



AGENDA ITEM: 9

SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	22 March 2016
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Hemel Evolution: Bus Interchange Project - Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) proposal for Waterhouse Street
Contact:	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers: James Doe, Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration)</p> <p>Nathalie Bateman, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Team Leader for Hemel Evolution</p> <p>Jo Deacon, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
Purpose of report:	<p>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Bus Interchange Project; To seek approval for the making of a new Traffic Regulation Order within Waterhouse Street, to enable the further enforcement of parking on double yellow lines in order to protect the works carried out to Waterhouse Street as part of the Bus Interchange project.</p> <p>Bus Interchange – Traffic Regulation Order</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the making of a Traffic Regulation Order associated with the Bus Interchange project, within Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead. 2. To seek delegated authority from Hertfordshire County Council to make a Traffic Regulation Order in Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead.

Recommendations	<p>Bus Interchange - Traffic Regulation Orders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cabinet approves the Council seeking delegated authority from Hertfordshire County Council to make the Traffic Regulation Order noted in 2 below. 2. That subject to receiving authority from Hertfordshire County Council Cabinet approves the making of a Traffic Regulation Order to implement a loading/unloading ban along Waterhouse Street as set out in the draft order at Appendix 1. 3. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration, to authorise the sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order following the consultation period and consideration/resolution of any objections received
Corporate objectives	The Hemel Hempstead Masterplan supports the Council's vision and in particular the corporate objective of Regeneration.
Risk Implications	The area of Waterhouse Street risk assessment is included as part of the PID for Market Square and Bus Station Regeneration Project.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment carried out as part of each design processes.
Health And Safety Implications	The Stage 3 safety audit refers to this TRO parking enforcement option that would protect the area, and HCC confirm that no further safety audit is required to carry out these works

<p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>The Council requires delegated authority from Hertfordshire County Council as the relevant Highway Authority before it can exercise delegated powers to make the TRO and this authorisation must be secured before the order is formally advertised.</p> <p>Regulations made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 set out the rules for formal consultation under the Act and these must be followed to ensure that the process is completed lawfully.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>All of the costs associated with the consultation and delivery and enforcement of the Traffic Regulation Order will need to be from within the approved project budgets.</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>Terry Curtis - Principal TRO Officer / Head of Profession, Traffic Order Services, Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Steve Barnes - Parking Services Team Leader, DBC</p> <p>Bradley Joseph - Senior Engineer advisor, assigned to Hemel Evolution team, HCC</p>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>14th February 2014 Cabinet Report - Hemel Evolution: MSZ and BI</p> <p>Appendix 1 - Waterhouse Street TRO –Traffic order and site plan</p> <p>Appendix 2 (page 5) - Stage 3 safety Audit report</p>
<p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</p>	<p>MSZ - Marlowes Shopping Zone BI - Bus Interchange TRO - Traffic Regulation Order HCC - Hertfordshire County Council</p>

BACKGROUND

General

1. In January 2013 Dacorum Borough Council adopted Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan, setting out its long-term vision and regeneration plan. The vision states that “by 2021 Hemel Hempstead Town Centre will be an appealing, attractive and sustainable destination with a thriving economic centre and a high quality environment. The regeneration and evolution of the town centre will emphasise the natural and cultural assets of the town and celebrate its New Town history and rich heritage”. The Masterplan forms a framework for the future development of Hemel Hempstead town centre. <http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/regeneration>
2. December 2015 saw the completion of the new bus interchange creating a transport hub within the heart of the shopping area to help attract more visitors during the day, evening and night making it a place that people will want to visit over and over again to shop, work, live and enjoy. The scheme has also released land at the current Bus Station and Market Square, where there are proposals to deliver a new commercial leisure development.

Traffic Orders

3. To facilitate the operation of the bus interchange in the town centre it was necessary to relocate the existing 24hr taxi rank to Waterhouse Street. Cabinet reports on 14 February 2014 and 24 June 2014 set out the necessary TRO changes required to make the scheme work. This also included the new 24hr rank along Waterhouse Street, (operational since April 2015) providing 37 spaces.
4. The new taxi rank arrangement provides a single rank (split by the existing pedestrian crossing to Bank Court) with its head located at the northern end of Waterhouse Street just to the south of Bridge Street. In operational terms this ensures the rank head is located in the most appropriate and prominent location to service demand, and removes operational difficulties arising through having two separate rank heads.
5. Disabled parking within Waterhouse Street South has also been formalised through the provision of 12 blue badge spaces. Under a separate project approved by Cabinet on 17 December 2013, the parking spaces were relocated from Bank Court, which had been regenerated to provide a high quality public space and improve connectivity between the Marlowes pedestrian area and the Water Gardens, extending across Waterhouse Street.

