plans

- 4.2.7 Both Councils are at an advanced stage with their emerging Local Plans, which have been subject to on- going Examination in Public in 2016/2017. Subject to the findings of the Planning Inspectorate on both Local Plans, it is possible that both Local Plans could be adopted later in 2017/early 2018.
- 4.2.8 The Cambridge City Council Local Plan and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan were submitted in 2014. Both plans are currently subject to an on- going Examination in Public. The examination was suspended in 2015 whilst a modifications consultation was carried out. Hearings resumed in June 2016, and were completed in July 2017. Although not yet adopted, given their advanced stage they are a material consideration for the busway proposals.
- 4.2.9 As part of both emerging Local Plans, a number of background evidence based documents have been prepared. Of particular relevance to the busway project, is the Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study (2015), prepared by LDA, and earlier Inner Green Belt Studies and Appraisals dating back from 2002/2012.
- 4.2.10 The Inner Green Belt review is not a statutory planning document but it was an important background document that formed the evidence base of the emerging South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Cambridge City Council Local Plans.

It was used (along with other considerations) to inform proposed allocations for new developments around Cambridge City. As set out above both Plans have been subject to Examination in Public and therefore are material planning considerations. With particular relevance to the Green Belt and land to the west of Cambridge, there are unresolved objections to the Local Plan. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, the weight that can be given to the emerging Local Plans, specifically having regard to the Proposals Map within west Cambridge is reduced, pending the report from the Planning Inspectorate. Nonetheless it is still a material consideration.

4.3 National Planning Policy Considerations

- 4.3.1 At national level, the key planning policy document is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which is a key expression of national policy for the consideration of planning applications.
- 4.3.2 In addition the National Planning Practice Guidance, which is a web based resource brings together all planning guidance into one place and is also a relevant consideration.
- 4.3.3 There are a several paragraphs within the NPPF, which are of direct relevance and will be provide the key basis at national level for determining the suitability of the busway project. The key parts of the NPPF having regard to the principle of the busway project, are discussed within section 4 of this report.

5. PRINCIPLE OF THE BUSWAY SCHEME

- 5.1.1 This section of the report provides an overview in relation to the principle of the busway project in planning policy terms, accounting for the relevant adopted Development Plan policies at a Local level and National guidance, along with emerging Development Plan policies, where they are considered to be of material weight to the principle of development.
- 5.1.2 This section does not go into detail regarding the detailed matters that will also be considered as part of the planning approval process, although they are touched upon within section 5. It also does not seek to list all of the planning policies that of relevance to the proposals. A review and list of relevant planning policies are contained within Appendix B of this report.
- 5.1.3 As detailed in section 2.5 above, a number of different route alignment options within option3A are being assessed by the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership. This report does not provide a recommendation on the preferred option in planning terms. The preferred option will be dependent upon deliverability of the different options and securing an option that provides the required transport objectives of the scheme, and the appropriate balance with other planning considerations. This report contains a high level overview of the principle of the busway development, followed by an analysis of key issues associated with the different route options.

5.2 Sustainable Development

- 5.2.1 The NPPF sets out within paragraph 7 that there are three dimensions to sustainable development, namely: economic, social and environmental. The definitions of the three dimensions are set out as follows:
- **An Economic Role-** contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. This includes supporting growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
 - **A Social Role-** contributing strong vibrant and healthy communities. This includes the need to create high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the communities needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - **An environmental role-** contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.2.2 The NPPF is clear that the three dimensions should not be considered in isolation and that each is mutually dependent on the other two. In addition, the NPPF also sets out that proposals, which accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay. When considering the principle of the busway scheme the three dimensions of sustainable development are of particular importance.

- 5.2.3 When considering if the busway is 'sustainable development' and whether in principle of development accords with the Development Plan, one of the key planning policy matters to address is its location in the Cambridge Green Belt.
- 5.2.4 The Green Belt has a strong protection at both National and Local Level. Policy 4/1 of the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan (2006) sets out a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Policy GB/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies also sets out the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It also benefits from strong protection within the relevant emerging Local Plans for both authorities. The detailed policy basis for determining inappropriate development in the Green Belt is set out in paragraphs 87 and 90 of the NPPF. This is discussed in further detail in section 4.9 of this report.

