

**TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER  
NOTICE OF PROPOSAL (PUBLIC CONSULTATION) REPORT  
DISABLED PARKING PLACES  
WATERHOUSE STREET, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD**



**Client:** Dacorum Borough Council

**Reference:** 5226-03

**Date:** June 2023



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS SO FAR**

### **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 to assess 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.

### **1.2 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’.
- 1.2.2 The introduction of new Disabled Parking Bays is proposed to generally increase the towns Disabled Parking capacity.

### **1.3 Previous Informal Consultations**

- 1.3.1 Residents and businesses affected by the proposals were consulted over a four-week period from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2022. A letter and plan were posted to the directly affected properties which explained the proposals and the reasoning behind them. Consultees were able to respond via email or post. The area comprised a total of approximately 226 addresses. Following the completion of the consultation process, no responses were received.
- 1.3.2 A consultation with the Statutory Consultees was also undertaken between 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2022. A letter and plan were emailed directly and consultees were invited to submit any comments via email. Two responses were received, of which one was an objection to the proposal.

1.3.3 Officers considered the responses received and in discussion with local stakeholders it was resolved to make the following changes to the proposal:

- To remove the proposed pay to park bays from the proposal.
- To retain 5x existing taxi bays after the crossing on the western side of Waterhouse Street.
- To convert a section of the existing taxi rank on the western side of Waterhouse Street into 8x Disabled parking bays.

## **2.0 NOTICE OF PROPOSAL (PUBLIC CONSULTATION)**

### **2.1 Methodology**

2.1.1 The Notice of Proposal (Public Consultation) process took place from 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 – a period of 3 weeks. During this process, Site Notices and Plans were erected on street furniture on site, the Notice of Proposal documents were made available on the Council website, and they were also published in the Hemel Hempstead Gazette.

2.1.2 A copy of the Notice of Proposal document package is included as Appendix B.

### **2.2 Consultation Responses**

2.2.1 Following the completion of the Notice of Proposal (Public Consultation) process, one objection was received from the Statutory Consultees (Taxi Association) and no objections from the general public. A response was received from a member of the public after the deadline, on the same grounds as the Taxi Association's objection.

2.2.2 The objection received from the Dacorum Hackney and Private Hire Taxi Association stated that the Taxi Bay on Waterhouse Street was used to, and above, capacity on a daily basis by taxi drivers and therefore, 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.

- 2.2.3 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.
- 2.3.4 In addition, Officers have visited the site in September 2021, February 2022 and September 2022. On all these occasions the Taxi Bay was occupied by a very low number of vehicles.
- 2.3.5 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 allowing additional visitors to the town centre to park at a convenient location.
- 2.3.6 A 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.

## **2.3 Conclusion**

- 2.3.1 Consideration has been given to the receipt of one objection arising from the formal Notice of Proposal for the above titled order. Despite this objection, it is clear that the vast majority of the Statutory Consultees and the general public consider the proposals on Waterhouse Street to be acceptable.

## **3.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Dacorum Borough Council have undertaken an extensive Notice of Proposal (Public Consultation) process with regards to proposed changes to existing parking restrictions on Waterhouse Street in Hemel Hempstead.
- 3.2 Site Notices and Plans were erected on street furniture on site, the Notice of Proposal documents were made available on the Council website, they were also published in the Hemel Hempstead Gazette.

- 3.3 One objection has been received from the Statutory Consultees and no responses were received from the general public. It can therefore be concluded that the vast majority deem the proposals to be acceptable.
- 3.4 Consideration has been given to the receipt of one objection arising from the formal Notice of Proposal for the above titled order. Notwithstanding the receipt of this objection, for the reasons as set out above, it is recommended to continue to make and implement the Traffic Regulation Order be implemented as proposed.