

Divisions affected: *Abingdon North*

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS MANAGEMENT – 29 JULY 2021**

### **ABINGDON: LARKHILL ROAD – PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS**

**Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet Member for Highways Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed no waiting at any time restrictions on Larkhill Road as advertised.

#### **Executive summary**

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce no waiting at any time restrictions at the south end of the Larkhill Road.

#### **Financial Implications**

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by Abingdon School who will also fund implementation if approved.

#### **Equality and Inclusion Implications**

4. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

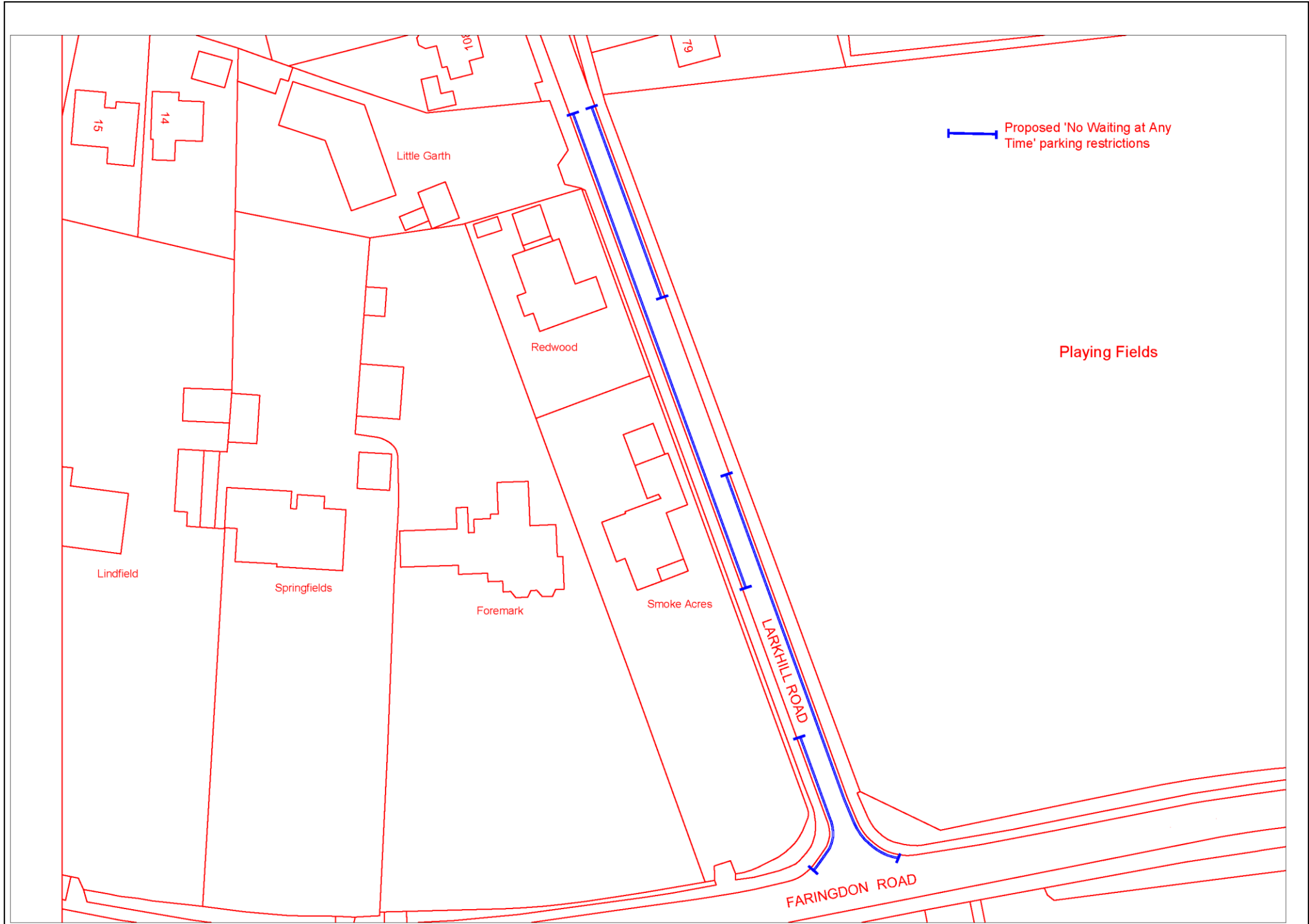
#### **Sustainability Implications**

5. The proposals will facilitate the safe movement of traffic including cyclists and pedestrians.

#### **Consultation**

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 12 May and 11 June 2021. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald newspaper and an email sent to statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, the Vale of the White Horse District Council, Abingdon Town Council and local County Councillor. Additionally, letters were sent to approximately 50 properties in the immediate vicinity of the various proposals and public notices were placed in the area.





Proposed 'No Waiting at Any Time' parking restrictions

Playing Fields

Little Garth

Redwood

Smoke Acres

Foremark

Springfields

Lindfield

LARKHILL ROAD

FARINGDON ROAD

15

14

108

79

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>No objection</b> – but must advise such restrictions feature very low in terms of any policing priorities.</p> <p>In terms of operational priorities our officers are encouraged to give preference to offences which might directly affect public safety followed by those which have an impact on traffic flow on main traffic routes. However even those priorities must be viewed in the context of the many other more pressing and demanding commitments which our officers face.</p>
(2) Vale of White Horse District Council	<p><b>No objection</b></p>
(3) Abingdon Town Council	<p><b>Support</b> – Abingdon Town Council welcomes with enthusiasm this traffic order which it is hoped will solve the longstanding problem of parking near the junction of Larkhill Road and Faringdon Road. This has caused considerable concern to local residents and the Town Council for many years.</p>
(4) Local Resident, (Abingdon)	<p><b>Object</b> - As a resident of Larkhill Road I object. The reason being it will just push parking/dropping off vehicles further into the residential part of the road which is very narrow.</p> <p>It has been a problem previously when the cones were laid out there and Abingdon Boys School 6th formers just parked higher up the North end of the road all day, making it difficult to get on/off drive way. School took no action either when contacted.</p>