5.3 Transport Benefits of the Scheme

- 5.3.1 Prior to considering the compliance of the busway with adopted Green Belt policies, it is important to assess the merits of the scheme in transport terms.
- 5.3.2 Section 4 of the NPPF sets out detailed guidance in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport. Paragraph 29 sets out that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of promoting sustainable modes of transport. Paragraphs 30, 31 and 35 of the NPPF provide support for the proposed busway. Policies 8/4, 8/8 and 10/1 of the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan; and TR/1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted Development Control Policies (2007) set out support for the promotion for walking and cycling, infrastructure improvements and promotion of sustainable transport. This is cross referenced to the objectives of the adopted Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2014).
- 5.3.3 The Cambourne to Cambridge Better Bus Journeys Scheme aims to facilitate fast, frequent and reliable journeys by bus between Cambourne and Cambridge in order to accommodate trips from the new and existing developments, as well as to encourage mode shift for those already travelling along the corridor. As referenced within section 2.6 of this report, all new developments that the busway project would serve either benefit from a formal adoption within the adopted Local Plan, have a resolution to grant planning permission, or are allocated as part of the emerging Local Plans. A number of studies, looking at route options, have been conducted in order to explore options for meeting the scheme aims.
- 5.3.4 A Strategic Outline Business Case for the Busway was prepared by Atkins in September 2016 and should be read in conjunction with this Statement. This document sets out detailed support for the Busway scheme, in terms of traffic alleviation along the A428, into Cambridge, and the Madingley Mulch Roundabout. The Strategic Business Case also contains a full overview of the predicted future demand from car trips, and sets out the car use of key settlements along the route. Cambourne in particular is very car dominant. The report highlights the challenge in delivering modal shift to more sustainable travel patterns.
- 5.3.5 Analysis of the journey times between Cambourne and Cambridge on existing online services and between St Ives and Cambridge on the Cambridgeshire Guided Bus

(CGB) show that bus journey times are significantly affected by congestion on inbound routes to the City Centre during the AM peak hour. Journey time benefits are experienced when buses are offline, on the CGB, as they are not in direct conflict with other road users. This suggests that in order to provide maximum journey time benefits into the City Centre, as part of the Cambourne to Cambridge Better Bus Journey Scheme, an offline route for as far as possible into the City Centre would be favourable in order to avoid congestion on Madingley Road and other pinch points on the route.

- 5.3.6 The segregated busway project would have the potential to provide approximately nine buses per hour between Cambourne and Cambridge City throughout weekdays and Saturdays. It would also provide a fast, frequent and reliable service between settlements at peak hours. The aim is to replicate the success of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, which took only three years to meet the initial forecast of 3.5 million trips per annum.
- 5.3.7 Therefore, the busway scheme has the potential to provide significant transport benefits and address the existing travel issues between Cambourne and Cambridge, which is strongly supported in section 4 of the NPPF and policies 8/8 and 10/1 of the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan and TR/1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Development Control Policies (2007). The transport benefits are considered to be a very strong material planning consideration in favour of the proposals.

Walking and Cycling

- 5.3.8 The Cambourne to Cambridge Better Bus Journeys Scheme aims to promote sustainable travel into Cambridge from surrounding settlements. The scheme also aims to promote cycling and walking where possible. Cambridge has a well-established and growing cycling culture therefore it is considered that cyclists are a major target user group when implementing the scheme. Pedestrians should also be encouraged to walk to bus stops to further reduce environmental impacts.
- 5.3.9 There are comprehensive footpath networks within Cambourne, Hardwick and West Cambridge that are likely to promote walking to potential busway stops. Walking and cycle routes do not currently extend along the whole length of the corridor, meaning there is no connection between existing and proposed development sites at Cambourne and Bourn Airfield and Cambridge.
- 5.3.10 The Cambourne to Cambridge busway scheme has the potential to deliver a strategic cycle route between primary employment sites in South Cambridgeshire and West Cambridge by providing safe, accessible and direct cycle routes. It is proposed that, where bus routes are segregated, cycle and walking facilities will be provided adjacent to the busway in order to deliver high quality, segregated, safe and accessible facilities.
- 5.3.11 The transport benefits of the scheme are considered to be fully consistent with the policy objectives set out within section 4 of the NPPF and policy 8/4, 8/8 and 10/1 of the adopted Cambridge City Council Local Plan and TR/1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted Development Control Policies. In addition,

paragraph 81 of the NPPF relates to Green Belt, and sets out that local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access. The busway scheme would promote access into the Green Belt, which is supported under paragraph 81 of the NPPF. The proposed cycle and pedestrian routes along the scheme are considered to be a strong material planning consideration in favour of the proposals.

- 5.3.12 With the transport benefits of the scheme being clear, it is important to consider the proposals in overall terms having regard for the three dimensions of sustainable development as out within the NPPF.

