Measure title : Extension of controlled on-street parking in Edinburgh – study of the impacts in one sub-area
City, Country: Edinburgh, UK (Scotland)
Year(s): Outline scheme design in 2005, operations from 2007 onwards

A1 Objectives

The City of Edinburgh Council's stated objectives for expanding its on-street parking controls (called a Controlled (Parking) Zone, C(P)Z) were to reduce parking-related congestion, make parking easier for shoppers, enable residents to park near their homes, discourage parking for long periods by drivers from outside the local area, keep traffic moving, ensure access for emergency vehicles, and improve road safety.

A2 Description of the CS

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland in the UK and is a city of around 460,000 people in a region of around 1,000,000 people. Its first on-street parking controls were introduced in 1974 and covered the city centre and the very most inner suburbs around – at the most, the controls extended 1.5 km from the centre. These controls required residents to hold a permit to park on street during controlled hours, and charged visitors by the hour to park, with maximum duration of stay of between 1 and 4 hours depending on location. Residents could park for as long as they wished. Most controls applied only from 0830 to 1830 Monday to Saturday in the very city centre, and 0830 to 1730 Monday to Friday in the slightly more peripheral controlled area. Outside these times there was no payment or permit required to park. Increasing pressure on residential parking by commuters raised the political importance of parking so that by the mid 2000s, the Council was forced to expand the CPZ into more residential areas further from the city centre. Some 16 new zones were introduced in 2006 and 2007, such that at its furthest the new CPZ extended 3km from the city centre. The number of controlled spaces in the extended CPZ is unknown, but in the old CPZ it was 5,740; the relative sizes of the old and extended CPZs suggests that there are at least as many spaces in the extended area.

This CS refers to a study of a very small part of the extended CPZ, in the wealthy Merchiston area in the southwest of Edinburgh, about 2.5km from the city centre. The main employer and traffic generator in the area is Edinburgh Napier University and many of its staff parked free on street in the Merchiston area, before controls were introduced. The new controls limited the maximum stay to 4 hours and levied a charge of 70 pence (about €1.10) per hour. Previously there was no charge and no maximum stay. Residents were to pay around €100 per year for a parking permit with a maximum of two permits per household. Impacts of the scheme on occupancy of streets within and just outside the new CPZ can be seen below, the photo on the left is a street just outside, whilst the photo on the right is a street just within the zone. (Pictures by William Mykura.)

B Costs and who paid them

This project was an extension to an existing CPZ and therefore the costs were composed of paint and signs for road markings, ticket machines and the staff costs of preparing, consulting on and finalising the legal definitions of the CPZ. The additional operating costs were enforcement staff and staff time to empty and maintain the ticket machines. Since the parking operation was already live, covering other areas of the city, there was no need for the major investment of setting up the "back-office" operation needed to administer and run a CPZ – ticket and permit issuing, handling money and card payments, administering fines, and managing appeals against fines. The precise costs of the CPZ extension in the area covered by this CPZ are not known.

Below, however, are some indicative costs from a CPZ in another British city (not Edinburgh) with about 100km of on-street parking regulations, although only 1,000 controlled parking spaces. Its operation was estimated to require 8 enforcement staff and two back office staff, and from nothing, was forecast to require the following investment costs:

Amend TROs[3] & Upgrade signs & Lines to comply with regulations	£55,268
On-Street. Hand held ticket processing hardware & uniforms	£16,962
Off-Street. Hand held ticket processing hardware & uniforms	£3,581
Ticket Processing -Accommodation, Office set up hard/software	£35,179
Publicity & Consultancy Advice	£23,934
Stationery, Telephone, Training, Web-site & Cash processing	£19,413
TOTAL	**£154,337**

C Project objectives, indicators, data and impact/results

In spite of the large number of stated objectives for the CPZ, no data were collected by the City Council (municipality) to measure whether or not the objectives had been achieved. However, in the context of a study carried out by the university located in the new CPZ, some occupancy and turnover data were collected in the before situation, and then a few weeks after implementation, in February and March 2007.

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	DATA USED	IMPACT/RESULTS
Reducing cars parked for long periods of time	*Length of stay*	*Before and after number plate and permit survey*	*Proportion of cars parked for more than 4 hours fell from 22% to 10%*
Reducing proportion of long term parkers from outside area	*Proportion of parkers who are residents; occupancy*		*Large majority of parkers in after situation were residents*
Making it easier for residents to park	*Occupancy*		*Occupancy on 3 of 4 streets surveyed fell by 40-50% after controls introduced. Occupancy on uncontrolled streets just outside the new controlled area doubled.*
Reducing parking related congestion	*Occupancy*		

The period of the evaluation was very short so framework conditions were unlikely to have had much impact. In the longer term, factors such as the increasing proportion of no-car households in Edinburgh, increasing levels of walking and cycling and fuel costs rising faster than inflation will have had an effect on parking demand over and above the impact of the new parking controls.

D Implementation process

The CS was implemented, as follows, in the following stages:
Stage 1: Outline scheme design and informal public consultation. January to July 2005. Carried out by City of Edinburgh Council and its consultants; general public involved in public meetings, responding to questionnaires etc.
Stage 2: Detailed scheme design, preparation of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs - legal definition of CPZ) – September 2005 to February 2006. Carried out by City of Edinburgh Council and its consultants
Stage 3*:* Formal legal consultation on the TROs. March to April 2006. Carried out by City of Edinburgh Council and its consultants, general public involved in submitting formal objections to the scheme.
Stage 4: Modification of scheme in light of objections; approval by Council of final orders. May to September 2006.
Stage 5: Procurement and appointment of contractors and implementation of scheme. September to December 2006.
Stage 6: CPZ starts operating, 8 January 2007.

D2 Barriers

As with any CPZ scheme, the main barrier was public opposition, but this was managed through careful scheme design and public consultation.

D3 Drivers

The main driver for the scheme was political support resulting from pressure from residents for parking controls. Politicians were more likely to support requests from residents for parking controls than to listen to objections from commuters, some of whom come from outside Edinburgh. The fact that parking controls had been implemented previously in the city without detrimental effects on local shopkeepers also helped.

This case study is based on research carried out by William Mykura whilst he was employed as a lecturer at Edinburgh Napier University. The information is reproduced here with his permission. There is no other documentation on which the CS was based.