

# London Borough of Wandsworth

## Northcote Road



### Site survey analysis

Prepared by



*on behalf of*



**Version 1.0 May 2007**

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#### Report

Prepared by



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## **Introduction**

The South London Freight Quality Partnership (SLFQP) was set up in the autumn of 2005 to understand freight transport issues and problems in the South London area, and to work collectively with all the stakeholders to create effective dialogue in promoting solutions to problems cited in the South London area.

The Legal Loading Initiative work is an offshoot of the South London Freight Quality Partnership (SLFQP) project. A number of sites in the South London area were chosen as a result of London Boroughs within the SLFQP of whom were willing to embrace the principles set out in the London Loading / Unloading Code of Practice. This Code is essentially aimed at commercial vehicles. The principles set out in the Code of Practice aim to promote a more co-operative approach to the problems and issues arising over the need to load and unload goods, and provide guidance for delivery staff, parking attendants and traffic authorities. The Code of Practice has arisen through the challenge to ensure that (un)loading is being carried out properly and that the enforcement is both sensible and fair. The situation can become exacerbated when there is incorrect enforcement, when drivers ignore the rules and when communication between drivers and traffic authorities is inconsistent.

In order to try and tackle the problems and issues arising from loading and unloading, business and industry groups came together to try and address some of the problems relating to deliveries, loading/unloading and to promote best practice. The main issue involves the incidence of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), issued to vehicles which are deemed to be inappropriately or illegally parked. London Boroughs that agreed to adopt the principles of the Code into their parking policies were provided with preferential treatment in terms of site allocation. The London Borough of Wandsworth has agreed to integrate the Code of Practice into its parking enforcement strategy and was duly awarded priority funding.

Following site identification, the study then sought to understand the nature of the problem specific to each site, in terms of the provision of loading and unloading facilities, inconsistent delivery practices, problems with parking enforcement and the excessive issuing of PCNs (Penalty Charge Notices). This was then followed up by an extensive phase of consultation and an on-street survey of loading and unloading facilities, delivery restrictions and their justification, delivery practices and parking operations to confirm the actual situation.

The main objective of the Legal Loading Initiative work is to find out how to reduce problems that are currently associated with loading and unloading in the sites identified.

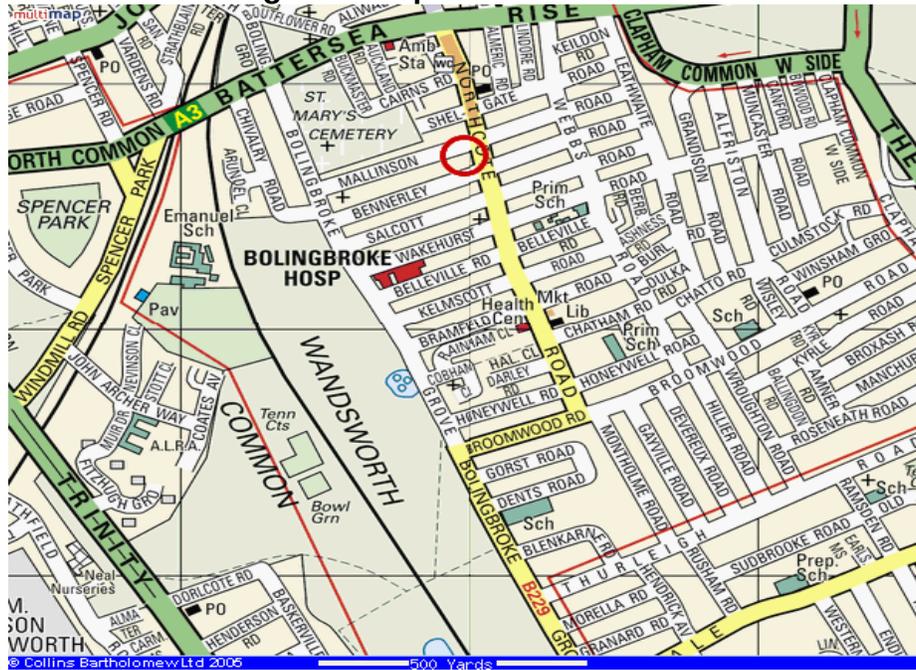
## **Local Context**

### **General Information**

Northcote Road (part of the B229) is in Clapham Junction, which is within the London Borough of Wandsworth. Wandsworth Common lies to the west and Clapham Common to the east. The B229 links the A214 Trinity Road with the A3

Battersea Rise. Northcote Road is situated within close proximity to Clapham Junction train station. Northcote Road is situated within a residential area, but the road itself is almost exclusively made up of independent speciality shops. The Clapham Junction Town Centre Partnership has helped to put in a wide range of improvements to the area. Northcote Road was recently rated as the “2<sup>nd</sup> best street in London”.

Figure 1: Map of Northcote Road



Ordnance Survey Licence No: [AL100032241]

The far end of Northcote Road is part of the Transport for London (TfL) red route network and has not been included in this study.

