

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

25 JANUARY 2012

HILLIER WAY CAR PARK & NORTH WALLS PARK ACCESS ROAD – OPTIONS
FOR CONTROL

REPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report considers the alternative options for the control of parking in the WCC off-street car park located off Hillier Way and on the access road into North Walls Park and seeks the Forum's views.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members indicate how they would wish to see the car parking in this area controlled and that indication be included in a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice (or report to the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee) for authority to consult on traffic regulation orders to implement such controls.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Hillier Way car park is located off Hillier Way in North Walls Park in the Abbots Barton area of Winchester, approximately 1100 metres north of the town centre. It is not currently the subject of any usage restrictions, nor is a charge made for its use. The car park is tarmac surfaced, but is not lit. It provides 32 car parking spaces, of which one space is used for recycling facilities.
- 1.2 The car park is owned by the City Council and maintained as part of the Town Forum's parks and gardens budget. In the past, Members of the Forum have raised the issue of whether a charge could be levied on the use of the car park, with a view to covering the cost of the maintenance of the car park.
- 1.3 The main function of the Hillier Way car park is to provide parking for people using the recreational facilities, open space and football pitches north of Winchester. However, the car park is now fully utilised during the working day by commuters who 'Park and Walk' into town. This action is not prohibited, but does mean that often there are no spaces available for recreational users during that time and therefore it is appropriate to consider ways of controlling the operation and use of the car park.
- 1.4 During visits in May and December 2011 the car park was almost fully occupied by mid morning, with evidence of other long term parking on adjacent roads. It would appear that parts of Abbots Barton are being used for commuter parking including that part of Hillier Way which is public highway together with the access road into North Walls Park (past the Football and Rugby clubs) and the car park which is meant for users of the park and recreational facilities. This parking generates unnecessary car trips through residential areas and along the park access road which is utilised by pedestrians and cyclists. In the past officers have been hesitant to introduce parking restrictions in this area as this would possibly lead to displacement of the commuter parking to nearby residential areas. However, as a wider review of parking in Abbots Barton is now under way, it is felt that it is now appropriate to do so.

2 Discussion

- 2.1 There are two main options for control of the car park. One would be to simply restrict the length of time visitors could stay; the other would be to introduce a charging regime with an associated maximum time restriction.
- 2.2 The simplest method would be to limit the time vehicles could park through a Parking Places Order. A maximum permitted stay of three hours would be sufficient for most leisure uses, whilst eliminating all-day use by commuters. There would be no need for any controls at the weekend, as commuter parking is not then an issue. The controls would need to be enforced by the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers.
- 2.3 An alternative approach would be to introduce charging in this car park. However, it is felt that the likely level of income received would be very small, as people are currently only parking here because it is free and if charges are introduced then they would park elsewhere. There would also be costs associated with the introduction of charges and the ongoing cost of cash collection. Car park payment machines are also vulnerable to theft in isolated locations such as this as there is no CCTV or lighting in this car park.
- 2.4 Whilst the car park is currently located outside of the Winchester 'Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)', the expansion of the CPZ to include the local area is the now the subject of a public consultation. It is possible that the creation of new parking controls on adjacent streets would minimise the displaced parking and therefore create a better level of revenue.
- 2.5 In order to further control parking in this area it is suggested that a 'no waiting at any time restriction' (Mon-Fri) is introduced on Hillier Way and on the North Walls Park Access Road (see plan at Appendix 1). The Scheme of Delegation for Portfolio Holders permits the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to authorise public consultation on proposed traffic regulation and parking orders, and if agreed, proposals will be formally advertised for public comment. Therefore, the view of the Forum is sought on their preference for the operation and control of the Hillier Way car park and North Walls park access road.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 This proposal will contribute towards a High Quality Environment.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 The consultation is being undertaken by officers within current available resources.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 There is a risk that vehicles displaced by the introduction of any parking controls in Hillier Way car park may relocate to adjacent residential areas currently not covered by any residential parking zone. However, the local area is currently the subject of consultation for the inclusion within the Controlled Parking Zone and this could be introduced early in the 2012/13 period.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Plan showing proposed waiting restrictions