



**Executive**  
16<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**Report from the Director of  
Environment and Culture**

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Taking Parking Forward in Brent – results of preliminary  
consultation on Brent Parking Strategy Review**

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-06/07-052

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs members on progress made on the development of a new borough-wide Parking Strategy document for the Council.
- 1.2 In light of the consultation responses received to date, approval is sought for the further research and development of a number of specific parking policy topics / areas.
- 1.3 A programme is given for the remainder of the study leading to the publication of the Brent Parking Strategy by December 2007.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress made on the development of the parking strategy.
- 2.2 That approval is given for officers to draft for internal circulation a series of topic papers examining the feasibility and financial implications of the parking initiatives outlined in paragraph 3.32.
- 2.3 That approval is given to carry out a 2nd stage of consultation based on more detailed policy proposals, following on from the stage 1 'fact finding' process and the development of more detailed parking topic papers for wider circulation and comment.

### 3 Details

#### Background

- 3.1 The Council's existing parking policies are set out in the new Transport Plan for Brent known as the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) which was approved, subject to minor amendments, by the Executive Committee in January 2006. The LIP has since received the formal approval from the GLA. As such, Chapter 7 of the LIP – the "Parking and Enforcement Plan" (PEP) – constitutes the Council's current statutory position on parking.
- 3.2 However, it has been recognised that there is a need to develop a supplementary parking document which, while consistent with the PEP, considers in more detail some important local parking issues and sets out a more visionary approach to the strategic management of parking in Brent for the longer term. This document will be *Taking Parking Forward in Brent - The Brent Parking Strategy*.
- 3.3 Car ownership/usage and demand for parking in Brent are increasing, placing considerable pressure on available space for movement and parking. Transport continues to be one major sector where greenhouse gas emissions are still increasing. The Council needs to prioritise measures to reduce road danger and the negative impacts of car use and to facilitate sustainable movement on foot, cycle and by public transport. It also needs to improve the public realm for everyone who lives and works in or visits the borough. The successful management of parking plays an important role in the Council's approach to tackling these environmental problems.
- 3.4 As such, the new parking strategy will be led by strong sustainable transport principles and contribute to encouraging people to reduce their dependence on private cars. The benefits of this will be reduced air pollution, noise and road danger, and streets where people actively choose to walk, cycle and use public transport more often.
- 3.5 Parking is an emotive issue and parking enforcement, by its very nature, can provoke dissatisfaction and lead to accusations of unfairness. The House of Commons Transport Committee report: Parking Policy and Enforcement (June 2006) states that:
- "..as media portrayals of over-zealous and disproportionate enforcement persist, there is a risk that the public perception of parking operations will deteriorate to the point where the appropriateness of any parking controls is brought into question."*
- 3.6 It is important therefore that the new parking strategy seeks to achieve public acceptance and confidence. In this respect, the parking control regime in Brent needs to be promoted as a key part of wider traffic management strategies which contribute to broad social, economic and environmental objectives. The parking strategy must be customer focused in order to ensure that parking allocation, charging and enforcement is seen as reasonable, fair and consistent across the borough.

## **Consultation Strategy**

- 3.7 Consultation on the new parking strategy is organised in a three stage approach designed to promote public involvement in the formulation of the strategy at all stages of its development:

Stage 1 – Consultation - Issues and Concerns

Stage 2 – Consultation - Draft Parking Strategy

Stage 3 – Public Awareness Campaign

### **Stage 1 Consultation – Issues and Concerns**

- 3.8 The first stage of the consultation process is focused on gathering the public's views, concerns and suggestions regarding parking in the borough.
- 3.9 Approximately 2500 public consultation leaflets/questionnaires have been circulated via libraries, One-Stop Service offices and parking shops. A freepost reply envelope is provided with every leaflet. The information was also posted on the Council's website and an article published in The Brent Magazine (July issue).
- 3.10 Officers attended and gave formal presentations to the April round of Area Consultative Forums, which provided a very useful source of feedback both in the form of questions/comments made during the presentations and in informal discussions at the end of the meetings. Officers were also in attendance at the Annual General Meeting of the Mapesbury Residents Association.

