



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (Mole Valley)

South Street Bus Stand Update Report

4 March 2009

KEY ISSUE

To update the Local Committee on issues relating to the siting of the bus stand in South Street Dorking for local bus service 465. A report by Surrey Highways and a petition objecting to this was previously presented to Local Committee on 11 June 2008.

SUMMARY

The bus stand for service 465 was previously sited at the Townfield Court bus stop. Due to the number of buses calling at this stop buses often had to stop in the middle of the road. Thus passengers were often forced to get on and off the buses in the road, creating a highway safety issue and also problems for the elderly or less mobile. To solve the problem a new bus stand was created in South Street outside Mays Garage. The terminus for the 465 was then relocated to it. The County Council has considered the options whether the bus stand at Mays Garage should now be re-sited to an alternative location. The Local Committee for Mole Valley is being consulted as part of this process.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to:

- (i) Note the comments from South Street Residents
- (ii) Note the comments from the bus users
- (iii) To submit comment on the options set out in this report to the Head of Transport for Surrey and the Executive Member for Transport for their consideration.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Since 1997 service 465 has been operated under contract to Transport for London (TfL). The frequency of the service and patronage has grown. The current Surrey patronage is 164,700 passenger journeys per annum (approximately 450 passenger journeys per day). It operates 7 days a week, half hourly Monday to Saturday and hourly on Sundays.
- 1.2 Service 465 previously took stand time on the Townfield Court bus stop. Accessibility and health and safety issues were identified by the operator due to vehicles having to on occasion double park causing passengers to board and alight in the road. In July 2007 TfL requested an alternative location to address these issues.
- 1.3 Service 465 is operated with low floor fully accessible vehicles, which are designed to pull up to the kerb to assist passengers by making the step height align with the top of the kerb. This is of no benefit when buses stop in the middle of the road.
- 1.4 Meetings to discuss the proposed location of the stand were held on 11 July 2007 and attended by Surrey Highways, Surrey Police, Transport for London, Atkins, Arriva and Passenger Transport Group. A map of the relevant bus stands/stops is attached as appendix 1.
- 1.5 The new site outside the former Mays Garage was agreed as being the only safe, suitable location with Surrey Highways, Surrey Police, Arriva and Transport for London. It was the only suitable site available to enable the bus terminus point to be retained at the western end of the Town Centre. This new stand was installed in January 2008.
- 1.6 Surrey County Council tries to be sympathetic when siting bus stops/stands and when choices exist will favour locations that have minimum impact on residents. Yet in order to enable access to bus services bus stands and stops must be sited in residential areas. The County Councils policy for siting bus stops is attached for reference in Appendix 2.
- 1.7 Initially the bus stand road markings were incorrectly marked on the carriageway and residents were concerned about the loss of 5 parking spaces, environmental issues, driver behaviour and buses double parking.
- 1.8 Surrey Highways corrected the road marking and shortened the length of the bay in May 2008, which reinstated 2 parking bays. The operator Arriva has been proactive and addressed concerns about environmental issues (drivers leaving engines running) and driver behaviour.
- 1.9 A meeting with South Street residents to address their concerns was held on 17 September 2008 and as a result the suggestion of moving the stand to opposite Waitrose has been explored. Notes from this meeting are attached as Appendix 3.

- 1.10 In order to inform current users of the proposals to move the stand to opposite Waitrose the Passenger Transport Group displayed advisory notices in the bus stops along the route and invited comments.
- 1.11 Representations have been received from 10 bus users, including the Priory School, who have made it clear they are speaking with the endorsement of others. Users have stated that moving the stand to Waitrose will cause them hardship and worsen accessibility. Many users have stated that walking the extra distance uphill with shopping will be extremely difficult.
- 1.12 TfL has no objections in principle to relocating the stand for the 465 to opposite Waitrose, but it would be local bus users who would be disadvantaged by this move. As a consequence of the proposal, bus service 516 would have its bus stand transferred from Waitrose to outside Mays Garage. Service 516 is a far more limited service and would cause less of an issue to residents in South Street.
- 1.13 As a compromise Passenger Transport Group suggest a split in the 465 bus stand allocation that is to use the current location at Mays Garage until 1900 hrs Mon-Sat and then use the stand opposite Waitrose in the evenings and on Sundays. TfL has indicated they would be prepared in principle to consider this request.

2 ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

- 2.1 The concerns of South Street residents have been explored in relation to environmental issues, bus driver behaviour and the loss of parking spaces as well as the issue of bus users who will be inconvenienced if the stand is moved to opposite Waitrose.
- 2.2 Four possible options exist, namely:
- A To leave the 465 stand in its current location in South Street outside the former Mays Garage.
 - B To relocate the 465 stand to opposite Waitrose and move service 516 to Mays Garage site.
 - C To leave the 465 stand in its current position until 1900 Mon-Sat and then use the bus stand opposite Waitrose evenings and Sundays.
 - D To leave the 465 stand in its current position until 1900 Mon-Sat and then use the bus stop at Townfield Court evenings and Sundays.
- 2.3 The following table sets out the advantages and disadvantages of each of the four options.

Table 1: Option Assessment

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
A Leave the stand in its current location	Bus users concerns are addressed and users are not inconvenienced or faced with accessibility difficulties.	Residents concerns are not addressed and buses continue to use Mays Garage until the last bus at 2330 Monday to Sunday.
B Swap the 465 bus stand with the 516 to opposite Waitrose	Residents concerns are addressed. Service 516 uses Mays Garage stand. This service is far less frequent than service 465 so residents' issues will be limited.	Bus users of service 465 experience accessibility difficulties walking the additional 395 metres.
C Stand stays at its current location until 1900 then moves to 516 stand opposite Waitrose	Bus users still have the full 465 service until 1900 without causing accessibility difficulties. Residents concerns regarding buses late at night and on Sundays are addressed.	This may be confusing for the infrequent traveller. Drivers may also be confused about where to stand. Residents will still have buses parked opposite during the daytime until 1900.
D Stand stays at its current location until 1900 then moves to Townfield Court bus stop	Bus users still have the full 465 service until 1900 without causing accessibility difficulties. Residents concerns regarding buses late at night and on Sundays are addressed.	Residents of Townfield Court are likely to complain about buses parked up directly outside their windows.

3 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 A site meeting was held on 11 July 2007 to consider the Mays Garage location proposed by Transport for London. All in attendance agreed to this location and letters were sent to residents informing them of the decision. Residents expressed concern and a further site meeting was held on 21 November 2007 to establish if any alternative locations were available. Mays Garage was still agreed to be the only location. A meeting was held with residents on 17th September 2008. Details of proposals to move the stand were placed in bus stops and leaflets were handed to passengers on the 465 buses. The local member for Dorking and the Holmwoods was informed.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 No implications, other than a small amount for publicity to highlighting any changes taking place.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Existing bus users have expressed concern that moving the stand will cause them accessibility difficulties in terms of walking the extra distance to where they live after alighting from the 465 at its proposed new terminus opposite Waitrose. There is a negative Equality & Diversity impact upon disability if the 465 stand is moved due to increased walking distances.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No implications

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Local Committee is asked to consider the options set out in this report and decide what comments it would wish the Head of Transport for Surrey and the Executive Member for Transport to note, based upon the advantages and disadvantages of each as set out in table 1. Please note that it is the officers view that option D should be discounted.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To enable those who currently use the local bus service to continue to do so without causing accessibility problems while recognising the concerns of residents that live opposite Mays Garage bus stand.

9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 The Local Committee's views will be sent to the Head of Transport for Surrey and the Executive Member for Transport for their consideration.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Mole Valley report 11/06/08