

Agenda Item No: 7
Report To: JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Date: 11TH DECEMBER 2007
Report Title: Lorry Parking – Orbital Park
Report Author: Engineering Services Manager – Ray Wilkinson



Summary:	The report is the result of potential options that Members wished to see investigated to resolve the lorry parking issues on Orbital Park
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards:

Recommendations: The Joint Transportation Board be asked to:-

Note this update report and endorse the actions proposed.

Policy Overview:

Financial Implications: Yes – Existing resources, both staff and funding, are already fully committed. Any further work would require additional funding or Members' agreement to defer one or more previously agreed schemes or projects.

Risk Assessment Not at this stage

Other Material Implications:

Background Papers: Previous reports

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Purpose of the Report

1. This update report is as a result of a request from JTB Members to investigate three specific options on dealing with the lorry parking problem on Orbital Park.

Issue to be Decided

2. Which of the three options (if any) Members would wish to pursue. They are:
 - (i) Extending yellow lines
 - (ii) Imposing a weight restriction on roads into Orbital Park
 - (iii) Clamping or removing lorries

Background

3. Members of the JTB agreed, at their meeting on 18th September this year, that officers should investigate the potential of three of the five possible options outlined in the scoping report to address the problems caused by lorry parking on Orbital Park. (The main problems are those of hygiene, increasing numbers of vehicle crimes and road safety for all Orbital Park road users).

The three options are as listed above under 'issue to be decided'; the other two (placement of blocks and a physical width or height restriction) were not considered feasible on either resources or cost grounds. This report is the result of further investigations into the implications and success (or otherwise) of pursuing any of those options.

Risk Assessment

4. No formal risk assessment has been undertaken at this stage, and it will need to be done when Members decide the way forward. It is, however, important that everyone involved knows that there is a general level of risk in 'both directions' on any solution for lorry parking on Orbital Park ... and that is the risk of not providing a solution may well be outweighed by actually providing one. In other words, if there is a successful solution that prevents lorries from parking on Orbital Park, it may well simply move the problem elsewhere, and it is important that any future risk assessment on a particular solution takes this into account. Although the problem on Orbital Park is, indeed, a real problem, the result of moving the problem elsewhere could increase the detriment to people in more residential areas.

Options Considered

5. (i) Extension of yellow lines. As Members heard at the last JTB, painting double yellow lines down both sides of every affected road on Orbital Park would not only restrict night time parking, but would also remove day time parking too. This option is not popular with the traders based on Orbital Park who rely on the road space for customer parking.

As part of the Traffic Management Act, due to come into force in March 2008, we are required to survey all existing lines and signs that are included in the current Traffic Regulation Orders. This work is currently underway and will include the Orbital Park.

When the original consultation took place regarding parking restrictions in that area, objections were raised to any 'blanket provision' of double yellow lines. As advised at the previous JTB, however, double yellow lines could be painted on bends and either side of access ways to protect visibility splays. This would contribute to road safety, although it would not prevent lorries parking 'after hours' and at weekends. There has been some indication that not all traders are likely to support extensions to the existing restrictions due to the potential effect on their businesses; notwithstanding this, we suggest that officers prepare a scheme, irrespective of any other initiatives that may be pursued, and set the process in motion.

5.(ii) Weight restrictions on roads into Orbital Park. In the previous report it was suggested that a weight restriction could be implemented on the roads into Orbital Park. This would make it illegal for vehicles to enter Orbital Park unless they had to deliver or collect goods from businesses within the restricted area.

After further investigation this option is not as feasible as first envisaged. If the approach roads to Orbital Park were subject to a weight restriction this would prevent Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from using The Boulevard and Crowbridge Road to gain legitimate access to Newtown Road and the area beyond.

The only direction that HGVs would be able to gain legitimate access to Newtown for deliveries and servicing would be via Boys Hall Road / Church Road which is not an acceptable route. HGVs can not access Newtown via Romney Marsh Road because of the low bridge which has an existing weight restriction which will remain even after the proposed improvements.

The only way to overcome this would be to include all the roads in Newtown in the restricted zone but this would make enforcement extremely difficult and ineffective.

The enforcement of weight restrictions is the responsibility of the Police, who would require resources to check vehicle documentation for a substantial period of the evening/night. It is unlikely that the Police would be able to commit adequate resources to continually enforce the restriction and it would therefore be open to abuse. When implementing restrictions of this kind the Police would normally request they are made self enforcing by physical measures. The implementation of physical measures to restrict access was ruled out at the last Joint Transportation Board. We are not, therefore, recommending the implementation of any weight restrictions on Orbital Park.

5.(iii) Clamping/Removal of Lorries.

As detailed at the last JTB, the Traffic Management Act, due to come into force in March next year, will introduce more stringent guidelines relating to clamping and removal. Although we already know that enforcement action (in terms of clamping or removal) will be able to be taken against repeat offenders, training on the implementation and implications of the TMA is being undertaken currently and, until the outcomes of this are known, there is little to update on this option at this time.

We are continuing, however, to work with our neighbouring authorities and, when the possibilities are clearer, we shall also need to work with the Police as their co-operation will be vital if we do pursue this enforcement regime.

We hope to be able to give more information to the next JTB.

Conclusion

6. From the three options, then, one of them will not be possible to pursue – i.e. that of implementing a weight restriction on the roads into Orbital Park.

As far as the first option is concerned – extending the yellow lines – the base work for this is already being done (as it has to be undertaken as part of the TMA) and we would suggest that this is an initiative that would help to alleviate some of the safety concerns of Members and the public alike.

On the issue of clamping, officers will continue to investigate this with neighbouring authorities and the Police and we would suggest that we report back to the JTB with further advice once more definite implications of the TMA are known.

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