



HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11 December 2012

REPORT

Subject Heading:

**Harold Wood Bus Interchange
Bus Accessibility, Walking and Public
Realm Enhancement Proposals**

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report sets out a proposal to improve bus stop accessibility, the walking environment the public realm at the Harold Wood Station bus interchange and seeks a recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the scheme be implemented.

This scheme is within **Harold Wood** ward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the bus stop accessibility, walking environment and public realm proposals be implemented, as described in this report and shown on Drawing QL007-100A.
2. That it be noted that the estimated cost of £70,000 will be met from the 2012/13 Transport for London Local Implementation Plan allocation for Gooshays Drive & Gubbins Lane Highway Improvements.

REPORT DETAIL

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Regeneration and Streetcare services, have been undertaking improvement works along the Gooshays Drive and Gubbins Lane corridor in recent years to improve the physical walking environment, highway safety and access to bus services.
- 1.2 The programme has developed in support of the expected increase in residents moving to the area as a result of several housing developments in both the Gooshays Drive corridor and on the site of the former Harold Wood Hospital. In addition, Harold Wood Station is a Crossrail Station and access to new train services is expected to increase footfall in the area as a result.
- 1.3 The works package has so far included a number of schemes as follows;
 - An improved walking route on the eastern side of Gooshays Drive from the Harold Hill Leisure Centre to the pelican crossing on the A12 connecting Gooshays Drive with Gubbins Lane;
 - Pedestrian lighting on the eastern side of Gooshays Drive and new lighting along the whole of Gubbins Lane;
 - Rationalisation of pedestrian refuges near the Gooshays Health Centre and the provision of a zebra crossing to improve access to the centre;
 - Short term drop off parking bay to serve the Gooshays Health Centre;
 - New pedestrian refuge on Gubbins Lane, near Beehive Court to assist with access to bus services, especially residents of Beehive Court.

- Bus stop accessibility improvements to the bus stops within Gooshays Drive.
- 1.4 The work has most recently concentrated on the area around Harold Wood Station and the physical accessibility and quality of the adjacent interchange which serves several bus services.
 - 1.5 In the southbound direction, bus services access a large lay-by/ interchange area next to the station. It is a dropping off point and turn-round for the 496 bus route which runs between Romford and Harold Wood and serves Harold Park and Harold Hill. The area also serves the 294, 256, 347, 646 & 656 bus routes in the southbound (the last two being school services).
 - 1.6 In the northbound direction, buses stop in a lay-by, just north of the junction with the development of the former Harold Wood Hospital. Those wishing to move between the various stops can do so via zebra crossings at the junction of Station Road and Gubbins Lane, both of which are modern, accessible and well lit at night. The footways in the immediate vicinity are generally in a good condition (other than the interchange area) and the area is well lit at night.
 - 1.7 The interchange area next to Harold Wood Station is currently in a poor state of repair, the kerb alignment at the bus stop area is not sufficiently arranged in terms of plan layout or kerb height to be fully compatible with low-floor buses; and the area is not directly lit.
 - 1.8 In addition, the footway between the bus interchange and the station entrance is narrow, especially where a pinch point exists at the western corner of the station area; and the footway outside the station is in a poor condition and cramped.
 - 1.9 In order to address these various issues, Staff have undertaken design work seeking to improve the accessibility of the bus interchange for passengers, to maximise footway space within the interchange and the route to the station entrance; and to improve the footway surfacing and lighting to the area.
 - 1.10 Staff have used a computer model to undertake a swept-path analysis of the movements of buses through the interchange area (north to south) and the space needed by the 496 bus route to move from Station Road, around the interchange and back into Station Road. Drawing QL070/101A shows an example of this analysis.
 - 1.11 The analysis has shown that the kerb-line within the interchange can be adjusted to follow a straight line (with a higher kerb to meet the bus loading doors) and the footway widened in the interchange area. In addition, there is sufficient space within Gubbins Lane to widen the footway past the pinch-point by the station building and in front of the station entrance.

- 1.12 Staff have therefore taken this layout and added a complete renewal of the footways, carriageway surface and the provision of specific pedestrian lighting at the interchange Drawing QL007-100A shows the proposed layout.
- 1.13 Staff are also in discussion with Transport for London's Taxi & Private Hire department (TfL TPH) with a proposal to convert part of the taxi rank on Station Road to provide a short term drop off/ pick up bay. Drawing QL007/102 shows a potential arrangement.
- 1.14 TfL TPH is required to agree changes through an internal board process and as Harold Wood is a Crossrail Station, TfL TPH is also consulting with Crossrail on the proposal. At the time of preparing this report, TfL TPH are receptive to the proposal and in due course this will be reported to HAC as a separate report.

2.0 Public Consultation

- 2.1 London Buses have been engaged during the design process and support the scheme.
- 2.2 Harold Wood ward councillors have been provided with a drawing showing the proposed layout.

3.0 Staff Comments

- 3.1 The current layout of the interchange is not fully accessible to all bus passengers and the footway condition is poor. The footway to the corner of the station building is narrow and congested at peak times. Crossrail is expected to increase footfall at the station and so Staff recommend that these improvements are taken forward to improve the interchange facilities in advance of Crossrail coming on stream from 2018.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The estimated cost of £70,000 will be met from the 2012/13 Transport for London Local Implementation Plan allocation for Gooshays Drive & Gubbins Lane Highway Improvements.

This is a standard project for the Council and there is no expectation that the works cannot be contained within the cost estimate. There is an element of contingency built into the financial estimate. In the unlikely event of an overspend, the balance would need to be contained within the overall budget.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no direct legal implications..

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities Implications and Risks:

The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that its highway network is accessible to all. Where infrastructure is provided or substantially upgraded, reasonable adjustments should be made to improve access. In considering the impacts and making improvements for people with protected characteristics (mainly, but not limited to disabled people, the young and older people), this will assist the Council in meeting its duty under the Act.

The provision of fully accessible bus stops assists with making public transport more inclusive to all sectors of the community, but most especially disabled people and people using pushchairs. Accessible bus stops will be of benefit to people using wheelchairs, but also people who have walking, balance and dexterity difficulties; and blind and partially-sighted people.

Good quality footways and reduced street clutter can help pedestrians of all abilities to negotiate and navigate the public realm and is especially helpful for disabled people.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Project Scheme File Ref: QL007 Gooshays Drive & Gubbins Lane 2012/13