



Northumberland

County Council

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY SERVICE DIRECTOR - LOCAL SERVICES

Paul Jones

Extension of Bus Stand - Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham

Cabinet Member: Glen Sanderson - Environment & Local Services

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the background to the proposal of extending a Bus Stand to replace an existing waiting restriction outside Queen Elizabeth High School on Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the proposed extension of the Bus Stand and subsequent removal of the adjacent 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction is implemented.

Link to Corporate Plan

Living - "We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for"

Enjoying - "We want you to love where you live"

Key Issues

1. The County Council has been made aware of obstructive and inconsiderate parking on Whetstone Bridge Road which blocks access for buses into the allocated bus stop areas and creates congestion during school start and end times.
2. The section of road where parking takes place does not legally conform to its associated Traffic Regulation Order and is therefore unenforceable for Civil Enforcement Officers.
3. Highway improvement works are set to take place at Queen Elizabeth High School over the next two years which will impact on the area and Whetstone Bridge Road has been identified as one of three areas for drop-off and pick-up points.

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4. The scheme will be funded from the 2020/21 Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme.

Background

Queen Elizabeth High School is accessed from Whetstone Bridge Road and this is also a route into residential areas such as Tynedale Terrace and Alexandra Terrace. As such, it becomes a busy route during school start and end times.

To discourage obstructive and indiscriminate parking during these times as well as throughout the day, 'No Waiting at Any Time' (double yellow lines) restrictions are in place at its junction with Allendale Road continuing around the bend in the road which has limited visibility. The access to the school has 'School Keep Clear' markings in operation from Monday - Friday between the hours of 8am and 5pm, whereas 'No Waiting, Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 9.30am & 3pm - 4pm' (single yellow lines) restrictions cover other key areas of the road to keep the route clear during drop-off and pick-up times.

Bus stop clearways in the form of Bus Stands are also in place on the western side of Whetstone Bridge Road to provide protection for buses as well as pupils who start or leave school for the day. The operational times for both Bus Stands are similar to the single yellow line restrictions on this road, applying on Monday - Friday between the hours of 8am - 9.30am & 2.45pm - 4pm.

A single yellow line is in place between the 'School Keep Clear' and Bus Stand markings, however the existing Traffic Regulation Order in place on this length of road reflects a double yellow line and is therefore unenforceable, meaning anyone can park there. By parking there, it obstructs the taper bus drivers use to navigate into the bay when other buses are parked further ahead within the Bus Stand. In turn, queues of traffic are formed along the road which increases road safety concerns. Figure 1 shows the location of this marking.



Fig 1: Existing single yellow line which is currently unenforceable

Amendments could be carried out to transition the marking into a double yellow line, or by changing the Traffic Regulation Order and adding signage to

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allow the existing single yellow line to become enforceable, but either option would still give motorists the opportunity to stop and wait there. By extending the Bus Stand to cover this section, it allows buses to easily maneuver into the bay and any motor vehicle apart from a bus or taxi would become instantly liable to receiving a Penalty Charge Notice for parking there. A Traffic Regulation Order is not required for a Bus Stand, but a revocation must still be made to the existing Order which covers the 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction before this can be implemented.

Highway improvement works are scheduled to begin in the vicinity of Queen Elizabeth High School over the next two years and Whetstone Bridge Road is proposed as one of three areas to continue to be used as a pick-up and drop-off point for service provider vehicles including taxis, mini-buses, coaches and private coaches. Therefore, it is imperative that the road remains free of obstructive and indiscriminate parking, especially during school start and end times.

Details of the proposals are shown on the plan at Appendix A. They are intended to maintain the free flow of traffic where possible, to improve road safety around the schools and to protect the amenity of the area overall.

Northumbria Police, other emergency services and relevant statutory consultees will be notified of these amendments as part of the process for making the permanent Orders.

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Implications Arising out of the Report

Policy	Consistent with existing policies.
Finance and value for money	Scheme will be financed through the LTP 2020/21 Programme.
Legal	Motorists will be required to comply with the Traffic Regulation Order (reference TRO_007_69). Although there is no requirement for a Bus Stand to have a Traffic Regulation Order, it is an offence to fail to comply with the indication given by its road markings.
Procurement	Road markings to meet Regulations for Traffic Regulation Orders.
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Risk Assessment	The proposal is designed to reduce the risks associated with obstructive and indiscriminate parking.
Crime & Disorder	Regulations in place to carry out enforcement.
Customer Consideration	Statutory consultees have been consulted.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Hexham West

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Background Papers:

File reference - S:\Highways\PROJECT\19\HE Minor
Improvements\HED19323-37 Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham

Appendix A – Scheme Plan

Author and Contact Details

Report Author **William Binks, Consultant Engineer**

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Officer:	Service Director, Local Services
Subject:	Proposed amendment to parking restrictions by removing the 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction to facilitate the extension of a Bus Stand on Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham.
Consultation:	Not required on the grounds of road safety, although representatives from the school and the Local County Councillor have been involved in the design process throughout.
Decision Taken:	To remove the existing 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction on Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham and replace it with an extended Bus Stand.

Signature of Director



Date

28 April 2020

Appendix A - Scheme Plan

