

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JANUARY 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	OBJECTION TO ADVERTISED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER - BOSTON AVENUE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	MINSTER
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To note the responses received to the advertised Resident Permit Traffic Regulation Order in Boston Avenue.
- 1.2 Members must agree on whether to implement the proposed scheme within Boston Avenue as advertised, or not to proceed with implementation.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 - Responses received in relation to the advertised Traffic regulation order.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That objections and support for the scheme, noted in Appendix 1, are considered by members and a recommendation is made to either implement or reject the proposals.
- 2.3 Should a decision be made to implement the proposals, that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the Boston Avenue Traffic Regulation Order, and no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

2.4 That the objectors be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The provision of waiting (parking) restrictions and associated criteria is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Parking within Boston Avenue has been a long standing issue due to its proximity to the town centre. Previous proposals to introduce a part-time waiting restriction and a one-way plug were rejected by local residents.

4.2 Both residents and Ward Councillors have continued to express their support for a resident permit parking scheme in Boston Avenue as they feel commuter parking has increased in recent years.

4.3 A statutory consultation on a proposal to introduce a shared use resident permit parking scheme was carried out on 23rd November for the duration of 3 weeks.

4.4 Of the 22 residents that responded to the statutory consultation, 14 (64%) objected to the proposed permit scheme.

4.5 The comments received are tabled in Appendix 1 for councillor's consideration.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:

- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Changes to waiting restrictions will require advertisement of the sealed Traffic Regulation Order, prior to implementation.

6.2 Objectors will be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee, once the meeting minutes have been agreed.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The sealed Traffic Regulation Orders will require advertisement, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 7.2 Necessary changes to Highway signing and lining will need to be implemented in accordance with the Traffic Signs, Regulations and General Directions 2016.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 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.

- 8.2 An Equality Impact scoping exercise has been conducted. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory and a statutory consultation has been conducted, providing the opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the scheme.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The works will be funded from the transport capital programme.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Resident Permit Parking - New and Outstanding Requests (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, September 2017).

BOSTON AVENUE PARKING CONSULTATION - OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

ITEM 10 APPENDIX 1 - Summary of letters of support and objections received to Traffic Regulation Order (in the order received)

No.	Objections/support/comments received.	Officer Response
1	<p>Support</p> <p>We support the proposed Resident Parking in Boston Avenue</p>	<p>A total of 22 responses received, of which 7 in favour, 14 against and 1 comment to the proposed scheme.</p> <p>The view of objectors are that parking is generally not a problem within Boston Avenue and a resident permit parking scheme will bring unwelcome additional cost to family living in the street. A permit scheme in Boston Avenue will also result in displacement parking in surrounding areas.</p>
2	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am against any parking restrictions in Boston Avenue, it's not needed and would not deal with the worst cross drive parking incidents - usually caused by other residents being ignorant.</p> <p>It is also my opinion that any initial small charge is open to being increased in future years with no regard to costs of running schemes, they're just cash cows.</p> <p>I'm curious as to whether this is actually being proposed - the notes pushed through the letter box have no name and are unsigned.</p>	
3	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing to let you know I think this is a <u>gross waste of time and money and should be abandoned immediately</u>.</p> <p>I have lived in this street for over three years (previously living elsewhere in Minster ward for over twenty five years before that). I have never had the slightest problem finding a parking space when necessary, though obviously not always right outside my own house.</p> <p>I believe parking schemes are not meant to be money raising projects for the Council. Either this is the case, and this is a pointless job creation scheme in a Council that likes its own importance, or it is an underhand way to milk more out of the residents. Either way, it is a misuse of power (and my money).</p> <p>I also think that having parking freedom is one of the small joys of living in Boston Avenue compared to where I was before, where there was a permit scheme. It is so much less hassle to just fetch up and look for a space and know your visitors can do</p>	

