



Northumberland

County Council

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Paul Jones – Director of Environment & Transport

Proposed Parking Restrictions – Castle Street, Warkworth

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

26 June 2024

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the background to the proposal to introduce additional 'No Waiting at Any Time' (double yellow lines) restrictions at Castle Street in Warkworth.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed parking restrictions are not implemented following results of the consultation.

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 received concerns regarding the existing parking arrangements on Castle Street in Warkworth.
2. Additional 'No Waiting at Any Time' restrictions in the form of double yellow lines were proposed in order to alleviate these concerns.
3. The proposal is not supported by the local County Councillor and is not favoured by residents within the vicinity.
4. It is therefore proposed that the scheme is not progressed.

Background

The A1068 Castle Street is situated in the centre of Warkworth forming part of the route between Birling and Amble. The road layout has a sharp bend slightly north of the Sun Hotel and existing 'No Waiting at Any Time' restrictions (double yellow lines) are in operation at this location to prohibit vehicles from parking on this bend.



Fig. 1: Existing road layout at Castle Street, Warkworth (Source: Google Maps, 2024)

Concerns were raised by Warkworth Parish Council to Northumberland County Council with regards to vehicles parking on the north side of the road directly outside Castle Terrace properties near to this bend and a request for an extension of the double yellow lines was made to improve forward visibility for motorists and the free flow of traffic. During the consultation for this proposal, requests were made to refrain from extending the restrictions as this would reduce parking for residents. A total of 12 responses were received to the proposed extension of the double yellow lines, with all 12 being against the proposal.

It is also considered following observations of traffic flows at the location that the presence of parked vehicles was not impeding the free flow of traffic or causing any road safety concerns.

As a result, it is recommended that the proposed restrictions are not progressed at this time. The proposed restrictions that were consulted on can be observed in Appendix A, with consultation responses listed in Appendix B.

Delegated Decision

Implications Arising out of the Report

Policy	Consistent with existing policies.
Finance and value for money	N/A
Legal	N/A
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Customer Consideration	Statutory consultees and directly affected properties were consulted.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Amble West with Warkworth

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Background Papers

File reference – HE243818-01

Appendix A – Scheme Layout

Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Author

Report Author **William Binks, Programme Officer**

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Officer	Director of Environment & Transport
Subject	Proposed 'No Waiting at Any Time' restrictions at Castle Street, Warkworth
Consultation	For: 0 (0%) Against: 12 (100%)
Decision Taken	To not introduce additional 'No Waiting at Any Time' restrictions at Castle Street, Warkworth

