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## Residents' Parking Review



## **PURPOSE**

This report reviews the data gathered from a number of different sources on the delivery and implementation of Residents' Parking Schemes.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Department issued its first residents' parking policy in 2007. The policy has since been updated, with version 5 issuing in October 2017.
- 1.2 Since 2007 the Department has only been able to introduce one scheme at Rugby Road/College Park Avenue, Belfast which became operational on 16 April 2018.
- 1.3 All other attempts to introduce schemes have been unsuccessful, either because it was not possible to secure sufficient levels of support for a scheme from residents at the development stage, or due to objections to the scheme during the public consultation. Eight other schemes had previously been developed and subsequently abandoned, some twice. Therefore a key focus for this review has been on learning lessons that might help deliver greater progress in future.
- 1.4 This review report draws on the following sources:
  - i. The Rugby Road/College Park Avenue Residents' Parking Operational Review, Department for Infrastructure Roads Eastern Division, October 2019;
  - ii. Rugby Residents' Parking Scheme Review, Department for Infrastructure Roads Parking Enforcement Unit, November 2019;
  - iii. Residents' Parking Scheme Review – Technical Review, AMEY November 2015;
  - iv. Residents' Parking – Comparison with Dublin.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Department's policy document on residents' parking first issued in December 2007 having been subject to a full public consultation exercise earlier that year.
- 2.2 In line with the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) aim to introduce some form of parking restraint in Belfast, schemes were initially designed for a number of areas in the city centre core area. These included the Markets, Donegal Pass, Sandy Row and Browns' Square. Two proposals for schemes in these areas were brought forward but neither succeeded in securing the required level of support from local residents to enable a scheme to proceed.
- 2.3 Efforts then focused out of the city centre, and three potential schemes were developed for the Lower Malone, Stranmillis and Rugby Road areas. The Stranmillis scheme quickly floundered during the informal consultation, as local traders did not believe the proposals met their needs. Progress was more promising in the Lower Malone and Rugby Road areas with the required threshold for public support for each being met (a two-thirds majority based on a response rate of a third of all households). However, the Lower Malone scheme received a considerable level of objection when the draft order was published. These were mainly from businesses in the area and the decision was taken not to proceed. The scheme for Rugby Road became operational in early 2018.
- 2.4 This report considers the possible causes for the lack of success; looks at the lessons learnt from the implementation of the first scheme; and seeks to draw on experience from elsewhere.

### **3. How Schemes and Permits Work**

- 3.1 Residents' Parking Schemes are introduced by an order made under the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.
- 3.2 In general, such an Order prohibits the parking of vehicles in an area with the exception of vehicles in designated parking places which will normally be marked bays.
- 3.3 The Order also puts controls on the use of bays to ensure that longer stay parking is prevented, the exception being vehicles belonging to residents or local businesses.
- 3.4 The form of control preferred here is based on the models from England, Scotland and Ireland which primarily use a combination of permits and paid parking. These are generally combined in what are known as 'mixed-use schemes'.
- 3.5 Permits accommodate longer stay parking in the area for residents and businesses, and paid parking allows shorter stays which facilitates visitors coming into an area.
- 3.6 There are various types of permit which include residents, visitors, business, health care providers, along with special permits for weddings and funerals, statutory undertakers and builders.
- 3.7 Permits for health care providers, and special permits for weddings, funerals, and statutory undertakers are all provided free of charge. All other permits attract a charge, unless the scheme is either wholly or partially within a Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA), when all permits are free apart from those for builder's vehicles and skips.

3.8 The cost for both residents and business permits is currently £30 each per year. A business case established the level of charge and was developed on a full cost recovery basis to ensure that these schemes are self-financing, and do not add an additional burden on the public purse. Importantly, the business case assumed an estimated level of income from on-street parking, without which the cost of a permit would be much higher.

#### **4. Rugby Road/College Park Avenue Operational Review**

- 4.1 The Rugby Road/College Park Avenue operational review sets out the background to the scheme, provides the scheme detail and explains how the scheme is working in practice.
- 4.2 The Rugby Road/College Park Avenue residents' parking scheme became operational on 16 April 2018 in these streets:
- i. Rugby Road
  - ii. College Park
  - iii. University Avenue (part)
  - iv. Carmel Street (part)
  - v. College Park Avenue
  - vi. Rugby Street
  - vii. Rugby Parade

College Green was added to the scheme on 16 August 2021.

