

**Decision Session –  
Cabinet Member for Transport,  
Planning and Sustainability**

**18<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

**Duncombe Place Taxi Rank**

**Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to review the operation of the Duncombe Place taxi rank in light of the anti-social behaviour that takes place in this area late at night and during the early hours.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the following:

- That the Duncombe Place taxi rank should continue to operate as a 24 hour rank.

Reason: because there is a demand for it and there is no practical method of preventing its use by individuals seeking a taxi.

- That the head of the rank be relocated further towards the Museum Street junction.

Reason: to enable clearer more reliable CCTV monitoring of the head of the rank.

- That the existing shelter near the existing head of the rank be removed.

Reason: to remove a potential focus for rowdy activity and to improve the street scene.

- Continue working with the Police to aid their efforts in combating the anti-social behaviour that takes place.

Reason: to try to resolve the concerns of residents.

**Background**

3. There has been a taxi rank in Duncombe Place for many years. A few years ago its operation ended each evening at 10pm. The aim of this was to remove disturbances at the rank which affected local residents and businesses overnight. However, the taxi rank continued to effectively operate after this time due to people queuing for a taxi and there being no legal way for the authority to

prevent a taxi turning up and picking up a fare. All that was prohibited was a taxi queuing at the rank waiting for a fare and whilst this practise will almost certainly have occurred on occasions there is little practical enforcement that can be carried out.

4. In March 2012 the taxi rank returned to 24 hour operation. However when this decision was made the then Director of City Strategy being mindful of the concerns raised asked for this change to be for a 12 month period and for the matter to be reviewed after 6 months operation. A permanent change was made to the Taxi rank order with the intention of amending it again if after the issue was reviewed a change was wanted. It is now 13 months since the rank reverted to 24 hour operation.
5. In the summer of 2012 a number of complaints were received regarding the use of the taxi rank (see Annex A). These highlighted some unpleasant carrying on in the area (see below) believed to be associated with the taxi rank and other nearby premises. These matters are ones of public order and can only be dealt with by the Police.

Rowdy behaviour

Excrement on doorsteps

Underwear left on lawns

6. Local residents and businesses have been asked for their comments regarding the operation of the taxi rank and the responses are shown in Annex B. These highlight the strong level of feeling in the area over the antisocial behaviour taking place in Duncombe Place. The issues raised are:

Very noisy in the evenings / early morning

Shouting and laughing until after 3am

Fighting

Unable to open windows because of the noise

Feeling intimidated / fear of crime

Urination, defecating and vomiting in doorways, on walls, pavement grills, gardens and War memorial

Setting a fire on a doorstep

Litter

Ringling doorbells in the early hours

Attempted forced entry to property

7. In addition to the above issues the Duncombe Place Management Company representative has supplied a list of 14 incidents (see Annex C) reported to the Police between 25<sup>th</sup> November and 22<sup>nd</sup> December (with a one week gap in recording). These details include information on the numbers of people involved and helps explain why the termination of the taxi rank at 10pm previously was not a great success. As has been noted above a taxi would not be breaching a regulation if they entered Duncombe Place to pick up a fare and if there are upwards of 30 people waiting in the area then this will attract further taxis all of whom would simply stop to pick up a fare. An abuse of a regulation ending the rank at 10pm would only occur if a driver stopped at the kerbside to wait for fares to arrive.
8. The City Council's CCTV control room report that the number of requests for monitoring from the police due to reported incidents at the Taxi rank is low. However there is regular use of the camera for activity in the area mainly originating in the city centre as this is a route out of town.
9. The Police have also been asked for their views – Verbal update will be given at the meeting.
10. The views of the Chair and Vice Chair of Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee are provided in Annex D. There are concerns about the anti-social behaviour in the area and a desire to see greater support for residents whilst retaining the taxi rank. As has already been mentioned enforcement and management of the taxi rank by the city council is not a practical option and couldn't be relied on to bring about a change. However with regards to the anti-social behaviour continued support will be given to the police via the use of CCTV as a deterrent and evidence gathering tool when required.
11. There are other taxi ranks in relatively close proximity at Bootham Bar, Exhibition Square and in St. Sampson's Square. These taxi ranks are not as popular with users as the Duncombe Place rank and whilst it could be supposed that if the hours of the Duncombe Place rank was reduced these other ranks would pick up the displaced need, this wasn't the case previously. There is little scope to extend the taxi ranks at these locations though there may be scope to change the bus stop outside the Theatre Royal to a late night rank around midnight (the last bus is at 11.35pm). However, as has already been noted it is not legally possible to prohibit a taxi from picking up someone waiting at the side of the road, it is only possible to prohibit taxis from ranking up, but there are practical difficulties in achieving this aim. From the above and the experience previously when the rank operated for limited hours it is reasonable

