

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

**TAXI RANK, EVESHAM ROAD - OBJECTIONS**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Juliet Brunner, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services
Relevant Head of Service	Steve Jorden, Head of Regulatory Services
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

Further to minute 8 of the Committee's 3rd June 2010 meeting and minute 25 of the Committee's 25th January 2010 meeting, to site an additional and an alternative rank on Evesham Road, Headless Cross with an increase of 6/7 rank spaces, the Committee is asked to consider objections received to the proposals following the publication of the statutory notice as required by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked, in light of the objections received during the consultation process for an additional and alternative ranks on Evesham Road, Headless Cross, to RESOLVE that**

**1) the Committee's decision of the 25th January 2010 be confirmed and the additional and alternative ranks be approved;**

**OR**

**2) amend the decision.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 At it's meeting on the 25th January 2010 the Licensing Committee approved the provision of an additional Hackney Carriage rank for 6/7 spaces outside Steps Bistro and to re-site the current provision of 3 spaces situated outside the White Hart on the pavement; to the roadside opposite the White Hart public house.

3.2 The licensed premises on Evesham Road have a thriving night time economy and the lack of rank spaces has been a problem and has helped

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

---

- to create congestion issues which are un-enforceable under the current rank arrangements.
- 3.3 A site visit was undertaken with the Leader of the Council, West Mercia Police and the Licensing Manager to discuss the issues and try to find a solution to the problems.
- 3.4 The allocation of a proper rank outside Steps night club and the moving of the rank off the pavement and onto the road opposite the White Heart where the bus stop is situated were felt to be a part solution to the problems.
- 3.5 The siting of the new ranks will be in opposite directions and at bus stops which are not used between the hours of 8pm and 6am.
- 3.6 The Highways Authority will cover the cost of any required amendments to the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's).
- 3.7 The Highways Authority have to apply to the Department for Transport for special authorisation to have bus/taxi & taxi/loading facilities sharing the same carriageway space, as these are non standard arrangements. This shouldn't pose a problem but the Highways Authority needs to do this before the start of formal consultation on the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) from their side.
- 3.8 When the Highways Authority have resolved this issue they will forward the relevant information to the Local Authority to enable the advertisement of the new ranks. This is expected to be early in this new financial year.
- 3.9 It is expected that there will be 6/7 rank spaces available outside steps night club and 3 spaces opposite the White Heart. This will be an increase of 6 to 7 spaces on the current arrangements.
- 3.10 West Mercia Police alongside Civil Parking Enforcement Officers and Licensing Officers can then enforce the appropriate legislation which in turn may help the heavily congested areas.
- 3.11 The Redditch Taxi Association, Highways Agency, West Mercia Traffic Police and West Mercia Police Officers (beat officer) have been consulted on this proposal between 1st October 2009 and 31st December 2009 and are in agreement with the suggestions.

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

---

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 This matter was put before the Licensing Committee on 3rd June 2010 where the Committee decided that:-
- a) a decision on the proposals be deferred pending a late night site visit on 18th or 25th June 2010;
  - b) Officers investigate the possible utilisation of local business parking at night for taxis; and
  - c) Officers clarify Police information regarding the proposals and invite a representative to attend the meeting on 19th July 2010.
- 4.2 West Mercia Police are re-considering their position on the proposals and have confirmed that position in writing; this can be found at Appendix 2.
- 4.3 A site meeting will be undertaken on the 25th June 2010 at 11pm; any feedback from this site visit will be reported to the meeting on the 19th July 2010.
- 4.4 A Ward Councillor has withdrawn her support for these proposals and raises the following points:
- a) There are 30-40 taxis in the area on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, we would only be increasing rank space by 6 bays. Therefore for most of the evening there would be 30 plus vehicles parked in exactly the same places as at present or cruising up and down the road waiting for a taxi rank space to become available.
  - b) There is a big parking problem in this area already as the Dog and Pheasant has no parking, our own sheltered scheme has parking for residents only and that is already over subscribed. Local residents fronting onto that part of Evesham Road have no garages or drives and it is obviously an issue for some of the shops, particularly the hair dresser. At the moment the situation is not ideal but they are able to park on the road.
- and suggests:
- c) That the rank could be replaced by a bay but it would require the Borough, the Police and the County Council to agree.

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

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- 4.5 Further consultation with the Highways Authority has been conducted and their response is as follows:
- 4.6 The intention of the proposal from a traffic management/road safety perspective is to remove the inappropriate taxi rank from the footway, which is deemed a safety hazard. The loss of this facility would be offset by the utilisation of the bus stop clearway areas for taxis during the evening and also the additional provision of taxi facilities outside Steps public house. There will actually be a net increase in taxi ranks spaces available, which will help to formalise taxi parking and therefore minimise indiscriminate parking which currently takes place.
- 4.7 Regardless of these proposals going forward, we are obliged to remove the unofficial marking from the pavement area, and we would encourage Redditch Borough Council to remove any formal Hackney Carriage Stand Order that may exist.
- 4.8 We wouldn't support the general principle of a lay-by when facilities can be accommodated within existing highway arrangements as proposed. I would also say that a lay-by at this location would leave a substandard footway width and interfere with visibility from the pub accesses".
- 4.9 The Redditch Taxi Association have responded to this consultation stating that they feel the implementation of these new and revised ranks would improve the congestion problems and that noise and anti social behaviour problems would increase if no rank provision in that area was provided.
- 4.10 Following the publication of the statutory notice objections have been received; these are available as background papers and the results of which are reported below:

