

17th September 2013

Agenda Item

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (CASTLE GATE, NEWARK ON TRENT) (PERMIT HOLDERS' ONLY PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2013 (3186)

CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider objections received in respect of a proposed parking places order for the introduction of a permit only parking scheme in a lay-by outside the new registry office at the Gilstrap Centre, Castle Gate, Newark on Trent.

Information and Advice

2. Nottinghamshire County Council is in the process of transferring the Newark Registry Office from its present location in the old municipal buildings along Balderton Gate to the Gilstrap Centre in the grounds of Newark Castle. The registry office is scheduled to be opened in October 2013. As one of the main functions of any registry office is to perform wedding and civil partnership ceremonies, it is intended to allow vehicles being used in connection with these ceremonies to park in the lay-by located in close proximity to the Gilstrap Centre.
3. It is proposed that a permit system be introduced to manage parking within the lay-by on Castle Gate outside the new registry office. Permits will be issued by the Registry Office to allow wedding party vehicles to park within it. It is intended that only vehicles with permits will be allowed to park along the whole length of the lay-by between the hours of 8am and 7pm, seven days a week. There is at present a bus-stop within the lay-by and parking along it is currently prohibited at all times. The proposed scheme will discontinue the use of the lay-by as a bus-stop and will allow parking within the lay-by outside of its times of operation. This presents opportunities for local businesses by increasing the capacity of evening and overnight parking in the area. This is considered to be valuable as the area has a proliferation of bars and restaurants. Due to the success of the temporary bus stop it is proposed that this is maintained in the vicinity of the lay-by with a second phase of work to include shortening the lay-by to provide a permanent stop at this location and maintaining the permit system, subject to design and safety review.
4. The statutory public advertisement of the Order was undertaken between 6th and 26th June 2013 during which there were four responses, three of which were

objections to the proposals which are shown on the accompanying drawing H/JB/TRO3186.

Comments received

Objection from Newark Town Council

5. Newark Town Council's Planning and Regeneration Committee at its meeting on 26 June 2013 decided to object on the grounds that the proposal would have an adverse impact on traffic management and flow of vehicles along Castle Gate. The Town Council has not provided any further detail to clarify this view.
6. The County Council acknowledges the town council's concerns but it is the opinion of officers that parking by vehicles within the lay-by will not cause any adverse impact on the flow of traffic along Castle Gate. Parking in a lay by is preferable to having these vehicles parking elsewhere along Castle Gate in order to drop-off and pick-up the wedding party.

Objections from bus operators

7. The commercial director of Stagecoach East Midlands and the managing director of Marshalls (an independent local bus and coach operator) wrote in separately objecting to the proposals on a number of similar points.
8. It was stated that the Gilstrap Centre bus-stop is a well used and established facility and that its removal will cause unnecessary inconvenience for bus users thus making bus services less attractive. However, the bus stop at this location was intended to be a temporary facility originally to be removed following the opening of the new bus station. This has proved to be a well-patronised facility and its removal and subsequent reversion back into a parking-only facility has been delayed for as long as has been possible.
9. The original proposal suggested that services currently using this bus stop could use one of two alternative bus-stops located within 200 metres of the Gilstrap Centre lay-by: the first along Beastmarket Hill and the second along Bar Gate to facilitate the introduction of the permits for the Registry Office from 1st October 2013. In addition, the County Council is also proposing to remove the bus stop shelter currently installed at the Gilstrap Centre lay-by and re-erect it at the Beastmarket Hill bus stop; this will be done as part of the first phase of works. However, due to concerns raised by the bus operators and the success of the existing temporary bus stop it is proposed that this is maintained in the vicinity of the lay-by with a second phase of work to include shortening the lay-by to provide a permanent stop at this location and maintaining the permit system, subject to design and safety review.
10. It has been observed that the lay-by is being used as an informal lay-over facility on certain services due to a lack of such facilities in Newark, even though the lay-by has been designated as a bus-stop rather than as a bus-stand. The alternative would be for buses to travel and wait at the lorry park on the opposite side of the level crossing along the old Great North Road which would result in an unreliable service if the barriers were to be lowered for trains. The County Council has never taken enforcement action against prolonged lay-overs along the lay-by as this has not caused any inconvenience for other services; however it recognises and

agrees that there is a lack of suitable facilities to enable buses to lay-over in the Newark Area. Therefore two additional bus bays will shortly be installed within the curtilage of the bus station in order to formally provide such a facility for bus drivers.

