

**TM2/20/481- GARDNER ROAD/CLIFTON ROAD AND
GREENGATE LANE, PRESTWICH**

**COMMENTS ON THE OBJECTIONS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE
ADVERTISEMENT OF THE PROPOSALS**

Introduction:

An enquiry has been received from a member of the public regarding parking concerns on the junctions of Clifton Road with Gardner Road and Greengate Lane and Gardner Road.

Parking, especially front and side of number 2 Gardner Road can prevent vehicles that are emerging from Greengate Lane towards Clifton Road from being able to clear the southerly side of Gardner Road and reach the give-way lines on Gardner Road without potentially obstructing westerly bound traffic turning into Gardner Road from Clifton Road.

In view of the concerns it is proposed to introduce some waiting restrictions on the junctions of Greengate Lane and Gardner Road and Gardner Road and Clifton Road.

This report was circulated to the Traffic Management Unit members for 31 March 2020, the decision being to recommend the introduction of no waiting at any time restrictions to alleviate visibility, access and obstruction problems.

The advertised proposals (Bury Times 29 October 2020 edition) were as follows:-

Introduction of No Waiting at any time

Gardner Road, Prestwich	South side from the westerly kerbline of Greengate Lane for a distance of 12 metres in a westerly direction
	North side from the westerly kerbline of Clifton Road for a distance of 11 metres in a westerly direction
Greengate Lane, Prestwich	Westerly side from the southerly kerbline of Gardner Road for a distance of 23 metres in a southerly direction
Clifton Road, Prestwich	Westerly side from the northerly kerbline of Gardner Road for a distance of 8 metres in a north westerly direction

Objections:

Following the advertisement of the proposals the Council received 5 objections from residents.

These are as follows:

Objection ~ (1)

I am a resident of Greengate Lane and I am writing to submit my concerns with the proposed parking changes on Greengate Lane, Prestwich.

Whilst I am in agreement that parking on the corner of Greengate Lane/Gardner Road and Gardner Road/Clifton Road is not ideal and creating potentially dangerous situations, I believe the balance of the restrictions to be unfairly restricting parking on Greengate Lane. At present, the parking situation is limited but manageable and under the current proposals, we look set to lose 3-4 parking spots on Greengate Lane as opposed 1-2 on Gardner Road. I believe this to be unfair.

Due to the offices directly opposite 2-8 Greengate Lane, parking during the day is extremely limited, and further limitations on this area are merely going to create parking difficulties in different areas, namely further down Greengate Lane, where lorries turn and the timber yard sees large vehicles pass by regularly.

During the evenings, the area is also fraught with people dropping off and waiting in cars whilst attending martial arts classes opposite. Restrictions on Greengate Lane will not alleviate the problem, but merely encourage more people to park and wait illegally, either on double yellows or in front of a garage gate on Greengate Lane.

Whilst obviously any restrictions to parking outside my own house are a nuisance and an inconvenience, I believe further communication, clearer visual representations on restrictions imposed and a more equal distribution of restrictions on Greengate Lane and Gardner Road are required so that residents of Greengate Lane are not unduly impacted by these measures compared to their neighbours.

Comment on objection – There does seem to be a case for reducing the length of the proposed restrictions on Greengate Lane

Objection ~ (2)

I would like to respond to the proposed parking restrictions on Greengate Lane now we are in the advertised period.

Whilst I agree there's a need to stop people parking on the curve between Greengate Lane and Gardner Road, looking at the proposed plans, I would like to object to this element:

Greengate Lane, Prestwich – Westerly side from the southerly kerbline of Gardner Road for a distance of 23 metres in a southerly direction

I do not understand why the impact on Greengate Lane is 23 metres when the impact on Gardner Road and Clifton Road is between 8 and 12 metres and propose that it is reduced to match the other roads. The double yellow line opposite the proposed area on Greengate Lane is always observed so there is no reason to create a bigger impact to the residents of Greengate Lane.

Parking is regularly an issue, especially with the businesses operating from the old Co-op building opposite my house. Losing several parking spaces will make this even more difficult and the impact on Greengate Lane feels unreasonable compared to Gardner Road and Clifton Road.