(5) Resident, (Oxford)	<p><b>Object</b> - The reason given for this change is incorrect 'current unregulated parking along Larkhill Road has allowed a significant amount of vehicles to park in continuous lines along both sides of the carriageway, and this has resulted in vehicles wishing to traverse Larkhill Road not be....'.</p>

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	<p>This is not true. The road's width is just over the width of two cars. Cars only park on one side of the road. I would support one side of the road having double yellow lines as this is in effect what happens already. If you wanted to make the road safer you should make the initial 100m one way.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> - Just one correction to make! Vehicles do not park along both sides of the road - it's barely wide enough for two vehicles anyway (certainly not two large lorries) so it's only one side they park on and that's the right, as you look south to Faringdon Road. It can often be a nightmare for us living in the first few houses either side at that end of the road, and tempers are often frayed outside our house because neither driver wants to give way. So we do see the need for something to be done.</p> <p>However! When you put the cones down for a week to assess the reaction, all you did was move all the people who normally park there further down the road i.e. right outside our houses, causing us even more problems. One of our children arrived with the young grandchildren that Monday and had to park 100 metres further down the road and, on the Wednesday of that week, because of inconsiderate parking we were unable to enter or exit our own driveway between 08:30 and about 4pm. Unfortunately, I missed the driver when he left the road. One of my neighbours deliberately blocked in a similar incident on the other side of the road, a couple more houses down, so he could have a go at the owner.</p> <p>So, if you do as you want to, instead of a frequent nightmare, it will be a permanent one for us - which is very worrying. What we could do with to go along with the proposed changes is something like a no waiting area between, say, 08:00 and midday for the next 100 metres (we all have our own drives). That's because most of the people who park there are either walking into town to work for the day; going to Abingdon School for the day (teachers, staff and pupils) or going into the Albert Park (on the other side of Faringdon Road and with permit parking only) to exercise their dogs.</p> <p>Several of us have collected traffic cones over the years - and it looks like they will need to be permanently deployed to give us any quality of life.</p> <p>May I just add a few more points for your "technical" team to consider? We have lived here for 20 years - some of our neighbours a lot longer. The traffic problems for us at the top end of Larkhill Road (bottom end, geographically!) have got steadily worse over the years to the point where we are all in a constant state of apprehension - will we be able to get out of our drives in the morning? - will we be able to get back in when we return? - will we have to go down the road and turn round because we can't get in from the Faringdon Road end? THIS IS EVERY WEEKDAY.</p>

