

Taxi Operations & Airport Related Parking in Neighbourhoods around Airports

What this paper is about

This paper summarises problems suffered by local communities caused by taxis and other airport related car parking in neighbourhoods around airports and some of the initiatives that have been put in place by airports.

Points for discussion

- To share experiences of how airports are addressing these problems.
- Are the parking problems less of an issue at airports where there is free drop off and pick up? Delegates are asked to compare experiences?
- Whether the initiatives put in place by airports and other parties are effective.
- Are there other initiatives which may be explored with airports?
- Delegates are asked to consider how airports are addressing the growth in electric vehicles using airport car parks.

Possible Action

Depending on discussion at the meeting.

Background

1. The problems associated with taxis parking in residential neighbourhoods close to Newcastle Airport and the activities of their drivers was raised by Newcastle ACC who sought the experiences of similar sized airports. From the feedback received it appears that this is not a unique problem to Newcastle. The UK has seen many changes over the past few years, with changing technologies and huge numbers of private hire vehicles and taxis on our roads.
2. In addition, there is a growing problem of airport-related car parking in residential areas close to airports with passengers, airport staff and other users of the airport choosing to park in local roads to avoid paying parking charges at on- and off-airport sites.
3. This paper therefore summarises the issues and some of the initiatives that have been put in place at airports. To enable UKACCs to establish the extent of the problem and the range initiatives being pursued at our airports, delegates are asked to share and compare experiences of how their airports are addressing these problems.

Parking Impact

4. The emergence of ride-sourcing operators, such as Uber, which pair potential passengers with registered drivers through an app or digital service platform using GPS software, is a major challenge for the taxi and PHV sector. The Government is looking at possible further regulation in the sector but it is not known whether this will address the problems being experienced at some of our airports. The key problem for neighbourhoods close to airports is that taxi drivers are parking in areas close to airports whilst waiting to pick up passengers from the airport, sometimes for substantial periods of time, sometimes involving a large number of taxis all waiting at the same time, some indiscriminate parking restricting access to properties or the flow of traffic on local roads, causing general disturbance and creating a litter problem. The absence of toilet facilities is also a problem.
5. The issue of passengers, airport staff and other users of airports seeking free parking, for days and possibly weeks at a time, in neighbourhoods within a 5km radius of an airport and along bus corridors serving airports, is also a growing trend.
6. Communities are citing problems such as loss of local amenity, inability to park outside their own properties, the noise impact - often early morning/late at night such as running engines, doors slamming and alarms, damage to grass verges, litter, and in some cases experience of verbal abuse and intimidation when inconsiderate drivers have been challenged. Communities are also concerned about the reputation of some areas becoming known for parking problems which is impacting on the area's desirability. Some property owners are however taking advantage of commercial opportunities to sell parking spaces on their drives through advertising on social media platforms and websites such www.parkonmydrive.com
7. Off-airport car parking operators using unauthorised sites for car parking, such as in disused industrial areas or fields which are often are not secure and can result in damage to vehicles is also an issue that is challenging airports and local authorities.

Initiatives and action taken by airports

8. Some airports are proactive in addressing the problems working in partnership with taxi companies, local authorities (highways, planning and trading standards), the police and car parking operators. Local residents are seeking better and long term solutions to ensure the problems are resolved or minimised as far as possible.

9. From feedback the Secretariat has received, some ACCs are assisting and encouraging their airports to bring together all parties to discuss the issues and identify actions, possible enforcement and the development of initiatives. Examples include:

- Offering free drop off/pick up car parking for a limited time in airport car parks
- Identifying with local authorities waiting areas near the airport for taxis with café and toilet facilities
- Approved Car Parking Operators' scheme with charter mark/Code of Conduct scheme run in conjunction with local planning authorities and trading standards
- Working with local businesses where appropriate to provide parking solutions
- Technology solutions, such as geo-fencing for taxi operators
- Full review of parking charges and waiting fees on-site
- Working with local authorities in identifying areas for residents' car parking schemes or traffic regulation orders.

10. As only a few ACCs have so far been approached for views, it would be beneficial to know how widespread these problems are across the UKACCs membership and whether there are other initiatives that have been brought forward at airports which might be of interest to other ACCs. Delegates are therefore asked to share their experiences.

11. It has also been questioned whether the problems are arising as a consequence of demand for car parking outstripping the supply at airports, an airport's drive to encourage more passengers to access the airport via public transport and/or the lack of choice for available parking products, including drop off and pick up facilities, offered at airports at the right price. Delegates are therefore asked to compare experiences at airports.

12. In considering this matter, it is also important for ACCs to take into consideration parking products for the future. Given the Government's drive to ensure a transition to electric vehicles seeing an end to the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040 to help achieve the UK's carbon targets, the growth in the use of electric cars will need to be taken into account by airports. Although, there is currently little use of charging point parking bays by passengers, ACCs will need to monitor whether airports have sufficient charging points in their airport's car parks. It is understood that there have been issues of passengers parking petrol/diesel cars in the airport's parking bays that have charging points whilst they are on holiday effectively blocking the bay for a week/fortnight at a time. As the growth in electric vehicles increases airports will need to work out how best to manage this requirement. Delegates are asked to share experiences.

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