

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT

26 January 2023

SPEAKERS

WRITTEN SPEECHES RECEIVED

Statements received

Item 5

Jack Mullins

I am a resident of Crouch Street and would like to provide a written statement ahead of this meeting in view of the objections raised against the scheme. Based on the response rate to the consultation, i.e. 46 responses from 425 households (950 people if a household is assumed to consist of two people), the vast majority of affected residents seem not to oppose the scheme. Rather, those who have not responded are likely to be in favour, and the few opposing responses received could be seen as an example of negativity bias. Arguably, the 18 responses in opposition to the scheme represent a vocal minority of residents, primarily those of Beargarden Road with access to off-road parking, and should not be taken as representative of the broader feeling towards the scheme in the areas affected. Furthermore, the proposal offers significant benefits in a range of areas, as set out below.

Available spaces: Currently, the number of cars attempting to park on Crouch Street and Beargarden Road regularly exceeds the number of available spaces. This issue is twofold – firstly there is a lack of spaces for those that live on these roads, and secondly the roads are used by non-residents visiting the town centre for work or leisure. The proposal addresses both of these concerns by increasing the number of available spaces and restricting use of the spaces to residents. This measure will greatly benefit the vast majority of residents. While some consider that the number of spaces will reduce as residents will no longer be able to park across their drives, the total number of spaces overall will not be reduced. Rather, a space that can currently only be used by a single household with off-road parking will be replaced by one or more spaces on the opposite side of the road that are available to all residents, to the overall benefit of the majority of residents.

Enforcement: The proposal indicates that the introduction of the scheme will be supported by enforcement of the new parking restrictions. At present, no enforcement is carried out, leading to cars parking not only in the restricted bays, but also on double yellow lines, as well as non-residents blocking driveways with impunity. This causes safety issues as well as broader disputes. By introducing enforcement as part of the scheme, parking of this nature can be prevented, to the benefit of all residents, including both those with and without off-road parking.

Safety: Several concerns were raised around the safety of moving the parking spaces from the South West to the North East side of Beargarden Road. It is agreed that the introduction of additional speed measures such as speed bumps or chicanes on this road and on Crouch Street would be beneficial. However, in the absence of this, enforcement of the double yellow lines at the junction of these two roads and moving traffic on Beargarden to the far side of the junction may at least reduce the potential for collisions at the junction itself.

Cost: At present there is no enforcement of parking restrictions. However, if the scheme were not to proceed and the existing restrictions be imposed, residents currently using on-

street parking would have to pay to park elsewhere (e.g., on South Bar Street) or be fined. The cost of this would be significantly higher than the £66 annual charge for a permit under the proposed scheme. Although it is appreciated that this price could be subject to increase in the future, this would also be the case for other paid parking. The proposed scheme is likely to be the lowest cost option for residents if enforcement is resumed in any capacity.

If, despite these benefits, a view is taken that some residents of Beargarden Road are sufficiently negatively impacted by the proposal to prevent its implementation on Beargarden Road, one option could be to only implement the scheme on the other roads. However, in this case, it would seem reasonable to issue parking permits solely to residents of the roads where permit parking will actually be introduced, as well as those of Beargarden Road who do not have use of off-road parking. In this way, the situation for those affected by the current lack of parking can be improved, while avoiding any perceived negative impacts on Beargarden Road residents who currently have access to off-road parking.

In summary, I believe that the overall impact of the scheme would be positive for the residents of the affected roads as a whole, and implore the Cabinet Member for Highway Management to approve the proposal for the wider benefit of the majority of affected residents.

