

## RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LOCAL SERVICES

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### PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS – NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite Order 2014 - Amendment No 3 Order 2015 – TRO\_019\_03

#### **Purpose of report:**

To consider the results of the public consultation exercise regarding the proposed additions and amendments to the NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite Order.

The restrictions consulted on were:

- Amble Town Centre Car Park, Amble – 4 hours, no return within 5 hours
- Wentworth Car Park Medium Stay, Hexham – 4 hours, no return within 5 hours (Disc Parking)
- Wentworth Car Park Long Stay–All day parking
- Restrictions to apply all days in the whole of Wentworth Car Park
- Priory Grange Car Park, Blyth – All day parking
- Greenwell Road (Part D) Coach Park - All day parking
- Greenwell Road (Part D) - Disc Parking, 4 hours No return within 5 hours

#### **Recommendations:**

**It is recommended that in view of the consultation exercise the proposed amendments and additions should be introduced.**

The addition of the following new car parks:

- Amble Town Centre Car Park, Amble – 4 hours, no return within 5 hours
- Wentworth Car Park Medium Stay, Hexham – 4 hours, no return within 5 hours (Disc Parking)
- Priory Grange Car Park, Blyth – All day parking
- Greenwell Road (Part D) Coach Park - All day parking

The amendment to the following car parks

- Amendment - Greenwell Road (Part D) Car Park, Alnwick will change from a "All Day" car park to "4 hours No return within 5 hours" car park (Disc Parking)
- Amendment – The remaining Wentworth Car Park, Hexham (where no time limit currently applies) to be named Wentworth Car Park Long Stay
- Amendment - Restrictions to apply all days in the whole Wentworth parking area.

## Key Issues

- 1) Amble – This scheme will introduce much needed additional town centre parking which will help increase turnover of parking spaces. This will in turn increase footfall through the town, assisting the local economy.
- 2) Hexham – This scheme will introduce much needed additional town centre medium stay parking which will help increase turnover of parking spaces. This will in turn increase footfall through the town, assisting the local economy.
- 3) Blyth – This scheme will introduce additional controlled parking spaces to an existing parking area that is currently not in the NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite Order. This will help discourage dangerous and inconsiderate parking outside the school on Priory Grange, which will improve safety for children entering and exiting the school.
- 4) Alnwick – This scheme will introduce much needed additional town centre medium stay parking which help increase turnover of parking spaces. This will in turn increase footfall through the town centre assisting the local economy.

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**PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS – NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite  
Order 2014 - Amendment No 3 Order 2015 – TRO\_019\_03**

## **BACKGROUND**

- 1) Northumberland County Council has been working with a number of town councils to identify parking problems and resolve any issues that have arisen following the implementation of free parking and as a result of other parking priorities. As an outcome of these discussions, a number of amendments and additions to the NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite Order were put forward for consultation (see Appendix 1).
- 2) The main purpose of the proposed changes is to improve parking facilities within the town centres identified by increasing the availability of parking spaces. It is hoped that this will increase footfall and will assist in improving the local economy.

## **CONSULTATION**

- 3) The consultation exercise started on 14<sup>th</sup> April and ended on 24<sup>rd</sup> May 2015. Approximately 260 consultation letters were sent out to all County Councillors, Town and Parish Councils, associated statutory bodies, internal and external interested parties and residents of effected properties. Consultation information was also available on the NCC website and in the local libraries.
- 4) A summary of the responses received is attached as Appendix 2.

## RESPONSE TO KEY ISSUES RAISED

- 5) **Amble** – The one objection that was received stated that the on average visitors stay for longer than four hours. There is a lack of medium stay parking within Amble town centre at present. Visitors are only able to stay for one hour on Queen Street. There is a small car park adjacent to the Tourist Information Centre on Queen Street, however it is constantly in high demand. There is a clear need for a parking place close to the town centre that allows visitors time to shop and access other services in Amble without having to move within 1 hour. This restriction will also ensure that workers do not park in the premium town centre parking places and will also encourage visitors away from parking in residential streets. A 4 hour stay is considered adequate for the Amble Town Centre Car Park. There are a number of long stay car parks a short walk from the town centre that may be used by visitors that wish to stay for longer than the 4 hour period.
- 6) **Alnwick** - Objections received mainly came from staff working within the town centre that use the car park on a regular basis. Some of those who objected stated that 4 hours was not long enough for visitors coming to the town. All of Northumberland County Council car parks within Alnwick are long stay with the exception of Bondgate Cobbles Car Park and Fenkle Street Car Park. At present Greenwell Road (Part D) Car Park is predominantly used by workers, preventing visitors from finding somewhere to park. The demand has increased following the removal of parking charges and anecdotal evidence tells us that more town centre workers are driving to work as they now do not have to pay to park. The change to 4 hours maximum stay will allow medium stay parking for visitors who wish to spend more than a couple of hours in Alnwick town centre. There are also long stay car parks at the Alnwick Gardens for visitors who wish to spend a full day visiting the bigger attractions of Alnwick. We are working with the Town Council and the Chamber of Trade to promote other forms of sustainable travel such as car share, cycling, walking and public transport. This would help to alleviate pressure on parking within the long stay car parks while also supporting a healthier lifestyle and the environment.
- 7) **Hexham** - The objections received stated that residents of Hallstile Bank and workers coming into Hexham would find it difficult to find a parking space. When free parking was introduced in April 2014, it significantly increased the demand for parking spaces within the Wentworth car park. One of the main aims of free parking was to increase economic growth in our town centres. Due to this increase in demand it was proposed that a section of the car park be restricted to 4 hours, no return within 5 hours to assist with the turnover of parking spaces. The aim being to improve footfall in the town and increase economic growth.

