

Divinity Road Area Residents' Association

8 July 2009



CPZ CONSULTATION – GLOBAL COMMENTS

1. We welcome the removal of parking around corners and junctions – this will help improve safety in the area.
2. It is worth remembering how disparate this area is. Hill Top Road and the very top of Southfield and Div Roads suffer greatly from commuter parking (Brookes and hospitals) and so the CPZ is a popular concept for residents there. The bottoms of Southfield, Bartlemas and Divinity Roads (adjacent to Cowley Road) have a lot of transient shopper and staff parking, and a CPZ will help a little here. However, the CPZ won't bring any benefit to members in most of the Div Rd area (the middle bit). Hill Top Road suffers little from student parking, whereas all of the other roads suffer very much from this and regret the Council's unwillingness to tackle this obvious problem.
3. What we have all always been much more concerned about is vehicle SPEEDS. This has always been a much greater concern for all residents than parking and remains so. The wider carriageways, caused by parking on pavements in places and the removal of one side of parking in others, will encourage motorists to drive faster. Oxfordshire County Council must take steps to ensure this does not happen. Are traffic calming measures being considered to deter speed? We campaigned hard for 20 mph and were very pleased to get it. We wish OCC would use joined-up thinking to make the CPZ design work in favour of 20 mph rather than undermine it, as at present.
4. **WE OBJECT TO HAVING PARKED CARS ON PAVEMENTS – WHICH ARE NARROW IN ANY CASE.** According to your data, 70% of residents opposed it during the informal consultation (54 out of 75). Years ago, OCC should have stopped the (mainly commuter) parking on pavements that exists now in places, rather than seek to right this deficit by allowing pavement parking in the future CPZ. This is a sad abnegation of duty on the council's part. We feel let down. As we have already made clear to you, pavement parking is bad news for the disabled, parents with young children, anyone trying to push a bike / wheelbarrow along the pavement, and even people who simply wish to walk side-by-side. Nowhere in this area do parked cars occupy "nearly all of the pavement, so that people have to walk in the road" as you claim in the FAQs (sent out with the consultation documentation). This is simply untrue.

The group most seriously prejudicially affected by pavement parking are disabled people. We note the DfT guidelines for pavement widths as well as opposition from Cheney School and all sorts of disabled groups, including Transport for All.

5. We challenge the Council's assertion that residents in Southfield Road, when presented with the choice between parking on two sides and parking on one side, chose the former option and therefore agreed with partial pavement parking. They should have been presented with the third option of parking on both sides and no pavement parking.
6. We are pleased to see that most of Divinity Road is free of pavement parking. We are also pleased to note the proposal to make the eastern side of Southfield Road free of pavement parking as this will make a big difference to the disabled and parents with young children. However, we wish that the western side could be spared as well and we sincerely urge Jacobs' engineers to measure each section of road very carefully to minimise the 'need' for pavement parking if indeed you disregard our objection to it.
7. We object to the purpose of the orders as given in the Statement of Reasons: "the policy background for Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) is contained within the County Council Local Transport Plan (LTP2) for 2006-2011. It identifies five priorities for transport scheme development: tackling traffic congestion, delivering accessibility, safer roads, better air quality, and improving the street environment". In fact, the CPZ in this area will:
 - **reduce accessibility** along the pavements
 - **not deliver safer roads** (speeds will be higher if anything)
 - **not improve the street environment** – many more cars will park on the pavements in the proposed CPZ than at present
 - and it will make no difference to air quality.Neither will the CPZ "encourage commuters [passing through the area, not parking] to find alternative means of transport within the City" (Statement of Reasons) if they find pavements less easy to use than previously (as will happen on Southfield Road) and if cyclists find cars go faster and the pavements are too narrow to push bikes (as is very common) on the steep bits of Southfield and Divinity. In truth, we really do wonder what the motive for installing a CPZ is.
8. We remain to be convinced as to why the DRARA area cannot simply be ear-marked as a residents' parking zone – without the need for parking bays to be formally marked. OCC's most recent response on this issue did not explain adequately why this was not possible. Emergency services vehicles can pass along Bartlemas, Southfield, Minster, Warneford and Hill Top* as it is – it's tight and not 'ideal', but it is possible – and Divinity will have much more space as the

emergency services' primary route post-CPZ. Allowing pavement parking for the convenience of the emergency services is also far from 'ideal'. We have contacted the Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service with a view to ascertaining what really is essential vs what is simply desirable. If asked, they are bound to ask for as much as they would ever need, but this may be at too great a cost to other local needs. We know how wide the emergency services' vehicles are (and will be) and also the carriageway widths throughout the area. We would not be happy if pavement parking were installed on the mere assertion by Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service that this is what they 'need', because other needs and rights (primarily those of disabled residents) will be trampled over if the OFRS request is honoured. Some kind of accommodation or compromise must be brokered – please can you arrange this?

