

Divisions affected: *Henley-on-Thames*

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 1 JULY 2021

HENLEY – A4155 READING ROAD PROPOSED CAR CLUB PARKING PLACE

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed car club parking place on the A4155 Reading Road as advertised.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a car club parking place on the A4155 Reading Road in a part of the road with currently no parking controls.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by Henley-on-Thames Town Council, who will also fund implementation, if approved, as part of the introduction of a pilot car club scheme in the town.

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 support the pilot car club scheme in the town being operated by Henley-on-Thames Town Council.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 21 May and 18 June 2021. A notice was published in the Henley Standard newspaper and an email sent to statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, South Oxfordshire District Council, Henley Town Council, and local County Councillor. Additionally, letters were sent to approximately 110 properties in the immediate vicinity of the proposals and public notices also placed on site in the area.

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7. Nine responses were received during the formal consultation. 7 objections, one in support and one non-objection. The responses are shown at Annex 2 with copies of the original responses available for inspection by County Councillors.
8. Thames Valley Police did not object but expressed some concerns over the enforcement of the bay. While noting the latter concerns, the planned introduction of civil parking enforcement in the district later this year will increase the capacity for enforcement.
9. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery & Environment supported the proposal given the scope for car clubs to reduce private ownership of cars but queried the type of vehicles being operated by the club. In response to that the type of cars being operated by the car club are understood to be 'standard' hybrids not requiring an electric charging point. This is, however, a pilot project being financed by Henley Town Council and, if successful, the choice of vehicles will be reviewed by the latter and should an electric charging point be required in the future, the County Council will be happy to facilitate its provision.
10. Seven objections were received from local residents primarily on the grounds of the loss of parking for residents and their visitors in an area with parking pressures and requested that the car club space is sited on one of the adjacent private roads. It is understood that this option is being explored by the town council but, at present, the proposed site is required for the trial and also noting that should the pilot be successful the longer-term effect will be a reduction in parking pressure in the area.
11. One respondent queried the safety and potential for restricting traffic and also the likely use of the car club and also suggested consideration of alternative sites. Given that the space is currently used for parking without any current concerns and is judged to well serve the potential customers of the car club, officers consider the proposed site safe and appropriate.
12. One respondent was also concerned that the users of the club would cause disturbance, especially at night etc. However, in practice experience of the operation of other car club places elsewhere in the county has not found this to be a problem while also noting that their users will typically be residents living close to the car club space.

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Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes

