
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 5 September 2017
Subject: Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard – consider objections to proposed waiting restrictions

Report of: Paul Mason, Assistant Director Highways

Summary: This report seeks the approval of the Executive Member for Community Services for the implementation of waiting restrictions in Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. That the scheme be implemented as published

Contact Officer: Paul Salmon, Team Leader Traffic Management
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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Leighton Buzzard North and South

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposal supports the following Local Transport Plan objectives:

- (B) Reduce the impact of commuting trips on local communities
- (J) Reduce the risk of people being killed or seriously injured.

Financial:

The construction of these proposals will be funded from the Highway's Traffic Management budget. Maintenance will be funded from the Highways Maintenance budget.

Legal:

None from this report

Risk Management:

None from this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None from this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None from this report

Community Safety:

None from this report

Sustainability:

None from this report

Budget and Delivery:	
Estimated cost: £2,000	Budget: Highways Traffic Management
Expected delivery: March 2018	

Background and Information

1. Hockliffe Road is one of the main arterial roads serving Leighton Buzzard, is a designated freight route and part of the authority's resilient route network. On a weekday, between 700 and 800 vehicles use the road in the morning and evening peak hour, heading either toward or away from the town centre.
2. The road has an active frontage of residential properties for most of its length. As a result of infill development and increases in car ownership, demand for parking along the road has steadily increased. This has been supplemented by demand from residents of adjacent streets, including Regent Street and George Street, where demand for parking exceeds available kerb space.
3. As a consequence, Central Bedfordshire Council has received several complaints about obstructive parking on the westernmost section of Hockliffe Road. Issues are most prevalent during the morning and evening peak periods where on-street parking creates congestion as there is insufficient width within the carriageway for opposing vehicles to pass without interruption.
4. In an attempt to minimise the potential for conflict and to protect their vehicle, many drivers park their vehicles half on the footway. However, there is insufficient width within the footway to accommodate this behaviour. The result is to create an obstruction, requiring vulnerable users to cross and re-cross the carriageway to complete their journey. This presents a significant risk to their safety.
5. The advertised proposals are designed to address these issues and were formally advertised by public notice in June 2017. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Leighton-Linslade Council and the Ward members.

Representations

6. A total of 15 representations were received in response to the advertised waiting restrictions, of which 10 raised objections. Areas of contention included:
 - a) That the requirement for the restrictions had not been sufficiently evidenced.
 - b) That the introduction of waiting restrictions would remove the traffic calming effect of parked vehicles and facilitate an increase in vehicle speeds.
 - c) That the effect of the proposed restrictions would be to displace parking demand, adding to the already severe competition for spaces in adjacent streets.
 - d) That the effect would be an increase in the incidence of indiscriminate and obstructive parking within the locality.
 - e) That any restrictions should be accompanied by the creation of a Residents Parking Zone, prioritising the needs of local residents over other users of the highway.
 - f) That the restriction would be ineffectual without an effective enforcement regime.

7. Officers noted:
 - a) There is a clear case to act on traffic management and road safety grounds, including contravention of the authority's policy on verge and pavement parking.
 - b) Whilst it is likely that average vehicle speeds will increase on this section of Hockliffe Road, the net impact of the proposal on road safety would be expected to be positive.
 - c) There would be a displacement of parking demand into adjacent roads, which would increase the pressure for measures to address issues in Regent Street, George Street and the South Street areas (all of which have been the subject of recent informal consultation).
 - d) As with all new schemes, the impact of the proposals should be monitored and additional mitigating measures bought forward if required.
 - e) It is unlikely that the requirements for a Residents Parking Zone, set out Section 4 of the authority's 2012 Car Parking Strategy, could be met.
 - f) The requirement for enforcement is acknowledged.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Public notice and proposal drawing.

Appendix B – Written representations.

PUBLIC NOTICE



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE NO WAITING AT ANY TIME IN VARIOUS ROADS, LEIGHTON-LINSLADE

Reason for proposal:- The waiting restrictions are intended to address indiscriminate parking, prevent obstruction of the footways and remove conflict between opposing vehicles.

Effect of the Order:

To introduce No Waiting at any time on the following length of road in Leighton-Linslade:-

1. Hockliffe Road, south side, from a point in line with the boundary of no.64 and no.66 Hockliffe Road extending in a westerly direction to a point in line with the boundary of no.28 and no.30 Hockliffe Road (existing double yellow lines).
2. Hockliffe Road, north side, from a point approximately 2 metres east from the east flank wall of no.63a Hockliffe Road extending in a easterly direction to a point approximately 3 metres east from the boundary of no.67 and no.69 Hockliffe Road.
3. George Street, east side, from its junction with Hockliffe Road extending in a northerly direction to a point approximately 3 metres north-east of the boundary of no.59 George Street and 65 Hockliffe Road.
4. George Street, west side, from its junction with Hockliffe Road extending in a northerly direction to a point in line with the boundary of no.57 and no.59 George Street.

Further Details may be examined during normal office hours at the address shown below, viewed online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices or tel. 0300 300 5003.

Comments should be sent in writing to the Traffic Management team at the address below or e-mail traffic.consultation@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk by 14 July 2017. Any objections must state the grounds on which they are made.

Order Title: If made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (Bedfordshire County Council (District of South Bedfordshire) (Civil Enforcement Area and Special Enforcement Area) (Waiting Restrictions and Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2008) (Variation No.*) Order 201*"

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Chicksands
Shefford SG17 5TQ

Marcel Coiffait
Director of Community Services

20 June 2017

Statement of Reasons

The waiting restrictions are intended to address indiscriminate parking, prevent obstruction of the footways and remove conflict between opposing vehicles.



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Appendix B – Hockliffe Road

I am against the proposal for the following reasons:

1. The majority of the time there are only a few cars that park on the pavement in the proposed area. Please let me know if you would like me to send photos of the road from various stages of the day to show that there are only a few cars that park here. Most residents will agree although occasional inconvenient, the majority of the time there is no issue.
2. Cars that park in the proposed area help reduce the speed of cars and reduce the amount of larger vehicles using this route.
3. In addition to the above point this also results in less accidents and safer conditions.
4. The parking may become an issue for residents who will now need to park further away from their homes - which could make another area worse.
5. Some residents may result in parking across other resident's private land which will create further disputes.

Please note the following:

1. I live in [redacted] Langtry court (my property is on hockliffe road).
2. I have my own private parking space and I do NOT park in the proposed area for no waiting lines; my comments above are not because I want to park in this area.
3. I am the only car owner at my property. (The above statement is for my property not just me).
4. Cars occasionally parking outside my front home/front door do not bother me - they help prevent cars speeding.
5. My neighbours who often use a pram agree that there has not been an issue with space on the footpath.

My suggestions:

1. Only add lines of no waiting on road exit points to help with vision and safety. It would be beneficial for the exit point of the Langtry Court from my experience.
2. Leave the proposed area as is for now and review in 2 years time to discuss further with residence if street parking increases beyond the level it currently is. If this does need to change after this period then a restricted time (i.e. a single yellow line) may be a more suitable option.

The Committee received a list from Central Bedfordshire Council proposing to introduce no waiting times in various roads, Leighton-Linslade. While it was recognised that proposals might result in displacement of parking issues, the proposals were welcomed as a means of addressing current problems within the town. The Committee expressed a hope that any proposals implemented would be adequately enforced. Further to a concern raised at a previous meeting in respect of the road surface at the junction of Heath Road and Shenley Hill Road, it was noted that repairs needed to be undertaken by Anglian Water before any resurfacing could take place.

I live at [redacted] Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard and I applaud your plans to restrict parking in Hockliffe Road which has become an ever increasing problem, and one that is a cause of a major accident in the waiting.

