

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 14 DECEMBER 2011

REVIEW OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS NEAR KNOCKHOLT STATION, HALSTEAD

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director & Deputy Chief Executive

Status: For decision

Executive Summary: This report reviews the operation of the parking restrictions implemented in the vicinity of Knockholt station, Halstead, with recommendations to address issues that have arisen.

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

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Hunter

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

Recommendation: It be RESOLVED that the proposals as outlined in the report be approved for public consultation.

Introduction

1. Following approval by the JTB in June 2011, a scheme to introduce parking restrictions in the vicinity of Knockholt station was implemented at the beginning of October 2011. Previously, a number of yellow line restrictions had been introduced by Kent Highways to address parking issues at and near road junctions.
2. Schemes of this nature are normally review after six months of operation, which in this case would be the end of March. However, in order to take accommodate residents' concerns and to be able to progress any remedial measures without delay, the review is being undertaken slightly earlier in order to meet the timetable for this meeting.

Review of the Scheme

3. The review is undertaken with reference to site observations and communications received during the six month period. To assist the review, comments have been invited from the parish councils of Halstead, Knockholt and Shoreham, and from local District and County Council Members.
4. For information, an overview of the scheme as implemented, including other restrictions introduced by Kent Highways, is attached as Appendix A.

5. The yellow line restrictions introduced along the main road and side roads have been working well with no real enforcement issues being encountered.
6. Minor issues of land ownership has arisen in the lay-by on the southeastern side of Watercroft Road, but this is being resolved via enquiries against the Kent County Council gazetteer and the via a search with the Land Registry.
7. Use of the pay and display parking bays has been lower than expected, with approximately 60% utilisation currently being achieved. Although this has an effect upon income received, it does means that there are spaces available for those wishing to park.
8. There have been reports that the overall reduction in parking numbers has been linked with an increase in usage of Chelsfield Station (within the Bromley area) and at other stations up and down the railway line. There has also been anecdotal reports of commuters that had been travelling from further afield now choosing to use their local stations.
9. In the period leading up to Christmas, a temporary car park was operated on land adjacent the station in competition to the on-street parking which reduced the level of patronage on-street.
10. As can be seen from the plan in Appendix A, the yellow line restrictions implemented along the main road (Old London Road) at the south-east limit of the scheme, end approximately halfway between the junctions of Watercroft Road and Badgers Rise. Displacement parking has been regularly occurring beyond the restrictions up to and around the junction of Badgers Rise. This has had the effect of reducing visibility at the junction and has caused severe difficulties for residents in Old London Road to the north of the junction in accessing and, particularly in exiting, their driveways.
11. Residents of Badgers Rise have reported that commuter parking is also taking place in that road.
12. The District Council has not had powers to immediately deal with parking at the junction and is seeking to address this issue as part of this review.
13. Some comments have also been received concerning the displacement parking which is affecting the cycle lanes.
14. Correspondence received from the Halstead Parish Council and the Badgers Mount Residents Association and from a number of residents is attached as Appendix B for information. This is not a record of all correspondence received, but is representative of the issues raised. Any further notable communication received following preparation of this report will be reported at the time of the meeting.

Proposals and Recommendations

15. We believe the current scheme is working well and there are no adjustments proposed.

16. Issues of displacement parking in the vicinity of Badgers Rise need to be addressed. We propose to provide double yellow line restrictions on the north-east side of Old London Road at the junction with Badgers Rise either side of the junction. These will extend a distance appropriate to the traffic speed and road layout towards the station in order to keep the area outside the adjacent properties clear and south-eastwards to ensure the adjacent bus stop and crossing point from the nearby residential areas to the stop on the other side of the road are kept clear.
17. In addition, to ensure no parking will take place on the south-west side and to assist with keeping the bus stop on this side of the road and the crossing point clear, double yellow lines will be provided on the opposite side of Old London Road, the south-west side, to effectively extend the current double yellow lines southwards to terminate at the same point just beyond the bus stop.
18. It is not proposed that restrictions be introduced to prevent the displaced parking along Old London Road beyond the current restrictions. There are no properties along this length of the main road, there is sufficient road width to accommodate parking and provided parking is kept clear of the junction with Badger Rise and adjacent properties, it should not create issues with visibility.
19. Parking on the north side of Old London Road is currently constrained by the eastern end of the existing single yellow lines. To allow the existing parking capacity to remain, but to move the parking away from Badgers Rise, it is proposed to reduce the length of the existing single yellow lines by 2 car spaces (approximately 10m), which should also help deter parking from displacing from this area to the southeast of Badgers Rise.
20. This would retain a free parking option as opposed to using the pay and display parking areas nearer the station, and although parking here would effectively prevent use of the advisory cycle lane, the situation would be no different to the parking areas outside the station. Parking in an advisory cycle lane is not in contravention of any parking restriction. Should this issue require attention, it would fall to the County Council's Highways and Transportation team to consider. By permitting parking along this stretch of the main road, properties to the south-east of Badgers Rise are unlikely to be affected.
21. To prevent commuter parking in Badgers Rise, a single yellow line restriction operating for one hour in the day (11am to noon to match others in the area) is proposed for the entire cul-de-sac. This may prove controversial with some residents, as there were some reports of parking occurring in Badgers Rise that predates any parking proposal around Knockholt Station, but this restriction could be introduced or abandoned in line with the views of residents received via the consultation process.
22. The proposals are shown on the plan attached as Appendix C. It is recommended that these be approved for formal public consultation, with any objections being brought back to the next meeting for consideration.

23. Residents of Badgers Drive and adjacent properties in Old London Road have suggested new restrictions be provided further along Old London Road towards the Polhill roundabout. We believe that the provision of restrictions in this area is unnecessary. Further measures can always be considered in the future should the need arise.

Key Implications

Financial

24. The costs to implement the further measures, estimated at £850, will be met from the District Council's On-Street Parking Account.

Community impact and outcomes

25. The proposals should improve the safe use of the highway for local residents.

Legal, Human Rights, etc

26. The procedures will be subject to the procedure as set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996).

Equality Impacts

27. The restrictions are being proposed to improve road safety. There should not be any relevant equality issues that will need to be taken into consideration.

Risk Assessment Statement

28. The proposals should have no increased level of risk beyond those relating to the management of on-street parking.

Sources of Information: Feedback and correspondence received from residents and other interested parties.

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