

Division(s): Thame & Chinnor

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - 9 JUNE 2016

PROPOSED PARKING RESTRICTIONS ELMS ROAD, THAME

Report by Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Introduction

1. This report presents objections received in the course of the statutory consultation on the proposal to introduce no waiting at any times parking restrictions along the majority of Elms Road in Thame.

Background

2. The proposed parking restrictions (double yellow lines) are being proposed as part the planning approval for residential development on the northern side of Elms Road, which will also include the construction of a new junction entry close to the corner of Elms Road & Broadwaters Avenue. The location of the proposals is shown at Annex 1, whilst more details of the exact nature of the proposed restrictions are shown at Annex 2.

Consultation

3. The Formal consultation on the proposals was carried out between 10 March and 8 April 2016. Letters were sent to 83 properties (primarily residential) 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 10 March, with an email sent to statutory consultees, including: Thames Valley Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Thame Town Council and local County Councillors. A total of 22 responses were received during the consultation period.
4. Objections were received from the Town Council and a number of local residents, and these - along with other comments received as part of the consultation - are summarised at Annex 3. Copies of all the consultation responses are available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre.
5. Thames Valley Police had no objections but were not convinced that the extent of the restriction is justified; they also had concerns about the potential displacement of parking and its effect on surrounding residential areas.
6. Councillor Nick Carter did not specifically object to the proposals but did raise a number of concerns, chiefly regarding the loss of potential parking provision for local residents, many of whom already struggle to find suitable locations to

park. He also felt that dealing with problems in isolation in Thame is not the solution, but rather a more holistic/joined-up approach would be the way forward. In which improvements could be made that would benefit the local people in the surrounding residential streets.

7. Thame Town Council objected to the proposals as they did not see any rational reason for their implementation once construction of the new development is complete. They accept the need for some extra restrictions at the Elms Road/Windmill Road junction to improve safety but do not accept the need for any further permanent restrictions on the north side of Elms Road as the current un-restricted parking facilities on Elms Road is critical for nearby residents, 24 hours a day. The Town Council was concerned that the proposed parking restrictions in Elms Road would have a detrimental effect on the existing reported issue of excessive vehicle speeds, and therefore safety in the area. In addition, they were concerned that the proposed 'solution' appears to have been proposed in isolation – not taking into account existing traffic issues in the wider area – that will be exacerbated during any construction activity. They strongly felt that a better solution could be defined that satisfies the needs of both local residents and the new development.
8. The primary concern from local residents (and others commenting) centred on the potential loss of parking facilities for residents of nearby streets, their visitors as well as visitors to the town centre. Objectors feared that without additional parking facilities being provided as part of the development, the problem would only be pushed onto surrounding streets, which are already under heavy pressure.
9. Road safety was also 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 i.e. elderly pedestrians and school children.
10. A number of residents felt that a solution that benefits the whole of southern Thame was required rather than dealing with isolated areas, and that concentrating on individual issues would only have negative impacts on those surrounding areas.

Response to objections and concerns

11. The double yellow lines are being promoted to ensure the visibility splays of the new junction to the housing development to remain free from obstruction. The restrictions are also required opposite the proposed development bell-mouth junction to allow refuse vehicles (and other large goods vehicles) to enter/exit the scheme without obstruction. The proposals retain 50 metres of unrestricted carriageway extended which should accommodate up to 10 cars.
12. The width of Elms Road is approximately 6m and whilst it is to be widened slightly by narrowing the northern footway, if there are no restrictions then parking is likely to take place on both sides of the carriageway which is considered inappropriate given the increased traffic that will arise once the new development is complete and the reduced footway width. The alternative

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of narrowing the footway on both sides has been considered but would not allow sufficient carriageway width to allow parking on both sides and adequate space for large vehicles to pass unhindered.

13. The reported injury accident records during the most recent 5 years shows only one road traffic accident involving a pedestrian in Elms Road. There is no reason for Officers to believe that the proposed parking restrictions would necessarily lead to an increase in reported injury accidents, either within Elms Road itself or in the surrounding residential streets.
14. With regards to the wider problem of parking availability, traffic volumes and flow within southern Thame, there is at present no general OCC transport strategy or policy for the town, and the Council is satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan will lead on both the housing growth and infrastructure provision/policy for the Town.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

15. The proposals would help reduce the risk of road traffic accidents, and facilitate the easier flow of motor traffic in the area

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

16. Full funding for the proposal has been secured from the local developer undertaking the residential development.
17. The appraisal of the proposals and consultation has been undertaken by E&E officers as part of their normal duties.

