

ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Christine Traill, Director for Community and Place Delivery and Councillor Helen Campbell, Lead for Public Realm.

DATE: 24/01/2025

REPORT TITLE: Access Permit Proposal

WARD/S: Various

CONTACT OFFICER: Parking Development

TRAFFIC ORDER TITLE: THE ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) AMENDMENT NO.1 ACCESS PERMIT ORDER 2025

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Council's Director for Community and Place Delivery and the Lead Councillor for Public Realm with the background, consultation process and information relating to the proposals to introduce a new permit to enable eligible residents to access a prepayment permit to make paying for parking easier for them.
- 1.2 The report seeks approval to make the Traffic Regulation Order to implement the Access Permit following its advertisement on **22/08/2024**.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council's Director for Community and Place Delivery and the Lead Councillor for Public Realm, agree to make the named Traffic Regulation Order with the recommendations provided within this report, as detailed in the order, and incorporated maps in the locations detailed and highlighted.

3. Background.

- 3.1 This document summarises the comments that were received in response to the Car Park Access Permit consultation, which was carried out between 22 August and 17 September 2024 to seek stakeholder views from St Albans and Harpenden residents, businesses, and visitors regarding the introduction of a Car Park Access Permit.

- 3.2. The proposals introduce an 'Access Permit' available for residents aged 70 and over and who are the registered keeper of the vehicle to purchase a permit for the said vehicle for £190 per annum to enable the Access Permit holder only to park the said vehicle for one session per day for up to 3 hours in any Council operated paid car park

4. Consultation Summary

- 4.1 The Public Notice for the Car Park Access Permit consultation was published in the Herts Ad and printed and placed at each car park location affected.
- 4.2 The Public Notice offered three avenues available for those wishing to comment, online, through email to parking.development@stalbans.gov.uk or in writing to The Parking Development Team – St Albans City and District Council, Civic Centre, St Albans, AL1 3JE.
- 4.3 The consultation documents were made available both online and in printed A3 booklets in reception at the Civic Centre.
- 4.4 In total, 69 comments and representations were received.



5. Report Outline

- 5.1 Section 1 of the report outlines the proposed permit details and officer recommendations.
- 5.2 Section 2 provides the data figures for the Consultation responses.
- 5.3 Section 3 provides the Council's analysis of the main themes and sentiments expressed by the Consultation responses.

6. Appendix

- 6.1 Appendix A contains a copy of all the online survey Consultation responses.
- 6.2 Appendix B contains a copy of all the email Consultation responses.
- 6.3 Appendix C contains a copy of the written Consultation responses.
- 6.4 Appendix D contains a copy of the relevant maps associated with the Car Park Access Permit.

7. Report Sign Off

Strategic Director for Community & Place Delivery	Lead for Public Realm
Name: Christine Traill	Name: Helen Campbell
Date: 24 January 2025	Date: 27 January 2025
Signature: 	Signature: 
<u>Select below as appropriate;</u>	<u>Select below as appropriate;</u>
<i>Agree to Make Traffic Regulation Order/s</i> X	<i>Agree to Make Traffic Regulation Order/s</i>
<i>Agree to Abandoned Scheme</i>	<i>Agree to Abandoned Scheme</i>

Section 1 – Proposed Permit Details and Officer Recommendations

Map	Car Park Name	Proposed Restriction/s	Up to 3 hrs	Proposed Permit Price	Officers Recommendation/s
1.	Lydekker	Access Permit	£4.40	£190	Proceed as advertised.
2.	Bowers Way East	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Bowers Way West	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
3.	Amenbury Lane	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
4.	Bricket Road	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Civic Centre	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
5.	London Road	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Keyfield Terrace	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
6.	Clarence Park	Access Permit	£0.00	£190	Proceed as advertised.
7.	Verulamium	Access Permit	£2.70	£190	Proceed as advertised.
8.	Westminster	Access Permit	£3.20	£190	Proceed as advertised.
9.	Adelaide Street	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Gombards	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Drovers Way	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.
	Russell Avenue	Access Permit	£4.50	£190	Proceed as advertised.

