

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th May 2009

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

C/6/9/1A

Discharge of Condition 3(a)(iii) and (vi) - Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Design and External Appearance of B1050 Park and Ride Junction and Longstanton Park and Ride Site

Recommendation: Approval

Notes:

This submission was considered at Planning Committee on 4th June 2008. The recommendation of approval is contrary to Parish Council objections.

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:
 - iii) the formation, layout or alteration of any means of access to any highway used by vehicular traffic; and
 - vi) Park and Ride sites, including finished ground levels for sites located within the indicative floodplain.
- (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.

2. The minute of Planning Committee on 4th June 2008 reads:

“Prior to considering this application, the Committee attended a site visit on 4th June 2008. The Committee gave Officers delegated powers to **DISCHARGE** Condition 3(a)(vi) relating to the design and external appearance of the Longstanton Park and Ride site in accordance with the amended drawings submitted by letters dated 8th November 2007 and 20th March 2008, subject to agreement being reached on a timescale for completion of the dedicated bus, foot and cycle way connection to Northstowe, the use of full cut off luminaries in accordance with the recommendations of the Institute of Lighting Engineers, revisions to planting proposals between the balancing pond and the B1050 carriageway to

include an appropriate replacement of the hedge, suitable measures to protect the access and parking on it at "Southwell" and the provision of a footway/cycleway between Longstanton and the Park and Ride site".

3. Amendments, submitted by letters dated 23rd February 2009 and 12th March 2009 propose a total of 700 parking spaces constructed in two phases of 350 each, of which 32 spaces (8%) would be for disabled persons. Works to the B1050 junction and ground works in the Park and Ride site have commenced.
4. Other elements of the scheme include:
 - (a) Park and Ride Building - details approved.
 - (b) A cycleway is proposed from the B1050 Station Road and follows the entrance road into the bus terminal area. There is provision for cycle shelters to accommodate 100 cycles (50 in each phase).
 - (c) Two walkways have been provided for pedestrian access through the parking area from the furthest parking row to the bus terminal. Future connections to Northstowe are shown on the south and east boundaries.
 - (d) Access into the Park and Ride is provided from the B1050 Station Road via a signalised junction and then through a roundabout. The highway junction has been moved some 32 metres north of its original position opposite the bungalow "Southwell". The alignment of the approach road has consequently been adjusted and there is now a single surface water balancing pond south of the approach road. To achieve the junction, the alignment of Station Road has been moved eastwards for a distance of approximately 180 metres south of the proposed junction. This will involve the loss of that extent of hedgerow on the east side of the road.
 - (e) Landscaping proposals include native screen planting between 5m and 20m wide on the western, southern and eastern edges and larger stock trees planted in an avenue arrangement alongside the central pedestrian routes. Land around the balancing pond and south of the approach road will be planted with a mixture of native screen planting, wildflowers, grassland, reedbed and 'aquatic' planting.
 - (f) Native screen planting "to be constructed by others" will be provided between the balancing pond and the cycle route alongside the B1050 on the northbound approach to the Park and Ride.
5. In a letter dated 13th November 2008, the Project Manager addresses the following points:
 - (a) "The County Council (CCC) has confirmed that they will be instructing their Highways Department to construct a cycleway from Longstanton to the Park and Ride site. Albeit that these works are not part of BAM Nuttall's scope of works, the County has undertaken to complete these works.
 - (b) We have reviewed the impact on the design of a change from 10m to 8m lighting columns and can confirm that it is our intention to replace the 10m columns with 8m columns without modifying the layout. There is a small impact on the lighting levels in three areas but these can be addressed.

- (c) As discussed, we can confirm that there will be screen planting on the boundary between the B1050 and the Park and Ride site, although the final design of the cycleway may impact on the type and location.
- (d) With respect to the entrance for Mrs Kides and her small retail business we can confirm that the road lane width for the new junction is not reduced below that of the existing road (additional space is provided on the P&R side of the junction) and as such cars will continue to be able to pass those that may be stopped at the entrance to Mrs Kides' property".

Consultations - amended scheme

6. **Longstanton Parish Council** re-iterates objections made on 1st May 2008. Specifically it comments:

"General - there should be a clear warranty on planting and a specific proposed maintenance regime during that period. There is a road segment labelled, "future connection to Northstowe". This link should be removed. It will discourage pedestrian and cycle traffic, contrary to the aims of this "prototype ecotown." It will also provide potential to use the parking facility as a cut-through during rush-hour.

It is unclear why the screening along the B1050 in drawings 092 and 094 is not being provided for by the developers. Existing residences must be provided with screening from the Park and Ride, and that screening must be in place early in the development.

Section 3 - 100 spaces for bicycles does not seem sufficient to encourage green transport, especially since it will want to draw from Northstowe, not just existing residences. The P&R provision must include the B1050 cycle/pedestrian access (paved) and screening.

Section 4.1.1 - It is unclear what the density of the plant screening will be, and how the visual impact will change through the year (e.g. percent deciduous vs evergreen). The area should be fully screened year-round.

