

WIRRAL COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATIONS PANEL

7 MARCH 2011

SUBJECT:	OBJECTIONS: SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS, VARIOUS LOCATIONS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	BEBINGTON, PRENTON, WALLASEY WARDS
REPORT OF:	THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES COUNCILLOR LESLEY RENNIE
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers objections to the provision of waiting restrictions at 3 locations following an audit of School Keep Clear and associated Traffic Regulation Orders around the vicinity of Wirral schools.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The report recommends that the Panel note the objections however in the interests of road safety that in respect of:
- 2.1.1 Holmway, Bebington – a revised time of operation, Monday to Friday 8:00 - 9:30 am and 3:00 – 4:30 pm is introduced.
 - 2.1.2 Bramwell Avenue and Edinburgh Drive, Prenton – Members views are sought on which one of three options should be progressed, as identified in paragraph 4.23.
 - 2.1.3 St Georges Road, Wallasey – that the proposals for No Waiting at Any Time are introduced as advertised.
- 2.2 The report further requests that the decisions of your Panel are recommended to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval and implementation.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An audit of School Keep Clear and associated Traffic Regulation Orders in the vicinity of all schools has been undertaken during 2010/2011 across a number of Phases. The review aimed to improve road safety, ensure compliance with Department for Transport (DfT) regulations and resolve a number of anomalies where schools have altered pedestrian entrances.
- 3.2 Guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) on the introduction of School Keep Clear markings indicate their intended use is to protect pedestrians, so that they have clear visibility of traffic, and vice versa. They also identify a safe area around a school.
- 3.3 I have consulted with all schools to find out which pedestrian entrances are currently in use and given them the opportunity to highlight any particular concerns they have relating to parking issues, school related traffic and road safety around the school.
- 3.4 Following concerns raised by schools, together with site observations by my Road Safety Team, I have advertised additional waiting restrictions at a number of sites to regularise parking, in the interests of road safety.
- 3.5 Phase 1, which reviewed over 114 of the 137 schools within Wirral during 2010 has made good progress with the approved advertised measures being implemented on site.
- 3.6 This report considers objections at 2 locations, within Phase 2 of the audit together with an update from a scheme within Phase 1.

4.0 OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSES

4.1 BRACKENWOOD INFANT SCHOOL, HOLMWAY, BEBINGTON

- 4.2 Members may recall that during the original advertisement period of Phase 1, in September 2010, objections were received to the Monday to Friday, 8 am – 5 pm Waiting Restriction, from residents at properties 3, 5 and 7. These objections were supported by two Ward Members. One of the objectors suggested that the situation could be resolved by the introduction of a 'No Motor Vehicles – Except For Access' restriction and associated signs.
- 4.3 In addition to the objections, I have also received a letter of support from one resident who felt the proposals (shown in B.Eng/21/10D1) would assist them in manoeuvring to and from their property. This resident also requested that the proposed restrictions be extended to 'No Waiting at Any Time'.
- 4.4 Brackenwood Infant School has reported safety concerns relating to parked vehicles within the turning head restricting both the visibility of, and for pedestrians. The school support the introduction of the original advertised waiting restrictions shown in plan B.Eng/21/10D1.

- 4.5 Following its meeting of 8 November 2010, your Panel resolved that the advertised scheme, for the provision of waiting restrictions as shown in B.Eng/21/10D1, be deferred for further consideration of an alternative 'Access Only' scheme.
- 4.6 I have sought advice from Merseyside Police, who have confirmed that the introduction of 'Access Only' signage and legislation is unsuitable and effectively unenforceable at this location on the basis that 'Access Only' can not be easily defined. Parents / carers, staff or visitors could legitimately seek access the school and then park within Holmway, bringing the sign and legislation into disrepute. Furthermore, my officers are concerned that the safety of those wishing to access / egress from the pedestrian footpath will not be addressed through this proposal.
- 4.7 Merseyside Police do not support the introduction of a 'No Motor Vehicles – Except For Access' restriction, but consider the introduction of Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 9:30 am and 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm waiting restrictions to be a more practical solution.
- 4.8 As a compromise to my original proposal, I now recommend that a single yellow line which prohibits parking within the turning head, Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 9:30 am and 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm is introduced.
- 4.9 PRENTON PRIMARY SCHOOL, BRAMWELL AVENUE AND EDINBURGH DRIVE, PRENTON
- 4.10 Residents at 75 Bramwell Avenue and 65 Edinburgh Drive have submitted two separate objections to the proposals as shown in the attached drawing, No. B.Eng/1/11/B
- 4.11 Residents from number 75 Bramwell Avenue are concerned that the removal of the existing School Keep Clear Markings will be detrimental to safety and will exacerbate the difficulty they face when attempting to enter / egress from their driveway. They feel that Bramwell Avenue is too narrow to allow parking on both sides of the road and this could cause a potential safety concern for children running / walking in-between parked vehicles.
- 4.12 They state that the School Keep Clear Markings are currently respected 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- 4.13 These objectors are concerned that the removal of the existing School Keep Clear Markings and introduction of a Monday to Friday, 8 am – 5 pm waiting restriction, for the length of the school side of Bramwell Avenue, will signal to motorists that it is acceptable to park on that side of Bramwell Avenue outside of these hours and are concerned that if they need to leave for medical appointments etc. they will be unable to, due to vehicles parking opposite their household.
- 4.14 These objectors are concerned that parking, outside of school hours, during school events such as Discos, Christmas Plays and Parents Evenings will occur

