

Division: Charlbury & Wychwood

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT– 9 OCTOBER 2014

PROPOSED REMOVAL OF DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PLACE, IN THE PLAYING CLOSE, CHARLBURY, WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT

Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Introduction

1. This report considers responses received as a result of a formal consultation on a proposal to remove a Disabled Persons' Parking Place (DPPP) in The Playing Close, Charlbury, West Oxfordshire District.

Background

2. The proposal in this report follows previous reports dealing with requests for a new DPPP in Brown's Lane to assist shoppers visiting the adjacent supermarket, which was finally approved by the Cabinet Member on 24 July 2014. At that time, officers were asked to carry out a consultation to remove the DPPP in The Playing Close (also referred to as Poole's Lane) adjacent to the retirement development.

Formal Consultation

3. Oxfordshire County Council sent a copy of the draft Traffic Regulation Order, statement of reasons, and a copy of the public notice appearing in the local press, containing the proposed parking place changes to formal consultees on 14 August 2014. These documents, together with supporting documentation as required, were deposited for public inspection at County Hall and West Oxfordshire District Council Offices. They were also deposited at Charlbury library and are also available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre. At the same time, the Council wrote to local residents affected by the proposed change, asking for their comments. Finally, public notices were displayed at each site and in the Oxford Times.
4. Eighteen responses have been received in respect of the proposal, of which nine are objections (including the Town Council and the Estate Manager of the retirement development). The other respondents were either in favour of the proposals or had no objection. County Councillor Rose has previously indicated his support for the removal of the DPPP. These are shown at Annex 1 together with an officer response.

Conclusion

5. The request for the removal of the bay in The Playing Close came from residents of Brown's Lane without off-street parking who were concerned that the new DPPP being implemented outside the supermarket would reduce the amount of space for them to park. Whilst it is recognised that residents of a retirement development might have greater need for easily accessible parking, these properties all have garages and it is understood that there is other space for these residents to park off the highway.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

6. The cost of the proposed work under consultation, including that described in this report, will be met from the fund set up for this purpose.

RECOMMENDATION

12. **The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the removal of the existing disabled persons parking place in Playing Close (also referred to as Poole's Lane) as set out in this report.**

MARK KEMP

Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Background papers: Consultation documentation

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September 2014

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

RESPONDENT	COMMENT	RESPONSE
Charlbury Town Council	Oppose the proposal – most disabled bays are used in a transitory fashion and therefore could be considered rarely used. Not the case with this bay which is regular used by nearby residents and less disabled visitors to the Town Centre.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used unlike the new bay outside the supermarket. Beechcroft Estate (owners of The Playing Close) could install a replacement bay in their own private service road.
The Estate Manager (Beechcroft Estate)	Objects to the proposal. There are not enough spaces in their private car park for residents, staff, and visitors, and the bay is a necessary facility for the Estate. The bay is used by disabled residents and visitors who would otherwise have difficulty due to shoppers and railway commuters. There are 14 resident's cars in the estate but only 10 parking spaces and some owners use their garages for storage when they downsize to live here. Could the bay be made limited stopping or moved further down the lane? Could parking measures be introduced in the area to force rail commuters to use the station car park?	The Estate itself could ensure that residents use their garages to park which would free up parking space. A bay in the service road need not conform to the minimum size requirements on the public adopted highway. The lane is too narrow further up for the bay to be moved here. Due to the diverse use of the centre of Charlbury for parking, only a Controlled Parking Zone would provide a viable solution. Such a scheme would be very expensive to implement even assuming residents would be in favour and no funding would be available for the foreseeable future.
Two Residents The Playing Close	Opposes the proposal. Parking in the Beechcroft Estate is extremely limited and the bay is very useful for disabled visitors to the elderly residents here.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used unlike the new bay outside the supermarket. Beechcroft Estate (owners of The Playing Close) could install a replacement bay in their own private service road.
Resident The Playing Close	Although the bay has been spasmodically used over the last few months, it was used regularly by a resident who has recently died. Lives in a retirement development and many will face	While carers and relatives can use a residents disabled badge to park in the bay to take them out or bring them back, it cannot be used simply to

