

Meeting: Portfolio Holder Decision

Portfolio Area: Economy, Enterprise & Transport

Date: TBC

Consideration of consultation responses (Formally proposed parking controls in The Grange, Stevenage)

Author – Liviu Azoicai (Parking Management Officer)

Contact Officers – Liviu Azoicai (extension 2955), Phil Howard (extension 2296)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To detail responses received to a statutory public consultation on proposed parking controls in The Grange for consideration by the Portfolio Holder.
- 1.2. To enable the Portfolio Holder in consultation with Ward Councillors to decide if and how the Council will now proceed with these proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Proposed parking controls are implemented as proposed.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Under an Agency Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council (the Traffic Authority for the area) Stevenage Borough Council is empowered to make Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for the control and restriction of parking, and enforce those restrictions through Civil Parking Enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

- 3.2. Following a number of reports regarding obstructive parking in The Grange investigation of restrictions to address this was included in our work plan for 2020-2021. A number of site visits were carried out and all previous reports and complaints about parking issues in this area were considered before we drafted this Traffic Regulation Order.
- 3.3. After consultation with the Police and Hertfordshire County Council (the local Highway Authority), neither of which raised any concerns, authorisation was given by Tom Pike, Strategic Director (Environment) for the advertising of The Borough of Stevenage (The Grange, Stevenage) (Restriction of Waiting) Order 2020 for public consultation in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 3.4. The effect of The Borough of Stevenage (The Grange, Stevenage) (Restriction of Waiting) Order 2020 would be to prohibit parking at any time for the entire length of The Grange.
- 3.5. These formal proposals for statutory public consultation were advertised through a Notice of Proposals that was published in the Stevenage edition of The Comet on 29 October 2020. Copies of this notice were also erected on local street furniture, and notification letters were sent to addresses in the immediate vicinity of the proposals and to statutory consultees. The consultation continued until 20 November 2020.
- 3.6. Deposited documents including the Notice of Proposals and a Statement of Reasons for proposing to make this Order, together with copies of the draft Order and map showing the location and effects of the Order, were made available for the public to inspect at the Council's offices in Daneshill House and via its website.
- 3.7. The consultations having been completed, it is now necessary for a decision to be made on if and how the Council should proceed with the introduction of parking restrictions that have been proposed.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Consultation responses

- 4.1. A total of 26 responses were received throughout the public consultations on the proposed parking restrictions. Copies of those responses are included in Appendix 1, but contain personal data so cannot be publicly released.
- 4.2. Two responses were objections and three responses stated support for a reduced length of double yellow lines whilst 21 expressed their support for these proposals. All responses are summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange		
Item number	Response	Comments on response
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. I can confirm the support for the proposed restrictions. ii. Following a fire service routine site visit at Thomas Alleyne Academy, due to parked vehicle in The Grange the fire engine had to carry out several manoeuvres and to drive over the kerb to be able to enter the school grounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The support is noted. ii. The main reason for the proposed 'no waiting at any time' restrictions is to ensure that the road remains passable at all times to facilitate unhindered access to emergency vehicles.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The support is noted.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange. ii. Many people park here inconsiderately and if a fire engine or ambulance needed to get through, sometimes they just plain wouldn't be able to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The support is noted. ii. See comments on response 1 ii. above

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.ii. The main issue with this side road is that it is very narrow for 2 cars passing and this problem is made a lot worse for the HGVs requiring access. Obviously if an emergency vehicle required access they would have the same problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The support is noted.ii. See comments on response 1 ii. above
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The support is noted.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The support is noted.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The support is noted.

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>entire length of The Grange.</p> <p>ii. Each day is a disaster waiting to happen. If the school or Grange had a fire, the Fire Engine, Police, Ambulances would have great difficulty getting through. Refuge lorries & large supply vehicles for the school also have problems.</p>	<p>ii. See comments on response 1 ii. above</p>
8	<p>i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.</p>	<p>i. The support is noted.</p>
9	<p>i. I do not believe the lines will help, it will simple push the school traffic issue onto the High Street and Bowling Green.</p> <p>ii. Double yellow lines on the corners of High Street into The Grange and the entrance to Old Swan Court would be more appropriate</p>	<p>i. There are a number of parking spaces within short walking distance from the school which can be used for school drop-off/pick-up. These parking spaces are located High Street and in December 2020 new time limited parking areas were introduced in Walkern Road near High Street junction.</p> <p>ii. Double yellow lines just at the locations suggested will not be sufficient to ensure unhindered access for emergency vehicles such as a fire engine.</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	and provide adequate access.	
10	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
11	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
12	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
13	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
14	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange. ii. We have a whole catalogue of photos of very dangerous situations which have	i. The support is noted. ii. See comments on response 1 ii. above

