



Highways Committee
7th February 2012

**Report from the Head of
Transportation**

For Decision

Wards Affected: Preston, Barnhill

**Proposed changes to charging and other arrangements
at Preston Road Car Park.**

1.0 **Summary**

- 1.1 Preston Road car park is a large Council operated public car park that is under-used.
- 1.2 At the meeting on 27th July 2011 the Committee agreed to introduce pay and display parking on Preston Road and Bridge Road. At the same time the Committee agreed that further work should be done to (a) explore ways to improve the attractiveness and visibility of Preston Road car park with a view to improving usage and (b) to piloting a charging regime that could also improve usage and support the vitality of the shops and businesses along Preston Road.
- 1.3 This report summarises the outcome of a meeting of a working group to address the two issues.
- 1.4 The report describes proposed measures that the working group agreed would improve the attractiveness and visibility of the car park and describes how those proposed measures are being progressed.
- 1.5 The report also describes a pilot charging regime that could be introduced in the car park with a view to improving usage and supporting the vitality of shops and businesses along Preston Road

- 1.6 The report recommends that the proposed charging regime is introduced as a pilot and reviewed no later than 12 months after introduction.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee note the outcomes of a meeting of a working group comprised the Executive member, ward members and representatives of residents and businesses on proposals for Preston Road car park as outlined in this report,
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees to the advertising and making of Traffic Orders associated with the introduction of a revised regime of charging and usage at Preston Road car park as described in Appendix "B" of this report and, subject to the satisfactory outcome of the statutory consultation, to the introduction of that revised regime,
- 2.3 That the Committee notes that the impact of the proposals described in this report will be reviewed no later than 12 months after their implementation and that review will be the subject of a future report to the Committee,

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Preston Road is a 167 space, Council operated public car park located off Preston Road close to Preston Road shopping and business area.
- 3.2 The surface car park is lit, reasonably well maintained and laid out on two main levels. The car park is open at all times although the lower level is closed at 8pm each night (except on Wembley event days).
- 3.3 Users are required to pay to park between 8:00am and 6:30pm (midnight on Wembley event days) from Monday to Saturdays.

The charging regime is consistent with that of all Council public car parks.

Up to 1 hour - £1.00
Up to 2 hour - £3.00
Up to 3 hour - £4.50
Over 3 hours - £7.50

- 3.4 The car park is extremely poorly used. On a typical weekday there are generally fewer than 10 vehicles parked in the car park at any one time.
- 3.5 At the meeting on 27th July 2011 the Committee agreed to the introduction of pay and display parking along Preston Road. That (pay and display) regime was introduced on 4th January 2012.

At the same meeting the Committee resolved to:

“instruct the Head of Transportation to give priority to working with lead member, ward members, and others representing local businesses, to (i) identifying and introducing measures to improve awareness and use of the Preston Road car park and (ii) to explore opportunities to pilot a charging regime in that car park that would further increase use of the car park and the vitality of businesses in Preston Road and could be considered for introduction in all town centre car parks”.

- 3.6 The car park is outside of the Wembley Event Protective Parking Scheme zone which means that event visitors are able to pay and park in the car park and then travel onwards to Wembley Stadium from Preston Road underground station.

Aside from along Preston Road and around various junctions there are no waiting controls in the residential streets surrounding Preston Road and the car park. This means visitors to the area are able to park free of charge and walk to the shopping / business area and to the station.

4.0 Proposals

- 4.1 Officers have met with a working group of ward members and those representing local businesses and residents. The working group included representatives of the two largest local residents associations in the area.

- 4.2 Consistent with the Highways Committee resolution, the discussion focused on 2 subjects:

(i) Opportunities to improve awareness and attractiveness of the car park,

(ii) Identifying a “pilot” charging regime that could be introduced so as to support the local shopping / business area and possibly into other town centre car parks.

- 4.3 The working group discussed a number of possible improvements to the car park. The table at Appendix ‘A’ summarises the improvements and the views of the working group alongside a commentary by officers.

- 4.4 Aside from improving the CCTV and CCTV signage, improving the lighting and introducing electric vehicle (EV) charging points, all of the improvements suggested can be implemented from the 2011/12 Transportation (Revenue) budgets and currently are being progressed at an estimated total cost of £10,000.

The estimated cost of introducing EV charging points is of the order of £11,000, can be met from the TfL LIP settlement for 2011/12 and is also being progressed.

The value and cost of introducing CCTV and upgrading the lighting is currently being evaluated. Once this work has been completed the Head of Transportation will also be able to assess whether this work can be funded.

- 4.5 The working group also discussed possible changes to the charging regime in the car park. There was overwhelming support for the introduction of a “first hour free” arrangement and for a move to a linear charging regime for stays beyond one hour.

There was a general consensus that the charges for stays of longer than one hour should be reduced and support for encouragement of longer-stay parking.

- 4.6 Recognising the views of the working group, the Councils wider transport objectives in relation to visitor parking and the need to pilot a regime that is not completely at odds with car parking charges elsewhere in the Borough a set of proposals has been developed and is shown in Appendix ‘B’.
- 4.7 Officers are of the view that these proposals, together with the improvements previously discussed, could increase the usage of the car park and support the vitality of the Preston Road business / shopping area.
- 4.8 The introduction of the arrangements proposed would need amendment of existing Traffic Management Orders following the normal statutory process. Barring objections, it is anticipated that the new regime could be in place within 3 months.
- 4.9 The proposals would be introduced as “pilot” arrangement and would be subject to review and further report to the Committee not less than 12 months after introduction.

That review would need to evaluate changes in usage, the financial impact, operational issues, the impact on parking in adjacent roads and the relationship between the Preston Road car park regime and the charging regime approved elsewhere in the Borough.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The cost of the improvements identified in Appendix A, other than the cost of improving the car park lighting, introducing EV charging points and any CCTV works, is estimated to cost £10,000 and can be met from Environment and Neighbourhood Services (Transportation) revenue budgets for 2011/12.

The cost of installing EV charging points in the car park is £11,000 approximately and is being funded from the Council’s 2011/12 TfL (LIP) allocation for Travel Awareness / improvements.

No budget has been identified for improvements to the car park lighting and / or the introduction of CCTV. Once feasibility work on those aspects is complete, an appropriate source of funding will have to be identified before that work can progress.

- 5.2 The cost of making the necessary amendments to Traffic Orders and upgrading the pay and display machine to one suitable for the proposed regime is estimated to be £5,000 (approx.) and can be met from Environment and Neighbourhood Services (Transportation) revenue budget for 2011/12.
- 5.3 Income from the car park since April 2011 has been £1,200 per month (approximately). Income over the last four months has been around £985 per month.

No accurate information on the duration of visits exists but it is reasonable to assume that around 80% of income is generated from visits of less than one hour.

There is risk that the proposals would result in no change in patronage which would result in a reduction in income to the Parking Revenue Account of the order of £9,600 per annum.

It is not possible to predict the impact of the proposals on patronage and hence the financial impact with certainty. However, a prudent forecast of increased patronage has been produced. This indicates that introduction of the proposals this could generate an additional income equivalent to the worst case predictions. This would mean that the proposals would be cost neutral in regard to the receipt of income.

6.0 Legal Implications

There are no significant legal implications arising from the proposals.

The Council has the power to make changes to parking charges under the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, subject to proper procedures, in relation to the making or amending of Traffic Orders, being followed.

7.0 Diversity, environmental & staffing implications

There are no significant diversity, environmental or staffing implications arising from the proposals.

Background Papers

Report to Highways Committee 27th July 2011- Proposals to introduce P& D in Preston Road & Bridge Road

Notes of working group meeting 10th November 2011

Appendices

Appendix “A” – Proposals for improving awareness & attractiveness of Preston Road car park.

Appendix “B” – Proposed pilot charging regime for Preston Road car park.

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Transportation Service Unit, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ, Telephone: 020 8937 5124

Contact Officers

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Appendix 'A'

Proposals for improving awareness & attractiveness of the Preston Road car park.

	Suggestion	Supported by Working Group	Officer Comment
1	Repair potholes in approach road	Yes	This has been completed. The approach road has been resurfaced.
2	Introduce marked disabled bays	No	Blue badge holders can park free of charge anywhere in the car park at present.
3	Refresh parking bay markings	Yes	This can be undertaken at relatively low cost.
4	Introduce Electric Vehicle charging points	Yes	Funding from TfL exists to undertake this work and the works are in progress.
5	Improve CCTV and CCTV signage	Yes	This is relatively expensive and further work needed to explore feasibility and cost.
6	Improve signage at the entrance	Yes	This can be undertaken at relatively low cost.
7	Improve signage near the entrance	Yes	This can be undertaken at relatively low cost.
8	Install new "Town Centre Parking" type signage at approaches to Preston Rd.	Yes	This can be undertaken at relatively low cost
9	Upgrade information about the car park on the Councils web site	Yes	This work can be undertaken at negligible cost
10	Promote the car park in the Brent Magazine	Yes	This can be done at nil cost but is best undertaken alongside implementation of a new charging regime
11	Provide a poster on the car park for businesses to display in their premises	Yes	This can be done at relatively low cost but is best undertaken alongside implementation of a new charging regime
12	Improve lighting in the car park	Yes	Work is required to ascertain the benefits and disadvantages and cost of improving the lighting
13	Add "Parent & Child" wide shopping bays	Yes	This work can be undertaken at negligible cost
14	Explore ways of improving / creating a footway along the entrance road	Yes	There is insufficient space to create a footway and allow 2-way traffic. It may be possible

			to mark a “safer” pedestrian route using road markings.
15	Install a fence between the car park and playing field	No	This would reduce personal security / increased fear of crime and restrict access for those using the playing field
16	Improve distinction between long and short stay areas	Yes	The configuration of the car park (with the lower car park closed at 8pm) makes it difficult to enforce this distinction. This issue should be reconsidered if patronage improves significantly
17	Provide notices / adverts about the car park in Preston Road Station	Yes	This could be relatively expensive but is best reconsidered and undertaken alongside implementation of a new charging regime

Appendix 'B'

Proposed "pilot" charging regime for Preston Road car park.

(a) Pay & Display charges

	Period	Charge
	Up to 1 hour	free
	Over 1 hour and less than 2 hours	£1 plus 20p per 6 mins – ie 2 hour charge is £3.00
	Over 2 hours and less than 3 hours	£3 plus 25p per 10 mins – ie 3 hour charge is £4.50
	Over 3 hours	£4.50 plus 25p per 10 mins up to a maximum charge of £7.50 ie 4 hour charge is £6.00 and charge for 5 hours and over is £7.50.
	Blue badge holders	No charge

Notes

- time bought will be a fixed charge plus a linear extra
- the cost of 2 and 3 hour stays will correlate with the existing arrangement
- there will be no maximum stay period

(b) Additional proposals:

- Allow the sale of business permits for Preston Road businesses consistent with arrangements within CPZs (cost £300 pa) which would entitle businesses to unlimited parking in the car park.
- Allow the sale of yearly & 6 monthly season tickets for the car park:
 - (i) £1600 for a yearly half day season ticket (equates to £5.30/day)
 - (ii) £2000 for a yearly full day season ticket (equates to £6.66/day)
 - (iii) Pro-rata charge for half yearly season tickets subject to an additional nominal handling charge consistent with those applied to resident parking permits.