Supporting information/Evidence

The Plan relies on increasing bus travel so that growth can be accommodated on the transport network

Policy S/DS and its supporting text recognise that delivery of the Plan's proposed growth is dependent upon a sustainable and effective transport network (paragraph 2.76). The Local Plan's vision is also that "new development must minimise carbon emissions and reliance on the private car" (Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan, section 2.3). The Local Plan's Transport Evidence Report shows that the number of trips made by car need to remain below certain levels for the Plan's growth to be accommodated on the road network. The proposal in the Local Plan to use vehicular trip budgets for major developments as part of transport-related mitigation strategies is further evidence that increase in car trips as a result of the local plan's growth needs to be controlled. The Plan must therefore set out realistic and deliverable alternatives to car travel.

Aside from the proposed new stations in Cambourne and Cambridge East, the major schemes the Plan identifies to mitigate the transport impacts of growth on the network are busways:

> *"Our proposed strategy is heavily informed by the location of existing and committed public transport schemes. For example, focus growth at Cambourne takes advantage of the proposed East West Rail station and the proposed public transport improvement in the Cambourne to Cambridge corridor." (Policy S/DS, paragraph 2.82)*

The term 'public transport corridor' is used in the Local Plan, however the Greater Cambridge Partnership, who is developing the schemes is planning them specifically as busways (https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/public-transport-schemes). The plan therefore targets an increase in bus travel to ensure its growth does not have too severe an impact on Greater Cambridge's road network.

The Plan states that the infrastructure needed to support planned growth is set out and ongoing costs of transport infrastructure are considered

The supporting text to Policy I/ID states that the infrastructure needed to support planned growth is set out and the cost of ongoing management has been considered:

> *"For the Greater Cambridge area, the infrastructure needed to support planned growth over the plan period, and deliver the spatial strategy, is set out [in the] the IDP [Infrastructure Delivery Plan], which has been informed through engagement with relevant services providers. Where appropriate, account has been had to ongoing management and maintenance, the need to fund initial establishment costs, and any monitoring requirements" (*Policy I/ID paragraph 10.74).

However the evidence we set out below suggests that schemes to provide ongoing revenue funding for buses are not in place.

Funds will need to be found to support new bus routes and services

The decision has been made for franchising in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and the expectation is that franchising will have been implemented by 2030. The new bus routes and services required to make the Local Plan 'work' in transport terms will therefore need to be provided under Combined Authority contracts.

Bus services cannot be supported by the revenue from fare-paying passengers alone and it is unusual to find any public transport network operating without public funds (Leon Daniels OBE, appearance at CPCA Transport Committee, 17.6.26). The difference between revenue and cost of bus services in London, for example, is about £1 billion a year (Leon Daniels OBE, addressing the CPCA Transport Committee, 17.6.26). It is therefore to be expected that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (the Transport Authority for Greater Cambridge) will need to provide financial support for the bus routes and services required for the new developments set out in the Local Plan. While developer contributions (Section 106) might support services on a temporary basis, they are usually used to support routes specific to that development for 3 to 5 years, although sometimes up to 10 years, but not support for an integrated wider network

The Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy (one part of the Plan's three-part evidence base) states that key opportunities for funding buses are:

> *"For bus priority and service improvement (including corridor bus priority, interchange upgrades, information/ticketing improvements and demand responsive services), key opportunities include BSIP and successor bus programmes" (Paragraph 5.15).*

However the evidence above indicates that BSIP is not sufficient to support the Combined Authority's existing subsidised services, let alone an expanded bus network.

Funding for the current bus network is insufficient, let alone an expanded one

Around 88% of bus mileage is currently run on a commercial basis (and thus, sustainable on fare revenues); with approximately 12% of services subsidised by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. As of November 2025, The Combined Authority was having to draw on its reserves to fund the subsidised services, as its expenditure on them was greater than the funding available:

> "*The passenger transport service is reliant on draw-downs from reserve in both the current and next financial year, this indicates that the current suite of interventions is not affordable in the long-term*." (Agenda pack for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's Transport Committee, 17 Nov 2025, p58

The bus network has contracted in size in Greater Cambridge in recent years. Analysis by Friends of the Earth and the University of Leeds suggests that the bus network in Cambridge contracted by 17% between 2010 to 2023 and the bus network in South Cambridgeshire contracted by 14%. A recent report to CPCA's Transport Committee also predicts that unless solutions are found to close the funding gap that exists for buses, the bus network across

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough could contract further by more than a third by 2035 (Independent Review of Implementation Pathways for Bus Franchising) .

