

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 21 SEPTEMBER 2010

2009 TRAFFIC ORDER AMENDMENT 13

PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN HIGH STREET, SEVENOAKS

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director

Status: For decision

Executive Summary: This report requests that Members approve the introduction of a traffic regulation order to amend the parking restrictions in the High Street, Sevenoaks.

This report supports the Key Aim of safer communities and the effective and efficient use of resources.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Williamson

Head of Service Head of Environmental and Operational Services – Mr. Richard Wilson

Recommendation: It be RESOLVED that

The comments and objections to the changes in the on-street parking Traffic Regulation Order 2009 Amendment 13 be noted and the officer recommendations set out within this report be implemented.

History (Northern section)

1. Parking in Sevenoaks High Street has always been in short supply and the parking arrangements have not been amended for some years.
2. When the Blighs area was redeveloped and Blighs Road became a pedestrianised area the parking restrictions on the High Street were not amended to reflect this.
3. Unlawful parking in the northern part of the High Street (on both sides outside WH Smith causes delays through the town and congestion through the Pembroke Road traffic signal junction.
4. Approximately 3 years ago, Southern Water carried out water main replacement through the High Street and as part of the accommodation works, temporary limited waiting parking bays were provided outside WH Smith. These proved popular, but as they were subject to a temporary Order were removed once the works were completed.

Item No. 6

5. The redevelopment and relocation of Waitrose to the old Woolworths premises, along with the demolition of the Waitrose multi-storey car park has increased parking pressure on the northern section of the High Street.

History (Southern section)

6. Parking in the southern part of Sevenoaks High Street (between the Fountain and Lock's Yard has also been in short supply compared to the demand.
7. Additionally the existing taxi rank facilities outside MK One exceed the demand, as the majority of taxi usage in the area comes from pre-booking or from the bus or railway stations.
8. There is a large underused taxi rank is frequently used by the general public, leading to a number of penalty charge notices being issued for non-compliance.
9. Loading and unloading in a safe area that does not cause an obstruction has been a problem for local businesses as rear access is not always possible.
10. The existing single yellow line junction protection across the High Street / Akehurst Lane junction was created many years ago and is outdated and should be updated to provide cover at any time.
11. The existing disabled parking bay in the High Street causes a problem as it reduces the overall capacity of parking in the area, and prevents loading.
12. Disabled shoppers have complained that it is occupied and that there is no alternative, and its removal and replacement with double yellow lines would still allow disabled parking (via the normal Blue Badge conditions) and would make more space available for general pay & display parking (free to Blue Badge holders).
13. The traffic order defining the existing parking bay on the west side of the High Street (outside The Chequers) has been subject to a legal challenge and we are advised to amend and re-define the parking bay to reduce the possibility of further challenge and to aid enforcement

Proposal (High Street, Northern section)

14. The proposal is to;
 - 14.1. re-introduce parking bays outside WH Smith, but extended further northwards towards Blighs Road, with the bays being subject to pay & display, similar to the other on-street parking bays in the High Street.
 - 14.2. Change the existing 'no waiting at any time' outside Tesco to 'no waiting at any time and no loading (Mondays to Saturdays, 8.30am to 6.30pm)' to prevent obstructive parking causing congestion and delays
 - 14.3. Introduce a new 'loading only' bay to provide specific loading and unloading facilities for nearby commercial premises.

Item No. 6

15. The effect of these proposals is to provide 10 new parking spaces for short term parking, specific loading facilities and parking controls to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.
16. A plan of the proposal is shown in Appendix A (available via CMIS, on deposit in the Members' Room and to be tabled at the meeting)
17. Details of the Traffic Regulation Order are available on CMIS and in the Members Room as Appendix D.

Proposal (High Street, Southern section)

18. The proposal is;
 - 18.1. to reduce the existing 5 space underused taxi rank to a 2 space 'parking place for taxis' – this can operate as a taxi rank for taxis plying for hire, but can also allow taxis to park, thus giving more freedom to the drivers.
 - 18.2. to remove the existing disabled parking bay outside No. 88 High Street as this area tended to get 'blocked' by all-day blue-badge parking, with no space 'turnover'.
 - 18.3. to extend the existing pay & display spaces outside Lorimers to improve parking availability. As with all on-street pay & display spaces within the District, there is no charge for blue badge holders.
 - 18.4. to change the existing single yellow lines (used for junction protection) across Akehurst Lane to double yellow lines so that access is better maintained.
 - 18.5. to amend the parking bays and double yellow lines outside The Chequers so the traffic order is more robust to challenge.
19. The effect of these proposals is to provide 4 additional parking spaces for short-term parking, specific loading facilities, facilities for taxis that are more suited to the current usage and more turn-over of parking spaces for short-term visitors to the High Street
20. A plan of the proposal is also shown in Appendix A (available via CMIS, on deposit in the Members' Room and to be tabled at the meeting)

Formal Consultation

21. The District Council carried out formal consultation on the proposals in accordance with the statutory requirements, but due to the complexity of the issues, extended the consultation period from 21 days to 6 weeks to allow more time for those wishing to respond.
22. The consultation produced 15 responses, detailed in Appendix B. (Please note that there is no Appendix C.)

Item No. 6

23. All of the emergency services were consulted. The Police commented on the proposals indicating 'no objection' and Kent Fire & Rescue Services confirmed that the means of access 'is considered satisfactory'.

24. One of the public responses made no specific comments relating to the proposals, but commented on the facilities in Blighs car park, making suggestions that the arrangements in the car park should be changed. Unfortunately the suggestions made are not practicable.

