

Transport for London



Your ref: ES/SGE
Our ref: TfL/ BPT/ RDT/LD.1

Sue Harris
Head of Street Scene and Waste
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden, Surrey
SM4 5DX

Transport for London
Surface Transport
Windsor House
42 - 50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL
Phone 020 7222 5600
www.tfl.gov.uk

8th September 2008

Dear Ms Harris,

Proposed Removal of Wimbledon Hill Road – Bus Lane

Thank you for your Traffic Order inviting comment on the Notice of Proposal to remove the bus lane on Wimbledon Hill Road.

Transport for London would like to register an objection to this Proposal.

As you are aware, there are currently three bus routes (93, 493 and 200) using this bus lane with a combined frequency of 23 buses per hour and this is likely to increase in the future. In terms of people movement this bus lane is helping to improve journey times and bus reliability for over 4923 passengers during the AM, Inter and PM Peaks.

Transport for London acknowledges receipt of the JMP Wimbledon Town Centre Traffic Management Impact Assessment Report (received 28th August 2008). However, we do have some concern regarding the robustness of the modelling and would therefore appreciate if you could accept this letter as an interim response to allow us more time to carry out a thorough review of the report to support our objection.

I would also welcome a short meeting with yourself to discuss this issue and also the overall Bus Priority & Bus Stop Accessibility programme and will be in contact with you to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Lester
Head of Responsive Delivery, Bus Priority Team
Transport for London

cc: to Tony K + Wakeed +
return original to me please.

Transport for London



Your ref: ES/SM/SGE
Our ref: TfL/ BPT/ RDT/SL



Sue Harris
Head of Street Scene and Waste
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden, Surrey
SM4 5DX

24 SEP 2008

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

Transport for London
Surface Transport

Windsor House
42 - 50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL

Phone 020 7222 5600
www.tfl.gov.uk

19th September 2008

Dear Ms Harris

**Re: London Borough of Merton (Wimbledon Hill Road Bus Lane) (No.*)
Order 200X**

With reference to my letter of 8th September, I'm further writing to you with the details of our objection to the London Borough of Merton's proposals to remove Wimbledon Hill Road bus lane (ref. attachments- TfL letter of 8th September 2008 and Peter Brett Associates-PBA's Review Report of 16th September 2008).

Transport for London objects to the Proposal on the following grounds:

- TfL has concerns on the robustness/validity of the VISUM model prepared by the Borough's consultants.
- A key deficiency appears to be that the traffic flow on Wimbledon Hill Road was obtained from a one day survey on the 13th October 2004 and that this value is not reflected within the 2006 VISUM model. The difference between the observed and modelled flow being some 300PCUs.
- The model only provides information for weekday peak periods, but TfL's transport consultants (Peter Brett Associates) have observed evidence of significant congestion on Saturdays.

Scott Lester

Head of Responsive Delivery Team, Bus Priority Team
Transport for London

- The modelling exercise has not considered the effect of retaining the bus lane with the proposed two lane approach to the Wimbledon Hill / Woodside junction (ref. attached PBA Review Report of 16th September 2008 on JMP's VISUM Study of Wimbledon Town Centre).

In regard to bus flows and person movement, Wimbledon Hill Road is served by over 23 buses an hour and carrying over 4700 passengers a day. It is a key bus corridor and the 24 hour bus lane plays a vital role in maximising highway capacity for people movement in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The section of Wimbledon Hill Road is a cycle route marked on the London Cycle Guide maps and is on the planned London Cycle Network Plus (LCN+) to which the borough is committed in their Local Implementation Plan (LIP). It should be noted that the bus lane is the current provision for cyclists, and also provides assistance to school buses, taxis and the emergency services.

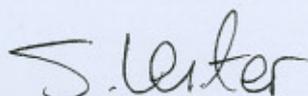
On the rat-running issue, there is no evidence to prove that the removal of the bus lane will encourage traffic to use Wimbledon Hill Road in congested conditions. Indeed the bus lane would provide mitigation against any increase in congestion arising from a reduction in rat-running through adjacent residential areas.

Removal of the bus lane will be contrary to Merton's Transport Objectives, set out in section 3.6 of the Boroughs Local Implementation Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11, which correspond to the Mayors transport priority areas.

TfL respectfully requests Merton Council retain the existing Wimbledon Hill Road bus lane, pending implementation of the proposed Belvedere and Woodside traffic management measures. Merton Council should continue to monitor the impact of these measures on Wimbledon Hill Road's capacity to absorb the predicted increase in traffic movements. Any future decision to remove or amend the bus lane should be based on robust evidence of a sustained decrease, or significant increase, in queue lengths from the Woodside junction stopline.

