



Title: **Cockington Traffic Regulation Order – Size of Local Buses and Parking Restrictions**

Public Agenda Item: **Yes**

Reason for Report to be Exempt:

Wards Affected: **All Torquay Wards as the bus service affects Torquay passengers**

To: **Transport Working Party** On: **6th October 2011**

Key Decision: **No** **Implemented following legal procedures.**

Change to Budget: **No** Change to Policy Framework: **No**

Contact Officer: **Richard Brown**
Telephone: **207674**
E.mail: **Richard.brown@torbay.gov.uk**

1. What we are trying to achieve and the impact on our customers

- 1.1.1 Continuation of two affective bus routes which serve Cockington Village, Cockington Court and Nut Bush Lane through affective access.
- 1.1.2 Improve disabled access to and from Cockington Village and Court to meet DDA requirements through the use of low floor buses which are 7.4 metres in length.
- 1.1.3 Provide residents from Nut Bush Lane access to Torquay through the provision of public transport.
- 1.1.4 To keep access from Torquay Seafront to Nutbush Lane clear for the bus services and emergency vehicles all year round.
- 1.1.5 Provide residents parking on street in the area of the Almshouses and Rosary Grange including specified disabled parking where possible.

2. Recommendation(s) for decision

- 2.1.1 To adopt the Traffic Regulation Orders for the revised vehicle size to allow local bus services to carry customers with mobility difficulties and meet the DDA Act 1995 for vehicle accessibility compliance. This ensures that buses of 7.4 metres in length can travel in both directions in Cockington Lane between the junction of Old Mill Road and the Village Square.
- 2.1.2 To introduce on street Disabled Parking Bays close to the Almshouses.
- 2.1.3 To create specific parking places within Cockington Lane from Torquay Seafront to Nutbush Lane to allow access for the buses and emergency vehicles all year round. To action this point Traffic Regulation Orders will need to be advertised and the public consulted with objections considered by the Policy Development Group at a later stage.
- 2.1.4 Officers to investigate the implementation of residents parking in the area in Cockington Lane by the Almshouses and Rosery Grange most affected by the new parking restrictions subject to approval from the Department of Transport.

3. Key points and reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 If the vehicle size for the local bus services in Cockington isn't revised on a permanent basis they will not be able to carry residents or visitors with mobility restrictions and will continue to experience loading problems due to the limited capacity of the vehicles.
- 3.2 The vehicles will not comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and may be forced to withdraw from Cockington Village by 2015.
- 3.3 The Travel Plan for Cockington Court clearly states the bus service needs improved frequency of service, particularly in the winter months and aims to actively promote the bus links to and from Cockington Court. The Torbay Development Agency supports the larger buses as it is hoped that the services will bring in customers for the craft businesses operating at Cockington Court.
- 3.4 Some residents (especially from the Almshouses) who have been affected by the parking restrictions have stated that they would like the Council to consider on street disabled parking and dedicated residents parking to assist them. Any introduction of such parking bays without the need for ground lining works will need to be approved by the Department of Transport.
- 3.5 If specific parking areas can be introduced along Cockington Lane all year round this will encourage drivers to park correctly and allow access at all times for the bus and emergency services.

For more detailed information on this proposal please refer to the supporting information attached.

