

Part I

Item No: 0

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Panshanger, Howlands, Hatfield Central, Welwyn  
East and Welwyn West Wards

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET PLANNING AND PARKING PANEL – 18 FEBRUARY 2025  
REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRIC CHARGING ONLY BAYS IN VARIOUS CAR PARKS, WELWYN  
GARDEN CITY AND HATFIELD

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The proposed restrictions link to criteria of the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) funding scheme “On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme” which Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council applied to, to facilitate installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points across the Borough at nil cost to the Council.
- 1.2 Energy Saving Trust (EST) is administering the scheme on behalf of the OZEV.
- 1.3 In June 2022, the Council applied for “On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme” funding to EST and in August 2022 OZEV approved a grant of £695,350 for the installation of up to 96 electric chargers at 23 locations across the Borough, as well as remaining costs covered by our electric vehicle charging supplier EB charging. Since the application three sites have had to be removed due to issues around grid capacity and/or landowner consent. These are from High Street and Lockleys Drive Car Parks, Welwyn and Aldykes car park, Hatfield. No suitable alternative sites in the vicinity with sufficient grid capacity could be identified. The total number of installs that has taken place under the OZEV application is therefore 20 locations.
- 1.4 Some of EV charging bay locations are required to be restricted to EV vehicles only and subject to a maximum stay to ensure compliance with OZEV funding requirements. This report focuses on the bays where EV parking restrictions were not implemented as part of other projects but are still required for the project to be in line with OZEV funding requirements.
- 1.5 This report recommends the implementation of parking restrictions that would limit the maximum stay to 4 hours with no return within 4 hours between the hours of 8am and 6pm, Monday to Sunday and for the bays to be restricted to electric vehicles only. This is in relation to the following sites: Aldbury Grove, Birchwood Leisure Centre, King George V Playing Fields, Longmead, Moneyhole Car Park, Russett House and Thundridge Close.  
**(Appendix D)**
- 1.6 This report sets out the statutory consultation, and the recommended course of action.
- 1.7 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 via an online feedback form placed on the Council’s website 3 months after start of restrictions. Should the Council receive reports requesting changes or amendments to the new restrictions due to significant issues, then a review of the restrictions would take place which may result in further recommendations.

- 1.8 Eleven objections have been received relating to the proposed Order, which are set out below in Section 4. These objections are detailed in Section 5. A full list of the objections is contained within **Appendix A**.

## **2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 **“THE BOROUGH OF WELWYN HATFIELD (ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING) (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 202X”** 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 creation of the advertised traffic regulation order as set in Sections 3 of this report; and to note the delegated powers conferred to Executive Member for Environment to sign an executive member decision to proceed with the creation of the traffic regulation order, subject to unanimous recommendation of the Panel.

## **3 Explanation**

- 3.1 The “On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme” project commenced in 2022 and enabled the Council to install up to 96 charging units at 23 locations. Some sites were found to be unsuitable during the installation process, mainly due to insufficient grid capacity at locations where upgrades, which were not within the scope of the OZEV grant, were required to be completed. This and challenges surrounding UK Power Network’s availability to conduct initial checks on the electricity grid and subsequent installations works caused delays to this project.
- 3.2 Under the funding criteria all EV charging bays were required to be restricted to EV vehicles and subject to a maximum stay upon completion of the project, however due to the feedback from residents at some locations, the Council sort for this requirement to be relaxed to accommodate residents who have no electric vehicles yet. OZEV agreed a relaxation of this restriction at certain locations. This report is therefore seeking to only implement parking restrictions at locations where OZEV were not willing to agree a relaxation.
- 3.3 Parking restrictions were initially proposed at 8 locations (**Appendix C**) however one site – Prospect Place (this was a replacement site for one of the other Welwyn sites) no longer requires EV parking restrictions as EV charging points were not installed due to issues around landowner consent/grid capacity.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended for parking restrictions to be introduced at 7 locations - Aldbury Grove, Birchwood Leisure Centre, King George V Playing Fields, Longmead, Moneyhole Car Park, Russett House and Thundridge Close as show in **Appendix D**.
- 3.5 The 4 hours stay limit is required between 8am-6pm to facilitate “top-up” charges, there is no stay limit between 6pm and 8am to allow overnight charging. This is inline with OZEV requirements.
- 3.6 It is proposed at this stage to introduce the Order to cover the entirety of each car park as show on Appendix D. Whilst the restrictions will only apply to marked EV charging bays, this provides the flexibility to increase charging capacity in the future as demand rises, without the need for a further TRO.

