

REVIEW OF ON-STREET PARKING CHANGES – KNOCKHOLT STATION

Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board – 12 June 2013

Report of the: Chief Executive Designate

Status: For information

Executive Summary: This report reviews the changes to on-street parking arrangements near to Knockholt Station in Halstead that were brought in to effect in October 2011.

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

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Hogarth

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

Recommendation: It be NOTED that the changes to parking arrangements have had a beneficial effect on traffic movements along London Road, and congestion outside the station has been dramatically reduced.

Introduction

1. The District Council introduced new parking restrictions and controls near to Knockholt station in the parish of Halstead following reports of a number of parking and safety concerns.
2. The aims of the parking changes were;
 - 2.1. to improve safety at junctions close to Knockholt station
 - 2.2. to remove the problem of the obstruction of the cycle lanes
 - 2.3. to prevent the obstruction of bus stop facilities
 - 2.4. to allow effective management of commuter parking by the introduction of parking charges
3. The proposals were subject to extensive public consultations which were reported to the Board on 16th March 2009 and 15th June 2011.

Analysis of the effect of the changes

4. The restrictions that were introduced have had a significant effect on the parking arrangements in London Road, close to the entrance to Knockholt station. Prior

incidents of parking on both sides of the road with the associated obstruction and congestion, no longer occur. Also, buses have been able to use the bus stops near the station.

The Operations Manager of Arriva (one of the bus companies that operates in the area has commented *"I am pleased to report that there have been significant improvements in the free flow of buses in this area. The roads are clear including the bus stops. One improvement that has had the desired effect!"*

5. Parking around the junctions of Watercroft Road, Wheatsheaf Hill, Cadlocks Hill, Broke Hill golf club and the station access road has also been effectively prevented.
6. Parking in the advisory cycle lane on the southwest side of the road has now stopped, and has been greatly reduced on the northeastern side of the road.
7. The number of cars that park to use Knockholt station has been significantly reduced from up to 150 cars a day to approximately 70 to 80, some drivers choosing to park further along the main road rather than in the parking spaces provided.
8. This recognizes that a proportion of those who previously commuted from Knockholt station were choosing to do so on economic grounds as parking had previously been free. Those commuters are now choosing to use stations elsewhere along the rail line.
9. Of the 105 pay and display parking spaces provided adjacent the station, on average 54 have been used on weekdays since the scheme was implemented, giving a utilisation rate of 51%. The charges do not apply on Saturdays and Sundays. Income from parking charges for year 2012/13 totalled £38,705. Of ticket purchases, 26% were made by pay-by-phone.
10. The parking places provided seem to operate well. There is always parking availability within the spaces provided. It could be argued that this is a result of the scheme providing too many spaces, but it results in a facility that is available to be used. No comments have been received in relation to the parking facilities or the parking charges in operation.
11. There were comments about overhanging vegetation from trees on the property boundary line on the northwest side of the station access. To address this the District Council arranged for the vegetation that extended over the public highway to be trimmed back.
12. There was a comment from the operators of the waste transfer station in the Knockholt station car park that the pay and display machine to the immediate right of the station exit (for emerging traffic) could mask on-coming traffic. This was assessed and was only thought to be a minor issue for some designs of skip lorry – other lorries with different driving positions were not experiencing problems, and the issue could be addressed by the drivers moving slightly further forward to improve their view at the junction.

13. As previously mentioned, some parking had displaced to the southeastern end of the restrictions, between the end of the lines in Old London Road and Badgers Rise. This was causing concern for residents of Badgers Rise. To address this, the District Council promoted new parking restrictions for that area. These were subject to a report to the Board on 12th September 2012, and were introduced on 31st March 2013.
14. The further restrictions introduced on Old London Road and in Badgers Rise have provided junction protection, have moved parking that was occurring along the main road to nearer the station (to an area with no fronting properties) and have prevented all-day on-street parking in Badgers Rise, in line with the requests from residents.

Recommendation

15. Accordingly it is recommended that the Board note the changes to parking arrangements and that no further changes are required.

Key Implications

Financial

16. There are no financial implications within this report.

Community impact and outcomes

17. The changes have addressed significant parking, congestion and safety issues.

Legal, Human Rights, etc

18. There are no legal issues or implications within this report.

Equality Impacts

19. There are no equality issues associated with this report.

Risk Assessment Statement

20. There are no proposals within this report and no associated risk.

Sources of Information:

Contact Officer(s): Andy Bracey Ext.7323

**PAV RAMEWAL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE DESIGNATE**