

	<p><b>Environment Committee</b></p> <p><b>14th July 2016</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Parking in and around the Burnt Oak Town Centre</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Commissioning Director for Environment</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>Burnt Oak</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>Appendix A <b>Environment Committee meeting dated 08 March Members Item 6(d).</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Paul Bragg, <a href="mailto:paul.bragg@barnet.gov.uk">paul.bragg@barnet.gov.uk</a>, 0208 359 7305</p>

<p><b>Summary</b></p>
<p>This report is in response to a Member’s item from Councillor Farrier concerning parking in Burnt Oak and specifically the role that Watling Car Park plays in providing parking provision to the area.</p> <p>The report identifies the current usage of the car park and the parking behaviour occurring in and around Burnt Oak Town Centre. The report identifies the reasons for this parking behaviour and the possible options to influence this. The options presented will also aim to provide suitable parking provision that will benefit the Town Centre whilst enabling local residents to be able to park as close to their properties as possible, which is an objective of Barnet’s parking policy.</p>

## **Recommendations**

**1. That the Environment Committee approve the formulation of detailed proposals, as indicated in this report, which will benefit local residents via increased management of the high parking demand in the Burnt Oak Town Centre area.**

**2. That the Environment Committee approves a recommendation that officers be given the authority to formulate and finalise options to manage the parking in the roads local to the Burnt Oak Town Centre and encourages the use of the Watling Car Park. That Committee also provides officers with the authority to commence two linked informal consultations, one with local residents and the second with local traders and businesses.**

**3. That the outcome of the informal consultations and a finalised option proposal be reported to a future Environment Committee in order to gain authority to progress to a statutory consultation on the preferred option to manage local parking.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 This report is in response to a Members item (Item 6 (d) which was discussed at the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 Environment Committee meeting. The request was to remove car park charges as it was felt that this would improve the quality of life for all residents within the area. The Committee heard from the Commissioning Director for Environment that making the car park free would likely not assist local residents and in particular local businesses as the car park would become full of commuter vehicles. The Committee approved a recommendation that officers investigate the parking arrangements in and around the Burnt Oak Town Centre and bring a further report back to the Committee which outlines the potential changes that would be available to improve residential parking in Burnt Oak.
- 1.2 The Parking provision in Burnt Oak Town Centre is served by a number of on-street pay and display parking bays along Watling Avenue, outside the parade of shops. However, these bays are limited in number due to the proximity of the underground station, the bus stop and the need to keep the area immediately outside of the station clear of parked vehicles for safety reasons.
- 1.3 The largest car parking provision is provided by the Watling Car Park which is directly behind the shops and accessed by car from Barnfield Road. The shops can be accessed from the car park via a footpath and alleyway although there is a substantial difference in levels which means it is necessary to walk up a flight of steps and hence this is not easily accessible for those who have mobility issues. Those car park users who are unable to use the steps do not have the option of a lift and as such would need to walk to the car park entrance at Barnfield Road and along a short section of the road before reaching the Watling Avenue shopping parade.
- 1.4 The Watling Car Park incorporates 208 parking spaces. Of these 4 are reserved for disabled drivers with the remainder available for general use on a pay and display basis.

- 1.5 The current charges for parking in the on-street bays and the car park are as follows:

**On-Street Spaces – 52 number of available spaces**

Up to 15 minutes: £0.50

Up to 30 minutes: £1.00

Up to 1 Hour: £2.00

Up to 90 minutes: £3.00

**Car Park Spaces – 204 number of available spaces**

Up to 2 Hours: £1.00

Up to 4 Hours: £1.50

Over 4 Hours: £2.00

- 1.6 Historical parking transactions and evidence from site surveys shows that the On-Street parking bays are very well utilised with a regular turnover of vehicles.
- 1.7 By contrast the historical transaction data related to the car park and site surveys shows that the car park is very much under-utilised at present. During a midweek survey conducted mid-morning there was 88 vehicles parked in the pay and display bays and one vehicle parked in the disabled bays. However, there is a clear reason for this, as unusually at a major transport hub (underground station) location, the local residential roads are not subject to parking restrictions.
- 1.8 From site surveys of the surrounding residential streets it is clear that motorists and in particular commuters using the Burnt Oak underground station choose to park in these unrestricted roads (usually all day) in order to avoid parking charges. This makes these local streets heavily parked which in turn prompts the following concerns:
- Vehicles are parked nose to tail and therefore local residents will find it difficult to park outside their own properties during the day. This is understandably a frustration for local residents.
  - Some vehicles park very close or even encroaching onto dropped kerbs making it hazardous to access and exit property driveways safely and at times this can be so extreme as to be obstructive.
  - Due to the narrow roads and the way in which vehicles park there are very few passing points available and this leads vehicles travelling in opposing directions being unable to pass each other. Vehicles have to reverse long distances and drive partially and in some cases fully onto the footpath in order to allow another vehicle to pass causing a safety hazard for pedestrians. This also has the potential damage to the footway as well as causing delayed journeys, congestion and frustration for motorists.

- Some vehicles park partially on the footpath at locations where this is not intended. This causes damage to the footpath and/or grass verges which creates safety hazards for pedestrians, increases liability claims, increases maintenance costs and generally looks unsightly.

The roads where the above problems were evident are listed below:

- Barnfield Road
- Silkstream Road
- Gasgarth Road
- Playfield Road
- Millfield Road
- Gervase Road
- Gunter Grove
- Thirlby Road
- Gilbert Grove
- Forscue Road
- Parkcroft
- Blessbury Road
- Littlefield Road
- Boston Road
- Colchester Road

The following two roads were also heavily parked nose to tail, however due to the wide width of the road, passing concerns were not applicable:

- Watling Avenue
- Orangehill Road

- 1.9 Due to the number of traders and businesses operating in the area it is also likely that a number of the cars parked in the surrounding residential roads are business vehicles and staff working for local businesses. This will clearly be placing additional strain on the parking provision in the surrounding residential roads if they choose not to park in the car park.
- 1.10 The car park is in a good condition with a level and freshly tarmaced surface with the bays marked out with clearly visible white lines. The car park should be deemed to be a safe place to park as it is well lit and is protected by a well-positioned CCTV camera. On that basis the underutilisation of the car park can only be attributable to the ease of parking locally in residential streets without any charges applying.
- 1.11 On the basis that the charges in the car park are the lowest in the borough it is unlikely that lowering the charges would make much of a difference in terms of increasing usage.
- 1.12 If the charges were to be lowered it would be likely that the costs associated with maintaining the car park would exceed the income generated from parking charges even if the current usage were to double. If the charges were removed completely this would place a pressure on

the parking budget as the costs of maintenance would not be offset by any form of income.

- 1.13 In most other areas of the borough where a transport hub exists and these problems are evident the most obvious solution has been to introduce a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) for the surrounding and adversely impacted roads.
- 1.14 The introduction of a CPZ would align with the Parking Policy commitment to ensure that residents can park close to their properties. Currently with commuter vehicles and likely business vehicles parked nose to tail in the roads surrounding the Town Centre and specifically the underground station this is not possible. By introducing restrictions, which only need to be for one hour, the commuters and business related vehicles would be encouraged into using the available spaces in the car park.
- 1.15 The agreed parking Policy introduced in October 2014, following approval by Environment Committee, identifies the process to be followed in order for a controlled parking zone to be introduced.
- 1.16 It is understood that residents have previously expressed unwillingness for a CPZ to be introduced and on that basis alternative options would need to be explored for this location. However, it is important that any option proposed would need to be sufficient in order to address the safety concerns that have been highlighted in paragraph 1.8 above.
- 1.17 It may be prudent as part of a more detailed review of potential options to conduct an informal consultation process on the possible options and include in this the option of introducing a CPZ as it may be that residents views may have changed since this was last considered.
- 1.18 As traders and businesses may also be suffering from the local parking situation, it would be beneficial to carry out a consultation with them to ascertain where the vehicles related to their businesses are parking at present and to determine their views on the problems they are currently experiencing due to the local parking behaviour.
- 1.19 Other options that could be drawn up for consideration would include:
  - A solution that directs vehicles to park in specific sections of a road with the addition of small sections of yellow line restrictions to ensure appropriate passing points are available for through traffic. This could potentially include, where footpath width allows, some partial footway parking bays being introduced as is currently the case in Barnfield Road. In addition restrictions could be extended across dropped kerbs to improve the access and egress from property frontages.

- A solution to encourage business vehicles to make use of the Watling Car Park and hence free up space on the local residential roads. This could include allocating a section of the car park for Business Permit holders only. This has proven to be a popular addition in the car parks at North Finchley Town Centre. This could potentially be extended to allowing businesses to buy a pre-determined number of additional business permits that could be allocated by the businesses to regular customers. The current cost of an annual Car Park Business Permit (£350) would amount to a significant saving on the current all day parking charge.

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The recommendations seek to address the parking issues/concerns being experienced in and surrounding the Burnt Oak Town Centre for both local residents and businesses.

## **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Alleviating the parking pressure and safety concerns in residential streets by reducing or removing charges in the Watling Car Park in order to encourage increased usage. This is not recommended as the charges are already low, especially for all day parking at only £2. Any further reductions in the charges would lead to a further cost being incurred due to the need for on-going maintenance in order to keep the car park in an acceptable, safe and compliant condition.
- 3.2 As well as a reduction in parking income there would be an impact in terms of a reduction in enforcement income in a situation where charges are removed.