Northcote Road appears to be a particularly busy street serving several different purposes. It manages early morning commuter traffic and can get busy with car traffic during the early morning and evening rush hour. It is popular with daytime shoppers and the demand for parking spaces along the road is high with parking space limited. There are a number of schools located within the vicinity of Northcote Road, all of which collectively create a high degree of school traffic passing through the area. There is also a high volume of bus movement that passes along Northcote Road. There is a vibrant night-time economy with many pubs, restaurants and bars.

- The Borough of Wandsworth is situated within relatively close proximity to Central London, with Merton Borough to the south and Lewisham Borough to the east.
- The main problem is the acute lack of space for parking (residents and customers) and for delivery vehicles to load and unload.
- Clapham Junction appears to be becoming a trendy district for young city professionals.

**Figure 2: Car parking on Northcote Road**



Business Profile

Northcote Road contains many independent speciality shops. There are a total of 102 shops on the road, of which 47 (46%) are either food or drink retailers, or bars / restaurants. These types of stores need regular servicing and normally from a number of different suppliers, creating the need for a great number of deliveries.

**Figure 3: Graph to show the business profile of Northcote Road**  
**Northcote Road business profile (%)**



- Many businesses along Northcote Road are food related and therefore require regular servicing with fresh food and drink.
- There is a high concentration of estate agencies along Northcote Road.

### **Methodology**

The research was undertaken in the following way:

- Initial site visit with Wandsworth Borough Council officer to introduce the site and to begin to understand problems and issues
- Photographs taken of live delivering taking place to understand the true situation
- Delivery observations 8:00am – 1:00pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006  
4:00pm – 5:30pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006  
9:00am – 12:00pm on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006
- Retailer surveys 27<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006
- Stakeholder forum 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007

The initial site visit with Wandsworth Borough Council parking enforcement allowed the opportunity to assess the situation in Northcote Road and acquire some background information to the site. This included capturing photographic evidence of live problems observed with delivery vehicles in Northcote Road. There has been consistent close contact with Wandsworth Borough Council during the study.

Separate visits were made to the site to carry out a detailed observation of the types of vehicles that were coming into Northcote Road and an assessment of vehicle parking.

A survey of retailers, delivery drivers and parking attendants was also conducted to try and acquire primary information from the individual stakeholders as to the problems and issues concerning loading and unloading. It was envisaged that the research carried out through the survey would be somewhat supported by the vehicular observations that were made.

A stakeholder forum was organised to bring together the main stakeholders to discuss the main issues arising from the surveys and to agree a set of recommendations that would be agreed locally.

## **Loading / Unloading**

### **Restrictions**

There are four different Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) in operation within the London Borough of Wandsworth. Northcote Road falls within Parking Zone C2 (sub-zone).

Drivers are usually allowed to stop to load or unload. If the items are heavy or bulky or if the driver has a large number of items which would involve more than one trip, the car is allowed to wait on the yellow line. The car should be moved and parked legally when the (un)loading is finished.

Commercial vehicles are allowed to collect and deliver goods. If any paperwork needs to be checked, such as delivery notes or invoices, the time this takes can be included in the (un)loading time allowed. Obviously, the vehicle must be moved after the delivery or collection has taken place.

- Delivery vehicles are permitted to stop on a single or double yellow line in order to make deliveries, but if they are parked dangerously or inappropriately, or if they are obstructing the flow of traffic, they are liable to be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice.
- Loading is not permitted at places where the parked vehicle could cause an obstruction, such as within 10 metres of a junction.
- Often there will be yellow 'blips' on the kerb. These warn that there is a loading restriction. Two 'blips' mean no loading 'at any time'. One 'blip' means that loading is restricted at certain times, as shown on a white plate. However, there is no loading prohibition in operation along Northcote Road.
- Blue Badge holders are not allowed to park in locations where there are loading restrictions in force.
- There are no loading bays along Northcote Road. This causes a problem for delivery drivers in terms of finding somewhere to legally stop to load/unload, due to the fact that the majority of the space is usually taken up by customer or business parking. The observational work that took place demonstrated clearly that delivery vehicles are being forced to stop in awkward and potentially dangerous spots to (un)load. This can create congestion and generate Penalty Charge Notices.
- The C2 parking zone has restrictions in place, that allow for 25 parking spaces, and parking for a maximum of 4 hours in operation between Monday

- to Saturday, 9:30am to 5:30pm. This allows both visitors and permit holders to park.
- There are 45 pay-and-display bays specifically for shoppers. These are available for parking in between Monday to Saturday from 9:30am to 5:30pm for a maximum of 1 hour. Permits are not valid in these bays.
  - There are 8 disabled bays in Northcote Road.
  - There are 21 parking spaces (pitches) set aside for the Northcote Road Street Market. No parking in the market pitches is permitted between Monday to Saturday, 7:00am to 6:30pm. Of the 21 spaces, 10 are usable by Business Permit holders between Monday to Thursday from 9:30am – 5:30pm. Friday and Saturday are the main market days, during which only market stalls are permitted to occupy the pitches. Delivery vehicles are not permitted to use this area to load / unload.
  - There are a number of parking spaces available for Business Permit Holders only between Monday to Thursday 9:30am to 5:30pm. However, no stopping is permitted in these bays on Fridays and Saturdays between 7:00am and 6:30pm.
  - Approximately 10% of all PCNs issued throughout the London Borough of Wandsworth are appealed.
  - Travelling into Northcote Road from the main A3 Battersea Rise causes you to enter CPZ C2 from a Red Route. If one wishes to enter Northcote Road from the south, there is the possibility of entering CPZ C4 and then C2 – both zones are signed to inform you of entering and leaving the particular zone, but there is a possibility of missing the sign leading a driver to believe that he/she may be in the same zone.
  - Parking restrictions differ between CPZs and even along Northcote Road the rules are different for different bays. However the parking signage along Northcote Road is generally good.
  - There are many local streets branching off of Northcote Road which are usually at capacity in terms of car parking. The parking availability along the local side streets is generally for permit holders only.

