

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 23 February 2017

Agenda Item	9
Report No	CIA/07/17

Minor amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders

Report by Community Services

Summary

To consider minor amendments to the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) Traffic Regulation Order for Inverness. To consider the review of Disabled Bay time limits. To update members on Permit scheme issues.

1. Background

- 1.1 After a period of bedding in of the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement scheme, officers have been able to observe the effect of restrictions in relation to several specific restrictions in the City Centre. As the implementation phase is still live resources and budgets are in place to allow any changes to be made. There are also time critical processes relating to the Castle Wynd redevelopment that require Committee approval.

2. Observations on Permit Streets

- 2.1 The length and severity of restrictions in some locations have been highlighted as unnecessary from actual observations by officers carrying out patrols in the City Centre and it is felt that an early intervention will benefit all users.
- 2.2 After discussions with users the following streets have been identified and alterations suggested to maximise use:-
1. Portland Place: reduce the amount of permit parking transferring some 25m to 2hours max stay 8am to 6pm. Add a Disabled Bay 3hour max Stay;
 2. Duncraig St - Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm;
 3. Balnain St: Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm;
 4. Queen St: Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm;
 5. Muirton St: Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm;
 6. Broadstone Park: Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm;
 7. Ness Bank: Reduce the current 7 day Permit restriction to Mon-Sat 8am-6pm.

3. Blue Badge Holder Bays

3.1 City Centre Disabled vehicle access

It has been observed by officers and requests have been made to review the nature of Disabled parking provision in the City Centre to improve accessibility and availability. Although we are limited in the number of spaces available for Blue Badge parking the service has endeavoured wherever possible to ensure a reasonable distribution of available road-space is allocated for Disabled Parking. We have recently increased the number of Disabled Bays to 18 within the core streets, (Academy St, Church St, Union St, Queensgate) however these bays are currently unlimited in the time in which a Blue Badge holder may occupy these spaces which greatly limits access to these spaces.

The current arrangements are of benefit to Blue Badge Holders who work in the City centre but very limiting for Blue Badge shoppers or casual users. This would include visitors who are important to the vibrancy of the City (**See diagram 1**).

- 3.2 To improve overall access and therefore benefit the majority of Disabled users and encourage access to the city centre we would propose at least 50% of Disabled bays in the city centre are time limited to 3hours maximum stay as is commonplace in other City Centres. This proposal will require direct engagement with access and disability groups and users for agreement and advertising the proposals to give the public an opportunity to comment before implementation.

4. Permit Parking Scheme

- 4.1 Recent representations made in the media have highlighted some issues around the Inverness Permit scheme, however these concerns are not limited to Inverness and a Council wide consensus is required under the terms of the new enforcement regime.

- 4.2 For the benefit of members permit parking spaces are not allocated to individual permit holders. A Residents Parking Scheme does not guarantee the availability of a parking space or a space outside the permit holder's residence. The permits only entitle residents to park their vehicles if space is available. Permits have always been a tool used by local authorities at the request of residents to "exclude" vehicles. The number of permits issued is determined by the number of eligible users. There is a finite number of permits issued therefore numbers are not unlimited and are not a money making exercise. Highland Council permits are among some of the cheapest in the U.K. and charges are based on the cost to administer the Permit.

- 4.3 The Service is currently reviewing public opinion in Inverness via a questionnaire which will be issued to all streets with Permit Provision (**see Appendix A**). As a result of DPE the Back Office element of the Permit Scheme is being completely overhauled to allow full monitoring of permit provision and allow real-time enforcement of permit abuse.

4.4 It is proposed that members are presented with an update in a standalone committee item on the existing scheme and any proposals to update the scheme and its operation at a later date.

5. Castle Wynd Re-development – Taxi Rank & Tour Bus displacement

5.1 As a result of the requirement to remove taxis from Castle Wynd when pedestrianising this area (Castle Redevelopment), proposals for relocating taxis from their existing rank and displacement of tour buses from Bridge St have been discussed with operators.

5.2 Taxis

It is proposed to create two lengths of dual use bays on both sides of Bridge St to allow Loading from 6am to 10am, Taxi Only from 10am to 7pm. Taxis will then use Eastgate from 7pm to 6am as a new rank entering from Crown Road and exiting from Hamilton Street (**See diagrams 2 and 3**).