for extended periods of time on the school side, unless specifically prevented by the introduction of more stringent waiting restrictions.

- 4.15 The objectors request that we extend the hours of operation for the advertised restriction to No Waiting at Any Time.
- 4.16 Residents at 65 Edinburgh Drive have also objected to the planned proposals. They state that their property fronts onto both Bramwell Avenue and Edinburgh Drive. Whilst these objectors are not opposed to the introduction of parking restrictions per-se, they object on the grounds that the proposed No Waiting, Monday- Friday 8 am – 5pm waiting restrictions (junction of Bramwell Avenue / Edinburgh Drive) are excessive and will prevent visitors parking outside their property. They believe that parking problems result from school traffic and only between the hours of 8 am – 9 am and 3 pm – 4 pm.
- 4.17 Correspondence from two Ward Members, on behalf of undisclosed resident(s) and the Prenton Tenants and Residents Association, supports a reduction in the hours of restriction to cover the afternoon and morning drop off / pick up only (Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 9:30 am and 3:00 – 4:30 pm).
- 4.18 Prenton Primary School have an adopted School Travel Plan and actively raise road safety and sustainable transport issues with the school community through initiatives such as the Walking Bus and Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme which aim to safely reduce car use on the journey to and from school.
- 4.19 My Officers have carried out a number of site observations to assess the impact of the proposed markings in relation to safety and traffic management around the vicinity of the school.
- 4.20 The proposed Monday to Friday, 8 am – 5pm parking restriction, as advertised, will prevent motorists from parking on the north side of Bramwell Avenue, during the whole school day preventing vehicles parking outside the school and causing an obstruction.
- 4.21 In response to concerns from the residents at property number 65 Edinburgh Drive that the proposals will impact on the ability for visitors to park near their property, I consider that although the Highway Code states that drivers should not park opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, although this is not always observed, particularly around schools. My proposals, which are part of a wider area approach manage congestion and parking in this area and will provide a more formal restriction of parking at this junction, improving visibility and safety. Site observations show that the extents of the advertised proposals still permit the parking of vehicles at the end of the proposed waiting restrictions on Edinburgh Drive outside and adjacent to their property which also has a facility for off-street parking.
- 4.22 My Officers noted that Bramwell Avenue is relatively narrow and should drivers leave cars parked opposite (or almost opposite) each other, the potential exists for the road to become obstructed. I consider that the proposed Monday to

Friday, 8 am – 5 pm will significantly reduce the likelihood of parked vehicles causing an obstruction.

4.23 Due to the differing viewpoints involved, Members' views are sought on the following options in order to progress this scheme:

- a. Increasing the effect of the restrictions to cover No Waiting at Any Time. This option would require re-advertising.
- b. Implementing the advertised Monday to Friday, 8 am – 5 pm restriction. This option would not require re-advertising.
- c. Relaxing the time of operation to Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 9:30 am and 3:00 – 4:30 pm. This option would not require re-advertising.

4.24 ST GEORGE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, ST GEORGES ROAD, WALLASEY

4.25 A Resident from 30 Claremount Road has outlined his concerns on a number of parking and speed related issues around the vicinity of the school and has objected to the advertised proposals (shown in plan B.Eng/1/11/C) on the following grounds.

4.26 The objector feels that the current approach to the proposals deals with only one part of a much wider problem and that Officers have failed to consult properly with all concerned parties (car drivers, non car drivers, teachers and local residents).

4.27 The objector states that the proposals partially result from the difficulties faced by the School Crossing Patrol, relating to poor sight lines. He questions why the Crossing Patrol can not operate from the east side of St Georges Road.

4.28 The objector believes that the removal of parking spaces opposite the school will add to the dangers, harassed parents / carers experience when seeking parking spaces at the beginning and end of the day. The objector also feels that that the proposals are discriminatory and do not support parents or make provision for disabled drivers who wish to drive their children to school.

