



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
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**To: COUNCILLOR JONATHAN BIANCO
CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS
AND TRANSPORT**

c.c. All Members of the Property, Highways &
Transport Select Committee
c.c. Catherine Flew – Place Directorate
c.c. Perry Scott – Corporate Director of Place
c.c. Ward Councillors for Uxbridge

Date: 14 July 2023

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

Responses to Experimental Traffic Order for 'Parklet Pilot' in Uxbridge town centre

Dear Cabinet Members,

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Monday 24 July 2023** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Rebecca Reid
Democratic Services Apprentice

Title of Report: Responses to Experimental Traffic Order for 'Parklet Pilot' in Uxbridge town centre

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....

Cabinet Member for Property, Highways & Transport

Responses to Experimental Traffic Order for 'Parklet Pilot' in Uxbridge town centre

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Property, Highways & Transport
Officer Contact(s)	Catherine Flew – Place Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A – Uxbridge Parklet outside no.120 High Street Appendix B – Summary of responses to Experimental Traffic Order

HEADLINES

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Members on the responses to the experimental traffic order 'Parklet Pilot' in Uxbridge town centre as part of the Government's Welcome Back initiative, supporting high streets and town centres. To seek approval for the parklet to be retained in Uxbridge town centre, subject to the business paying an annual fee.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Thriving Economy.
Financial Cost	The cost of the notice to make the experimental Traffic Management Order permanent is £1,000, funded from the Town Centres revenue budget.
Relevant Select Committee	Property, Highways & Transport Select Committee
Relevant Ward(s)	Uxbridge

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1) **Note the comments received during the first six months of the experimental traffic order for 'Parklets Pilot' in Uxbridge town centre, as summarised in Appendix B.**
- 2) **Authorises the Corporate Director of Place to make the experimental traffic management order permanent for "At Any Time" waiting restrictions outside no.120 High Street, Uxbridge to retain the parklet at this location.**

Reasons for recommendation

All responses to the experimental traffic order have been considered. Feedback from the business using the parklet has been considered including their willingness to pay an annual fee to retain the parklet based on the business parking bay model and relevant licence charges.

This feedback clearly demonstrated that there is sufficient demand for the parklet throughout the year to warrant the business being prepared to pay a significant fee and licence charge.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Council could decide to arrange the removal and disposal of the parklet which would incur a cost of £2000. This would mean that the business and its customers would lose the additional outdoor dining option and the high street would lose the additional greenery provided by the parklet planters and green roof.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. To help aid the recovery of high streets during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government launched the Reopening High Streets Safety Fund (RHSSF), with funding available to every Council through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).
2. On 20 March 2021 the Government announced that the Reopening High Streets Safety Fund had been expanded to begin a new phase of delivery up to the end of March 2022 as The Welcome Back Fund (WBF). This was an opportunity to support businesses that had struggled through various lockdowns and the challenges of the pandemic period. The Welcome Back Fund could be utilised to support a range of activities, such as:
 - Communications and public information;
 - Business-facing awareness raising activities to promote local shopping; and

- Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies could be managed successfully and safely.
3. Following the implementation of the second nationwide lockdown in December 2020, the Government announced, from 12 April 2021, the commencement of the roadmap out of lockdown. For hospitality businesses, this initially meant that they would be able to serve patrons in outside areas only. This was a clear advantage for those premises with large outside spaces and beer gardens to trade; however, many high street hospitality venues were not easily able to accommodate customers in their limited outside spaces.
 4. In some of Hillingdon's town centres, the existing private forecourts, or the public footway immediately outside the hospitality premises were already sufficiently wide to allow street-based dining to take place with no call for infrastructure alterations, whether temporary or permanent. In these areas, Licensing Service were able to assist with pavement licences and the potential for some of the restaurants to extend their evening street-dining activities in front of adjacent businesses closed from 6pm. In other town centres, where constraints on the available footway width were more limited, other temporary measures were considered.
 5. In the summer of 2020, officers carried out a review of the Borough's town centres and identified areas where additional outdoor dining space could be created where pavement widths were limited. Initial consultation was undertaken with the relevant ward councillors for their feedback who were broadly supportive, with further consultation with local businesses requested to identify the need.

