

**NOTE OF THE PARKING PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION FORUM  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER AT 7.30 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE**

**Introductions**

1. Attendees introduced themselves and were:

**Chair**

Councillor Ian Reay

**M Zone Resident Representatives**

David Carter

Jane Keenan

**P Zone Resident Representatives**

Colin Garrett

Ian Stephenson

**Business Representatives**

Ivor Eisenstadt, MGP Ltd

Simon Redlich, ABC Ltd

Steve Carter-Hounslow, Waitrose

**School Representative**

Peter Nicholls (Berkhamsted School)

**Councillors**

Julie Laws

Laurence Handy

David Collins

Tom Ritchie

**Minutes**

Gary Cox, Town Clerk

**Purpose and Context**

2. The Chair opened the meeting by setting the overall purpose of the Discussion Forum.
3. In recent years parking in Berkhamsted has become increasingly difficult. The Town Council has been consulting for several years on Controlled Parking Schemes for the town and a further round of consultation on a revised scheme will take place this autumn.
4. However, it has become clear that any scheme needs to be assessed in the wider context of parking provision and management within the town as a whole. The Discussion Forum consisting of members of the main affected groups has been formed to help find solutions to the overall parking problems in the town.
5. In the first instance the purpose of the Discussion Forum will consider the approach to proposed controlled parking zones as a way to tackle some residential parking issues and to gain a shared understanding of those proposals and their likely impact.
6. It was agreed that the Forum should not discuss details of the proposed schemes but attempt to gain a shared understanding of how the proposed schemes will operate and estimate the impact on parking across the town as a whole. The exhibitions and consultation responses were the appropriate place for detailed points to be made.
7. The Discussion Forum will also look at broader issues of parking across the town so that the Town Council could have a suite of proposals to improve parking in the Town, including, but not only, the results of the Controlled Parking Zones consultation.
8. These overall parking proposals would be put to Dacorum Borough Council, which has responsibility for parking matters. The proposals could also inform a wider and long-term Urban Transport Plan

(UTP) for the town, currently being developed by Hertfordshire County Council, in time for the next phase of consultation, scheduled for December 2012 to February 2013. The current timetable is for the UTP to be published in 2013.

9. The Discussion Forum is envisaged to meet regularly to develop and take forward proposals to improve parking and to reduce car usage in the town.

#### **Terms of Reference**

10. Two changes to the terms of reference for the Discussion Forum were agreed and revised terms of reference with changes in italics are at Annex A.

#### **Proposed Controlled Parking Schemes**

11. Indicative maps representing the detailed schedule of Traffic Orders were considered.

12. In discussion, the following points were made or clarified:

- The proposed parking scheme has two options:
  - 2 hour scheme restricting parking between 12 and 2.00pm, except parking permits holders
  - 10 hour scheme restricting parking between 8am and 6.00pm, except parking permit holders.
- 'Shared spaces' are bays that can be used by non permit holders for limited waiting e.g. 1 hour with no return within 2 hours during a 2 hour scheme. For a 10 hour scheme the length of stay for non permit holders varies, During a 10 hour restrictive period limited wait times vary, but generally the length of stay is longer. Permit holders can use these bays at any time for any length of time
- Representatives from M Zone believed the proposals lead to a loss of available parking spaces due to double yellow lines and narrow road single yellow lines and there are some further parking space opportunities, not reflected in the maps.
- During the day, representative at the meeting, have estimated that there are likely to be 100 cars displaced from M Zone and 200 displaced from P Zone.
- In the evenings in M Zone, residents have estimated that there are likely to be 20 more resident cars than space available in the zone. No evening parking problems for residents/spaces in P Zone were expected
- 67% of 167 Waitrose employees who drive to work, park in adjacent roads. This will add to the displacement figures already provided.
- ABC Ltd ensures its own car park is fully utilised. But a further 30-40 employees look to park in adjacent roads from Monday to Friday.
- It was suggested that an estimated 200 business users could be displaced from P Zone and are likely to park towards or in the Sports Centre.

- Berkhamsted School has 130 parking spaces across its sites. Some relatively remote sites are underused. An estimated 40-50 students and staff park in residential streets close to school campus sites.