An 'Observation period' exists for which a parking attendant to observe any evidence of loading/unloading taking place in an area where parking is restricted, but loading/unloading is permitted. The length of the observation period depends largely on the type of contravention and often on the vehicle type.

Wandsworth Council typically expects Parking Attendants to provide a minimum 2 minute observation period before issuing any tickets to any vehicle that is parked incorrectly in a bay or along a yellow line that does not have a loading restriction enforced at the time. The Council would expect Parking Attendants to provide 5 minute's observation to commercial vehicles before issuing tickets. Parking Attendants usually observe vehicles for longer periods and do not issue tickets to vehicles where it is clear that loading / unloading is taking place.

### Enforcement

During the six month period from May 2006 to November 2006, there were a total of 2,297 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued for parking-related offences on Northcote Road. Whilst it was not possible to break this number down into the types

of vehicles that received PCNs, it was possible for the data to be broken down by type of contravention. Nearly 40% of all PCNs issued on Northcote Road were due to the vehicle being parked during prohibited hours. A further 25% were issued because the vehicle was parked beyond the time for which it had paid for. In the case of delivery vehicles, the latter contravention would not apply because tickets would not be purchased for delivery vehicles loading / unloading.

Parking enforcement in the borough is contracted out to Central Parking System (of which trades under the name of Control Plus) and provide basic training to all parking attendant staff. Following initial training by Control Plus, further training is then provided by the Parking Enforcement department at Wandsworth Borough Council to include details about specific policies.

A parking attendant will normally observe an unattended vehicle for the relevant observation period for that vehicle type before considering the issuing of a PCN. If after the period of observation there is no loading / unloading taking place the parking attendant will issue a PCN.

There are 94 parking enforcement officers within the borough. It is not easy to enforce parking restrictions throughout the borough all of the time. However, attendants were present on the Northcote Road parking beat on each occasion when observational work was conducted.

### Signage

Although the restrictions vary considerably along Northcote Road, there is no loading prohibition along Northcote Road, and therefore delivery vehicles are permitted to stop on either single or double yellow lines or in normal parking bays, to (un)load. However, they are not supposed to stop in the market pitches nor in the disabled bays. Each different stretch of parking bays is marked with a sign to indicate the restrictions for those particular bays.

**Figure 4: Signage to show parking restrictions on Northcote Road**



## **Observational and Survey Work**

### **Vehicle Movements and Conflicts**

There is a high volume of car, bus and lorry traffic along Northcote Road. A proportion of the traffic is through-traffic, but a substantial amount of the car traffic appeared to be bound for Northcote Road, either for a shopping / leisure purpose, or as a final destination.

Due to the fact that rear servicing of businesses on Northcote Road is limited, many deliveries are restricted to kerbside access, causing the demand for road space for unloading to be high. It was observed that the vast majority of the parking bays were occupied from 8:30am onwards, with traffic levels remaining high until 9:30am but then reducing and levelling off for the remainder of the day.

The initial site visit involved developing an inventory of the numbers of different types of retailers that there are in Northcote Road and to make an inventory of the numbers of parking spaces and their associated restrictions. The initial visit was also an opportunity to experience the actual live conditions on Northcote Road. Follow-up site visits were conducted in order to specifically observe the movements of delivery vehicles passing through and delivering to stores in Northcote Road. The period of observations was conducted over two days. This provided an insight into the actual

situation with respect to (un)loading, the problems and conflicts that the vehicles are exposed to and the severity of the challenge to (un)load.

There appeared to be a high level of traffic moving along Northcote Road, particularly between 8:00am and 9:30am. It was observed that delivery vehicles arrived at staggered times during the day. The section of Northcote Road close to the junction with Broomwood Road was observed to be less busy than other sections.

Many of the delivery vehicles observed were either vans or small rigid vehicles. Some of those observed were the larger 3 – 4 axle rigids. Many vehicles observed had been forced to park on the only available double-yellow space next to the corner of Northcote Road and one of the side streets.

The observations seemed to suggest that the road was at its most congested in the early morning peak, between 8:00am – 9:30am, with the level of traffic reducing after 9:30am. The issue, however, was not with traffic congestion per se, but instead due to problems with delivery vehicles creating conflict and hence delay.

Generally, it was observed that many delivery vehicles coming into Northcote Road to make a delivery during the period of observation struggled to find a suitable place to stop and unload. Due to the high demand for customer parking bays, many delivery vehicles were forced to park inappropriately – many vehicles were observed parking awkwardly close to the junctions with side roads to stop creating conflict and potential danger with other road users. There was also a degree of illegal stopping observed by car drivers stopping quickly to buy something. This illegal stopping was generally on double-yellow lines or in the pay-and-display bays but without paying. Such behaviour created an additional (and illegal) disruption for delivery drivers. The busiest section of Northcote Road was observed to be the junction with Mallison Road and Bramfield Road.