I hope you consider these objections and will make amends to the plans.

Comment on objection – Although, 23 metres seems rather excessive for junction protection this is due to the unusual road layout and wide radius/curve/bend at the junction of Greengate lane and Gardner Road. However, as mentioned above in response to objection 2 the extent of the yellow lines can be reduced.

Objection ~ (3)

I am writing regarding the attached plans to apply additional parking restrictions at the junction of Gardner Road and Clifton Road/Greengate Lane in Prestwich.

Whilst I appreciate any actions taken to improve road safety in Prestwich, I think this piecemeal approach is not likely to address the bigger problem and even increase the potential risks of serious accidents in the area.

In summary, my concerns are:

- In recent years, Gardner Road (and the surrounding area) has increasingly become a free “park and ride” resource to Metrolink users, and the preferred car park for staff of businesses, restaurants and bars around Prestwich Village. There is sufficient car parking available behind the Longfield Centre (under normal circumstances) combined with the Fairfax Road car park.*
- This has further been exacerbated by the increased restrictions of parking on Bury New Road.*
- Furthermore, the positioning of the new Covid testing centre has seen an increase of street parking (hopefully temporarily)*
- The impact all of the above has been to push the traffic problems to the surrounding residential streets rather than the designated car parks.*
- The effects being experienced by residents are that we are frequently unable to park close to our homes, and on frequent occasions we have had to park in neighbouring streets. I am fortunate to have a drive so can park off-road, however, getting in and out of my drive is often impossible given the volume of parked cars on either side of the road.*
- More importantly, I think there is a growing safety hazard. Cars often drive at excessive speeds, visibility to pedestrians and other drivers is made very difficult by the volume of parked cars and I am very concerned that this will lead to a serious accident.*

Consequently, I am objecting to the proposal based on a need for a more holistic approach to traffic management in the area that these “sticking plaster” tactics will not resolve the current and future needs of the community. This junction is just a symptom of a bigger problem.

My opinion is that a combination of traffic calming, parking restrictions and resident permit parking will ensure that the issue is moved to the available car parks and make our residential streets safer and more convenient to the people who live there.

Comment on objection – The displacement of parking to ‘residential’ streets mentioned. However, the recently introduced Prestwich High Street has limited waiting for shoppers and businesses on Bury New Road on both sides. Clifton Road also has a short stay car park for 15 vehicles. Long Stay car parking on Fairfax Road and at the Longfield Centre lessens the impact on surrounding streets.

The extent of displacement from Prestwich High Street is therefore likely to be minimal and that any working day parking in streets such as Greengate Lane, Gardner Road and Clifton Road is mostly residential. The introduction of the proposed restrictions will reinforce the existing junction markings such as give way markings which are being hidden by parked vehicles. In this instance a resident parking scheme may not increase parking capacity for local residents nor would it guarantee a parking place closer to their property as a scheme where streets are narrow, as is the case in this instance, is likely to reduce the overall number of on-street parking spaces in the area.

Objection ~ (4)

We refer to the above proposal.

Whilst we would generally support any steps to improve road safety in Prestwich, we object to the above proposal for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is based on just one enquiry. There is no indication in the statement of reasons as to whether this is one enquiry over a 12 month period or shorter or longer period. In any event, one enquiry does not justify a proposal of this nature. The Council initially refused to provide any additional detail in response to an FOI request. However, the following information has recently been provided:*

One complaint has been received as a basis to instigate the traffic order proposal and there are no reported collisions within the last 3 years. The content of the complaint is as follows:-

“You may not have any accidents on your records at the junctions that I mentioned (Gardner Road, Clifton Road and Greengate Lane) but I can assure you that there have been several. I also think that prevention is better than cure and it should not take a serious accident for you to bring in measures to prevent people from parking illegally and therefore making manoeuvres at the junctions much safer.”

When we first moved in to Gardner Road in 2002 we attended a Township meeting at the Longfield Centre to raise concerns about the junction and were informed that in the absence of accident data to justify proposals no action would be taken. This was presented as Council policy and as far as we are aware it is still Council policy. To our knowledge there have no accidents before or since 2002. The proposal is unsupported by relevant evidence and is therefore without legal justification.

