

Parking Review Amendment 32

Committee considering report:	Individual Executive Member Decisions
Date of Committee:	20 July 2023
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Denise Gaines
Report Author:	Gareth Dowding
Forward Plan Ref:	ID4339

1 Purpose of the Report

To inform the Executive Member for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel of the responses received during the statutory consultation on the review and introduction of waiting restrictions on High Street Streatley and to seek approval of officer recommendations.

2 Recommendation

That the Executive Member for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel approves the proposals as set out in Section 6 of this report.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The implementation of the physical works would be funded from existing Capital budgets as part of the Network Management team’s Minor Works Programme for 2023-24.
Human Resource:	None arising from this report.
Legal:	Sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order would be undertaken by the Legal Services team.
Risk Management:	If implemented the project will be managed in accordance with the Environment Department’s approach to risk management.

Property:	None arising from this report.			
Policy:	The consultation was in accordance with the Council's consultation procedure.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		N/A
Environmental Impact:		X		N/A
Health Impact:		X		N/A
ICT Impact:		X		N/A
Digital Services Impact:		X		N/A
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		N/A
Core Business:		X		N/A

Data Impact:		X		N/A
Consultation and Engagement:	Local stakeholders, statutory consultees and road users were consulted on the proposals by way of statutory advertisement, Street Notices and online consultation.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Executive Member for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel of the responses received during the statutory consultation on the review and introduction of waiting restrictions on High Street Streatley and to seek approval of officer recommendations.
- 4.2 Objections and support for the proposals were received. This report summarises the responses and makes recommendations to the Executive Member on what should be implemented as a result of this consultation. .

5 Introduction/Background

Introduction

- 5.1 The West Berkshire Clear Streets Strategy is the basis on which parking in the main towns and villages has been formally reviewed. When Decriminalised Parking Enforcement was adopted in April 2009 the principal Consolidation Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was made which identified all on-street parking restrictions across the district. When inconsiderate dangerous or obstructive parking is raised as a concern at individual locations across the district these are now prioritised and investigated within a district-wide parking scheme and amendments made to the principal TRO.
- 5.2 Parking Review Amendment 32 was proposed in support of a request by Streatley Parish Council and the Ward Member at that time to address congestion and obstruction issues on High Street Streatley following a village-wide parking survey undertaken by the Parish Council in February 2022.

Background

- 5.3 High Street, Streatley is one of the main links across the River Thames and is a continuation of the B4000 linking traffic between Streatley and Goring-on-Thames. It extends for approximately 300 metres from the River Thames westwards towards the crossroads with the A329 and can experience significant levels of traffic at peak periods. Several of the historic properties fronting High Street have no off-street parking facilities for residents and as a consequence the on-street parking can introduce regular, short-term obstruction problems for through traffic.
- 5.4 Streatley Parish Council undertook a parking survey in February 2022 to gauge the level of support from villagers on five separate Options to address this congestion and obstruction issue. Letters were distributed to 430 homes in the Parish detailing the background and asking for 2 preferences to be chosen from their list so that responses

could be analysed and the result submitted to West Berkshire Council to formally proceed with a TRO proposal as part of the statutory process.

- 5.5 The Parish survey received a 52% return from the letter drop, with 456 individual responses submitted by residents. Of the 456 responses received, Option 4 to introduce “Daytime 14/15 parking spaces for residents only (precise locations to be determined but would create larger passing places.” was a clear favourite as the preferred first choice, with 255 respondents in favour and the next preferred Option of creating a new Meadow Car Park having 72 in favour.
- 5.6 On this basis the Parish Council and Ward Member at that time requested that a scheme involving Resident Permit parking be drawn up and taken to statutory advertisement.
- 5.7 The proposals were detailed in Consultation Parking plan BK19. A copy of the advertised TRO and plan are included at Appendix A.
- 5.8 The statutory consultation and advertisement of the agreed proposals was undertaken between 02 and 23 March 2023.

Responses to Statutory Consultation

- 5.9 At the end of the statutory consultation period a total of 43 responses had been received, including comments from Thames Valley Police who indicated they had No Objection. A letter signed by six residents of High Street was also submitted, which detailed numerous objections to the proposals.
- 5.10 There were 27 responses indicating support for the proposals, 22 of which were from residents of Goring-on-Thames, many of which asked that the white line Access Protection Markings across the three driveways on High Street also be widened significantly to provide ‘informal passing places’ for through traffic in periods of congestion.
- 5.11 3 responses gave no direction on whether they were supportive or wished to object and either suggested additional restrictions which were not part of the scheme or suggested the proposals would not change anything.
- 5.12 There were 12 objections received, 9 of which were from residents who provided home addresses on High Street. One of the objectors considered that the proposals didn’t go far enough and all parking should be removed from High Street. .
- 5.13 Objectors’ comments included:
 - (a) The proposal for Resident Parking Permits would benefit nobody and would have no effect on traffic flow or safety as the number of parking spaces was not being reduced significantly, but spaces were instead being converted to Permit Parking under the proposal.
 - (b) The proposed permit scheme was unwanted, unaffordable by some residents and enforcement would be very limited, leaving any permit restriction open to continual abuse and would be unfair for those who were eligible for permits and chose to opt into the scheme if introduced.