### **Main Issues Arising from Stage 1 Consultation**

- 3.11 Stage 1 consultation is ongoing and at the time of drafting this report 17 completed questionnaire forms have been returned with a further 7 responses being made via the website. In addition, comments have been received by letter, email and telephone. Responses from this broad medium of methods offered a balanced selection of issues from which it was possible to draw a number of common threads and recurring themes. The deadline for consultation responses is 3<sup>rd</sup> August.
- 3.12 While it is expected that further issues will emerge as the consultation period continues, comments received to date have highlighted a number particular issues which the parking strategy needs to address, these are discussed below.

### **Controlled Parking Zones**

- 3.13 The most common consultation response received so far relates to the size and days/hours of operation of existing Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's).
- 3.14 The first CPZ in the borough was implemented in Wembley in 1997. Over time further zones have been introduced in response to local parking pressures and to protect residential areas from the impact of traffic displaced by the

introduction of the Central London congestion charging zone. In addition to the Wembley Event Day zone, there are currently 35 CPZ's in Brent covering approximately a third of the borough. 27 zones are located in the south of the North Circular Road while the remaining 8 zones are situated to the north of the borough. As shown in Table 1 below, the gradual rolling out of new zones, each of which is subject to detailed local consultation, has resulted in a situation where there is little consistency between zones in terms of hours and days of operation.

CPZ area	Operating Hours	Days
GA;GM; MC	10.00 – 21.00	Mon - Sat
MA;MK;SA	10.00 – 15.00	Mon - Fri
QA	10.00 – 15.00	Mon - Sat
GB;GC;GD;GH;KS;NS	08.00 – 18.30	Mon - Fri
C;ST;SH;Y;H;HS;HW;KM;MW;NC	08.00 – 18.30	Mon - Sat
K;KB;KC;KD;KG;KL;KQ;KR	08.30 – 18.30	Mon - Fri
E;W	08.00 – 21.00	Mon - Sun
KH	12.00 – 15.00	Mon - Fri
Temple Area (T)	Any time	
Wembley Event Days	8am to midnight on event days	

**Table 1: CPZ Operating Hours**

### Hours of Operation

- 3.15 A number of respondents have requested that the hours of operation of existing CPZ's be reduced to allow greater flexibility for visitors, deliveries etc. Zone KH, which became operational in August 2006, restricts parking between 12 and 3pm, Monday to Saturday. It's introduction has led to requests for other zones to operate under similar hours. Requests for CPZ restrictions to operate for only 1 hour /day, to deter commuters but provide maximum flexibility for other users, have also been received. In contrast one respondent has suggested that the hours of operation need to be extended to 10.30pm, while another suggests that all CPZ's should be scrapped.
- 3.16 Respondents resident within some of the older CPZ's in the south of the borough have pointed out that, when originally consulted, they were only given the option of choosing between 8am – 6.30pm, Monday to Friday or Monday to Saturday. In retrospect, they feel that the available choice was too limiting and that revised hours would now be more appropriate.

### Saturday Restrictions

- 3.17 Concerns have been raised regarding inconsistency over Saturday restrictions which, as shown above, are in operation in approximately 50% of existing zones. One resident points out that the Saturday restriction around Willesden Green station is inconsistent, citing the hours of operation at Kilburn station (10am – 3pm, Monday to Friday) and Neasden and Dollis Hill (8am -6.30pm, Monday to Friday).

## Bank Holiday Restrictions

- 3.18 There appears to be a degree of confusion amongst the public regarding bank holiday restrictions. At present the Council considers bank holiday parking arrangements on a case by case basis. As a result, bank holiday restrictions only operate in certain zones within the south of the borough. Signage in these zones specifically states that the restriction operates on bank holidays. However, in zones where bank holiday restrictions do not operate this is not made explicitly clear through the CPZ signage i.e it does not indicate the restriction is exclusive of bank holidays. Some residents in these zones are therefore unsure whether a bank holiday restriction is in force or not. It should be noted that the residents permit application form does not make specific reference to bank holiday restrictions.

