

REPORT: Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 8th February 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Proposed waiting restrictions around Runcorn Hill

WARDS: Heath

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on consultation that has been carried out on the proposal to introduce waiting restrictions on parts of Park Road, Highlands Road, Campbell Avenue and Heath Park Grove in Runcorn near to Runcorn Hill Park, in order to address parking congestion and recommend a way forward.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

This Board supports the proposal to make an Order to introduce at “At Any Time” waiting restrictions on parts of Park Road, Highlands Road, Campbell Avenue and Heath Park Grove in Runcorn as shown in Appendix ‘B’ and defined in Appendix ‘C’ and that the report be submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the recent improvements to Runcorn Hill Park, several complaints have been received about problems caused by parked vehicles from residents living on adjacent roads. These complaints have come directly from residents and via their elected members, as well as from PCSOs, who were complaining on behalf of residents and the police. Also, three letters were received from residents in April 2016 supporting the principle of installing parking restrictions in order to resolve parking problems.
- 3.2 The complaints have been about:
- congestion caused by vehicles double parking (i.e. parking on both sides of the road) which could block access for residents and for emergency vehicles;
 - dangers to children crossing from the café to the park (again because of double parking); and
 - blocked accesses to residential properties.
- 3.3 On the park side of these roads, there is no footway apart from a very small length towards the northern end of Highlands Road. In fact, there is no footway on either side

of Highlands Road between Park Road and Heath Park Grove. This lack of footways only exacerbates the potential for conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. On the sides of the roads where there are houses, there are footways which help improve visibility of pedestrians.

- 3.4 During preliminary discussions between residents, local councillors and Council officers, problems with drivers parking across driveways, particularly on Park Road, were raised. It was agreed that 'H' bar markings would be installed across driveways, where wanted, in order to keep accesses clear (this request to provide 'H' bars was received via local councillors). Due to the delays in implementing any parking restrictions, these 'H' bar markings have already been installed for all driveways on Park Road between Campbell Avenue and Highlands Road.
- 3.5 Since the opening of the café and the redevelopment of Runcorn Hill in August 2015, the complaints about parking problems have increased and, given the increased usage of the area, these complaints appear to be justified. The letters received in April 2016 have raised other issues as follows:
- *the placing of a residents only sign at the southern end of Highlands Road adjacent to the prefabricated homes*– an advisory sign saying “Access to properties only” has been erected by the Council to discourage general parking on the southern section of Highlands Road
 - *fencing around the field opposite the café* – the complainant has requested additional fencing but this goes against the design principles for the area. The Heritage Lottery Funded re-designed layout for the Park has a ditch along the boundary of the field opposite the café and additional fencing isn't required. The path layout, together with placement of boulders indicates the safe route across the road for pedestrians, removing the need for fencing.
 - *signs displaying children crossing* – two signs are being provided on Highlands Road in the vicinity of the café
 - *restricted speed signs*– these are being requested for the area which is already restricted to 30 mph, therefore additional signs are not permitted but the area will be monitored, if the waiting restrictions are implemented
 - *direction signs directing traffic to other car parking areas, away from the café and residents' area* – these have been provided and additional signs will be provided in the vicinity of the northern parking area when the alterations to create additional parking are completed.
 - *opening up the extra parking at the café and the park* – the parking adjacent to the café is now open (it was delayed due to establishment of the reinforced grass which was weather/season dependant); the old car park has been closed and is only suitable for large events, when it would be manned, this is due to poor visibility entering and leaving the car park. Also, its location adjacent to the playground makes it less suitable for public use. Alterations to the changing room car park (accessed from Heath Road South) will be completed in time for the February half term break. This car park, which offers 20 spaces, will then be open at peak times (school holidays and weekends throughout the summer months) instead of only when the football pitches are in use. (Please refer to the Plan in Appendix E for more detail).

- 3.6 Plans are currently being drawn up for improved and expanded car parking facilities at

the north end of Highlands Road close to the original Runcorn Hill Park car park. Subject to funding, the additional facilities could be in place by the Summer of 2018. This car park would accommodate at least 30 cars. The café will be visible from this new parking area, which should encourage its use. In the meantime, due to the large number of residential properties in the area, who use on street parking, it is hoped that the parking restrictions could help to encourage visitors to the park to use more sustainable means of transport, such as walking and cycling.