to suppose that even if the Duncombe Place rank was removed entirely this would still remain a popular place for people to wait to get a taxi for some time. Due to the limited opportunity to provide taxi ranks close to the city centre removal or relocation of the Duncombe Place rank is not an attractive proposition at this time. It should also be noted that not all the incidents in the area are a result of there being a taxi rank in the vicinity and it also needs to be borne in mind that taxis do make a valuable contribution to transportation and night time economy in the city.

12. The current location of the head of the taxi rank is approximately 40m from the CCTV camera at the St. Leonard's Place junction. Although the head of the rank can be viewed, the distance, objects and branches between camera and rank do obscure some areas and if incidents take place away from the highway details are difficult to pick out especially at night. The reason for the current position of the rank is down to property accesses and the slip road into Blake Street. However the slip road has now been closed off to traffic so it is feasible to move the head of the taxi rank much closer to the junction. This would increase the personal safety of the taxi users waiting at the rank late at night. In addition, some of the behaviour noted above may be reduced or detection improved due to the closer proximity (about 15m) of the CCTV camera. In addition, whilst the provision of a shelter at the head of the rank does benefit the users in inclement weather it also has the potential to be used by non-taxi patrons and is not in keeping with the general look and feel of the area, hence there may be benefits in removing this structure. The plan in Annex E outlines the potential changes to the position of the Taxi rank.

#### **Options -**

13. **Option 1** - take no action.  
This option does not seek to tackle the antisocial behaviour taking place and is not the recommended option.
14. **Option 2** – reduce the hours the Taxi rank operates  
This has been tried before, is not effective and is not the recommended option.
15. **Option 3** – Relocate the head of the taxi rank and remove the existing shelter as outlined above and on the plan in Annex B.  
This is a recommended option because it may contribute to resolving some of the anti-social behaviour.
16. **Option 4** – Continue working with the Police to aid resolving anti-social behaviour.

This is a recommended option.

### Consultation

17. A 28 day notice would have to be advertised to make any alterations to how the taxi rank operates.

### Corporate Strategy

18. Considering this matter contributes to the Council Plan building strong communities by engaging with all members of the local community likely to be directly affected by traffic management proposals.

### Implications

19.

<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications.
<b>Financial</b>	There are no financial implications.
<b>Human Resources</b>	There are no HR implications.
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	There is potential for a reduction in antisocial behaviour in this area
<b>Sustainability</b>	There are no sustainability implications
<b>Equalities</b>	There are no equalities implications at present
<b>Property</b>	There are no property implications

### Risk Management

20. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

### Contact Details:

#### Author

Alistair Briggs  
Traffic Network Manager  
Tel No. (01904) 551368

#### Chief Officer Responsible for the Report

Richard Wood  
Assistant Director City Strategy

Report  
Approved



Date 28/3/2013

Wards Affected: Guildhall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

- Annex A Summer 2012 complaints  
Annex B March 2013 comments from local residents and businesses  
Annex C Representation from Duncombe Place Management Company and details of reported incidents.  
Annex D Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee comments  
Annex E Plan showing potential changes to the rank

Summer 2012 Complaints

**Sent:**23July2012

**Subject:** Incident Duncombe Place

I have been informed by the police that the incident on Duncombe Place last Friday morning was due to and I quote 'a heavily intoxicated street drinker allegedly assaulted by two youths but refused to make a complaint. Nothing to do with taxi rank/drivers as the alleged offenders came from Blake St and continued along High Petergate.'

**City of York Council** | Licensing Services, Communities and Neighbourhoods,  
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14/8/2012

I wish to place on record yet another serious incident that is irrefutably - like all other disturbances over the last few years- due entirely to the location of the taxi rank opposite.

It supports the call to have the Duncombe Place taxi rank closed once and for all and moved to a non-residential area such as St Sampson's. This latest incident proves that the rank is a catalyst for late night trouble and totally unacceptable levels and frequencies of disturbances.

Reported by my Night Porter, following many complaints from residents; recorded by York Police as Job 40 -in the early hours of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> August (3.30am/4am) it involved 4 girls screaming and shouting and fighting, full on.

Regrettably the police arrived just minutes after they piled into a taxi.

BMX riding louts had by then joined in and hung around, exacerbating the disturbance

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We too were woken by this disturbance, as were our neighbours. Sadly being woken in the middle of the night is not uncommon, despite our always having to sleep with bedroom windows closed and installing very expensive double glazing.

Our neighbours downstairs are about to move out, partly because the pregnant wife is disturbed so often at night. Luckily for them they only rent the property so are easily able to move.

None of the residents here 'bought into' this situation. We bought our properties in 2004, and noise at night was not a problem before the licensing laws were relaxed. It is only since then that the taxis have gathered en masse to take home passengers who are at best happy and at worst drunk, and loudly so. It is disingenuous, if not knowingly dishonest, to deny that the disturbances in Duncombe Place at night are unrelated to the taxi rank.

We have long complained about this and have been ignored. The 'experiment' of allowing all night use of the taxi rank for 6 months is due to be reviewed soon. It would be nice to think that York Council would then show concern for its residents and the Dean Court's guests but I am not optimistic.

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Sent: 2012-09-03 13:27:24.88  
Subject: Another Duncombe Place Incident

I am contacting you to report yet another night of disturbance at the taxi rank in Duncombe Place on Saturday 1 September.

A neighbour, who reported this incident to the police, took a number of photographs of the debris outside our front door and in the Boer War Memorial Gardens. I am sending, separately, 2 of these photos.

The damp patches on our driveway, outside our front door, are urine. The underpants I have not investigated (they are still there should you wish to see them!) but they were on the grass, again right outside our front door, and I can only surmise that some young man soiled himself.

This is not the aftermath of passers by passing through the gardens, and is not a 1-off incident. The pattern is that at the taxi rank, in the early hours of most Sunday mornings, there are often at least a dozen people waiting. From the noise many of them have had a lot to drink, have probably eaten a curry, and faced with a wait for a taxi will use our driveway as a lavatory.

The use of the taxi rank means

- i) noise for the residents
- ii) mess for the Council or the residents to clear
- iii) a very unattractive sight for the tourists for at least a day afterwards in one of the most important parts of the city.

## Annex B

### March 2013 comments from local residents and businesses

I am writing to you in response to your letter of 17th March 2013. As regular visitor to the apartments overlooking the taxi rank, I would comment as follows

When staying for a week or more I soon established that the taxi rank is a very noisy place in the evenings and more so recently

The noise begins to rise in the late evening and continues into the early hours in the morning to a degree where I was forced to purchase earplugs in an attempt to get some sleep

I originally noticed that there were no taxis on the rank in the mornings until after 10.00.am when one or two taxis would arrive. However more taxis would arrive after 7.00pm and I have often seen nine or taxis parked as far back as the

Cenotaph

After about 10.30.pm the whole scene starts to change. people begin returning from within the city and the noise level builds up with shouting and laughter which continues until after 3.00.am

On one occasion I remember being awakened in the early hours by a lot of noise and on looking out two men were fighting on the rank and a crowd was gathered round them shouting

During the hot summers the apartments which are located in the old Probate Offices have thick walls that retain the heat but it is impossible to open the bedroom windows at night because the taxi drivers congregate outside talking and laughing whilst waiting for late night fares which is very disturbing

In conclusion I would earnestly request that the 24 hour taxi service should be discontinued. When you consider that there are taxi ranks outside the Theatre and the Art Gallery on St Leonards Place which is a main thoroughfare leading out of the city and down the hospital etc!.

