Delegated Decision

Northumberland County Council

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY THE
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

Paul Jones – Director of Environment & Transport
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Proposed Disc Zone Extension & Taxi Rank Removal – Bondgate Within, Alnwick

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle, Improving Our Roads & Highways

25 April 2024
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Purpose of Report

This report sets out the background to the proposal to remove an existing taxi rank and replace it with limited waiting disc zone parking at Bondgate Within in Alnwick.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed parking restriction amendments are implemented in order to improve parking facilities in the area.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following key themes in the Corporate Plan for 2023-26:

'Thriving Places and Culture – Neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained'

Key Issues

1. Northumberland County Council has received concerns regarding the current parking layout at Bondgate Within in Alnwick.
2. There is a lack of usage in the existing taxi rank, whereas visitor parking is in high demand in the town centre and allocated parking bays can often be at full capacity.
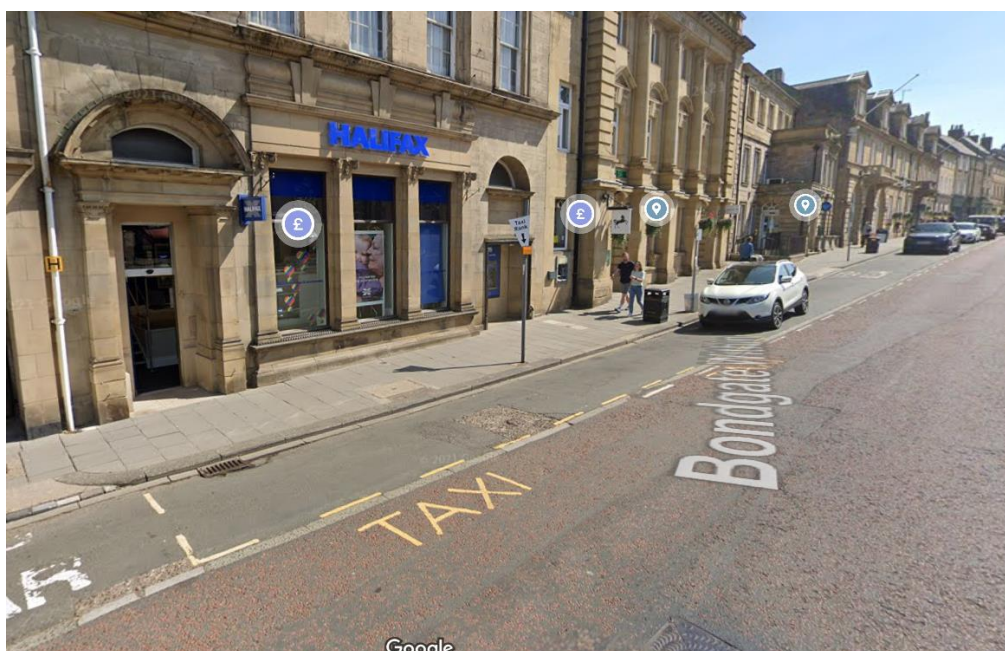
3. It is proposed to remove the existing taxi rank restrictions and replace the bay with an extension to the limited waiting disc zone parking restrictions in place at Bondgate Within.
4. The scheme is supported by both local County Councillors and Alnwick Town Council.
5. The scheme is to be funded through the 2024/25 Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme.

Background

Bondgate Within is situated within the town centre of Alnwick surrounded mainly by commercial properties and is therefore a popular location for visitor parking. Marked parking bays are allocated on Bondgate Within and waiting restrictions in the form of double yellow lines are in place to prohibit obstructive and indiscriminate parking throughout the area, but the road is also included within Alnwick's disc zone to permit limited waiting parking and is often at full capacity.

As well as disc zone parking, Bondgate Within has a taxi rank in place which prohibits any vehicle other than a licenced taxi from parking within the bay at any time.

Fig. 1: Existing taxi rank on Bondgate Within, Alnwick

The local County Councillors for Alnwick and Alnwick Town Council have raised concerns that the existing taxi rank is no longer utilised for its purpose and remains empty throughout the day. Given that the limited waiting disc zone parking bays are in high demand, a request has been made to replace this taxi rank with an extension of the disc zone.