Alexandra Tyson

I am a resident of Beargarden Road and would like to submit the following comments in support of the proposed permit parking scheme. I understand that residents from 34 houses on Beargarden Road have raised objections/signed a petition against the scheme. A significant majority of the objectors live on the south west side of the road and have private driveways. Most of the objections seem to primarily stem from the fact that these residents would lose guaranteed parking across their driveways for the third (or even fourth) vehicle of the household. I note that a number of responses assert that the scheme proposes an effective reduction in the number of available parking spaces in the road. I, however, agree with the Council's assessment that the number of spaces will increase. I live on the north east side of the road and do not have a driveway, so parking on the road is my only option. There are, at present, only 10 spaces in the road, where I could park. Of these spaces, some are almost permanently reserved by households with more cars than driveway spaces. Some households rotate their cars between their driveway and nearby road spaces to ensure that, if multiple cars are in use, the driveway is left empty and only the road space is used. This essentially makes that road space a semi-private parking space for that household. Thus, when I return home from work, more often than not there are no vacant spaces in Beargarden Road. A number of the objections express concern for the loss of parking space for visitors. In my opinion, the availability of parking for residents who use the spaces every day should be prioritised over the irregular or infrequent need of visitors. Furthermore, should the number of visitors permits provided be exceeded, South Bar (only 4 minutes walk away) provides very affordable parking, starting at only £1.10 per hour (up to £5.00 per day) between 8 am and 6 pm Monday-Saturday. My visitors do not have any qualms about incurring these costs, if necessary, when visiting me. To speak to the concerns regarding safety, I agree that a reduction in the speed limit on the road to 20 mph would be beneficial. However, absent these measures, enforcement of the double yellow lines at either side of the junction between Crouch Street and Beargarden Road may reduce collisions. At present, there appears to be no enforcement of the no parking zone at this junction and cars often park all the way to the end of Crouch Street. It is my belief that implementation of the parking scheme, in conjunction with the enforcement of restrictions, will improve safety. I understand that, to many people the principle of paying to park on their

residential street may be unpalatable. However, at present I regularly have to pay to park on South Bar at an extrapolated cost that far exceeds the £66 a year for a permit. I have even contemplated whether it would be more cost-effective for me to pay for a season ticket to park on South Bar at a rate of £270 per quarter. I think this further illustrates the lack of equity provided by the current parking situation. My greatest concern is the possibility that the permit scheme might be approved for Crouch Street but not for Beargarden Road. This will mean that all those non-residents who currently use Crouch Street/ Beargarden Road to park temporarily, (e.g. to go to work, to the doctors or shopping) will instead only be able to park on Beargarden Road, significantly increasing the competition for the public parking spaces on the road that are regularly used by residents who, like me, have no off-road parking. It would also remove Crouch Street as a possible place for me to park when I cannot find a space on Beargarden Road. Furthermore, I consider this situation would also negatively impact residents on the south west side of the road, as I believe it will increase the incidence of people parking across and blocking driveways temporarily in order to attend the doctors' surgery or pharmacy (a problem that already exists as outlined by respondent number 8 who objected to the scheme). In summary, I sincerely believe the parking permit scheme would provide a more equitable parking situation for all residents who require parking on the road (whether due to lack of a driveway, or because they have more cars than the number of spaces on their driveways).

Item 6

Jo Freer

As follow-up to reference (55) Member of public, (Oxford, Howard Street), I wish to submit the following queries in writing, to be addressed at the OCC Decisions / Cabinet for Highway Management meeting on 26 January.

Why can't affected Howard Street residents (i.e. those with private parking off Boundary Brook Road) be eligible for the Donnington CPZ, instead of the Magdalen South CPZ? Why would it not be possible to offer these residents a choice over which CPZ best suits their needs? Surely something could be put in place to prevent abuse of this system, e.g. automatic rejection of an application from an address if residents already hold a permit for the other zone? If this isn't possible to implement, it would be helpful to know exactly why.

Connected to this, has any analysis been done around the impact of additional Magdalen South CPZ applications from these Howard Street residents? Parking in this area is already practically at capacity. Adding cars from around 36 extra houses (i.e. approximate Howard Street residences affected by the proposal) poses a very real risk of creating new parking issues.

For Howard Street residents who enjoy private parking at the rear of their property, what measures will the Council take to prevent parking abuses from those who park on their land? This is already an issue, with cars blocking garages and residents' access by parking along this side of the road. Can the Council provide any reassurances to residents around this valid concern, as well as examples of tangible actions they will take to prevent this from happening?

We do not have a Magdalen South CPZ permit. Currently, if we arrive home to discover a car blocking our drive, we can park on Boundary Brook Road without issue, and then move the car back to our driveway as soon as possible. In the future, with the plans as currently proposed, doing this would incur a fine. What action would the Council recommend for us

when this happens – both immediately and in the longer term? We do not feel purchasing a Magdalen South CPZ permit is an appropriate solution. Driving from the back of our house to park on Howard Street represents a 1km journey minimum (and a 1.5km round trip). At a time when residents of the city are being strongly encouraged to reduce travel by car, this seems counterintuitive.

