

## **Devon Local Transport Plan – Chagford Street Parking Management Scheme**

Report of the Local Service Officer (Okehampton)

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the proposed Chagford street parking management scheme shown on Drawing No. 6291 OK 3A, as displayed at Committee, is approved at a cost of £15,000 and a Traffic Regulation Order to bring about the proposed changes to street parking is authorised to be advertised and, subject to no objections being raised, the Order to be made and sealed as advertised.

### **1. Summary**

This report seeks approval for a Restricted Parking Zone scheme to be introduced in Chagford as part of their Community Travel Plan.

### **2. Background**

Several years ago the current advisory parking management scheme was implemented, after consultation with the community and Police, to bring some order to street parking in Chagford. There are no yellow lines to prohibit street parking, only the marking of parking spaces, some with advisory time restrictions, to encourage 'positive parking' in the town. Parking outside of these designated spaces would be regarded as an "obstruction".

### **3. Current Situation**

Over time, the advisory scheme has become increasingly abused creating significant problems to the free movement of vehicles, including public transport. Considerable growth in car ownership has made the situation worse and the available highway space has not, and cannot, expand in the same way. The Police now find the advisory scheme very difficult to enforce. Local concern has been expressed within the community regarding street parking and the stranglehold it has upon the town.

### **4. Consultation**

It is proposed to introduce a 'Restricted Parking Zone' scheme in Chagford that will regulate street parking by a Traffic Order, without requiring yellow lines and kerb blips to be laid. Drawing No. 6291 OK 3A, on display at Committee, illustrates the proposed parking management scheme in detail. Adjustments are required to be made to the current balance of street parking in the town to take account of the needs of residents, businesses, visitors, disabled and public transport users.

Meetings have taken place with representatives from the Parish Council, Police, Fire, Dartmoor National Park and local business community. Two public exhibitions have been held in the town and were both very well attended by the local community. Questionnaires have been returned in addition to several letters, petitions and a letter received from a Member of Parliament offering feedback on the proposals that were exhibited to the public. The street parking proposals displayed at the first public exhibition were subsequently modified to take into consideration as much of this feedback as possible and revised proposals were then put on public display at the second exhibition. Drawing No 6291 OK 3A shows the many areas of change after public and emergency services consultations.

Residents and employees of the town are particularly concerned about the impact the proposed street parking management scheme will have upon their individual circumstances. Those without private off-road parking will be required to either park in the designated parking spaces on the public highway or within the public off-street car park managed by

West Devon Borough Council. In spring 2004, the Borough Council introduced parking fees. Previously, it was a free car park. This has caused a lot of resentment within the community and has placed increased pressures on the available street parking spaces in the town.

A 120-signature petition was received seeking a Residents' Parking Scheme in Chagford. Whilst no-one has a 'right' to park on the public highway and neither the County Council nor Borough Council have a duty to provide residents' parking, the option of introducing a residents' parking scheme has been considered and was discussed with the local community at the second exhibition. Residents were advised there can be no guarantee of a parking space being available; they would have no priority to spaces near their properties; it is not usually appropriate to introduce a residents' parking scheme in towns where demand for spaces exceed supply. The scheme should be self-financing and the cost of a parking permit would either be £12pa if allied to an on-street 'Pay & Display' parking scheme in the town, or could rise to around £200pa if 'Pay & Display' is not introduced and no additional income was generated to cover the increased cost of enforcement. As the petition incorporated 113 households, having a total of 203 cars, a residents' parking scheme would not address all the problems identified by the petitioners.

It is not possible to introduce a street parking management scheme in Chagford that satisfies the needs of all residents, businesses and visitors as the demand for street parking has outgrown the available highway space. Employee car-sharing was encouraged during the consultation stages to reduce the number of vehicles parked all day on the highway.

