

TRANSPORT DECISIONS COMMITTEE – 19 JULY 2007

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW BUS STOP ON PREMIUM BUS ROUTE – BUCKINGHAM ROAD, BICESTER

Report by Head of Transport

Introduction

1. At a Quality Bus Partnership Meeting with the Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach on 21 March 2006 it was agreed that the 2006/2007 Premium Bus Routes improvements programme would include upgrading inter-urban Oxford-Bicester route services. It was judged that these routes would benefit significantly from investment.
2. A meeting was held on 31 October 2006 between County Council officers and Stagecoach to discuss problem areas along this route (Oxford to Bicester). Officers have carried out assessments on this route of:
 - Bus stop distribution;
 - Bus stop facilities;
 - Scope for real time passenger information;
 - Effect of junctions on bus journey times and scope for bus priority;
 - Parking arrangements on the route.
3. Amongst other improvements, the assessment revealed a need to provide a new bus stop along Buckingham Road. A site meeting to decide on a suitable location for this bus stop was held in February 2007 with representatives from Stagecoach, Thames Valley Police and the Area Engineer in attendance. Town and County Councillors were also invited. Residents who may be affected by this new bus stop were also asked for comments.
4. This report details the objections to the proposed new bus stop and seeks a decision on whether to proceed with installation. Annex B summarises the comments received with an officer response. It is considered that none of the comments override the need for a bus stop in this location.

Buckingham Road Bus Stop

5. The plans at Annex A set out the proposed stop arrangements and location.

6. (a) A new bus stop was considered for this location in order to provide a suitable interchange point between users of rail and Premium Route bus services. At the moment, the nearest bus stop to the rail station is a significant walking distance away and there is no visible signage to the rail station from this stop. The provision of a new stop would improve accessibility and is considered beneficial to both train and bus users.
- (b) According to the Council's own guidelines on bus stop distribution (contained within the 'Bus Stop Infrastructure Design Guide'), bus stops should generally be provided every 300-400 metres in urban areas. The current distribution exceeds 400 metres and so a new bus stop would bridge the gap between the previous and preceding stops (located at either end of Buckingham Road).

How the project supports LTP2 objectives

7. Congestion/Air Quality: *Make public transport faster, more reliable and more user friendly.*
8. There is a need for a better interchange between the Premium Bus Route and train services at Bicester North Station. Linking one transport mode to another in this way makes public transport more convenient and attractive to users.

Financial Implications (including Revenue)

9. The cost of installing the new bus stop on Buckingham Road, including new flag and pole, clearway markings and raised kerb is approximately £2,000 to be funded as part of the LTP2 capital programme for improvements to Premium Bus Routes.
10. Work will be undertaken within existing staff resources.

RECOMMENDATION

11. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to approve installation of a new bus stop on Buckingham Road, Bicester as shown at Annex to this report.**

