

**INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 25
JUNE 2019**

PART I - DELEGATED

**8. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO PARKING OPTIONS FOR LOCAL
BUSINESSES
(DCES)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report details the outcomes of investigations that were required by this Committee to support a proposed scheme intended to address the parking needs of local businesses and employees who require regular, cost-effective parking near their workplace, while safeguarding the parking needs of local residents and other existing permit holders. This proposal was agreed in outline by the August 2018 meeting of this Committee, to address the required review of business permits and to introduce a solution that will make better use of unused parking capacity in Rickmansworth and Chorleywood.
- 1.2 The proposal creates new permits available to people who are not residents but are working at local addresses, to enable them to park in on-street permit bays and in designated permit bays in off-street car parks. This option would make available only a limited number of permits which would be allocated on a strict quota-based system to ensure that permits can only be used in specific streets or parking places where spare, unused parking capacity has been evidenced.
- 1.3 This will ensure that parking pressures are kept at a sustainable level and to ensure this, a proportion of parking bays (set here as 20%) in each street would be excluded from the scheme, to ensure that legitimate eligible permit holders (other than resident permit holders, who have already been accounted for) find it easy to park.

2 Details

- 2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee requested a review of the criteria and demand for business permits, together with other types of permit types such as season tickets in Rickmansworth. That review was reported to the August 2018 meeting of this Committee, which requested detailed investigation into a scheme and consultation to introduce new permits for local employees' use in on-street permit bays in Rickmansworth and potentially in Chorleywood, converting 'Business Permit' bays in off-street car parks to generic permit bays and offering permits to local employees.
- 2.2 The August 2018 the Committee delegated authority to the Director in consultation with the Lead Member and subject to consultation on details of each scheme with relevant local Ward Councillors and the Lead Member, the outcome of the consultation and any final scheme to be reported to the Committee as appropriate.
- 2.3 A study was undertaken from October 2018 until May 2019 to show parking pressures and availability in every street within the permit parking areas located in a 20-minute walking radius of the centres of the two towns to show capacity against permit uptake (by street) and actual observed capacity. A proposal was then developed to provide a new type of permit to enable employees to park near their workplace.
- 2.4 The proposal uses the existing Business permit bays (32 bays) and on-street capacity that exists, as demonstrated robustly through the investigations carried out and

summarised at Appendix A. This indicates that around 241 permits could be issued in Rickmansworth and up to around 263 in Chorleywood (section 3.6 below). The total numbers of permits issued are likely to vary from these figures due to the availability of off-street bays currently allocated for 'Business Permit' use (this type of permit would be continued but the bays reallocated for either type of Business or Local Employee permit). Permits would apply during the operational hours of the permit zone relevant to each location (in central Rickmansworth would apply all day).

- 2.5 A trial scheme would run for one year to assess its effectiveness and take-up. In Rickmansworth, two tiers of permit prices would be available based on walking distance to the town centre, given that some opportunities (such as in Money Hill Road) are some distance from the town centre.
- 2.6 It is proposed that the lower-cost tier prices would apply in Chorleywood. Permits would be issued on a first-come, first served basis and limited to four per business, in the trial first year, available for periods of 3- 6- or 12-months. Parking would not be guaranteed but the quotas established would ensure that there is a reasonable opportunity for permit holders to find parking in each location.
- 2.7 Several small allocations of current business permit bays around different car parks would be consolidated into one permit-holder car park in the Bury Car Park and long-stay allocation would be moved and focussed on the Talbot Road provision, particularly at the north end. This would improve legibility and accessibility for users wanting to find parking in long-stay car parks.
- 2.8 Members should note that the initial survey conducted last year included a response from the Chorleywood Residents Association which requested that the current practice for Business Permits being available to employees of local businesses is continued on the same lines. This would involve permits being made available at £240 to each business with multiple vehicles that could share the permit (an open permit). This was said to assist retail firms that employed multiple part-time employees. While it would be technically feasible for several vehicles to be recorded on one permit (which will be electronic records), this is not recommended and is not proposed by this report as it is considered that the terms would become too difficult to manage in a fair way, since any driver could reasonably request multiple vehicles on any type of one permit, claiming that they would not all park at one time. If this were an option that the Committee was minded to consider, it is strongly recommended that any such arrangement is accompanied by very strong penalties should a firm be found to be parking multiple vehicles concurrently (such as immediate and indefinite withdrawal of all permits for that business).