## **5. Proposals**

Within the heart of the town, it is proposed to introduce a 2-hour limited waiting restriction between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Mondays to Saturdays, within the designated parking spaces to encourage a regular turnover of these spaces. This will benefit visitors to the town and also provide parking for residents between the hours of 3pm and 11am, Mondays to Saturdays, and all day on Sundays without the need to move their parked vehicles. Visitors who wish to park for a longer period and residents who wish to park all day can either make use of available unrestricted street parking spaces away from the central area or can park within the fee-paying public car park.

Designated spaces are proposed in The Square and Mill Street to permit loading and unloading either by goods vehicle or by any category of vehicle. Outside Black's delicatessen, it was proposed to construct a loading bay for any category of vehicle within a wide footway. A 158-signature petition was received against the reduction of this footway as it is the only wide pavement area which many visitors and residents enjoy using as a meeting place and is a safe place to relax with children. As a result of modifying the designated loading space, it is possible for a vehicle to be wholly situated in a space marked on the carriageway without that vehicle causing an obstruction to all but possibly a large commercial vehicle. The traffic and parking situation will, however, need to be monitored. It is further proposed to provide permit parking for two postal vehicles outside the Post Office in The Square. There is a requirement for these vehicles to be parked as close to the premises as possible owing to the nature of the business.

Disabled drivers currently have two marked parking spaces in The Square adjacent to the 'Pepper Pot' and there are a further four marked parking spaces, for any driver, alongside. It is proposed to amend this parking facility to four disabled drivers' parking spaces and to relocate a central pedestrian island opposite Webber & Sons to a position that will provide better management of turning vehicles in The Square.

The existing bus stop in The Square and a new bus stop at the junction of Lamb Park with Lower Street near the Primary School will both be protected by a bus stop 'clearway'. The new bus stop is strongly supported by the Primary School.

A Restricted Parking Zone is required to be authorised by the Department for Transport (DfT) before the Traffic Order can be made and sealed by the County Council. Feedback to

date has indicated DfT's willingness to support the proposed scheme. However, one drawback of a Restricted Parking Zone is the number of small regulatory signs normally associated with a scheme. This concern was raised during the public consultation stage and by the then local Member, Councillor Cann. Further detailed discussions with DfT have successfully resulted in a 56% reduction in the level of signing to limit the environmental impact of the scheme on the town.

## **6. Financial Considerations**

On 8 April 2005 this Committee was advised that there is a £130,000 budget for the 2005/06 West Devon Area Programme of the Devon Local Transport Plan. This programme brings together the former Zone Programmes and Local Area Programmes to form a comprehensive and co-ordinated package of measures for each area. As part of this combined Programme, £35,000 was agreed to cover commitments and retentions to enable the completion of previous years' schemes of which £15,000 is allocated to the Chagford street parking management scheme.

## **7. Sustainable Considerations**

The proposed street parking management scheme for Chagford will bring about improvements to the town's accessibility, economic viability, environment, integrated transport, safety and tourism, and thus satisfies many of the principle objectives of "Devon on the Move", the statutory Devon Local Transport Plan 2001 – 2006.

## **8. Reasons for Reaching the Recommendation**

The proposed scheme addresses a long-standing concern in relation to the current advisory street parking management scheme in that street parking cannot be satisfactorily enforced without the imposition of a formal Traffic Order. Restricted Parking Zones are particularly suited to environmentally sensitive areas, such as Chagford, where yellow line road markings and kerb blips would be environmentally intrusive. The proposal described in this report and as shown on Drawing No 6921 OK 3A gives a good balance of signing required for authorisation and limiting to the environmental impact of the scheme.

## **9. Alternative Options Considered**

A residents parking scheme has been considered in principle but would not resolve all the problems identified by the petitioners. No other alternatives were considered as a Restricted Parking Zone is the only option that enables the street parking in Chagford to be regulated without applying yellow lines and kerb blips, which would be environmentally intrusive.

Brian George

**County Electoral Division: Hatherleigh and Chagford**  
**District Council Ward: Chagford**

Local Government Act 1972

List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Paul Marshall  
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Background Paper	Date
Devon Local Transport Plan	
West Devon Area Programme 2005/06	8 April 2005
Chagford Parking Management File	December 2003 onwards

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