
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting

Date: 25th April 2013

Subject: Albert Court, Dunstable - Consider Objections to Proposed Residents Permit Parking Scheme

Report of: Jane Moakes, Assistant Director Environmental Services

Summary: This report seeks the approval of the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services for the introduction of a Residents Permit Parking Scheme in Albert Court, Dunstable following the publication of proposals and receipt of objections.

Contact Officer: Gary Baldwin
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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Dunstable Manshead

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposal will improve road safety and improve parking facilities.

Financial:

The cost of implementing this scheme in total will be approximately £5,000 and is being funded by the Council's Housing Services.

Legal:

None from this report

Risk Management:

None from this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None from this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None from this report

Community Safety:

None from this report

Sustainability:

None from this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the proposals to introduce a Residents Permit Parking Scheme in Albert Court, Dunstable be implemented as published.

Background and Information

1. Albert Court is a short cul-de-sac containing 30 apartments mainly occupied by elderly residents. It has 16 garages and the road will accommodate approximately 12 parked vehicles. There have been long-standing concerns about non-residents of Albert Court parking there, thereby denying space for those who live in Albert Court. Adjacent streets, particularly King Street, are very heavily parked and residents appear to use Albert Court for parking when space is available. Albert Court is within a comfortable walking distance of the town centre, so it is possible that some of the parking is retail-related.
2. Albert Court residents have expressed concerns about the parking situation to Central Bedfordshire Council's Housing Manager as well as the Highways Service. Consequently, the proposed permit parking scheme is being funded by the Council's Housing Services.
3. A preliminary consultation exercise was carried out in October and November 2012 to gauge Albert Court residents' views on the possibility of introducing a permit parking scheme. A total of 20 questionnaires were returned from the 30 residents and 15 said that parking was an issue in their road. 10 residents said that they would support a permit scheme and 9 said that they would not. Residents clearly felt that parking was an issue, but support for a permit scheme appears more mixed. However, it was felt that the proposals should proceed to the formal publication and consultation phase.
4. The proposals were formally advertised by public notice during February and March 2013. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Dunstable Town Council and the Elected Member. Residents of Albert Court were individually consulted by letter and notices were displayed on street.
5. Four individual objections have been received, one from a resident of Albert Court and the others from residents of nearby streets. A petition signed by 33 residents of King Street has been submitted with a covering letter and photographs. Copies of all correspondence are included in Appendix C. The main points being as follows:-
 - a) There are always parking spaces available in Albert Court because many residents do not have cars, so residents and visitors have no problem finding a parking space.
 - b) It is more important to resolve the more serious parking problems in King Street. Albert Court cannot be viewed in isolation because decisions about parking there will affect King Street.

- c) Those without a permit would need to find somewhere to park in another street, thereby denying a parking space to residents of those other roads.
 - d) The existing disabled spaces are not used.
6. Bedfordshire Police has no objection to any of the proposals.

Responses and Conclusion

7. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the points above are as follows:-
- a) It is acknowledged that the parking situation in Albert Court is significantly less acute than in some neighbouring streets, such as King Street. However, Albert Court is a small cul-de-sac and the parking area has the appearance of being an integral part of it, even though it is highway. Consequently, it is understandable that residents want to retain the parking for their own use. In addition, many of the residents are elderly and probably feel vulnerable if they have to park in other streets and walk home.
 - b) The level of on-street parking is very heavy in King Street due to most properties having no off-road parking and its close proximity to the town centre. As a result, vehicles are parked on both sides of King Street and many are parked partially on the footway to ensure that the road is not blocked to through traffic. There is certainly some merit in considering a residents permit parking scheme for King Street, although any formal parking controls are likely to have a significant impact on parking capacity and activity in that road. Extensive consultation with residents would clearly be essential.
 - c) There are approximately 12 on-street parking spaces in Albert Court, including 2 disabled bays. Consequently, if the proposed permit scheme was introduced the number of parked cars belonging to non-Albert Court residents likely to transfer to adjacent roads is likely to be relatively small. Residents of King Street would, of course, lose the ability to park in Albert Court on those occasions when parking in King Street itself, which would mean that they would have to park further and they would have an impact in adjacent streets.
 - d) Of the 20 replies received to the preliminary consultation, 5 stated that they are blue badge holders. This suggests that the two existing disabled parking spaces should be retained. Also, one might reasonably assume that some visitors to Albert Court will be blue-badge holders, so the disabled spaces would serve that additional purpose.
8. In conclusion, it is felt that the proposed permit parking scheme for Albert Court should be implemented.

