

PROPOSED BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE EXTENSION OF THE 73 BUS ROUTE IN HAWKINGE

To: Folkestone & Hythe Joint Transportation Board: 11th February 2019

By: Phil Lightowler, Head of Public Transport, Kent County Council

Classification: Unrestricted

Ward: Hawkinge – North Downs East

Summary: This report gives details of proposed bus stop installations in Page Road, Atkinson Road and Pannell Drive Hawkinge to support a commercial extension of the 73 bus service, operated by Stagecoach South East. Members are asked to consider the response to the consultation and the resulting recommendation.

For Recommendation:

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 As Highways Authority, Kent County Council (KCC) is responsible for the siting of marked bus stops across the County. As part of this role, KCC maintains approximately 7000 existing assets, investigates new bus stop requests and looks to undertake improvement works. Our aim is to ensure that Kent's residents are able to access the public transport network as easily as possible. When conducting bus stop works, we also work to ensure that the infrastructure meets access requirements set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 1.2 KCC's role is to provide bus stop poles, flags, timetable cases, raised / dropped kerbing, areas of hardstanding and clearway markings. Bus stop shelters are typically provided by either the local Borough / District Council or Parish / Town Councils.
- 1.3 When investigating new bus stop requests or proposals the following process is followed:
- A qualified safety engineer assesses the area and recommends the safest place for the bus stop infrastructure to be installed or decline the scheme if a safe area does not exist.
 - The bus operator(s) are contacted to advise whether they would be willing to serve a new stop if installed and whether they are happy with the location proposed by the engineer.

- A consultation document is sent to directly affected nearby properties to seek views and the concerns of residents.
- All consultation responses are considered to ascertain any valid reasons why the scheme should not progress. Ultimately, in many cases concerns around such issues as aesthetics and privacy are not deemed a reason to mean the abortion of a scheme.
- If the level of objection is significant, we undertake to take the proposal to the local Joint Transportation Board (JTB).
- If there are no valid reasons why the scheme should not progress, we inform the residents of the decision and begin the process of the physical stop installation.

- 1.4 Following completion of development in 2001 there has been a long standing ambition for Public Transport to serve Page Road, Atkinson Road and Pannell Drive, Hawkinge. The issue has been frequently discussed through the area's Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) at which KCC, FHDC and Stagecoach are members. A service here would provide closer access to public transport for residents in those areas, as opposed to the current requirement to walk to the nearest bus stops on Haven Drive.
- 1.5 Following discussions at the QBP, Stagecoach concluded that they would be in a position to serve the area commercially by diverting service 73 from Haven Drive to Page Road, Atkinson Road and Pannell Drive on a 20-minute frequency.
- 1.6 Given this commitment, KCC and Folkestone & Hythe District Council (FHDC) have been working to establish how and where bus stop infrastructure can be provided to support this proposed change. There are S106 monies available to deliver bus stop poles, flags, cases and areas of hardstanding from the Terlingham Village development. FHDC have confirmed that there is also funding available to provide 2 bus shelters as part of the scheme.
- 1.7 A site visit was conducted to identify suitable bus stop locations and recommendations provided by a qualified engineer. The proposed locations have also subsequently been looked at by KCC's Traffic Schemes Team who concurred with the original assessment that the locations were the most appropriate for the area.
- 1.5 A consultation was conducted between 10th December and 7th January 2019 in line with KCC's established procedures.
- 1.6 Given the level of response to the consultation, in line with KCC's procedures, a decision was taken to bring a paper to JTB for the proposals and the consultation response to be considered by members. The scheme however, is supported by Hawkinge Town Council.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 Stagecoach have committed to extending the 73 bus service on a commercial basis at no cost to KCC or FHDC. The route they plan to utilise can be seen in appendix A (page 11).

- 2.2 To facilitate the bus route and maximise coverage of the development it is proposed that a bus stop will be installed on Page Road, Atkinson Road and Pannell Drive. As the bus route will be a loop only one stop will be needed at each location.
- 2.3 Each bus stop will need a bus stop pole, flag, timetable case, kerb works and a bus stop clearway to ensure they are compliant with equalities legislation. The 'Atkinson Road' stop will also have a path and a dropped kerb installed in order to make the stop fully accessible.
- 2.4 The 'Page Road' and 'Pannell Drive' stops will have bus shelters provided by FHDC. The 'Atkinson Road' stop will not have a shelter as the presence of the nearby barrier, marking the boundary of the land owned by KCC, will prevent one being installed.
- 2.5 Stop locations and design detail can be found in appendix B (page 13).
- 2.5 Should the proposals receive JTB support, it is expected that works will be carried out in spring 2019 with the service extension following shortly after.

3.0 Consultation

- 3.1 There is no statutory requirement for KCC to consult on the installation of bus stops on the public highway, however, we do undertake to do so with directly affected properties as a matter of good practice. In this case 42 properties were consulted split between the proposed areas on Page Road, Atkinson Road and Pannell Drive. The consultation document sent to each property can be seen in appendix C (page 15)
- 3.2 A total of 10 responses were received, with 2 in support of the proposals and 8 against.
- 3.4 It should be considered that this consultation is for the stop infrastructure and not for the extension of the bus route itself which could still be implemented commercially by Stagecoach even with no supporting infrastructure should they wish.
- 3.5 As the consultation is for properties directly affected, it is usually expected that more responses will be against the proposals than are for.
- 3.3 A summary of the main points of the consultation responses can be seen in the table in appendix D (page 19). In order to keep all responses confidential all potentially identifying information has been removed. Instead the individual concerns raised and the number of people who raised them have been reported.

4.0 Financial

- 4.1 The bus stop poles, cases, flags, hard standing areas and bus stop clearways will be financed by S106 funding from the Terlingham development.

4.2 Funding for the two bus shelters will be provided by FHDC and will be added to their existing maintenance contract.

4.2 Though the consultation was on the bus stops themselves and not the bus service, the extension to the bus route will be provided commercially by Stagecoach at no cost to KCC or FHDC

5.0 Legal

5.1 None for FHDC

6.0 Corporate

6.1 None for FHDC

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 Members are asked to consider whether, based on the consultation with directly affected properties, they would support or object to the installation of the bus stops as described.

7.2 KCC officers recommend that, as there are no valid safety concerns that have arisen from the responses to the consultation, the infrastructure should be installed in all three locations.

Contact Officers:

Dan Bruce:

Dan.bruce@kent.gov.uk

Samuel Bassett:

Samuel.bassett@kent.gov.uk