- 4.3 The scheme provides a total of 236 parking spaces - 117 'Residents Only' bays, and 119 'Pay & Display' (P&D) bays which are available to everyone by purchasing a ticket from the on-street machines or by using cashless parking. The residents only bays are for the exclusive use of residents or visitors who hold a valid permit.
- 4.4 The scheme cost £207k to implement, as follows:
- i. £25k traffic signs and road marking;
  - ii. £70k installation of new kerbs and footway build-outs;
  - iii. £70k design development costs; and,
  - iv. £42k for ticket machines.
- 4.5 There are 211 residences within the area of the scheme, 153 of which were eligible for a resident or business permit in Year 1 of permit issue, and all 211 residences were eligible in the Year 2



which included 58 residences that have access to off-street parking. Year 2 and 3 included all properties as the overall number of permits issued was well within the maximum number permitted within the policy.

4.6 The table below sets out the number of permits issued.

Table 1: Permits Issued – Numbers			
Type of Permit	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Resident Permit	82	104	102
Business Permit	4	7	7
Health Carer Permit	70	69	70
Visitor Permit (properties)	89	63	32

Year 1 - 153 properties eligible

Year 2 - 211 (all) properties eligible

Year 3 - 211 (all) properties - eligibility criteria applies

4.7 To gauge the feedback on the operation of the scheme a questionnaire was issued to all residents and business owners. Views were also sought from:

- i. Belfast City Council;
- ii. The Police Service of Northern Ireland; and,
- iii. The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

4.8 Feedback in the questionnaire was positive and some of the comments are summarised as follows:

- *‘The scheme is working really well. It has improved the environment in which we live hugely. We are no longer a car park!’*

- *'I believe that this scheme has helped attract people to live in the area'*
- *'This residential family home area has been given back some of its character i.e. not a long stay carpark'*
- *'It makes a huge difference for residents and visitors, who are otherwise inconvenienced in their access to their properties'*
- *'The residents' parking scheme has been literally life-changing for me'*
- *'As a disabled person, this is the first time I can park outside my own home'*
- *'We had 20 years of having difficulty parking near our property'*
- *'It has been a transformation for me'*
- *'The scheme has been a life-changing event for us as residents. It has improved our quality of life'*
- *'Need more information on special permits'*
- *'Would like to see Botanic Court included in the scheme'*
- *'Loading bay has helped local shop'*
- *'Would like to see more permits'*
- *'Problem with parking after 6pm'*

#### 4.9 The operational review reached these conclusions:

- *The introduction of a residents' parking scheme within the Rugby Road / College Park Avenue area has changed the look and feel of the area for the better.*
- *DfI Eastern Division would deem this pilot scheme as a success and it has fully achieved its objective in removing all day commuter parking.*
- *The residents are fully supportive of the scheme (based on replies of 53, of 212 questionnaires issued)*
- *Landlords, who are not eligible for a residents permits have expressed concern in relation to servicing their properties.*
- *P&D bays are well used by visitors to the area.*
- *The short stay (10mins) bays are a useful addition within the scheme.*
- *The loading bays are a useful addition within the scheme.*

- *The pilot scheme identified that it was difficult to anticipate take up of permits.*
- *The resident only permit area could be improved.*
- *The further expansion of the P&D areas should be considered, but limited to through roads.*
- *The level of enforcement applied to this scheme i.e. 1 Traffic Attendant (TA), is correct.*
- *The impact of a residents' parking scheme needs to look at the surrounding areas due to displacement of vehicles. Data on this aspect has not been collected to date. No significant increase in complaints due to displaced parking, and where they have arisen the Department has formerly marked out corner restrictions.*
- *Consideration should be given to public / community buildings on the edge of residents' parking zones.*

4.10 The operational review made the following recommendations:

- *Working group to be set up to review Policy & Procedure Guide RsPPG E042 and lessons learned within this operational review.*
- *Consider the introduction of a Landlord Permit.*
- *Consider the time period for homeowners to hold a permit to be extended to every 2 or 3 years (subject to spot inspections to be carried out by the Department at any time during this period, at no cost to the Department).*
- *Consider wider use of P&D (with certain restrictions).*
- *Residents' Parking Schemes to be only considered with full support of elected representatives.*
- *Elected representatives to be consulted and support sought to resolve potential objections.*
- *Develop further use of NI Direct web page, to enable completed applications, supporting information and payments all to be completed online.*
- *Need to develop a wider strategy on the impact Residents' Parking Schemes have on surrounding areas and the method of how this can be controlled.*

- *Costs of developing Residents' Parking Schemes should be included in any future major project i.e. BRT 2, York Street Interchange.*
- *Consideration of Electric Vehicle Parking spaces in P&D Residents' Parking Zone.*
- *Consideration to providing cycle parking within Residents' Parking Zone.*
- *Consideration to providing motorcycle parking within Residents' Parking Zone.*

4.11 The Rugby Road scheme with its combination of mixed-use and permit-only parking, allows the two approaches to be compared. The difference is clearly visible with the mixed-use part being well used with a good turnover of spaces, while the permit-only, where only residents can park, portion is sparsely used.

