

Report to:	Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Date of Meeting:	Monday 5 September 2022
Subject:	Thornton Road, Southport - Proposed revocation of Hackney Carriage Stand		
Report of:	Head of Highways and Public Protection	Wards Affected:	Norwood;
Portfolio:			
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To report on the results of a consultation with Hackney and Private Hire Trade Members over the proposal to revoke the existing Hackney Carriage Stand on Thornton Road, Southport.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) the results of the consultation are noted;
- (2) Licensing & Regulatory Committee support the proposal to revoke the existing two cab Stand on Thornton Road and replace it with a Disabled Parking Place for two blue badged vehicles;
- (3) Licensing & Regulatory Committee request Cabinet Member – Locality Services to authorise advertising of the proposal.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Council has the power to revoke a Traffic Regulation Order (Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984) as well as the power to make a new Traffic Regulation Order (Section 1 of that Act). Authorisation to advertise new Traffic Regulation Orders falls under the remit of Cabinet Member Locality Services.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The cost of all legal and administrative procedures and signing and lining, amounting to £1250 will be funded from the 2022/23 Traffic Management Revenue budget.

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): All costs associated with the introduction of the Traffic Regulation Order will be funded from the 2022/23 Traffic Management Revenue budget.	
Legal Implications: There are no legal implications.	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications	
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
This report seeks authorisation to implement a Traffic Regulation Order to control the safe movement of traffic. It does not include any Climate Change implications, positive or negative.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Improvements within the environment contribute towards how safe and happy residents and visitors feel when living or visiting an area.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Will make people feel safer and more confident to go out or use facilities within the community
Commission, broker and provide core services: Sefton Council has a statutory duty to take steps to reduce and prevent road traffic collisions and assist road users
Place – leadership and influencer: Improvements to the local environmental quality of the Borough contributes towards the desire for Sefton to be the location of choice to live, work, visit and invest.
Drivers of change and reform: Improvements within the local environmental quality of the Borough promote pride and ownership amongst communities therefore driving change at a local level.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Improvements to the local environmental quality of the Borough contributes towards the desire for Sefton to be the location of choice to live, work, visit and invest.
Greater income for social investment: Improvements to the local environmental quality of the Borough contributes towards the desire for Sefton to be the location of choice to live, work, visit and invest.
Cleaner Greener: Improvements to the local environmental quality of the Borough contributes towards the desire for Sefton to be the location of choice to live, work, visit and invest.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6915/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5115/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultation has taken place with all registered Hackney Carriage and Private Hire associations.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee / Council meeting.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 A suggestion has been made by a local Ward Councillor for the revocation of the existing two cab Hackney Carriage rank on Thornton Road and replacement with a Disabled Parking Place for blue badge holders. A plan showing the location of the rank is attached as Annex A.
- 1.2 Historically, the rank was used as a 'radio rank', where Hackney drivers would park up whilst waiting to be directed by their radio control room to jobs in the general area. The rank has never been classed as a 'walk up' rank for patrons of local shops or attractions, as is the case in most of the other Hackney ranks within the Borough.
- 1.3 The request is to use the space adjacent to the shops as a convenient parking space for blue badge holders, rather than leaving the two car spaces empty and preventing members of the public from using the space.
- 1.4 Anecdotally, the Ward Member and officers say that in recent years they have never seen a cab ranking at this location.
- 1.5 As per the Council's policy on changes to Hackney Ranks, the proposal has been forwarded to representatives from all of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire associations in Sefton, seeking their views.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 As discussed, the proposal was sent to representatives of the 15 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire associations registered within Sefton, detailing the background to the proposal and requesting comments about the current use of the rank and the suggestion to replace it with parking for blue badge holders.
- 2.2 The associations were given 3 weeks to respond.
- 2.3 One response has been received from the North Sefton Hackney Carriage Association (NSHCA), which is copied verbatim below:-

North Sefton Hackney Carriage Association.

Here are our reasons for objecting to the proposal changing the High Park Rank into disabled parking bays.

If there is demand for disabled bays in the Bispham Road area they can be positioned anywhere without interfering with the taxi trade rank locations.

The taxi rank in Thornton Road is well established. You will know when it was originally requested and then was moved to its present location which is convenient for customers who have dropped off from the town centre bus

stops and then, after shopping, come if they see a Hackney on the rank and can hire immediately instead of having to carry their shopping back home.

Taxi trade has been affected dramatically by the lockdowns, private hire and hackney drivers suddenly had to find employment elsewhere e.g. Amazon and other delivery companies.

A lot of private hire drivers that made these moves have not come back to the trade because the licences of ran out of date, Sefton Hackney Department's decision not to issue new driving licences for both hackney or private hire this close down of service to the trade was activated for months.

This has had a knock-on effect for the public - a shortage of drivers has caused the Private Hire Companies to accept Hackney carriages on the fleets to make up for the depletion of private hire drivers.

I have observed on my regular visits into Southport town centre that e.g.

The Sainsbury's taxi rank has empty spaces on the taxi rank because far less cars trying to get on to the rank.

The station taxis don't require to use the National Car Park on the east side in London Street.

The station taxis - a lot of them are now on the White Cabs fleet, My son has his Hackney carriage which has a station pass now working on white cabs fleet.

If you contact the Hackney Office and enquire which of the Hackney Carriages are using Private Hire Companies to keep themselves busy Mark Toohey should have the details of the changes compared with the period before the pandemic. Mark will have the details of any Hackney carriage proprietors that have placed the plate temporarily back in the office.

