

REPORT OF REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**PROPOSED BUS STOP CLEARWAY (BLAKE ROAD, STAPLEFORD)****CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the objections received in respect of the above proposed bus stop clearway and whether the bus stop clearway should be implemented.

Information and Advice

2. Nottinghamshire County Council has over 5,700 bus stops throughout the County and continually invests in the network's infrastructure as part of the County Council's ongoing commitment to improve public transport.
3. The County Council works closely with all public transport operators across the County to identify bus stops that suffer from indiscriminate parking. To address this problem bus stop clearways can be installed that prohibit cars from parking or waiting in the bus stop during specific times and these are clearly identified with new road markings and signage. The main benefits of bus stop clearways are to:
 - Help the bus align with the kerb to enable level access for disabled passengers and pushchair users;
 - Ease congestion as a correctly aligned bus will not block the road for other road users;
 - Ensure that bus drivers discharge their duty to drop passengers off on the kerb and not on the road;
 - Ensure that the investment in raised kerbs, (as previously required under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and now required by the Equalities Act 2010), is not negated by indiscriminate parking at bus stops;
 - Ensure that bus services operate on time and are not delayed.
4. Where parking enforcement has been decriminalised (as in Nottinghamshire) bus stop clearways do not require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) but are nevertheless enforceable by Civil Parking Enforcement Officers, and operating hours can be adjusted to reflect bus services' hours of operation. At the Transport and Highways Committee report on 11th September 2014 it was agreed that outstanding objections received in respect of bus stop clearways will be reported to the Service Director for Highways or, where 3 or more objections are received from separate households, to Transport & Highways Committee for their consideration.

5. Blake Road is a residential road, located near to Stapleford town centre, which comprises both detached and semi-detached properties with off-street parking. The proposed clearway is for a bus stop (ref BR0480) located approximately 150m from the junction of Toton Lane. In 2013, Nottinghamshire County Council received a request for improvements at this stop to assist a disabled user accessing bus services at this location. At the time and in response the County Council proposed to install a bus stop clearway to prevent obstructive parking. Consultation was undertaken with affected residents in 2013, several residents objected and it was decided to postpone the installation pending a review period.
6. Over the next two years bus access to the stop was monitored; which included reports from NottsBus (the service operator). These confirmed the bus stop continued to be regularly obstructed by parked vehicles.
7. As a result of obstructive parking preventing buses accessing the bus stop Nottinghamshire County Council is proposing to introduce a bus stop clearway (Mon – Sat, 7am – 7pm) to remove parked vehicles from the bus stop. The consultation took place between 28th April 2016 and 23rd May 2016 and the attached drawing H/04078/2265/01 represents the advertised proposals.

Responses received

A total of six responses were received to the consultation, five of which were are considered to be objections to some or all of the proposals.

8. Objection – why is a clearway required?

A common theme to all of the objections received during the consultation was that the respondents questioned either the need for a clearway or for the bus service.

Response – why is a clearway required?

The purpose of the bus stop clearways is to provide an area clear of parked vehicles to enable buses to pull up and allow passengers to board and alight from the footway. This stop (ref BR0480) has been identified by passenger transport services as one that suffers from habitual parking. Not all stops along a particular route may experience problems with parked vehicles and so not all stops will be treated with clearways.

The bus stop is used by two scheduled bus services (one of which links to the NET tram park and ride site), which operate throughout the day, offering sustainable transport choices to local residents, not all of whom have access to a private car. Data from the 2011 census shows that in both Broxtowe and Ashfield over a fifth of households (21.6% and 23.7% respectively) do not have access to car or van, this is higher than the Nottinghamshire average of 20.8%. In order for public transport to be an attractive option services must be accessible and function effectively and reliably.

9. Objection – times of operation of the clearway

Two objectors also questioned the duration of the proposed clearway restriction and considered that it should be reduced to more tightly reflect the times of operation of the service.

