



Highways Committee
23rd March 2011

**Report from the Head of
Transportation**

For Action

Wards Affected:
Sudbury

Petition for the Restoration of the Watford Road Bus Stop

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the responsibility for the locating 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 Watford Road was temporarily relocated from a location outside of 32/34 Watford Road to a location outside of 60/62 Watford Road in response to road safety concerns. The temporary bus stop was later removed in response to road safety and amenity concerns highlighted by residents living in the proximity of the stop. As a result those bus users that used the original bus stop have had to use the nearest alternative existing stop (which is some distance away - outside 786 Harrow Road) for several months.
- 1.3 This report informs members of a petition entitled "Petition for the restoration of the Watford Road Bus Stop." The report outlines officer's investigations into the matter.
- 1.4 The report advises the Committee that officers are currently consulting on proposals as part of the Sudbury and Harrow Public Realm Scheme. Implementation of the Scheme will allow the reintroduction of the bus stop outside of 32/34 Watford Road in a way that addresses the road safety and other issues that caused the bus stop to be moved in July.

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.

3.0 Petition

3.1 A petition received by the Council via Councillor Mary Daly, requests the restoration of the bus stop outside of 32/34 Watford Road. It has been verified by officers.

3.2 The full wording of the petition is included in a covering letter shown at Appendix 1. The sense of the petition can be summarised in the following extract:

“We would strongly urge you – our local ward Councillor – to have the Council restore, with immediate effect, this crucial bus stop, to its original location.”

3.3 The petition contains approximately 108 signatures.

4.0 Detail

4.1 TfL/London Buses are responsible for the locating 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.

4.2 In response to an assessment of road safety issues at a number of bus stops in Brent, including the bus stop outside 32/34 Watford Road, 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 at Watford Road should be suspended. All parties agreed that it was important to maintain a bus stop close to the original location until a suitable permanent location could be identified. A site assessment determined that a location outside 60/62 Watford Road would be suitable as an interim measure. Accordingly a temporary stop was located there.

4.4 Subsequently officers received a number of communications from residents and local Ward Members in relation to the interim bus stop location. Residents were concerned about road safety, amenity issues and inconvenience in relation to the temporary bus stop.

4.5 In response to the strength of feeling from the community, and the on-going concerns regarding safety, officers asked TfL to remove the temporary bus stop on the 1st September 2010. It was removed the same day.

Bearing in mind the concerns in relation to the original bus stop location had not been addressed, officers were unable to recommend restoring the bus

stop to its original position. They were also unable to identify a suitable alternative location.

This has meant that those bus users that used the original bus stop have had to use the nearest alternative existing stop for several months. That stop is located outside 786 Harrow Road and is approximately 270m south of the original bus stop.

- 4.6 Recognising the problems that removing bus stops cause 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

- 4.7 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 they are of the view that the original location was unsafe.

- 4.8 Officer's investigations have determined that the most appropriate location for the stop was in its original location outside of 32/34 Watford Road. This is consistent with the views expressed in the petition.

However officers have also recognised that there is a need to amend the layout of bus stop and make modifications to the Zebra crossing (that adjoined the original bus stop) so as to address that original concerns about road safety and disabled access.

- 4.9 Since the concerns in relation to the bus stop emerged, officers have been developing the, TfL funded, Sudbury and Harrow Public Realm scheme.

This scheme is within the 2011/12 TfL (Local Implementation Plan) capital programme approved by the Committee at its meeting on 9th February 2011. The scheme has a broad scope covering improving - road safety, the public realm, facilities for bus users and rationalising and/or improving on street parking controls in the area.

Opportunity was taken to address the issues associated with the original bus stop location when developing this scheme.

- 4.10 Officers were recently able to obtain the agreement of the Police and TfL/London buses to a new arrangement in the vicinity of 32/34 Watford Road. This would, if implemented, allow the reintroduction of the bus stop at its original location.

The proposal is currently being consulted on as part of the wider Sudbury and Harrow Public Realm scheme. Ward members were given the opportunity to discuss the proposals at the development stage.

- 4.11 Subject to the outcomes of the consultation process, it is proposed to implement the Sudbury and Harrow Public Realm scheme during the forthcoming (2012/13) financial year.

In recognition of the problems and inconvenience that the removal of the bus stop outside 32/34 has caused, it is proposed to undertake the necessary changes that will allow the reintroduction of the bus stop early within the wider Scheme implementation programme.

Accordingly it is anticipated that the bus stop will be restored, in a way that addresses the earlier road safety and access issues, during the first quarter (April- June) Q1 of the 2012/13 financial year.

5.0 Financial Implications

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

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 None at this time

7.0 Diversity Implications

- 7.1 No significant issues

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 8.1 None at this time

8.0 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 None at this time

Background Papers

Petition.

Sudbury & Harrow Road Public Realm Scheme papers

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Extract of petition submitted January 2011

Contact Officers

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Appendix 1

11th January 2011

Cllr. Mary Daly
Labour Members' Room
Brent Town Hall
Forty Lane, Wembley
Middx
HA9 9HD

Dear Cllr. Daly,

Restoration of the Watford Road Bus Stop

Your letter of December 2010 is an absolute God send.

We, the residents of the Sudbury Ward, who have been so adversely affected and inconvenienced by the hard-hearted action of London Buses to **ARBITRARILY ELIMINATE THIS BUS STOP WITHOUT ANY PRIOR WARNING OR CONSULTATION OF ANY SORT**, have been left totally helpless not knowing who to make representations to during this terrible winter weather we have recently experienced.

We have, therefore, assembled a Petition and are forwarding it to you with the request that you may please take whatever action is necessary to have Brent Council move in the matter as one of utmost urgency in view of this unjustified arbitrary action which has inflicted untold misery and suffering on the regular bus users in the Sudbury Ward - especially the helpless seniors who have been, quite unjustifiably, called upon to make additional treks to alternate bus stops, on icy pavements, often risking life and limb, through no fault of their own.

We would strongly urge you - our local Councillor - to have the Council RESTORE, WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT, THIS CRUCIAL BUS STOP, TO ITS ORIGINAL LOCATION - ONE THAT HAS EXISTED FOR WELL OVER 25 YEARS OR MORE - rather than continue to inflict needless further additional suffering on the on the bus commuter residents of the Sudbury Ward especially these harsh winter months.

Whilst fully appreciating your concerns for us helpless constituents, we shall be most grateful for your kind support and urgent action in this regard **PENDING PROPER PRIOR CONSULTATION BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION OF** of any new Traffic Scheme for the area.

Thank you very much,
Yours faithfully,

THE PETITIONERS OF THE SUDBURY WARD
(List Of Names & Addresses Attached)

Copy To : The Editor, Wembley Observer