

COUNTER PROPOSALS ON PARKING IN THE GROSVENOR ESTATE AREA OF WHITLEY BAY

A report compiled by members of the Executive Committee of the Grosvenor Estate Residents' Association

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is concerned with the increasing problem of parking in a residential area of Whitley Bay, not far from the central shopping area, referred to herein as the 'Grosvenor Estate'. The area in question comprises the roads named Grosvenor Drive, King's Drive and Queen's Drive which lie between Marden Road to the east, Norham Road to the north and west, and the Tyneside Metro railway line to the south.
- 1.2 The report describes the existing parking arrangements in the Grosvenor Estate area and those proposed by North Tyneside Council's Highway Engineers Department in a report prepared earlier this year and featured in an exhibition on show in Whitley Bay library from 15th to 29th September, 1988.
- 1.3 A strong reaction against the Highway Engineers' proposals, and previously existing dissatisfaction with the current parking arrangements, coupled with the absense of enforcement of parking regulations designed to protect the environment of residents, was largely responsible for the formation of a local residents' association, herein referred to as 'the Grosvenor Estate Residents' Association'. Almost 75% of the households in the Estate have joined the Association since its formation in July, 1988.
- 1.4 The Executive Committee of the Grosvenor Estate Residents' Association have carried out a census of the residents, sought their views and surveyed the traffic movements in the area. From the data collected and the opinions expressed, the Executive Committee have compiled

counter proposals to those of the Council's Highway Engineers Department. These counter proposals have the substantial majority support of the residents of the Grosvenor Estate.

2. EXISTING PARKING ARRANGEMENTS (Refer to Plan No. 1)

2.1 GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST

At the east end of Grosvenor Drive, between Marden Road and the junction with King's Drive, there is nominally residents' only permitted parking. No parking at any time is allowed within 10-20 metres of the junction with Marden Road and with King's Drive.

2.2 KING'S DRIVE

Parking for non-residents along both sides of King's Drive is encouraged by road signs and white-lined, parking bays. Parking is limited to 2 hours for non-residents during the periods, 8am - 6pm, Monday to Saturday inclusive. Residents with permits are excluded from these limitations. Adjacent to the junction with Norham Road there is no parking allowed at any time over a distance of about 10 metres on the west side, but oddly, this stretches for about 40 metres on the opposite side, where there are business properties. A one-way system in the direction from Norham Road to the junction with Grosvenor Drive is currently in force.

2.3 GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST AND QUEEN'S DRIVE

There are no current parking restrictions in that part of Grosvenor Drive which runs to the west of its junction with King's Drive, or in Queen's Drive.

3 RESIDENTS' DISSATISFACTION WITH EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 There has been an increased incidence of parking, both long- and short-term, in all areas by non-residents, frequently making it difficult, often impossible, for residents to park within a reasonable distance of their homes.

- 3.2 There has been an increase in danger, especially to children and elderly residents, caused by increased traffic movements in a congested street scene. This problem has got noticeably worse since the deregulation of public transport, to which the increase in traffic to the town centre is partly attributable, and more so since the erection of traffic lights at the town end of Marden Road. The traffic lights cause frequent, frustrating tail-backs of traffic along Marden Road during busy periods, leading to motorists using Grosvenor Drive, and King's drive, (travelling in a direction opposite to the one-way system) to by-pass the lights.

4. ENFORCEMENT

- 4.1 The problems are made worse by the laxity in enforcement of the present regulations. This has led, for example, to customers of the motor shop and garage of 'Charlie Browns' parking on the 'no parking' area at the road junction, and in the 'permit holders only' part of Grosvenor Drive, without fear of punishment for breaching the parking regulations. There is no let up in this flouting of regulations at weekends; 'Charlie Browns' is open for business 7 days a week.
- 4.2 It has become a very rare event indeed to observe a traffic warden in the area. No traffic warden was seen during the whole of the 10 hour period during which the traffic survey, described later in this report, was carried out. An analysis of the survey data reveals that there were 163 parking offences committed in Grosvenor Drive east alone, during the 10 hour period covered.
- 4.3 It is known that the local police prefer a 'permit holders only' parking scheme because it is so much easier to enforce than 1 or 2 hour limited parking. Whereas the former needs only a check on the display of a permit the latter requires recording of car registration numbers and times, with repeated visits to detect those vehicles staying longer than the limit.

