



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 22 January 2020
LEAD OFFICERS: David Curl – SCC Parking Strategy and Implementation Manager
SUBJECT: Geoff McManus, Assistant Director for Place, WBC
Woking Town Centre Controlled Parking Zone Changes
AREA: ALL WOKING

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To review the outcome of a statutory consultation about changes to parking controls and decide whether to amend the operational hours of the Woking Controlled Parking Zone 1 (the town centre area including The Grove and Ferndale) and introduce a restricted zone into Church Street East and roads leading from it.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Joint Committee (Woking) is asked to agree that:

- (i) the proposed changes to parking controls in and around Zone 1, as amended following a statutory consultation (described in Section 2) are implemented and the traffic order amendment made.
- (ii) authority to introduce parking restrictions in The Grove, Ferndale and Horsell Moor is delegated to the Parking Strategy and Implementation Team Manager in consultation with the WBC Assistant Director for Place, the chairman/vice chairman of this committee and the local county councillor.
- (iii) the Joint Committee allocates funding from the 18/19 on street parking surplus as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of this report to proceed with the introduction of the parking amendments,
- (iv) An amendment is included in the parking traffic orders to allow the use of 'virtual resident and visitor permits' in all the Woking controlled parking zones.
- (v) A mobile phone payment system for parking is introduced in the Woking CPZ (the existing payment methods, voucher and meter will remain)

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The changes to parking restrictions recommended above will:

- Increase turnover in the on street limited waiting bays in the evenings improving access to local businesses.
- Reduce obstructive parking on the single yellow lines in the town centre to maintain an effective traffic management regime. This will also help keep the footway clear in some locations improving access and safety for pedestrians.
- Protect the residential areas of The Grove and Ferndale from displacement parking **in the event this is needed** and encourage visitors to use the town centre car parks in the evening where there is ample capacity. It is simpler to go straight to a car park rather than driving around town looking for a parking space which in itself adds to congestion and pollution.
- Help improve the street-scene in the Church Street East area
- Allow effective bank holiday parking enforcement
- Provide more choice for visitors about how to pay for parking

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**Town Centre CPZ**

- 1.1 Woking Town Centre currently has a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ, referred to as Zone 1, see map Annex 1) which imposes a uniform set of parking restrictions during the day (Mon-Sun) between 08:30 and 18:00. There are also a number of limited waiting bays in Zone 1 that also operate during the same period providing parking for up to 1 hour.
- 1.2 After 6pm, CPZ Zone 1 is not operational, so vehicles can park on single yellow lines or for unlimited time in the parking bays. The evening economy of the town centre is continuing to grow becoming increasingly busy attracting visitors/shoppers and customers to the many restaurants and attractions in the town. The town centre is also undergoing major redevelopment and will have an increasing number of residential dwellings arising from separate developments.
- 1.3 The lack of consistent parking controls in the busy evening period means vehicles park on the single yellow line in the town centre which can be obstructive particularly if on the pavement. In addition the one hour limited waiting bays in the town centre do not turn over as quickly making it harder for visitors to find a space.
- 1.4 Following discussion at the Joint Committee Parking Task Group over the last year it has been proposed to extend the Zone 1 operational hours from 6pm to 10pm every evening to remedy this problem. The Grove and Ferndale were included in the proposals to reduce the possibility of displacement parking to these residential road that are very close by.

Church Street East

- 1.5 As part of the town centre development it is proposed to create a pedestrian zone in part of Church Street East and Christchurch Way near Town Square as shown on the attached plan (Annex 2). Church Street East, Christchurch Way, Chobham Road and Duke Street are also being resurfaced with new block paving.
- 1.6 To improve the appearance of the area it is planned to create a restricted parking zone instead of the existing conventional yellow lines and signs that are currently present. A restricted zone has boundary signs that state the parking and loading restrictions at the entry point but no other signs or lines within, (except for other parking features such as parking or loading bays etc. which are identified) which improves the overall appearance and street scene.
- 1.7 In Church Street East (and the roads that lead from it) it is proposed to implement a 'restricted zone' that will impose waiting and loading restrictions for the same period as Zone 1, 08:30 to 22:00, Mon to Sun (as amended by the proposals described above).
- 1.8 Within the zone it is also proposed to locate a loading bay (adjacent to the martian) for use during the restricted hours as well as a parking bay for buses that will allow improved transport links into the town centre for local business and a parking bay for police/emergency service vehicles as shown on the plan.
- 1.9 Six disabled bays will also be created in existing limited waiting bays in Chobham Rd and Christchurch Way in to mitigate the loss of those near Concord House and Cleary Court.
- 1.10 Duke Street is similarly proposed to be redeveloped and the new layout will include additional disabled parking bays to mitigate the loss of several bays around Church Street East. There are also disabled parking spaces provided in the adjacent Victoria Way car park.