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Drawing of Proposed Waiting Restrictions
- Appendix B – Public Notice for Proposed Waiting Restrictions
- Appendix C – individual Objections
- Appendix D – Petition, covering letter and photographs

PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE A RESIDENTS PERMIT PARKING ZONE AND NO WAITING AT ANY TIME IN ALBERT COURT, DUNSTABLE

Reason for the proposal: The proposed Order is considered necessary in the interest of improving parking facilities for residents. Car owners from other streets park in Albert Court, thereby preventing people who live in Albert Court parking near their homes. The proposed residents' permit scheme is intended to restrict parking in Albert Court to those who live there. Those lengths of road that will not be designated as permit parking areas are proposed to be no waiting at any time to ensure that they are kept clear of parked vehicles.

Effect of the Order:

To introduce Parking by Residents Permit Holders only on the following lengths of road in Dunstable:-

Albert Court, south-west side, from a point approximately 18 metres south-east of the front wall of nos.28 and 30 Albert Court in a south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 18 metres.

Albert Court, north-east side, from a point in line with the front wall of no.28 and 30 Albert Court in a south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 14 metres.

Residences eligible to apply for a permit to park in the Residents Permit Parking Zone identified above:-

All Albert Court residences.

To introduce No Waiting at any time on the following lengths of road in Dunstable-

Albert Court, north-east side, from a point approximately 14 metres south-east of the front wall of no.28 and 30 Albert Court in a south-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 17 metres, including the vehicular access to the garages.

Albert Court, south-east side, from a point approximately 4 metres north-east of the north-east flank wall of no.12 and 16 Albert Court in a north-easterly direction for a distance of approximately 3 metres.

Further Details of the proposal and plans may be examined during normal opening hours at Dunstable Library, Vernon Place, Dunstable LU5 4HA or online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations. These details will be placed on deposit until 6 weeks after the Order is made or until it is decided not to continue with the proposal. For more information please contact Gary Baldwin tel. 0845 365 6116 or e-mail gary.baldwin@amey.co.uk

Objections: should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or e-mail centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk stating the grounds on which they are made by 8th March 2013.

Order Title: If made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (Bedfordshire County Council (District of South Bedfordshire) (Civil Enforcement Area and Special Enforcement Area) (Waiting Restrictions and Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2008) (Variation No.*) Order 201**"

Technology House
Amphill Road
Bedford MK42 9BD

Gary Alderson
Director for Sustainable Communities

13th February 2013

Appendix C

DOCUMENT REF | 51849
ABBEY
Dear Sir GPB

19 FEB writing in reply to your letter re parking permits. I only moved in in November so did not get to put my views I strongly object to the scheme there isn't many people with cars and friends and family have no trouble parking when they visit. This scheme means if you don't have a permit they would have to go and park in another street and take up someone else's space and the spaces here would be empty there is already one disabled space none can use and is always empty if permits are to be issued we should have visiting cards that friends and family could use I really don't think this has been thought through enough and could cause a lot more problems there will always be some issues in most streets as families have more than one car also who is going to police this scheme. Are the garages in use people with cars could use those if they think there is a problem or turn the area into a car park.

