

Results of Churchfields Parking Public Consultation

Highways & Transportation Committee 27th February 2017

1. Background

Since the introduction of a residential parking scheme in Offham Road, we have received a number of comments from residents in Churchfields asking if a dedicated residential parking scheme can be introduced in their street.

This is because there has been an increase in cars owned by either business users or station users who previously parked elsewhere. This has been made worse by some visitors parking there to avoid the parking charges that have been introduced in the Short Term Car Park.

We set up a simple online consultation on our website (www.westmallingpc.org) and ran this between 16th & 27th January 2017. It was publicised to Churchfields residents by a leaflet drop to all 37 properties, an online campaign using our social media accounts as well as personal visits by Trudy and myself to properties on the street.

2. Action Required

The Highways & Transportation Committee is asked to review the results of the public consultation and consider the next steps.

3. Public Consultation Results

3.1. Number of Respondents

There were **32** online responses to the parking consultation and **3** paper responses.

Of the **35** responses, 1 was from a resident of Kings Hill and 1 was from a West Malling resident who does not live in Churchfields.

As the consultation was for residents of Churchfields, both of them have been excluded from the results.

This means there were **33** responses from Churchfields residents. It is these responses that have been used to produce the results below.

3.2. Question 1

“Do you think there should be a residential parking scheme introduced in Churchfields?”

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	60.6%
No	13	39.4%
Total	33	

3.3. Question 2

“What time would you like a Residential Parking Scheme in Operation?”

Option	Number	Percentage
Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm	1	4%
Monday to Saturday 8am to 8pm	2	8%
Monday to Sunday 8am to 8pm	14	56%
Other	8	32%
Total	25	

4. Comments

Below are the verbatim comments made in response to the public consultation.

They have been reproduced in full. The only things that have been removed are any names, house numbers and telephone numbers. Where this has been done, it is noted in the comments.

<p>There is usually little problem with parking in this road. I have just looked out of my door and can see at least 15 spaces.</p> <p>It appears to me to be another way of extracting more money out of local residents. Better still develop the small plot of land next to the Scared Crow as that could accommodate at least fifteen to twenty vehicles and stop charging for parking behind Tesco's. The yellow lines around the pub haven't helped either despite claims to the contrary. Just an example of the many reasons I resigned from the Parish Council some years ago.</p>
<p>Churchfield residents opposed permits in the general sense as most of us park wherever we can. We have been caught out with the permits for the reasons you state. However, ChurchFields does not need parking bays: we are all experts at parking close to each other and parking bays will make things worse. Just a restriction on non residents will suffice.</p>
<p>As a Churchfield resident i do not want to pay to park outside my own house, i pay road tax and think this is adequate, This is all stemming from parking charges introduced to tesco car park. my view is that obtain all residents vehicle regs, and to charge anyone who is not resident in Churchfields, with a sign put up in road clearly stating parking for residents ONLY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!</p>
<p>No means No</p> <p>We are against more urbanisation of our village</p> <p>we were against the yellow lines in Offham road which have crept in to Churchfields anyway .</p> <p>we knew this would not solve anything but create more problems .</p> <p>Glad the people who mainly have drives anyway got their way, which may have been influenced by councillors living in Offham Road.</p> <p>The focus of the council should be prevention of Construction Traffic using Churchfields during the development of the Church Centre opposed by the residents of Churchfields but pushed through anyway for the financial benefit of the Church and a Property Developer made richer and the local Community and residents much worse off.</p>
<p>We are in urgent need of resident only parking in Churchfields.</p>
<p>Even though it would be a shame to have permit parking signage in such an historic area of west Malling I feel it is necessary. Parking has always been a problem in this tiny road because of visitor and commuters to the high street mon-fri, and church goes on Sundays. The situation has been compounded by the parking restrictions in</p>