Section 5 - Cycle access into the Park and Ride stops at the entrance. There should be provision for a separate cycle lane along both sides of the Park and Ride into the parking area (drawings 091 and 092). There appears to be no cycle access from northern Longstanton and Willingham. Dedicated pedestrian and cycle access should be provided by the proposal at least as far north as the bus crossing.

Section 7.4.1 - B1050 storm sewers already overflow, and so cannot be expected to handle extra capacity from such a large impervious surface. All water must be attenuated on site, with a demonstration that peak run-off and total from the site will not be greater than it was before construction began in the area (i.e. run-off should be as if it were a field with a significant amount of evapotranspiration from plant matter and with nearly all the rest being groundwater run-off rather than the overland run-off proposed.

Section 7.5 - Foul sewage should be handled on-site (e.g. via reed beds) until such time as Anglian Water make good their commitment to fully upgrade the system from Longstanton. There is already flooding along the B1050 in people's gardens; no extra effluent should be permitted in residential gardens.

Section 8 - Lighting should be limited to use only while the Park and Ride site is open in order to avoid light pollution and to reduce energy use, in line with the goals of the

prototype ecotown of Northstowe. Lighting must be demonstrated to be not directly visible from any existing residence to avoid polluting residences with light (i.e. making the site not in keeping with the surrounding homes). Lighting must be low-energy downlighting to avoid general light pollution in the area. Longstanton is a rural setting, and is not amenable to the glow of urban lighting. It is not clear that the proposed lighting meets these criteria.

The new junction shows limited access to and from the property of Mrs Kides ("Southwell"). Mrs Kides has operated a small retail business from her property for over 30 years, and is dependent upon the income she generates. The Parish Council is concerned that limited access to "Southwell" raises road safety concerns for Mrs Kides, pedestrians and drivers. It is not good enough for the current road-edge simply to be maintained. At present if a car draws in and stops in order to purchase from Mrs Kides' stall, the road is still wide enough for other vehicles to overtake. However, under the three-lane proposal the lanes will necessarily be narrower than at present. Anyone stopping at Mrs Kides' stall would block the flow of northward traffic. The only solution is to widen the road adequately at this point."

7. **Willingham Parish Council** - No additional comments received.
8. **Ecology Officer** has no specific comments, other than welcoming the extensive wildflower planting.
9. The **Landscape Design Officer** considers the proposed pedestrian route to Northstowe to be acceptable in the short term. In the longer term it would be preferable to have the footway along the south side of the outer roadway.

It is also recommended that the north-south central avenue planting is completed in its entirety in the first phase so that the trees match.

Representations - amended scheme

10. Resident of "Southwell" still has concerns on the following matters:
 - (a) The proposed traffic lights at the new junction will cause vehicles to queue on the two lanes outside her access, blocking this entrance. This will prevent vehicles, including service deliveries, refuse and visitors to the vegetable and flower stall, from stopping, but also driving in and out of the property. No solution has been offered.
 - (b) The reduction in height of lighting columns is welcomed but the number of lights will harm the environment of "Southwell", "Stanton House" and Northstowe.
 - (c) A proposed temporary footpath on the east of the B1050 and south of the Park and Ride junction to the Longstanton Bypass roundabout could be completed where the alteration of the road will take place in connection with the Park and Ride. Sight of the final design of the footway/cycleway and landscaping between the B1050 and the Park and Ride site is sought. Who will construct the cycle route and provide the replacement screen planting alongside it?
 - (d) A proposed lamp post will be close to or on the edge of the driveway. This will cause light pollution and make it difficult for cars to turn in and out of the driveway.

- (e) There is a headwall proposed south of the drive. What is its purpose?
- (f) There are still drainage problems to be resolved:

The pumping stations and Over Sewage Treatment works are working above capacity. It is unacceptable to continue to put more sewerage into a system that frequently breaks down because it works above capacity.

- (g) After heavy rains any attenuation system will reach capacity very quickly and must drain into a system that may not have the capacity to cope. Willingham High Street will be in danger of flooding. Who is responsible for maintaining the balancing pond? A security fence should be provided around the pond for public safety.
- (h) About 13 feet of ditch north of "Southfield's" driveway has been left open. This will be dangerous to the public but also difficult for SCDC to keep it clean from weeds and rubbish.

11. Residents of "Stanton House" object. In addition to the concerns raised by the resident of "Southwell", the additional issues are raised:

- (a) Access to/from Stanton House will also be blocked at busy times. New signs and lamp posts will obscure line of sight of oncoming traffic from both directions.
- (b) Exhaust from stationary traffic will increase air pollution risk.
- (c) Fencing and screen planting on the east side of the B1050 is essential and should be provided by the Developers.
- (d) The use of traditional, inefficient and oversized lighting scheme design risks gross light pollution. Insufficient on-off timing information has been provided to be able to form a complete assessment about light pollution effects.

