



Parking Strategy Task Group

Review of the Year 1 Recommendations

July 2016

Contents

Introduction	Page	3 - 4
Schedule of locations and recommendations	Pages	5 - 7
Bibliography	Page	9
Appendices		
1. Task Group scope and proposal	Pages	11 - 18
2. Meeting agreed actions 12 July 2016	Pages	19 - 21
3. Meeting agreed actions 18 July 2016	Pages	23 - 25
4. Map of locations (A)	Page	27
5. Map of locations (B)	Page	29

Introduction and background to the Task Group

Task Group Members

Councillor Derek Scudder	Chair, Councillor for Stanborough Ward
Councillor Sohail Bashir	Councillor for Callowland Ward
Councillor Stephen Bolton	Councillor for Central Ward
Councillor Anne Joynes	Councillor for Leggatts Ward
Councillor Glen Saffery	Councillor for Woodside Ward

Other Members attending

Councillor Ahsan Khan	Councillor for Callowland Ward
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Officer Support

Andy Smith	Transport and Infrastructure Section Head
Brian Scott	Traffic Engineer
Sandra Hancock	Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Jodie Kloss	Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

Background

The Council commissioned a parking strategy report to be undertaken by one of the Council's framework consultants. Following the report, the scrutiny was proposed by the Head of Regeneration and Development. Officers wished to gain the input of non-executive members prior to the recommendations being presented to Cabinet in September 2016.

The Parking Strategy covers car, bicycle, powered-two-wheeler, coach, taxi and freight parking and use of on-street space. The policies contained within the parking strategy address existing parking problems, challenges and opportunities. Year one of the recommendations concentrates on the Town Centre area inside the Ring Road. Recommendations for subsequent years focus on different areas of the Borough.

At its meeting on 16 June, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task group and approved the membership, comprising the five councillors listed above. Given the short timescales involved, the task group needed to work quickly and had a very specific brief.

The task group met on two occasions and focused on 11 locations within the Ring Road which had been identified as areas where there was some flexibility in the

use of kerbside space.

At the first meeting, an introduction was given to the report as well as an overview of some of the changes that have been implemented in the High Street. This had resulted in increasing pressures for kerbside space, particularly for blue badge users, taxis and powered-two-wheelers.

Following the meeting, officers updated the plans of the town centre to reflect the views of the task group. The second meeting was used to give further consideration to the proposals and the opportunities they provided. The task group was mindful of the need to balance the available space for different uses in the town centre. Both blue badge users and taxis in particular had seen their available space limited in the previous year.

Other factors taken into consideration for the allocation of the locations included:

- How the space is currently being used
- Attractiveness to potential users
- Provision of similar space in the locality
- Safety of proposals

As a result of the discussions, the following schedule was created to give an overview of the views of the task group about the best use of the available space.

The task group considered that the review had been an effective way for non-executive councillors to provide input into the strategy. They recommended that similar task groups could be considered for the parking strategy recommendations in future years.

Recommendations

1. That the task group's proposals and comments on each of the locations listed in the schedule be progressed.
2. That further task groups be considered in future years for the parking strategy recommendations.

Watford Parking Strategy

Amendments to on-street parking allocation

Outcomes of Task & Finish Group Monday 18 July 2016

Site reference	Location	Current use	Proposed use	Capacity (car spaces)	Comments/ Notes of task group
1	Granville Road – west side close to King St	Permit bay 8am-10pm	Taxi rank	2	May not be attractive to trade – consultation required.
2	Granville Road – east side close to King St	Permit bay 8am-10pm	Shared use 8am-4:30pm Mon-Fri (permit holders/ short stay P & D- max stay 2hrs)	6	Reverts to permit holders only after 4:30pm, Mon-Fri & all day Sat/ Sun.
3	King St – opposite Met Quarter	Full time loading bay and P & D 8am-6:30pm max stay 1 hour)	Loading bay: 5am-1pm Taxi rank: 1pm to 5am	8	Exact hours to be subject to survey – early start for taxi use sought. Use to be subject of consultation with local taxi/ private hire & businesses.