Response – times of operation of the clearway

Nottinghamshire County Council typically implements only two types of clearway; either 24hrs or 12hrs (7a.m. to 7 p.m.), in force on each day a service operates. However, in response to the comments received during the consultation it is proposed to alter the

proposed hours of operation to more closely reflect the current operational hours of the bus service. The stop is used by services from 09:50 until 18:28 Monday to Saturday and as such the revised times of operation of the clearway are proposed as 09:30 a.m. to 7.00pm Monday to Saturday, shown on the attached drawing H/04078/2265/02 .

10. Objection – loss of on-street parking availability

A common theme to the objections was that the respondents viewed the bus stops as available kerbspace to park private vehicles and so objected to the loss of on-street parking and potential parking migration.

Response – loss of on-street parking availability

The bus stop clearway will enable services to pull in, directly against the raised kerb, therefore enabling passengers with limited mobility and wheelchair users to access the bus.

The affected properties have off-street parking provision and unrestricted on-street parking is available elsewhere on the road, offering alternative on-street parking locations for additional vehicles and visitors without obstructing the bus stop. The proposed times of operation for each clearway has been modified to reflect the days and times of the buses which service that stop.

11. Objection – location of the proposed stop

Two objectors also questioned the location of the stop and consider that it should be moved to another location or not used, as they believed a 'hail and ride' system was in use.

Response – location of the proposed stop

The bus does not operate using a hail and ride system, but has used this system in the vicinity of Blake Road when it is unable to access the bus stop. Safeguarding unrestricted access to the bus stop and the raised kerb facility will enable all passengers to benefit from the raised kerb boarding point which is a significant aid to disabled or elderly passengers and passengers with push chairs.

The request to move the bus stop south-west along Blake Road opposite number 76 would move it approximately 80m and result in it being within 100m of the next bus stop. This is well below the minimum distance between which bus stops are best located and means passengers further along Blake Road would have further to walk to catch their bus. It is considered that the current stop is located at the most appropriate point for the safe operation of the service and most equitable distribution of stops.

Other Options Considered

12. Other options considered relate to the length of time and number of days that the bus stop clearway is in force. The demand for on-street parking is recognised and so it is proposed to reduce the restrictions to the minimum required to ensure the safe operation of the bus stop by reducing the hours of operation to 9½ hours; significantly below either of the standardised durations of operation (i.e. 24hrs / 12hrs) otherwise used across the County.

Comments from Local Members

13. Local County Councillor Jacky Williams asked that the objections raised by her constituents be considered. No comments on the proposals were received from County Councillor Stan Heptinstall.

Reasons for Recommendations

14. The measures contained in the proposed clearway restriction are considered appropriate taking into account a balanced view of the needs of all sectors of the community, including non-drivers, the County Council's network management duty and safety concerns. The times of operation have been amended to reflect the hours of service operation and the proposals will assist the safe and effective operation of local bus services.

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 require.

Financial Implications

16. The scheme is being funded through the 2016/17 Local Transport Plan Bus Improvements capital budget and the cost is estimated at £1,000.

Crime and Disorder Implications

17. Nottinghamshire Police made no comments on the proposals.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is **recommended** that:

The bus stop clearway proposed at stop (ref. BR0480) be implemented with a revised time of operation (Monday – Saturday 9.30a.m. to 7.00 p.m.) and the objectors informed accordingly

Tim Gregory
Corporate Director Place

Name and Title of Report Author

Neil Hodgson, Head of Consultancy Via East Midlands Ltd.

Constitutional Comments (SJE – 24/06/2016)

18. 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 both traffic management and road safety, and the provision of passenger transport services, including bus initiatives, has been delegated.

Financial Comments (GB – 24/06/2016)

19. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 16.

Background Papers

All 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.

Reports:

Proposed Change to the Process of Managing Objections to Bus Stop Clearways
(Transport & Highways Committee, 11th September 2014, Agenda Item 5)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Bramcote and Stapleford ED	Councillor Stan Heptinstall
Bramcote and Stapleford ED	Councillor Jacky Williams