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Cambridge South Station consultation
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Dear Sir or Madam,

Camcycle is a volunteer-led charity with over 1,550 members that works for more, better and safer cycling for all ages and abilities in the Cambridge region.

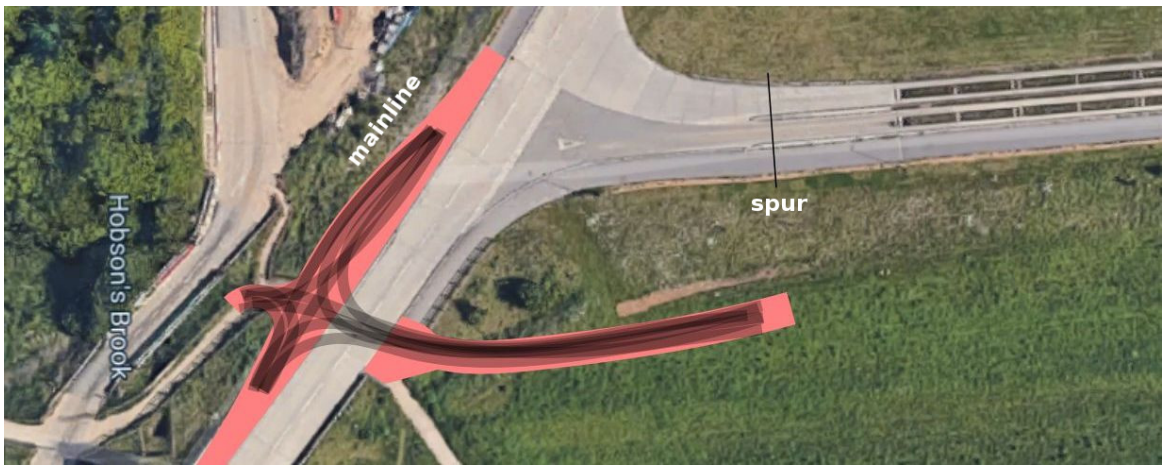
We appreciate that Network Rail and the Cambridge South Station team have made efforts to accommodate stakeholder input and produce a high-level design given the constraints of the site and of the decisions made so far.

However, we concur with the conclusion of Smarter Cambridge Transport and Railfuture that the community would be much better served by a station on a deck over the tracks with facilities above the railway, as well as a new cycleway over the tracks separate from the existing bridge. Such a new cycleway over the tracks could directly link with cycle parking facilities incorporated into a station on a deck, providing a very convenient and efficient travel hub similar to that which has been achieved at many railway stations in the Netherlands.

Given the current proposal, we have comments about the Western Access, the Eastern Access and the Cycle Parking.

Western Access

The maintenance tracks alongside both the mainline and spur tracks of the guided busway are very busy walking and cycling routes and will only become busier after the station opens. Both of these routes will need to be widened and properly designed to accommodate large numbers of people. The crossing of the mainline busway will have to be widened and realigned so that it can safely handle many people using it simultaneously. This is because the existing crossings of the mainline busway are both problematic:



A diagram showing the various cycling desire lines with approximated curvature that need to be accommodated, showing why widening is needed of the pathway and crossing, given that dozens of people could be using this space at the same time once the station opens.

- Most people now use the long dropped kerb at the Addenbrooke's spur junction because it is the easiest place to turn and the most direct route; however, it is considered somewhat hazardous because buses could be approaching from three directions.

- Very few people use the designated crossing point about 20m south of the junction because it is tightly-constrained and clearly unsuitable for cycling. It requires you to thread a very narrow path while also performing an owl-like, 180-degree rotary head movement and attempting to remain stable and not collide with other road users. This makes it less safe in practice, even though there are only two directions to check for buses.

Therefore, any change to this area will need to:

- create a significantly wider crossing and ensure that people can safely and sensibly approach it at reasonable angles from all directions, allowing for a quick and easy glance to the right and left before crossing;

- widen the maintenance track on the west side of the mainline busway, to give people more space to slow down, turn and look, while reducing conflicts with other users of the maintenance track as well as the pathway branching off to Trumpington;

- provide a jughandle approach to the crossing from the east side of the mainline busway, coming from the Addenbrooke's spur, to ensure that people can approach the crossing at the correct angle for easy visibility of buses approaching from either direction.

To the credit of the consultation team, the brochure does show such an approach from the east side. It is important that the proposed jughandle approach to the crossing remains part of the design even if other aspects of the Addenbrooke's spur and station access pathway change.

Moving east, we wish to ensure that the pathway between the busway and the station is suitable for the level of usage it will see. The consultation has not included information about the number of people walking and cycling expected at peak times, therefore it is hard for us to be specific. Local Transport Note 1/20 section 6.5 discourages shared-use pathways within urban areas. Table 6-3 states that the minimum width of a shared-use facility with up to 300 pedestrians and over 300 cyclists per hour should be 4.5m. For your information, our volunteers conducted counts of people using the Addenbrooke's Spur on weekday mornings in July 2019 and January 2020, finding cycle flows of 407/hour and 552/hour respectively.