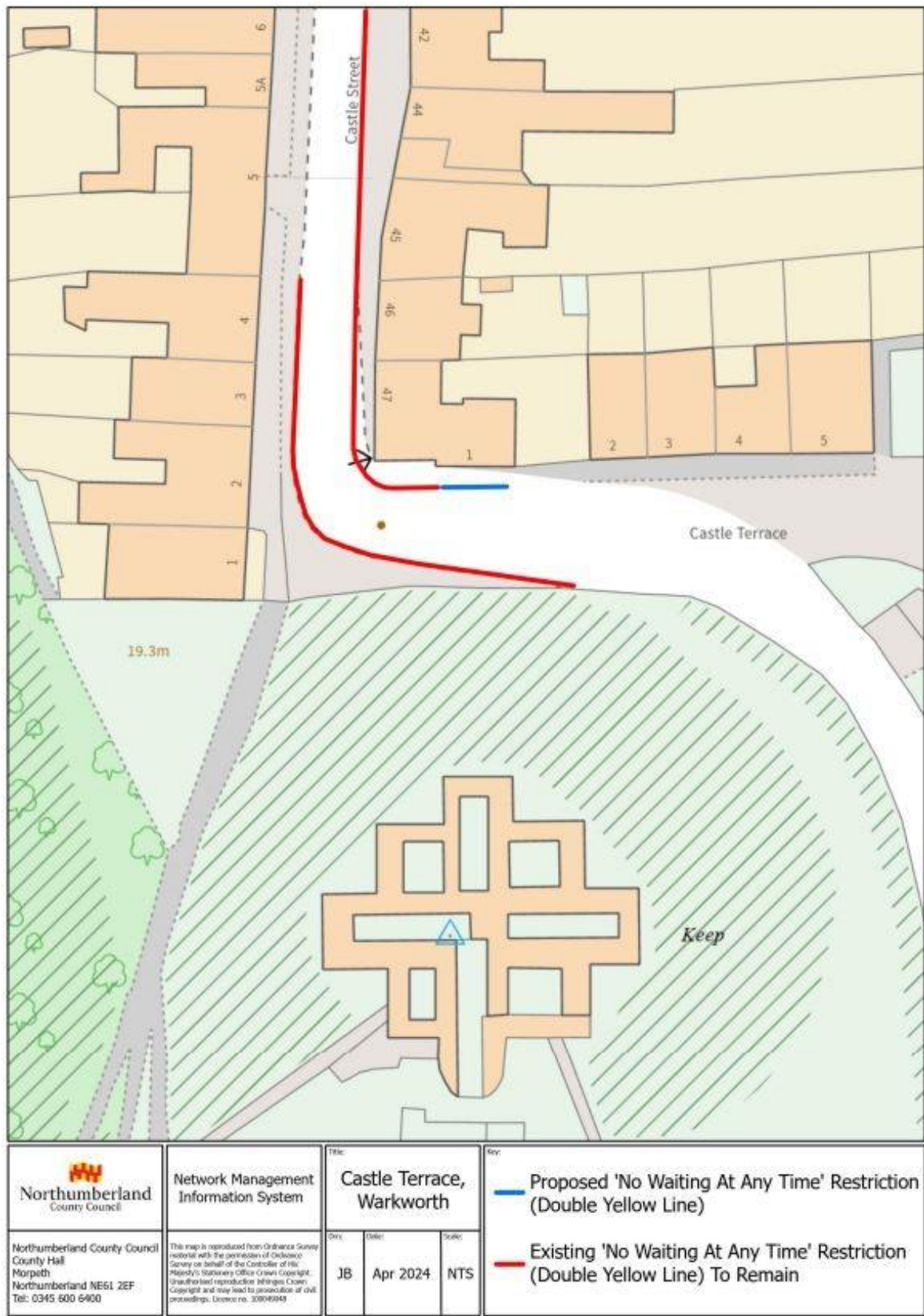
Signature of Director



Date

28th June 2024

Appendix A – Scheme Layout



Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Key: F = For; A = Against

F A	RESPONSES
1	<p>Having received your letter dated 12 April 2024 on the above subject under the above reference number, a few matters need to be pointed out. You refer to issues about parking concerns on Castle Street when you indicate in blue, the proposed new restrictions that affect Castle Terrace. What are you saying - Castle Street or Castle Terrace. Your proposed new parking restrictions talk about "obstructive and indiscriminate parking", but the area you have marked in blue has been a legitimate and legal parking place for 23 years since I have lived at number X Castle Street. How is it possible for a legally parked car in the area you have marked in blue, to be obstructive and indiscriminate? Your letter refers to having received concerns (in the plural) being expressed. This presumably suggests that more than one person of one body has expressed concerns. I would like to challenge the truthfulness of that. If one person or one body has expressed concerns about parking in this legitimate place as being obstructive and indiscriminate, then I would suggest that that person has not a shred of factual or photographic evidence to support their suggestion. You don't talk about parking being obstructive or indiscriminate, but you lump both features together such that a car has been both obstructive and indiscriminate. That suggestion sounds silly. On your map showing double yellow lines around the top corner of Castle Street, it has to be pointed out to you that apart from 24 hours about 15 years ago, there has never been double yellow lines around that corner ever, as far as I'm aware. You've produced a map of the houses on the west side of Castle Street that you have covered by yellow lines where A) some of the houses do not have double yellow lines outside of them and B) you have a house number X missing. It may be that somebody has been leading you on in that you have presented a document containing a number of significant errors and you make assertions that those who actually live in the immediate vicinity do not recognise. I will of course be registering a formal objection to your proposal before 10 May but I thought it useful to point out a number of errors at the outset.</p> <p>Thank you for your letter dated 12 April concerning your proposal to install double yellow lines on Castle Terrace (outside Tower cottage). I should like to register an objection to your proposal on the following grounds: As a resident who has lived at X Castle Street directly across the road from Tower cottage for quarter of a century, I have never witnessed any obstructive and/or indiscriminate parking in the area you propose to impose restrictions. The resident at number X Castle Street has lived in his house for XX years and he advises me that he also has never seen any parking outside Tower cottage that is, "...obstructive and indiscriminate...". A previous owner of Tower cottage is Councillor XX and he has advised me, as well as getting on the record of