4.12 The development of the scheme was very resource intensive in terms of staff input. The original project brief was sent to the Department's consultants at the end of 2012, with the scheme only becoming operational in early 2018. During this time period there was a considerable commitment of staff time.

4.13 There are four main stages in the scheme development process:

- i. Surveys and design;
- ii. Consultation and legislative processes;
- iii. Construction; and
- iv. Implementation and Permit issue.

4.14 Parking levels are surveyed before, during and after the working day, and is therefore fairly labour intensive. However, the rest of

Stage i. was relatively straightforward, although the design and survey work did represent approximately 30% of the actual cost of the scheme.

- 4.15 Similarly, the implementation and permit issue stage is also relatively easy to manage and will become more straightforward in future schemes with the adoption of an online process for permits, although additional funding would be needed to do so.
- 4.16 The consultation and legislative stages however demand a significant staff resource. The informal consultation, which involved open days in the local area, along with the formal consultation and the advertising of the draft Residents' Parking Order, resulted in large amounts of queries and correspondence. Going forward a team of 3 – 4 staff, with a mix of technical and administrative skills, would be needed to deal specifically with each scheme consultation.
- 4.17 The findings from the Department's operational review were largely positive, particularly the feedback from residents; however it is important to understand that this was achieved with a significant staff resource to develop and implement the scheme.
- 4.18 The storage and parking of trailers within Rugby Road and College Park Avenue has been causing some issues, and legal advice is that TAs can treat these as vehicles, provided it has a Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM).
- 4.19 The potential use of more 10 minute drop off points, especially close to schools / nurseries should be given more consideration, however, any active travel proposals being developed in the vicinity of schools also needs to be taken into account.

## **5. Rugby Road Review by Parking Enforcement Unit.**

- 5.1 The Department's Parking Enforcement Unit (PEU) review of the Rugby Road Scheme took a detailed look at the operation of the scheme including the issuing of permits, usage of the parking provision, enforcement, and ongoing costs and potential income.
- 5.2 PEU identified that the application process did raise some practical difficulties. A facility was set up in Clarence Court to allow residents to make their application in person. However, the process was time consuming, with some residents failing to show up at their appointed time and others did not bring the required documentation with them. An on-line application process would improve this and it is currently undergoing development.
- 5.3 The number of applications for permits and number of permits issued are as follows:
- i. Year 1 (April 2018) 153 properties eligible
    - 77 Residents Permits
    - 5 Blue Badge Residents Permits
    - 4 Business Permits
    - 70 Health Care Worker Permits (managed by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust)
    - 98 properties issued visitor permit booklets.
  - ii. Year 2 (April 2019) all 211 properties eligible
    - 97 Residents' Permits
    - 7 Blue Badge Residents' Permits
    - 7 Business Permits
    - 69 Health Care Worker Permits (managed by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust)
    - 63 properties issued visitor parking booklets.

iii. Year 3 (April 2020)

- 97 Residents Permits
- 5 Blue Badge Residents Permits
- 7 Business Permits
- 70 Health Care Worker Permits (managed by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust)
- 32 properties issued Visitor parking booklets.

5.4 From a financial perspective, the income generated from the scheme comes from the following sources:

- i. Charged parking;
- ii. Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) payments; and,
- iii. Permit income.

5.5 The total income for this scheme is:

- i. **Year 1** total income: £239,569.
- ii. **Year 2** total income: £187,339.
- iii. **Year 3** April 20 to Dec 20 total income: £31,710  
(Year 3 income has been significantly impacted by the suspension of enforcement and charging due to the first Covid lockdown 25 March – 21 June 20. Since June 2020 there has continued to be a reduction in P&D income and PCNs due to reduced parking within the residents' parking zone.)

5.6 The main costs incurred when managing the scheme are due to the following:

- i. Ticket machine purchase and running costs;
- ii. TA deployment;
- iii. Permit printing costs;
- iv. PCN processing costs; and,
- v. PEU operational costs.

