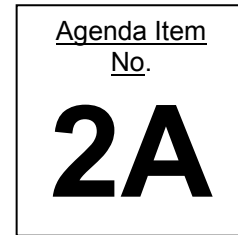


HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS CABINET PANEL
WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018 AT 10.00AM**



RESPONSE TO PETITION FOR A WARE ROAD TRAFFIC AND PARKING STUDY

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment

Author:- Trevor Brennan, Strategy & Programme Manager,
East Herts & Broxbourne (Tel: 01992 658406)

Executive Member/s: - Cllr Ralph Sangster

Local Member: - Andrew Stevenson, Hertford All Saints

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Panel of the response to the Ware Road traffic and parking petition.

2. Summary

- 2.1 A petition was received by East Herts District Council (EHDC), containing 349 signatures, calling for the suspension of planning decisions on development applications involving residential parking provision for Ware Road, Hertford in July 2017. It also requested that Hertfordshire County Council undertakes a comprehensive traffic and parking study to investigate congestion, speeding and problem parking within the area.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Highways Cabinet Panel are asked to endorse the following recommendation:
- To endorse Option 2 (Junction protection measures) as set out in the Ware Road – Feasibility Study Stage 1 (December 2017).

4. Background

- 4.1 The study has been undertaken to address the concerns raised in a petition from residents living around the junction of Ware Road-Stanstead Road, Hertford. There has long been an ongoing concern surrounding the impact of inconsiderate on-street parking within the community locally.

4.2 The petition reads:

“We, the residents of Ware Road, Hertford and all the roads in the surrounding area, request that East Herts District, Local Planning Authority impose an immediate suspension on all planning decisions that involve residential parking provision, and call on Hertfordshire County Council Highways to complete their comprehensive traffic and parking study as soon as possible – to look at the serious problems we are experiencing in relation to road safety, resulting from congestion, problem parking and speeding vehicles.”

4.3 The study area identified from the petition included, Foxholes Avenue, Woodlands Mount, Cromwell Road, Kings Road and Burleigh Road (see Appendix 1 to the report, for location plan). Investigations were undertaken to measure vehicle speed and volume data to determine current traffic levels and associated average speeds, alongside comprehensive parking occupancy surveys in order to determine the level of on street parking against the parking levels for the area.

4.4 Construction and consequent occupation of a new housing development (Liberty Rise), which presents a change from the former police station, is thought to have resulted in an increased demand for on-street parking outside the development on Ware Road and surrounding side roads, which is also causing footway obstruction through inconsiderate parking behaviour.

4.5 A nearby primary school (Wheatcroft) also presents a destination for some peak time traffic journeys and associated parking stresses on the existing highway network. The promotion of sustainable journeys, especially for school generated trips, is a key objective for the highway authority. The speed and volume of traffic can be a direct obstruction to the safe crossing of main roads and therefore a deterrent to promoting walking and cycling.

4.6 While there are no immediately obvious speeding problems with this key route between Ware and Hertford, there is some evidence of prior speed non-compliance, with safety cameras having been previously installed along the route. The road clearly carries high levels of both motorised and Non-Motorised User (NMU) traffic, with few facilities apart from two controlled pedestrian crossings.

4.7 With road traffic incidents being reported in the vicinity of the development and associated junctions there is a concern that increases in indiscriminate parking close to these junctions are contributing to those incidents.

4.8 High levels of parking and instances of footway obstruction parking could impact on both traffic flow and road safety. However, it is important to be mindful of the need to find a balance between the

conflicting parking requirements of residents, commuters, visitors and school traffic.

5. Data and Analysis

- 5.1 A vehicle speed & volume survey of Ware Road and Stanstead Road, and car parking occupancy counts within the study area at multiple times of day were deemed the most appropriate methods of data collection for the study. Accident data was also included to test any connection between accidents within the study area and parking levels.
- 5.2 Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data covering a five-year period from April 2012 to April 2017 was reviewed. There have been eleven recorded PICs within the study area; eight are considered slight and three serious. There do not appear to be any trends arising from the data.
- 5.3 Vehicle speed & volume data was taken over the period of a week, between 31 October 2017 and 6 November 2017, within school term time.
- 5.4 Observing results from the daily 12 hr average flows on Ware Road, the traffic volume is approximately 5045 vehicles per day in the northeast-bound direction and 3697 vehicles per day in the southwest-bound direction. From the daily 12 hr average flows on Stanstead Road, the traffic volume is approximately 3675 vehicles per day in the eastbound direction and 3556 vehicles per day in the westbound direction.
- 5.5 Using the daily average from each speed survey, the mean speed is 25 mph on Ware Road and 26 mph on Stanstead Road. These are below the Association of Chief Police Officers parameters, indicating the posted speed limit of 30 mph is correct and in accordance with the Hertfordshire County Council Speed Management Strategy, which uses the mean speed for setting speed limits.
- 5.6 Therefore, there is no current requirement to change the speed limit or provide further traffic calming measures.
- 5.7 It is noted that the highest recorded speeds were over 60mph on both roads. However, these were outside peak hours. The majority of speeding recorded was overnight. These instances represent less than 1% of the total volume of traffic movements on these sections of highway.

