



St Helens - Parking Options

Introduction:

Island Highway & Transport Consultants have been commissioned by St Helens' Parish Council as the lead authority in a joint funded initiative with the Isle of Wight Council to identify preliminary options to increase parking opportunities in the centre of the village. This paper explains the background to the commission, identifies and evaluates preliminary options to increase parking opportunities and recommends a way forward.

Background:

Within the centre of the village there is a demand for resident parking which exceeds the space available particularly overnight and at weekends which is exacerbated during the summer holiday period. The matter has been an issue of concern locally for a number of years. Few of the properties fronting the village green or in the immediately adjacent roads have off street parking facilities and rely on on-street parking opportunities. This issue is not peculiar to residential properties rather similar issues are faced by village centre commercial premises, the school and medical centre. The nature of the issue is well understood and there is little benefit in undertaking exhaustive parking surveys to establish that the daily demand for parking exceeds the space available to accommodate that either on street or in the car park on the village green. The commission is focused to determine options to improve the parking stock.

Consultation:

Whilst no formal parking surveys have been undertaken, limited consultation has taken place with the school, doctors and St Helen's service station been consulted to establish their demands for on street parking. This has found a significant demand for non-resident on street parking on weekdays which will be exacerbated when sporting fixtures or events are held on the green.

St Helen's Angling Club has made representations to the effect that they have limited parking opportunities within their club compound and rely on parking on-street in Latimer Road. They have indicated that they would wish to oppose the introduction of any form of parking control in that vicinity.

Options:

There are a number of options to increase the village centre parking stock which are summarised below:

Introduce Controlled / Residents Parking Scheme:

This would allow parking on sections of road or in the car park to be time or permit limited allowing priority to be given to different user groups in different locations. For example parking in the car park could be limited to a stay period of one hour excepting permits which could be sold to employees at the school, medical centre and garage; whilst on street parking could be limited by permit to residents only. Such an approach would not increase the number of parking spaces rather would control the location of parking improving the likelihood of residents being able to find a parking space close to their properties. However this would need a practical enforcement presence by redeployment of IWC existing CEO resources to ensure compliance and would be likely to displace vehicles to park elsewhere on the network potentially creating issues where none are currently apparent. This would be unlikely to provide any really benefit in the evenings, overnight and at weekends when the parking demand from the non-residential uses is lesser.

Extend the Car Park:

There is scope to extend the car park southwards towards St Helens' Service Station to provide a further 14 parking spaces although that would require work at a cost of approximately £40k to be undertaken on the village green which is protected by statute. Whilst an exception could be applied for from the secretary of state the success of such is not certain. The current car park has been constructed without such authority and if the parish was minded to pursue such an application it would be prudent to regularise the position with regard to the existing car park at the same time.

Provide an Alternative Car Park:

There is practically no alternative land availability on which a car park could be provided sufficiently proximate to the village centre which is not protected by statute as village green. There may be scope to agree the use of a limited number of spaces at BHYC car park on weekdays during term time when that does not operate at capacity. Subject to agreement this could help accommodate the off-site parking demand from the school although this is approximately 1km from the school site and beyond the 800m threshold established to be reasonable for a 'walking neighbourhood'. As a consequence this is likely to have a low level of take up and little practical impact on the parking stock.

Increase On-Street Parking Capacity:

By establishing a gyratory around the green or at a less intrusive level converting Lower Green Road on either side of Mill Road to operate as a one way link; road space could be realised to allow echelon parking to be provided increasing parking provision on those sections by 50%. If the section between Upper Green Road and Latimer Road was so controlled in the order of an additional 17 parking spaces could be achieved on that link.



This would require the implementation of a traffic regulation order and remarking / signing the junctions and providing echelon parking bay markings. If progressed as an experimental traffic order which does not require advanced public consultation this could potentially be implemented in tandem with the Island Roads resurfacing planned for October at a cost in the order of £5k. Such an approach and would give residents the opportunity to observe the controls in operation and impact which those have on the use of Latimer Road to inform a decision about whether or not these arrangements should be retained.

This could be extended to include Vine Road as far as the car park entrance which would realise a further 4 or 5 spaces although would introduce an onerous diversion route for those accessing Latimer Road from the west.

Each of these options has the scope to improve the village centre parking stock although it should be noted that the current arrangements with constrained parking opportunities are likely to have suppressed car ownership / resident parking demand. The provision of additional parking facilities may simply realise that demand and not improve the availability of parking on the highway practically.

Recommendation:

I would recommend that the following options be pursued in the priority identified:

1. Seek agreement to and explore scope for match funding from IWC in respect of the various initiatives.
2. Seek to promote an experimental traffic order through IWC / IR to make the section of Lower Green Road between Upper Green Road and Latimer Road one way to facilitate the introduction of echelon parking spaces realising an additional 17 spaces with a view to implementing that in parallel with Island Roads resurfacing of the road in October 2018
3. Explore the statute limitation of 'village green' and approach to resolve that to regularise the legal position regarding the existing car park and allow the extension of the car park to realise an additional 14 parking spaces if required in future.
4. Monitor the effect of the option 2 to establish whether or not a permit controlled parking scheme should be developed to control access to on street spaces.

Peter Hayward BEng (Hons) CEng MICE MCIHT DMS
Director

September 2018