**Figure 5: Delivery vehicles servicing businesses on Northcote Road**



There is CCTV in operation overseeing nearby bus lanes along Garratt Road and Lavender Hill, but not Northcote Road itself.

## Retailers

Some retailers felt that the degree of residents parking on Northcote Road was causing a large amount of the problem of limited space for delivery vehicles to (un)load.

A loading 'clock' displaying the time the driver arrived in the window of the cab would clearly show a parking attendant the amount of time that had elapsed since arriving at his/her destination to load / unload.

The busiest period to load and unload is in the morning, and Friday seemed to be the busiest day of the week for receiving deliveries. Table 1 shows the distribution of time intervals for making deliveries.

**Table 1: Time intervals for deliveries**

Time interval	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 minutes	5	19.2
5 - 15 minutes	11	42.3
15 - 30 minutes	8	30.8
More than 30 minutes	1	3.8
Variable	1	3.8

The following table shows the different vehicles used to make deliveries to retailers on Northcote Road.

**Table 2: Vehicles used to make deliveries**

Vehicle	Percent
Van up to 3.5 tonnes	35
2 axle rigid up to 7.5 tonnes	8
2 axle rigid over 7.5 tonnes	15
Articulated vehicle	15
Two or more of the above	27

Table 3 illustrates the typical pattern of deliveries for businesses on Northcote Road.

**Table 3: Frequency of deliveries**

Frequency of delivery	Percent
Throughout everyday	35
Once per day	15
2 - 4 times per week	35
Once per week	15

The number of individual suppliers varied greatly between the different types of retail outlets on Northcote Road – according to the data, the average number of deliveries equated to **9.5 deliveries per store per week**.

Almost 40% of the retailers questioned confirmed that they received deliveries between 9:30am and 4:30pm with approximately the same number stating that they would typically use a delivery bay for between **5 – 15 minutes per delivery**.

85% of retailers said that they used front servicing as their main (or indeed only) access point to accept deliveries, with 73% of retailers reporting that they are indeed restricted to kerbside collections or deliveries. 77% reported problems with access or unloading restrictions.

There was a general feeling among retailers that the restrictions were too harsh and that the current parking policies should be relaxed. The general consensus on loading and unloading restrictions was that the current observation period was sufficient (supported by the amount of time needed to (un)load being between 5 – 15 minutes on average) but that parking attendants should exercise a greater degree of common sense – according to a number of retailers, there have been many apparent incidents of parking attendants issuing tickets to vehicles where (un)loading has clearly been seen to have been taking place.

Friday was found to be busiest day for receiving deliveries, for 26% of retailers. This implies that Friday is potentially the busiest day for all activity in Northcote Road, as this is also one of the street market days.

### Delivery Staff

A number of delivery drivers were questioned as to their experiences of loading and unloading along Northcote Road – the general feeling was that the provision of a dedicated loading bay would help ease the pressure on them to carry out the job properly. For some types of goods that need to be handled carefully (e.g. antiques or rolled carpet) a longer period of time would be useful. The same logic follows for high-value goods, for example musical instruments – the tail lift on a commercial vehicle must be left in the ‘up’ position whilst the vehicle is unattended, for insurance reasons – this may wrongly signal to a parking attendant that the vehicle has just stopped and that no unloading is taking place, and hence a PCN may be incorrectly issued.

Another issue raised was that of needing to take time to check the stock delivery was correct, which can take time. The absence of evidence of physically moving goods between the shop and delivery vehicle for a few minutes whilst this is being carried out may again unnecessarily incur a PCN.

There was a feeling among delivery drivers that parking attendants work on a commission basis, depending on the number of tickets issued. There was also a feeling that parking attendants need greater awareness of the needs of drivers making deliveries, possibly through better training, and need to act and enforce sensibly. Complaints about parking attendants ignoring the observation period for

commercial vehicles (un)loading and issuing tickets after a few minutes or whilst the process was observed to be being carried out, were reported.

Where a PCN is issued in a situation where legitimate loading / unloading was taking place, this can usually be highlighted and cancelled where valid documentation (usually the delivery invoice) can be provided, showing the time of the delivery, which will almost certainly provide sufficient evidence for cancellation of the PCN if the times of both documents match.

### Parking Enforcement Attendants

A number of parking attendants were approached, essentially to gain some information about their focus and whether they would tend to prioritise the enforcement of private parking or that of commercial vehicles. We were also interested to know if parking attendants had different priorities according to different times of day. Unfortunately, it was found to be difficult to engage in any form of constructive dialogue concerning how they conduct their operations and enforce the parking regulations.