5.8 Table 1, below, shows the average mean and 85%ile speeds (mph) at the four locations (split over the two roads) measured on Ware Road and Stanstead Road over a five-day Mon-Fri period, in free flow conditions for both the 12-hr and 24-hour observations.

Table 1:

Ware Road A northeast		Ware Road A southwest		Ware Road A northeast		Ware Road A southwest	
12 hr		12 hr		24 hr		24 hr	
85% Mean		85% Mean		85% Mean		85% Mean	
30.96	25.60	32.76	26.50	32.10	26.34	33.66	27.36
Ware Road B northeast		Ware Road B southwest		Ware Road B northeast		Ware Road B southwest	
12 hr		12 hr		24 hr		24 hr	
85% Mean		85% Mean		85% Mean		85% Mean	
31.58	26.00	28.04	22.48	32.28	26.52	28.72	23.14
Stanstead Road A northwest		Stanstead Road A southeast		Stanstead Road A northwest		Stanstead Road A southeast	
12	hr	12	hr	24	hr	24	hr
85%	Mean	85%	Mean	85%	Mean	85%	Mean
30.96	25.60	32.76	26.50	32.10	26.34	33.66	27.36
Stanstead Road B northwest		Stanstead Road B southeast		Stanstead Road B northwest		Stanstead Road B southeast	
12	hr	12	hr	24	hr	24	hr
85%	Mean	85%	Mean	85%	Mean	85%	Mean
31.58	26.00	28.04	22.48	32.28	26.52	28.72	23.14

5.9 A summary of the parking occupancy survey can be seen in Table 2 below. This summary specifies the measured parking capacity of each road in the study, indicating the number of spaces available to park vehicles along its length, accounting for dropped kerbs, waiting restrictions, and judgement as to whether parking is suitable at the location. Each road has its parking levels considered against these saturation levels and is shown as both the number of spaces occupied and a percentage of that comparison.

Table 2:

Parking Occupancy Survey								
Observations compared to Saturation Capacities as spaces occupied (bold) and as percentage (<i>italic</i>)								
Survey Date: Wednesday 8 November 2017								
Hour	Ware Rd	Stanstead Road	Foxholes Ave	Woodland Rd	Woodland Mount	Cromwell Rd	Page Road	Kings Rd /Burleigh Rd
0800	59 <i>(44)</i>	6 <i>(75)</i>	31 <i>(52)</i>	19 <i>(46)</i>	32 <i>(70)</i>	68 <i>(76)</i>	29 <i>(76)</i>	39 <i>(51)</i>
1200	72 <i>(53)</i>	6 <i>(75)</i>	31 <i>(52)</i>	17 <i>(41)</i>	24 <i>(52)</i>	80 <i>(90)</i>	24 <i>(63)</i>	37 <i>(49)</i>
1500	63 <i>(47)</i>	6 <i>(75)</i>	34 <i>(57)</i>	21 <i>(51)</i>	30 <i>(65)</i>	70 <i>(79)</i>	25 <i>(66)</i>	42 <i>(55)</i>
1800	56 <i>(41)</i>	8 <i>(100)</i>	20 <i>(33)</i>	21 <i>(51)</i>	28 <i>(61)</i>	73 <i>(82)</i>	22 <i>(58)</i>	37 <i>(49)</i>
Overnight	83 <i>(61)</i>	8 <i>(100)</i>	59 <i>(98)</i>	34 <i>(83)</i>	43 <i>(93)</i>	103 <i>(115)</i>	22 <i>(58)</i>	85 <i>(111)</i>
Total parking spaces.	135	8	60	41	46	89	38	76

5.9.1 The results of the parking occupancy survey infer that throughout the day the on-street parking is far below saturation capacity. They observe that the parking reaches saturation levels at or after the evening peak traffic times and remain at these levels until the morning peak traffic times. This implies that the vast majority of parking overnight is residents' vehicles. It is during these times that the majority of instances of inconsiderate parking and footway obstruction are also observed. This was notably along Ware Road in the immediate vicinity of the new development. Outside of these times there are observations of visibility splays at junctions being obscured by parked vehicles for sustained periods.

