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Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport

Thursday, 15 July 2010 at 10.00 am County Hall

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 23 July 2010 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

Tony Cloke

Assistant Head of Legal & Democratic Services

July 2010

Contact Officer:

Graham Warrington

Tel: (01865) 815321; E-Mail:

graham.warrington@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 2 September 2010

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am on the working day before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

4. Proposed Improvements to Weirs Lane Bus Stop (Eastbound), Oxford (Pages 1 - 16)

Forward Plan Ref: 2010/096

Contact: Matt Bromley, Development Assistant Tel: (01865) 815531

Report by Head of Transport (CMDT4).

Division(s): Isis

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

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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

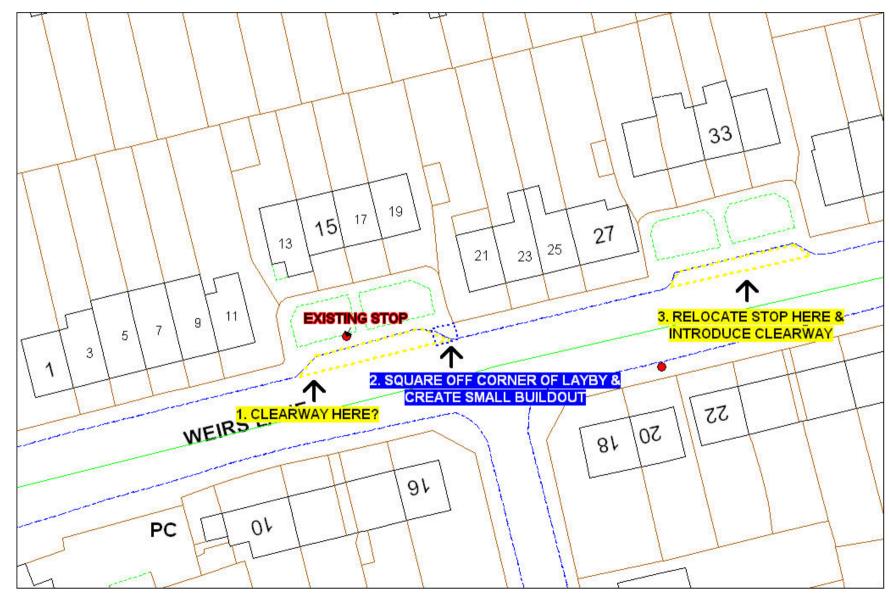
Contact Officer: Matt Bromley Tel 01865 815531

July 2010

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PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO WEIRS LANE BUS STOP (E-BOUND), OXFORD

Annex 1: Proposed Solutions





Transport
Oxfordshire County Council
Environment & Economy
Speedwell House
Speedwell Street
Oxford OX1 1NE

Tel: 01865 815700 Fax: 01865 815085

Steve Howell Head of Transport

Direct line: 01865 815531

matthew.bromley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

PROPOSED BUS STOP CLEARWAY - WEIRS LANE (EASTBOUND).

The County Council proposes introducing a bus stop clearway at the eastbound Weirs Lane bus stop. This measure has been requested by local residents, and is supported by local Councillors and the bus operator. The purpose of this letter is to seek your views on the proposal.

The attached drawing shows:

Please ask for: Matt Bromley

- a) The location of the bus stop (marked by a red circle).
- b) A bus stop clearway signed to be enforced 24 hours a day. This will replace the existing advisory marking outside 17 Weirs Lane. The existing markings outside 13 Weirs Lane will be retained.

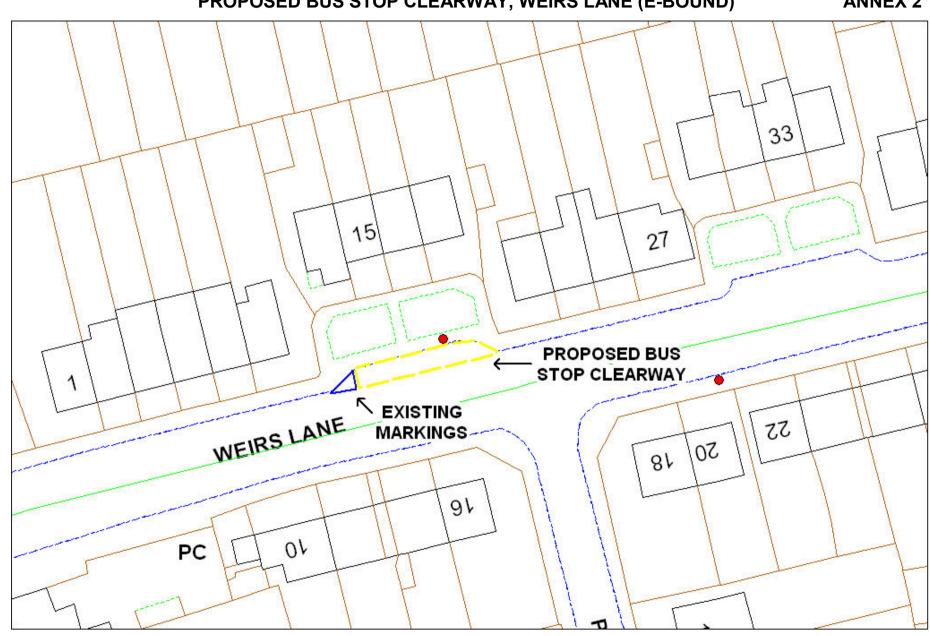
We want to seek your views prior to proceeding further with the project. If you wish to comment on the proposal please write to me at the above address **before Friday 15 January 2010.**

