

27 June 2011

PARKING STRATEGY REPORT – UPDATE

Introduction

An effective parking policy will assist to further a wide range of urban policy objectives such as:

- Economic development and vitality of the commercial business district
- Safety and accessibility from a Social perspective
- Enforcement that is consistent but fair
- Specialised parking requirements for businesses, public transport and less abled people.

There is probably now sufficient on and off street parking available on the fringes of and within the CBD to cater for locals and visitors for the next 10 years. The coming tourist season will prove this one way or another.

The mix of parking controls and time restrictions can now be critically looked at to ascertain whether what is in place is about right, or whether some tweaking is required. For instance -the amount of free all day parking in the extended Tarapuhi/Albert St parks. Is this about right or should more free parking be provided for people who work in the CBD? A decision on this should only be made after the trends have been observed and monitored over the next summer visitor season. There needs to be sufficient parks for visitors in Mackay and Tainui Streets for economic benefit to flow through to retailers and this may mean more regular parking enforcement during the busier times which will force motorists to utilize the off street three hour parks that are back off the main streets.

Recent Improvements

- An additional 80 odd parks developed in the Albert/Tarapuhi Street car park comprising a mixture of free three hour and free all day parking.
- The Whall Street Park dedicated solely for campervans
- Advertising the Whall Street and Cobden Bridge campervan parks in the NZ Motorhome Association Handbook.
- Providing increased and alternative all day free parking provided on Petrie Avenue to the south for office/retail workers who previously parked in Whall Street.
- Large directional P signs are on order for placement on Mackay, Tainui and Guinness Streets to direct motorists to the Albert/Tarapuhi St car parking area.
- Vegetation cut back around the outdoor dining area at 124 Mackay St to improve traffic safety and visibility.
- Yellow crisscross lines to be painted on Tainui Street footpath to warn motorists using the undercover entrance to Olsons Pharmacy to try and stop vehicles extending out into the road.

Strategy

Development of an effective strategy for the future provision, maintenance and regulation of parking amenities needs to be a team effort given the limited personnel and financial resources directly available within Council. It is suggested that a small working group be established comprising the Councillor for Land Transport, Peter Haddock, a representative from the Greymouth Business and Promotions Association, Council's Manager Support Services, a representative of the transport industry and possibly a representative from the New Zealand Transport Agency.

This group could share the load on researching the previous reports and current material that has been produced and look at parking strategies that have been produced elsewhere with a view to meeting together to set the direction for the initial draft strategy that will be prepared by Council. The draft will then be widely circulated within the Town Development Strategy Group for feedback prior to wider consultation as necessary.

The Town Development Strategy 2010 document clearly sets the expectations and issues that need consideration as part of the parking strategy and some of these this will involve quite a bit of leg work and monitoring if evidence based solutions are to be introduced.

The strategy will probably not meet the expectations of everyone, but if it can achieve majority support with the outcomes balanced and affordable then it will go a long way to improving the core commercial area.

Kevin Beams

Manager Support Services.