

Mossley Hill Matters: Traffic and Parking Discussion - 3rd Feb 2020

Introduction

We elect officials to run the city for us and be our voice in the town hall. But this is still our city, and we have a responsibility, as residents, to make it the best city in which to live work and play. We can't just tell our councillors that something needs to be done, we need to tell them what action we want them to take, but we can only really do that if we know it's an action that will benefit everyone. Mossley Hill Matters aims to bring local residents together to talk to each other, identify solutions, agree a way forward and then share it with our elected representatives, ensuring that they know what we want when they speak on our behalf.

Topic

Following a number of emails, social media posts and comments on the doorstep, **parking** was identified for the first event.

Number of attendees: 36

Format

Small table discussions, ideally with residents randomly grouped so that each group could raise a variety of issues and discuss them with people who don't experience the same issue, gaining an outside perspective.

The groups initially identified a list of locations that they were aware of in the area that has particular parking issues, along with causes and times, for example, North Sudley Road is bad during the school run with parents parking up to drop off or pick up their kids from school.

Each issue was written on a post it note and added to the ward map to show us which areas were being consistently mentioned.

Each group was then given just one location and asked to discuss potential solutions. Some of the group may be unaffected by the issue and could offer an outside perspective. This emulates the likely discussions that the council teams might have, trying to identify solutions to problems they don't experience. It also removed the emotional factor of being so caught up in the personal effects of the issue that it becomes difficult to find a logical solution.

The plan was then to look at the pros and cons of those solutions. Who else might be affected by the solution, for example, are we going to stop visitors coming to the area by making everywhere resident parking only?

Unfortunately due to a mix up with the venue booking, we were unable to set the room up in advance of attendees arriving so everyone sat with people they knew and several were reluctant to move when the format was explained. Some residents felt that as they had a very specific issue that needed addressing, they didn't want to take part in wider discussions. We were also late starting so didn't have time to get through all of the questions.

Question 1: What are the issues?

- Mersey Road and side roads off Mersey road, being used as an extended car park for Aigburth Station.
- Ashfield Road – congestion around the traffic lights at the Aigburth Rd Junction
- Elmswood – Restricted visibility due to cars parking by the shop & cafe. Difficult for cars turning out of the junctions and hazardous for pedestrians
- Holmfield Road, by Tesco – Cars parking on the corner and churning up the grass verge, cars blocking in residents by parking across the H markings that have faded.
- Stafford and Desford – Narrow roads forcing cars to park on the pavement. This has churned up the grass verge to such an extent that it is uneven, muddy, slippery and a trip hazard.
- Donalds Way – Residential cul-de-sac, with a side entrance to Sudley Jrs. Parents are parking up, leaving their engines running, parking on pavements causing residents to have to walk in the road as well as causing damage to the pavements and residents property. Double Yellow lines have been put in but parents ignore them. Residents are mostly retired, and just want some peace and quiet but are subjected to verbal abuse by parents if they ask them not to park there. The congestion during the school run has caused residents to be trapped in their own driveways, causing them to miss doctors appointments because of inconsiderate use of a small residential area that has only one way in and out.
- Rose Lane , junctions by Mossley Hill Church – lot of congestion here.
- Mossley Hill Road – parking right along, especially when sports clubs are in action, ignoring the double yellow lines. Reduces the road to a single lane, with limited pull in places.
- Aigburth Vale – cars parking on the double yellow lines on the corner by the gym. Causes a visibility hazard for people coming out of Gorselands, especially as cars hurtle around the corner from Aigburth Road. Buses leaving their engine running while drivers take their break, noisy and unpleasant fumes.

Question 2: Potential solutions to specific problems

Mersey Road & Side roads

- One way system
- Posts to prevent parking on double yellow lines
- Improved public transport to encourage people to give up their cars
- Encourage people to walk to the station
- Encourage walk to school schemes to reduce school run traffic
- Reopen Otterspool station
- Have a 1 car per household restriction
- Create cycle paths to encourage more cycling
- Resident parking between set hours to make it impossible for commuters to leave the car there all day
- Park and ride scheme

Holmfield Road/Tesco

- Double Yellow Lines around the corner to prevent parking
- Bollards to physically prevent parking on the pavement/grass verge
- Ask Tesco to reward customers who walk to the shop rather than drive
- Parking bays outside Tesco should be for disabled or family parking only

Elmswood

- Double yellow lines around the corners to prevent parking that reduces visibility