Annex 1: Consultation Plan

Annex 2: Consultation responses

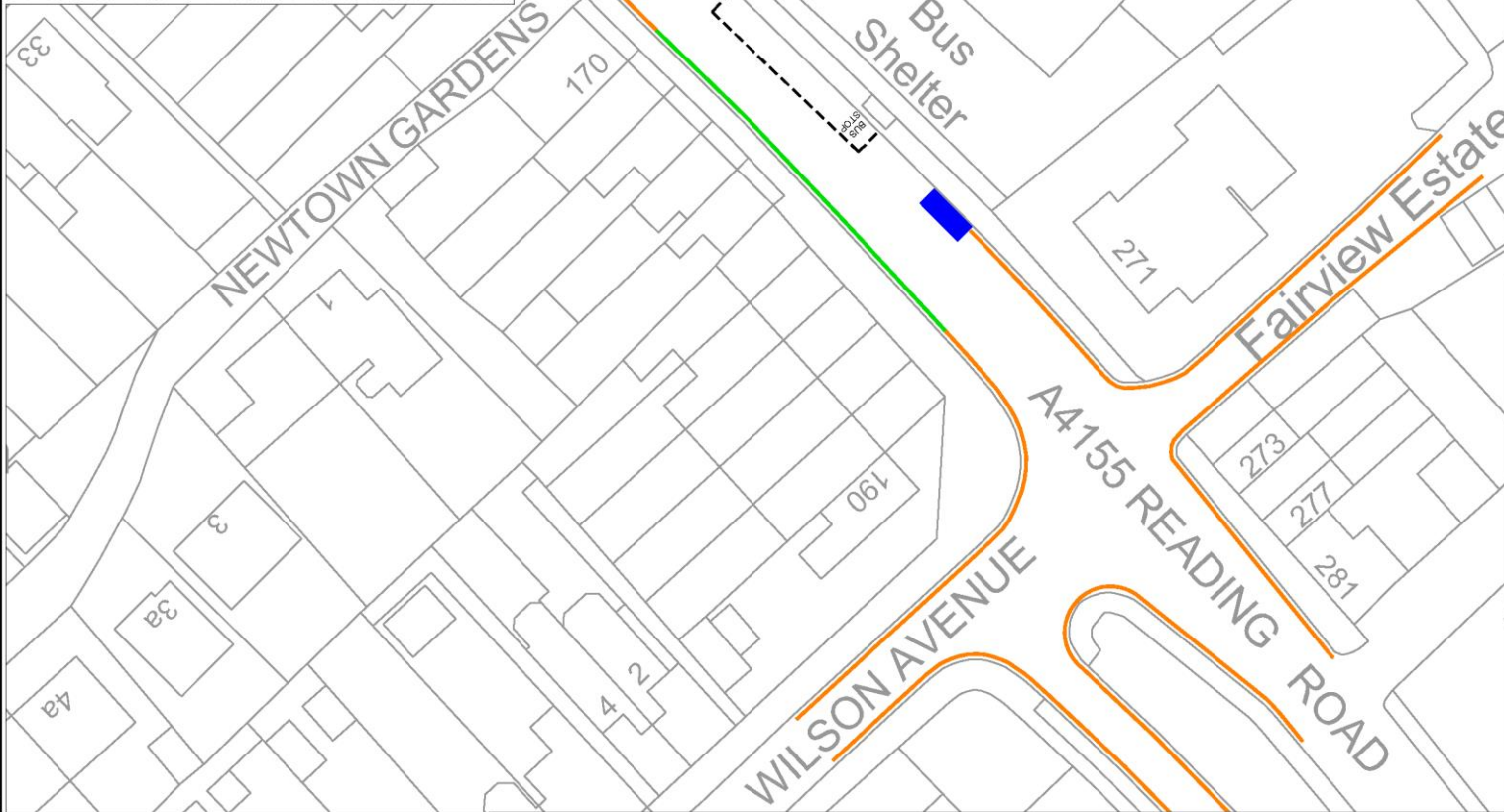
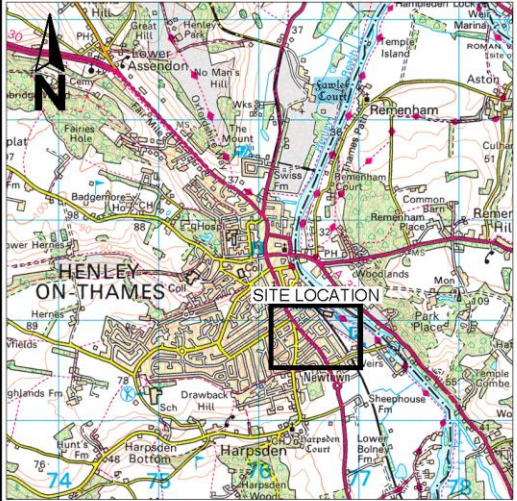
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July 2021

C:\Users\jane.clark\OneDrive - Oxfordshire County Council\IT\RO useful info\CAD plans\A4155 Reading Road Car Club bay.dwg



Drawing No. Revision 0

- Key**
- Proposed Car Club Bay location
 - Existing 'No Waiting at any time' to remain
 - Existing 'No Waiting Mon - Sat 8am to 6pm' to remain

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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Project title
A4155 READING ROAD, HENLEY ON THAMES
CAR CLUB BAY

Drawing title
CONSULTATION PLAN

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	JaC	JaC	
	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved
	04/21		

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. Revision 0

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No Objection – Concerns over enforcement of the bay.
(2) Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery & Environment	<p>Support - Car clubs are good. They reduce ownership of private cars.</p> <p>Re the "hybrid" vehicle used. Is this a conventional (wrongly dubbed "self-charging") hybrid, which is not a lot more environmentally friendly than a standard ICE, or a Partial hybrid (i.e. with a battery capable of powering the vehicle for 20+ miles)?</p> <p>I would have thought the latter should be a minimum requirement in a climate emergency, which would mean the parking space would need to be fitted with a charging point.</p>
(3) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)	Object - I live opposite the proposed parking bay and do not like the idea of people stopping/ parking their car there who are not local, nor the idea that people will be able to come and go from there 24 Hours a day. These are also spaces that local residents currently use to park their cars
(4) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)	<p>Object - Our reasons for objection are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Road is a relatively narrow and busy main road through Henley and having a car parked on the road only narrows this route further and makes it more dangerous. When in use, the existing parking spaces require buses to pull out around them and into the oncoming lane. This will only happen more often if there is a club car there 24 hours a day. A lot of lorries use the road for Tesco and Gibbs and Dandy and will face the same issue. - It seems the rationale for picking a busy road for the trial is to increase visibility of the scheme. If so then picking a spot further down Reading Road where the road is wider and not in front of a bus stop would be better. - A better choice still would be to use one of the pay and display spaces on Hart Street as this is extremely visible in

