

ON-STREET PARKING IN THE HIGHCLIFFE HIGH STREET

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The rate of the flow of eastbound traffic into the High Street is controlled to a certain extent by a pedestrian crossing. Westbound traffic entering the High Street is controlled by the traffic lights at Sea Corner. Flow through the Highcliffe High Street is very variable; it is affected by the use of a pedestrian crossing. Vehicles accessing or exiting, Buce Hayes Close, Stanley Road, The Globe/Premier Inn car park and the Tesco Express car park affect the smoothness of traffic flows. There are a series of narrow accesses to car parks behind the shops and offices. Additionally there is interaction between the through traffic and vehicles using the on-street parking. These factors contribute to congestion and extensive traffic jams in the Lymington Road within and in the approaches to the High Street section.

1.2 Responses from the 2014 [1] and 2015 [2] surveys suggest that on-street parking in the Lymington Road Shopping Centre (the High Street) is a major problem and should be reviewed. Proposals have ranged from removing all on-street parking, removing parking from the north or south side to removing specific parking bays. On the other hand some traders favour the on-street parking. This paper sets out to describe the current arrangement and to assess options.

2. CONFLICT BETWEEN THROUGH TRAFFIC AND ON-STREET PARKING

2.1 The Problems Some see the on-street parking as a calming measure and have supported it for that reason. Whilst coupled with the very necessary pedestrian crossings, it does slow traffic down; it also causes congestion and conflict. This can lead to shows of bad temper and a general feeling of chaos for drivers and pedestrians alike. Drivers leave more room on their nearside than is necessary and hug or cross the centre line. Poor parking and careless opening of car doors add to the problems.

2.2 Parking Restrictions Parking in the bays and laybys is restricted between 9am and 6pm to 30 minutes with no return within 30 minutes.

2.3 Delivery Vehicles Delivery vehicles have a no-loading restriction between 10am and 3pm

2.4 Accidents and Incidents Three slight collisions (two involving pedestrians) have been recorded in the last five years. However local residents have observed daily bumps and scratches which are not reported formally.

3. SURVEY OF ON-STREET PARKING

3.1 On-street parking in the shopping centre is limited to the primary core between the Globe and Sea Corner. On the north side the parking places are recessed in a layby with 2.5m wide bays. Whilst on the south side there are marked 2m wide parking bays on the carriageway. The places are outlined in blue on the two maps below showing the east and west ends of the High street.



4. LANE WIDTHS IN THE PRIMARY CORE

4.1 An attempt has been made to estimate the widths of the north and south lanes from a 1:590 scale map (for the overall road width) and the Google satellite maps facility. The method is not very accurate and widths have been estimated at the locations shown on the above maps. At the eastern end a second north lane has been formed giving a dedicated turn right lane enabling traffic to turn south into Waterford Road.

HIGHCLIFFE CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

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LOCATION	PARKING LAYBY	N LANE 1	N LANE 2	S LANE	N+S	PARKING	CHECK	OVERALL ESTIMATE	Difference
A	-	3.33		3.2	6.53		6.53	6.49	0.04
B	2.0	2.74		2.39	5.13	2	9.13	9.15	-0.02
C	2.5	2.6		2.6	5.2	2	9.60	9.44	0.16
D	2.5	2.6		2.6	5.2	2	9.70	9.44	0.26
E	2.5	2.55		2.55	5.1	2	9.60	9.44	0.16
F	2.5	2.6		2.55	5.15	2	9.65	9.56	0.09
G	2.5	2.44		2.78	5.22	2	9.72	9.74	-0.02
H	2.5	2.65		2.65	5.3	2	9.8	9.74	0.06
I	-	2.82		2.73	5.55	2	7.55	7.48	0.07
J	-	3.3		3.8	7.1		7.1	7.48	-0.38
K	-	3.8		3.8	7.6		7.6	7.38	0.22
L	-	3.4		3.6	7		7	7.38	-0.38
M	-	3.64		3.13	6.77		6.77	6.8	-0.03
N	-	2.6		2.7	5.3	2	7.3	7.2	0.10
O	-	2.6		2.5	5.1	2	7.1	7.38	-0.28
P	-	3.9		2.5	6.4	2	8.4	8.26	0.16
Q	-	2.8		2.5	5.3	2	7.3	7.3	0
R	-	2.7		2.5	5.2	2	7.2	7.1	0.10
S	-	4.3		2.1	6.4	2	8.4	8.26	0.14
T	-	4.4		2.1	6.5	2	8.5	8.85	-0.35
U	-	2.64	2.73	1.5	6.87	2	8.87	8.73	0.14
V	-	2.58	2.62	3.78	8.98		8.98	8.85	0.13
W	-	2.51	2.70	3.72	8.93		8.93	8.85	0.08

4.2 The “check” column is the sum of the widths estimated and can be compared with the overall estimate. The differences appear to be very reasonable in most cases and reflect the difficulty in making the estimates.

5. LANE WIDTH REQUIRED BY TRAFFIC

5.1 A full range of vehicles pass through the shopping centre including wide loads. A regular bus service (two an hour) uses the road and there are other public service vehicles such as coaches and minibuses which pass through. HGVs of various types and sizes use the A337 with peak rates of 25/hour in each direction. Typical widths of the vehicles are summarised in the table below.