5.7 The operational costs for the scheme are:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| i. Year 1 total costs:                    | £142,478 |
| ii. Year 2 total costs:                   | £117,989 |
| iii. Year 3 (Apr 2020 to Dec 2020) costs: | £63,705  |

5.8 The annual cost of operating the scheme (permit processing, enforcement and management) in Year 1 and 2 has therefore been offset by the provision of P&D bays within the residents' parking zone along with PCN income, and it is considered that going forward there is no reason to suggest that this level of income would not be sustained for the Rugby Roads scheme. It should be noted however that this scheme is potentially unique due to its location beside the University, and so the results achieved may be unlikely to be replicated everywhere else. Table 2 provides detail of the income provided by the scheme.



Table 2: Rugby Road – Costs and Income				
Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 (Apr-Dec 20)	Notes
<b>Capital costs</b>				
P&D machine capital cost	£42,505	NIL	NIL	1
<b>Operational costs</b>	£142,478	£117,989	£63,705	2
Costs sub-total (A)	£184,983	£117,989	£63,705	
<b>Income</b>				
P&D and cashless	£76,208	£82,037	£10,706	3
PCNs	£158,444	£101,400	£17,472	4
Parking Permits	£4,917	£3,902	£3,532	5
Income sub-total (B)	£239,569	£187,339	£31,710	
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT</b> [Income (B) – Costs (A)]	<b>£54,586</b>	<b>£69,350</b>	<b>-£31,995</b>	6

**Notes on table 2:**

- 1 Capital costs for 11 P&D machines (includes College Green).
- 2 Year 2 operational costs reduced due to lower PCN processing costs (fewer PCNs issued) and no capital costs. Year 3 operating costs lower due to significant reduction in PCN processing costs (fewer PCNs issued) as a result of the Covid restrictions.
- 3 Parking income Year 1-3 - College Green P&D not operational. Parking income Year 3 - Covid suspension of charging 25 March 2020- 29 June 2020 and ongoing impact of Covid restrictions.
- 4 Year 2 – 36% reduction in PCNs issued (1950) compared to Year 1 (3047) due to increased public awareness of restrictions within the scheme.  
Year 3 – 79% reduction in PCNs issued (336) April 2020- Dec 2020 compared to the same period in Year 2 (1580) primarily due to Covid restrictions.
- 5 Minimal changes in permits income Years 1 -3.
- 6 Surplus / deficit of income over costs.

5.9 Following a two-week advisory notice period, the scheme was patrolled daily by a TA dedicated to the scheme with enforcement action taken against any vehicle detected in contravention of parking restrictions.

5.10 In Year 1, between 30 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, 3047 PCNs were issued.

In Year 2, between April 2019 and March 2020, 1950 PCNs were issued (36% reduction on year 1) the number of PCNs issued on an annual basis fell considerably as public awareness of the parking restrictions increased.

In Year 3, between April 2020 and December 2020, 336 PCNs were issued (78% reduction on same period in 2019), this significant reduction is due to the ongoing Covid travel restrictions.

5.11 The numbers of PCNs issued is seasonal and peaks when a new intake of students arrive in the area.

5.12 The Department is also pursuing future developments aimed at improving how the scheme is managed and controlled. Possible developments include:

- i. On-line permit application and processing is currently under development;
- ii. New handheld computers for TAs with access to automatic number plate recognition; and,
- iii. JustPark will continue to encourage greater use of cashless parking service across the whole of NI.

5.13 In summary, operationally the parking enforcement elements of the Rugby Road scheme were delivered on time in accordance with the legislative requirements by the Department and its service provider NSL.

5.14 If further Residents' Parking Schemes are introduced the Department's PEU will require additional resources to assist in the

development and management of the additional workload these schemes create.

- 5.15 College Green was included in August 2021 and estimates show that the income from parking charges should increase by approximately £109k per year.
- 5.16 Income related to Resident /Business and Visitor permits is likely to remain similar to year 1 at around £4-5k.
- 5.17 Table 2 does indicate that the Rugby Road scheme cost £118k to manage in year 2, and other schemes of similar scale and location are likely to attract similar costs. The income from permit issue is minimal (and zero if the scheme is within a Neighbourhood Renewal Area) and the income from PCNs cannot be relied upon.
- 5.18 Some form of on-street charged parking along with the permit parking is the only other means of providing income to make these schemes affordable or self-funding.

## **6. Proposed Scheme in the Bogside Area of Derry**

- 6.1 In 2011, work started on a residents' parking for the Bogside area in Derry/ Londonderry. The scheme is known as the Rossville Street Residents' Parking Scheme. The scheme covers a large area of city centre residential area of approximately 650 dwellings.
- 6.2 The consultation for this scheme took place in March – April 2018. There were 226 responses of which 33 were individual responses and 193 'standard' signed letters. There was a very high level of opposition to the proposal as we received 212 objections in the 226 responses. Similar to the Rugby Road scheme the consultation processes involved a substantial staff resource.
- 6.3 Consideration is being given to developing a much smaller scheme in the area. The option of having an element of P&D being incorporated into a new smaller scheme is also being examined. Although it is important to note that the Rossville Street Residents' Parking scheme proposal has always been promoted as being a zero charge to residents as it is within a NRA.

