

GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
COMMITTEE  
15 OCTOBER 2024

PART I

**Proposals for an Off Street Parking Places Order to allow parking controls to be implemented at new parking bays at School Mead, Abbots Langley, Herts.  
(DoF)**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 Following the approval of planning permission to install hardstanding and associated development to facilitate the creation of parking bays at School Mead, Abbots Langley, Officers are now seeking to implement a form of Traffic Order (an Off Street Parking Places Order) on these parking bays.

**2 Details**

- 2.1 The approved parking bays are to be constructed on the edge of a site comprising an area of allocated open space, encircled by the highway of School Mead. The open space is primarily laid to grass with some small trees around the edges of the area. Parking bays have been historically installed by the District Council to the eastern, southern and western edges of the amenity area with a timber knee rail separating these from the green itself.
- 2.2 The bays on the western side of the open space, adjacent to the highway on School Mead, are orientated parallel to the road. There are currently approximately 8 spaces although these are not formally marked. These spaces are currently not restricted and serve as overflow spaces to the parade of shops (albeit it is understood some longer term residential use may also occur).
- 2.3 There is a parade of shops to the west of the parking bays, a community centre and church to the south and a school to the east (Tanners Wood JMI), interspersed with residential properties. The 14 existing parking bays adjacent to the shops are covered by a Traffic Regulation Order which imposes a 1 hour limit and a 2 hour no return period Monday to Saturday 8.00am to 6.30pm.
- 2.4 A footpath runs long the northern edge of the area, adjacent to Hazelwood Lane, with more informal pathways across the open space.
- 2.5 The new parking bays are shown on the plan at **Appendix A**. 20 bays will be created, a net gain of 12 bays.
- 2.6 Whilst the land is owned by Watford Community Housing Trust consent has been given, through a licence agreement, for the works to be implemented. Once the bays are constructed a Off Street Parking Places Order can be imposed.
- 2.7 It is considered necessary to impose an Order on the new parking bays to encourage short term churn to alleviate the parking pressures for those visiting the shops/businesses. These units currently comprise a funeral directors, a fish and chip shop, a Chinese takeaway, a café, a pizza takeaway and a Spar retail unit.

- 2.8 The Order process would require consultation and due statutory process to be followed. The timing of this process could take around 6 months and would involve statutory public consultation and completion of the associated report.
- 2.9 For information, existing parking on the verge on the corner of School Mead and Hazelwood Lane already occurs but is to be formalised and improved in appearance as part of the planning permission/scheme. However, these 2/3 spaces will remain unrestricted.
- 2.10 Planning permission (reference 05/00793/FUL - *Demolition of existing building and erection of one 2 storey and one 3 storey building to provide 24 flats and 777sqm of commercial space with parking and landscaping at 17/22 School Mead*) was granted in 2005 for the 4 storey building facing the new parking bays comprising commercial units and flatted development. A parking scheme to the rear of the building was approved and a condition imposed to ensure it was implemented. This has occurred but it is Officer's understanding the parking spaces have not been allocated to specific units but have been offered to anyone interested .... This has resulted in overflow parking beyond the flatted development site and the use of the existing on street parking bays for longer term residential parking. Whilst on street parking provision can be used by anyone, subject to compliance with any restrictions, it is not the role of the Local Authority to provide parking for private interests.
- 2.11 Works have commenced on the construction of the bays and are planned for approximately 8 weeks.

### **3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 A new Order which similarly replicates the TRO and restrictions on the bays to the west is proposed. This is initially proposed as a 1 hour restriction (and 2 hours no return) to encourage short term use and churn to support the local businesses. The Order would operate Monday to Saturday 8am to 6.30pm. The replication of the existing controls would ensure it is clear to those using the bays on the parking controls in place. Longer term use of the bays would be possible in the evenings and on a Sunday and Bank Holiday.
- 3.2 An alternative proposal and considering the local businesses (and nearby facilities) and the duration of stay, is that a longer period could be imposed ie 2 hours. The concern would be that this means different timings on each side of the road leading to confusion and misinterpretation so it is not suggested this is a pursued option.
- 3.3 However, it is recognised there is likely to be demand for further flexibility in the parking restrictions given the current business uses at School Mead. In order to allow consistency there is a suggestion a 2 hour restriction could be imposed on all the bays (existing and proposed). Whilst this does not replicate the parking controls in our main centres it is recognised this is a local centre and a 2 hour control is already evident when controls exist in other local centres such as Tudor Parade. A consistent approach across all the bays would be manageable and enforceable.
- 3.4 However, any Order would be taken through the full statutory process which includes public consultation involving local residents and businesses which could amend the timings/controls suggested and imposed.

