

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (WESTGATE AND HALLOUGHTON ROAD, SOUTHWELL) (PROPOSED NO RIGHT TURN BAN AND NO WAITING AT ANY TIME RESTRICTIONS) ORDERS 2015 (3215 AND 3216)

CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider objections to the Nottinghamshire County Council (Westgate and Halloughton Road, Southwell) (Proposed No Right Turn Ban and No Waiting at Any Time Restrictions) Orders 2015 (3215 and 3216).

Information and Advice

1. Halloughton Road is a residential road in the historic market town of Southwell. The road runs between Westgate and Nottingham Road, both of which are main roads into the town. The route is frequently used as a rat-run by drivers avoiding a busy town centre junction. The northern section of Halloughton Road, where it joins Westgate, is only 4.0m wide in places; substantially narrower than the 7.3m typical width of a modern standard single carriageway road. This particularly narrow section extends over 90m and has no footway for pedestrians. The lack of footway combined with the increased traffic flow in the morning and evening peak causes concern to users over the potential for conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.
2. Following representations from constituents local County Councillor Bruce Laughton raised residents' concerns over the volume of non-access traffic, coupled with the narrowness of the road and lack of pedestrian footway. The local Highways District Manager and Councillor Laughton met with residents and a Town Council representative regarding these issues and agreed to investigate a solution.
3. As part of the scheme development consideration was given to a number of options, including a closure with residents' only access, a one-way order along the entire length and traffic calming along the entire length. These were discounted at the development stage for a variety of reasons including enforcement issues, increases in traffic speed, noise/vibration concerns and lack of resident support.

4. The option to close Halloughton Road entirely, from a point approximately 90m south of its junction with Westgate was considered in more detail. The effect of such a closure was assessed in terms of highway impact, additional journey lengths, traffic flow and speed of traffic. Residents were surveyed in July 2012 to determine their view on such a closure; 63 properties were surveyed and 58 responses received. The results showed a majority (85%) of those responding were in favour of a road closure; however many gave their approval conditional on other measures or exemptions, which were not achievable. A safety audit of the closure was undertaken, which highlighted concerns over vehicles reversing into Westgate, increased vehicle speeds over the southern stretch of Halloughton Road and also the lack of a safe turning area to the south of the proposed closure. These factors in conjunction with the substantial cost of such a scheme meant that it was unfeasible.
5. The scheme now proposed by Nottinghamshire County Council introduces a no-right turn traffic order on Westgate that will prohibit right-turn vehicle movements into Halloughton Road from Westgate. Traffic count information from a survey undertaken on 16th October 2013 indicates that in the morning peak (between 0700 and 1000 hrs) there were 184 vehicles travelling south along the whole length of Halloughton Road before turning right on the A612 towards Nottingham, this will be traffic using the road as a cut through. During the same time period 35 vehicles travelled along the road in the opposite (northern) direction. In the afternoon peak (1500 and 1730 hrs) the number is more balanced, but traffic counts still show 89 vehicles travelling south along all of Halloughton Road and 74 in the northern direction after turning off the A612. The proposal will help to reduce vehicles using the route as a rat-run between Westgate and Nottingham Road in the southerly direction, which as shown is the primary traffic movement. As a comparison in the morning peak 34 vehicles originated on Halloughton Road and turned right onto A612 and 12 additional vehicles turn left towards the school, as these vehicles originate from Halloughton Road they are considered as local residential traffic.
6. In addition “No Waiting At Any Time” (double yellow lines) are proposed on Westgate and for a distance of approximately 55m along both sides of Halloughton Road from its junction with Westgate. The waiting restrictions will ensure that Halloughton Road is kept clear of parked vehicles, improving visibility and safety for both motorists and pedestrians and making it easier for vehicles turning into and out of the road. Double yellow lines extend into Halloughton Road as this is the narrowest section with walling and hedgerows either side that would restrict traffic movements and flows should any vehicles park at the location.
7. The proposals were initially consulted on between 2nd October 2014 and 27th October 2014, with double yellow lines extending approximately 6m (minimum length) on Westgate and 55m on Halloughton Road from the junction. In response to comments from consultees the double yellow lines on Westgate were extended to 10m to provide better visibility and additional double yellow lines were proposed for the Halloughton Road / Nottingham Road junction, to ensure visibility at that junction is maintained. In response to comments from conservation experts the signing and lining were amended where possible to be sympathetic to the heritage of the area. The “No Waiting At Any Time” (double yellow lines) will be primrose coloured lines of 50mm width and the right-turn ban sign will have no yellow backing board.
8. These revisions were publicly advertised between 17th November 2014 and 22nd December 2014, as shown on the attached plans H/04078/2014/01/A and H/04078/2014/04.

Objections Received

9. During consultation on this proposal a total of twenty-seven responses were received, which nine expressed support for the scheme. A variety of comments were raised:

- Concerns that the restriction would increase speeds and did not sufficiently improve pedestrian safety on Halloughton Road;
- Concerns that the right-turn ban from Westgate to Halloughton Road would be ignored by drivers and cause resentment amongst those drivers who adhered to the traffic regulations;
- Requests for these or limited waiting restrictions to be extended / introduced at other junctions;
- Concerns that the restrictions would inconvenience residents travelling from Oxton / Farnsfield as the right-turn restriction would require them to make a longer trip via Nottingham Road to access their homes on Halloughton Road;
- Comments that the waiting restrictions on Halloughton Road were unnecessary.
- Nottinghamshire Police objected to the right-turn ban only; on the grounds that insufficient resources were available to enforce the restriction and that other engineering measures would more effectively address the issue of rat-running.