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>occurred due to the cars which park all along this “entrance to the school” road & we know that a fire engine has no chance of getting to us in Olde Swan Court during the hours of 8.30am-4pm.</p>	
15	<p>i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.</p>	<p>i. The support is noted.</p>
16	<p>i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.</p>	<p>i. The support is noted.</p>
17	<p>i. On balance I believe easy and safe access for emergency vehicles and residents at all times is the priority 24/7. So I support proposed double yellow lines throughout The Grange with the exception of a small section on the south side of the road as a safe compromise.</p>	<p>i. The comments are noted.</p>
18	<p>i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the</p>	<p>i. The support is noted.</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	entire length of The Grange.	
19	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
20	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
21	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines in The Grange. The whole entrance to school is a nightmare.	i. The support is noted.
22	i. I support proposed double yellow lines throughout The Grange with the exception of a small section on the south side of the road.	i. The comments are noted.
23	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange.	i. The support is noted.
24	i. I support the proposed double yellow lines for the entire length of The Grange. ii. Parking along this road has created dangerous obstructions and is a real threat to the safety of residents and pupils at the school. There have also	i. The support is noted. ii. See comments on response 1 ii. above

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>been instances when emergency services (fire) have been unable to get through, which is unacceptable.</p>	
25	<p>i. I would like to object to the changes to parking/waiting in The Grange.</p> <p>ii. This road is only busy early morning and at 3pm to do with the school. This does not warrant the road to be closed for parking / waiting all day. The local residents complain because they feel they should have a private exclusive road.</p>	<p>i. The objection is noted.</p> <p>ii. See comments on response 1.ii above</p>
26	<p>i. In summary, evidence contained within has highlighted that double yellow lines along the full extent of both sides of The Grange is not necessary to maintain safety and access. I therefore Object on these grounds. I would have no objection to double yellow lines to the North side of</p>	<p>i. The objection is noted.</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>The Grange and around the junctions/turning head. Key points summarised below:</p> <p>ii. Minimum road widths stipulated in the Building Regulations and by the Association of Chief Fire Officers has been met. Therefore fire appliances, and all emergency vehicles, have no obstructions with regards to accessing all buildings off of The Grange, even if vehicles are parked on one-side of the road. Thus, there are no accessibility issues.</p> <p>iii. No reports of accidents, incidents or collisions on The Grange have been found despite the main entrance to The School being accessed from The</p>	<p>ii. This statement is incorrect. The Manual for Streets specifies that for on-street parallel parking each vehicle will typically need an area of about two metres wide and six metres long. Hertfordshire County Council, the local Highway Authority, has issued Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide, which sets out that for on-street parking to occur the carriageway should be a minimum of 5.5 metres wide. The carriageway width in The Grange is 4.5 metres therefore if vehicles are parked on the south side of the road this would mean that the remaining carriageway space will not be sufficient to provide unhindered access to a fire engine. This is the main reason why double yellow lines were proposed for both sides of the road for the entire length of The Grange. Other consultation responses highlighted that there has already been a case when a fire engine was unable to access the school grounds because of parked vehicles in The Grange.</p> <p>iii. Although the Borough Council is not the Authority where crashes or near misses are reported, past reports received by the Council and some consultation responses from the residents suggest that parked vehicles are a safety issue in this road with photographic evidence highlighting vehicles parked on the pavement, at junctions and on south side of The Grange. These are safety issues for the traffic in this area including pedestrians.</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>Grange for around 30 years. Thus, no foreseeable or adverse safety issues exists, beyond that which is reasonably to be expected in any road with parked vehicles.</p> <p>iv. Evidence has shown on street parking leads to lower speeds. Evidence shows reduced road width leads to lower speeds. Evidence shows accidents are more likely to take place at junctions rather than on the 'link' road itself.</p> <p>v. Lower speeds on The Grange can lead to lower speeds at the junction to the High Street and on the A602 High Street itself.</p> <p>vi. There is no evidence to show that parking along The Grange is carried out in a hazardous or obstructive manner.</p>	<p>As noted in the previous point parking in this area is liable to hinder access to the school for emergency vehicles.</p> <p>iv. The proposed double yellow lines are in response to concerns regarding parking obstruction both near junctions and due to the narrow carriageway width where parked vehicles would cause access difficulties for emergency vehicles such as a fire engine. Therefore, to allow unrestricted parking in The Grange in order to encourage reduced vehicle speeds is not desirable in this case.</p> <p>v. Drivers are responsible for driving their vehicles safely and within the existing speed limits and adhering to the traffic and parking controls present in the area. Proposed restrictions will ensure that all drivers have clear view of the junction mentioned, sufficient time and distance to take the driving manoeuvres required.</p> <p>vi. This is incorrect. Photographic evidence, past reports from public and responses to this consultation show that hazardous and obstructive parking takes place in The Grange. The local Fire Brigade have indicated that they are concerned about obstructive parking in the Grange and support measures to</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>vii. The change of use of nearby properties has created additional demand for the on-road unrestricted parking provision for residents living on the High Street. Thus, where necessary, residents utilise parking provision on The Grange.</p> <p>viii. During the planning committee for the conversion of No. 11 High Street, mistakes were made with regards to the required parking provision for the development. It is imperative that this is not further exacerbated by the introduction of double yellow lines along the full extent of both sides of The Grange when the evidence contained within has</p>	<p>prevent it.</p> <p>vii. The comment is noted. An increase in demand for parking does not alter the obstructive or hazardous effect of parking in a given location.</p> <p>viii. The comment has been noted and shared with the Development Manager. See comment on response 26.vii above.</p>