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	<p>The problem is so bad that two of our neighbours have moved away because of it. We also tried to do the same - DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT A LIFE CHANGING DECISION THAT WAS, BECAUSE OF A PARKING PROBLEM? All our four children and six grandchildren live in Abingdon, but we decided to move to the Isle of Wight - where they could all come down for holidays etc., - but, three times our sellers let us down and Caroline, my other half, said she couldn't take any more - so we're stuck here. Much against my wishes.</p> <p>I'm absolutely sure none of this will make the slightest difference to what you will do because from what I have seen from other decisions; people, families, disruption to their way of life, is of no importance whatsoever.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> - Firstly, during your trial with the cones, the traffic that would usually be parked at the end of Larkhill Road was just pushed further up into the area where the houses start. I live in the first house next to the school field and this was a real issue for me, cars were constantly parked outside of my house and blocking the access to my driveway. This has been an issue for a number of my neighbours and has caused a lot of tension, it really does cause a lot of unnecessary stress for those of us in the closest houses. Not only that, it is also an eye sore having these vehicles loitering all day, this of course isn't an issue with the current layout.</p> <p>Secondly, the vehicles being parked at the bottom of the road does have a benefit. It is common knowledge that people use Larkhill road and the access through Longmead as a rat run to avoid the speed humps which are in place on Wootton Road. When the vehicles are parked at the bottom end of the road it slows down cars meaning they cannot accelerate up Larkhill Road. There are usually cars on the road at the top end by Longmead which means that speeding is limited somewhat. As you know, on Larkhill Road there are a lot of school children dropped off and dog walkers making their way to Albert park, we have seen a lot of near misses and it is only a matter of time before someone gets hit. The speeding is a real concern.</p> <p>Should you go ahead with your current plan, and I do sincerely hope that you do not, I would be heavily in favour of accompanying speed reduction measures. In addition, the plan would also create a need to prevent people waiting outside of our houses during busy hours. I would not suggest a no parking zone as our visitors would be affected but perhaps a permits type solution whereby residents could have visitors park and the vehicles which are moved up the road wouldn't be able to. I note councils usually charge for permits, however as in this case the very need for them is being caused by issues created by the council, I would hope this would not be the case.</p> <p>In conclusion, I would be very strongly against your suggested changes. I believe that if they were to be implemented as you currently suggest for them to be, without any additional waiting and speeding measures, it would reduce the</p>

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	<p>quality of life for my neighbours and I drastically.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - As a Larkhill Road resident, I am concerned that prohibiting parking near the Farrington Road will cause cars to park further down the street, between driveways. This has the potential to make it much more dangerous for residents to pull out of their driveways, because parked cars obscure the view. In addition, badly parked cars could block access to driveways.</p> <p>At least when parked on the portion of the road now proposed to be restricted, cars do not hinder the view of the street when pulling out of driveways.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - 1. Strongly support restriction on West side near junction with Farrington Road 2. Suggest restriction for whole of East side. This reflects the current practice of leaving this side entirely free of parking. 3. The proposal to "encourage" any parking on the East side, means that cars entering Larkhill Road from Farrington Road and wishing to pass the parked cars on the West side by travelling on the "wrong " side, will be unsure if they have a clear route. Cars travelling South along Larkhill Road will face a similar problem. 4. Two or Three intermittent sections of double yellow lines on the West side would be preferable.</p>
<p>(10) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - I support the parking restrictions shown on the plan but think it would be safer if no parking is allowed on the West side of Larkhill Road near the junction with Farrington Road.</p> <p>If two or three cars are entering Larkhill Road from Farrington Road and cars are parked on the West side of Larkhill Road near the junction, this can cause a backup on Farrington Road, which is clearly a hazard.</p>
<p>(11) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - We regularly walk along the road and have seen many incidents of cars waiting with neither being able to move.</p> <p>The main issue is with boys from the Abingdon Boys School having to park on the road. The letter states that cars are parked along both sides of the road, but it's not possible to do this as the road is not wide enough. They park on one</p>

