
REPORT 1
(1215/52/IM)

PARKING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION - REVIEW OF SUNDAY PARKING TIME LIMITS IN THE CENTRAL AREA

1. Purpose of Report

To report back on consultation on the proposal to introduce 2 hour parking time limits on Sundays in the pay and display/metered parking areas in the Central Area similar to weekdays and Saturdays and to make a recommendation to the Committee.

2. Executive Summary

A report seeking permission to consult on the proposal to introduce 2 hour parking time limits on Sundays in the pay and display/metered areas within the Central Area similar to weekdays and Saturdays, was approved by SPC on 13 May 2010.

The consultation period was from 1 June – 30 June 2010, during which time 81 submissions were received and 4 oral submissions were presented to SPC. The consultation procedure satisfies the Bylaw requirements for a traffic resolution.

The responses showed that the majority of the submitters are regular visitors who park on the street. There was a relatively even split between those who do and do not struggle to find a car park. Support for the 2 hour time limit was also relatively even those for and against.

Two main themes emerged from the consultation were the length of the time limit and the zone boundary. These themes are discussed later in the report.

Officers have considered the issues raised by submitters and have concluded that the benefits of introducing the proposed time limits outweigh the disbenefits. Accordingly it is recommended the proposed time limits are adopted by the Council.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Agree to recommend to Council that it approves the proposed traffic resolution, included as Appendix 1, to take effect on a date to be publicly notified. Existing restrictions will remain in force until that date.*

4. Background

The Council introduced free weekend parking in the central city in 1996 as a means of supporting retail activity. In order to increase the turnover of on-street car parking and maximise the amount of kerbside parking available to shoppers and visitors, a two hour time limit was introduced on Saturdays. Initially the time limit applied from 8:00 am - 1:00 pm, and this was extended in 2002 to 6:00 pm to recognise increasing retail activity. No time limits were placed on Sunday kerbside parking as historically there was less demand for turnover of spaces on Sundays.

During consultation on the draft Parking Policy in 2007, the issue of weekend parking was discussed with key stakeholders (Retailers Association, Chamber of Commerce, Positively Wellington Tourism (PWT), Federation of Wellington Progressive and Residents Associations Inc). A key message from these discussions was that the Council should continue its policy of free weekend parking, but apply time restrictions on Saturdays and Sundays to encourage shoppers and visitors to come into the central city at weekends. The approved implementation plan of the Parking Policy included an investigation into the feasibility of applying the 2 hour time limit on Sundays.

The 2007 Parking Policy states that “*on-street parking in the central area is primarily to support retail and entertainment facilities, servicing for commercial and professional activities, community recreational facilities and events*”. The majority of on-street car parks in the main retail and commercial core have been set at a 2 hour maximum and charged by either parking meters or pay and display on weekdays. There are approximately 3,400 pay and display/metered parks which are premium spaces in the city.

Parking turnover and duration surveys confirm that Sunday parking turnover is lower than any other day and is deteriorating on a year on year basis. Also the duration of car park occupation is considerably longer on Sundays, depriving other motorists of the opportunity to park. This situation can be improved by introducing time limits on Sundays during business hours in the same way as Saturdays.

The 2 hour maximum has been in place for a considerable period as providing a reasonable time for shopping or business and previous reviews have reconfirmed the 2 hour limit as appropriate. Outside this core area there are various other parking restrictions in place tailored to the needs of the locality. Examples include the P 90 parking area along Thorndon Quay which was introduced to protect the businesses and residents from parking pressures due to events at Westpac Stadium.

The pay and display/metered parks are the focus of this review as they provide parking for the main weekend shopping activity. For those shoppers and visitors who need to park for more than two hours during the weekend there are eight publicly available off street car parks which provide low cost (\$3 a day) parking via the “*in the know*” scheme, along with a number of other private parking buildings.

5. Discussion

The proposal was publicly advertised with the period allowed for submissions running from 1 June to 30 June 2010. 81 written submissions were received and 4 oral submissions were presented to SPC on 12 August.