4.29 The Objector states that the proposals only treat parking problems and do not deal effectively with speed related road safety problems outside the school, or the careless parental supervision of children. The objectors also considers that the congestion in the area has been caused by poor planning approval (e.g. the extension of St Mary's Catholic College) by Wirral Council and a failure to monitor the situation by elected Members.

4.30 The objector requests that the proposals are delayed until a wide scale consultation meeting takes place to cover the following points:

- a. Introduction of a dropping off zone
- b. Staggering the end of the school day for different classes
- c. Better use of the CCTV car (or speed trap) to monitor speeding vehicles
- d. Introduction of traffic calming measures within St Georges Road
- e. Passing a By-Law to allow pavement parking as specific times of the day

- f. Planning future road maintenance schedules to include the narrowing of the pavements

- 4.31 In response to the objections I can confirm that I have followed the Council's procedures for public consultation over the introduction of waiting restrictions and have not received any other Objections to the advertised proposals within St Georges Road.
- 4.32 The build-outs of the footways were introduced a number of years ago to improve the visibility for pedestrians crossing St Georges Road outside the Primary School. At that time, white hatch type road markings were set out on the approach to the build-out opposite the school to warn approaching traffic of the extended kerbline.
- 4.33 It is not stated in the Highway Code that drivers 'must not' park within hatched areas, however, it is not recommended - unless it is safe to do so. I consider that vehicles parked within the hatched areas either side of the build-out (particularly large vehicles such as vans etc.) significantly obscure visibility for pedestrians, including children.
- 4.34 A school crossing patrol operates at key times from the build-outs. Although the patrol could operate only from the school side, this is done only rarely. It is considered safer and good practice to have the patrol operate from which ever side of the road has the majority of people wishing to cross (i.e. from opposite the school in the morning and directly outside the school in the afternoon), as they have a greater degree of control of the pedestrians waiting to cross. I consider the introduction of the proposed No Waiting At Any Time parking restriction will provide clear visibility to and from the build-out at all times.
- 4.35 It is recognised that congestion and limited availability of parking does occur in the vicinity of most schools throughout the Borough, however I consider that providing a safer environment near schools is a key priority. In this case, due to the proximity of an access to private off-street parking, the proposed waiting restrictions would prevent up to 3 vehicles from parking (on the hatched markings) opposite the school, and may result in displacement of these vehicles into the surrounding area. I consider that there is scope within the local area for people to park further away and walk, which would further improve road safety at this location. My Road Safety Officers continue to support schools in reducing the number of people driving to and from school.
- 4.36 St Georges Primary School has completed a School Travel Plan. In addition, the school has signed up to the Bike-It initiative, working with my Road Safety Team and Sustrans to promote sustainable travel (especially by bike) for the journey to and from school. Such schemes result in fewer vehicles travelling to and from the school, therefore reducing the pressure on parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of schools. As with all waiting restrictions, people entitled to a Blue Badge can (providing they do not create an unnecessary obstruction) park on waiting restrictions for up to 3 hours.

4.37 I recommend that the parking restrictions are introduced as advertised in plan number B.Eng/1/11/C.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 No risks from implementing my proposals are identified.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Site visits have been undertaken and relevant stakeholders consulted to develop/design the schemes detailed in the appendices.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 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.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from this report.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The estimated cost for the provision of waiting restrictions, for the 3 locations identified within this report are detailed below:

Location	Estimated Cost
Holmway	£200
Prenton primary	£2100
St Georges Primary School	£800
Total	£3100

9.2 Maintenance costs will be contained within the Highways Maintenance Budget.

9.3 Existing staff resources will be utilised in the progression of these schemes.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As defined by the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Measures which encourage safer walking and cycling to schools have a positive impact in reducing unnecessary car use and therefore assist in reducing the overall carbon footprint.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The recent audit of School Keep Clear and associated Traffic Regulation Orders undertaken in the vicinity of schools aims to improve road safety, particularly for vulnerable road users such as children and adult pedestrians.

13.2 There are no specific planning implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 'A' Holmway, Bebington. Existing Layout. B.Eng/51/10C1

Holmway, Bebington. Proposed Layout. B.Eng/51/10D1

Appendix 'B' Prenton Primary School, Prenton. Existing Layout. B.Eng/1/11/A

Prenton Primary School, Prenton. Proposed Layout. B.Eng/1/11/B

Appendix 'C' St Georges Primary School, Wallasey. Existing and Proposed Layout. B.Eng/1/11/D

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Site notes, drawings and objection letters have been used in the preparation of this report

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Highways and Traffic Representations Panel	8 November 2010