RECOMMENDATION

18. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve implementation of the proposals as advertised.**

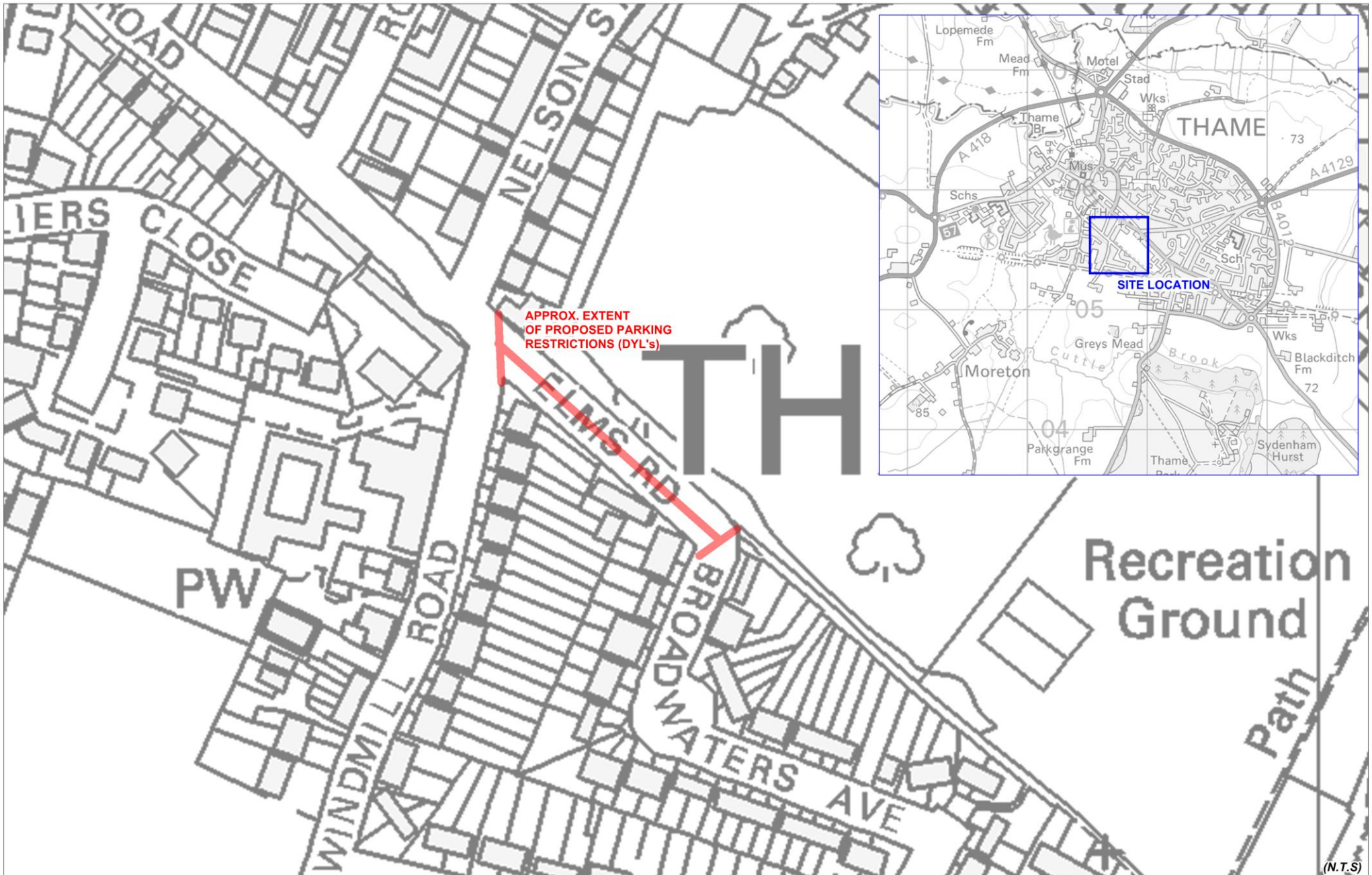
MARK KEMP

Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)