Whilst the Council sympathises with the views of the residents of Hallstile Bank, it is not the Council's responsibility to provide private residential parking within a public off street parking place. The former District Council worked with the residents in the past and granted access to the rear of the properties on Hallstile bank to assist with the on-street parking problem and NCC has continued to support this arrangement.

A number of suggestions have been put forward by the residents of Hallstile Bank. One being to swap round the proposed 4 hour and long stay parking areas

so that the long stay remained to the rear of Hallstile Bank. For operational and enforcement reasons this would make the management of the car park more difficult. As there are already 2 hour restrictions in place next to Waitrose, the 4 hour area needs to be positioned alongside this section so that the time limited restrictions 'flow' through the car park. Other suggestions such as allowing the parking of cars on the cross hatched area that allows passage from the car park into the back of the properties on Hallstile Bank. This is not possible for a number of reasons e.g. due to the terms and conditions of the legal parking order which need to be followed to ensure a clear, fair and consistent approach to enforcement.

It must be noted that the proposed medium stay car park will allow for someone to park from 14:00 on a day, (with 4 hours taking them up to the end of the restriction period) and will then allow them to continue to stay in the same parking space for a further 4 hours the following day (taking them up to 12:00). Clearly at the start of the morning period the parking disc would need to be re-set to 08:00. Following this, the vehicle would have to be moved from the medium stay parking area, and not return for 5 hours.

A long stay parking area will be retained in the Wentworth car park some 60m from the rear of the properties on Hallstile Bank that can continue to be utilised for longer periods of parking by the residents. As the 4 hour limit is there to improve availability of parking, the residents may find that time limited bays to the rear of their properties brings greater benefit to them than they currently experience as access can often be restricted due to there currently being no time restriction in place.

There are also a number of privately owned all day pay and display car parks in Hexham available for use and a free NCC car park at Tyne Green.

We are working with the Town Council, Business Forum and local business owners to promote other forms of travel to work such as car share, cycling, walking and public transport. This will help alleviate pressure on parking within the long stay spaces while also supporting healthier lifestyle and the environment.

- 8) **Blyth** - The objections received stated the introduction of the car park to the off street parking order would make no difference to the congestion around the school and that the car park was created for the residents, not the school.

Whilst the new restrictions change very little to the functioning of the car park in that it will remain an all-day car park without time limit, the introduction of the Traffic Regulation Order will allow the Civil Enforcement Officers to enforce the car park. Inconsiderate parking in this location has been an issue for some time. This change means that any vehicles observed by a CEO, parking outside of a marked bay, may now receive a Penalty Charge Notice. It is hoped that this will prevent inconsiderate and dangerous parking that puts child safety at risk. The car park is a public car park that is there to be used by everyone, weather a visitor to the school or someone living or visiting the residential estate.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9) From the outset, the County Council has endeavoured to respond positively to local concerns raised and it is inevitable that some sections of the community will be dissatisfied with whichever decision is reached. Following the consultation exercise it is clear that some residents and workers are dissatisfied with the proposals, but the decision has to be made, taking into account the benefits of the whole community. It is therefore recommended that the parking restrictions be introduced as proposed.
- 10) The Council has the power to hold a public inquiry before making any traffic regulation order. Such an inquiry might enable disputed evidence to be tested under cross-examination and the need for an order to be critically examined by an independent inspector. In this particular case, officers believe that the extensive consultation process and involvement with interested parties, means that such an inquiry is unlikely to bring any fresh information to light and it is therefore recommended that an inquiry is not held.
- 11) Accordingly it is recommended that the Executive Director of Local Services notes the objections but agrees to proceed with the introduction of the following Traffic Regulation Order;

PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS – NCC Off Street Parking Places  
Composite Order 2014 - Amendment No 3 Order 2015 – TRO\_019\_03

## APPENDIX INDEX

Appendix 1 – Consultation Letter and Plan  
Appendix 2 – Summary of Consultation Responses

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Road Traffic Act 2004  
Local Government Act 2000

## IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<b>Policy:</b>	Consistent with existing policies
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Scheme will cost approximately £3,000 and will be financed from 2015/16 Revenue
<b>Human Resources:</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b>	Introducing additional parking and medium stay parking will improve accessibility to local amenities.

<b>Risk Assessment</b>	None
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	The proposal will assist in contributing towards a reduction in disorder and disruption and help promote a safer environment.
<b>Customer Considerations</b>	The proposals will improve traffic congestion at school start and finish times and improve the turnover of parking spaces, improving footfall through town centre.
<b>Sustainability</b>	None
<b>Consultation</b>	Town Councils, the emergency services, all affected residents and interested road user organisations were consulted together with the County Councillor for the area.
<b>Wards</b>	Blyth, Amble, Alnwick and Hexham

## DECISION TAKEN

**Title of Cabinet Member and Executive Director:**

Executive Director of Local Services, Barry Rowland  
Cabinet Member for Local Services, Ian Swithenbank,  
Streetcare and Environment

**Subject:**

NCC Off Street Parking Places Composite Order  
2014 - Amendment No 3 Order 2015 – TRO\_019\_03

**Consultation:**

Area	For	Against	Neither
Amble	3	1	0
Alnwick	2	11	0
Blyth	8	2	0
Hexham	4	9	0

**Decision Taken:**

To approve the proposal the addition of the following new car parks:

- Amble Town Centre Car Park, Amble – 4 hours, no return within 5 hours
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**Signature of Executive Director**



**Date**

