

Delegated decisions



Northumberland County Council

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY SERVICE DIRECTOR - LOCAL SERVICES

Paul Jones - Service Director - Local Services

PROPOSED PARKING IMPROVEMENTS, BELLINGHAM

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle

Purpose of Report

To consider a proposal to provide various parking improvements in Bellingham.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the proposed improvements are 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

- The County Council has received concerns from the local Ward Member and Bellingham Parish Council about parking in Bellingham.
- These include issues caused by indiscriminate parking, as well as a need to ensure more efficient use of the available parking spaces.

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Background

1. The local ward Member and Bellingham Parish Council have raised a number of issues relating to parking in the village centre.
2. These include:
 - a) Congestion and safety concerns caused by roadside parking on the narrow section of High Street, including difficulties for local businesses to load and unload.
 - b) Inefficient use of the parking available in Manchester Square.
 - c) All day parking close to shops on Parkside Place and Fountain View, preventing short stay visits by shoppers.

a) High Street

3. Roadside parking in High Street can restrict the passage of through traffic, leading to congestion and safety concerns as oncoming traffic can meet 'head-on'.



Current situation at High Street

4. Initially, double yellow lines were proposed on both sides of the road to prevent all parking. However, following consultation with adjacent properties and Bellingham Parish Council, the proposals were amended.
5. Double yellow lines are now proposed on the west side of the road only, to assist through traffic, and at the junctions with Manchester Square, Lockup Lane and the C201, to keep them clear and ensure that traffic may join High Street safely.

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6. There are shops on High Street which experience difficulties with loading and unloading when parked cars are present. It is therefore proposed to provide a loading bay to address this problem.

b) Manchester Square

7. Manchester Square provides a large parking area within the village centre. However, this parking is currently informal with no bay markings, leading to inefficient use of the space available.



Current situation at Manchester Square

8. It is therefore proposed to provide marked parking bays to enable better use of the space and maximise the amount of parking available. This includes the provision of disabled parking and EV charging bays.

c) Parking at Parkside Place

9. Parking is available at Parkside Place and Fountain View, immediately adjacent or close to the Co-op and other local shops. These bays are currently unregulated with no time restriction which prevents short stay visits by those wishing to access the shops.

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Current situation at Parkside Place

10. In order to increase turnover and benefit local traders, it is proposed to introduce a short stay time limit in these bays.
11. The proposed time limit is a maximum stay of one hour, with no return permitted within two hours. This will be effective Monday to Saturday between the hours of 8am – 6pm.
12. Appropriate signage and road markings will also be provided to ensure the existing electric vehicle charging bays at Fountain View can be regulated. This includes a one-hour time limit for the rapid charger to ensure turnover and maximise its availability.

Consultation

13. The proposals described above were subject to significant consultation with affected properties, Bellingham Parish Council and the local Ward Member. A copy of the consultation plan is shown in Appendix A.
14. Only three responses were received from property owners/occupiers in High Street. Two of these stated they were against double yellow lines if they covered the entire length of the street on both sides. The Parish Council also questioned the extent of the yellow lines and referred to a local survey which showed that a majority did not support this. They would, however, support more targeted parking restrictions. The proposal was therefore amended to the west side of the road and junction protection only, as described above.

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15. A copy of the amended proposals is shown in Appendix C.

16. The other aspects of the proposals were supported by those who responded to the consultation.

17. It is therefore recommended that the proposed parking improvements, as shown in Appendix C, are implemented.

Implications Arising out of the Report

Policy	The proposal is in accordance with relevant guidance.
Finance and value for money	The proposal will be funded via the Local Transport Plan Programme with a contribution from the members Local Improvement Schemes funding.
Legal	Motorists will be required to comply with the Traffic Regulation Order.
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	Statutory consultees have been consulted.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Bellingham

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Background papers:

File ref: HO206883

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that relevant officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	initials
Finance Officer	n/a
Monitoring Officer/Legal	n/a
Human Resources	n/a
Procurement	n/a
I.T.	n/a
Director	
Portfolio Holder(s)	

Author and Contact Details

Report Author ***Richard McKenzie – Senior Programmes Officer***

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Appendix A – Original Proposal and Consultation Letter

This proposal included double yellow lines on both sides of High Street

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Appendix B – Consultation Responses

