

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/065/2006-07.
Date of meeting: 9 October 2006.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

**Portfolio: Planning & Economic Development.
Civil Engineering & Maintenance.
Housing.**

Subject: Broadway Town Centre Enhancement – Traffic Regulation Orders.

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To agree the following traffic management arrangements for the Broadway TCE and to prepare for submission the relevant traffic regulation orders:

(a) The Broadway becoming one-way along its length in a north easterly direction;

(b) Vere Road becoming one-way along its length in a north easterly direction; and

(c) Burton Road becoming one-way along its length in a south westerly direction;

(2) To agree the following parking management regime for The Broadway TCE and to prepare and submit the associated traffic regulation orders:

(a) on street pay and display echelon parking in the Broadway, to be restricted to 2 hours with no return within 3 hours and to operate between the hours of 09.30 and 17.30 Monday to Saturday inclusive;

(b) off street pay and display parking in the Burton Road car park, the car park to carry a designation of combined (short and long stay) to operate between the hours of 09.30 and 17.30 Monday to Saturday inclusive;

(c) off street permit parking in the smaller Burton Road and Vere Road car parks (marked C, D, E and F on the attached plan), permits to be restricted to resident (and visitors) and business users only to operate between the hours of 09.30 and 17.30 Monday to Saturday inclusive; and

(d) the service road adjacent to the Burton Road car park be for business permit users only plus loading/unloading to operate between the hours of 09.30 and 17.30 Monday to Saturday inclusive;

(3) To agree that the tariff structure for the on and off street parking regimes:

(a) residents & visitor parking permits and business permits shall be the same as are in operation in the district as a whole with the exception of a reduced price for the first business permit;

- (b) That the maximum number of permits per resident be limited to 3; and
- (c) To prepare and submit the associated traffic regulation orders; and
- (4) To agree that Environmental Services manage the Broadway car parking arrangements on behalf of Housing Services (The Housing Revenue Account) and to receive a further report on the associated financial arrangements.

Background:

1. Cabinet, in agreeing to proceed with The Broadway town centre enhancement scheme endorsed the underpinning principles of the original 1998 Design Guide (also adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance) as amended by follow up meetings of the town centre enhancement Focus Group.
2. In terms of parking and traffic management the approved scheme assumes that:
 - (a) The Broadway becomes one-way along its length in a north easterly direction;
 - (b) Vere Road becomes one-way along its length in a north easterly direction;
 - (c) Burton Road becomes one-way along its length in a south westerly direction;
 - (d) on street pay and display echelon parking in the Broadway;
 - (e) off street pay and display parking in the Burton Road car park;
 - (f) off street permit parking in the smaller Burton Road and Vere Road car parks; and
 - (g) the service road adjacent to the Burton Road car park be for business parking and loading/unloading only.
3. The car parking regime in The Broadway area is a mixed one, with the off street car parks being free and unregulated and the existing on street bays in The Broadway itself being free but regulated to 1 hour with no return with 3 hours.
4. The recommended controls were designed and approved on the basis of controlling the level of commuter parking and also ensuring a managed turn around of spaces for people wishing to use the shops in The Broadway. The Focus Group and Cabinet agreed that a pay and display regime was best suited to meeting those objectives following a detailed assessment of parking in the area.

Issues:

5. There are a number of issues for consideration in determining the most effective regime and traffic management for the enhancement area. These include:
 - (i) the Administration's key message of providing free parking on Saturdays for town centre areas;
 - (ii) how residents' and business parking is to be managed and the associated tariffs;
 - (iii) the balance between long stay and short stay parking given the proximity of the LUL station; and
 - (iv) the relationship between the Housing Revenue Account which 'owns' the Broadway area and the general fund in terms of car parking management and costs;

Residents' and business parking:

6. The Broadway is relatively unique within the district in that all the parking in the immediate area is free with the exception of the car parking associated with the London Underground station. Therefore residents of the flats above the shops, employers and employees and visitors alike are all able to park without payment. Cabinet agreed several years ago that a pay and display regime should be introduced, but not until the town centre enhancement scheme had been implemented. This decision recognised the fact that the Broadway trading was suffering, mainly due to commuter parking, and that paid parking without enhancement would add to that burden.
7. A plan of the current proposals is attached as an Appendix. Members will note that there are 7 designated parking areas as follows:
 - (i) The Broadway - Short stay pay and display, limited to 1 hour maximum;
 - (ii) Burton Road car park - Short stay pay and display;
 - (iii-vi) Car parks C, D, E and F - Residents (plus visitors) and business permits only; and
 - (vii) Burton Road service road - Business permits (plus loading/unloading).

