

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 7 October 2021 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor R Ormerod (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors D Boyes (Vice-Chair), A Bell, J Higgins, G Hutchinson, R Manchester, D Oliver, I Roberts, M Wilson and M Simmons (substitute for A Simpson)

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hood, Hutchinson, Idwal-Roberts, Moist , Robson, Simpson, Sterling and Tinsley.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor Simmons was present as substitute for A Simpson.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Seaham, Dawdon and Deneside - Parking and Waiting Restrictions Order 2021

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which advised of the proposed changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Seaham, Dawdon and Deneside and requested that they consider the objections made during the informal and formal consultation period (for copy see file of minutes).

The Traffic Management Section Manager gave a detailed presentation which included site location plans, aerial photos and photographs of the sites and details of the following restrictions;

- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) in the pedestrianised area of Church Street to address obstructive parking, and improve safety for pedestrians. Five objections were received in the informal consultation phase from local businesses who expressed concerns with loading and un-loading.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) at the junction of Gregson Terrace and Seaton Lane which had been requested by residents to address visibility and road safety issues where a number of cars parked and narrowed the width of the road. Two objections had been received during the informal consultation phase from directly affected frontages.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) at the junction of Hazel Dene Way and Hill Crescent and on the west side of the carriageway of Hill Crescent. These amendments were requested by Durham Constabulary to address visibility and road safety issues where cars parked on the grassed verge and on the junction of Hazel Dene Way and Hill Crescent. One objection was received in both the informal and formal consultation phase from the same resident who claimed they would be forced to park further down the road, away from their property.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) on Admiralty Way in Fox Cover Industrial Estate as requested by local businesses. The proposals were to address issues with visibility and road safety at the accesses to units 3 and 4. One objection was received in the informal consultation phase which stated that this was not an area for concern.

Councillor Bell referred to the photographs of Church Street and asked whether the bollards pictured would remain open. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that bollards were difficult to enforce as they were often removed, local businesses managed to get a key to remove them and it was difficult to enforce access restrictions. The bollards had to be removable for emergency services and street cleaning and therefore this proposal would allow the Council to take enforcement action.

In response to a question from Councillor Bell, the Traffic Management Section Manager advised that the business owners who had objected did have access to the rear of their premises.

Councillor Boyes asked details of the number of businesses that would be affected by the proposal. The Civil Engineering Technician advised that of around forty businesses on the strip, only would be affected.

Councillor Boyes referred to the current road markings at Gregson Terrace and asked what difference the proposal would make if the keep clear markings were currently being ignored. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that keep clear was an advisory marking enforced by police whereas double yellow lines were enforced by the Council. The area would be patrolled and fixed penalty notices could be issued after a five minute observation period and this discouraged people more.

With regards to Hazel Dene Way, Councillor Bell queried whether this was a new development site and if so, why weren't double yellow lines considered at the time. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that it appeared to be a modern site but he was unaware of the reasons it wasn't proposed at original planning stage, but only surmise the Officer did not expect there to be any issues at the time.

Councillor Bell asked whether there was a history of complaints and the Traffic Management Section Manager advised that Durham Constabulary had requested action to keep the junction free as they were concerned that traffic was being pushed into the central line. The Civil Engineering Technician advised that the concerns were along the stretch of Hill Crescent and he was not aware of any requests, the proposal was a request from the police.

Resolved

That the proposal in principle to proceed with the implementation of the Seaham, Dawdon and Deneside Parking and Waiting Restrictions Order 2021 be endorsed.

6 Newton Aycliffe - Parking and Waiting Restrictions Order 2021

The Committee considered a report Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth advise Members of the changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Aycliffe and requested Members to consider the objections made during the informal and formal consultation period (for copy see file of minutes).

The Traffic Management Section Manager gave a detailed presentation which included site location plans, aerial photos and photographs of the sites and details of the following restrictions;

- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions on both sides of the carriageway at Greenfield Way, adjacent to Greenfield School Community and Arts College to address obstructive parking and improve visibility and traffic flow for both road users and pedestrians. One objection had been received from Greenfield School Community and Arts College during the informal consultation.

- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions on both sides of the carriageway adjacent to Tekmar Energy. The proposals were to address obstructive parking and improve accessibility for the affected business. One objection had been received from Sabre Rail during the informal consultation.
- To introduce 'restricted waiting and loading Monday-Friday, 8-9am, 3-4pm' on the south side of Humphrey Close for the local residents and Woodham Burn Community Primary School. To amend the layout of the existing school keep clear markings (no stopping Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm) around the access to Woodham Burn Community Primary School.
- To introduce a 'Disabled Badge Holders Only' bay at the access to Woodham Burn Community Primary School. These proposals were to address obstructive parking and road safety concerns during peak school times, and to improve access to residents' properties as well as Woodham Burn Community Primary School. One objection had been received from a local resident at the informal consultation stage. A representation, signed by 17 residents, opposed to the scheme was received during the formal consultation stage.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions on both sides of the junction from Well House Drive to Woodham Way. The proposals were to address obstructive parking, to improve accessibility and visibility for both road users and pedestrians. One objection had been received from a local resident at the informal consultation stage.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions on both sides of the access roads to Newton Park Services extending from the junction with the A167. The proposals were to address obstructive parking, road safety concerns and improve traffic flow in this location. One objection had been received from a local business at the informal consultation stage.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions to cover the extent of the Royal Mail Sorting Office in line with current planning conditions. The proposals were to address road safety concerns and improve traffic flow in this location. Two objections had been received from local businesses at the informal consultation stage.

Councillor Bell referred to the large number of objections to the proposal on Greenfield Way and asked if there had been any support from local residents. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that the restrictions had been requested by residents and supported by local members. The Civil Engineering Technician added that a number of residents had requested the restrictions via contact with local members.

The Traffic Management Section Manager confirmed that ballot cards were sent out with what was essentially a tick box exercise and acknowledged that the information would be useful for the Committee to consider in future reports.

Councillor Bell commented that the Committee had to rely on local members and the Traffic Management Section Manager advised that people who were in favour did not tend to comment on applications.

Councillor Boyes referred to Newton Park Services and the HGV parking facility that was closed at the time of consultation and asked whether any further investigative work had been done since it reopened to see whether HGV's were still parking on the access road. The Civil Engineering Technician advised that no work had been done since it reopened but there were significant issues when it was requested, prior to the closure of the petrol station. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that the access road was slightly closer than the alternative parking which was unfortunately closed when the survey was done, however a routine had been established it would usually continue so the proposal would address those road safety concerns.

The Chair queried whether going ahead with the proposal would impact trafficking queuing for the drive through and disperse cars onto the A167 and the Traffic Management Section Manager advised that queuing vehicles were not classed as parked vehicles so there was very little that could be done about that, however the police could close business down if they were having a road safety impact.

Councillor Boyes asked whether there was any cumulative impact with regards to the proximity of proposals and was disappointed that there were no local members who were aware of the areas and able to put residents' representations forward. The Traffic Management Section Manager confirmed that in this instance, they were not in close proximity but going forward he acknowledged it would be helpful to show a plan with all of the schemes.

The Chair commented that local members had indicated support for the proposal but it was difficult as the application covered three wards.

Mr D Priestly addressed the Committee on behalf of Greenfield Community College having been concerned about safety on Greenfield Way between 2.45pm and 3.30pm on school days for twenty years. The photograph shown was of queuing cars which he had heard were not affected by double yellow lines and he suggested that they were queuing to pick up children rather than parked.

Mr Priestly continued that over the years he had requested and been declined the following road safety features;

- Speed limit reduction from 40mph, asked for a 20mph exit restriction
- Removal of the no right turn island

- Pedestrian crossing

He welcomed the interest to make this a safer road and some additional lines would assist in enforcing a safe exit from the school. He continued that Greenfield School was the only building on Greenfield Way that actually had access an access road from Greenfield Way.

Mr Priestly advised that a minimum of 6-8 staff were deployed between 2.45pm and 3.30pm to ensure children used the underpass, although they did not like to use the underpass as they did not feel safe. It was important to recognise that children being picked up who had to queue and wait for buses leave the site, before they could drive in, were mainly children with SEND or high levels of anxiety who needed to be collected from the site.

He referred to the current system which had been devised in conjunction with local police a few years ago and consisted of queuing on one side of the road – he would welcome double yellow lines on the opposite side of the road. The exit strategy was supervised every night and Mr Priestly was concerned that if this scheme was approved in its entirety, some parents would park deeper in estate and jeopardise the relationship between the school and local residents, or put children with extreme needs at higher risk or even result in looking at alternative schools. His only objection was where do those people who needed to pick up their children go, if they were unable to pick up outside of the school.

The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that vehicles were able stop and allow passengers boarding and this included accompanying children and vulnerable adults and therefore should not affect those mentioned.

Councillor Bell queried the time of the restrictions and asked whether it would be sufficient and accord with the schools hours. The Traffic Management Section Manager advised that the timing of the school would have been considered but this would be rechecked.

The Major Projects Team Leader confirmed that was a location which had been affected for a number of years and the school, Town Council and Durham Constabulary had been consulted to develop the proposal.

The recommendation to approve was moved by Councillor Wilson and seconded by Councillor Higgins.

Resolved

That the proposal in principle to proceed with the implementation of the Newton Aycliffe Parking and Waiting Restrictions Order 2021 be endorsed.