If this proposal goes ahead an important factor will be enforcement. There is a distinct lack of traffic enforcement generally in Leighton Buzzard which has incrementally led to people flouting the existing restrictions. When I have previously raised this with the police I was told it is no longer their responsibility which I found surprising. Can I please ask for one other matter to be enforced as part of this proposal. One the north side of Hockliffe Road outside of number 25 there is a

blocked paving extension of the pavement with a bollard on. People consistently (daily) park their cars to the inside of the bollard on the blocked paving area. This severely restricts the ability of people living in 37, 39, 41 and 43 Hockliffe Road to have clear visibility of oncoming traffic when trying to pull out onto Hockliffe Road from our rear access entrance way and has on a number of occasions resulted in near miss collisions with oncoming traffic

I'd like to object to the proposed waiting restrictions that you wish to impose on Hockliffe Road. There is already a distinct lack in parking spaces on Hockliffe Road for the number of residents, therefore a restriction on being able to park on one side of the road will only increase the lack of available parking spots hugely. Residents struggle to park as it is, due to non-residents using the parking bays and walking into town. This happens regularly both during the week and on weekends.

I would not have any objections to the restrictions on parking on that side of the road if you were to make the parking bays for resident permit holders only?

I live at [REDACTED] Hockliffe Road. Currently there are already waiting restrictions outside our house. Last year a neighbour knocked on my door and asked for a signature on a petition to lower the speed limit on the first stretch of Hockliffe Road to 20 mph which I happily signed. At this time there wasn't extensive parking on the south side of the road and residents used the parking bays on the north side. Whilst this petition was being talked about on social media, someone suggested that, as there were no parking restrictions on the south side of the road, residents should park there in order to slow traffic simply by ensuring that they had to stop and let other cars go past. There have been incidents of car owners in the parking bays losing wing mirrors and the woman who organised the petition had had her wing mirror knocked off her car whilst she was leaning into the car to secure one of her children into their car seat. Drivers on this stretch of road are usually passing through to get to somewhere else and so are often keen to keep going rather than take care on what is a residential street. As Hockliffe Road is a main route into and out of town it is natural that it is used by those who don't live on the street. However, extending the no parking further along the road will mean that traffic moves faster and it becomes more difficult to cross the road. Car drivers do not adhere to the 30 mph limit when there is nothing to restrict their driving. On the other hand there are difficult exchanges between car drivers on the road most days with drivers honking their horns as they feel they have right of way in one direction or another around the parked cars. Buses also find it difficult to get around the parked cars. The zebra crossing at the top of South Street/Hockliffe Road is most often ignored by drivers and makes crossing the road, even with this in place, difficult. I think that there needs to be further development of the measures for the traffic situation on the road. It would be good to have the 20mph proposal revisited so that traffic is moving freely but not speeding. This would also help those who live on the south side access the parking bays on the north side. I would also like the issue of the zebra crossing addressed, it might be worth considering moving this further up to help residents cross to get to the parking bays as well as make drivers more aware that they are supposed to give way. With the development of what used to be the police station into residential housing there will be more cars trying to park in this area, as well as more people pulling onto the road. This also needs to be considered.

Thank you for giving us, the residents of Hockliffe Road the chance to voice our opinion. I am totally against this scheme on the bases that the road as it is today with the indiscriminate parking is safer than it has been over last 20 years I have [REDACTED] Hockliffe Road. It was about 18

months to 2 years ago that the residents started to park in numbers on the south side of the road and since then the number of minor accidents, i.e. door mirrors swiped off by cars passing too close to each other and too close to the parked cars in the parking area, trucks damaging parked cars in the parking area etc. Also before these last 2 years there were a number of major accidents with police and ambulance attendance. One of which was a car pushed off the road by a speeding HGV articulated sand bulker. The car mounted the pavement on the proposed parking restriction side, narrowly missing a young woman with a child in a pushchair. Another was two cars collided off side to off side, they did a dozy-doe in the road and severely damaged 3 parked cars just down from the police station.