I look forward to meeting you to discuss this further at our scheduled meeting of 2nd October 2008 with a view of reaching an amicable solution agreeable to both parties.

Yours sincerely



Scott Lester

Head of Responsive Delivery Team, Bus Priority Team
Transport for London

**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

CENTRAL OPERATIONS

Mr. Simon Edwards,
London Borough of Merton,
Merton Civic Centre,
London Road,
Morden,
Surrey,
SM4 5DX

CO15 - Traffic

15 Deer Park Road
Merton
SW19 3YX

Telephone: 020 8247 4713
Facsimile: 020 8247 4701
Email: RichardN.Parr@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk

Your ref: ES/SM/SGE
Our ref:

17th September 2008

Dear Simon,

Re: BUS LANE (REVOCAION NO. *) ORDER 200*; (WAITING AND LOADING RESTRICTION) (W1) (NO. *) ORDER 200*; (PARKING PLACES) (3F) ORDER 200*

Thank you for your letter of 28th August and the accompanying plans in relation to the above-mentioned proposals.

Police have no objection to the proposal in St. George's Road to protect the turning circle with double yellow lines; indeed we would support it as a sensible and necessary use of such restrictions.

Police would object to the proposal in Wycliffe Road.

Police consider that the proximity of the remaining bays to the crossover and the layout of the other parking bays which effectively reduce the carriageway to a single running lane does not guarantee sufficient vision to emerge safely if all the bays are parked up.

In such cases, police are of the opinion that there is far less visibility available to a driver emerging from the driveway than there would be to a parallel parked driver pulling away from the kerb at the same point, and therefore the new manoeuvre is inherently less safe than the existing one. On that basis we are bound to object. Were the bay removal to be continued to allow sufficient vision to allow vehicles to emerge safely then police would be happy to remove our objection.

Police would object to the proposal to remove the bus lane.

Police understand that the bus lane was introduced, in accordance with other measures, to address traffic problems within Wimbledon Town Centre. To remove the bus lane now without addressing any other aspects of the scheme that were introduced at the same time may well have an adverse effect on traffic in the town centre.

The statement of reasons provided with this consultation states that the bus lane is being removed "to facilitate traffic flows". Which traffic flows will it facilitate? Certainly not the buses, who will undoubtedly suffer delays and reliability issues as a result. Certainly not the cyclists who will lose the facility they currently have.

Police consider that at this stage there is insufficient detail available to us to accurately assess the reasons behind the removal of the bus lane, but based on the statement of reasons we do not believe it to be justified. If more information is available then we would be happy to receive it and reconsider our position in light of that, but as things stand we fail to see the benefits of the scheme, and therefore we would object to the proposed removal of the bus lane.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**Richard Parr, Pc 230TD.
Traffic Management Unit @ TDV.**

Simon,

Thankyou for the new documentation relating to this proposal. I have also had the opportunity to discuss the scheme with Waheed.

Whilst police understand the thinking behind trying to encourage traffic to use Wimbledon Hill Road and Alexandra Road to access other parts of the borough, which will be restricted when the Belvedere Grove route is restricted, police remain unconvinced of the merits of the scheme. We believe that it will be easier for traffic inconvenienced by the Belvedere Grove closure to use Church Road or other roads of off Parkside to access these areas, and therefore it will not use the proposed facility.

Despite the ability to queue up in two lanes at the Woodside ATS, we believe the flow through the town will still be effectively in one lane, once consideration is given to the existing right turn into Worple Road, the bus stop, and the proposed single lane discharge through the town centre, so whilst the end of the queue is relocated, we do not believe traffic will actually flow any better. There will be undoubted inconvenience to buses and cyclists, two forms of transport that should be encouraged where possible and which currently are. We also have concerns about the cycle facilities as drawn throughout the scheme, and the proposed layout for traffic exiting Wimbledon Bridge into Wimbledon Hill Road. We would also question the legality of the box junction as drawn at Worple Road.

In view of these concerns, we would retain our objection to the proposal as it stands.

Regards,

Richard.

Richard Parr, Pc 230TD.
Traffic Management Unit @ TDV.
Tel. 020 8247 4713 (34713)
Fax. 020 8247 4701 (34701)
E-mail; RichardN.Parr@met.police.uk



Our Ref: Merton
Your Ref: 2008ES/SM/SGE

15 September 2008

Simon Edwards
Head of Street Scene & Waste
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
MORDEN SM4 5DX

Dear Mr Edwards,

Removal of bus lane – Wimbledon Hill Road, SW19

Thank you for your letter dated 28 August 2008 informing London TravelWatch of this proposal and inviting our views. I am grateful for the invitation to comment.

London TravelWatch is the statutory watchdog representing transport users in and around London.

