

Letter in support of retaining current parking arrangements on Grenville Drive, Tavistock

To whom it may concern, Devon Highways

I am writing in my capacity as an elected Town Councillor for Tavistock. I do not have any vested interests in this area, apart from raising the concerns of residents as summarised below.

I understand that there has been an erosion of parking spaces in the locality of Westbridge Cottages, a valued and historic part of Tavistock's heritage, listed buildings and homes to a wide variety of residents. My understanding is the loss of 30 parking spaces in the early 2000s, after the installation of a pedestrian crossing, and further 8 - 10 parking spaces lost 3 years ago. This systematic erosion over the past 20 years has resulted in 46 properties along this stretch of road without any allocated parking.

As a consequence of this there are a number of concerns amongst residents about safety as well as a lack of parking not only for residents but also for visitors and workers. It has been contended that having parked cars slows traffic and provides safer streets for all. As many children play in Ransum Way should double yellow lines be introduced there is a possibility that those children will be at risk from cars speeding up Grenville Drive and straight into Ransum Way. Parked cars may look untidy but they force drivers to slow down, with benefit to both and cyclists.

No provision has been made for residents to have a marked space to load or unload safely and residents may not only need vehicles for employment but also for visits from care workers, plumbers, electricians, and builders.

It has also been contended that access by emergency vehicles is an issue although residents have assessed that there has been no problem of access by emergency vehicles. Access has not been identified as an issue by FCC, the contractors who collect refuse weekly, in the past 2 and a half years.

The current plan does not, in itself, remove a large number of parking spaces from the area, but would appear to be the latest episode in a long catalogue of on-road parking restrictions. Requests for alternative parking to be provided for residents seems to have gone largely unheeded and residents now feel alienated and depressed. It would appear that Westbridge Cottages is deteriorating into a ghetto of poor, elderly and disabled people who are also in need of access to support services to enable them to live independent lives. These residents need deliveries of food, medicines, coal and logs as well as visits from carers. This is also resulting in a lack of representation amongst younger people starting on the property ladder with and does not enhance the sense of vibrancy and pride in a historic community which Tavistock strives to encourage.

It is important that local residents are heard and feel listened to. However, this is insufficient if it is not backed up with viable actions. Should DCC see fit to impose further restrictions on parking in Grenville Drive sensible alternatives must be offered to these residents. Such alternatives should not require extensive walks to parked cars, given that many older residents might have mobility or other health problems.

I therefore urge DCC to give this matter their serious consideration in light of the serious issues outlined here.

Lesley Crawford

Tavistock North Ward Councillor