## **7. Proposed Scheme Iveagh Area (Falls Road, Belfast)**

- 7.1 Following the introduction of the Gilder route on the Falls Road, and in response to concerns about commuter parking, and the impact of parking associated with the Royal Victoria Hospital, a scheme is currently being developed for the Iveagh Area.

## **8. Residents' Parking Policy – Technical Review, AMEY**

- 8.1 In 2015, and in recognition that up until then the Department had been unsuccessful at implementing any schemes, an independent review of the approach taken elsewhere was commissioned.
- 8.2 The review looked at approaches elsewhere to see if we were doing something differently with our policy that was impeding implementation.
- 8.3 At the time it was evident that the lack of progress was generally down to two main issues; either development of schemes that, for whatever reason, could not secure demonstrable support from the local community; or the level of objection to the proposals at the formal consultation stage.
- 8.4 A policy review was commenced in response to the high levels of objection received to schemes in the Belfast area, and in particular the scheme in the Lower Malone area. A significant proportion of the objections were from businesses challenging the policy itself. The remit of the review was to compare our policy against those in place elsewhere.
- 8.5 To ensure a degree of independence the review was undertaken by our Consultant Partner, Amey.

8.6 The Amey review looked at 12 different areas of scheme implementation:

- Reasons for implementing the scheme;
- Requests;
- Traffic management / movements;
- Local democracy responses;
- Initial surveys;
- Wider area;
- Enforcement timings;
- Minimum threshold to proceed;
- Enforcement;
- Businesses;
- Number of permits issued; and
- Business permit cost.

8.7 The Amey review also included information on a number of successful schemes implemented in the following local authorities:

- Liverpool City Council;
- Gloucestershire County Council;
- Herefordshire County Council;
- Staffordshire County Council;
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (Manchester);
- Southampton City Council; and
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

8.8 The review concluded that the criteria used to identify the need for a residents' parking scheme in the Departmental policy are generally similar to those used throughout GB.

8.9 The key conclusions in Amey's review are as follows:

- i. The Department's initial data gathering requirements are the most onerous.
- ii. Potentially the schemes here have the potential to progress significantly more quickly because of our much lower acceptance threshold of two thirds of respondents to be in favour of the proposals from a minimum response rate of one third of all households affected (which equates to 22%). This is less than six of the Council areas examined where a minimum response rate of at least fifty percent of affected households is required before calculating the levels of support for the proposals.
- iii. The Department's policy accommodates businesses within schemes by initially offering a single parking permit to each business, with additional permits being available if kerb-space permits. In comparison Liverpool City Council has an allowance of ten parking permits per business while Staffordshire County Council and Southampton City Council allow for three and two permits per business respectively. Notably three of the other Council areas do not include an allowance for businesses within their policy at all.
- iv. The Department's charge for a business parking permit at £30 per year is considerably lower than other Council areas parking policies which can be as much as £306 per annum.



## **9. Residents' Parking – Comparison with Dublin**

- 9.1 Approximately 988 Residents' Parking Schemes have been introduced in Dublin since 1988.
- 9.2 A comparison of the Department's policy with the Dublin City Council Parking Control Byelaws was also undertaken.
- 9.3 The check against the Dublin parking control byelaws identified that while certain elements of their approach are similar there are some significant differences. For example, how they handle engagement with residents and businesses is very different although this is not detailed in the byelaws.
- 9.4 A detailed comparison is contained in Appendix 1, however Dublin schemes are only developed following a request from residents. On receipt of a request, the Council asks those making the request to provide evidence that at least 25% of residents are in favour of a scheme. If this is not forthcoming nothing further is done. This percentage figure is similar to our initial response threshold (two thirds of one third of residents responding, or 22%, needing to be in favour).
- 9.5 If evidence of 25% support for a scheme is received, the Council will then assess the area and, if suitable, a design is developed. The Council then ballots residents to gauge support for a scheme. The 'ballot' letter is accompanied with a map showing the proposals for the area. A simple majority either way determines progress.
- 9.6 If the ballot indicates support for a scheme, an Order will be drawn up, which is subject to statutory consultation. This involves

consulting with the local police and the Council members. Residents are not consulted.

