

Recommendations from Regulatory Committee - 6 December 2018

Proposed parking restrictions on the C8, West Road, West Lulworth

65 The Committee considered a report by the Service Director – Environment, Infrastructure and Economy on proposals to introduce no waiting at any time restrictions on the C8, West Road, West Lulworth; in extending those which already existed northwards to the junction with Daggars Gate and southwards to the junction with Church Road. This proposal was designed so as to facilitate access to the village more readily, ease congestion which was being experienced; improve the means by which traffic could more readily flow; and on safety grounds, particularly for those vulnerable road users accessing the road and to allow unfettered access for emergency service vehicles, as necessary. The proposals had been initiated by West Lulworth Parish Council who considered them to be necessary for the reasons given. Following the advertisement of the proposals, objections had been received and, as a consequence, the Committee was now being asked to consider whether the proposals should be implemented as advertised.

With the aid of a visual presentation, and having regard to the provisions of the Update Sheet and statements from third parties provided to members prior to the meeting, officers explained the reasoning behind the need to impose the waiting restrictions, what these entailed and the basis of the objections received. Photographs and plans were shown to the Committee by way of illustration. This showed where the proposals would be situated, the characteristics of the road and its setting within the village. It also showed the relationship between the road and commercial and residential properties; where off street car parks operated by the Lulworth Estate were situated; what other opportunity there was for on street parking within the village and the effect congestion was having on access arrangements.

Objections received considered that the proposed arrangements would be detrimental to their parking needs and affect trade. However, officers considered that the proposals were, on balance, the best achievable to meet competing needs and addressed the issues currently being experienced.

Primary consultation had been carried out on the proposals and was supported by the local County Councillor for South Purbeck, Purbeck District Council, West Lulworth Parish Council and the Dorset Police. There was an alternative view that any additional restrictions should be on a seasonal basis only, as much of the congestion being experienced only happened during the summer season. However, with ever increasing parking needs given the popularity of the village - owing primarily to its access to Lulworth Cove as a destination – maintaining accessibility was seen to be fundamental to the prosperity of the village and it was essential for emergency services to be able to gain access on every occasion needed.

However, objections received had cited the loss of much needed on road parking spaces as the reason why the proposals were not beneficial to either the business interests of the village nor on an individual basis in meeting residents own parking needs.

Officers acknowledged the contribution made by the Lulworth Estate towards the management of parking in the village; being critical to how off-street car parking could be managed throughout the village. This cooperation was much valued and could not be underestimated.

How parking needs should be assessed was seen to be a balanced choice; in what arrangements were considered to be the most beneficial. Whether there was a significant problem with access for emergency vehicles was seen to be somewhat debateable, but still needed to be given careful consideration.

The opportunity was provided for public speaking with the Committee first hearing from James Weld of the Weld Estate who welcomed what was being proposed as a means to manage the traffic being generated by what the village and Lulworth Cove had to offer. He considered the proposals would benefit residents and visitors alike and enable access to be more readily achieved. Congestion had been experienced in the recent past and this was detracting from the overall experience for visitors and inconveniencing residents. He confirmed that the Estate would continue to play its part in providing what parking was necessary and particularly now, to ensure that those displaced vehicles could be accommodated. He was confident that this could be achieved.

Carole Matthews, a local business owner and Parish councillor, considered the proposals not to be in the interests of the village and would adversely affect trade by the loss of on street parking provision and the ability to readily access the church. She said that double yellow lines on one side of the road would be acceptable, but not on both sides. Moreover, displaced traffic would create increased congestion in the centre of the village by motorists seeking alternative on street parking and cause accessibility issues to residential properties. The resultant decrease in parking options would be detrimental to the prosperity of the village and its vibrancy and disenfranchise residents.

Jon Davey, the Chairman of the Parish Council, considered the proposals to be necessary and would complement what parking management already existed. There had been a significant increase in the number of visitors over the previous five years. He confirmed that the Parish Council had taken into consideration local opinion and had come to the view that the proposals, as advertised, would best meet the parking needs of the village. He acknowledged there to be sufficient car parking to deal with demand, provided that motorists were considerate in how they parked. However, this had not always been the case and had led to the need for the restrictions now proposed. It was essential that access was maintained for emergency vehicles and these proposals would serve to achieve that.

The County Councillor for South Purbeck, Cherry Brooks, was provided with the opportunity to address the Committee but was satisfied that her statement in Appendix 3 to the report set out her position clearly. Whilst she considered the proposals to be adequate as they stood, she thought that these would not necessarily solve all the parking issues being experienced.