Officers from Licensing Services visited hospitality businesses in Eastcote, Northwood, Ruislip and Uxbridge town centres to ascertain what support the Council could provide to support the reopening, providing residents a safe and enjoyable restaurant/café experience and contributing positively to the local community. Businesses were positive regarding the proposals and a number supported the use of parking bays to provide additional seating through the installation of parklets. Based on this demand, and with the approval of the Cabinet member/s, officers developed proposals for parklets to be piloted in Eastcote, Ruislip, and Uxbridge town centres where there was support for these measures as well as a concentration of hospitality businesses which could benefit from them.

1. For reference, a parklet is a small public pavement extension designed to fit within an existing parking space. Most have a decked area that takes into account the camber of the road and are level with the kerb to avoid a trip hazard. As the parklet replaces an existing parking space and occupies the same width as a standard parking bay, they are not expected to impact on traffic movement in the area. For the purpose of the trial, the parklets were specifically to provide additional outdoor eating space rather than for use as a general community/social area.

Utilising the 'Welcome Back Fund', the Council procured the services of Meristem Design Ltd through an ERDF-compliant tender process to provide temporary street furniture in four pilot town centres: Eastcote, Northwood, Ruislip, and Uxbridge town centres. The location of the pilot parklet in Uxbridge is outside 120 High Street, shown in the plan attached as Appendix A.

To ensure the parklets provided a visual enhancement to the high street and could be used if needed in all weather, planting including a green roof was incorporated within the structure. Weekly maintenance was also included as part of the tender up until 30 June 2022.

As the parklet in Uxbridge is on a bus route, Meristem Design Ltd provided enhanced protection through the provision of a large planter on the outer extent with reflective chevron signage.

The use of a parklet was subject to a pavement licence being granted by the Council. The licence could be issued to an individual business, or a consortium of businesses located within the vicinity of the parklet. As part of the licence, there would be conditions on their use along with the Council having sufficiently robust powers to prevent or tackle nuisance should this occur.

2. The parklets were installed following the implementation of an experimental traffic order, which converted existing parking places to 'at any time' waiting restrictions to facilitate the structures. The experimental traffic order enables the Council to implement changes to parking controls for a maximum period of 18 months, whilst also providing an opportunity during the first six months for anyone to comment and give feedback on the scheme. Public notices for the Uxbridge parklet were advertised in the local newspapers and the Council's website along with street notices erected on site from 27 January 2022, with the order becoming operational from 31 January 2022.
3. During the six-month consultation period between 31 January 2022 and end of July 2022, the Council received three responses to the Uxbridge parklet. These included two responses received at the construction stage from a nearby business concerned with potential anti-social behaviour and road safety issues due to its proximity to the junction, traffic island and adjacent bus route. The third respondent asked for clarity on the use of the parklet and its suitability as a pilot location due to the amount of passing motor traffic.
4. Consultation was undertaken with ward councillors and the hospitality business in October 2022 to seek feedback on whether they were still in support of the parklet scheme. Two Ward Councillors raised concerns with traffic issues but were happy to be guided by officers and relevant services such as the bus operating companies and police.
5. Quarterly traffic management liaison meetings are held by the Council with representatives attending from London Buses and the emergency services. At the start of the parklet pilot scheme the bus operator raised concerns about buses passing close to the Uxbridge parklet and hitting their wing mirrors. Officers concluded that it was comparable to having a van / car parked in this location and there have been no adverse feedback or incidents reported since. The parklet in Uxbridge also has the enhanced protection of the large planter with reflective chevron signage on its outer extent. The last traffic management liaison meeting was held on 27 April 2023 and no concerns were raised regarding the parklets. These meetings allow all representatives to raise any road safety or traffic related concerns.
6. As part of the tender for temporary street furniture, a weekly maintenance schedule for the parklets and associated planting was included up until 30 June 2022, with monthly updates

provided by the contractor. On review of these maintenance reports, no feedback suggesting excessive litter or damage to the parklets was identified. The pavement licence also includes a condition requirement for the parklet and planters to be kept well maintained. The Council has not received any reports of anti-social behaviour taking place at the Uxbridge parklet to date following its construction in early 2022.

7. The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members have reviewed the scheme including feedback from local businesses and their willingness to pay an annual fee to retain the parklets based on the business parking bay model and relevant licence charges. The annual fee, based on 2023/24 costs, for retaining a parklet sitting over one parking bay is £578. As the parklet outside 120 High Street, Uxbridge sits over two parking bays, the annual fee to the business to retain it is £1,156. The application fee for a pavement licence is £100 which will be issued for the period to the end of September 2023, when the legislation is due to change as part of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.
8. This feedback from the business clearly demonstrated that there is sufficient demand for the parklet throughout the year to warrant it being prepared to pay a fee and licence charge.
9. To summarise, whilst a small number of concerns have been received to the installation of the parklet in Uxbridge Town Centre, these have been fully considered within this report. It is, therefore, recommended that the parklet is retained in Uxbridge town centre subject to the business, Bar Italia, paying an annual fee.

