

Proposed revision to Parking Enforcement Policy Guidance – Footpath Parking

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Parking Enforcement Officer

Report to Transportation SPC September xx meeting.

Introduction

The main objective of the Parking Enforcement Division is to ensure the safe and free movement of people, through, in, and around the city, and the adjoining suburban areas. No matter which mode of transport is chosen by the person to complete their journey it is our brief to ensure that the roads, cycle tracks, bus lanes, and footpaths remain obstruction free and safe for all people and abilities to use.

Continually the most frequent request to Dublin City Council and Dublin Street Parking Services is to address the issue of footpath parking. For as much roadway as we manage we also have an approximate similar amount of footpath and while there are many legislation pieces around parking prohibitions which can be called upon to govern the roads there is only one which references footpaths, that is section 36 (2)(i), (S.I 182/1997 Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking Regulations) 1997, where it states that it is illegal to park on a footway, grass margin, or median strip.

To be fully compliant with the law any vehicle which parks or comes to a stop on a footway can be subject to enforcement. The issue though which arises is where best to concentrate the limited resources which DCC and its contractor DSPS have available to them such that the maximum impact on unsafe parking can be achieved.

Dublin has many locations within it where the existing street scape does not provide space for parking and in some cases in residential areas there is very limited or no off street parking. At the May 25th 2021 Transportation SPC meeting and subsequent Full Council Meeting, it was decided to offer guidance on footpath parking outside the canal areas, where Dublin City Council wouldn't enforce a vehicle parked on a footpath, if a 2.5m space could be maintained to allow pedestrians safely pass. Further to this guidance being offered a number of issues have arisen. Where on certain roads, residents of the road need to park on the footpath (leaving less than 2.5m) as they have limited or no off-street parking, and, to park legally on the road would cause significant obstruction. This has caused some concern as to what Dublin City Council and DSPS will do in these cases. In providing practical examples some roads which fall into this category are;

Coulston Avenue – Dublin 6

Templemore Avenue – Dublin 6

Beaver Row – Dublin 4

Clancarthy Road – Dublin 5

This is not an exhaustive list

Proposed methodologies for enforcement

Where Dublin City Council see the need to provide further guidance and policy, is around footpath parking in residential areas where road and footpath widths can't accommodate the 2.5m spacing, as outlined above, the options we see available to address these situations are as follows;

1. Enforce the vehicle(s) using Clamping, Towing or Fining. It should be noted that these options are always available and also AGS may also enforce.
2. Permit the vehicles to continue park on the footpath, however this may cause obstructions for the visually impaired, vulnerable road users and wheelchair users.
3. Assess if road may be suitable for an alternative option such as a one-way system, allowing parking on one side of the road, or a residential parking scheme etc...(This would require the assistance of the Traffic Advisory Group)

The real issue is that there is clear legislation stating that parking on footpaths is illegal and the City Council is not able to ignore this legislation and therefore when considering enforcement we cannot simply ignore breaches of parking regulations. In many cases we receive requests from residents and users of footpath space, where they are unable to use the footpath safely, to take enforcement action and again we cannot ignore these requests. We are also well aware that this approach can be very contentious with residents and elected members.

Therefore, we are seeking further guidance and discussion with SPC members and the elected members on what type of enforcement options they would wish to see from Dublin City Council, and its appointed contractor, in residential areas where the 2.5 m spacing cannot be respected.

Dermot Stevenson – Parking Enforcement Officer

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