

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: East Area
Date: 12 November 2009
Ward: Huntington/New Earswick
Parish: New Earswick Parish Council

Reference: 09/01474/FUL
Application at: STREET RECORD Wigginton Road Wigginton York
For: Installation of solar powered LED lights on shared use path at Bootham Stray between Wigginton Road and Alder Way
By: Andy Vose
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 11 November 2009

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 SITE: The application relates to the off-road foot path and cycle track between Wigginton Road, adjacent to the northern entrance to the Nestle factory site, and running across Bootham Stray in a northerly direction to Alder Way, at the southern point of New Earswick village. The land is designated green belt.

1.2 PROPOSAL: The proposal involves the provision of solar powered Light Emitting Diode (LED) light units that automatically illuminate from dusk to dawn along the track and at the three barriers along its length. The units extend the night-time 'view' of the track and are proposed to address concerns about the safety of path users during the hours of darkness. The units would be sunk into the track and would emit either a white or red light that would be visible when approached by a pedestrian/cyclist for a distance of approximately 900m. All lights would be in pairs either side of the path approximately 150mm in from the edge with the exception of the pair either side of the bollard at the Wigginton Road end. The lights would be arranged as follows:

- 260 double-sided white LED units (viewable from either approach direction) at 9m intervals along path and at 6m intervals where path bends;
- 26 double-sided red LED units (viewable from either approach direction) on the approaches to the three barriers along the length of the path (two either side and from each approach), with one pair at the entrance to the path at Wigginton Road;
- 4 single-sided red LED units to be located on the approach to the Alder Way barrier and either side of the central bollard at the Wigginton Road end of the path.

1.3 HISTORY: Planning permission granted for creation of surfaced cycle track across Bootham Stray in 2004 (04/2124/GRG3). Lighting columns were proposed as part of the application, but were considered to harm the openness and character of the Green Belt. A condition (condition 3) was therefore attached excluding the lighting columns from the approval and only allowing lighting to be erected after submission for Committee approval of detailed design and position.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams East Area (2) 0005

2.2 Policies:

CYGB1

Development within the Green Belt

CYGP1

Design

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 PUBLICITY: The application has been advertised by way of the display of three site notices at the northern and southern entrances to the path and consultation letters to the two Parish Councils whose areas the path falls within and adjacent residents on Alder Way and Jasmine Close. Consultation period expired 28.10.09.

3.2 INTERNAL

3.2.1 Highway Network Management - No objections.

3.3 EXTERNAL

3.3.1 Clifton Without Parish Council - Support the application.

3.3.2 New Earswick Parish Council - Support the application.

3.3.3 CTC North Yorkshire

York's network of cycle routes are partly on-road which usually benefit from urban street lighting, and off-road which usually do not. Some off-road paths have been provided with column lights, where personal security is a concern and where a budget exists to extend local electrical supplies and associated control equipment to the site.

Some off-road paths cross York's Strays, where street-style lighting may not be considered appropriate. The present application seeks to follow other UK local authorities, who have already successfully trialled solar powered LED studs to demarcate the edges of cycle paths in off-road and rural situations. These give sufficient night time illumination for that purposes, but do not create significant light pollution.

Cambridge Council have installed the LED's on rural off-road routes, to immediately outlying villages. Harrogate are to do likewise on the recently created cycle paths across their Stray. Peterborough City Council has installed them on segregated urban cycle/pedestrian paths, with different coloured LED's to indicate the cyclist and pedestrian areas of the path.

Approval would allow York to follow in the wake of these local authorities and trial a technical solution that can potentially be rolled out to similar sites across the City. This

will improve cyclists night time safety, commensurate with the lack of power supplies, or likely refusal of consent to install street-style lighting in sensitive areas.

Manufacturer's information submitted about lights installed at Peterborough and Cambridge.

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 The key issues are:

- purpose, openness and visual amenity of Green Belt;
- residential amenity;
- highway safety.

4.2 The shared use path cuts across Bootham Stray, which is part of the designated York Green Belt. The Government's approach to development in Green Belts is contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts. Paragraph 3.12 of PPG2 states that the carrying out of engineering operations 'are inappropriate development unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt'. In addition, the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by development proposals (para.3.15). Central Government policy is reflected in Policy GB1 of the City of York Draft Development Control Local Plan.

4.3 The LED units would be sunken into the existing surfaced path. They would not, in themselves, detract either from openness or the visual amenity of the Green Belt, nor conflict with its main purpose of preserving the setting and special character of the historic City. It is the illumination emitted from the units that could potentially detract the visual amenity of the Stray and consequently the character of the Green Belt due to the distance at which the lights can be viewed.

4.4 However, the lights have been chosen to minimise light pollution within this open area as the level of illumination emitted from the lights is low. They are designed so that they are viewed from the direction of travel and only by those using the path or in close proximity to it. In light of this, it is considered that the proposal would not constitute inappropriate development and would represent a balance between preserving the character of the Green Belt and the safe use of the path, whilst extending its use by residents of the City in the evening, particularly in the winter months.

4.5 The proposal would be unlikely to harm highway safety along Alder Way and Wigginton Road or the amenity of residents on Alder Way given the separation distance and presence of boundary vegetation and street lighting. The lights proposed would offer a sustainable solution to the lighting of the path, avoiding the need for cabling or an electrical source.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed lighting units that have been chosen, seek to minimise the visual impact from illumination on the Green Belt and open area in general, whilst improving safety and extending the use of the shared path in a sustainable manner. The

proposal would not harm the character or openness of the York Green Belt nor prejudice the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt. It is unlikely that any harm would be caused to the amenity of residents neighbouring the Stray or safety on the adjoining public highways of Wigginton Road and Alder Way.

5.2 In light of the above, the proposal is recommended for approval.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIME2 Development start within three years

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following plans:-

Unnumbered and undated location plan received 29.7.09;
Drawing ref. BTHMSTRY.ECW, dated 14.9.09 and received 15.9.09;
Drawing, marked Annex 1, 'Indicative layout of red LEDs at barrier arrangements', dated 14.9.09 and received 15.9.09;
Drawing, marked Annex 2, 'Indicative layout of red LEDs at bollard and end of path', dated 14.9.09 and received 15.9.09;

or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as amendment to the approved plans.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to the openness and visual amenities of the York Green Belt, sustainability, residential amenity and highway safety. As such the proposal complies with Policy YH9 and Y1C of The Yorkshire and Humber Plan, policies GP1 and GB1 of the City of York Development Control Local Plan and Government policy contained within Planning Policy Statement 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' and Planning Policy Guidance note 2 'Green Belts'.

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