

Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

To: Cabinet

Date: 25th May 2010

From: Acting Executive Director: Environment Services

Electoral divisions: The Hemingfords and Fenstanton, St Ives, Papworth and Swavesey, Willingham, Cottenham, Histon and Impington, Waterbeach, East Chesterton, King's Hedges, Petersfield, Trumpington, Gamlingay.

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Purpose: This report sets down for consideration by Cabinet the progress being made towards opening of the Cambridge to St Ives section of the busway.

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to note the progress that is being made towards sectional completion and the opening of the busway between Cambridge and St Ives and in particular, the current timescale from the contractor for addressing the notified defects.

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1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 16th March, Cabinet was advised of the reasons for the delay in the opening of the busway between Cambridge and St Ives, which rested on the commitment by the contractor Bam Nuttall to rectify six key areas of work which had been notified as defects under the Contract.
- 1.2 At the subsequent meeting on 27th April, Cabinet was advised that Bam Nuttall had provided a timetable for progressing the six issues.
- 1.3 These six issues are:
- 1 River Great Ouse Viaduct Expansion Joints;
 - 2 St Ives Park and Ride (P&R) surface ponding;
 - 3 Maintenance track flooding;
 - 4 Guideway shallow foundations;
 - 5 Thermal expansion gaps between the guideway beams;
 - 6 Rubber tyre infill between the guideway beams.
- 1.4 Some of these items require physical works to rectify them and for others, simply calculations and confirmation from the designers that the infrastructure will perform as planned and not present long-term maintenance liabilities. Either way, these issues must be addressed if the busway is to be launched successfully.
- 1.5 Bam Nuttall has prepared a timetable for when these issues will be addressed and it is this that the following progress is being monitored against.

2 PROGRESS

- 2.1 Since the 27th April there has been progress on all the issues. The progress together with the current status of each of these notified defects is set out below with reference to the work that is required, as noted in the previous report. Members will be advised of the latest position on each of these at the meeting.

2.2 River Great Ouse

BNL submitted a design for the expansion joint by 30th April in accordance with their timetable. Our designers have made a number of comments on the design. Bam Nuttall provided a response to these comments on Wednesday 12th May. At the time of writing, these comments were being reviewed and Bam Nuttall had been requested to organise a meeting with their designers with a view to resolving the

outstanding issues. Subject to resolution of these comments Bam Nuttall will then proceed to order and place the joint.

2.3 St Ives Park and Ride

BNL has committed to complete the design work on the car park by 19th May and has confirmed that when this design work is complete, they will implement the solution to address the ponding on the site as soon as possible. Again, given the likely nature of the solution, this work will take a number of weeks to complete.

BNL's designers submitted proposals for resurfacing the car park on Monday 10th May. These proposals include extensive replacement of almost all of the existing drainage system, which in the view of both the County Council and Atkins is unnecessary. It has been put to Bam Nuttall that a simpler, less expensive and quicker to implement solution should be possible within the constraints, such as they are. At the time of writing Bam Nuttall had not confirmed that they would be revisiting their design approach.

2.4 Maintenance Track

Initial design work to identify the volume of material needed to raise the maintenance track to the level indicated at the public inquiry and to determine the volume of flood storage available was completed for 23rd April and discussed at a meeting on 27th April. The available flood storage is around half the volume required, however it is not evenly distributed between the different areas or flood cells, as they are known. The Environment Agency will need to agree to a transfer of storage between cells.

Bam Nuttall has now calculated the approximate height of track that could be provided with the available flood storage with both a 4m wide maintenance track and a reduced width of 3m. They are now, at the time of writing, assessing how frequently, based on the historical record, a track at these heights would be flooded. This is an important part of understanding where the optimal solution may lie. BNL also have a meeting with the Environment Agency on 18th May to discuss the concepts.

2.5 Foundations

The respective designers met on site on 30th April and agreed the positions of boreholes and methodology for testing. Bam Nuttall submitted these details on 6th May and the designers met again on 7th May. Bam Nuttall has indicated that the borehole sub-contractor will start work on Monday 24th May. This is several weeks later than indicated by BNL in their initial programme. The boreholes are programmed to take one week and the testing of the resulting samples a further three weeks.

The results of the soil investigation and testing should therefore be available in the week commencing 21st June. The implications of the soil test results will then need to be assessed by the respective experts, before conclusions can be drawn about the foundations. It is therefore likely to be into July before there is clarity on the foundations issue, when BNL had originally indicated that they hoped to resolve this by mid June.

2.6 Beam expansion gaps

BNL has now completed calculations which confirm that a number of gaps are not sufficiently wide to allow for the full effect of thermal expansion of the guideway beams. Discussions are now taking place on how the guideway structure will react to the stresses created. BNL's designers are now undertaking further calculations to assess this. These had been promised for 14th May. At the time of writing (17th May) these had not been received but were expected imminently.

2.7 Rubber Tyres

The Fire Safety Report has now been accepted. The Designers Risk Assessment has been revised and re-submitted. The outstanding issue is the risk of damage to the communication cables, which run in ducts between the tracks. BNL has been advised of the need to quantify the risk of a fire in this area, and are now undertaking this work. Again, at the time of writing, BNL have indicated that this will be provided in the week commencing 17th May.

3 Summary

3.1 From the above it can be seen that progress is being made in all areas although not necessarily as quickly as set out by Bam Nuttall in their timetable. Inevitably there are a number of iterations necessary as part of the design process before a design can be formally accepted. Greater certainty of the programme for implementation of the solutions or otherwise resolving these issues will not be achieved until these design processes are concluded.

3.2 Given the above it would be premature to commit to an opening date for the northern section of the route. Based on progress to date it will now be July at the earliest before any commitment to an opening date will be possible.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resources and Performance

Finance and risk management – the report sets out the latest progress towards resolving the issues that have prevented the opening of the northern section of the busway. The busway is a high profile project and whilst the Council is keen to secure beneficial use as soon as

possible, this should not be at any cost, particularly in terms of future maintenance liabilities. At present, whilst the notified defects are not expected to cost a very large amount of money to rectify, that is not yet clear, particularly for the foundations and beam gaps issue and so resolving these technically is essential to protect the Council's interests.

4.2 Statutory Requirements and Partnership Working

There are no significant implications for any of the headings within this category.

4.3 Climate Change

The busway will provide a good alternative to use of the car for travel into Cambridge, St Ives, Huntingdon and other villages along the route. When operational, it is expected to significantly increase the bus patronage in this corridor and as such assist in our objectives to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses from vehicles.

The buses which are already running, run on bio fuel and this also has environmental benefits. These environmental benefits have been partly secured as a result of the guided buses currently running on ordinary roads, where it has believed even on the existing services, patronage has increased. Patronage will increase significantly further when the busway is fully operational.

The busway also has a high quality track alongside that is available for pedestrians and cyclists and this again will increase its environmental benefits. This is already being well used and usage will increase when the scheme is formally open.

4.4 Access and Inclusion

The busway will provide good public transport and cycle/foot links between St Ives, the intervening villages and Cambridge. This will open up travel opportunities by increasing the quality of bus services in those communities and benefit particularly those without use of a car.

4.5 Engagement and Consultation

There are no significant implications for any of the headings within this category.

Source Documents	Location
Agenda and Minutes, Cabinet 1/3/2005, 7/2/06, 13/6/06, 11/7/06, 16/10/07, 16/12/08, 29/9/09, 16/3/10, 27/4/10 Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Order	CGB Team Office, Old Police House, Shire Hall, Cambridge