

Report for Resolution

Report to Norwich Highways Agency Committee
24 November 2011

Report of Head of city development services

Subject Chapelfield East – Alterations to parking bays

Item
7

Purpose

This report responds to the concerns and objections raised by the Chapelfield Nursery at the committee in July to proposed changes to the parking arrangements on Chapelfield East, but concludes that the proposals should be implemented as advertised.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to ask the head of city development services to carry out the necessary statutory procedures to implement the changes to waiting and loading restrictions in Chapelfield East as advertised and shown on Plan No PL/TR/3329/722/14.

Financial Consequences

Funding is available from the 2011/12 local transport plan budget to implement these changes.

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority “Safe and healthy neighbourhoods – working in partnership with residents to create neighbourhoods where people feel secure, where the streets are clean and well maintained, where there is good quality housing and local amenities and where there are active local communities” and the service plan priority to implement the Local Transport Plan.

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Petition and Technical Submission on behalf of Chapelfield Nursery

Survey and ‘Pay and Display’ bay data

References

Committee Reports September 2010, and July 2011-10-19

Report

Introduction

1. At your meeting in July, you discussed proposals to provide additional car parking spaces on Chapelfield East, replacing part of an existing loading bay and motor cycle parking facility. A decision was deferred to enable officers fully assess the objection received from Chapelfield Nursery, and the technical submission provided in support of that objection. A copy of the plan showing the proposed changes is attached as appendix 1.

Current position

2. The waiting facilities on Chapelfield East currently comprise a loading bay (closest to the nursery, capable of holding up to 5 cars, a further loading bay capable of holding two cars, and an extensive motorcycle parking area.

The proposal

3. It is proposed to extend the current two car loading bay (by removing some of the motorcycle parking), creating a bay capable of holding 3/ 4 vehicles, and operating this bay as a 'pay and display' facility for stays of up to one hour at a charge currently of 40p per 15 minute period. It is proposed that the existing exemption the nursery has to allow parents and carers to park in the loading bay would extend to the new pay and display bay, as is the case with St Giles Nursery on St Giles Street.

The Objection

4. The nursery objected to the proposal on the grounds that the changing of one of the bays to pay and display parking would have a detrimental effect on their business as it would create a lot more congestion in Chapelfield East during peak times which could become a hazard for the children. Parents already complain on regular occasions and find it very difficult to park in the bays as they are taken up with service vehicles, (some of whom are using dispensations) and people waiting to pick up staff from the House of Fraser. The full text of the objection is reproduced in the minutes from your July meeting.
5. Members will be aware that the loading facilities on Chapelfield East are a public facility and are not (and cannot be) specifically provided for the Nursery alone. During the construction of the Chapelfield development there were significant issues with the over-use of parking dispensations in the area, but that work is now complete. Additionally general issues with misuse of dispensations have largely been addressed through changes to the issuing and use criteria, which has benefited not only users of this bay, but all facilities across the city centre. These legitimate users have an equal right to use the bay as the Nursery, even if they do so at times when the Nursery has its highest demand.
6. As with all locations in the city centre there are a number of conflicting demands for the availability of on street parking and loading facilities and in no

location is parking reserved for an individual business but have to be designed for the general benefit of the area as a whole, so the issue has to be whether they are fulfilling that requirement, whilst providing a reasonable facility for the Nursery itself, which does benefit from specific additional benefits which are not offered to other users of those bays.

The Technical submission and review

7. Officers have reviewed the technical submission, and have no reason to dispute the level of demand for pick-up/drop-off as suggested in it. As a result of the concerns raised, officers have, since your July meeting undertaken a series of 'spot surveys' to see the level of usage of the loading and Motorcycle bays on Chapelfield East.
8. We surveyed during 7 peak hour periods, and routinely found 3-5 vehicles displaying 'nursery stickers' in the morning and evening peak periods (on one single occasion during one peak hour period there were six 'nursery stickers'). This level of use is consistent with that suggested by the Nursery in their technical submission. One or two other vehicles were also often present during this period. During the 7 peak hour periods we surveyed, we undertook 21 'spot checks'. On only two of these 21 occasions were the bays full. During the rest of the day, the bays are often empty, and at no time were more than three vehicles found using them. Except during the period when the Market Place cycle park was temporarily closed, only one motorcycle has been surveyed in the motorcycle bay during any of the periods. All of these surveys have taken place since the implementation of changes to the 'dispensations' scheme.

The use of 'Pay and Display' bays

9. Members will be aware that a scheme similar to that arranged with the Chapelfield Nursery is available to users of the St Giles Nursery, except that their scheme only provides access to 'Pay and Display' bays and this scheme operates satisfactorily. Usage data across the 'Pay and Display' bays across the City Centre is shown in Appendix 2 which shows that use of the bays is lower during morning and evening peak traffic hours when the Nursery demand is at its highest, and users of the nursery will be able to use their 'stickers' in any vacant P&D bay. As the number of bays will increase from the current loading bay capable of holding two vehicles, to a short stay parking bay capable of holding up to 4, it seems unlikely given the normal profile of usage of P&D bays that the nursery will be any substantive change in the availability of spaces for Nursery users. There is, therefore, little likelihood of any increased congestion in the area.

Conclusion

10. The availability of parking for nursery users is unlikely to be significantly affected by the extension of one of the existing loading bays to provide 'Pay and Display' spaces, but this provision would provide requested facilities for other organisations and businesses in the area in a location that is routinely barely used in its current form. Members are therefore recommended to proceed with the implementation of the parking bays as proposed.



