

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 12 September 2019

Bus Stop Removal, Liberton Road at Goods Corner

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	15/16
Council Commitments	19

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - 1.1.1 notes the contents of this report; and
 - 1.1.2 approves the recommendation that the Goods Corner bus stop is not reinstated and that consultation is carried out with local residents on the proposal to relocate the stop closest to Braidburn Court which is a few metres to the north, to create more regular spacing at this location.

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Executive Director of Place

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Bus Stop Removal, Liberton Road at Goods Corner

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As part of the Council's strategy to improve conditions for Public Transport, where physical changes are being made to the road network, the opportunity is taken to review the spacing of bus stops at that time.
- 2.2 Following the construction of a new development at the corner of Liberton Road and Gilmerton Road a decision was taken not to reinstate the bus stop at this location.

3. Background

- 3.1 During development works at Goods Corner, which are at the junction with Liberton Road and Gilmerton Road, the bus stop was removed for approximately two years as works were ongoing.
- 3.2 At the conclusion of the development works, a decision was taken not to reinstate this bus stop as it was only 230 metres from the preceding bus stop and the bus operators using this stop were supportive of this action.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Edinburgh has more bus stops than other comparable cities. Although this is partly due to its comprehensive bus network, the spacing between stops has reduced over many years as a result of new requests, changes to land use and existing stops seldom being removed or rationalised with new.
- 4.2 Lothian Buses are concerned about their ability to maintain reliable services during busy periods and often have to dispatch additional buses to fill this timetable gap. These additional buses can affect the profitability of routes and there is justifiable concern that either headway will be increased or routes will be cancelled or curtailed.
- 4.3 National guidance states that 400m is the optimum distance between bus stops, providing a reasonable balance of bus service efficiency and passenger accessibility.

- 4.4 Theoretical savings for bus companies of at least 20 seconds per stop removed is supported by actual savings achieved elsewhere in UK where stops have been rationalised. This may not seem significant but a conservative review of the stops on the Service 16 route, for example, would produce a five minute reduction on end to end journey time which would result in one less bus to operate the route and this represents a significant saving to a bus operator.
- 4.5 During the development works at Goods Corner, the bus stop was removed for approximately two years. At the end of the development works a decision was taken not to reinstate this stop as it was only 230 meters from the interchange stop at Lady Road.
- 4.6 Local residents, mainly from Mid Liberton, have expressed their disappointment that this stop is not being reinstated and a petition was submitted to the Transport and Environment Committee on [20 June 2019](#) where it was agreed that the Convener and officers would meet with the petitioners to discuss the issue specific to users of the former bus stop at Goods Corner.
- 4.7 The Convener and the Council's Public Transport Manager met with local residents on the 20 August to discuss their specific concerns. These relate mainly to the increased distance that residents need to walk to alternative bus stops. They also do not consider the path which exits the south side of the estate is suitable for accessing the adjacent bus stop as the path is poorly lit, it is steep and there are no handrails.
- 4.8 This path is adopted and maintained by the Council. The existing Street Lighting is due to be upgraded as part of the Energy Efficient Street Lighting Programme and is programmed to be renewed in November 2020. Currently there are two lighting columns on this path, but the most southerly one is shaded by trees from the adjacent garden.
- 4.9 With the removal of the stop at Goods Corner, the spacing to the next stop along Liberton Road is approximately 510 meters. Whilst the ideal spacing of bus stops on bus routes is quoted as 400 metres, the crucial distance is how far passengers will have to travel from the point that they join that corridor. Therefore, the maximum distance passengers should be required to walk is 200 metres to a bus stop when joining a bus route.
- 4.10 The bus stop to the south of the entrance to Mid Liberton is 195 metres from the entrance to this estate so it is within the recommended distance. If passengers are comfortable with using the south footpath entrance to Mid Liberton, the bus stop is located 10 metres from that access point.
- 4.11 This path is approximately 67 metres long which gets steeper over the last 20 metres of the path. On this remaining section, the grade varies between 6% and 8%. Inclusive Mobility notes that an 8% slope is the maximum that should be provided.

- 4.12 Whilst it is recognised that some residents will have an increased walking distance to reach a bus stop, this is an unavoidable consequence of rationalisation and there is a balance to be sought between the distance that bus passengers are asked to walk against ability to maintain a reliable bus service.
- 4.13 There are three potential outcomes to the current situation:
- 4.13.1 reinstate the bus stop at Goods Corner which, whilst this is what the petition has requested, it does create a precedent that will undermine the rationalisation process on other corridors, unless there are extenuating circumstances at this location, which are not currently apparent;
 - 4.13.2 leave the bus stops on this corridor as they currently are and do no further work; or
 - 4.13.3 investigate moving the bus stop outside Braidburn Court Retirement Village to a new position to the north. A move of approximately 100 metres will create spacing of approximately 400 metres with adjacent stops. This brings the stop closer to the main entrance of Mid Liberton but does increase the distance from Braidburn Court.
- 4.14 As part of the Goods Corner development, there was a Minute of Agreement between the City of Edinburgh Council and the Developers that included a Section 75 Transport Contribution of £5,000 to go towards the improvement of public transport infrastructure in the vicinity of that development.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 To carry out local consultation on the proposed bus stop relocation outside Braidburn Court Retirement Village.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The cost of the recommended measures would be met from the Minute of Agreement between the Council and the Developers that included a Section 75 Transport Contribution of £5,000 to go towards the improvement of public transport infrastructure in the vicinity of that development.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 To be assessed through local consultation.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Detailed comments received from Lothian Buses on measures that could be implemented to improve their journey times and reliability.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 None.