

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET HOUSING AND PLANNING PANEL – 17TH MARCH 2016  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (FINANCE AND OPERATIONS)

LITTLE HEATH, POTTERS BAR – JUNCTION PROTECTION SCHEME

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Hertsmere Borough Council implemented the North Potters Bar Parking Scheme Order in 2014, part of which overlapped into Welwyn Hatfield. For legal reasons the part of the Hertsmere Order affecting Welwyn Hatfield residents, was thereafter revoked in 2015.
- 1.2 As a result of this, the Council added Little Heath to Parking Services work programme. Residents were re-consulted with those previously affected by these restrictions; and included those residents living nearby who had been indirectly affected by parking displacement. Consultation also took place with the residents residing in the remainder of Little Heath, which falls under Welwyn Hatfield, so as to perform an area wide parking survey. The purpose of these consultations were to create areas free of parked vehicles, for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion of traffic and improving road safety.
- 1.3 This report sets out the results of the informal consultation, the formal consultation and the recommended course of action. Six letters of objection to the formal consultation have been received.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the Panel consider the objections received and recommends to the Cabinet to proceed with the creation of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) named in item 3.5 for the reasons outlined in items 3.7 and 3.8

**3 Explanation**

- 3.1 Between May and August 2015 all residents in the aforementioned areas in Little Heath were consulted separately (Appendix A).
- 3.2 Residents in the Heath Road and Osborne Road area (Survey 1) were given a choice on whether they wished to retain, amend, or delete the existing restrictions. Residents in Kerdistone Close chose to retain the 1 hour restriction and requested double yellow lines in the turning area. Those residing in Heath Close voted for the removal of the 1 hour restriction in its entirety. The majority of residents in Heath Road chose to retain the present restrictions. Following the formal consultation, no letters of objection were received pertaining to this area.
- 3.3 Residents in the Osborne Road area submitted their own returns (Survey 2). Complaints of congestion were received relating to the junctions with Osborne Gardens, Heath Road and the entrance to Osborne Court. It was noted on inspection that there were many turning movements in and out of the junction with Hawkshead Road, which at times led to stacking problems due to parked

vehicles. Further to this, residents were also asked whether they wished restrictions outside their own individual properties. Double yellow line restrictions were chosen by the residents to negate the need for signage. A blanket restriction was discounted so to allow staggered parking and reduce the speed of through traffic. Again, following formal consultation no letters of objection were received pertaining to this area.

- 3.4 Finally the remaining Little Heath residents living within Welwyn Hatfield participated in their own consultation (Survey 3). In Hawkshead Road, residents reported congestion around the junctions with Cranmer Close, Gresley Court and Grangewood. In particular, many reports were concerned with the amount of vehicles parked between Gresley Court and the Great North Road; the problems being more acute during the school run drop off and collection periods.

The area to the east of the A1000 Great North Road posed different problems in that several streets are comprised of terraced housing with little or no off-street parking. It is noteworthy that parking space is at a premium in these roads on a 24hour basis with limited spare capacity. A local school and church also contribute to parking congestion at the relevant times. In addition, Welwyn Hatfield Council holds current records on file pertaining to access difficulties by its refuse collection service, particularly in Thornton Road, Coopers Road and Frampton Road where parking on the corners is prevalent. The survey results were in the main concerned with parking on the junctions with some residents also complaining about blocked access to the residential developments of Cringle Court and Alma Court. There was no particular demand for any further restrictions, including the provision of a resident permit parking scheme.

- 3.5 On the 27th January 2016, **The Borough of Welwyn Hatfield (Various Roads, Little Heath, Potters Bar) (Restriction of Waiting) Order 2016** (Appendix B) was advertised in the Welwyn Hatfield Times and notices were erected in the affected roads. Letters were also sent out to the residents
- 3.6 There are six formal objections to the proposed traffic regulation order (Appendix C). Below is a summary of grounds for their objections.

- *(Claregate) Enough spaces should have been provided for during the planning stages. It is unreasonable to deprive the residents of Thornton Road of any more spaces.(Submitted with petition, see accompanying papers)*
- *The Council has given permission for several households to have vehicle crossovers; this has led to a reduction in the number of available parking spaces.*
- *I object to the restrictions by the entrances to both Alma Court and Cringle Court. There is ample width for a car to get through.*
- *(Hawkshead Road) I object to the restrictions opposite Cranmer Close. This will push cars into our narrow road.*
- *Residents need to park on the corners overnight. Put in a part-time restriction instead, not 24hrs.*

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

- (Claregate) – The existing visibility splays are extremely limited for vehicles exiting Claregate and present a safety risk. The proposed junction protection is minimal. (Petition - Nb it is the policy of Hertfordshire County Council not to install convex visibility mirrors on the public highway).
- The provision of vehicle crossovers has provided residents with the opportunity to take vehicles off the road.
- The present situation at these developments restricts access to refuse collection vehicles and emergency service vehicles (Fire and Rescue Service). In response to comments made by residents, minor amendments were agreed to in providing additional on-street parking.
- (Hawkshead Road) – In mitigation, a 30 metre parking bay has been reinstated at this location to service local users (Church, School etc)
- Unlit vehicles cannot park within 10 metres of a junction at night. The Highway Code advises against parking within 10 metres of a junction at any time for safety reasons.

As one of the statutory consultees, Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service has responded with the following advice (in respect of this particular consultation).

Fire hydrants are positioned at some of these junctions. We require these areas to be kept clear at all times to enable essential testing.

Fire tenders have reported problems with access in these locations. Double parking reduces road width and prevents the tender from driving through; they are also unable to make the 'swing' around corners. They state they would have serious issues in the evenings in attending emergency calls.

3.8 The people most likely to benefit from these proposals are the residents. It is standard procedure to monitor new parking restrictions for the first six months after they are implemented. During this period any reports of safety issues or parking displacement will be recorded. Any significant issues will be dealt with as part of the review process. The review may lead to further consultation or amendments to the existing parking restrictions.

3.9 The primary objective of this scheme is to improve the road safety around junctions. There is an existing risk of road traffic collisions and injury to pedestrians. Parking Services are therefore recommending the scheme to proceed and be implemented as advertised.

#### **4 Legal Implication(s)**

4.1 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.

## **5 Financial Implication(s)**

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

## **6 Risk Management Implications**

- 6.1 Changing the parking conditions in Little Heath could generate negative publicity. There may be an element of parking displacement due to the loss of some car parking space. The risk is minimal but any significant safety issues will be reviewed and dealt with following the six month monitoring period.

## **7 Security & Terrorism Implications**

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

## **8 Procurement Implications**

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

## **9 Climate Change Implication(s)**

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

## **10 Link to Corporate Priorities**

- 10.1 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.

## **11 Equality and Diversity**

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

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*Date*                                        *1<sup>st</sup> March 2016*

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)

**Thornton Road Proposed Parking Restrictions - Petition**