

REPORT TO: Environment & Urban Renewal
Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 10th September 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Objections to proposed waiting restrictions on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.

WARDS: Farnworth

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on two objections that have been received following public consultation on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes. A plan and definition of the original recommendation is supplied in Appendix 'B'.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that this Board supports the Council's intention to introduce an Order to implement 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes as set out in Appendix 'B' and that the report be considered by Executive Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At a previous meeting (Item 47, 26th March 2014) the Board resolved that the necessary steps be taken to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order to implement "At Any Time" waiting restrictions on both sides of Cronton Lane, Widnes, extending from its junction with Lunts Heath Road/Birchfield Road to Hill View. The formal consultation on the proposed Order has been undertaken and two objections have been received from residents of properties fronting the affected area. The letters of objection with name and address identification removed are attached as Appendix 'A', with a drawing and schedule for the proposed restrictions also attached as Appendix 'B'.
- 3.2 Objection 1: This letter of objections sets out a series of points:
- 1) *Parking problems along Cronton Lane most often occur between 5.00pm and 7.00pm Monday – Friday. At other times there are relatively few issues. As previously reported to the Board (Item 21, 11th September 2013) the original petition request for waiting restrictions from residents of Cronton Lane between Lunts Heath Road and Hill View was for "At Any Time" restrictions.*
 - 2) *Belief that the main complaint from residents on Cronton Lane expressed through the original petition was concerned with inconsiderate parking and that the introduction of "Any Time Parking" restrictions will not deter motorists. The petition requesting the proposed waiting restrictions was clear in favouring "At Any Time" double yellow lines which if installed, would be enforced by Cheshire Police*
 - 3) *Lack of enforcement by Cheshire Police due to resource problems. Requested information on the numbers of parking offences recorded by the Police over the past two years on Cronton Lane is not available but if introduced, Cheshire Police would be requested to carry out rigorous enforcement action.*
 - 4) *Inconvenience for residents. This is an unfortunate side-effect of any parking*

restrictions which will apply equally to residents and visitors alike and it is a factor that residents will have considered for themselves in relation to their own circumstances.

- 5) *The proposed restriction would prevent visitors from parking outside homes when visiting and parking elsewhere could generate complaints from adjoining areas because of this displacement.* It is correct that parking displacement would occur and visitors would have to park a short distance away if no space was available on their host's driveways. However, most residents evidently accept this situation as an inconvenience worth tolerating and the small number of vehicles so displaced would be unlikely to create a knock-on problem elsewhere. .
- 6) *Motorists visiting the [Cronton Lane] shops will need to seek alternative parking e.g. Norlands Lane, potentially causing fresh complaints.* The proposed restrictions extend only as far west as Hill View, requiring visitors to park only a short distance away from the shops. There is normally adequate on-street parking space available in Hill View or Norlands Lane which should not inconvenience residents of these roads.
- 7) *The shops along Cronton Lane are a resource and the introduction of "Any Time Parking" restrictions could adversely affect their trade.* The immediate area of the shops already has 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions; the current proposal seeks only to extend these to Hill View as per the attached drawing in Appendix 'B'. No objections have been received from the retail premises during the formal advertising period associated with the 'At Any Time' waiting restriction consultation.

- 3.3 Objection 2: This objection is concerned mainly with enforcement issues and the inconvenience that the proposed restriction would cause to residents. Asserting that the lack of enforcement action in the area of the existing waiting restrictions outside the Cronton Lane shops means that drivers tend to disregard them, the objector believes that extending the existing restrictions would serve little purpose apart from causing severe inconvenience to adjacent residents. The objector puts forward alternative enforcement methods.

If introduced, Cheshire Police would be requested to carry out rigorous enforcement action on Cronton Lane in order to re-educate highway users not to park on the waiting restriction lines. Residents would be excused parking on the waiting restricted areas provided they were actively engaged in loading/unloading their vehicles.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The ward councillors for Farnworth have been consulted and support the recommended actions. Cheshire Police have been consulted and have raised no objections to the proposal.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total cost of introducing the requested waiting restrictions would be approximately £1,000. This could be funded through annual traffic management revenue allocations.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct policy, social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 7.1 Children & Young People in Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Children and Young People in Halton'

priority.

