



20th October 2016

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (BRECK HILL ROAD, THACKERAYS LANE ROUNDABOUT AND WOODTHORPE DRIVE, WOODTHORPE) (PROHIBITION OF WAITING AND LOADING) AND WOODTHORPE DRIVE, WOODTHORPE (PARKING PLACES) TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER 2016 (7182)

CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the objections received in respect of the above Traffic Regulation Order and whether it should be made as advertised.

Information and Advice

2. The County Council has received complaints from the local bus operator, residents and road users regarding problems with obstructive parking at a number of locations in the Breck Hill Road area. These complaints focus on three separate locations; Thackeray's Lane roundabout, Breck Hill Road and the northern arm of Woodthorpe Drive. A number of parking restrictions and parking bay amendments are proposed to address the issues. These proposals have been grouped together under one Traffic Regulation Order, this ensures that residents and other road users in the area are offered a comprehensive view of all the proposed changes through a single consultation process.
3. Breck Hill Road is a local distributor road in Woodthorpe in the Borough of Gedling which runs between Thackerays Lane roundabout to the junction of Plains Road / Woodborough Road. The road is a busy bus route and the number 25 Lilac line, operated by Nottingham City Transport runs with a 10 - 20 minute day time frequency starting from 5.45am and finishing at 11.15pm. It also carries significant volumes of traffic, with an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) of 8,100, this equates to an average of nearly 600 vehicles an hour during the day (between 7am and 7pm). Thackerays Lane roundabout comprises both residential and commercial premises, while Breck Hill Road is generally residential in character until the junction with Plains Road / Woodborough Road. The Plains Road / Woodborough Road area is a popular district centre comprising a variety of commercial, retail and leisure premises.

4. At Thackerays Lane roundabout the presence of parked cars in close proximity to the roundabout forces buses and other large vehicles to cross the centre line in order to manoeuvre around them. This impedes drivers approaching the island from the opposite direction as it requires them to stop short of the junction in order to allow buses to pass. This reduces the capacity of the roundabout and increases the risk of collisions for these vehicles and in particular for vulnerable users such as motorcyclists and cyclists. The parked vehicles also obstruct pedestrian crossing points, reducing visibility and amenity for these users.
5. On Breck Hill Road the brow of the hill creates limited forward visibility for drivers. When large vehicles, such as buses approach in either direction, they have to move over the centre line to manoeuvre past parked cars. This position puts them in conflict with vehicles approaching in the opposite direction and due to the limited forward visibility is considered detrimental to highway safety. Residents of Greengates Avenue have also expressed concern over parked vehicles on Breck Hill Road reducing visibility for vehicles turning out of Greengates Avenue, increasing the potential risk of collisions.
6. The local bus operator has reported problems with obstructive parking by Blue Badge holders at the junction of Woodthorpe Drive and the B684 Plains Road. Blue Badge holders are parking on double yellow lines adjacent the Memorial / triangular splitter island. While Blue Badge holders are entitled to park on double yellow lines for up to three hours, they are only entitled to do so where this does not cause an obstruction. Parking in this location obstructs the free-flow of vehicles and particularly the movement of bus services 46 and 47 which make a clockwise turning movement at this junction, to enable them to make their return journey back along Plains Road. Vehicles emerging from a private car park on this northern arm of Woodthorpe Drive have the opportunity to turn right to proceed in a westerly direction; however the presence of parked vehicles along this stretch effectively reduces the carriageway to one lane and impedes their ability to make this manoeuvre.
7. A number of parking restrictions and parking bays are proposed to address the issues in the Breck Hill Road area. The proposed restrictions are as follows:

Breck Hill Road

- Introduce a no waiting restriction on Monday to Saturday between 8am and 6pm on the south-western side of the road, from the end of the existing double yellow lines (outside numbers 144 / 146) to a point 10 metres south-east of Greengates Avenue;
- Introduce double yellow lines (no waiting at any time) restrictions from a point 10 metres south-east of Greengates Avenue to a point 7.5 metres north-west of the same junction.

Thackerays Lane Roundabout

- Introduce double yellow lines (no waiting at any time) restrictions to the outside perimeter of the roundabout;
- Introduce double yellow lines to all the roads on the approach to the roundabout – Arno Vale Road, Breck Hill Road, Thackerays Lane, Wensley Road and Worcester Road;
- Arno Vale Road – make the existing bus stop clearways enforceable (by the addition of a regulatory sign) for all days and for all hours.

