

Traffic Management in Lancaster City Centre
Stakeholder feedback
March 2012

Lancashire County Council feedback:

Highways Authority

- Supports aim to regularise the charter market and manage the usage of Market Square to improve public realm amenity through a revised permit system
- Highlights the potential for objections relating to the removal of disabled spaces. The County Council would support the provision of further off-street parking spaces reserved for disabled badge holders.
- Can confirm that as the proposal does not seek to prohibit traffic for more than 8 hours in any 24 hour period there is no requirement to seek approval from the Secretary of State and that the exemption for parcel deliveries and postal packets can be omitted from the traffic regulation order
- Would support further investigation into the provision of short term deliveries on the perimeter of the zone to manage the number of individual deliveries into the zone at peak times. This is due to the increased concentration of delivery vehicles that would result, especially in peak morning times where there are also a large number of pedestrians in the zone travelling to school / work.

County Councillor Sam Riches (Lancaster East division) and City Councillor Dave Brookes (Duke's Ward)

- Support general principle of addressing the current situation by extending core hours, removing couriers etc to improve pedestrian safety.
- Supports experimental approach
- Keen to see meaningful survey work with local residents, traders and visitors once underway to gauge opinion and understand what further changes may be required
- Aware of some concern about removing parking rights for Blue Badge holders and feel that it important that serious effort is put into looking at ways to work with Marketgate (remove or reduce parking charges for Blue Badge holders) and more extensive provision outside the pedestrian zone.

Lancaster City Council feedback:

Charter Market, Property Services

- Concerns regarding the proposal to extend core hours until 5pm – potential health and safety/insurance issues in inclement weather and during winter months.
- Potential for traders to leave the market altogether if regulations are too restrictive.
- Opportunities to address the layout of the market taking into consideration perishable goods.

Parking, Property Services

- Team have key role in the administration of the permit system

- Core Period: Concerns regarding the concentration of deliveries at both ends of the core period – potential for obstructions and pedestrian safety issues.
- Exemptions:
 - Agrees with the comments raised in the proposal relating to general deliveries and understands that logistics companies may well be flexible to accommodate this.
 - Concern expressed relating to cash security vehicles as this could lead to increased costs for businesses to rearrange this specialist service and the need to reschedule wider banking arrangements.
 - Requests for exemptions likely to escalate and a revised criteria for permitting emergency access would be required.
- Permit System:
 - how much are problems with the existing TRO exacerbated by the numbers of disabled drivers circulating the zone?
 - Existing zone signage not clear enough regarding 'permits' – LPS therefore 'unable' to deal with blue badge holders without Permit A using the zone during core hours.
 - Is the Permit A criteria sufficient to limit access to those with severe disabilities as intended? Some may well be able to use alternative parking without major difficulties. Blue badge fraud being addressed by the DfT.
 - Changes to the permit system would need to have a suitable lead-in time to ensure that up to date records of all existing users could be identified and checked.
 - LPS able to deal with contraventions of Permit Bs. A verbal dispensation can be provided by the team where they are aware of the circumstances but the emergency means there is not time for a permit.
 - Understands that Permit C is obsolete.
- Longer term changes to traffic management and other issues:
 - Potential for a increased number of delivery vehicles on the main gyratory at peak commuter times, increased demand for on-street loading bays. Consideration may be needed regarding the gyratory loading ban times.
- Revised street maintenance schedules
 - Should be revised in line with the proposals
 - Contractors working on the adopted highway are exempt at all times but require Permit B during core hours – potential to review?
- Increased use of Market square for performance and entertainment
 - Current booking system refers to the core period and requires that only vehicles integral to the booking (eg. information bus) are permitted.
 - Efforts are made to ensure users comply with the core hours but it is assumed that some vehicles arrive and depart inside this period.
 - Efforts to increase the use of Market Square for performance etc is likely to increase vehicle movements and the demand for access within the core period. Requests to drop off and pick up outside the Library in line with their increased community activities has so far been restricted.
 - Review of CCB conditions?
- Alternative disabled parking
 - Marketgate and St Nicholas offer 5 and 14 specific disabled spaces respectively, representing 4.4% and 4.8% of their total (and fully accessible) capacities. The

DfT recommends, and the City Council is working to achieve, 6% or more as part on some car parks.