### Local Stakeholder Consultation

A number of proposals have been put forward by the Northcote Road Business Network to the Council, which have been made available in the form of a report by the Council's Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to investigate parking and enforcement in the Northcote Road area. The main view put forward by the Northcote Road Business Network was in relation to delivery vehicles, and that businesses were becoming increasingly frustrated about lorries and vans servicing their businesses being affected by parking fines even while unloading was proceeding. A proposal being put forward by the Network is for shops to be issued with a card containing a clock which can be displayed on the lorry or van to demonstrate the time at which (un)loading started, thus preventing an unnecessary fine. The response to the request was that business interests would be considered when a major review of the parking enforcement criteria is carried out, in preparation for the drafting of the Council's planned 'Enforcement Protocol' document.

A report by the London Borough of Wandsworth's Economic Development Officer on proposed improvements to Northcote Road considered a number of aspects including concerns from the Northcote Road Business Network (as above). The main proposal relevant to the Legal Loading Initiative is to:

*"carry out a major review of parking enforcement criteria which better reflects the legitimate needs of businesses"*

The Executive have agreed that the concerns of the Northcote Business Network be taken into account when a major review of parking enforcement is carried out. The Executive also agreed that a dedicated parking attendant or attendants should patrol Northcote Road to try and build up a relationship with the traders and businesses and a familiarity with the vehicles and delivery timetables that operate in Northcote Road. In order to improve the clarity of the restrictions in Northcote Road, it is further proposed that a review of road markings and signs should be carried out, in order to

renew or replace faded or missing lines or signs, and to simplify the restrictions, where possible.

Borough officers from the London Borough of Wandsworth were consulted as to their views and opinions concerning the provision of loading and unloading within the Borough. Representatives in Parking Services, Transport Planning, the Town Centre Manager and a representative from the local Chamber of Commerce were all invited to comment on hot-spots within the Borough that they deemed to have sufficient problems with loading and unloading to warrant investigation of possible solutions. Further consultation was also carried out to investigate the incidence of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) that have been recorded to further justify the sites that were proposed by the relevant stakeholders.

#### Wandsworth Borough Council perspective

Following consultation with Borough Council officers, Northcote Road retailers, delivery drivers and parking enforcement, a forum was organised to bring together key stakeholders and discuss the issues that had arisen individually during the initial period of consultation. It was envisaged that this forum would allow more in-depth discussion of the problems perceived from all the different perspectives.

The forum helped to solidify the draft recommendations that had been proposed following consultation with retailers, delivery drivers and Borough Council officers.

The outcome of the forum was intended to feed into a list of future possible actions and recommendations for Northcote Road, in terms of new measures to develop to improve the provision for loading and unloading.

The background survey work noted a poor relationship between businesses and Wandsworth parking enforcement. Wandsworth Borough Council confirmed that parking attendants must not be seen to be giving undue discretion to potential offenders as leniency on the part of the Authority may be mistakenly interpreted as legitimising what might be a potential offence. The Council also acknowledged that the relationship between parking enforcement and the local business community is very hostile and that the turnover of parking attendants in the Borough is high.

The Council have been trying to explore options to improve the poor relationship between parking enforcement and the businesses – one possible solution might be to introduce dedicated parking attendants to the Northcote Road parking beat, which may provide an opportunity for PAs to develop an improved relationship with businesses.

The Council are generally opposed to the introduction of delivery bays on Northcote Road. There is a strong view that any change to or the layout of existing bays or their restrictions would generate a high degree of local objections.

The Council acknowledged the number of different types of parking restrictions that are currently in operation on Northcote Road but explained that due to it being a very complex road with competing demands for space, the many different uses of space dictate different levels of restrictions for different users of the street.

Wandsworth Council are planning to conduct a major review of parking enforcement and signage in the Borough, which will include bays and lines.

The Council consider that they already allow a degree of leniency with respect to the need to double-park. This is permitted on a discretionary basis by the Council. Although it is against the regulations, it is permitted in the case of delivery vehicles where legitimate loading / unloading is taking place, and must allow traffic to move past. In these instances, enforcement would try to refrain from issuing a PCN, but this would depend upon the degree of obstruction caused and if the double-parked position was unduly dangerous. The judgement as to whether the vehicle should receive a PCN is largely down to the judgement of the parking attendant. In a busy road such as Northcote Road, this may not be a feasible option.

#### Town Centre Manager and Retailer perspective

Northcote Road retailers consider the relationship between them and the parking attendants that patrol the Northcote Road parking beat to be very poor. Retailers also feel that parking attendants are, on the whole, very aggressive in the way they do their job and issue PCNs. In the context of loading and unloading, there have been many reported citations of parking attendants booking delivery vehicles even when loading / unloading was clearly seen to be taking place.

Retailers are aware of a permit system involving 'loading clocks' being used in some areas. The delivery driver will display the loading clock during the time (s)he is servicing the premises and display the clock in the window of the cab. This is a new measure that might work well in a location such as Northcote Road.

Health and Safety implications are also an area for concern – many of Northcote Road's businesses are food-related and in many cases, consignments of food (e.g. flour, meat etc) must be transferred from the vehicle into the premises within minimal time and must not be moved any great distance.

Retailers consider the number of different types of restrictions for general parking to be too great. This is related to the fact that Northcote Road is a complex road with very high demand for its finite road space.

There was a feeling among the business community that parking attendants almost certainly needed to become more aware of the needs of delivery drivers in order to carry out their job to a better standard and not to issue such a high number of 'inappropriate' PCNs to delivery drivers.