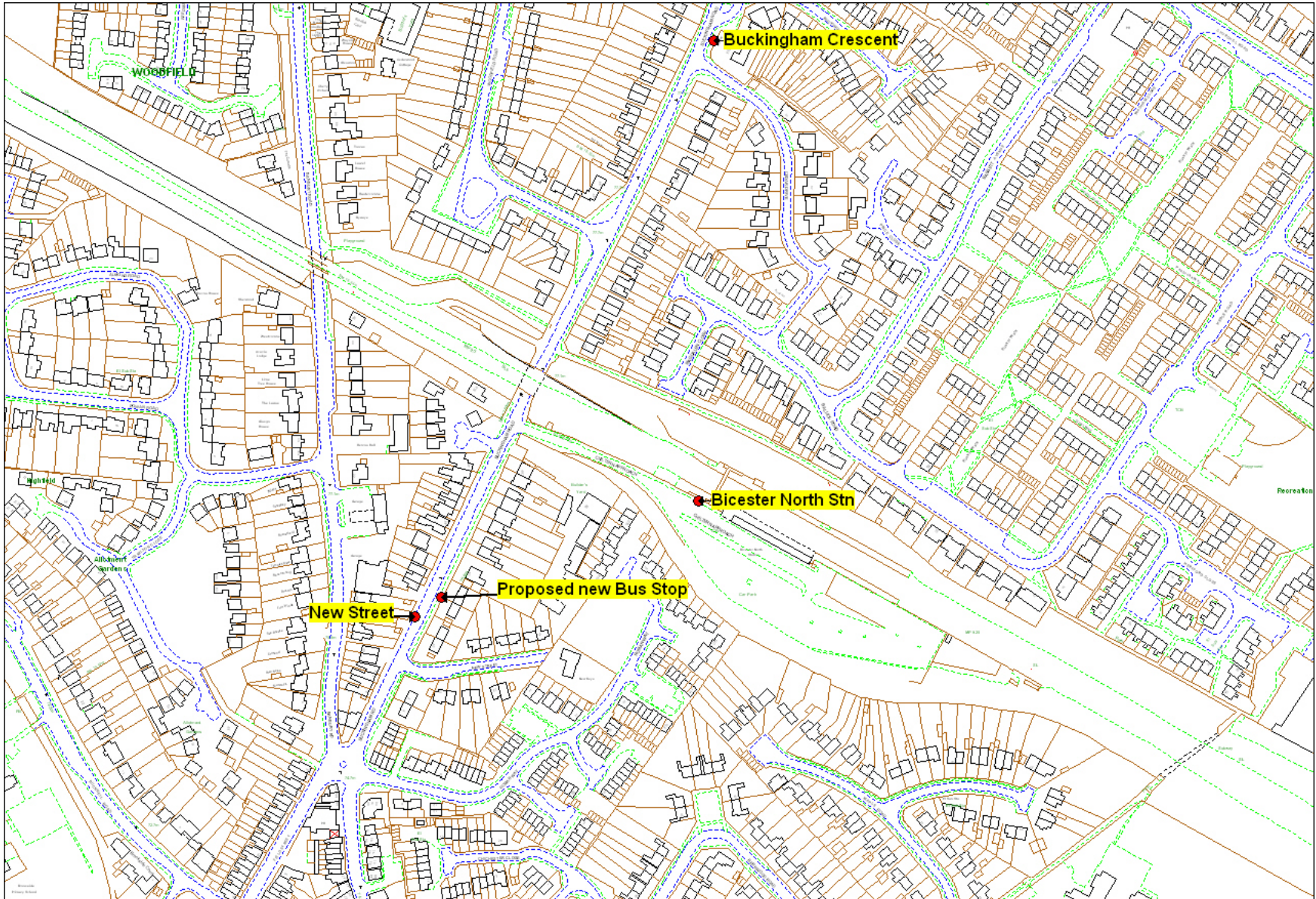
STEVE HOWELL
Head of Transport
Environment & Economy

Background Papers: 'Oxfordshire County Council Bus Stop Infrastructure Design Guide 2006'

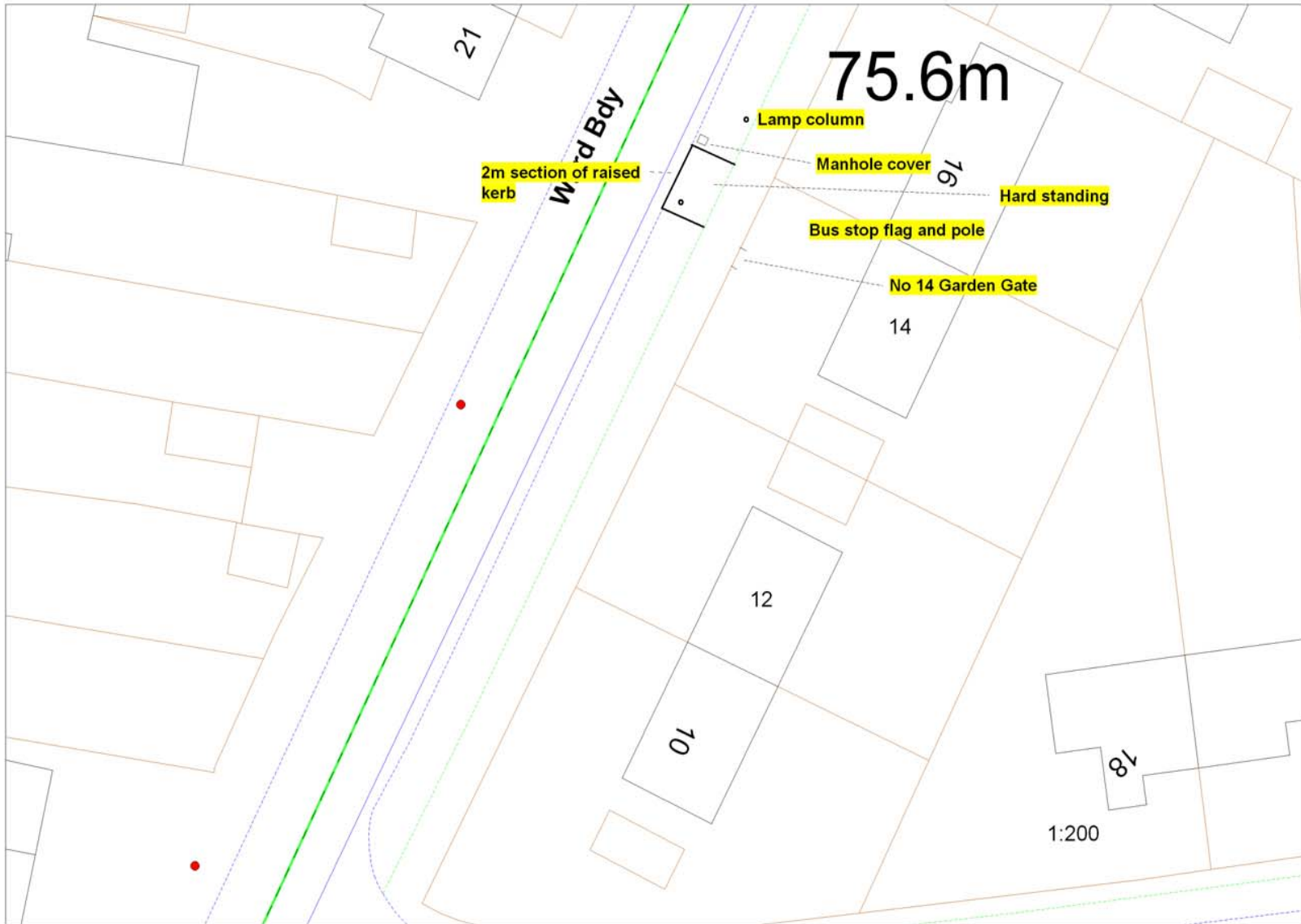
Contact Officer:: Stu Timms Tel: 01865 815683