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	<p>likewise, compared with fiddling about with permits.</p> <p>Life is complicated enough. I wish you would look at ways to do less rather than looking for more ways to inconvenience residents. I'm sure there are plenty of more important things you should be doing.</p>	
4	<p>Objection</p> <p>I understand that there are formal proposals to make Boston Avenue a permit holder parking area. I have lived in the road for 19 years and want to formally object to these proposals.</p> <p>We are usually able to park outside or near our home and think it is unfair to have to pay To park outside our own home. Also it will restrict family and friends being able to drop in regularly or our elderly parents coming to visit or stay for a few days. An extra bill of around 150 pounds as a minimum per year is not in our budget.</p> <p>We also view that we are in a residential area of Coley Park, not a central Reading location. Therefore to put parking restrictions in Coley Park on Boston Avenue will only move the parking problems to the adjacent Roads, namely Shaw Road and Holybrook Road and Wensley Road. As these Roads are access roads in and out of Coley Park and are very busy, I foresee other problems with access to Coley Park. Also as a new housing development on the old defra site is almost completed, the volume of traffic using these roads particularly to exit Coley Park, will increase. I have witnessed an accident and many near misses at the Junction of Shaw Rd onto Wensley Road, so fear that if parking is restricted in Boston Avenue it is likely to make the surrounding roads contested which could cause accidents or traffic congestion.</p> <p>Please would you consider the concerns mentioned and look at the statistics of accidents due to poor visibility and the health and safety issues that surround the proposal to restrict parking in Boston Avenue.</p>	
5	<p>Support</p> <p>We are in full agreement with your proposal to introduce a resident permit scheme.</p>	
6	<p>Objection</p> <p>I would like to object to this proposition.</p> <p>The additional costs for residents, especially for friends visiting, tradesmen requiring permits (2 per day if parking the full day) are reasons enough to object.</p>	

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	<p>The fact that parking is free at the moment, i personally do not feel any impacts of having the current situation of free parking, therefore i do not feel the need to change.</p> <p>Please consider my objection to this proposal.</p>	
7	<p>Support</p> <p>We agree to the permit parking proposal as stated in the yellow notice on the lamppost.</p>	
8	<p>Support</p> <p>I want to register my support for the proposed parking restrictions in Boston Avenue (CMS / 8113). I am a resident.</p> <p>Regrettably, it does appear that it is becoming more difficult to park - and that this is likely to continue getting worse. Therefore, I support the introduction of resident permits.</p>	
9	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing to object to the proposal to introduce parking permits on Boston Avenue Ref: CMS/8113.</p> <p>My main objection is that it is entirely unnecessary as there is enough parking in the street for residents and their visitors.</p> <p>I am able to park outside my own house probably about 95% of the time and it is rare that I need to park more than a couple of houses away. I have lived in Boston Avenue for 31 years and I can only recall one occasion when I could not park in the road and that was when there was an event in Coley Park Recreation ground. I therefore parked on my drive. All bar one house in the street has a drive. My drive, like many others is short and narrow which is why it is more convenient to park on the road but virtually everyone has access to off street parking.</p> <p>I do not see why I should pay for the privilege of doing something that has been free up to now.</p> <p>I walk up and down the street more often now that I am retired and there are usually free spaces to park outside many houses, on Wednesday 29th November fro example I stopped counting when I got to 15 empty slots. Boston Avenue is a public highway so if people wish to park here they have every right to do so even if they cause a minor irritation to those who think they have a right to park immediately outside their own house.</p>	

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	<p>I note from the minutes of the Traffic Management Sub-committee of 13th September, section 5, that the proposal for parking permits resulted from a meeting between ward councillors and residents of Boston Avenue.</p> <p>This was a self-appointed group of residents, not a democratically elected group, and they cannot be assumed to reflect the range of opinions in Boston Avenue.</p>	
10	<p>Support</p> <p>I am writing <u>in support</u> of the new proposals for the residents parking in Boston Avenue</p> <p>The situation has got gradually worse over the years, the street is being used as a local car park, a dumping ground for abandoned cars - I have reported three dumped cars in the last week.</p> <p>People use the street to park their cars to go into town or go to work and get the bus into town with their suitcases and then on the shuttle to the airport on their holidays! There is even a gentleman that comes from north London every day because he works in Reading</p> <p>The street is even being used for football parking</p> <p>Several taxis use it to park their taxis whilst not in use, then pick them up for work and park their own cars in the street.</p> <p>All in all it's a nightmare, the road is riddled with pot holes, and is being used as a rat run with the queues of traffic in Berkeley Avenue and cars regularly speed up the road its very frightening as there is a blind corner on part of the street- someone is going to get seriously hurt or even killed</p> <p>People are regularly parking over driveways with large commercial vehicles together with multi occupancy houses in the road - not great</p>	
11	<p>Support</p> <p>We would like to express our support of the residents parking permits proposal.</p> <p>We often see many non-residents parking outside our house both for walking into town or using the park near us. We have also had on occasion non-resident parking in front of our drive, blocking access.</p> <p>We would obviously prefer if the permits were as low a cost as possible, but agree £30 a</p>	