Fig. 2: Example of disc zone parking bays on Bondgate Within, Alnwick

A shared-use bay for disc zone parking on Monday-Saturday during the hours of 8am-6pm and a taxi rank between the hours of 6pm-8am every day were initially proposed and the extents of this can be found in Appendix A, however responses during the consultation advised that the majority of stakeholders would be comfortable with the rank being removed completely, as many licenced taxis use other facilities for the purposes of picking up and dropping off. Full consultation results are listed in Appendix B. As a result, the existing 'no stopping except taxis' restriction is proposed to be removed completely and the limited waiting bays as part of Alnwick's disc zone are to be extended to cover the extents of this taxi rank. Details of the proposed amendments which were re-consulted on with an overview of the final planned extents are outlined in Appendix C. No responses were received to the second consultation.

The proposal is intended to increase parking opportunities for visitors to Alnwick and residents and to protect the amenity of the area overall. Northumbria Police, directly affected properties, other emergency services and relevant statutory consultees will be notified of these amendments as part of the process for making the permanent Traffic Regulation Order.

Implications Arising out of the Report

Policy	Consistent with existing policies.
Finance and value for money	Scheme will be financed through the LTP 2024/25 programme.
Legal	Motorists will be required to comply with the Traffic Regulation Order.
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐	N/A
Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	Regulations in place to carry out enforcement.
Customer Consideration	Statutory consultees, directly affected properties and taxi operators have been consulted.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Alnwick

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Background Papers

File reference – S:\Highways\PROJECT\22\HE Minor Improvements\HE223606D - TROs Countywide\HE223631D North Northumberland\HE223631D - 20 Bondgate Within, Alnwick (Taxi Rank)

Appendix A – Consultation Plan

Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Appendix C – Post-Consultation Plan

Author
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Report Author   William Binks, Programme Officer

Delegated Decision

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Officer   Director of Environment & Transport

Subject   Proposed parking restriction amendments at Bondgate Within, Alnwick

Consultation   For: 5 (83%)
Against: 1 (17%)

Decision Taken   To remove the existing taxi rank and replace with limited waiting disc zone parking bays at Bondgate Within, Alnwick
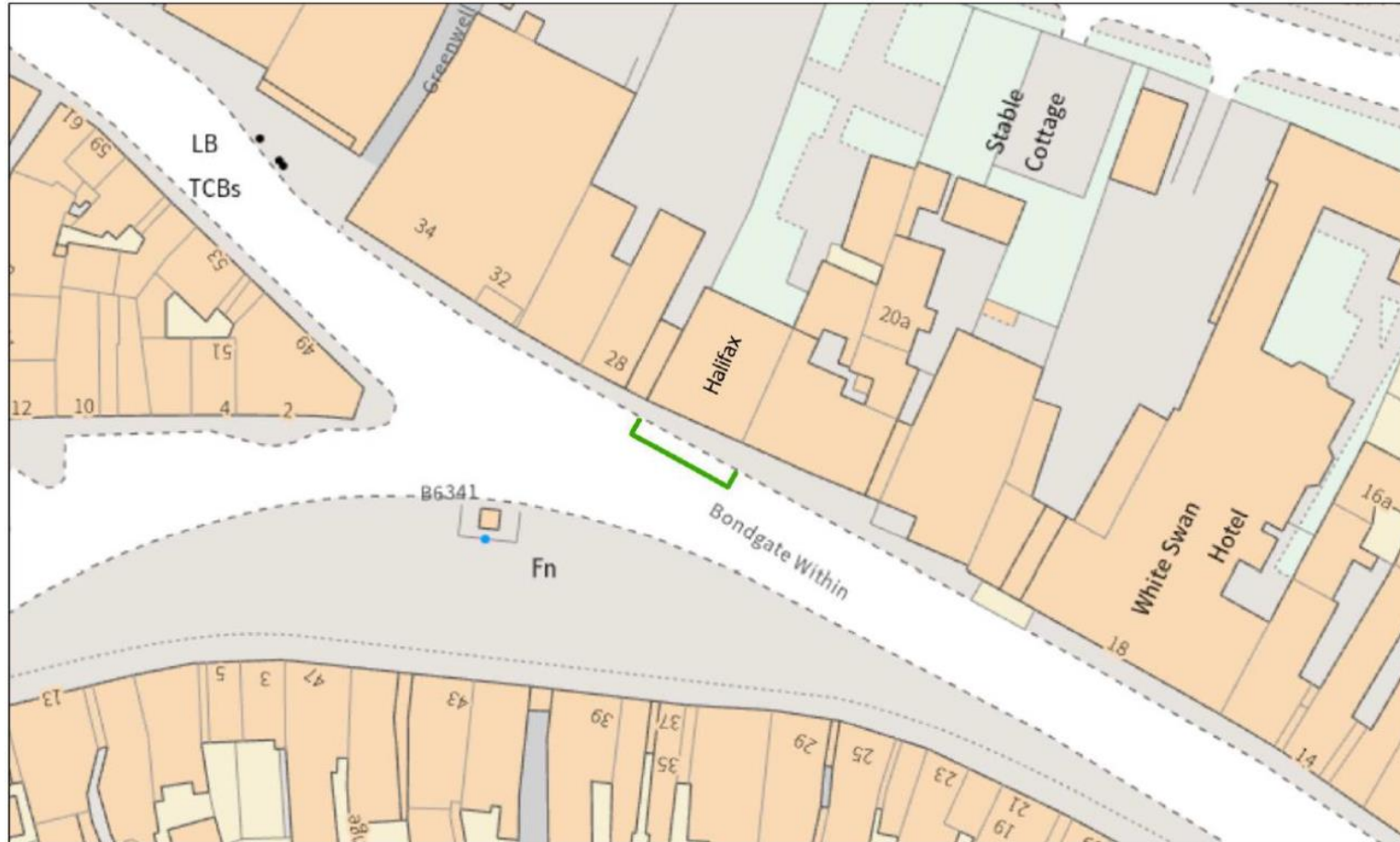
Signature of Director