New Traffic Orders required

6. Since the implementation of the taxi rank and disabled bays in Waterhouse Street, the street now experiences instances of informal blue badge parking. Although this is permitted under the Blue Badge scheme, Blue badge holders are parking on double yellow lines which encroach on junctions, roundabouts, service yard accesses and particularly in front of the taxi rank and bus stops. This is currently causing conflict with access and movement along Waterhouse Street.
7. The problem can only be resolved through Police enforcement should they consider it an obstruction, or by introduction of additional enforcement in the form of a loading/unloading restriction (Appendix 1), this TRO will give the Council's parking team the authority to enforce and help resolve this issue.
8. In order for the Council to make the TRO, our existing delegated authority with HCC needs to be updated to include this TRO although this is considered a formality, it is subject to their internal timescales to conclude this matter.
9. Traffic Regulation Orders are subject to formal, public consultation, a process that takes a minimum of 19 weeks. Objections to the various Traffic Regulations, dependent on their nature, may be resolved locally. As the Order covering Waterhouse Street reflects a prohibition on loading/unloading activities any objections received on these grounds, or any objection received from local bus operators, qualify for an automatic Public Inquiry, outside of the ability for the Council to address until the Inquiry is scheduled.
10. Appropriate informal consultation on the Traffic Regulation Orders, now implemented within Waterhouse Street, had been undertaken to minimise the risk of such objections. No significant objections were raised. The proposed changes set out in paragraph 8, does not change the original intention behind the TROs currently in force, however it this does not guarantee that objections will not be received.
11. Consultation has involved appropriate stakeholders, both through the ongoing Project Board / Member presentations, but also involved the taxi association, bus operators and HCC. Disabled user groups were consulted previously as part of the relocation of the taxi rank, and creation of short stay and formal disabled parking bays, this TRO only seeks to enforce the areas of double yellow lines where Blue Badge parking is already prohibited, but can currently only be enforced by the Police.
12. Further Informal public consultation has not been sought on this issue as the implementation of the taxi rank, disabled parking and short stay bays were subject to a Stage 1,2 & 3 Safety Audit, which recommends that further enforcement action may be required to deal with this issue of informal blue badge parking. The implementation of this TRO will therefore support this recommendation (Appendix 2 - page 5)
13. Timescales for delivery of this TRO for Waterhouse Street have been developed with regard to the formal TRO process, giving rise to three options for delivery dependent on the duration taken to resolve any objections received.

The following delivery options, based upon the TRO process, are expected to start April 2016.

- **Option 1** - No objections to TRO: therefore
Consultation ends - May 2016
Sealing - July 2016
Enforcement starts - July/Aug 2016
 - **Option 2** - Locally resolved objections to TRO: therefore
Consultation ends - May 2016 – consideration of responses by Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) and Portfolio Holder June 2016
Sealing - Aug/Sept
Enforcement starting Oct 2016
 - **Option 3** - Non-resolvable objections, therefore
Public Inquiry - April 2017
Sealed (subject to Public Inquiry decision) July-Dec 2017
14. Should there be 'no objections' to the formal consultation, or objections received are capable of informal resolution, the approval of recommendation 3, would afford the TRO to be implemented without requiring a further Cabinet report confirming there were 'no objections' and that we are in compliance with legislation regarding TRO's and with HCC's delegated authority to proceed.
15. The specific effects of the TRO on Waterhouse are set out in the draft TRO in Appendix 1, however,
- The general nature and effect of which will be to introduce:
- *Providing loading/unloading restrictions to all areas of double yellow lines, to include the roundabout at Moor End Road on Waterhouse Street, between Bridge Street and Moor End Road.*
 - *The proposals will convert existing 'No Waiting at any time' restrictions to No Waiting or Loading at any time restrictions*