

COMMITTEE: SOUTH EAST **REF NO:**SEAC/18/29
DATE: **13 MARCH 2019**
SUBJECT: **PROPOSED BUS STOP CLEARWAYS**
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HEAD OF SERVICE: **MARTYN FULCHER**

Short description of report content and the decision requested:

This report is regarding proposals to relocate a bus stop on Felixstowe Road and install a bus stop clearway restriction, and to install bus stop clearway restrictions at two bus stops on Nacton Road. It refers to objections that have been made against these proposals. The SE Area Committee is requested to consider the matter, determine the objections and authorise any works accordingly.

List of Appendices included in this report:

- a) *Appendix A – Consultation letters and public notices*
- b) *Appendix B – Consultation plans*
- c) *Appendix C – Objections to proposals*

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This report was prepared after consultation with:

Internal consultees

Helen Pluck, Chief Operating Officer

Shirley Jarlett, Head of People & Governance

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External consultees

The following policies form a context to this report:

(all relevant policies must also be referred to in the body of the report)

Building A Better Ipswich

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(papers relied on to write the report but which are not published and do not contain exempt information)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

OTHER HELPFUL PAPERS

(papers which the report author considers might be helpful – this might include published material)

1. **SE Area Committee Report (ref: SEAC/16/13) – 16th November 2016 – Proposed Changes to Bus Stops – Nacton Road**
- 2.
- 3.

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The Council has a responsibility to provide bus stops in Ipswich and discretionary powers to provide bus stop clearway restrictions, so to ensure that bus passengers can easily and safely board and alight from buses.
- 1.2 The planning permission pertaining to the residential conversion of the former Crown public house on Felixstowe Road includes a condition that requires the developer to provide improvements to the inbound and outbound bus stops that serve the site, in order to promote accessible sustainable transport measures.
- 1.3 It has been agreed with the developer that the provision of raised 'Kassel' style bus stop kerbs with bus stop clearway restrictions would be a sufficient set of improvements, in order that the condition can be discharged. However, the existing outbound bus stop opposite the site, outside 391/393 Felixstowe Road, is adjacent to dropped kerbs on both sides, and as such, in order to prevent the need to remove existing vehicular access to these properties, it is necessary to move this bus stop to an alternative position if raised kerbs are to be provided.
- 1.4 Separate to this, the Council has received a request from Ipswich Buses Ltd asking for the provision of a bus stop clearway restriction at the inbound bus stop outside 176 Nacton Road (in the vicinity of the junction with Hatfield Road) as the bus stop is regularly blocked by parked cars. Officers have ascertained that this is the case and have noted that the outbound bus stop on the opposite side of the road, outside 291 Nacton Road, does not have a bus stop clearway restriction either.
- 1.5 As such, the Council has recently carried out consultations with affected residents on proposals to do the following:
- * Relocate the outbound bus stop outside 391/393 Felixstowe Road to a new position outside 365 Felixstowe Road, install raised kerbs, and install a bus stop clearway restriction in force from 7am to 7pm;
 - * Install raised kerbs and a bus stop clearway restriction in force from 7am to 7pm at the existing inbound bus stop outside 346A to 346D Felixstowe Road (on the site of the former Crown PH) – to which there have not been any objections;
 - * Install a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, at the existing inbound bus stop outside 176 Nacton Road; and
 - * Install a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, at the existing outbound bus stop outside 291 Nacton Road.

- 1.6 The installation of raised bus stop kerbs helps to enable bus passengers to get on/off buses by removing the gap that would usually otherwise occur between the floor of the bus and the kerb. This is important for those passengers who have mobility issues or additional items such as prams or buggies.
- 1.7 Bus stop clearway restrictions make it an offence for vehicles (except buses and certain other vehicles allowed in law) to stop or park at the bus stop during the times at which they are in force. They are shown by a thick yellow line on the carriageway and the installation of a small plate.
- 1.8 The provision of bus stop clearway restrictions is important as without them bus stops can often be blocked by parked vehicles, meaning that buses cannot pull up flush with the kerbs. In some cases, passengers are forced to board or alight from the bus in the middle of the carriageway which is not safe, and for passengers who have physical disabilities could be impossible.
- 1.9 As the proposal for the outbound bus stop on Felixstowe Road involves it being relocated, a public notice was placed on the bus stop in order to consult with affected passengers. Copies of all of the consultation letters and the public notice are attached to this report as Appendix A. Copies of the consultation plans showing the locations and details of the proposals are attached to this report as Appendix B.
- 1.10 In respect of the provision and positioning of bus stops, officers try to ensure that bus stops are approximately equidistant from each other and, in accordance with government guidance, that passengers do not have to walk more than 400 metres to get to or from the bus stop.
- 1.11 Furthermore, it is long established Council practice not to locate bus stops outside the front of residential properties if possible, however, as many bus services operate along residential roads, it is often not possible to meet this objective.
- 1.12 In this instance, the Council has received 5 objections from affected residents or passengers. Copies of the objections are attached at Appendix C.
- 1.13 The purpose of this report is to consider the objections to the proposals, determine how to proceed and authorise any further steps.

