



Highways Committee

9 February 2011

Report from the Head of Transportation

For decision

Wards Affected:
Brondesbury Park

Petition regarding Willesden Lane bus stop by Christchurch Avenue

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the responsibility for the siting of bus stops lies with Transport for London (TfL)/London Buses although local decisions are generally taken in consultation with the Council (as the Highway Authority and the primary interface with local residents) and the Police.
- 1.2 In July 2010 a bus stop on Willesden Lane was relocated from a location close to Christchurch Avenue to a position approximately 150m north-westwards in response to road safety concerns.
- 1.3 This report informs members of a petition entitled "Petition to restore the Christchurch bus stop to its original position for pedestrian and vehicle safety". The report outlines officer's investigations and stakeholder engagement on the matter.
- 1.4 The report advises the Committee that, after considering the petition, alongside the responses to local consultation and a consideration of alternative bus stop locations, the Head of Transportation has advised TfL/London Buses that the Council will not object to the siting of the bus stop in its current (interim) location on a permanent basis.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the petition and the issues raised.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the course of action taken by officers in relation to the issue.
- 2.3 That the Committee decide whether, having given consideration to the petition and the action taken by officers, to instruct the Head of Transportation to take a different course of action.

3.0 Petition

- 3.1 A petition entitled “**Petition to restore the Christchurch bus stop to its original position for pedestrian and vehicle safety**” signed by 172 residents was received by the Council on 7th December 2010.
- 3.2 A copy of the petition was also sent to Mr G Snewing, Regional Manager (west), London Buses Services Ltd, Bus Infrastructure and to Inspector Tucker, Harlesden Police Station.
- 3.3 The petition contains more than 50 signatures of registered electors. The petition is shown as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.4 The petition is signed by residents over a relatively wide local area. A number of the signatories live close to either the original or the relocated bus stop position(s) whilst others live some distance from Willesden Lane but would, no doubt, be bus users.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 TfL/London Buses are responsible for the siting of bus stops in London. Generally agreement on individual locations is reached in consultation with the Council (as the Highway Authority and the primary interface with local residents) and the Police. The Council is responsible for implementing certain controls (bus stop “cages”, waiting restriction etc.) that may support the effective use of bus stops. No such controls have been implemented at the stop that is the subject of this report at this time.
- 4.2 In response to an assessment of road safety issues at a number of bus stops in Brent, including the bus stop on Willesden Lane near to Christchurch Avenue, a meeting was held between representatives from the Police, London Buses and Brent Council on 19th July 2010.
- 4.3 At the meeting it was agreed that in response to the assessment the bus stop should be suspended and that, as the only identified viable location, a temporary bus stop should be located outside of Beechworth as an interim measure. This course of action was implemented.
- 4.4 Subsequently officers received a number of communications from residents and local Ward Members in relation to the bus stop. A number supported the retention of the bus stop in its relocated position whilst others sought to have the bus stop relocated to its original position.
- 4.5 In response to those local concerns officers have been working to determine the most suitable location for the bus stop with regard to:
- Ease of access for bus users
 - Pedestrian safety
 - Road safety generally
 - Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance

- The amenity impact (noise, litter etc.) on local residents

- 4.6 This work has involved a number of meetings with TfL/London Buses and the Police, the identification of the various locations for the stop and a road safety audit of those alternatives and a public consultation exercise seeking views as to whether the stop should remain in its current (relocated) position on a permanent basis.
- 4.7 Throughout that time a number of representations have been made directly to TfL/London Buses on the issue. In the main, those representations have sought the relocation of the bus stop to its original position. In response to those representations TfL/London Buses have consistently refused to relocate the stop back to its original position. They have consistently stated that the decision to relocate the stop was made on the grounds of road safety and with consideration of DDA issues. In essence that are of the view that the original location was unsafe and the relocated position is the correct one.
- 4.8 On the 24th January 2011 the Head of Transportation considered a report on the issue. The report is shown as **Appendix 2**. In the report all the relevant issues were considered:
- i. The concerns in relation to pedestrian and general road safety
 - ii. Alternative locations and the results of road safety audits into those alternatives
 - iii. The results of the local public consultation exercise
 - iv. Issues relating to ease of access for bus users and the amenity impact on residents
 - v. The petition
- 4.9 Having considered the above issues the Head of Transportation concluded that, on balance, the most suitable location for the bus stop was the relocated position and that TfL/London Buses should be advised that the Council has no objections to that location being made permanent.
- 4.10 TfL/London Buses were notified of the Council's position of the 28th January 2011. Local Ward Councillors and the petitioners have also been informed. TfL/London Buses have also been made aware that the issue is being considered by the Committee. No response has been received from TfL/London Buses at this time.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The responsibility for the siting of bus stops lies with TfL/London Buses although local decisions are generally taken in consultation with the Council and the Police. It is unfortunate that on this occasion the bus stop was relocated without the local consultation which would have enabled a better and wider appreciation of the issues and local engagement.

5.2 It is recognised that there is no ideal location for a bus stop along the section of Willesden Lane that is the subject of this report. However, officers have thoroughly considered the relevant issues and determined that, on balance, the current (relocated) position is the most suitable location. The signed report to the Head of Transportation at **Appendix 2** sets out the detail behind that decision. The petition was an integral part of that consideration.

5.3 The Committee may, after considering the petition and the action taken by officers, decide that an alternative course of action is appropriate. If so, they will need to determine that course of action and instruct the Head of Transportation accordingly.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 This is essentially an information item and has no financial implications at this time.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 None at this time

9.0 Diversity Implications

9.1 No significant issues

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 16 December 2010.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Petition to restore the Christchurch bus stop to its original position for pedestrian and vehicle safety

Appendix 2 – Report to the Head of Transportation (signed 24.01.11)

Contact Officers

Report author – Paul Smith (Senior Traffic Engineer)

Email: paul.smith@brent.gov.uk Telephone: 020 8937 5143

Tim Jackson,
Head of Transportation
Environment and Neighbourhoods Services