

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

3rd December 2008

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

C/6/9/1A

**Discharge of Conditions - Cambridgeshire Guided Busway
Design and External Appearance of Arbury Park South Bus Stop and Histon
and Impington Bus Stops**

Recommendation: Approval

Notes:

These submissions have been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendations of approval are contrary to objections raised by the Parish Council.

Background

1. On 21st December 2005, the Secretary of State for Transport directed that planning permission be deemed to be granted for the development included in the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Order. One of the ten conditions reads:

(Condition 3)

- (a) Work shall not begin on each of the following items of development until in each case prior written approval of their design and external appearance has been obtained from the local planning authority:
 - (i) any building or bus stop
 - (b) The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approval given by the local planning authority or, if that authority gives prior written approval to any amendment or alteration, subject to such amendment or alteration.

The reason for the condition is to ensure the satisfactory appearance and functioning of the development, in the interests of highway safety.

A. CONDITION 3(a)(i) - ARBURY PARK SOUTH BUS STOP

Site and Proposal

2. The site is located at the southern end of Arbury Park at the traffic light controlled junction of Kings Hedges Road, Arbury Road and Chariot Way.
3. The adjoining Arbury Park development comprises land parcels A2 and B1, on which development, comprising part four and part three storey dwellings have been erected on the former.

4. The submission, dated 15th September 2008, proposes details of design and external appearance for a bus stop on either side of Chariot Way. The eastbound stop comprises a 12m x 3.5m platform of block paving, a shelter 9.6m long incorporating ticket machine, seating and real time passenger information display and a 13.8m long cycle shelter for 30 cycles. The west bound stop comprises a 24m x 3.5m platform, and a shelter 12m long. The shelters would be constructed of a steel frame, glass panels to rear and side elevations and a clear polycarbonate roof. A CCTV camera would be positioned on each platform. The scheme incorporates planting proposals.

Consultations

5. **Impington Parish Council** comments:
 - “(a) Out of style and character
 - (b) Not sympathetic to its surroundings
 - (c) Poor functional design, with flat roof in an area of trees/leaves, attractive for climbing onto
 - (d) No Smoking Signage will be required
 - (e) Concern over lack of cycle shelter provision in both directions”
6. The **Landscape Design Officer** has no objections but suggests that on the northern boundary of the west side of the junction a few more plants than shown are planted. The planting on the south of the guideway will presumably be integrated into the existing planting. The bluebells are unlikely to succeed planted in grass around young trees because of the competition with the grass. However, they would thrive amongst the shaded environment of the adjacent established planting and could spread out in time as the hornbeams mature and shade out the grass. This may not technically be the busway site but there shouldn't be a problem blending in this bulb planting across the site as the planting operation is only very superficial.
7. No comments have been received from **Cambridge City Council**, or the **Local Highway Authority**.
8. **Gallaher Estates** asks that the land take and design of the cycle and bus shelters should be checked with Gallagher prior to construction.

Planning Comments

9. The planning condition does not require the Authority's approval of siting of the bus stop. This has planning permission. The condition requires approval of “design and external appearance” in the interests of highway safety.
10. The Inspector's Report into the Guided Busway inquiry, which was held between September and December 2004, concluded that the proposed stops were appropriately located to serve the main areas of passenger demand.
11. The design and appearance of the shelters is functional but is not intended to reflect the style and character of buildings in the vicinity. The shelters are contemporary and transparent and will appear insignificant in the context of the scale of nearby buildings. Their transparency will also enhance the security of passengers using them. In addition the design has been accepted elsewhere along the route, including Arbury Park North, Cambridge Regional College and Cambridge Science Park.

12. I have made the Guided Bus Team aware of the comments regarding no smoking, but it believes that, since the shelter is only partly enclosed on each side, such signage is not required.
13. I have no evidence to suggest that the provision of secure parking for 30 cycles is inadequate. This was the number approved for the Science Park stop, which was also positioned on the eastbound side. The cycle shelter is, however, intended to serve both eastbound and westbound travellers.
14. The Guided Bus Team is happy to increase the number of plants as suggested by the Landscape Design Officer. A revised plan is expected.

