

Division(s): Abingdon East

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - 21 JULY 2016
**PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS (DYL's) – THAMES VIEW,
ABINGDON**

Report by Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Introduction

1. This report presents objections and comments received in the course of a statutory consultation on a proposal to introduce no waiting at any time parking restrictions along the majority of Thames View in Abingdon.

Background

2. The parking restrictions are being proposed in response to residents' concerns, expressed through the local Member, regarding the high levels of inappropriate and dangerous commuter parking. The location and detail of these proposals is shown at Annex 1, with an amended version – following proposed changes made due to comments received during the consultation process – shown at Annex 2.

Consultation

3. The Formal consultation on the proposals was carried out between 14 April and 13 May 2016. Letters were sent to 220 residential & business properties in the immediate area, whilst street notices were also put up at intervals along the street. A public notice was advertised in the Oxford Times on 14 April and in the Abingdon Herald on 20 April. Finally, an email was sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Town Council and the Abingdon local County Councillors (including those representing the other divisions).
4. A total of 19 responses were received during the consultation period, accounting for less than 10% of people directly contacted. Objections were received from approximately half of those who responded, and these – along with those supporting the proposals and other comments received as part of the consultation – are summarised at Annex 3. Copies of all the responses received are available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre.
5. Thames Valley Police had no objection, but were keen to stress that they were well aware of the issues affecting Thames View and that the current parking by commuters placed a considerable burden upon the local policing team in response to the residential complaints.

6. Councillor Rooke (local Member for the area including Thames View) has indicated her support for the proposals.
7. Following an Abingdon Town Council meeting to discuss planning matters, the proposed parking restrictions were noted by the Planning Committee, and were supported.

Objections and concerns

8. The primary objection from the local residents who responded centred on the loss of parking facilities for residents & their visitors. Objectors feared that without additional parking facilities being provided as part of the proposals, not only would residents suffer, but also that the problem would only be pushed onto surrounding areas.
9. It was highlighted that although the majority of properties within the estate have one allocated parking space, many of the households have more than one vehicle. By removing the unrestricted parking along Thames View this will put pressure on the remaining spaces. This was coupled with the view amongst residents that the problems are largely caused by non-residents parking for work/shopping in town, exasperating the lack of spaces.
10. Similarly, a local business was concerned that the industrial area car park (at the north-eastern end of Thames View) which already suffers from non-customer parking, will be used as an alternative by those that currently park in Thames View (including non-residents), as they seek the next suitable facility.
11. There was a concern that no suitable alternative provision for residents had been put forward, especially as 'commuter' parking has added to the problem. Preferred solutions suggested were in the form of 'marked bays' or parking permit restrictions for residents only, which would ensure that the unregulated sections of parking would be available to residents only.
12. For those residents who supported the proposals, road safety was cited as an issue, with possible increase in speeds due to the removal of unofficial traffic calming provided by parked cars, and the danger this posed to vulnerable users of the road (e.g. elderly pedestrians and school children).
13. Supporters of the proposals felt that the current unregulated parking causes visibility issues for drivers and vulnerable pedestrians, whilst also 'artificially' narrowing the carriageway which causes further issues, especially with larger service and emergency response vehicles.
14. The ability of large vehicles to safely enter the western end of the estate was highlighted as a consequence of the current high levels of unregulated parking. Among the side effects mentioned, were large service vehicles damaging both the footway and adjacent properties, it was suggested that some additional restrictions were required to combat the inappropriate parking here, which would ensure that the larger vehicles could access the entire extent of the road.

