

23rd January 2019

Policy Projects and Resources Committee

Merrymeade Site Parking Order

Report of: *Greg Campbell – Director of Operations*

Wards Affected: *Brentwood North*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report considers the introduction of parking restrictions at the site of Merrymeade House, to be known as Merrymeade Chase Car Park. The site is in two parts, 9 flats leased to a Housing Trust and a community facility managed by Brentwood Leisure Trust (BLT) for Brentwood Borough Council. The site also contains a Coach House and two semi-detached houses which accommodate the day nursery.
- 1.2 The Site has become increasingly dangerous for pedestrians walking to, from and around the location due to increased levels of vehicle use and poor parking.
- 1.3 There is clearly a need to regulate the parking on the site and to stop the abuse from vehicles seeking free all-day parking facilities.
- 1.4 It is proposed to add Merrymeade Chase to the Brentwood Off Street Parking Order with the objective of formalising the parking arrangements, discourage inappropriate parking and to address the parking abuse that is increasing.
- 1.5 By carrying out these changes, site safety will improve and the residents, businesses, their customers and staff will all benefit. It will further reduce the likelihood of an accident occurring.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To agree to delegate authority following consultation with Ward Members to the Director of Operations and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of PP&R Committee to add the Merrymeade Chase site to the Brentwood Off Street Parking Places Order.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Merrymeade House is one of a number of Halls which is managed by BLT through an agreement with Brentwood Council. However, Brentwood Council have responsibility to maintain the overall site and are therefore required to maintain the site safety.
- 3.2 Merrymeade Chase was due to be added to the parking order in November at the PP&R Committee 2018 and although there was not an issue with the Merrymeade site the application was deferred as it formed part of the overall report which required further work.
- 3.3 The report on Parking Orders specific to housing sites will be returning to a future PP&R Committee, however, in the meantime due to ongoing parking and safety situations at the Merrymeade site it is felt that this should be dealt with and progressed without delay.
- 3.4 Parking at the site is provided through marked parking bays, some specific for the residential flat occupiers and others are for those visiting the House or grounds. Further there are four disabled parking bays provided either side of the House.
- 3.5 It was brought to the Council's attention that parking at the Merrymeade site has become an issue with cars parking on either side of the road and using the pedestrian walkway to park their cars. In addition vehicles also park around the main entrance creating access difficulties for pedestrians and service vehicles.
- 3.6 Further it is understood that many of those people parking their cars on the site are not necessarily using the hall for its intended purpose. Many are local employees, staff or young adults from local schools and some are believed to be commuters. The problem is exasperated by the manner in which the cars park. These cars are often left on site from early morning to late afternoon.
- 3.7 The unmanaged parking means that pedestrians have to walk in the road to get to the house or the nursery they may be visiting. It is not uncommon to see adults pushing or walking young children up and down the middle of Merrymeade Chase. Further the unrestricted parking on each side of the road creates reduced visibility raising the level of the safety risk.
- 3.8 In order to regularise the situation, it is proposed to add this site to the parking order, make improvements to the pedestrian walkways and encourage those who should not be parking at this site to park elsewhere.

- 3.9 At this point in time it is not proposed to charge for parking but introduce a scheme which regularises the situation to reduce the abuse, encourage good parking and improve safety and have the power to enforce through the issue of parking tickets if necessary.
- 3.10 The proposed scheme will be consulted with Ward Members and the Chair of PP&R Committee and will be along the proposals set out below. Once consultation with Members is complete, the formal consultation with stakeholders including residents at the site will be undertaken. The proposal is based around:
- The introduction of limited free parking – Maximum stay 2 hours with no return for 4 hours.
 - The introduction of an effective scheme to allow residents, businesses, their customers and staff to park for longer as and when required.
- 3.11 The introduction of the Parking Order will require funding for signage, line marking and making general improvements including the relocation of the disabled parking bays to the front of the house nearer to the entrance ramp. It is envisaged that the cost will be in the region of £3,000 and funds will need to be taken from existing revenue budgets of the Parking service area.
- 3.12 The introduction of a parking order can take up to six months and it is felt that the risk to pedestrians is too great not to put some temporary measures in place. It is therefore proposed to purchase some temporary barriers to fence off the pedestrian pavement to enable safer passage for those walking to and from the site.
- 3.13 The cost of the above scheme will be in the region of £3,000 however these barriers can be used for future events and will be stored at the Depot in Warley.
- 3.14 Therefore, the total cost required for temporary safety arrangements and the introduction of a parking order to the Merrymeade site is £6,000.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To secure the safety of pedestrians visiting and using the site and ensure the parking is available for legitimate users of the site.
- 4.2 To formalising the parking arrangements, discourage inappropriate parking and to address the parking abuse that is increasing which, in turn, will improve the pedestrian safety at the site

5. References to Corporate Plan

- 5.1 To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services to our residents and businesses.

6. Implications

Financial implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

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- 6.1 The introduction of the parking order will require funding for signage, line marking and some general improvements. This is envisaged that the cost will be in the region of £3,000 and funds can be utilised within existing revenue budgets of the Parking Service Area.
- 6.2 The temporary barriers of £3,000 can be funded from the Asset Development budget of the Capital Program.

Legal Implications

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- 6.3 Under Section 32 Road Traffic Regulation 1984 where it appears necessary to a local authority to provide suitable parking places for vehicles it may provide off-street parking places. The same section empowers maintenance of such parking places by the authority.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Health & Safety implications

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- 7.3 The Health and Safety implications include the Council's arrangements to enable legal compliance with statutory responsibilities for using the Council's public open spaces.

7. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Map

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