- 9.7 If no objections are received to the statutory consultation then the scheme will be implemented, with the residents notified by letter usually shortly before the lines and signs are installed.
- 9.8 Unlike here, the Council does not, at any point of the process, engage with residents about the scheme design or the approach being taken. They do receive comments but these are largely set aside. The only aspect of the scheme design where there seems to be any flexibility is the times of operation, otherwise it is largely a 'take it or leave it' situation. It is worth highlighting that residents there will be generally familiar with what a scheme entails as it is likely that the neighbouring streets, which are closer to the city centre, will already have one.
- 9.9 Local businesses are not consulted at any stage of the process and are not included in the 'ballot'. Interestingly, they do not get business permits if a scheme is implemented, they either have to find their own parking provision, or use the P&D facilities which are provided with all schemes.

## **10. Key findings**

- 10.1 The Rugby Road/College Park Avenue scheme has been broadly welcomed by residents.
- 10.2 The scheme is viewed as successful from an operational perspective, as it has removed all day commuter parking from the area.
- 10.3 The element of the scheme that is mixed use, which allows permit and charged parking, works well allowing residents to park during the day while providing time limited access to visitors to the benefit of residents and local businesses.
- 10.4 The scheme, in normal operation, is self-funding with income being provided from the charged parking bays. The Rugby Road figures should however be viewed with caution as there is possibly a larger than anticipated income from PCNs which is likely due to the large portion of students living in the area. This income may not be realised elsewhere. Removing the PCN income altogether would mean that schemes would potentially operate at a slight deficit, however it is unlikely that there will be zero income which may help balance the figures.
- 10.5 There are some proposals for further change to the policy which mostly come from the business community.
- 10.6 This scheme has raised the level of demand from other areas and numerous requests have been received.
- 10.7 Despite the positive feedback from the Belfast scheme difficulties are still being encountered with the scheme in Derry/Londonderry.

The originally proposed scheme was much simpler in approach being permit only, but it still received a significant level of opposition during the consultation stage.

10.8 Residents have consistently expressed concerns about various aspects of the policy, aspects which are mostly needed to ensure there is sufficient control to ensure that the schemes work as planned when implemented. These aspects of control are based on approaches used elsewhere in UK and Ireland.

10.9 The level of engagement with residents in both the Rugby Road scheme and proposed scheme for the Rossville Street area, and indeed the other proposed areas, shows that these schemes are very resource intensive in terms of staff time. Engagement is, however, crucial if designs and proposals capable of securing support are to be brought forward.

10.10 The consultation and legislative stages were a large draw on resource. Both the informal consultation, which involved open days in the local area, and the formal consultation when the draft Residents' Parking order was advertised, attracted large amounts of queries and considerable time and effort has been needed to support this.

10.11 The number of visitors permits in particular has received much criticism in the past with many respondents wanting an unlimited number of permits for family and friends, which would defeat the purpose of the scheme if all were to be used on a daily basis. The feedback from Rugby Road does not however bear the concerns out as the scheme has in practice helped visitors as they are now

able to park in the area whereas before the scheme there was limited opportunity to park in those streets.

10.12 When originally developed, the Department's policy was based on best practice from various policies in England and Scotland.

10.13 The Department used feedback from questionnaires sent to a number of local authorities combined with site visits to Nottingham, Croydon and Glasgow.

10.14 Two of the site visits were in Croydon and Glasgow, it was noted that schemes were presented on a strict "take it or leave it" basis.

10.15 This approach is largely replicated in Dublin where scheme designs are also presented on a "take it or leave it" basis. No discussions take place with residents, and communication is through their local Councillor. Only minimal changes to designs layouts are accommodated such as moving a bay or a sign.

10.16 A key learning point, here, is the importance of engagement with local representatives and of involving them more proactively in promoting and gaining acceptance for schemes.

10.17 At approximately £1k per bay, schemes are relatively expensive to provide. Early indications show a good level of income for the Rugby Road scheme, but being located beside a university it would not be considered representative of schemes elsewhere where parking charges and usage levels are likely to be much lower.

10.18 The time taken to introduce the Rugby Road Scheme of approximately five years is clearly unsustainable from a resource and delivery perspective, especially in the context the need for

urgent action to meet our climate change commitments and five-year carbon budget periods.

10.19 'Demand management' measures, which aim to reduce the number and length of journeys undertaken using a private car, especially close to town and city centres, are a key element of the Department's transport focused climate response. This will be outlined in the new Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland currently being prepared. The Department's future approach to parking, including the rationale for Residents' Parking Schemes, will be considered as part of a strategic approach to demand management and will also be a key theme of the NI Transport Plans. These Transport Plans are currently being drafted alongside Councils' Local Development Plans and will be subject to statutory assessments and public consultation. Residents' Parking Schemes may be included within a number of complimentary transport measures, however the progression of any individual measure will still follow its own statutory and approval processes.