Also the ranks are outside public buildings not private dwellings Whereas Duncombe place is not; the hotel obtains taxis elsewhere for its guests, there are generally no late night functions at the Minster and the road train ferries tourists in and out during the day

This leads me to wonder why the rank is in Duncombe Place, is it perhaps from when the Probate Offices were originally located in the apartment block then it would have served a very useful function

I trust this information will help you in your considerations

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I am responding on behalf of the members and staff of the Masonic Lodge in Duncombe Place to your request of the 17th.March for comments on the 24 hour operation of the Taxi Rank there.

Our members usually leave the Lodge after our meetings between 10.30 and 11pm. At this time people start to congregate around the Taxi Rank, especially at weekends, and our members, who tend not to be so young, report feeling intimidated. We all carry briefcases and fear that we may become targets for anti-social behaviour. The situation is made worse by the Taxis ranking up both sides of Duncombe Place and sometimes well down into High Petergate, so that it is difficult for us, or our wives collecting us, to pass, or find a space to make the pickup.

We are not affected by the noise after we leave, but we do suffer from the anti-social behaviour of the crowds in Duncombe Place, who we believe are drawn there by the presence of the all night Taxi Rank. There are no toilets close by and young men have no reservations about urinating, and worse, in our doorways, down our pavement grills, and against our walls late into the Night and early mornings.

We have recently had a more serious event, the setting of a fire on our doorstep. It was very close to our waste bin, and had it taken hold the results could have been disastrous.

We regularly have to pick up litter from our doorstep on Monday mornings when I go in to wind the clocks which have the McDonalds label or markings on them. This is a regular occurrence and very unpleasant to deal with.

I would like to attend the hearing on April 18th.

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Thank you for your letter of 17/3/13 requesting our views as residents of Duncombe Place on how the 24 hour rank is operating.

We regularly encounter severe problems late at night/early morning caused by, what is probably a minority, of customers waiting for taxis. On various occasions it has been necessary to call the police and, to a lesser extent, the council to clear up the mess. This includes incidents of:

1. Frequent defecating and urinating against the door and wall of our home, vomiting on the driveway and memorial garden grassed area
2. The ringing of our doorbell in the early hours, and in two instances, that we know of, intruders attempting to gain entry. One of which was quite blatant about the fact and very verbally aggressive. We dread to think of the possible situation had not the police responded rapidly for us.

3. The situation has reached such a state that some of our friends and family, particularly unaccompanied ladies, are reluctant to visit unless they are able leave at a relatively early hour following dinner/meeting as they are fearful of intimidating behaviour outside

We are both senior citizens and find it all very stressful, all the more so as the problems seem to be increasing with the growth of the night time economy. Indeed, when we moved into this home we had thought to spend a happy retirement in a peaceful and secure environment, tucked away as we are, away from the hustle and bustle of the central bar and restaurant areas.

We do hope you will take our concerns seriously and do what you can to help us

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I'm grateful for the opportunity to put on record the full extent and gravity of the prevailing circumstances.

The Hotel has suffered a burgeoning level of complaints for many years – and they emanate almost entirely from the passenger queues at the Rank – thru from late night until the “early hours” and this happens most nights all year round.

Apart from the general noise generated by the regular large gatherings of normal well-behaved people in these night time hours - itself enough to wake our residents nightly - our property is subjected to frequent disgusting acts of urination and defecation through our grills - that are above storage and kitchen areas-as well as in our doorways. I know our neighbours face this frequently too. Litter on all our steps occurs regularly and creates a very poor impression.

This is all down to the albeit minority of low-life that populate the Rank and the street, throughout the night.

But the Rank is also without doubt the catalyst for crowds gathering, ergo it also attracts lots of hangers on - people of all ages gathering both sides of the road in varying states of drunkenness - with consequent frequent intolerable disturbances to our residents. Because it has the Rank, all these “others” use Duncombe Place to summon and wait for other taxis too.

