

TAXI RANK TRAFFIC ORDER EPSOM HIGH STREET

Report of the:	Head of Housing & Community
Contact:	Rachel Jackson
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	n/a
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annexe 1 – Representation to the proposed Order from an Epsom Taxi user. Annexe 2 – Representation to the proposed Order from the Licensed Taxi Driver Association.
Other available papers (not attached):	Minutes of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee of 23 February 2017. Petition submitted by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council licensed Hackney Carriage drivers in 2016.

Report Summary

To enable the Plan E Highways Improvements works to progress as intended, it is necessary to make a Parking Place Order for Hackney Carriages between 112 (at the eastern extent) and 122 (at the western extent) High Street, Epsom, and cancel the appointment of the established rank situated by the Clock Tower, High Street, Epsom. The Order was advertised as required under Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, and representations have been received.

Members are required to take into account the representations and determine if the order should be approved.

Recommendation (s)	Notes
<p>That the Committee determines if:</p> <p>(1) the Traffic Order for establishment of a new Taxi Rank should be made, and;</p> <p>(2) The Traffic Order for the existing Taxi Rank by the Clock Tower, Epsom be cancelled.</p>	

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1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Traffic Order is required to support the Plan E Highways Improvement scheme within Epsom Town Centre.

2 Background

- 2.1 The need to close the existing Hackney Carriage rank at the Clock Tower, Epsom has been considered necessary under the Plan E Highways Improvement scheme. To ensure rank provision is maintained, the proposal is to establish a new rank outside/close to the current TK Maxx store between 112 (at the eastern extent) and 122 (at the western extent) High Street, Epsom. Once the new rank is established, the current rank at the Clock Tower would cease to have effect.

- 2.2 In February 2017, the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee listened to a submission by the Hackney Carriage trade and their representatives, and agreed that representations contained in the petition submitted during 2016 be taken into account prior to any decision being made about whether to re-locate the Taxi rank.

On 4 January 2018, the Council published a notification of its intention to appoint a new Hackney Carriage stand and revoke the existing stand as detailed at paragraph 2.1. The notification allowed for representations to be submitted by 2 February 2018. One representation was received from a taxi service user which is attached as **Annexe 1**, and a representation from the Licensed Taxi Driver Association is attached as **Annexe 2**.

- 2.3 As required under the procedures, Surrey Police have been consulted, and have confirmed there are no objections to the proposed Order.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the Committee takes into account the representations received, including the original petition submitted by the Taxi trade in 2016, and determines if the Traffic Order should be made.
- 3.2 Should the Committee decide that the Traffic Order should be made, the Planning Department understand that the intention would be to establish a temporary rank at the proposed rank site as works commence near the existing rank.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The cost of marking and signing the new rank would be met within the Highways Improvement scheme budget.
- 4.2 Enforcement of the order will be managed within existing arrangements.

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- 4.3 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** the costs of implementing this change will be contained within existing budgets.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** A local authority can appoint areas on streets and private land as taxi ranks under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The creation of a taxi rank is not a straightforward process; the Local Authority must obtain the permission of the Highway Authority, give notice to the Police, publish a public advertisement in a local newspaper and taken into account any objections or representations received within 28 days of publication, before a stand is appointed.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 None applicable for this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 The whole Plan E Highways Improvement scheme is in partnership with Surrey County Council.
- 7.2 The funding for the Improvements has been secured in partnership with Surrey County Council and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Should the Traffic Order be approved and the existing rank relocated, there is a risk that the disabled, elderly and/or those with restricted mobility could face difficulty in accessing taxis. In response to this concern, the Planning Department have commented that in terms of access, the proposed new rank location offers more space for individual taxis to deploy and use their passenger ramp access. The current location typically sees the mobility impaired passengers having to access taxis from the 'road-side' rather than from the pavement. The proposed new rank is relatively well located in relation to entrances and exit points to the Ashley Centre and well located in relation to the pedestrian crossing (across the Market Place/ High Street). Additionally, Surrey Highways Authority have added that the matter of ramps was raised during the consultation period, with several locations being considered, but the proposed location was deemed the most appropriate.

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- 8.2 In addition, there is a risk that should the rank at the Clock Tower close then others may seek to continue to use the area around this as a passenger pick up and drop off point which could cause traffic congestion. In reply to this, the Planning Department have commented that the closure of the existing rank will see this part of the Market Place transformed. It will no longer be a lay-by but will be a physical continuation of the Market Place. The consequence of that is that the current taxi rank will very quickly stop being a taxi rank. Further to this the resurfacing of the Market Place (and reconstruction of the lay-by) will also serve to significantly restrict access to area for some time – and serve as break to any unlawful operation.
- 8.3 The Planning Department have commented that the relocation of the existing taxi rank to its new location will bring considerable benefits for pedestrians, the operation of the market and the flow of vehicular traffic approaching the Spread Eagle junction. In terms of the latter, the movement of vehicles entering and exiting the taxi rank has an adverse impact upon the flow of traffic at the junction. The proposed relocation offers a significant improvement upon this situation. If the relocation is not carried out there is a risk to the council's reputation – namely that the Town Centre improvements provide little improvement over existing traffic conditions.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Committee determine if the Traffic Order should be made.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Town Ward;