

MITCHAM CRICKET GREEN COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE

MITCHAM BUSES: DELVING DEEPER INTO FOOTFALL AT FAIR GREEN

June 2013

Merton Council's plans for the welcome regeneration of Mitcham depend on more people using the town centre to boost local shops. This is to be achieved by running a bus lane through the heart of Fair Green and creating a crossroads on the site of the Mitcham clock.

"Using TfL bus survey data we estimated that by allowing buses into the London Road, around 5,000 to 6,000 extra pedestrian trips per day will be made into the Fair Green area. These people can provide custom and footfall for local shops and stalls as well as increase the amount of activity in the area"

Rediscover Mitcham – second public consultation June 2013

The Rediscover Mitcham programme depends on the accuracy of this statement and given the huge disruption and damage which will result to the historic Fair Green we have delved deeper into the figures.

Transport for London figures

Our investigations have resulted in the following figures for bus passengers in Mitcham Town centre being provided to us by Transport for London

Stop	Location	Boarders (per day)	Alighters (per day)
Stop C	Raleigh Gardens (towards Tooting)	2150	1420
Stop D	Raleigh Gardens (towards Colliers Wood or Streatham)	600	1000
Stop G	Raleigh Gardens (towards Colliers Wood)	730	0
Stop H	Mitcham Fair Green (towards Carshalton, Colliers Wood, or Rosehill)	1400	1030
	TOTAL	4880	3450

The data comes from Bus Origin Destination Surveys (BODS), which contain sub route level information on boardings, alightings and loadings for all bus routes in London. This data is collected via manual surveys, with each route in London surveyed once every five years.

The BODS surveys for each route serving the stops in the town centre were carried out on the following dates:

Route	Date	Route	Date
118	24/06/2009	200	19/10/2009
127	06/11/2009	201	04/11/2009
152	23/09/2009	264	13/10/2010

The figures used by officers in the first report of the Rediscover Mitcham consultation is summarised here:

“The objective of the bus lane proposal is to reintroduce activity to the London Road pedestrianised area and to Fair Green. Based on London Buses figures approximately 5995 people board and alight buses each working day on stops which could be relocated to the new bus lane. This provides potential for up to 1,348,875, additional pedestrian journeys through the Fair Green each year (based on 225 working days pa.) This excludes weekend usage. People walking to and waiting, alighting and walking from bus stops in the Fair Green area are potential customers of shops and a revitalised market that currently do not exist.”

Para 2.43, Report to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, March 2013

The total of alighters and boarders in Mitcham is 8,330 (4,880 boarders and 3,880 alighters) and the 5,995 figure used by Merton Council includes a reduction factor on the assumption that some passengers would use other stops than the ones in the town centre.

Implications

- The figures quoted by Merton Council (5,995) are in line with those from TfL allowing for the reduction factor and are quoted as a total of usage both alighting and boarding of buses
- TfL's figures show that only 41% of people using buses in Mitcham are alighting – reducing the potential new footfall to 2,482
- The other 59% of people using buses are leaving Mitcham and cannot be considered as new footfall
- A large number of the 41% alighting will be school children and commuters
- A large number of the 41% alighting will be going to locations outside Fair Green and London Road – such as Lidl, ASDA and Tesco – or even changing buses
- The figures are 3-4 years out of date

The impact of moving the bus stops to Fair Green and London Road is therefore much more limited than Rediscover Mitcham implies. The overall numbers are lower and many people will not be using the town centre. The footfall is not new and it is only being moved from the four current bus stops to four others in a slightly different position on Fair Green and along the pedestrianised London Road.

It would be simpler and less expensive simply to improve access from the existing bus stops to Mitcham town centre and make the road crossings easier. This would avoid cutting historic Fair Green in two and creating a crossroads at the heart of Mitcham.

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