Economic

- 5.3.13 In economic terms the busway project will provide much needed infrastructure to link together existing major housing and employment areas. It will provide the opportunity for a more sustainable, reliable and rapid alternative form of travel between Cambourne and Cambridge for existing residents. This will include providing reliable journeys to work from Cambourne to Cambridge. In addition, the scheme also aligns with recent and projected housing and job growth along the A428 corridor as set out in the emerging Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plans.
- 5.3.14 The Area of Major Change site, West Cambridge, is subject to a current outline application on behalf of the University of Cambridge for 383,300m³ of employment comprising predominantly of academic floor space. Although this application is currently pending consideration, on the basis that it has an allocation in the adopted Local Plan, it will provide a major expanded employment facility that the busway development will serve. The principle of a busway serving the proposed expanded West Cambridge employment site is considered to be strongly supported in planning terms and it is consistent with the objectives of the NPPF, and the emerging Cambridge City Local Plan 2014.
- 5.3.15 Within South Cambridgeshire, the busway scheme will support the projected growth associated with Cambourne West, which has a resolution to grant permission for the erection of up to 2,350 dwellings, together with formal and informal open space, new community and retail facilities and new infrastructure under planning application Number: S/2903/14. The busway will also run directly through Bourn Airfield, which has the potential to delivery approximately 3,500 new dwellings. Although Bourn Airfield has not yet been formally allocated, it does have a designation in the emerging plan, which should be given some weight in planning terms.
- 5.3.16 It is therefore considered that the busway project is consistent with the economic objectives in terms of housing and employment growth within both the adopted and emerging Development Plans for both Councils. The busway scheme will also create a number of jobs both directly and in-directly, which is strongly supported in planning terms and is a strong material consideration in favour of the proposals.

Social

5.3.17 In social terms the busway project will seek to promote healthy communities by providing a significantly improved cycle and pedestrian network from Cambourne to Cambridge. This will result in a likely modal shift change and more people cycling and walking to work. In addition, by alleviating congestion, the busway will also support the required housing and employment growth along the A428 Corridor. This is required in order to meet the objectively assessed housing and employment needs of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council, as identified in evidence based documents in their emerging Local Plans. Although both emerging Local Plans are not yet adopted, they are of very advanced stage and therefore in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF are of material weight in planning terms. The social benefits of the scheme are also considered to be strongly supported in planning terms and represent a strong material planning consideration in favour of the busway scheme.

Environmental

- 5.3.18 The environmental impact of the busway is a key issue in planning terms. These in particular relate to restriction of inappropriate development within the Green Belt, the impact of the proposals in landscape and visual terms, and heritage considerations related to the setting of the Conservation Area and listed buildings within Cambridge City and Coton. The support for sustainable transport schemes as set out in the NPPF, needs to be weighed against other policy factors within the NPPF and the environmental impact of the scheme.
- 5.3.19 The environmental impact is a broad term and one of the benefits of the scheme is that the busway will provide clear benefits in terms of reducing CO₂ and emissions associated with the use of the private motorcar. The full environmental impact of the busway project will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

5.4 Interpretation of Green Belt Policy

- 5.4.1 As referred to above, large areas of the busway route options are located within the Cambridge Green Belt as identified on the adopted Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council Proposals Maps. In relation to Cambridge City Council's adopted Proposals Map (2006) route option 3a/3 encompasses land that is within the Cambridge Green Belt. As set out on the South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted Proposals Map (2012), the busway route options between Hardwick east of the Cambridge City Council boundary are situated within the Cambridge Green Belt. The busway route to the west of Hardwick is situated outside of the Cambridge Green Belt.
- 5.4.2 To establish if the busway project as defined under option 3a/3 is a sustainable development, the impact of the busway upon the Green Belt is a key matter to consider. Paragraph 89 sets out that most forms of development are inappropriate within the Green Belt, with a few exceptions related mainly to agriculture and forestry.

- 5.4.3 When considering the acceptability of the principle of busway project within the Green Belt, the key policy criteria is set out within paragraph 90 of the NPPF. Paragraph 90 of the NPPF states the following:

‘Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. These are:

- *Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.*

- 5.4.4 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF is consistent with Policy 4/1 of the Cambridge City Local Plan and policy GB/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies (2007), which states that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map.

