

Plans to ban on-street parking in Edinburgh neighbourhood to go ahead

Controversial plans to ban on-street parking in a congested city neighbourhood are to go ahead after being backed by Edinburgh council.

Many residential streets in the Bangholm neighbourhood are very narrow, which often causes cars to mount pavements when passing parked vehicles on the streets.

As a result, councillors voted today (Thursday) to put double yellow lines on several roads in the neighbourhood, helping to counter the issue of vehicles mounting the pavement but also removing substantial amounts of parking in the area.

The Scottish Government recently introduced legislation banning pavement parking in an effort to keep footways safe and accessible to all road users, but allowed local authorities to designate certain areas of pavement as okay to park on.

Conservative councillor Marie-Clair Munro proposed an amendment which would have allowed pavement parking in the neighbourhood to allow parked vehicles to stay out of the roadway, but this was not approved by councillors.

John Allan, from Clark Avenue, near Bangholm said: "I can only imagine what will happen to our residential street, if the 50 or so households in the Bangholms have to park elsewhere where there is no capacity to absorb additional vehicles.

“The yellow lines will not completely avoid the problem of cars mounting the pavement. Delivery vans and workmen may still park on double yellow lines.

“An exemption to one side of each street would allow one free pavement for pedestrians and the wheeling community, enabling vehicles to pass safely.”

Clark Avenue, Clark Road and Ferry Avenue, which are wider than other streets in the area and sit next to the neighbourhood, would likely take up much of the slack from the loss of parking in Bangholm.

The council report warned that allowing pavement parking to fix the issue would risk causing safety issues for people walking or wheeling on the pavement.

Green councillor Kayleigh O'Neill, who represents the area, said: “The area has a tricky situation, which myself and other councillors have engaged with for months.

“I've had loads of emails, calls, a handful of meetings and visited some residents to ask their views – not all, unfortunately, as the area is quite inaccessible for me in a wheelchair because of the cars, ironically.

“I can understand the frustration that residents have, but we have to respect that cars do not belong on pavements, cars should not have priority over pedestrians, and the reliance of the private vehicle is a relationship that the city needs to stop feeding.”

Council officers evaluated several alternative options to double striping the streets, including the creation of new laybys in the area that could have supported around 40 parked cars.

However, they assessed that the cost of this – starting at about £350,000 – was not feasible.

Nick Adams, another Clark Avenue resident, raised the issue of property prices, saying: "We are working with a number of Edinburgh's legal and property firms to fully understand what impact turning gardens into car parks and or preventing cars being parked outside hundreds of homes is going to have.

"These properties were valued and purchased with parking available. Initial findings estimate affected properties will see a 15% reduction in value, which when confirmed, the residents will be keen to pursue."

Councillor Munro said: "I am disappointed that others on the committee did not support this amendment – this was a sensible and fair solution that directly addressed the concerns of residents.

"I fear that the report that was ultimately agreed upon will be a disappointment to many living in the area.

"We all know that changes in one area can create problems elsewhere. Residents raised legitimate concerns about parking displacement, and this amendment provided a pragmatic way forward.

"While I regret that it was not supported, I will continue to push for common-sense solutions that work for residents, rather than against them."

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter