

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET PLANNING AND PARKING PANEL – 15 SEPTEMBER 2022
REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

INTRODUCTION OF RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING SCHEME, PARKING PLACES AND OTHER
WAITING RESTRICTIONS, IN VARIOUS ROADS, PEARTREE WARD, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In March 2021, Parking Services undertook a parking survey with residents and businesses in Peartree, Welwyn Garden City. The scope of the survey took in the majority of the Peartree ward barring the industrial area that will be worked on outside of the residents' consultation. The purpose of the survey was to engage with residents and businesses in seeking their views on parking options for the area.
- 1.2 Owing to the large geographical footprint of the survey, a decision was made to split the ward into 4 different areas to help focus on the more localised needs of the residents and businesses within the ward. This report focuses on the outcome of the consultation within Area 1 of the Peartree Ward.
- 1.3 Area 1 comprises of the west residential section of the ward and includes the following roads; **Athelstan Walk North, Athelstan Walk South, Broadwater Crescent, By The Mount, Corals Mead, Creswick, Edgars Court, Goblins Green, Moatwood Green and The Reeds**. These roads are closest to the Broadwater Road sites which are due to be redeveloped over the next few years where additional parking pressures may be displaced into the area.
- 1.4 This report sets out the results of the informal consultation pertaining to **Peartree 1**, the statutory consultation and the recommended course of action.
- 1.5 It is now established practice that with all new parking restrictions, the Council monitor any reports as to their effectiveness for the first 6 months following their implementation. Should the Council receive reports requesting changes or amendments to the new restrictions, then a review of the restrictions would take place which may result in further recommendations. A feedback form will be available on the Council's website after the introduction of restrictions.
- 1.6 Three objections have been received relating to the proposed order(s) which are set out below in Paragraph 4. All objections are contained within **Appendix A**.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 **"The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Peartree (1), Welwyn Garden City) (Restriction of Waiting Places and Permit Parking Zones) Order 2022"**
- 2.2 That the Panel considers the objections received in Section 5 in addition to the issues raised in Section 16 around equalities and diversity and recommends to Cabinet to proceed with the creation of the traffic regulation order as advertised; and to note the delegated powers conferred to Executive Member for Community Safety & Parking to sign an

executive member decision to proceed with the creation of the traffic regulation order as advertised, subject to unanimous recommendation of the Panel.

2.3 **“The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Peartree (1), Welwyn Garden City) (Prohibition of Stopping and Waiting on Verge or Footway) Order 2022”**

2.4 That the Panel considers the issues raised in Section 16 around equalities and diversity and recommends to Cabinet to proceed with the creation of the amended traffic regulation order as advertised and to note the delegated powers conferred to Executive Member for Community Safety & Parking to sign an executive member decision to proceed with the creation of the traffic regulation order as advertised, subject to unanimous recommendation of the Panel.

3 Explanation

3.1 All residents of the Peartree Ward were written to in March 2021 inviting them to fill in a short survey requesting their views on any ongoing issues within their street as well as asking them to provide input on any improvements or restrictions that could be offered to improve the parking situation throughout the ward. To ensure the survey reached the current resident at that moment, all letters were addressed to “The Occupier”.

3.2 After an initial low response rate of 16% from Peartree Ward, follow up letters were sent out to residents. Those who had already submitted survey responses were given an update that we were extending the deadline for survey responses whilst those we had not received an initial response from were reminded, they had additional time to respond.

3.3 Area 1 which this report focuses on has 386 households. From these households, 124 survey responses were received, response rate of 32.1%. The highest response rate from area 1 was received from The Reeds and the lowest response rate was received from Edgars Court.

3.4 When asked about the existing issues within these roads, the following points are of note; Over 50% of respondents highlighted that parking issues occur during the mornings, afternoons and evenings which shows that residents are experiencing parking issues throughout the whole day.

3.5 Most respondents identified that issues occurred throughout the week and did not single out weekdays or weekends as specific times of the week where there was an increase in parking issues.

3.6 46% of respondents reported that verge and footway parking was an existing issue in their road and 64% of respondents stated non-resident parking was an issue.

3.7 Of the 109 residents that completed the parking restriction section of the survey, 59.63% were in favour of a resident permit scheme whilst 33.03% did not want any restrictions at all.