- 3.7 Ward councillors have been consulted and fully support the proposed restrictions. Cheshire Police have been consulted and raised no objections; the local PSCO has agreed to enforce the restrictions.
- 3.8 The proposals for waiting restrictions, as shown in Appendix A, were the subject of formal public consultation in September 2016 and 15 objections were received from residents of Highlands Road and members of Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats Group. A summary of the objections is included in Appendix D.
- 3.9 Following the objections, an officer from the Council met with some of the residents from Highlands Road, to explain the proposals and discuss their objections. The main points raised are as follows:
1. Lack of parking for houses with no off-street parking
 2. Insufficient car parking for the Runcorn Hill Park
 3. Request for a residents parking scheme.

Officer responses to the comments are as follows:

1. It is acknowledged that parking is limited for properties with no off-street parking, but there is no statutory right to be able to park on the highway outside a property. However, in view of the objections, it is now proposed that the original proposal be amended, as shown in Appendix B to reduce the impact for residents on Highlands Road. If approved, the situation will be monitored to assess the impact of the amendment and to determine whether further action is necessary.
 2. Additional parking has been and will be provided for Runcorn Hill (as para 3.6 above). In addition, extra signage to the car parks has been provided in the area to direct visitors to the car parks.
 3. It is current policy not to have residents parking. This was the subject of a report to this Policy & Performance Board on 16th September 2009; the situation has not changed since that date.
- 3.10 There were eight objections from Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats Group which are mainly objecting to reduced availability of parking near the lake, as some members have mobility issues and hence feel that their access to the lake would be restricted. Also, due to the proposed restrictions, they feel that it will make tenure of the existing buildings next to the lake and use of the lake impossible. They also say that refurbishment of the former air raid shelter as a workshop may not proceed. These, unfortunately, are not grounds for objection and cannot be considered. However, additional parking is to be made available with access from Heath Road South that can be used by members of the Model Boat Group and if the members have a Blue Badge then, providing they are not causing an obstruction, they can stop on the double yellow

lines for up to three hours. Therefore, it is felt that the impact of the restrictions will be minimal for members of the Model Boat Group.

- 3.11 The proposed revisions to the restrictions should, through adequate enforcement by the police, help to keep the areas clear of parked vehicles and ensure access to the area is maintained. Drg. No. 2016-001A in Appendix 'B' indicates the proposed restrictions.

There is a risk that removal of the parking could result in an increase in speeds, but as stated above this will be monitored and speed surveys are to be carried out in the near future (before implementation of any restrictions).

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total cost of introducing the requested waiting restrictions would be approximately £700. This would be funded through annual traffic management revenue allocations.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Children & Young People in Halton
The implementation of waiting restrictions should serve to reduce the amount of parking along lengths of road frequented by children.
- 6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.
- 6.3 A Healthy Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Healthy Halton' priority.
- 6.4 A Safer Halton
The proposed waiting restrictions will serve to prevent obstruction and protect sightlines for all road users.
- 6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Urban Renewal' priority.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There is a variable and uncertain road safety risk associated with not introducing these proposed restrictions, the degree of risk depending on the number of drivers who continue to park obstructing the highway and sight lines at these locations.
- 7.2 Parking displaced from those lengths of road for which restrictions are proposed, will inevitably place an extra demand on adjacent areas; however this will, in time, be mitigated to some extent by the creation of additional parking areas off Highlands Road. The new restrictions recommended in this report are being proposed on safety

and freedom of access grounds, due to the park proving so popular. This will increase parking on adjacent roads and this will be monitored following implementation of the restrictions and possible additional restrictions may be required, although it is also hoped that visitors be encouraged to use more sustainable means of transport, such as walking and cycling.

7.3 No full risk assessment is required.

8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES.

