

**SUDBURY STEERING GROUP MEETING
THE ASSEMBLY ROOM, SUDBURY TOWN HALL
FRIDAY 15 JANUARY 2016
MAIN NOTES AND ACTIONS**

In Attendance

Steering Group Members:

Simon Barrett (SBa) - BDC Ward Member
David Holland (DH) – BDC Ward Member
Nigel Bennett (NB) – Sudbury Town Council
Colin Spence (CSp) – Suffolk County Council
Lorna Hoey (RD) – Sudbury Society
Chris Storey (CS) – Chamber of Commerce
Mark Bills (MB) – Gainsborough’s House
Suzanne Buck (SBu) – Suffolk County Council
Lesley Ford Platt (LFP) – Sudbury Market Town
Partnership

Advisory / Support Officers.

Lindsay Barker (LB) – BDC/MSDC
Sue Dawes (SD) - BDC/MSDC
Melanie Yolland BDC/MSDC

Other attendees

James Finch (JF) Suffolk County Council
Cabinet Member Highways and Transport

1. Welcome by Chair and context for the meeting.

The Chair welcomed the public to the meeting advising the purpose of the meeting was to receive feedback on the bus station options at Gt Eastern Road/Girling Street (split option) and Girling Street (single site)

The Chair also advised the decision to leave the bus station in its present location was not an option being considered.

The Chair welcomed James Finch, Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to the meeting and gave apologies for Suzanne Buck, who was due to deliver the presentation and was unwell. Lindsay Barker, Strategic Director for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils would be delivering the presentation on Suzanne’s behalf.

The Chair explained there would be an opportunity for questions from the public at the end of the presentation and immediately after the meeting the Steering Group would assess the options taking into account the feedback from today and from the previous consultation held in September.

2. Apologies and substitutes

Jaqui Howells, Sudbury Town Council
John Sayers, Suffolk County Council, Colin Spence substituting.

3. Brief Introduction to Infrastructure Projects for Sudbury – James Finch (JF)

James Finch thanked the Steering Group for the invite and provided a brief introduction to his role and the key transport infrastructure projects SCC are involved with other relevant stakeholders which are all important to enable Sudbury's town and economy to grow.

Rail:

SCC has been highly involved with Network Rail discussions and the bids to tender a local supplier which closed on 17th December 2015, with the aspiration that this would meet demands for Sudbury & Suffolk. An issue also raised by James Cartledge MP. This sought improved timetabling and rail stock which has declined over the last decade. The anticipated timescale for hearing back is the 2nd quarter of this year.

Bypass:

This is now being re-investigated in conjunction with Essex County Council with some early phasing activity now underway which includes updating data, JF advised this will be a long journey.

Bus Station:

Progress has been made over the last 12 months; this being an iterative process looking at alternative options in discussion with Babergh, Sudbury Town Council and the Steering Group and hoped today will see the end of this first phase of this work.

4. Hamilton Road and bus station options:

Setting the context – Lindsay Barker (LB)

LB provided a short introduction to the context behind moving the bus station prior to the main presentation. This primarily is to enable the regeneration of the Hamilton Road Quarter which remains a priority for Babergh and the Steering Group.

Babergh has invested on part of the site and keen to invest further but unable to do so unless the bus station is relocated as this impacts on the viability and deliverability of enhanced provision to enable the town to grow.

Presentation:

LB presented SCC presentation on the two proposed options following the Steering Group's recommendations September 2015. The presentation can be found on the following [link](#).

Public comments:

A 30 minute session was provided for public comments. A summary of the questions raised and responses provided can be found on the appendix attached to these notes together with a copy of two documents handed in at the meeting.

Chair thanked members of the public for their comments.

Steering Group Option for going forward.

Following the feedback from the public, the three options were considered looking at the pros and cons of each.

Steering Group Recommendation:

Option C: Drive through layout Girling Street was the Steering Group's preferred option and therefore recommended to SCC to progress to the next stages.