* Hill Top residents tell us that a person died last year as a result of emergency vehicles' path being blocked in Hill Top Road. (We hear that this was caused by some particularly inconsiderate commuter parking not by residents' parking.) Clearly situations such as this must be averted, but we assert that current parking practice rarely if ever comes close to this risk and if there are *occasional* pinchpoints (parts of Hill Top Road?), these should be relieved by removing parking on one side (not pavement parking on one side and regularly parking on the other). After all, refuse trucks pass weekly with no problem – ergo so can much rarer emergency services' vehicles.

9. Across the area generally, white access protection (WAP) lines which mark off dropped kerbs where residents have driveways should NOT be considered a real parking space. Residents will not use them to block off their own driveways. Even though (permanent) neighbours may know each other, it is a nuisance to have to seek the permission of the owner of a driveway every time you want to park. Further, many temporary residents never get to know their neighbours and are therefore extremely unlikely to use or be able to use this system which relies on neighbourliness. It is unreasonable and unrealistic to include WAPs in the tally of actual parking spaces. For instance, in Hill Top Road, which has, according to official figures, 74 spaces, the reality is that there will be 62 parking spaces once WAPs are discounted – and there is reason to believe that many cars are longer than the cars measured for the purposes of this CPZ. We therefore urge you not to include white-line accesses in space counts.
10. Re overhanging bushes, why wait for “people [to] complain, [and then you] will write to them to ask them to” trim hedges (ref: FAQs). Can't parking enforcement officers issue notices as they go about their duty, both now and under a potential CPZ?
11. Some residents have suggested removing the chicanes as they use up

valuable space. While NO ONE would like to lose any of the trees, it is the case that our chicanes are fairly ineffectual at the moment. Leaving a concrete square around the trees but removing the angled part of the chicane would be a good idea.

12. In item 11 of the Residents' Parking Explanatory Notes on your website, you state that, "Most new properties or developments (e.g. from a house to flats) granted planning permission since 1968 are not eligible for either residents or visitors permits. This also affects older properties that have given up part of their property for infill development. Applicants are advised to visit the office or telephone (0845 634 4466) before signing any contract to buy or lease a property to check that the property is still eligible for parking permits and has not been excluded from the permit parking scheme under a planning agreement." We have only recently become aware of this. There are a number of properties in this area that would be affected by this rule if it applies to our area: will it, and have those affected been informed? It would seem unfair for newbuild non-HMO townhouses to be included in this ruling if they were not made well aware of the stipulation at the time they occupied the house.

TIME-RESTRICTED PARKING

1. We think it is a very good idea that the time-restricted parking places should revert to residents (or visitors' permits) from 6.30 pm–8 am.
2. The 2-hour parking at the bottom of Divinity, Bartlemas and Southfield Rds should be 1 hour ONLY as it is intended for shoppers to the Cowley Rd shops: longer is unnecessary.
3. **WE OBJECT TO THE EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF 2-HOUR SHARED WAITING SPACES ACROSS THE AREA.** Really the only place for time-restricted parking places is near Cowley Road, for shoppers, not in the middle of the residential areas. Most of the time-restricted shared spaces north of 30 Divinity Road, 20 Southfield Road and 20 Bartlemas Road should be removed, and there need be none in Warneford Road, Minster Road, Hill Top Road and Stone Street. Very short-stay visitors would probably need a visitors' permit in any case as landing on a free time-restricted parking place would not be guaranteed or even likely if residents can use them as well. We know from the experience of existing Morrell Avenue residents that such 2-hour spots are routinely used by Brookes students who are prepared to take the chance that they will get a ticket for outstaying their time.

We particularly object to the 33 spaces in Southfield Road compared to 8 in Divinity Road. This appears extremely illogical. Students at Sinnet Court

may need three or four 2-hour shared waiting spaces (max) but not the glut that is proposed for – how many outside Sinnet Court, 20+? This is too many. On Southfield Road heading north, between Warneford and Minster Roads, it should be residents only. It is Brookes' stated policy to discourage students from bringing cars to Oxford – and the CPZ scheme should be supportive of this.