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	<p>side so the line of cars can be 15 plus cars long, and they park too close to the Faringdon road. I have seen cars waiting to turn in to Larkhill road having to wait on the Faringdon road. This is dangerous and I have seen drivers shouting at each other in frustration.</p> <p>Putting the yellow lines in, as described in the letter, will not have the desired effect because there is nowhere for cars to wait. The road is not wide enough to stagger the yellow lines, it will create a snake effect and as the road has a bend further along drivers will have the same problem as now. They will then park further down Larkhill road, as happened when there was a temporary restriction a few weeks ago. It will just push the problem further along the road.</p> <p>The only way to sort the problem is for Abingdon Boys School to provide proper parking for the older boys who drive to school. This will enable parents who park along the road at pick up times to do so safely and with enough room for other cars to use the road without incidents occurring.</p>
<p>(12) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - Looking at the proposed plan I have the following comments to make:</p> <p>A. Before any works are thought about, the whole of Larkhill Road needs to be resurfaced right up to Berrycroft ,particularly the road edges which have been compacted by heavy traffic and having to use one side of the road to avoid parked vehicles .It has not been properly resurfaced for many decades and the neglect is obvious. You need to inspect the road closely yourself to appreciate the issues and wasting Public Money by glossing over the original problems</p> <p>B. There needs to be more distance from the Faringdon Road end before any parking starts, this is a problem when turning into Larkhill Road and more space needs to be allowed for a 2/3 cars, as you turn into Larkhill Road and waiting for cars coming down you can be stuck waiting partly in Faringdon Road which is dangerous. Also, Parents dropping their children off for Abingdon School tend to “just park “ on or near the corner!!</p> <p>C. Also to alleviate B slightly can you move the parking area further up level with Smoke Acres and move to other one on opposite side further up towards Redwood and still maintain the passing gap in the middle</p> <p>Hopefully these proposals will not push the parking problem further up Larkhill Road to the houses which has happened on occasions with some events at Abingdon School, making the situation impossible to get in/ out of driveways for Residents</p>



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<p>(13) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - Broadly speaking we welcome these proposals. People parking close to the end of Larkhill Road certainly, in our experience, creates dangerous situations, though the road is sufficiently narrow that parking is in general only on one side.</p> <p>That said, given that the major reason for people to park in that location is attendance at Abingdon School, or waiting to collect/deposit pupils from/for the school, one does fear a) that those who park all day long will merely do so further down Larkhill Road thus creating difficulties for the houses in that areas and b) that those who are collecting/dropping off will ignore the restrictions whilst waiting (which would be consistent with the way some motorists launch their vehicles right onto the pavement across the corner of the road whilst waiting).</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> - There is one thing that stands out where will pupils from Abingdon school park will it be further up the Road parking in front of our houses which will not be a good thing?</p> <p>The other thing that should be looked into is that the traffic that comes down Longmead Road can't get into Larkhill Road as in the evenings most of the time there is large van parked right on the corner and parking all the way down the front of the flats you can't see what is coming it's a wonder there has not been an accident it's not so bad in the dark evenings but any other time you can't see anything coming.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I live on Larkhill Road, this has always been a problem, so glad to see something is being done about it. I suspect it will just lead to people parking further up the road, but hopefully will put some off.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I am a Neighbour in Larkhill Road and fully agree that car park in the south side of the road is becoming an issue, especially when there are events in the Abingdon school. It makes is difficult to drive or cross the street.</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - The parking that's used at the end of Larkhill road is dangerous and obstructs the fluidity of traffic on daily basis. It's even worse at the weekend when Abingdon school is running a sporting event. I live in Larkhill Road and this will be welcomed by all the residents. I strongly believe that if the Abingdon school wishes to hold large events it should not impact the local residents or town.</p>

