

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 20 November, 2017

Report of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport

Ham Lane East, Llantwit Major - Proposed Amendments to Waiting Restrictions - Objection Report

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Cabinet of the objection received to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to restrict waiting of vehicles along Ham Lane East, Llantwit Major.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet reject the objection for the reasons contained in this Report and that the Traffic Order is progressed as proposed.
2. That the objector is advised of this decision.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To enable the Order to be made as intended.
2. To confirm the Cabinet's position to the objector.

Background

2. On the 18th August 2017 the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Director of Environment and Housing services gave approval to give notice of a proposal to introduce a No Waiting at any Time (NWAT) and No Waiting 8am-5pm Traffic Orders, to prohibit vehicles waiting along sections of Ham Lane East, Llantwit Major. A copy of this Report provided in [Appendix A](#).
3. Accordingly, public notice of the proposal was given on 31st August 2017 with objections being invited in writing by the 22nd September 2017.

Relevant Issues and Options

4. This is a popular area for parents to drop off and pick up children from the local schools which can cause many highway safety concerns with irresponsible parking and potentially dangerous highway manoeuvres being carried out.

5. Several complaints have been received in the past regarding the saturated parking due to the lack of space and narrow nature of the road.
6. One letter of objection was received from a resident from outside the area. A copy of the letter in full is contained outlined below together with Traffic Officer's response which follows in paragraph 8 of this report.
7. Residents comments

When the Council took the decision to locate 3 schools along Ham Lane, and increase pupil numbers at the new Ysgol Y Draig site by closing Eagleswell Primary, proper thought should have been given to the increased traffic that this would generate.

With the subsequent alterations that have been made to Ham Lane over the summer break, e.g. the widening of the footpath and the removal of laybys, it must have been apparent that this would increase the demand for on street parking in the vicinity. Whilst there are parents that are able to walk their children to school (and at the comprehensive school the majority of children are able to make their way to school unescorted), there are many parents who simply cannot walk their children to primary and nursery school, either because of distance, a commute to work, or a combination of both.

During the consultation meetings prior to the closure of Eagleswell School parents and residents raised, time and again, the issue of increased traffic in the area, and each time Council Officers stated that surveys had been conducted and our concerns were unfounded as adequate provision would be provided in the building of the new site. I have been informed during correspondence with the Leader, Councillor Thomas (my local Councillor) that "As previously stated, the National and Local Policy is clearly to try to discourage the use of the car and encourage more people to travel sustainably by either walking, cycling or using public transport and this should form part of the basis for the future travel planning and policy arrangements for all schools along Ham Lane East. I also advised that the schools project in this area has incorporated a drop off facility as part of the overall site design utilising the newly constructed car park which provides additional parking and drop off for the scheme. For the secondary school, there is also a bus drop off / turning circle for coaches." Can you please confirm that we are able to use the newly constructed car park at Ysgol Y Draig because when I drop my daughter to school the gates are always closed?

As for the Council's aspiration to get more people walking, cycling or using public transport – this is quite simply an unrealistic expectation for many parents at the start and end of the school day. I myself live more than 3 miles from the school, have a child to drop at Ysgol Y Draig, another to be dropped at a child-minder and then I have to drive to Cardiff for work. I cannot walk this distance (most of it without a pathway) with 2 children. I cannot cycle this distance with a 10 year old and a 20 month old, and public transport provision is not adequate to enable me to leave the car at home.

There are many other reasons why leaving the car at home is not possible for many. Time is one consideration. There are also many grandparents who carry out the drop off and collection of children from school, some of whom may have mobility difficulties. Further, there are child-minders who take/collect their charges from one or more schools. I understand the desire of the Vale of Glamorgan Council to promote active lifestyles for its citizens, but removing parking from schools is tantamount to enforcing an active lifestyle.

I recently attended an open evening at Llantwit Major Comprehensive for year 6 pupils, and there was nowhere to park. Judging by the number of people I saw in fitness clothing there must have been a fitness class starting, but the leisure centre car park was full to capacity. There was not a stretch of double yellow lines within that car park that didn't have a car parked on it.

Whilst the safety of residents and children is paramount, it cannot be denied that for some, travelling by car is the only workable solution. Therefore, my objections to the Proposed NWAAT Restrictions on Ham Lane are:-

8. Concern 1

The merging of Eagleswell Primary and Ham Lane Primary has increased pupil numbers and resulted in additional demand for parking. The removal of laybys along Ham Lane has reduced previous parking provision in the area and a NWAAT Order will likely make travelling along Ham Lane and surrounding streets more dangerous. Plans should be put in place to increase "short stay" parking for parents, not remove it altogether.