PERMIT PARKING

1. We object to the criteria upon which permits will be allocated. It will enable too many transient residents to obtain permits. A more robust scheme is needed. If there are problems, we trust the scheme will be reviewed after one year as promised.
2. We believe only one permit per household should be allocated with second permits allocated on a needs basis to avoid causing “hardship to many families”. Otherwise you will cause hardship to everyone using the pavements that have cars on them: what makes that bad better than the first?
3. You state that “Some have argued that the second permit should be allocated on the basis of need, but this would be extremely complex and costly to administer.” Other places do this: where there is a will there is a way. OCC can do this if it wants to. Importantly for the vast majority of residents, it would enable a drastic reduction in the amount of pavement parking.
4. IF a second permit IS allocated, the issue of charges for residents' second permits divides our members. Many feel it should be much more than £40.00 per annum for each permit, for example, ten times that amount (£400.00) would deter students from applying for second permits but allow families who really need a 2nd car to have one. This (£400.00) is what Hammersmith and Fulham charges.
On the other hand, many residents are adamant that £40 is ample, the same as for the first permit.
Of course, assessing permit allocation on a needs basis would be much the best system.
5. We object to the charge for a permit for less than a year being calculated pro rata. This will simply make it easier and cheaper for students to get cheap permits but will make scant difference to permanent residents. Please scrap this idea.
6. We object to a pro rata refund being made for any residents permit or blank visitors permit for which payment has been made which is surrendered. This will only make it more attractive for students to obtain permits, something which is hardly necessary.

7. Visitors' permits for residents aged 70 or over should be free of charge AND WITHOUT LIMIT IN NUMBER.
8. We are pleased to note that a temporary resident will be entitled to just 25 visitors' permits vs 50 for a permanent resident.
9. We object to residents as young as 17 having access to visitors' permits. May we suggest that the lower age limit is 21? Anybody younger than this can use their parents' allocations. Anybody older than this could arguably be employed and living independently in the area, and so require permits.
10. Point 15 in JulTa/TRO/Divinity & Magdalen Roads Oxford CPZ – last sentence reads “A person who is temporarily resident for study purposes does not qualify.” for residents' permits. However, in the FAQs point 15 states “we do not have any plans to prevent students from obtaining residents permits”. How temporary is temporary?
11. Skips: will these get permits as well?

CAR CLUB PARKING PLACES

1. We agree with the siting and number of car club bays, but wonder whether the location at the top of Bartlemas would be better on Southfield or Divinity so as to attract more members (higher footfall). This is a matter for the car club, which DRARA welcomes and supports.
2. We would be happy for these to be provided free of charge: the car club is to be encouraged as much as possible.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

1. Have the gaps which have been left for fire hydrants been checked? We cannot find fire hydrants outside 21/23 Southfield Road or 162 Divinity Road. Can accuracy of these gaps be checked across the area as presumably other discrepancies exist.
2. We object to the pavement parking bay in Southfield Road adjacent to 30 Warneford. There is way too little pavement width here to allow this and as there are fewer houses, the demand tends to be lower.
3. We object to the space left for a garage at the bottom end of Southfield Road because it is unnecessary. The garage is never used – a WAP line would be preferable.
4. Why are there no parking spaces between 13–17 Southfield Road? Please add in.

5. The carriageway widths around the Sinnet Court area do not justify pavement parking. The road is sufficiently wide in this stretch to allow cars to park on both sides of the road without encroaching on the pavement. Please have Jacobs actually measure the road width there.
6. Why is there no parking right up to the chicanes at the bottom of Southfield Road? These are wasted parking spaces.
7. There seems to be many disabled parking spaces, esp in Divinity. There are six in lower Div Rd. Have these been double-checked? Are they really needed? We know of at least one elderly resident who has left the area very recently.
Are they for use of disabled DRARA residents only or for people from outside the area who have disabled permits?
8. Why has half of Warneford Lane been excluded from the scheme? OCC has claimed that one of the main objectives of the CPZ was to reduce commuter traffic, esp to Brookes, and this exclusion is an Achilles heel in this claim/aim.
9. There is an urgent need for a pedestrian crossing on Warneford Lane from the south side across the central reservation to the South Park gate, which children at Cheney School, Brookes students and residents can use. If the CPZ design can leave a gap between parked cars and provide a dropped kerb (at the least) this would help. Ideally, we would like to see a zebra crossing here although we imagine that you'll be unable to provide this now due to (1) budget and (2) it falling outside the CPZ remit. Nevertheless, we think it worth mentioning this opportunity for some joined-up planning – and the CPZ could lay the groundwork for making a future crossing easier to install.

[Aside: Can you also ask the contractors who left a year ago after installing pipes in the road to pay for the Warneford Lane central reservation to be rehabilitated – it is a disgraceful eyesore and has been impossible to negotiate when wet (mud, puddles) for 12 months. A graded path would be a perfect recompense.]

Compiled by Lynne Trenery and James Styring on behalf of the Divinity Road Area Residents' Association (DRARA) committee and members

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