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	mobility problems and the bay will be a godsend for relatives or carers to take them to hospital appointments etc.	visit a disabled person. A bay on the service road would be a more flexible solution since these rules do not apply.
Resident, The Playing Close	Is a disabled badge holder. Strongly against the proposed removal. The locality is in constant use by residents (including badge holders, their families, carers, visitors and trades people. The bay outside the Co-op is too far away to be of use.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used unlike the new bay outside the supermarket. The bay outside the Co-op was installed primarily to aid disabled shoppers.
Resident, The Playing Close	The residents here are all old. Doesn't have a blue badge but friends sometimes offer lifts and they need to stop outside.	Friends couldn't use the bay without displaying a valid blue badge.
Resident, The Playing Close	The Estate is for elderly people and several are currently disabled. At least one has a blue badge. Removal of the bay would allow non-residents to park here making it more difficult for residents and their visitors to park at the front of their houses. The bay was originally installed to help the residents of The Playing Close and would like it to remain.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used. Beechcroft Estate (owners of The Playing Close) could install a replacement bay in their own private service road.
Resident, The Playing Close	The bay is much used and essential for disabled people both in Charlbury and surrounding villages. Parking in Charlbury is difficult and disabled brother uses the bay to visit.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used. Beechcroft Estate (owners of The Playing Close) could install a replacement bay in their own private service road.
Resident, The Playing Close	Home does not face onto the lane but believes the removal of the bay could affect many residents. They are all elderly and several are disabled and cannot drive or walk any distance. Rely on friends and carers to take them out. 16 homes here and the estate itself does not have room for a disabled bay.	Officers and others report that the bay is very rarely used. Beechcroft Estate (owners of The Playing Close) could install a replacement bay in their own private service road.
OXTRAG (Chair Deborah Whelan)	Believes the bay is in the best place for the area being on level ground, especially when the Farmers Market is held on the adjacent Green. Doesn't object to its removal if the residents here don't and no regular use of it is made by disabled visitors to the Market.	Noted
Resident, The Green, Charlbury	Is a Blue Badge holder and has never seen the bay used. Has used it twice – once to visit the house, and once to attend the	Noted

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	Farmers Market. This doesn't justify its retention.	
Resident, The Green	Believed the proposal was to remove the new bay outside The Co-op. Opposes this.	Following further discussion now accepts that the subject is the bay in The Playing Close and has withdrawn objection.
Resident, The Playing Close	Agrees with the proposal. The bay is a hindrance to visitors as road parking nearby is extremely limited. The new bay outside the Co-op is far more practical for those wishing to shop there.	Noted.
Resident, The Playing Close	While the user of the bay has recently died, a number of residents have serious mobility problems and it is likely there will still be a need for the bay in future. Would be unfortunate to remove the bay and for the Estate Manager to have to go through the procedure to have it re-instated.	As above. The resident now accepts that the new bays outside the Co-op and Chemist makes the general use of this bay unnecessary. Accepts that a bay within the estate would be more helpful to residents and has withdrawn the objection.
Resident, Browns Lane	Supports the proposal. The bay is rarely used and the new bay outside the Co-op has removed 2 parking spaces for residents. The Estate has its own parking and parking in the centre of Charlbury for residents is at an absolute premium. Most residents have nowhere else to park but the road. Rail commuters and shoppers compete for spaces. Removing the bay in The Playing Close would provide some comfort for residents in the area as a whole.	Noted
Resident, Browns Lane	Supports the proposal. Works at home and the bay has been rarely used since it was installed. The Co-op is open 15 hours of the day and rail commuters avoiding the station car park charges, and shoppers, all compete for use of the area making it very difficult for residents to park. This has been made worse by the new bay outside the Co-op. The Estate in The Playing Close has 16 garages and 10 car parking spaces for 16 dwellings and doesn't need a bay in the lane as well. The bay is well over 100 metres from some residents on the Estate.	Noted
Resident, Browns Lane	Supports proposal. The Estate has ample parking on site and while noting the Town Councils' wishes for the bay to remain,	Noted.

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	<p>doesn't agree. Residents in Browns Lane have difficulty parking and removal of the bay would free up space for them. Further parking pressure is likely because of the proposed redevelopment of the Old Fire Station and the sale of Merton Cottage in Browns Lane which are likely to introduce more cars.</p>	
<p>Resident, Browns Lane</p>	<p>Supports the proposal. The bay is rarely used and the new bay outside the Co-op has made it even less necessary.</p>	<p>Noted</p>