10. Replies have been sent direct to all respondents and of these seven are considered to be outstanding objections to the proposals; including the objection from Nottinghamshire Police.

11. Objection by local residents to the right-turn ban.

All outstanding objections related to the introduction of the right-turn ban from Westgate to Halloughton Road. Three Halloughton Road residents objected on the grounds that the ban would increase their journey distance and travel time when travelling from a westerly direction, as they would be required to access Halloughton Road via Nottingham Road. Two other objections were made on the basis that the right-turn ban would not be effectively enforced and that other measures, such as a road closure, would more effectively address the issue of rat-running. A sixth objection, from a resident of Westgate, was that the right-turn ban would force more traffic onto Westgate, worsening the situation on an already congested route. The objector argued that Halloughton Road could easily accommodate the current levels of traffic.

12. Response

It is not possible to exempt residents from the proposed right-turn ban, nor to make the prohibition time-limited. This full time restriction assists both understanding of it and compliance with it from drivers. The right-turn ban, rather than a prohibition of entry on Halloughton Road, has been chosen as the best available measure to address the rat-running problem, whilst retaining the widest access to the public highway for both residents and other users. This option maintains two-way traffic flow on the route, therefore reducing the likelihood of increased vehicle speeds that is a result of making a one-way order. Other options, such as a closure, were considered. However, this would also create longer journeys for some users and increased traffic speed and volumes over certain stretches of road. It would also require additional engineering measures, such as turning heads which cannot be accommodated within the restricted Highway boundary. The decision to prohibit the right-turn movement from Westgate is designed to minimise conflict over the narrow

section of Halloughton Road and may improve traffic flow along Westgate as it will no longer be held up by right-turners waiting for a gap in westbound traffic.

13. Objection by Nottinghamshire Police to the right-turn ban.

This objection was made on the grounds that the scheme requires compliance from drivers to work and such compliance can only be enforced by Police Officers (not PCSO or Community wardens) taking them away from more serious incidents. The objections states that a barrier in the middle of Halloughton Road would be a more suitable and self-enforcing option.

It also states that accident statistics show that there have been no injury collisions on Halloughton Road itself for the last 3yrs and 5 months (time period 1/1/2011 – 31/5/2014). The suggestion from Nottinghamshire Police is that the scheme is addressing perceived rather than actual safety concerns as there is no collision problem at this location.

14. Response to Nottinghamshire Police

The right-turn ban from Westgate has been identified as the intervention which offers the best balance of outcomes between reducing rat-running and improving residents' perception of safety in the area. It also maintains the widest access to the public highway for all users and minimises journey extensions required by road closures or prohibition of entry regulations. To assist in driver understanding of and compliance with the regulation, the prohibition will operate 24hrs a day, 365 days a year with no exemptions. The prohibition will be signed in advance and further highlighted by carriageway markings.

15. Objection – that the No Waiting at Any Time restrictions at the northern end of Halloughton Road is unnecessary.

Three objections included a comment that the No Waiting at Any Time (double yellow lines) restrictions are not unnecessary because no vehicles are customarily parked in this area.

16. Response – regarding the No Waiting at Any Time restrictions at the northern end of Halloughton Road.

The scheme proposed by Nottinghamshire County Council would introduce formal No Waiting at Any Time restrictions at the northern end of Halloughton Road and along Westgate. There is considerable pressure on the highway in the area, with conflicting demands of residents' parking, visitor and commuter parking, essential loading and parking by blue badge holders alongside the movement of vehicles, cycles and pedestrians.

The primary purpose of the highway is to facilitate the movement of people and vehicles not as parking for vehicles. However it is recognised that parking on the highway does occur, particularly for households with no alternative parking provision. To improve safety and visibility, double yellow lines will be introduced on Westgate. This will reduce the availability of on-street parking and, as pressure on the highway increases; it is possible that without formal restrictions on Halloughton Road, the wider sections may be used for parking. As such the double yellow lines are also proposed for a section Halloughton Road and this is also along the narrowest section with walling and hedgerows to either side.

Other Options Considered

17. Other options have been considered and discounted, as outlined in paragraphs 4 - 5 and the present scheme proposal altered in line with requests and comments received as part of the initial consultation.

Comments from Local Members

18. County Councillor Bruce Laughton supports the proposed scheme.

Reasons for Recommendations

19. The proposals contained in the Westgate and Halloughton Road proposed No Right Turn Ban and No Waiting at Any Time orders are considered appropriate taking into account a balanced view of the needs of all road users.

Statutory and Policy Implications

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), 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.

Financial Implications

21. The scheme is being funded from the 2014/15 Integrated Transport Measures capital budget and will cost in the region of £5,000.

Crime and Disorder Implications

22. Nottinghamshire Police objected to the right-turn ban element of the proposals as detailed in paragraph 13.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

The Nottinghamshire County Council (Westgate and Halloughton Road, Southwell) (Proposed No Right Turn Ban and No Waiting at Any Time Restrictions) Orders 2015 (3215 and 3216)

are made as advertised and objectors advised accordingly.

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Constitutional Comments (LMcC – 09/01/2015)

23. The Highways and Transport Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (GB - 08/01/2015)

24. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 21 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, West Bridgford.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Southwell and Caunton ED

Councillor Bruce Laughton