

TITLE OF REPORT: BALDOCK PARKING MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

REPORT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENTERPRISE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises progress with the area parking review and seeks the Committee's support for amendments to proposals agreed in February 2011.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report contains a key recommendation that was first notified to the public on 1st June 2009 for the NHDC Car Parking Strategy Review.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its February 2011 meeting the Committee agreed parking management options in several areas of Baldock. Detailed work on these schemes and the TROs required for them has been ongoing since that date.
- 3.2 In March 2011 the Twitchell and Community Centre car park TRO was published and 29 objections were received to the car park and proposed on-street controls in the vicinity. The Committee is asked to consider amendments to the on-street proposals for Simpsons Drive and The Twitchell as well as parts of High Street.
- 3.3 The TRO for the Twitchell car park was sealed on 29th June 2011. A decision on including the Community Centre car park has been deferred pending negotiations with Baldock Community Association.
- 3.4 The Committee agreed proposals for the streets around the Station. Detail on the Orders for these proposals is being completed at time of writing. A change to the permit hour for Bygrave Road/Salisbury Road/Larkins Close from 11am-12noon to 2pm to 3pm has been agreed via email with ward Councillors and the Chairman of the Committee.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 The Twitchell car park consultation resulted in a number of concerns about displacement of long stay parking. Some of these resulted from the proposed 4 hour maximum stay in the Community Centre car park.

- 4.2 The Twitchell consultation also identified a need for 4 hour limited waiting in the town centre (i.e. for customer/client medium stay). The Community Centre 4 hour max. stay proposal would offer some medium stay but as this land is leased, it should not be relied upon as available to the wider public.
- 4.3 The agreed on-street proposals for Simpsons Drive created a section of permit parking for businesses on the north side along with short stay and disabled parking on the south side. A significant amount of yellow line protection was also agreed.
- 4.4 In the Twitchell, along with yellow lines, the remainder of the road was proposed to be resident permit parking on both sides. In the High Street the Committee agreed to return half of the 2 hour limited waiting parallel to the access road starting at the Cock Public House, to unrestricted parking.
- 4.5 In light of the concerns re: displaced long stay parking from Twitchell car park and, potentially, the Community Centre, informal observations have been made of Simpsons Drive and The Twitchell on street parking. It is recommended that unrestricted parking is retained on the north and south sides of Simpsons Drive with one disabled bay on the south side and amended yellow lines retained to protect junctions.
- 4.6 In The Twitchell, parking on the west side (either side of the access to the car parks) appears not to be needed by residents so it is recommended that it remains unrestricted. On the east side it is recommended that parking be retained as permit holder only as originally agreed.
- 4.7 In the High Street people do not park in the most efficient way in unrestricted bays. The Committee has previously expressed concern about large vehicles using this parking which adds the inefficient use of the space.
- 4.8 It is recommended that unrestricted parking (plus the High Street area in para. 4.4) could be restricted to certain class of vehicles only and using individually marked bays. The restrictions could apply Mon-Fri 8am-6pm.
- 4.9 Creating marked bays would, potentially, result in more parking spaces being available mainly to long stay users. These proposals would be delivered as part of the TRO process for the area review and within existing budgets.
- 4.10 The proposals set out under paras 4.5 to 4.8 would help mitigate against displacement of long stay parking from the Twitchell and Simpsons Drive, partly by helping accommodate more long stay parking in the High Street.
- 4.11 In addition the 2 hour limited waiting on the east side of the High Street in front of 'Displayplan' could be changed to 4 hour limited waiting. This would offer short/medium stay parking.
- 4.12 As this parking is not in front of retail premises nor is it permit parking, it has the potential to be used for medium stay with minimal impact on the overall short stay parking supply.
- 4.13 One risk is that part time employees use the space or full time employees do likewise and rotate vehicles. However, the demand for medium stay parking for clients and customers has come from businesses.

- 4.14 The proposal set out in 4.11 would be covered by the area review TRO process and delivered by existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's agreement with Hertfordshire County Council gives the Council powers to create Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for on-street parking management. All of the recommended proposals in this report will require TROs to be made except those that make no changes to existing unrestricted parking.
- 5.2 The Council will be required to follow regulations on creating TROs including consulting all statutory bodies and considering any objections.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Preparing TROs, plans and supporting documents will be done in-house with a small input from HCC's TRO team to the proposal in para. 4.8. All costs of preparation work and consideration of objections then implementing any subsequent signs/lines will be met from existing revenue budget.
- 6.2 A key risk associated with this report is that the proposals are not approved and the process is delayed further into the second year of the project. Draft TROs are planned to be prepared in July and published in August. Depending on objections received schemes could be implemented in October/November.
- 6.3 The main risks associated with the proposals are significant objections to draft TROs which extends implementation time or may result in them being abandoned.
- 6.4 No income from permits or enforcement has been assumed from the original proposals in Simpsons Drive and The Twitchell nor any of the proposals set out in this report in the Council's Corporate Business Planning process.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Work on this project will be undertaken from existing staff resources.
- 7.2 The TRO process requires notices to be published in the local press. Notices will also be posted on site in the areas affected and draft TROs will be made available to the public in Baldock Library, NHDC Council Offices and the NHDC website.
- 7.3 The Council will need to consider resource implications of administration and enforcement. At this stage it is anticipated that additional enforcement resource will be required depending on the outcome of any TRO process.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS

- 8.1 Informal consultation will be undertaken with Herts Highways and the Police prior to the Committee date. Any changes to the report will be reported orally.

- 8.2 The Cabinet Member for Transport has been consulted throughout the process to date. Ward Members will be briefed in detail on the proposals.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Area Committee endorses the recommendations highlighted in this report as amendments to those agreed at the February 2011 meeting.
- 9.2 The Area Committee receives regular updates on progress with the Parking Management proposals from the Transport Policy Officer.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In order to progress the Baldock Parking Management project towards implementation following the significant consultation work undertaken in 2010 and 2011.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Several options for each zone were provided in the consultation undertaken in late 2010. The Committee has considered reports on the consultation options and recommended proposals in 2010/11 financial year.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 None.

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 13.1 Simon Young
Transport Policy Officer
01462 474846
simon.young@north-herts.gov.uk
- 13.2 Louise Symes
Projects Manager
01462 474359
louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 Baldock Parking Management Options consultation results summaries.