- 2. Contrast the 1 enquiry that has been received by the Council to the numerous complaints made to the Council/local Councillors regarding a lack of available parking in the location and a need for residents only parking. This proposal, if implemented, will have a significant detrimental impact on the current situation whilst providing no real road safety improvements. When the issue of residents parking was again recently raised we were told that any such requests were on hold due to Covid. How can the Council justify this and at the same time find the time and resources to progress non-urgent traffic management proposals? I asked for clarification. The Council's response?*

Finally, there is no requirement to have policy decision on whether or not proposals for restrictions can progress whilst a 'residents' permit scheme is suspended.

With respect, this response is incorrect as a matter of basic public law. If the Council makes an operational decision (ie sets a policy) it is required to record its decision with reasons.

- 3. Whilst the Council has spent money on major improvements on the main road this has done nothing to improve the parking situation on Gardner Road. As far as we are aware the Council has not undertaken an assessment of the impact of the major improvements on residential streets in the locality? If this is correct how can the Council justify this proposal without an up to date assessment of traffic and parking in the area.*

The major roadworks appear to have increased non-resident parking around the junction. The new proposal will simply move the parking issues further along Gardner Road etc. Where do you stop? You cannot keep moving the issues further out of sight of the main road and then pretend they don't exist. These are residential areas. People have cars. They need to park somewhere. This is reality.

- 4. The junction at Gardner Road and Clifton Road is undoubtedly a difficult junction to traffic manage (that and the lack of accidents is probably why the Council has done nothing until now). With all due respect to the author of this proposal, the proposal will do nothing to improve road safety in the area. The junction itself is quite wide compared to other residential junctions meaning that there is adequate visibility even with parked vehicles. The parking around the junction helps the traffic self regulate by generally slowing down vehicles down and cars as they approach and cross the junction. The absence of accidents etc is evidence of this. This proposal is very likely to lead to vehicles driving faster in and around the junction thereby increasing the risk of accidents/injury. Perhaps the one complainant should simply slow down and drive through the junction with due caution like most drivers do?*
- 5. Many of the vehicles parked around the junction are workers from local businesses (shops, restaurants, bars) parking through the day and into the evening and residents from Clifton Road who are unable to park nearer their properties due to existing parking restrictions in the location. Rather than impose further unnecessary restrictions, consideration should be given to removing some existing restrictions to alleviate some of the parking issues to one side of the road. Removing some of the parking restrictions at the top end of Clifton Road would have the affect of increasing parking whilst at the same time reducing the speed of vehicles driving down towards the Clifton Road/Gardner Road junction (the only traffic issue that really needs managing in this location).*
- 6. If the Council is concerned about road safety in this area (although as stated above there is no real evidence to justify concerns) why isn't the Council introducing a 20mph zone? This seems to be the approach in almost other parts of Prestwich and indeed the Borough.*
- 7. We have been unable to find any details on the Council's website regarding the Council's policy in relation to either residents parking or implementing traffic proposals. Why is this information not publicly available? Nor can we find any details relating to this specific proposal. What steps have been taken, other than a couple of notices on site, to advertise this proposal. Have all the statutory publication requirements been met?*

Ultimately, the current proposal does nothing but attempt to interfere where there is no basis to do so whilst doing nothing to assist local residents and businesses. If the Council has evidence based concerns about the traffic in this area it should produce a properly thought out plan to deal effectively with this and at the same time support local residents and businesses by providing appropriate parking in the location. This should include residents parking in some parts of Gardner Road and the removal of some of the existing restrictions.

If the Council proceeds with this proposal based on the current evidence (and contrary to the Council's established policy) we will immediately seek to judicially review that decision in the High Court and seek costs against the Council.

Comments on Objections (4)

Although there has been one complaint for the basis of the proposal being progressed, this is not unusual. In fact, many traffic orders are processed following one complaint. The Traffic Management Unit will decide each case on its merits; whether it came from a signed petition or from a single member of the public. The initial refusal to provide additional information **during the traffic order advertising period only** was made to make sure that any objections or indeed support for the proposal, was based on the same information being in the public domain. However, on review it was decided to send the additional information in this instance.