July 2007

Proposed location of new bus stop



Proposed layout of new bus stop



ANNEX B

Objections to the installation of a new bus stop on Buckingham Road

Objector: Resident, 12 Buckingham Road
<p>Basis for objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access: The stop will obstruct future plans for residents to lower their driveway kerb. • Noise Pollution: Her son has epilepsy. Buses will be stopping and starting outside her house and will affect his sleeping pattern. • Safety: Bus stop flag & pole will reduce visibility of oncoming traffic and make access into and out of driveway dangerous.
<p>Officer comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new stop will not significantly affect access to this property and any future proposal to lower the driveway kerb can still be accommodated. • The bus stop is not directly outside this house. Bus services along Buckingham Road do not run throughout the night and it is considered that noise created by buses stopping will be minimal compared to the ongoing background traffic noise on this busy road. • Thames Valley Police and the Area Engineer were not concerned with any road safety issues the new bus stop may cause.

Objector: Resident, 21 Buckingham Road
<p>Basis for objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Service Provision: Buses are already serviced by a stop further along Buckingham Road • Noise/Congestion: Buses stopping would add to noise pollution and congestion • Access/Safety: Buses stopping will make access to and from driveway dangerous.
<p>Officer comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are strong reasons to provide an easier interchange between the Premium Bus routes with the rail network. At present there is a significant walk between the nearest bus stop and the rail station. A new stop is considered beneficial. • There is unlikely to be any significant increase in pollution; the additional noise and congestion caused will be minimal compared to the ongoing background noise on this busy road. • The new bus stop is on the opposite side of the road. Access to and from 21 Buckingham Road will not be significantly affected.

Objector: Resident, 14 Buckingham Road

Basis for objection:

- **Litter:** The new bus stop will create litter which will be disposed of in the garden/hedge etc.
- **Practical use of hard standing:** Hard standing will not be used because of close proximity to the busy road.
- **Access/Safety:**
 - a) When a bus is at the stop, the view of the road is restricted and will make leaving the driveway dangerous.

 - b) There is a major road sign outside the house; if a double-decker bus is at the stop, traffic will fail to see the sign.
- **Bus stop positioning:** The new stop should be located at the train station if it is designed to serve the station.

Officer comments:

- A litter bin can be provided at the stop.
- The provision of a hard standing will not affect the resident or the property.
- a) The view of the road will be more restricted when leaving the driveway, but the road can still be safely seen even when a bus is at the stop.
- b) The situation with the road sign will be re-assessed when the bus stop is in place. It will be relocated if deemed necessary.
- Manoeuvrability issues into and out of Chiltern Approach (rail station) make it difficult for buses to access the rail station via this route. Retaining buses along Buckingham Road is more practical and increases bus reliability.
- It is difficult to manoeuvre a bus from Buckingham Road into Chiltern Approach (and vice versa), and the circulation area in front of the station is very limited. Such a manoeuvre would add several minutes onto each bus journey, would impact on reliability, and would be unpopular with most bus users.