Response to objections and concerns

15. It is acknowledged that the introduction of the proposed restrictions will reduce the amount of on-street parking space available for all but it is considered necessary to do so in order to allow safe passage of vehicles along the carriageway and pedestrians along the footways. Alternative parking is available in the nearby car park operated by Vale of White Horse District – here free parking is allowed overnight, all day Sunday and for up to 2 hours at other times and in addition residents may purchase permits for use at any time.
16. With regard to the potential abuse of the private parking area at the industrial area at the eastern end of Thames View, this is a matter for the owners and occupiers of the site to control.
17. In response to the road safety concerns there have been no reported injury accidents along Thames View or in the immediate vicinity since 2011 and there is no reason to believe that the proposed increase in parking restrictions would necessarily lead to a potential increase in reported injury accidents, either within Thames View itself or in the surrounding residential streets.
18. Following concerns regarding the ability of large delivery, emergency response and refuse collection vehicles being able to access the western end of Thames View without endangering pedestrians or damaging footways officers are proposing a minor extension to the restrictions on the southern side of the carriageway, at the south-western end adjacent to the access to Thames Water land (shown at Annex 2). This would allow for unhindered, safe passage for the larger vehicles that require access to it and to make the right-angled bend.
19. Furthermore, following representations from the residential care home at the end of Thames View, officers consider it appropriate to alter the proposals outside the property (also shown at Annex 2) to remove 40 metres of the proposed restriction which would in turn allow the care home to continue to operate effectively, whilst also catering for occasions when excess numbers of visitors are expected.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

20. The proposals would help facilitate the easier flow of motor traffic in the area, reduce the risk of road traffic accidents, especially those involving vulnerable pedestrians, and also minimise the damage to highway infrastructure (i.e. footways and kerbing).

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

21. Full funding for the proposal has been secured from the developer. The appraisal of the proposals, consultation and preparation of all paperwork has been undertaken by E&E officers as part of their normal duties.

RECOMMENDATION

22. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve implementation of the proposal as advertised and amended as described in this report.**

