

# Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 10 October 2024

## Incorrect Parking on the Tram Line

**Executive  
Wards**

**Routine**

1 - Almond, 3 – Drum Brae/Gyle, 6 –  
Corstorphine/Murrayfield, 11 – City Centre, 12 – Leith  
Walk and 13 - Leith

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Transport and Environment Committee is asked to note this update on incorrect parking on the tram line, as requested by the Council and Transport and Environment Committee.

**Gareth Barwell**

Interim Executive Director of Place

Contact: Gavin Brown, Head of Network Management and Enforcement

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## Incorrect Parking on the Tram Line

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides a further update on incorrect parking on the tram line, as requested by Committee in January 2024.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 On 31 August 2023, the Council approved an [adjusted motion](#) by Councillor Rae on Illegal Parking Disrupting Tram Operations.
- 3.2 A [Business Bulletin](#) update was provided to Transport and Environment Committee on 14 September 2023.
- 3.3 An initial report in [response](#) to the motion was submitted to Committee on 12 October 2023. This report did not address all of the actions agreed by the Council in August 2023 and a further [report](#) was submitted in January 2024 to address the outstanding action points.
- 3.4 On 11 January 2024, Committee [agreed](#) the following actions:
- 3.4.1 To note the update on incorrect parking on the tram line as requested by the Council and Committee.
  - 3.4.2 To note the report was based on the original motion by Councillor Rae, rather than the substantially amended composite motion that was approved by Council on 31 August 2023
  - 3.4.3 To note that as a result, several actions from the composite motion remained outstanding.
  - 3.4.4 To regret that a briefing from parking officers, with Transport spokespeople and ward Councillors had not taken place despite Committee agreeing to have this offered by the end of September 2023.
  - 3.4.5 To request a briefing was organised with relevant officers, Transport spokespeople and ward councillors on the issues raised in Councillor Rae's original motion.
  - 3.4.6 To request a revised report comes to Committee in March which addressed the issues raised and the following:

- 3.4.6.1 How effective, accessible and well used the current reporting systems were;
- 3.4.6.2 What the financial and environmental benefits of reducing car parking spaces on Leith Walk would be;
- 3.4.6.3 How we could proactively implement physical measures and prioritise these in future business cases; and
- 3.4.6.4 How these measures were crucial in reducing car kilometres, dependency on the private car, and congestion whilst ensuring our public transport options remained the most accessible and attractive form of mobility in Edinburgh.

## 4. Main report

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### Briefing for Transport spokespeople and ward councillors

- 4.1 A briefing note relating to Incorrect Parking on the Tram Line was circulated to Transport Spokespeople and Ward Councillors on 19 January 2024. As agreed, given the public concern regarding the matter, the written briefing was in a form that could be shared with residents and other stakeholders as required.

### How effective, accessible and well used are current reporting systems?

- 4.2 The following data details the number of enforcement requests which have been received by the Council this year through the online reporting form, and the percentage of those that relate to Leith Walk in particular:

Month (2024)	Requests	Leith Walk Specific	% relating to Leith Walk
January	2,616	28	1.07%
February	2,725	39	1.43%
March	2,019	20	0.99%
April	1,539	17	1.10%
May	1,585	13	0.82%
June	1,463	19	1.30%
July	1,534	31	2.02%
August	1,692	38	2.25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,173</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1.35%</b>

- 4.3 The figures demonstrate that the online reporting form is well used by customers across the city. All reported locations are visited, and enforcement action is carried out (when appropriate).
- 4.4 Of the requests made for Leith Walk only two (one in July and one in August) related to incorrect parking on the tram line. These issued were resolved, and the areas were clear when Parking Attendants attended.
- 4.5 Edinburgh Tram provide a daily Operations Summary report to the Council as well as being able to contact Council officers directly if any issues arise. However, they do not regularly contact the Council directly about incorrect parking on the tram line and, as an example, the daily Operations Summary reports for the first week of September 2024 make no mention of incorrect parking on the tram line causing any delays to services.
- 4.6 It is considered that the successful implementation of city wide parking prohibitions relating to parking on footways, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs has played a part in better management of inconsiderate parking on the tram line alongside a prominent enforcement presence in the area is ensuring safe, efficient movement of all road users on the network.