Requirement for Green Belt Location

- 5.4.5 When assessing the acceptability of the busway within the Green Belt in accordance with NPPF paragraph 90, it is firstly important to consider if it is required to be located in the Green Belt. In this regard, the key objective of the scheme is to provide a busway route from Cambourne to Cambridge. A route option that travelled through the Cambridge West development would be outside the Green Belt and therefore provide an opportunity to avoid a Green Belt location for this stretch of the route. This route would include a route within land under third party ownership and would therefore be subject to deliverability and subject to ensuring that the transport objectives of the scheme can still be delivered, when assessed against the alternatives.
- 5.4.6 All of the land to the remaining land to the west of Cambridge to Hardwick within option 3a/3 is located within the Cambridge Green Belt (aside from land within Hardwick and Coton village development frameworks). It is therefore not possible to deliver the busway project that meets the objectives of the Greater Cambridge Partnership outside of Green Belt land. The proposals are therefore considered to be fully compliant with paragraph 90 in respect that the eastern part of the route needs to be delivered on Green Belt land and there are no available options outside of the Green Belt.
- 5.4.7 In terms of route alignment options, the bridge across the M11 is being assessed in three different locations. Whilst the M11 itself is within the Cambridge Green Belt, the land immediately to east of the M11 will involve the busway being situated within land that is allocated for development within the adopted Cambridge City Proposals Map (2006). This land is outside of the Cambridge Green Belt and forms part of the Cambridge West Employment Site Allocation. Green Belt concerns do not arise in relation to sections of the route within this area. In addition, they do not arise in relation to the section of the route between Hardwick and Cambourne, which is also outside of the Cambridge Green Belt.

Openness and Purposes of Including Land within the Green Belt

- 5.4.8 With the need for a Green Belt location being established, under paragraph 90 NPPF, it is secondly important to consider if the busway will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and whether the busway conflicts with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 5.4.9 Policy 4/1 of the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan and policy GB/1 of the South Cambridgeshire adopted Development Control Policies (2007) sets out that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map. The emerging Local Plan also both seek to restrict development within the Green Belt. These policies would only be applicable to the busway scheme in the event that it is defined as 'inappropriate development.'
- 5.4.10 To fully consider whether or not the busway scheme is 'not inappropriate' development, the key determining factors as set out in the NPPF, is whether the scheme:
- Preserves the openness of the Green Belt
 - Conflicts with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt
- 5.4.11 Firstly, when considering if the busway scheme preserves the openness of the Green Belt or conflicts with the purposes of the Green Belt, it is important to acknowledge that preserving the openness of the Green Belt is different from harm to the Green Belt. Development within the Green Belt, by its definition will cause some harm to the Green Belt, but harm in itself does not necessarily mean that the development will not preserve the openness of the Green Belt or conflict with its purposes.
- 5.4.12 Secondly, it is clear that in policy terms the NPPF does seek to define transport schemes as 'not inappropriate' within the Green Belt. If permission is granted for the busway it will not change its designation as Green Belt land. Clearly, the NPPF contemplates that it is possible to deliver a transport scheme within the Green Belt which neither affects openness or the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
- 5.4.13 To inform the impact of the busway project in terms of openness and purposes of including land within the Green Belt, a detailed consideration of Green Belt Issues Report (2017), has been completed by LDA Design. This report contains a detailed analysis that the impact that the busway project will have, and provides an assessment of three different route options, named options A, B and C.

Openness of Green Belt

- 5.4.14 In terms of openness the LDA report concludes that the vast majority of the busway route are likely to have negligible or no effect on the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This is accounting for the Green Lane concept for the proposed busway and that it can be delivered without the need for any extensive cut and fill or re-levelling. It is concluded that the proposed routes closest to Cambridge City (referred to as Sectors Ai and Aii in the LDA Report) and the routes to the north of Coton would have very limited or no impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. The only

area when it is concluded that there is likely to be conflict with openness of the Green Belt, relates to the green bridge ramp associated with route option A and possibility route option C. It is the view of LDA that the bridge ramp options A and possibility route C, could require substantial earthworks as the M11 is at grade, rather than being in the cutting to the south of West Cambridge. LDA conclude that route option B would not conflict with the openness of the Green Belt. It is acknowledged by LDA that the degree of harm is likely to be low in both instances.

5.4.15 At this stage, the required amount of re-levelling and cut and fill is not known. However, any cut and fill will be undertaken sensitively to ensure minimal impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. Once the amount of cut and fill has been fully established, further assessment may be undertaken in respect of conflict with purposes of the green bridge ramp for options A & C. In this regard, it is also worth noting that under paragraph 90 of the NPPF, mineral extraction is another form of development that falls within the umbrella of 'not inappropriate' development in the Green Belt. On the basis that mineral extraction inevitably a significant impact in terms of cut and fill and change in levels, it follows within the logic of the NPPF paragraph 90 that cut and fill can be done in a way which is not inconsistent with openness.