London TravelWatch supports the use of bus lanes as an effective method of ameliorating the effect of traffic congestion on bus services and their passengers. Bus lanes have contributed, as part of the London Bus Priority Network (LBPN), to the improvement in bus service reliability and performance across London. Bus priority is vital if buses are to be an attractive alternative for travel in London.

This particular section of bus lane is used by bus routes 93, 200 and 493, which operate at a combined frequency of 23 buses an hour. We understand 5000 passengers benefit from this bus lane every day. It is very disappointing that Merton are proposing to remove this part of the LBPN.

There is no explanation in your letter as to why this is being proposed.

Accordingly, London TravelWatch objects to this proposal.

Can you also keep us appraised of the process of your considering our objection and please tell us if there are any fora at which we can explain our views on this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vincent Stops".

Vincent Stops
Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer
Direct dial 0207 726 9956

Waheed Alam

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 September 2008 00:00
To: Waheed Alam; Simon Edwards
Cc: Pete Thomas; Nick Greenwood; Councillor William Brierty
Subject: RE: Wimbledon Hill bus lane consultation

Dear Simon & Waheed

Merton Cycling Campaign objects to the proposed removal of the Wimbledon Hill bus lane primarily on the following road safety grounds:

- the removal of a safe haven for cyclists conflicts with TfL, LBM and MCC aims to provide a safer environment for cycling;
- it will make conditions more hazardous for pedestrians, giving them three heavily-trafficked lanes to cross instead of two;
- it will bring a heavily trafficked lane much closer to the footway resulting in further increased danger to pedestrians;
- it is a steep downhill section so two lanes of traffic is likely to result in risky overtaking and speeding, just as traffic enters the 20mph central Wimbledon area, heavily thronged with vulnerable road users.

MCC also notes that:

- more space for private motor traffic will result inevitably in more private motor traffic, and consequently more road danger, higher air pollution, greater congestion, and rising CO2 levels;
- heavily trafficked lane closer to the footway will result in pedestrians exposed to higher noise and pollution levels;
- it is disingenuous to suggest that the removal of the bus lane will improve the flow of traffic - it certainly won't improve the flow of bus traffic or cycle traffic;
- only private motor vehicle traffic will benefit from this scheme - in the short term;
- in the long term, as noted above, more private motor traffic will be induced by making more roadspace available to cars.

If the scheme does go ahead despite MCC objections above, please note:

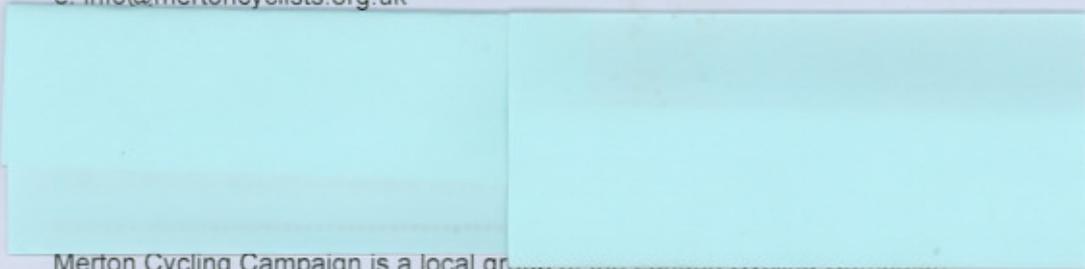
- the proposed new 'left turn only lane' from Wimbledon Hill into Alexandra Road shows a minimal (between the lanes) lead-in cycle lane to the Advanced Stop Line which may be just OK when traffic is on a red light. However when cyclists are part of moving traffic through these lights it will not be easy for cyclists, who want to go straight on, to take the position away from the now prescribed left turn. This makes it even more important that the traffic proceeds at the supposed 20 miles an hour. Therefore it should be an essential part of this proposal that a proper and statutory 20mph 'gateway' is installed at the bottom of Wimbledon Hill, with proper signs on both sides of the road, so that everything possible is done to instil 20mph into the minds of motorists and reduce the risks to vulnerable road users;
- MCC supports the proposed entry into Belvedere Grove for emergency vehicles only, provided contra-flow cycle provision can be included in the scheme. This would help to make local journeys around the village more convenient by bike than by car.

In summary, the proposed short-term improvement for private car use will be at the expense of bus users, cycle traffic and pedestrians. Buses, bikes and walking are much more space-efficient and less polluting modes than the private car. This road leads directly to Wimbledon town centre and the last thing Merton should be doing is encouraging more people to make short journeys by car. In a congested urban environment, how can there be any justification to re-allocate roadspace in favour of one unsustainable mode against three sustainable modes?

