

Horsley Lane, Peckforton

Feasibility report on the introduction of Parking Restrictions

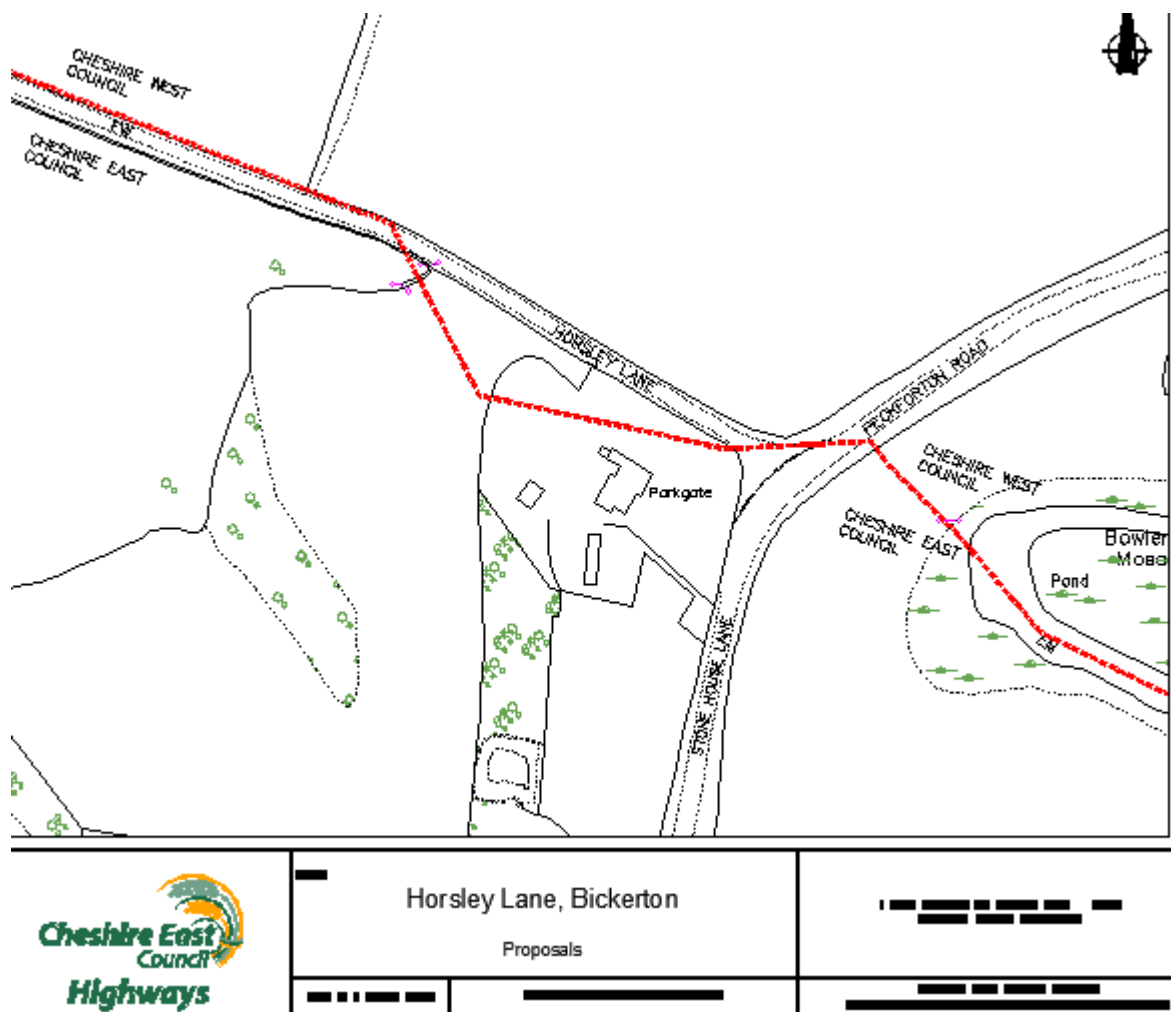
1. INTRODUCTION

Cheshire East Highways have been requested to evaluate and assess whether current parking conditions justify the introduction of waiting restrictions on Horsley Lane at its junction with Stonehouse Lane/Peckforton Road.

