**Cambridge South East Transport: The misguided busway**

The GCP have now published their route and leafleted every home inviting a response: it is quite extraordinary that having chosen their route they are only now just beginning to look at the environmental impact of it. What other organisation would fail to consider the environmental impact before choosing a route? To quote the leaflet ‘We will be conducting a full Environmental Impact Assessment, and are seeking your views on the design of the proposals and how we could best manage and mitigate possible impacts and any changes to the design needing to be considered. .... find out more and have your say’. Their consultation is open until 7th December so, please, do take this opportunity to say ‘yes’ to the alternative railway aligned route and ‘no’ to the misguided busway.

Over the last couple of months we’ve been working with Cambridge Connect on our strategy to change the GCP’s destructive route. We have produced a well-researched background paper setting out the GCP’s processes and consultations (or lack off) and a technical Terms of Reference document to go out to tender with leading independent transport consultants of national standing. The point of the exercise was to verify whether or not the railway route is viable as an alternative to driving the busway through the greenbelt. Most international consultants seem to have worked for the GCP and Cambridgeshire County Council and were therefore conflicted but we have had a bid in from a leading firm that we have accepted. The cost of this Task 1 Report is being born by Great Shelford Parish Council and Stapleford Parish Council with a top-up, given Stapleford’s shortage of funds, from a crowdfunder organised by Cambridge Past Present and Future.

This report will be with us shortly and there is every indication that this will validate our position. The point here is that the GCP did not assess the railway as an appropriate route as they were focused on simply driving the busway through open countryside and they failed to consult with the general public on this and so their processes are flawed.

The other issue is that of connectivity: it is hard to understand why the populations of Great Shelford (and Little Shelford) and Stapleford have not been provided with this accessibility and connectivity to Cambridge and why the GCP chose a route with bus stops a mile out of the village and up a hill!

We will need to embark on significant and urgent fundraising for the Task 2 Report investigation in that we need to examine the GCP’s methodology in calculating not only the predicted journey times but also the numbers of potential passengers generated and the overall business case as we believe the GCP’s methodology and calculations are also flawed.

It is it also important to bear in mind that the reports we have commissioned will form part of the expert witness evidence at the forthcoming public enquiry and without commissioning these reports there we would not have the evidence to stand up in the enquiry process. It is therefore vital that further fundraising is undertaken so that the funds are available not only for the expert witness reports but also to have the lawyers lined up to present our case at the public enquiry.

The fundraiser has already raised nearly £3,000 which will cover current costs when put with the Parish Councils’ contributions, but for Task 2 (referred to above) we will need to see further donations in the order of £2,500. We are so grateful for the generosity of people so far and we really hope we can cover the next stage. Together we can convince the GCP to change its misguided busway.

This link provides the background information:  <https://www.cambridgeppf.org/south-east-cambridge-busway> and the donations link is <https://www.cambridgeppf.org/appeal/sss-green-belt>