



Highways Committee 19th October 2010

Report from the Head of Transportation

For Information

Wards Affected:
Willesden Green & Brondesbury Park

Report Title: Petition for the Relocation of a Bus Stop on Donnington Road

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-08/09-027

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs members of a petition that was received from residents requesting the relocation of a bus stop on Donnington Road due to concerns about safety following a recent road traffic accident involving a student at the stop. The report outlines officer's investigations and ongoing stakeholder engagement on the matter.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee notes the contents of the petition and the issues raised.
- 2.2 That Committee notes the key stakeholder engagement that has taken place and is still underway and that a further report will be presented when a proposed way forward has been determined.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 A plan showing Donnington Road and the location of existing features relevant to this report is provided at Appendix "A".

Donnington Road School, Willesden Sports Centre and the Capital City Academy are all located on the south side of Donnington Road. The properties on the northern side of Donnington Road are chiefly residential with off street parking and vehicular crossovers. Donnington Road is traffic calmed and forms part of a bus route (with bus stops).

The vehicular access to the Sports Centre is also a significant pedestrian access route into the Academy.

There is a (eastbound) bus stop on the northern side of Donnington Road that is opposite the vehicular entrance to the Sports Centre (and hence the access to the Academy).

There is a zebra crossing located opposite the pedestrian entrance to the Sports Centre. The zebra crossing is located to the east of the eastbound bus stop, the vehicular access to the Sports Centre and the pedestrian access to the Academy.

- 3.2 On 27th April 2010 there was a road traffic accident on Donnington Road involving a pupil of the Academy. A female student alighted from a bus at the eastbound bus stop (outside of no. 72/74 Donnington Road), crossed the road in front of the bus heading towards the Sport Centre/Academy entrance and was struck by a car overtaking the bus.

Immediately following the accident officers and ward members received numerous communications calling for action to be taken to improve road safety at this location.

- 3.3 A petition has also been received by the Council from residents of the area requesting the relocation of the eastbound bus stop (on the northern side of Donnington Road near Abercorn Gardens). The petition has been verified to be in accordance with Standing Orders.

Received on 8th July 2010, the petition reads:

“We the undersigned support the petition for the re-location of the number 6 bus stop eastbound on Donnington Road (opposite the entrance to Willesden Sports Centre and Capital City Academy back entrance”

- 3.4 The petition and the other representations are typical of a many requests made to the Transportation Unit in relation to concerns about road safety. The procedure for assessing these requests is for officers to undertake an initial investigation to determine the extent of any problem and the scope for a solution. Appropriately, priority for progressing remedial measures is subsequently given to those locations with the most severe problems.

4.0 Details of Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.1 In response to the initial concerns, a site meeting was held on 24th June 2010 attended by Council officers, the Head Teachers of the 3 schools in the vicinity of Donnington Road - Donnington School, Capital City Academy and Queens Park school, a Willesden Green ward member and a parent of a pupil of Capital City Academy.

The meeting was held at the end of the school day so that the operation of the bus stop and its use by students in the area could be observed. It was clear from these observations that the majority of Academy students using the eastbound bus stop were crossing Donnington Road directly from the entrance to the Academy to the bus stop and not using the zebra crossing located to the east.

There was agreement by all in attendance that this behaviour, associated with the location of the bus stop, represents a major road safety concern, especially at the start and end of the school day.

The general feeling of the attendees was that the most effective solution to improve road safety at this location would be the relocation of the bus stop eastwards of the zebra crossing so that passengers, particularly students of the Academy, getting off the bus and wishing to go down the vehicular entrance to the sports centre (and visa versa), would be more inclined to use the crossing.

Options such as installing guard-railing or moving the various entrances so as to ensure students and others used the zebra crossing to reach the eastbound bus stop were recognised as not being practicable.

- 4.2 The petition referred to in 3.1 was received subsequent to that meeting.
- 4.3 Members will be aware that, although the Council works in close partnership with them, Transport for London (TfL) are responsible for bus services and related aspects in London - including the location of bus stops.
- 4.4 On the 12th August 2010 a further meeting took place on site attended by Council officers, TfL and the Metropolitan Police. The purpose of the meeting was to undertake a more detailed analysis of the issues associated with the current location of the bus stop and consider possible alternative locations for it on Donnington Road.

During the meeting, officers reported the concerns and views that had been expressed at the earlier meeting on 24th June 2010, and are set out in the petition, to the other attendees.