The cost of new bus services set out by the Plan

The new bus services set out by the Local Plan will cost CPCA a substantial amount each year. The following table shows the costs, which are taken from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). According to the IDP :"Bus service costings assumed annual operating costs over 5 years of operation." (p60)

Project/ description	**Description**	**Location**	**Cost (£ million) for annual operation over 5 years of operation**	**Anticipated funding**
Bus service to connect North East Cambridge with North West Cambridge	Orbital bus services from North East Cambridge to Eddington, Madingley Park and Ride and the proposed Cambourne to Cambridge public transport corridor	NEC Eddington	TBC	
Improvements to public transport	High quality, direct public transport route through the site from the Newmarket Road Travel Hub.	Cambridge East	4.5	
Shuttle / commuter services between Babraham and key railway stations	Provide attractive staff commuter public transport enhancements, connecting the site with Whittlesford Station, Cambridge South Station and Cambridge, either through collaboration with Granta Park and Genome Campus commuter services, improvements to existing services and / or provision of new services.	Babraham Grange Farm	9	
Bus service enhancements [for Grange Farm]	Package of bus service enhancements connecting the site with Granta Park, Babraham Research Campus, Genome Campus, Cambridge Biomedical Campus, North East Cambridge, Cambridge railway stations (including	Grange Farm	6	

	Cambridge South and Whittlesford Parkway station), Linton and Haverhill.			
Implementation of extensive [Cambridge Biomedical] Campus wide public transport improvements	To deliver new and upgraded bus routes and provide sufficient capacity to accommodate travel demands, including: - Employee specific coach / bus services where a need is identified in the vision-led Transport Assessment. - Extension of bus service start and finish times to match staff shift patterns. - DRT services	CBC	15.8	
Bus services [for Slate Hall Farm]	Connect the site with rail services (either to a future EWR station at Cambourne, or Cambridge North or Cambridge station) by sustainable modes.	Slate Hall Farm	1.5	
Bus services [off-peak for Slate Hall Farm]	Off-peak bus services to cover staff shift patterns	Slate Hall Farm	3	
A series of public transport improvements	A series of public transport improvements are to be delivered to connect the development sites to the existing network. These may include: Route extensions Bus priority measures Timetable amendments to support staff shift patterns.	District wide	TBC	
Total			£39.8	

This indicates an annual cost to CPCA of at least £40 million to run some of the bus services the Local Plan indicates are necessary. The actual sum will be higher as a) some costs are still TBC and b) some measures appear to be missing from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, for example there's no allocation for new bus routes and services for Cambourne North.

The new bus routes/services required to mitigate the transport impacts of the developments in the Local Plan will incur a cost to CPCA, however the Plan does not identify how that cost will be met. This is particularly a concern because:

- There is already a funding gap for buses in the CPCA area, which is predicted to grow substantially by 2035
- Beyond the provision of socially-necessary bus services, decisions to spend money on bus services are a political choice afforded to the leader of the CPCA, not the leaders of councils in Greater Cambridge. Paul Bristow, Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, opposes new busways, and has said that he will not guarantee that he will run services on them once they have been constructed (see also https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9mZfz01aSI&t=7595s). In Paul Bristow's statement of evidence on the Cambourne to Cambridge order, he said:

"a. I cannot guarantee the Applicant's assumed bus service levels on C2C will be viable under future bus franchising arrangements operated by the Authority;
*b. I can give no assurance that bus services will be permitted to operate on the C2C route under future bus franchising arrangements operated by the Authority." (*Statement of Evidence of Paul Bristow, Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for the Public Inquiry opening 16th September 2025*)*

- He has also ruled out introducing road charging or increasing the mayoral precept (the Mayor's portion of council tax), two major measures that can be used to generate revenue funding for buses (Paul Bristow, Manifesto).

Evidence/information for section 'What changes need to be made to the Plan?'

Oxford City's adopted Local Plan supports road user charging and/or a workplace parking levy (paragraph 7.9 and Policy M1). There is therefore a precedent for a Local Plan to include measures such as these

"*The following movement specific objectives are important to ensure people are provided with efficient, attractive and sustainable ways to move throughout the city:*
- *Supporting the existing movement hierarchy prioritising walking and cycling and use of public transport, and reallocating road space according to this hierarchy;*
- *Supporting the introduction of additional demand management measures alongside the existing measures, which may include traffic restrictions, road user charging and/or a workplace parking levy…" (paragraph 7.9)*

Nottingham's Workplace Parking Levy generated £90 million in its first ten years for reinvestment in sustainable transport (Nottingham's Workplace Parking Levy 10 Year Impact Report)

A road charge would raise substantial sums to invest in public transport. The business case for the Cambridge Sustainable Travel Zone road charge suggested that the scheme could generate over £50 million in stable ongoing income per year to invest in bus services (Making Connections 2022 consultation brochure (available via the Internet Archive site Wayback Machine). The Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy is clear that road charging is not proposed, however (p1).