5.4.16 On the basis that the green bridge will be viewed in context with the M11, which is subject to a high degree of level change already, it is considered that the LDA Report provides for a worst case scenario and a conservative assessment of the impact the busway project will have upon openness in respect of the green bridge.

Purposes of Including Land within the Green Belt

5.4.17 The second paragraph 90 test is to determine if the proposals will conflict with the purposes for including land within the Green Belt. The national purposes for including land in the Green Belt are:

1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

5.4.18 In addition to the 5 purposes of the Green Belt at National level, it is important to consider the three purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt, which are defined within the adopted Cambridge Local Plan (2006) and the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy and DPD (2007) as follows:

1. Preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic City with a thriving historic centre
2. Maintain and enhance the quality of its setting; and;
3. Prevent communities and the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the City.

- 5.4.19 All eight tests of Green Belt purposes as set out above have been analysed within the Green Belt Issues Report (2017), prepared by LDA. Although it is noted within their report that purpose 5 of the national purposes is not relevant to the busway project and is therefore not analysed in detail as part of the report.
- 5.4.20 LDA take the approach that any adverse effect on the characteristics set out in the purposes equate to a conflict with that purpose. Therefore LDA conclude that sections of the proposed busway within the context of option 3a/3 will have some impact in terms of purposes for including land within the Green Belt in this area. The areas where there is a degree conflict relate to national purpose 4 (to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns) and Cambridge Green Belt purposes 1 (to preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic City with a thriving historic centre) and 2 (maintain and enhance the quality of its setting). Given the main origin of these conflicts are effects on character and setting, these effects, and in turn any such conflict, can to an extent be mitigated by suitable landscape and hedgerow planting, which will reduce the impact of the busway scheme, in the medium to long term (particularly within the area to the west of the M11).
- 5.4.21 The LDA report also confirms that the busway scheme would be unlikely to conflict to the other four national Green Belt purposes. It will also not conflict with Cambridge purpose 3, which relates to ensuring that communities and environs of Cambridge do not merge into one another.

Route Options

- 5.4.22 In Green Belt terms, as set out within the LDA Report, the degree of conflict the purposes of including land within the Green Belt will change dependent upon the final transport option chosen.
- 5.4.23 In relation to the area to the east of the M11, as set out in paragraph 4.4.5 above, a route alignment option that travels through Cambridge West development would be outside the Green Belt and therefore Green Belt concerns would not arise, however, there are of course, other factors to be considered.
- 5.4.24 Once exiting the Cambridge West development, there is a requirement for the route alignment to travel through Green Belt land in order to connect to Grange Road at any of the four connection points. It is the view of LDA that all of the routes within the sector between the M11 and Grange Road, Cambridge will conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. As assessed within the LDA Report, the route via Adams Road, is likely to result in a lower level of conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, than the other three options. The LDA report sets out that the option to the furthest south connecting into Cranmer Road likely to have the highest degree of conflict.

- 5.4.25 In purely Green Belt terms, accounting for the conclusions of the LDA Report, the route via Adams Road would be the most favourable in terms of minimising conflict with Green Belt purposes. However, the planning balance when selecting the most appropriate option will have to be weighed against the transport need to create a fast, frequent and reliable transport system and to ensure that the scheme is fully deliverable in planning terms. The selection of a preferred route will also be subject to a detailed public consultation process
- 5.4.26 In relation to the land to the west of the M11, it is the view of LDA that all of the route alignments on the land immediately to the north and the north- west of Coton will have a conflict for the purposes of including land within the Green Belt and that the degree of this harm will be moderate. This conflict with Green Belt purposes, in the view of LDA relates to the change in the setting of Cambridge that would result from changes to the character and setting of Coton as a necklace village to Cambridge. It is the view of LDA that this represents a conflict with Cambridge Green Belt purpose 2 and National Green Belt purpose 4.
- 5.4.27 This assessment by LDA, particularly having regard to the impact that the busway project will have upon the setting of Coton, is considered to represent a worst case scenario and a conservative assessment. Further detailed work will be undertaken to assess this impact once a preferred alignment for the busway project has been selected.