25. A summary of the 14 remaining responses is as follows;

Proposal Ref.	Area	Proposal	For	Against
A	Northern section	Parking bays outside WH Smith	12	2
B		Prohibition of loading outside Tesco	13	1*
C	Southern section	Changes to taxi rank outside MK One	14	0
D		Changes to yellow lines (and removal of disabled bay) across Akehurst Lane	12	2
E		Extension of parking bays outside Lorimers	14	0
F		Amendment of parking bays outside The Chequers	14	0
G	Both sections	Loading bays	11	3

** It should be noted that any valid objection to a loading restriction that operates for longer than the morning and evening peak periods should be considered for a public enquiry.*

26. Objections to Proposal Ref A

26.1. One objection commented that the loading bay at the end of Blighs Road is too small and is inadequate and thus the parking bays outside WH Smiths would prevent adequate loading and unloading.

26.2. One objection commented that the northern section of the High Street should be kept clear to avoid nightmare traffic jams during the day.

27. The District Council suggests that the loading bays are of sufficient size for the purposes of loading and unloading, as this is a transitory action and vehicles doing so are not allowed to park for long periods of time. Additionally there is no reason why vehicles wishing to load and unload cannot use the pay & display

Item No. 6

parking spaces. The proposals allow more facilities than are currently available, with areas that are preserved for loading.

28. If it proves that the loading facilities in the northern section are insufficient, the loading area could be extended, but its current size is thought to be appropriate.
29. The proposed loading restriction outside Tesco should (subject to its approval) be sufficient to allow effective enforcement and reduce congestion.
30. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref A – it is recommended that the changes be introduced as proposed

31. Objections to Proposal Ref B

31.1. One objection commented that the loading bay at the end of Blighs Road is too small and is inadequate, and thus objected to the loading ban on the opposite side of the road.

32. Though an objection to the loading restriction was received, it actually pertains to the size of the loading facilities being provided in Proposal Ref A, and is thus not sufficient to be considered grounds for a public enquiry
33. The District Council suggests that the loading bays are of sufficient size for the purposes of loading and unloading, as this is a transitory action and vehicles doing so are not allowed to park for long periods of time. Additionally there is no reason why vehicles wishing to load and unload cannot use the pay & display parking spaces. The proposals allow more facilities than are currently available, with areas that are preserved for loading.
34. If it proves that the loading facilities in the northern section are insufficient, the loading area could be extended, but its current size is thought to be appropriate.
35. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref B – it is recommended that the changes be introduced as proposed.

36. Objections to Proposal Ref C – There were no objections to this proposal

37. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref C – As there were no objections, it is recommended that the changes be introduced as per the proposal.

38. Objections to Proposal Ref D

38.1. Two objections commented that the disabled bay should not be removed.

39. The proposals are designed to allow better access to Akehurst Lane and also provide more opportunities for blue badge holders to park, either on the new double yellow lines or within the extended parking bays, under the normal conditions associated with their Blue badges.
40. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref D - it is recommended that the changes be introduced as proposed.

41. Objections to Proposal Ref E – There were no objections to this proposal

Item No. 6

42. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref E– As there were no objections, it is recommend that the changes be introduced as per the proposal.
43. **Objections to Proposal Ref F** – There were no objections to this proposal
44. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref F – As there were no objections, it is recommend that the changes be introduced as per the proposal.
45. **Objections to Proposal Ref G**
- 45.1. One objection commented that the loading bay at the end of Blighs Road is too small and is inadequate.
- 45.2. One objection commented that the northern section of the High Street should be kept clear to avoid nightmare traffic jams during the day.
- 45.3. The Town Council requested that the times of operation of the both loading bays be restricted to 9am-11am
- 45.4. The Town Council requested that loading be prevented opposite the loading bay in the southern section.
46. The District Council suggests that the loading bays are of sufficient size for the purposes of loading and unloading, as this is a transitory action and vehicles doing so are not allowed to park for long periods of time. Additionally there is no reason why vehicles wishing to load and unload cannot use the pay & display parking spaces. The proposals allow more facilities than are currently available, with areas that are preserved for loading.
47. The proposed loading restriction outside Tesco should (subject to its approval) be sufficient to allow effective enforcement and reduce congestion.
48. Restricting the times of operation of the proposed bays is not a practical solution to the needs to the businesses in the area who have deliveries and collections throughout the day.
49. Additionally, if the times of operation of a loading bay are restricted to 9am to 11am, outside of the specified times those areas would be unrestricted (and available for free parking by all with no time limit) which would defeat the objective of providing facilities for loading.
50. **Recommendation** for Proposal Ref G - it is recommended that the changes be introduced as proposed.

Key Implications - Financial

51. The costs of the changes are estimated to be approximately £6000, consisting of new signing and road markings and the provision of a new pay & display machine.
52. The 14 additional pay & display parking bays would be subject to Tariff A1, currently set at; 10p for 30minutes, 50p for 1hour, £1.00 for 2 hours, providing an income of approximately £1500 per space per year.

Item No. 6

53. The costs of implementation would be met from the District Council's on-street parking account.

Community impact and outcomes

54. The District Council will be able to better enforce its parking restrictions within the town centre.

55. Additional short-stay parking facilities in the town centre will assist local businesses

56. Congestion and delays in the town centre should be reduced.

Legal, Human Rights, etc.

57. The procedures appropriate to the promotion, advertisement and introduction of a traffic regulation order (as set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996) have been followed and exceeded.

Risk Assessment Statement

58. The proposals should have no increased level of risk beyond the normal for managing on-street parking.

Sources of Information: Existing on and off-street parking traffic regulation orders held by the Parking and Amenity team

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**KRISTEN PATERSON
COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES DIRECTOR**