Please note that any comments received as part of this consultation will not be the only factor influencing the final decision. Technical and safety considerations along with the County Council's approved transport policies will also affect the final decision made.

Yours Sincerely

Matt Bromley Development Assistant, Public Transport Development

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PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO WEIRS LANE BUS STOP (E-BOUND), OXFORD

Summary of resident's comments

Consultation

Eight properties were invited to comment on the proposed bus stop clearway.

- 2 letters supporting the proposal were received.
- o 1 resident objected because it would prevent taxis from stopping to collect residents.

Six residents that were not included in the consultation also commented on the plans.

- All 6 objected to the proposed clearway.
- It was felt that a bus stop clearway would make the already difficult parking arrangements worse by reducing the available parking space by at least two vehicles.
- The clearway is not needed because few people use the stop and the bus normally stops in the road to collect passengers, even when the layby is free of parked cars.
- Reducing the hours of the clearway to 7am to 7pm would not be effective because most residents need to park in the lay by during these hours.
- o Residents also felt that the County had not consulted widely enough.

Further Comments

One resident has asked that the following comments be included in this report:

The loss of vital parking spaces would be extremely detrimental to local residents

The number of residents' cars in Weirs Lane has increased substantially over the last few years. Parking is extremely limited in Weirs Lane as there is no parking at all on the Southern side of the road. Residents only park in the bus stop lay-by when all other spaces are filled, but this is a common occurrence as there is such a shortage of parking.

On the few occasions that my husband and I have been forced to park in Peel Place, we have been verbally harassed by Peel Place residents for parking in front of their houses. Any such scheme would have a profound impact upon our lives and would make things extremely difficult for us on a regular basis.

The proposed clearway will actually make the road more unsafe.

At times when even the two spaces in the lay-by are full things become dangerous as residents resort to parking on both corners of Peel Place. This makes it hazardous for vehicles to pull out of this junction, and obstructs access for emergency vehicles. It will also allow cars to drive at even greater speeds past the houses on Weirs Lane, which poses a risk to pedestrians and cyclists.

The council have not provided good reasons for implementing a clearway

We have lived on Weirs Lane for six years now and cannot see any good reason why a clearway should be necessary. Even when there are no cars parked in the lay by, the number 16 bus

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almost always stops in the road by the corner of the lay by. We have hardly ever seen the bus actually pull fully in to the lay by. This is because cars rarely allow buses to pull back out of the lay-by if they pull in fully.

In addition, only two buses per hour use this route and they rarely stop on Weirs Lane, as it is not a very well used stop. When they do stop, it is only for a few seconds. In contrast 14, 400 vehicles a day use this road as a cross-town route (figures from the Oxford Mail, February 2010).

Despite this, the predominant traffic flow and congestion is in the other direction during the evening rush hour, and buses rarely stop for long enough to cause obstruction to traffic. On the Southern side of the road there is no lay by for buses and this is the direction in which most of the congestion occurs.

The majority of local residents do not support the plan.

Although initial consultation was very limited, all of the residents that we have subsequently spoken to were against the plan. A number of people felt very let down that they were not consulted. The whole proposal was initiated on behalf of one resident only, and the majority of residents clearly do not want a clearway.

In this economic climate, spending money on a scheme requested by only one resident seems wasteful, especially as the council were not convinced by the need for the scheme and suggested a "trial" period

We are certain that once the money has been spent, the decision to reverse a "trial" period is unlikely to be taken, even if the majority of residents do not feel the scheme is a success. In addition, with another bus stop only a few metres around the corner on Abingdon Road, and this stop rarely used – is this really the best use of public funds?

The criteria that were proposed to assess whether or not the clearway has been a success were not fair.

It was proposed that the measure of success would be to ask bus drivers if they could get closer to the kerb! Clearly this would be a key consequence of introducing a clearway, so it is hardly an objective measure of whether the scheme gives overall benefit or harm.

The impact on the environment – we believe that the clearway will be unsightly.