the Warkworth Parish Council meeting, that he had never seen any parking outside this cottage that is, "obstructive and indiscriminate..." The only informed residents in a position to comment accurately on the parking situation outside Tower cottage, are those who are able to observe it, month in and month out. Such residents live at numbers X,X and X Castle Street as well as the owner of XX I have permission from all the residents who overlook the space you have marked in blue, to confirm that none of them have ever witnessed any parking that is other than appropriate and safe. The question has to be asked, 'who would park their car there if it was regarded as unsafe' or dangerous? The area you have identified in blue is currently a legal parking space and it is hard to understand how a car legitimately parked outside Tower cottage could be deemed as, "...obstructive and indiscriminate..." It could be suggested that those who have raised the issue of a car in this parking space as being, "... obstructive and indiscriminate...", have no evidence to support their claim. If parking outside Tower cottage was ever "...obstructive and indiscriminate..." is it not a thought that one of the adjacent residents would have said something by now? When a car is parked outside Tower cottage, the distance from the edge of that car to the curb opposite is 7.54 metres. When a car is parked half way down Castle Street, the distance from the edge of the car to the curb opposite is 6.35 metres. The road width at Tower cottage on Castle Terrace is therefore 1.19 metres wider than the road on Castle Street. (See attached photo that shows a parked SUV outside Tower cottage being passed by another SUV with a lorry passing in the opposite direction – there is ample room to spare and it can be seen that traffic is able to flow uninterrupted in both directions). The person concerned who is alleging, "...obstructive and indiscriminate..." parking is perhaps mixing up their concerns with heavy vehicles that pointedly meet on the Castle Street and Castle Terrace corner. Being a medieval village with an acute left hand bend that protects the pavement with two low metal bollards, means that long vehicles heading south have to swing out as they negotiate the bend. See the attached photo of a large low loader travelling north that meets a bus heading south where both vehicles meet at the corner. The photo illustrates that the bus cannot continue unless the vehicle heading north either backs up or continues on round the corner. What is equally easy to see is that the car parked outside Tower cottage has nothing to do with this situation whatsoever. What normally happens in situations like this is that the vehicle heading north drives forward whilst the bus remains put, which then allows the bus to continue round the corner and away. The parked car clearly has no bearing on this situation in any shape or form. If the person investigating the proposal to add double yellow lines cared to stand at my upstairs window for half an hour observing the traffic from this vantage point, they would see that large vehicles do get stuck when they meet each other at the corner, but more</p>