## Zone Sizes

- 3.17 Another common response has related to the number of zones within the borough. It has been pointed out that while Brent has 36 controlled parking zones, Kensington and Chelsea has only 6. However, to place this in perspective a comparison with other neighbouring local authorities is given in Table 2 below:

Local Authority	No. of CPZ's
Brent	36
Harrow	19
Ealing	28
Hammersmith and Fulham	26
Kensington and Chelsea	6
City of Westminster	8
Camden	19
Barnet	30

**Table 2: Borough Comparison of CPZ Numbers**

- 3.18 The large number and relatively small size of zones within the borough are cited as being confusing and too restrictive, causing problems of parking pressure in one CPZ where space is available in neighbouring streets but which cannot be used because it lies within a different zone. It has also been suggested that the small zone sizes can lead to residents receiving Penalty Charge Notices for mistakenly parking near their home but within a different zone. The large number of zones and different restrictions in force is also seen as leading to unnecessary sign clutter impacting on the streetscene.

## Residents Permits

- 3.19 At present, the Council allows up to 3 residents permits per household. Some respondents see this as excessive given the Council's commitment to reducing car dependency and usage.
- 3.20 There is a degree of public support for a scale of resident's permit charges based on vehicle emissions, as adopted in the London Borough of Richmond. However, some residents have suggested that relating the charge to vehicle

size would be more appropriate. Others have suggested a form of “anti-social” charge which could apply to, for example, sports utility vehicles (SUV’s) which many see as dangerous (to other road users particularly pedestrians and children) and inappropriate for use in urban areas.

- 3.21 Where parking pressures within a CPZ are particularly acute it has been suggested that a restriction should be placed on the number of permits issued for use in that zone and that new applicants for permits be placed on a waiting list.

### **Car Clubs and Private Car Sharing**

- 3.21 While a number of respondents have indicated their support for Car Clubs a difficulty with “private” car sharing has emerged. Specifically, the existing system of permit allocation does not easily accommodate a situation where a number of residents living in close proximity but within different CPZ’s, wish to share the use of a single vehicle.

### **Footway Parking**

- 3.22 Footway parking is another issue where some public confusion appears to exist. Footway parking is prohibited in London unless specific exemptions are in place. Many streets within the borough have been granted an exemption from the prohibition which is generally indicated by associated signage and carriageway markings. However, certain streets do not have the necessary signage in place which can lead to complaints regarding enforcement. For example, a resident was recently issued a PCN for footway parking in a street in the Roe Green area (which has an exemption in place) after parking with all four wheels on the footway; the exemption allows for only two wheels on the footway. However, no signage is in place in the street and the council’s parking website, while providing a list of exempt streets, does not indicate where two wheel or four wheel exemptions apply.

### **Public Realm**

- 3.23 A number of respondents feel that parking signage is causing “clutter” with a negative impact on the streetscene.

### **Enforcement**

- 3.24 Many residents concerns relate to enforcement issues. This is to be expected from any enforcement system which imposes a financial penalty for contraventions. However, as stated earlier, the new parking strategy needs to support an enforcement system which is, as far as possible, seen publicly as fair, consistent and transparent. In this respect, the introduction of “Parking Charter” allied to a set of rigorous performance standards could help to increase public confidence, and in turn compliance with the parking system.

## **Pay and Display**

- 3.25 A number of respondents have asked for the introduction of “½ hour free parking” in local shopping streets, similar to the arrangement currently operating in the Preston Road area.

## **Disabled bays**

- 3.26 Comments made with respect to the provision and use of disabled parking bays include the introduction of “personalised” bays and problems with what is seen as widespread abuse of the Blue Badge system, including the incidence of theft of badges from parked vehicles.

## **Consistency with Car Park Charges**

- 3.27 It has been suggested that there is a need to ensure that on and off street (public and private) parking charges are mutually compatible.

## **Planning Decisions**

- 3.28 Some respondents wish to see greater consistency between on street parking provision/charges and parking allowed in new developments.

## **Public Transport**

- 3.29 Many respondents stress the link between reducing car dependence and the provision of safe, high quality public transport. The need for public transport improvements to be introduced in parallel with any measures to discourage car use is emphasised.

## **Bicycle Parking**

- 3.30 In general, respondents are supportive of greater provision of bicycle parking facilities within the borough, and in particular at rail stations. However, it has been suggested that bicycle parking stands should be placed parallel to and not at angle with the kerbline to avoid reducing the available footway width for pedestrians.

## **Specific Problem Areas**

Areas where respondents have identified specific parking problems include:

- Harlesden;
- Roe Green;
- Hay Lane; and
- Valley Farm.

- 3.31 While the above represents a summary of the common parking issues raised to date, all other individual concerns and any new issues arising from the continuing consultation will of course be given due consideration as part of the parking review process.

## Topic Papers

- 3.32 In response to comments received to date, further investigation is required with respect to a number of specific parking issues. It is therefore recommended that a series of parking topic papers are drafted for internal circulation examining the feasibility and financial implications of:
- A rolling CPZ review and consultation programme offering residents the opportunity to comment on zone coverage and hours/days of operation.
  - Traffic Regulation Orders and their significance in the CPZ review/yellow-line revisions process, particularly with respect to timescales.
  - Revised arrangements for bank holiday parking restrictions and related signage.
  - A reduction in the maximum number of residents parking permits from 3 to 2 per household for new applications.
  - Charging for residents parking permits based on vehicle emissions and/or size or design of vehicle.
  - Amending the existing permit charging regime to specifically encourage private car sharing.
  - Improved clarity and greater consistency regarding on-street signage for footway parking exemptions, with clearer information for the public appearing on permit application forms, in light of the Roe Green example cited in para' 3.22.
  - Ways of minimising the impact of CPZ signage on the streetscene.
  - The introduction of a council "Parking Charter".
  - Wider availability of short term free parking in shopping streets.
  - Personalised disabled bays.
  - Review of consistency between off and on-street parking charges.
  - 'Technology' – the Council must make progress on both the mobile phone/internet front relating to parking payment methods. Meters need to be networked. Electronic permits recognition. The future of CCTV enforcement.
  - Review voucher system arrangements
  - Implications of Moving Traffic Enforcement and Differential Parking Penalties for Brent.
  - An agreed policy for parking at Places of Worship, particularly at events.



## Programme

- 3.33 A programme for the completion of the parking review and the publication of *Taking Parking Forward in Brent – The Brent Parking Strategy* is given in the table below:

Date	Event
June 2007	Stage 1 Public Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation of consultation leaflet to all libraries, one stop services and parking shops;</li> <li>• Posting of consultation information on the internet;</li> <li>• Preparation of Draft Parking Strategy.</li> </ul>
July 2007	Stage 1 Public Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article in the Brent Magazine</li> <li>• Summary of Stage 1 consultation.</li> </ul> Stage 2 Public Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of Draft Parking Strategy to Area Consultative Forums.</li> </ul>
August-October 2007	Completion of Final Draft Parking Strategy and circulation to Parking Review Group. Develop Executive Report on Final Draft Parking Strategy and circulate to usual consultees (must go to legal/finance by 8 <sup>th</sup> October)
November 2007	Report to Executive Committee for approval of Draft (Final) Parking Strategy.
November - December 2007	Stage 3 Public Information Campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, print and publish <i>Taking Parking Forward in Brent - The Brent Parking Strategy</i>.</li> <li>• Launch and circulation event.</li> <li>• Follow up article in Brent Magazine</li> </ul>

Table 3: Programme

## 4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Potentially, future policy changes in the area of parking could impact positively or negatively on the Council's Parking Account. As the details of such policies have yet to be determined as part of this review, it is not possible to project the levels of funding involved, or whether the impact might be positive or negative.
- 4.2 As an example of a policy impacting on finances, the London Borough of Richmond are implementing a policy whereby cars with emissions below 100g of CO<sub>2</sub> per km would get a free permit, low to medium emission vehicles would receive a permit for slightly less than existing charges but medium to high and very high emission vehicles would pay significantly more per permit. Their top band permits would cost £300 for the first and £450 for the second household permit.