I presume the council will put some traffic calming scheme in place at the same time they carry out the parking alterations. I would suggest a single lane chicane at both ends of this stretch of Hockliffe Road, a 20 miles per hour speed limit, speed bumps and a ban on all HGVs. This might just about do the same job as the indiscriminately parked vehicles. Safety along this stretch of road is my priority not the parking as I have a yard at the back of my house to park our cars in. I would urge the council to make a proper study of Hockliffe Road/ Hockliffe Street and realize that they are now almost totally residential and since the southern bypass and the improvements at Thorn Turn on the A5 are not needed as a through route. Traffic should be discouraged from using Leighton Buzzard's roads as a through route which would help the traffic jams on the inner ring road which have only got worse since the very expensive traffic scheme introduced by the council some years ago. I hope this scheme is not being driven by pressure from a large corporate sand and ballast mining company whose articulated bulk carriers still insist on coming right through Leighton Buzzard from the Woburn Road in Hockliffe to the roundabout on the bypass and then heading off towards Bletchley. Surely, they should be made to use the A5 and the bypass

I write to express our full support for your proposals; we whole heartedly agree that the works are necessary for the reasons cited in your public notice. The road and pedestrian footway have both become increasingly difficult to navigate due to the indiscriminate parking at most times of the day. Cars even park here when there is space at the allocated parking bays opposite and further down the street. Furthermore, the conflict between opposing vehicles often results in anger and stress for drivers, coupled with noise nuisance for residents and neighbours in the form of car horns, revving of engines and aggressive acceleration noise. Also, cars often park directly opposite the off-road

access adjacent to 35 Hockliffe Road making it very difficult for residents of the six properties on the North side of the road to gain vehicular access and egress to their homes and their off street parking. I suspect other residents with similar arrangements also experience such difficulties. We sincerely hope that the proposals are approved and implemented as soon as possible to address the existing and growing problem.

With regards to the proposed changes to the traffic scheme in this area, I am concerned that the extension of the no waiting zones will severely reduce the ability of residents to park along Hockliffe Road. If you see the road on any evening, there are not enough bays to facilitate all the households along the road as it stands, and these proposals will make it much more difficult to park. Many people are already forced to park in George Street and Regent Street if they arrive home beyond 6pm. By introducing these changes, these cars will merely be forced to park elsewhere, thereby increasing congestion in other areas such as George Street and Regent Street, which I know have raised issues with congestion in the past. There has never appeared to be a particular issue with the flow of traffic down Hockliffe Road, and occasionally a particular direction is held up outside houses 30 - 48. Usually this is for about 10/20 seconds, and never longer than this. Outside my house there is a piece of concrete that is off the pavement. I have

attached pictures. I have safely parked my car here for three years. Under your scheme I would not be able to do this. There is no obstruction to pavement, the road, nor visibility. You will be taking away two spaces here with this scheme. You also intend to do this to the corner of Hockliffe and George Street, yet again I can't understand who is being obstructed by cars parked here. My greatest concern is that I actually feel these measures will make the road MORE dangerous. The cars parked along Hockliffe Road slow the traffic down, and I feel there is already an issue with cars speeding (it is common to see cars do 40 if not 50mph down this road). By removing the cars the traffic speed will increase, which could lead to accidents. Overall I find the whole proposal unnecessary, and am not entirely sure what positive outcomes will be achieved

Please find attached our letter in opposition to the proposed parking restrictions, plus supporting documents

Thank you for today's correspondence with regard to your reference GPB/VRB. I completely concur with your proposals. However I have a couple of further issues which I would like you to consider if you would. I live at [REDACTED] hockliffe road which is at the front of the property unaffected by your improvements directly. That said one of the biggest issues here is parking by non residents. I am fortunate enough to have a drive and garage at the rear which fronts on to South street. most residents do not. So the issue here is with residents parking. Many people who who commute to town park on hockliffe road since it is free. I used to be part of a two car family and would often find myself with a ten minute walk home at 5.30, by 6pm there would be empty spaces outside my home. Weekends are exactly the same. To avoid parking charges in the ample car parks people park here and walk to town at the detriment of the residents who live here. It is impossible most days to get within several hundred yards of your home. Time restrictions or resident only parking would hugely help our problem at a fraction of the cost. In addition and on a personal note. South street has the very same issues. As said my garage and drive are at the rear of the property. I am protected by only a single yellow line. I regularly find my driveway blocked by people using the launderette and shops and takeaways on hockliffe road and hockliffe street. Several times I have returned home to find a car actually parked on my drive. Could you please look at protecting myself and my neighbours either side by changing the single yellow to white line. At least then I can report people blocking me in or restricting my access to the police and get them ticketed.