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	<p>importantly, any car parked outside Tower cottage plays no part in the through flow of traffic. Large vehicles being held up for a few minutes at a sharp bend in an attractive medieval village, seems to be a reasonable price to pay and there is no obvious solution to this phenomenon. There appears to be a reasonable case to suggest that NCC should avoid any more expenditure of time and money on this case and leave alone this long established and settled parking place outside of Tower Cottage. Parking places for residents are already scarce and there seems to be nothing new in 2024 after all these years to warrant further street disfigurement from additional double yellow lines. Please see the photo attached that shows the 14.55 bus rounding the corner heading south. There is currently no car parked outside Tower cottage and there is no traffic coming the other way north. The bus however voluntarily pulls right into the oncoming lane, not because of parked car, but because of the acuteness of the left hand bend and the two low bollards. I think this proves our point. I could take photos like this all day, but I'll capture a few more just to press the point when making the case to NCC. As one of the residents who directly overlooks the proposed parking restrictions outside Tower Cottage for XX years, I've already talked about myself and my immediate neighbours never having seen a problem, as well as the fact that the Tower cottage parking is mitigated by the fact that the road width outside Tower cottage is wider by 1.17 metres than the width of road on Castle Street. By way of presenting some factual evidence to try and rebut the contentions by Warkworth Parish Council that Tower Cottage is indiscriminate and obstructive, I offer the attached range of photos of many different vehicles taken from my upstairs window on the 1/05/24. I could have taken hundreds of similar photos every day, but the selection may make the point well enough. The evidence illustrates that south bound lengthy vehicles are not influenced by a car that might be parked outside Tower cottage, but more by A) two low bollards that protect the corner and B) the tightness of the acute left-hand bend. In the series of photos, it can be seen that: - Vehicles can equally pass each other comfortably in the north and south direction outside Tower Cottage whether there is a car parked there or not. Because of the tight bend, vehicles naturally have to swing out, thus missing where a Tower cottage parked car might be, even when there is no car parked there at all. The tightness of the sharp left hand corner dissuades drivers from immediately straightening their car as they come off the bend, which make them instinctively avoid the parking space outside Tower Cottage. Because of the acute bend and the two bollards, long vehicles have to stop at the bend and swing right out into the north bound roadway in order to take the corner. It can be seen that when there is no car parked outside Tower Cottage, long vehicles still have to invade the north bound highway simply to get round. From the photographs, it can be seen that this manoeuvre happens in a way that has nothing to do with the Tower Cottage parking space. It can be seen that having negotiated the bend, long vehicles naturally occupy the road outside Tower Cottage with sufficient width that would avoid encroaching on the Tower Cottage parking space as if there has been a car there. I can't think of any more convincing evidence that what is apparent from the photos. It is easy for Warkworth PC to say that Tower Cottage parking is obstructive and indiscriminate, but photographic evidence looks as though such a statement cannot be correct. The picture I have tried to paint is the picture that has always been there for XX years. Castle Street and Terrace are medieval roads overlooked by a castle. I don't think anybody wants vehicles to have such free passage that may then lead to excessive speed through these streets.</p>
1	<p>I have received your letter of 12 April reference HE243818-01 concerning the proposal to insert double yellow line parking restrictions at the junction of the Castle Street and Castle Terrace Warkworth. My house overlooks Castle Terrace so I see traffic movement much of the day from my study window. You refer to concerns expressed by "obstructive and indiscriminate" parking on the proposed section. I am not sure what this phrase means and would be grateful if you could explain what "indiscriminate" means in the highway control context. As to "obstruction" given the bend and road-width at this point of the highway, any such obstruction would presumably halt traffic flow but I have not observed that, other than when Highways England have directed excessively large loads through the village to avoid pressure on the A1 North and the long articulated vehicles get stuck turning the bend. I am not aware of any vehicle collisions at this location and have observed buses and wide farm vehicles navigating the corner without undue difficulty. The County Council will of course do what it deems appropriate but as residents upon whom this will impact, I believe we are entitled to know the actual basis for the need to alter the situation. This email will be forwarded to our Local County Councillor so that he is informed of the question being asked of the department. Your response on "obstructive and indiscriminate" would be greatly appreciated. I live opposite this bend and have not observed any obstruction. The bend is difficult and traffic must slow to navigate the corner but buses and wide farm vehicles do so without blocking the road when a car is parked in the proposed restriction area. This proposal is not based upon fact but on the opinion of those who do not know the area in question.</p>
1	<p>The plan shows unbroken double yellow lines across the road they have a gap in them. For twenty years (until 8 years ago) I owned the cottage where the issue is, all that time the postal address was X Castle Terrace and it still is. I have never seen an accident on this corner, two previous surveys by NCC highways have not seen the need for any change. I really think there is no issue here and it is a waste of effort and will not support any changes.</p>