Richard Brown – Service Manager, Community, Leisure and Transport

Supporting information

A1. Introduction and history

- A1.1 Bus Routes 50 and 62 run by two different companies currently operate local services into and out of Cockington Village from Paignton and Torquay.
- A1.2 Route 62 run by Chelston Leisure Services/Local Link operates the only bus service from Torquay into Cockington to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors throughout the year. During peak periods the bus service is increased in capacity to meet demand. Route 62 exits the village through the one-way system via Cockington Lane to Nutbush Lane.
- A1.3 Route 50 operated by Devonian Motor Services is a new commercial service which commenced on the 11th April 2011 and operates the only bus service from Paignton into Cockington. Route 50 turns around in the village and exits via Cockington Lane back to the Seafront. This manoeuvre has been assessed and agreed by the Council's Traffic Engineer. The operator of this route has stated that he is not prepared to alter his route and run through the village to Nutbush Lane because this will add considerably to his operating costs due to the fact that his mileage would double and fuel costs would double. In addition to this his customers would be inconvenienced because they could not return to their original boarding point without having to travel around the whole loop. Any alterations to the existing route would seriously affect the operators Business Plan and put the route in jeopardy of being withdrawn.
- A1.4 In 2008 the Council amended the Cockington Prohibition of Driving Order to address problems experienced by the operator regarding the length and capacity of the buses allowed into Cockington from 12-seater vehicles to 16-seater vehicles.
- A1.5 Due to the popularity of Cockington Village and the improvements being made at Cockington Court, as part of the Sea Change Project, the Bus Services are the main means of public transport into this area and require larger vehicles in order to address capacity and DDA issues.
- A1.6 During 2010/11 a total of 40,937 passenger journeys were made on Route 62 out of which 36,861 were concessionary pass holders.
- A1.7 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) lays out the Vehicle Accessibility compliance dates in respect of new and existing vehicles and Local Link / Chelston Leisure Services are very aware that they will need to convert their vehicles operating on this route to low-floor easy access by 2015 at the latest. The passenger numbers above clearly show there is a need to have a low-floor easy access vehicle on this route at all times, in order to assist the vast majority of customers.
- A1.8 The bus services were experiencing severe problems operating due to the lack of parking restrictions. This involved on some days bus route 62 being cancelled as buses have got stuck due to obstructions by parked vehicles. Temporary parking restrictions have been introduced to assist the bus operators with their services into and out of Cockington. The restrictions will also assist the Emergency Services.

A1.9 The parking restrictions along the lower part of the lane from the Seafront to Cockington Village are seasonal therefore from the end of September the bus services will experience access problems unless the restriction is altered to all year round. One Bus Operator has already stated they will remove Cockington from their scheduled route should the parking restrictions not be implemented. Officers are looking at areas where parking bays can be allocated in the wider parts of the lane.

A1.10 The owner of the village car park has been approached in relation to the residents of the Almshouses hiring some parking spaces in the car park but the cost of £30 per week for each parking bay would be unaffordable to the residents and the Council would be unable to fund such a scheme in a privately owned car park.

A2. Risk assessment of preferred option

A2.1 Outline of significant key risks

A2.2 Without the parking restrictions the bus service can not operate and will have to be cancelled due to the access issues.

A2.3 It is a duty of the Council to carry out reasonable practicable measures to assist the Public Transport Operators with the efficient operation of their services. The implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders requires publication of legal notices and legal Orders to be sealed.

A2.4 The removal of on street parking is very controversial and has caused a lot of concern to residents who have properties with no off street parking.

A2.5 Any additional permanent parking bays introduced in the area by the Almshouses and Rosary Grange will require Department of Transport approval due to the nature that there are no ground markings relating to parking restrictions in Cockington.

A2.2 Remaining risks

A2.2.1 There will be resistance from those residents who will be unable to park on the road due to the new parking restrictions. Although this will be mitigated through the introduction of some on street disabled parking and residents parking bays.

A3. Other Options

A3.1 Do not adopt the Traffic Regulation Orders for the revised vehicle size. This will mean that customers with mobility difficulties wishing to visit Cockington will continue to struggle or be unable to use public transport to this area. The services will also be unable to meet the DDA Act 1995 for vehicle accessibility compliance in 2015.

A3.2 Do not introduce disabled bays close to the Almshouses or consider residents parking in this area. This will mean that residents will find it extremely difficult to park close to their homes especially during peak season.

A3.3 Do not implement the parking restrictions all year round and create specific parking places within Cockington Lane. This could mean that Cockington Court and Nut Bush Lane lose their bus service.