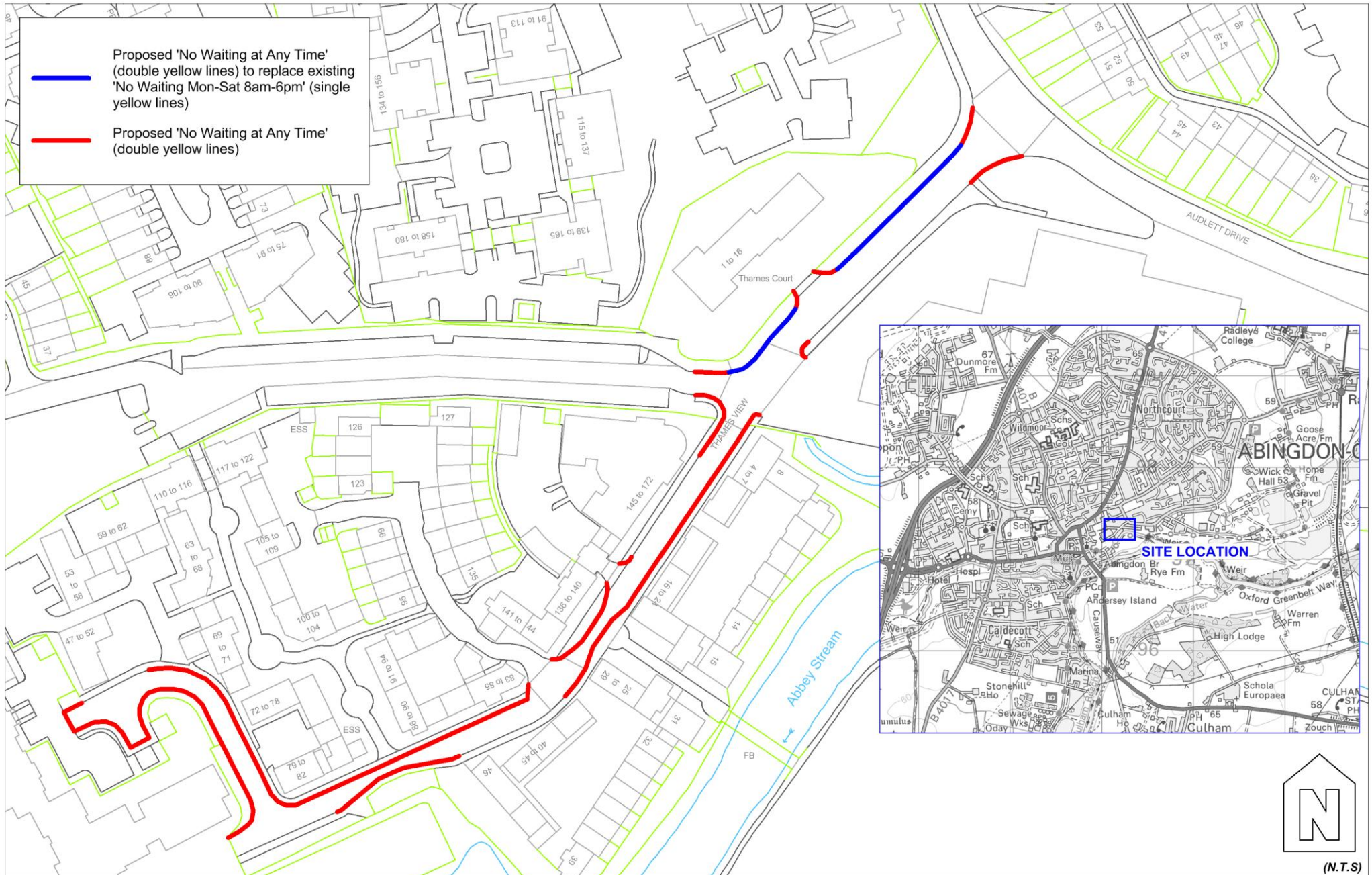
MARK KEMP

Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Background papers: Plan of proposed restrictions
 Consultation responses

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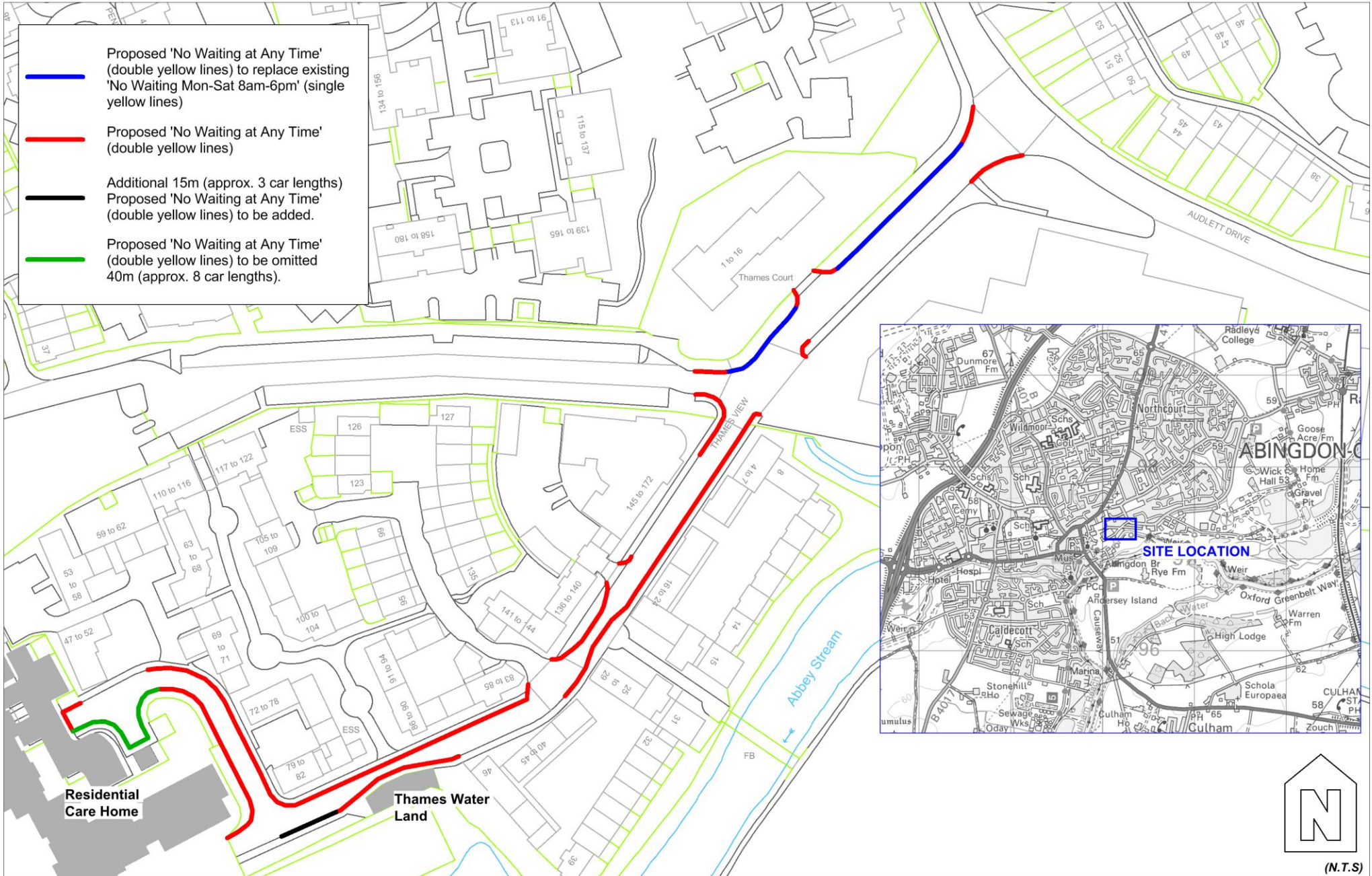
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Date drawn: 12/04/2016
 Drawn by: CJM