Date	Start time	End time	Cyclists/Hour	Pedestrians/Hour
24 July 2019	07:00	09:30	407	98
13 Jan 2020	08:00	09:10	552	134

Once the station opens and as the Biomedical Campus expands, we expect that at peak times there could easily be over 600 cyclists and 300 pedestrians per hour using the pathway alongside the busway spur. Paragraph 6.5.7 goes on to say 'Wherever possible, and where pedestrian flows are higher, greater widths should be used to reduce conflict.' As the width requirement increases it makes a lot more sense to switch to a segregated pathway solution with a dedicated footway separate from a dedicated cycleway. A dedicated footway would likely need to be 2.0-2.5m in width at a minimum. Based on Table 5-2 of LTN 1/20 we would suggest that a desirable minimum width for a dedicated cycleway would be 3.0-3.5m for up to 1,000 cyclists per hour. We also note that Table 6-1 specifies that there should be a horizontal separation buffer between a carriageway and cycle track. The existing pathway currently lacks any separation from the busway, but it would be desirable to have at least the specified buffer separation if the path alongside the busway is to be removed and rebuilt to LTN 1/20 standards.

We do recognise the sensitivity of Hobson's Park, however we also have to balance that against the needs of people using the pathway, especially vulnerable pedestrians who would experience more difficulties being forced to share an inadequate pathway with many hundreds of cyclists per hour. We note that the Coton Path in West Cambridge is a well-known example of a segregated pathway handling many hundreds of cyclists and pedestrians per hour (pre-pandemic) and it runs along the edge of the sensitive West Fields. We also note that expected heavy usage is a good reason why a separate cycle bridge over the tracks is preferred, compared to the existing narrow shared-use pathway on the busway bridge. We hope to continue this discussion once better information about projected future walking and cycling rates to the station is available.

Eastern Access

We concur with the comments of other stakeholders that the eastern side of the station is unnecessarily dominated by car pick-up and drop-off. It is a very constrained area and as much room as possible is needed for walking and cycling access as well as cycle parking. The only motor vehicle access on the east should be for blue badge parking and an accessibility shuttle. The junction of Francis Crick Avenue and the busway spur road is a perennial problem area because it is so constrained and already very busy with people walking and cycling during normal times; the station will add hundreds if not thousands more pedestrians and cyclists per hour. The consultation team has produced an indicative plan with some additional space, which is an improvement, but probably still insufficient. There is also too much dependency on the CSET plans, which are problematic in their own right and very uncertain. We note that, once again, many of these problems with access and space for walking and cycling could be resolved with a deck over the station.

The Sawston Greenway proposes a two-way cycleway along Francis Crick Avenue, however the CSET proposals would squeeze it into a very tight space with insufficient room to build proper crossings of Francis Crick Avenue. The problems with CSET will be dealt with separately — however where the Sawston Greenway reaches the station access road, you must ensure that the Greenway is given a good amount of space to reduce conflicts between road users and a prioritised crossing either with signals or road markings. It will be important to ensure that there is a suitable location for rail replacement bus services that does not create problems for the Sawston Greenway or other cycle routes.

Cycle Parking

In general, we believe that cycle parking on the east side is preferable and will be better utilised and surveilled. Cycle parking should be largely provided using Sheffield stands or A-stands that are concreted into the ground, following layout advice from the Cycle Parking Guide SPD published by Cambridge City Council, in order to provide easy-to-use and fully accessible cycle parking spaces suitable for most people. There should also be a proportion of inclusive cycle parking spaces for use by disabled cyclists, following advice from the Wheels for Wellbeing Guide to Inclusive Cycling, as well as designated cargo-cycle parking spaces to accommodate those larger cycles (which are popular option for families with children, among others). We strongly discourage the installation of two-tier cycle parking because this type of stand is less accessible to many people. However, if some proportion of such stands are installed then they should also follow the Guide and Local Plan requirements, and the model chosen should have features like a welded frame-locking loop and gas-strut lifting assistance. Further detailed consultation with stakeholders such as Camcycle and the city council should be undertaken with regard to cycle parking design.

Security has been a major problem with the cycle parking at the central and north stations. This must be addressed at the design stage for this station or else we will suffer the same problems. CCTV is not sufficient because the footage is never examined. Experience at the other stations also shows that cycle stands must be designed to effectively withstand disassembly and attack on the integrity of the stands themselves. Mechanisms that detect the usage of powered lock-cutting tools and raise an alarm should be incorporated. Stands should be located in a place with good natural surveillance and easy casual oversight by station staff. While we would consider the provision of a certain proportion of spaces within a secure enclosure, we note that such enclosures are far from perfect and are often easily broken into by determined thieves, and therefore cannot be considered a panacea.

The proposed number of spaces, at 1,000, does not seem to be sufficient looking at the 10+ year time horizon. We would welcome further modelling from the consultation team on this matter. At the very least, there needs to be strong passive provision for future expansion — but that possibility appears to be in doubt on the important east side of the station, a problem that we would like to see tackled.

Yours sincerely,
On behalf of Camcycle

Matthew Danish,
Trustee