**What would be the financial and environmental benefits of reducing car parking spaces on Leith Walk?**

- 4.7 While a reduction of parking places could be an effective demand management tool, it is very difficult to predict the financial and environmental benefits of reducing car parking spaces on Leith Walk. There are unlikely to be financial benefits to the Council of reducing car parking spaces, and there may be a reduction in income to the Council from parking charges if the number of spaces is reduced. The environmental impacts are also difficult to quantify as it is possible that, rather than removing vehicles, they may be displaced to surrounding streets.
- 4.8 In the development of the Tram to Newhaven project, a technical review of the positioning of all dedicated loading/parking places provided along the route both in terms of proximity to junctions and interaction with other vehicles and road users was carried out. It was considered that the loading/parking places were located in the most advantageous locations for all road users. They were also placed at strategic points to ensure equality of access for all businesses.
- 4.9 Also, during the design phase of the Trams to Newhaven route, consultation with businesses demonstrated that an important consideration was the retention of loading/parking places. While much of the parking and loading was relocated onto side streets, there remains some on street which is in response to the requirements of businesses and residents' requirements. To remove loading/parking places would require consultation with businesses and residents on Leith Walk and Constitution Street.

4.10 It should also be noted that the successful introduction of the Controlled Parking Zone in Leith has effectively managed demand on limited kerbside space through the use of parking permits and pay and display parking. This, and an increased enforcement presence, has contributed to more considerate parking in the vicinity of the tram line.

**Could we proactively implement physical measures and prioritise these in future business cases and how would these contribute to reducing car kilometres, dependency on the private car, and congestion whilst ensuring our public transport options remained the most accessible and attractive form of mobility in Edinburgh?**

- 4.11 Officers have considered the current arrangements and have concluded that, at present, due to the introduction of the pavement parking prohibition and the reduction in incorrect parking on the tram route, there are no additional physical measures required to restrict incorrect parking on the tram line. And, as noted above, parking places and loading bays are required to meet the need of local businesses. In addition, measures may not contribute to an overall reduction on car use or reduce congestion significantly.
- 4.12 The Council is continuing to review the operation of the tram route and surrounding streets to ensure they are operating effectively and that the requirements for businesses and residents are balanced.
- 4.13 As stated in the briefing note, given the relatively small number of instances of incorrect parking within the dedicated loading/parking places, it is not considered appropriate to introduce physical barriers which could further limit access to the parking places. Such measures could have the unintended consequence of creating more conflict between the tram and poorly parked vehicles, particularly when some drivers find the current parking places difficult to utilise correctly.
- 4.14 The Controlled Parking Zone and continued enforcement of parking rules (including the procurement of a new Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) Contract) ensures that parking will continue to be monitored in this area. This will support reductions in parking demands and congestion; as well as improving air quality and road safety.
- 4.15 Parking places along the tram route are managed through parking charges or maximum stay periods to ensure a turnover of spaces and to discourage all-day commuter parking, with access maintained for disabled blue badge holders who may not be able to use public transport.
- 4.16 New parking controls around Leith have extended more effective parking management within the vicinity of the tram line. As a result, it is expected that better parking opportunities will be available nearby and the number of instances of incorrect parking will reduce. Additional enforcement visits will also continue in known problematic locations.

**Planters**

- 4.17 Officers have discussed in detail the removal of planters along Leith Walk. The planters were not designed to prevent pavement parking or installed in strategic positions to do so. It should also be noted that the successful implementation of city wide parking prohibitions relating to parking on footways, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs has played a part in better management of inconsiderate parking on the tram line as well as a prominent enforcement presence in the area related to the Controlled Parking Zone and ensuring safe, efficient movement of all road users on the network

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 The Council will continue utilising a streamlined system for reporting incidents, deploying regular patrols and working in partnership with Edinburgh Tram and other stakeholders to ensure the safe and efficient movement of all road users on the network whilst ensuring the travel hierarchy is promoted and supported.
- 5.2 The procurement of a new DPE contract will consider removals from tram tracks in greater detail and the new contract will provide the Council with the opportunity to procure additional recovery solutions, if required.

## 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 The actions set out in this report are met from the Council's existing revenue budget.

## 7. Equality and Poverty Impact

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- 7.1 There is no equality, human rights (including children's rights) or socio-economic disadvantage implications as a result of this report.