Painting a large box with hashed lines on the road will spoil the look of the road and be detrimental to residents' quality of life.

We believe there are better options that should be considered

If there really is a genuine issue with one particular resident accessing the bus, and the council feels that it is worth spending the money and inconveniencing other residents to achieve this, we believe there are better options to achieve the same result.

There is no need to sacrifice two parking spaces to allow the bus to dock with the kerb. If this really is felt to be necessary, we would support moving the bus stop to the corner of the lay-by and thereby retaining one of the two parking spaces.

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ANNEX 4

Location: Abingdon Road/Weirs Lane **Queue Length Survey**

Date: 29th April 2010

Data File: TC4659

Grid Ref: 51940419

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Location: Abingdon Road/Weirs Lane **Queue Length Survey**

Date: 29th April 2010

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D-C	07:33:56			07:34:14	00:18
D-C	07:34:14	30	30	07:35:38	01:24
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D-C	07:38:17			07:39:17	01:00
D-C	07:39:17			07:40:15	00:58
D-C	07:40:15			07:40:37	00:22
D-C	07:41:32	30	30	07:41:32	00:00
D-C	07:42:10	30	30	07:42:10	00:00
D-C	07:43:31	20	20	07:44:50	01:19
D-C	07:45:02			07:45:56	00:54
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D-C	07:54:07	20	20	07:55:01	00:54
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ANNEX 4

Queue Length Survey

Data File: TC4659

Location: Abingdon Road/Weirs Lane Date: 29th April 2010

Grid Ref: 51940419

Location: Abingdon Road/Weirs Lane **Queue Length Survey**

CMDT4

Date: 29th April 2010

Grid Ref: 51940419

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B-A	08:48:47	35	35	08:49:15	00:28	D-C	08:45:38	10	10	08:46:44	01:06
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B-A	09:00:56	20	20	09:00:42	00:16	D-C	08:57:50	30	30	08:58:51	01:01
B-A	09:01:45	25	25	09:02:01	00:16	D-C	08:59:29	10	10	09:00:10	00:41
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Grid Ref: 51940419

Location: Abingdon Road/Weirs Lane Date: 29th April 2010 **Queue Length Survey**

Data File: TC4659

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Queue Length Survey

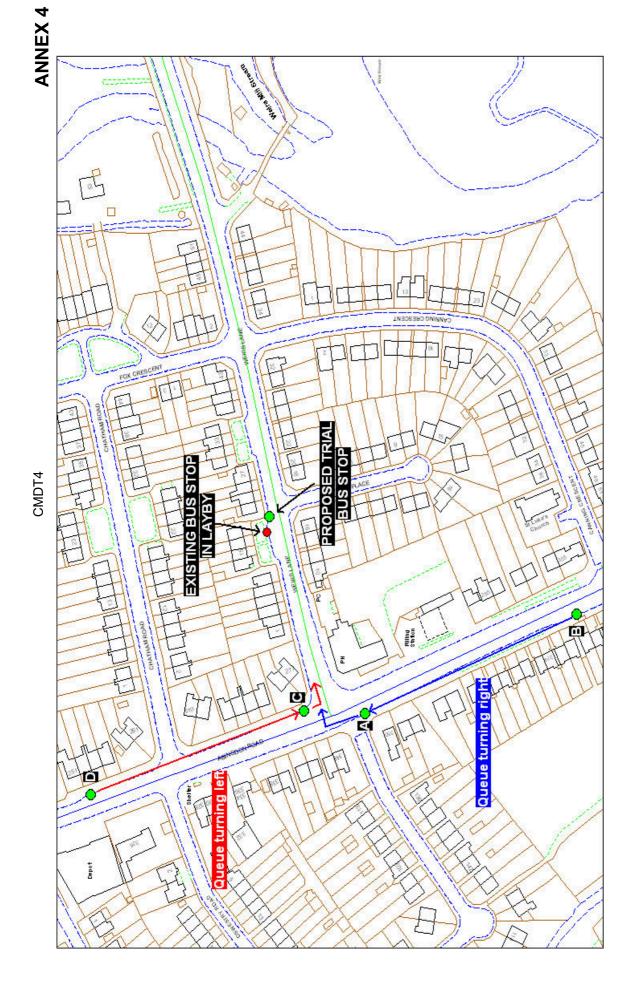
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D-C	09:14:22	10	10	09:15:27	01:05
O-C	09:16:09	10	10	09:17:09	01:00
O-C	09:17:45	40	40	09:19:06	01:21
D-C	09:19:47	10	10	09:20:53	01:06
D-C	09:21:36	10	10	09:22:30	00:54
D-C	09:23:10	10	10	09:24:15	01:05
O-C	09:24:56	40	40	09:26:08	01:12
O-C	09:26:40	20	20	09:28:00	01:20
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