3.8 Although Goblins Green was not in favour of a resident permit scheme and there was a split vote in Corals Mead and Creswick Court, Parking Services looked to propose a resident permit scheme in those roads to remove the likelihood of parking displacement from the other interlinking roads that did have a majority response in favour.

3.9 Although residents were in favour of various times for parking restrictions to start and finish, the survey indicated that the majority of residents who responded preferred the restrictions start times 8-9am and finishing time 6pm.

- 3.10 At Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 10th March 2022, Parking Services put forward a proposal that a Resident Permit Parking Scheme be introduced into the Peartree 1 Area. Due to objections that had been received during the objection period, the panel requested that Parking Services return to the residents of Peartree Area 1 and reconsult them on the preferred times and days that the RPPS would be in force.
- 3.11 On 17th May 2022, the Peartree 1 residents were written to asking them to choose between 10-12 Monday-Friday and 8-6 Monday-Saturday as to which of these restriction periods they would prefer. Residents were asked to either fill in an online survey to select their preference or contact the council to receive a paper copy of the survey.
- 3.12 The timing survey results were answered by 115 households (29.8% response rate). 78 (67.83%) voted for Monday to Friday 10am to 12noon, 32 (27.83%) voted for Monday to Saturday 8am to 6pm. The remaining responses did not vote for either option. The timing survey led to some additional households responding, and some who previously contacted us not replying.
- 3.13 Parking Services wrote back to residents on 30th June 2022 outlining the outcome and the intention to advertise the new Traffic Regulation Orders. We also advised in the letter that any previously lodged objections are not being counted, and a new objection period would open.

4 Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)

- 4.1 On the 6th July 2022, a Public Notice of Intention proposing the below orders was advertised in the Welwyn Hatfield Times. (See Appendix C).

“The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Peartree (1), Welwyn Garden City) (Restriction of Waiting Places and Permit Parking Zones) Order 2022”

“The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Peartree (1), Welwyn Garden City) (Prohibition of Stopping and Waiting on Verge or Footway) Order 2022”

- 4.2 Notices were erected in the affected length of roads and letters delivered to residents and businesses. Plans illustrating the proposals for each Order are attached to this report. (See **Appendix B**).

5 Objections

- 5.1 3 Objections were received pertaining to the new proposed permit and yellow line restrictions in Peartree Area 1 (See **Appendix A**). 386 households were consulted, the objection rate being 0.78%.
- 5.2 No objections were received in relation to the proposed verge and footway parking prohibition.

5.3 The below table summarises the objections, number of objections and the Councils response.

Objection	Number of Objectors	Response
The newly proposed 2 hours permit scheme restrictions are not adequate to resolve the ongoing issues with commuters and visitors to nearby flats	1 household objection	The results of the timing survey showed that 69.9% of respondents would prefer the restrictions for the shorter time period of 10am-12pm Monday-Friday. Whilst we recognise the views of the objector that this shorter time period may not be a resolution to parking issues that take place throughout the day, we are obliged to strongly take into consideration that the majority of residents would prefer shorter hours. Parking Services believes the shorter restriction hours may not resolve parking displacement from nearby of future residential developments, however, it would stop all day parking by non-residents of the permit zone.
Residents should not be expected to have to pay for the cost of permits or visitor vouchers. Resident also feels that all day restrictions would also be a better option than 2 hours a day	1 household objection	Whilst we agree that the cost of living has gone up, the cost of designing, introducing, and maintaining a resident permit scheme is partly self-funding by residents who would get direct benefit from better availability of parking. Council Tax funds cannot be used to finance parking permits. The parking permits fees and charges are set by Council to correct fund the service and balanced budget and is amongst the lowest on street permit costs in Hertfordshire and beyond. With regards to a preference for all day restrictions, the results of the survey showed that 69.9% of respondents prefer the restrictions for the shorter time period of 10am-12pm Monday-Friday. A shorter restriction time would reduce the period a visitor voucher is required (therefore the resident may not need to buy many vouchers)
Objector is against introduction of double yellow lines in the form of junction protection as it will prevent them from parking close to junctions and remove parking spaces	1 household objection	Double yellow lines are being introduced as standard as a form of junction protection throughout the borough whenever Parking Services consults an area for parking controls. The proposed junction protection is compatible with the Highway Code guidance that no vehicle should be parked within 10 metres of a junction and is proposed to highlight this point to motorists and to provide enhanced junction visibility for road users and pedestrians alike.