Richard Evans

06/10/2008

Merton Cycling Campaign
e: info@mertoncyclists.org.uk



Merton Cycling Campaign is a local group of the London Cycling Campaign which works to improve cycling in London and also provides services to its members, including:

- * Free third party insurance
- * Discounts in lots of London bike shops
- * Discounted theft insurance
- * Free cycle-friendly legal advice
- * Free London Cyclist magazine
- * Leisure rides, social events and campaigns

FREE MONTH OF MEMBERSHIP WHEN YOU PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

London Cycling Campaign
2 Newhams Row
Off Bermondsey St
London
SE1 3UZ

020 7234 9310

<http://www.lcc.org.uk>

London Cycling Campaign is a charitable company limited by guarantee (registered number 1766411, registered charity number 1115789)

28 August 2008

Environment and Regeneration Department
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM45DX

Your ref: ES/SGE

Dear Sirs

Bus Lane, Wimbledon Hill Road

I was very pleased to see that it is proposed to remove the bus lane on Wimbledon Hill Road. When this was installed it was said to be an experiment and it is an experiment that has not worked. Whilst it is important to avoid unnecessary delays on bus routes it is also important to keep distributor roads as free flowing as possible. In this case the build up of traffic in the single lane remaining has resulted in the frequent backing up of east-bound traffic, encouraging many road users to divert through local residential roads such as the Belvederes and Ridgway Place.

One thing that might be considered is to retain two lanes of traffic down the Hill and one up because although there is often a build up of traffic entering the town centre this seldom occurs with traffic leaving the town centre. Another problem is the traffic island at the foot of the Hill by Woodside. If this were removed there could be two lanes of traffic right through the town centre.

The only problem then remaining would be the expensive gyratory system installed when the Centre Court shopping centre was built. As the Civic Trust pointed out, when it carried out its survey of Wimbledon Town Centre, this serves no useful purpose other than to feed cars into the Centre Court car park. The Broadway is the same width along its length and there is no point in diverting traffic around Hartfield Road when it could easily continue in a straight line.

Yours faithfully

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

17 SEP 2008

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020-8946 2467

Bus Lane Revocation proposal: Wimbledon Hill Road: ES/SGE

Heur Jic

I refer to the advertisement of this proposal dated 28 August. I would like to register my **objection** to this proposal on the following grounds:-

Abolition will not prevent congestion

- Even if traffic surveys etc have shown congestion in Wimbledon Hill Road, it is not the bus lane that is the cause but the bottleneck of traffic into one lane for the traffic lights at Woodside/Mansell Road, followed by the right turn facility for turns into Worple Road which further constricts traffic flow.

Bus lane causes rat-running in neighbouring streets

- There are many other ways to close off rat-running through eg selective barring of road ends (eg the Quicks Road area); banning of turns etc. It is excess traffic and selfish drivers that cause rat-running, not bus passengers.

Abolition will encourage car use by slowing buses

- The bus lane allows bus users to pass faster through congestion – removal of the lane will cause substantially longer delay to bus users. This will discourage bus use and stimulate car usage leading to extra congestion.

This is a sledgehammer to crack a nut – alternatives to abolition

- You should look at alternatives to total abolition of the bus lane so as to ameliorate any marginal effects it may have in terms of crowding the mini-roundabout with Ridgway/Belvedere Road. Eg

a) Limiting the time of operation of the bus lane. Almost uniquely in the borough, the lane operates 24 all day, every day. Why not limit its use to (say) rush hours?

b) Limiting the length of the bus lane. By cutting its length approximately in half (from 61 to 81 Wimbledon Hill Road, and abolishing the section north of 81 Wimbledon Hill Road to Draxmont), some benefit of the bus lane would be preserved and the "car capacity" of Wimbledon Hill Road would be increased.

Public policy/environmental effects of abolition

- Abolition will indicate that the Council is slackening its commitment to the promotion of public transport and provides a precedent for other abolitions. Travellers may conclude that, because they face delay in bus travel, they might as well travel by car instead. The borough's roads are not sufficient to accommodate more traffic; nor do we want more vehicle pollution.

Wimbledon Hill

Dear Mr Edwards,

I object to the closure of this bus lane on the grounds that:-

no informed assessment appears to have been made of the comparative cost of maintaining the highway as it is to the cost of maintaining it as proposed; this is surely a fundamental and essential requirement both of Merton's electorate, and good financial governance.

no independently audited risk assessment has been made of the impact of the proposed traffic changes on the most vulnerable public highway users; this is surely a fundamental and essential requirement both of Merton's electorate, and good financial governance.

the closure can not have been planned in the light and spirit of the policy of encouraging the use of sustainable methods of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport advocated by Merton; it smacks of an ambiguity of standards.