Thank you for this info and our discussion on the south side of Hockliffe Road. With the correction of the double line limit to stop at 64/66, as you confirmed, rather than 72/74 as published, I am happy with this part of the proposal. However I am still concerned that this portion of the change will only move the problem farther out from the town centre. I believe that the best option would be to add double yellows all the way from the end of the current proposal to the Brook Street junction. Thus, the lining would run along the side of the road opposite the current marked parking boxes, ie on the north side from George Street to Regent Street, and the south side from Regent to Brook Streets. Beyond this point, Hockliffe Road is centre-hatched, so i understand that parking there is already a traffic offence and can be dealt with by the police. As an aside, this is a problem coming into town just beyond the Garden Centre entrance - I would appreciate your taking a look at this problem and assisting us by passing comment to Beds Police on your findings.

I have received a letter re traffic "proposed waiting restrictions" on Hockliffe Road. I have been in dialogue with several of your colleagues and am disappointed that this has been proposed

especially as I have fed back on it not being a viable option previously We do have issues with the parking and traffic and the measure proposed doesnt improve anything for the residents. It will mean that there will be a rush for spaces and those that come last will not have anywhere to park. The reason that people have to park on the other side of the road is because there are an excess of cars to space. Other alternative options must be explored, for example: -reducing the size of the curb on the far side of the road so there is space for both sides to park -reducing the traffic flow- there are too many lorries that come down our road and I understand from your colleagues this is flaunting regulations
-introducing speed bumps and a 20 mph limit -signs saying lorry free zone Also what has been proposed is likely to mean that people drive faster rather than slower. To help calm traffic we should be directing traffic to what are intended to be the main roads.

I am a resident of hockliffe road and object strongly to the proposition of the parking restrictions proposed on hockliff road. At the moment the cars having to park on both sides are acting as a natural slowing down of the cars travelling along the road. Before this happened accidents were accuring. Plus people are having to park on both sides as there is no where else to park. The department proposing this obviously do not live here or know the town. WHERE DO YOU SUGGEST WE PARK, PERHAPS YOU COULD SPEND OUR MONEY ON PARKING FACILITIES.
The land along the road used to be a petrol garage, could be used to build double storey garage facilities. Come and live here for 2 weeks,I promise you would change your mind

I am writing to object to the proposal to have a no parking zone on the east side of George St at the junction with Hockliffe Rd. I have lived in [REDACTED] Hockliffe Rd for 34 years and have always parked in George St. Let me explain why. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Hockliffe Rd are the only two houses on the North side of Hockliffe Rd between the police station and the vets to have no off road parking. I appreciate the need to improve access to George St and limit the parking but to remove it all together from both sides of George St on the area from no 57 George St to Hockliffe Rd seems too extreme and will only lead to several cars having to find somewhere else to park and no doubt causing the problem to move to another street. I wonder if it would be possible to allow resident only parking on one side of the road, namely the east side of George St in front of 57 and 59 George St. This is a stretch of road that has been used regularly for the last 34 years by 57 and 59 George St and also 67 and 69 Hockliffe Rd. With parking limited to only this east side there would still be adequate access for emergency and delivery vans. One other possibility is to allocate two residential parking bays in front of 65 and 67 Hockliffe Road, the pavement is wide enough here for this to be possible. Cars do regularly park on this bit of pavement without causing any obstruction to pedestrians, mothers with buggies or disabled people in wheelchairs or mobility scooters.