



Highways Committee
16 July 2013

**Report from the Head of
Transportation**

For Information

Wards affected:
SUDBURY

Sudbury and Harrow Road Bus Stop Petition

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Brent Council has received a petition signed by a group of residents in Sudbury who are concerned about changes to bus stopping arrangements in the town centre. The petition contained 235 signatures and has been verified by Democratic Services.
- 1.2 The petitioners are asking for the restoration of a bus stop/stand at 786 Harrow Road, opposite Sudbury and Harrow Road station, which was removed as part of a major improvement scheme. The stop that they wish to be reinstated was replaced by two new stops, one to the north near the Rugby Avenue junction and a second close to Chiltern railway bridge (now known as at Sudbury and Harrow Rd Station). Southbound bus services have been split between these two new stops.
- 1.3 The plan in Appendix A illustrates the existing situation and shows bus routing, the location of the original stops, and the locations of new stops that have been introduced to replace them. Appendix B contains consultation plans for the scheme that has recently been implemented.
- 1.4 Brent officers have reviewed the petition and determined that a reinstatement of the original bus stop would remove the pay-and-display parking which replaced the stop and was provided to increase short-term parking for the benefit of shoppers. It would also have financial implications and would involve amendments to a scheme that has very recently been implemented, and which

was extensively consulted over before construction with a majority in favour. In addition, the impact of the changes made is not considered to be significant as the new stop is located 100m south (less than 1 minutes walk) from the previous stop location and accommodates all stopping services that pass through Sudbury, as did the previous stop.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That member's note the petition received from Sudbury residents.
- 2.2 That the request for reinstatement of the original bus stop at 786 Harrow Road be rejected.
- 2.3 That Brent Council officers review the operation and stopping patterns of bus services in Sudbury six months after scheme implementation to determine whether there have been any notable impacts on punctuality or passenger usage.

3.0 Content of Petition

- 3.1 The full wording of the petition is:

“Petition for the restoration of the Sudbury & Harrow Station Bus Stop to its original location:

We the undersigned bus commuters of Sudbury, who have been greatly disadvantaged by the relocation of the above mentioned bus stop without any prior warning whatsoever to residents, wish to request the urgent review and restoration of this bus stop to the position at which it stood - right outside Wenzel's The Bakers prior to the commencement of the most recent road works – which provided us the use of this single stop for all four services, namely the Route Numbers 18, 92, 182 and 245 towards Wembley and Alperton from this one single pick up stop.

It is inconceivable that the interests of the thousands of bus commuters, which include the old and the disabled and school children – who have used this crucial bus stop daily for as long as they can remember – no find their basic travel convenience so blatantly sacrificed, to accommodate a parking bay for a few privileged motorists, who already enjoy near luxury parking facilities on both the Harrow Road and Watford Road sides of Butler's Green, not to mention the massive parking facility set up for them – right across the road – outside Sudbury Supermarket”.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 A £700k improvement scheme has recently been implemented in Sudbury town centre, involving resurfacing of footways in high-quality paving, resurfacing of the road and creation of new loading and parking bays on-street. New street furniture has also been provided along with street trees and signing improvements. Appendix B contains a plan of the improvement scheme that has been delivered.