- 7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.
- 7.3 A Healthy Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Healthy Halton' priority.
- 7.4 A Safer Halton
The proposed waiting restrictions could serve to prevent obstruction and protect sightlines for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike.
- 7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 8.1 There is a variable and uncertain road safety risk associated with not introducing these requested waiting restrictions, the degree of risk depending on the degree to which drivers would continue to park so as to obstruct the footpath, carriageway, desire lines and sight lines along Cronton Lane.

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES.

- 9.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Report to Executive Board Sub- Committee 7th December 2006 - Proposed Zebra Crossing – Cronton Lane, Widnes
- 10.2 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board, 11th September 2013 (Item 21) - Petition requesting the introduction of bollards and waiting restrictions to prevent parking on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.
- 10.3 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board, 26th March 2014 (Item 47) - Consultation results re: request for waiting restrictions to prevent parking on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.

OBJECTION 1

09 June 2014

Re: Proposed Waiting Restrictions, Cronton lane Widnes

Dear Mr Parr,

I am writing with regards to a letter I received from Halton Borough Council dated 30th May 2014, informing me of a proposal by the Council to implement "At Any Time" waiting restrictions on Cronton Lane.

I was informed in the letter that any objections to the proposals, together with the grounds on which they are made, must be sent in writing to you, by 04th July 2014.

Whilst I welcome and appreciate the fact that the Council has taken seriously the concerns of some residents about parking along Cronton Lane, I believe the proposal to introduce "At Any Time" waiting restrictions to be a gross over reaction and akin to using a very big mallet to crack a rather small nut.

I understand one of the most common complaints from homeowners along this stretch of road is to do with motorists who park across driveways and I can appreciate from my own experience how annoying this is. However it is a relatively rare occurrence and I am sure there are more appropriate alternatives to consider which tackle the issue of parking, whilst at the same time avoids causing significant other problems for homeowners and businesses along this road e.g. a white line across the driveways or a resident parking permit which can also be given to family and friends when they visit.

I have set out below a list of my objections and my reasons for them:

- 1) Any problems caused by motorists parking along Cronton Lane most often occur between 5.00pm and 7.00pm Monday – Friday. At all other times of the day and night there are relatively few, if any, issues caused by the parking of motorists.
- 2) I believe the main complaint from residents on Cronton Lane which instigated the consultation, was concerned with the inconsiderate parking of motorists when visiting the shops on the junction of Cronton Lane and Norlands Lane e.g. parking across driveways. I do not believe the introduction of "Any Time Parking" restrictions will deter motorists who are responsible for the issues raised by residents from continuing to park in the way that they do now. The existing parking restrictions certainly don't deter most motorists from parking where they want to i.e. along the double yellow lines and I fail to see how "At Any Time" parking restrictions will fare any better. I have photographs which clearly show this to be the case and I am sure a Council officer would be able to determine this for him/herself, were s/he to visit the junction between 5pm and 7 pm on a weekday.
- 3) In the years I've lived on Cronton Lane, I've yet to see any enforcement of the existing parking regulations along the road and I don't believe new restrictions would be any better enforced. This isn't a criticism of the police, as they would need to have a police officer on duty each day between 5.00pm and 7.00pm to have any effect; and that would be an unrealistic expectation. I am happy to be challenged on this assumption, for example perhaps you could tell me how many traffic penalty notices have been issued by Cheshire Police to motorists of cars parked illegally along this road over the last 2 years.

- 4) I believe the only people who will be affected by the introduction of an “At Any Time” waiting restriction are the home owners along Cronton Lane; myself included. For reasons I have previously given, it will be mostly the homeowners on Cronton Lane who abide by the “Any Time Waiting” restriction even though it is not the home owners who cause the problems. So although the Council will be seen to have taken steps to address the residents’ complaint about parking, those steps will in fact have done nothing to resolve them.
- 5) The proposed restriction would prevent visitors e.g. family and friends from parking outside the homes when visiting. Visitors would instead have to park somewhere else, such as outside the homes of residents where the restrictions did not apply e.g. further along Cronton Lane or on Norlands Lane. This could potentially cause those home owners to complain to the council, so starting the process all over again.
- 6) Any motorist visiting the shops who does abide with the parking restrictions is likely to seek out an alternative place to park and will no doubt choose the closest next available road e.g. Norlands Lane. This could potentially cause the home owners along this road to complain to the council, so starting the process all over again.
- 7) The shops along Cronton Lane are regarded as a much valued community resource by people living in the area and the introduction of “Any Time Parking” restrictions could adversely affect their trade. Times are hard enough for small businesses and I am sure the Council would not want to be seen to be putting obstacles in their way; even if it was inadvertent.