## **4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Should the recommendations of this report be approved officers would commence preparing a number of potential options to be included in separate but linked consultations with local residents and businesses. The results of informal consultations and further recommendations will also be reported back to a future Environment Committee.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

Improving parking and traffic conditions in these roads and effectively managing the traffic movement throughout the local road network contributes to the Corporate Plan priority “A Successful London Suburb” and contributes to strategic objectives of “keeping Barnet moving through the efficient management of the roads and pavements network” by improving the quality of life for residents through affording them better parking protection and by improving the traffic and parking conditions, contributing to “The Sustainable Community Strategy for Barnet 2010-2020.”

## **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 The costs of reviewing and preparing potential options and conducting consultations with local residents and businesses will be dependent on the extent of consultation that this approach involves. This work will be conducted by Re as part of business as usual activity.
- 5.2.2 Should the ultimate outcome lead to either the introduction of a CPZ or a range of restrictions, it will require the making of relevant Traffic Management Orders, writing to any objectors and to all properties that were previously consulted and the work to introduce new road signs and road markings. The cost of this work will be dependent on the number of roads to be included and therefore this will not be known until after final proposals are agreed and the informal consultations with local residents and businesses have been carried out
- 5.2.3 Subject to prioritisation of other reviews the costs associated with consultation and implementation will be funded from the 2016/17 Local Implementation Plan (LIP) allocation for Parking Reviews.  
The likely cost of conducting site visits, feasibility, initial design of options, informal consultation and analysis will be in the order of £20,000.
- 5.2.4 Any works arising would be carried out under the existing LoHAC term maintenance contractual arrangements and through the Council's internal DLO contractor. The likely costs (dependent on the extent of roads) associated with implementing a CPZ through the making of a Traffic management Order and the subsequent placing of parking bays and appropriate signage is in the order of £30,000.
- 5.2.5 Any additional road markings and associated signage will require on-going routine maintenance which will be met by the Special Parking Account.

## **5.3 Social Value**

Not applicable for this report.

## **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1 Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 places an obligation on local traffic authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the duty.
- 5.4.2 The Council acting in its capacity of Highway Authority has the necessary legal powers to introduce or amend Traffic Management Orders and exercise its functions in relation to Traffic Management Orders through the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("the 1984 Act").  
Section 122 of the 1984 Act imposes a statutory duty on the Council so as to secure (so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in Section 122(2) below) the

expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. Section 122(2) specifies the matters to be have regard to as:

- (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- (b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
- (c) the strategy prepared under section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (national air quality strategy);
- (d) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and
- (e) any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant.

## **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 It is not considered that the issues involved are likely to give rise to policy considerations as any proposal to improve parking provision in the area will be complimentary to the commitments made in the Parking policy and will assist in meeting statutory obligations to improve the traffic flow by helping to disperse local traffic into the wider network of local roads and car parks.

5.5.2 It is considered that the issues involved in proposing or introducing a CPZ and/or additional parking restrictions may lead to some level of public concern from local residents who feel that they do not wish for a CPZ to be introduced, or from residents of other roads in the area concerned about commuter parking being displaced into their road or network of roads. However, for both issues, it is considered that adequate consultation across a sufficient area in accordance with the Council's standard process ensures that members of the public have had the opportunity to comment in any statutory consultation on any proposed CPZ.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

5.6.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires a decision-maker to have 'due regard' to achieving a number of equality goals:

- (i) to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- (ii) to advance equality of opportunity between those with protected characteristics and those without; and



(iii) to foster good relations between persons with a relevant protected characteristic and those without. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.

- 5.6.3 The safety elements incorporated into any parking scheme design and resultant traffic movements will benefit all road users equally as they would improve safety and traffic flow at those locations. An equalities impact assessment will be carried out should any final proposals include any option that will have adverse impacts on any vulnerable groups.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.7.1 Consultations will be carried out to determine the level of support for proposed options and to establish the extent by which these should be introduced. The extent will include the number of roads to be included, the hours that any introduced restrictions will be operative and if appropriate the type and number of parking bays to be implemented in each road.

- 5.7.2 Any CPZ would be introduced in accordance with the agreed process as included within the Parking Policy and will be complimentary to other parking policy commitments. The Policy was introduced following a detailed consultation process.

## **5.8 Insight**

The statistics and observations detailed in this report were informed through analysis of parking payment transactions, parking maps and on site observations of the parking behaviours in the area.

# **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix A: Environment Committee meeting dated 08 March Members Item 6(d).