Members are requested to note that the car parks C, D, E and F are proposed to be restricted to residents and business uses only. It is also proposed that residents should be permitted to park in the Burton Road off-street car park and that business permits for Burton Road and business parking bays should be based on the long stay tariff rate rather than the short stay tariff.

8. These proposals do result in some significant changes for local residents and traders, who, as has been stated, currently enjoy free parking. If the same standards are to be applied as exist in the other town centre areas, residents and business users will be required to purchase permits to park in their designated areas, which can include both on and off street locations. Based on existing schemes this would result in:

(a) resident permit	£25 p/a for the 1 st car, £50 p/a for the second and £100 p/a for the 3 rd (assuming that this number of permits will be issued)
(b) business permit	£46.00 (monthly), £122.50 (quarterly) or £428 (annual) season ticket for a designated business bay or in Burton Road car park
(c) visitor permit	£0.20p 2 hours, £0.50p 4 hours, £1.00 all day

However, given this significant change and the need to continue to support trading at The Broadway, it is suggested that the business permit regime be amended to provide the first business permit at a reduced rate; a figure of £104 per annum (£2 per week) is recommended for consideration. Additional business permits would be charged at the prevailing district wide rate (currently as in the table above).

9. Although the earlier Cabinet decision designates Burton Road car park as short stay, Members are requested to consider changing this to combined (i.e. long and short stay) to ensure better utilisation and also to enable this to be the car park which would become the 'free' car park on Saturdays once Cabinet has considered how this should be implemented. It may also assist part time employees for whom an annual season ticket is not cost effective.
10. In order to assist residents it is recommended that the on and off-street restrictions

commence at 09.30 rather than the normal 08.30 or 09.00. This will enable local residents to park overnight without the need to remove vehicles early in the morning to avoid payment or penalty. This will greatly assist those who use their cars to get to work by enabling them to park during unrestricted periods during the evening and early morning periods.

11. As with all new restrictions it is probable that the new regime will result in some local displacement from the town centre to local roads, in particular by commuters seeking to avoid parking charges. This situation will need to be kept under review and proposals developed in the event that displacement becomes a problem.

Relationship with the Housing Revenue Account:

12. The Broadway and associated car parks are 'owned' by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Therefore, any income generated from the new parking regime has technically to be credited to the HRA and not to the General Fund (GF). If the Council wishes to alter this situation then it will need to consider the following options:
 - (a) a transfer of the land from the HRA to the GF; and
 - (b) a management arrangement whereby the GF manages the car parking on behalf of the HRA and receives an appropriate recompense for so doing.

Option (a) will be difficult and potentially expensive for the GF. The land would need to be appropriated at the relevant value and the HRA credited with that sum. This would take some time to achieve and would require Government consideration and approval. It is also likely to require a significant capital sum being transferred from the GF to the HRA. Option (b) therefore seems to be the most expedient and effective solution but it remains the case that the GF would only be able to claim back from the HRA the reasonable costs associated with the management of the car parking areas and their enforcement. Advice will need to be sought on how the financial arrangements and this agreement should be framed.

Statement in Support of Recommended Action:

13. The report sets out the agreed arrangements for parking controls and sets out some suggested changes to make these more effective. The proposals are based upon regimes in place in the other town centres and the proposed tariff structures also mirror those.
14. The situation with the HRA at The Broadway is a unique one and the report sets out the preferred method of dealing with, but stops short of a complete appropriation of land from the HRA to the GF due to the expense and complexities involved.

Other Options for Action:

15. As with all parking regimes there are many alternatives available, and Members will have to balance what regime is appropriate in the local circumstance against what exists elsewhere within the district. No specific alternatives are therefore put forward since each would have its own operational and financial consequences, which would need to be considered at that time. It is recognised in the report that the situation at The Broadway is very different to elsewhere in the district due to it having benefited, over a long period of time, from free parking. Therefore, any new regime, which introduces an element of charging, is likely to generate local concern.

Consultation Undertaken:

16. The report reflects the general views of the Town Centre Enhancement Focus Group.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: Contained within the approved budget for the TCE scheme. Income from car parking charges and penalty charge notices to the HRA. Management fee levied by the GF on the HRA for service provision.

Personnel: Nil.

Land: Enhancement works to Loughton Broadway.

Community Plan/BVPP reference: N/A.

Relevant statutory powers: Road Traffic Acts.

Background papers: Previous Cabinet reports.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Environmental improvements to Loughton Broadway, improved security and parking provisions etc.

Key Decision reference (if required): N/A.