

Lancashire Local – Lancaster District

Meeting to be held on 19 January 2010

Part I - Item No. 5

Electoral Divisions affected:
Lancaster East and
Lancaster Central

Proposed Residents Parking Scheme Regent Street, Brook Street and Dallas Road Areas, Lancaster District (Appendices 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' 'E' and 'F' refer)

Contact for further information:

John Foster, 01524 772068, Lancashire County Council, Environment Directorate
john.foster@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Three proposed traffic regulation orders introducing residents parking schemes in the Regent Street, Brook Street and Dallas Road areas of Lancaster were advertised and objections were received. The Local is asked to consider the objections and recommend a course of action.

This is deemed a Key Decision and is included in the Forward Plan.

Decision Required

To consider the proposed schemes in the light of the objections received and recommend whether the proposals should be implemented, amended, or abandoned.

Background and Advice

A number of years ago, Lancaster City Council received reports from residents in the area covered by the proposed traffic regulation orders that they were experiencing difficulties in parking their vehicles on the highway close to their homes due to commuters and shoppers who park there for long periods. The City Council considered that residents parking schemes could solve this problem and consequently resolved to carry out consultations with the intention of introducing a scheme if it was thought that this could be justified.

The initial proposal was to introduce a single parking zone for the whole area, but many of the residents of the Brook Street objected to this. Regent Street and Portland Street are relatively narrow; however drivers currently are able to park their vehicles on both sides of the road by parking partly on the footway. The introduction of a parking scheme consisting of marked bays in these streets would result in parking being available on one side of the street only. Some of the residents who

currently park there would then be forced to look elsewhere for parking places, and many of the residents of the Brook Street area were concerned that if a single zone was introduced they would have to compete with them for parking places in the Brook Street area.

The City Council was keen to explore all options in an attempt to solve the problem of commuter parking and proposed an alternative scheme, which would introduce 3 separate parking zones. City Council local Ward Members carried out an initial consultation regarding this and it was decided that there was sufficient support to proceed with the preparation of a traffic regulation order.

Work relating to highways and traffic was passed to Lancashire County Council when the Lancashire Highways Partnership was terminated in 2006, and subsequently the City asked the County Council to prepare and advertise the relevant traffic regulation orders.

Traffic Regulation Order Procedure

The orders were advertised as:

1. Lancashire County Council (Regent Street Area, Lancaster, Lancaster City)(Part Revocation, Amendment, Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Residents Permit Holders Parking Places) Order 20**
2. Lancashire County Council (Dallas Road Area, Lancaster, Lancaster City)(Part Revocation, Amendment, Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting, Combined Residents Parking and Restriction of Waiting, Residents Permit Holders Parking Places) Order 20**
3. Lancashire County Council (Brook Street Area, Lancaster, Lancaster City)(Part Revocation, Amendment, Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting, Combined Residents Parking and Restriction of Waiting, Residents Permit Holders Parking Places) Order 20**

Public advertisement of the proposals has been carried out in accordance with legal requirements and objections have been received. Details of the proposed restrictions are contained in Appendices 'A', 'B' and 'C' and the schedules are shown in Appendix 'F'.

The Council received the following responses:

- 67 letters objecting to the proposals,
- 2 petitions, containing 34 and 21 signatures, objecting to the proposals,
- 21 letters of support, and
- 8 letters giving comments, but not stating support or otherwise.

Details of the responses received, together with Officers' response are set out at Appendix 'D'.

Because of the response received, Lancaster City Ward Councillors and the Lancashire Divisional Councillors are carrying out a further informal consultation and the results will be presented to the meeting by a Lancashire Local Member.

Tables showing the number of proposed parking spaces in the zones and the number of vehicles observed there at night are set out at Appendix 'E'.

Advice

The three options available are:

1. To implement the orders as advertised, without changes

This would solve some of the problems that have been reported relating vehicles parking in inappropriate places and causing difficulties for some residents; however it appears that it would be unpopular with a significant number of other residents.

