

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET HOUSING AND PLANNING PANEL – 12TH JANUARY 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

LONGCROFT LANE AND SURROUNDING ROADS, HANDSIDE, WGC – PROPOSED RESIDENT PARKING PERMIT SCHEME AND WAITING RESTRICTIONS.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The residents of Longcroft Lane, Parkfields, Lytton Gardens, Birdcroft Road, Longcroft Gardens, Wilkins Grove, Rooks Close, Fordwich Road and Rooks Hill, Welwyn Garden City have been consulted on proposals for a resident parking permit scheme and waiting restrictions. The purpose of the consultation was to prevent long term parking by non-residents.
- 1.2 This report sets out the results of the informal consultation, the formal consultation and the recommended course of action. A total of 402 properties were consulted on the proposals and the Council has received ten letters of objection to the formal consultation. The objections comprise the 14 bullet points summarised in 3.8 below

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Panel consider the objections received, in particular the issues raised around equalities and diversity and having considered all the detailed issues in this report including any proposed mitigating actions, recommends to Cabinet to proceed with the creation of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for all the reasons set out in this report.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 In most roads surrounding the town centre, single yellow lines were introduced a number of years ago and some residents had complained this type of restriction was no longer fit for purpose. Residents wanted the option to be able to park during the restriction time, but still want to prevent non-residents from parking all day.
- 3.2 In 2015, Parking Services carried out a general parking survey in Handside, Welwyn Garden City. The initial results from the general survey suggested that a number of roads in the Longcroft Lane area would consider the implementation of a resident parking permit scheme (RPPS). In June 2016, a further consultation commenced in this area, based upon the findings of the 2015 survey.
- 3.3 Existing restrictions in the area consist of 'no waiting' Monday to Saturday, 8am to 6pm in the northern area (A) close to the Town Centre and 'no waiting' Monday to Saturday, 9am to 11am to the south of the area (B).

- 3.4 In the survey letters of June 2016, residents were asked to confirm their original choice for a RPPS, together with their preference for operating times. Of the roads consulted, Parkfields, Fordwich Road and Rooks Hill in the survey of 2015 had shown no interest in a permit scheme. In the 2016 survey they voted to retain their existing restrictions and not to be included in a RPPS. The majority of residents voting for the permit scheme had opted for the Monday to Saturday, 9am to 5pm operating time

	RPPS - Yes	RPPS - No	9am-11am	9am-5pm	*Replies
Longcroft Lane (A)	24	11	8	17	49%
Longcroft Lane (B)	13	13	9	8	34%
Lytton Gardens (A)	11	1	1	10	86%
Birdcroft Road (B)	11	3	6	6	50%
Longcroft Gardens (A)	9	8	7	7	32%
Wilkins Grove (A)	15	6	7	11	68%
Rooks Close (A)	6	2	5	4	64%

* Indicates percentage of replies received from total no. of properties

- 3.5 Following publication of the results, further representations were received from several residents in Parkfields. They believed their quality of life to be blighted, citing the fact that they were unable to accommodate visitors in their road, especially on a Saturday when the 8am to 6pm restriction was in force. In response to this, residents were informed by letter that Parkfields would subsequently be included in the proposed RPPS and that any residents opposed to this action would have the opportunity to submit formal objections in due course.
- 3.6 Running parallel with this consultation was a proposal to implement a verge protection order. This restriction will prohibit stopping and waiting on footways and verges and is in response to the many complaints the Council receives regarding unnecessary obstruction of footways and damage to the grass verges. This proposal has been warmly welcomed.
- 3.7 On the 2nd November 2016, **The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Handside, Welwyn Garden City) (Restriction of waiting and permit parking zone) Order 2016** and **The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Handside, Welwyn Garden City) (Prohibition of stopping and waiting on verges and footways) Order 2016** (Appendix A) was advertised in the Welwyn Hatfield Times with notices erected in the affected roads. Letters were also sent to all residents.
- 3.8 Following the advertisement of the Notice of Intent, a number of comments were received from residents who live in Longcroft Lane (B). The comments pertained to the proposed double yellow line protection around that area of Longcroft Lane in the centre currently 'stopped' up, citing loss of on-street parking. To satisfy those residents, the double yellow lines have been removed from the proposals. The TRO has been amended together with the submission of a new drawing (Appendix B).