2. Details of objections and discussion

First and second objections – relocation of outbound bus stop to 365 Felixstowe Road

2.1 The first and second objections relate to the proposal to relocate the existing outbound bus stop outside 391/393 Felixstowe Road to a new position outside 365 Felixstowe Road, install raised bus stop kerbs, and install a bus stop clearway restriction in force from 7am to 7pm. The objections have been received from the residents of 361 and 363 Felixstowe Road and the principal points of objection are as follows:

(i) Increase in noise (for the residents) as a result of buses drawing up and pulling away from the bus stop. The children of one of the residents have autism and this noise could be distressing and disruptive to sleep;

(ii) Vans are often parked on the opposite side of the road during the day and concern that the road is not wide enough to allow for this and also allow for buses to stop and other traffic to get through;

(iii) The proposed location is close to the junction with Ascot Drive;

(iv) Vehicular access to/from the property will be impeded by buses stopping at the bus stop;

(v) Concern at increase in anti-social behaviour (e.g. litter and damage to boundary wall etc) as a result of waiting bus passengers; and

(vi) Concerns that the proposal would devalue the property.

2.2 Officers comments on the points made in paragraph 2.1 are as follows:

(i) Whilst there would be some increase in noise as a result of buses pulling up and drawing away, this would be limited in comparison to the noise already generated from buses passing the properties as they do now. Furthermore, Ipswich Buses mostly use modern buses on this route and these are quieter than previous models. As this is an outbound bus stop, buses will mostly be stopping only to drop off passengers as there are unlikely to be many passengers boarding buses. It is not thought likely that many passengers will be alighting from buses in this location early in the morning, meaning that buses at this time would go past without stopping. Finally, the objectors properties are set back over 10 metres from the highway.

(ii) The carriageway of this part of Felixstowe Road is approximately 9 metres wide and visibility along the road is excellent. Furthermore, buses on this route only operate every 30 minutes during the day, Monday to Saturday (hourly on Sundays from 31st March 2019), and will only stop at the bus stop to pick up and drop off passengers as

required. As such, and given the comments above regarding this being an outbound bus stop, officers do not consider that there would be any significant traffic management issues as a result of this proposal.

(iii) The proposed location of the bus stop is over 30 metres from the junction with Ascot Drive. As such, officers do not consider that the proposed location of the bus stop is unacceptable on these grounds.

(iv) As referred to in (ii) above, buses only operate every 30 minutes during the day Monday to Saturday (hourly on Sundays from 31st March 2019) and will only stop as needed to pick up or drop off passengers, meaning that in some cases they will not stop at all. As such, in any given hour buses may only be at the bus stop for no more than one minute.

(v) As this is an outbound bus stop, and as the destinations served by outbound buses at this point are primarily residential (i.e. not large employment, shopping or leisure sites), it is thought unlikely that many passengers board buses here, meaning that the probability of anti-social behaviour is much lower as buses are mostly stopping to allow passengers to alight. One of the objectors refers to alleged problems at the bus stop on the opposite side of the road, but that is the inbound bus stop where there is likely to be a higher volume of waiting passengers, as that bus stop is used by passengers going to the town centre.

(vi) Officers are unable to confirm or deny whether this would be the case.

Third and fourth objections – 176 Nacton Road

2.3 The third and fourth objections relate to the proposal to install a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, at the existing inbound bus stop outside 176 Nacton Road. The objections have been received from the residents of 178 and 180 Nacton Road and the principal points of objection are as follows:

(i) Loss of on-street parking, and potential medical implications for child of one of the objectors as a result of not being able to park on street in front of their property;

(ii) The bus stop is not needed as it is close to the previous and next bus stops on this road and is rarely used. The Council proposed to remove this bus stop in 2016;

(iii) Concerns about the safety of passengers when trying to cross the road in this location;

(iv) This bus stop does not have a bus shelter, but both the previous and next bus stops do have a bus shelter so passengers are more likely to use those bus stops; and

(v) A request that if the proposed bus stop clearway restriction is approved, then the Council should fund an extension to the existing dropped crossing of one of the objectors to the entire width of the frontage of their property as compensation for the loss of on-street parking.