- 4.2 The Sudbury town centre scheme was devised in 2010, at the time when articulated single-deck buses ('bendy-buses') were due to be withdrawn from service. The opportunity was therefore taken to review bus stand locations in Sudbury town centre as part of the new scheme design.
- 4.3 A key design consideration was the lack of short-term customer parking in the town centre. Traders were strongly in support of more short-stay parking and loading facilities. As a result two loading bays were provided along with new short-stay parking bays with pay and display parking facilities. These facilities replaced some of the existing bus stops within the town centre, including the stop that petitioners wish to be reinstated.
- 4.4 Brent officers consulted with London Buses and the Police during the design phase of the scheme. It was decided to introduce two new southbound bus stops to replace the single existing stop. Firstly, a bus stop was provided outside 818 Harrow Road and named Rugby Avenue (shown in Appendix A). London Buses have allocated through services 92, 182 and 245 (towards Wembley and Alperton respectively) to use this stop. A second new stop was introduced 100m south of the old stop, near Chiltern railway bridge, and is officially named 'Sudbury and Harrow Road station'. This stop was introduced to replace two bus stops, one that was further south (nearer Barham Park) and the original stop outside 786 Harrow Road (which the petitioners are requesting be reinstated).
- 4.5 The new Sudbury and Harrow Road station stop was proposed to rationalise stopping patterns and free up space for parking and loading facilities within the main town centre area. It has been allocated as the first southbound stop for the Route 18 service and is also used by the 92, 182 and 245 through services.
- 4.6 Route 18 links Sudbury to Euston Station and is a very high-frequency service. It carries 55,000 passengers on an average weekday (over 20 million per year). It is therefore a very well used service. The petitioners are concerned that all passengers approaching from the north of Sudbury are now required to walk slightly further south through the town centre to reach the new Sudbury and Harrow Road station stop. In addition, they feel that the environment beneath the railway bridge is poor and that they have been marginalised as bus users.
- 4.7 The proposed scheme was consulted over between 22nd March and 18th April 2011, with responses received from businesses and residents associations. Overall the scheme was supported by 81% of respondents. Details of which bus stops would be used by which buses were not confirmed by London Buses at that time. However, the locations of proposed stops were indicated on consultation plans and consultees were aware of the proposed relocation of stops to their current locations.
- 4.8 During the consultation some concerns were raised over the combination of two bus stops to the new location close to Chiltern Railway Bridge. Changes to bus stop locations were discussed with London Buses and the Police and the proposed new combined stop was considered to be the only viable alternative location. The proposed scheme was therefore taken forward with majority approval.

- 4.9 Transport for London (TfL) through its operating company London Bus Services Limited (London Buses) is responsible for the planning and oversight of the capital's 'red bus' network. This includes the provision of infrastructure such as stops and stands in conjunction with each London borough. London Buses determine which routes call at stops as part of its route planning process.
- 4.10 Given the concerns expressed by the petitioners, officers have approached London Buses and requested a review of the stopping pattern. We have suggested that routes 92,182 and 245, which all call at stops a short distance north of the Butlers Green roundabout, could stop at Sudbury and Harrow Road station stop only so that Route18 services could use the Rugby Avenue stop exclusively.
- 4.11 This suggestion has been rejected by London Buses as they state that "we have reviewed the decisions made and believe that given the topological constraints and the many conflicting interests on a relatively small amount of kerb space the best outcome has been reached". They go on to say that all stops are within TfL's guideline of 400m from the next joint stop for all routes. They therefore feel that the first stop on the 18 route should be Sudbury and Harrow Road station, which should continue to accommodate all services passing south through Sudbury.
- 4.12 In summary, the improvement scheme in Sudbury has very recently been implemented. It was subject to consultation before construction, as are all major projects of this nature. The scheme was designed to improve the ambience and viability of the town centre as well as catering for the conflicting requirements of through traffic, traders, their customers, cyclists and public transport users. Road safety has also been a major consideration. To re-instate the previous bus stop, as petitioners are requesting, would involve changes to a scheme that has only just been delivered, including removal of on-street parking and loading facilities.
- 4.13 This change has necessitated approximately 1 minutes additional walk time for passengers, and is not therefore considered to be a major change from the original situation. In conclusion, a reinstatement of the original stop is not considered to be appropriate at this time.
- 4.14 It is proposed to allow a period of six months for the current bus routing and stopping patterns to operate and "bed in" before a further review is undertaken. Officers will then review the situation in conjunction with London Buses and determine whether the current arrangement is acceptable for bus passengers and other town centre users.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. Further investigations and consultations will be undertaken using in-house staff resources.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 There are potential implications in terms of disabled groups, who may have been impacted by the increased walk distance to the route 18 stop.
- 6.2 The additional walk distance is relatively modest at 100m and the footway between the original and new bus stop (and throughout the town centre) has been resurfaced as part of the scheme design. In addition, a raised junction and entry treatment has been constructed across the walk route, which has created an at-grade surface for wheelchair users and other mobility impaired pedestrians.
- 6.3 The impact on disabled persons is therefore considered to be partly mitigated by this surfacing improvement work and entry treatment, and by other improvements such as dropped kerb provision and tactile paving throughout the town centre.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 There are no significant staffing implications arising from this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Layout plan

Appendix B – Sudbury Town Centre improvement scheme

Background Papers

Petition available on request

Contact Officers

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Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Paul Chandler, Head of Transportation, Transportation Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ, paul.chandler@brent.gov.uk or telephone: 020 8937 5151.

Appendix A – Layout Plan



