

Remarks on Parking Observations made in Sandgate during September 2012.

Observations during September 2012

Preamble: At the request of the Environmental Committee of Sandgate Parish Council, these observations were taken at various times on various days during September. They do not pretend to be taken as a formal survey but as an indication of where parking issues or traffic bottle-necks might exist in Sandgate.

Some 500 observations were made at various times during weekdays and weekends from a set of fixed points where bottlenecks and problems have been reported by members of the public. About half of these observations were recorded on camera to enable comparisons to be made as a retrospective exercise should this be necessary.

Sample points

- Lister way/Castle Road
- Castle Road/Lachlan Way
- Castle Road car park
- Foot of Military Road (Eastside)
- Military Road/Bybrook Field
- Military Road/Enbrook Road
- Enbrook Road (East side bus stop)
- Granville Parade
- Military Road/Sandgate High Street pedestrian crossing (Eastern)
- High Street - Western pedestrian crossing

Remark 1

At all times during the working week there were parking spaces available in Sandgate – mainly in the High Street at the western end on the north side and in Castle Road to the east of the Castle.

Remark 2

The Castle car park never had more than four cars parked during weekdays. At most times, valid parking tickets were displayed. A significant percentage of those few cars parked in the car park displayed Shepway long-term parking permits. White van drivers were more likely not to obtain or display valid tickets. - one van was observed to be parked on double yellow lines on the opposite side of the road at the bottom of Military Road and then to be seen in the car park five minutes later with the driver eating his lunch; no valid ticket was seen on the dash or on the windscreen.

Remark 3

The earliest set of observations was made on several days at 07:00 at the observation points listed above and these observations showed in the region of 70 plus unoccupied parking spaces.

After 08:30 on weekdays most parking spaces around Lister Way, Castle Road, Enbrook Road and the lower end of Military Road below the turning to Enbrook Road are occupied.

Empty parking spaces on both Military Road and Enbrook Road tended to reappear after 3pm.

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Remark 4

Castle Road and Military Road beyond the turning to Enbrook Road suffer from irresponsible and insensitive parking.

A white van was observed twice at 7am; it was parked in such a manner that it limited access to Castle Road from Lister Way to all but the thinnest cars.

Two cars were observed on most days parked on the pavement on the north side outside Sandgate Manor which is the opposite side to a long line of parked cars (see observation 3) which restricted the width of the road so that cars were unable to pass each other at the same time. The road at this point has a large percentage of traffic travelling up and down faster than 30mph.

Remark 5

A small percentage of residents have been seen to ignore any parking restrictions outside their own residences or places of work. On one occasion, a car was parked overnight on Granville Parade on the pavement right next to the ramp down to the beach

A car was parked on the kerb on the restricted West side of Enbrook Road in the afternoon during the restricted hours on that side of the road. The resident claimed to be waiting for someone to return with a key.

A white van was parked for a considerable period of time on several occasions outside 66 Steak House on the pavement with double yellow lines on Sandgate Hill. The same van was then later observed parked in Lachlan Way on double yellow lines. This van was the same van which caused an obstruction two days running in Castle Road. The same van was observed on a different occasion parked on the pavement outside the Castle in such close proximity to the Castle wall that it was impossible to pass the van on the pavement.

Remark 6

There appears to be a lack of understanding about the function and parking restriction associated with the zigzag lines at the pedestrian crossings at either end of the High Street.

One observation found two drivers, in a van and in a car; both were parked on the south side of the western zigzag lines of the Military Road crossing. The van drew away and the car driver then moved further up on the lines. The car contained a baby and the driver was using a mobile phone. Parking spaces were available further down the High Street.

Remark 7

The road traffic signage is not obvious in certain areas. Two have been observed; a wider survey might be necessary.

The blue P (Parking) sign at the foot of Sandgate Hill is obscured by a flower basket. There is a confusing set of No Entry signs on Granville Parade at the junction with Parade Road. They require re-positioning in direction and height. Cars have been observed driving up Parade Road towards the High Street on two occasions.

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Actions taken

1. I have asked Fred Millar, Transportation Manager, SDC about the inconsiderate and illegal parking situation at the foot of Military Road. He has replied that the council now employs a contractor, NSL to enforce parking restrictions across the district. He has asked them to include this area in their list of hot spots to be patrolled frequently. They do patrol until 8pm and once a month they patrol until 11pm. He will ask them to ensure that the CEOs patrol after 6pm in this vicinity.
2. Alan Lague, Highways Engineer, SDC has replied to the request to provide a solution to the congestion in the evening that occurs in Sandgate High Street when people park on the north side on the single yellow line which leads up to the zigzag lines for the Pedestrian crossing once the parking restriction is removed at 6pm.

His reply is that the council will look at Sandgate as part of Phase 2 - the single yellow line in Sandgate High Street is a throwback to the Ministry of Transport days and we have noted that it is in need of changing to suit current parking habits. The council will launch a full consultation in due course.

Question:

Is parking on the pavement legal? If not, who is the enforcer?