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<p>(18) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I think that this will improve access to the road immensely. I was wondering whether you might consider adding something around the junction of Longmead with Larkhill road. People often park right up to the corner which makes it difficult to see oncoming traffic, thereby making it risky to exit Longmead onto Larkhill road. Especially when there are larger vehicles such as vans parked up. I think it is important to let the people that inhabit the flats there to park their vehicles on the road (as there is limited off-road parking), but I do think that the junction needs a little more clearance than is currently given to make it safe.</p>
<p>(19) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I agree we should have Double yellow lines to the points you have detailed in your letter , but that will only move all the Abingdon school cars up the road making it very difficult and dangerous to get in and out of our drives , I have had correspondence with the bursar on a number times only to be told they have on-site parking for their pupils which they don't use. The problem is Abingdon school, surely the way forward would be to make parking in Larkhill road out of bounds for Abingdon school pupils and teachers. The other problem time is pick up time at the end of the day where they use mine and my neighbours drives to turn around in. I await in anticipation.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Wonderful news that at last there is going to be yellow lines in Larkhill rd. we have lived here for nearly many years and have had many difficulties in this area. I have counted at least 26 cars parked in this area.</p>
<p>(21) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I wholeheartedly support the Proposed parking restrictions on Larkhill road Abingdon. In fact one might almost say about time. The use of this stretch for parking has become an ongoing problem since pupils from Abingdon School have started routinely parking there.</p> <p>The only thing I could add, is that Larkhill road (and environs) could usefully be made a 20 MPH Zone. This might moderate the speed of some of the 'Road runners' using Larkhill road as a Rat Run avoiding the Speed bumps in Wootton road. and racing through at 40 - 50 MPH</p>
<p>(22) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I support your proposals. Parking never used to be a problem, but the pupils at Abingdon school must have become more affluent and the older pupils (or their parents) can afford to drive to school and park in Larkhill Road.</p> <p>My only suggestion is that as well as restricting the parking, you also introduce charging. If you mandate the use of a phone parking app you only need to install a sign (no need for a costly meter) and you can boost the council's coffers.</p>

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<p>(23) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - although I'm all for this as the parking is an absolute joke down the road causing many problems for the residents that live there, me being one of them.</p> <p>I'm sure you know where the cars are from, students from Abingdon school now maybe an idea would be to stop the school building so many buildings and provide them with some sort of parking facility on site, I can understand your idea on restrictions with double yellow lines in some areas but if this was to happen where do you think they will park yes you guessed right further up the road, blocking driveways restricting parking spaces outside our own homes for people who wish to visit and I know for a fact this will happen because it's happened before when they have some sort of event at the school with cars parked half way down the road causing absolute chaos.</p> <p>My recommendation would be double yellows all the way down stopping any vehicles parking there, or option two I think is the best one, place a LTN barrier at the end of Larkhill road/junction to Farrington road which would return it to how it was many years ago a dead end, stopping all traffic from using as a cut through and speeding down there at 50+ mph, or simple place the LTN further up Larkhill road to the first property (redwood) allowing vehicles to park there if they must.</p> <p>Although these seem to anger a few people in and around the Cowley area the roads seem to be much better now around these areas and I'm sure the residents of Larkhill road would be more than happy with an LTN positioned there.</p> <p>Bearing in mind this is about the safety of people and more so the children that walk this way to/from school, I'm surprised no one has been seriously injured or killed down here.</p>