

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 NOVEMBER 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	PROHIBITION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO GARAGE AREAS - SOMERSTOWN COURT AND WOOD GREEN CLOSE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To seek approval to carry out statutory consultation and implementation, subject to no objections being received, for a prohibition of motor vehicles except for residents access, to be enforced using physical barriers to the garage areas in Wood Green Court and Somerstown Court.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 - Location plans

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Members of the Sub-Committee approve a statutory consultation.
- 2.2 That in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee, the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultations and advertise the proposals as detailed in Appendix 1 in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 2.3 That subject to no objections received, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.
- 2.4 That any objections received, following the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The proposals are in line with current transport and planning policy.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The garage areas of Somerstown Court and Wood Green Close have regularly been reported by residents as being used for prostitution. This has been a problem for many years. In 2004/5 some bollards were installed in two of the three garage areas which later had to be removed as the land is classified as Public Highway. Residents regularly report prostitutes bringing their clients in cars and leaving associated litter behind.

4.2 Residents in both areas have asked for bollards or some form of physical barrier preventing access to non-residents in vehicles. Reports to the police are increasing in Somerstown Court backed by the Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association and residents are becoming increasingly despondent with a perception of lack of action. Additional work by the anti-social behaviour team is ongoing to help reduce the problem working with the sex workers and kerb crawlers and the police team regularly visit when on shift.

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1 This report seeks the approval of the Sub-Committee to carry out the Statutory Consultation on a proposal to introduce a prohibition of motor vehicles except for access restriction in the garage areas of Somerstown Court and Wood Green Close. The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

5.2 Individual consultation with residents will also be undertaken via the Stronger and Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

5.3 Subject to no objections to the proposals, a physical barrier will be installed that is appropriate to each of the areas alongside the regulatory prohibition signs.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

6.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 That residents with access to the garage areas be informed of the request for a Traffic Regulation Order and are advised of the timescales of the project.

7.2 Any Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Any proposals for movement restrictions are advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as required.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9.2 The Council has carried out an equality impact assessment scoping exercise, and considers that the proposals do not have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The consultation and works will be funded from the Safer Reading capital budget from Safer Communities.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None