

Appeals & Complaints Committee

A meeting of Appeals & Complaints Committee was held on Thursday, 6th September, 2007.

Present: Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey

Officers: J. Butcher, S.Ahmed, M. Henderson (LD) D. Lynch, M. Gillson (DNS)

Also in attendance: Councillor K. Lupton, Councillor T. Laing (Ward Councillors), Mr and Mrs McGuckin, Mr and Mrs Cliff, Mr Lindo, Mr and Mrs Heald, L. Randall, Mr Burdon, Mrs K. Morrison, Mr A Morrison, Mr Andrew Morrisson, Mrs J. Morrisson, Mr and Mrs Symons, Mr B.A. Morrison, Mr I. Wallis, Rev J. Thomas, Rev K. Jobson, Mr Blackburn, Mr Wattis and Mr Burrell

Apologies: Councillors Baker, Dalgarno, Larkin, and Javed.

ACC 1/07 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

ACC 2/07 **Appeals and Complaints Procedure**

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman allowed parties present 15 minutes to consider information submitted by supporters of the proposed Order.

All those present were informed of the procedure for the meetings of the Appeals and Complaints Committee.

RESOLVED that the procedure be noted.

ACC 3/07 **Green's Lane, Hartburn - Proposed 24 Hour Waiting Restrictions**

The Committee initially considered a report and introduction by an officer from the Council's Technical Services.

Members noted that, at the Planning Committee meeting on 21 February 2007, a planning application for a residential development at nos. 69/71 Green's Lane, was approved. The Head of Technical Services had no significant road safety/traffic management concerns with respect to the proposed development. As part of the approval of this application, a planning condition was attached requiring the implementation of a traffic regulation Order to ensure an unobstructed visibility splay of 4.5m x 90m from the proposed access before development commenced.

The requirement for 24 hour waiting restrictions, on Green's Lane, between Adelaide Grove and Green's Beck Grove was confirmed by a Stockton Officers' Traffic Group meeting on 21 March and the proposal was subsequently approved by the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport. Members were provided with a location plan.

It was explained that 55 objections and a 17 name petition had been received by the Council following statutory advertising of the proposed restrictions.

Members were provided with a summary of the objections, together with a response from the Head of Technical Services. Ward Councillors comments were also provided.

The officer indicated that many of the objections related to road safety including concerns that removal of on street parking would increase vehicular speeds. He explained that the introduction of the Order shouldn't cause any road safety concerns. Green's Lane had no history of accidents and the school crossing patrol had confirmed that speed was not an issue. Visibility would be improved with the removal of the parked cars.

It was explained that the proposals would remove on street parking for around 15 vehicles and it was anticipated that the effect of migration of parental parking was unlikely to be significant, however this would be monitored as would traffic speeds on Green's Lane.

The Officer suggested that the benefits of the proposed Order i.e improved visibility between drivers, pedestrians and the School Crossing Patrol, plus the potential that the restrictions may encourage more sustainable methods of travel to and from school, outweighed any possible problems.

The Officer considered that the Order would aid access and egress to the site at 69/71 Green's Lane and improve safety.

The Committee was reminded that its role was to determine whether the reasons for objections to the Traffic Order outweighed the benefits of its introduction

Objectors were given the opportunity of presenting their case to the Committee and made the following points:-

- Congestion in the area caused by church and parental parking on mornings and afternoons would become worse if the restrictions were introduced.
- Green's Lane could support parking each side of the road, however displaced parking, caused by the proposed restriction, would move to streets that were not sufficiently wide enough to accommodate them. This was likely to cause significant traffic problems at school drop off and pick up times and exacerbate dangers to children
- Cars parked on Green's Lane had a positive affect in terms of reducing the speed of vehicles using it.
- Parking for residents of Green's Lane and visitors would be lost for the whole day if the restriction was introduced.
- 65% of the children, at the local school, came from outside the catchment area and those parents often had no choice but to drive. This resulted in

upwards of 150 cars arriving at the same time in the area around the school. The restrictions would increase congestion.

- Cars parked in the Methodist Church car park, and caused problems. This would get worse if the Order was introduced.

- Enforcement of the Order was likely to be limited and would be flouted.

Supporters of the proposed Order were given the opportunity of addressing the Committee and made the following points about the proposal:-

- It would help alleviate congestion

- it would improve road safety and access for Emergency Services.

- Parent's behaviour in parking outside schools needed to change and the proposal would assist in this.

All parties were given the opportunity of asking questions relating to the representations.

In conclusion, the officer from the Council's Technical Services Section summed up and responded to some of the issues raised. He reiterated the reasons for the Order and explained that the Car Park Manager had indicated to him that enforcement of the proposed Order would take place, and that wardens would have a high profile in the area. Monitoring of congestion and safety issues would be undertaken by the school, as part of its travel plan, and by the Council. Monitoring of traffic speed would be undertaken and the school crossing patrol would report any problems.

At this point the Committee confirmed that it felt it had gathered sufficient information and requested all parties, other than officers from Law and Democracy, to leave the meeting room in order to come to a decision.

Members were mindful of its remit to consider whether the objections outweighed the reasons for making the Order.

Members noted that the Council's Head of Technical Services considered the Order to be necessary to improve sightlines from the development site at 69/71 Green's Lane and consequently protect the safety of traffic leaving the site and the safety of the highway users. The Committee considered the representations made by objectors and the responses by officers and, on balance, agreed that the traffic order was necessary.

The Committee sympathised with some of the objections to the Order but did not consider that they were sufficient to outweigh the need for it. The Committee considered that adequate monitoring and review of any problems arising from the making of the Order should ensure that those problems would be mitigated.

The Committee agreed to recommend that the Order be implemented and the Head of Technical Services be requested to review the impact of the order six months after completion of the development in Green's Lane and report to those

members of the Committee present.

RESOLVED that

1. the Head of Technical Services be recommended not to uphold the objections and to implement the Order.
2. the Head of Technical Services be recommended to review the impact of the Order 6 months after the completion of the development at Green's Lane and report to those members of the Committee present.