Map centre:
 easting. 450198, northing. 197327

(N.T.S)



ANNEX 3

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Thames Valley Police	<p>No objection – but has the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aware that the current parking by commuters is placing considerable burden upon the local policing team in response to resident complaints.
(2) Abingdon Town Council	<p>Supports the proposals.</p>
(3) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Irresponsible parking causes inconvenience and risks to both residents and visitors, ▪ Cars are parked on both sides of the road, leaving barely the width of one car between them, ▪ Visibility can be severely restricted by cars parked on corners and pedestrian cross walks, ▪ Exiting any of the side roads is difficult, because lines of sight are blocked by parked vehicles, ▪ Walking on the footways can be impossible, vulnerable pedestrians can often been seen having to walk in the middle of the road.
(4) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>No objection – but has the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerned about restricting parking as it is already currently very difficult to park at particular times in the day as non-residents park down Thames View for town or to visit the bridge house care home, ▪ To deter non-residents could the available parking be reserved for permit holders only or “2hrs only, no return”?

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<p>(5) Business, (Audlett Drive)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Already has a problem with vehicles not attending business’s using the car park, this has been an ongoing problem for many years, ▪ Seems incredibly foolish to add further restrictions without offering any solution to where cars will be parked alternatively.
<p>(6) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ever since the care home was built large vehicles have been forced to make tight turns across the footways; damaging the pavement, buildings & vegetation, ▪ Could pose a danger to pedestrians and increases the potential of vehicles colliding with nearby buildings, ▪ Potentially to affect health, with significant amounts of noise disturbance and physical movement of buildings, ▪ Large number of people parking in Thames View are not residents, these are people walking into central Abingdon to work or shop, ▪ The turning access at the western end could be made into two parking bays as this area would not impact turning vehicles.
<p>(7) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The situation on Thames View is unsustainable and unsafe, current parking means that service vehicles cannot get up the road, particularly concerned about fire and ambulance access, ▪ Safety issue is also particularly noticeable; parking on the corners significantly obstructs the view of drivers.