The case for/against residents parking has already been mentioned in response to the other objections raised. In addition, it should be noted that additional sightline protection at junctions in the form of yellow lines, may be required as part of any scheme, further impacting on local residents. Contrary to the objector indicating that it is not residents that are causing these problems, observations indicate that parking on the junction occurs late at night when most businesses are closed, indicating that this is indeed residents and not just visitors that park too close to the junctions in question.

Consideration has been given to improving the existing restrictions in the area and fading yellow lines/give-way lines will be refreshed as soon as it is practical to do so.

Objection ~ (5)

I am writing with regard to the proposed 'no waiting' zone at the junction of Clifton Rd, Gardner Rd and Greengate Lane in Prestwich (TM2/20/481). Thank you for sharing the statement of justification and the restrictions plan. I have three points to make:

1. I would be grateful if you could check the accuracy of the plan that was shared with the statement of justification as I am doubtful that the lines indicated on the plan correctly represent the footprint of the planned no waiting restrictions. According to the statement of justification, the line running from the south side of Gardner Road and into Greengate Lane is 35 metres in total (12m + 23m) - however the line on the plan appears shorter than this. If a correction to the plan is required, I'd be grateful if a revised version could be shared for comment before any final decision on the proposed work is taken.

2. No consideration appears to have been given to the impact of the proposed changes on resident parking and access. In recent years these streets have become heavily used by people working in Prestwich who take advantage of the free on-street parking, 7 days a week. Prior to the first lockdown in March, my neighbours and I routinely encountered problems trying to park near our homes between the hours of 9am to 10pm (several cars that park on the street all day are linked to local restaurants). I would commonly have to park close to the junction of Gardner Road and Arthur Street - far from ideal. The proposed no waiting zone will further reduce the space available for residents to park. Once the pandemic is over, we expect issues with parking to re-emerge - the changes proposed in this plan will make this issue worse.

3. By far my biggest concern in relation to road safety is the speed at which some vehicles enter the Gardner/Clifton/Greengate junction. The junction in question is poorly laid out and confusing to some drivers - speeding cars make it much less safe, commonly those approaching from Bury New Road down Clifton Road (which have right of way). The layout of the junction means that indicators are not used consistently and thus the intentions of cars coming down Clifton Road towards the junction are not always clear to other road users, including pedestrians. At night, it's not uncommon for cars driving up Gardner Road towards Bury New Road (which do not have right of way) to drive straight through the junction without stopping or even slowing.

Comments on Objections (5) – As mentioned above, residents parking schemes may not resolve many of the issues for residents. In addition, to the reasons for that are highlighted above, permits are also available to local businesses and restaurants who may also apply for them.

Also mentioned above is the length of the proposal on Greengate Lane which seems rather excessive. This is the length measured from the t at the centre of the junction.

In summary:-

All the objectors agree that some measures are needed at the location. Indeed the basics are that the proposed restrictions will reinforce the Highway Code advice not to park within 10 metres of a junction. This distance is increased slightly in these proposals to take into account the wide junction radii. These restrictions will also protect the existing give-way lines and warning triangle on Gardner Road which can be hidden by vehicle parking.

Pedestrians will also not be impeded by pavement parked vehicles and will have improved sightlines when crossing these junctions. Drivers approaching the give-way lines will no longer have to be positioned over centre lines (effectively on the wrong side of the carriageway) and will also benefit from improved visibility.

However, taking into account the comments for Greengate Lane, it does seem reasonable to reduce that length.

In view of the above, the proposal will therefore be amended as follows:-

Introduction of No Waiting at any time

Gardner Road, Prestwich	South side from the westerly kerbline of Greengate Lane for a distance of 12 metres in a westerly direction
	North side from the westerly kerbline of Clifton Road for a distance of 11 metres in a westerly direction
Greengate Lane, Prestwich	Westerly side from the southerly kerbline of Gardner Road for a distance of 15 metres in a southerly direction
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