Bank Holiday restrictions

- 1.11 Bank holidays can be just as busy for traffic movement and retail activity as other days of the year. It is proposed to apply current parking controls across the whole borough so that they apply consistently on bank holidays. This will help improve access to shops/businesses, reduce obstructive parking and generally help keep traffic moving at these times.

Service Improvements

- 1.12 Changes in technology mean that it is no longer necessary to use paper parking permits displayed in vehicle windscreens. It is planned to carry out service improvements through 2020 that will introduce 'virtual' resident and visitor permit in the whole CPZ area. This will allow on line permit applications and renewals and the vehicle registration plate will effectively become the parking permit.
- 1.13 A similar enhancement can be made for the pay and display bays in the town centre by the addition of a pay by phone service. This would allow visitors to pay for parking via their phone instead of using cash at a meter or purchasing a paper voucher (both

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these payment methods will remain in place). This system already operates in the off street car parks.

- 1.14 These changes are planned to be carried out at the same time as the Zone 1 revisions described in this report in order to minimise signing costs and clutter.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 At their meeting on 20 June 2018 the Joint Committee (JC) agreed to delegate the decision to review and consult about changes to Zone 1 operational hours to senior Woking and Surrey officers in consultation with the JC Parking Task Group. The outcome of this is that following discussion and agreement at the Parking Task Group a statutory consultation on the proposed changes was carried out between 05 September and 04 October 2019.
- 2.2 As part of the statutory consultation a notice explaining the proposals was placed in the Woking News and Mail. Street notices were also placed around the town centre area and all residential and business properties were sent information in the post. A fuller description of the changes were provided at the civic centre, library and on our parking web pages.
- 2.3 There were 43 responses including objections, statements of support and other comments made in response to the consultation. Respondents sometimes objected to some aspects of the proposals but supported others which we have tried to reflect in the summary below.

The general themes mentioned were:

The Town Centre Economy

- 2.4 Thirteen objected or commented that they thought the changes would harm the evening economy of the town centre (such as the Theatre and restaurants) or make it harder to work in the town because parking would be more difficult. Some felt it was a just a plan to increase parking revenue. There was a request to reconsider loading facilities for some businesses.

Response

- 2.5 The proposals will extend the 1 hour parking time limit until 10pm each evening but that should increase turnover in the spaces and help access for short term parking, which in turn should help the local economy. There will be less long term on street parking before 10pm if the proposals are introduced, however this is part of the overall strategy for the town centre to encourage the use of car parks for long term parking. When vehicles drive around the town centre looking for free parking in the evenings they create congestion and pollution that could be reduced if they went straight to car park.
- The theatre and cinema are most conveniently accessed from the main shopping centre car parks where parking through the evening is available at a flat rate of £1.50 from 7pm each evening.
- It is proposed to amend the proposals in Duke Street to provide a loading bay instead of 2 (of the planned 4) disabled bays.

Resident/Visitor Parking in Zone 1

- 2.6 Six people responded that they lived within Zone 1 objected that it would be harder for them and their visitors to park near their properties in the evenings (including 5 from Eastgate). They also said there were too many taxi's around the station area making it harder to find a parking space.

Response

- 2.7 Resident and visitor permits are not issued in Zone 1 other than to honour historical agreements which cease as new tenants come into the Town in the full knowledge that on street parking is not available for town centre residents. Residents are typically encouraged to make use of town centre car parks at published rates should they consider purchasing/renting premises around the town centre. In the case of Eastgate residents can purchase off peak residents permits for the adjacent Heathside Crescent car park.

