

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

05 June 2023

Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services

Part 1- Public

Matters For Decision

1 **HILDENBOROUGH PARKING REVIEW**

1.1 As part of the Borough's Parking Action Plan, the Borough Council has been carrying out a parking review of Hildenborough. The review started in 2019 and proposals were prepared for consultation in 2020. However, due to the COVID19 pandemic and the following changes to commuter traffic patterns the consultation was not carried out until earlier this year, as "a new normal" of commuter parking demand and traffic movements were established.

1.1.1 The proposals taken to informal consultation are shown in Annex 1

2 **SUMMARY OF INFORMAL CONSULTATION**

2.1 Informal consultation was carried out with the immediate frontagers to the proposals from to 6th January to 5th February 2023. We received 56 discrete responses. Hildenborough Parish Council also commented on the proposals.

2.1.1 Details of the public responses (redacted of personal information) are shown in Annex 2

2.1.2 The Parish Council response is shown in Annex 3

The responses showed 15 in favour of proposals, 44 not in favour and 1 where the response was unclear.

2.2 Further analysis looked at the detail of the responses, and the differing elements of the proposals.

2.2.1 In relation to parking permits

- We received 5 responses supporting the introduction of parking permits and 23 not supporting them.

2.2.2 In relation to new double or single yellow lines

- We received 15 responses supporting, and 23 not supporting them.

2.2.3 In relation to the times of restrictions

- We received 2 supporting the restriction times and 1 requesting restrictions should last longer.

2.2.4 In relation to on-street parking charges for long-stay station commuters

- We received no supporting responses and 6 responses against.

2.2.5 Different restrictions

- We received 6 responses that asked for significantly different alternative restrictions, which would be difficult to apply under the constraints of the public highway.

2.2.6 Other issues

2.2.7 We also received 20 “other” responses, with a number of requests for traffic calming and 20 mph speed limits, along with requests for extensions to existing off-street car parks, for new off-street parking, and for verges at the side of roads to be changed to lay-bys and parking places. There were also comments about Hildenborough’s place in the Local Plan and anticipated changes and additional developments.

2.2.8 Other issues raised

- Rings Hill area – Request for traffic calming.
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Leigh Road – Provide more free car parks.
The Borough Council has no scope for introducing a car park at this location. All the verges are public highway, so this would be an issue for KCC as the Highway Authority.
- Mount Pleasant – create parking bays in the verge on the north side of Mount Pleasant.
This would be an issue for KCC as the Highway Authority.
- London Road (near Foxbush) – Another car park is needed.
The Borough Council has no scope for introducing a car park at this location. All the verges are public highway, so this would be an issue for KCC as the Highway Authority.
- Riding Lane – Recreation Ground car park should be extended.
This would be an issue for the Parish Council.
- Stocks Green Road – disabled parking provision.
This has been addressed by the reduction of the proposals in the area.

- Ashley Road – 20 mph speed limit.
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Leigh Road – 20 mph speed limit. (x3)
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Leigh Road – School to develop parking within their grounds for staff and parents. (x2)
This would be an issue for KCC as the Education Authority.
- Riding Lane – Traffic calming request.
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Stocks Green Road – Traffic calming request. (x2)
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Foxbush – Barrier control to prevent non-resident access.
This would be an issue for KCC as speeding and safety on the public highway are the responsibility of the Highway Authority.
- Tonbridge Road – KEEP CLEAR marking at entrance to Pembroke Gardens.
This has been taken forward as an alteration to the parking bays on Tonbridge Road.

3 **ANALYSIS OF INFORMAL CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 From the consultation responses, the initial appetite for measures to address on-street commuter parking near the station has disappeared, reflecting the change in demand for rail commuting. Linked with this are the responses against permit parking, a measure that was proposed to manage and deter commuter parking displacement to residential areas.
- 3.2 The comments relating to the proposals for double and single yellow lines were more mixed. The majority of locations where yellow line restrictions were proposed reflect the advice of the Highway Code to prevent parking where it would cause an obstruction (such as bends, junctions and narrow sections of road) or where there has been a history of requests and complaints about parking. Wherever we propose parking restrictions in line with the Highway Code, we tend to get objections on the basis that there would be a loss of parking facility – this actually re-inforces the need for restrictions at those locations as they have tended to be used for parking at the expense of ease of access and safety.