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1	<p>Thank you very much for your letter of 12 April 2024 asking for comments on Proposed Parking Restrictions - Castle Street. 1. I have lived on Castle Street for XX years and during that time and especially since lockdown, the amount and speed of traffic and competition for parking have increased. One might say that it is now changing the character of the village. 2. However during that time, I have never seen problems from cars parked on the stretch of Castle Terrace marked on your map where you propose an extension of double yellow lines. 3. There have been however several accidents at the top of Castle Street during this 36 years, some of which I have witnessed and they seem to be due to cars increasing their speed coming up the hill from the direction of the Sun Hotel, and then not being able to control their speed when, the road turns abruptly right, the surface levels of and then goes downhill. Usually the crashes occur directly outside or a little downhill from my home. 4. I realize that the NCC has a difficult job here, as there will be those seeking to attribute the danger of past and indeed future accidents to cars parked on Castle Terrace, and there will be an element of "I warned you", but I am not one of them, and in my opinion the accidents will continue even if the double yellows are extended as the cause is people's driving behaviour. 5. The extension of the yellow lines down Castle Terrace will however have adverse effects as it removes car parking spaces at a time when car parking in the village is getting more competitive - a cause of major upset for residents. 6. Sadly I cannot suggest any other sensible or economic proposal which would reduce accidents - I believe traffic calming measures are not permitted on the grounds that it is an A road (A1068). However if the stretch of Castle Terrace marked on your map where you propose an extension of double yellow lines is not causing a problem, then there seems no good reason to extend the yellow lines. 7. Lastly please may I point out that the double yellow lines on the opposite side of the road adjoining the "triangle" were removed some years ago and I would be grateful for reassurance that there is no intention to reinstate them? I have lived on Castle Street Warkworth for XX years and I have observed the traffic going around the corner during that time. The buses and usually any HGV coming up the hill of Castle Street, all pause at the brow and wait because of the acuteness of the bend and because of the traffic approaching from the second bend ahead. Then, when the oncoming traffic on Castle Terrace permits, they pull out into the centre of the road to make the turn. Any car parked on Castle Terrace in the area that would be excluded by yellow lines is immaterial. The accidents I've seen are related to the speed and poor judgment of the drivers, not a stationary car outside Tower Cottage.</p>
1	<p>We are writing to object to the proposed parking changes on Castle Terrace (to double yellow line the single space outside Tower Cottage). We are unaware of any danger, or obstruction or indiscriminate parking of a car parked outside Tower Cottage. From our own observations, traffic moves with great care but freely in both directions, and we have never seen any form of traffic jam or threat to pedestrians. Unfortunately, we are unable to attend the next Parish Council meeting on 2 May, and we cannot find any minutes from the meeting on 2 April, but we are very interested in keeping in touch with this issue.</p>
1	<p>We have owned Tower Cottage on Castle Terrace outside of which is where the parking restrictions are proposed, since 2009 and are unaware of any "concerns regarding obstructive and indiscriminate parking" outside our cottage nor of any incidents where harm or the potential for harm has been caused by parked cars outside our cottage. We are confident that would be endorsed by the previous owner, currently the county councillor for Amble West with Warkworth and the neighbours we have consulted with. I should be grateful therefore if you could provide me with full details of the evidence behind these "concerns" so we can see if they hold up.</p>
1	<p>I wish to register my objection to the proposed change to add a further Double Yellow restriction outside Tower Cottage Warkworth. I see little value in the proposal other than a further restriction/limitation on the ridiculous parking arrangements currently in place for residents. Furthermore I don't quite follow why this has been proposed other than you received concerns regarding obstruction. I have lived in the village for over 20yrs and have never noticed this to be an issue. I would further be interested to review the evidence of this? As I imagine it would not be as simple as expressing this on the County Council website only? I would further be interested in understanding why other residents have not been informed whom are not directly adjacent to this proposal? I would like to request any further restricted proposals within the village then information should be sent to all residents within the village. I suggest this due to the atrocious current parking arrangements given the number of tourist/day visitors visiting whom have unrestricted parking, irrespective where they are visiting. Any place lost is a further impact on residents as current parking is a premium. I object to this proposal and would request any further removal of the current parking spaces are sent to all residents.</p>
1	<p>I am writing with regard to recent correspondence proposing parking restrictions on Castle Street Warkworth. I am a resident of X Castle Street and would like to raise my objection to such a proposal. There are limited parking spaces allocated to Castle Street and to reduce ever further will cause unnecessary congestion for the residents of the village: particularly during busy summer months. The current parking allocation where there are no yellow lines, serves the residents equally well without causing any obstruction or traffic build up as cars drive through the village without issue. There has been no evidence of any problems with the current parking arrangements. I would also like to add that the residents at the top of Castle Street (X-X) are quite elderly with the average age of XX years plus. There also needs to be a duty of care considered for the residents and therefore maintain the</p>