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	<p>permit is a reasonable cost.</p> <p>It would be good if every house was provided with a book of permits for visitors or tradesmen free of charge per annum.</p>	
12	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong objection to proposed plans to turn Boston Avenue from free on street parking to restricted and permit holders parking.</p> <p>In theory adding parking restrictions to a road should help ease congestion for residents who live on the effected streets, however it does not guarantee residents a parking space on their street let alone in front of their houses.</p> <p>Whilst the number of cars does increase during normal working hours this rarely prevents residents from finding a parking space on the street. As those commuters leave in the evening spaces are often then occupied by returning residents from their commute with plenty of other street parking available.</p> <p>Please see attached pictures of our street which show average street parking availability during different periods of the week and time of day:</p> <p>Although residents have driveways, not all are big enough to fit cars without encroaching onto the pavement especially older houses occupied by elderly residents who have lived in the street for a longer period of time this then penalises them as they go from free parking to having then pay £30 for a permit to park in their own street. For some this also may encourage more people to turn their front gardens into full parking driveways thus detracting from the aesthetic look of the street bringing down the property value and could lead to more requests for dropped curbs which will reduce the total number parking spaces available.</p> <p>In line with other proposals to certain surrounding areas (introducing one way streets) which have free parking have you considered how this may affect those streets in terms of congestion with people choosing to park in those streets, especially considering they have bus routes running on those roads?</p> <p>Another concern is the financial implications which will effect residents. With the high cost of housing, many families have adult children living at home meaning there are multiple cars owners, 2 household permits will equal £150 and further permit will cost an additional £240 which is not guaranteed to be granted thus equalling £390. As shown with recent changes with parking permits there is nothing to stop the council from increasing the cost of permits.</p>	

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	<p>Although residents are given visiting permit books, If residents have a visitors stay for a week i.e. during school holidays they will need 2 each day permits each day, if we have evening tradesman with vans that can't fit on drives they will also need 2 a day this results in books being used up very quickly thus adding further cost to residents for more visiting books.</p> <p>I would like propose that the money available to implement this parking restriction be used repair the road surface as numerous pot holes present more of a danger to both residents and drivers.</p>	
13	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing as a resident of Boston Avenue (where I have lived for 19 years), regarding the proposed Permit & Meter parking scheme for Boston Avenue.</p> <p>I do not want this scheme for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I will have to pay for what is free at the moment, especially if and when we do have 2 cars in our household. 2) There is the danger of visitors picking up unwelcome parking fines, even with permits. 3) The cars that currently park in Boston Avenue, for access to Reading town centre, will simply be forced to park elsewhere, so there is no gain for local residents. And even with such parking in Boston Avenue, with off road parking & on street parking, a space can usually be found to park in the road. <p>In other words the losses outweigh any potential benefits, so I am definitely in favour of leaving the Boston Avenue parking unchanged.</p>	
14	<p>Comments</p> <p>I am a resident in Boston Avenue and am not totally against parking permits, but have three observations to make:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Half-day permits simply make this scheme look like a cash cow for councils. Tradespeople are notoriously inaccurate in arrival and departure times and what if a guest arrives or leaves an hour early or late? 2. Not many residents can accommodate two vehicles off the road. What guarantee do we have that the second car isn't going to be penalised more and more heavily in the coming years? 3. All councils will have transport policies, but it would be nice to think that someone 	

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	<p>somewhere saw it as a priority for residents to actually be able to get to work. I do shift work in Slough that rules out public transport and for years have now been unable to predict how long my drive will take due to the same roads repeatedly being ripped up and / or coned off.</p>	
15	<p>Objection</p> <p>This is just going to put pressure on neighbouring roads.</p> <p>A lot of properties in Boston Avenue have 2 to five cars. Visitors i.e.nurses, carers, family members. Therefore will be parking in neighbouring roads.</p> <p>This is too expensive for some families, so they will be also parking in neighbouring roads.</p> <p>There is more cars parking in the road due to the reopening of Shaw Road Flats.</p> <p>Extra double yellow lines in the area. Taxi firm running from Shaw Road, parked taxi's, Mini Buses. Car Wash in Berkeley Ave Park spare cars here.</p>	
16	<p>Objection</p> <p>We have lived in Boston Avenue for 27 years and have never had a problem parking.</p> <p>The parking issues in Boston Avenue are confined to the 10 or so houses on either side towards the St Saviours Road end . These houses have high levels of car ownership average 3 cars per household including and plus works vans and do not use their drives or garages. There are a number of houses towards the St Saviour Road end who do not use their drives . They just want to park outside their houses on the street. Residents parking will not guarantee that. I took photographs on three days last week as I was at home and the road was clear from the Shaw Road end to about number 30 at 10 .30 am. There were cars at the St Saviours end but that is to be expected due to the high volume of car ownership at that end, and its proximity to town.</p> <p>I understand that members had a site visit with residents. That was not publicised and appears to have been confined to those residents who live towards the town end, and excluded anyone who was against the introduction. We were not told about it at our end of the road. We live roughly in the middle of Boston Avenue, Any decision based on that visit or the representations of the person who has made representations to members should be given little weight as it does not represent the view of the majority in Boston Avenue.</p> <p>If residents parking is introduced (although I sincerely hope it is not) I would prefer the</p>	

