

**Transport Environment and Leisure Services**

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My reference:

Your reference:

Please ask for: Antoneta Horbury

Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter of 11 January 2010 regarding the proposals for the final routings of bus services around South Kensington and the proposed locations of the stops and stands.

As you know the Council recently completed Stage One of the Exhibition Road scheme, making changes to the road layout and traffic flow around South Kensington Underground station. As a result of these changes there have also been some changes to the bus routes and stops and stands. We appreciate that TfL has already held preliminary discussions with the Council and residents about the proposals outlined in this consultation and are pleased that some modifications have been made to the initial proposals in response to concerns already raised. We believe these modifications have largely addressed the main issues raised by both the Council and residents.

Additionally, we appreciate that this consultation has involved significantly more work and engagement than most TfL bus consultations; for example, TfL held a meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January to further discuss the consultation with residents of Cromwell Place and attended the Exhibition Road Community Involvement Group meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. We are grateful to TfL officers for the time and effort they have put into engaging with residents in the South Kensington area.

**Our comments**

We agree with the proposed route for the 430 however we would like the bus to stand outside the V&A Museum on Cromwell Gardens (stop 9, on page 5 of the consultation

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material) rather than on Cromwell Place (stop 2). We have been discussing final plans for this option with TfL colleagues and believe it will be possible to locate a stand here. We would also be happy to work with TfL to explore extending the 430 so that it did not terminate in the South Kensington area. Whilst this would not remove the need for a stop for the 430, it would remove the need for a stand.

We would like the route C1 to travel in both directions along Thurloe Place rather than the northbound service using Cromwell Place. As the C1 already travels in both directions along Thurloe Place, and has done for many years, we believe this can successfully continue.

We believe that this consultation could have contained more options than the two given above, namely the location of the V&A stand and the routing of the C1. For example, we would like to see fewer buses stop at the bus stop outside the NatWest bank (stop 3) on Cromwell Place. We have provided some options below, which would reduce the number of buses stopping outside the NatWest bank:

- We would prefer the 74 to use the Harrington Road bus stop (stop 4) instead of the NatWest stop (stop 3). Although this would mean that one of the routes going towards Knightsbridge served a different stop, the NatWest stop would still have 24 buses an hour heading towards Knightsbridge (one every 2½ minutes) and adding another service (the 74) would reduce the average wait by around 35 seconds. We do not think this will be discernible to most passengers and the NatWest stop would still be the obvious stop for passengers wanting to go towards Central London. Although, the 74 would lose direct interchange with other routes serving the NatWest stop, we do not believe that this loss of interchange is that significant as the Harrington Road bus stop is round the corner from the NatWest bus stop and no roads need to be crossed to move between the two stops. Interchange with other routes is also possible at stops between South Kensington and Knightsbridge. The Harrington Road bus stop (stop 4) could be moved further forward, nearer to the junction of Cromwell Place, to ensure that there is sufficient space for extra buses to stop at this stop;
- We would prefer that the last stop for the route 345 be outside Carluccio's (stop NC on Onslow Square), rather than outside the NatWest (stop 3), as it was before the changes to the road layout around South Kensington Station were made. Although this would mean that the 345 would not have an immediate interchange with the 74 and C1 (as it would not stop at the Natwest stop), we assume that the number of people who interchange between the 345 and the 74 and C1 is small, and so we support this option. We would also like the 345 stand (stop 1) to be an alighting point for passengers, in addition to being a pick-up point;
- If no other means of reducing the number of buses serving the Natwest stop (stop 3) are feasible, then TfL should investigate whether the 14 and 414 (which currently stop at the Carluccio's stop) could skip the Natwest stop as, from general observation, most passengers get off at the Carluccio stop for the station and interchange is possible between these routes and the 74 and C1 at stops between South Kensington and Knightsbridge.

We are disappointed that TfL refused our request to share bus loading and interchange data for stops in the South Kensington area which would have given us, and other respondents, more information on which to base our decisions. We ask that in all future consultations, TfL make all relevant data publically available from the outset of the consultation. For example, it would have been useful to know in this consultation the number of passengers who interchange between the different routes and the different stops, since some of our comments are made with the assumption that the number of people affected by our proposed changes is small.

We would also like to make the following, more general, points:

- We are happy with the proposed location of the 70 stand (stop 5), the 345 stand (stop 1) and the westbound bus stops (stops 6 and 7) near the Cheese shop. However, there is considerable congestion around the bus stops near the cheese shop. We suggest moving the bus stops forward slightly, towards the traffic lights, so that buses are less likely to queue around the corner.
- We would like all the shelters in the area to be of the same (new) design. The current shelter outside the Natwest bank is of an older design which now looks very much out of place with the new, cleaner, streetscape.
- We would like all bus stop and bus stand flags to be fixed to lamp columns where possible. We would also like to install bins to any flag poles erected to reduce the amount of street furniture in the area.
- We would like there to be leaflets at South Kensington Station which visitors can take away which provides a map of the general area and which clearly indicates which routes stop and which stops, as is common in other stations in the Royal Borough such as High Street Kensington.
- We recommend that there is a large map in the station concourse area that showed the routes served at each stop.

We would be grateful if you would please let us know when you have made a decision as to where the stops and stands should go as we will need to consider what traffic management changes are required and advertise these accordingly as part of the traffic management order process.

We look forward to hearing the results of the consultation.

Yours sincerely

Antoneta Horbury  
**Transport Policy Manager**