

South Quay – Parking Review.

Notes of review meeting 23 June 2016

Present: Phil Reilly – NCC and Helen Martin – NCC (note taker); Martin Chisholm, Charlotte Martin – BCKLWN, Cllr Lesley Bainbridge, Cllr Kathy Mellish – BCKLWN; Cllr David Collis – NCC,

Ben Coulson – BID Kings Lynn; Dr Elizabeth Harrison – Nelson St Residents Group; Dr Julian Litten, Sally Turff and Prof Brian Falconbridge - St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward Forum; Darren Taylor – Town Centre Partnership; Antony Goodrich, Michael Baldwin – Bank House Hotel; Tim Mann - resident

Phil Reilly (PR) – welcomed attendees and advised that the meeting was to review the operational scheme in South Quay/King Staithe Sq (SQ). This review had originally been planned to take place 12 months after commencement the scheme but had been brought forward 6 months due to requests from the resident groups and businesses represented today.

PR confirmed that any agreed alterations that required an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order would take about 8-9 months to implement, due to the legal processes involved and so no immediate changes could be made.

The floor was then opened to attendees to bring forward their comments/concerns/requests

Sally Turff – Implementation of SQ and other parking schemes is having an impact on nearby streets, was that considered, and what will be done about it? **Response (R):** Other areas are not forgotten but are not currently on the forward programme due to funding but are on the list.

Tony Wright – is changing the SQ zone to enable overnight parking on the cards? **R:** Yes

Tony Wright – the 3hr time limit is too restrictive on having a meal can this be extended? **R:** Possibly with agreement

Julian Litten – previous consultation was reactive not proactive, hoping for a more proactive discussion today

Helen Martin and Martin Chisholm presented some data and analysis of tickets purchased in the new parking zone to 20 June

28821 tickets issued, 78% are for the one hour free stay, 11% for 2 hour stay, 6% for 2.5hr stay and 6% for 3 hr stay. Very positive feedback from businesses and people now able to 'pop' in to town for a quick shop. Residents permits cost £40 and approx 40 have been sold. Surveys showed that about 7 are in use at any one time. Analysis showed that the car parking spaces are on average half full at the most with a peak around lunchtime and another spike in the evening.

David Collis – can we expand the permit zone to include other addresses. **R:** the plan has always been to consult on a further zone which would include St James St, Queen Street, King Street etc. This was not as high a priority as areas such as around the hospital, Eastgate/Highgate, the railway station and SQ which have now been implemented. However, work on developing this further zone is not currently programmed.

Julian Litten –townscape heritage funding is coming on stream

Martin Chisholm – if parking/highway issues are high on the agenda of those managing the townscape heritage funding can they allocate funding to these projects?

Kathy Mellish – confirms that big picture thinking is important when taking forward these types of projects

Sally Turff – In the previous consultation residents who didn't want to lose the free parking on SQ and said so, were then not included in the later consultation nor were they eligible for residents' parking (RP). Will this be addressed? (No response).

Lesley Bainbridge – reiterated that parking is high on local residents agenda. There is limited on-street parking and it is being further restricted when new developments are built or when improvement schemes happen. The Friars area for example would like residents parking. MC/PR advised that residents parking schemes only help residents when the pressures on parking are external (ie vehicles from outside the area). If there are simply more residents than space, permits will not help. The Friars area had previously been considered for RP but this is not considered practical as regulation of parking would result in a net loss of parking as on-street parking would then be outlawed. People currently park very close to junctions and partially on footways, this kind of congestion would be removed, but the end result would be less parking space. Residents are therefore 'better off' with the status quo..

Ben Coulson – used to live in Friars area, so appreciates pressures on parking. Does NCC model parking displacement? **PR:** Yes there is consideration of displacement, but no formal modelling due to time/cost constraints.

Antony Goodrich – owns the only hotel in the zone (The Bank House) he is increasing the number of bedrooms and guests want to park. He would like the ability to park overnight. Happy to pay to be able to do so. Would also like additional permits as they are close to using their allocation. – MC advised that on-street permits are set on a county wide formula for consistency., he could however issue off street scratch cards for the Baker Lane car park.

Darren Taylor – Town Centre Partnership supports the concept of on street charging but would prefer if on/off street charging could be aligned. Pointed out the car parks are quite empty in evenings – MC advised aligning on/off street is not possible due to NCC policy parking principles.

Sally Tuff – numerous residents in the town centre don't have off street car parking – used to rely on locations like SQ for parking options, this has been removed and no alternatives are available.

Brian Falconbridge – residents in historic KL contributing to the historic area through the upkeep of historic buildings and thus contributing to tourism and the local economy. This should be respected

Darren Taylow – Visitor access and parking is vital for as there are insufficient residents to support the economy of Kings Lynn alone.

Julian Litten – following on from town centre works there would be other townscape projects how would this review fit with those projects, would changes in one conflict with later changes from another? These projects are probably a better way to lead on parking changes

Tim Mann – as a resident, felt that KL is a good place to visit, a good place to work but a difficult place to live as parking for residents is non existent on-street or expensive in off street car parks

General discussion on planning policy which enables/encourages developers to provide town centre accommodation without parking, putting further pressure on limited on street facilities as occupants still have cars. Cllr Mellish said that if developers were 'required' to provide parking they would go to appeal and this would be a cost to the planning authority.

Phil Reilly/Martin Chisholm – thanked everyone for participating and outlined that there were clearly three workstreams arising from the meeting

1. Development of proposals to introduce overnight parking to the SQ area. The principle is accepted, now the detail needs to be worked up
2. From discussions it seems that an extension of the current max stay from 3hr – 4hr would be welcomed. This would be taken forward with an appropriate charge considered.
3. Investigating other initiatives and sources of funding that might lead to consideration of additional residential parking zones. Timescales outside of the scope of this project.

End

In addition to this information – taking from NCC notes and slightly amended for accuracy and comprehension – Forum officers present stressed that in deciding parking provision, the fact that SQ is a residential area must be taken into account and residents' requirements and enjoyment of their environment must be considered. Already numerous public events are being held in the waterfront area and the plan is to extend this to make the 'Old Town' a tourist destination. While having no quarrel with this, it should be remembered that this is very much an innovation, which residents, many of whom have lived in the area for many years, are having to learn to live with. Inevitably there is disruption of varying degrees.

2) The Nelson Street Residents Group and forum members also emphasised the effect of the new SQ parking arrangements on surrounding streets. Vehicles displaced by parking restrictions, especially at night, are being moved into otherwise quiet streets to the disruption of traffic, mounting of pavements and danger to both pedestrians and buildings – many historic and/or listed.

3) Next. The forum has requested a clear written statement of 'process' of review, absent in the NCC notes of the meeting, as well as the commitment to write to all those likely to be affected (i.e. the knock on effect) in the streets immediately adjacent to the South Quay. This has been agreed.

Conclusion.

Although the forum welcomed the opportunity to attend the meeting and to be able to make points which did not appear to have been taken into account previously, it was extremely disappointing to learn that little could be done immediately or even in the short term. This is because of the bureaucracy and the legal processes that have to be enacted. There was further disappointment that no other parking schemes are even being considered, for the same reasons..