

Dear Peter and Jo,

Thank you for organising the two recent workshops for LLF Technical Group that considered a 'quick win' on-road bus route on the A1303 and the potential of a northern 'Girton' route.

While we appreciate the engagement, we are very disappointed at the solutions you presented, and indeed your general approach to the issue. This appeared to us to be little more than "box-ticking". In both cases, we do not think that you have undertaken the analysis promised to the LLF.

1. The 4th April on-road workshop:

The request from the Joint Assembly was to explore 'quick wins' that could be implemented in a 2-3 year time frame to create a viable on-road bus route that would provide short-to-medium term benefits. However you immediately settled on a definition of a "quick win" that is so narrow it allowed you to assert that the only "quick win" bus lane option is a very short stretch out-bound at the Madingley Mulch roundabout. You explicitly discounted the c.500m stretch passing the 800-year wood and American Cemetery, despite the fact the highway is wide enough (although you stated that trees had encroached into the highway boundary which could not be cut back – but surely they will have to be at some point?), but also despite the fact there are open fields opposite from which a strip of land could be taken if necessary. You then concluded that only a "piecemeal" bus lane of several disjointed sections was possible.

This is an inaccurate and highly prejudiced presentation of what is possible with regard to an optimised on-road option. We came to the meeting expecting to see an end-to-end, on-road solution drawn up that could be delivered in the agreed timeframe. Instead we received a series of reasons why it was not worth further investigation. This is not satisfactory. Also, despite having requested it for the past three years, the LLF has still not been presented with an optimal on-road solution deliverable within any timeframe.

So, for presentation to the LLF on 6 June, we ask you to (i) revisit the issue of 'quick wins' to provide an in-bound bus lane solution that could realistically be delivered within a 2-3 year time frame, so its performance characteristics (from Cambourne to, as a bare minimum, Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Cambridge Science Park) can be compared with the off-road alternative; (ii) provide a (long-awaited) optimal on-road solution for consideration and (iii) provide to the Technical Group the plans of the A1303 showing the highway boundary, in order that we can carry out our own investigations.

2. The 9th April northern 'Girton' route workshop:

This was even less satisfactory than the workshop the previous week. Mott MacDonald had been asked to investigate a northern route via Girton. We came to the meeting expecting to see a high level bus route proposal via Girton (or one close to Girton that could be linked to an upgraded Girton Interchange at some later date), which could link to the City Centre, the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and the Science Park. Instead, we were essentially shown a slide of the Smarter Cambridge Transport All-ways Girton Interchange upgrade proposal, and a presentation that concluded with the assertion that mapping a busway proposal via Girton was not worthwhile given it is not known precisely when the Girton Interchange will be upgraded – even though it is likely. No effort had been made to produce even an indicative route proposal, and no thought given to how it might link to the West Cambridge site and the City Centre. [We suggested along the east side of the M11 and via the existing Park and Ride on Madingley Road]. Again, the analysis has not been undertaken to a satisfactory degree.

So, for presentation to the LLF on 6 June, we ask you to revisit the brief to investigate a possible bus route via, or close to, Girton so that its long-term strategic value can be assessed, and its performance characteristics from Cambourne to Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Cambridge Science Park can be compared with the current off-road alternative.

This project has been plagued throughout by a significant and damaging deficit of trust and good faith and, in our view, this episode only adds to that. Please work with us to rectify that.

With regards,

Helen Bradbury, on behalf of the LLF Technical Group: Rod Cantrill, Steve Jones, Gabriel Fox and Des O'Brien.