Very Special Circumstances

- 5.4.28 As identified in the report prepared by LDA, the sections of the busway project that can be delivered without conflict with the openness or purposes for including land within the Green Belt relate to the areas within LDA sub- area B.1 (in between Coton and the M11), and the western half of area C.1, which is situated to the west of Coton. It is therefore assumed that harm to the Green Belt in these areas would be neutral/negligible.
- 5.4.29 It is the view of LDA that the remainder of the route would result in some conflict the purposes for including land within the Green Belt or conflict with openness with respect to the green bridge ramp for option A and possibly option C. It is the view of LDA that these parts of the route would fall outside the scope of 'not inappropriate' development as defined in paragraph 90.
- 5.4.30 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF sets out that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 5.4.31 Firstly, when considering if very special circumstances exist, it is important to consider if the harm to the Green Belt is out- weighed by the other material considerations. In accordance with the conclusions of the LDA Report, the level of harm to the Green Belt will depend on the final route alignment chosen for the busway project. It is the view of LDA that all route options to the north/north-west of Coton, will have moderate degree of harm to the Green Belt. In that regard the degree of harm for all routes will be similar. In addition, it is LDA's view that the

bridge ramp for option A and possibility option C, will have a low impact in terms of harm to openness of the Green Belt.

- 5.4.32 The area where there is greatest change in terms of harm to the Green Belt dependent upon the route option selected, relates to the area of study in between Cambridge and the M11. It is LDA's view that route option B, along the southern edge of West Cambridge and to the north of the Sports Fields connecting to Adams Road, would have low harm on the Green Belt. Options A and C in the view of LDA would have a high level of harm on the Green Belt. When considering the most appropriate route alignment, level of harm, will need to be weighed against the transport objectives of the scheme and other material planning considerations.
- 5.4.33 It is considered that strong very special circumstances exist for the delivery of the Busway. The benefits of a segregated rapid busway project can only be realised by a Green Belt location and this in itself is considered to provide very special circumstances for the proposed busway project. In addition, as set out in section 4.3 (paragraphs 4.3.1 to 4.3.17 above), the proposals will provide significant benefits in terms of promoting sustainable modes of transport, and meeting the economic and social objectives of sustainable development, which is strongly supported both in National and Local policy. Paragraphs 30, 35, and 162 of the NPPF provide strong support for strategic transport projects and the need to promote sustainable movement of people and travel. This includes providing a sustainable transport connection to new development locations, which are located outside of the Cambridge Green Belt. The busway project will also facilitate accessibility for pedestrian and cyclist to the Green Belt, which is supported under paragraph 81 of the NPPF. The land will also remain in the Green Belt after the busway project is complete. The proposals are also strongly supported by the Transport Plan for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire (2014).
- 5.4.34 It is therefore considered that strong very special circumstances exist. It is also considered that dependent upon selection of a route that seeks to maximise the transport objectives of the busway project and also seeks to limit harm to the Green Belt (which may include appropriate mitigation), that a good case could be made that very special circumstances for the busway project would be likely to out- weigh any identified harm to the Green Belt. This will be dependent upon the final route chosen, further detailed clarification on relative impacts and appropriate mitigation
- 4.4.35 Very Special Circumstances for the busway project exist along the whole of the route, but very special circumstances are only really required for those parts of the route, which do not meet the paragraph 90 test of not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Land Outside of the Green Belt

- 5.4.36 In relation to the part of the busway route to the west of Hardwick, that is situated outside of the Green Belt, policies of countryside protection apply. Policy DP/1 and DP/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy sets out that new development should conserve and enhance the local landscape character. Policy

DP/7 states that outside of urban and village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted.

- 5.4.37 As set out in above, the purpose of the busway is to provide a direct, fast and reliable route from Cambourne to Cambridge. To achieve this, there is a requirement to use land that is outside of the Development Framework boundary. Therefore, the principle of the busway in the countryside is full consistent within policy DP/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (2007) in that there is clear need to use land within the countryside.
- 5.4.38 The part of the busway route situated within West Cambridge development site, is within the development boundary of Cambridge City, where the principle of development is supported in planning terms. It is also likely to utilised existing highways within this site.
- 5.4.39 Overall the proposals are considered to be consistent with the three dimensions of sustainable development, including relevant Green Belt policy. It is therefore considered that the principle of the busway development is supported in planning terms. This will need to be reviewed further as a single route option is chosen

