

Highways Committee

20th February 2024

Durham City (South East)



Parking & Waiting Restrictions, Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 2024

Ordinary Decision/Key Decision No.

Report of Corporate Management Team

Amy Harhoff Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth

Councillor Elizabeth Scott, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Growth.

Electoral division(s) affected:

Durham South.

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise Members of objections received to the consultation concerning proposed changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Durham City (South East). The area in question is shown on the plan attached at Appendix 2.
- 1.2 To request that members consider the objections made during the informal and formal consultation period.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to decide, in principle only, whether the TRO should be made, which will then guide the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth in the exercise of delegated decision making. The final decision is therefore one for the Corporate Director, under delegated powers.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The County Council are committed to regularly reviewing Traffic Regulation Orders to ensure that the restrictions held within them are relevant and appropriate.

- 2.2 Cabinet approved a report in September 2023 which included proposals to extend parking controls in Durham City to a Sunday. The measures proposed will address the availability of parking space to encourage the use of alternative, more sustainable transport modes, as well as generating a financial contribution, to the ongoing management and maintenance costs of the car parks, from the end user.
- 2.3 An amendment to The Durham City (On Street Parking Places - Permits & Tariffs) TRO was therefore recommended to oversee an increase in on-street parking tariffs by 20p/hour and an extension in the regime's days of operation to include Sunday charging.
- 2.4 With the above in mind, it is proposed that all relevant on-street bays within Durham City (South East) such as loading, disabled parking, permit parking, taxi parking be amended so that their operational duration includes between 8am and 6pm on Sunday.
- 2.5 Officers have determined that the changes listed below would be of benefit in terms of facilitating the turnover of vehicles in the identified locations. It is therefore proposed to amend the current Durham City (South East) (Parking and Waiting Restrictions) Traffic Regulation Order to allow the identified changes to be implemented.
- 2.6 The streets affected are:

Church Lane	Illingworth Grove	Stockton Road
Elvet Crescent	New Elvet	The Hallgarth
Green Lane	Oswald Court	Whinney Hill
Hallgarth Street	Quarryheads Lane	

- 2.7 Please see appendix 4 for details of changes.
- 2.8 All Local Members and Durham Constabulary have been consulted on this proposal.
- 2.9 Consultation Period:

	From	To
Statutory Consultees	20-Oct-23	10-Nov-23
Informal Consultation	23-Oct-23	13-Nov-23
Formal Consultation	30-Nov-23	21-Dec-23

2.10 The informal consultation exercise for this proposal took the form of an online questionnaire which invited comments on the proposed amendments.

3 Recommendation(s)

3.1 Committee is recommended to:

Endorse the proposal, in principle, to introduce the Durham City (South East) (Parking and Waiting Restrictions) Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 2024, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.

4 Proposal, Objections & Responses

4.1 It is proposed that all restrictions within the Durham City (South East) TRO be amended so that they apply on All Days.

4.2 Proposal Background

Durham County Council currently charge for off street parking in 31 car parks located across the County as well as over 4000 on street parking bays within Durham City (4000+ spaces in total).

Durham City (South East) is recognised as having a high demand for parking and the Council has tailored its parking approach accordingly to promote maximum usage of spaces and discourage commuter parking.

Government guidance says that local authority parking enforcement should be self-financing and that authorities need to bear in mind that if their scheme is not self-financing, then they need to be certain that they can afford to pay for it from within existing funding. The Secretary of State does not expect either national or local taxpayers to meet any deficit.

Income from parking is therefore ringfenced to provide the service and maintain facilities to a good standard. Any surplus from parking enforcement activities, must be used in accordance with the legislative restrictions in Section 55 of the RTRA 1984.

Within the parking sector 85% occupancy is considered to be the figure whereby operational capacity has been reached within a parking area. Beyond this level of usage people find some difficulty locating a vacant space and either continuously circulate the car park, queue within the car park, or leave to go to another destination. This affects future decision making whereby people choose to go to a destination where there is an expectation of easily finding a space. The County Council therefore monitor their charging regime and amend tariffs and restrictions where necessary to manage occupancy, increase turnover and increase the expectation of a space being available for visitors.

