



PRESS RELEASE  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## A GREED AGENDA

Countryside campaigners have condemned the Cambourne to Cambridge busway plan as ill-thought, greedy – and certainly not green.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CPRE say the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) plan has little to do with improving public transport. "The real reason is 'Land Value Uplift'. In short, the plan will break up the countryside for development - including within the Cambridge Green Belt," said CPRE Chairman Dr Alan James. "This proposal is certainly not good value as a public transport scheme. The area would be much better served by a more flexible and better integrated approach to public transport," he continued.

CPRE is appalled by the effect this proposal will have on the landscape and ecology along the route. "High earth banks with tarmac or concrete topping will form ugly intrusions upon the landscape. They will cause tremendous damage to the local ecology. Perhaps the best example will be the division of the largest traditional orchard in the UK at Coton. The loss of its biodiversity will be impossible to restore".

The UK Government recently signed an international treaty, committed to addressing biodiversity loss and restore ecosystems. In 2019, Cambridge City Council pledged to work to reverse the decline in biodiversity within Cambridge and the wider region. CPRE says this proposal appears to ignore those commitments. The campaigners are also concerned about the negative impact on the American Cemetery at Madingley. "The setting has already been severely damaged by the unsympathetic A14 flyovers to the north. The cemetery will become at additional risk if the breakup of agricultural units to the south leads to applications for development there. Don't the 3,811 American war dead buried there, all of whom died fighting for the freedom we enjoy today, deserve more respect?" asked Dr James.

CPRE asserts busways are not an effective way of maximising the use of bus services. They say fixed routes mean services cannot be adapted as travel patterns develop and are very costly to maintain. "Furthermore, they are unable to serve any of the smaller communities they pass, without those residents driving to the nearest bus park" Dr James explained. A transport engineer who has worked globally on transport projects has told CPRE such schemes have proved ineffective. A similar scheme in France was ripped out and replaced with a light rail scheme after experiencing many problems.

The group also queries the timing of the proposal. They say since the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CAPCA) has only just completed a public consultation of its Draft Bus Strategy, this proposal appears very premature. They say it has been brought forward at the same time as proposals for a congestion charge in Cambridge. "Clearly, these matters are linked. It seems likely the GCP considers them inter-dependent, although they haven't said as much. Both proposals are equally unpopular and councillors should take account of public opinion before it's too late to save our countryside," Dr James concluded.

***For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact: Dr Alan James***

***Mob: 07801 880113 Email: [chairman@cprecamb.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cprecamb.org.uk)***