- 3.9 There are ten letters of objection (Appendix C) to the proposed TRO. Below is a summary of grounds for objection.
- a) *It would appear that the residents are divided equally between keeping the current restrictions and changing to a 9am-5pm restriction.*
 - b) *By making all areas restricted all day, the area will be virtually empty.*
 - c) *Under no circumstances should residents have to pay for their own or visitors' parking.*
 - d) *Is there really a demand for such (kerbside) parking here?*
 - e) *Residents with no need for additional parking may sell the space on to commuters.*
 - f) *Parking is free at out of town shopping centres. This will force shoppers elsewhere.*
 - g) *There is no mandate for change. Only those who want change tend to speak up.*
 - h) *(Parkfields) residents have been consulted and voted by a clear two thirds majority against a permit scheme.*
 - i) *All properties have room for two or more vehicles to park on the property.*
 - j) *Parking on the blind bends would be dangerous.*
 - k) *Parking on this narrow road would make it dangerous and difficult to enter for the elderly.*
 - l) *Residents should be allowed to park on the raised kerb as long as the pathway is not obstructed.*
 - m) *Allowing parking on Parkfields would result in it being an overspill for Parkway and Longcroft Lane.*
 - n) *There must be a good reason why Parkfields has an 8am-6pm restriction, while Longcroft Lane which is nearer to the town centre has a 9am-11am restriction.*

4 The reasons for moving forward with the proposals are as follows:

- a) *It was the majority opinion of residents to request a permit scheme.*
- b) *All the roads included in the proposals are currently restricted with single yellow lines, which means no-one can park during the days and times they operate. Some roads voted to continue with their current restrictions, not all roads are subject of a permit scheme.*
- c) *Charges levied to permit schemes are long established and are to contribute towards both their administration and enforcement.*
- d) *One of the aims of the scheme is to remove non-resident parking and thereby improve the capacity for residents and their visitors.*

- e) *There are built-in safeguards to prevent fraudulent permit applications.*
 - f) *Increasingly this is not the case. Many such shopping centre now charge for parking and adjoin residential areas are now adversely affected. In the Town Centre on street parking is free for up to 2 hours*
 - g) *It was made clear that Parking Services would be guided by the majority opinion of those residents who replied to the consultation.*
 - h) *See remarks in Para 3.4*
 - i) *This is incorrect, off-road capacity varies.*
 - j) *Double yellow lines are proposed at the junctions. However, as on any road users must exercise care where they park.*
 - k) *The take up for permits/vouchers is likely to be very small in this location with authorised users having little or no effect on the existing situation.*
 - l) *Parking on the footway is hazardous to pedestrians with sight problems, causes damage and increased maintenance costs.*
 - m) *Parkway residents have their own RPPS schemes and would be ineligible to park in Parkfields. There is no evidence to suggest any shortfall in capacity for Longcroft Lane*
 - n) *That area of Longcroft Lane adjacent to Parkfields shares the same 8am-6pm restriction.*
- 4.1 The people most likely to benefit from these proposals are the residents. Only a resident parking permit scheme (RPPS) has the benefit of allowing residents and their visitors to park on the road during the hour(s) of the restriction. The removal of yellow lines will reduce maintenance costs. Parking Services are firmly of the opinion that this is the best option for residents. All monies accrued are channelled into both the enforcement and operation of the scheme and are designed to be self-financing. Parking Services are therefore recommending this scheme to proceed and be implemented as advertised.
- 4.2 No objections have been received during the consultation process by any of the statutory consultees. These include, but not limited to Hertfordshire County Council, Ward Councillors or the Police.

5. Legal Implication(s)

- 5.1 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. No other legal implications are inherent in relation in to the proposals in this report.

6. Financial Implication(s)

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

7. Risk Management Implications

7.1 There may be an element of parking displacement due to the loss of some car parking space in the existing car parking areas. The risk is minimal but any significant safety issues will be addressed and dealt with following a six month monitoring period.

8. Security & Terrorism Implications

8.1 There are no security & terrorism implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

9. Procurement Implications

9.1 There are no procurement implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

10. Climate Change Implication(s)

10.1 There are no climate change implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

11. Link to Corporate Priorities

11.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority Protect and Enhance the Environment, and specifically to the achievement to Deliver Effective Parking Services

- Protect and enhance the environment – Deliver effective parking services;
- Engage with our communities and provide value for money;
- Revitalise our town centres and other shopping precincts.

12. Equality and Diversity

I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out. No significant differential impacts were found.

12.1 The process will have a positive impact on **Age**. Elderly residents may benefit from a less congested environment with improved access to and egress from their properties. Residents in receipt of a state pension are eligible for a 50% discount when purchasing visitor vouchers.

12.2 The process will have a positive impact on **Disability**. Disabled persons may feel encouraged to use their vehicles in a less congested environment. Residents in possession of a valid blue badge receive their first permit free of charge.

Name of author Jack Carson 01707 357529
Title Parking Technician
Date 14th December 2016

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)