Section 2 – Response Data

Overall Figures

In total, 69 individual responses were received. This included 29 online survey responses, 39 email responses and 1 handwritten response. Not included in this total is 1 additional email response and 1 additional written response, these were disregarded as the comments were unrelated to the proposal of the Car Park Access Permit. Any responses submitted to the wrong online Consultation, any responses submitted before the commencement of the Consultation, and any received after the deadline have been omitted. The overall response data is presented in figure 1.

Support Type	Wholly Support	Partly Support	Neutral	Partly Object	Wholly Object
Access Permit Responses (Total)	8	13	3	14	31

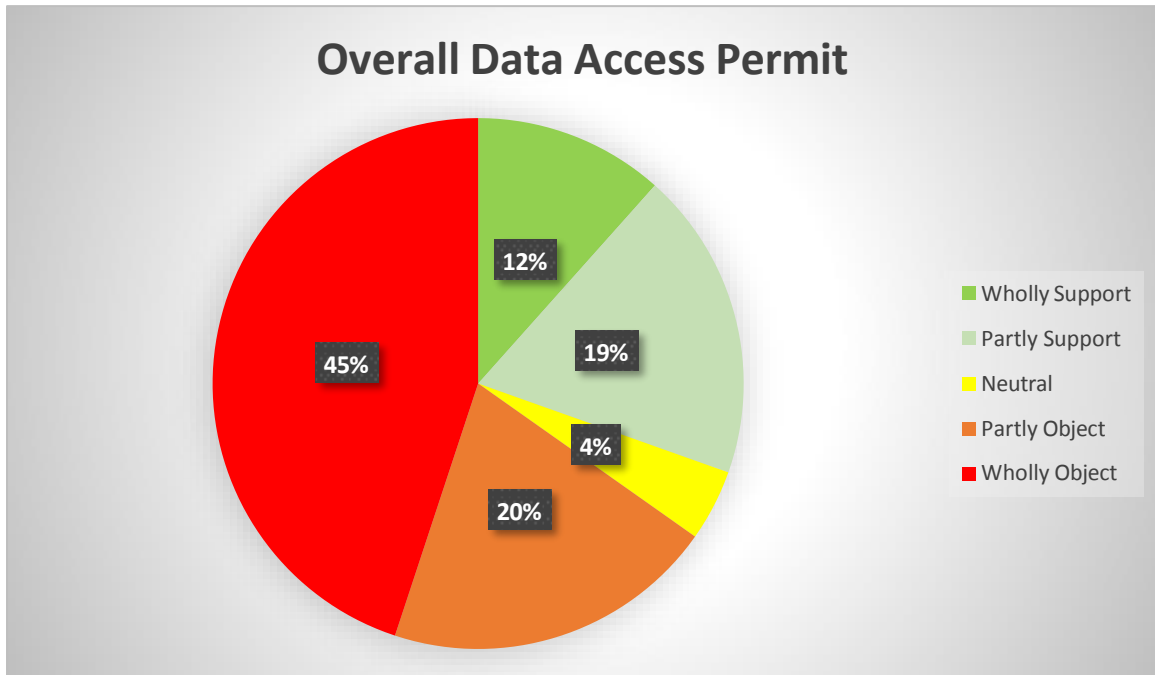


Figure 1: Overall response data for Car Park Access Permit.

The online survey responses separated feedback by 5 support levels: Wholly Object, Partly Object, Neutral, Partly Support and Wholly Support. The email responses consisted of free text, so they have been categorised respectively into these support levels based on their content.

Out of the total responses received, 31 (36%) stated they Wholly Objected to the Ca Park Access Permit, while 14 (20%) Partly Objected. 8 (9%) Wholly Supported the proposals, with 13 (15%) Partly Supporting them. A total of 3 (3%) were neutral regarding the proposed Permit.

Online Survey Response Data

Support Type	Wholly Support	Partly Support	Neutral	Partly Object	Wholly Object
Access Permit Responses (Online Survey)	1	2	3	11	12