- 4.3 When officers report again to the Executive seeking approval of the final version of the Parking Strategy they will set out any significant positive or negative financial impact on the Parking Account as a result of a change in direction or new policy in the Parking Strategy. Likewise, officers will also report to the Executive in the future, following the adoption of the Parking Strategy, if there is likely to be any such impact on the Parking Account as a result of any proposed new policy being adopted. If income to the Parking Account is increased as a result of a parking policy change, it is ring-fenced for re-investment in transport related activities by virtue of section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation act 1984. Where income is decreased as a result of a policy and Members wished to maintain related services, additional revenue funding would need to be found.
- 4.4 The consultation relating to the review and development of the Parking Strategy is funded from the Transportation Service Unit Revenue budget.

## **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

## **6.0 Diversity implications**

- 6.1 The Council's overarching (transport) policy document - the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) - contains progressive policies and proposals for transportation that will, among other things, reduce the degree to which people feel discriminated against by the design and implementation of schemes.
- 6.2 The Road Danger Reduction Plan (Chapter 6) and the Parking and Enforcement Plan (Chapter 7) of the LIP commit the Council to developing schemes that place vulnerable road users (disabled people, elderly people, children, pedestrians and cyclists) at the top of the transport hierarchy, so that in all schemes the potential to encourage more widespread use of the sustainable and inclusive modes is assessed. The policy direction adopted by the Council will contribute to reducing the degree to which people feel discriminated against, excluded or disadvantaged by the Council's transport policies and implementation.
- 6.3 Although the LIP also contains a freestanding Chapter focussing on Equality Impact Assessment (Chapter 4) – an independent Equalities Impact Assessment will accompany the Executive Report on the Final Draft Parking Strategy at the November meeting, as unlike this report, the November one will contain new policy proposals that will require such an assessment. This is likely to discuss aspects of Parking related to disabled parking and issues such as footway parking, which can prevent the safe and convivial passage of, for example, people with mobility impairments that use electric scooters, or parents with double-buggy's that are forced onto the highway to get past 'parked' vehicles. Blue badge issues, personalised disabled bays, and other linked issues will also feature.

## **7.0 Staffing / accommodation implications**

7.1 There are no staffing/accommodation implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 Environmental Implications**

- 8.1 Car ownership and usage and demand for parking in Brent are increasing, placing considerable demand on available space for movement and parking. Where conflict arises, the Council needs to prioritise measures to reduce road danger and the negative impacts of car use and facilitate sustainable movement on foot, cycle and public transport. It also needs to improve the public realm and quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the borough. Successfully managing demand for parking within Brent plays an important role in the Council's approach to tackling the borough's environmental problems.
- 8.2 Emissions of noxious particulates from road traffic remains a problem and there is clear evidence that recommended levels of emissions are being exceeded especially along main route corridors. (Harrow Rd, Kingsbury Rd, Kenton Rd, A406, A5 Edgware Rd/Kilburn High Rd, East Lane/Forty Ave)
- 8.3 Population density across Europe has been growing in the cities with approximately 80% of citizens currently living in cities. The proportion of city dwellers is expected to grow further in the coming decades. The Greater London Authority (GLA) estimates that there will be a 14 per cent growth in Brent households, rising from 93,968 households in 2001 to a potential 112,000 by 2016. This increase in households will bring about an increased travel demand over and above that experienced without the projected increase in population. In order to avoid problems of congestion and slower journeys, it is important to manage demand by seeking a greater transfer to local trips made on foot, cycle and public transport.
- 8.4 Parking policies, from the National (Planning Policy Guidance & Supplementary Planning Guidance) through to local level, seek to manage demand for unnecessary private car travel, especially for local trips within the borough, and encourage a modal shift toward more use of walking, cycling and public transport. The benefits of this are to reduce the amount of congestion on the borough's roads, making it easier for people to make necessary journeys by private car. At the same time the plan seeks to reduce the level of road danger and conflicts between movement and parking whilst reducing air pollution and improving accessibility for everyone.

### **Background Papers:**

L.B. Brent Parking Strategy (2002)

L.B. Brent Local Implementation Plan (2006)

Brent Parking Strategy Consultation Leaflet (2007)

House of Commons Transport Committee – Parking Policy and Enforcement - Seventh Report of Session 2005 – 06

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