

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION
REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2021/21

TITLE	Wokingham Borough-wide Off Street Car Parks Order 2021
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen*
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	16 December 2021 Council Chamber at 5pm
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)

This report seeks approval to conclude the Traffic Regulation Order process for a revision to the existing Off-Street Car Parks Order, following a review of responses received during the statutory objection period.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive Member* considers the objections received and the officers' responses thereto and;

1. Instructs officers to proceed with the making of relevant Off-street Car Parks Traffic Regulation Orders;
2. Instructs officers to write to all objectors and to advise them of this decision;

OR

3. Instructs officers to abandon the Order making process

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report summarises the Objections received to the proposed Wokingham Borough-wide Off-Street Car Parks Order 2021.

These proposals were published on the Council's website, displayed within all car parks and published in a local newspaper for a period of 35 days, in accordance with statutory requirements.

All of the comments and objections received were recorded and officers' responses are provided in respect of each response received during the statutory objection period. These are summarised in Appendices A and B of this report.

*Please note the Leader of the Council will stand-in for the Executive Member for Highways & Transport at this meeting.

Background

As part of its Borough-wide parking management improvement plan, Wokingham Borough Council needs to make changes to its current Off-Street Borough Car Parks Order. The primary purposes of these changes are to enable the Council to introduce parking controls which enable it to enforce against increasing instances of antisocial behaviour in existing car parks; to provide a separate Order for our existing and new Park & Ride car parks; to respond to resident requests for clarity in charging; to limit the maximum stay permitted at California Crossroads Car Park; and to take this opportunity to incorporate provisions that will enable the Council to designate electric vehicle charging parking bays in any Off-Street Car Parks.

The Council is also taking this opportunity to update and amend the Articles* of the 2017 and 2018 Orders, absorbing the remaining provisions from those Orders that have not been incorporated in the new Borough Park & Ride Sites Order. *Articles are separate and distinct parts of a written Order that is divided into sections containing a series of rules and stipulations that are each designated as an article.

Changes to Car Park Management

Changes to the car parks Order are necessary to remove a number of off-street car parks that are no longer operated by the Council. The car parks being removed are Elms Road, Wokingham Multi-Storey; The Paddocks Car Park, Wokingham; and Wellington House Car Park, Wokingham.

The Order will create a new, separate Order for two new Park & Ride Car Parks at Coppid Beech and Thames Valley Park, incorporate the existing Mere oak Park & Ride Car Park and transfer Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride from the current Off-Street Parking Order.

The Council will also implement a maximum vehicle height restriction of 2.1 metres in Carnival Multi-storey; Shute End; Easthampstead Road East/West; Lytham Road East/West; and Station Road Car Parks.

Changes to Operating Hours

The new Off-street Car Parks Orders will enable the Council to take action against anti-social behaviour, misuse and vandalism of public car parks by extending the current, 10-hour daily charging period to be 'At All Times' and car park operating hours to apply from Mon-Sun (including bank holidays).

This means that all car park users will be required to comply with parking regulations at all times and the Order will permit the Council to issue penalty charge notices to those vehicles in its use car parks as part of anti-social gatherings. These controls will be supported by CCTV and meet the recommendations for deterring such activity made by Thames Valley Police.

Changes to Off-street Parking Costs

Although the charging periods will change, for example the single '0-2hrs' period will change to two periods of 'Up to 1 hour' and '1-2hrs', this Order will make no change to existing parking costs. The cost of parking will therefore remain the same for all customers across all operational hours, in all car parks.

The Order simplifies information about how much customers will need to pay for their selected parking periods by placing each time period into a 'parking band' that customers

can see clearly on signs displayed within each car park when. Alongside this change, an improved method of payment for customers is being rolled out in all car parks, with a 'check in/check out system' which means that customers can elect to stay for as long as they wish after checking in without fear of a penalty charge, as well as paying only for the time they have parked, instead of purchasing a longer period than is necessary.

This will support local businesses, enabling customers to shop, socialise and benefit for longer periods, whilst being fairer to customers and removing the need to display a ticket within the vehicle. Any future changes to parking costs that do become necessary will be determined by elected members in the same way that they currently are and published by a Notice of Variation to this Order.