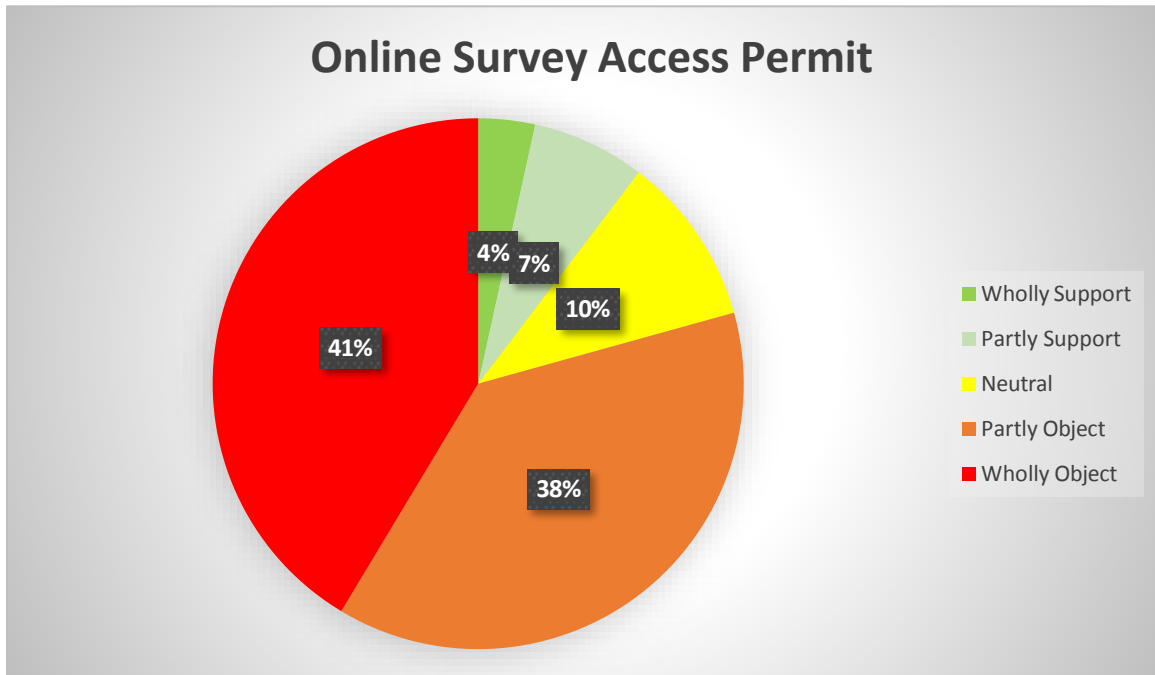


Figure 2: Online survey response data for Car Park Access Permit

12 (41%) Wholly Objected to the Car Park access Permit proposal, 11 (38%) Partly Objected, 3 (10%) were neutral, 2 (4%) Partly supported and 1 (4%) Wholly supported.

The online survey responses prompted the user to select respondent type: resident, visitor, commuter, business, stakeholder group or other. Below, figure 3 presents the respondent type of the online survey.