The majority of the submitters were individuals from a cross-section of Wellington suburbs

5.1 Written Submissions

- Individual: 75
- Businesses/Organisations: 4
 - Kate Sheppard Apartments Body Corp (3 submissions)
 - Positively Wellington Tourism
 - Nancy's Embroidery Shop
 - New Zealand Retail Association (surveyed 58 retailers)

The responses show that the majority of the submitters are regular Sunday visitors to the central city who park on the street. There was a relatively even split between those who do and do not support the time limit.

Submitters were asked to respond to four questions, the questions and the answers are shown below.

- *How often do you visit the central city on a Sunday?*

Regularly - 53
Occasionally - 24

- *Where do you usually park?*
 - On the street in metered and pay-and-display parking - 63
 - In a car parking building - 8
 - Other - 6

- *Do you struggle to find a park?*
 - Yes - 37
 - No - 39

- *What do you think of introducing time limits on Sunday?*
 - It is a good idea - 29
 - It is not a good idea - 39
 - Other - 13

5.2 New Zealand Retailers' Association

The Association conducted a survey of its members. The results of the surveys form part of the Association's submission

- *Do you support time limits being introduced for parking within the city on Sundays?*
 - Yes - 33
 - No - 25

- *Do you support Council officers enforcing these time restrictions in a similar way to the current time limit restrictions on Saturdays?*
 - Yes - 32
 - No - 26

- *Do you support the Council encouraging greater use of off street car parks within the city at weekends by way of better promotion of the facilities that are currently available?*
 - Yes - 55
 - No - 3

5.3 Oral submissions

Oral hearings were held on 12 August 2010 by the SPC. Four oral submissions were made. The submitters were:

- Individuals: 2

- Julie Anne Genter, Te Aro
- Frances Lee, Ngaio

- Organisations: 2

- Nancy's Embroidery Shop, Thorndon (Les Brown)
- New Zealand Retailers Association (Louise Evans)

Issues discussed:

Julie Anne Genter – Suggested that parking fees are more effective than time restrictions, and that people are generally happy to pay for parking.

Response – We agree that parking fees are more effective, however, Council has a policy to have free weekend parking to encourage people to come to the city centre. If people are happy to pay for parking they can pay for it off street and park for longer.

Frances Lee – Suggested that not enough has been done for the Churches, and wanted Thorndon removed from the proposal.

Response – It would be problematic to develop a city wide policy based on a request from a small sector of the market. Most Sunday church services would be accommodated within the normal 2 hour time limit. Otherwise it is likely there will be alternative off street parking available within reasonable proximity, and depending on the location there are areas of coupon parking on the edges of the central city which are unrestricted on Sundays.

See section 5.4.2 regarding the parking zone boundary.

Nancy's Embroidery Shop (Les Brown) – Thorndon Quay is a different situation to the CBD and time limits could be doubled without inconvenience to any one.

Response – In regard to Thorndon Quay, there is currently a mix of parking types with a significant length of 10 hour time limit pay and display parking on its east side from around Davis Street through to the Gateway shopping centre. The remainder of Thorndon Quay generally has a P90 time limit applying seven days and this was put in place a number of years ago to protect local businesses and residents from the potential effects of Westpac Stadium parking. The parking time limits and application along Thorndon Quay are currently under a separate review to see whether some relaxation would be appropriate with the possibility the P90 limit could be adjusted to P120 in line with the general CBD time limit.

New Zealand Retailers' Association (Louise Evans) – Stated that the association was supportive of the 2 hour restriction on Sunday. They had 58 responses from their membership which were mostly supportive of the proposal.

Reply: The proposal is designed primarily to benefit central area retailers and therefore the Association's support is particularly important

5.4 Common themes from the consultation

5.4.1 Length of time restriction

In total 21 of the 81 submitters commented that they did not think that 2 hours would give them enough time on a Sunday to do what they wanted. The general feeling was that Sundays are a relaxed day and people did not want to be worrying about parking time limits.

Ten of those who said that 2 hours was not long enough had said that they were not in favour of the time limits.

Response -

We acknowledge that some activities require longer than the proposed 2 hours. However, these activities can continue to take place as off-street parking is cheaply available for long term parking on the weekend with plenty of capacity to satisfy the demand. People who wish to park longer than the restriction can park off-street, as they do on every other day of the week.