This general activity happens as I say, throughout the night, but especially after midnight- reaching peaks at 2am and 3am

and later at weekends. This is when the all-night drinking fraternity are at their most numerous and vociferous.

The Police will have, on record, many incidents of rowdy behaviour, fighting, screaming and so on reported by us – as it is a regular need for my Night Porters to make a vain attempt to summon police to bring people to order.

This whole scenario has and continues to lose the hotel a lot of business.

The Taxi Licensing Dept has—in the past—received letters of complaint from our guests – one from the owner of a taxi company who used to stay here over Ebor Races. 4 rooms. 4 nights. We lost them 2 years ago. They could stand it no longer

A previous Council review of the Ranks quoted Trip Advisor comments of the hotel having “good sleep quality”. This is not representative.

Going back just one year on “Room Tips” there are 12 mentions of noisy rooms. And browsing the reviews generally, going back 1 year there are 13 mentions of noisy to 4 of quiet rooms, and of the 4 quiet, I know from Room numbers that they were at the back. As well as this, all my front desk staff have reported verbal complains about noise. Because of the noise my guests have to keep their windows closed at night, and I then get complaints about over-hot bedrooms.

If I had not thrown in the towel a few years back (in a failed one-man campaign to have our problems recognised), I would cite, and be able to show, hundreds of in-house guest questionnaires - that quote noise, intolerable disturbed nights and so on and many declaring they will not return. This continues.

The fact that in 2009/10 (?) the culmination of a series of Meetings held in 1 Museum Street, with Cllrs Watson, Looker and Gillies, Inspector Crinnian from York Police. Messrs Lacy and Taxi Licensing executives, led to a 10pm Curfew being installed.

This in itself proves there was a serious problem of public disorder and anti-social behaviour causing the hotel and the neighbourhood serious problems. This is the case now- and it has worsened significantly.

I urge you to transmit the full and serious level of this situation to the Committee who I trust will take steps to re-instate all of our entitlement – to a decent night's sleep

Yours sincerely



David Brooks

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I would like to register a formal complaint about the unacceptable noise levels from the taxi rank located outside our flat at Duncombe Place. In spite of installing secondary glazing and extremely thick curtains at our flat this taxi rank is incredibly noisy and has an extremely negative impact on life in our flat.

Unfortunately this taxi rank attracts large lines of loud, intoxicated people who have no respect for the people living in the vicinity of the rank at all. In spite of contacting the police on a number of occasions it made no difference to the noise levels as by the time the police arrived to deal with our complaints the culprits were always already in a taxi on their way home for a good night's sleep - if only this were the case for the poor residents of our building and the residents of the Dean Court Hotel who pay a premium to live in and visit the historic city centre! Even whilst wearing earplugs both my husband and my sleep were seriously affected during the Summer we lived at The Chapter.

The Chapter belongs to my father & have power of attorney as he is unwell and I would like to take this opportunity to also register his formal complaint about this issue as he has always really struggled to sleep whenever he stayed at his flat. The problem is always far worse at the weekend and on bank holidays but it is a nuisance all year round and as well as impacting on our sleep this rank also leads to people defecating in the doorway of our building, urinating up the walls and littering all over the neighbourhood and this really needs to be addressed.

The Chapter is currently let out to a tenant through Linley and Simpson. We had to ensure that the agents warned any potential tenants about the noise problem prior to them moving in and unfortunately, in spite of our warnings and the double glazing etc the tenant is already

complaining about the noise and having to wear earplugs to bed every night.

Please can you email me to let me know you have received this formal complaint and register that it a complaint that is signed by 2 different individuals.

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I note that there is shortly to be a review of the Experimental 24hr Operation of the Duncombe Place Taxi Rank.

As a resident of Blake Street, I would request the operation time of this rank be stopped at 10 p.m. in order to keep late night, anti-social behaviour and noise to a minimum in an area where there are many residential properties whose occupants are having to suffer at a time when they should be entitled to get some well earned sleep. It would seem sense to bring into play other ranks which are close to late night bars and away from residential areas. This would disperse the late night revellers away from The Minster Quarter of Duncombe Place and Blake Street which deserves to be quiet and peaceful during those late hours.