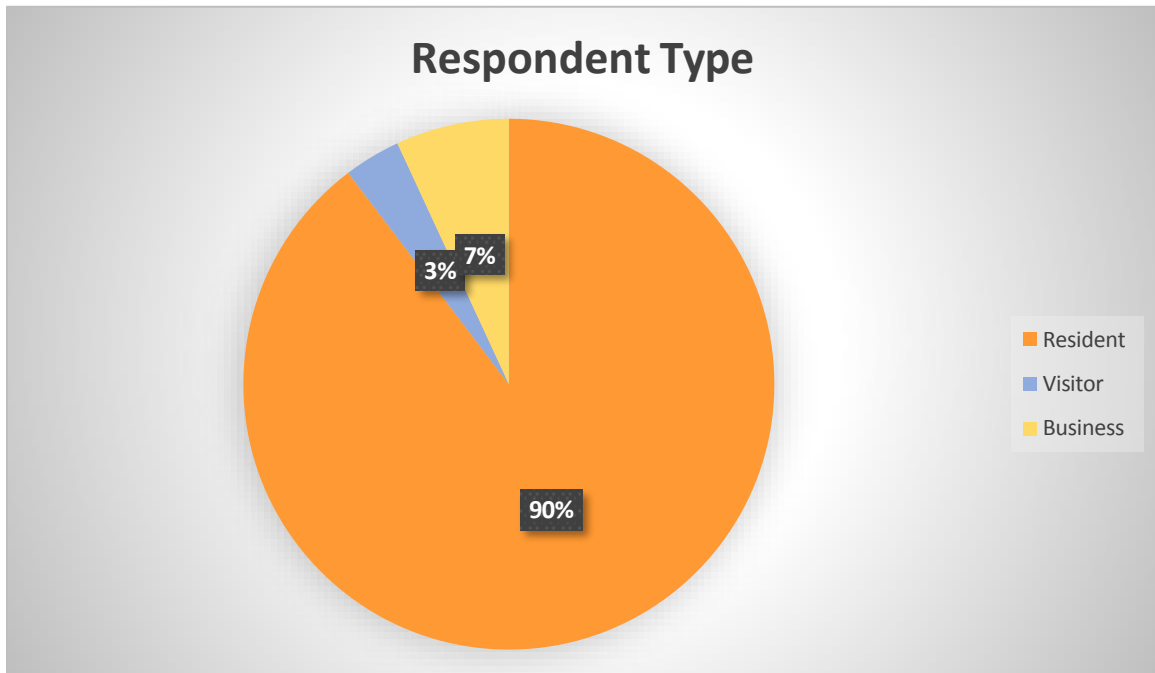


Figure 3: Online survey respondent type for Car Park Access Permit

Respondents also indicated which aspect of the consultation they were providing feedback on, including parking, financial concerns, environmental issues, access, traffic, safety, disturbance, or other areas. Figure 4 presents the feedback category data.

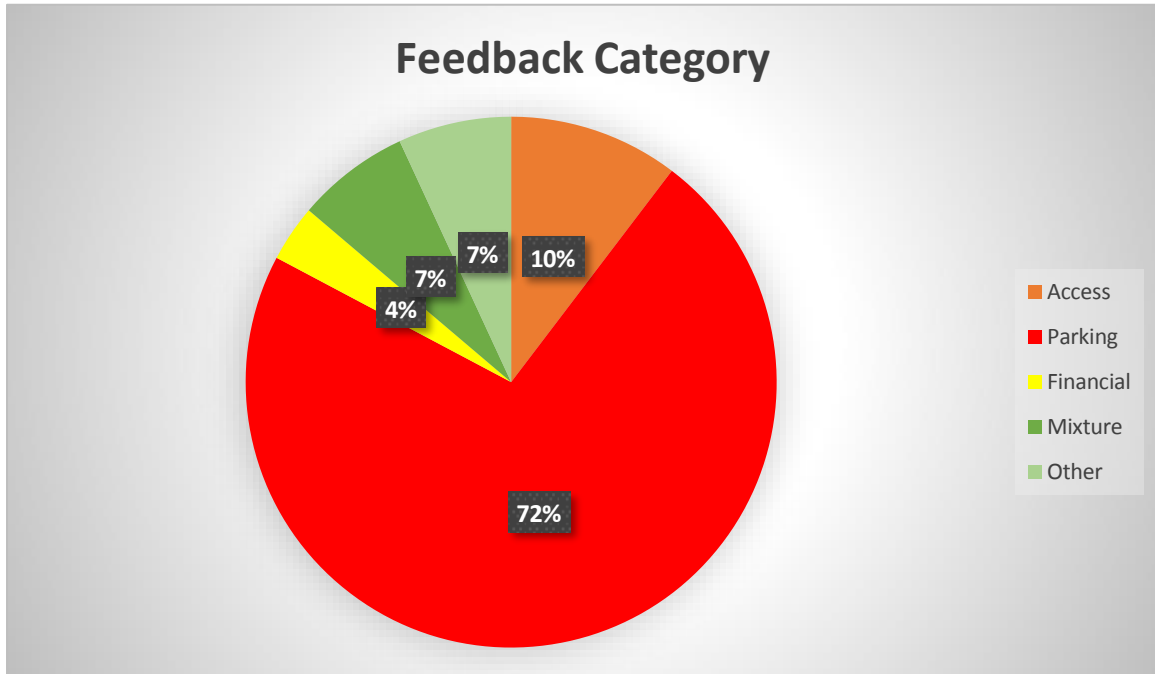


Figure 4: Online survey feedback category data

Email Response Data

Support Type	Wholly Support	Partly Support	Neutral	Partly Object	Wholly Object
Access Permit Responses (Email Responses)	6	11	0	3	19