- 3.3 A number of the objections relating to double yellow line proposals were from residents of Stocks Green Road, commenting that there was no issue to be addressed and Ashley Road, that the issue was mainly on the access rather than around the loop.
- 3.4 There were also comments from residents in the Riding Park area that the double yellow lines should be adjusted to allow more parking on Riding Lane and ease access in to the estate.

4 **REVISION OF THE PARKING SCHEME**

- 4.1 In light of the informal consultation, we have listened to the responses and adapted the proposals, but have still aimed to have a cohesive parking scheme to address the concerns that had been raised.
- 4.2 The changes to the proposals are;
- 4.2.1 The “phone payment” commuter parking restrictions on Rings Hill, Lower Street, Philpots Lane and Noble Tree Road have been deleted. Whilst some areas have no double yellow line proposals to address concerns raised, the remaining on-street spaces would be uncontrolled.
- 4.2.2 With the deletion of the “phone payment” restrictions, the potential commuter parking displacement to residential areas is unlikely, and accordingly the resident parking permit measures specifically designed to give priority to residents and deter commuters are not necessary and have been withdrawn.
- 4.2.3 The parking issues associated with the School in Leigh Road have not been confirmed by the residents of Stocks Green Road, and accordingly the restrictions to help maintain access to properties have been withdrawn.
- 4.2.4 The double yellow line parking restrictions in Ashley Road have been reduced to cover the junctions and one side of the entrance road. The restrictions around the “loop” have been deleted.
- 4.2.5 The restrictions in the Riding Park have been adjusted to allow more parking on Riding Lane and to prevent obstruction on the entrance in to the estate.
- 4.2.6 The restrictions on the Tonbridge Road near the One-Stop have been adjusted to create a disabled parking place.
- 4.2.7 The parking bays near the entrance to Pembroke Gardens have been reduced to provide better visibility.

5 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1.1 The powers allowing the Borough Council to carry out parking management activity are contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, supplemented by formal agreement with Kent County Council as the Local Highway Authority, in

respect of its powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004. In particular section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation 1984 Act imposes a general duty on local authorities exercising functions under the Act to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of safe and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.

- 5.1.2 The Borough Council carries out parking enforcement under an Agency agreement with Kent County Council by way of a Traffic Regulation Order, under the terms of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (and its amendments), the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 5.1.3 Changes to parking charges are made via an Amendment Orders to the Council's on and off-street parking Traffic Regulation Orders, using the procedures set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and will reflect any temporary amendments to procedures introduced to address Covid-19 restrictions. The proposals have followed and exceeded the requirements of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England & Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 5.1.4 The matters raised in this report are considered to be routine, uncontroversial or not legally complex.

5.2 **Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 5.2.1 Funding for the development of the Parking Plan is provided within existing revenue budgets.

5.3 **Risk Assessment**

- 5.3.1 The comprehensive assessment and consultation process applied to Parking Action Plans provides the assurance that the Borough Council has the will and ability to adapt proposals brought forward, in the light of comment and circumstances, and to ensure that it achieves a best balance of local parking needs. A regular review of the schemes is crucial to ensure that the Council correctly and effectively manages on-street parking in these areas, as the proposals are either introduced for safety reasons or to provide a more appropriate balance of parking needs.
- 5.3.2 A major risk is that scheme proposals encounter significant lack of local support. This risk is mitigated by the considerable effort devoted to ensuring there is widespread consultation on proposals both informally and formally.

5.4 **Policy Considerations**

- 5.4.1 Asset Management
- 5.4.2 Communications
- 5.4.3 Community

5.4.4 Customer Contact

5.4.5 Health and Safety

5.5 Equality Impact Assessment

5.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the revisions discussed in Section 4 of the report are taken forward to formal consultation, and the results be reported to this Board for further consideration.

Background papers:

Annex 1 Informal consultation plans

Annex 2 Informal consultation responses (redacted)

Annex 3 Parish Council response

Annex 4 Revised plans for formal consultation

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