The business community generally felt that improved training and re-training for parking attendants was necessary in order to ensure that they are constantly informed of changes to work practices and that they are carrying out the job of parking enforcement in a fair and consistent manner that is compatible with the parking policies of the Council.

There were reports of PCNs being issued to vehicles in instances when the vehicle had been parked up for less than 5 minutes where the driver may have been away

from the vehicle in the process of unloading, and also in instances where loading / unloading was clearly observed to be taking place.

There was a certain feeling of parking attendants working on the basis that they received commission in return for the number of PCNs issued.

A report by the Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee via-a-vis proposals for amended parking enforcement in the Northcote Road area stated that, "The Council's parking enforcement contractor is not set targets for the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued, although it would be unrealistic for the Council not to give them an indication of its expectations in terms of enforcement, based on the type of area concerned, and the parking restrictions that apply there. There are no targets for the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued" (Northcote Business Network Petition).

### **Recommendations**

- **Review of the lines and signage on Northcote Road**

This review is already planned for Northcote Road. The complex nature of the road means that scarce space has to be divided between competing users and the end result is an array of different signs for all different users. Although there are no dedicated loading / unloading facilities, it would be useful for delivery drivers to know which bays they can and cannot stop in so as to avoid unnecessary PCNs. The review of lines along Northcote Road will not affect delivery vehicles greatly due to the fact that the lines affect existing customer parking bays. However, it would assist delivery drivers if they were aware of the time limit that they have to stop and unload. An overall simplification of the signage would benefit all road users.

- **Introduce dedicated parking enforcement officers to the Northcote Road parking beat and promote re-training where necessary**

The current relationship between parking enforcement and the retail community of Northcote Road is currently a negative one. The implementation of a team of dedicated parking attendants to the Northcote Road parking beat may be a useful step towards re-establishing good relations between the two sides. This will also help to endorse the principals of co-operation set out in the Code of Practice for Loading/Unloading. Although enforcement officers must be seen to be conducting their job in a fair manner, on-going training and re-training would be beneficial to ensure that the job is being done in the fairest way possible and that the best judgement is being used when deciding whether or not to issue a PCN.

- **Loading 'permits' in the form of clocks**

A useful way of letting parking attendants know the time that the vehicle arrived to load/unload could be done through displaying a 'loading' clock showing the time at which the vehicle arrived.

- **Targeting the servicing requirements for food retailers**

46% of businesses along Northcote Road are food or drink related in some way, and generally require multiple deliveries of stock every day. It might be helpful if extra leniency was given to deliveries of food and drink products, but any leniency offered would imply that other servicing companies may expect a similar dispensation.

- **Loading Bay provision**

We would tend to agree with Wandsworth Council that the provision of new loading bay facilities would not be the most appropriate solution in this regard due to the fact that all existing space is used for general customer and business parking. Due to the observed illegal stopping by general car traffic through our observations, we consider the provision of new loading facilities will simply be abused by general car traffic requiring a temporary stopping place. Ultimately this would also add a further type of parking restriction to the current level of different restrictions. The provision of a loading bay may also create conflict between retailers over the positioning of the bay.

## **REFERENCES**

*Wandsworth Borough Council, Regeneration and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Report by the Economic Development Officer on proposed improvements to Northcote Road, SW11.*

*Wandsworth Borough Council. Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2006*

*National Parking Adjudication Service*

## **APPENDICES**

## Wandsworth Legal Loading Initiative Forum

### Northcote Road

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007 – Transport for London Freight Unit

#### Attendees

Penny Cobb, La Cuisiniere, Northcote Road, Clapham Junction  
Lorinda Freint, Clapham Junction Town Centre Manager  
Craig Scheepers, Parking Enforcement, London Borough of Wandsworth  
Russ Tricker, Consultant, Transport & Travel Research

#### The Forum

The aim of the forum was to provide a background to the South London FQP project, explaining about the stakeholders that are involved and the various initiatives that have taken place within the project. The background to the Legal Loading Initiative specifically was then explained, including the process that was employed to confirm the sites for consideration in this piece of work. A short piece of information to provide some site context was then provided, including a comprehensive parking inventory.

Part of the presentation was to explain about the observational work and about the consultation that was undertaken (including a survey of retailers) and the results arising from this. As a result of the observational work, consultation and the forum, a set of recommendations for future action will be drawn up and included in our final reports for each of the six sites.

The forum took place in Transport for London's Freight Unit on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February. A sample of Northcote Road retailers were invited, however only one retailer attended.

#### The Legal Loading Initiative

The Legal Loading Initiative is an offshoot element of the South London Freight Quality Partnership (SLFQP) which is a project managed by Transport & Travel Research on behalf of Croydon Borough Council. The Legal Loading Initiative work has sought to understand problem hot-spots within the South London area that have reported problems with loading and unloading facilities. This has involved working closely with Borough Officers and Chambers of Commerce primarily in deciding upon locations within each borough that were in need of improved facilities for loading/unloading.

The Boroughs that were deemed to be 'entitled' to priority funding were those who agreed to adopt the principles of the London Loading/Unloading Code of Practice into their parking policies. This Code of Practice principally seeks to promote a more co-operative approach to the process of Loading/Unloading. Six sites were allocated across six boroughs (one per borough). Wandsworth Council deemed Northcote

Road to be the location most in need of having its (un)loading issues and problems researched.