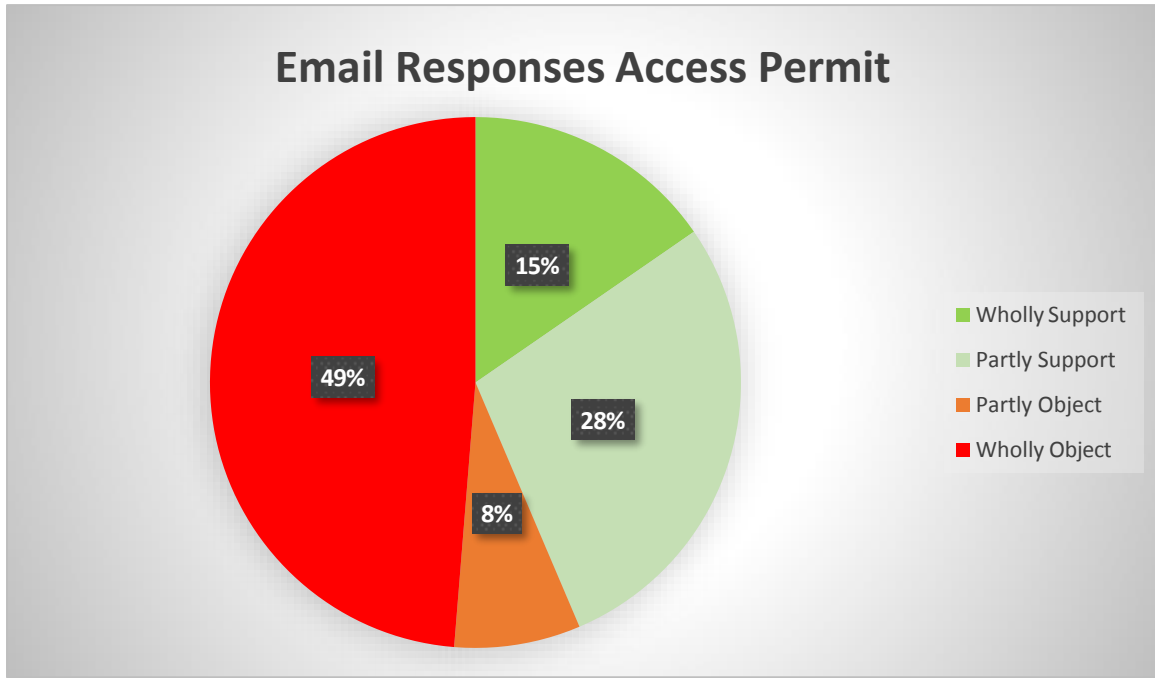


Figure 5: Email response data

19 (49%) Wholly Objected to the Car Park access Permit proposal, 3 (8%) Partly Objected, 11 (28%) Partly supported and 6 (15%) Wholly supported.

Written Response Data

Support Type	Wholly Support	Partly Support	Neutral	Partly Object	Wholly Object
Access Permit Responses (Email Responses)	1	0	0	0	0