The 2 hour time limit has always been the main parking time restriction in the central area. The 2 hour time limit is seen to be successful on every other day of the week. By nature Sunday is relatively similar to Saturday, which is seen to be working well. The purpose of the time limit is to achieve a healthy turnover of parks, which we are currently not achieving on Sunday. It needs to be reiterated that on-street parking is not for people to park freely all day. In saying this, there is no intention to introduce parking fees on a Sunday, as free weekend parking is a long standing Council policy which has been reconfirmed several times.

It would be unnecessarily confusing for the public to have a different duration of stay time restriction on one day (Sunday) compared to every other day for the same car park. For consistency it is preferable that the same time applies for a car park across the week.

A different time restriction on Sunday would also require more complex signing, labelling and advertising. This would be more confusing for the public, and also increase the cost of implementation for the Council.

As the time limit has been predominantly 2 hours for many years, enforcement practices are set for 2 hours. There are some complications in changing to a different time restriction, and would not achieve the desired turnover of vehicles to provide the opportunity for more shoppers to park

Officers therefore recommend that the 2 hour time restriction apply on Sundays consistent with those that apply on weekdays and Saturdays as:

- It is consistent with existing policy
- It is consistent with the time restrictions on every other day of the week
- There are alternative parking options for those who need to park longer
- It is easier to enforce effectively
- It will achieve the improved turnover of spaces to allow more shoppers to park

5.4.2 Central city zone boundary

There were submissions regarding the extent of the boundary, particularly in Thorndon, 12 submitters commented on the zone boundary.

Response -

The time restrictions have been designed to protect the residents and businesses from long term commuter parking. If Thorndon, which is substantially part of the central area and subject to the same parking pressures as other parts of the central area, no longer had a time restriction, as suggested by some submitters, then it is inevitable that Thorndon would see an influx of parkers who are looking for unrestricted parking. The officers therefore consider that the current restriction boundaries are necessary to protect Thorndon residents and businesses, and will prevent new issues from arising.

Most of the issues raised regarding the boundary related to street specific parking concerns. It is not considered that this generic paper is the vehicle to respond to complaints about the restrictions in a particular street, and there are other avenues for these to be addressed

In summary there were no substantial or compelling reasons presented as to why the boundaries should be adjusted. Officers therefore recommend that the current boundaries should be retained to prevent new issues from arising. The existing boundary reflects the Central Area boundary in the District Plan Maps.

6. Conclusion

As part of the Council's approval of the current Parking Policy adopted in 2007, it was agreed that officers would investigate and report back on the feasibility of introducing on-street parking time restrictions on Sundays similar to the restriction applicable on Saturdays. This report completes the agreed policy task.

An increase in weekend retail activity has resulted in pressure from retailers requesting Sunday time limits and associated enforcement in the pay and display/metered car parks in the core part of the central area.

The report presented on 13 May confirmed that Sunday parking turnover is lower than any other day and is deteriorating on a year on year basis. Also the

duration of car park occupation is considerably longer on Sundays, depriving other motorists of the opportunity to park.

The proposal to introduce 2 hour parking time limits on Sundays in the central area has been through the required consultation process. This report considers the issues raised by submitters and the officers' conclusions.

The officers do not consider that the submissions received are of sufficient weight to warrant changes to the original proposal which is now recommended to the Committee.

Contact Officer: *Stephen Carruthers, Transport Planner.*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The Parking Policy supports Council's strategic direction in that it aims to balance and deliver desired outcomes in the Transport, Urban Development, Economic Development, Environmental, Social and Recreation, Cultural wellbeing Strategies. The Policy supports Council activities as a provider of on-street parking, a manager of public road space, a regulator of off-street parking and a facilitator of arrangements to achieve parking goals.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Labels and advertising, expected to be \$58,000, will come from SEPE01 C290, these are one off costs incurred in the first year. The revenue from enforcement will go back into the same budget, expected on average to be approximately \$19,000 per year.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

N/A

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

This report is feedback from the consultation process. Consultation requirements have been met.

b) Consultation with Maori

No specific consultation.

6) Legal Implications

A traffic resolution has been written to ensure legality.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is in response to the implementation plan attached to the Parking Policy adopted by Council in 2007.