

Report to: General Purposes Committee Meeting – 1 December 2022

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director – Communities & Environment

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Report Summary	
Report Title	Potential Removal of the Kirk Gate, Newark Taxi Rank
Purpose of Report	To inform Members of the results of the consultation exercise to potentially remove the Taxi Rank on Kirk Gate, Newark
Recommendations	That Members: a) consider the comments from the licensed trade and businesses regarding the removal of the Taxi Rank at Kirk Gate, Newark. b) inform Nottinghamshire County Council Highways of their current position regarding the rank.
Reason for Recommendation	Nottinghamshire County Council will be able to keep their temporary Traffic Regulation Order in place for the Kirk Gate Taxi Rank or begin the statutory consultation/advertising to make the current order permanent.

1.0 Background

1.1 There are three taxi ranks operating within Newark Town centre. These are set out in the table below.

Middlegate (junction with Stodman Street)	7 spaces	24 hours
Kirk Gate (outside Violin School)	4 spaces	08:00 to 18:00
Castle Gate	3 spaces	18:00 to 06:00

1.2 The rank on Middlegate is a rank serving both day-time town centre users and night-time users. The Castlegate rank serves the evening economy and the Kirk Gate rank designed to support town centre day-time users.

1.3 During the early months of the pandemic a number of temporary traffic regulations were introduced. This resulted in the closure of Middlegate and as a result some parking areas were no longer available. To compensate the Kirk Gate taxi rank designation was amended so that the space became a temporary parking space with limited waiting.

1.4 Councillor Mrs Saddington had been approached by a local business who has requested that the change to the rank be made permanent, thus removing the layby as a taxi rank and providing more town centre parking.

- 1.5 Members will be aware that a survey of taxi users and the taxi trade was undertaken in autumn last year. The Kirk Gate rank was specifically mentioned in the trade responses four times to the question “do we need more ranks in the district and where should these be?” These are copied below:

Kirk Gate needs returning to a rank now Covid restrictions have eased.

Think we need a bigger rank in the town centre somewhere as I feel Kirk Gate does not accommodate enough spaces

No need for ranks, but return Kirk Gate rank to a taxi rank and remove Joe Publics free parking for 30 mins +. Additionally, the continued misuse of Middlegate taxi rank by the private, delivery vehicles continues and occasionally will prevent taxis getting onto the rank. A cctv system taking number plate details floored by a fine may be a preventative measure. Additionally, set down/ pick up points around town rather than ranks would be a massive help such as the bus station and Castle Station.

Kirk Gate not been a rank for months, Castle station, bus station, London road car park

- 1.6 At the General Purposes meeting in June 2022, Members considered the report, noting that the rank provided a useful space for market shoppers, allowing them to park for 30 minutes. They added that its permanent removal as a taxi rank would allow this to continue and would assist with returning footfall to the town which was much needed following the drop in trade due to the pandemic.
- 1.7 It was agreed that a consultation exercise be undertaken and the results be reported back to Committee prior to the final decision.
- 1.8 As part of the consultation period, all licensed drivers, local businesses and residents were contacted and asked if they would like to make any representations regarding the proposed removal of the taxi rank.
- 1.9 Eleven responses were received and these can be found at the table in **Appendix A**.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

- 2.1 If Members determine to remove the Kirk Gate Rank it is proposed that Nottinghamshire County Council are informed so that they can begin the statutory consultation/ advertising to make the current order permanent at their own cost.

3.0 Implications

- 3.1 In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered a range of potential implications. There are no implications arising from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
Taxi Provision Consultation Survey 2022 NSDC