5.3 Tour Buses

As a result of moving Taxi provision to Bridge St we have agreed with the tour operators to relocate tour buses to Bank St and create permanent stops outside Doctor Blacks Hall and The Mercure Hotel. This will be achieved by removing two lengths of Loading facility (**See diagram 4**).

6. Implications

6.1 There are no additional resource implications as the DPE scheme budget is still live and works are ongoing.

6.2 Item 3 is proposed to improve accessibility and will require agreement of stakeholders to ensure that the proposal is adequate for their needs.

Recommendation

1. Members agree the changes listed in item 2.2 and the amendment of the existing Traffic Regulation Order subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures.
2. As per item 3 members agree the investigation and implementation of time limited Disabled Bays in Inverness City Centre subject to agreement with stakeholder's and representatives. The changes would also be subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures.
3. That members Note item 4.
4. Members agree the changes in item 5 by amendment of the existing Traffic Regulation Order subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 24 January 2017

Author: Shane Manning, Principal Traffic Officer

Background Papers: Diagram 1 - Disabled Bays
Diagram 2 - Bridge St Taxis
Diagram 3 - Eastgate Taxi Rank
Diagram 4 - Tour Bus Stands
Appendix A - Residents Permit Parking Survey 2017

Diagram 1- Disabled Bays