5. HIGHWAY ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSALS (Refer to Plan No. 2)

5.1 GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST

At the east end of Grosvenor Drive, between Marden Road and the junction with King's Drive, the existing resident's only parking is to be removed, and replaced with two hour limited parking with exemption for permit holders.

5.2 KING'S DRIVE

The west side of King's Drive is to be made no waiting, 8am - 6pm, Monday to Saturday, without exemptions for permit holders. The east side is to remain as present, that is, with 2 hour limited parking, 8am-6pm, Monday to Saturday, with exemptions for permit holders.

5.3 GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST AND QUEEN'S DRIVE

Along approximately half the length of the remainder of Grosvenor Drive and Queen's Drive, running from the east end junctions with King's Drive, 2 hour limited parking, 8am - 6pm, Monday to Saturday, with exemptions for permit holders, is proposed. In the remainder of Grosvenor and Queen's Drives there will continue to be no restrictions on parking.

6. RESIDENTS' OBJECTIONS TO ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSALS

6.1 Particular arguments against these proposals, based on the studies carried out by the Executive Committee of the Grosvenor Estate Residents' Association are given in section 8 of this report. However, it is appropriate to present two arguments of principle here:

6.2 The streets in the Grosvenor Estate are residential streets; they are places where people have their homes. The roads were designed for access to these homes only, at a time when motor car ownership was a much less than now. None of these streets should be viewed as 'thoroughfares'.

6.3 Residents of the streets should have priority of parking rights over

all others; they should not feel any obligation, nor should any obligation be placed upon them, to provide parking spaces outside their homes for local businesses, private or public offices, shops or places of public entertainment etc.

- 6.4 The above principles are supported by recommendations on standards for residential areas advised by DOE/DOT documents, "Roads in Urban Areas" and Design Bulletin 32 - Residential Roads and Footpaths. In particular, the latter document describes the relevant category of road, category 3, as having a restriction placed upon it such that "it must not attract through traffic but should not be a cul-de-sac".

7. RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION STUDIES

7.1 CENSUS

A census of each household in the three Drives was made. The data collected included number of adults; number of children under 18 years; number of children under 12 years; registration numbers of any motor cars/vans owned and garage access for off-street parking. The results are presented in table 1. For the 152 dwelling houses there are 167 motor vehicles owned, but only 79 garages. A proportion of these have difficult access, and some are too small to accomodate the modern car.

- 7.2 Some 75 % of the households are members of the Residents' Association, representing over 80 % of the adult population of the Estate. There are at least 79 children under the age of 12 in the area.

7.3 PETITION

Whilst collecting census data members of each household were invited to sign a petition with the following declaration -

"North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council Officers have compiled a report detailing their proposals to introduce car parking for 2 hour periods with permit holders' exemption, in both Grosvenor Drive and Queen's Drive. (Exactly like King's Drive at present.)"

"If you wholeheartedly disapprove of their proposals, please sign this form."

Only one of those invited declined to sign the petition.

7.4 QUESTIONNAIRE

After the census was carried out, households were asked to complete a questionnaire which had been compiled to elicit residents' views on various means to improve the parking/traffic situation in the area. The responses to the questionnaire are given in table 2. In summary, the results from this survey were: 87.5 % of respondents wanted residents' only parking, with provision for their visitors, 87.5 % wished to see raised pavements introduced at the entrances to each road from outside the area, 69.7 % favoured additional raised pavements at the junctions between the Drives, and 91.6 % wanted some form of speed restrictive measures introduced within the area.