The Committee were then provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the officer's presentation and about what they had heard and officer's provided clarification in respect of the points raised as necessary.

In asking what consideration had been given to some variation of the proposals to provide for waiting restrictions on the northern side of the road only, some members felt this compromise would go some way to satisfying the needs of all concerned. Officers confirmed that various alternative options had been explored but it was felt that these would not achieve all that was necessary and what was proposed was the only option agreed upon by all the primary consultees. Moreover, the Senior Solicitor confirmed that, should the Committee be minded to

pursue an alternative option, there would be a need for the process to start afresh to allow for the necessary consultation on this.

Nevertheless, some members considered such a compromise to be a viable option in the circumstances, so a resolution was proposed and seconded on that basis, in that whilst there was concern about congestion on the road, there was a need to recognise the absence of alternative, suitable parking facilities.

Other members considered what was being proposed to be satisfactory in meeting the parking needs of the village and in addressing the issues being experienced. Whilst there was recognition that vehicles might well be displaced, there was felt to be adequate alternative provision to deal with this. On the basis of the alternative resolution, on being put to the vote, the proposal was lost.

Then, having considered the objections received and in being mindful of how displaced vehicles might be accommodated, the Committee considered that the proposed waiting restrictions were necessary to address the issues being experienced and were seen to be both reasonable and proportionate in achieving this. Given this, and taking into account the views of the primary consultees and, in particular, those of West Lulworth Parish Council - in being the best representation of local opinion, thought and will - on being put to the vote, it was decided that the proposals should be implemented, as advertised.

Recommended

That the Cabinet agree that the Traffic Regulation Order for extending the current waiting restrictions northwards and southwards on West Road (C8) at West Lulworth be introduced, as advertised.

Reason for Recommendation

To avoid danger to persons or other traffic using the road and preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising and for facilitating the passage on the road, of any class of traffic, including pedestrians.

Proposed Puffin Pedestrian Crossing - Broad Street, Lyme Regis

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The Committee considered a report by the Service Director Environment, Infrastructure and Economy on the advertisement of a proposal for the implementation of a Puffin pedestrian crossing on Broad Street, Lyme Regis in facilitating the crossing of the road by a controlled means. Following the advertisement of the proposals, 57 representations had been received, primarily objections, on the basis that the crossing would erode already limited on street limited parking provision; spaces which were much in demand for accessing the businesses in the town centre and also would cause tailbacks and congestion.

The proposed crossing had been requested by Lyme Regis Town Council following a local campaign for a safer crossing point to be installed, particularly for less able pedestrians and vulnerable road users. As primary consultees, West Dorset District Council, Dorset Police and the County Councillor for Marshwood Vale all agreed the proposals should be advertised. However, as a consequence of the objections received, the Committee was now being asked to consider whether the proposals should be recommended to Cabinet for implementation, as advertised.

With the aid of a visual presentation, and having regard to the provisions of the Update Sheet and Statements from Third Parties provided to members prior to the meeting and appended to these minutes, officers showed where the crossing was advertised to be sited, the characteristics and configuration of Broad Street; what access arrangements were affected on the surrounding road network; what parking could be retained, including disabled parking provision; the part the bus stop arrangements played in how parking provision was able to be managed in the road; the setting of the crossing within the townscape and what amenities and facilities would be served by the crossing. Officers also explained what other options had been considered for alternative locations and what reasons there were for these being deemed to be either unachievable or impractical. Effectively the only point at which a crossing could be situated to meet the needs of users and in meeting the engineering practicalities of doing so to ensure the necessary regulations were complied with was adjacent to No.20 Broad Street.

Having received such a significant number of objections to the proposal, and having made an assessment of the benefits and otherwise of pursuing the proposals, officers were now recommending that in light of the objections, whilst a crossing could well be beneficial to pedestrians, those benefits were considered to be outweighed by the loss of much needed on street parking, which could lead to an adverse effect on the viability of businesses and could result in increased air pollution from stationary traffic. Given that the availability of parking provision was limited, the loss of 4/5 spaces to provide for the installation of a crossing, was considered to be detrimental and not necessarily justifiable. Furthermore as traffic speeds were low, whilst a crossing could well assist in some cases, it was not considered to be essential on road safety grounds. On that basis, officers were now recommending that the Cabinet should not support the introduction of the crossing.

The County Councillor for Marshwood Vale noted the assessment made by officers and the reasoning for coming to their recommendation. Whilst he was provided with the opportunity to address the Committee as local member, he declined as he wished to have the opportunity to do so at Cabinet.