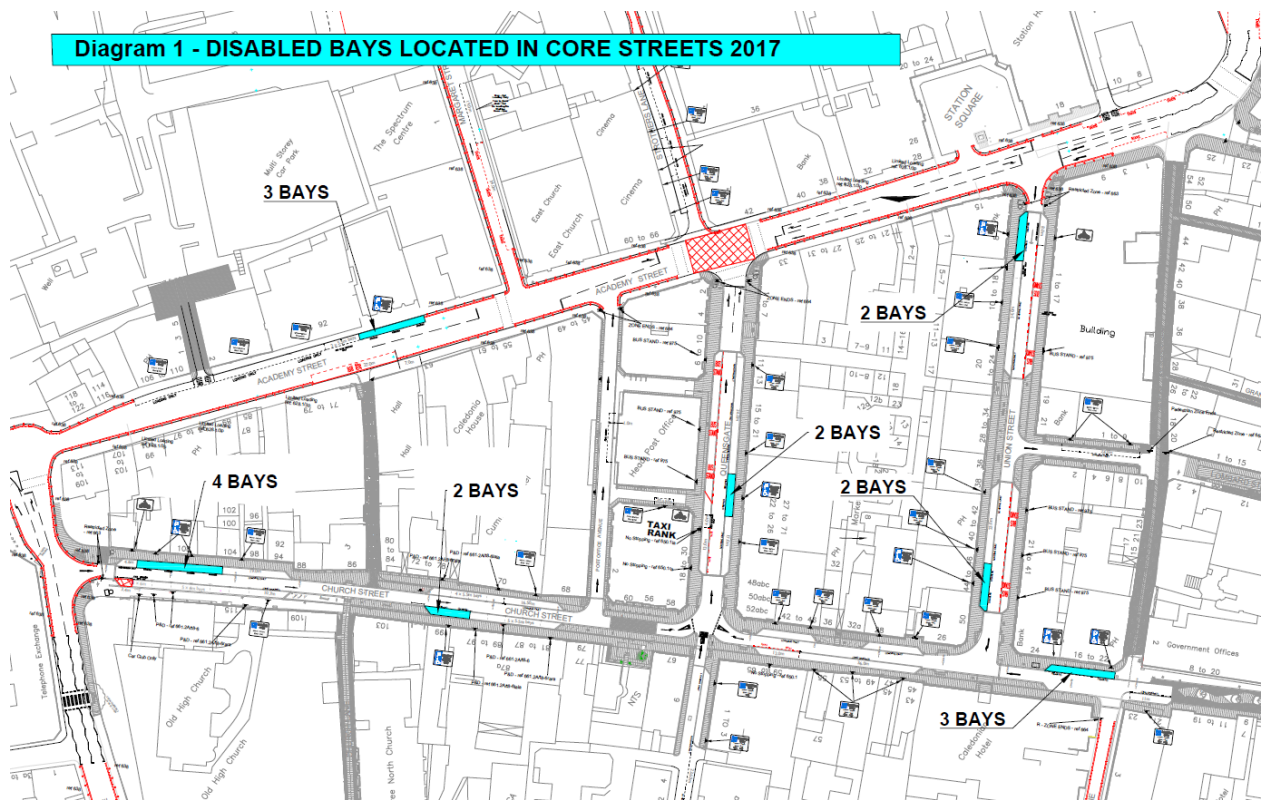


Diagram 2 – Bridge St Taxis

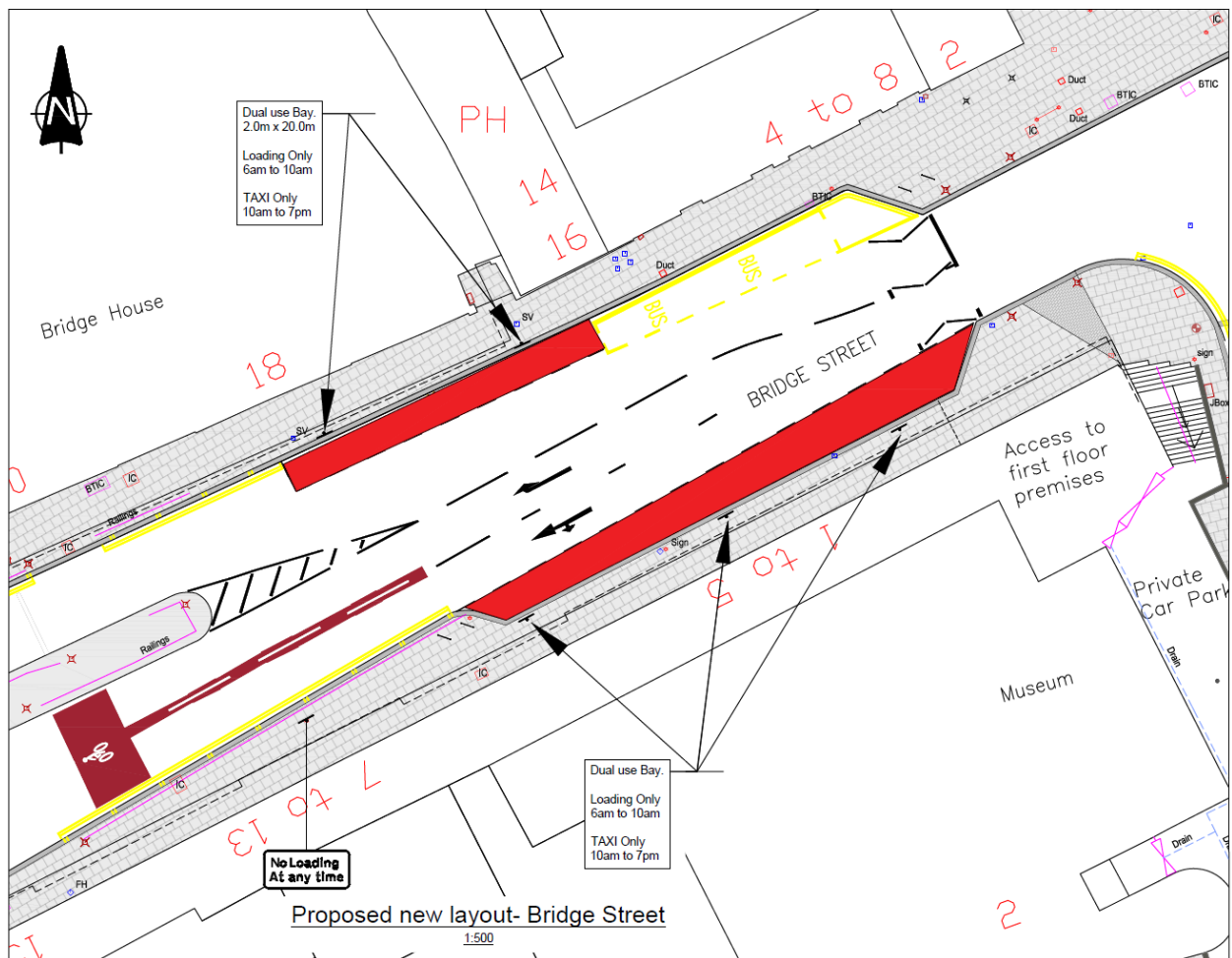


Diagram 3 Eastgate Taxi Rank

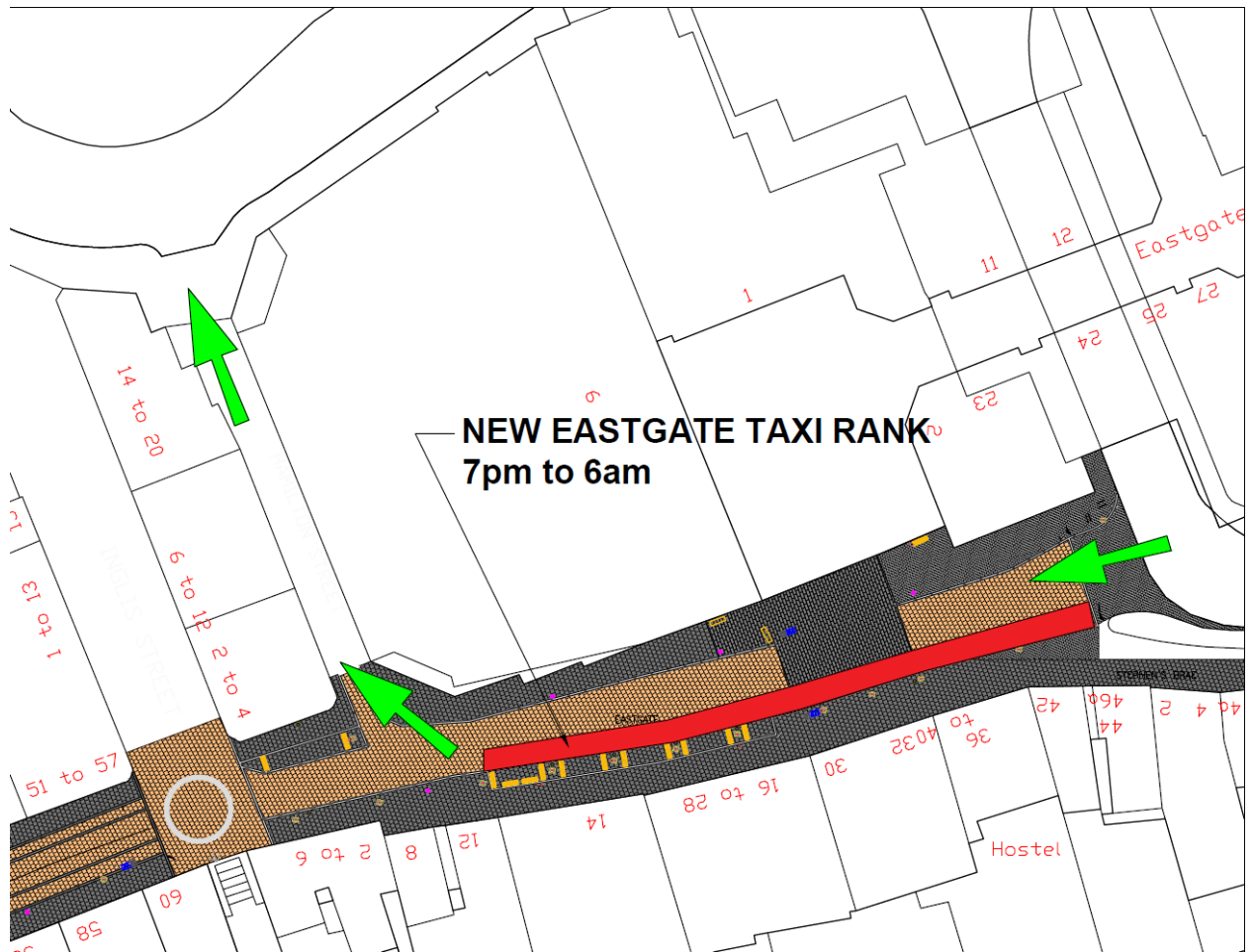


Diagram 4 Tour Bus Stands

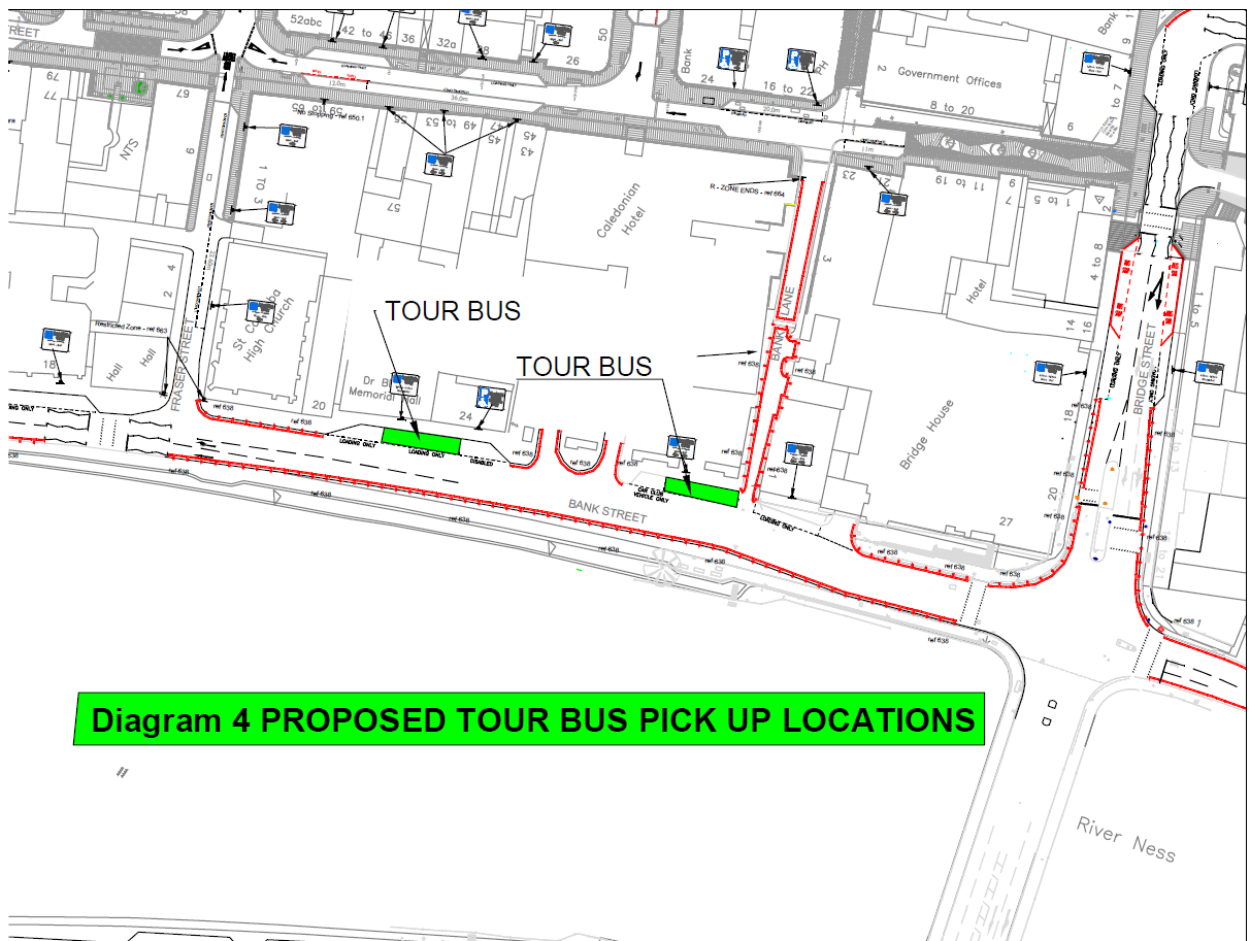


Diagram 4 PROPOSED TOUR BUS PICK UP LOCATIONS

Appendix A

Residents Permit Parking Survey 2017

A number of issues have arisen since the Highland Council took over the enforcement of parking restrictions in areas where Residents Parking Permits are operating. To assist in resolving some of the issues the following survey should be completed by residents.

Street.....(Required)

Name (optional)

Contact Number..... (optional)

Contact Email..... (optional)

Q1. Does the household have a Residents or Visitor parking permit?

Yes No How many_____

Q2 Would the residents prefer the permit system to operate:

(please tick one choice)

Monday to Saturday or 7 days per week

Q3 Would the residents prefer the permit system to operate from

(please tick one choice)

8am to 6pm 8am to 8pm 24hours

Q4 Would you prefer fixed Permit pricing or scaled based on road tax.

(the greener your vehicle the cheaper the permit)

Fixed Scaled

Q5 Should there be a restriction on the number of permits per household.

Yes No How many_____

Q6 Should the parking permits be issued by zone or by street?

(a permit is valid on multiple streets or just one street)

Zone Street

Any Other Comments:

(Continue on separate sheet)