7.5 SURVEY OF TRAFFIC MOVEMENT

An intensive survey of traffic movement was carried out on Saturday, 24th September, 1988 over the period 8am - 6pm. A log was kept of the times that each vehicle passed into and out of the entrances to the area. Each vehicle was identified, by its type and registration number, by an observer stationed at each of the road junctions. From this information it was possible to deduce, for example, the total number of traffic movements into and out of the Estate, the period that each vehicle spent within the area, and the number of vehicles using the streets as a thoroughfare, i.e. passing straight through the area without stopping.

7.6 The data collected on the log sheets was entered for analysis by computer. The results of this analysis are summarised in table 3. During the ten hour period there were approximately 3000 traffic movements in and out of the 4 entrances to the Estate:

185 vehicles entered, and 629 left the west end of Grosvenor drive;

128 vehicles entered, and 254 left the west end of Queen's drive;

596 vehicles entered, and 2 left (illegally) the north end of King's drive;

627 vehicles entered, and 553 exited from the east end of Grosvenor Drive.

8. SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS FOR COUNTER PROPOSALS ON PARKING

- 8.1 During the census of each household a proportion of residents reported their own casual observations about parking and the traffic problem. The most frequently heard were about the number of vehicles passing through the east end of Grosvenor Drive, apparently to avoid the traffic lights at the end of Marden Road, the difficulty of residents in parking their cars within sight of their homes, and the rarity of enforcement of current regulations. The results of the traffic survey have confirmed these casual observations.
- 8.2 It is the residents' view that there are already too many traffic movements within the Estate. If the Highway Engineers' proposals for the Estate are implemented, the area would be effectively advertised as a short- to medium-term car park. The Engineers' report contains the statement: "It is considered a general principle that long-term parking in residential streets should be discouraged apart from that of the residents themselves." A corollary of this general principle, implied by the highway engineers' proposals for the Grosvenor Estate area, is that short-term parking is to be encouraged, thus creating yet more traffic movement.
- 8.3 It requires little imagination to envisage the results of encouraging visitors to the town centre to park in the area. Firstly, the streets will fill up from the end nearest the town centre, leaving the east end of Grosvenor Drive packed with vehicles on both sides. King's Drive, now with parking allowed only on one side, will also fill up quickly. Then, all additional cars seeking a place to park, will pass through both

streets, further escalating the amount of traffic movement.

- 8.4 Given the need for the provision of parking for visitors to the town other than those visiting residents, it is more sensible to encourage short-term parking in the available off-street areas and in the on-street areas adjacent to public, business, commercial and entertainment premises. Consideration should be given to developing, for car parking purposes, the vacant land adjacent to both Whitley Bay and Monkseaton Metro Stations. Charges for short-term parking in existing parks near the town centre should be reduced or removed altogether.
- 8.5 As the census figures show, a substantial proportion of households have at least one car, and although some of these have access to a garage, their use would not add to the availability of short-term parking because the bays could not cover the entrances to the residents' driveways which, with few exceptions, are only accessed from the Drives. The area is almost unique within Whitley Bay in that there is no backstreet access to the houses. It should be apparent that residents would be less inclined to use what garage and driveway space there is if their access to it is likely to be restricted by additional visitors' vehicles.
- 8.6 Reference to the current standards for new residential estates shows how poor are the existing provisions for parking in the Grosvenor Estate in comparison:-
- 8.7 The car parking requirements for the design of new residential estates, currently enforced by North Tyneside Council's Engineers and Planning Departments include a residents' provision of 1 space per dwelling (garage or drive) and 1 space per 3 dwellings for visitors. These parking standards must be met by accommodation off the roads in order that a minimum carriageway width of 5.5 metres is maintained.