- PCSOs to be more engaged

Donalds Way

- Parking enforcement
- Reach out to the school and send letters home to parents
- Educate parents
- Investigate whether the school can create a drop off/pick up point in the front of the school

Stafford & Desford

- Tarmac the pavements
- Put down stones to discourage parking on the pavements
- A mesh layer under the grass to prevent it being churned up.
- Reduce the pavement width to enable more road space for parking

Rose Lane/Mossley Hill Road

- Use some of the Carnatic Halls land to widen the road and install a roundabout
- Enforce Double Yellow lines
- Improve lighting to encourage more pedestrians

Aigburth Vale

- Speak to the gym owners about their members parking on the corner
- Enforce double yellow lines
- Speak to MerseyTravel about the buses

Other general suggestions

- Spanish style kerbs
- Build a multi-storey car park to increase parking capacity at South Parkway station and encourage commuters to travel by train from South Parkway instead of Aigburth
- Offer a reduction on council tax to carless homes as an incentive to reduce the number of cars on the road.

Question 3: Pros and Cons

Though we ran out of time to really debate the pros and cons, some groups had already filled in the worksheets so these answers are largely taken from them and other discussions being had on social media.

Solution	Pros	Cons
<i>One Way System</i>	Would reduce congestion and improve traffic flow	Diverts traffic to quieter roads, increases mileage and emissions
<i>Parking Permits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent people coming into the area and taking up parking spaces • If parking permits are time specific, will allow regular visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on local businesses that rely on visitors coming from a wider radius • Where parking issues are caused by cars vastly outnumbering

	to homes/shops to park but prevent commuters leaving their car there all day.	parking spaces, resident permits wont make any difference, but may in fact increase the parking difficulty
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Conclusion

There are several key issues:

- Infrastructure
- Behaviour
- Enforcement

Infrastructure

Clearly there are more cars than there are parking spaces. In many parts of the ward, streets were built long before cars and the roads are too narrow for houses on both sides of the street to park outside. This halves the number of parking spaces for each road, which is particularly limiting in terraced streets where there are no driveways. Alternatively, cars park on both sides but have to mount the pavement. This results in broken pavements, destruction of grass verges and creates an access issue for pedestrians. In these areas, parking permits would be useless as every home would be entitled to a parking permit and there still wouldn't be enough parking spaces. Creating new parking spaces is impossible where there is physically no space to widen roads and building on to green spaces would be harmful to the environment.

If increasing parking space is impossible, the most logical solution is to decrease the number of cars vying for parking. Suggestions for this include having more cycle lanes and improving public transport across the city.

Behaviour

Issues experienced by inconsiderate parking, the use of residential streets as a waiting area for drop off and pick up, or extended car parking, ignoring road markings, ignoring speed limits, are all behavioural issues that are difficult to address without causing conflict. Certainly some residents have experienced verbal abuse from drivers who ignore the parking restrictions.

Where businesses and public organisations are the root cause of these issues, perhaps conversations need to be had between the organisations and residents, either through residents associations or facilitated by councillors to try to reach some kind of agreement as to how to improve matters for local residents.

Behaviour change could come through enforcement, however more positive schemes such park and ride, walk to school schemes and improvements to public transport might reduce the amount of cars driving to school or to the train station.

Enforcement

In addition to behavioural issues the lack of enforcement makes it easy for drivers to ignore the restrictions.

As one resident pointed out, enforcement happens daily in the city centre, but locally it might happen once or twice a year. As this is likely an issue of capacity and budget cuts, perhaps a community parking enforcement scheme could be developed giving volunteers the right to issue tickets where parking restrictions are being ignored.

Since declaring a climate emergency and setting a zero carbon deadline of 2030, work is being done to reduce the amount of traffic and air pollution in the city centre, however that has moved it along to the surrounding areas. While it is great that more people are using the train to travel into the city centre, they are still driving to a train station, often from further afield, bringing additional emissions to the area and adding to the air pollution. Suggestions about creating a multi-storey car park at South Parkway could reduce the pressure on the small streets around Aigburth station.

The next Mossley Hill Matters event will be 11am Saturday 22nd February at St Margaret's Academy.

The discussion will ask: What does suitable public transport look like?

As responsibility for transport has been devolved from Central Government to the Liverpool City Region, The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotherham will join the discussion.

The following event will be 7pm Thursday 19th March at Mossley Hill Athletics Club.

The topic for this event will be crime and we'll be joined by Cllr. Emily Spurrell, Labour candidate for Police & Crime Commissioner.