<p>surrounding roads. Due to the restricted space It would be ideal for permits to be allocated solely for this road</p>
<p>As I usually have difficulty in finding a parking space in churchfields I am very willing to pay the £40 permit fee. to allow me to park in my road.</p>
<p>One permit per household with guest passes available. We would also need some assurance that it would be enforced properly.</p>
<p>One permit per house with expensive guest passes and assurances that it will be enforced properly</p>
<p>One permit per household (Note: submitted on behalf of neighbour with no internet access)</p>
<p>Although I agree that there has been a slight increase of workers in West Malling parking in Churchfields during the day I don't think the problem is bad enough to warrant permits (there doesn't seem to be any provision elsewhere for these people to park??). It has always been the case that at times we have had to park elsewhere due to no spaces being available. However once the church hall is developed into housing and we lose some of the current spaces (??) at that end of the street then I think the situation should be revisited as we will have the overspill of residents/visitors to these houses as well as the removal of the spaces - but I presume this is come way off.....</p>
<p>We don't feel that we should pay for permits as revenue will be generated from tickets/fines. We would like to add that we did not receive notification of the previous consultation and could not express our views.</p>
<p>The solution is simple. Go back to free parking and people will use the car parks instead of the streets. Shops and businesses will benefit from increased visitors. The council created this issue by charging for parking.</p>
<p>The implementation of residents permits doesn't fix the situation. If we have it in Church Fields, then people will park in other residency roads. So the situation is moved to somewhere else. Business people both full time and part time need to be able to park. Otherwise if nobody can park, then businesses will shut down. Can you confirm if everybody in Church Fields is guaranteed a space? If not, then it's just more money for the council. This needs to be made clear. The only time when residents parking could would is from overnight 7pm to 7am. Then if people drive to work during the day, this frees up spaces for people who work in West Malling. My hairdresser who works part time, has rented a space on someone's drive as it she can't afford a space at the business car parking. Best option is to make the Tesco Car Park free again or a reasonable day rate of Â£4.50 which is charged at the station. We need to fix the problem, not move it to another area. Take it away from Offham Road and Norman Road too. Please feel free to call me on XXXX (telephone number removed to provide anonymity).</p>
<p>The parking in Churchfields was terrible at the best of times let alone now Offham Road etc is permit parking. I would also like to add that I find it confusing that the letter states residents previously indicated we did not want resident parking yet ourselves and every other resident I have spoken to have not been consulted on this matter at all.</p>
<p>I think this will have a huge impact on visitors to St. Mary's Court, Churchfields (Sheltered Accommodation for the Older Person). If a parking bay was to be available they will have limited time to stay with their relative.</p>
<p>Would it be fair to expect all the residents to buy visitors permits?</p>
<p>There's been a notable increase in cars parked in Churchfields and the crescent by the scared crow since parking permits were introduced in Offham road and charges to car parks. I've found that I'm increasingly struggling to park my car when returning home in the evening and having to park in Fatherwell avenue - ironically though spaces are available at this time in permit bays in Offham road. Visitors to the church for</p>

Christenings (you can tell by the outfits!) are also parking in Churchfields on Sunday's, restricting spaces for residents. It therefore feels right that parking permits are extended from Offham road to Churchfields to help address these issues especially given that they'll worsen when the redevelopment of the church centre leads to the loss of further car park spaces at the top of Churchfields. Thanks

It is important that passing trade to the public house is not detrimentally affected, therefore parking should be available to all after 6.00pm. I would suggest two windows when the street becomes resident only parking. In order to prevent all day parking by non-residents I would suggest residents parking only between 10.30-12.30 and again 4.00-6.00pm.

I don't think that we have a major problem with non-residents parking on the street. I occasionally have to park away from Churchfields in the evening but this has been the case ever since we moved to WM 11 years ago. This could be due to a multitude of factors- more cars per household, visitors, non-residents, overspill from Offham Rd, etc but we won't know the real reason unless a thorough survey is conducted. I also think that the situation should be review once the new houses in the church hall are built as they may (or may not) impact on the parking situation. And finally, I don't really want to pay for parking outside my house on top of my ever increasing council tax bill.

