
By: David Beaver, Head of Network Management

To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview Committee
- 16 July 2009

Subject: **The Management of Vehicle Obstructions to Private Access**
(White Access Highlight Markings on the Public Highway [Dog Bone Markings])

Classification: Unrestricted.

Summary: This report seeks approval from the members of Policy Overview Committee for Kent Highways Services to introduce a new policy on how the Council carry out the management of vehicle obstructions to private accesses and in particular the process of approving white access highlight markings on the highway.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under current legislation, both Kent County Council and the 12 Kent District/Borough and City Councils are responsible for the practical application and management of white access highlight line markings on the public highway. This report summarises the current situation with regard to the management of these white markings.
- 1.2 Historically, white access highlight line markings have been introduced on the highway across private premises to assist the access and egress of vehicles where there has been a perceived problem with obstructive parking. These white line markings are not legally enforceable by either Kent County Council or the district authorities and act only as a visible deterrent for the motorist.
- 1.3 However, obstructive parking can be dealt with by the police force either by the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or by vehicle removal and it is recognised that it can be easier for the traffic police to enforce this issue if there is a physical measure on the highway.

2. Information

- 2.1 Prior to the reorganisation of Kent Highway Services the 12 Highway Units located within the District Authorities were responsible for the introduction of white access highlight line markings on the highway. Since reorganisation some district authorities have decided to retain this function whilst others have opted to pass the responsibility to Kent County Council.
- 2.2 Of the 7 district authorities that have retained the function; 1 district makes a charge for the service, 1 district request that customers meet strict criteria and 5 districts introduce a white line with no conditions attached. Kent County Council carries out the function in the remaining 5 districts areas but currently does not support the introduction or maintenance of these highway markings.
- 2.3 There is currently an abundance of white access highlight line markings across the County and this has led to the reduction in awareness taken by the motorist. There

has also been a marked increase to both Kent County Council and the District Authorities for public requests to enforce these non-enforceable lines.

- 2.4 It is recognised that there is currently some confusion for the general public due to the current process where some District Councils carry out this function and others choose not to do so.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 To mark a white access highlight line on the public highway, maintain and refresh the line marking over a ten year maintenance period will cost the authority a total sum of £150.
- 3.2 To administer an application for a white access highlight line marking, KCC will need to carry out a desk top analysis of the evidence presented and visit the site to survey the extent and exact location of the proposed line markings. This analysis and survey work will cost the authority a total sum of £115.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The proposed application process, policy and procedure notes have been referred to the 12 district authorities for a period of 6 weeks in order that their comments and professional advice can be taken into account. Their comments have been incorporated into the attached paperwork.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 It is considered necessary that Kent County Council take full management of the process for introducing a new white access highlight line marking on the public highway and for refreshing those markings that already exist. Criteria should be met by an applicant to prove that they have a persistent parking problem and that their application is fully supported by the traffic police. This will ensure that any lines that are introduced are necessary to relieve an obstructive parking issue, therefore relieving the difficulties encountered when a prolific number of unnecessary markings are placed on the public highway.
- 5.2 As these lines are generally for the benefit of the property owner/applicant it is felt that the costs incurred by the authority to administer the application and place the line markings on the highway should be borne by the applicant.
- 5.3 Therefore, a standard non-refundable charge of £115 will be made to investigate and administer the process of applying for a white access highlight line marking. If an application is successful following investigations and liaison with the traffic police, an additional cost of £150 will be paid by the applicant to introduce a line on the highway and pay for the maintenance and upkeep of this line over a suitable maintenance period.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Subject to the views of this Committee, it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment Highways and Waste that:
- (i) the recommendation that the management of the introduction and maintenance of white access highlight line markings on the public highway to prevent obstructive parking is carried out in the 12 district areas by Kent County Council be approved;

- (ii) the recommendation that an applicant will be asked to meet certain criteria, as outlined in the attached policy, in order to qualify for a white line and that a charge of £115 administration and then an additional charge of £150 for the placing and maintenance of the lines will be made for this service, be approved.

Background Documents:

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

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