

## Proposed Electric Vehicle Charging Bays, Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells

<b>Report Author / Lead Officer</b>	Nick Baldwin – Engineer
<b>Head of Service / Service Manager</b>	Jane Fineman – Head of Finance and Procurement
<b>Originating Authority</b>	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council
<b>Final Decision Taker</b>	Kent County Council
<b>Exemption</b>	Non-exempt
<b>Classification</b>	For Information

### Recommendation:

- That the Board notes the results of a public consultation exercise in respect of proposed electric vehicle charging bays in Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells

### INTRODUCTION

There are currently no electric vehicle charging bays provided on-street in Tunbridge Wells Borough. Kent County Council have secured funding for the provision of electric taxi charging points in a number of locations around the county. A suitable location for a charging point has been identified on Mount Pleasant Road in Tunbridge Wells. To ensure that the associated roadside space is restricted to use by electric vehicles, and only when being charged, a traffic regulation order has been advertised, the effect of which would be to create bays for the intended purpose.

### BACKGROUND

National government policy is encouraging a transition away from internal combustion engines and towards ultra-low 'tail pipe' emission vehicles (ULEV), including Electric Vehicles. Meeting this ambition requires a step change in the availability of electric vehicles (EVs) charging infrastructure. Although it's difficult to say with certainty how the technology will progress over the next ten years, a network of charging infrastructure will be required to enable drivers to top up their battery when they are out and about and critically for use by drivers without off-street parking. Whilst it is not anticipated that councils will become the long-term default provider for charging infrastructure, Councils do have a role to play in catalysing this market during the early interim phase.

There are both environmental and economic reasons for councils to encourage the adoption of EVs on our road networks, including reducing emissions of harmful air

pollutants and carbon dioxide and the expectation from residents and visitors that places will have adequate coverage of convenient and affordable electric vehicle charging infrastructure available to use. Therefore, in partnership with other Kent local authorities and led by Kent County Council a successful grant bid for round 2 of the ULEV Taxi Infrastructure Scheme was made to the Office for Low Emission Vehicles for the installation; at no cost to the council, apart from the TRO costs; of a dual rapid vehicle charge point on Mount Pleasant Road. One bay will be available for the exclusive use of Taxi and Private Hire vehicle drivers only, as per the grant requirements, thereby encouraging the uptake of EV's amongst the trade. Mount Pleasant Road was chosen due to its close proximity to the town centre areas, critically the taxi ranks and shopping areas, plus adequate space on site to accommodate two bays and the charging equipment safely.

## **CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

The two on-street parking bays have been proposed on the western side of Mount Pleasant Road between points 25 metres and 37 metres north of its junction with Lonsdale Gardens. It is proposed that one of these will be for use by electric taxis and private hire vehicles with the other for use by any electric vehicle whilst in the process of being charged, but with a maximum stay of one hour.

The draft order was advertised on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 and a 3 week response period followed.

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

5 responses were received during the statutory three week consultation period. Of these, all expressed support for the changes, with none objecting. Some queries were raised and responses have been sent to the individuals concerned.

The responses were as follows:-

- *“The chargers should be rapid dual use type as these are the type that would work with a 1 hour restriction.”*
- *“My personal car and my work van are both electric and I think this is an excellent proposal.  
In addition to the benefits mentioned, I feel it would also benefit tourism in the area as I am sometimes put off visiting other towns that do not have adequate charging facilities.  
There is no mention of the type of chargers but given that the waiting time is limited to one hour I would hope they would be a minimum of 50kW rapid chargers with both CHAdeMO and CCS connectors.  
I can foresee some frustration to drivers who need to charge if the public charger is in use, blocked or not working and the taxi charging bay is empty.”*
- *“Both units must be for all to use there, simply isn't enough electric taxis atm to warrant having a designated unit. Great to here they are coming thou”*
- *“The provision of EV chargers, especially destination chargers (7kw) would certainly encourage me to visit.”*

- *“I support the proposed change. Being a regular user of the "Fast" chargers in the Great Hall multi-storey car park, I can see that more provision is required. However I have the following concerns:*
  - *One hour is not a long time to be charging an electric car on a standard "Fast" charger. I would like assurance that these bays will be for "Rapid" chargers, charging at least at 22kW*
  - *There is no need to restrict one of the bays to taxis. In order to achieve maximum benefit to the local environment, two bays should be provided for all vehicles. It is too soon in the uptake of electric vehicles to restrict some of these facilities to such a small minority of users. Other systems (such as incentive pricing) should be offered to encourage EV uptake by taxi drivers.”*

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

With no objections having been raised to the creation of the two bays for electric vehicles, Kent County Council will be asked to make the necessary traffic regulation order and the bays will be marked and signed.

## **CONCLUSION**

A consultation in respect of a traffic regulation order to cover two EV charging bays has been completed with no objections being made thereby enabling the necessary traffic regulation order to be made and the bays introduced.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members note this report

---

## **Appendices to the Report**

- None