

Parking Restrictions on Conduit Road

Chair, Councillors and Officers, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I am here as a Trustee of Trinity Church in Abingdon and its Community Centre – the Conduit Centre – which has served the Ock Street and wider Abingdon community for over 150 years. At our church meeting on 17 July, we discussed the proposed Residents' Permit Parking scheme for the Ock Street area and its impact on Conduit Road.

Conduit Road differs from much of the Ock Street area. Overnight, the road is fairly clear because most houses have driveways. During the day and evening, the road is used not just by residents and their visitors but also by people attending Trinity Church and its Conduit Centre, Carswell School, and the Albert Park. It is also only a 5-minute walk from the town centre. However, the main issue occurs at school drop-off and pick-up times, when cars can block driveways.

We have three main concerns:

First, the process. Trinity Church was not consulted last November when residents were asked about possible changes. Given the impact on our community work, groups like ours should have been involved from the start.

Second, the proposals. Removing all spaces opposite the church and making them residents-only would make access harder during the day and evening. Extending other bays alongside the church from two to four hours is also unhelpful. Most church and community activities fit within a two-hour period, and shorter limits allow better turnover.

Third, the impact. Trinity Church is more than a place of worship. The church and Conduit Centre host a toddlers' group, groups for the elderly, a food bank, uniformed organisations, weddings, funerals, and many community meetings – all dependent on reasonable nearby parking. These restrictions would disproportionately affect vulnerable groups and could reduce bookings for our Conduit Centre, impacting financial sustainability.

We believe a better solution to school traffic would be occasional traffic wardens at peak times, rather than restrictions affecting the road every day.

In conclusion, these proposals, as they stand, place an unfair burden on a long-established church and community centre. We urge reconsideration, ensuring the needs of residents and community groups are properly balanced.

Thank you.