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 A study has been undertaken to determine the evidence for spare capacity in permit bays located in Rickmansworth and Chorleywood. This study includes research into total bay capacity against total numbers of permits issued and surveys of streets where capacity was identified, to show typical actual parking pressure in permit bays, both due to permit holders during operational hours and to general parking outside operational hours.
- 3.2 This research provides clear evidence of the current parking pressures in every street where permit data indicates that capacity exceeds daytime parking demand. The study considered the take up of resident permits as well as visitor permits over the last eighteen months. Detailed results are shown at **Appendix A**.

- 3.3 The table at Appendix A details the new evidence that has been collected, to demonstrate the amount of unused parking capacity in roads in permit zones within easy walking distance of the town centres. For each road that has been considered, the table shows the number of parking bays, the number of permits issued for those bays and the number and proportion of unused capacity identified through surveys.
- 3.4 The new data was supplied by in-house and independent survey data; as well as more robust data on the number of permits issued. In the most sensitive locations (for example in the terraced roads in Zone C), Officers have undertaken further, regular occupancy surveys to ensure that the data is robust.
- 3.5 The table shows which streets are recommended to be included, based on this evidence. In Rickmansworth, the current spare capacity is shown at around 241 bays, while protecting existing users by excluding from these calculations a buffer of 20% reserve capacity to accommodate non-standard demands such as commercial deliveries or works vehicles.
- 3.6 These figures do not include the 32 off-street permit parking bays in Rickmansworth that are currently allocated to Business Permits, which would become part of the overall capacity. As permits for these bays are currently priced similarly to the upper-tier proposed price and are currently nearly at capacity, there would be no additional income and no impact on capacity recorded for these bays.
- 3.7 In Chorleywood, maximum spare capacity is around 263 bays but this report proposes only 150 are allocated initially, based on market research which indicates lower demand (for under 100 permits). The Business Permit bays in Zones ST and TX (in Station Approach) have been included (the previous report excluded them) as following detailed investigation, it is difficult to justify excluding them.

Better parking for low-paid retail employees

- 3.8 The Council's intention is to make it easier and more affordable for people who work locally to park near their workplace, in order to support local businesses and to make it easier for them to recruit and retain employees. The provision of permit parking zones in town centres has historically been managed in a way that permits residents to park on-street but does not provide specifically for local employees, who currently have the option to park in the long-stay car parks. While this would still be an option for local employees who do not want or need one of the proposed permits, the permits would offer a reduced cost opportunity for Local Employees to park.
- 3.9 Parking provision for local employees can enable the Council to meet its policy objectives to improve local retail centres and to facilitate economic development. It particularly wants to protect and enhance the High Streets in the key settlements of Rickmansworth and Chorleywood.
- 3.10 The proposal would retain the designation of Business permits but would generalise the designated bays to make them available to any permit holder.

Improvements to car parks to facilitate permit parking and long-stay provision

- 3.11 This report also proposes to reallocate off-street car park capacity in the locations identified in the Background Paper. This is recommended because in Rickmansworth there are 13 small car parks, of which three accommodate Business Permit bays (which would be reallocated). There are currently small allocations of less than 12

bays in each car park, which would be more conveniently located in the same place, so that drivers do not have to drive around the town seeking parking.

3.12 The proposal essentially would convert the Bury Lane car park to permit-holders parking only; while the Business permit holder bays in the Talbot Road South (10 bays) and Talbot Road (12 bays) would become long-stay bays to create a larger provision of long-stay in one part of Rickmansworth, reducing trips around the town by drivers seeking spaces.

