

Appendix 2a

Please reply to: Steve Cox,
Principal Safety & Licensing Officer, Licensing
Section, Roebuck House, Torquay. TQ2 5EJ
My ref: SJC/SJC/0617353

To Hackney Carriage Drivers

Your ref:
Telephone: 01803 208126
Fax: 01803 208854
E-mail: Licensing@torbay.gov.uk
Website: www.torbay.gov.uk
Date: 16th January 2009

Dear

Re: Torquay Harbourside & The Strand Taxi rank and Bus Bay

I am writing to you to advise you on the work being undertaken by Torbay Council and the Police to try and resolve issues that are arising in the use of The Strand, its taxi rank, the adjacent bus bay and the roundabout. During 2008 there have been a number of complaints about this area, mainly about drivers using areas not designated as taxi ranks. I have been tasked to try and find a solution to this problem. It is my view that a compromise is needed because their simply isn't enough space for all the demands made upon this area.

Torbay Council is also working with representatives of the Taxi Association to try and help find a solution.

I think it is important in the first instance to remind you that the only places drivers can queue for fares at this time are the three ranks, on Victoria Parade, on The Strand and on Cary Parade. Though waiting has been tolerated at times on the Bus Bay, it is must clear that the road traffic orders in place prohibit this.

Torbay Council has taken the view that it would be helpful to change the bus bay after midnight on the harbour side of The Strand; however it has to seek approval from the Department of Transport for this change. It has approached them about the change to the existing order and they have agreed with our submission that after midnight the Bus bay on the harbour side can become a taxi rank. This will still need to go through the proper channels of advertising etc, but we are hopeful that this can be agreed by mid March.

Until mid March there is no right to use this bus bay before or after midnight, and should you be approached and asked to move on, or even receive a fixed penalty notice, for doing so, I will expect you to comply. Should any driver make threats or anything similar against Torbay Council personnel or their contractors as some have done, they can expect to be brought before the Licensing Committee with the threat of their driver's licence being suspended. This also applies to any arguments with bus drivers, as they too have been warned and in two cases action has been taken against their drivers.

The same applies to the roundabout, where drivers have been queuing on it. This is simply not acceptable and is not only causing an obstruction but is simply dangerous. Ticketing is now taking

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If you require this in a different format or language, please contact me.

place in that area, as several drivers have discovered.

Finally, at the start of this letter I said Torbay Council is working with the Taxi Association, and through them we hoped to identify some other potential locations for new ranks. It may be that we are not successful, but we do understand times are hard and if we can help we will. The process is slow and there will be other interests regarding any location, who will have a right to raise their concerns, but if we feel the location is right, I will add my support behind any report to Licensing Committee.

In due course I will write again to confirm any changes we have been able to achieve.

If you have any queries then please ring Craig Noble or myself.

Yours sincerely

Steve Cox

Principal Safety & Licensing Officer
Environmental Health & Consumer Protection