- (c) The proposal is based entirely on a Parish Council survey which is considered flawed as the views of High Street residents with no off-street parking and who would be directly impacted by the proposal, were not properly consulted prior to the survey questions being decided and there has been no opportunity for their responses to be fully considered or given the higher priority they deserve.
- (d) Larger households with multiple car ownership and off-street parking for only one or two vehicles would not qualify for any permits and this is unfair on a street where competition for a smaller area of unrestricted space would then be significant as a result of visitors to the Swan Hotel parking on-street .
- (e) The decision to provide Permit Parking for just 14 vehicles seems arbitrary and questionable.
- (f) If parking is removed traffic speeds will increase and road safety will be compromised in a location where historic properties were built close to the carriageway with narrow footways.
- (g) The congestion problems on High Street are relatively short term and should be expected at times of peak traffic. More recently there have been building works taking place on High Street properties and repairs to the carriageway, both of which have exacerbated obstruction for traffic due to builders vans and Highways vehicles, but this is a temporary situation and should not influence a long term decision to introduce parking restrictions.
- (h) Included amongst the objection from The Swan at Streatley Hotel was an offer to provide dedicated and policed residents' parking to the High Street residents, along with electric vehicle charging points as part of an extended parking scheme in the hotel grounds, as was proposed to the Parish Council on 8 February 2022.

5.14 The majority of the objectors did indicate that, while they opposed the proposal for Permit Parking, they were supportive of the proposal to extend the 'No Waiting At Any Time' double yellow line restriction up to the entrance for Little Falklands in an effort to relieve some of the obstruction problems.

Officer's comments

5.15 The Parish Council and previous Ward Member have for some time requested that obstruction and congestion issues on High Street be addressed. Our remit in Network Management is to consider parking restrictions which will improve road safety and reduce congestion, but we also have to take into consideration the needs and wishes of local residents where possible, especially those who may have no alternative off-street parking space available to them. There is no absolute right to park on the public highway but it is an accepted modern day practise and is allowed where it can be accommodated.

5.16 When Whitchurch Toll Bridge was closed for repair for several months in 2014 the High Street formed part of the diversion route and parking was prohibited during the day for the majority of it's length to take into account the additional traffic that was expected on this route. Once the bridge was repaired the restriction was removed and parking has remained unrestricted since that time.

- 5.17 The Parish Council's parking survey has provided an opportunity through the formal statutory process to reconsider whether parking restrictions are justified and would be welcomed by local residents.
- 5.18 There are approximately 35 properties located on or adjacent to the High Street, the majority of which have some form of off-street parking available to them and therefore may not be eligible for a permit if a scheme was to be introduced. Of the remainder there would seem to be from an initial inspection of parking provision approximately 10 properties with no off-street parking. Six of those properties are owned by the residents who signed the multi-signature letter strongly objecting to the permit parking proposals.
- 5.19 The level of objection from High Street residents, with none indicating any support, and those that have responded indicating they would not be willing to purchase a permit, makes it difficult to justify forcing a permit regime on residents and creating a new Parking Zone for such potentially very small numbers of residents willing to opt in.
- 5.20 The concerns raised by some residents regarding limited enforcement is also difficult to argue against given the position of Streatley towards the outer edge of our district and the limited enforcement resource available in the Parking team. Any Permit scheme where residents are expected to pay for their permits should only be introduced if there is a realistic chance of regular enforcement, otherwise the parking bays can become subject to abuse, will be an enforcement burden for the Parking team and unfair to those residents who may in good faith have opted into a Permit scheme.

6 Proposals

- 6.1 Given the above objections it is proposed that the Permit Holders Only 8am – 6pm restriction be omitted from the scheme and that the length of the existing Access Protection Markings be reviewed for extending to help create longer informal passing places.
- 6.2 That the proposed 'No Waiting At Any Time' double yellow line proposal be introduced as advertised.
- 6.3 That the respondents to the statutory consultation be informed accordingly.
- 6.4 That the parking scheme be monitored so that any parking displacement can be addressed as part of a future scheme.

7 Other options considered

- 7.1 An option for consideration is to disregard the objections from residents of High Street and to introduce the Permit Holders Only 8am-6pm restriction as advertised. This would be supported by the majority of the non-resident respondents and the Parish Council. If the residents who indicated their objection do not apply for permits as stated, or if the numbers who are eligible is very small, then it may result in the new parking bay initially mostly being clear of parked vehicles during the day and may resolve the peak traffic congestion and obstruction complaints. It's also possible however that the small number of eligible residents do ultimately purchase permits, together with visitor permits and the new Permit Zone parking bays may fill up with permitted vehicles and the congestion

and obstruction issues will not have resolved at all. On balance we would however favour giving priority to the views of the residents who have objected to the proposals.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Due to the nature of parking schemes it can sometimes be difficult to accurately anticipate the consequences of change, such as where displaced parking may occur. Therefore the parking restrictions will need to be monitored to determine their effectiveness and should any further amendment be required these can be introduced as part of the review process, subject to the standard consultation procedure.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A

- Proposed Traffic Regulation Order – WBDC (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Loading, Parking Places and Residents’ Parking (Consolidation) Order 209 (Amendment 32) Order 202[] Consultation parking plan – BK19

Background Papers:

Consultation Parking Plan BK19

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees or Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

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