3.13 The proposed changes include:

- Talbot Road South Car Park (currently residents permits/business permits/long-stay) to long-stay and resident permits only, removing 10 business permit bays)
- Talbot Road Car Park (currently residents permits/business permits) to long-stay, removing 12 business permit bays and 12 resident permit bays); note that substantial numbers of new resident permit bays are proposed to be created in this area, in Zone C.
- Bury Lane Car Park (currently business permits/long-stay/short-stay) to new permits (reducing provision by 10 short stay bays, 20 long-stay bays; and transferring provision for at least 30 new Local Employee/Business permits from Talbot Road South and Talbot Road car parks)
- Nursery Car Park (currently residents permits) to residents permits/new permits
- Park Road Car Park (currently 12 bays, to be changed to private parking for Three Rivers House).

Protecting parking for permit-holders

3.14 Resident permit-holder parking has been very effectively protected by the methodology on which this proposal is based, which only recommends creating new permits on streets where there is capacity (where both types of data demonstrate that there is over 10 bays capacity after the buffer area is accounted for)

3.15 This means in practice that the only roads included in the recommendation have been demonstrated to have spare, unused capacity in existing parking bays, even when every individual resident permit holder parks at the same time (this evidence is highlighted by the grey-coloured permit columns in the table).

3.16 The total capacity required by all resident permit holders is then protected further by:

- Protecting a buffer (of 20% of all parking bays that are currently unused in each street) which would cater for the demand from any irregular but authorised visitors;
- Capping new permit numbers, by maintaining a strict quota of new permits that are eligible to be used in each street, based on the evidenced unused bay capacity in each street, which constrains new permit-holders to one location while residents can park anywhere in the Zone;
- Creating new parking bays from existing verge or superfluous yellow lines (a minimum of around 37 in Rickmansworth);
- Making existing controls more flexible, creating new 'overflow capacity' by permitting residents to park in long-stay car parks near the end of the day (section 3.18 below).

3.17 This proposal would also increase capacity for resident permit holders and others in the locations identified in the background paper, including Skidmore Way and its

garage sites, Ebury Road, Talbot Road and other locations where potential capacity has been identified with no impact on other parking demands. In Skidmore Way it is proposed that the garage sites are brought into the Parking Zone. Bury Lane CP is identified for capacity increase for permit holders.

- 3.18 This overall increase includes permitting resident permit holders to use the long-stay car parks after 3:30pm, which is of minimal impact to long-stay provision because long-stay car parks end operation at 4:30pm but cost the same to stay for any period (so all-day parking is currently £4 whether drivers park at 8:30am or 4:15pm).
- 3.19 All this can be provided by Traffic Order, which will require public consultation and reporting on feedback to the Lead Member, before the statutory advertisement of Orders. The increase involves conversion of some verge, some informal parking bays and superfluous yellow lines to parking bays, with some minor physical works. As stated in the previous report to this Committee, it is anticipated that at least 37 bays can be created in Rickmansworth.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is set out in the Regulatory Services Plan and relates to reducing the budget shortfall in the Parking Account.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this report do not relate to the achievement of any performance indicators set out in the Service Plan.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Expenditure on any of the proposed measures is expected to be small, with the only change requiring a traffic order amendment which would cost around £5,000, which includes legal changes and any new signs and lines, with a further £2,000 in consultation costs. This report assumes that there is minimal cost to issue permits (which would be virtual, applied for and issued online through a new system obtained for recent new permit types). These costs can be contained within existing budget provision.
- 5.2 Evidence of likely demand is available only anecdotally, so income from this source is difficult to predict at this stage. However, based on a potential demand and capacity, around 100 permits could be issued at £500 in Rickmansworth and a further 300 at £300 (150 in Rickmansworth and 150 in Chorleywood), which could result in income of up to £140,000.
- 5.3 The impact on alternative parking provision such as long-stay due to the availability of permits cannot be assessed at this stage, as there is no evidence (nor means of collecting it) to indicate likely transfer of parking activity from the long-stay car parks, or other car parks, should new permits be introduced. Due to the lack of data on users of long-stay car parks, it is considered likely that some transfer would occur. However, this would potentially enable other demands to be served in these car parks, such as for other long-stay visitors to the local area.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council uses powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and other enabling Acts to create and enforce Traffic Orders, which will be prepared following public consultation to the usual standard. All schemes will be progressed in line with the Council's powers under its relevant Agency Agreement with Hertfordshire County