The Grove and Ferndale

- 2.8 There were eleven objections against extended hours in The Grove/Ferndale citing the extra cost of purchasing visitor permits and the general inconvenience the extended times of the parking controls would cause. There were three in support of this however.

Response

- 2.9 Most respondents acknowledged the operational hours were being extended as a precaution to reduce the likelihood of displacement parking from the town centre in the evenings. However the proposals here do not seem well supported by residents, and may not be justified, so the decision to introduce evening restrictions in the Grove and Ferndale can be deferred and evaluated again should a problem arise following the other Zone 1 changes being implemented.

Church Street East area (Refer to Annex 2)

- 2.10 There were comments regarding the new pedestrian zone specifically about access to buildings that will lead from it. There will be a further local consultation about the new arrangements here to ensure all views are taken to account. Overall there were concerns about maintaining access, particularly though the construction period, however there were no substantive objections against the proposal.

3 PROPOSALS AFTER CONSULTATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that following the statutory consultation the proposals are modified in some cases and introduced as described below:
- The Zone 1 operational hours are extended from 6pm to 10pm every evening including charges in limited waiting bays (as advertised)
 - The Grove and Ferndale are not included. These roads will be monitored after implementation of the changes above and if necessary the restrictions will be extended until 10pm in this area should this be necessary and supported by residents.

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- A new loading bay adjacent to Wetherspoons will replace two of the proposed disabled bays in Duke Street.
- The restricted zone in Church Street East and roads leading from it is implemented as advertised.
- Parking restrictions in the whole borough will apply on bank holidays

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The cost of changing the operational time for Zone 1 as described in this report is estimated to be around £15,000. The main cost implication is for new signs however this is also an opportunity to provide a 'pay by phone' service for the on street parking bays which will also require changes to the parking bays signs. Implementing these together will reduce costs.
- 5.2 It is proposed that this cost is met from the Joint Committee share of the 18/19 Woking on street parking surplus.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

- 6.1 The minimum statutory requirement for the introduction of new waiting and parking restrictions is the advertisement of a statutory notice in a local paper. If this was the only form of public consultation there is a risk many residents and highway users would not be aware of the proposals. In order to ensure members of the public are informed and have a chance to comment we also put up street notices and letter drop residents where they could be directly affected. We also provide all the relevant information on our website and with links highlighted in the notices.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 Each location where parking restrictions are proposed to be amended will have an impact on the local residents and visitors in that area. This effect will vary from slight to significant depending on the resident's/ businesses circumstances and requirements for parking on street. The advertisement stage will allow these affected parties to get involved and comment on or object to the proposals. This will impact on what decisions are made following the advertisement. Local councillors can also help in this process by liaising with residents who may not want to contact the parking team directly, and prefer to deal with their local councillor instead.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications for this report.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

9.1 Crime and Disorder implications

There should be fewer instances of obstructive parking and improved traffic movements as a consequence of the proposed new restrictions

9.2 Sustainability implications

The introduction of parking restrictions can help reduce congestion and keep traffic moving. In some cases new restrictions can also encourage the use of off street car parks or alternative means of transport.

9.3 Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

There are none.

9.4 Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

There are none.

9.5 Public Health implications

There are none.

9.6 Human Resource/Training and Development

There are none.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the waiting restrictions are implemented as detailed in Annex A. They will make a positive impact towards:-

- Road safety
- Access for emergency vehicles
- Access for refuse vehicles
- Easing traffic congestion
- Better regulated parking
- Better compliance with parking restrictions

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

The agreed proposals will be introduced from April 2020. There will be numerous signing changes needed which will provide an opportunity to rationalise signs and posts where possible to improve the street-scene.

Contact Officers:

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Consulted:

All proposals have been discussed with the Woking Parking Task group and respective county councillor where appropriate.

County Council Cabinet Member

Mr Matt Furness.
Tel: 0300 200 1003

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Plan showing the Woking Zone 1 boundary.
Annex 2 – Plan showing the proposed restricted zone in Church Street East area

Sources/background papers:

None