6 Legal Implication(s)

- 6.1 TROs are created under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Consultations follow a statutory legal process as set out in The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996
- 6.2 The Council can amend proposals once advertised. Any proposals that are less restrictive can be done without having to re-advertise the Traffic Regulation Order.
- 6.3 Through the Agency Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council, Welwyn Hatfield can implement restrictions on any road and links in with Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 powers to make certain Orders.
- 6.4 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places an obligation on the Council to have due regard to the need of the advance equality of opportunity between those groups who share protected characteristics and those who do not, when coming to a decision on the exercise of any of its functions.

7 Financial Implication(s)

- 7.1 The cost of TRO and Parking Improvement works recommended in this report will be funded through existing Parking Services revenue and capital budgets.

8 Risk Management Implications

- 8.1 Changing the parking conditions could generate negative publicity. Some parking may be displaced into nearby roads where no restrictions exist.
- 8.2 It is standard procedure to monitor new parking restrictions for the first 6 months after any are implemented. A feedback form will be available on the Council's website after the introduction of restrictions to also monitor resident's comments. During this period all reports of safety issues or parking displacement will be recorded. If any significant safety issues are discovered during the monitoring period, Parking Services will investigate and carry out the appropriate remedial action.

9 Security & Terrorism Implications

- 9.1 There are no known security & terrorism implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

10 Human Resources

- 10.1 There are no known Human Resources implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

11 Communication and Engagement

- 11.1 When making any changes to parking restrictions there is a statutory consultation process set out in the Local Authority Traffic Orders (Procedures) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 which the Council needs to adhere to. This includes consulting directly with all affected parties and a number of statutory consultees, such as the Police and Hertfordshire County Council. Formal objections can only be made during the period stated on the Notice of Proposal and stating the grounds on which they are being made.
- 11.2 Ward Members as well as emergency services and Hertfordshire County Council have also been consulted as part of this process and no objections have been received relating to the proposals recommended in this report.

- 11.3 In addition, Public Notices are required to be erected within all affected roads and advertised in the local newspaper, in this case the Welwyn Hatfield Times.
- 11.4 This process has been carried out and there are no known implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

12 Health and Wellbeing

- 12.1 There are no known Health and Wellbeing implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

13 Procurement Implications

- 13.1 There are no known procurement implications in relation to the proposals in this report.

14 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 14.1 There is a potential for a positive climate change implication, by restricting parking for part of the day to resident permit holders only can in some parts of the area, make it easier for residents to find available parking thus reducing emissions of driving further to look for a parking space. By prohibiting verge parking, verges are likely to recover leading to ecological enhancement.
- 14.2 Parking restrictions may result in non-residents using alternative methods of transport to travel to the area. This may result in a reduction of carbon emissions.

15 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 15.1 This report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities to engage with our communities and deliver value for money.

16 Equality and Diversity

- 16.1 I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out.
- 16.2 The EqIA found that there is potential for both positive and negative impacts on Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity. No issues were raised from any of these characteristic groups during the course of the consultation process; however, the use of yellow lines to prevent parking on junctions may have an effect on these groups in that they might have to park further away.

In mitigation there are statutory exemptions contained within the Order which allow for the unloading and loading of goods and passengers while parked on yellow lines. Blue badge holders can also park on double yellow line restrictions for up to 3 hours. The introduction of resident permit parking will free up additional capacity which will allow these groups better opportunities to park closer to home. Visitor permits may be purchased at a 50% discounted rate for those persons in receipt of a state pension. Parking close to junctions creates a hazard in that it reduces visibility on entry and exit. The benefits accrued to the new restrictions outweigh the above-mentioned risks.

- 16.3 Parking Services believe that the benefits gained from double yellow lines far outweigh any drawbacks as it enhances the safe navigation of the highway for all.
- 16.4 In addition, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the scheme for the first 6 months and further recommendations may be made at a later date; should any unintended impacts arise, as a result of the new scheme being introduced.

Name of author Claire Nicholls
Title Parking Services Officer
Date 12 August 2022

Background papers:

Peartree 1 Objections – Appendix A

Peartree 1 Notice of Intention – Appendix B

Peartree 1 Plans – Appendix C

Peartree 1 Survey results table – Appendix D