The opportunity was provided for members of the public to address the Committee and they first heard from Cheryl Reynolds, Lyme Regis Town Councillor, who considered the crossing to be necessary and would prove to be advantageous for those more vulnerable road users, particularly those with mobility issues and those visiting during the busy summer season. She considered that more parking provision could be achieved by relocating the bus stop and that congestion and air quality concerns were not necessarily significant. She also made reference to a petition containing 600 signatories supporting these measures. (Officers understood this petition had been submitted to the Town Council and had played a part in that Council's original support).

Lizzie Wiscombe's views were expressed on her behalf by Councillor Reynolds, in explaining that as she had very limited visibility, a crossing would assist her invaluable and would be a beneficial asset to the town as a whole. As it stood, there was seemingly no recognition of what needs disabled or other vulnerable road users had and the installation of the crossing would go some considerable way to addressing this so that they were no longer disadvantaged. Given the lack of disabled parking spaces available, she too considered that the relocation of the bus stop could contribute to more spaces being identified. She said that

traders often used the parking spaces and said that there had been five injuries, with one being serious, of people trying to cross Broad Street.

As part of their public participation, Cheryl Reynolds and Lizzie Wiscombe both submitted statements complementing their respective addresses to Committee; these being included as part of the statements of third Parties to these minutes.

The Committee were then provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the officer's presentation and about what they had heard and officer's provided clarification in respect of the points raised, as necessary.

The practicalities of siting the crossing elsewhere was discussed and the reasoning understood for why this had to be limited to being outside No.20. What provision had been made for minimising the loss of parking spaces was also recognised.

Some members were of the view that the officer's recommendation should be supported given the strength of local feeling following its advertisement and in supporting the viability of local businesses. It was suggested that other, uncontrolled crossing provision could be achievable, if at all practicable, and officers were asked to see what this might entail. However other members considered that the loss of parking was not as significant as claimed given the availability of three, off street car parks in the vicinity which could comfortably accommodate any displaced parking.

The Senior Solicitor confirmed that any decision taken had to be based on the proposals before members and that any alternative would require the process to start afresh and consulted upon accordingly.

A proposal was made, and seconded, not to make an Order based on the reasons given in the officer's report, but with a request for officers to look at other solutions to assist pedestrians, particularly the less able, to cross Broad Street.

Other members of the Committee were on the view that, on balance, the provision of a crossing and the benefits this brought in terms of road safety, assurance and accessibility, outweighed the loss of parking provision, particularly given the demographic profile of the town and visitors to it. There appeared to be little compelling evidence that air pollution would deteriorate significantly as a result or that congestion would worsen either.

Given this, the Committee considered that they had a responsibility to ensure that every opportunity was taken to improve road safety where practicable and that the introduction of a Puffin crossing would go some considerable way to achieving this. There was a recognition amongst members that the perception and judgement of some vulnerable road users in being able to cross a road safely and confidently varied considerably from those who were more able to do so. There should be an acknowledgement that any assistance that could be given in doing this should be taken.

The Committee also took the opportunity to address how the issue of the management of the bus stop arrangements might be achieved as a means of compensating for those spaces lost to the crossing's installation and in providing for more parking opportunities. This was referred to in paragraph 1.8 of the report, together with what progress had been made in that regard. Officers were

asked to see how this might be achieved, if at all practicable, but should not be conditional on their recommendation being progressed.

Following this discussion, the original proposal was withdrawn by the proposer and seconder and a new proposal was made and seconded for a recommendation to Cabinet to proceed with the implementation of the crossing and a request for officers to look at providing additional on street parking elsewhere, for example, by moving the location of the bus stop.

Having heard what they had from those addressing the Committee, assessed the options before them and in understanding the reasons for the officer's recommendation, on being put to the vote, the Committee considered, on balance, the crossing to be necessary on road safety grounds and that the benefits of providing a crossing to facilitate pedestrian movements by a controlled means outweighed the risk of any potential impacts on local businesses, from the loss of parking and loading provision or in a deterioration of air quality or worsening of congestion and that Cabinet be asked to endorse this recommendation on that basis.

Recommended

1. That having regard for the officer's recommendation and the reasons for that, the Cabinet be asked to support the provision of a Puffin pedestrian crossing for Broad Street, Lyme Regis, as advertised.
2. That Cabinet be asked to agree that consideration be given by officers to the possible relocation of the bus stop in Broad Street, if at all practicable, to provide for increased provision of limited waiting so as to compensate for that lost by the installation of the puffin crossing.

Reason for Recommendations

To facilitate pedestrian movements and benefit road safety in Broad Street and in contributing to the Corporate Aim and Outcomes of encouraging people to lead active lives and in maintaining their independence.