## **11. Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 11.1 This review concludes that Residents' Parking Schemes can work for the benefit of residents. It highlights also both the importance of, and the challenges associated with ensuring effective engagement with residents and local businesses and with local public representatives at the outset.
- 11.2 Mixed-use schemes which include charged parking along with permit parking provide the greatest flexibility in terms of residents and their visitors being able to park in an area. However, given our responsibilities under the Climate Change Act, further consideration will need to be given to how we utilise road space to bring about the required level of modal shift from private car use to more sustainable modes of transport.
- 11.3 While schemes have the potential to make significant improvements to the availability of parking opportunities for residents, the extent and coverage of each scheme must reflect the Department's overall need to change travel and parking behaviours and must be dictated by this need rather than the desires of local residents.
- 11.4 The ability of schemes to be self-funding is very much dependent on the income generated by it. Where income is provided from the cost of a permit it will be minimal in comparison with the operating costs, and PCN income will only be generated if vehicles park in contravention of the restrictions. The main source of reliable income is therefore from some form of on-street charging for car parking.
- 11.5 In recognition of the constrained nature of the funding position here any new scheme will be mixed-use as these offer the greatest

potential for schemes to be self-funding. Mixed-use designs also offer the greatest parking access for residents, visitors, and businesses while being relatively straightforward to enforce, which is essential to ensure that schemes work as envisaged.

11.6 The cost of the permit should contribute to covering the cost of the administration of the scheme, to reduce the impact of schemes on the public purse. Permits for schemes either wholly or partially within a NRAs will continue to be provided free of charge except for builder's vehicles and skips. This charge is being retained as an incentive to builders not to park multiple vehicles for overly long periods.

11.7 The current policy is very similar to approaches which work elsewhere and does not need to be altered, however, opportunities to reduce to the cost of providing schemes during the design stage should be implemented. For example, potential savings on the costs could come from reducing the number of ticket machines provided or designing out the need to realignment kerb lines to fit in a few more spaces.

11.8 Schemes are resource intensive in terms of the amount of staff time and effort needed to take a scheme from inception through to implementation. Local engagement and responding to the concerns of residents are very significant portions of this workload. Going forward the Department is to adopt a more robust approach to local engagement, similar to that taken elsewhere, where the aim is to inform, explain and reassure rather than repeatedly redesign the scheme. This will hopefully reduce the staff input to the introduction of schemes which will accelerate delivery.



11.9 With the provision of mixed-use only schemes it is considered reasonable that landlords, who have a property within the scheme area, should use the on-street P&D parking in order to access their properties for maintenance or other needs. Landlords whose office address is within the bounds of a scheme will be entitled to apply for a business permit.

## **12. Other Considerations**

- 12.1 The enactment of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, and the Department's duty to develop a Transport Sectoral Plan which will give increased focus on how emissions from surface transport can be reduced. This will include measures to reduce reliance on private car journeys; and how alternative sustainable travel modes can be made more attractive to private car travel. Demand management in the urban areas will be an important policy lever in achieving this.
- 12.2 A strategic approach to parking, including Residents' Parking Schemes, will need to be developed and will link in with local Parking Strategies being developed in support of the new suite of Transport Plans, currently in development.
- 12.3 The work on this review has however identified a number of significant resource concerns along with policy areas that will need to be considered if further Residents' Parking Schemes are to be taken forward.
- 12.4 Until local parking strategies are agreed, the Department will continue to develop schemes already commenced such as in the Bogside and Iveagh areas, with consideration given to schemes to address the emerging pressures with on-street parking in the vicinity of the new Ulster University campus in Belfast and the Magee campus.
- 12.5 A more streamlined approach to delivery and implementation is needed if more schemes are to be introduced. An approach aimed at informing and explaining only is therefore necessary.

- 12.6 It is recognised that local representatives could have an important part to play in the successful implementation of schemes and it would be worth exploring how their input could help with the promotion of schemes to businesses and residents, as this may better identify those schemes which could ultimately be delivered.

### **13. References**

1. RsPPG E042 'Residents' Parking', Department for Infrastructure October 2018 <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/residents-parking-rsppg-e042>
2. The Rugby Road/College Park Avenue Residents' Parking Operational Review, Department for Infrastructure Roads Eastern Division, October 2019.
3. Rugby Residents' Parking Scheme Review, Department for Infrastructure Roads Parking Enforcement Unit, November 2019.
4. Residents' Parking Scheme Review – Technical Review, AMEY November 2015.