Can you state with confidence that Howard Street residents directly affected by this proposal have been adequately consulted about the proposed CPZ? Unlike the recent School Streets initiative, affected residents were not consulted in writing about these plans. Though notices were displayed on the street, these could easily have been missed. That the official consultation report contains so few responses from Howard Street residents suggests limited awareness, which is of concern given the significant impact it may have on them.

John Marsh

I'm grateful the OXFORD – DONNINGTON: PROPOSED CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE (CPZ) report recognises the concerns of some Howard St residents whose properties have driveways and garages on Boundary Brook Rd. However, I do not see how it has addressed them. I would like to raise these issues again and hope that the meeting on 26 January may generate more ideas, or encourage the Committee to reflect on the issue differently. I have outlined extracts from the report in **bold** below.

A few residents with properties on Howard Street raised the issue of their private parking (in front of garages) is accessed off Boundary Brook Road, within the proposed CPZ. The concerns raised were that their parking arrangements may be affected by the introduction of the new zone and residents of Howard Street should be given the option to join the new Donnington CPZ.

Our concern is that having a private parking area we require no permit. But if drivers block our drive, we will be forced to park on the public highway where a permit is needed to avoid a fine. Please could the council instruct us on what to do in this instance? Despite leaving notes on offending cars, drivers can block our drive for days. The Thames Valley Police website says to contact your local council to help people in these situations. Will the council help, or would we be issued with a fine for being forced onto the public highway?

In response, Howard Street is currently within the Magdalen South CPZ, and residents have the option to apply for permits to park in this zone.

Because of the location of our drive, and one-way streets. To drive to Magdalen South CPZ and park there is 1km away along 5 different roads. Once the offending vehicle had been moved, and we can reclaim our drive, it's 0.5km drive back to the driveway (see below). We are committed to reducing car journeys and do not want to purchase a permit in order to do more driving. If Howard Street residents with garages (36 or so) were allowed to park on boundary brook rd, they would only have to drive to the side of the road opposite their driveway/garage. Fewer cars on the road, doing fewer miles and much more convenient for residents. This is the goal.

We currently don't have any arrangements in Oxford City where a resident can apply for permits in multiple zones, as would be difficult to manage and would be open to abuse.

Would the Oxford city council be willing to try, in order to limit car journeys and better serve residents? No other arrangements in Oxford City would mean there are fewer requests to manage. Just 36 or so. Might those attempting to abuse the system be spotted, because

they would be the ones applying for two CPZ zones, that don't live at one of the 36 addresses.

Are there any CPZ arrangements in the city where residents with driveways are not eligible for a CPZ connected to their driveway. But have to leave their driveway and drive away from their house for 1KM to reach an CPZ they do qualify for.

Where private parking areas are not part of the public highway, they would not be part of the zone and therefore enforcement.

This applies to residents. However, it also applies to anyone who wishes to park on boundary brook rd for a while without a permit, and not face a fine. It is an incentive to block the garages, and park on driveways. This currently happens so it will continue to do so.

Item 16

Robin Tucker, Co-Chair, CoHSAT

The private motor vehicle has brought great convenience to people who can afford it, but only those directly affected stop to think about the social costs. Five people every day are killed by motor vehicle collisions in the UK, and 50 seriously injured. This sits on top of a bigger, less visible toll from air pollution and physical inactivity. The benefits of using a private vehicle are to its user, but the damage affects all society, so reducing that damage is a basic act of fairness.

Reducing speed limits is one way that a Transport Authority can reduce the damage caused by traffic, and we are pleased that Oxfordshire has established itself as a leader in England's move to safer speed limits. At last year's 20s Plenty Conference we heard from Wales, where 20 is now the default for restricted roads. This is estimated to save £100 million in the first year alone in reduced deaths and injuries, and reduces the load on the health service. We saw graphically the difference between a collision at 30 and a collision at 20. The myth that slower speeds cause more pollution was dispelled. And they reduce speeds and injuries even without enforcement.

Today, we will hear several recommendations where local communities have put forward requests for lower speed limits. These are Parish and Town Councils where the residents feel threatened by the dangers of motor vehicles, and they would like something done about it. They know that this will add to journey times. Indeed, as locals, they will be affected by it more than anyone. But they want their communities to be aligned to the needs of keeping people alive, rather than speeding through in metal boxes.

We urge you to approve these speed limit reductions.

Robin Tucker

Co-Chair

CoHSAT