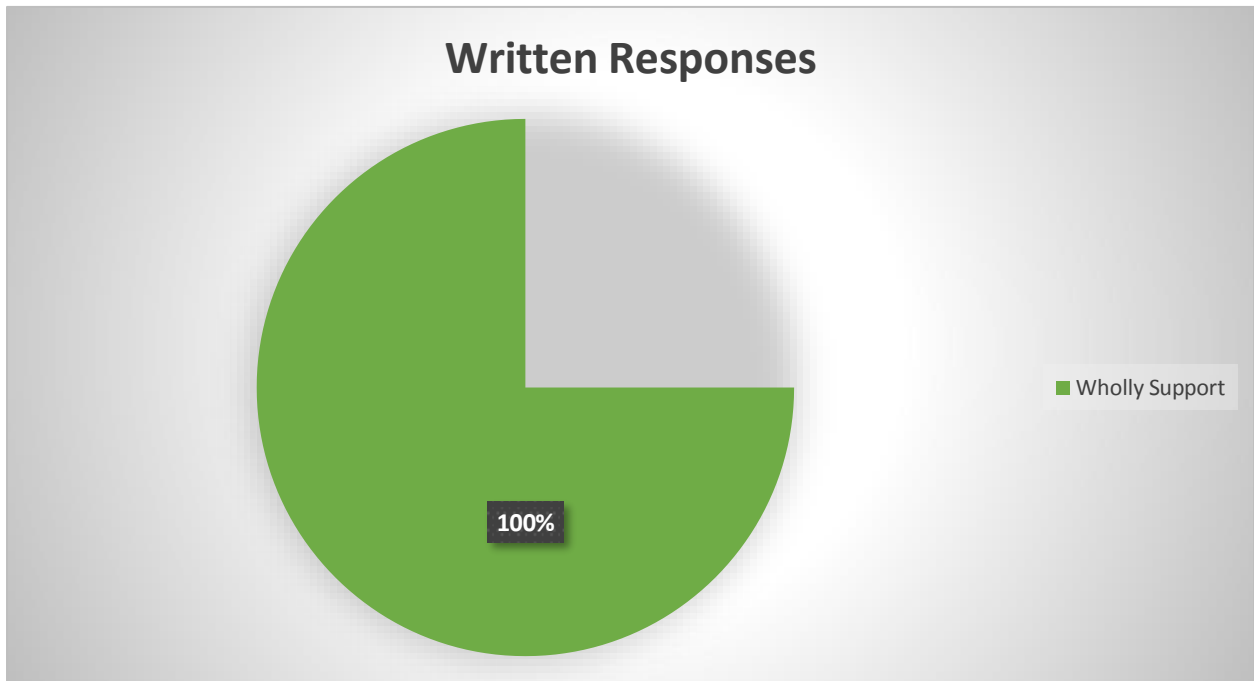


Figure 6: Written response data

1 (100%) Wholly supported the Car Park Access Permit.

Section 4- Council Analysis

The analysis in this section of the report combines the comments between support levels “Wholly Object” and “Partly Object” and “Neutral”, as the 4 common themes identified out of these support levels to the Car Park Access Permit shared similar sentiments:

- Price
- Arbitrary Age
- Impact on visits to the town and local businesses
- One 3 hour visit per day is insufficient and unrealistic.

5.1 Price

Based off our current 3-hour rate at the below car parks, we have calculated:

Car Park Name	Up to 3 hrs	2 x weekly visits at 3hrs per annum	Savings	3 x weekly visits at 3hrs per annum	Savings	Proposed Permit Price
Lydekker	£4.40	£422.40	£232.40	£633.60	£443.60	£190
Bowers Way East	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Bowers Way West	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190

Amenbury Lane	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Bricket Road	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Civic Centre	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
London Road	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Keyfield Terrace	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Verulamium	£2.70	£259.20	£69.20	£388.80	£198.80	£190
Westminster	£3.20	£307.20	£117.20	£460.80	£270.80	£190
Adelaide Street	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Gombards	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Drovers Way	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190
Russell Avenue	£4.50	£432.00	£242	£648	£458	£190

We have identified that with the Car Park Access Permit, two 3-hour visits to the town or City Centre weekly will result in significant savings at our lowest rate council owned car park and our highest rate council owned car parks. Our Car Park Access Permit can save residents money compared to paying for each parking session individually.

5.2 Arbitrary Age

Concerns were raised over the possibility of some people being the age of 70, but not born in 1954, who would therefore be unfairly excluded from satisfying the required criteria of eligibility for the Access Permit.

The Lloyds Bank '2023 UK consumer digital index' found that:

"There are 13 million people with 'very low digital capability' (25%). This group are most likely to be of the older age group with 50% of this group being 70 years and older".¹

Based on these findings and from the concerns raised in the representations to the consultation, we intend to amend the criteria of eligibility for the Car Par Access Permit to those being 70 years or over, which ensures that this digitally excluded target demographic is met, and that all those people who are 70 years and older can apply for the Access Permit. In 2023, the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee published a report on digital exclusion.

The Communications and Digital Committee state that 'digital exclusion' *"typically refers to sections of the population not being able to use the internet in ways that are*

¹ Lloyds Bank, ['2023 UK consumer digital index'](#), November 2023, p.12

needed to participate fully in modern society”.² They further addressed “a strong civic case...[to] help ensure many of the most vulnerable in society have a voice at a time when political debate and engagement are increasingly moving online”.³

Whilst SADC have participated in this digital movement, with the use of online response avenues being encouraged for making representations to live Parking Consultations, we have maintained alternative approaches to Consultation responses.