- 8.8 The Resident's Association recognises that it is unrealistic to compare the design of modern housing estates with those designed some 70 years ago, but it also argues that those estates designed at a time when car ownership was virtually non-existent should not now be expected to accomodate excessive traffic caused by encouragement of non-resident parking, when these same roads already have to accomodate residents' vehicles at modern ownership levels.
- 8.9 The census results provide figures to show how far the Estate falls below the standards for new residential estates. According to modern standards there would be 152 spaces for residents and 51 for visitors, a total of 203. The actual provision is 79 for residents and none for visitors.
- 8.10 The figures show that there is a shortfall of 88 residents' off-road spaces, besides a total absence of off-road spaces for residents' visitors. Even if modern standards were somehow (miraculously) met there would still be a shortfall of 15 places for residents' vehicles, there being 167 residents' vehicles for 152 dwellings.
- 8.11 The residents of King's Drive have very strong objections against the Engineers' Department proposals there. There are currently 23 motor vehicles owned by the 20 dwellings in the street, yet only 8 garages. Residents already have great difficulty in finding parking spaces in the Drive, yet the Engineers' proposals, if implemented, would stop waiting on one side, making it impossible for most of the residents or their visitors to park on the other side during the working day or on Saturday.
- 8.12 In 1980, Tyne and Wear County Council, the then Traffic Authority, introduced a one way system in King's Drive, for two reasons:
- (i) to prevent vehicles exiting from King's Drive, directly onto the busy junction of Park View and Norham Road,
 - (ii) to enable vehicles to park on both sides of King's Drive.

There appears to be no logical reason for the Highway Engineers to propose the removal of parking facilities, between the hours of 8 am and 6 pm, Monday to Saturday, from the west side of King's Drive, whilst the other Drives remain two way, with parking retained on both sides.

8.13 It should also be noted that King's Drive suffers from severe congestion on most evenings throughout the week. This takes place between the hours of 6 pm and midnight, when non-residents park their cars in the street, whilst visiting the nearby establishments of St.Paul's Church Hall, the Masonic Lodge in Norham Road, and the Ivy Court Fitness Centre and Royal Banqueting Hall, both in Park View. With the advent of Sunday opening for estate agents premises, their clientele look most favourably on the parking facilities available to them in King's Drive, even on the residents' day of rest.

8.14 During the survey of traffic carried out by the Resident's Association it was found easy by those making their observations at the Norham Road end of King's Drive to recognise those vehicles that were using the road as an alternative to the traffic lights at the end of Marden Road. Such vehicles sped down King's Drive and turned left into Grosvenor Drive east. The proposed restriction of parking to one side of King's Drive will encourage yet more drivers to speed along King's Drive.

8.15 Just as residents are against the use of housing for business (or any other non-residential) use they are also strongly against the idea that permits would be given to local businesses to allow their use for parking anywhere within the Grosvenor Estate area.

9. COUNTER PROPOSALS ON PARKING (Refer to Plan No. 3)

9.1 The writers of this report recognise the difficulties arising from the increased ownership and use of private vehicles and the conflict between satisfying both business and residential community interests in the town. The residents of the Grosvenor Estate are already suffering

the effects of increased traffic. What parking restrictions exist are being flouted due to failure by the relevant authorities to enforce them. The Engineers' Department proposals will increase traffic movements in the area, introduce regulations that are difficult to enforce and not gain additional parking spaces in practice. Residents are not amenable to the idea that they should turn the streets where they live into parking lots for local businesses. They are unwilling to tolerate the present deteriorating traffic problem and want alternative arrangements to alleviate it.

9.2 The Residents' Association proposals are:

- (i) Permit holders only parking throughout the Grosvenor Estate, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Only residents to be eligible to hold permits, with the number of permits per dwelling to be equal to the number of vehicles registered at that dwelling plus one, for residents' visitors' parking.
- (ii) Raised pavements to be introduced at all entrances to the Estate.
- (iii) Raised pavements to be introduced at the junction between King's Drive and Grosvenor Drive.
- (iv) Further measures to be introduced to restrict the speed of traffic along the roads within the Estate.