Horsley Lane is a narrow rural road (approximately 4.3 metres wide) with verges either side but no footways which joins Stone House Lane/Peckforton Road at a fairly wide bell mouth junction. Horsley Lane is relatively lightly trafficked although it provides access to 12 residential properties, connects to the Sandstone walking trail a popular walking route and is used as a route to transport farm machinery.

There have been complaints that especially on weekends and during the past 12 months (Due to the Covid-19 situation) that vehicles are parking in the bell mouth junction, which can cause access problems into Horsley Lane for both vehicles and also pedestrians and horse riders.

Figure 1.1: Site Location



As can be seen from the above location plan, the junction is located on the boundary between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West Council. This means that any measures which are to be proposed by Cheshire East would need to be agreed and co-ordinated with Cheshire West Council.

2. SITE SURVEYS/OBSERVATIONS

To determine the extent of the problems caused by parked vehicles in this area and the appropriateness and potential effectiveness of introducing parking restrictions, a number of site surveys have been undertaken including at the weekend when the problems are reported to be at their worst with people visiting to go on walks especially along the Sandstone trail

The site surveys and photographs received from local residents showed that there was parking in the bell mouth area of this junction, and also there were instances of sporadic parking on the verges of Stone House Lane and Peckforton Road close to the junction.

It should be noted that the situation has become worse during the last year during the Covid-19 pandemic, with many leisure facilities being closed many more people have visited the area to go walking.

3. OPTIONS

Following consideration of the comments received and the site surveys/observations the following options are available:

Option 1 – Do nothing/remain as existing

It is accepted that vehicles do sometimes park in a manner which can restrict access, especially for larger vehicles negotiating the junction and turning into the narrow length of Horsley Lane. However, given the fairly wide nature of this bell mouth junction, it is possible for vehicles to park in the bell mouth without causing access problems for vehicles turning in and out of the junction. Also if waiting restrictions were introduced to prevent parking at the junction, then this could lead to parking occurring in other nearby areas, which could be a worse than the current situation.

The disadvantage of doing nothing, is that there are instances when vehicles do park in a way which causes access problems for vehicles turning into Horsley Lane, and the parking can also make access more difficult for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

An important consideration is that, the situation has been much worse during the Covid-19 pandemic as there has been an increase in people visiting rural locations to walk/cycle due to pubs/shops/entertainment venues being closed. It may well be that as things improve and more facilities re-open, there will be less visitors to the area, and therefore the parking problems won't be as bad.

Option 2 – Introduce waiting restrictions

The introduction of waiting restrictions at the junction would help remove the parking, some of which can be obstrutive and hence improve access and road safety for vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists and horse riders .

However, there are significant disadvantages to introducing waiting restrictions which are as follows:

Proposed waiting restrictions would likely transfer parking to other nearby locations, such as on the verges of and on Stone House Lane and Peckforton Road. This could cause worse access and safety problems than currently occur, on roads with more and faster traffic, and could also lead to significant damage to verges. Whilst the current parking can sometimes cause some access problems, the junction mouth is very wide and the majority of parking does not cause significant problems.

Also Cheshire West have indicated in preliminary discussions that they would not support waiting restrictions at this locations which borders both authorities.

It should be noted that this junction is located in a rural location, it is unlikely that would be the same level of enforcement for waiting restrictions as happens for instance in an urban area, due to the additional time required to travel to an isolated site.

Option 3 – Consider other measures to regulate parking at the junction – Lining/Signing

An alternative option could be to design a scheme which would allow some parking at this junction at the widest points of the bell mouth but discourages parking which could potentially cause obstruction where for instance the narrow section of Horsley Lane commences. These measures would also take into consideration access for pedestrians, Cyclists and horse riders. This option would also be relatively inexpensive as it would not require the provision of a Traffic regulation order (TRO), which is generally costly and time consuming

Disadvantages with this option would be that, the layout (Road markings) would be advisory and hence unenforceable, and it could encourage parking in the area. However, this would be a relatively inexpensive measure and could be removed or altered at relative low expense if it did not work effectively.

4. RECOMMENDATION

It is Cheshire East Highways recommendation to take no further action at this stage, given the significant problems with introducing waiting restrictions, and also with Covid-19 restrictions easing and leisure facilities re-opening, it is hoped that there will be less problematic parking at this junction and hence no measures will be required.