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

REASON	NUMBER OF OBJECTIONS		
	PETITION 1	PETITION 2	LETTERS OF OBJECTION
Parking spaces needed for staff and customers	35		1
Resident and visitor parking needs	14	11	11
Unspecified parking needs	19	2	
Window cleaning	1		
Noise	9	1	
No requirement for change	4	1	
No taxis	13		
No parking	17		
Dangerous		5	
Blocking the church		1	
Taxis obstructing access and parking on double yellow lines		1	1
Too many taxis		2	
Taxis turning in driveway		1	
Road congestion		4	
Nuisance		1	
Not discussed		1	
Vomit, urine and damage to business premises			2

4.10 A letter has been received supporting the new ranks stating that taxis take away drunks from area and this alleviates anti-social behaviour incidents.

4.11 A map of the proposals can be found at Appendix 1

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

---

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost of installing new ranks by the County Council Highways Department, to include any necessary signs, road markings and road works is £1500. This cost is an estimate by the County Council and has not been included in the current year's budget. However, in consultation with finance the money can be found from the existing budget.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Under Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Borough Council may from time to time appoint stands (ranks) for Hackney Carriage for the whole or any part of a day in any highway in the district which is maintainable at the public expense and, with the consent of the owner, on any land in the district which does not form part of a highway so maintainable and may from time to time vary the number of Hackney Carriages permitted to be at each stand.
- 6.2 Before appointing any stand or varying the numbers to be at each stand, the Council is required to notify the Police for the areas in which the stands will be situated.
- 6.3 The Council is required to give public notice of the proposals by advertising in at least 1 local newspaper and take into consideration any objections or representations in respect of such proposals which may be made to them in writing within 28 days of the first publication of the notice.
- 6.4 A District Council may not appoint a stand:
- a) So as unreasonably to prevent access to any premises;
  - b) So as to impeded the use of bus stops, or in such a position to interfere with access to any station or depot of any passenger road transport operations, except with the consent of those operators;
  - c) On any highway except with the consent of the Highways Authority.
- 6.5 It is necessary for ranks to be signed and the road marked out accordingly.

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

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**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

See legal implications

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

This item links with the Council Priority – Safe

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY  
CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 The current provision of rank space on Evesham Road is for three spaces. This rank is situated on a pavement close to a licensed premise “The White Heart”. There is some doubt as to the legalities of this rank; the problem of encouragement by the Local Authorities of Hackney Carriages parking on the narrow pavement and issues around enforcement for both the Local Authority, Civil Parking Enforcement Officers and West Mercia Police.

9.2 There is also major traffic congestion on Evesham Road especially during the evening with Hackney Carriages and privately owned vehicles parking both sides of the road. This new proposal will help legalise Hackney Carriages ranking up on Evesham Road and enable responsible authorities to enforce the new order, discourage Hackney Carriages parking on pavements and reduce the risk of accidents and road blockages.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

None

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET  
MANAGEMENT**

None

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

---

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

The provision of the additional rank and the alternative rank could have a possible impact on carbon emissions if enforced as it may cut down on the congestion issues and the number of vehicles in that location at any one time.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

None

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF  
CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

Provision of the new ranks will improve the safety of residents and users of the licensed premises by reducing to a minimum the walking distance of those enjoying the night time economy of Evesham Road whilst also having, if enforced, a reduction impact on the congestion within the area.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

18.1 The area of Evesham Road has a vibrant night time economy and is densely populated. There are a number of licensed premises in the area which are very popular. The current provision of 3 rank spaces has proved to be inadequate for the area and has had an adverse impact; Hackney Carriages, when the rank is full are currently parking half on and half off the pavements, u – turning in the street and generally adding to the already heavily congested areas. At the closing time of these licensed premises the area becomes extremely busy and it is essential to get these visitors away from the area safely and as quickly as possible to help reduce any noise, litter and other related issues.

18.2 The provision of two ranks each facing opposite directions will cut down on u-turns; provide adequate transport for visitors leaving the area and help ease the congestion problems.



## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# LICENSING COMMITTEE

19th July 2010

### 19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 19.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers.
- 19.2 Other consultees were Redditch Taxi Association; West Mercia Traffic Police, West Mercia Police, the Ward Councillor and Leader of the Council and the Highways Agency.

### 20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	yes
Chief Executive	yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	no

### 21. WARDS AFFECTED

The Wards of Headless Cross and Crabbs Cross are affected by this report.

### 22. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Map of Evesham Road showing new rank details.  
Appendix 2 - Letter from West Mercia Police.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**19th July 2010**

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**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous report  
Details of previous rank allocation on Evesham Road.  
Emails from Highways Authority  
Email from Redditch Taxi Association

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