Financial Implications

The recommendation to make the experimental Traffic Management Order permanent (via statutory notice) would cost £1,000, funded from the Town Centres revenue budget. The fees generated from Bar Italia, the business retaining the parklet, including £1,156 annually in relation to the two parking bays and £100 to apply for a pavement licence (covering the period to September 2023, at which point legislative changes are expected in relation to the duration and cost of licences) will contribute to existing income targets within the Parking and Licensing budgets respectively.

The alternative option for the Council to arrange removal and disposal of the parklet would incur a cost of £2,000.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

The overall benefit of the Welcome Back initiative was to support small independent businesses in reopening safely and attracting residents and visitors back to enjoying time and spending money within town centres and local shopping parades. Parklets provide an extension to the footway in areas where this is restricted and give further opportunities for hospitality businesses to provide additional outdoor dining options.

Consultation carried out or required

Consultation was undertaken with ward councillors and the hospitality business in October 2022 to seek feedback on whether they were still in support of the parklet scheme as detailed in paragraphs 7 and 8 of this report.

The consultation forming the basis of this report is directly associated with the experimental traffic order and came into operation from 31 January 2022, which invited all comments to be received by 31 July 2022.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concur with the Financial Implications set out above, noting the recommendation to note the comments in relation to parklets and make the parklet permanent outside no.120 High Street, Uxbridge, with the £1k cost to be funded from the approved budget for the Town Centres service, with associated fees contributing to the Council's existing income targets.

Legal

Legal Services confirm that there are no legal impediments to the Cabinet Member agreeing the recommendations set out in the report. Whenever necessary legal advice is given in relation to specific issues as they arise to ensure that the Council always meets its legal obligations.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

None at this stage.

Comments from other relevant service areas

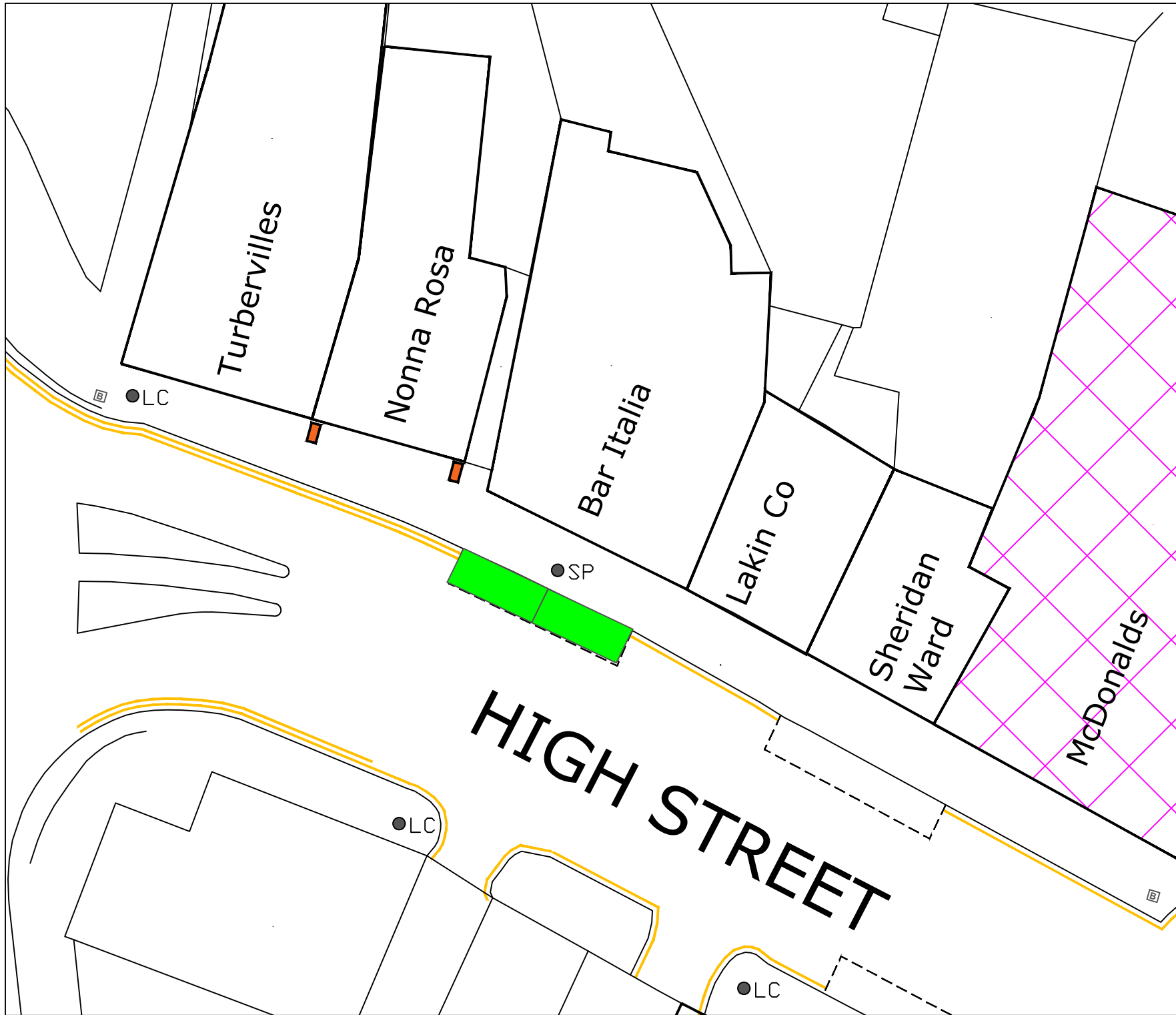
N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix A – Uxbridge Parklet outside no.120 High Street
Appendix B – Summary of responses to Experimental Traffic Order



