



Highways Committee
27th March 2008

**Report from the Director
Of Transportation**

For Action

Report Title: Petition – Dudden Hill Lane Bus Lane

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-07/08-043

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 As part of London Bus priority Network, the Council has implemented a bus lane in Dudden Hill Lane, this has made bus travel more convenient, more reliable and reduced delays to bus Routes 226 & 302.

This report informs Members of the Committee on the Transportation Unit's response to the petition submitted by Dudden Hill Community Centre on behalf of local traders and residents, and verified by Democratic Services as containing in excess of 50 signatures.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee notes the petition
- 2.2 That Committee instructs officers to negotiate with London Buses for the bus operating hours be reduced from Monday - Sunday to Monday – Saturday 7.0am- 10am and 4pm to 7pm.
- 2.3 That the Committee instruct officers implement a Disabled Person Parking Bay opposite 202 Villiers Road subject to satisfactory statutory consultation.

3.0 Detail

Petition

- 3.1 A petition was received from Dudden Hill Community Centre led by Naginbhai Mistry, Tony Antoniou and Jugal Mehta on behalf of local traders and residents, which the signatures have been verified by Democratic Services and the petition reads:

“We the undersigned residents and traders living and working on and off Dudden Hill Lane and Willesden High Road, hereby wish to convey our concerns in the strongest possible terms over the unnecessary implementation of a bus lane running on Dudden Hill Lane.

We believe that the bus lane to be dangerous and a safety risk which has also been confirmed by the local constabulary. The bus lane is also creating excessive congestion to local residents.

The Dudden Hill Community Centre has for several years been a venue for the elderly and disabled people of Brent to meet for various activities. Having this bus lane implemented right outside has caused extreme difficulties for these people use the centre by being unable to be dropped off and picked up outside the centre”.

We ask for the immediate removal of the bus lane and the establishment of normal road markings.

Background

- 3.2 The section of Dudden Hill Lane southbound between Normanby Road and Willesden High Road was identified as a bottleneck where buses were experiencing delays. It was determined that rationalising the road space by introducing a bus lane at peak hours and allowing parking outside peak hours is the most effective way to utilise road space and reduce delays for buses in Dudden Hill Lane at that section.
- 3.3 On 22nd March 2006 the proposal for introduction of a new bus lane Monday to Sunday (7-10am and 4 -7.0pm) in Dudden Hill Lane between section of Normanby Road and High Road was discussed and the Highway Committee gave the approval for design consultation and implementation subject to satisfactory statutory consultation.
- 3.4 The scheme was consulted on November 2006 and implemented and became operational from 22nd August 2007.
- 3.5 On 26th August 2007, a complaint letter was received from Mr Jugal Mehta, Chairman of Sri Sathaya Sai, expressing his disappointment with the bus lane that imposed waiting and loading restrictions outside the community centre. He complained that proper consultation was not carried out and the proposed parking restriction would curtail their activities on Saturdays for children and

on Sundays for their elderly members. Mr Mehta maintained that if there was no parking space near or opposite the Community Centre hall their elderly members could not walk to the community centre, and if the parents could not drop off and pick up children at the gate of the centre there was a risk for young children's safety if they walked on their to the centre. He requested changing the bus lane hours to accommodate parking.

- 3.6 It was explained that as this was a new scheme and any changes to the bus operating hours, would require the Council to monitor the bus lane operation for the next six months and during this period consider any comments from residents and traders, carry out stage 3 safety audit. It was also explained that any decision to change the bus lane operating hours, will take a minimum of six months before they can be implemented as this will require an amendment to the Traffic Management Order.
- 3.7 Mr Mehta was unhappy with this explanation and wanted the changes with immediate effect. This was followed up by Cllr Sneddon who wanted to know how the bus lane was being monitored? How specifically were we assessing the impact on the parking, traffic flow and social amenities and finally if we were willing to attend a meeting with the concerned parties to discuss their concerns.
- 3.8 The following explanations were provided ;
- 3.9 Journey time surveys will be carried out to evaluate the benefits. At present the council is carrying out modification works at the junction of Burnley Road and delays are anticipated to all traffic. Therefore this assessment will be done once the works are completed at this junction. Also, the accident records have not been compiled since there is not enough data available.
- 3.10 On our consultations with bus operators suggest that the number of bus passengers have been increasing on route 302 because it is now become more reliable. The bus running times before the bus lane was introduced had been increasing. The Bus operators wanted to increase the bus lane operating hours, particularly on Saturdays. However, this was thought to be too onerous on the locality and has not been recommended to Members.
- 3.11 During our consultation with the buses on this matter , we were encouraged to see a positive response, even before carrying out post assessment surveys. Once the Burnley Road junction improvements are completed the running times for buses will be improved further and this will be beneficial for general traffic.
- 3.12 We explained that, in order to change the Traffic Management Orders we would require at least 4 to 6 months before amendments can be made. Meanwhile, within that period we will conduct consultations with bus operators, carry out safety audit stage 3 and consider if there are other adverse comments from residents and traders.

- 3.13 The Road Safety Audit is currently in progress and the results are expected by the end of March.
- 3.14 We consulted with the management of the centre and agreed to accept the representation of their members on this issue, even though no responses had been sent directly to us.
- 3.15 Mr Mehta also put a request for a disabled parking bay and submitted an application on 08.06.07. This was considered outside 204 Villers Road and the TMO's are being progressed. If there are no objections it is anticipated that after advertisement and consultation in June it will become operational in July 2008.

4.0 Current Situation

- 4.1 Since operation of the bus lane in Duden Hill Lane, no adverse comments have been received either from residents, or from traders of the area who are directly affected by the scheme.
- 4.2 As requested By Cllr Sneddon/Mr Mehta, investigation was carried out for the possibility of reducing the bus operating hours. A response was given to the councillor.
- 4.3 A disabled bay in Villers Road has been put forward and the outcome is still pending.
- 4.4 The removal of bus lane cannot be justified on the ground of one objection. The scheme is still premature approximately seven months operational.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The bus lane on Dudden Hill Lane is aimed at improving the bus routes which serve more than 4 million passengers per year. The bus lane was implemented in line with the Transport of London's policy to improve to make bus travel more convenient and more reliable and reduce delays to bus Routes 226 & 302.
- 5.2 As LT Buses preferred bus lane operational times are Saturdays in light of this it is proposed to do carry out minimum changes. The operational dates will be changed from (Monday to Sundays) to (Monday to Saturdays) which is in line with many bus lanes in London.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications. The scheme was funded by Transport for London (TfL), Bus Priority. Any amendments to the bus lane will be funded by TfL through this bus priority programme.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.2 The procedures for amending the bus lane operational time and implementing a disabled bay are subject to satisfactory statutory consultation.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 All public consultation material included an explanation of how more information about the proposals could be obtained. This was written and available in several languages that are commonly spoken in the Borough. No specific issues arose from the original consultation process. However, the concerns expressed by Mr Mehta regarding young children and elderly members were significant issues and officers have tried to accommodate these concerns as explained in paragraph 3.6.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 The Transportation Service Unit is undertaking the scheme development and will deal with all issues related to this report.

Contact Officers

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