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	<p>Ealing model of restricting between 9 am and 10 am and 3pm and 4pm and free at other times. The 8am to 8pm , 7 day model favoured by Reading Borough Council makes life very difficult for visitors and is excessive . I dread the whole scenario of traffic wardens parading up and down Boston Avenue slapping tickets on cars and for ever having to renew permits that will go up in price year on year.</p> <p>Councils including Reading spend their time trying to find ways of charging people for whom they do not have to provide statutory services, so they can fund services for people for whom they owe a duty to provide statutory services. Permit charges are part of that process of trying to generate income. As a council tax payer I am aware that Reading is the highest Council Tax in Berkshire and the Council always raise it by the maximum allowed under the scheme including the 3 % adult social care levy, every year. I accept that, as I am aware of the demographic challenges in a town that is really a City in all but name, and who are starved of resources, by a Central Government funding formula , in part because of their political complexion being different to the Government. The Council will say the cost is signage and policing it. My submission is I do not want signage, yellow lines and traffic wardens in Boston Avenue. It is a disproportionate response to introduce residents parking and I would implore the elected members of the Committee to show Nolan style Community Leadership, and not introduce residents parking. If they have spare cash to spend on signage and introducing resident parking schemes, I would prefer they use it to restore weekly bin collection, fill the pot holes, the roads in Reading are worse than the roads in Botswana or abolish library reservation charges, or charges for going to the tip, which has led to an increase in fly tipping.</p> <p>I am aware the Council has to balance competing interests and I am largely a supporter of the Council. However, the introduction of resident parking will severely challenge that support. A residents parking scheme in Boston Avenue is disproportionate and unnecessary. If Councillor or the Members who will decide this would like to walk along Boston Avenue this morning at 10. 10 am they will see that the road is clear and no resident parking scheme is required.</p>	
17	<p>Objection</p> <p>As a University Student I have friends and family that visit me for a day or so quite frequently. I house share with 3 other students and none of us drive. The space we have outside our house is only used for our guests that come to visit us which is why we'd be very unhappy and find it unnecessary for permits to be put in place on this road.</p>	
18	<p>Objection</p> <p>We have recently been informed that the council propose issuing parking permits to the</p>	

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	<p>residents of Boston Ave. ~This is totally unnecessary and will only cause confusion and more problems elsewhere in the area as people will park in other nearby roads. It will create problems when family, friends or workmen come to visit and there is no guarantee that we will be able to park outside our house even with the permits. There are some elderly people in the avenue and permit restrictions will create problems for them when carers and family and friends come to visit them. For those people who cannot get about easily visitors are very welcome and it may mean the difference between seeing someone or spending the day alone.</p> <p>The current situation works well - people who live here go to work in the morning in their car, some people park here whilst in town then they go before the residents get home from work.</p> <p>Why not provide a layby or passing places along Holybrook and St Saviours? There is plenty of room.</p>	
19	<p>Objection</p> <p>I wish to formally object to the proposal of residents parking being introduced in Boston avenue, I still live with parents so would be a absolute nightmare for friends and myself for parking.</p> <p>We never have issues with parking only a few houses at the bottom of the road play road bin wars!! But our end is absolutely fine.</p>	
20	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing in regards to the proposed restricted parking on Boston Avenue. I believe this is unfair, as a resident to pay for a parking permit in order to park my car on my road. I pay road tax in order to use the car on a public road, the thought of having to pay more to park my car on top of this is daunting. The residents should be given free permits and those who park their cars here in order to pay car parking fees in and around the town should have to pay. I believe this is very unfair.</p>	
21	<p>Objection</p> <p>I am writing to express my objection to the proposed plans to turn Boston avenue from free on street parking to permit parking.</p> <p>I fell that having permits in our street is not needed. There are only sometimes that our street is busy but generally parking is fine.</p> <p>I don't feel like having a permit will stop people from parking on our street.</p>	

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	<p>All it would do is stop people leaving there cars there for a weekend. Some residents might have Family who stay for the weekend and they would leave there car outside someone House. That is just bound to happen. Having permits is just more expenses that honestly not everyone can afford. We have lived in the street for 21 years, and we happy with the parking situation. We have family who live in Wolsey street with parking permit and the street is packed and my family struggle to get a place outside their own house. So I do object to this proposal.</p>	
22	<p>Support</p> <p>This e-mail is in support of the proposal to introduce residents parking. Over time, parking on the avenue has increased due to it being used by non-residents (for commuting/visiting the town/parking overnight from other roads etc) and by multi-car ownership of individual occupancies. This increased parking often narrows the whole length of the avenue, making it more difficult to navigate and increasing the risk of accidents or damage to residents vehicles.</p>	