

# APPENDIX D

Luton Hackney Carriage Owners Association  
Shoket Malik  
Suite 20  
Enterprise House  
New Town Road  
Luton  
LU1 3EA

Tony Ireland  
Licensing Manager  
Licensing Department  
Luton Town Hall  
Luton  
LU1 2BQ

Dear Tony,

## RE: HACKNEY CARRIAGE UNMET DEMAND SURVEY/RECOMMENDATIONS

Responding to your Departments letter (16th January 2009) Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey, the HCOA would like to give our opinion on this matter. This letter will set out our points in brief and to which we will expand further on the 25th February Regulation Committee meeting;

### **TAXI RANKS**

From 2001 to 2007 an addition of 80 Hackney Carriage licenses have been issued, during the same period. No additional Hackney Carriage ranks have been allocated, resulting in over crowding, between 2001 to 2008, the trade in its quarterly meetings with the Licensing Department and the planning department attended by myself and on occasions various licensing officers and councillors including yourself Tony Ireland and Allan Williams of the Planning Department, the trade has on numerous occasions have discussed and applied for additional spaces and ranks for our trade to which Allan Williams has consistently replied back to us that there is a shortage of space within the Luton Town Centre and that the Hackney trade is in competition with various other bodies for this space and the Hackney trade is not a priority when it comes to this space. Issuing further licenses will only increase the over crowding and congestion within the Town Centre with no quick or permanent solutions to this existing problem. (We will further expand this point at the Regulation Committee on the 25 February 2009)

# APPENDIX D

## CONGESTION

Luton Town Centre is a very heavily congested area. The central government has recognised this position and has allocated millions of pounds to Luton Borough Council to establish a bus way link. Issuing more licenses will just add to the congestion as all prominent Hackney Carriage ranks are positioned within the Town Centre and why spend millions trying to fix the congestion problem and then issue out more licenses only to add to the problem. As an example, if we take the current position in Park Street; there is a Hackney carriage rank with space only for 16 taxis with a further 6 prominent bus stops and various other road users such as traders and the public. Also the Bedfordshire University is situated on the Park Square. This results in heavy congestion of traffic and also pedestrians which the council have tried to resolve in various traffic calming measures. Therefore the further issue of licenses will create further problems. (We will expand our point on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009)

## RECESSION

The country has officially gone into recession from the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009 and this is only the beginning. How long and how deep will the impact of this recession remains to be seen. At the time of the Unmet Demand survey and recommendations mentions possible future affects that this recession will have on the trade, however since the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009 it has been officially stated that the recession is worse that what was predicted. The survey carried out by Colin Buchanan and partners and their recommendations have to be re evaluated according to the current situation. (We will further expand on this point at the meeting)

The letter received from your department on the 16<sup>th</sup> January with this executive summary in the paragraph recommendations is very ambiguous and not clear, for example, the passage (we can conclude that there is occasionally some unmet demand but for the majority of the time, passengers are almost always able to find a taxi when they need one. The word 'occasionally' in this passage can be substituted to 'rare' meaning that on an odd occasion, a passenger is waiting longer for a taxi. Regarding this statement we are in the view that there is no real unmet demand. In addition, under the paragraph recommendations in the executive summary, the statement 'the release of around 15 to 20 Hackney licenses for the next few years after which the demand should be re assessed) this statement is ambiguous and unclear. We are in the opinion that previous surveys and recommendations have been specific in their recommendations. We take the above statement to mean that 15 to 20 licenses in total will be issued over a few years. These 2 statements mentioned above indicate that after a lengthy survey there is no accurate conclusion as to how many licenses are to be issued. (We will expand these issues further on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009)

# APPENDIX D

I would like to request that on the regulation committee on the 25th February 2009  
I will be giving an opportunity to speak and expand on these points of views.

Thank you

Shoket Malik HCOA