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I am a resident on Blake Street and I would like to object to the 24hour taxi rank on Duncombe Place.

It is a disgrace to attract endless amounts of drunken youths throughout the early hours of the morning to such a location as outside the Minster and opposite one of the only city hotels. I can only imagine that when a visitor books to stay at the Dean Court Hotel they are choosing this location with it in mind that it would be peaceful because it is opposite the church--ie The Minster.

The type that frequent this taxi rank are not only rowdy but usually are eating take-away foods and beverages and drop their litter from these on the street before getting into a taxi.

This is totally the wrong location for a taxi rank and is a disturbance to the local residents who are trying to get a nights sleep.

## Representation from Duncombe Place Management Company and Details of Reported Incidents

Duncombe Place Management Company  
The Garret  
5 Duncombe Place  
York YO1 7ED

25 March 2012

Dear Cllr Merrett

Submission to Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability for Hearing  
re. Duncombe Place Taxi Rank on 18 April 2013

I have been asked by Alistair Briggs to comment on the use of the above taxi rank. I assume that this is part of the promised 6 month review which you and Cllr Woolley asked for after your decision, in February 2012, to extend the hours of the rank to 24 hours.

The 24 operation of the taxi rank impacts negatively on the residents. However, since the rank has effectively operated its own 24 hour policy for several years, in practice it has made little difference. This flouting by the taxi drivers of any regulation of the hours of operation for the taxi rank is well known to the City of York Council. The 19 January 2011 report, para 15, of the Directors of Communities and Neighbourhoods and City Strategy to the Taxi Licensing Review Task Group, acknowledges this.

The main problems for us continue to be

1. Noise, disturbance and anti-social behaviour throughout the night.

I have no complaints about the day time use of the taxi rank - or of military parades, the road train, the road and cycle races, the bells of the St Wilfrids and the Minster, the theatre get-out, or any normal street noise. I am concerned about the night time and early morning operation of the taxi rank giving rise to general noise, swearing, shouting, fighting, singing and so forth by the customers and preventing and disturbing sleep.

Many complaints on this problem have been made by the residents and the Dean Court Hotel to the Council over several years, since the Licensing Laws were extended. They are referred to in para 2 of the above report, and the Council previously accepted that there is a problem, both when they limited the rank's use to 10pm, and when they rejected a petition by taxi drivers that this decision be reversed. It was only because they felt unable to enforce their earlier decisions that they decided to ignore our experiences.

That same report claims, in para 16, that 'The Council has little evidence to substantiate that the use of the rank gives rise to disturbance.'

Since our anecdotal advice was ignored, we have, on the advice of the Police and following a meeting called by them to discuss low level crime in the area, conducted our own survey. Over most of a 4 week period one household reported instances of real disturbance after midnight to the Police, and was given incident numbers (which were not always recorded by the household). The results are shown in Annexe 1 and can be corroborated by the Police.

There were 14 such incidents, usually at weekends and, since the household only reported after midnight, in the early hours of the morning. This is the time when there are often no taxis at the rank, but when crowds congregate to wait for one to arrive. The customers were not necessarily misbehaving but their noise, since there are often more than 30 people waiting, was sufficient to wake the residents.

The Taxi Licensing Review Task Group would not have had such a record previously since such noise is not the Council's responsibility. As recently as September 2012 Nigel Woodhead of City of York Council wrote 'Noise issues in the street are dealt with by the police and if you are having problems with noise can I respectfully suggest that you contact them to attend.'

We do not think it is a sensible use of Police resources to expect action whenever a drunk is singing outside at 3am as he waits for a taxi. If an incident is reported the Police have to attend, but by the time they arrive the incident is usually long over. For this reason we have seldom contacted the Police in the past and the survey was discontinued after 1 month.

I should add that all of our own windows which face Duncombe Place are double glazed, 4 of them are sealed, and we have not opened the remaining 2 at night for about 6 years, even in the unusual event of a heatwave.

