

QUESTION TO CABINET 7th October 2013

From: Michael Bradley

To: Cllr B Collins

Question

Within the report titled "Third Platform, Halifax bus-rail interchange" presented to Cabinet on 25 November 2009. It states under 1.4 "Opening of the third platform would benefit Calderdale residents as buses would be able to come into the existing Eureka car park to pick up and drop off, at platform level". In relation to this report please explain why it would not be possible for buses to come into the "existing Eureka car park to pick up and drop off" without the reopening of the third platform?

Response

The report entitled "Third Platform, Halifax bus-rail interchange" was intended to propose a transformational change in passenger facilities at Halifax Station, a package of measures comprising:

- reopening of the third platform for train departures;
- the return of the '1855 Building' to its former role as ticket office, travel centre and passenger waiting area;
- creation of a bus interchange area on the existing car park with level access into the station;
- enhancement to rail service frequencies serving the Calder Valley line;
- diversion of local bus services (potentially involving a redesign of the local bus network) to serve the new facility.

Currently the 1855 Building and the car park are subject of long term leases with Eureka and the proposed changes would require negotiation and significant reorganisation in the way Eureka operate their site.

The bulk of bus services operating into the town centre are also provided on a commercial basis and the bus companies would need to be sure that any diversion via the rail station would not be detrimental to their commercial viability.

The transformation of what is a key 'gateway' into Halifax town centre is expected to generate significant passenger growth and to encourage inward investment into the local economy, justifying the investment that such a project would require.

In the context of your question you are correct in that it is physically possible to bring buses into the Eureka car park now. However its use as a bus interchange would require Eureka to relinquish a substantial area of the car park. It would also involve investment in bus waiting and loading/unloading facilities and, without further significant investment, intending bus and rail

passengers would also be faced with using the current stepped pedestrian access to/from the over-bridge in order to access the station. There would be no 'step-change' to provide seamless passenger facilities and it would be unlikely to lead to a generation of passenger numbers both to justify the investment and to encourage the bus companies to divert their services.