

**Report on possible action to resolve congestion and reduce hazards posed by parked cars on Main Street/Oakham Road and Stapleford Road junction.**

(Author: Whissendine Parish Clerk)

**Purpose of report:**

This report looks specifically at the area near the school. This is not the only issue with vehicle use/parking in the village but this report confines itself to just Main Street/Oakham Road and Stapleford Road issues. The purpose is to outline the issue, confirm the powers available to the Parish Council and to recommend a path to resolving the issue.

**Introduction:**

Whissendine has one Main Street that crosses the brook and links both sides of the village. The roads serving the village are narrow. Some homes along Main Street do not have access to off street parking.

The village school is popular and is sited to the western end of Main Street; near the junctions with Oakham Road and Stapleford Road. The majority of pupils who travel, from distances further than walking distance, arrive by private vehicle. The influx of large numbers of vehicles looking to park in the immediate area of the school has led some drivers to park on blind corners, across junctions, across pavements and both sides of carriageways; so that other vehicles cannot safely pass through the area.

This congestion from pupil loading/unloading is confined to school opening and closing times.

**Powers available to the Parish Council:**

On-street parking falls to the highway authority (Rutland CC) to action. The parish council does have power to provide off-street parking places to relieve or prevent traffic congestion. (s57 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). There are size limitations and there must be suitable land available.

The parish council has the power to employ civil enforcement officers.

**Possible solutions**

1. Provision of off-street parking: While the parish council has the power there is no suitable land close to the school that is owned by the parish council, or could be acquired by them.
2. Seeking on-street parking controls (yellow lines): To adequately control parking by intervening with legal sanction it is necessary that yellow lines would have to be used. The provision of yellow lines in villages is contrary to RCC's current parking policy but a safety case could likely be made. The provision of yellow lines has been considered previously and three different scenarios have been put forward:
  - a. Yellow lines around Bishop's Corner (junction Main Street/Oakham Road) and the around the corner on the eastern slip of the triangle Main St/Stapleford Road (2016).
  - b. Yellow lines both sides of the road from 30 Oakham Road to 31 Main Street and 3 Oakham Road to beyond 8 Stapleford Road (RCC Parking Review 2015).
  - c. Double yellow lines both sides of road from 4 Oakham Road to 3 Main Street, bus shelter Oakham Road to 6 Stapleford Road, and 5 Stapleford Road to beyond 26 Main Street RCC Parking review 2015).
  - d. As the issues are specific to certain times of the day, time limited controls have been explored but these would require single yellow lines and yellow signs on posts. The provision of additional sign posts would increase sign-clutter which is contrary to the

local drive to minimise clutter. Time limited controls are not appropriate for corners as it would contradict the Highway Code.

**Conclusions:**

There is no land currently available, local to the school, that could be acquired to provide off-street parking.

Some of the previously considered parking restrictions are too onerous and unnecessary given the existing constraints. Double yellow lines on the north (School side) of Main Street are unnecessary as the other side of the road is almost continuously occupied with parked vehicles. The carriage-way is barely wide enough for 2 vehicles to pass and is within the 20mph zone so that any vehicle that stopped in the area opposite parked cars would immediately cause obstruction and be likely to draw a response from other road users so that stopping/parking is unlikely.

Yellow lines around the corners seem to be necessary given the recently observed behaviours of some drivers who park and the reactions of those drivers and pedestrians force to navigate the area. The extent of the lines along the road is open to debate so that safety is maintained without disadvantaging those home owners who do not enjoy the benefit of sufficient off-street parking to meet their needs.

The Parish Council has power to employ civil enforcement officers. These officers have to be uniformed and trained so that direct employment is not feasible. It does mean that the Parish Council could offer to pay RCC to send their civil enforcement officers to enforce parking controls, on a targeted basis. The current cost would be approximately £20 per person per hour. RCC does not currently operate a service level agreement of this type with any other council within Rutland but it would not be impossible to negotiate and draft.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Parish Council request RCC, as Highway Authority, provide yellow lines to the corners of Main Street/Oakham Road and Main Street/Stapleford Road to prevent parking where both forward vision and space to manoeuvre is restricted.

It is recommended the Parish Council request RCC supply civil enforcement officers to enforce parking restrictions, once the lines are painted; and that a service level agreement be agreed to achieve this. The enforcement to be strictly targeted and time-limited to achieve a change in unsafe behaviours. The supply of officers to the village to be at times agreed with the Parish Council and the costs to RCC to be reimbursed by the Parish Council.

**References:**

Department of Transport Traffic Management Act 2004 The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions. (2016)

NALC Legal Topic Note LTN 18 March 2017 Local Councils' Powers to Provide Parking Spaces