

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

29 November 2010

Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure

Part 1- Public

Matter for Recommendation to Borough Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 PARKING ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Summary

A draft East Malling Local Parking Plan has been endorsed by the Steering Group and it is presented to the Board for adoption.

The other current focus of the Parking Action Plan is Phase 5 of the general programme and preparatory work on Phase 6.

1.1 The East Malling Local Parking Plan

1.1.1 Public consultation on the Local Parking Plan took place between 27 September and 18 October 2010. It included two 'drop-in' sessions at local venues in the centre of the Village on 12 and 16 October. During these sessions, a member of the parking team was on hand to provide answers to queries posed by local people and to explain the elements of the proposals on the drawings displayed at these two exhibition sessions.

1.1.2 The draft Parking Plan and supporting drawings were available for reference at the Parish and Borough Council Offices and also on the Council's website. The sessions were well attended and created a great deal of local interest in the proposals. A total of 163 local people visited the drop-in sessions to discuss various aspects of the draft Parking Plan. Some 46 written representations were received from the local community and these are presented in **[Annex 1]**.

1.2 The Steering Group

1.2.1 Preparation of the Parking Plan is being guided and overseen by a Steering Group. It consists of local County, Borough and Parish Council members together with representatives from the local Conservation Group, Russet Homes and Kent Highway Services (KHS).

1.2.2 The Steering Group met on 11 November to consider the comments and observations received from the public consultation exercise and to decide how best to reflect this in the draft Plan. The result of the detailed assessment of the

Group is the Draft East Malling Local Parking Plan reproduced at **[Annex 2]**. The Steering Group has endorsed this document and it recommends it to the Board for adoption and implementation.

1.2.3 The Plan consists of a range of measures at many locations in the village such as:-

- Resident preferential parking arrangements supported by permits in the High Street neighbourhood. These permits also give exemption from the four hour maximum stay in the High Street car park.
- A system of waiting restrictions in The Rocks Road and Rocks Close to protect the neighbourhood from potential displaced all-day commuter parking.
- Some additional waiting restrictions in Cottenham Close to protect the junction and some restructuring of the parking in Mill Street to prevent obstruction to traffic flow, especially the local bus service.
- Waiting restrictions at a number of locations in the Stepstile and Clare park estates where residents reported persistent parking problems and obstruction.
- Some additional 'school keep clear' markings and waiting restrictions in Chapman Way to manage the considerable amount of on-street parking in and around the school access that has been creating concerns about the safety of pupils attending the school.

1.3 Traffic Management Representations

1.3.1 Earlier survey work by the Conservation Group reinforced the view of the Borough Council that a substantial proportion of the concerns of the local community related just as much to traffic management as it did to parking. For this reason the development work for the Local Parking Plan has included the participation of Kent Highway Services so that the many anticipated representations about traffic speeds and volumes could be dealt with as an integral part of the project.

1.3.2 The aim has been to produce a Parking Plan that incorporates, to the extent that it is possible to do so, a coordinated and integrated approach across on traffic and parking issues. The constraint to a totally integrated document is that the parking and traffic work are subject to fundamentally different pressures, timescales, funding streams and, crucially, to the fact that carrying out the work on each is the separate responsibility of the Borough Council and the County Council. Therefore the critical consideration for the Steering Group was whether all progress on actions identified in the parking plan should be kept 'on hold' until such time as there is some clarity on what the County Council might be able to do to address the traffic management related concerns of the local community. There is no telling when that might be or even if there are viable actions. The further

complication is that the funding position for future highway works is looking less and less certain, all the more so if the budget model in the draft Local Transport Plan (2011 – 2016) is incorporated in the final version of the document.

- 1.3.3 Given this uncertainty, the Board was not keen to place the Parking Plan in abeyance pending and it takes the view that the Parking Plan should be adopted as it is now, with its primary focus on parking actions. The representations on traffic management received in the course of the public consultations have been acknowledged by the Steering Group and lodged with the County Council, as local highway authority, for its consideration and action. A particular concern has been traffic speeds and volumes through Wateringbury Road, Chapel Street and the High Street. To follow this up, KHS will be installing data collection equipment in Wateringbury Road in the near future to measure approach speeds, volumes and direction of traffic flow over a 24 hour, seven day period. In parallel, another data collection point will be set up in Chapel Street to collect comparative results within a more constrained section of the corridor.
- 1.3.4 The County Council will also be exploring with its Cycling Officer the request to include a secure cycle parking rack in the car park as part of the Parking Plan.

1.4 Next Steps

- 1.4.1 If the Board is minded to accept the recommendation of the Steering Group and the East Malling Local Parking Plan is adopted, the next stage in the implementation programme would be for the required Traffic Regulation Orders to be drawn up and advertised. What happens next is dependent on the public response received during the statutory notice period. If there are no objections to the proposals, they can be implemented forthwith. In contrast, if we receive objections and these remain unwithdrawn after the usual process of explanation and discussion with the person lodging the objection, then these will have to be reported to the next meeting of the Board in March 2011 so that they can be duly and fully considered. Subject to the Board's deliberations, the Plan as adopted or as amended in the light of objections can then be implemented in the late spring to early summer next year.

1.5 Parking Action Plan - Phases 5 and 6

- 1.5.1 Phase 5 of the Parking Action Plan comprises a number of individual sites where, to respond to parking problems parking problems reported to the Borough Council, parking management measures of various types have been devised to improve safety, to share parking opportunities equitably and to prevent obstruction to traffic.
- 1.5.2 The Board considered a number of objections received at the statutory notice stage at the last meeting and endorsed the final contents of Phase 5. The Traffic Regulation Order is now in place and the installation of the restrictions is currently progressing.

- 1.5.3 The holding list of requests for parking interventions is being assessed so that a short list of sites for Phase 6 can be drawn up. This will be reported to the Board for endorsement at the next meeting in March 2011.

1.6 Legal Implications

- 1.6.1 The Borough Councils powers to carry out parking management derive from the existing contractual arrangement with Kent County Council

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.7.1 Funding for the work in the East Malling Local Parking Plan is contained in existing Capital Plan budgets for the Parking Action Plan.

1.8 Risk Assessment

- 1.8.1 A major risk is that the scheme proposals encounter a significant lack of local support when introduced. This risk is mitigated by the considerable effort in ensuring there is wide consultation throughout the initial informal stages of developing a parking plan before a formal stage is reached. There is also care given to ensuring that schemes are adapted and adjusted in the light of comments received from the local community without compromising highway safety or the councils commitment to deal with identified parking concerns

1.9 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.9.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.10 Recommendations

- 1.10.1 That the Borough Councils Cabinet be recommended **TO ADOPT** the East Malling Local Parking Plan and that the actions in the Plan **BE IMPLEMENTED**.

The Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Karole Reynolds

Nil

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning Transport and Leisure

| Screening for equality impacts: | | |
|---|---------------|--|
| Question | Answer | Explanation of impacts |
| a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? | No | The decision does involve an element of discrimination but not against the 'protected characteristics' identified in Equalities legislation. To free up parking opportunity for the local community, there is a clear aim of removing commuter parking from the Parish Council car park and from the neighbouring roads. There is ample opportunity for commuters to park at West Malling station, on the recent completion of a new 250 or so space car park. |
| b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? | Yes | It will include specific provision for additional disabled parking bays. |
| c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above? | N/A | |

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.