It is also important to note that these proposed measures also tie in with the County Council's long term environmental objectives. Durham County Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and it is expected that these changes will assist in the delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy by improving air quality, reducing transport emissions and encouraging modal shift.

Transport emissions accounts for 33% of all emissions in County Durham. Free or cheap parking makes car travel a more attractive option when residents are deciding by which mode of transport to travel by. By incentivising people to drive on these journeys, this increases both congestion and transport emissions.

4.3 Statutory Consultation:

Consultation dates	Expressions in favour	Expressions against
20.10.23 – 10.11.23	1	0

4.4 Informal Consultation:

A questionnaire was hosted online to invite comments from residents and visitors to the area where changes are proposed.

Total Properties consulted	Number in favour	Number opposed
NA (Notice via Comms)	19	302

4.5 Formal Consultation:

208 notices were posted and maintained on site across the affected areas and a formal advert was placed in the Advertiser North. The proposals were also provided in Durham Clayport library for the public to view them.

Consultation dates	Expressions in favour	Expressions against
30.11.23 – 21.12.23	0	3

4.6 Summarised objections & responses:

Owing to the scale of the consultation exercise undertaken for this proposal the objections have been summarised into categories and are listed below:

4.7 Objection Reason 1:

“These changes will have a negative effect on businesses within the area.”

80 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.8 DCC Response:

- Within the parking sector 85% occupancy is considered to be the figure whereby operational capacity of a parking area has been reached. Beyond this level of usage people find some difficulty locating a vacant space and either continuously circulate the car park, queue within the car park, or leave to go to another destination. This affects future decision making whereby people choose to go to a destination where there is an expectation of easily finding a space. By effectively managing available parking space through the introduction of pay and display parking, we should help visitors access the city centre and make trips more attractive, encouraging future visits.
- Pay and Display parking is typically introduced in town/city centre locations where commuters occupy spaces that ideally would be used by visitors.
- The introduction of pay and display parking is intended to support the commercial viability of town centres and attractions by increasing parking availability for visitors and therefore increasing footfall.
- In the simplest form of illustration, if a space turns over 5 times a day, and the occupants of each vehicle spend £10 in the local economy:
= £50 per space per day
= £18,100 per space per annum (362 days excluding public holidays)

4.9 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.10 Objection Reason 2:

“These changes will make me / others visit the area less”.

129 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.11 DCC Response:

- The lack of a charging regime within the city on a Sunday has led to capacity issues whereby the majority of the on-street bays are occupied by the same vehicles for most of the day. The introduction of charges should encourage turnover of space, giving more opportunities for visitors to park on street.
- It is worth noting that the charges for parking on street on the outskirts of the city are considerably less than those within the centre.
- Parking for blue badge holders will remain free for an unlimited length of time in the marked on-street pay and display parking bays.
- The park and ride bus service will operate on a Sunday to aid journeys in and out of the city.

4.12 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.13 Objection Reason 3:

“These changes will cause parked vehicles to be displaced, leading to congestion and road safety issues in the surrounding residential areas”.

7 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.14 DCC Response:

- Some level of parking displacement is unfortunately inevitable when parking controls are introduced. If the controls are introduced, we would be monitoring the nearby adjacent residential streets and areas to determine any effects. It is, however, envisaged that extending parking controls to include Sunday will be no more detrimental than the existing Monday to Saturday situation.

4.15 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.16 Objection Reason 4:

“There is currently a cost-of-living crisis and it is wrong to ask people to pay more”.