Albert Court
RUNS
246 35P

Yesterday I received a letter concerning the proposed parking permit application for Albert Court. Initially I thought to email and object. On passing Albert Court on many evening occasions there are always spaces and the disabled spaces are often empty. So why do they need parking permits? Is it to stop the residents of King St parking there which they are legally able to do at the present time. I have a blue badge and on occasions have parked in an unused disabled bay which no-one has queried or objected to.

I think the council are missing the point- if you dealt with the dreadful parking problem on King St and allowed permits on there - much of the problem would be solved. These are the main problems on King St.

During the day people are parking on King St and walking into the town to avoid paying for car parks.

During the day many workers from businesses on High St South are parking and householders often cant get near thier address.personal number plates is one of the worst offenders.

At teatime and all weekend there are commercial vehicles left parked- a scaffolding firm van/ 2 builders lorries/ a window cleaning van and unmarked white van .These take up approx 7 parking spaces and the owners of these vans also have 1 or 2 family cars as well. Over Christmas I had a large white van parked there for 12 days- meaning i couldnt get near my front door and blocking light.

Many households have more than 1 car. the 4 houses opposite me have 8 cars. They have strategies for parking these- leaving spaces between cars but not big enough to park in- then moving them up to get another space. People also sit on chairs in their windows waiting for a space near the house. My daughter who lives further down often has to walk a considerable distance with a young child and shopping. This seems most unfair.

I have asked the council twice to do something about this by introducing permit parking. They told me someone came to assess the situation and ask residents opinions. I asked many people if they had seen anyone or been asked- No. Obviously the houses that have 2 or 3 cars wont support us who only have 1 car as they dont want to pay for extra permits.

I have a blue badge parking permit but the parking situation has led me to not replacing my car. I would like a car but the parking situation is so bad , I dont feel I can cope with the situation as it is now. i feel I am being discriminated against by the parking situation.

So i will register my objection to parking permits in Albert Court
But also ask you to consider the situation in King St.- which i feel is a far worse situation and affecting far more people

It has come to my attention that yet again the residents of Albert Court are trying to stop parking in Albert Court.

I am bemused by this latest attempt as very very few residents in Albert Court have vehicles. This latest attempt is not so they can park their vehicles but to stop other road users parking in their road. What makes them so different than those in King Street.

They had always thought that this was a private road, but the council informed King Street Residents and Albert Court residents that this was in fact not the case and the private road signs to Albert Court were subsequently removed. Even though Albert Court residents are fully aware that parking is allowed in Albert Court, they have placed very sticky notices right across the eye view on car window screens telling people not to park there.

Do the residents, if they have cars, and whose property entry is on King Street park in Albert and walk around the corner, no they would want to park as near to their property as possible. Well, so do the residents of King Street.

It is not the residents of King Street who cause the parking problems and it is not just Albert Court who suffer but King Street also suffer from local offices, especially Transferreg, and pub customers parking in King Street and Albert Court.

I am resident of King Street and since the removal of the yellow lines around Albert Court there is now very little, if any, parking on the pavement as they used to be, which was a problem for everyone, not just Albert Court residents.

If this latest attempt by Albert Court is successful it will, as stated many times before, have a detrimental affect on the parking around King Street and surrounding roads.

As before, when the offices have gone home there are very few cars in Albert Court and in the evening there are spaces available for Albert Court Residents and King Street residents to park.

As stated many times before, why should the King Street residents have to suffer because of parking by non-residents of King Street and Albert Court.

I therefore strongly object to this latest request by Albert Court. If a permit only parking is introduced then it should also include King Street so we can ALL have the benefit of being able to not just park near our homes but in our road.

I am emailing on behalf of my mother who is a resident in King Street Dunstable Re: Alabert Court. They would like to object to the recent proposal of permit parking and no waiting restrictions. There is not a sufficient amount of parking in King Street as it is with the double yellow lines at the top and bottom of King Street. Every evening Albert Court is empty of cars parked in there. They feel that yet again the residence of Albert Court are being awkward and stubborn for the sake of it.