FOR	AGAINST	NEITHER	Comments
1			<p>I welcome the double yellow lines along the high street to both ease the flow of through traffic & also as a measure to remove the danger that the parked vehicles caused along that stretch of road. the marking of parking busy in Manchester Square & Fountain View may marginally increase the number of vehicles that can be accommodated in these areas but this tiny increase will be more than filled by the vehicles that will now park there instead of along the high street. Ironically the Co-op, pharmacy etc who get irate at people "dumping" cars outside the shops all day limiting customer parking are quite happy for their staff to park in Manchester Square all day blocking residents form parking near their homes. Residents parking bays are required, especially in Manchester Square which has become a dumping ground for tourists and some local residents (who live elsewhere in the village) who think nothing of leaving a car blocking a frontage for days at a time. The situation, especially form Spring to Autumn last year was totally chaotic & unacceptable, vehicles need to be directed to the two car parks at either end of the village but this will only happen if there are permit only area in the village centre giving residents relief. I know that the residents have had enough, many will ignore the bays & will park across two spaces to save a parking bay for a wife or husband, there have already been "heated" confrontations & without some serious consideration being given to the people who actually live in areas such as Manchester Square the situation will undauntedly get worse not better.</p>
	1		<p>Viewing my concerns for parking in Bellingham. Yellow lines from Chemist to Manchester Square I feel people will just go and park outside town hall and opposite this will be worse that Main Street. Bellingham has more parking problems than Main Street. Russell terrace very bad as can't see round corner when school buses etc are coming also Fountain terrace park right up to junction by post office and again can't see to get out. I do agree that need short lines at each side of Manchester square but full length too much. The one hour restriction outside shops is also pushing people away as nights and Sunday nobody parks there. We have a home on the Main Street very worrying where we will park if have shopping etc and can't get outside house. Fruit shop has bay could homes not also have one.</p>
1			<p>Ref yellow lines in front street Bellingham we will be losing car parking spaces for village shops etc. all these cars will cause problems parking elsewhere i.e. on Blackbull corner, will homes along that street be advised where they car park? If lines are needed there then lots of places in Bellingham would also need lines. I think it will be worse getting out of square with traffic going faster, has any accident happened coming out of square?</p>

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			<p>In response to your recent request for feedback on the proposed changes to parking restrictions at Bellingham, the Parish Council has the following feedback. The Parish Council is happy with the majority of the proposals, but very strongly objects to the idea of double yellow lines on the high street on the side outside the current grocers. While the Parish Council is satisfied with the need for double yellow lines on the side of the Cheviot hotel, double yellow lines on the other side of the street (outside the grocers) should be restricted to the space between the entrance to Manchester Square and the end of the metal railings (the location of the old telephone box), as previously requested by the Parish Council in our feedback to Highways on the proposals. It has been argued that placing double yellow lines along this section of road will improve safety as it will remove an obstruction for vehicles travelling along the high street. The Parish notes that there have been no known cases of accidents caused by cars parked along this section of the Highstreet. In fact, the parked vehicles here act as a traffic calming measure, reducing the speed of cars travelling through Bellingham, leading to safer conditions for pedestrians. In the absence of another traffic calming measure by NCC, allowing traffic to speed up through the centre of Bellingham by removing this section of parking would reduce, not increase safety. Even if there was a safety benefit of removing an obstruction, as there would be a loading bay on this section of road anyway in NCC's proposals, there would still be an obstruction to traffic through Bellingham in this section of road. In addition, the primary need for parking changes in Bellingham is to increase the amount of available parking. Parking is very limited in Bellingham. This restricts our local economy, tourism and makes life more difficult for residents. For this reason, the Parish Council is very happy with the proposals to mark out bays for parking throughout the centre of the village. However the value of these bays will be for nothing if the few spaces Bellingham gains from marking out bays are removed by eliminating parking spaces outside the grocers. In short, the lining of the road along the length of the high street will mean NCC is failing to solve problem Bellingham has (lack of parking) by failing to remedy a problem that the village does not actually have (road safety). At the very least, any plans to reduce parking in the centre of the village MUST be delayed until further parking has been made available for users of the village at Westlands/Foundry Yard. The village cannot afford, under any circumstances, a net reduction in parking spaces at this time. The Parish has received a large number of complaints from residents about this matter and has therefore undertaken an investigation into public opinion through online surveys of local residents. Residents were asked about their thoughts on the proposed double yellow lining along the grocers side of the high street. There was a huge response of 186 people. Of these only 33 thought NCC's proposals were sensible. 113 wanted the double yellow lines to only run a short distance from the entrance to Manchester Square (as per our feedback above) while 40 felt that there was no need for any double yellow lines. This means that the poll showed 82% of local residents are opposed to double yellow lines along this section of the high street, suggesting that NCC has little locals support for double yellow lines in this area from people who will be most affected by the proposals. As such, we would ask that his section of double yellow lining is removed from the plan for the parking restrictions in Bellingham as a matter of urgency.</p>
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Appendix C – Revised Proposals

The final proposal has a section of double yellows removed on the East side of High Street, and additional double yellows at High Street's junction with the C201.

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DECISION TAKEN

Title of Officer(s) and Portfolio Holder (where appropriate):

Paul Jones - Service Director - Local Services

Subject:

PROPOSED PARKING IMPROVEMENTS, BELLINGHAM

Consultation

Four responses:

1 for

2 against

1 neutral

Proposals were amended following objections to the scheme.

Decision Taken:

The proposed parking improvements should be implemented.

Signature of Director



Date
27.10.22
