



Proposed Bus Services to Heathrow Terminal 5 Response to Consultation

SWELTRAC are pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the TfL consultation on the proposals for bus services at Heathrow Terminal 5 from March 2008.

The issue of public transport access to Heathrow Airport has been a long running concern for Boroughs located to the west of London, and this was one of the primary causes for the creation of the SWELTRAC Partnership in the early 1990's. The opening of Terminal 5, and the 30 million passengers expected to use it every year, will have a significant impact on traffic and transport over a wide area. Any efforts to encourage journeys to and from the airport by public transport are warmly welcomed.

In principle, SWELTRAC supports the TfL proposals for improvements or replacements to bus services that will in future run to Terminal 5. Where bus frequencies are also being increased in anticipation of demand, this is also welcomed.

The new route 482 (formerly the 435) serving Heston and the western Heathrow area will also provide a useful interchange with LU services at Hounslow West for passengers coming from Southall and the northern end of the route. The increase in frequency will also make this service more attractive in those areas that are currently less well served by buses.

We share the views of the London Borough of Richmond in respect of the extension of route 490 to Terminals 4 and 5. This will provide an important direct link to the airport from places such as Richmond and Twickenham, which also have busy rail interchanges serving passengers from a much wider area. The rerouting to serve Feltham station directly is also most welcome, and will supplement the existing 285 service which runs to Hatton Cross and the Central Bus Station at Heathrow.

We appreciate that there will be some inconvenience caused to existing passengers of the H23 wishing to access the Cargo area, but we accept that there are a number of other frequent services which they will be able to use from Hatton Cross (including the new 482, as above). The benefits of running this service along the Bath Road and on to Terminal 5 will significantly outweigh the disbenefits to a minority of passengers.

The increased frequency and hours of the new 390 (formerly the H50) are welcomed. We would expect this service to be of particular benefit to airport workers living in the Hayes and West Drayton areas.

The use of route N9 to serve Terminal 5 will provide a direct link to Central London and areas such as Kensington, where many tourist hotels are located. We note that the frequency of this extended service is to remain at 20 minutes, but we hope that extra buses will run on this route to ensure that this frequency is maintained despite the additional distance that each round trip will need to cover.

We note that it is the view of TfL that spare capacity on the Heathrow section of most of these routes allows for the anticipated growth in passenger numbers to be accommodated without the need – in most cases – for a consequent increase in frequency. We are pleased to learn, however, that this situation will be kept under review and that an increased frequency of services will still be an option if it is required in the future.

GNF – 24/4/07