

KEY POINTS ARISING FROM WHITE YOUNG GREEN'S EXAMINATION OF THE CO-OP'S PENNBURY ECO-TOWN TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT (SEPT 08)

- Successful, upfront delivery of public transport measures is critical to the delivery of an 'eco-town'. Modelling work has shown that if the development were to operate as per a more conventional settlement, the effects on traffic congestion would be widespread, significant and unacceptable.
- The level of detail presented in the transport assessment (TA) is very limited. The proposed infrastructure improvements that are outlined in it are far from comprehensive enough to achieve the predicted 'Bus Rapid Transit' (BRT) journey times and reliability. No details are provided of the proposed BRT / Leicester railway station interchange.
- It is not clear that the necessary improvements can be implemented in such a constrained urban environment, where the costs of the measures are likely to be considerable and acquisition of multiple parcels of land far from straightforward. The measures will be required upfront and delivery costs and complexities could well hinder Pennbury's development.
- Key issues associated with the delivery of "continuous bus lanes" include:
 - Designs which minimised land acquisition are not capacity neutral for general traffic (i.e. there would be a reduction in the space available to accommodate other vehicles, with potential congestion implications);
 - Failure to retain critical pedestrian crossing facilities in some locations (e.g. London Road / Stoughton Road); and
 - Potential impact on mature trees.
- Further land acquisition may be required to deliver the proposed BRT stop infrastructure on the A6 stops.
- Even with an enhanced package of improvements WYG believe that BRT journey times will be at least 10 – 15% higher than the TA predicts, as it does not appear physically possible to accommodate the levels of buses required along the A6 without buses causing delays to each other.
- There appear to be no insurmountable technical barriers to using articulated buses in the city.
- The proposed local bus services, including to Fosse Park and Leicester General could not operate on a commercial basis and require undefined highway improvements to address existing congestion problems in order to deliver the predicted journey times.
- It is not clear how a permanent park and ride site can be delivered at the racecourse on the A6.
- Segregated Gartree Road bus links are in the Green Wedge.
- Based on comparisons with other schemes, WYG estimate that the proposed tram route could cost in the region of £300 million. Amongst other things, this does not include any allowance for measures that will be required to accommodate/mitigate the impacts of traffic that would be diverted from the A6 corridor as a result of the tram.
- The TA does not explain how measures such as 'smart tickets' for public transport are to be delivered.
- The modal split for cycling trips, based as it is on Cambridge, appears extremely ambitious for a new town in this location.