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	current parking arrangements so properties can be accessed with ease. I would welcome further updates as they become available.
1	<p>As a resident of XX years living at number X Castle Street along with my husband, my house overlooks the corner directly opposite the location that is under consideration for double yellow lines outside Tower Cottage. I constantly see the traffic that negotiates the tight bend at the intersection of Castle Street and Castle Terrace. Long Vehicles like HGV's and buses traveling south approach the bend with caution. The two short bollards on the pavement and the 90-degree bend means that these vehicles have to pull out into the north bound roadway to successfully get round the corner. They have to do this on the corner itself and are not influenced by any car that might or might not be parked outside Tower Cottage. I see this every day and could not be persuaded that difficulties on this corner are any fault of a car parked outside Tower Cottage. There has been permitted parking outside Tower Cottage for as long as I have lived at number X and I understand that there has been uninterrupted parking well before that. I don't understand what the Warkworth Parish Council meant by suggesting that a car, legally parked outside Tower Cottage is obstructive and indiscriminate. All the cars that I've seen parked there have been parked in a normal manner similar to all the cars parked elsewhere in Warkworth. The Tower cottage parking space has been satisfactory throughout my time in Warkworth and there appears to be no change in traffic flow or volume of HGV's and buses to cause any current alarm. To my knowledge there has been only one accident adjacent to Tower Cottage many years ago. The local resident involved in that lives at number XX Castle Street. At a public meeting about village parking issues she described how the accident was a result of a drunk driver heading north around the Sunn hotel corner on the wrong side of the road. She stated it was nothing to do with a car parked outside Tower cottage. If the Parish Council felt that there was a parking problem outside Tower Cottage, should they not have mentioned it in their risk assessment document of September 2021. Parking places in Warkworth are precious and to lose even one space impacts on all the residents. Tower cottage parking cannot suddenly have become a problem and I would urge that it is left alone, given nobody who actually lives near this location has ever witnessed a problem.</p>
1	<p>My name is XX and I live at XX Castle Street Warkworth. Can I raise an objection to the restriction of Castle Terrace double yellow lines being used. It would have an impact on the parking elsewhere in the village as that place is often used by drivers. I've never seen it causing an accident. I've not seen it being parked in an obstructive manner as cited in the proposal.</p>
1	<p>We object to the proposed parking restrictions and would like to raise several points - We don't understand how any vehicle can be considered to be parking either indiscriminately or obstructively on a section of road where parking is unrestricted (legal). What aspect of parking on this section of road is indiscriminate? What aspect is obstructive? Which leads us to observe that vehicles heading south and turning left on the A1068 at this point are forced to take great care because of the bollards at the top of left side of Castle Street. Long vehicles are not obstructed in any way by vehicles parked on the road at the proposed location of the new parking restriction (blue line on your diagram). If there is evidence of obstruction it would be instructive to see it. Your diagram shows a continuous double yellow line on the opposite side of the road but it is in fact not continuous - there is a break at the corner. This allows vehicles to be parked legally and safely (and without causing any obstruction) on the paved area on that side of the road. The diagram should be altered to reflect the facts.</p>
1	<p>I wish to object to the new parking restrictions proposed at the top of Castle Terrace. There has been parking here for decades, without issue and the proposed restriction will only exacerbate problems caused by lack of parking in the village. I have never seen any obstructive and indiscriminate parking at this site and live a few doors down at X Castle Terrace.</p>
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