Introduction of New Car Parking Controls

The Off-street Car Parks Order will also allow the Council to support leisure users by introducing a new 15-minute initial parking period, without charge at Dinton Pastures Country Park Activity Centre Car Park, Hurst and a new 30-minute free visitor parking at the Council offices in Shute End (Mondays to Fridays 6am to 6pm). Drivers must check in using one of the machines nearby and display a free ticket in their vehicle.

As part of the regeneration of California Cross and to support the local economy, the Order will introduce a new, time-restricted parking period at the off-street California Crossroads Car Park of 1 hour maximum stay, with no return within 2 hours. This will improve turnover and space availability within the car park for customers.

To support the new Coppid Beech Park & Ride site we will introduce waiting and loading restrictions on a length of Oak Avenue, Wokingham and the Coppid Beech Park and Ride terminus road.

Business Case (including Analysis of Issues)

There is no requirement for a Business Case in support of these proposals. However, the benefits to be gained by the Council from making these changes include:

- A simplified and improved legislative basis upon which to manage its off-street car parks;
- An effective deterrence basis to deal with instances of antisocial behaviour, misuse and vandalism;
- Better car parking services for customers, greater flexibility in parking duration; and
- Reduced likelihood of penalty charges for overstaying in car parks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£4000/ (NIL)	N/A	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	NIL	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	NIL	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
N/A

Cross-Council Implications
The revision of Off-street Car Parks Orders support economic resilience of the Borough's businesses, improves the customer experience in accessing goods and services, leisure services and open spaces; and provides for greater equality in service delivery.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and an equalities assessment is not required as no change to existing policy or procedure is involved.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Director – Resources and Assets	No comment
Monitoring Officer	No comment
Leader of the Council	No comment

For Highways use only	
Town and Parish Councils	
Woodley Town Council	Objections received
Earley TC	No response
Wokingham TC	No response
Local Ward Members	
Arborfield - Gary Cowan	No response
Barkham - John Kaiser	No response
Bulmershe & Whitegates – Shirley Boyt	No response
Bulmershe & Whitegates – Carl Doran	No response
Bulmershe & Whitegates – Shaheed Younis	No response
Charvil – Sam Akhtar	No response
Coronation – Keith Baker	No response
Coronation – Alison Swaddle	No response
Emmbrook – Rachel Bishop-Firth	No response
Emmbrook – Morag Malvern	No response
Emmbrook – Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	No response
Evendons – Sarah Kerr	Emailed comments
Evendons – Adrian Mather	No response

Evendons – Ian Shenton	No response
Finchampstead (N) – Charles Margetts	No response
Finchampstead (N) – Daniel Sargeant	No response
Finchampstead (S) – Rebecca Margetts	No response
Finchampstead (S) – Simon Weeks	No response
Hawkedon – David Hare	No response
Hawkedon – Clive Jones	No response
Hawkedon – Andrew Mickleburgh	No response
Hillside – Pauline Jorgensen	No response
Hillside – Chris Smith	No response
Hillside – Caroline Smith	No response
Hurst – Wayne Smith	No response
Loddon – Anne Chadwick	No response
Loddon – Abdul Loyes	No response
Loddon – Bill Soane	No response
Maiden Erleigh – Guy Grandison	No response
Maiden Erleigh – Norman Jorgensen	No response
Maiden Erleigh – Tahir Maher	No response
Norreys – Rachel Burgess	No response
Norreys – Phil Cunnington	No response
Norreys – Gregor Murray	No response
Remenham, Wargrave & Ruscombe – John Halsall	No response
Remenham, Wargrave & Ruscombe – Graham Howe	No response
Shinfield North – Parry Batth	No response
Shinfield South – Jim Frewin	No response
Shinfield South – Barrie Patman	No response
Shinfield South – Jackie Rance	No response
Sonning – Michael Firmager	No response
Southlake – Laura Blumenthal	No response
Southlake – Jenny Cheng	No response
Swallowfield – Stuart Munro	No response
Twyford – Stephen Conway	No response
Twyford – Lyndsay Ferris	No response
Wescott – Peter Dennis	No response
Wescott – Maria Gee	No response
Winnersh – Prue Bray	No response
Winnersh – Paul Fishwick	No response
Winnersh – Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	No response
Wokingham Without – Chris Bowring	No response
Wokingham Without – Pauline Helier-Symons	No response
Wokingham Without – Angus Ross	No response

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
Objections & Comments Report

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