

PROPOSED CAR PARKING AT CIRENCESTER RUGBY CLUB – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is this proposal necessary?

Additional parking space is being sought to help meet the need for additional capacity in Cirencester. Car parks in the town have become much busier over the past few years, and it is difficult for motorists to find spaces at peak times, especially as there is very little on- street parking available.

The Council has established a Parking Board to satisfy current and future needs and they have been investigating potential car parking sites. They have concluded that the Rugby Club is the most viable site available at this time.

More specifically, if planning permission is granted for the proposed decked car park at the Waterloo, we would need alternative parking to offset the loss of that amenity during the construction phase. We estimate that the Waterloo would probably be closed for around 12 months and having the option of the Rugby Club site would enable us to decant motorists who would normally use that car park.

What sort of car parking development is proposed at the Rugby Club?

The Council plans to secure a lease for part of the Rugby Club site which would provide parking for permit holders only. This means that the permit holders would park their cars on the site Monday – Friday during the working day. It would only be used by the Rugby Club at weekends and possibly some evenings in the week. As there would be no pay and display parking available, there would hardly be any turnover of spaces throughout the day.

Would this require planning permission?

Yes - planning permission would be needed to enable the Rugby club site to be used for permit parking. The relevant planning application is being prepared and will be subject to the usual consultation process.

How many Parking spaces would there be at the Rugby Club?

Numbers have not been finalised and it would depend on designs and consultation with the Council's planning service prior to applying for planning permission. However, it is estimated that around 150 spaces could be provided.

Would this increase the traffic using The Whiteway?

If Planning permission is granted for permit parking at the Rugby Club, this would increase the number of cars using the Whiteway to access the car park Monday – Friday (specifically early in the morning and then in the late afternoon).

How long would it take to redevelop the Rugby club site?

Redevelopment would be minimal and primarily involve levelling some uneven grassy areas and installing permeable surfacing to enable use during wet winter months. We would also install low level lighting and make some changes to entrance gate/barrier to restrict unauthorised access. There would be no buildings erected. Estimated development time is 12 weeks. We do not have a start date at this time, as this will depend on the planning process.

What level of enforcement would there be?

Enforcement would be carried out both on the Whiteway and within the Rugby Club car park. Enforcement activity is targeted so the level of activity would be increased if there are problems with people parking illegally and reduced if a high level of compliance was achieved.

When would the work start?

We do not know yet but – subject to planning permission being granted – we would keep residents informed once we have a timetable.

How much would it cost?

The proposed works to the Rugby Club are estimated to cost £430,000; this equates to around £2,867 per space for 10 years. There would also be annual revenue costs to maintain the car park, carry out enforcement, manage the permit scheme etc.

We do not yet know the costs to amend the Traffic Regulation Order on the Whiteway and make changes to lines and signs as this would depend on the changes that are actually agreed.

What would be the parking charges at the Rugby Club once the work has been completed?

This has not yet been decided. However, it is likely that the price of a permit would be similar to or less than the cost of permits for town centre parking. Whilst the Rugby Club parking is further out of town, motorists would be guaranteed a space as they would not be competing with Pay and Display customers for spaces.

Is the proposal intended to be a temporary public facility whilst existing car parks in Cirencester are out of action, or a permanent one?

The intention is that the Rugby Club would initially act as a decant site for permit holders whilst the Waterloo site is developed but would then remain as a permit holder car park on a fairly permanent basis. As we would intend to lease the site, we would want to operate a car park here until the lease is brought to an end by either party.

By offering the site for Permit holders only we would know the maximum number of cars which would travel to the car park and there would be fewer travel movements compared with a pay and display carpark. We would also know who all the permit holders are so if there were problems of any kind we would be able to contact them directly.

Is there anything in the public domain that sets out the process for selecting the Rugby Club as a viable option for car parking, and the alternatives considered?

There is information on our website <http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/environment/parking-and-public-toilets/cirencester-parking-project/> . This explains our rationale for selecting the Rugby Club option. We have a list of all sites considered but that is not in the public domain as not all land identified on the list was available for sale or lease and therefore not all landowners are aware that their site has been considered. Had one of those sites been considered as the most suitable, we would have made an approach to the landowner. The overriding problem we have encountered is a lack of suitable sites which are of an adequate size and have good highway and pedestrian access. No suitable vacant sites were available closer to the centre of the town. There are some smaller plots and we have considered them but for a variety of site specific reasons they were not available to us.

Has the Cirencester Parking Strategy been prepared in any form yet?

We have a Parking Strategy which was adopted in 2010 and is available on our website <http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/234098/Parking-strategy-2010.pdf> . The Strategy was amended at Cabinet in February 2017 to reflect parking demand issues in Cirencester - see <http://www.cmis.cotswold.gov.uk/cm5/Meetings/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/4413/Committee/858/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>