- 3.5 It is not the role of the Local Authority to cater for private interests with the provision of private parking. There is private parking available for the flatted development opposite the bays and other on street parking in the wider vicinity. In addition, the parking controls are not in force overnight or on Sundays/Bank Holidays and there are 2/3 spaces being formalised and provided at the top of School Mead which will be unrestricted.
- 3.6 The bays could remain unrestricted but this is not suggested appropriate given the known pressure on parking in the locality and the encouragement of churn for the businesses.
- 3.7 Any Order would be enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers as part of the current Parking Enforcement Service provided by Hertsmere BC.

#### **4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

#### **5 Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre**

- 5.1 The Off Street Parking Places Order process and initial establishment of the physical changes, such as the implementation of the signage, required by the Order would be implemented by the Transport and Parking Projects team within existing resources.

#### **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The Order process and the cost of the implementing the scheme will be contained within existing budgets. The enforcement of the bays would be contained within the existing costs of the parking enforcement service.

#### **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Officers have sought specialist legal advice from external solicitors and traffic consultants who have confirmed the lawfulness of the proposal subject to the prescribed statutory process being followed. This advice has been sought due to the requirement for an Order to be imposed on privately owned land. The advice is that the land/area can only be made subject of an Off Street Parking Places Order once the bays have been implemented.
- 7.2 The Order process could take up to 6 months to complete. However, this process could take longer if it is subject to receipt of objections which may require further variations to, or prevent the introduction of, the Order.
- 7.3 There are not considered to be any legal risks associated with this proposal provided the statutory process is followed. It is recognised that local residents and/or

businesses might challenge the proposal and these will be considered as part of the statutory process.

## 8 Equal Opportunities Implications

### Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

## 9 Communications and Website Implications

- 9.1 All proposals will be publicised using the website and standard communication channels, together with consultation site notices when and where required.

## 10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Regulatory Services Service Plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Challenge from local residents/businesses to parking controls	Proposal might not succeed	Order statutory processes followed with	Treat	4-6

		public consultation		
Increased parking demand arises	Displacement parking beyond the scheme	Monitor traffic & parking pressures.	Tolerate	6

10.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

<b>Very Likely</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>Very High</b>
	4	8	12	16
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>
	3	6	9	12
<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
	2	4	6	8
<b>Remote</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>
	1	2	3	4
<b>Impact</b>				
Low -----> Unacceptable				

**Impact Score**

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

**Likelihood Score**

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

10.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore

operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

10.5 The remainder are therefore operational risks. Progress against the treatment plans for strategic risks is reported to the Policy and Resources Committee quarterly. The effectiveness of all treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

10.6 After Members have made their policy decision, the risks must be entered on to the relevant Risk Register.

## **11 Recommendation**

11.1 It is hereby requested that:

(i) The Committee agree to an Off Street Parking Places Order to be implemented to impose parking controls on the new parking bays at School Mead (and vary the existing TRO and controls if required).

(ii) Committee confirm the initial controls proposed and to be consulted upon as:

- To replicate the existing controls on the new bays
- for 1 hour parking with 2 hours no return.
- the Order would operate Monday to Saturday 8am to 6.30pm

### **OR**

- To introduce a new TRO on all the existing and proposed bays
- for 2 hour parking with 2 hours no return.
- the Order would operate Monday to Saturday 8am to 6.30pm

### **AND**

(iii) Authority is delegated to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member of General Public Services together with relevant Ward Councillors, to implement the Order and for Officers to make any necessary amendments or variations to the proposal as may be required, including as a result of responses to any consultation; as well as to address or set aside any formal objections to any Notice of Proposal in connection with approval of the final Order scheme.

Report prepared by: Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

### **Data Quality**

Data checked by:

Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	✓
3	High	

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## **APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 - Location Plan