The main reason for objecting to the proposal that was stated by the objectors is that the number of parking places in the proposal is less than the number of vehicles that currently park on the street overnight. The number of proposed parking spaces and the number of vehicles observed parking during the night are contained in Appendix 'E'.

In the Brook Street zone, the maximum number of vehicles observed on the street at night was **111**, and the number of proposed parking spaces is **160**, however 56 of the proposed spaces are to the west of the railway bridge on Aldcliffe Road, where very few currently park. A number of residents would therefore not be able to park their vehicles close to their home.

In the Dallas Road zone, the maximum number of vehicles observed on the street at night was **176** (including 4 parked in the Dallas Road car park), and the number of proposed parking spaces is **174**.

In the Regent Street zone, the maximum number of vehicles observed on the street at night was **167**, and the number of proposed parking spaces is **143**. There is some potential for the number of proposed spaces to be increased by approximately 6, but this would still not provide sufficient capacity for all vehicles that are parked on the street overnight.

Lancaster City Council has resolved that if the proposed schemes are adopted, resident permit holders from any of the 3 zones will be allowed to park on Dallas Road Car Park before 10.00am and after 4.00pm from Monday to Saturday, and all day Sundays. This would solve some of the problems caused by the reduction in the amount of on-street parking spaces, although it would involve a round trip of approximately 1100 metres for a resident of a property situated at the south end of Portland Street.

2. To amend the orders and implement them

The objectors made a number of suggestions regarding this, including the following:-

i) Introduce the restrictions as one zone, not three

This would have the benefit of allowing residents to park in adjacent zones if the parking places in their zone were full; however when Lancaster City Council previously proposed this it received objections from a large number of residents and therefore decided to abandon this option (94 supported the proposal and 150 objected to it).

ii) Increase the proposed maximum allocation of residents permits in the Regent Street zone to 2 residents permits per dwelling, as proposed in the other zones

Examination of the parking surveys that were carried out in the Regent Street area zone reveals that there is insufficient space in the proposed on-street parking places to accommodate all of the vehicles that currently park there overnight. It was therefore thought that it would be appropriate to allocate only 1 permit per household, similar to the restriction that is applied in the Lancaster Central zone. It is possible that a number of the vehicles parked in the Regent Street area zone belong to residents of the Lancaster Central or Castle residents parking zone; residents of dwellings where there are 3 or more cars registered; or people who have travelled somewhere by train and left their vehicles in the unrestricted parking area that is nearest to the station. If that is the case, the proposed residents parking restrictions might reduce the demand for parking space sufficiently for the allocation of permits to be increased to 2 vehicles per dwelling.

The number of permits allocated could be increased without readvertising the regulation order.

iii) Move the proposed new residents parking bays from the east side of Dallas Road to the west side (relates to the section between Lancaster Boys Club and Carr House Lane)

There is an existing 'No Waiting' restriction on the west side of Dallas Road and the proposed residents parking bays were not sited there because vehicles parked in them would reduce the visibility of drivers emerging from Ushers Meadow, Villas Court and Lancaster Boys Club. There were also some concerns that vehicles parked there would make it more difficult for residents to drive out of the garages and drives situated on the east side of Dallas Road and, in addition, placing the bays on that side of the road would mean that residents of the proposed parking zone would be forced to cross Dallas Road to access their vehicles. The proposed bays could be moved to the west side of the road providing that adequate visibility is ensured at the road junctions. This proposal would increase the number of parking spaces available by approximately 6, but it would mean that drivers and their passengers would have to cross Dallas Road to access their vehicles, and residents of properties on the east side of the road may find it more difficult to access their drives due to vehicles being parked opposite them, on the far side of the road. **It should be noted that even with the additional spaces provided by this measure, the number of parking spaces in the Regent Street area zone would be less than the maximum number of cars observed parking in that zone overnight.**