Contrary to what has been suggested, we do not think parking has become more difficult since the double yellow lines in Offham and Norman Roads. There is room during the day which belies the point about refugees from the Tesco car park. After 6pm it is difficult but no more so than previously. It has however been our experience that some residents believe they're entitled to a space outside their front door and resent anybody else parking there, Again this has always been the attitude and is no change. We would strongly object to paying for parking in our street in what would undoubtedly a reduced number of spaces- witness the spaces in Offham road as against previously. The biggest improvement would be if customers of the Scared Crow were more considerate and parked properly and effectively.

Monday-Saturday inclusive between 9am - 3pm. This should prevent indiscriminate parking by others to the detriment of residents without causing the residents too much inconvenience. Parking permits for residents only at all times.

On the basis that all surrounding areas have a permit, then we should have a scheme in Churchfields.

Provided that the 'semi circle' is 'in scope' for Churchfields permit holders....or we share permit space with offham road, such that we can use their permit space, and they can use ours...(I don't tend to part on the narrow street as my car has been damaged along here)

One additional point - I think we were too over zealous on the double yellow lines on the semi circle - a few extra spaces could be created here which would help

Parking bays will mean a loss of spaces as residents will no longer be able to park as per the unwritten agreements that many neighbours have; this situation will be compounded when the Church Centre is renovated. West Malling employees need somewhere to park, create this and I imagine that parking issues in Churchfields and the surrounding streets will ease.

I'm not convinced this will help the situation for a few reasons:

residents currently utilise the spaces as efficiently as possible - I suspect the introduction of boxes for us to fit into will result in the loss of spaces, as appears to have been the case in Offham Road

the main issue with non-residents parking in the street is during the day, Monday to Friday - this is actually when parking is least required by residents because they are at work. The best solution to eliminate this problem will be to find suitable parking areas for day time workers in the town.

It is during the evening that the problem occurs. People using the pub can no longer park in Offham Road until after 8pm and therefore park in the D at the end of the street and further out from Churchfields. This means this area is now full and Churchfields residents are forced even further afield - would the permit area include the D at the end of the road and therefore take away parking for the pub?

One other point we haven't been advised on is whether we would be in the same permit area as Offham road or a different one - if it is the latter, then I suspect the introduction of permits will make little difference to the current situation.

I am the owner of XX Churchfields. (house number removed to protect identity)
There will be an overall loss of parking compared to the current informal arrangement as passing places will be needed, as well as perhaps disabled bays if a resident applies. Considering this I am of the opinion that any business parking provision should be resisted.

Church Fields should be included in WM 3 zone or above to prevent residents of Offham Road etc putting extra pressure on the reduced parking provision. Wicken Place is a similar distance from the High Street to Churchfields and is WM1 zone. Furthermore, it should be noted that properties in Churchfields have no front gardens and are therefore not able to accommodate vehicles within their curtilage.

I FEEL THIS WOULD BENEFIT MOST OF THE RESIDENTS HERE, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF US WHO STILL WORK AND FIND IT PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO PARK WHEN WE GET HOME. ALSO SOME OF US ONLY HAVE 1 CAR, WHEREAS OTHERS WHO HAVE 2 OBVIOUSLY TAKE UP ALL THE SPACE. I AND OTHERS OFTEN HAVE TO PARK IN FATHERWELL RD.

ALTHOUGH PARKING IN CHURCHFIELDS IS AN ONGOING PROBLEM AS A RESIDENT I FEEL THAT PUTTING IN RESTRICTIONS IE PARKING BAYS, WOULD REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SPACES NOW AVAILABLE AND THEREFORE MAKE THE PROBLEM WORSE. I COUNTED 27 VEHICLES PARKED ALONG THE LENGTH OF THE ROAD AND PUTTING IN PARKING BAYS WOULD CONSIDERABLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SPACE.

MONDAY TO SUNDAY 0600 TO 2300

I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE WEST STREET ONE WAY (FROM OFFHAM ROAD TO HIGH STREET). PEOPLE INCLUDING MYSELF WOULD GET USED TO IT.

Councillor Richard Selkirk
Vice Chairman
West Malling Parish Council