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<p>(8) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The current situation is appalling, extremely difficult for delivery lorries to get through the cars parked either side of the road, ▪ The situation is made worse for pedestrians due to some drivers parking on the footway, causing an obstruction for vulnerable pedestrians.
<p>(9) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't feel the proposed parking restriction facilitates adequate parking opportunities for residents, as residents have to resort to parking on the road as most households have only one parking space, yet generally have two cars, ▪ Unrealistic to assume that households will not have visitors that will drive cars, they too will have nowhere to park, ▪ Most cars parked where the parking restrictions are proposed are those working/shopping in Abingdon and using Thames view as a free place to park, ▪ Making the area 'Residents only' parking or 'Permit holders only' parking could solve this issue.
<p>(10) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The plans do not seem to include alternative parking arrangements for residents in Thames View who own two cars, there is no alternative provision to make up for the shortage of spaces, ▪ Would welcome restricting parking to residents only.
<p>(11) Resident, (Thames View)</p>	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Daily problem of trying to exit the complex and not being able to see clearly because of parked cars on the footway,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many parked cars are owned by people who work/shop in Abingdon and either do not wish to pay for parking or want 'convenient' parking close to town centre, ▪ There have been many examples when refuse collection has been missed or postponed because they could not gain access, ▪ There have been cases where vehicles have been damaged by passing delivery lorries misjudging the narrow gap between parked cars.
(12) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very happy that at last something is going to be done as the car parking is getting worse by the day, ▪ Worry for those that have two cars as most only have a parking space for one car, where are they going to be able to park the other, ▪ Concerned that people who don't live in the vicinity will take some of available parking, leaving not enough for residents.
(13) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thrilled that this severe problem is finally being addressed, ▪ Main problem is danger, can't see around the parked vehicles (particularly large vans), impossible to see vulnerable pedestrians (particularly children), ▪ Difficult for emergency & refuse vehicles to get down the street, fire engines would find it particularly problematic, ▪ Most residents have 2 cars, could there be a permit system for other members of families and visitors? (E.g. similar to Helen Road in Oxford).
(14) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is going to cause a huge problem for residents who have more than one car, as most in the development only have one assigned parking space,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is no suitable alternative being put forward, ▪ “Residents only” parking would alleviate some of the congestion, as it currently is sometimes used as alternative parking for Abbey Meadows, ▪ The plans have not taken into account the needs of local residents, who have not been consulted with, the council should have been aware of these issues when the development was proposed/constructed and should not now affect the developments' residents.
(15) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed restriction would make it impossible for residents to continue living there, most residents have two cars but as with most (if not all) Thames View, only have one allocated space, ▪ During the day most of the cars parked along Thames View are not residents and are in fact people parking there for work/shopping in the area (It is these that cause the obstruction), ▪ Would propose that if the restriction has to go ahead, that resident’s permits be implemented.
(16) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Supports – with the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dangerous & anti-social car parking are prevalent at all times of the day, and on all days of the week, ▪ Road not designed to accommodate parking on both sides of the road, however as vehicles are parked on both sides the remaining width of carriageway is reduced ▪ Access along the footways for vulnerable pedestrians is often impossible and/or hazardous, ▪ Vehicles that are parked up on the footway on Thames View are continually parked so close to the accesses of the development, sight lines can be completely blocked.
(17) Business, (Thames View)	<p>Objects/Supports – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels that the introduction of parking restrictions in the area outside of the Care Home will prejudice and restrict the effective operation of the business, especially when functions are held at the site (on average once a week) with the increase in visitor numbers,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As such, would like to see an area of the proposed restriction removed from the proposals, ensuring the smooth running of the business, ▪ However, outside of this immediate area, the proposed restrictions are welcomed, as vehicles parked along Thames View often hinder and/or prevent delivery vehicles from accessing and exiting the area.
(18) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main concern is whether or not residents will be able to park their vehicles; this will increase if you go ahead and implement the restriction, ▪ Don't think it is the residents of Thames View that are causing the issues that have led to this proposal, yet it is they who will suffer the most, ▪ Ambulances get down here on many an occasion without issue and also the refuse vehicles (similar size to Fire Engine) manage each week to gain access, ▪ Feel that the proposals are reducing parking for residents with no suitable alternatives suggested or additional parking made available E.g. marked bays for parking or “residents only” parking.
(19) Resident, (Thames View)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parking is extremely restricted already throughout the estate, particularly with the large number of flats here. The majority of residents only have 1 parking space. Most households have 3 bedrooms and have more than one vehicle, ▪ The car park at Waitrose as an alternative is far from ideal given the limited 2 hour allowance for free parking, ▪ Biggest concern is potential damage from the continued thru-flow of traffic into the town centre, as many commuters use it as a cut-thru to avoid the congestion from the Oxford Road area. ▪ Vehicles go through here at relatively high speed and do their best to avoid the speed humps, ▪ Have never seen any access issues or the main road being blocked even when there are cars heavily parked down the road it still doesn't cause problems. Most new estates are congested and Thames View is no exception. The refuse lorries regularly visit and do not suffer from any problems.