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

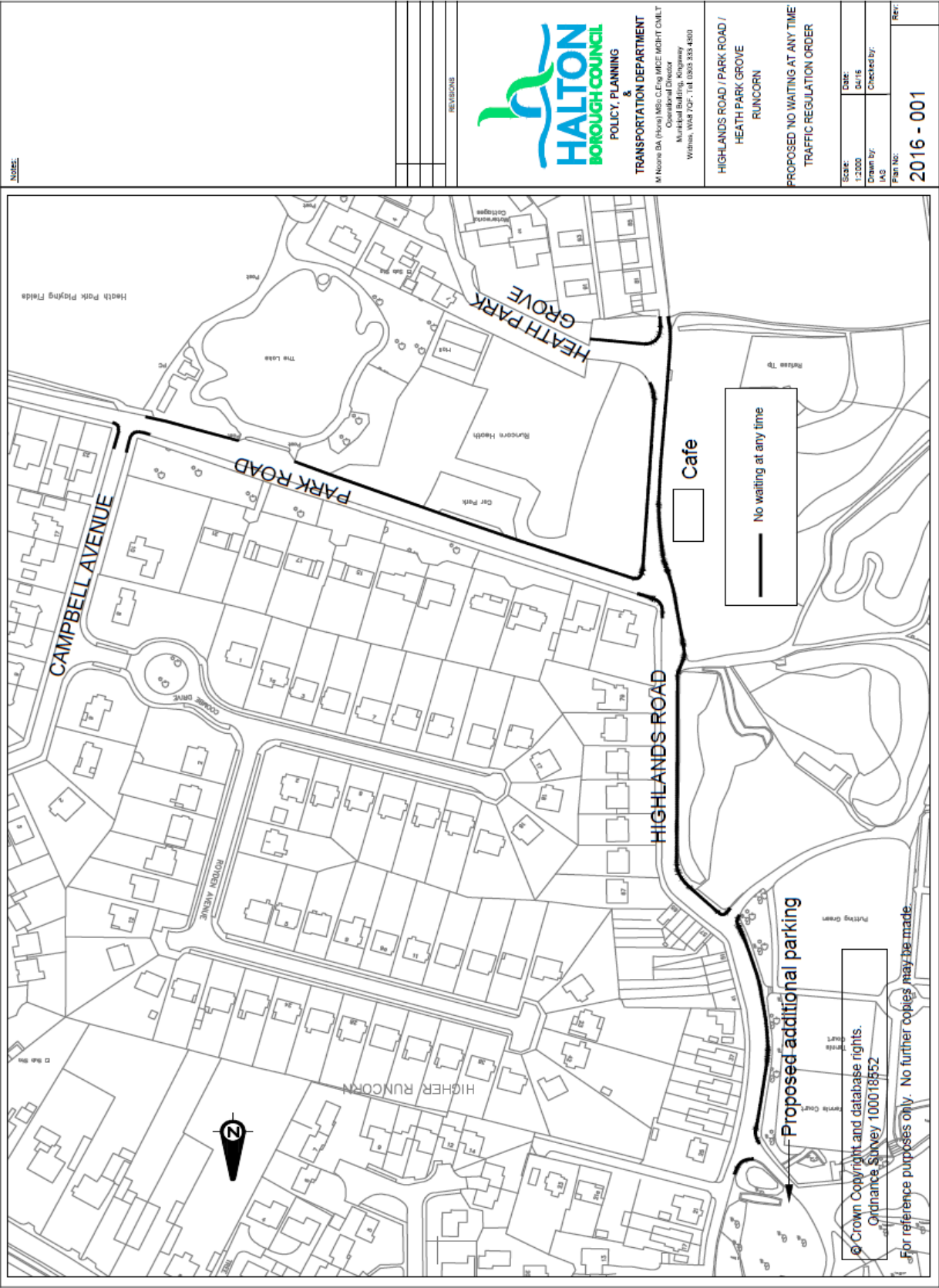
9.0 KEY DECISIONS ON THE FORWARD PLAN

9.1 These proposals do not constitute a key decision and are not included in the Forward Plan.

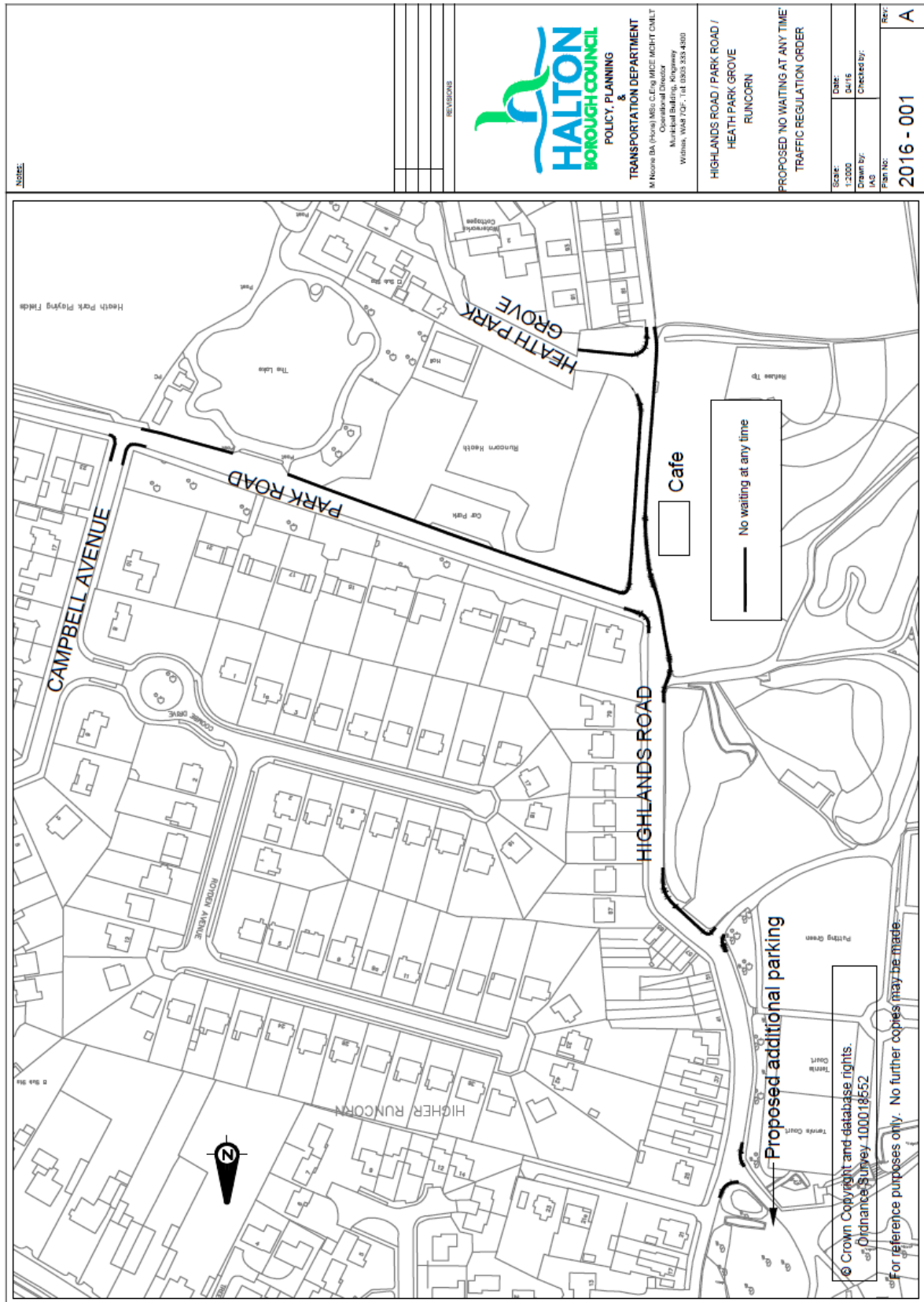
10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B



Details of Proposed Order:

[a] "At Any Time" Waiting Restrictions.

[b] Details:

Highlands Road

West Side

From a point 261m north of the centreline of the junction with Park Road, for a distance of 26m in a southerly direction.