## 2. Urinating, vomiting and defecating outside our property at night.

The obvious conclusion is that since there are no convenient lavatories in the immediate vicinity for the use of the late night and early morning revellers, our walls, driveways and doorsteps, and the Boer War Memorial Gardens are the perceived alternative for those who have to wait for a taxi. In the last few months we have had 3 instances of people defecating on our doorstep, all reported to the Council. We have countless instances of both men and women urinating, including on occasion against our door when the urine comes into our hall. Our doorbell has been rung in the early hours which we believe is due to people leaning against it while urinating. At weekends especially there are usually urine trails against the walls, and we see from our windows men urinating against the walls of the gardens. It is so common that we don't bother to report it. Vomit is usually swept away by the Council's own workers, or us, or simply dries up.

## 3. Litter.

This is less of a problem than it used to be, but littering still goes on.

I understand the Council's problems in enforcing any rules regarding the taxi rank and the drivers. I also appreciate that this is a hearing to give feedback. And I do understand that there is a demand for taxis through the night. I would hope that the hearing would lead to wider consideration of the taxi ranks in the context of the late night economy (which is actually an early morning economy) and how the Council should manage it, and the changing nature of the city centre as a residential as well as a commercial area in which protection needs to be given to residents whose right to sleep at night is being violated. There are some very obvious avenues for exploration, for instance a consideration as to why the St Leonards/Exhibition taxi ranks, which already have 4 full time and 3 night time spaces and could have more, are adjacent to the public lavatories and to the best of my knowledge have no residents nearby are never used.

Yours faithfully,



Lorna Evans

## **ANNEXE 1**

### **Incidents of noise, disturbance, antisocial behaviour at the Duncombe Place Taxi Rank after midnight reported to N Yorkshire Police 23 November 2012 - 7 December 2012 and 16 - 21 December 2012**

Date	Time	Incident number	Nature of Offense
24/25 Nov	2.10am	162	Noise at taxi rank
	3.55am	162	Shouting at taxi rank
25/26 Nov	2.32am		Queue of 20+ waiting at taxi rank, raining, game of trying to cram into shelter, loud singing.
	3.57am		Large, noisy crowd waiting for taxis.
01/02 Dec	1.59am		Large, noisy crowd waiting at rank, shouting, general noise.
	4.30am		8 people in queue (students?), noisy
02/03 Dec	3.56am	102	3 or 4 taxis leaving, so assume large group, general noise, shouting goodbyes. Shortly after there was a fracas between a man and a woman from 2 different groups waiting at the rank.
07/08 Dec	2.25am	57	Queue of over 30 people at rank, partying as they waited.
	3.45am		Man breaking away from queue to urinate in the gardens.
08/09 Dec	3.45am	0126	Man leaving queue to urinate in gardens.
Resident was then away from York for 1 week and resumed survey on return			
16/17 Dec	3.53am	130	2 youths fighting in road, about 20 people in crowd. Then 2 girls joined in.
17/18 Dec	3.15am		3 youths set off car alarm in drive. Reported to Adam Duffield by email next day.
21/22 Dec	2.50		Young woman screaming
	3.25am		Noise from group of 12 - 15 people waiting at rank.



**Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee Comments**

The Reinvigorate York proposals are not likely to affect this rank, but could mean the night time one in St Leonard's may be affected, which makes the Duncombe Place one more important.

Duncombe Place is well used, although there are allegations of ASB resulting from the rank, however I am not sure that this is the sole source of the problems. Not sure what can be done - Hackney drivers can pick up in the street, and if people congregate there they will pick them up whether or not it is a rank.

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The rank is operating on a 24 hour basis. Any reduction in hours will need to be policed.

The manager of the Dean Court has allegedly been abused and threatened by drivers and guests have been disturbed.

If it is decided that the hours will be reduced they must be enforced. There also needs to be an alternative which will be difficult as passengers continue to gravitate to the Duncombe Place rank.

If it remains, we need to ensure that no disturbances take place affecting residents or visitors to the Dean Court through active policing of the rank.

Plan Showing Potential Changes to the Taxi Rank