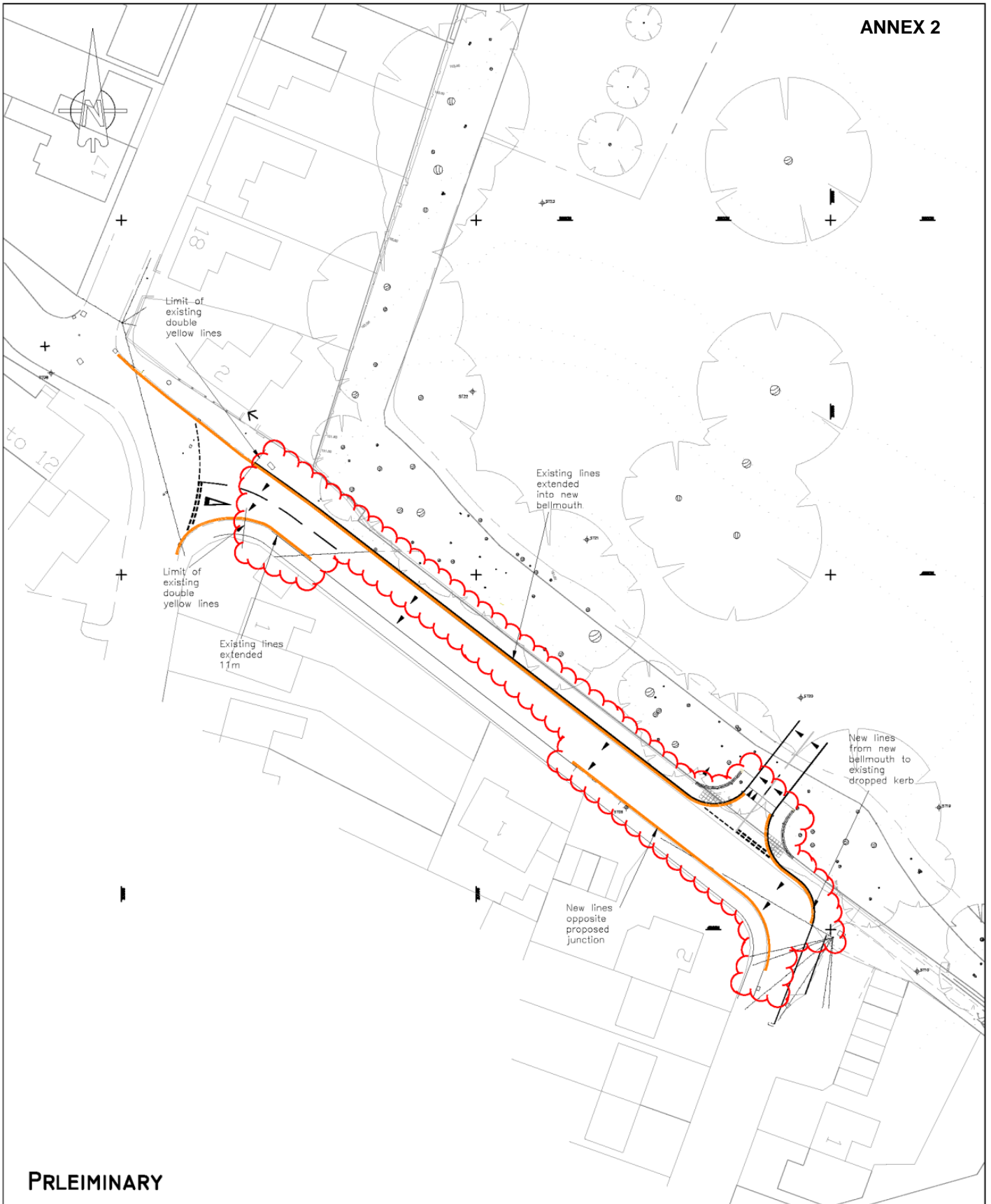
Background papers: Plan(s) of proposed restrictions
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Owen Jenkins 01865 323304


June 2016



(N.T.S)



PRLEIMINARY

REV. No.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	INITIALS
Client			MJA CONSULTING CIVIL AND STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS Monarch House, Barton Lane, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 3NB Tel: 01235 555173 Fax: 01235 523226
Project			
Title		Scale 1:500@A3 Checked	Date Oct 15 Drawn PPB
Section 278 Agreement – Traffic Regulation Order			
		Drawing No.	Rev
		4882:610	A