12. Gallagher Estates comment:

1. We support the inclusion of the indicative highways links between the Park and Ride and the adjacent Northstowe development. These proposals appear to positively respond to comments we made on the design of the Park and Ride site in our correspondence dated 9th December 2008 (Your Ref: C/6/9/1A/DJR).
2. We also support the inclusion of the new indicative cycle path from the junction of the Park and Ride and the B1050 south towards Longstanton village. We have additional comments on this part of the submission:
 - (a) We have seen no supporting, written information and on the basis of the plans submitted to discharge these conditions, we question why there is not a combined footpath and cycle way adjacent to the B1050 south towards Longstanton village for all non-motorised users.
 - (b) It is unclear from the plans what movement cyclists from Longstanton village heading towards the Park and Ride would make once they have turned right into the Park and Ride access road.

- (c) It is unclear how and what surface or cycle infrastructure the new indicative cycle path ties into at the southern edge of the Limits of Deviation of the CGB works.
- (d) We note the use of the phrase 'constructed by others' to describe how the new indicative cycle path will be implemented. Without a clear explanation of the strategy for non-motorised users wishing to access the Park and Ride from the south, there would appear to be potential safety issues and a lack of clarity about movements in and out of the Park and Ride and heading south towards Longstanton village. This strategy should provide a clear explanation of who will implement the new indicative cycle path and when the works are proposed."

Planning Comments – Key Issues

13. The key issues identified by the Planning Committee minute are:

- (a) Links to Northstowe;
- (b) Lighting;
- (c) Landscaping alongside the B1050;
- (d) Access and parking at "Southwell"; and
- (e) Footway/cycleway link to Longstanton.

Links to Northstowe

14. In response to the suggestions made by Gallagher Estates, the CGB Team has incorporated three future routes from Northstowe into the layout of the car park, two on the south boundary and one on the east boundary. These will provide pedestrian and cycle access and in one case, a bus link. In accordance with Policy NS/11(8) of the Northstowe Area Action Plan, adopted 2007, there should be no direct road access to the site from Northstowe. No motorised vehicular traffic, other than for essential access, should use the route into Northstowe.

Lighting

15. As amended, the Park and Ride site will be extensively lit from 8m high columns for safety reasons. The reduction in height is welcomed. The lighting design will be in accordance with British Standards and the recommendations of the Institute of Lighting Engineers, which recommends the use of full horizontal cut-off luminaires installed at 0° uplift to reduce sky glow and to minimise visual intrusion and light pollution. Lighting at the Cambridge Park and Ride sites has been successful in achieving this objective. The lights will be switched off outside of operational hours. These measures, together with the distance in excess of 200 metres between "Southwell" and the Park and Ride site and the intervening landscaping, will minimise visual impact in the longer term.

16. 8m high lighting columns are proposed on the west side of the B1050 on the northbound approach to the Park and Ride junction. One is proposed on the north side of the driveway to "Southwell". This should not interfere with access on the driveway, although I have asked the applicant if this can be moved a short distance to the north.

Landscaping alongside the B1050

17. The CGB Team has confirmed that the screen planting alongside the B1050 will be provided to suit the available planting space between the balancing pond and the realigned kerb line. The actual species will be confirmed on future drawing

submissions. The final design of the cycleway (see below) may also impact on the type and location of screen planting.

Access and parking at "Southwell"

18. The access to "Southwell" will be some 17 metres south of the proposed traffic lights controlling northbound B1050 and right-turning Park and Ride traffic. At the entry point to "Southwell" there will be a two-lane approach to the traffic lights.
19. The CGB Team has indicated that the road lane width for the new junction is not reduced below that of the existing road (additional space is provided on the Park and Ride side of the junction) and as such cars will continue to be able to pass those that may be stopped at the entrance to "Southwell".

Footway/Cycleway link to Longstanton

20. A 2.0 metre wide footway has been constructed on the east side of the road from Longstanton village northwards to the new bypass roundabout and finishing adjacent to the Golf course clubhouse. North of that point and as an interim measure, pending Northstowe development, it is intended to improve the verge for safer use by pedestrians and cyclists using a rolled road planings surface, not constructing a sealed surface cycleway. Work has commenced and has reached the southern site access to the Contractor's yard.

Other issue - Drainage

21. Drainage for the Park and Ride will discharge via permavoid storage units, which attenuate the flow, to the storm sewers on the B1050, in accordance with requirements of the Environment Agency. Attenuation will be to a permissible greenfield run-off rate. Foul drainage from the Park and Ride building, which has been approved, will discharge to a foul water sewer in agreement with Anglian Water. The open ditch on the west side of Station Road is an awarded watercourse and works to it have to be carried out in accordance with Land Drainage byelaw approval.
22. The proposed headwall south of the drive to "Southwell" is shown in error. A new headwall has been constructed to the north but there is to be no change to the south.

Recommendation

23. It is recommended that Condition 3(a)(iii) and (vi) be discharged in regard to the design and external appearance for the B1050 Park and Ride junction and the Longstanton Park and Ride site in accordance with the amended drawings submitted by letters dated 23rd February and 12th March 2009 and subject to final submission and approval of detailed landscaping for the screen planting on the east side of the B1050 and completion of the dedicated bus, foot and cycleway connections to Northstowe in accordance with an agreed timescale.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Northstowe Area `Action Plan (adopted July 2007)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: C/6/9/1A
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

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