



BROOKWOOD HOSPITAL BUS GATE

LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING

14 OCTOBER 2004

KEY ISSUE:

To review the feedback received from the consultation in the Knaphill local area about the operation of the Brookwood hospital bus gate.

SUMMARY:

A delay in the procurement and replacement of the bus gate bollards has delayed the Local Transportation Service in undertaking a consultation in the Knaphill local area. However, a consultation is now taking place within Knaphill, the return date for comments and observations being 12 October 2004. An oral presentation of the results from the consultation will be made to the Committee at its meeting on 14 October 2004.

The report sets out the delays in the procurement process and briefly describes the history behind the installation of the bus gate linked as it is with the grant of planning consent for the redevelopment of the Brookwood hospital site.

The officer recommendation is consistent with the Committee's agreed course of action taken to date.

CONSULTATIONS:

People within the Knaphill local area.

Divisional and Borough Ward Members

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that the Brookwood hospital bus gate remains operationally buses only.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. The Committee received a petition at its meeting on 28 January 2004 objecting to the repair and re-instatement of the bus gate bollards on the Brookwood hospital site Knaphill. The petition requested that the route be used to improve access to the village centre and reduce traffic volumes in Queens Road, Lower Guildford Road and Broadway.
2. Previously the Committee had received public and member questions at its meeting on 22 October 2003 related to the operation of the bus gate. These questions either expressed concerns over safety while the bus gate was not operational and requested prompt re-instatement or promoted that the bus gate should remain open.
3. Feedback from the Transportation Community Forum in November 2003 reinforced that there were two strongly held opposing views within the community about the usefulness and operation of the bus gate.
4. It was agreed in October 2003 that the bus gate be replaced and made operational again. It was also agreed in January 2004 that a comprehensive consultation is undertaken in the Knaphill local area, which would be reported back to a future meeting of the Committee.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

Procurement

5. The bus gate bollards were damaged in May/June 2003 having been in place since April/May 1996. The maintenance contractors Siemens and the manufactures APT concluded that they were beyond serviceable repair and replacements would be required.
6. The County Council's Traffic Signals Group initiated the procurement of a replacement installation in June 2003.
7. During the summer of 2003, a debate commenced in the local Knaphill community about whether the bus gate should remain open or be replaced. This uncertainty culminated in public and member questions to the Committee in October 2003 when it was agreed the bus gate should be replaced.
8. During this same period, summer 2003, procurement of traffic signal equipment was under review, the new Surrey Highway Partnership (SHP) began to consolidate.
9. By September 2003, Carillion, the SHP contractor responsible for traffic signal equipment, was instructed to obtain quotes for replacement bollards. Carillion received these in November 2003.
10. Between November 2003 and February 2004 discussions took place regarding modifications to the existing layout and specification of the

equipment to ensure the bus gate operated satisfactorily with the new style bus fleet and electronic sensor equipment starting to be installed across the County.

11. In March 2004, the Traffic Signals Group requested manufactures revise their quotations, based on the enhanced specification, and supply these to Carillion by 18 March 2004. Traffic Signals Group requested Carillion to notify them immediately the revised quotation arrived as they were seeking to have the bus gate operation by the end of April 2004.
12. A lapse in communication occurred between the parties shortly after revised quotations were requested, which resulted in significant lost time during the remainder of March, April, May and early June 2004.
13. Work commenced on-site 2 August 2004, and was complete 25 August 2004. However, the electronic software failed to detect all the buses and commissioning did not take place.
14. By 21 September 2004, the bus gate was working sufficiently to leave it operational.

Planning the Bus Gate

15. Surrey County Council's Local Transportation Plan seeks to encourage people to use modes other than the private car and promotes safer environments for pedestrians, cyclists and schoolchildren.
16. The Spur road between Broadway and Redding Way is designed for buses and few general-purpose movements to the community facilities only.
17. The bus gate is provided to enable public transport to deliver a better service to passengers; passenger usage has increased on quality bus partnership routes 91 and 34/35 that use the bus gate to access Knaphill village centre.
18. All purpose use of the spur road cannot be considered in isolation. The Brookwood hospital development master plan considered its impact on the local surrounding highway network to be detrimental, encouraging rat running in Limecroft Road, Sussex Road, Broadway, Anchor Hill, Knaphill village centre, Hermitage Road, Blackhorse Road and through the Brookwood development. Redding Way is designed for the development and not rat running traffic.
19. The installation, operation and subsequent alteration to the prescribed operation of the bus gate is controlled by planning consent granted by the Planning Authority for the redevelopment of the Brookwood hospital site. Therefore, notwithstanding the results of the consultation, to open the bus gate to all traffic would require an application to vary the original conditions imposed with the grant of consent for the redevelopment.
20. Any interested third party could therefore apply to the Planning Authority for a variation of a planning condition. The Planning Authority would then consult the Highway Authority and a Transportation Assessment could be

requested to justify the application.

21. Woking Borough Council considered detailed reports (January and March 1995) about the overall impact of opening the spur road. Woking emphatically rejected the proposal considering the resultant environmental and highway impact unacceptable. Copies of the reports were circulated to members of the Committee shortly after the 22 October 2003 meeting.
22. The Local Transportation Service is committed to delivering many high priority studies, assessments and schemes that meet Local Transport Plan aims and objectives. It is extremely unlikely that the Local Transportation Service would promote the removal of the bus gate and go against the strategy of the Local Transport Plan. Studying the bus gate would therefore be a low priority based on known historic reporting of its operation.
23. The Local Transportation Service remains committed to the bus gate, taking into consideration the many different views of the local community about its operation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24. There are no financial implications for the Committee in retaining the bus gate as the Traffic Signals Group funds the replacement bus gate and ongoing maintenance.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

25. The provision of the bus gate in 1996 pre-dates the aims and objectives of the current Local Transport Plan. However, the foresight shown in making provision for buses only at this location supports sustainable development and the County Council's aim to encourage alternate modes of transport.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

26. There are no crime and disorder issues when the bus gate is operational.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

27. There are no equalities issues.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

28. The delay in undertaking the Knaphill local area consultation results from procurement difficulties experienced in commissioning the replacement bus gate. Output from the consultation due back on 12 October 2004 will be reported orally to the Committee.
29. Notwithstanding the results of the consultation, the bus gate constitutes part of the planning consent for development of the Brookwood hospital site and as such would require an amendment to that planning consent before alterations can be applied.

Report by: Stephen Child, Local Transportation Director, Woking

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Geoff Wallace

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01483 518 300

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Petition 28 January 2004

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