5.5 Park & Ride

- 5.5.1 In relation to the park & ride, the most appropriate location for the park & ride has not been subject to the same level of assessment as the busway project. At this stage a thorough transport appraisal to assess the most appropriate location assessment has not been undertaken. A detailed Green Belt assessment has also not been undertaken. The park & ride options being considered fall both within and outside of the Green Belt.
- 5.5.2 It is considered that a park & ride would fall within the umbrella of 'local transport infrastructure' as defined within paragraph 90 of the NPPF, provided it can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location. The tests in Green Belt terms having regard to 'not inappropriate' development/very special circumstances in this regard are the same as for the busway project.
- 5.5.3 At national level, there is no longer any detailed guidance in relation to park & ride schemes. Although now superseded, the old PPG2, did contain guidance specifically in relation to park & rides. Accounting for the lack of detailed adopted policy guidance in the NPPF, the old PPG2 is considered to provide some relevance guidance in regard to the acceptability of Park & Ride sites within Green Belt locations. Although it cannot be given full weight in planning policy terms.
- 5.5.4 Paragraph 3.17 of PPG2 and relates specifically to park & rides. This acknowledges that park & rides are often in the countryside around urban areas and in many instances this land may be designated as Green Belt. Paragraph 3.17 set out that park & ride development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided that:

- (a) a thorough and comprehensive assessment of potential sites has been carried out, including both non- Green Belt land and, if appropriate, other Green Belt locations, having regard to sustainable development objectives, and the need to be flexible about the size and layout.
- B) The assessment establishes that the proposed green belt site is the most sustainable option taking account of all the relevant factors including travel impacts;
- C) The scheme will not seriously compromise the purposes of including land in the Green Belts
- D) The proposal is contained within the local transport plan and based on a thorough assessment of travel impacts; and
- E) new or re- used buildings are included within the development proposal only for essential facilities associated with the operation of the park & ride scheme.

5.5.5 At this stage a thorough and comprehensive assessment of potential sites have not been fully completed, although a number of site options are in the process of being assessed. A preferred location for the park & ride, will be chosen dependent on a range of factors. This will include a detailed consideration of a wide range of planning policy considerations, including transport objectives, Green Belt and other statutory designations. The most appropriate location will be chosen dependent upon the most appropriate and sustainable option in planning terms, having regard to adopted local and national policy guidance. If a Green Belt option is selected, very special circumstances may be required. Any case for very special circumstances will be dependent upon establishing that the Green Belt is the most sustainable location for the park & ride, when assessed against the alternatives.

6. DETAILED PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section of the report provides a brief overview of other detailed planning considerations and detailed reports that will be commissioning as part of the busway project.
- 6.1.2 With the principle of the development being established (refer to section 4), it will be important to consider other material planning considerations as set out within the adopted Development Plans, which would render the scheme unacceptable in planning terms. It is recognised that there are a number of other detailed planning policy considerations, which will also need to be taken into consideration when addressing if the busway scheme is acceptable in planning policy terms.
- 6.1.3 Important detailed matters to address as part of the busway proposals include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1 Heritage, Listed Buildings and Archaeological Considerations.
- 2 Transport
- 3 Landscape and Visual Considerations
- 4 Impact upon Neighbouring Residential Amenity.
- 5 Ecological and Biodiversity considerations and impact upon sites of international, national, regional and local importance.
- 6 Noise & Vibration
- 7 Air Quality
- 8 Drainage and Flood Risk
- 9 Ground Conditions
- 10 Waste

6.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Process

- 6.2.1 The above matters will be considered in detail as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, which is a formal planning process that major developments have to follow. The purpose of an EIA is to assess the environmental impact of new developments and assesses both positive and negative environmental impacts of new developments.
- 6.2.2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process of evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed project or development, taking into account inter-related socio-economic, cultural and human-health impacts, both beneficial and adverse. The busway scheme would fall under the category of Schedule 2 development as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017) and may be likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. As a result, a full EIA will be undertaken to assess the impact of the scheme across a range of

different disciplines. This will include the preparation of an Environmental Statement to fully assess the scheme.

6.3 Formal Request for a Scoping Opinion

- 6.3.1 In order to determine the matters and chapters that will be considered as part of the EIA process, it is likely that a formal request for a Scoping Opinion will be submitted to clarify the matters to be included within the Environmental Statement.
- 6.3.2 Therefore at this stage the full scope of the EIA is therefore yet to be confirmed. The matters that are likely to be included as part of the EIA are set out below.

6.4 Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives

- 6.4.1 A legal requirement of the EIA process is to provide a description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the applicant, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of environmental effects. In this instance it is likely to include an overview of different route options for the busway and it will also consider the 'Do Nothing Scenario.'

6.5 Policy Context

- 6.5.1 This section will outline the relevant planning policy considerations at both a National and Local level in relation to the busway scheme.

