

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Monday 22 May 2023 at 9.30 am**

### **Present:**

**Councillor R Ormerod (Chair)**

### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Higgins, J Howey, G Hutchinson (Vice-Chair), R Manchester, E Peeke, I Roberts, K Robson, A Simpson, A Sterling, M Wilson, D Wood and M Stead

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Kay, E Mavin, D Oliver and F Tinsley.

### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor M Stead was present as substitute for Councillor E Mavin.

### **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **4 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **5 Waldrige Parking & Waiting Restrictions, Traffic Regulation Order 2023**

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

D Lewin, the Strategic Traffic Manager provided a detailed presentation including a map indicating the location plan of proposals and associated buildings, aerial photos, photographs of the site, and details for the following restriction:

- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions for the full extent of the Waldrige 'spine road' and around its adjoining junctions with Chester Street (Back), Poplar Street, Lime Street & Cedar Street to maintain access at all times for all road users. A total of 8 objections were received during the informal and formal consultation period.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed Members that separate to this proposal, local members were in the process of funding an off-street layby within the verge of Chester Street (Back)/Poplar Street which would accommodate up to 20 vehicles in an effort to improve parking availability within the village. The Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that the layby was subject to planning permission.

The Chair advised that although local members were not present at the meeting, they were in full support of the proposal.

Mr M Weightman addressed the Committee in objection to the proposal and expressed his thanks for the opportunity to speak. He stated that the lane in question was one of three access routes into the village and in his opinion was minor in comparison to the other two. He explained that the streets in the village were navigated regularly by HGVs, large vans and refuse vehicles and explained that turning circles were available. Mr Weightman pointed out that there were many terraced streets in Chester-le-Street where access for emergency vehicles could be viewed as an issue and these streets were not dissimilar to the village of Waldrige.

Mr Weightman stressed that his main objection was the 4.5m extension of the yellow lines into the side streets as this would directly impact on residents who park outside their property. He felt that these residents would be treated unfairly and expressed concern that displaced cars would cause disruption and create conflict with neighbours.

The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that Highways had certain standards to apply and explained that by extending the yellow lines by 4.5m complied with standards for a turning circle for larger vehicles. He accepted that large vehicles had managed to make manoeuvres in the past but stressed that the current layout did not meet the required modelling and standards.

Councillor Stead informed the Committee that two properties in the area had modernised their yards to allow for parking and one property had constructed a garage. He stressed the importance of clearance within the village, particularly for large vehicles such as refuse vehicles and felt that the proposal would improve access for all.

In response to a question from Councillor Howey regarding Chester Street, the Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that there were no frontages on Chester Street and explained that the purpose of the yellow lines was to help vehicles manoeuvre safely.

Councillor Wood accepted the rationale for the proposal at Chester Street but asked if local members had considered any alternative options for the side streets rather than the 4.5 extension of yellow lines. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that the proposal was the bare minimum that Highways could implement to achieve the area needed to perform manoeuvres. In response to a further question from Councillor Wood regarding the two alternative access routes into the village, the Strategic Traffic Manager stated that they were unable to regulate the passage of traffic and confirmed that the proposal being considered was a result of a request from local members.

With regards to the alternative routes of access, E Brown, Traffic Engineer advised that local members had raised specific concern regarding safety on Spine Road as this road provided access to all residential streets.

Councillor Peeke asked if it was possible to introduce 'no access' on Chester Street. The Strategic Manager stated that this was not an option as this would encourage traffic to drive past frontages rather than the gable end of properties on Chester Street.

Councillor Stead stressed that all streets concerned were difficult in terms of access, particularly for large vehicles such as refuse vehicles and believed the proposal would help improve access in the area. He confirmed that he was in favour of the proposal.

The Chair agreed that the proposal would improve access and highlighted the importance of clearance for emergency vehicles.

Councillor Higgins acknowledged that there were many streets in County Durham where vehicles parked on junctions but he also emphasised the importance of clearance to allow access for emergency vehicles.

Councillor Higgins **moved** the proposal to be endorsed and this was **seconded** by Councillor Stead.

## **Resolved**

That the proposal, in principle, to introduce the Waldrige Parking and Waiting Restrictions, Traffic Regulation Order 2023, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers be endorsed.