

Some comments on the *University of Cambridge BAP*  
from the **Cam Valley Forum** (a CCF member).

It is good to have a view of this draft document. I wish it well and I think it is very important that it be taken seriously.

Firstly, I did have some early personal engagement with Cecile Thiaucourt and Amy Munro-Faure on this, so I have been asked before to contribute before. My main suggestion to them was that GREEN ROOFS on all new buildings would greatly increase City biodiversity. They help insects and small passerines, absorb carbon dioxide and attenuate rainfall too.

Secondly, with respect to the document, the atomised nature of the land and property owned by the University in the city of Cambridge and its environs makes something of a non-sense in joined up thinking! I understand why this has happened. That is not the point. However, one should not ignore the contiguity of environments that do join all these things together!

**The River Cam** is one of these, as it runs through the middle. You could make this point when you mention 'Lawton'. The River Cam made Cambridge as a place. It has been a wildlife corridor through the City for ever and still it has **no conservation status** of itself for its own wildlife. The University **should show** somehow that it cares about this fact! Eels pass through the city in both directions (with difficulty) but they do manage it. Since the Fish pass was inserted at the Rush (Sheeps Green) Sea Trout have been recorded upstream of the City, both these species have come all the way from the sea. The river is also a 'fly line' for many birds:- kingfishers, common terns, egrets, wildfowl all use it. It matters hugely in the big picture. As a 'riparian owner' you must take some responsibility at least.

On '**Invasives**' (1.44) I was astonished to see that Floating Pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* was not included! This plant blocked the upper river and with some considerable expenditure and manpower has now been eliminated. It is the best local example of why our national biosecurity is such a shambles.

**Nine Wells** has great cultural and ecological importance to the City. It would be deeply wrong to abuse it further by neglecting its management. Dr Steve Boreham (Dept of Geography) should be consulted on that aspect.

On **Climate Change** the University should recognise that Cambridge is at the centre of driest part of the UK. We are entering a climate emergency (full of unknowns) and we need to reinforce the resilience of our own local aquatic environments. The Cam has been at its lowest ever recorded rates of flow in 2019. This is attributable at least in part to local overabstraction of ground water comparable to such problems in Spain. The canalisation of the River Cam, ponded between water retaining weirs gives the impression that the river system is in good health. It is not.

On **University Farmland**, could some care be given to conserving the biodiversity of what are increasingly rare farm weeds? These ruderals are home to a diversity of other forms of life. One reason why we are now so insect poor and farmland bird poor is that monoculture farm practice has been so devastating. Annual harrowing of strips of farm field edges can do much to aid such conservation. Alan Leslie and Dr Jonathan Shanklin (notably absent from your advisors ?) could help here.

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