

THIS IS NOT A CIRCULAR



Date: June 2022  
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Dear Sir/ Madam,

## **RESIDENTS PARKING PROPOSALS: CONSULTATION OUTCOME AND DECISION**

As many residents will be aware, the County Council has been assessing the practicality of introducing a permit parking scheme following many years of complaints and requests to implement a scheme which sought to eliminate commuter parking on roads where limited on-street parking provision existed.

An informal exercise was initially carried out for residents along The Lawns, Queens Road, Orchard Street, Thornycroft Road, and Hill Street to assess the wider level of community support of formally proposing a scheme. The proposal was then extended towards Mount Road, Priesthills Road, Princess Road, Hurst Road, and Springfield Road as a result of feedback from residents on those roads also wanting to be considered for a permit parking scheme.

During the informal exercises, the County Council received a response rate of 43.7% from properties contacted, with 82.8% of those responses indicating that residents would like to see a permit parking scheme introduced.

As a result of that feedback, a consultation was initiated between 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020, where the scheme was formally advertised on the above roads in question, and all properties contacted via letter with supporting information, explaining why the scheme was now being formally advertised and how to provide comments. The scheme was also advertised in local press, on the County Councils website, with notice boards placed throughout the streets in question.

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The results of the formal consultation received a very low response rate of only 16.2%. The analysis revealed a 27.3% support for the scheme, and 72.7% objection to permit parking proposals. As the response rate was very low, officers felt this gave no real indication on how to proceed with the majority of properties not indicating a support or objection to the proposed scheme. Further contact with the properties who had not responded was therefore made, urging them to provide feedback regardless of whether they were for or against the scheme. They were given 21 days to confirm their position.

The overall results of the consultation revealed that of the 675 properties consulted, 40.7% responded with 52.7% of those respondents objecting to the permit parking proposals.

As part of the permit parking scheme advertised, additional restrictions were also proposed throughout the area such as double yellow lines where visibility was severely reduced at junctions, and creating a small one-way system between Castle Steet and Orchard Street, to provide more on-street parking needs. This also included some minor changes to existing parking bays and waiting restrictions, whilst introducing new parking bays.

Throughout our engagement with residents and businesses, the County Council has always maintained the permit parking scheme was only being advertised because of continued requests by residents, and that a scheme would only be implemented where the majority of the local community supported such proposals.

The outcome of the consultation exercise was considered by the Director of Environment and Transport in consultation with local elected representatives and the Cabinet Lead Member for Highways, Transportation and Flooding and on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 the decision was taken to **abandon** the proposals to implement a permit parking scheme but to go ahead with the introduction of the above additional restrictions - i.e. double yellow lines at junctions, one-way system and parking bay amendments. The approved measures will be introduced within the next 12 weeks.

Officers have worked extensively on this proposal since 2019 to ensure that all residents and local businesses had the same equal opportunity to comment on the scheme, whilst being available to discuss concerns and answer questions throughout this period. We appreciate there will be residents who are disappointed with the outcome, but we would seek to assure you that officers continue to recognise commuter parking remains a concern, and further work will occur later this year to provide more parking opportunities in the town centre.

We do apologise for the time taken to reach a conclusion on this scheme and indicate a decision to all of those affected. Regrettably, COVID-19 severely impacted officer normal ways of working and the general contentious nature of the proposals for both those who support and are against proposals, meant it was necessary to take time and ensure informed decisions were made accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

Ashley Hughes  
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