37 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.17 DCC Response:

- On street parking charges were first introduced in Durham City on 5 May 2003 with the aim of managing parking demand and encourage sustainable travel options. Parking charges were in place Mon to Sat between 8am and 6pm to reflect the core times when parking demand exceeded supply and caused problems for residents and their visitors and visitors to the city. Whilst the scheme has been extended to incorporate a wider area on a number of occasions, the charging days and times have remained unchanged to date.
- In the 19 years since introducing the charging regime, Sunday trading has been relaxed to the extent that almost all commercial outlets in the city are trading on a Sunday. The consequence of this is that free on street bays and residential streets are occupied at the start of the day by long stay parkers to the detriment of visitors and residents alike.
- In line with a number of neighbouring authorities, and all off street parking providers in the city, it is proposed to extend the parking charges to operate seven days a week to reflect core business opening times.
- Parking charges only apply to those people who own a car and choose to park in a location that has a parking tariff in force. All car parking areas are managed and maintained at a cost. Unfortunately, the service can not absorb the increasing costs associated with managing and maintain these facilities, it is therefore appropriate that these costs should be borne by the end user.

4.18 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.19 Objection Reason 5:

“Free parking is one of the main reasons people visit the area”.

23 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.20 DCC Response:

- There have been numerous instances where the on-street parking offer within the city has been operating over-capacity on a Sunday. This has led to congestion and the purpose of the introduction of paid parking is to manage the demand on this day.

4.21 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.22 Objection Reason 6:

“People will not use sustainable travel methods instead of their car. The sustainable travel offer in the area is inadequate”.

39 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.23 DCC Response:

- It is anticipated that the introduction of charges will assist people in making reasoned choices about their mode of transport when planning their journey.
- Transport emissions accounts for 33% of all emissions in County Durham and unfortunately free parking will make car travel a more attractive option than public transport or walking / cycling to the areas of interest.
- The park and ride bus service will operate on a Sunday to aid journeys in and out of the city.

4.24 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.25 Objection Reason 7:

“These charges will have a negative effect on peoples physical and mental health”.

10 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.26 DCC Response:

- It is recognised that many people visit the historical city of Durham for exercise and to maintain and improve their mental health.
- The lack of a charging regime within the city on a Sunday has led to capacity issues whereby the majority of the on-street bays are occupied

for most of the day. The introduction of charges should encourage turnover of space, giving more opportunities for visitors to park on street.

- It is worth noting that the charges for parking on street on the outskirts of the city are considerably less than those within the centre.
- The park and ride bus service will operate on a Sunday to aid journeys in and out of the city.

4.27 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.28 Objection Reason 8:

“The money made from this proposal will not be reinvested within the city”.

7 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.29 DCC Response:

- Government guidance says that local authority parking enforcement should be self-financing and that authorities need to bear in mind. If their scheme is not self-financing, then they need to be certain that they can afford to pay for it from within existing funding. The Secretary of State does not expect either national or local taxpayers to meet any deficit.
- Income from both on (and off-street parking) is therefore ringfenced to provide the service and maintain facilities to a good standard. Any surplus from on-street parking charges or on- street and off-street enforcement activities, must be used in accordance with the legislative restrictions in Section 55 of the RTRA 1984.
- Whilst it is inevitable that the introduction of parking tariffs will be unpopular with many car owners, it should be recognised that any changes will potentially lead to a positive impact for those who rely on other modes such as public transport, walking or cycling, as any surplus income generated from parking is ringfenced for transport measures county wide, including Durham City.

4.30 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.31 Objection Reason 9:

“These proposals will have a negative effect on workers within the town”.

5 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.32 DCC Response:

- Commuters parking within these areas for prolonged periods are effectively taking away trade from the businesses. Each parking space is potentially a source of income for the local economy and the introduction of a charging regime will encourage a turnover of vehicles, thus maximising income potential.

4.33 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.34 Objection Reason 10:

“There isn’t enough parking within this area”.

5 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.35 DCC Response:

- Durham City currently has approximately 3500 public car parking spaces within the City Centre. Of these spaces, 406 are contained within DCC off- street car park and 1594 are on-street.
- Durham Park and Ride will also be operating on a Sunday which can accommodate 859 vehicles.