## 14. Appendix 1: Comparison with Dublin By-Laws

### RESIDENTS' PARKING – COMPARISON WITH DUBLIN BYELAWS

This document looks at the differences between the current NI policy for Residents' Parking Schemes Residents' Parking Schemes and the approach taken in Dublin.

The NI policy is contained in RsPPG E042 <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/residents-parking-rsppg-e042.pdf>

The Dublin approach is contained in the Dublin City Council Parking Control Byelaws 2019  
<http://www.dublincity.ie/main-menu-services-roads-and-traffic-parking-dublin/dublin-city-council-parking-control-by-laws>

	Dublin City Council Parking Control Byelaws 2014	NI Equivalent
1.	Schemes only developed where there is evidence that 25% of residents of an area want one.	$\frac{2}{3}$ of a $\frac{1}{3}$ of residents (22%)
2.	Scheme is designed on basis of 25% support and then put out to ballot amongst residents a simple majority 'wins'. Businesses do not get a 'vote'.	None
3.	Scheme will be put in under an order which is subject to statutory consultation which involves consulting with the local police and the Council members. Residents are not consulted with at this stage.	Draft order advertised and representations invited.
4.	If no objections are received to the statutory consultation then the scheme will be implemented, with the residents notified by letter usually shortly before the lines and signs are installed.	None
5.	Residents do not get any say on scheme design. Only aspect open to discussion are the hours of operation.	Residents fully informed and are able to influence detailed designed.
6.	All schemes are mixed use i.e. a combination of permit and P&D parking. There are no permit only schemes; in the Council's view this would be akin to turning the street into a private road.	Residents do not like P&D in their streets. Initial schemes are

		combination of mixed use and permit only.
7.	Residents' parking permit either issued for 1 or 2 years.	1 year.
8.	Heavy demand area – where no permits issues is > 65% the total number of bays.	None
9.	In heavy demand area, max number of permits for single building is 2.	1 per rateable address on first round. More may be issued up to a max of 1.2 times spaces available.
10.	Not in heavy demand area, max number of permits for single building is 4.	Ditto
11.	Where building has 2, 3 or 4 units, max number of permits is one per unit.	Ditto
12.	Where building has > 4 units, and in heavy demand area, max number of permits is one per unit.	Ditto
13.	If self-employed, private vehicle and goods vehicle, has no off-street parking, and not in heavy demand area may get additional permit (may be refused if no front gardens).	None.
14.	Where house converted to > 4 units and in heavy demand area, total number of permits = 4, subject to 1 per unit. Will only issue further permits when vacancy becomes available.	None
15.	Permit may be issued with a max of 2 vehicle registrations on it for up to 2 non-resident immediate family members who act as carers to someone with a chronic illness. Need written submission, vehicle insurance details and written confirmation form family doctor.	Can be treated as 'special permit' on presentation of sufficient evidence and where no other permits have been issued.
16.	Permit may be issued to employee of residential institution when individual resides overnight at a residential institution. 183 nights per year and where there is no off-street parking, and subject to evidence and a max issue of 2 per inst.	None.

17.	<p>In building with &gt; 4 housing units not in a heavy demand or converted houses consisting of more than 4 housing units, located on a heavy demand road</p> <p>1 year permit = €400      2 year permit = €750</p> <p>All other permits</p> <p>1 year permit = €50      2 year permit = €80</p>	<p>£30/year</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Free in Neighbourhood Renewal Area</p>
18.	8 complimentary visitor permits are issued with each 1 year permit and, 16 with each 2 year permit.	None.
19.	Replacement permit fee = €10	£10
20.	Returned permits no refund except for more expense permits with > 3 months remaining. Refund pro-rata.	No refund.
21.	Change of permit fee = €10	£10
22.	Display of invalid permit may result in exclusion from scheme.	None.
23.	<p>Visitors permits – numbers issued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single unit, 80 – max 160/year</li> <li>- Building with 2 or more units, 80/year/unit</li> </ul>	<p>‘Free’ scheme – 20/year or 40/year (over 65s)</p> <p>‘Charged’ scheme 25/quarter or 50/quarter (over 65s)</p>
24.	<p>Visitors permits – costs</p> <p>€1.25/permit, with a minimum purchase of 4 (i.e. €5)</p>	<p>In NRA 20 issued without charge.</p> <p>In other schemes £12.50/25 permits. (Or £12.50/50 for over 65s)</p>
25.	Business permits – none issued.	Treated same as residents permit.