Council. If any physical changes to the layout of highway are proposed, it may be necessary for the Council to enter into a Section 278 Agreement with the County Council, to enable works on the highway to proceed.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No – no policy change and the proposed new parking option will be available to any relevant applicant.
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

8 Environmental Implications

8.1 The impact of schemes on the local built environment and street scheme will be considered as part of individual schemes, but the design and use of any proposed parking control measures are controlled by legislation and Government guidance as well as by local policy set out in the Hertfordshire County Council policy documents forming part of the Local Transport Plan and specifically in the local design guide, Roads in Hertfordshire (2011).

9 Community Safety Implications

9.1 All schemes are designed to take account of safety implications. Where appropriate the police will be consulted and safety audits are where necessary carried out as part of the scheme design.

10 Staffing Implications; Public Health implications

10.1 None.

11 Customer Services Centre Implications

12 Parking consultation is particularly likely to attract unusual levels of contact. Where required, the Customer Services Manager will be briefed as appropriate.

13 Communications and Website Implications

13.1 Information about individual traffic and parking schemes and the Council's general approach to parking schemes is made available online and at key locations such as libraries and parish offices, as appropriate.

14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

14.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Regulatory service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan.

14.3 There are no risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s).

15 Recommendation

15.1 That informal public consultation on the proposals is undertaken to propose new 'Local Employee permits' in the locations indicated by the final columns (labelled 'Recommended') of the tables at Appendix A, with limited numbers of permits in each street, subject to quotas based on evidenced spare capacity in each street,

15.2 That authority to determine these quotas annually is delegated to the Director (CES) in consultation with the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development

15.3 That (subject to the outcomes of informal public consultation being reported back to the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development), authority is delegated to the Director (CES) in consultation with that Lead Member to determine details of the scheme in line with those in this report; to authorise advertisement of the relevant traffic orders and to either return a report to this Committee or to set aside objections and proceed to make the traffic orders, to:

- a) increase capacity for permit holders in the locations identified in section 3.17 above;
- b) reallocate off-street car park capacity in:
 - i. Talbot Road South Car Park (currently residents permits/business permits/long-stay) to long-stay and resident permits only, reducing by 3 or 10 business permit bays)
 - ii. Talbot Road Car Park (currently residents permits/business permits) to long-stay, reducing by 12 business permits and 12 resident permits)
 - iii. Bury Lane Car Park (currently business permits/long-stay/short-stay) to new permits (reducing provision by 10 short stay bays, 20 long-stay bays; and transferring provision for at least 30 new Local Employee/Business permits from Talbot Road South and Talbot Road car parks)
 - iv. Nursery Car Park (currently residents permits) to residents permits/new permits
 - v. Park Road Car Park (currently 12 bays, to be changed to private parking for Three Rivers House);
- c) prevent the unauthorised use of permits by charging an additional fee where permits are misused;
- d) in exceptional circumstances and following consultation with the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development, to issue 'Local Employee' permits at no cost (recording the resulting cost to the Council through Budget Monitoring)
- e) amend traffic orders to update the eligibility of both businesses and residential addresses for the issue of residents and other permits, in line with the August 2018 report to this Committee to regularise the issue of business permits and

following planning decisions that have occurred since the making of the current permit parking traffic orders;

- 15.4 To authorise officers to promote new permits and changes to the business permit scheme.

