

1.1 Context

- 1.1.1 The Parking Action Plan includes a commitment to assess parking management in the village of Aylesford and a general intention to revisit each of the established Local Parking Plans from time to time. This is to ensure that they continue to provide a proper balance between capacity and competing demand and that any changes in circumstances are reflected through appropriate adjustments to the Plan.
- 1.1.2 If we go back to the beginnings of work on the Parking Action Plan some ten years ago, it is possible to see the origins of the two-streamed approach we adopted for dealing with parking requests in the Borough. At that time there were a considerable number of requests from locations across the Borough and these have continued to come forward. Many of these had the character of one-off problems that could be addressed independently from the surrounding neighbourhood. These have been dealt with through a phased programme that has currently reached its sixth stage.
- 1.1.3 However, many others were grouped in self contained areas that warranted a more comprehensive treatment leading to a 'local parking plan' approach. To date we have carried out such Local Parking Plan work in fourteen areas across the Borough starting with West Malling during 2003/04 and culminating in East Malling during this current year. The final area based project in the programme focuses on Aylesford village.

1.2 Aylesford Village

- 1.2.1 Many years ago, we had recorded a range of disparate and relatively discrete requests from Aylesford, concentrated particularly around the Rochester Road area. At the time, we had no opportunity to assess the situation anything more than superficially. Initial thoughts were influenced heavily by concerns about the risk of transferring problems to neighbouring areas without properly dealing with the underlying causes. This leads us to conclude at the time that a parking plan approach was the best way to deal with parking management matters in the village.
- 1.2.2 From time to time, we have dealt with some critical and particular parking issues in the village as part of the phased programme of work, introducing waiting restriction in Mount Pleasant associated with school drop-off activity is an example of such work. The success of these individual interventions might help explain the absence of serious pressure over time for a wider parking plan. Nevertheless, in recent weeks this work has started and the results from initial assessments

are that the matters we are being invited to address in Aylesford do not really merit consideration as a full scale Local Parking Plan. Rather, they fall somewhere in between this and the phased programme.

- 1.2.3 Either way, it is not going to overly influence the process we need to go through. It simply means that the scope of the work can be much more focussed than first envisaged and the end result will be a simpler and more self-contained set of recommendations and proposals centred primarily on Rochester Road and the management of the Council car parks.

1.3 Next Steps

- 1.3.1 Given the scope for the exercise, I am recommending a streamlined approach involving a degree of delegation to a local Steering Group to expedite this project between now and the next meeting of the Board. This Group would be similar to those that have provided the steer on all the previous local parking plans, even if the end product in this case is a more selective and concise schedule of actions rather than a 'Local Parking Plan' document.
- 1.3.2 The group would consist of local Borough and County Council Members and a representative from the Parish Council and be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation.
- 1.3.3 The series of steps between now and the next meeting of the Board are as follows;
- parallel report to the JTB
 - meeting of the Steering Group to approve a draft set of proposals;
 - public consultation exercise focussed on the immediate area likely to be influenced by the proposals;
 - reassessment of proposals in the light of the feedback received;
 - further meeting of the Steering Group to endorse the revised proposals;
 - report to the next meeting of the PTAB and the JTB for endorsement of the proposals.