- Statistics demonstrating demand for disabled parking in the zone would be useful.
- Potential to allow disabled vehicles on Church Street?
- Taxis
 - Opportunity for authorised taxis to enter the zone for severely disabled people? Issue raised through the MP. Concern that this system might be abused by non-disabled passengers.
- Enforcement
 - City Council is a member of the Partnership Plus SLA with Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Parking Services and NSL Services Ltd – potential for joint enforcement.

Rob Bracewell, Access Officer, Regeneration and Policy

- Not averse to traffic being reducing in the centre to improve pedestrian safety.
- The Council has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to make areas open to all and not exclude those with significant mobility impairments from the economic heart of the city.
- Alternate options and the involvement of disabled people in the process will help avoid discrimination and create a sense of ownership.
- Understanding of practice in other cities would be useful
- Supports the 'experimental' approach to the TRO
- Alternative offers to parking in and around Market Square:
 - Designate 1 car park for blue badge holders
 - Increase disabled bays in current provision
 - Designate drop off zones e.g. Church Street
 - Explore with Marketgate opportunity to drop or remove current charges
 - Explore the use of park and ride
 - Increase seating in the pedestrian zone preferably no more than 15-20m apart
- Additional city centre design issues to be addressed including street furniture, street café design and the charter market layout.

Chamber of Commerce

Summary from Ann Morris, Chief Executive:

- Independent retailers may find changes to the morning core hours present difficulties in terms of deliveries.
- Would support a better enforcement of the existing rules to help eradicate abuse of the system
- Concerned about the added congestion to the main arterial routes and the pedestrian zone itself if delivery times are narrowed
- Provision for disabled drivers could be accommodated through additional designated on-street spaces outside the zone, free or charged
- Additional on street provision for delivery vehicles could be considered
- There should be no special provision for market traders to set up or dismantle within the core hours.

Lawsons, New Street:

- New Street traders rely on vehicle access to the street itself for deliveries
- Most deliveries come from national chains with depots in Preston. Drivers already struggle to complete deliveries before 10.30 and may rule out delivering to Lancaster altogether if the proposals are implemented.
- Dedicated loading bays would be required if restrictions were imposed.
- Delivery drivers are well aware of the time restrictions.
- Disabled drivers are a problem within the core hours and drive without care.

BHS, Market Street

- Main delivery usually at 9am but the proposals may cause problems during peak trading, for ad hoc additional stock deliveries, if the delivery was running late or when deliveries are shared with Topshop.

Vue, Anchor Lane / Church Street

- Present system is fair, allows work and deliveries to be managed accordingly.
- Changes to the system would impact on how the business is managed eg. the start times of managerial shifts in line with what times suppliers can offer for deliveries. Notes that many suppliers only offer pre-10am slots not pre 9.30.
- Feel that the current system is abused by the public and in particular the disabled system.

Juicafe, Market Street

- Small businesses depend on the delivery schedule of national suppliers and can't afford overnight deliveries / additional staffing to take deliveries at different times. National suppliers already struggle to exit the pedestrian zone by 10.30 and can't afford the premium that couriers charge for early or specific deliveries.
- Evening limit is not so much of a problem and may be a good idea to allow pedestrians an extra 30mins traffic free.
- The added congestion on the one-way system brought about by the concentrated morning delivery times would not improve the consumer experience as they travel into town.

Silvertree, Upper Penny Street

- Contrary to further restricting vehicular access, thinks it should be increased.

Clarks, Penny Street

- Thinks 9am would be unrealistic (proposed actually 9.30), possibly 10am may be better

Diggles, Market Street, North Road and Frances Passage

- The business would have to reschedule its deliveries but will do what is good for the town.
- Non-compliance by other vehicles and vehicles related to the market are the main problems and need addressing.

Cycling

Matt Hodges, Right to Ride

- ETRO should include cycling in the area outside core hours for a trial period and then a further trial within core hours with all effects being monitored.

Alasdair Simpson, Sustainable Travel, Lancashire County Council

- Further to Matt Hodges' email – possible options include allowing cycling in the pedestrian zone outside core hours, allowing cycling in Market Street (King Street to New Street) and New Street only, allow cycling except on market days.

Gary Bowker, Project Engineer, Lancaster City Council

- Further to Alasdair and Matt's responses – allow cycling at all times throughout the pedestrian zone in all directions. Note that this is the current system on Upper Penny Street and Church Street with no recorded incidents.
- Would be a contradiction of Council and City cycling strategies not to do it.
- Once in a generation opportunity. Was not attempted through the CDT as advised it should form part of a wider pedestrian zone review.