6.6 Economic and Social Assessment

- 6.6.1 This section will set out the economic and social impact of the proposals. It will assess the economic impact of the proposals in relation to job growth and supporting the housing and employment objectives of the two Local Plans and the adopted Transport Strategy. It will assess the likely impact of the proposals on human health in terms of promoting cycling and walking.

6.7 Transport

- 6.7.1 Detailed work relating to transport matters has already been undertaken by Atkins, which has been fundamental to informing the case for the proposed busway and is detailed in earlier sections of this report. Further work will be undertaken as part of the EIA process to determine the full impact of the scheme in transport terms having regard to journeys by car, bus, cycling and pedestrians and the impact that the development will have on the surrounding road network.

6.8 Heritage & Archaeology

- 6.8.1 This chapter will assess heritage matters and considerations related to the impact of the busway on designated conservation areas, Listed buildings and the setting of Cambridge City. Whilst heritage overlaps with the Green Belt considerations, it is also an important consideration in its own right. Heritage considerations will include the impact that the busway proposals will have upon the setting of identified listed buildings and conservation areas along the route. The setting of Cambridge City and

Coton Conservation Area will be key matters to address as part of the proposals. In addition, the American Cemetery, which is situated to the north of Coton is designated as a Historic Landscape/Historic Park and Garden under policy CH/1 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies and the setting of this area will also be fully considered. An initial assessment in terms of views to heritage assets and recommended mitigation has been undertaken by Atkins as part of the Green Lane Concept Document (2017).

6.9 Landscape & Visual

6.9.1 Substantial work relating to landscape and visual considerations has already been undertaken by Atkins. This document should be read in conjunction with the Green Lane Concept Document (June 2017), prepared by Atkins. This document analyses key route options and concludes all the route options would result in adverse landscape and visual effects to varying degrees, which is inevitable given that the busway is new development within the open countryside. Atkins, also recognise that appropriate mitigation is key to offsetting and reducing the landscape and visual impact of the busway. The mitigation measures are different dependent upon which route is selected. The design of the busway as a green lane concept, in itself is proposed to minimise the impact of the proposals. Other aims to minimise landscape harm, would be to limit the amount of tree removal along the selected route, but also to provide sensitive and appropriate replacement and new planting along the route as appropriate. A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the EIA process, with suggested mitigation as required.

6.10 Ecology and Biodiversity

6.10.1 As part of the process detailed ecological surveys will be undertaken to assess the impact of the busway in ecological terms. Ecological designations in proximity to the busway, include Magingley Wood, which is designated as a County Wildlife Site and a SSSI and is protected under policy NE/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies (2007). The level of adverse impact upon ecology will be dependent both on the selected route and also upon mitigation provided. As set out in the Green Lane Concept Report, prepared by Atkins, the busway scheme aims to increase biodiversity and amenity through orchard and wildlife planting. The proposed Green Bridge also has the potential to deliver a wildlife corridor across the M11.

6.11 Air Quality

6.11.1 This section will assess the impact that the scheme will have in terms of air quality both for neighbouring receptors in close proximity to the busway and wider considerations relating to the likely reduction in emissions in the wider road network if the busway scheme is delivered.

6.12 Sound, Noise and Vibration

6.12.1 An initial Noise and Vibration has been undertaken by Acoustic Associates. This assessment concludes that the impact of the scheme is 'negligible' at most of the dwellings in proximity to the busway, using the significance criteria set out in the

Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. The most affected dwellings are on Hall Road at the south of Highfield, which could experience a moderate adverse impact dependent on the final route option chosen. This report is to be used to inform the future route of the busway and also to determine any mitigation measures that may be required.

6.13 Water, Flood Risk and Drainage

6.13.1 A full assessment of the drainage strategy for the busway and consideration of any flood risk will be fully considered as part of the EIA. It is likely that the scheme will be located in a Flood Zone 1 (low risk).

6.14 Ground Conditions

6.14.1 This section will provide an overview of the ground conditions along the route and whether any contaminated land matters need to be addressed as part of the busway scheme.

6.15 Waste

6.15.1 This section of the report will relate to the construction of the busway and any construction waste that will be created, re- used as part of the scheme.

6.16 Clarification of Matters not to be included within the EIA

6.16.1 There will be some matters that are likely to form part of the planning application, but will not form part of the EIA. These include the following:

- Plans and Drawings for the Scheme
- Planning Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Construction Management Plan
- Planning Application Forms
- Ownership Certificates

6.16.2 The full scope of matters including within and outside of the EIA will be formally agreed with the relevant local planning authorities.