Table 1: Content of responses to proposed parking controls in The Grange

Item number	Response	Comments on response
	<p>highlighted this is not necessary to maintain safety and access.</p> <p>ix. It has been discovered that there is an opportunity, by the appropriate body, to widen the road width of The Grange by around c. 1m. I believe this is public amenity land owned by the Council, and thus the opportunity to widen the road presents itself, if desired.</p>	<p>ix. The verge in The Grange which is mentioned in the objection is part of the Public Highway and changes such as this are a matter for the County Council: the Borough Council's responsibility is limited to introducing and enforcing parking restrictions. This suggestion to increase road width has been shared with the Local Highway Authority, however it is unlikely that it will be possible for them to progress it given the costs involved and prioritisation of non-car modes in the Local Transport Plan.</p>

- 4.3. The majority of responses were in favour of the proposed restrictions while three responses agreed that double yellow lines are need in The Grange but suggested some unrestricted spaces is left on the south side. Two objections were received throughout the public consultation period.
- 4.4. The first objection mentions that this road is used as a safe location for school drop-off/pick-up and is only busy at these hours therefore double yellow lines will not be required to prohibit parking at all times. However, reports to the council and observations by officers show that parking does take place here at other times. Double yellow lines do not prevent drivers from stopping to set down passengers. Though there are no designated on-street parking spaces in The Grange there are parking bays in the High Street and in Walkern Road for parking up to three hours. If the proposed double yellow lines are not implemented the main issue of facilitating unhindered access for emergency vehicles will not be addressed.
- 4.5. The second objection contains several points which are included in table 1 above as item number 26. The objector mentions that they would be in favour of double yellow lines being introduced on the north side of The Grange and around its junctions but they believe south side should remain unrestricted. However, if the south side of the road will be left unrestricted it will not ensure that unhindered access is available for a fire engine due to the narrow width of the carriageway in The Grange.
- 4.6. It is clear that most local residents who are interested in parking controls in The Grange share the Council's assessment that parking here is liable to cause an obstruction, and would prefer that parking in this street is prevented.
- 4.7. It is therefore recommended to implement the restrictions as proposed.
- 4.8. If it is decided not to proceed as recommended, the alternatives are:
- To decide not to progress the proposals, and end the entire project. This is not recommended as it would not address the problems that exist in this area.
 - To prepare and consult on proposals for additional or different restrictions. This is not recommended as the evidence suggests that the proposed restrictions should go ahead and developing a workable alternative that does not result in the carriageway being obstructed would be liable to require changes to the street scene that are outside this Council's remit. Pursuing such changes would take many months, and cost significant amounts, which would not represent the best use of the Council's resources.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1. If it is decided to proceed as recommended a capital budget is available for the implementation of the scheme.

Legal Implications

5.2. None identified.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.3. None identified.

Service Delivery Implications

5.4. The addition of new parking restrictions will place further demand on limited parking enforcement resources, increasing the likely need to expand the service.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

5.5. Deposit documents for formal public consultation

5.6. Template letter from formal public consultation

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Detailed responses to the formal consultation