Date

26th April 2024

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Appendix A – Consultation Plan

Northumberland County Council	Network Management Information System	Proposed Dual Use Disc Zone & Taxi Rank Bondgate Within, Alnwick	Key:
Northumberland County Council County Hall Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2EF Tel: 0345 600 6400	This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution of civil proceedings. License no. 100049048 (2005)	Drn: JB — Date: August 2023 — Scale: NTS	Proposed Disc Zone, Mon-Sat 8am-6pm, 2 Hrs No Return within 3 Hrs Proposed 'No waiting except taxis', 6pm-8am

Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Key: F = For; A = Against

F	A	RESPONSES
1		In my opinion there is no need for a taxi rank in Bondgate Within. Nobody uses the rank through the day and night time you can park anywhere on the main street. When we have bookings from public houses or hotels we arranged to pick them up outside their establishment. Customers do not want to walk in cold, damp, inclement weather to a taxi rank at night or through the day.
1		I fully support the removal of this facility. We have lived in Northumberland for over X years and despite visiting Alnwick several times a week have never seen a taxi on this rank.
1		No comments.
	1	I think this is a very bad idea to have any taxi rank 'part-time' because it's difficult enough as it is to have a designated area where the public can wait or hire a taxi. The amount of disruption this causes through traffic abusing full time taxi ranks as car parks is already ridiculous! There is zero support as it is from local councils or the government regarding any enforcement of the public abusing taxi ranks as a car park. I personally feel it's a huge insult to the taxi trade this proposal! I would rather the Alnwick Taxi rank is full time, is located elsewhere full-time (near Alnwick bus station for example) or is just removed altogether by proposing a part-time taxi rank is in my eyes is a complete joke & just highlights the lack of understanding from the council for the importance of taxi ranks. I seriously hope this proposal is reconsidered. Above anything else having a part-time taxi rank is a serious safeguarding concern! Taxi ranks should always be full-time! Taxi drivers are required to jump through hoops to get licensed yet the national & local attitude from authorities towards taxi ranks is ridiculous, it's only a matter of time before someone with evil intentions see that any Tom, Dick or Harry can abuse taxi ranks anyway they like!
1		I am responding to the consultation regarding the proposed hybrid parking scheme in Bondgate Within Alnwick, that intends to remove taxi rank status form the parking bay where it is at present and restore it to 2 hour parking for all vehicles between 8am-pm. Whilst I support restoration of normal parking, I have yet to see a single taxi use the space in the evening and a taxi company owner I spoke to said it was completely unnecessary to retain it for taxi use at any time. Therefore, I recommend that the space is allocated to any vehicles for 24 hours every day.
1		Alnwick Town Council have reviewed the proposed amendments to the taxi rank in Bondgate Within Alnwick and would request that, as the taxi rank is not needed or used, it is removed.
5	**1**	

Appendix C – Post-Consultation Plan

	Proposed Parking Restrictions Bondgate Within Alnwick	Key:
Northumberland County Council		Existing Taxi Rank to be removed Proposed Disc Zone, Monday-Saturday, 8am-6pm 2 Hrs Maximum Stay, No Return within 3 Hrs

Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland NE61 2EF
Tel: 0345 600 6400

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Drn: WB | Date: 09.01.24 | Scale: NTS