13. **It was agreed that residents would ‘walk the roads’ with Councillor Laws to undertake a detailed assessment of the impact of proposals as currently mapped and to agree on resident spaces needed and available.**

### **Consultation**

14. The CPZ Consultation will run from 26 September to 26 October. This will include: an exhibition at the Court House on 3 and 4 October; a market stall on 6 October; and an exhibition display in the Civic Centre Council offices from 8 October to 26 October. Those premises in 54 designated roads in, and adjacent to, the proposed parking zones will receive details of the schemes and consultation arrangements; and there will be notices displayed in affected streets with details of the scheme and consultation arrangements. It was suggested that information also be made available on the Town Council website.
15. The Emergency Services are among the statutory consultees on parking scheme proposals.
16. The consultation will be open to everyone and will comprise yes/no answers. All respondents are invited to provide reasons for their choice.

### **Problems**

17. In discussion, parking problems faced by the town and differing groups – residents, local businesses, shoppers, schools and rail commuters, many from outside the town - were identified as follows:

#### ***Residents***

18. The proposed parking scheme has two options for the benefit of parking permits holders as detailed above.

#### ***Commuters***

19. Commuters are reluctant to use the expensive station car park. These create the bulk of current M Zone problem. Parking scheme proposals and a proposed commuter parking ban in Bridgewater and other roads will encourage greater use of the station car park or move displacement problem to other parts of the town. It is believed some commuters from within the town make relatively short car journeys to the station and park in neighbouring streets.

#### ***Shoppers***

20. Likely to continue to use pay and display car parks and spaces on High Street already provided. Little impact caused by parking scheme, except more short term parking will be available via the shared use bays.
21. Waitrose recognise that customers use their 2 hour car park to undertake other town centre activities as well as shopping in the store.
22. It is considered that the proposed M&S store has underprovided for car parking for customers. New customers attracted to the town and store may add to Waitrose free parking numbers. Waitrose may need to be more vigorous in addressing parking issues in their car park.

### **Businesses/Employees**

23. Few employees take the bus to work. Limited public transport availability does not encourage alternatives to using the car. Some employees encourage their staff to cycle or car-share.

### **Schools**

24. Insufficient school parking, for staff means students and staff who currently park in residential areas will be displaced to other areas.

### **Solutions**

25. It was recognised that solutions needed to recognise the likely increase in housing in town and that longer term solutions were needed, not just for the problems of today.

26. The following were suggested as potential solutions to increase parking spaces and/or reduce car usage in the town:

- Designated business parking spaces and permits or business voucher schemes which work in other towns (e.g. Milton Keynes).
- The Cricket Club, Football Club and Catholic Church have available parking spaces. **Businesses invited to open negotiations with Sports Clubs and the Church on using available spaces for staff parking.** Then Town Council can facilitate this if it would be helpful.
- Berkhamsted School has remote parking in Kitcheners Field. But this is considered a remote parking location and is little used by staff or students.
- Existing School Astroturf on Lower Kings Road could be developed into a school car park, if a suitable site can be found for a new Astroturf venue. This could ease M Zone problems.
- Should explore scope for multi-storey car park in the town with Dacorum Borough Council. This will be constrained by cost and planning issues.
- Employee car share/season ticket loans/cycle racks to encourage cycling. Some businesses already have these schemes but take-up is generally low.
- Some offices in Chapel Street and Castle Mews have private parking spaces that are not used in the evenings. It was suggested that there may be opportunities to use these by other local residents.
- Encourage fewer short car journeys into town/station, i.e by more walking
- Encourage students to walk/ cycle to school
- Park and ride schemes for commuters, employees and students are unlikely to be financially viable.
- Better 'round the town' bus service geared to peak needs – commuters to station; children to school; shoppers to town centre.

- More generally, it was recognised that affordability of parking fees is the main issue for encouraging employees at business in the town and commuters to use off-street car parks, particularly the station car park.

#### **Date of next meeting**

27. It was proposed to meet again end of September or 1<sup>st</sup> week of October, to consider proposals for the exhibition and consultation and to take stock on proposals, further ideas and any progress made.  
**Town Clerk to canvass for suitable and most convenient dates.**

## Annex A

### Agreed Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Discussion Forum is

To provide advice on development of an integrated parking provision and management plan for Berkhamsted, including to:

- Review the current, revised Controlled Parking Zone proposals *initially* prior to consultation with a view to understanding how they would impact on and affect parking provision and management in the town as a whole and subsequently in parallel with the public consultation.
- Identify the range of parking provision and management *and traffic flow* issues to be addressed
- Identify possible measures to relieve pressure on parking
- Identify possible ways of increasing the provision of spaces within the town.