

PETITION TO REMOVE GRASS VERGES AT COWLEY CRESCENT, UXBRIDGE AND REPLACE WITH HARD STANDING MARKED FOR 2 WHEEL PARKING

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	Steven Austin, Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a petition requesting the removal of grass verges on Cowley Crescent, Uxbridge to create parking spaces.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered in relation to the Council's strategy for on-street parking controls.
Financial Cost	There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations to this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents, Education and Environmental Services
Ward(s) affected	Uxbridge South

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting with the petitioners, the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling:

- 1. discusses with petitioners their concerns relating parking on Cowley Crescent, Uxbridge;**
- 2. advises petitioners that the Council will not, as a general rule, create hard standing at the expense of long established grass verges; and**
- 3. discusses with residents possible options to manage parking in Cowley Crescent.**

Reasons for recommendations

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss with petitioners their concerns and, if appropriate, add aspects of their request for further investigation.

PART I - MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS

Alternative options considered / risk management

These will be discussed with petitioners.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition with 21 signatures has been submitted to the Council from residents in Cowley Crescent, Uxbridge. In an accompanying statement, the lead petitioner states the following:

"I have lived in Cowley Crescent on and off for 73 years and have never seen the road in such a state most of the damage to the grass due to bad driving visitors and Council vehicles. The hedges belong to properties in Meadow View. The damage outside No.27 is being done by builders working at that address. The damage caused by not having a crossover is at No.15. I think as well of the majority of residents by removing the grass would benefit not only the Council by not having to constantly cut it would also widen up the road by allowing 2 wheel parking."

2. Cowley Crescent is a mainly residential road mainly comprising of semi-detached properties many of which benefit from off-street parking provision. Cowley Crescent has a carriageway width of approximately 5.0 metres, with footways typically 2.9 metres of which 1.7 metres is grass verge and 1.2 metres is hard footway. A location plan is attached as Appendix A.

3. As the Cabinet Member will recall, this issue was previously investigated by the Council's Street Environment and Highways Manager following damage caused by larger commercial vehicles (e.g., refuse vehicles) to the verges. As with many similar cases across the Borough, the grass area is needed for run-off drainage. The lack of other drainage means that surface run-off needs to be intercepted by the permeable grass areas.

4. As the Cabinet Member will know, the Council does not widen existing roads at the expense of long established grass verges. The costs and considerations would in any case include:

- constructing properly hardened verges, which would include setting the kerbs back with new carriageway construction of sufficient strength to accommodate parked vehicles;
- moving or protecting buried services;
- installing new lamp columns in different locations;
- making alterations to the existing drainage (including gullies); and
- accommodating the established root-systems of mature trees in a manner which does not damage them.

5. These and other aspects are often underestimated by those who imagine that widening a road is a simple exercise; even if the Council was to accede to such a request, these essential works would make the cost of such a project considerable.

6. In light of the concerns from the petitioners, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member meets with them, explains that the Council will regrettably not sanction the removal of the grass verges in Cowley Crescent, but discusses other ideas which the petitioners may wish to explore in order to address the challenges they have identified.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations to this report. However, if the Council was to consider possible alternative options for Cowley Crescent, such as parking restrictions, then funding would need to be identified from a suitable source.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petitioners' request and available options the Council has to address these concerns.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs that there are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal

There are no special legal implications for the proposal to informally consult residents on possible parking restrictions in Cowley Crescent, Uxbridge. Informally consulting residents is perfectly legitimate as part of a listening exercise, especially where consideration of the policy, factual and engineering issues are still at a formative stage.

In considering any informal consultation responses, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising, including those which do not accord with the officer's recommendations. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account.

Should there be a decision that further measures are to be considered, then the relevant statutory provisions will have to be identified and considered at that time.

Corporate Property and Construction

None at this stage.

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received