### Overview of the observations made during the on-street survey

Northcote Road is part of the B229 within Clapham Junction, with Wandsworth Common to the west and Clapham Common to the east. Northcote Road is a unique road consisting largely of independent speciality shops and has been voted as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best street in London by a number of audiences.

It is a complex road with many different uses. There is a high density of residential properties in the area with 3 schools nearby generating a high degree of early morning school traffic. The level of business activity also generates a high volume of servicing requirements.

There are 102 shops on Northcote Road, of which 46% are food or drink related in some way. There are a total of 70 standard parking bays and 8 disabled parking bays on Northcote Road that are shared between residents, shoppers, business permit holders and the Northcote Road Street Market (for which there are 21 additional bays).

There are currently no loading bays on Northcote Road and neither is there a loading prohibition.

The customer parking bays are normally busy from about 8:30am onwards during the week, placing a great deal of pressure on parking spaces. As there is no dedicated delivery bay anywhere along Northcote Road, delivery vehicles are forced to find spaces on double yellow lines, often close to junctions with many of the small side roads to stop and unload. The busiest section of Northcote Road appeared to be between the junction with Mallison Road and Bramfield Road.

Consultation work: This showed that the busiest period to load and unload is in the morning, with Friday appearing to be the busiest day of the week for receiving deliveries. The average number of deliveries was found to be 9.5 deliveries per store per week, each taking an average time of between 5 – 15 minutes to complete.

85% of retailers confirmed that they could only use front servicing to complete the process of (un)loading.

### Wandsworth Borough Council's perspective

Observation periods vary between types of vehicles. An 'ordinary' vehicle (a car) would normally only be given 2 minutes of an observation period. A small van would receive 5 minutes and a large rigid or articulated lorry would receive 15 minutes.

The background survey work noted a poor relationship between businesses and Wandsworth parking enforcement. Wandsworth Borough Council confirmed that parking attendants must not be seen to be giving undue discretion, as leniency may be wrongly taken as a signal to attempt to abuse the system. The Borough Council acknowledged that the relationship between enforcement and the local business

community is a very hostile one. Indeed, the turnover of parking attendants within Wandsworth was said to be 'high'.

The Council have been trying to explore options to improve the poor relationship between parking enforcement and the businesses – one possible solution might be to introduce dedicated parking attendants to the Northcote Road parking beat, which may provide an opportunity for PAs to develop an improved relationship with businesses.

The Council are generally opposed to the introduction of delivery bays on Northcote Road. There is a strong view that any change to or the layout of existing bays or their restrictions would generate a high degree of local objections.

The Council acknowledged the number of different types of parking restrictions that are currently in operation on Northcote Road but explained that due to it being a very complex road with competing demands for space, the many different uses of space dictate different levels of restrictions for different users of the street.

Wandsworth Council are planning to conduct a major review of parking enforcement and signage in the Borough, which will include bays and lines.

The Council consider that they already allow a degree of leniency with respect to the need to double-park. This is permitted on a discretionary basis by the Council. Although it is against the regulations, it is permitted in the case of delivery vehicles where legitimate loading / unloading is taking place, and must allow traffic to move past. In these instances, enforcement would try to refrain from issuing a PCN, but this would depend upon the degree of obstruction caused and if the double-parked position was unduly dangerous. The judgement as to whether the vehicle should receive a PCN is largely down to the judgement of the parking attendant.

#### Town Centre Manager and Retailer Perspective

Northcote Road retailers consider the relationship between them and the parking attendants that man the Northcote Road parking beat to be very poor. Retailers also feel that parking attendants are, on the whole, very aggressive in the way they do their job and issue PCNs. In the context of loading and unloading, there have been many reported citations of parking attendants booking delivery vehicles even when loading / unloading was clearly seen to be taking place.

Retailers are aware of a permit system involving 'loading clocks' being used in some areas. The delivery driver will display the loading clock during the time (s)he is servicing the premises and display the clock in the window of the cab. This is a new measure that might work well in a location such as Northcote Road.

Health and Safety implications are also an area for concern – many of Northcote Road's businesses are food-related and in many cases, consignments of food (e.g. flour, meat etc) must be transferred from the vehicle into the premises within minimal time and there must be no need to move them over any unnecessary distance.

Retailers consider the number of different types of restrictions for general parking to be too great. This is related to the fact that Northcote Road is a complex road with a great deal of demand for its finite road space.

Recommendations arising from the forum

- **Review of the lines and signage on Northcote Road**

This review is already planned for Northcote Road. The complex nature of the road means that scarce space has to be divided between competing users and the end result is an array of different signs for all different users. Although there are no dedicated loading / unloading facilities, it would be useful for delivery drivers to know which spots they cannot stop in so as to avoid unnecessary PCNs. The review of lines along Northcote Road will not affect delivery vehicles greatly due to the fact that the lines affect existing customer parking bays. However, it would assist delivery drivers if they were aware of the time limit that they have to stop and unload.

