

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	15 March 2011
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Governance
TITLE OF REPORT	The Aberdeen City Council (City Centre) (On-Street Car Club Parking Spaces) Order 2011
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/11/022

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

A single statutory objection has been received in response to the public advertisement of the above-named order. This objection is discussed in section 5 below. The statutory notice is attached as an appendix.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The recommendation is that the objection be overruled and the order made as originally envisaged.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This is being funded by NESTRANS at a cost of £10,000.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

This order would provide for the establishment of a number of on-street parking bays reserved exclusively for vehicles operated by an associated car club. The cars entitled to use the bays would be identifiable by their registration numbers and also by the display of special parking permits issued to the car club in terms of the traffic order.

Broadly speaking, a car club is an organisation that owns or leases, and maintains, a fleet of cars from which its members can book a vehicle whenever they need it. The club pays for tax, insurance, servicing, cleaning and fuel, whereas members pay a joining fee and a subsequent fee for each journey made.

48 cities or towns in the UK (including London of course) currently operate successful car clubs. The concept has only failed once, in Liverpool, because of vandalism in poorly lit areas.

Studies by Carplus, a national charity supporting responsible car use, have shown that 10% of car club members will give up owning a car **or** sell a second family car **or** defer owning a car in the first place. Typically, this results in ten vehicles slipping off the radar for each car club vehicle. The environmental benefits are evident, and individuals are encouraged to consider more closely whether they really need a car, or (more likely) whether they really need a second one.

The only objection received is from Miss Margaret Greig of 9 Crimon Place, who has first of all identified a blind corner at the end of her street, just before Golden Square (and also coming off Golden Square into Crimon Place, in the other direction). Ms Greig thinks that having two cars parked on that very short part of the street will be dangerous and that the obvious place for the bays would be around the statue at the centre of Golden Square.

The spaces in question are indeed restricted by yellow lining at the moment, although allowing parking in them would not cause disquiet. However, my roads colleagues agree with Miss Greig that it would be altogether more desirable to have these spaces more visible in Golden Square, not around the statue in the centre (where the Council's relationship with the British Legion is such that it might seem discourteous to alter the parking arrangements so soon after taking over the operation of them) but at two locations on the street side of the central area instead.

However, this minor change would still require a traffic order, albeit that the alteration could be achieved by adding it to the next citywide collection of minor measures. Accordingly, were this to be done, there is little risk that final implementation in Golden Square would have fallen behind the implementation of the car club spaces elsewhere.

Miss Greig also expresses considerable scepticism that the overall plan is a "green" initiative – dreamed up by politicians and "urban intellectuals" – to reduce the number of cars in the city centre by trying to persuade people that they don't need cars.

*From an urban **realist's** perspective, this initiative will have little effect on city centre traffic which has become a problem as a result of **poor planning**: over the last 30+ years, developers have over-developed city centre sites by being allowed to "**buyout**" the lack of parking.*

*The motor car has been around for more than 100 years; since the end of World War 2, incomes at all levels have risen and credit has become easily available hence ++ cars. It is quite unacceptable for the Council to be treating **city centre residents and visitors as pariahs** for daring to own cars.”*

It is difficult to know how to respond to this set of criticisms. Scepticism about green initiatives is a powerful strand in the popular imagination, and it also finds fields of expression in political and academic spheres. Nevertheless, such scepticism also stands clearly outwith the broad impetus of this Council’s transportation policies, in terms of which it is difficult to argue against a scheme that appears likely to reduce the number of cars coming into the city centre. Under these circumstances, I am bound to recommend that the objection be overruled.

6. IMPACT

The Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking document has a range of aspirations under the heading “transport” (paragraph 7), and the car club proposal seems compatible with many of those aspirations.

Likewise, there are objectives in the Community Plan to maximise accessibility for pedestrians and all modes of transport, and, again, the current proposals sit well with these objectives.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used as a point of departure for writing this report (other than the statutory objection itself).

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984**

**THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE)
(ON-STREET CAR CLUB PARKING SPACES) ORDER 2011**

1. Aberdeen City Council proposes to make the above-named order in terms of its powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
2. The effect of the order will be to establish on-street parking bays reserved exclusively for vehicles operated by an associated car club.
3. The bays will be established at the lengths of kerbside specified in the schedule to this notice.
4. The cars entitled to use the bays will be identifiable by their registration numbers and also by the display of special parking permits issued to the car club in terms of this order.
5. Full details of the proposals are to be found in the draft order, which, together with maps showing the intended bays and an accompanying statement of the Council's reasons for seeking to establish them, may be examined during normal office hours on weekdays between 29 December 2010 and 26 January 2011 inclusively, in the offices of the Road Safety and Traffic Management Team. Please call at the ground floor of St Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen.
6. It is recommended that anyone visiting St Nicholas House to view the documents should make an appointment to do so, in order that a member of staff can be present to offer an explanation if necessary. The telephone number is 523463.
7. Anyone wishing to object to the proposed order should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to the undersigned during the statutory objection period which also runs from 29 December 2010 until 26 January 2011 inclusively. Any objection should state (1) the name and address of the objector, (2) the matters to which it relates, and (3) the grounds on which it is being made.
8. Any person who submits an objection should note that the Committee agendas are public documents, available in libraries and also distributed to the press. Objectors' names and addresses, perhaps with summaries of their observations, may be able to be found in these agendas. Also, although the original letters of objection will not ordinarily be copied as part of the agenda, they are available for inspection by Councillors and are essentially in the public domain. To that extent, however, they are redacted, with e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and signatures blanked out.

Jane MacEachran
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Aberdeen City Council, Town House, ABERDEEN

SCHEDULE

Albyn Lane

North side from a point 70 metres west of the extended western kerblines of Alford Lane westwards for a distance of 12 metres.

Albyn Place

North side from a point 48 metres west of the extended western kerblines of Rubislaw Place westwards for a distance of 12 metres.

Chapel Street

Each side from a point 16 metres south of the extended southern kerblines of Huntly Street southwards for a distance of 12 metres.

Crimon Place

North side from a point 10 metres west of the extended western kerblines of Golden Square westwards for a distance of 10 metres.

East Craibstone Street

North side from a point 14 metres west of the extended western kerblines of Bon Accord Street westwards for a distance of 6 metres.

Hollybank Place

Both sides from a point 11 metres east of the extended eastern kerblines of Holburn Street eastwards for a distance of 6 metres.

Queen Street

North-west side from a point 102 metres north-east of the extended north-eastern kerblines of Broad Street north-eastwards for a distance of 6 metres.

Rose Street

West side from a point 7 metres north of the extended northern kerblines of Margaret Street northwards for a distance of 6 metres.

Rosemount Viaduct

South-west side from a point 2 metres north-west of the extended north-western kerblines of Gilcomston Park north-westwards for a distance of 6 metres.

South Silver Street

West side from a point 34 metres north of the extended northern kerblines of Union Street northwards for a distance of 6 metres.

Stanley Street

Both sides from a point 8 metres west of the extended western kerblines of Albyn Grove westwards for a distance of 6 metres.

West Craibstone Street

North side from a point 6 metres east of the extended eastern kerblines of Bon Accord Terrace eastwards for a distance of 6 metres.