4	George St- East side close to junction with King St	No waiting 8am-6:30pm Mon to Sat	Short stay P & D 8am-6:30pm Mon-Sat max stay 1 hour	8	Currently blue badge holders parking on badge up to 3 hours. Not excluded by proposal.
5	George St – east side opposite Alms Houses	No waiting 8am-6:30pm Mon to Sat	Disabled bays – max stay 3 hours	4	Currently used periodically by blue badge holders parking on badge for up to 3 hours
6	Church Road – verge area opposite St Mary's Church	No waiting 'at any time' and public open space	Disabled bays	9	Requires construction of lay-by on open space. No specific budget allocated, Cabinet will need to consider how this could be funded. Planning permission required. Possible link to Shop Mobility operation?
7	New Street – lay-by outside Church mscp	4 space loading bay servicing market store in old public conveniences	Split use – 2 spaces to remain for loading: 2 spaces for electric vehicle	2&2	Loading facility required for shops in High St (note: One Bell redevelopment)

			charging bays		
8	Wellstones – r/o 52-56 High St	Temporary 'no waiting/ loading at any time' for duration of building works on 52-56 High St, otherwise, no waiting 'at any time'	Subject to survey of use once temporary loading ban is removed, P & D 8am-6:30pm Mon-Sat; max stay 1 hour.	6	Prior to building works site was used by disabled badge holders parking on the 'at any time' restrictions using blue badge.
9	Wellstones – r/o TSB/ Linens Direct	No waiting 'at any time'	Disabled bays	3	
10	Exchange Rd-lay-by opposite Upton Road	No waiting 'at any time'	Powered two wheeler or other parking use – further investigation required	n/a	Possible visibility issues for emerging vehicles
11	Wellstones r/o Chelsea B. Soc	No waiting 'at any time'	Split use-2 spaces disabled; 1 space m/c	2&1	

Bibliography

1. Watford Borough Council - Watford Parking Strategy Summary Report
2. Watford Borough Council - Watford Parking Strategy Report
3. The Watford Parking Strategy Action Plan 2015-16
4. Watford Town Centre - Proposed relocation of Parking, Designer's Expansionary Notes
5. Watford Parking Strategy Policies and Objectives

Parking Strategy Task Group – evaluation table

A Member, Officer or member of the public suggesting a topic for scrutiny must complete Section 1 as fully as possible. Completed tables will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion: The Parking Strategy - Year 1 Recommendations	
Proposer: Councillor/Officer/Member of public Jane Custance	
<p>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i> <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i> <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i> 	<p>In July 2014 Watford Parking Strategy Scoping Report was produced by Arup's who are one of the Council's Framework Consultants. The scoping report was presented to The Highways Forum Members in October 2014. In July 2015 The Watford Parking Strategy Report was produced and the report provides a framework and set of policies for parking in Watford. The Strategy has been accepted by the Council.</p> <p>The parking strategy is multi-modal and covers car, bicycle, powered two wheeler (PTW), coach, taxi and freight parking and use of on-street space. The parking strategy framework will enable fair and objective-led decision making on all types of parking and use of on-street space now and in the future.</p> <p>The policies contained within the parking strategy address existing parking problems, challenges and opportunities. The parking strategy is based on local, regional and national policy, stakeholder input and objectives from local policy and best practice guidance. The development of the parking strategy included stakeholder meetings, a public consultation questionnaire and meetings with Watford Borough and Hertfordshire County Council officers and Councillors.</p> <p>Year one of the recommendations concentrates on the Town Centre area inside the Ring Road.</p>