2.4 Officers comments on the points made in paragraph 2.3 are as follows:

(i) It is accepted that the provision of a bus stop clearway restriction will reduce the amount of on-street parking. However, there is no right to park a vehicle on the highway, including outside a person's own property, although it is a common concession. In this case it is noted that both of the properties in question have off-street parking available for more than one vehicle. Additionally, there is some on-street unrestricted parking available on the rest of this section of Nacton Road. The proposed bus stop clearway restriction would only cover part of the frontage of 180 Nacton Road.

(ii) Officers accept that this bus stop is close to the previous and next bus stops on this section of Nacton Road and it is correct that as a result of this in 2016 a proposal was made to remove it together with the outbound bus stop on the opposite side of the road outside 291 Nacton Road, as part of a wider consultation regarding bus stops in this area. However, there was an objection to this proposal and the SE Area Committee determined at its meeting of 16th November 2016 (report ref: SEAC/16/13) that both of these bus stops should remain in their current location because:

'...it was not considered appropriate to remove these bus stops as some passengers may have to walk further than is desirable...'

(iii) It is accepted that there is no designated crossing point such as a pedestrian crossing or traffic island in the immediate vicinity of this bus stop (as is the case with many bus stops in other locations). The Council does not have the power to provide this type of facility as this is something that can only be provided by Suffolk County Council (SCC) as the Highway Authority. Passengers could use the previous or next bus stop instead in order to use the crossing facilities that exist at those locations, as one of the objectors suggests.

(iv) It is correct that there is no bus shelter at this bus stop and there are no proposals to provide one. Passengers can choose to use the previous or next bus stop, both of which do have bus shelters, if they wish, as one of the objectors suggests.

(v) The Council is not in a position to do this. Additionally, SCC now have strict criteria for granting approval to extend dropped crossings and it is unlikely that such a request in this location would be approved.

Fifth objection – 291 Nacton Road

2.5 The fifth objection relates to the proposal to install a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, at the existing outbound bus stop outside 291 Nacton Road. The objection has been received from the resident of 291 Nacton Road and the principal points of objection are as follows:

(i) Loss of on-street parking;

(ii) Increased difficulty in ability to sell the property and that the property would be devalued;

(iii) Increase in noise and loss of privacy; and

(iv) The Council proposed to relocate this bus stop in 2016 to a position closer to Murray Road where it would not be located in front of any properties.

2.6 Officers comments on the points made in paragraph 2.5 are as follows:

(i) The same comments apply as in paragraph 2.4 (i). The objector does have vehicular access to the rear of their property.

(ii) Officers are unable to confirm or deny whether this would be the case.

(iii) A bus stop already exists in this location and has done for many years. The proposal subject to consideration at this time is to install a bus stop clearway restriction. As such, there is no change to the number or type of buses that would use this stop or to the positioning of the bus stop itself. The bus stop already has raised kerbs installed and the bus stop clearway restriction would help to ensure that buses could pull up flush with these.

(iv) The same comments apply as in paragraph 2.4 (ii). The bus stop has existed in this location for many years and officers are not aware of any reports of any problems in this respect. As such, officers do not consider that the current location of the bus stop is unacceptable on these grounds.

3. Relevant Policies AND Area Action considerations

3.1 The 'A High Sustainability Environment' priority within the 'Building A Better Ipswich (2017)' Corporate Plan includes the aim to 'Work with partners to reduce pollution and ensure there is a high quality public

transport network'. The provision of bus stop clearway restrictions helps to meet this aim by trying to ensure that bus passengers are able to safely get on and off buses.

- 3.2 It should be noted that the Area Committee is not being asked to provide any funds for these proposed works.

4. Options Considered / Under Consideration

- 4.1 Essentially, in respect of each of those proposals to which there have been objections or representations submitted, there are two main options for the Committee to consider, which will result in either upholding or overruling the objections.

* **Option 1** – to install bus stop clearway restrictions with the times of operation as proposed, including, in the case of the outbound bus stop on Felixstowe Road, relocating the bus stop to a new position outside 365 Felixstowe Road.