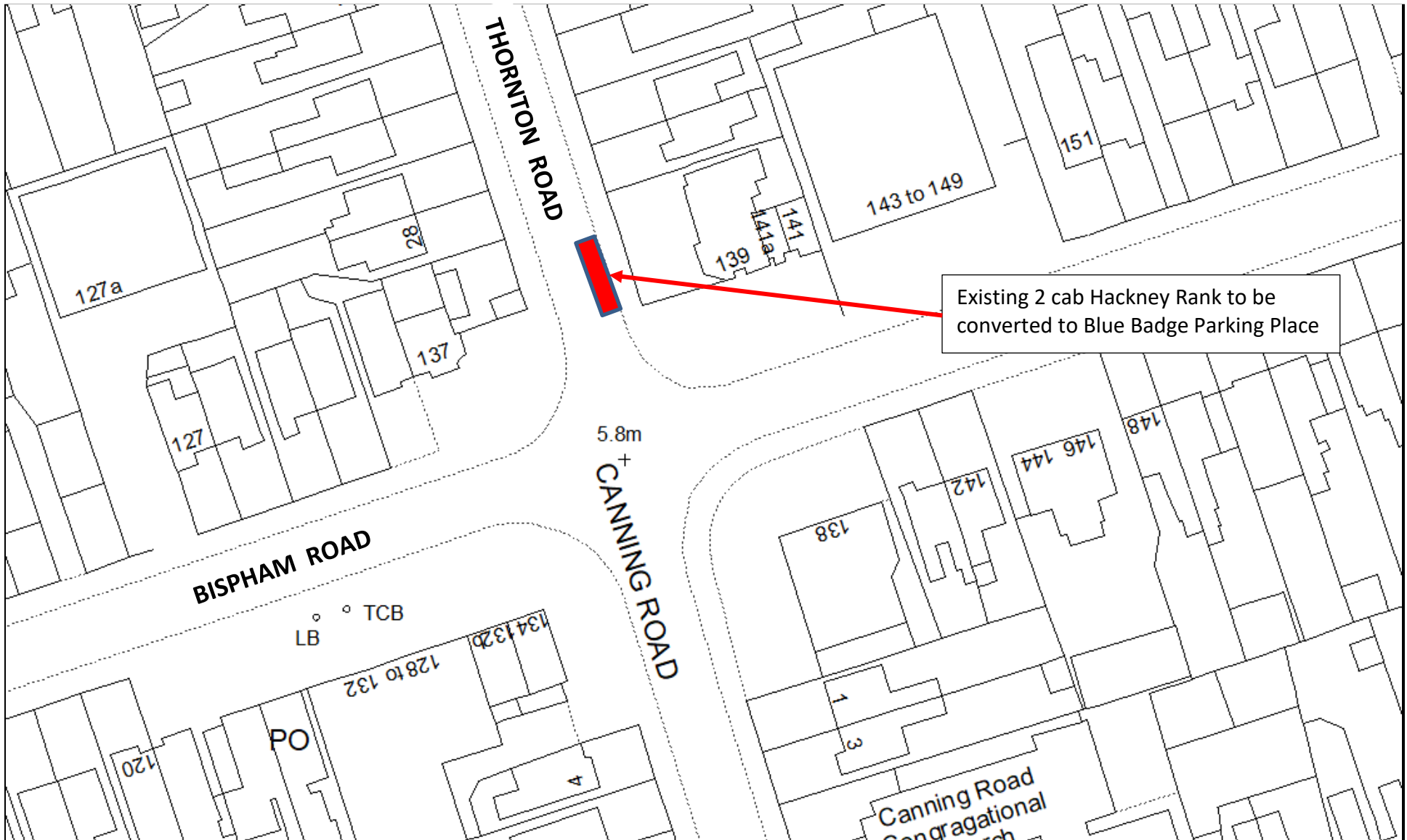
2.4 As can be seen from the comments above, the North Sefton Hackney Carriage Association representative effectively makes three points:-

- ***If there is a demand for Disabled Parking Places (DPPs) in the area, there is plenty of space on Bispham Road to accommodate them.*** Whilst it is accepted that there is space on Bispham Road to create DPPs, this would take away parking spaces for other able-bodied shoppers or residents and visitors to residential properties. If the Hackney Carriage Stand is no longer being used, surely it is better to utilise the available carriageway space which no-one else can use?
- ***The Hackney Rank is well used.*** Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is not true and neither the NSHCA nor any of the other Hackney Association representatives have provided any kind of evidence to this effect. None of the other 14 trade associations have felt the need to respond to this consultation.

- ***Covid has had a dramatic effect on the trade.*** By his own admission, many Hackney drivers have moved to Private Hire or other occupations, with Sainsbury's rank and the station rank having far fewer Hackney cabs ranking up. Surely this admission that there are fewer Hackney cabs in Southport would suggest that drivers are more likely to use the half empty ranks by Sainsbury's or the station where they can expect some kind of custom, rather than use this obscure 2 cab rank far away from any major passenger generator?

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 In order to maximise the use of the public highway, and given that the Hackney Trade have failed to give any credible reason for retaining the rank, it is proposed that the existing Hackney Carriage Rank on Thornton Road be revoked and replaced with a two car DPP.



Existing 2 cab Hackney Rank to be converted to Blue Badge Parking Place

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SEFTON
Peter Moore
 Head of Highways and Public Protection

Title
 Thornton Road, Southport
 Proposal to convert Hackney Carriage Rank into Blue Badge parking place

Drawn
Scale
Date

SJ
NTS
Jul 2022