Woodthorpe Drive (Northern Arm)

- Introduce a no loading / unloading at any time restriction to the south side of the road between Woodthorpe Drive and Plains Road;

- Introduce a no loading / unloading at any time restriction to the north side of the road between Woodthorpe Drive and the end of the existing parking bay;
 - Change the existing parking bay, which is Monday to Saturday, 8am – 6pm, parking for 30 minutes and taxis only between 6pm and 8am by splitting the bay to create a space for a disabled person's vehicle (at all times) and the rest of the bay for loading only between 8am and 6pm and for taxis only between 6pm and 8am;
 - Install direction sign outside number 141 Woodthorpe Drive.
8. The statutory consultation and advertisement was carried out between 12th July 2016 and 12th August 2016. The document packages were available on-line, and were held at Mapperley and Woodthorpe Libraries and County Hall with copies of the notice erected at a number of locations in the area. The proposed schemes are shown on the attached drawings, numbers H/04078/2275/01 – 03. An Equality Impact Assessment was also undertaken and is available as a background paper to this report.

Objections Received

9. Eleven responses were received to the consultation. Of the responses received, four expressed unmitigated support for the proposals, two were supportive but wanted the parking restrictions on Breck Hill Road to be more extensive and the remaining five are considered to be outstanding objections to some part of the proposals. A range of comments were received from all respondents, these include:
- That the proposed double yellow lines near Greengates Avenue should be longer;
 - That double yellow lines should be introduced along the whole length of Breck Hill Road.

These comments alongside other responses to the consultation were assessed, however it was not considered appropriate to re-advertise the proposals to extend the restrictions; this would incur a significant additional cost which would not be matched in terms of additional Highway safety. Objections were received regarding the loss of on-street parking in this area and this was also taken into consideration when deciding not to extend the proposed restrictions. The parking restrictions advertised for Breck Hill are considered to offer the best balance between addressing the identified highway safety issues and maintaining some on-street parking provision.

10. Objection – Loss of on-street parking (Breck Hill Road)
Two objections were made on the basis that the proposals removed on-street parking on Breck Hill Road. They stated that their properties, unlike others on that part of the street, had no off-street parking facility and that the loss of unrestricted parking on the opposite side of the road would affect their amenity and the price of their house. They expressed concern at having to park at least 50m away from their property and the inconvenience that would be experienced when moving heavy items such as shopping or walking with small children between their vehicle and property. They suggested that designated parking bays should be created near their properties, half inset into the footway.

Response – Loss of on-street parking (Breck Hill Road)

The demand for on-street parking is understood, however the provision of this facility must be secondary to maintaining the safe and efficient movement of traffic (including pedestrians) on the highway. There is always a balance to be struck between competing demands for a finite resource; it is recognised that the loss of on-street parking on this section of Breck Hill Road will inconvenience some residents.

The objectors have requested that parking bays be created within the highway as is the case on some other roads in the area. However, due to the width of Breck Hill Road, parking bays of this nature would not address the problem of obstruction. Vehicles currently park half on the footway and half on the carriageway on this part of Breck Hill Road which appears to be done in a bid to reduce the obstructive effect of parking here. Nonetheless, this still results in obstruction and visibility issues for larger vehicles, such as buses as they approach the brow of hill. The cost of providing the requested facility is significant and would still detrimentally affect safe traffic flow requiring traffic to manoeuvre around the parked vehicles, forcing them into the centre of the carriageway. Parking bays have been used on other roads in the area, however these roads have significantly lower traffic flows and are not high-frequency bus routes or are significantly wider than Breck Hill Road, allowing two-way traffic to be accommodated alongside parking.

Unrestricted on-street parking is available further along Breck Hill Road and limited waiting parking is available in a car park and on-street parking bays on Plains Road. It should be noted that loading is permitted on the proposed restriction, so deliveries to residents' homes are unaffected. This includes private vehicles briefly stopping to load and unload, so residents will still be able to briefly park outside their premises while they are picking up or setting down passengers or moving goods.

11. Objection – reduction in taxi rank capacity

Three objections, including one from Gedling Borough Council's Taxi Licensing Officer, were made on the basis that the proposals reduced the capacity of the taxi rank on Woodthorpe Drive. All three respondents felt that the blue badge holder parking bay should be located away from the northern arm of Woodthorpe Drive. One respondent also considered that the loading ban (which will also prohibit blue badge parking) should not apply 'at all times' and that this adversely affects business viability. One respondent stated that the proposed changes would make it more difficult for disabled users to access taxis at this location.

Response – reduction in taxi rank capacity

It is considered reasonable to provide blue badge parking at this location, to mitigate the parking opportunity lost to these users as a result of the loading ban. Disabled users have a need for parking to be in close proximity to their destination, in this case the public houses on Woodthorpe Drive so it is not considered appropriate to locate the bay further away. In its proposed location the bay will safely meet demand for blue badge parking for both the daytime and night-time economies without obstructing traffic. A limited number of disabled parking spaces are also available in the private car parks belonging to businesses on this stretch of Woodthorpe Drive.

The bus service operates on all days so it is necessary to maintain the loading ban 'at all times' to maintain unobstructed traffic movements on the highway. The taxi rank facility is retained and continues to provide accessible transport options for both disabled and able-bodied users. The loss of the facility to load on the existing double yellow lines is mitigated

by the introduction of a specific loading bay, tailored to the needs of businesses on this road. This will ensure business viability is not affected by the loading ban.

It is not possible to extend the parking bay to accommodate the disabled parking bay whilst retaining the same length of taxi rank as there are private vehicle accesses which must not be obstructed. It is not considered appropriate to create a second taxi rank in the bay outside the Post Office on Plains Road as this would not be located close enough to the public houses to attract customers and would be less used as a result. The presence of two ranks in close proximity may also create conflict between drivers if one is habitually under-used. It is also considered that it may encourage drivers to make U-turns on Plains Road to move to the more centrally located rank on Woodthorpe Drive, which would be a highway safety concern.

It is considered that the proposed scheme strikes the most appropriate balance between the differing needs of highway users and makes the best use of the road-space available. It is not possible to provide unlimited parking to meet all demand directly outside the pubs and restaurants on Woodthorpe Drive. A public car park is available on the south-eastern side of Plains Road, with 3 designated blue-badge holder car parking spaces. A signalised pedestrian crossing is in place to assist the safe movement of pedestrians from this side of the road to the northern arm of Woodthorpe Drive.

The removal of localised network congestion as a result of inappropriate blue badge parking will facilitate the punctual and reliable running of bus services.

Other Options Considered

12. Other options considered relate to the length and times of the waiting restrictions proposed, which could have been either lesser or greater and the relative positioning of the disabled bay in relation to the taxi rank. The proposed restrictions are considered to be a reasonable balance between the need to ensure the safe, effective and accessible operation of the highway network and public transport and on-street parking provision.

Comments from Local Members

13. County Councillor Roy Allan did not comment on the proposals, whilst County Councillor Muriel Weisz supported the proposals but asked that the viability of the request for parking bays on Breck Hill Road be considered during the consultation.

Reason for Recommendation

14. The recommendations represent the most appropriate action to reduce / prevent danger to highway users, for facilitating appropriate lawful parking where possible and the safe passage of traffic, particularly buses, incorporating the majority view and having had regard to all feedback received.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

16. Nottinghamshire Police has raised no objection to the proposals.

Financial Implications

17. The scheme is being jointly funded through the 2016/17 Traffic Management Revenue budget for Gedling and the revenue Bus Service Operators Grant, held by Transport Facilities team and the cost is estimated at £5,000 to implement the traffic order and construction works.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

18. The Council has a duty to provide a fair service to all users of the town. However, the Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies 'to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'. Disability is a protected characteristic. Therefore, the Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can continue to use the facilities of the town.

19. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact of the proposal, the results of the consultation and any appropriate mitigation. This equality impact assessment is included as a background paper to this committee report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is **recommended** that:

- 1) The Nottinghamshire County Council (Breck Hill Road, Thackerays Lane Roundabout and Woodthorpe Drive, Woodthorpe) (Prohibition Of Waiting And Loading) and Woodthorpe Drive, Woodthorpe (Parking Places) Traffic Regulation Order 2016 (7182)

is made as advertised and objectors notified accordingly.

Tim Gregory
Corporate Director – Place

Name and Title of Report Author

Mike Barnett - Team Manager (Major Projects and Improvements), Via East Midlands Ltd

Constitutional Comments (SJE – 29/09/2016)

20. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of the Transport & Highways Committee to whom responsibility for the exercise of the Authority's functions relating to traffic management have been delegated.

Financial Comments (SES 27/09/2016)

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

Background Papers

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. All relevant documents for the proposed scheme are contained within the scheme file which can be found in the Major Projects and Improvements Team at Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6BJ.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Breck Hill Road, Thackeray's Lane Roundabout and Woodthorpe Drive, Woodthorpe (Prohibition of Waiting and Loading) and Woodthorpe Drive, Woodthorpe (Parking Places) Traffic Regulation Order 2016 (7182)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Arnold South ED
Arnold South ED

County Councillor Muriel Weisz
County Councillor Roy Allan