4.36 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.37 Objection Reason 11:

“These proposals will not be cost effective”.

3 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.38 DCC Response:

- It is anticipated that these amendments will assist the service in managing and maintaining their parking asset(s) whilst managing demand within the area and assisting the environmental goals of the Authority.

4.39 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.43 Objection Reason 12:

“Houses of worship should be easy to attend.”

38 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.44 DCC Response:

- The proposals will introduce a tariff on a Sunday to all on street bays within Durham City. Visitors to the city will pay and display to park on street.
- Blue badge holders can park in any marked-on street pay and display bay for free, for an unlimited length of time.
- The lack of a charging regime within the city on a Sunday has led to capacity issues whereby the majority of the on-street bays are occupied for most of the day. The introduction of charges should encourage turnover of space, giving more opportunities for visitors to park on street.
- It is worth noting that the charges for parking on street on the outskirts of the city are considerably less than those within the centre.
- The park and ride bus service will operate on a Sunday to aid journeys in and out of the city.

4.45 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

4.43 Objection Reason 13:

No specific reason was given but those responding simply were opposed to the proposal.

81 No. of respondents mentioned this reason during the informal and formal consultation exercise.

4.44 See appendix 3 for objection chart.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Having considered the objections to the proposals, officers remain of the view that it is necessary to introduce the proposals in order to manage parking occupancy levels and encourage use of sustainable travel. Additional charges are also necessary to ensure that the parking service is self-financing. Accordingly, it is recommended that Members agree in principle to endorse the proposal to proceed with the implementation of the Durham City (South East) (Parking & Waiting Restrictions) Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 2023, with the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.

6 Background papers

- 6.1 Correspondence and documentation in Traffic Office File:

L:\TRAFPROJ\06 REGULATION DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION\Proposed
Tariff and Duration Changes\Durham\Durham SE

Author(s)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

All orders have been advertised by the County Council as highway authority and will be made in accordance with legislative requirements.

Finance

LTP Budget.

Consultation

Is in accordance with SI:2489.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

It is considered that there are no Equality and Diversity issues to be addressed.

Climate Change

It is considered that proposals will have a positive impact with regard to climate change by encouraging modal shift, reducing congestion and vehicle emissions in line with the Councils declared climate emergency.

Human Rights

Any interference with human rights is considered to be necessary in accordance with the law and proportionate in order to address highway safety issues.

Crime and Disorder

This TRO will allow effective management of traffic to reduce congestion and improve road safety.

Staffing

Carried out by Strategic Traffic.

Accommodation

No impact.