From a point 155m north of the centreline of the junction with Park Road, for a distance of 47m in a southerly direction.

From a point 42m north of the centreline of the junction with Park Road, for a distance of 160m in a southerly direction.

East Side

From a point 10m north of the centreline of the junction with Park Road, for a distance of 130m in a southerly direction.

Park Road

North Side

From its junction with Highlands Road, for a distance of 10m in an easterly direction.

South Side

From its junction with Highlands Road, for a distance of 155m in an easterly direction and from a point 9m west of the centreline of the junction with Campbell Avenue, for a distance of 35m in a westerly direction.

Heath Park Grove

South Side

From its junction with Highlands Road for a distance of 27m in easterly direction.

Campbell Avenue

Both Sides

From its junction with Park Road for a distance of 10m in a northerly direction.

[c] Plans: Drg. No. 2016-001A (attached in Appendix "B").

[d] Associated revocations: None.

[e] Exemptions: Standard

[f] Date to be advertised: ASAP

[g] Date to be effected: ASAP

[h] Advertising code: 5400 1625 2544

Justification: To prevent obstructive parking and protect sightlines.

APPENDIX D

Objections to Proposed Waiting Restrictions – Runcorn Hill Park

Objection No.	Objector	Objection	Comments
1	Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats (RDSMB)	Objection to reduced availability of parking near the lake. Some members have mobility issues, which restrictions would restrict their access Restrictions will make tenure of existing buildings and use of lake impossible. Also refurbishment of air raid shelter as a workshop may not proceed	Restrictions are only on one side of Park Road and additional parking is being made available off Heath Road South. Also blue badge holders can park on yellow lines for up to 3 hours providing they are not causing an obstruction
2	As Objection 1 but signed by 29 people	As objection 1	As above
3	Hindley Green Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	Concerned over proposed restrictions, as there is a lack of parking	Additional parking will be made available
4	Runcorn Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	Objection to reduced availability of parking near the lake. Some members have mobility issues, which restrictions would restrict their access Feels support of RDSMB is not valued	Additional parking will be made available. Work of RDSMB is not a consideration in regards to parking restrictions
5	Woolston Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	Feels RDSMB could be disbanded due to parking restrictions	Additional parking will be made available
6	Hough Green Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	Wants area to be reserved for RDSMB members to park near to the lake	This will be passed to Open Spaces for consideration but additional parking is being made available
7	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Objects to restrictions on Highlands Road due to a number of houses not having off street parking and some houses having more than one vehicle. Supports restrictions on Park Road Suggests a residents parking scheme	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road. Residents parking schemes are not available within the Borough
8	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Feels proposal will cause more problems as park users will not use car parks Wants signs for car parks Wants residents parking scheme	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road. Additional signs to the car parks have been provided. Residents parking schemes are not available within the Borough

9	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Objects due to difficulties in not being able to walk far Wants residents parking scheme	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road. Residents parking schemes are not available within the Borough
10	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Objects to proposal and feels reasons are not detailed enough Requested additional information that has also been requested through FOI system. Accepts no right to park outside house, but feels a moral and historical right. Feels visitors to park will park outside cottages Feels vehicles avoiding traffic signals will travel faster and increase safety concerns Feels Council has created problem by allowing expansion to detriment of residents	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road.
11	Runcorn Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	As objection 1	As objection 1
12	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Feels Council has made park more popular and will make it more difficult for residents with proposal	Additional parking has been provided
13	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Objects as they have problems parking at present and often need to park on opposite of Highlands Road. Wants residents parking scheme	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road. Residents parking schemes are not available within the Borough
14	Resident Highlands Road Runcorn	Objects as they have problems parking at present and often need to park on opposite of Highlands Road Questions the need for blanket restriction on one side of Highlands Road	Revised proposal makes available more on-street parking spaces for residents on Highlands Road
15	Culcheth Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats	Feels restrictions would affect his ability to sail his boat and meet friends due to his reduced mobility	Restrictions are only on one side of Park Road and additional parking is being made available off Heath Road South. Also blue badge holders can park on yellow lines for up to 3 hours providing they are not causing an obstruction

