

WIRRAL COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATIONS PANEL – 8 NOVEMBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

OBJECTION: SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers objections to the provision of waiting restrictions at two locations following an audit of school keep clear and associated Traffic Regulation Orders around the vicinity of all schools, within Wirral.
- 1.2 The report recommends that the Panel note the objections however in the interests of road safety that the proposed waiting restrictions are recommended to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee for approval and implementation, as advertised.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An audit in the vicinity of all schools has recently been undertaken to ensure compliance with current Department for Transport (DfT) regulations and resolve a number of anomalies where schools have changed their entrances.
- 2.2 Guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) on the introduction of School Keep Clear markings indicates that they are intended to be used to protect pedestrians so that they have clear visibility of traffic and vice versa as well as identifying a safe area around the school.
- 2.3 I have consulted with schools to ascertain which pedestrian entrances are currently in use and give an opportunity for them to highlight any particular concerns they have relating to safety of pupils, parking and school related traffic etc.
- 2.4 I have undertaken my normal procedure for advertising such proposals by erecting notices on site and advertising in local papers. Additionally I have written to residents affected by particular schemes to notify them of the proposals and invite comments.
- 2.5 Following concerns raised by schools, together with site observations by my Road Safety Team, some new waiting restrictions were also advertised to regularise parking in the interests of road safety and reduction of congestion.
- 2.6 Phase 1 of this project has reviewed 114 of the 137 schools, with 133 individual waiting restriction orders advertised. I intend to complete outstanding schools within Phase 2 in due course.
- 2.7 Of the 133 School Keep Clear / Traffic Regulation Orders advertised so far, there have been objections at 2 locations.

3.0 OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSE

3.1 ELLERAY PARK SCHOOL

- 3.1.1 Residents of Elleray Park (property numbers 34 and 36) have submitted two separate objections to the proposals as shown on the attached drawing, No. BEng/51/10.

- 3.1.2 Both objectors are concerned that the proposals will exacerbate the problems they face in parking outside their properties, as at present there is no signage that delineates the hours in which drivers cannot stop on the School Keep Clear markings. If parking is restricted by a traffic regulation order the objectors feel that vehicles will then park opposite the school, outside their properties. The objectors feel that parking issues are mainly caused by teaching staff / visitors who park for long periods of time throughout the day. Separate objections to the proposals as shown on the attached drawing, No. BEng/51/10.
- 3.1.3 Objectors request that the street be considered for a residents parking scheme.
- 3.1.4 Elleray Park School Caters for children with special needs. The majority of children travel to / from school by minibus which pick up and set down children within the school grounds via in and out gates.
- 3.1.5 The site has School Keep Clear markings which are currently unenforceable without the necessary regulatory signs. A number of children are brought to school by private taxi who currently stop on the School Keep Clear Markings to unload their passengers.
- 3.1.6 Should the appropriate signs be introduced to enable enforcement activities to prevent other vehicles from blocking this area, taxis setting down children with disabilities and other Special Educational Needs would no longer be able to do so.
- 3.1.7 Following discussions with Elleray Park School, I consider the introduction of a taxi bay would provide space to pick / set down the pupils safely.
- 3.1.8 Whilst residents of Elleray Park Road do not have off street parking provision, there are only houses on one side of the road and a park and the school opposite. The school makes great effort to permit staff parking within the school grounds, whilst it cannot regulate this, the head teacher requests that staff park considerately in the local area.
- 3.1.9 This area would not meet the Council Criteria for the introduction of a residents Parking Scheme.
- 3.2 BRACKENWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL, PULFORD ROAD
- 3.2.1 Residents from property numbers 3, 5 and 7 have objected to the proposals detailed in appendix BEng/51/10. This is further supported by objections from Councillor Jerry Williams and Councillor Walter Smith.
- 3.2.2 Objectors are concerned that they, or their visitors will not be able to park outside their properties or anywhere within the turning head during its hours of operation (Monday- Friday 8am – 5 pm), despite the 'school run' being a problem for part of the day.
- 3.2.3 Objectors also feel that the proposals will push parking towards the junction of Holmway / Norbury Avenue, increase double parking or parking across driveways.
- 3.2.4 Objectors are also concerned that the introduction of waiting restrictions in the turning head will lead to their properties being devalued.
- 3.2.5 One objector is concerned that the introduction of a post and waiting restriction sign will cause an obstruction for a relative using a wheelchair.
- 3.2.6 One objector states that the introduction of yellow lines will increase vehicle speeds whilst using the turning circle, therefore making the situation dangerous for pupils.

- 3.2.7 In addition to the objections, I have received a letter of support from a resident who believes the advertised proposal will assist them manoeuvring to / from their property. Indeed they would want the time of operation for this restriction to be extended to 'no waiting at any time'
- 3.2.8 The school itself have also raised their concerns that vehicles currently park within the turning head, restricting turning manoeuvres and obstructing visibility of pedestrians in this area, which is close to one of the pupil entrances. The school support the introduction of the proposed waiting restrictions.
- 3.2.9 Holmway is a cul-de-sac serving 8 properties. Plan no. BEng/51/10 shows the existing layout including the footpath which connects Holmway to Pulford Road / Higher Bebington and also serves an entrance to Brackenwood Primary School.
- 3.2.10 A School Keep Clear marking is currently situated on one side of Holmway, extending into part of the turning head. This marking is not currently legally enforceable, as it has no mandatory signs. The layout of this marking does not fully cover the area regularly used by pedestrians and children accessing the footpath / school.
- 3.2.11 I do not consider that the introduction of the necessary signs would provide an effective area to protect the footpath which leads to Pulford Road / Higher Bebington Road and the adjacent school.
- 3.2.12 Whilst the objectors raise concerns over parking and visitor parking, my investigations reveal that all properties directly affected by the proposed restriction have some form of off-street parking provision, though this may not cater for numbers of visitors. There are some on-street parking spaces, however there are pressures on this, particularly at school start and finish times.
- 3.2.13 I consider the proposals to restrict parking during the working day (Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm) provides a reasonable compromise to ensuring the turning area, together with the area adjacent to the footpath to the school is unobstructed. The proposals will displace approximately 2 – 3 vehicles from parking within the turning area. I do not consider that the proposals will inevitably mean that these displaced vehicles will park across driveways or obstruct nearby junctions any more than currently occurs.
- 3.2.14 I also do not consider that vehicle speeds will significantly increase within the turning area. Holmway and its turning head are already of limited width. I believe that there are greater road safety benefits by restricting parking in the turning head than any significant increase in speed.
- 3.2.15 The exact location of necessary signage to support proposed waiting restriction has yet to be determined. My officers have noted that such signs / posts can be accommodated at the back of footway where they will not obstruct pedestrians or wheelchair users.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Estimated cost for provision of taxi bays within Elleray Park Road, relating to Elleray Park School in the region of £360.
- 4.2 Estimated cost for works within Holmway and Pulford Road, relating to Brackenwood Infant School, in the region of £581. Specifically, the work relating to Holmway is estimated at £220.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 The provision of the taxi bays in Ellery Park Road will assist the safe drop off / pick up of pupils from Elleray Park School who have statements of special educational need.

7.0 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS/IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 There are no identified issues under this heading for this report and its recommendation.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The implications under this heading are addressed in the report.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

11.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

12.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications under this heading.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 This report has implications for Members in the Wallasey and Bebington Wards.

15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 Letters received from residents objecting to the scheme have been used in the preparation of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel is requested to note the objections and the officers' responses and recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the waiting restrictions be approved for implementation in Holmway and Elleray Park Road, as advertised.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES