

Service and community impact assessment (SCIA)

Controlled parking zones for the Magdalen Road (North), Magdalen Road (South) and Divinity Road areas

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to assess the potential impact of proposals for controlled parking zones (CPZ) for the Magdalen Road (North), Magdalen Road (South) and Divinity Road areas in Oxford, with particular reference to groups of people who share protected characteristics.

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- the need to eliminate any conduct which is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
- the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who
- share any of the protected characteristics listed in section 149(7); and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- Steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled include steps to take account of a person’s disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- Age (people of different age groups)

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- Disability (e.g. physical or sensory impairments, long-term illnesses and conditions, hidden impairments such as a heart condition, frailty, learning disabilities or mental health problems)
- Gender (men/women) and Gender Reassignment
- Ethnicity (including Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic groups, Gypsies & Travellers)
- Religion/belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnerships
- Pregnancy & Maternity

Main purpose of the scheme

By removing the availability of commuter parking, the CPZs aim to reduce the number of car trips into the area, contributing to the objective of reducing congestion on major routes into the city. The scheme would also benefit residents by better protecting space for them to park their vehicles, reducing the number of vehicles coming into the area and would benefit all users of the roads in the area by removing potentially unsafe or obstructive parking.

Main features of the scheme

- Parking only within marked bays, backed up by enforcement.
- Bays designated as permit holders only, shared use (residents or time-limited between certain times for others), or time restricted for anyone.
- Some bays marked partially on the pavement where necessary to guarantee emergency access and preserve a reasonable level of parking space.
- Permits available for residents, max two per property, at a charge which is currently £50 each per year.
- Visitor permits available to residents: max 50 24-hr permits per year for each resident over 17. The first 25 of these are free, the next 25 for a charge of (currently) £16 but free for over-70s.
- Permits also available to businesses for max 2 vehicles required for business use.
- Carers' permits available to residents requiring frequent visits by carers for medical reasons.
- Restrictions in operation at all times.

Consultation and stakeholder involvement

Consultation packs were sent to every property within the proposed CPZ area and to a number of organizations. The full list of organizations consulted is available in background document D.

Several previous consultations have been completed on CPZ proposals in the three areas. Throughout the consultation stages, individual responses have been considered in detail and requests from disabled people living in the area

or those representing them have been taken into account wherever possible with modifications made to the design in the immediate vicinity of their properties. Requests for disabled parking bays have been passed to the relevant officer and new disabled bays have been incorporated into the design.

In the consultation, individuals were encouraged to give reasons for any objections or comments they made. This information has enabled officers to consider the impact the scheme would have on various groups of people, and is incorporated in the assessment set out below.

Summary of impacts

Age: The restrictions on visitor permits may negatively affect older people as they are more likely to live in single adult households. However, net improvement for disabled people due to the regulation of pavement parking will also bring benefits for older people where they experience age-related disability.

Disability: Significant net improvement across the area on current conditions for people with disabilities, as a result of regulated parking.

Gender: The restrictions on visitor permits may indirectly affect more women than men due to the likelihood that there are more single adult households headed by or comprised only of women.

Ethnicity: No conclusive differential impact on any racial group.

Religion: No differential impact on any group as a result of their religion.

Sexual orientation: No differential impact on any group as a result of their sexual orientation.

Marriage/civil partnerships: No infringement of human rights.

Pregnancy and maternity: The restrictions on visitor permits may particularly affect parents with young children because they are likely to have a high number of visits from family and friends. However, regulation of parking on pavements will significantly improve conditions for parents with buggies and pushchairs. The removal of commuter parking will make it more likely that residents will be able to park closer to their homes than at present.

Impact on customers

Pavement parking

The scheme consists of lines marking out parking bays, and additional signage. Lines and signs will all accord with relevant regulations. The design includes partial pavement parking in many streets. This means that bays are marked so that vehicles must be parked with two wheels on the kerb.

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Enforcement would be carried out against vehicles whose wheels were outside the marked bays. Partial pavement parking has only been proposed where necessary to preserve a reasonable amount of parking for residents (i.e. parking on both sides of the road) whilst providing sufficient clear carriageway width to guarantee emergency access.

