

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> November 2009

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services)/  
Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities)

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**C/6/9/1A – HISTON AND IMPINGTON  
Discharge of Condition 5 –  
Lighting at the Histon and Impington Bus Stops, Station Road  
For Cambridgeshire Guided Busway**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Notes:**

**This submission has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendation of approval is contrary to objections raised by Parish Councils.**

**Background**

1. On 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Condition 5 reads:
  - (a) Details of the lighting system and switching arrangements proposed at all stops and along the off-highway sections of the route and to new and replacement footpaths, cycleways and bridleways shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before that part of the development is brought into operation;
  - (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.

Reason: in the interests of safety of users and visual and residential amenity.

2. Members will recall that at its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009 it resolved to not approve the scheme submitted for the lights at the Histon and Impington bus stops. The concerns expressed related to the impact on neighbouring amenity. A decision was not made in order to allow officers to continue to assess the impact of the light columns on neighbouring properties and to seek from the developer either a reduced number of columns or the use of full cut-off luminaires that meet Institution of Lighting Engineers standards or a combination of these and any other effective alternative.

**Site and Proposal**

3. The submission, attached to a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009, proposes details of the lighting arrangements at bus stops on the Guided Busway. Technical electrical specifications have been submitted. In addition the following information has been provided:

“Street lighting lamps have lower half clear and upper half solid to ensure light emits downwards only.

Switching is by light sensors (PECU) for night-time illumination only (dusk to dawn).

Bus shelter lighting is switched in the same manner. Fittings are angled to cast light downwards and across platform avoiding upward lighting as much as practicable.

Details of Lighting installed at Bus Stops on the Cambridge Guided Busway:

Histon and Impington: 11 Lamp Columns.

There are no Lamp Columns on the proposed Maintenance Track or any Cycleway/Footpath on the Cambridge Guided Busway.”

4. At the time of writing this update Planning and Environmental Health Officers, accompanied by local Member, Councillor Mike Mason, have met on site with the developer to discuss possible alternatives. Subsequently, initial details of an alternative scheme has to be submitted by the developer, which will be the subject of further consultation with local Members and the two Parish Councils. This scheme includes the existing 8 metre high light columns, with light shields and timers to automatically cut of the lights when buses are not running. It has been agreed that the Environmental Health Officer will visit the site after dark and to view the lamps when illuminated from the bus stops and affected residential properties to gauge the effectiveness of these measures.

### **Consultations**

5. The Parish Councils of Impington and Histon and Environmental Health were consulted on the original scheme.
6. **Histon Parish Council** recommends refusal based on:

“Lights should cease operation when buses not operating (currently proposed to be illuminated dusk till dawn). To avoid over-illumination Council suggest provision of solar lighting.

Solar lights along maintenance/cycle track preferable - important it should have **some** lighting.

Plans of siting required and better specifications, including standards of lights to be provided in bus stop.”
7. **Impington Parish Council** recommends refusal based on:

“Lack of detail and specificity e.g. siting details, so difficult to comment on suitability.

Committee question the need for dusk to dawn lighting when service due until Midnight only, although acknowledging may be sensible to leave on at some key sites.

Disappointment that no lights on maintenance/cycle track, cyclists needing illumination support.”
8. The Parish Councils are to be consulted on revised schemes, once received. An update will be provided.

## **Representations**

9. The Parish Councils have forwarded comments from a resident of 13 Villa Place, Impington. Having experienced the column lights turned on at the St. Ives bound Histon/Impington bus stop for a period at the end of July, he objects to the unacceptable light sources shining into his back bedroom and living room and into his rear garden, causing a privacy and security problem. He requests that the height and number of lamps be reduced and the bulbs are shrouded to stop light escaping far from the platform.

10. In response to the above comments from Histon and Impington Parish Councils, the Project Manager states:

1. "The Bus Stop Lighting is to remain on from Dusk to Dawn as a security measure in conjunction with the CCTV System to prevent vandalism to the ticket machines and other equipment.
2. Solar Lighting at the stops has been investigated but there is currently no Solar Powered Equipment available to meet the operating requirements of the equipment installed at each stop.
3. All practicable means have been taken in the design of the Bus Stop lighting to counter Light Pollution.
4. The deemed Planning Condition for the approved scheme does not cover lighting of the cycleway.
5. The specification supplied with the original submission was an abstract from the Contract Specification."

11. It has also been pointed out that the County Council's statement of case to the public inquiry said:

4.80. In order to reduce light pollution particularly in both rural and residential areas, lighting will not be included along the guideway or maintenance track between junctions."

Therefore it doesn't form part of the scheme considered at the Public Inquiry and by default is not covered by the planning permission.

12. In response to the comments from the occupier of 13 Villa Place, the County Guided Bus Team agreed it would check that the lighting levels meet the specification and would look into providing shielding. The specified levels of lighting are quite high at the stops and are based on Disability Discrimination Act requirements for railway stations.

## **Planning Comments**

13. The details of the design and external appearance of each of the bus stops have been approved and the relevant condition 3(a) discharged in regard to these. The approved details include the number and siting of lamp columns.

14. Lighting within the bus shelters is necessary for safety and security reasons. Each shelter has four lights wired, although only two will be in use and the level of illumination will be reduced from 250 to 120 lux. This is not considered to be unreasonable on security grounds or unacceptable for the shelters to be lit using photo-electric control units outside the hours of bus operation.

15. The St. Ives bound bus stop is very close to properties in Villa Place. As a consequence of the problems experienced by one of the residents, who clearly also writes on behalf of nearby residents, it is considered that the scheme must be revised.
16. Following a meeting on site, BAM Nuttall Ltd is to look again at the lighting proposals at this stop. It has ordered and will be installing shields to the lanterns and will provide automatic cut off switches so that lights turn off once the last bus has passed. Further BAM Nuttall has said it is willing to re-assess the number and height of the lighting columns, however it has advised that the 8 metre high columns provide a good spread of light. If it were required to provide fewer columns Bam Nuttall has advised that the height would have to increase to provide the necessary light spill area.
17. The impact on residential properties on Pepys Terrace from lights at the Cambridge bound bus stop is also to be considered. The Developer is open to including shields and cut off switches for these columns as well, if required to satisfy SCDC.
18. Members will be updated on progress. Due to the tight timeframes to which the developer is working in relation to the busway becoming operational it is considered expedient to bring the matter back to Planning Committee for Members' consideration at an early stage.

### **Recommendation**

19. Subject to receipt of a revised lighting scheme that satisfactorily addresses the particular the problems experienced at the St. Ives bound Histon/Impington stop and no new material planning considerations arising through consultation with Environmental Health, the Parish Council and local Members on those details, it is recommended that **delegated approval** be granted to allow condition 5 to be discharged in regard to the details of the lighting system for the Histon and Impington.

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

- Planning File Ref: C/6/9/1A
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings.

Contact Officer: Mrs Melissa Reynolds – Team Leader (East Area)  
Telephone: (01954) 713237