A4. Summary of resource implications

A4.1 As a guide, initial estimates to introduce highway markings will equate to approximately £5,000. This scheme is to be funded via Capital financing through the Local Transport Plan

A5. What impact will there be on equalities, environmental sustainability and crime and disorder?

A5.1 Improved access all year round for the disabled visiting Cockington Court and the new craft units and improved access for disabled customers & residents of Nut Bush Lane through the provision of public transport.

A5.2 Reduced on street parking for residents with no off street parking and in particular a number of disabled residents are affected. Although in the area of the Almshouses which is the most affected area it is hoped to mitigate these problems through the provision of on street residents parking bays subject to Department of Transport approval.

A6. Consultation and Customer Focus

A6.1 The consultation on Appendix 1 was carried out **prior** to the commencement of the new Paignton Bus Service.

In summary 19 Residents, 6 Residents & Businesses, 3 Businesses and 1 Bus Passenger responded to the questionnaire.

18 respondents agreed with the proposed parking restrictions from the Drum Public House. 4 respondents agreed provided their comments about residents parking especially for the Almshouses were taken into account. 6 respondents disapproved of the proposed parking restrictions.

19 respondents approved of the larger sized buses. 10 respondents disapproved.

The main issues raised by residents were:

1. Difficulties with 2 buses passing each other in the lane
2. Difficulties for the residents of the Almshouses (some of which are disabled) having no parking spaces close to their homes
3. Parking restrictions in the lower part of the lane from the Seafront to the Village should be all year round
4. Concerns about a bus turning within the Forge area and conflict with the horses
5. Requests for some residents parking

A6.2 The consultation on Appendix 2 was carried out **during the trial period of the larger buses**. This second part of consultation was requested by Members during the trial of the larger bus at the meeting of the Transportation Working Party on the 18th March 2011.

Questionnaires were asked to be returned by 31st July 2011 and were distributed to 67 businesses/residents, 53 responded being a very good response rate of 79%, plus 3 surveys from bus passengers

In summary 32 Residents, 10 Residents & Businesses, 11 Businesses and 3 Bus Passengers responded to the questionnaire.

40 respondents approved of the larger sized buses. 16 respondents disagreed with the larger sized buses.

The main issues against the proposals raised by residents were:

1. Hold ups/grid lock in Cockington Lane & vehicles being damaged
2. Larger buses are too big for the lanes and take up too much space
3. Buses not in keeping with village
4. Speed limit needs introducing
5. Buses are noisy
6. Families will not revert to the bus and will still use their cars
7. Accepting larger vehicles is a retrograde step in sustaining the valley as a valuable asset
8. Buses are often empty and the smaller buses are adequate
9. Residents parking required if parking restrictions introduced
10. One bus waits/turns in the square not commensurate with village image
11. Not enough passing areas for cars let alone buses

A6.3 Members at the last meeting of the Transport Working Party on the 16th August 2011 asked that Officers further consult with the Ward Partnership during their meeting in September. This consultation took place and subsequently the Ward Partnerships comments are as follows:

“The Traffic Order for larger buses was discussed and the Cockington Forum suggested that the buses are one way only, and are supportive of the buses not turning around in the middle of the village.

Regarding the No Parking All Year Round, the Cockington Forum supported this, but felt that there should be residents parking for Rosery Grange.

The Cockington Forum had discussed additional parking areas on the road from Old Mill Road into the village where parking could be included in the wider areas of the road. This requires further discussion about the areas, and is due to be circulated to the group.”

A7. Are there any implications for other Business Units?

A7.1 Torbay Development Agency – as the failure to provide the bus service to Cockington Court for the craft businesses will affect their travel plan and ultimately some potential customers will not be able to access this area.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Consultation Part One

Appendix 2 Consultation Part Two

Consultation results from the Ward Partnership.

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

None