

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT – 15 JULY 2010

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO WEIRS LANE BUS STOP (EASTBOUND), OXFORD

Report by Head of Transport

Introduction

1. This report considers improvements to the eastbound Weirs Lane bus stop in light of concerns raised by a local bus user.

Background

2. The eastbound Weirs Lane bus stop is served by Stagecoach route 16/16A. The service operates at a maximum frequency of 2 buses per hour (Oxford City Centre to Minchery Farm) from 06:40 to 23:50 Monday to Friday, at a similar frequency 07:55 to 23:50 on Saturday and hourly from 08:50 to 22:50 on Sunday.
3. A member of the public has requested that improvements be made to the above bus stop. The stop is located in a lay-by that frequently becomes obstructed by parked vehicles. When this occurs, the bus is unable to stop adjacent to the pavement and some passengers find it difficult to board the bus.
4. Officers of the Public Transport Development Team suggested a number of solutions to the problem:
 - (a) Provide a bus stop clearway in the lay-by at the expense of several car parking places;
 - (b) Relocate the bus stop to the carriageway at the eastern end of the layby, perhaps with some modifications to the kerb. Minimal loss of parking;
 - (c) Relocate the bus stop to the next lay-by (heading towards Cowley Centre). Most of the lay-by is protected by advisory keep clear markings, therefore there would be minimal loss of parking;

A plan highlighting the three options is attached at Annex 1.

5. Councillors and the local bus operator expressed a preference for option (a), the introduction of a bus stop clearway. It was felt that moving the stop to the carriageway (option b) would obstruct the flow of traffic.

Consultation

6. During December 2009, residents of eight properties most likely to be affected by a 24 hour bus stop clearway were invited to comment. A copy of the plan and letter sent to residents is attached at Annex 2.
7. Three responses, two letters of support and one objection, were received from those that were consulted. Six further objections were received from properties that were not included in the consultation. A summary of all comments received from residents is attached at Annex 3.
8. An informal meeting was held on 3 March 2010 with County Councillors for the ISIS division, the Cabinet Member for Transport and officers from the Public Transport Development Team to discuss a solution in light of the objections to the clearway. Due to continuing concerns about the traffic implications of relocating the bus stop to the carriageway, it was decided to trial a 7 am to 7 pm clearway for six months.
9. Following further representations from local residents implementation of the clearway was postponed to allow more time to assess the impact of relocating the bus stop.

Queue Length Survey

10. A queue length survey was commissioned to measure the volume of traffic turning from Abingdon Road into Weirs Lane. The purpose of the survey was to assess if traffic queuing on Abingdon Road could be accommodated behind a stationary bus on Weirs Lane without obstructing the junction of Weirs Lane and Abingdon Road. The survey was carried out from 7AM to 9:30AM on a typical Thursday morning. A plan showing the layout of the survey and the survey results are attached at Annex 4.
11. The survey found that:
 - (a) Approximately 69 metres of road space would be available behind a stationary bus at a stop on the main carriageway of Weirs Lane.
 - (b) On a typical day during the morning peak, traffic turning left into Weirs Lane could easily be accommodated behind a bus parked on Weirs Lane.
 - (c) On roughly a third of traffic light phases, the length of queue turning right into Weirs Lane exceeded the amount of space that would be available behind a stationary bus at a stop on Weirs Lane.

Conclusions

12. The survey data suggests that moving the bus stop on Weirs Lane from the lay-by to the carriageway would have a minimal impact on traffic flow. The bus service is relatively infrequent and most traffic queues could be

accommodated in the 69 metres road space available behind a stationary bus.

13. A temporary bus stop could be provided at this location, subject to the agreement of the frontagers, to assess the effect of a stop under actual conditions. The impact of the stop on traffic flow would be measured using a mobile traffic camera.

Financial Implications (including Revenue)

14. The cost of providing a temporary bus stop is estimated to be less than £100.

RECOMMENDATION

15. **The Cabinet Member for Transport is RECOMMENDED to approve the provision of a temporary bus stop on Weirs Lane as outlined in this report.**

STEVE HOWELL
Head of Transport
Environment & Economy

Background Papers: Consultation documentation

Contact Officer: Matt Bromley Tel 01865 815531

July 2010