## 8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

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- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

*"must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets"*

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

*"in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions"*

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and Transport and Environment Committee – 10 October 2024

corporate emissions and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

### **Environmental Impacts**

- 8.3 There are no impacts on climate change or climate change mitigation as a result of this report as there are unlikely to be significant positive or negative impacts on the natural environment as a result of retaining parking and loading arrangements as they are on Leith Walk.

## **9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact**

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- 9.1 There are no known risk, policy, compliance, governance or community impacts arising as a result of this report.

## **10. Background reading/external references**

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- 10.1 None.

## **11. Appendices**

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Appendix 1 – Briefing Note on Incorrect Parking on the Tram Line

# Incorrect Parking on the Tram Line - Briefing Note

Network Management and Enforcement  
Place Directorate  
January 2024

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 On 31 August 2023, the Council approved an adjusted [motion by Councillor Susan Rae](#) on Illegal Parking Disrupting Tram Operations.
- 1.2 Part of that motion included an agreement that Transport spokespeople and Leith and Leith Walk councillors would be provided with a written briefing note from parking officers outlining progress to resolve the issue of incorrect parking on the Trams to Newhaven (TTN) part of the tram network. It was also agreed that, given the public concern, a written briefing should be forwarded to all Councillors in a form that could be shared with residents.

## 2. Background

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- 2.1 A [Business Bulletin](#) on this subject was provided to the Transport and Environment Committee on the 14 September 2023.
- 2.2 A [committee report](#) on this subject was submitted to the Transport and Environment Committee on the 12 October 2023.
- 2.3 A further [committee report](#) was also submitted to the Transport and Environment Committee on the 11 January 2024.

## 3. Main Points

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- 3.1 It was noted that there were 22 incidents of trams being delayed on the TTN route by illegally or irresponsibly parked vehicles in the period 7 June to 31 July 2023. Between 1 August 2023 and 30 November 2023, this had reduced to 14 instances where parked vehicles caused obstructions on the tram line, causing an average delay of approximately 10 minutes. The longest delay was 20 minutes and the shortest delay was three minutes. The table below shows the number of incidents by month.

Month	Number of Incidents
August	3
September	3
October	4
November	4



- 3.2 Analysis of the data confirmed that the majority of the incidents delaying the tram are the result of inconsiderately parked vehicles protruding from loading/parking places positioned adjacent to the tram route, such as those provided on Constitution Street.
- 3.3 It should be noted that benchmarking with other cities around the UK, operating light rail or tramways systems, has identified that their tracks are segregated from moving traffic, with no loading/parking bays positioned directly adjacent to the track, avoiding the possibility of obstructions or service delays being caused.
- 3.4 The tram team carried out a technical review of the positioning of all dedicated loading/parking places provided along the TTN route, in terms of proximity to junctions and interaction with other vehicles and road users. It was considered that the loading/parking places were located in the most advantageous locations for all road users. They were also placed at strategic points to ensure equality of access for all businesses.
- 3.5 Consultation with businesses at the time the TTN route was designed demonstrated that an important consideration was the retention of loading/parking places. While much of the parking and loading was relocated onto side streets there remains some on street which is in response to their requirements. To remove loading/parking places would require consultation with businesses on Leith Walk and Constitution Street.
- 3.6 It is clear from contact received that businesses and residents on the TTN route support the provision of additional parking places, although this is not considered possible at this time.
- 3.7 Given the relatively small number of instances of incorrect parking within the dedicated loading/parking places it is not considered appropriate to introduce physical barriers which could further limit access to the parking places. Such measures could have the unintended consequence of creating more conflict between the tram and poorly parked vehicles, particularly when some drivers find the current parking places difficult to utilise correctly.
- 3.8 Consideration has been given to the possible introduction of additional Sheffield Cycle Stands in loading/parking places where incorrect parking has caused delays to the tram operation. However, initial concerns around providing for the safety of users and the need for a Traffic Order mean that any changes would take up to two years to introduce and could be potentially costly in design and necessary physical intervention.
- 3.9 Given the infrequency of delays to the tram, and the robust enforcement mitigations that are in place, it is not considered necessary, or appropriate, to introduce cycle parking in the dedicated loading/parking places at this time.