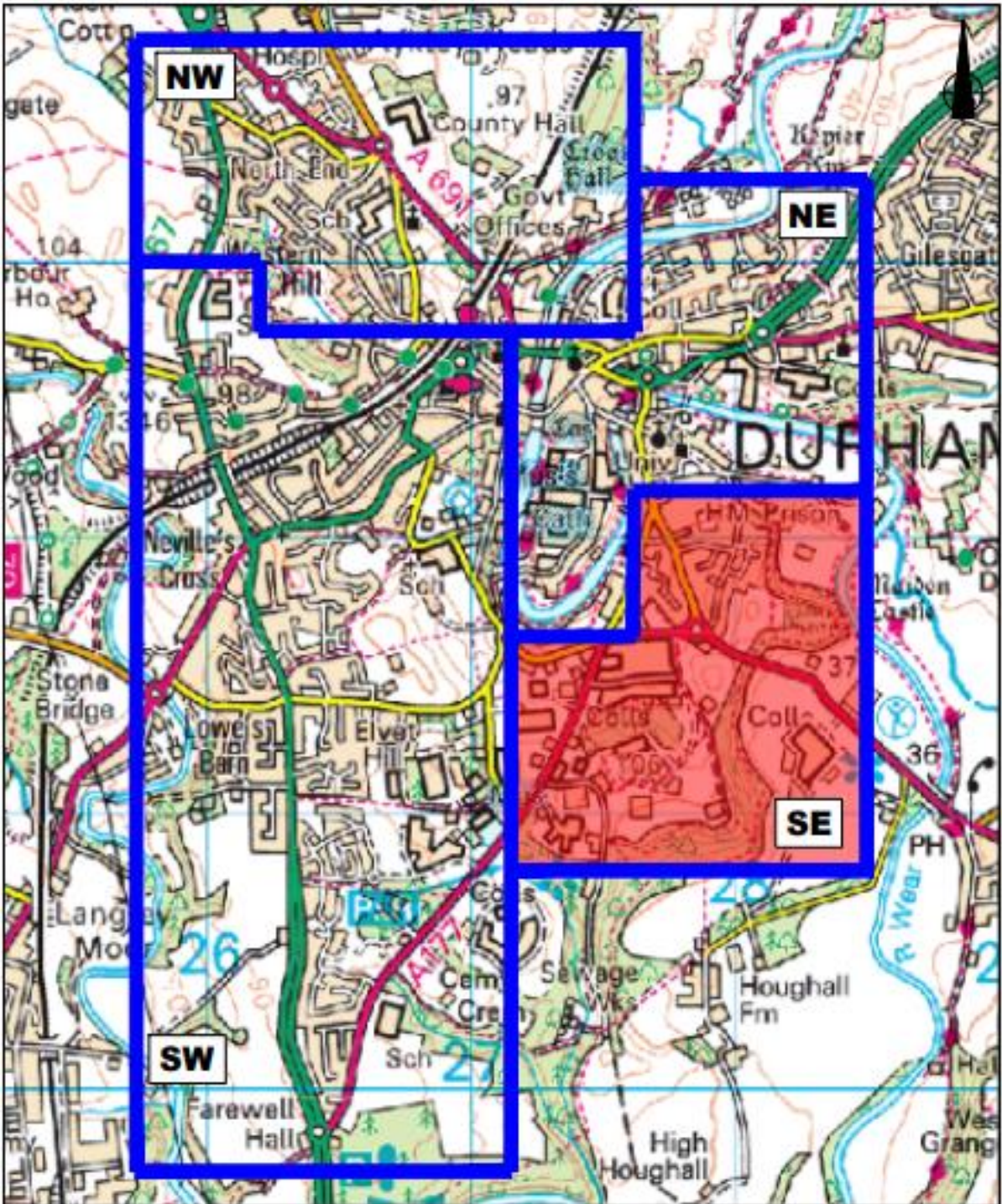
Risk

Not Applicable.

