

456 words

JIM - Please print in a separate, tinted box anywhere towards the end of the Environment Report

Transport Group (Richard Webber)

A previous edition of Buzz made mention of TfL's commitment to undertake a comprehensive Network Review for London's Northern Heights and to give serious consideration to suggestions presented by the Society involving both the removal of the 271 turnaround and improved timetabling of the 603.

Shortly before the press deadline for this issue of Buzz TfL produced a draft of their long awaited Network Review, copies of which have been passed to the local councillors actively involved in the campaign and to members of the Highgate Society's Transport Group.

A large number of different options have been considered but unfortunately none of them have succeeded in achieving the cost / benefit ratios that would have to be met for TfL to take them forward.

One change which TfL may be willing to consider would involve the 214 terminating at Parliament Hill Fields in exchange for the C2, which currently runs from Victoria to Parliament Hill Fields, being extended to Highgate Village, thus providing a direct link between Highgate Village and the West End.

The option which the Society put to TfL regarding the reorganization of the 603 was rejected on the grounds that the purpose of the service is to carry pupils from Muswell Hill and Highgate to Hampstead, not to make it easier for pupils living in Hampstead to get to school in Highgate. TfL failed to appreciate that one earlier bus in the reverse direction would enable Channing and Highgate School pupils to get to school before lessons had started. The bus would also reduce congestion caused by parents returning to Hampstead by car after dropping off their children.

It seemed odd to us that the option which the Society put to TfL regarding the reorganization of the 271 was one of the very few options not considered in any detail by the Network Review. The cursory evaluation took into consideration only the consequential disbenefits. Due to an arithmetic error these were estimated at double the actual number whilst not one of the many different sources of passenger benefit were included. Were TfL to have evaluated the scheme properly they would have found that the net disbenefit to passengers is comparatively minor in amount. It is certainly very small in relation to the benefit that would accrue from recovering public access to the space occupied by the parked buses.

We plan to draw TfL's attention to what we consider a very selective and in some cases quite incorrect use of the statistical evidence at their disposal. If they fail to respond to these points, we will provide members of the Society and community with a detailed explanation of the advantages and disadvantages that would result from the scheme we have asked TfL to consider.