

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 6 MARCH 2007

CUMNOCK PARKING STRATEGY UPDATE

Report by the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purposes of this report are to: -

- a) Inform the Committee about the work being carried out to develop a parking strategy for Cumnock town centre; and
- b) Seek the approval of the Committee for issues that will be the subject of local consultations

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 There has been a longstanding concern that car parking provision in Cumnock is insufficient for the current retail and business activities within the town centre. Given the proposed redevelopment of the town centre, parking would need to be enhanced to cater for any enlargement of the retail or office space in the town centre.

2.2 In 2004, a parking study was undertaken to establish the existing parking patterns in the town centre, both on and off-street, and to make recommendations on an initial parking strategy for the town centre. The surveys confirmed that a number of car parks in the town centre, which are located close to shops and other local businesses are very attractive for short-stay parking. The majority of parking in these car parks is for less than one hour and the car parks are either full or close to capacity for significant periods of the day. However, a significant number of spaces in these car parks are occupied by long stay parking thus restricting access to the town centre for shopping and business use.

2.3 The 2004 study recommended that the Ayr Road, Townhead Street, and Tanyard Car Parks should be designated as short stay car parks. This would remove the long stay parking and provide more opportunities for short-stay parking to meet the needs of shops and businesses.

2.4 At its meeting of 14 November 2006 the Committee agreed that the Head of Roads & Transportation appoint consultants to take forward the parking strategy proposals. The Transportation Consultants, JMP, have now been appointed and their work has confirmed the findings of the earlier study. JMP are now formulating a detailed parking strategy for Cumnock which will be the subject of a future report to the Committee.

3. ISSUES

3.1 While the majority of parking in the town centre can be classified as short stay there is also a demand, for long-stay parking of more than 4 hours within the off-street town centre car parks.

- 3.2** There is a significant amount of long-stay parking in the central car parks at Ayr Road, Townhead Street, and Tanyard which reduces the number of spaces available for short-stay parking. This impacts on accessibility to the town centre by leaving fewer spaces for shopping and business purposes.
- 3.3** The lack of short-stay parking opportunities in these town centre car parks is further highlighted by the recently surveys showing that there has been an increase in on-street parking in areas which now operate at or beyond their optimum capacity.
- 3.4** While it is not yet a significant issue the overcapacity of off and on street parking has resulted in an increase in illegal parking within the town centre.
- 3.5** Any future parking strategy will require effective enforcement to ensure a turnover of spaces and compliance with the restrictions.

4. PROPOSED CONSULTATION

- 4.1** The current study will bring forward a summary of the issues and potential solutions that will require to be the subject of local consultations. The main issues for consideration are set out below.
- a) Designation of three short-stay car parks at Ayr Road, Townhead Street, and The Tanyard. This would remove the long stay parking and provide more opportunities for short-stay parking to meet the needs of shops and businesses.
 - b) The duration of short stay parking.
 - c) The identification of public car parks, for long-stay parking.
 - d) The consideration of complementary parking controls in residential streets surrounding the town centre to minimise the displacement of the town centre parking and the need for a residents' parking scheme.
 - e) The need to improve traffic signage to complement any short stay/long stay parking strategy. This will include defining a route round all the available car parks. Consideration will be given to a system of strategically sited Variable Message Signs to indicate to drivers the availability of spaces in the car parks and direct them to the spaces, cutting down traffic circulation and consequently improving road safety and the environment.
- 4.2** It is anticipated that the public consultations will be carried out in the Spring. The responses will be the subject of a future report to the Committee.
- 4.3** In addition to the informal consultation proposed in 4.2 above, it will be necessary to promote a Traffic Regulation Order which will be the subject of statutory consultations, before new parking regulations can be introduced. A timetable for the Order process will be reported to a future Committee when JMP have developed the proposed strategy.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** Any changes to the parking controls would require the successful promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The cost of developing and implementing the strategy will be met through prudential borrowing as detailed in the Roads Division Budgets paper, also submitted to this Committee.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The strategy will be consistent with the Local Plan and Local Transport Strategy which seek to give priority to maintaining an adequate supply of short stay parking which is recognised as being essential to maintaining accessibility and vitality in town centres.

8. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** The Cumnock parking strategy will increase the availability of convenient short-stay parking, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of the town centre for shopping and business use and contributing to Improving Opportunities and Community Safety.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1** It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Notes that transportation consultants have been commissioned to develop a proposed parking strategy for Cumnock town centre; and
- b) agrees to the main issues as set out in paragraph 4.1 above, which will be the subject of public consultation.

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08 February 2007
KC/YK

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

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