KEY



PARKLET LOCATION

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London Borough of Hillingdon 100019283 2023



Project

High Street, Uxb

APPENDIX A

Description

Scale Drawn Traced Date

Project No. Drawing No.

Appendix B: Responses to Experimental Traffic Order for Parklet Pilot in Uxbridge town centre

Uxbridge Parklet		
Approximate Address	Summary of comments made	Officers Comments
Unknown	<p>"As I understand it, parklets are for general use so I could buy a takeaway from any local outlet and sit in one to eat it. The one on Uxbridge High Street though gives the impression it is only for customers of the adjacent Bar Italia. Please could it be made clearer who can use it?</p> <p>I'm not incidentally convinced that it is a good location to carry out a trial without measures to reduce the amount of passing motor traffic to make it at all enjoyable to sit there."</p>	Response sent advising that the parklet is being treated in much the same way as an extension to street trading
High Street, Uxbridge (business)	"Please could you advise us as to what is being built on the road outside Bar Italia - 120 High Street, Uxbridge - appears to be an outside seating area on the road with a grassed roof top? We and other businesses are not aware of any planning permission for the road/ High Street."	Parklet installed under an Experimental Traffic Management Order (paragraph 7)
High Street, Uxbridge (Uxbridge)	<p>"I am writing to voice my concerns and to also seek clarity from you on the below;I have the ground floor premises on Uxbridge High Street which has A2 usage in the grade II listed (...) High Street where I run my business.This week a structure has gone up on the highway outside Bar Italia, 120 High Street which is very close to the crossing island. Buses pass through and is already very tight enough as it is (...). As of last night, when I was leaving my premises there were no lightclearing s to warn motorists that this is now in the road. I feel that this is a hazard and will only result in an accident. Has a risk assessment been carried out to ascertain whether this is suitable? I would be interested to know who has authorised this structure and what appears to be an extension to Bar Italia. You would not grant a license on the highway for a skip/ waste container without adequate warning lights to motorists, may I ask why it is different here? Forgive me if I have missed the consultation / notices on this structure, however myself and my team can't recall seeing anything and nor my enighbour in the offices next door to us having checked with them. Please could you confirm if there was consultation / planning application on this? I assume this is part of Bar Italia and authorised by the Council?We are already plagued by antisocial behaviour outside our offices due to the night time economy, most weeks clearing up vomit and other bodily fluids / rubbish glasses, bottles etc on our own door step before we can get through the door to our premises.Please understand that we too pay business rates and should have trouble free enjoyment of our premises and the ability to conduct our business without disruption. Bar Italia regularly have delivery lorries parked up outside our office and unload noisy barrels etc for lengthy periods time while we try to work, they certainly won't be able to unload outside their own premises now they have annexed the highway too. This structure has now significantly reduced further stopping space for delivery drivers on this section of the High Street".</p>	Considered as part of this report (see paragraphs 10 & 11)