This proposal is a lesser restriction than the one originally proposed on the west side of the road; therefore it could be made without readvertising the regulation order. The proposed 'No Waiting' restriction on the west side could not be similarly moved to the east side of the road without another regulation order being produced and advertised. It is suggested that if the proposal to move the proposed residents bays is adopted, the situation should be monitored after the introduction of the residents parking scheme in order to determine what restrictions are necessary on the east side of the road.

iv) Allow parking on footways

Lancashire County Council does not place parking bays on the footways in Lancashire because of concerns that, even if the bays were only partly on the footway, they are likely to cause problems for pedestrians (particularly the disabled and partially sighted) and also they could damage the surface of the footway, leading to trip hazards. In addition, it would lead to drivers to think that they have a right to park on footways in other areas, whether marked bays are in place or not. This is less of a problem in some areas of the country, such as London, where it is an offence to park on the footway, other than in a marked bay, but this is not the case in Lancashire.

v) Allow unrestricted parking at night

A residents parking scheme could operate for a period less than the 24 hours per day proposed, but residents would still have to buy permits to park during the restricted periods. It is thought that many of the residents who support the introduction of a residents parking scheme near the city centre would want the restrictions to be in force on Saturdays, therefore there would be few residents who would avoid having to obtain a permit, however it would benefit evening visitors who would not have to use a Visitor Card.

Restrictions in the roads where drivers park partly on the footway in order to avoid obstructing the carriageway could operate for part of the day on one side of the carriageway, but a 'No Waiting' restriction would still have to be placed on the other side. The parking bays would be marked fully on the carriageway and some residents' vehicles would stay all day. The result of this is that other vehicles would not be able to park opposite them without causing obstruction.

vi) Allow limited waiting (3 hours maximum 8am to 6pm Mon to Saturday) in Aldcliffe Road

It is likely that the majority of the proposed parking bays to the west of the railway bridge in Aldcliffe Road will only be used by residents during the night. Some residents have suggested that an exemption to the proposed 'residents only' restriction should be introduced to enable limited waiting to take place. This would prevent all day parking by commuters, but could provide a useful facility for short-stay visitors to local residents or businesses.

This is a lesser restriction than that originally proposed therefore it could take place without the necessity for the regulation order to be readvertised.

vii) Amalgamate Queen Street into the proposed zone

This could not be done without advertising a new traffic regulation order. The residents of Queen Street have the benefit of being situated within a residents parking zone, however the demand for the residents parking spaces far exceeds the number of parking places on the streets in that zone. Queen Street is situated within the Lancaster Central residents parking zone and residents of any properties within that zone currently have a right to park in the residents parking bays in Queen Street. The amalgamation of Queen Street into another zone would remove this right from the residents of other streets who currently can park there and they are likely to object. In addition, the proposed zone that is nearest to Queen Street is the Regent Street area zone, which contains the fewest number of proposed parking spaces.

3. To abandon the orders

It should be noted that implementing restrictions in one zone whilst abandoning the proposed restrictions in another is likely to transfer the problem to the zone where no restrictions have been introduced.

Abandoning the orders would allow drivers to continue parking in inappropriate places, although some problems, such as the footway obstruction that occurs in Aldcliffe Road could be addressed by a separate traffic regulation order, however other problems such as the parking that occurs on footways in Regent Street and Portland Street are not likely to be revisited in the foreseeable future, due to the large number of objections that would ensue.

Consultations

Statutory consultation and advertisement has taken place.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Not implementing the proposals would enable drivers to continue to park their vehicles on the footway in some of the roads contained in the proposed zone. These vehicles partially obstruct the footway and damage it, however this situation has occurred for many years and there is no record of any traffic related injuries occurring as a result.

Financial

The work would be funded from the Residents Parking Capital Scheme Dallas Road - Code CHCJA3881.

Any representations made to the Directorate prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name: Organisation: Comments:

N/A.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper Date Contact/Council/Tel

Nil.

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.