Key points arising from the discussion requested to feedback to SCC and BDC in relation to this option:

- Buses, BBH & loading bays within in same criteria (entrance/exit) – How does SCC foresee this working? How delivery vehicles will be dealt with – would these trigger the lights?
- Fuller optimisation of the site, concern was raised regarding health and safety issues with the layout having a greater expanse of tarmac dressing which may lead to a rat run scenario and whether any other opportunities could be explored such as small retail/facilities.
- Could further investigation/modelling be included to seek to optimise the option and separation of public/private vehicles?
- Would buses be able to manoeuvre from the exit around delivery vehicles parked in Girling Street?
- The need to encourage good bus/rail link connections
- Further guidance on the loading facility requirements and BBH provision
- Car parking – (usage)

Signed as true record

Dated

Appendix to notes of 15 January 2016 meeting.

Summary of questions and answers arising from public participation

- Q. If the bus station is moved to Girling Street why is there a need to have loading bays and Blue Badge Holder parking spaces in the same area? Could the loading bays go to North Street and Blue Badge Holders to existing car parks?
- A. *Currently access to the rear of Girling Street is provided for the provision of loading for North Street businesses. Blue Badge Holders may increase and we need to enable access into North Street. There is space to accommodate Blue Badge Holders in the design proposal and we need to ensure thought is provided to this.*
- Q. If the bus station is in Girling Street will there be drop off and pick up points in Great Eastern Road?
- A. *This sort of decision will be for the bus operators and we will share with them any feedback we receive from the public. SCC Highways would try to encourage a bus stop in Great Eastern Road as a destination point and could be part of the route modelling.*
- Q. The bus station has been a 7 year discussion. How much money has been spent to get to this stage? Is Girling Street the preferred site as it is a cheaper option?
- A. *A preferred site had not been decided as one option included a split site option of Girling Street and Great Eastern Road. Cost and delivery are key factors; the Girling Street site is more deliverable, there are no other third party land ownership considerations which the other sites have. The one site option can also provide a less harmful economic effect on the town whilst the work was progressing.*
- Q. If you move the bus station the shops that are there will not have the public and those from the bus station using them and it will become a dead spot. You say you don't own all the land in Great Eastern Road so if you move the bus station you still can't develop the area because you don't own it. The bus station should be re-sited to Roy's or where the lorry park is.
- A. *Developing the Hamilton Road site is aimed to increase footfall and visitors. Babergh District Council has invested in some of the land and will invest further once the bus station can be moved. A destination drop off in that area together with footfall from the car parks will see pedestrians still use the Hamilton Road area to access the town.*
- Q. If the bus station is moved to Girling Street how does that aid rail and bus interchanges? Chambers buses have redone their timetables and if you walk from Girling Street you will miss your train connection

- A. *This feedback will be taken back to SCC officers to look at the rescheduling along with other data as part of the ongoing modelling work.*
- Q. Why have we not seen the 7 Options for the bus station?
- A. *The Steering Group had considered all the other options but discounted some as they impacted more on to the Town Centre or were unviable in terms of delivery or proximity to the town centre for the bus users. Each option had pros and cons there are no easy options.*
- Q. What alternative car parking has been thought of for the proposed loss of spaces in Girling Street car park?
- A. *Circa 71 car parking spaces will be lost for either proposal; Sudbury has the capacity to be able to cope with the loss of spaces. The loss equates to a 6% reduction in spaces. Recent survey data indicate that the car parks have an average of around 75% occupancy during the week. At the highest peak (Thursday) 76% average daily capacity was recorded across the car parks surveyed. Babergh DC will look at opportunities to increase car parking on other sites.*
- Q. In busy times the car parks are used up and people will be driving around the town looking for spaces. The Steering Group needs to look at this issue. Also the blending of Girling Street into the traffic will cause tailbacks into Melford Road.
- A. *The plan is to incorporate traffic lights with a priority onto Girling Street so that when a bus leaves the bus station it has priority and will trigger its own mechanism for the lights to change. The mechanism for vehicles using the loading bays exiting onto Girling Street will need to be looked into to trigger appropriately. It is not envisaged there will be a greater number in traffic movements, a smaller number of cars going in and out of the junction.*
- Q. I ran a bus company until 3 years ago for 20 years and am surprised the bus operators have given Option C as their preferred option as they will need to loop round twice to get back to Bury and there is nowhere for buses to layover.
- A. *Confirmation was provided that bus operators had been consulted and Option C was their preferred option for Health and Safety reasons as buses would not need to reverse as they could drive forward in and out of bus stands.*
- Q. I have lived here for 5 years and the option should be for the bus station to stay where it is or we will be left with larger derelict areas in the town once the bus station is moved.
- A. *The bus operators were given the option to stay in Great Eastern Road as part of the split site option along with the other 2 options and they chose the*

one site option. The bus station remaining at its current location is not an option as there is a need to redevelop the Hamilton Road area.