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	<p>the centre of town and convenient for residents. The current proposal requires removing an existing parking spot for residents all year round who have limited choice if they wish to park near their home. Repurposing a pay and display spot on Hart Street only inconveniences those looking for somewhere to park for a few hours and who have more flexibility in where they can choose to park.</p> <p>- I hope the council has not agreed to underwrite the financial risk of the Car Club as I don't think it will be that well used. The main advantage of car clubs is usually seen in big cities with good public transport connections where car ownership is naturally less advantageous but people might still have one for odd journeys. Given Henley is more remote and with poorer connection most journeys require a car and so car ownership still makes sense.</p> <p>- Are the council expecting to profit from the scheme or have a financial interest in it going ahead? I'm not sure how it will meet the stated aim of reducing emissions in its current form. Even if car ownership reduced the number of journeys will remain the same as people will simply make them with the car club instead of their own vehicle. Alternatively the lower entry costs to car travel might tempt people to use the scheme who were previously reliant on trains/buses and so the number of car journeys may well increase.</p> <p>I hope the above objections will be taken into consideration and the questions regarding whether the council will be underwriting this project or have a financial interest in the project will be answered.</p>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)</p>	<p>Object - Residential parking is at a premium throughout Henley, in most areas this is limited to permit parking only but in this area of Reading Road and the surrounding roads e.g Boston Road there is free parking for all. This causes an increased congestion of parking in this area; people parking to go into Henley, visit local services (e.g. solicitors, chip shop etc) and those living in the residential houses. This forces some people who live in this area to park on yellow lines, who then receive parking tickets. In addition, a lot of houses in this area have young families and moving items from their car e.g. prams/food shopping is already a laborious task. Until the issue of parking for local residents is resolved, it would not be feasible for a car club to be initiated. Although the car club is to help reduce car ownership, at this time this will further exacerbate the problem and a resolution needs to be made for the current parking issue - which would not be alleviated with a car club. E.g. tourism parking and local services parking.</p> <p>Reading Road is a very heavy traffic road with lots of HGV and heavy duty vehicles using this road. The use of this road by those vehicles causes a high amount of damage to vehicles parked on Reading Road. I believe having further parking which is permanently in situ, causing further narrowing to the road would increase the accidents on the road. Both a danger to pedestrians and to vehicles parked and on the road. The cessation of HGVs through Henley would reduce this risk and the volume of traffic.</p>

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	<p>The proposal does not fully outline important aspects for consideration by local residents and businesses; How many cars will be parked in this area? How much will this narrow the road? How many current residential spaces will this make no longer usable? Please provide a map to show the exact location that is being proposed.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)</p>	<p>Object - This is a good idea in London where residents do not own cars. Everyone who I have spoken to would not give up their car to use this one. We have a good bus service in Henley if we do not want to use our cars. It takes away another car parking space. I do not see the need for this in Henley, just more cars with gas emissions. Your letter states that this is a first for the town but the Henley Herald says that there is already two cars parked behind the Town Hall! Were we consulted on these?</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)</p>	<p>Object - I don't see how this will help residents. We have a single car household and parking is difficult. Dedicating a space to an addition car will only add to the issue as I don't see people giving up their second car to use this scheme. You're better incentivising single car ownership otherwise the problem won't be resolved with taking up a space already at a premium.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)</p>	<p>Object - I live on Reading Road approx. 100 yards or so from the space in question. I understand the logic of looking for spaces in such a busy, visible location, accessible to local housing but for the same reasons, I need to raise an objection.</p> <p>Myself and my neighbours on the same side of the road as the space as well as the terrace on the opposite side of the road (opposite Gibbs and Dandy) have no private or resident permit parking and these 3 (if people park properly!) spaces are very valuable to us as residents.</p> <p>Our only options are these spaces and those along the road which runs parallel to Reading Road at the bottom of Wilson Avenue. This road is used by residents of that road as well as ourselves and multiple households further along Reading Road towards Mill Lane who don't have parking either. It is already busy and people often have to park on the yellow lines which, whilst doesn't cause an issue, is clearly not ideal.</p> <p>I notice that there are multiple spaces on the road which Gibbs and Dandy and Invesco are on which are only just off the main road. Could one of those be used perhaps? Or along Mill Lane outside the Sawmill where there are several unrestricted spaces?</p>

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<p>(9) Local Resident, (Henley-on-Thames)</p>	<p>Object - I live at on Reading Road just a few metres away from the proposed site and I'm emailing with my very strong objections.</p> <p>Our row of properties have double yellow lines outside. I have lived here for nearly 20 years and as the years have gone on, it has become increasingly more difficult to find somewhere to park.</p> <p>The three spaces where you are proposing to site this Car Club are vital to everyone who lives in the immediate area. The Victorian terrace houses opposite the site also have double yellow lines.</p> <p>There are many days when it is so difficult to find a space that we have no option but park on double yellow lines!!! Please do not take away vital parking spaces from our neighbourhood to accommodate this Proposed Car Club.</p> <p>There has got to be a much better site elsewhere. Make a deal with Tesco or Gibbs and Dandy. You could use the parking on the road down to Perpetual.</p>
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