- **Introduce dedicated parking enforcement officers to the Northcote Road parking beat and promote re-training where necessary**

The current relationship between parking enforcement and the retail community of Northcote Road is currently a negative one. The implementation of a team of dedicated parking attendants to the Northcote Road parking beat may be a useful step towards re-establishing good relations between the two sides. This will also help to endorse the principals of co-operation set out in the Code of Practice for Loading/Unloading. Although enforcement officers must be seen to be conducting their job in a fair manner, on-going training and re-training would be beneficial to ensure that the job is being done in the fairest way possible and that the best judgement is being used when deciding whether or not to issue a PCN.

- **Loading 'permits' in the form of clocks**

A useful way of letting parking attendants know the time that the vehicle arrived to load/unload could be done through displaying a 'loading' clock showing the time at which the vehicle arrived.

- **Specific day prioritised for Loading/Unloading**

The day when most deliveries were found to take place was Friday. Therefore, demand for space to load / unload is likely to be greatest on this day. It might be beneficial to all parties if this was factored into the enforcement side, to allow for slightly greater consideration for the needs of delivery vehicles on the busiest day for deliveries to take place. This is no doubt a measure which would work on a discretionary basis and a parking attendant would need to use his/her judgement as to the degree of additional concession and legitimacy for any given delivery.

**South London Freight Quality Partnership  
Legal Loading Initiative  
Stakeholder Survey**

**Retailer Questions**

**GOODS IN**

**What is the nature of your business?**

Restaurants / Retail / Services (bank, estate agency, etc.) / Supermarkets /

Others

**What vehicles are used to make deliveries to you?**

Van up to 3.5t gvw / 2 axles rigid up to 7.5T gvw / 2 axles rigid over to 7.5T gvw /

3/4 axle rigid / artic / drawbar trailer / don't know

**How often are goods delivered?**

Throughout everyday / Once every day / 2 - 4times per week / Once per week / Less often

**Is any particular day especially busy for receiving deliveries?**

Monday / Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday / Friday / Saturday

Not really

**At what times of day are goods delivered to you?**

Before 7am / 7am - 9.30am / 9.30am - 4.30pm / 4.30pm - 7pm / After 7pm / All through the day

**How are the shops serviced?**

Using their own vehicles

By a freight operator(s)

Various Suppliers

**Prompt: (If they have answered "By a freight operator", ask how many suppliers deliver their goods)**

**How long do your deliveries normally take?**

**Prompt for further information: ('Delivery Time' could include time spent in the stock / store room, moving boxes around in the van, unloading, reloading and moving between the vehicle and the store. Also check that the driver is stopping to service just the one store you are surveying.)**

Less than 5 minutes / 5 – 15 minutes / 15 – 30 minutes / More than 30 minutes / Variable

**How close can your delivery vehicles park to service the shop?**

Less than 50m / 50m - 100m / 100m - 200m / More than 200m / Unknown

**Which access point do delivery drivers use? (Roadway, side-road, etc.)?**

**Do delivery drivers meet some problems/conflicts when goods are delivered? Explain?**

### **ACCESS & DELIVERY FACILITIES**

**Does your business have an adequate off-street collection / delivery area?**

Yes No

**Can heavy goods vehicles access the delivery area easily?**

Yes No

**Are you restricted to kerbside access for collections / deliveries?**

Yes No

**Do you have problems with access restrictions or (un)loading restrictions? What kind?**

**Would you be interested in co-operative management of delivery bays with neighbouring retailers? Other solutions?**

**Delivery Driver Questions**

**PARKING ENFORCEMENT AND RESTRICTIONS**

**What are your views towards the loading / unloading restrictions for delivery vehicles?**

**Do you have a particular problem with Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs or parking fines)? How many have you been issued with for parking in this site in the last 12 months?**

**How, if at all, would you like to see parking restrictions altered in this area for loading / unloading?  
(Prompt: Specifically for loading / unloading restrictions (otherwise they may provide a general answer about restrictions for customer parking)).**

**Do you consider the level of parking enforcement in this area to be adequate for delivery vehicle parking?  
(Prompt: Ensure that you are targeting a question about enforcement for delivery vehicles).**

**Parking Attendant Questions**

**PARKING ENFORCEMENT AND RESTRICTIONS**

**Do you focus more on private parking (residents or shoppers) or on commercial vehicles that are loading or unloading?**

**Do you have different priorities for different times of the day with respect to the type of vehicles enforced?**

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re: South London Freight Quality Partnership: Northcote Road**

Thank you for taking part in a recent survey about problems and issues concerning deliveries to businesses on Northcote Road. This work is part of the South London Freight Quality Partnership work which we are managing on behalf of Transport for London.

I would now like to invite you to a forum to be held at 10:00am on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February at:

Room 539  
Transport for London Freight Unit  
172 Buckingham Palace Road  
London  
SW1W 9TN

This will provide an opportunity for you to meet with parking officers from the local Borough Council, the local Town Centre Manager, other retailers and myself, to discuss in greater detail the issue of local problems and issues concerning the provision of delivery vehicles to load and unload to businesses in Northcote Road, Clapham Junction.

The forum will help us to produce a set of recommendations to Transport for London for a possible future course of action to improve the process of loading / unloading in your area. The forum should not last longer than 2 hours.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to call me on 01543 416416.

I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours faithfully

R. E. Tricker