5.9.2 It is clear from the observations that the main route of Ware Road is heavily parked at night and the side roads of Cromwell Road, Burleigh Road, Woodland Mount, Woodlands Road and Foxholes Avenue are more so, to levels in excess of their 100% saturation levels. Any

parking management scheme implemented within these roads will both reduce the status quo parking capacity and displace those vehicles further along Ware Road.

6. Options

- 6.1 A number of potential options (eight) have been outlined within the study to mitigate the measured parking situation, these include:
1. **Ware Road realignment** - Formalising the existing on-street parking areas. This option provides the most robust solution but would be the most costly to implement as it would involve the diversion of utility apparatus, drainage laterals and would also mean the loss of existing footway. The cost estimate for this option is approximately £88,000.
 2. **Junction protection** – The introduction of double yellow lines at junctions and turning heads. The advantage of this option is that the impact on the loss of on-street parking is limited. The disadvantage is that it will rely on compliance from the public and would likely require parking enforcement. The cost estimate for this option is approximately £15,000.
 3. **Burleigh Road parking area** – The establishment of a verged parking area at the end of Burleigh Road to provide a ‘stop & drop’ for children attending Wheatcroft School. This option would only be effective if teaching staff agreed that they would walk the children from the parking area into school. There is also likely to be a higher financial cost to overcome the level changes and drainage in order to provide a limited number of additional parking spaces. The cost estimate for this option is approximately £15,000.
 4. **Ware Road Residential Parking Zones (RPZ)** – The introduction of RPZ to provide on-street parking for residents only. The advantages of this scheme would be that only permit holders could park without penalty. The disadvantages are that there would not be enough space for all those with permits to find a parking space in peak times. This would, inevitably, lead to an element of displacement parking, most likely towards the direction of Ware Town, where parking levels are less concentrated. The cost estimate for this option is approximately £15,000.
 5. **Additional off-street car parking** – The provision of a ‘new’ off street parking area. For example, allotment land to the north of Cromwell Road. With both the impact on the community and the cost of implementing the works being high, this is not considered to be a viable scheme independent of any other. Cost estimates are not currently available, as these would be

largely dependent on officer time to negotiate with partner organisations to achieve collaboration towards changes in use of non-highway land.

6. **Constables Way Visitor Parking** – The parking survey identified 24 unallocated visitor spaces within the Liberty Rise site. Ad hoc feedback received indicated the lack of use was due to the cost to residents of the required visitor parking permits. This option would require the parking managers within the development to open up the use of these bays to residents at a reduced or ‘zero’ cost in order to remove the demand from the local area. As above, cost estimates are not currently available.
7. **Parking Restrictions** – The introduction of new parking restrictions (double yellow lines) along the highway where existing footway obstruction/parking has been identified. There are some advantages if the residents agree but due to the lack of parking in the area, it is likely that this option will be strongly opposed. The cost estimate for this option is approximately £15,000.
8. **Do Nothing** - ‘Do Nothing’ is always considered an option in these projects to ensure that change is not injected for the sake of doing ‘something’.

6.2 The recommendation of this report is to pursue junction protection measures i.e. **Option 2** to safeguard the visibility splays at the associated junctions during all situations, enforceable by East Herts District Council. This option would be the most effective mitigation to the parking stress along Ware Road, without presenting a significant cost or notable reduction in on-street parking opportunity to the affected residents.

6.3 It is not recommended to formalise the current parking situation at the end of Burleigh Road in the short term, as this is not considered to be cost-effective and may present higher construction cost at the design/build phase due to utilities or drainage complications.

6.4 Should the stakeholders be in support of the schemes, the next steps would be to undertake detailed design and formal consultation.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 Cost estimate for **Option 2** (Junction protection) is approximately **£15,000** (including 10% contingency).

- Costs predominantly for Traffic Regulation Orders and road markings.

- Assumptions are made that there would be no utility services to divert.

7.2 Funding will be sought from the Highways Locality Budget or Section 106 contributions.

8. Conclusion

8.1 In conclusion it is considered that the most cost-effective improvements are to be gained from junction protection (Option 2) to safeguard the visibility splays at the associated junctions during all situations, enforceable by East Herts District Council.

9 Equalities implications

9.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

9.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure the proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.

9.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant, protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9.4 Option 2 will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of any Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) process which would be undertaken to consider the viability of any highway works before a decision is made to take those works forward.

Background Information: [Ware Road Feasibility Study and Appendices](#)