Comment from Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

11. The only non-objection comment received was from the office manager of the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board, whose premises are located on the opposite side of Castle Gate to the lay-by. Prior to the use of the lay-by as a temporary bus stop, parking was permitted for a maximum duration of thirty minutes which businesses along this stretch of Castle Gate used for loading and unloading activities. Currently there are no facilities in the area which could be conveniently used for such purposes. The manager requested whether loading and unloading could recommence within the lay-by following its conversion into a parking bay since the Internal Drainage Board stores essential equipment required for flood defence purposes at their premises which is usually required to be used at very short notice, such as during emergency call outs. The manager confirmed that such activity would be infrequent and would take only a few minutes at a time.
12. Due to legislation governing traffic signs, it will not be possible to introduce a parking restriction which allows permit holders' parking and loading / unloading activities simultaneously within the same facility. However to assist the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board in carrying out its statutory functions more effectively, it is proposed to issue a permit which will grant authorisation to park within the lay-by for a maximum duration of fifteen minutes in order to load / unload vehicles. They will be encouraged to park their vehicle towards the 'upstream' end of the lay-by since it will be furthest away from the entrance to the registry office. Similar permits will not be issued to other businesses located in the area unless they could adequately demonstrate that their requirements for loading / unloading is of a similar nature to that of the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board.

Other Options Considered

13. The possibility of allowing wedding vehicles to drive into the grounds of Newark Castle was investigated. Newark and Sherwood District Council, which owns the grounds, rejected this proposal on the basis that the pathways that would have been driven along by vehicles are not wide enough or have the structural strength to adequately support them. In addition, there would have been safety concerns and difficulties with access into and egress out of the grounds at a time when both the grounds and registry office would have been busy.

Comments from Local Member

14. The member for Newark West was informed of the proposal; however no comments have been received.

Reasons for Recommendations

15. The parking restriction is being proposed to ensure that wedding vehicles carrying the official wedding party will be able to park in close proximity to the new registry office without encountering any adverse difficulties.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

17. The proposal is being funded from the overall budget for the conversion of the Gilstrap Centre into the new registry office and the cost of implementing the first phase of works is in the region of £5,000.

Crime and Disorder Implications

16. Nottinghamshire Police have made no comments on the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- a) The Nottinghamshire County Council (Castle Gate, Newark on Trent) (Permit Holders' Only Parking Places) Order 2013 (3186) is made as advertised and the three respondees to the statutory public advertisement be informed accordingly.
- b) The Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board is issued with a permit to park a vehicle within the lay-by for a maximum duration of fifteen minutes in order for it to load / unload.
- c) No permits will be issued to other businesses located in the area unless they can adequately demonstrate to the (highway) district manager for Newark and Sherwood, the local member and the chair of the Transport and Highways Committee that their requirements for loading / unloading are of a similar nature to that of the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board.
- d) The Gilstrap Centre bus-stop in the vicinity of the lay-by is retained whilst maintaining the permit holders' facility as detailed in the report, with a second phase of work to shorten the lay-by (during which time the bus stop may be suspended) and provide a permanent bus stop at this location subject to design and safety review.

Mike Barnett

Team Manager (Major Projects and Improvements)

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments (SHB 08.08.13)

15. Committee has power to decide the Recommendation.

Financial Comments (TMR 09.08.13)

16. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 17 of the report.

Background Papers

Letter from Commercial Director of Stagecoach East Midlands dated 17th June 2013
E-mail from Newark on Trent Town Council dated 27th June 2013
Letter from Managing Director of Marshalls of Sutton-on-Trent dated 31st July 2013
Other relevant documents for the proposed scheme are contained within the scheme file which can be found in the Major Projects and Improvements section at Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Councillor Tony Roberts MBE - Newark West