TYPE OF VEHICLE	WIDTH WITHOUT MIRRORS	WIDTH WITH MIRRORS
BUS SINGLE/DOUBLE DECKER	2.5	3.0
LORRY / HGV	2.5	3.0
VAN/MINIBUS	2	2.4
SALOON CAR	1.8	2.0

6. ASSESSMENT OF ROAD DESIGN

On-Street Parking Bays

6.1 At 2m, the width of the parking bays is adequate for saloon cars if they are parked properly. However there is a possibility that wing mirrors will protrude into the carriageway. Clearly the bays

are not adequate for parking any larger vehicles which would obstruct through traffic. Parked delivery vehicles would cause an obstruction and would also affect pedestrians if they were to park partly on the pavement.

Lay-by Parking

6.2 The lay-bys are about 2.5m wide except for the lead-in and lead-out sections. This should be adequate for parking cars but is only barely adequate for vans and mini-buses.

Lane Widths

6.3 Westbound Lane Starting from Sea Corner the lane is wide enough until the first on-street parking bay (U) which starts outside the Sports and Social Club. Here the lane width is estimated to be 1.5m where it is not wide enough for a car. At (T) the lane width has increased to 2.1m which is still not wide enough for a van/minibus or larger. From R onwards the width is 2.5m or more which is just adequate for and HGV/bus less its mirrors. There is however a pinch region near "B".

6.4 Eastbound Lane The eastbound lane appears to be wide enough for HGVs/buses but there is the problem of the protruding mirrors. Particularly between "N" and Sea Corner heavy vehicles are likely to be close in to the kerb which is intimidating for pedestrians

6.5 Sea Corner Turn Right Lane The right hand of the two eastbound lanes is the turn-right lane to enable vehicles to turn into Waterford Road. Although this appears to be wide enough on-coming cars pull out into that lane to avoid the parked cars. A further complication is due to westbound drivers wishing to turn into the Tesco Express car park opposite the S/R parking bay.

Parking Restrictions

6.6 Parking in Bays In 2014 HCP made an application to increase the parking time from 30 minutes to one hour. The reasoning was that a longer stay would be beneficial to traders and would also result in fewer movements into and out of the parking spaces; this would have led to a smoother flow of through traffic. The application was refused by CBC as it was considered that would make parking in Wortley Road car park less attractive and there would be a consequent loss of parking income.

6.7 Delivery Vehicle Parking As indicated above there should be no loading/unloading between 10am and 3pm. A review of a traffic survey [3] carried out in support of the Navitus Bay project suggests that vehicle flow (including HGVs) are likely to be high before and after these times.

7. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Importance of On-Street Parking to Traders

7.1 Some traders rely on the passing trade and the drivers parking in the bays for short periods to purchase their newspapers, buy takeaways or to pop into the post office. For these drivers a comparatively long detour into the Wortley Road car park and out again coupled with the parking charge are a deterrent. Tesco Express of course has its own free car park.

Pedestrian Crossing

7.2 It has been proposed [4] that there should be another pedestrian crossing; this could well involve moving the existing crossing. A crossing has a no-parking zone (the zig-zag lines) on either side of the crossing location. The changes could therefore effect on-street and lay-by parking arrangements depending on the siting of the crossing(s).

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 On a quiet day with the cars parked neatly there appears to be plenty of room for the through traffic. But when there is poor parking, careless opening of car doors and movements into and out of parking spaces and then buses and HGVs, driving through Highcliffe becomes a nightmare to be avoided.

8.2 Removal of all:

- On-Street Parking;
- Lay-by Parking;
- Parking in South-side marked Bays;

appear to be an over-reaction and unnecessary.

8.3 However there is a case for the removal of specified parking places on the south side to encourage a smoother flow of traffic. These places are on the south side of the Lymington Road and are the two most western places between the "B" to "C" locations, the most easterly bay between "T" and "U" and the easterly half of the "R" to "S" bay.

8.4 Before finalising these changes it would appropriate to close the specified bays as a temporary measure and observe the effects.

8.5 It is noted that additional spaces would be removed if changes were to be made to the number and location of pedestrian crossings

8.6 The restrictions on delivery vehicles parking should be reviewed in the light of DCC's recent traffic survey.

8.7 HCP has been considering various aspects of the management of traffic using the high street and has produced and discussed a series of background studies; these have included:

- a bypass (DCC has since decided to dispose of the land acquired for a Highcliffe Relief Road);
- a reduction in speed limit;
- pedestrianisation;
- pedestrian priority zones;
- on-street parking
- an additional pedestrian crossing;
- an HGV ban.

HCP has come to the view that these matters are inter-related.

References

1. "Residents Shopping Questionnaire 2014" M Mawbey, Highcliffe Centre Partnership September 2014
2. "Vision for Highcliffe, Analysis of Responses", R Hills & M Mawbey, November 2015
3. Navitus Bay Wind Park, Technical Appendix, Volume C, Onshore, Chapter 14 – Traffic and Transportation, Appendix 14.1, Document 6.2.3.14.1, April 2014.
4. Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1- Core Strategy adopted, April 2014