



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report

Non-Key Issue For Decision of Cabinet Member for Transportation

Date	22 nd February 2007
Title	Improvement Line Review
Author	Garrett Emmerson
Electoral Divisions Affected	All
Recommendation	Approve the revocation of improvement lines (as set out in Appendix 1).
Resources Appraisal	No resources used.

Summary

Improvement lines are sections of land designated for future transport improvement purposes, to ensure that development does not take place. They take several forms including those improvement lines being protected for road widening schemes, bus lane schemes and those to facilitate implementation of infrastructure should development take place. Descriptions of the various lines can be found in the glossary at the end of the Report.

The Improvement Line Review (ILR) is a process carried out regularly to consider all current improvement lines and determine whether they are still required for future highway improvements. Each line is individually assessed, and if it is agreed that the line is no longer required, it can be rescinded.

The current ILR has been carried out to provide information for and support the preparation of District Council Local Development Frameworks.

1. Justifications for the recommendation to revoke or retain any improvement line is provided in Appendix 2. Appendix 1 identifies solely the lines that are recommended to be revoked.
2. Some improvement lines have properties located on them, many of which are in public ownership, although some have been purchased by Transportation in the past and are

owned by Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC). Properties in private ownership sited on improvement lines can often lead to blight notices being served, which may incur significant costs to BCC. By revoking unnecessary improvement lines the risk of blight notices being served is minimised.

3. As part of the ILR process an initial review was undertaken, which invited all Managers and Team Leaders within Transportation to comment (see Appendix 3). All comments received were compiled to complete the initial internal review (see Appendix 4). This was then circulated to all County Councillors and District Councils who were invited to comment on the initial recommendations (See Appendix 5). County Councillors were invited to provide specific advice on a selection of lines where there was conflicting advice from officers (these are shown in Appendix 3). Once all external feedback was received, each comment was carefully considered before completing the final ILR (see Appendix 2).

Appendix 6 and 7 show the internal and external recommendations that differ from the decisions made in the final ILR. These recommendations are followed by a response from BCC as to why the final review differed from these recommendations.

Once the ILR is complete, County Councillors and District Councils will be advised of the outcome, and the report and appendices will be available to view on the County Council's website. Future land searches and queries will be informed by the outcome of the ILR, and where appropriate, property owners directly affected by the ILR will be contacted to advise them of the outcome.

4. Considering that an improvement line only reserves land for transport purposes, if the land is not owned by BCC it will have to be purchased before any work can be carried out.

If a line is rescinded it is no longer protected and development cannot be prevented on the land for highway reasons. If a line has been rescinded and it is required again in the future for transport use, there might be development on the land that would make it more difficult and costly to purchase. If there has been no development on the land, the same process of purchasing the land is required before work can be carried out. If a Compulsory Purchase Order is needed, this could take between 6-12 months to publish the orders, allowing time for any objections and enquires that may occur, before it can be agreed by the Cabinet Member.

5. There will be a second stage to the ILR, which will take place during 2007. This part of the ILR will involve altering any of the lines that have been retained and require amending to meet the current transport use that is required. The second part of the Review will also involve identifying and dedicating new lines for future transport use. The processes involved in altering and dedicating new lines include registering the land as a local land charge and notifying the landowners associated with this.
6. There are a number of Improvement Lines being revoked through the ILR and although some land will no longer be reserved for future transport purposes, any land or property owned by the BCC Transportation Service that is located on these revoked lines will be retained. Some of the land and properties are still required even though the improvement line is being revoked; consequently a separate process will be needed in the future to review all of the land and properties owned by the BCC Transportation Service. This has

not been carried out in the first stage of the ILR because further investigation revealed that it will require detailed analysis of the land and properties and would delay the ILR. The property review will take place during the second stage of the ILR, which will commence later this year.

For further information please contact: Rebecca Dengler on 01296 382401

Glossary of Improvement Lines:

Road Widening Lines

A scheme where the existing highway is widened, planning permission is not required.

New Road Lines

A scheme where the new highway is not generally contiguous with the existing, planning permission is required.

Bus Lane

A line dedicated for bus priority or a designated lane for buses.

Development Control Lines

A line representing the centre-line of the route of a scheme the layout of which, for one reason or another, is not considered suitable for public release. Originally not made known publicly other than by a comment on Planning Applications that the Application would prejudice future highway interests.

Section 30 Order

A New Street Order made under Section 30 of the Public Health Act 1925. The effect of this is to require adjoining owners developing or redeveloping their land to throw into the highway the land required to widen the existing highway usually to a standard width of 30 feet (9.15 metres).

Approved:
(Head of Service)

Date:

Decision Taken:
(Cabinet Member)

Date: