

Traffic Regulation Order
Consultation Report
Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead

REPORT CONTROL

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APPENDICES

- Appendix A Proposal Plan**
- Appendix B Residents Consultation Letter**
- Appendix C Statutory Consultation Letter**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

- 1.1.1 The leader of the Council has voiced concerns to Parking Services that the taxi rank on Waterhouse Street is too large for purpose and is therefore significantly underused.
- 1.1.2 Dacorum Borough Council are therefore undertaking a review of the current Taxi Bay and how the bay can be more efficiently and effectively utilised for parking provision. As part of this review, a site assessment has been undertaken by officers in February 2022 and following this a design has been produced outlining the proposed changes on the section of road under investigation.
- 1.1.3 The Council have undertaken both a consultation with residents and businesses who would be affected by the proposals as well as a consultation with the Statutory Consultees.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of this report is to outline the consultation processes undertaken, the responses received and to make a recommendation on how to proceed.

1.2 Proposals

- 1.2.1 The proposed alterations to the existing parking arrangements on Waterhouse Street are shown in Appendix A and outlined below.
- Conversion of existing section of Taxi Bay to Disabled Parking Bay ‘Mon-Sun 8am-8pm 3 hours no return within 2 hours’ (7 bays)
 - Conversion of existing section of Taxi Bay to ‘Pay to Park’ bays ‘Mon-Sat 8am-6pm 1 hour no return within 1 hour’ (approx. 7 bays). Charges are detailed in the table below:

Up to 12 minutes	12 to 24 minutes	24 to 36 minutes	36 to 48 minutes	48 to 60 minutes
£0.20	£0.40	£0.60	£0.80	£1.00

- 1.2.2 The ‘Pay to Park’ bays are designed to provide parking for visitors to the nearby town centre and encourage bay turnover. The introduction of new Disabled Parking Bays is proposed to generally increase the towns Disabled Parking capacity.

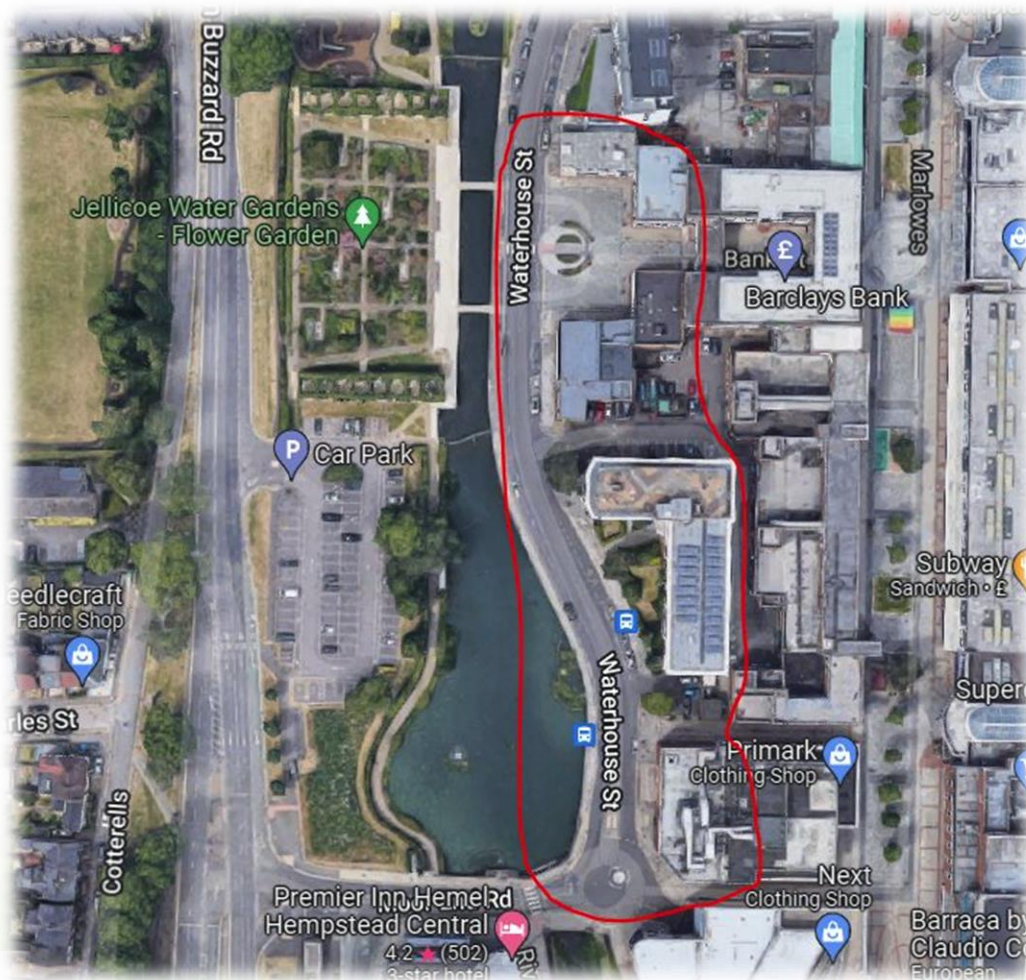
2.0 RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS CONSULTATION

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Residents and businesses affected by the proposals were consulted over a four-week period from 25th March 2022 to 18th April 2022. A letter and plan were posted directly which explained the proposals and the reasoning behind them. Consultees were able to respond via email or post. The letter posted is included as Appendix B.

2.1.2 The consultation area is outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 - Resident & Business Consultation Area



2.1.3 This area comprised a total of approximately 226 addresses.

2.2 Consultation Responses

2.2.1 Following the completion of the consultation process, no responses were received.

2.3 Conclusion

- 2.3.1 Following the receipt of no responses, it can be assumed that the scheme is acceptable to those residents and businesses consulted.

3.0 STATUTORY CONSULTATION

3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 The Statutory Consultees were consulted over the period from 23rd March 2022 to 18th April 2022. A letter and plan were emailed directly, and consultees were invited to submit any comments via email. There was a total of 19 consultees. The letter sent is included as Appendix C.

3.2 Consultation Responses

- 3.2.1 A total of two responses were received from the Statutory Consultees. One of which was an Objection.
- 3.2.2 One respondent was from the Traffic Management Unit stating that they had no objections to the proposals.
- 3.2.3 The Objection was raised by the Chairman of the Dacorum Hackney and Private Hire Taxi Association. The objector stated that the Taxi Bay was used on a daily basis by taxi drivers and that the removal of spaces would lead to drivers not being able to park and consequently to a loss of income for those drivers. It was also postulated that there was already ample provision of disabled parking on Waterhouse Street.

3.3 Officers Response

- 3.3.1 In response, a survey was carried out by the Council's Licencing Team in September/October 2021 which involved a significant number of survey trips to the rank over multiple times on multiple days. The survey demonstrated that a very low number of taxis were observed to be parked in the bay at all of the surveyed times. The full results of this survey are available in the Decision Report dated 23/02/22.
- 3.3.2 In addition, Officers have visited the site in September 2021 and in February 2022. On both occasions the Taxi Bay was occupied by a very low number of vehicles.

3.3.3 The above surveys and observations in the last 6 months demonstrate that the Taxi Bay is not currently used to capacity by taxi drivers. A proportion of the bays can therefore be utilised to house additional Disabled Parking facilities and ‘Pay to Park’ bays allowing additional visitors to the town centre to park at a convenient location.

3.3.4 A large section of the bay will remain operational for use by taxi drivers. It is considered that there will still be ample capacity available to them based upon the results of the surveys described above.

3.4 Conclusion

3.4.1 In light of the responses received, it is clear that the vast majority of Statutory Consultees find the scheme to be acceptable. Despite the Objection from the Taxi Association, it is clear from surveys and observations undertaken that the bay is not used anywhere near to its capacity at present and can therefore be used much more efficiently and effectively through the provision of Disabled Parking Bays and ‘Pay to Park’ bays.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Dacorum Borough Council have undertaken an extensive consultation process with 226 potentially affected residents and businesses in the area surrounding the proposals on Waterhouse Street. Of these, no Objections were raised suggesting that those consulted consider the scheme to be acceptable.

4.2 A Statutory Consultation process has also been undertaken with a total of 19 Statutory Consultees. Two responses were received, one of which was an Objection to the proposed scheme. This has been outlined and addressed in section 3.0 of this report.

4.3 In light of the above, it is recommended to continue to the next stage of the Traffic Regulation Order process – the Notice of Proposal (Public Consultation) stage – based upon the scheme as currently proposed. At this next stage the wider public will have an opportunity to issue any comments that they wish to convey.