

7. LICHFIELD LANES PARKING RESTRICTIONS AND OUTDOOR DINING DEVELOPMENTS

Officer responsible Transport and City Streets Manager	Author Peter Atkinson, DDI 941-8088
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to introduce interim changes to the existing parking restrictions in both Ash Street and Poplar Street to achieve a slow street; provide additional loading zones to cater for new business; and create two areas for outdoor dining.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Lichfield Lanes locality is an area that is just beginning to develop its own unique character as a specialised urban precinct in the central city. The "Lichfield Lanes" have the potential to become fully integrated a pedestrian-orientated area which will link High Street, Lichfield Street, Madras Street and Tuam Street, via a mixture of public streets and private rights of way. It is an area which will undergo a number of different stages as it develops into what could be a vibrant, diverse and unique range of retail, business and living activities.
3. This area has the potential to develop its own national character and to act as a tourist attraction. It is central to a wider area and will provide both a visual and an important pedestrian connection to the "SOL" development (South of Lichfield Lanes) centred on Struthers Lane and the "Urban Village" on the Turners and Growers site adjacent to Madras Street. These areas will all have their own individual character. The characters of these areas are evolving and are in the earlier stage of development. There will be various stages and there will need to be a commitment from the Council to ensure that in the long term their full potential and value to the city is realised.
4. The changes proposed in this report and illustrated in the attached diagram represent the next stage in the development of the Lichfield Lanes area and include measures to provide a greater focus on pedestrians, the provision of an appropriate road environment, changes to existing parking restrictions to accommodate new activities and the development of additional outdoor dining areas in Ash Street and Poplar Street.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

5. In accordance with the Council bylaws and under the provisions of the Local Government Act, a resolution of the Council is required to confirm the proposed parking restrictions and to determine that the proposed area of road space can be used for outdoor dining.
6. The costs associated with the changing of the existing parking restrictions are minor and there are identifiable funds set aside for the development of this area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council approve:

- (a) The creation of a loading zone on the northern side of Ash Street commencing at a point 10 metres measured in an easterly direction for the eastern boundary of Poplar Street and extending in an easterly direction for a distance of 8 metres.
- (b) The creation of a loading zone for goods service vehicles only on the southern side of Ash Street commencing at a point 50 metres measured in an easterly direction for the eastern boundary of Poplar Street and extending in an easterly direction for a distance of 12 metres.
- (c) The creation of a loading zone on the eastern side of Poplar Street commencing at a point 24 metres measured in a southerly direction from a point opposite the southern kerbline of Lichfield Street and extending in a southerly direction for a distance of 7 metres.
- (d) An adjustment to the P5 Loading zone (9 am to 5 pm) and Resident Vehicle Parking Only (5pm to 9am) on the western side of Poplar Street commencing at a point opposite the northern boundary of Tuam Street and extending in a northerly direction for a distance of 11 metres.

- (e) The creation of a 'no stopping at all times' parking restriction, at a new location which is to be used as access to an area for pedestrian access to High Street and for outdoor seating, on the western side of Poplar Street commencing at a point 59 metres measured in a northerly direction from the northern boundary of Tuam Street and extending in a northerly direction for a distance of 27 metres.
- (f) An adjustment to the P15 parking restriction on the western side of Poplar Street commencing at a point opposite the southern property boundary of Lichfield Street and extending in an southerly direction for a distance of 17 metres.
- (g) The creation of a 'Residents Vehicle Parking area' on the eastern side of Poplar Street commencing at a point 4 metres measured in an northerly direction from a point opposite the northern kerbline of Tuam Street and extending in a northerly direction for a distance of 15 metres.
- (h) The creation of a 'no stopping at all time' parking restriction on the western side of Poplar Street from a point opposite the northern kerbline of Tuam Street and extending in a northerly direction for a distance of 22 metres.
- (i) The creation of a 'no stopping at all time' parking restriction for an area to be used for outdoor seating on the southern side of Ash Street commencing a point opposite the eastern kerbline of Poplar Street and extending in a easterly direction for a distance of 20 metres.
- (j) That the existing parking restrictions in both Ash Street and Poplar Street in the above-described areas be deleted.
- (k) The new parking restrictions will become effective upon the erection of the new signs and or markings in the above described areas.

BACKGROUND ON LICHFIELD LANES

7. In the longer term the two principal local streets may become pedestrian malls similar to New Regent Street. During the interim period there will need to be a number of changes to reflect the growing nature of the surrounding development. The interim changes proposed for both Poplar Street and Ash Street are to reflect this changing character and to introduce measures to control vehicle speeds, reduce vehicular travel and provide for pedestrians. At present, there are no stopping restrictions down either one or both sides of these streets and it is proposed to utilise the location of some of the existing and new parking restrictions on different sides of the streets to provide a less direct route along these two streets. These changes are to make the street less attractive to use as a shortcut and may impact on the movement of some large vehicles. Developments proposed in the adjacent buildings will diminish the need to be serviced by larger vehicles.
8. In Poplar Street, the existing parking restrictions include residents' car parks, P15 spaces, P5 loading zones and no stopping restrictions. There are also two existing outdoor seating areas in this street; one in the street itself and the other located in the central courtyard area at the intersection with Ash Street. A further outdoor seating area is in the street adjacent to the walkway through to High Street. The other changes proposed in the street include an additional loading zone and changes to the location of the various parking controls.
9. The proposal would remove one resident's car park in the street. There is the potential to use/lease a park presently used by the Council in the Tuam Street car park (adjacent to Para Rubber) outside normal office hours. However, disadvantages of the use of this area are possible conflict with Council needs during normal business hours, and the limited life of the current site lease (about two years). Whilst there are also other alternatives, it should be recalled that in terms of policy in the Council Parking Strategy, resident parking is accorded a low priority in the central core area (only ahead of commuter parking) and is considered of a lesser importance to the demands of road safety and commercial activity.
10. Ash Street at present has extensive no stopping restrictions along its length and apart from two open areas located on the abutting properties, which are used for parking, unloading and loading activities. One of these areas is now proposed as an outdoor seating area. Two new loading zones are proposed; one loading zone is to service bar complex near to the proposed seating and the other mid block to service an adjacent building supplier and to act as a speed restraint.

OPTIONS

11. Alternative options for Ash Street and Poplar Street would include the creation of pedestrian malls, and other arrangements to the parking restrictions. However, the changes proposed best meet the present requirements of the owners and tenants of the adjacent buildings. For the pedestrian mall option to be realistic now, the character would need to significantly alter, with more redevelopment and more pedestrians being drawn to the locality. The principal difficulty with this option is that many of the buildings facing the street have yet to be renovated and new services laid. Construction activity will continue over a period and will be a dominant feature as the area is developing its unique sense of place in the central city. The 'do nothing option' is not an alternative as the whole character of the locality is evolving and considerable activity has already taken place which needs recognising and supporting.

PREFERRED OPTION AND CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING COUNCIL POLICIES

12. These measures proposed in this report are interim proposals as they are designed to accommodate recent changes and new proposals planned for next stage in the development of this special character area. They are consistent with the Council's objectives to revitalise the eastern part of the central city and are designed to add to the character of Christchurch.

VIEWS AND PREFERENCES OF PERSONS AFFECTED OR LIKELY TO HAVE AN INTEREST

13. These changes have been canvassed with representatives of all the adjacent business and the new proposals have the support of all the principal property owners and existing commercial tenants.