The Department for Transport's guidance in 'Inclusive Mobility' advocates a minimum pavement width of 1.5m, in order to allow someone to walk to the side of someone with a wheelchair and for larger wheelchairs to turn. Because of the narrow width of carriageway and pavement in many streets it has not been possible to provide a clear footway width of 1.5m. The general minimum width allowed in the design is 1.2m, dropping to an absolute minimum of 1m at pinch points. 'Inclusive Mobility' provides for a width of 1m at pinch points over a maximum distance of 6m.

There is a risk that the full marked width of clear pavement may be partially obstructed by wing mirrors that have not been folded in, overhanging vegetation, bins or recycling containers. However, with less non-resident parking it will be easier for residents, if they so wish, to remind each other of the need to retract wing mirrors. Overhanging vegetation can be removed by the county council if occupiers fail to cut it back when asked. Bins and recycling containers are generally placed back inside property boundaries by recycling staff once they have been emptied.

The restricted pavement width may have a higher negative impact on people with disabilities or age-related walking difficulties. Because women tend to live longer than men and are more likely to suffer from age-related disability it could also be the case that there is more of a potential negative impact on women than on men.

Activities that would be difficult under the design where there is partial pavement parking include:

- Passing someone in a wheelchair on the pavement, or two wheelchair users passing.
- Walking side by side with someone in a wheelchair or using a walking frame.
- Turning through 90 degrees or more in a wheelchair.
- Wheelchair users exiting or entering a narrow gateway alongside a car parked partially on the pavement.

These difficulties are mitigated as far as possible within the design by the provision of frequent passing places or other gaps in the parking, to protect accesses and fire hydrants, and provide clear sight lines around junctions. Where specifically requested, parking has been removed to keep the area around an individual gateway clear to assist disabled access. Disabled parking bays have in some cases been kept on the road rather than partly on the pavement, to assist users. Problems in the future for individuals accessing gateways could, when brought to the county council's attention, be eased through amendments to the design, subject to local consultation.

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Unregulated pavement parking currently occurs in the vast majority of streets where regulated pavement parking is now proposed. Vehicles are frequently parked so as to prevent access along the pavement for those pushing buggies or wheelchairs. The design would therefore improve conditions for disabled people in the following ways:

- Nowhere would marked clear pavement widths drop below 1m and generally the minimum would be 1.2m. With good enforcement, this means wheelchair users would be able to get around the area whereas currently their path is frequently blocked and they are forced into the road.
- Where possible, parking on the footway is only proposed for one side of the road. Where parking currently occurs on the pavement on both sides of the road, this is a significant improvement.
- Removal of parking from around junctions, where the kerb is usually dropped, will create more and better opportunities for crossing the road.

<i>Risks</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
<p>Disability - Pavement parking reduces available pavement width and makes it harder for people with disabilities to use the pavements</p>	<p>Unregulated pavement parking occurs in the vast majority of streets where regulated pavement parking is proposed.</p> <p>Regulated pavement parking will improve conditions significantly by creating an enforceable limit (the edge of the marked bay) on pavement parking. In many cases this means there will be considerably more space for pedestrians than there is currently.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity - Pavement parking reduces available pavement width and makes it harder for people with buggies or pushchairs to use the pavements</p>	

Taking all these factors into account, officers believe that there would be a significant net positive impact from the scheme's pavement parking design for disabled people including those with age-related disability. The pavement parking design is not considered to have any differential positive or negative effects on people sharing any of the other protected characteristics.

Designation of parking bays and position of yellow line restrictions

The parking bays have been designated as permit holders' only, shared use, short term, or car club according to various practical considerations and local demand. Double yellow line restrictions have been placed where necessary for reasons of safety and access. As parking is currently unrestricted, this

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means that some residents would no longer be able to park directly outside their house and may have to walk a little further to get to and from their cars.

It has sometimes been possible to accommodate particular requests for changes within the design.