## **4 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO)**

- 4.1 On 25 September 2024, a Public Notice of Intention proposing the below Order was advertised in the Welwyn Hatfield Times. (**Appendix B**).

**“THE BOROUGH OF WELWYN HATFIELD (ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING) (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 202X** Notices were erected in the affected car parks. Plans illustrating the proposals for each Order are attached to this report. (See **Appendix C**).

## **5**     **Objections**

- 5.1     Eleven objections were received in total. Ten objections specifically relate to Russett House car park, and the other objection relates to the Order in general (**Appendix A**). It should be noted that the Russet House car park is not restricted to residents of Russett House, but is a free to use car park available to the general public.
  
- 5.2     Below is a summary of the grounds for objection and reasons for moving forward with the proposed restrictions as outlined in Sections 3.4 and 3.5 of this report. It should be noted that all objections were considered however for the purpose of this report, objections made on the same grounds were consolidated into one objection point and officers’ response provided for each point.

Objection Point	Response
<p>I think the restrictions are not sufficient - EV chargers need to be unblocked at all times if we want to encourage EV uptake, not just during arbitrary daytime hours. The most common use cases will likely be people visiting the area (in which case they might be visiting during the day or overnight, perhaps staying overnight with friends or family), and local residents (in which case they will tend to want to charge outside of work hours, which for many will mean charging overnight). So I think 24/7 parking restrictions on these chargers are sensible.</p>	<p>It is the requirement of OZEV funding that the bays are restricted to a maximum of 8am and 6pm Monday to Sunday only, to enable overnight charging to benefit residents without requiring moving their vehicles in the middle of the night.</p>
<p>As to the 4 hour limit and 4 hour return limit, I'm not sure either is really helpful. A 4 hour charging time allows a maximum of 28kWh (4h x 7kW) of charge which is far from the full capacity of modern EV batteries - we are seeing 100kWh batteries at the extreme. Is there any evidence that a 4 hour limit is needed? Similarly for the "no return within 4 hours" - what is the goal here? These are largely residential car parks or car parks associated with public spaces, so what abuse are we attempting to avoid? The only problem I can see we want to avoid is trying to stop people basically claiming a charger as their own and thus leaving their car plugged in near-permanently even if not actively charging. We need to protect from that while also accepting the realities of what destination chargers are for - i.e.. I plug in and do whatever I am doing without having to worry about running back to unplug.</p>	<p>4 hours is set to enable partial charging of vehicles during the daytime, as a "top up" service, and ensures a sufficient turnover of charging spaces to increase availability to any driver and does then limit the circumstance of a driver claiming a charger as their own personal space. This is inline with the OZEV funding requirements.</p>
<p>there already exist EV chargers across WelHat that have different hours of restriction (eg. Moors Walk shops has 7am-7pm/4 hour/4 hour). Harmonising this would seem sensible, though I'd argue my points above may well apply to all chargers unless there are compelling reasons to deviate.</p>	<p>The previously installed chargers in tranche one was set at 7am-7pm before the criteria from OZEV to install and restrict the bays was changed. Those chargers are in more public areas such as near shops. Currently, Parking Services have no plans to reconsult those areas to amend the enforcement hours to streamline into one format. Each site does have clear signage indicating the hours of restriction to convey to drivers in each location. There are also privately owned charging points across the Borough and the Council has no power to enforce harmonisation. Finally, it should be noted that harmonisation may not be desirable as it removes flexibility and it is believed that it is better to tailor restrictions to specific locations and circumstances, rather than using a "one size fits all approach."</p>
<p>I would like to highlight that the car park in which the charging stations reside, even if these spaces weren't restricted for non-EV's to park, is quite often at/over capacity. This results in residents of Russett House having to park outside of the main car park.</p> <p>This is exacerbated by people who don't reside at Russett House also using the car park. One case in point is a John O'connor flat-bed truck whose owner lives across</p>	<p>At this stage, not all ten parking bays are planned to be restricted. In the immediate, only two bays would have a parking restriction applied to them, the other 8 EV bays would stay without a restriction to EV vehicle charging only. The design of the map plans allows Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to be able to increase restrictions on the bays as and when demand for chargers exponentially rise to tackle blocking of bays by non-charging vehicles.</p>