* **Option 2** – to uphold the objection(s) and not install bus stop clearway restrictions with the times of operation as proposed, and to leave the Felixstowe Road outbound bus stop in its current position.

- 4.2 In each case, the officer recommendation is to proceed with Option 1.
- 4.3 In respect of the proposal to relocate the outbound bus stop on Felixstowe Road, this is because Option 2 would result in leaving the bus stop where it is and not installing the proposed raised kerbs. As the existing bus stop is adjacent to dropped kerbs on both sides, this would mean that bus passengers would not get the benefit of a kerb to reduce the gap between the ground and the floor of a bus.
- 4.4 In respect of the proposed bus stop clearway restrictions at the two bus stops on Nacton Road, this is because Option 2 would result in these bus stops continuing to be blocked by parked vehicles, meaning that bus passengers, especially those with mobility problems, would find it difficult or in some cases impossible to safely board and alight buses. Passengers may be forced to attempt to board or alight buses in the carriageway, which is not safe.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Affected residents and IBC/SCC ward councillors have been consulted on the proposals, as have Ipswich Buses Ltd, First Eastern Counties Buses Ltd (in respect of the Nacton Road bus stop proposals) and the Suffolk Constabulary. Copies of the consultation letters and plans are attached to this report as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively. Copies of the objections and representations received are attached to this report as Appendix C.

6. Risk Management

Risk Description	Consequence of risk	Risk Controls	Probability of risk occurring taking account of controls (scale 1-6) 1 – almost impossible 6 – very high	Impact of risk, if it occurred taking account of actions (scale 1 – negligible; 4 – catastrophic)	Actions to mitigate risk
Affected residents complain that they have not been properly consulted on the proposals.	The Council could be seen to be introducing changes without having carried out a proper consultation.	A letter with plan was delivered or posted to all affected residents giving them 21 days to object in writing.	2	2	As per risk controls.

7. Environmental Impact Assessment

7.1 There are no environmental impacts as a result of this report.

8. Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.1 The provision of a bus stop clearway restriction helps to keep the bus stop free from parked vehicles and so helps bus drivers pull the bus up flush with the kerb. This helps those people with mobility difficulties get on and off buses more easily and safely.

8.2 Other than these points, there are not considered to be any equality or diversity implications as a result of this report.

9. Financial Considerations

9.1 There are no costs attributed to the Area Committee as a result of these proposals. The proposed changes to the two bus stops on Felixstowe Road will be funded by the developer of the former Crown PH. The proposed bus stop clearway restrictions at the two bus stops on Nacton Road are estimated to cost under £1,000 and, if approved, this cost will be met from the Council's existing public transport budgets.

10. Legal Considerations

10.1 The Council has the power to provide bus stops and bus stop clearway restrictions. This power derives from an agency agreement with SCC that permits the Council to exercise SCC's powers contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Signs Regulations

and General Directions 2016 with their consent. SCC approval for the proposed bus stop clearway restrictions has been obtained. In respect of the proposed works for the Felixstowe Road bus stops, either SCC or the developer will carry out the works (subject to SCC approval).

11. Performance Monitoring

- 11.1 To ensure that the Committee's decision is communicated to the objectors by 10th April 2019.

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 The provision of raised bus stop kerbs and bus stop clearway restrictions is important to ensure that bus passengers, especially those with mobility impairments, can easily and safely board and alight buses.
- 12.2 The objections received to the proposals in this report have been given proper consideration. The report provides officers comments on the objections and why the reasons for accepting them are considered to be outweighed by the reasons for implementing the proposals as drafted. The Committee is asked to determine the objections accordingly.

13. Recommendations

- 13.1 That the existing outbound bus stop outside 391/393 Felixstowe Road be relocated to a new position outside 365 Felixstowe Road and that a bus stop clearway restriction be installed with the times of its operation being from 7am to 7pm, in accordance with the plan shown in Appendix B of this report.**

Reason: In order to be able to provide raised bus stop kerbs for outbound buses in this vicinity and in order to ensure that bus passengers can easily and safely board and alight from buses.

- 13.2 That a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, be installed at the inbound bus stop outside 176 Nacton Road, in accordance with the plan shown in Appendix B of this report.**

Reason: To ensure that bus passengers can easily and safely board and alight from buses.

- 13.3 That a bus stop clearway restriction, in force at all times, be installed at the outbound bus stop outside 291 Nacton Road, in accordance with the plan shown in Appendix B of this report.**

Reason: To ensure that bus passengers can easily and safely board and alight from buses.