ANNEX 3

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
Thames Valley Police	<p>No objection – but has the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not convinced the extent of the restriction is justified, ▪ Concerned about displacement of parking affecting surrounding areas.
Thame Town Council	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fail to see the rationale for permanent restrictions, as it is felt no need once construction work completed, ▪ Restrictions will have detrimental effect on vehicles speeds in the area, ▪ Solution proposed in isolation, rather than taking into account surrounding area/issues. <p>However they do feel that restrictions may be justified at the Elms Road / Windmill Road junction.</p>
County Cllr Nick Carter	<p>No stated objection – but has the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposal involves the removal of a number of parking spaces in an area which already suffers from restricted on-street parking, ▪ Local residents' existing difficulties have been exacerbated during recent years by additional parking pressure resulting from other developments in the immediate area, including the one in Windmill Road. It is not acceptable to continue heaping further pressures onto residents in this way. Those living in Nelson Street, for example, can only park along one side of their narrow road, as very few houses have off-street facilities ▪ Solution proposed in isolation, rather than taking into account surrounding area/issues,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The developer of The Elms should be required to provide parking on the large development site for those residents who currently use Elms Road, ▪ The alternative would be to refuse access to or egress from the site in Elms Road, and instead, use the front of the site on the High Street where the existing entrance can simply be widened.
Resident, (Broadwaters Avenue)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels parking currently utilised by residents will be used by construction workers and those visiting the area.
Online response, (Wheatley)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will see a reduction in parking for those working in Thame, whilst also pushing traffic further into the residential streets.
Resident, (Hampden Avenue)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels the restrictions will only serve the new development, ▪ Removing spaces for parking will cause more problems for residents & visitors to the Town centre, due to the severe shortage of facilities.
Resident, (Nelson Street)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels there is not enough parking in the surrounding area to cope with both residents & visitors, ▪ Without sufficient allocation/provision for parking, the proposals will only cause additional problems on Elms Road for residents.

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<p>Resident, (Elms Road)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Believes the proposals will remove the ‘unofficial’ traffic calming effect that parked cars currently provide, and as such will provide conditions for vehicles to exceed the speed limit, ▪ Would like to see additional traffic calming features (road humps) installed as a resolution.
<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels there is not enough parking in the surrounding area to cope with both residents & visitors, ▪ Would like to see the introduction of “residents only” parking in Elms Road & the surrounding residential streets, and would support the proposals if this were introduced.
<p>Place of Worship (Windmill Road)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently rely on nearby parking for many of our elderly members (some of whom are registered disabled), and also for families with young children, ▪ Thinks that Thame needs more parking for the town, and not for it to be reduced any further. Especially considering the amount of development that is in progress and planned for the future.
<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels there is not enough parking in the surrounding area to cope with both residents & visitors, ▪ Would like to see the introduction of “residents only” parking in Elms Road & the surrounding residential streets, ▪ Believes additional parking facilities are required for visitors to the town centre.

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<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents with no measures to counter this loss, ▪ Possible increase of vehicle speeds on Elms Road & surrounding streets, creating a greater risk to vulnerable pedestrians (school children & elderly), ▪ Feels the proposals will create dangerous parking & turning conditions, as parking will only be available on the south side of the carriageway, ▪ Also feels that construction traffic has not been adequately planned for, resulting in an increase in safety risk during the construction period.
<p>Email response, (Garsington)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents & visitors.
<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents with no measures to counter this loss, ▪ Feels alternative provision should be made before the proposed restrictions are considered.
<p>Online response, (unknown location)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents.
<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents.

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<p>Resident, (Nelson Street)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible increase of vehicle speeds on Elms Road & surrounding streets ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents, ▪ Solution proposed in isolation, rather than taking into account surrounding area/issues, ▪ Lack of measures to combat potential increase in traffic volume in Elms Road & surrounding area resulting from development.
<p>Online response, (unknown location, <i>possibly Nelson Street</i>)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible increase of vehicle speeds on Elms Road & surrounding streets ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents, ▪ Solution proposed in isolation, rather than taking into account surrounding area/issues, ▪ Lack of measures to combat potential increase in traffic volume in Elms Road & surrounding area resulting from development.
<p>Resident, (Broadwaters Avenue)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents, putting pressure on surrounding streets.
<p>Resident, (Windmill Road)</p>	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feels the restrictions to be excessive and will only put further pressure on surrounding streets, ▪ Believes restrictions are only needed in and around the junction for the new development.
<p>Resident, (Windmill Road)</p>	<p>No objection – but has the following comments:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Concerned about where those that currently park in Elms Road will park if the restrictions are implemented,▪ Feels that Windmill Road will be parked on both sides which would restrict the road for emergency & large delivery vehicles,▪ Would like to see additional restrictions on Windmill Road to help prevent this from occurring.
Resident, (Nelson Street)	<p>Objects – due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Loss of parking spaces for local residents, putting pressure on surrounding streets,▪ Would like to see the introduction of “residents only” parking in Elms Road & the surrounding residential streets,▪ Believes the restrictions are only necessary for the duration of the development construction phase to accommodate larger vehicles, could then be removed once works have been completed.