Relocating the bus stop further eastwards (ie to the east of the zebra crossing) would mean that the bus stop would be located on a bend in Donnington Road. This would cause major visibility issues both for bus drivers when exiting the stop and for motorists when overtaking a bus that was stationary on the stop.

TfL has internal guidelines relating to the locations of bus stops. A number of potential positions for the stop were considered at the meeting. It was apparent to the meeting attendees that locating the bus stop to the east of the current location (and zebra crossing) would not meet these guidelines.

Subsequent visits carried out by a number of officers from TfL also determined that the guidelines would not be met if the stop were to be relocated east of its current location.

An additional issue is that of access to buses by passengers. Bus stop locations must also now meet strict criteria with regards to The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Again, these criteria would not be met at any location to the east of the current location - chiefly because of insufficient kerb space due to the number and location of vehicle crossovers.

The road straightens east of Bryan Avenue which would improve the visibility issue. However the DDA criteria could not be met at any point there due to insufficient kerb side space again due to vehicle crossovers. Furthermore, moving the stop that far eastwards would result in it being too close (by TfL guidelines) to the next eastbound bus stop located in Chamberlayne Road.

Notwithstanding these 2 issues, re-locating the stop east of Bryan Avenue would result in it being some distance from both the Academy and the Sports Centre.

Relocating the bus stop to the west of its current location was also examined. However the only practicable location identified was directly opposite the playground of Donnington School. Aside from the fact that this location would be some distance from the Sports Centre and Academy it is not desirable for child protection reasons and is against TfL's criteria.

5.0 Consideration of options

- 5.1 The failure to identify a suitable alternative location for the bus stop that would comply with TfL's guidelines in relation to road safety and accessibility leaves 3 options in relation to dealing with the issue:
- 5.2 The first option is to "do nothing". Officers concur with the general view, expressed by ward members, the Head Teachers and implicitly expressed by the petitioners, that this is inappropriate.
- 5.3 The second option is to leave the bus stop where it is at present and to examine the possibility of introducing additional road safety features in its vicinity. These could include pedestrian islands and additional speed reducing measures. Whilst the introduction of additional measures would not remove the risk of the type of accident that occurred at the bus stop from happening again it should have a positive impact on reducing the likelihood of such accidents and their severity (if they occur).

The Committee will be aware that funding for the development and implementation of traffic management, accident remedial and calming schemes is provided primarily from TfL through the annual (Local Implementation Plan (LIP)) process.

Donnington Road falls within an area that has already been identified within the Council's draft 2011/12 LIP programme as a priority for an area wide traffic management scheme.

This means that, subject to Committee and TfL approving that programme, and the associated funding being forthcoming from TfL, resources will be available (within the 2011/12 financial year) for the design of, and consultation on, additional measures in the vicinity of the existing bus stop to reduce the current potential for accidents.

- 5.4 The 3rd option is to remove the bus stop completely from Donnington Road. This would mean that the closest stop would be on Harlesden Road near to the junction with Donnington Road. This will affect the main users of the current stop (users of the Sports Centre and pupils/parents of the Academy and Donnington School) as well as the wider community.

6.0 Way forward

- 6.1 Key stakeholders including representatives of the 3 schools, ward councillors, interested local residents, the Metropolitan Police and TfL are currently being engaged on their views on options other than doing nothing.
- 6.2 The Committee will appreciate that there is no simple solution to the issues identified now that there appears to be no opportunity to re-locate the bus stop further eastwards.

Installing additional traffic calming measures would reduce the level of risk of, and probable severity of any, accidents but would not completely remove the risks associated with students crossing the road at an unprotected location.

Similarly removing the bus stop is not desirable in terms of the service it provides for those attending the schools, the Sports Centre and the community at large.

- 6.3 A further report will be presented to the Committee when an appropriate course (or courses) of action has been identified.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 This is essentially an information item and has no financial implications at this time. Officer time costs associated with the investigations described are being met from 2010/11 Transportation (Revenue) budget.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 None at this time

9.0 Diversity Implications

9.1 The issue of accessibility and safe use of the public highway, particularly for more vulnerable road users, like the disabled, elderly and children will be a key consideration in the decision making process on how to proceed with this matter.

10.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

10.1 None at this time.

11.0 Environmental Implications

11.1 None at this time.

Background Papers

Petition submitted 8th July 2010.

Appendices

Appendix "A" – Location plan

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