

Report to	<b>Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment</b>
Date	<b>25 July 2005</b>
Report By	<b>Director of Transport and Environment</b>
Title of Report	<b>Eridge – Petition concerning car parking near the station bridge</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To consider a petition calling for parking restrictions on either side of the bridge at Eridge Station</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**To advise the petitioners that this matter has been considered and that formal parking restrictions can not be justified based on the existing conditions.**

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### **1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 There are no additional costs arising from this report other than the costs associated with white road markings of approximately £100 which will be met from the Network Office Signs and Road Markings Revenue Budget.

### **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 At the County Council meeting on 5 April 2005 Councillor Tidy presented a petition to the Chairman requesting parking restrictions on either side of the bridge at Eridge Station. A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room.

2.2 Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and that a spokesperson for the petitioners be invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

### **3. Comments/Appraisal**

3.1 Prior to receipt of the petition, individual letters had been received regarding the parking situation at Eridge Station. As a result, the area has been closely monitored by both Sussex Police and members of the traffic team at the Western Network highways office over a period of time.

3.2 There has always been some on-street parking at this location, even before the imposition of charges at the station car park. However, the level of on-street car parking would appear to have increased since the introduction of that charging regime. The monitoring has demonstrated that the extra parked cars, in conjunction with the very low traffic flows and the available road width, do not appear to cause major problems.

3.3 Due to the fact that the parked cars are not causing an obstruction, there is no significant road safety reason for proposing their removal. Parking restrictions should normally only be considered if the safe and free flow of traffic were impeded, although the remote nature of this location is likely to lead to a low level of enforcement and the possibility of restrictions falling into disrepute.

3.4 The Lead Petitioner attended a site meeting on 17 June 2005 at Eridge Station with the Lead Member for Transport and Environment. Also in attendance were Charles Hendry MP, the Traffic Management Officer for Sussex Police, the local Traffic & Safety Manager for ESCC and the local County Councillor. The issues were discussed in great depth and the Lead Petitioner was informed that it was not appropriate for the County Council to use parking restrictions to force drivers into a private car park. In this instance, the parked cars are not a significant problem and there is not a high demand for on-street parking for residents with no off-road facilities.

3.5 It was also pointed out that the removal of parked cars might have an adverse effect on road safety with the possibility of increased traffic speeds.

#### **4. Environmental Issues**

4.1 There are no environmental implications at this stage in respect of the recommendations detailed in this report.

#### **5. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

5.1 It was agreed at the above meeting that the Traffic & Safety Manager would install a white line around the junction of Forge Lane and link it to the road markings delineating the adjacent layby. A line similarly installed on the corner by the nearby public house has proved very effective.

5.2 Charles Hendry MP agreed to take the issue of car parking charges up with Network Rail. The car park is clearly underused as a resource and it is for Network Rail to work out ways of improving its usage.

5.3 The Lead Member for Transport and Environment agreed to pursue the possibility of car sharing initiatives through the County Council's Travel Plans in order to try and minimise the number of cars being left at the Station.

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Local Member(s): Councillor Tidy, Councillor Whetstone