Recommendation

15. Subject to the receipt of an amended plan incorporating additional planting, it is recommended that Condition 3(a)(i) be discharged in regard to the design and external appearance of the Arbury Park South Bus Stop.

B. CONDITION 3(a)(i) - HISTON AND IMPINGTON BUS STOPS

Site and Proposal

16. Station Road is an un-classified road that runs parallel to the B1049 and is a relatively busy road within the villages. The junction of Station Road with the proposed Guided Busway is at the location of the former Histon Station, with Bishops' hardware and cycle shops on the opposite side of the line. The details of this junction were agreed by members at its meeting on 5th December 2007. The junction has been since constructed along with the Guideway on this stretch of the line.
17. This submission dated 29th January 2008, seeks agreement of the detailed design and external appearance of the bus stops, one on the south-western side of the line, northwest of Station Road (adjacent to Bishops cycles and dwellings at Villa Place). The other is to be sited on the north-eastern side of the track, southeast of Station Road, adjacent to woodland.
18. The design includes details of the platform, bus and cycle shelters and landscaping of the stops. The platforms are both 3.5m deep and 36m long. Both include shelters for twenty cycles and on the western side a passenger shelter 9.6m long while on the eastern side one 12m long. These are all constructed with stainless steel frames, clear glass panels walls and clear polycarbonate roofs.

Consultations

19. **Histon Parish Council** recommends refusal, commenting:
 - (a) Poor design, lack of imagination.
 - (b) 20 cycle spaces are totally inadequate.
 - (c) The Guided Bus is a flagship for the Cambridge area. The Station area will form the first view of our Conservation villages for people who pass through or stop. The design that has been presented to us does not adequately reflect the prestigious nature of this project or a positive reflection on our community.

20. **Impington Parish Council** recommends refusal. It commented:
- (a) Out of style and character.
 - (b) Not sympathetic to its surroundings.
 - (c) Poor functional design, with flat roof in an area of trees/leaves, attractive for climbing onto.
 - (d) Twenty spaces totally inadequate.
 - (e) Design should be open at both sides, not user-friendly.
 - (f) Minimum standard width between hoops queried – should be 900mm?

21. The **Local Highway Authority** confirmed that the details are acceptable subject to detailed design.

22. The **Landscape Design Officer** has commented that the drawings no: CGB.DES.17300-D-1-1001 and 1002 are satisfactory for the discharge of the landscape condition.

Representations

23. No representations have been received.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

24. The issues to consider in relation to the design and appearance are whether:

- (a) They will enable the stops to function well.
- (b) The number and spacing of cycle spaces are appropriate.
- (c) The appearance is appropriate to the character of the area and of a sufficient quality; and the landscaping will be appropriate.

25. As with the other bus stop proposals discussed in this report, the siting is not for consideration.

26. In relation to the design, the proposals are a standard design that has been proposed for all stops along the route. The site is not within a Conservation Area or within the setting of Listed Buildings and therefore its visual impact must be judged on that basis.

27. The designs are modern, easily maintained and of quality materials that will weather well. They provide clear views, which in crime prevention terms is essential for the safety of bus users. They are considered by officers to be of sufficient design quality to ensure that the character and appearance of the area will not be harmed. Due to their lightweight form they will not be visually intrusive.

28. The four shelters are to be sited away from the boundaries of the Busway and as such are unlikely to suffer significant problems relating to leaf fall from adjoining trees and landscaping.

29. In total forty cycle spaces will be provided. On the shorter cycle shelter this still provides adequate space between hoops to ensure ease of use. The Local Highway Authority when asked to comment on the number of cycle spaces proposed has advised informally that forty spaces is a good starting point. It will seek to review this when it is up and running; and provision may be an appropriate strategy to adopt within the Cycle City initiatives, particularly if done on a strategic level along the entire route. The Guided Bus Team expressed its concern that the number of spaces is not

an issue for consideration in relation to the design and appearance, which are the matters to be decided by virtue of this condition. There is limited space to accommodate additional spaces at these stops, in any event.

Recommendation

30. It is recommended that Condition 3(a)(i) be discharged in regard to the design and external appearance of the Histon and Impington Bus Stops.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Planning File Ref: C/6/9/1A
- Plans for the Guided Busway are attached as an Appendix.

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