9. Officer response 1.

The removal of the layby area should improve safety as the current practise is to pull in to the area often causing drivers to reverse back out into the flow of traffic, potentially causing collisions.

10. Concern 2.

The promised turning circle and adequate parking at Ysgol Y Ddraig has not materialised – whilst a suitable pickup/drop off area has been provided for Bro Morgannwg in Barry.

11. Officer response 2.

This is a detailed site layout matter, and the current position is that a walk way has been provided between Ysgol Y Ddraig and the Llantwit Major Comprehensive site, which provides sufficient car parking and turning area.

12. Concern 3.

Cllr Thomas informs me that the Council has received many complaints about dangerous driving manoeuvres and parking that have centred around the laybys and junctions but no attempt has been made to explore ways to improve safety/awareness, other than this blanket approach to banish cars.

13. Officer response 3.

As point 1 above, the removal of the laybys and implementation of associated waiting restrictions will look to address these concerns. Parents should be encouraged to use the drop off area and car park like the coaches.

14. Concern 4.

The Council are to be commended for encouraging active lifestyles in its citizens, but the banishing of cars is not an encouragement it is enforcement. Additionally, with the removal of on-street parking in the proposed areas, people wishing to use the Leisure Centre are unable to park. I recently attended an open evening at Llantwit Major Comprehensive for year 6 pupils, and there was nowhere to park. Judging by the number of drivers I saw circling the car park wearing fitness clothing there must have been a fitness class starting but the leisure centre car park was full to capacity.

Even the double yellow lines within that car park were hidden beneath the cars parked on them.

15. Officer response 4.

The waiting restrictions do actually allow for an exemption for drop off and pick up so long as they do so without actually parking up and leaving the vehicle. Likewise such parking / dropping off is only for very short periods at the beginning and end of the school day. I cannot comment about enforcement of the school / leisure centre car park which is off the adopted highway.

16. Concern 5.

Local travel plans, which encourage the use of public transport, haven't properly considered the problems encountered by people trying to juggle work and family, and public transport is simply not adequate enough to cater for many people's needs.

17. Officer response 5.

This is an issue that needs to be addressed on a national scale with public transport operators. In this regard whilst the concern is noted, the Council does subsidise local bus transport as well as home to school transport but has a limited budget in this regard.

18. Concern 6.

Residents in streets surrounding the schools in Ham Lane will experience greater demand for parking outside their properties, and properties which previously fell outside of the demand area will also begin to experience difficulties as parents are forced to park further away from the school.

19. Officer response 6.

Such parking / dropping off is only for very short periods at the beginning and end of the school day like in the majority of areas throughout the Vale adjacent to schools.

I would add that the Local Ward Members for the area were in agreement for the proposal to go ahead to improve safety for local road users and school children walking to and from school. Local members all support the proposal and comments from the local town council and South Wales Police also supported the proposal.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

20. The cost of implementing the scheme and the associated statutory legal procedures will be approximately £3,000 and will be funded from the Council's Revenue Budget.

21. The Council's own administrative resources will be used to progress this scheme, should approval be given. The proposed works will be implemented by the Council's Highways Construction Unit.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

22. Well managed highways improve public safety and can increase economic prosperity by reducing journey times. This proposal assists in supporting a range of transport modes at this location.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

23. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows Highway Authorities to make and vary Traffic Regulation Orders to regulate the movement of vehicular traffic, restrict or prohibit certain classes of vehicle and to improve the amenities of an area.
24. The Council as Highway Authority has a responsibility to improve the safety of the highway user and may be found to be negligent if it does not meet its statutory obligations under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
25. There are no human rights implications.

Crime and Disorder Implications

26. The Order is being proposed for the purpose of reducing inappropriate parking and enhancing visibility for pedestrians and school children crossing the road.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

27. There are no equal opportunities implications.
28. All associated traffic signs and road markings forming part of the scheme will be in accordance with the Councils Welsh language policy.

Corporate/Service Objectives

29. The appropriate control and management of the Highway Network contributes to the achievement of Well-Being Outcome 2: An environmentally and responsible Vale and Objective 4; promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment.

Policy Framework and Budget

30. This is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

31. The ward Members have been consulted and support of the proposal along with the town council members. South Wales Police also confirmed their support for the scheme.
32. Stakeholder consultations took place in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

33. Environment and Regeneration.

Background Papers

Traffic Management IF.803

Contact Officer

Mike Clogg - Operational Manager Highways and Engineering

Officers Consulted

Committee Reports - Legal Services

Accountant, Building and Visible Services

Responsible Officer:

Miles Punter - Director of Environment and Housing Services