

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
 Minutes of a meeting held on 23 January 2013

Present	Cllr SM Reed (chair) Cllr MJ Kelly Cllr MM Rahman Cllr MP Robinson Cllr S Robinson
Apologies	Cllr A Elliott Cllr P Carter
In attendance	Cllr JL Duckworth Cllr SE Thorpe Mr Brian McGough SDC

Cllr Reed welcomed Mr Brian McGough SDC to the meeting.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO NAILSWORTH BUS STATION

Mr McGough gave background details on the rationale behind SDC’s proposals and presented various plans, explaining that all of which were designed to increase pedestrian safety. He explained that SDC was obligated to redesign the bus station, having commissioned surveys of the location from a firm of consultants and from ROSPA in the light of a fatality which had occurred in a bus station in another part of the country, where it was understood that a bus had over-shot the kerb. A detailed scheme (plan 2307/11) had been produced in 2010, at an estimated cost of £30,000. This scheme involved the reduction of the existing bus bays from three to two, with the realignment of the bays in order to avoid the necessity for buses to reverse, and the resurfacing of pedestrian walkways to enhance the street scene and increase pedestrian safety. This plan had, however, been kept on hold whilst an alternative option was drawn up, (plans 2307/15 and 2307/16) involving the creation of two bus bays in the existing parking area opposite The Passage to India restaurant in Old Market, with the existing bus station being used as a drive-through for buses, retaining the parking spaces.

A detailed discussion of the various options ensued. Councillors were not convinced of the necessity for any changes to the existing layout of the bus station. As far as they were aware, there had been no accidents resulting from buses reversing out of the bays. They were unimpressed with the proposal to relocate the bus bays to Old Market and use the bus station as a drive-through, as this would create two distinctive areas of bus movement, which some councillors felt could reduce rather than increase pedestrian safety. Councillors noted that both schemes would result in a net loss of parking spaces in the town and were strongly opposed to any reduction in the existing 24 free parking spaces in Old Market. They pointed out that the bus station was well used by coaches and were concerned that any reduction in the existing number of bays would compromise this use. Additionally they were of the view that, as the demand for bus travel could increase in the future, it would be vital to ensure the design of the bus station space would be sufficiently flexible to accommodate increasing bus traffic. Councillors also wished to be reassured that any alterations to the bus station would allow for the area to retain its use as a ‘Town Square’ for events such as Nailsworth Festival Saturday and the Chistkindl Evening. In response to a question from Cllr Reed, Mr McGough confirmed that SDC was not

currently in dialogue with GCC regarding the County's long term sustainable transport policy, though he acknowledged that such a dialogue could be desirable.

Cllr S Robinson presented an idea put forward by Cllr Elliott, who was unable to be present, which had bus bays located diagonally in the road where cars currently parked, with car parking relocated to the current bus bays. Whilst the idea was attractive, it was not considered feasible as the available turning circle would be too tight for buses to negotiate.

There was some discussion of various ways to improve passenger safety within the existing bus station layout. Cllr M Robinson had noted that modern buses and coaches were fitted with 'talking reverse' systems and wondered if this facility in itself could address the perceived problem of pedestrian danger from reversing buses. However, Mr McGough confirmed that, although SDC owned the bus station, it had no powers to insist that bus and coach companies must use vehicles fitted with such systems. Cllr Kelly suggested that a scheme of clearly defined pedestrian routes through the bus station, aided by dropped kerbs, would be highly desirable and would, of itself, increase pedestrian safety. Mr McGough cited examples of 'raised island' arrangements which could create a clear separation between pedestrians and buses. However, he understood that this type of arrangement was more appropriate for larger bus stations.

The Clerk suggested that the visual aspect of the bus station could be enhanced by the removal of the wall between the bus station and the stream and its replacement with railings. This would make it more feasible for passengers to use the seats by the stream whilst waiting for buses, as they would have a clear view of the bus bays. Mr McGough confirmed that the wall in question belonged to SDC and that this was something which could be considered in due course as part of a bus station enhancement scheme.

After further discussion, the following recommendations for full council were agreed:

- 1. NTC would prefer the retention of the existing layout of the bus station, including the car parking spaces, but would support appropriate steps to improve aesthetics and to manage any risk to pedestrians, such as improved signage, clearer pedestrian routes and ongoing monitoring.**
- 2. NTC would not support any scheme which resulted in the loss of the 24 free parking spaces in Old Market.**
- 3. If SDC was required to pursue one of its proposed schemes, NTC's preference would be for Plan 2307/11 with the proviso that it be adapted to incorporate 3 bus bays rather than 2, and that the bus shelters be re-sited and improved to enable passengers to face the buses when seated.**

Mr McGough agreed to report the Council's preferences to SDC and to provide feedback on any further developments to NTC.

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Chair

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Date