9.3 The contents of this report were described and discussed at a General Meeting of the Residents' Association, held in the YMCA in Grosvenor Drive on the 6th October, 1988. **The proposals received the unanimous endorsement of the Meeting.**

Dated: 6.10.88

NO. OF DWELLING HOUSES:

IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	26
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	68
IN KING'S DRIVE	20
IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	38
TOTAL	152

NO. OF MOTOR CARS/VANS:

IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	18
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	86
IN KING'S DRIVE	23
IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	40
TOTAL	167

NO. OF GARAGES:

IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	10
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	51
IN KING'S DRIVE	8
IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	10
TOTAL	79

NO. OF ADULT RESIDENTS:

IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	51+
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	135+
IN KING'S DRIVE	40
IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	74+
TOTAL	300+

NO. OF JUVENILE RESIDENTS:

UNDER AGE 18		UNDER AGE 12	
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	17	IN GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST	12
IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	57+	IN GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST	35+
IN KING'S DRIVE	17	IN KING'S DRIVE	12
IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	25+	IN QUEEN'S DRIVE	20+
TOTAL	116+	TOTAL	79+

TABLE 1.

GROSVENOR ESTATE CENSUS RESULTS

QUESTION:

- a) WOULD YOU LIKE RESIDENTS' ONLY PARKING THROUGHOUT THE ESTATE, WITH PROVISION MADE FOR YOUR VISITORS?

RESPONSE:

YES: 84 (87.5%) NO: 11 (11.5%) ABSTAIN: 1 (1%)

QUESTION:

- b) WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE INTRODUCTION OF RAISED PAVEMENTS AT THE ENTRANCES TO GROSVENOR DRIVE, KING'S DRIVE AND QUEEN'S DRIVE?

RESPONSE:

YES 84 (87.5%) NO: 10 (10.4%) ABSTAIN: 2 (2.1%)

QUESTION:

- c) WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE INTRODUCTION OF ADDITIONAL RAISED PAVEMENTS AT THE JUNCTIONS OF QUEEN'S DRIVE/KING'S DRIVE AND GROSVENOR DRIVE/KING'S DRIVE?

RESPONSE:

YES: 67 (69.8%) NO: 27 (28.1%) ABSTAIN: 2 (2.1%)

QUESTION:

- d) WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE INTRODUCTION OF SPEED RESTRICTIVE MEASURES WITHIN THE ESTATE?

RESPONSE:

YES: 88 (91.6%) NO: 8 (8.3%) ABSTAIN: 0 (0%)

TABLE 2. RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

VEHICLE MOVEMENTS 'IN' AND 'OUT' OF THE GROSVENOR ESTATE AREA:

	'IN'	'OUT'
GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST (MARDEN ROAD JUNCTION)	627	553
GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST (NORHAM ROAD JUNCTION)	185	629
KING'S DRIVE NORTH (NORHAM ROAD JUNCTION)	596	2
QUEEN'S DRIVE WEST (NORHAM ROAD JUNCTION)	128	254
TOTAL	1536	1438
TOTAL ('IN' + 'OUT')	2974	

	'IN'*	'OUT'
KING'S DRIVE SOUTH (GROSVENOR DRIVE JUNCTION)	11	472

* OPPOSITE TO ONE-WAY DIRECTION.

OF THE 472 VEHICLES LEAVING KING'S DRIVE SOUTH
322 VEHICLES TURNED LEFT INTO GROSVENOR DRIVE EAST (TOWARDS MARDEN ROAD)
150 VEHICLES TURNED RIGHT INTO GROSVENOR DRIVE WEST.

NO. OF VEHICLES STAYING IN AREA FOR MORE THAN 2 HOURS.	>122* (>16.1%)
NO. OF VEHICLES STAYING IN AREA FOR BETWEEN 1 AND 2 HOURS.	121 (8.8%)
NO. OF VEHICLES STAYING IN AREA BETWEEN 5 MINUTES AND 1 HOUR.	574 (41.6%)
NO. OF VEHICLES PASSING STRAIGHT THROUGH AREA.	462 (33.5%)
TOTAL:	1379* (100%)

* THESE FIGURES DO NOT INCLUDE THOSE VEHICLES ALREADY IN THE AREA AT
8AM OR THOSE WHICH ENTERED THE AREA BUT DID NOT LEAVE BEFORE 6PM.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY RESULTS OF TRAFFIC SURVEY