### **Current Enforcement Approach**

- 3.10 A streamlined system for reporting incidents has been introduced, whereby the tram operations team can contact the Council's parking enforcement contractor directly when incidents occur so that Parking Attendants can be deployed immediately to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) where appropriate.

- 3.11 Regular patrols are also being made by Parking Attendants to deter such parking. There is also an agreement in place with Lothian Buses and Edinburgh Trams to allow Parking Attendants to travel on buses and trams so that they can better monitor main routes and quickly attend incidents as they occur.
- 3.12 New parking controls around Leith have extended more effective parking management within the vicinity of the tram line. As a result, it is expected that better parking opportunities will be available nearby and the number of instances of incorrect parking will reduce. Additional enforcement visits will also continue in known problematic locations.
- 3.13 An [online form](#) can be used by members of the public to report incorrectly parked vehicles. Reports are submitted directly to the parking contractor to take action as necessary.
- 3.14 There is currently no legal mechanism to allow members of the public to submit photographic or video evidence, captured by themselves (such as on mobile phones) which would allow the Council to retrospectively issue PCNs. Legislation currently requires that all evidence be gathered by a designated Parking Attendant before a PCN can be issued.
- 3.15 As agreed by Council, Councillor Scott Arthur, Convenor of the Transport and Environment Committee, has written to Scottish Ministers to address this issue and request additional powers to assist with the Council's ability to robustly enforce against inconsiderate parking.
- 3.16 The Council's Parking Enforcement Protocol reflects the legislation and regulations that are in place, and does not require to be updated.
- 3.17 Further powers are not required, to create a new road traffic offence of blocking a tramway with a parked vehicle, when enforcement can be managed through existing means.
- 3.18 The Council's current fleet of removal trucks are unable to operate near to the tram line due to the overhead power lines. Consideration is therefore being given to the procurement of additional vehicles which can remove vehicles from the tram line without the need for overhead lifting as part of the Council's next Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) contract, starting in October 2024.
- 3.19 However, given the short delay times experienced by the tram, and the volume of traffic using the roads in Leith, it is unlikely that any removal resource procured by the Council could be deployed quickly enough to action the removal of an obstructive vehicle before the driver returns (based on the maximum reported delay time of 20 minutes).
- 3.20 In the meantime, the Council's current enforcement contractor will continue to utilise dolly wheels, which allow for vehicles to be manoeuvred away from the tram tracks into safe areas. Or, in the majority of cases, vehicles would be pushed further to the kerbside, away from the tracks, removing the obstruction to the tram.

3.21 Three types of removal truck were considered for procurement by the Parking team and the indicative costs for purchasing additional vehicles are outlined in the table below:

<b>Vehicle Type</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Winch and flatbed	£70-80,000
Wheel lift	£130-140,000
Tow Track	£250-260,000

3.22 There is no funding currently available within the Council's revenue budget to meet the cost of an additional vehicle (or vehicles) at this time. However, it is anticipated that such costs could be contained (and spread) across the Council's next DPE contract.

3.23 A number of local third-party suppliers have been identified as having appropriate vehicle recovery capabilities. These could be used on a case-by-case basis to remove vehicles from the tram tracks without the need to use a lifting arm. These options will be discussed further with the tram operations team. However, as detailed above, it is unlikely that any removal resource could be deployed quickly enough to action the removal of an obstructive vehicle before the driver returns.

#### **Other Actions and Considerations**

3.24 The Council have installed 60 Sheffield Cycle Stands along the TTN route. Discussions are ongoing regarding installation at other locations, but bike hangars are not planned for installation on the TTN route due to the limited available space and the fact that they are usually placed on adjacent side roads rather than major transport routes.

3.25 The pedestrian crossings at the various junctions along the TTN route are operating as efficiently as they can in accordance with the overall junction operation, whilst still allowing tram progression through the network.

3.26 At some junctions and standalone crossings, the pedestrian waiting time will be minimal. However, at more complex multistage junctions the pedestrian wait will be longer as there are more stages within the traffic signal sequence that need to be serviced during the full cycle of the sequence

3.27 When TTN went live issues raised by Living Streets, regarding the pedestrian crossings along the route, were rectified and no further contact has been received.

## **4 Contact Details**

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Parking Operations Customer Care

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