<p>the road from the car park - this vehicle takes up 2 spaces and is parked every evening and weekend in the car park.</p> <p>If these parking spaces were restricted 7 days a week, this would further negatively impact the parking situation, especially at weekends where residents would no longer be able to park in the car park.</p> <p>Furthermore, if residents then have to park elsewhere, e.g. on Russett Wood, car insurance policies which are quoted on vehicles being parked "On a street outside the home" would have to be changed to cover vehicles "On a street away from home", which could potentially increase insurance policies during a cost of living crisis.</p>	<p>Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council cannot guarantee any driver can always be parked on a road outside the home, and on occasions may need to park elsewhere. Such changes would be a matter for the vehicle insurance companies to make such a decision.</p>
<p>the car park itself is in a state of disrepair.... The majority of the parking space lines are all but invisible</p>	<p>The parking consultation itself does not relate to the maintenance of the car park surface at Russett House, however, any issues raised can be considered through the maintenance schedule. Parking Services would look to demarcate bays as part of the introduction of restrictions, as the Off-Street Order gives powers to issue a PCN to any vehicle parked outside of marked bays.</p>
<p>there are public charging stations at the Moneyhole park in very close proximity to the Russett House car park, so I'd like to question why these were installed so close together (I did hear that the charging stations in the Russett House car park were installed in error - is this true?).</p>	<p>EV chargers were also installed at Moneyhole car park and is covered under the proposed Order to also be restricted. The installation was not an error and was put in to meet expected EV charging demand in the future whilst funding is still available for such installation.</p>
<p>what are we supposed to do, returning home late at night and not being able to park in "our" car park? I, for one, will be extremely nervous and unhappy about having to park elsewhere and then walking home alone in the dark.</p>	<p>Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council cannot guarantee any driver can always be parked on a road or car park outside the home, and on occasions may need to park elsewhere. Safety issues including ASB can be reported to the Council and local Police. The car park is not specifically allocated for residents of Russett House.</p>
<p>Also, if the limit is set at 4hrs in the EV charging point bays, what is to stop that person just moving their vehicle into one of the other bays for the rest of the night if they are charging in the evenings - again causing even more issues for us residents.</p>	<p>The 4 hours limit would only apply 8am-6pm. After 6pm, there would not be a time limit to make a vehicle move. Once charging is finished the driver of an EV vehicle would have the same rights to park in a non-controlled space as the driver of a non-EV vehicle.</p>
<p>since the electric charger ports have been installed, I have not seen a single electric car using the charger ports</p>	<p>The installation was to meet expected EV charging demand in the future whilst funding is still available for such installation. At this stage, not all chargers would be used. Creation of EV charging points is an essential part of the strategy to encourage EV adoption and the funding was designed to help facilitate this.</p>
<p>I have personally spoken to the service engineers who are responsible for the upkeep of the chargers and was told " no usage of the chargers has been recorded since they were put into operation ." He was asked to check automatic recorders which send the readings to the parent company were working correctly and he confirmed that the systems were working but the chargers had not been used . He</p>	<p>The installation was to meet expected EV charging demand in the future whilst funding is still available for such installation. At this stage, not all chargers would be used. Creation of EV charging points is an essential part of the strategy to encourage EV adoption and the funding was designed to help facilitate this.</p>