I hope that my objections are given serious consideration by the Council before a final decision is made on this matter and that the option which is chosen has the full support and backing of both the residents and businesses along Cronton Lane.

Regards,

OBJECTION 2

RE: Proposed no waiting along Cronton Lane.

This is the second time that I have objected to these plans, the first objection has somehow been lost.

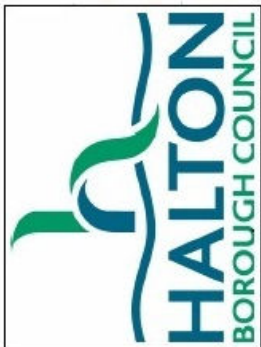
My objection regarding the no waiting at anytime is due to the fact that currently there are double yellow lines in place outside of the shopping area and for a few metres up the Lane. Currently these lines are completely ignored and observed by very few drivers, these include mainly delivery drivers but also people visiting the shops during specific times of day ie breakfast, lunch and dinner time. This does not affect the entire road. Nor is it an issue all of the time. Recently there was even a fire engine parked on these lines whilst the firemen were buying their lunch in the chip shop. Regrettably I did not have my phone on me to photo evidence this, however it is not the first time. If the emergency services are unwillingly to respect the no waiting at any time lines currently in place what hope have we got that anybody else will?

In my opinion the issue is not having yellow lines put down, the issue is having these rules enforced. I have lived here for over 2 years now and have never observed PCSO's patrolling the Lane (which would also deter some of the anti social behaviour and drunken teenagers at the weekend, however that is another matter entirely) or police moving people on who are parked illegally. In fact I regularly observe the police driving around said cars. I find it extremely frustrating that both the council and some residents seem to think that this is the solution to the problem. I have 2 very young children, both under 3 and I often have to park on the road to get the children in and out of the cars, as do my parents who child mind for me. Double yellow, no waiting at anytime lines, would be an incredible inconvenience for us all day every day, not simply for a few hours each day. Equally, as a 2 car household, we regularly need to swap cars for work the following day. We currently do this by leaving 1 car on the road. This would become a logistical nightmare if we had to park up Hill View in order to simply swap the cars.

Having read the minutes from the previous council meeting. I read a letter that was presented to the council from The Cronton Lane Residents. I would like to make it extremely clear here that we were not shown this letter, nor asked to contribute or agree to what was in the letter and so I would like to know who sent you that letter because I am certainly not happy for them to speak inaccurately on my behalf.

My suggestion would be to install cameras or have people (police/PCSO/traffic wardens) visibly fining vehicles or moving them on. I have no doubt that whether you put down the double yellow lines or not, in the future you will end up paying for further deterrents anyway because double yellow lines don't currently work, it is a ridiculous idea to think that painting them further up the Lane will deter people and make the problem go away.

Regards



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**Proposed 'At Any Time'
 Waiting Restrictions
 Cronton Lane &
 Hill View**

**Scale: NTS Date: Aug 2014
 Drawn: SJ Dra. No 9084**



Details of Proposed Order

[a] Type: "At Any Time" Waiting Restrictions

[b] Details:

Road	Details	Extent of Restriction
Cronton Lane	Both sides from its junction with Norlands Lane/Lunts Heath Road to a point 12 metres west of the centre of its junction with Hill View.	At any time
Hill View	Both sides from its junction with Cronton Lane to a point 12 metres south of the southern kerb line of Cronton Lane.	At any time

[c] Associated revocations: The Halton Borough Council (Cronton Lane, Widnes)(Prohibition of Waiting) Order, 2002

[d] Exemptions: Standard.

[e] Statement of Reasons: To prevent obstructive parking on Cronton Lane, caused mainly by drivers visiting nearby Cronton Lane shops.

[f] Plan: Drg. no. 9084.

[g] Date to be advertised: ASAP.

[h] Date to be effected: ASAP.

[i] Advertising code: 2050 1625 W041.