As a one car household they feel it should be an option to be able to park in the street they live and pay council tax and road tax for. On occassions they have been unable to park in King Street and feel very strongly about Albert Courts lack of understanding in this issue, when they have so much space and limited residence owning cars themselves.

They understand that emergency access to Albert Court is necessary, but in the last meeting we had with Albert Court this issue was resolved with the Double yellow lines at the entrance of Albert Court.

Some residence of Albert Court Residence show unexceptable behaviour by verbally abusing residence of King Street and also harrasment which my mother and her partner have experienced whilst walking their dog on the pavements around Albert Court, where one of the residence has been abusive at the window and taking photos!!!

They will also be contacting Andrew Selous on this matter as they feel that Albert Court kick up a fuss and council seem to do everything they can for them!!!

Appendix D

KING ST PETITION
MARCH 2013

PROPOSAL FOR PERMIT PARKING FOR ALBERT COURT RESIDENTS AND PARKING RESTRICTIONS

We the petition signatories and residents of King Street, Dunstable wish to object to the proposal for permit parking and parking restrictions for Albert Court. The reasons for our objections are:

1. That Albert Court car parking area is under used by Albert Court residents and the scheme is therefore unnecessary.
2. King Street residents on occasion need to park by Albert Court when there is no space to park in King Street, often when King St residents come home late from work. At no time does this inconvenience Albert Court residents as there are always spaces available. Our observation is that few Albert Court residents have cars as it is accommodation for the elderly.
3. If the scheme goes ahead it will make the parking problems much worse for other King Street residents who already struggle to park near their homes.
4. Albert Court is part of King Street and to reserve parking for the few who live in Albert Court will mean there will be empty parking spaces in that area whilst other residents of King St will not be able to park on the street in which they live. This is clearly unfair to the rest of us both as road users and tax payers.

We wish to formally object to the application from the residents of Albert Court in Dunstable to have permit parking and no waiting restriction the area in and around Albert Court and to limit permits to the residents of Albert Court.

Please see attached a copy of the petition signed by King Street residents over the past couple of days complaining about the proposed Albert Court permit scheme. Everyone that we managed to speak to signed and all commented on the selfish attitude of Albert Ct in proposing this and the way it would make King Street even more difficult to park in.

Also attached are photographs taken 9.00am on 16th March which contrast the crowded nature of the street compared with the open spaces and oceans of parking at Albert Court. King Street residents try to avoid parking at Albert Court when they can (in order, partly to avoid abuse from the residents there) but they have to sometimes park there when arriving late from work. The fact you can always find somewhere to park on Albert Court proves that the residents there do not need this scheme.

The reasons for our objections are:

- Albert Court is situated on and is an integral part of King Street. It cannot be viewed in isolation as decisions about parking in Albert Court will inevitably affect King Street.
- The claim that Albert Court residents require permits due to their having insufficient parking available because of people from other streets parking in their area is a false claim. What does happen however is that King Street residents' who return home from work after 7pm are often forced to park on Albert Court as the rest of the road is full after that time. The fact that they are able to use Albert Court shows that residents of the Court do not need these spaces. If you introduce permits for Albert Ct residents where do you think the other King Street residents can park?
- Albert Court residents never have any trouble parking as they are a sheltered housing scheme and few of the residents there drive. In contrast the majority of other King Street residents do drive and parking in the rest of King Street is at a premium.
- I point to photographic evidence taken on the morning of Saturday 16th March to demonstrate the relative parking situations of Albert ct compared to the rest of King Street. Photographs, A, A (i) show the Albert Court car park, B, C, D and E show the rest of the Albert Court area with numerous spaces for parking available. Photographs F, G and H show King Street at the same time with its usual parking problems. These problems would be exacerbated should the permit scheme go ahead.
- The parking permit scheme for Albert Court residents only will hardly raise any revenue as they will not be purchasing permits for vehicles they do not own.