That public access to the report be immediate

Report prepared by: P. Simons, Senior Transport Planner, Transport & Parking Projects (Regulatory Services)

Data Quality

Data sources:

WBC Indigo parking permit data

HBC parking permit data

Surveys provided by PCL Ltd.

Data checked by:

P. Simons

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	y

Background Papers

Proposed improvements to parking options for local businesses (Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee 14 August 2018)

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/meeting/infrastructure-housing-and-economic-development-committee-14-august-2018>

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A - Capacity by street

Appendix B – Background paper to the report

Appendix A – Evidenced parking capacity

Rickmansworth			Permits Assessment		Survey Assessment		Recommended (if both methods forecast over 10 bays capacity)
Rickmansworth streets in parking zones	Parking Zone	Total bays *	Unused bay capacity (by permits, averaged)	Unused bay capacity (by permits, averaged) -20%	Survey Data Average Daytime Capacity	Survey Data Average Daytime Available Capacity	
Bury Lane	A	15	3	3	49%	6	No
Ebury Road	A	85	0	0	No Data	0	No
Parsonage Road	A	15	7	6	44%	8	No
High Street (west end)	A	25	0	0	41%	12	No
Townfield	A	47	28	22	79%	40	Yes
Rectory Lane	A1	30	18	14	79%	25	Yes
Cedars Avenue	B	80	43	34	78%	66	Yes
Chorleywood Close	B	3	1	1	71%	3	No
Meadow Way	B	26	23	19	82%	21	Yes
Money Hill Road	B	46	43	34	87%	41	Yes
Nightingale Place	B	3	1	1	No Data	0	No
Nightingale Road	B	76	49	39	74%	60	Yes
Raven Close	B	11	11	9	92%	12	Yes
Swallow Close	B	3	0	0	83%	3	No
Winchfield Way	B	2	2	2	92%	2	No
Norfolk Road	C	51	0	0	39%	19	Yes
Skidmore Way	C	71	55	44	47%	25	Yes
Talbot Road	C	56	25	20	46%	27	Yes
Overall		645	309	241	71%	368	

Opportunity

Not recommended

Capacity % 0 - 49

Capacity % 50 - 74

Capacity % 75 - 100

Rickmansworth CPZ	Total Spare Capacity By Zone (permits)	Total Spare Capacity By Zone (surveys)
A, A1	56	90
B	173	207
C	80	71
TOTAL	309	368

Chorleywood

Chorleywood streets in parking zones	Parking Zone	Total bays *	Permits Assessment		Survey Assessment		Recommended (if both methods forecast over 10 bays capacity)
			Unused bay capacity (by permits, averaged)	Unused bay capacity (by permits, averaged) -20%	Survey Data Average Daytime Capacity	Survey Data Average Daytime Available Capacity	
Lower Road	NL	42	0	0	40%	19	No
North Road	NL	20	8	7	50%	12	Yes
Beechwood Avenue	OW	18	14	11	81%	26	Yes
Blacketts Wood Drive	OW	52	49	39	78%	40	Yes
Brushwood Drive	OW	42	40	32	85%	36	Yes
Carpenters Wood Drive	OW	99	83	67	87%	86	Yes
Whitelands Avenue	OW	92	62	49	75%	69	Yes
Berks Hill	OZ	42	16	13	76%	41	Yes
Capell Way	OZ	3	0	0	83%	3	No
Hillside Road	OZ	23	19	15	45%	5	No
Quickley Lane	OZ	16	4	3	62%	12	No
South Road	OZ	47	23	18	64%	35	Yes
Station Approach	ST	15	15	12	53%	6	Yes
Overall		511	333	263	68%	366	

Chorleywood CPZ	Total Spare Capacity (permits)	Total Spare Capacity (surveys)
NL	7	31
OW	198	257
OZ	49	95
ST	12	6
TOTAL	266	389

Opportunity
Not recommended

Capacity % 0 - 49
Capacity % 50 -74
Capacity % 75 - 100

Appendix A – Evidenced parking capacity