



FORMAL ROUTE TEST

Route 78 – Double Deck Conversion

Held on Friday 2nd July 2010

Vehicle used: Double Deck, Length: 10.2 metres, width 2.55 metres

Attendees:

Wayne Butler	Performance Team, London Buses
Lisa Dipnarine	Performance Team, London Buses
Stephen O'Connor	Consultation and Engagement, London Buses
Peter Orchard	Bus Operations, London Buses
Clive Evennett	Bus Operations, London Buses
David Field	Better Routes and Places, TfL
David Eaton	Better Routes and Places, TfL
Chris Proctor	Borough of Hackney
Barbara Selby	Borough of Southwark
Councillor Fiona Colley	Borough of Southwark
Christian Frederick	Borough of Tower Hamlets
Paul Coppin	Traffic Management Officer, Metropolitan Police
Nick Cox	Metropolitan Police, City of London
Paul Grant	Performance Manager, Arriva London

Introduction

Arriva London North route 78 operates between Shoreditch, Calvert Avenue and Nunhead, St. Mary's Road.

Under tendering Tranche 328, it has been proposed to convert the route to double deck operation. The length and width of the new double deck vehicles will remain the same as the current single deck vehicles used along the route (10.2 metres and 2.55 metres respectively).

The purpose of the route test was to test that the bus could safely traverse the whole route from Shoreditch, Calvert Avenue to Nunhead, St. Mary's Road and return, using a double deck vehicle.

Issues discussed

1. Calvert Avenue / Arnold Circus

Residents close to Calvert Avenue and Arnold Circus are not happy that buses operate in this residential area. This has been an outstanding issue with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and London Buses. On the route test, it was suggested that a mini-roundabout could be constructed by the Calvert Avenue / Boundary Street junction. This would prevent buses from manoeuvring around Arnold Circus. A number of parking bays would need to be removed in order to create the mini-roundabout, the construction would also be subject to funding and consultation. This suggestion was discussed at length on the route test. Paul Coppin from the Metropolitan Police said he would not agree to the construction of a mini-roundabout as he believes it would compromise the safety of vehicles and pedestrians.

An alternative suggestion to prevent buses from entering this residential area is for routes 42 and 78 to swap stands, as both routes run in parallel to Tower Bridge Road. Route 42 is currently operated by London Central (Go Ahead) and the route stands in Worship Street, near Liverpool Station. This proposal will need to be discussed further with Network Development as this will result in the 78 being rerouted away from Shoreditch High Street.

Action: WB to discuss with ND.

2. Nunhead Bridge

The double deck vehicle manoeuvred under the bridge at Nunhead without any difficulty. This was tested towards Nunhead and Shoreditch. The vehicle drove as close to the kerb as possible and no issues were raised regarding the height of the vehicle or bridge arch.

3. Tree Trimming / overhanging branches

3.1 Grange Road

Towards Nunhead, as the bus turned left into Grange Road, there was a tree on the offside of the road that needs trimming. The tree is located within the Southwark Borough.

3.2 St. Mary's Road

Towards the stand at Nunhead, there were a number of low trees along the kerbside at the southern end of St. Mary's Road. However, there were no low trees in the centre of the road or in the stand area at the northern end of St. Mary's Road. It was agreed by all on the route test that as cars were heavily parked on both sides of the southern section of the road, this would not be an issue unless the unlikely situation arose whereby no cars parked in this area. Therefore in the short-term, CE (Bus Operations) agreed to put 'Low Tree' signs on the trees leading up to the stand. In the long-term, Southwark Borough will consider cutting the trees.

3.3 Hollydale Road

Towards Shoreditch, as the bus manoeuvred away from the stand, there were a few low trees along Hollydale Road which needed trimming. Southwark Borough agreed to look into tree trimming in this area.

4. Consultation and Engagement - Nunhead

BS asked if a letter could be sent out to residents in the Nunhead area giving details of when the 78 will be converted to a double deck route. SO'C agreed to look into this and will send a letter once a firm date for the conversion has been confirmed.

Action: SO'C to look into.

Conclusion

A double deck vehicle was considered acceptable for use along route 78, as the bus successfully traversed the route without difficulty.

Before the route can be converted, trees along Grange Road and Hollydale Road will need to be trimmed. Southwark Borough agreed to look into tree trimming in these roads and in St Mary's Road. However in the short-tem Bus Operations will put 'Low Tree' signs on the trees leading up to the St Mary's Road stand.

Due to safety concerns at Calvert Avenue, the construction of a mini-roundabout will not be pursued. However the proposal of swapping stands with route 42 will be discussed with Network Development, London Buses.