

ANGUS COUNCIL

ROADS COMMITTEE

24 AUGUST 2000

CAR PARKING IN LITTLECAUSEWAY, FORFAR.

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ROADS

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the situation with regards to the 'residents-only' car parking areas in Littlecauseway Forfar.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee agree to the reinstatement of lockable bollards in Littlecauseway, Forfar to restrict access to the parking areas to residents only and to allow access to the main carriageway by emergency vehicles, and access to the private garage at No 4 Littlecauseway.

2 INTRODUCTION

Previous References:-

Report No. 143/98 - Planning and Transport Policy Committee, 29 January 1998 when the Committee agreed to authorise capital expenditure for the repair of the footways in Littlecauseway Forfar.

3 BACKGROUND

Littlecauseway is located in a Conservation Area just off West High Street in Forfar Town Centre and is the only street in the town that retains its original cobbled surface.

In the 1970's Forfar Town Council decided to upgrade the road including the pedestrianisation of the carriageway with parking at each end for residents only.

In anticipation of the proposed works a Prohibition of Vehicles Order was promoted in 1975 prohibiting vehicles from the carriageway of the street and at the same time a Traffic Order was also promoted restricting the use of the proposed parking areas off Littlecauseway on the basis of a Residents Permit system. These permits were to be issued by the Director of Finance of the Town Council with an annual fee of £10 being payable.

Prior to implementation of the environmental improvement works discussions were undertaken between the District and Regional Councils on the matter of future maintenance of the area. It was agreed that the area be converted to footpath to permit

Angus District Council to carry out the environmental improvement works and they would become responsible for maintenance of the area although it would remain on the List of Public Roads. A formal Order, under the Planning Act, was promoted in 1978 by Angus District Council converting the entire cobbled length of Littlecauseway to footpath with limited vehicle access. This Order had the effect of revoking the 1975 Prohibition of Driving Order as mentioned above.

The parking areas were provided and lockable bollards erected to restrict access to residents who were issued with keys. However over the years the permit system lapsed for various reasons and the bollards were damaged such that abuses of the parking restrictions by non-residents began.

When complaints by residents were received it became clear that the 1978 Order was poorly drafted and as a result the Police considered the restrictions on the parking areas to be unenforceable.

Angus District Council therefore promoted a variation Order in 1987 reaffirming the situation and restricting use of the parking areas to residents-only on display of a Permit issued by the Director of Finance.

Up until that time the arrangement had been self-enforcing due to the bollards etc. and questions were raised as to whether the Police could issue fixed penalties to offenders under the controlling legislation.

Since that time the use of these parking areas by residents has continued generally satisfactorily with no enforcement until recently when the footways were upgraded. As part of those works the damaged bollards restricting access to the parking areas were removed and not replaced with the result that the residents-only signs are not being obeyed. Non resident parking is now a serious issue with a number of complaints by residents being received relating not only to use of the parking areas by non-residents but also the blocking of access to the main carriageway of Littlecauseway for emergency services, etc. and the garage at No 4 Littlecauseway.

4 **PROPOSALS**

The volume of complaints has now reached a level that something must be done to resolve the situation and the following options were considered:-

- (i) To revoke the current Order and remove the residents' privilege to reserved parking by making the car parking spaces free to all.

This option would have the effect of upsetting the local residents of Littlecauseway who have enjoyed the privilege of parking in these areas for approx. 25 years. The problem of occasional blockage of access to the carriageway of Littlecauseway for exempt vehicles including access to the garage at No. 4 Littlecauseway would remain. This option would remove the need for future maintenance of bollards and enforcement of parking restrictions.

- (ii) To revoke the current Order and remove the parking areas reverting them to footpath along with the remainder of the cobbled street.

This option would have the effect of upsetting the local residents of Littlecauseway who have enjoyed the privilege of parking in these areas for approx. 25 years. It would however ensure access to the main part of Littlecauseway for exempt vehicles including access to the garage at No 4 Littlecauseway which would require to be maintained. This option again removes the need of enforcement of parking restrictions but would involve the erection of bollards to prevent general access.

- (iii) To retain the current Order restricting the parking areas to and reintroduce the permit system.

This option would likely not find favour with all local residents as they have enjoyed free parking for some time although others may be willing to pay for a dedicated space provided if it was a reasonable sum.

It would involve the Director of Finance's staff resources and some expense in setting up the Permit scheme with printing of permits, issuing permits and enforcement. In terms of enforcement the Council have at present no formal enforcement staff relating to off-street parking whilst the Police have stated that due to availability of resources their enforcement action would be limited. Particular problems of enforcement can be anticipated outwith office hours.

- (iv) To retain the current Order restricting the parking areas to residents and replace the lockable bollards to restrict access.

This is the option most likely to find favour with the residents of Littlecauseway as it would return the situation to the status quo prior to the recent refurbishment works. It would also overcome the problem of maintaining access to the carriageway of Littlecauseway for exempt vehicles. The only concern would be that this residents-only arrangement is the only one in Angus and to actively support its retention may result in residents at other problem locations requesting a similar facility although it can be argued that it has been inherited from former Councils and would not otherwise have been considered.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Option (i) The costs of removing signs and of providing bollards or other suitable arrangement to maintain access to the main area of Littlecauseway is likely to be in the region of £1000.

Option (ii) The costs of erecting bollards to prohibit access to the parking areas but maintain access to the carriageway of Littlecauseway is likely to be in the region of £500.

- Option (iii) The costs of printing the permits, issuing the permits and collecting the fees is not known but can be anticipated to be significant particularly in terms of staff time. The costs of possible enforcement would also require to be considered.
- Option (iv) The costs of erecting lockable bollards to restrict access to residents only is likely to be in the region of £750. Additional costs can be anticipated for the repair and or renewal of damaged bollards in the future.

With the exception of Option (iii) for which the costs cannot be accurately quantified the costs can be contained within the 2000/01 Roads Department Revenue Budget for traffic.

6 **CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance, the Director of Planning and Transport, and the Chief Constable have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

7 **CONCLUSION**

Due to complaints by residents regarding misuse of parking areas at Littlecauseway by non-residents a solution must be found. The erection of lockable bollards with keys issued to residents would appear to be the simplest and most cost effective means of resolving the situation.

Dr Bob McLellan
DIRECTOR OF ROADS

NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:-

Report No. 143/98, Angus Council Planning and Transport Policy Committee 29 January 1998 - Resurfacing of Footways at Littlecauseway Forfar.

DAM/JSG
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REPORT/park.little.cause