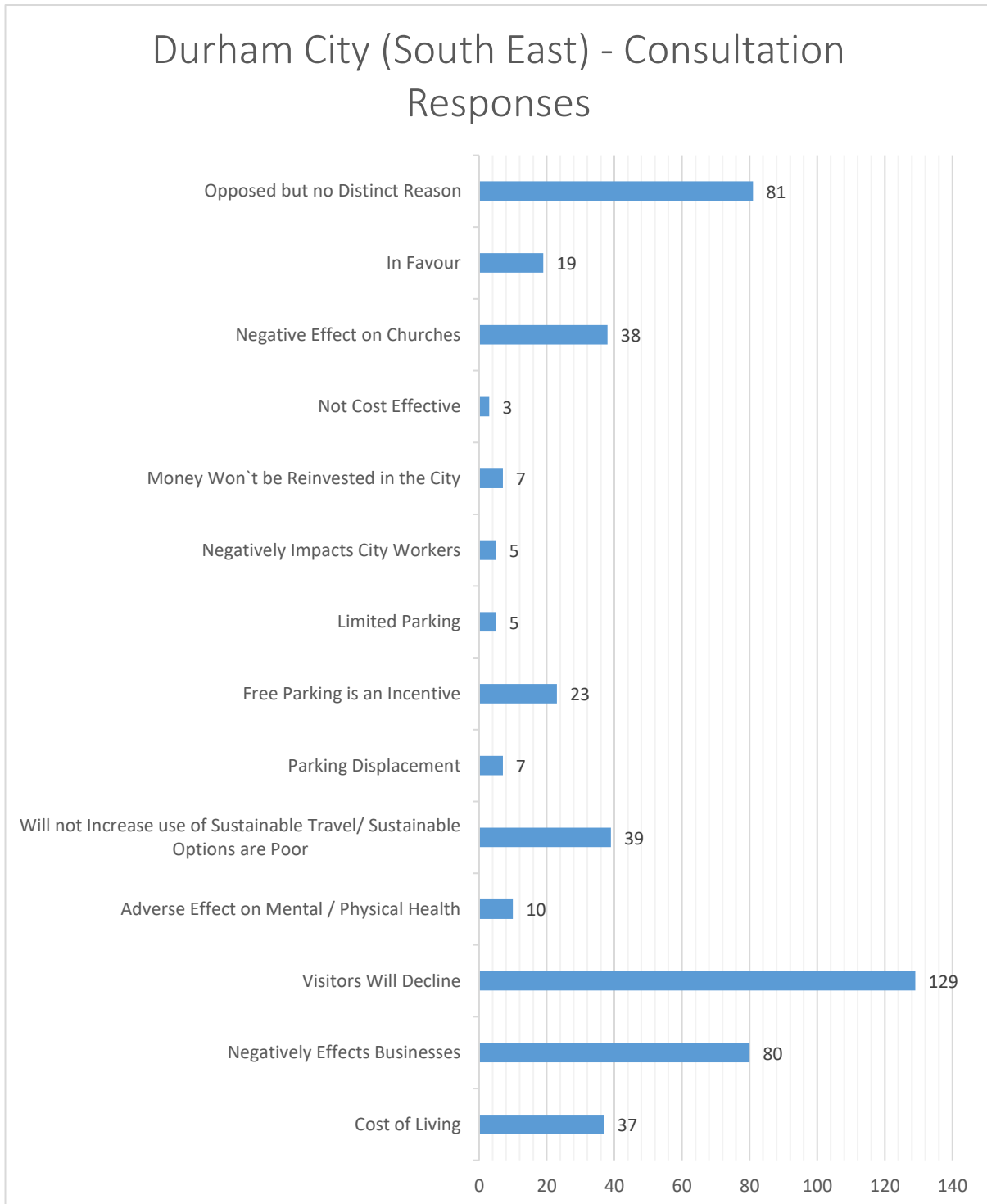
Procurement

Operations, DCC.

Appendix 2: Location of Proposals



Appendix 3: Combined Consultation Responses



**Data shown represents all responses from all stages of consultation.*

Appendix 4: Proposed Changes

Permit Holders or Pay & Display		
Street Name	Permit Zone	Proposed Restriction
Green Lane	C	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Hallgarth Street	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
New Elvet	C	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Oswald Court	C	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Quarryheads Lane	A	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Stockton Road	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
The Hallgarth	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Whinney Hill	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm

Permit Holders Only		
Street Name	Permit Zone	Proposed Restriction
Church Lane	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Elvet Crescent	C	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Illingworth Grove	IG	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Stockton Road	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
The Hallgarth	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm
Whinney Hill	B	Monday – Sunday, 8am-6pm

Appendix 5: Statutory Consultation Responses

From: Durham Constabulary

Sent: 20 October 2023 13:37

To: Traffic Consultations

Subject: 0997 - Durham City - On Street Tariff and Parking Restriction Changes

Hi,

As all areas outside controlled parking bays are controlled by parking restrictions to address possible displacement and obstructive/dangerous parking issues within the City, no issues are raised with the proposed changes and it is welcomed that additional Park and Ride Services are being implemented in conjunction with on street parking changes on a Sunday as part of the strategic aims of modal shift but particularly giving people an option to park outside the immediate City as part of relieving congestion in the City Centre.

Regards



DURHAM
CONSTABULARY