

COALITION OF PARISH COUNCILS

**Viability of the busway and the
sustainability of Cambourne and
other A428 settlements**

Steve Jones

The Councils have not proved the case that a segregated busway would be a sound use of public money or offer value for money.

- A segregated busway will not make the new settlements (West Camboune and Bourn Airfield) sustainable.
- The busway plans are at an early stage and the economic and commercial case is not proven
- The importance of an all-ways interchange at Girton/Madingley.

1. West Cambourne and Bourn Airfield are unsustainable because they are located too far away from where people work. Investing in a busway will do little to address this fundamental problem.

- Buses don't go where people want – spatially dispersed pattern of employment in region
- In Cambourne, according to the 2011 Census, 70% of people commute by car and only 6% by bus. Even if the proportion of people travelling to work by bus tripled to 20%, most people would still travel by car.
- Currently approx. 1,500 cars rat run from the A428 to Barton to access the M11 in the 2-hour morning rush. If the West Cambourne and Bourn Airfield go ahead (with St Neots developments) this would probably increase to 4-5,000 making life intolerable

2. The busway plans are at an early stage and the economic and commercial case is not proven

- A business case is needed to demonstrate that a segregated busway (with necessary additional investments like the Western Orbital) could be operated viably and provide High Quality Public Transport, without the need for long-term subsidies.
- No decision should be made until the business case has been developed and independently evaluated.
- Operators would have to provide a frequent service 18 hours day (0500 to 2300) to cater for shift workers at Addenbrokes and New Papworth hospitals.

3. Need for an all-ways interchange at Girton

- **Currently not possible to connect from the A428 to the M11 and onto new jobs at the biomedical park and biotech companies south of Cambridge.**
- **As a result, commuters have to rat-run through local villages.**
- **An all-ways Girton interchange urgently needed but is not being prioritised by Highways England, local councillors or council officers.**
- **Need a lobbying campaign.**

Conclusion: In our view, the Councils have not proved the case that a segregated busway would be a sound use of public money or offer value for money.

Resolution

The Forum asks that the proposals for the Cambourne to Cambridge busway and Western Orbital be reviewed to clarify how they will improve the sustainability of Cambourne and new A428 settlements. No decision should be taken on either scheme until a business case involving the operator is completed (and independently evaluated).