	<p>Key parking problems identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The constrained space available in the town centre for different uses; • A lack of parking at key locations for Blue Badge holders, motorcycles and bicycles; • A lack of parking for coaches; • A lack of ranking and drop-off/pick-up space for the high number of taxis operating in Watford; • Problems with some of the town centre car parks including problems with quality and the pricing structure and payment methods available; • Constrained space for residential parking in several areas of Watford; • Constrained space for workplace parking at several locations in Watford; and • Problems for other road users which are caused by parking. <p>A key aspect of the parking strategy is the Watford street type hierarchy matrix, a framework for decision-making which has been based on work carried out for Transport for London by the Road's Task Force,¹ adapted for Watford. The street type hierarchy matrix enables the classification of streets in Watford depending on their characteristics. The map based plan indicate what the priorities for each street should be and so what kind of policies for parking should be pursued on each street. In addition to the Watford street type hierarchy matrix, a number of specific parking policies to address identified problems are included. The main parking policies which are included in the strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimise the use of space in the town centre (including the use of space for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, taxis, Blue Badge holders, freight and other vehicles) by applying the principles of the street type matrix. Improve the existing car parking offer in the town centre; • Identify and dedicate space for short stay town centre parking; • Introduce modern payment methods in the town centre car parks and other pay-and-display locations; • Continue reviewing options for the use of the multi-storey car parks; • Ensure any revenue generated from parking is used for transport;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a town-wide Travel Plan and other measures to relive pressure on workplace parking and generate other benefits from reduced peak car travel; • Improve the residential parking situation; • Improve Blue Badge parking provision; • Increase cycle and PTW parking; • Provide a secure cycle parking facility in the town centre; • Pilot a scheme for implementing secure residential cycle parking; • Improve taxi ranking and drop-off/pick-up facilities; • Implement improvements to signage associated with different types of parking and taxi facilities; • Provide coach parking facilities; and • Pilot a Delivery and Servicing Plan within the Council. <p>A set of actions and targets for each policy has been developed together with an outline timeframe for delivery . This will enable the objectives of the parking strategy to be met. It is intended that the parking strategy be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains up-to-date and relevant. A monitoring and review process has been developed which involves assessing progress against policy targets.</p>
Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?	Officers would appreciate non executive members input prior to the recommendations being presented to cabinet
What are the specific outcomes you wish to see from the review?	To seek non executive members views on the proposed reallocation of parking opportunities in Watford town centre area.

<p><i>Examples might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To identify what is being done and what the potential barriers are;</i> • <i>To review relevant performance indicators;</i> • <i>To compare our policies with those of a similar authority;</i> • <i>To assess the environmental/social impacts;</i> • <i>To Benchmark current service provision;</i> • <i>To find out community perceptions and experience;</i> • <i>To identify the gap between provision and need</i> 	
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<p>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires/Surveys • Site visits • Interviewing witnesses • Research • Performance data • Public hearings • Comparisons with other local authorities 	<p>All back ground information including in the Parking Strategy Summary Report together with the Designers explanatory notes and plans.</p>
<p>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</p>	
<p>It must affect a group or community of people</p>	<p>All users of the Town Centre</p>
<p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p>	<p>Links to the Parking Service and Green Travel Plan 2010-15</p>

<p>It must not have been a topic of scrutiny within the last 12 months</p> <p><i>There will be exceptions to this arising from notified changing circumstances. Scrutiny will also maintain an interest in the progress of recommendations and issues arising from past reports.</i></p>	<p>The Parking Strategy has not been to scrutiny before.</p>
<p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making Watford a better place to live in 2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth 3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town 4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please confirm which ones</i></p> <p>One and two above.</p>
<p>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i> • <i>imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i> 	<p>The Officers report needs to be presented to Cabinet in September 2016</p>
<p>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Are there likely to be any Equality implications which will need to be considered?</p> <p><i>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability • Gender reassignment • Pregnancy or maternity • Race • Religion or belief • Sex • Sexual orientation • Marriage or civil partnership (only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination) 	<p>Equality implications will be considered as part of any formal Traffic Regulation Order taken forward.</p>
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<p>Sign off <i>(It is expected that any Councillor proposing a topic agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee will participate in the Task Group)</i></p>	
<p>Officer Jane Custance and Andy Smith</p>	<p>Date May 2016</p>

Parking Strategy Task Group

**12 July 2016
Agreed Actions**

Present: Councillor Scudder (Chair)
Councillors Bashir, Bolton, Joynes and Saffery

Officers: Transport and Infrastructure Section Head
Traffic Engineer
Committee and Scrutiny Officer
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

1. Election of Chair

Councillor Scudder was elected Chair.

2. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

4. Scope of review

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer explained that the task group had been suggested by the Transport and Infrastructure Section Head and the Traffic Engineer. The proposal had been approved by Overview and Scrutiny in June.

The Transport and Infrastructure Section Head provided the task group with the background to the consultants' parking strategy report. He explained that the task group would be looking at the year one recommendations of the report. The focus of this piece of work would be the area inside the ring road.

Officers would be bringing the report to Cabinet in September and they wanted to consult with other councillors beforehand to gain their views and buy-in of the recommendations. Following Cabinet, the normal traffic regulation order procedures and consultation would be followed.

In future years, there would be the potential to repeat the task group to consider the recommendations for years two and three. Members were invited to express their views at the end of the review about whether a task group was the most appropriate format.

5. Summary of Parking Strategy

The Traffic Engineer explained that the work had been done by consultants and officers did not necessarily agree with all the recommendations. There was a high level of demand for kerbside space in the town centre and decisions had to be made about the priorities. Space for loading, taxi ranks and further disabled parking bays were needed.

There had been a number of recent changes on the High Street which had had an impact on available space. There had been a scheme to extend the cycle route which had displaced blue badge holders who parked on the double yellow lines as well as a two-car taxi rank. The footway widening scheme, in preparation for increased footfall following the Metropolitan Line extension, had also resulted in a bus stop being relocated.

6. Review of Action Plan 2015-16

The action plan had been included as part of the background paperwork and informed the discussions of the proposals.

7. Design Notes

The Task Group considered the maps detailing the proposed restrictions of the parking strategy programme. They discussed the options proposed by the consultants as marked out on the plans.

8. Actions and recommendations

There was a consensus that the following recommendations should be taken forward:

- Converting the loading bay opposite the Met Quarter on King Street into a dual-use bay for loading and taxis. It was proposed that after mid-afternoon this could be used as a taxi rank. Most loading activity had finished by this time.
- Introducing a number of shared use bays on Granville Road for residents with permits or pay-and-display for up to 2 hours due to unused capacity during the day. After 6.30pm, this would revert to permit-holders only.
- That a layby on the left-hand-side of Church Street would be an appropriate location for further parking, the exact use to be agreed.
- That the space in front of the former public conveniences should be used for two electric charging bays. Officers should wait to see the outcome of potential redevelopment in the area before allocating the other two bays.

- The proposed formalised disabled bays on the bend of George Street and Church Street should be installed.
- That the proposed Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) spaces on George Street would be better used for further pay-and-display bays as it would not be an attractive location for PTWs. Limiting stays to one hour would encourage turnover.
- That when the works have been completed, double yellow lines should be introduced on Wellstones which would allow blue badge holders to park for up to 3 hours. Once this approach has been tested, the spaces could be formalised with disabled bays. The road was not prominent enough for taxi ranks or PTW parking.
- That the proposed taxi rank outside HSBC would be inappropriate due to its proximity to the bend.

The following actions were agreed:

- For officers to bring an updated version of the town centre plans, incorporating the task group's suggestions, to the next meeting.
- For officers to bring a list covering all the locations of proposals to the next meeting.
- For officers to undertake a survey to determine when loading tends to have finished on the bay opposite the Met Quarter.
- For officers to discuss the proposal for a part-time taxi rank on King Street with local private hire companies.
- For councillors to consider the best use of the proposed new layby before the next meeting.
- For officers to investigate potential uses, possibly PTW parking, for the layby on the right-hand side of Exchange Road before the flyover.
- For officers to investigate the potential to extend the proposed part-time taxi rank on King Street.

Chair
Parking Strategy Task Group

The meeting started at 6.30 p.m.
and concluded at 7.50 p.m.