Disabled drivers holding a blue badge benefit from the following mitigations:

- Non-residents may park in permit holder only bays or unrestricted in time restricted bays
- Residents may apply for a Disabled Persons Parking Place (several new requests have been accommodated as part of the design but future requests will also be considered)

Loading (including dropping off passengers) is allowed within permit holder only bays and on double yellow lines where safe to do so.

The removal of commuter parking will make it more likely that residents will be able to park closer to their homes than at present.

While it has not been possible to please everybody, the distribution of parking bay designations is not considered to have a potentially more positive or negative impact on any particular group.

Restriction on residents' permits

Residents would be entitled to permits: one each up to a maximum of two per property. This may create more difficulties for households with more than two adults, as well as residents in shared housing, where more than two people want to keep cars. However, the evidence from the consultations suggests that those likely to experience difficulties are relatively few in number, and that generally people recognize the need to limit demand for parking due to the constrained space available. A restriction per property is considered by officers to be a fair and practicable way of rationing the available space, and would not disproportionately affect people according to any of the equality groups.

Disabled residents with blue badges benefit from being able to park without a permit in residents' bays, so there is no negative impact on disabled people.

The removal of commuter parking will make it more likely that residents including disabled residents will be able to park closer to their homes than at present.

Officers do not consider that there is any clear potential negative impact on any particular group as a result of the restriction on residents' permits.

Restriction on visitor permits

The restricted number of visitor permits available would present difficulties for some people, especially those with family members or partners who visit regularly by car, or those with childcare providers who come to their houses by car. While there is some shared use or short term parking space in almost every street it may be hard to find a space nearby, particularly in the evenings.

Unlike the restriction on resident permits, which most people seem to accept, a recurring theme in the consultations has been dissatisfaction with restrictions on visitor permits.

In line with other Oxford CPZs, the allowance of visitor permits is per adult rather than per property. While this means that multi adult households and shared housing benefits from more visitor permits (in contrast to their disadvantage in terms of resident permits), it also means that single adult households are disadvantaged in terms of the ease with which they can receive car-borne visitors. Groups particularly affected may be single parent households relying on help with childcare and older single adult households. Non-car owners, who may be more reliant on car-borne visitors, do not qualify for any more visitor permits than do car owners. The majority of single parent households are headed by women and the majority of elderly single people are women, so there is potentially a greater negative impact on women than on men.

It should be noted that people requiring regular visits from carers or home helps for medical reasons (e.g. disabled or elderly frail) can apply for a carers' permit, which they keep and can give to any of their carers for the duration of the visit. Thus there is not considered to be any negative impact on disabled residents. Disabled people with blue badges visiting the area would be exempt from restrictions.

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<i>Risks</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
<p>Gender: The restrictions on visitor permits may indirectly affect more women than men due to the likelihood that there are more single adult households headed by or comprised only of women.</p>	<p>The area is very well served by public transport</p> <p>Shared use bays (which visitors can use without a visitor permit) have been provided throughout the zones and provide two and three hours parking spaces between 8 am and 6.30 pm seven days a week</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity: The restrictions on visitor permits may particularly affect parents with young children because they are likely to have a high number of visits from family and friends.</p>	<p>The area is very well served by public transport</p> <p>Shared use bays (which visitors can use without a visitor permit) have been provided throughout the zones and provide two and three hours spaces between 8 am and 6.30 pm seven days a week</p>
<p>Age: Older people may have more car-borne visitors and therefore be more affected by the restriction on visitors permits, particularly since older people are more likely to live alone or in a couple rather than in a household with several adults.</p>	<p>The area is very well served by public transport</p> <p>Shared use bays (which visitors can use without a visitor permit) have been provided throughout the zones and provide two and three hours spaces between 8 am and 6.30 pm seven days a week</p>

The restrictions on visitor permits could have a slightly more negative impact on people according to gender, age, pregnancy and maternity.

However, the area is well served by public transport, including buses late into the evenings, so in most cases visitors have alternative means of travel. There is also a provision for additional visitor permits to be issued in exceptional circumstances at the county council's discretion.

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The restriction on visitor permits is not considered to have any differential positive or negative effects on people sharing any of the other protected characteristics.