Q. What is in that area that you are keen for the economy and to bring more people in the town apart from the cinema? What is it that will make it better for our shops? Why can't we concentrate on being a good town with what is here? Why are we competing with other towns?

A. *The town is not attracting new shops, retailers advise premises are not currently suitable due to the historic nature of confined buildings. We want the town to be able to provide better offer and encourage more retail.*

We have a large range of shops and a number of local people employed in those shops. There is a need to have larger retailers employing more people to service the shops which will lead to an increase in numbers to help support and sustain our businesses. Otherwise we will see a reduction in footfall and shop closures.

Reference was made to retail changes made at The Arc in Bury St Edmunds. Sudbury is not trying to compete however we need to look for an up to date offer to increase footfall.

To give their view on the benefits to Sudbury, the chair invited the members of Sudbury Steering Group to introduce themselves to the floor, advising who they represented and what they hoped the redevelopment of Hamilton Road would bring to Sudbury. :

Lesley Ford-Platt – Sudbury Steering Group, the Sudbury Market Town

Q. Are there any facilities for buses to layover in the new proposals?

A. *There will be no long stay layover.*

Q. I am a Girling Street resident and I do care about the town and have put forward options at previous meetings. All items will affect the residents like noise from people in the bus shelters and the buses. What are your opinions on the air quality and has there been a noise assessment?

A. *In taking an option forward, initial feedback and consideration has been given to these issues. Future studies and surveys will form part of the planning application which BDC will consider as part of the process.*

10 copies received at the meeting.

SUDBURY BUS STATION

PROBLEM: Two projects have been combined

1. The Bus Station -which is a necessity, a priority and long overdue;
2. Improvement projects for the town in general.

RESULT: More delays and disagreements.

OBSERVATIONS: 1. Difficulties in exiting one's car from Girling Street car park, let alone crossing to the left lane;

2. An exiting Iceland delivery van brings traffic to a standstill;
3. These are exacerbated by the proximity of the traffic lights for the busy intersection;
4. Hence, a bus station would be unfeasible and even dangerous, as many people have already said.

ANSWER: UPGRADE THE PRESENT BUS STATION, since;

1. Everyone has always known it to be there;
2. People in that area are already used to the pollution;
3. It would "buy time" for the consideration of and decision on improvement projects for the rest of the area.

WHAT IT SHOULD INCLUDE:

1. A proper waiting room with toilets and snack/drinks machines;
2. It should NOT include a cafe - Sudbury is overflowing with cafes;
3. An improved layout and access routes.

RESULT:

1. NO ONE could complain that it had been upgraded - even if they were disappointed about its siting;
2. It would then be clear how much space and money remained for the improvement ideas for the "wasteland".
3. The most important consideration would at last have been achieved!

A concerned town centre resident.

SUDBURY STEERING GROUP

Working towards a shared vision for Sudbury: "A local destination town, providing fantastic leisure, shopping, cultural experiences and a night time economy for all"

AGENDA

FRIDAY 15th JANUARY 2016

4.00 PM – 6.00 PM

THE ASSEMBLY ROOM, SUDBURY TOWN HALL

1. Welcome **Simon Barrett** – *Chair*
2. Apologies
3. Sudbury Bus Station Options
 - Introduction - Simon Barrett
 - Options Presentation – Suzanne Buck, Suffolk County Council
 - Public Comments
 - Steering Group Recommendation
4. Open for Business Event 9th March 2016
5. Date of next meeting

May we know where the eighty lost parking spaces will be replaced, present site is so useful

Why the desperate need for a cinema couldnt that wild space be used to improve the present bus station