Parking Strategy Task Group

**18 July 2016
Agreed Actions**

Present: Councillor Scudder (Chair)
Councillors Bashir, Bolton, Joynes and Saffery (for item 12)

Also present: Councillor Ahsan Khan (for item 12)

Officers: Transport and Infrastructure Section Head
Traffic Engineer
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

9. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence. Councillor Saffery had sent his apologies that he would be delayed.

10. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

11. Minutes

The notes and agreed actions of the meeting held on the 12 July 2016 were submitted and signed.

12. Discussion of conclusions and recommendations

The Traffic Engineer had updated the plans following the previous meeting of the task group. He had also prepared a schedule of locations where there could be amendments to the on-street parking allocation. The task group reviewed the updated maps and discussed the proposals for the 11 locations in question.

1. Granville Road - west-side close to King Street

A taxi rank was proposed in this location. Officers and members agreed that consultation with the trade would be required as they were not convinced this would be an attractive location.

2. Granville Road - east-side close to King Street

A daytime shared use scheme was proposed for permit holders and pay and display parking. The task group felt it was important for this to revert to permit holders only from 4.30 pm rather than 6.30 pm. This would ensure there was space for residents returning home in the evening.

3. King Street-opposite Met Quarter

At this location, there was potential for a dual-use bay with loading permitted until the afternoon and then it could be used as a taxi rank. Survey work would be required to determine the exact hours. The task group considered that, for this to be a valuable ranking area to access the daytime trade, taxis would need to be permitted to use it as early as possible. As part of the survey work, officers would consult with the restaurants to establish their delivery times. It was agreed that all the proposals for the area should be presented to the restaurants as a package, rather than in isolation to ensure the complete picture was understood. Officers agreed that, subject to the survey, they would bring forward the hours for the start of the rank.

4. George Street - east-side close to the junction with King Street

Short stay pay and display, for a maximum of one hour, was proposed for this area. This would provide facilities for residents who wanted to make brief visits to local businesses and would not exclude blue badge holders.

5. George Street- east-side opposite Alms Houses

This area was already used by blue badge holders and the task group agreed this should be formalised with disabled bays. It was agreed that the bays should be limited to 3 hours to encourage turnover.

6. Church Road - verge area opposite St Mary's Church

There was potential to build a layby at this location for approximately six disabled bays. The task group were happy with this suggestion. Officers advised that there was a budgetary implication to construct the layby but they undertook to obtain quotations and progress this option.

7. New Street-layby outside Church car park

This area provided an opportunity for two on-street electric charging bays. There was potential redevelopment in the vicinity, particularly

of the One Bell public house, and the remaining two spaces were likely to be required for loading. The task group was of the view that if circumstances changed with the redevelopment, consideration should be given to other uses for these bays.

8. Wellstones-rear of 52-56 High Street

The task group felt that this location was suitable for further pay and display parking. It was noted that blue badge holders could park for free in pay and display bays. These would be for short-stay visits, with parking available for short increments of time up to a maximum of one hour and no return.

9. Wellstones-rear of TSB/Linens Direct

There was an area which could provide approximately three disabled bays. There was pedestrian access to the High Street from this location. This would also support access to the market.

10. Exchange Road layby opposite Upton Road

This area provided an opportunity for some powered two-wheeler (PTW) parking. However, this would be subject to a safety review by the Highways Authority. It was noted that PTWs often parked under the flyover and this facility would help to prevent this.

11. Wellstones - rear of Chelsea Building Society

This area could provide further disabled bays as well as some parking for PTWs. The proximity to the shops and the market would be important for these road users. Officers would undertake further survey work at this location.

The task group had been happy with the format of the review which they felt had worked well. This type of scrutiny could be repeated in future.

The Task Group confirmed that no further meetings were required. The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer advised she would circulate the draft review report by email to councillors.

Chair
Parking Strategy Task group

The meeting started at 6.30 p.m.
and concluded at 7.15 p.m.