<p>also confirmed that the chargers were slow overnight chargers which would take 7 hours to fully charge a vehicle .</p>	<p>The 4 hours stay limit applies 8am-6pm for “top-up” charges and no stay limit after 6pm on the basis that longer full charging by residents is most likely to occur overnight.</p>
<p>Therefore people who are paying rent, council tax etc will be forced to park elsewhere and people who drive electric cars from elsewhere can park here.</p>	<p>The restrictions would allow any driver to park there to charge an Electric Vehicle regardless of where they live. It is most likely those who do park to charge would be residents within the area and is a significant distance from many facilities such as town centres or railway stations. At the current time Russett House car park does not have measures to prevent non residents from parking, the proposals would also not contain provision to make it residents parking only.</p>
<p>Provide each household with 1 or potential 2 parking permits. This will help remove additional vehicles and make the car park fairly used.</p>	<p>To introduce such measures would require a full consultation including surveys with residents to ascertain parking restriction wants and needs. At this time, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council are not carrying out a parking consultation to offer residents the option for resident permits in this road, however, it will fall under the Panshanger consultation which will begin in 2025/26 and will provide opportunity to consider such measures if requested by residents.</p>
<p>I am a disabled lady who has to visit regularly for my daughter to assist me with some day to day care and the proposed parking restrictions will impact upon my ability to park safely.</p>	<p>At this stage, not all ten parking bays are planned to be restricted. In the immediate, only two bays would have an EV charging only parking restriction applied to them, the other 8 EV bays would stay without a restriction. The design of the map plans allows Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to be able to increase restrictions on the bays as and when demand for chargers exponentially rise to tackle blocking of bays by non charging vehicles. The introduction of just two bays being introduced at this time would likely reduce such impact.</p>

## **6 Legal Implication(s)**

- 6.1 Traffic Regulation Orders 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 is, in order to claim the OZEV funding, required to restrict EV bays as per the funding criteria.
- 6.3 Through the Agency Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council can implement restrictions on any road and links in with Road Traffic Regulation 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 to 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 associated works recommended in this report will be funded through the OZEV grant and the maintenance of the scheme will be funded via the existing Parking Services revenue budget.
- 7.2 Introducing parking restrictions outlined within this report is a funding requirement of "On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme."

## **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 New parking restrictions are being monitored for the first 6 months after they are implemented. A feedback form will be available on the Council's website 3 months after the introduction of restrictions to allow stakeholders to submit their comments. All comments will be recorded and considered. If any unintended impact is discovered as a result of the Traffic Regulation Order being put into place, Parking Services will investigate and consider remedial actions.
- 8.3 There is a potential financial risk to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council if restrictions are not introduced, as they are a requirement of the OZEV funding. A proportion of the funding may need to be repaid in the event we are not in compliance. This proportion is not known and would need to be agreed with OZEV.

## **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 stakeholders 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 were erected within the area 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 are potential climate change implications in relation to the proposals in this report. The provision of enforceable electric charging points supports the switch to EV, as part of the method to tackle climate change.

## **15 Link to Corporate Priorities**

15.1 This report is linked to the following Council corporate priorities:

Action on Climate Change – Provision of dedicated electric vehicle charging places to make a positive adaptation to climate change.

Run an effective Council – Making a financial decision to deliver at nil installation cost to the Council to introduce electric charging points under OZEV funding.

Enable an economy that delivers for everyone – By enabling access to amenities in neighbourhoods.

## **16 Equality and Diversity**

16.1 I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out.

The EqIA found that there is potential for both positive and negative impacts on Disability.

In addition, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the scheme for the first 6 months and further recommendations may be made later; should any unintended impacts arise, as a result of the new scheme being introduced.

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Date	15 January 2025

### **Background papers:**

Objections – Appendix A



Notice of Intention – Appendix B

Advertised Plans – Appendix C

TRO and plans – Appendix D