

Report to Leighton -Linslade Partnership Committee

Subject Relocation of the taxi rank

Date of Meeting 7. September 2017

1. Recommendations

- 1) To note the report and progress to relocate the taxi rank to support the market experience.
- 2) Endorse relocation to the opposite side of the High Street on a temporary / pilot basis from the date of the relaunch of the market.
- 3) Endorse ongoing work to determine an alternative location for the taxi rank subject to a) public and stakeholder consultation b) funding.

2. Introduction

Following discussion at the Partnership Committee meeting held on 22 June a meeting took place on 20 July to explore options for a relocation of the taxi rank to support the new arrangements for the Market as part of the Market Town Regeneration programme. Those present at the meeting are listed below.

Cllr Dalgarno	CBC Executive Member for Community Services
Cllr Brian Spurr	CBC Executive Member for Health
Cllr Tony Morris	LLTC Member and Vice Chairman of L-L Partnership Committee
Su Childerhouse	CBC Head of Public Protection & Transport
Steve Lakin	CBC Principal Highways Officer
Vivien Cannon	LLTC Head of Cultural and Economic Services
Sarah Hughes	CBC Community Engagement Manager
Apologies	
Marc Howard	CBC Regeneration Manager

3. Background

Cllr Spurr described the history associated to the request to move the taxi rank from its current location in the High Street. This has over a period of 2 years included consideration of a number of alternative locations including:

- Mill Street
- Turning Circle (behind Iceland / Poundland)

- Duncombe Drive
- Lake Street

The imminent reconfiguration and relaunch of the Market, which is funded by Market Town Regeneration scheme, is a key driver to the relocation of the taxis.

a) Options – Temporary arrangement to support Market Days

The location option considered viable on market days is to relocate the taxi rank to the opposite side of the road, thereby enabling an improved market layout.

Currently, the bays on the south side of the road are covered by a Traffic Regulation Order that imposes a 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction on Tue and Sat between 6 am and 6pm and allows Goods Vehicle Loading on Mon, Wed, Thursday and Fri between 8am and 6pm. Advice received previously is that the suspension of the No Waiting at Any Time restriction to allow the rank to operate from here on Tue and Sat could be trialled using an experimental order. Such orders are typically reviewed after 6 month of operation.

Note:1 the Traffic Signs and General Directions Regulations (TRSGB) does not permit a shared arrangement whereby a taxi rank and loading bay operate simultaneously in the same space. Therefore, the taxis would need to switch back on non-market days, assuming the loading bays are required.

Note 2: Taxis would be expected to load from the footway. Hence, the parking direction of the rank would change, necessitating a U-turn to exit the High Street. The market layout should accommodate this.

b) Option : Longer term /permanent.

Lake Street - The parking bays outside of Perfect Parties on Lake Street has sufficient kerb side parking for six taxis, a 50% increase on current provision and therefore beneficial to the trade.

It is proposed that this area is reconfigured to operate as short term parking during the day (as at present) and as a taxi rank during the evenings. Such an arrangement would require a new traffic regulation order, a process that typically takes 6 months to complete.

Note 3: Taxis would be expected to load from the footway. Hence, the parking direction of the rank would need to reflect this, necessitating a U-turn manoeuvre when taxis are joining the rank.

Turning Circle beside MSCP – this option is the preferred option by LLTC, however there are constraints due to the shape of the area and its use as a turning circle for delivery vehicles (Iceland, Poundland and Boots) at various times of the day.

Furthermore the multiple accesses off the service road severely constrain the useable space for a rank where passengers load from the footpath (i.e. vehicles join and leave in a clockwise direction). To make this area work would most likely require use of the existing semi-circular parking area to the east of the multi-storey car park for taxis queuing to join the rank, with the loss of 7 parking spaces.

While the turning circle is owned by CBC it is not part of the public highway. It is covered by a 'No Waiting at Any Time' restriction introduced by way of an off-street parking places order. The advice received is that this order could be amended to allow for the operation of a daytime taxi rank.

Location	Time	When
Lake Street	6pm – 10am	Market Days – Tues and Sat
Turning Circle	10am – 6pm	Market Days – Tues and Sat

The options not considered viable were:

- Mill street because of the potential loss of parking spaces and
- Duncombe Drive because of its inclusion in the land south of the high street regeneration scheme.

The meeting, which included a site visit, felt that Lake Street had the greatest potential to become a permanent solution.

Before any works are undertaken a twenty eight day consultation must be undertaken by Licensing with the taxi trade and local businesses. If any valid objections are received which cannot be resolved the changes proposed cannot be implemented.

4 Pre scheme works

The following works were identified as needed in order to deliver a longer term solution.

Location	Works	Communication / Consultation	Cost
Lake Street	Dedicate use of parking area as a taxi rank for specified hours (TRO and signage)	28 day with the trade, local businesses and key stakeholders. New Traffic Regulation Order involving 28 public consultation with any objections resolved at Traffic Management Meeting	£500 consultation incl. public notice
Turning circle	Alleyway lighting and CCTV Bollards or other	28 day with the trade, local businesses and key stakeholders	

	method to block vehicular access Bay markings Signage	Amendment to Off-Street Parking Places order	
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5. Timescale

The relaunch of the market is expected to be 23 September 2017 subject to approval from the Town Council. Any temporary scheme needs to be in place by then.

A permanent scheme could be put in place within 6 months subject to the outcome of a statutory consultation.

6. Approval and Costings

Costings are needed for:

- TROs and associated consultation
- Streetworks, including signage
- CCTV / Surveillance

Should there be objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders these will be resolved at CBCs Traffic Management Meeting, typically scheduled on a bi-monthly basis.

7. Conclusion

In summary, the expedient solution to support the market relaunch is a temporary scheme whereby the taxi rank is switched to the other side of the High Street on markets days.

Longer term the preferred solution is to operate the rank from Lake Street (evenings).

LLTCs preferred (daytime) option for the rank to operate from the MSCP turning circle had been previously advertised but discounted because of an objection. However, it is hoped that the concern of this retailer can be ameliorated. Hence, the recommendation is to re-run the consultation and to cost the changes required to make a rank at this location acceptable to the various stakeholders.