The Car Park Access Permit Consultation was published in the Herts Ad and printed and placed at each car park location affected. The Public Notice offered three avenues available for those wishing to comment: online, through email to parking.development@stalbans.gov.uk or in writing to The Parking Development Team. An A3 booklet containing the Public Notice, Statement of Reasons, Draft Traffic Regulation Order, and proposed maps was also printed and made available at the reception in the Civic Centre for those persons wishing to view them in person.

Although there is no legal requirement to do so, where feasible the council aims to send out Consultation letters with details of any proposed parking changes and instructions on how to make a representation.

Amongst various barriers identified to digital exclusion in the Committee report, one was “*accessible services*”, where it was also argued “*that adequate provision needed to be maintained for those who could not or did not wish to use online services*”.⁴

The new Car Park Access Permit is designed to offer a concession for older residents who regularly use our car parks and meet the eligibility criteria to purchase a permit to make it easier to park without having to go through the process of purchasing parking time from a pay and display machine or parking app when they use a car park.

SADC are committed to being an inclusive council, and whilst we recognise the impacts an ever-increasing online presence can have on the digitally excluded, the Customer Services team can offer advice or assistance over the telephone during normal hours, or bespoke appointments can be made to receive in person assistance at The Civic Centre for application support. Further details on these appointments will be released in due course.

In addition to these options, 'Computer Friendly St Albans' provides free and low-cost support and training on Laptops, Android Tablets & Phones and Apple iPad & iPhones at drop-in sessions. They also offer courses from beginner to advance on eBay, Facebook, Family History, Microsoft Office and much more. For further support, residents can call 01727 617359 (Mon, Weds, Fri 10am - 1pm).
Answerphone at

² House of Lord Communications and Digital Committee, ‘[Digital exclusion](#)’ 29 June, 2023, HL paper 219 of session 2022-23, p.8.

³ House of Lord Communications and Digital Committee, ‘[Digital exclusion](#)’ 29 June, 2023, HL paper 219 of session 2022-23, p.53.

⁴ House of Lord Communications and Digital Committee, ‘[Digital exclusion](#)’ 29 June, 2023, HL paper 219 of session 2022-23, p.53-7.

other times) or contact them by email if you have access to an email account at courses@computerfriendlystalbans.org.uk.

5.3 Impact on visits to the town and local businesses

Concerns over the impact of this permit on local businesses are recognised, however there is no evidence to support that businesses or the town and City Centre will be impacted negatively. The proposed permit offers 3-hour use of all council owned car park up to 7 days a week.

There is similarly no evidence to support that the proposed Access Permit will negatively impact visits to the town and City Centre, the Access Permit can play a role in supporting older people's independence and health and well-being by providing suitable parking arrangement for visits into town.

5.4 One 3 hour visit per day is insufficient and unrealistic

We do not agree one 3-hour visit per day is insufficient and unrealistic. The permit provides more than adequate time to visit the town centre at a significantly reduced cost. The council is committed to ensuring our services focus on the battle against climate change and one aim is to discourage the unnecessary use of vehicles. Having permits which can be used multiple times encourages car use therefore by limiting the use to one session per day will help shape driver behaviour.

Appendix A- Online Survey Consultation Responses

Wholly Object

My objection to the proposed changes to the Senior Parking Permits eligibility is the inconsistency and discrimination contained within them.

The introduction of means testing has undoubtedly led to much criticism and concern among the previous holders of the Permits on a scale comparable to the loss of the Winter Fuel Allowance. The proposal results lacks consistency :-

	Means Tested Holders	Access Permit Holders
Qualifying Age	65	70
Daily Usage	Unlimited	Once
Cost	£40	£190

No rationale has been given for the egregious 376% price increase which had previously doubled in cost per hour. Why the disparity in daily usage and qualifying age other than a further plundering on pensioners incomes?

The eligibility criterion for the "Access Permit" is for 70+ aged residents who are less able "to purchase parking time from a machine or parking app". Is this a new health condition that only afflicts the over 70s? What allowance has been made for those aged between 65 and 70 who may have the same problem or even those who are capable of using these specified payment options? Are healthy Pensioners to be denied any form of age related concession?

One cannot conceive how many hours have been spent in the ivory tower in St. Peter's Street concocting this Byzantine scheme when the the most obvious solution is staring them in the face. All that needs to happen is for the previous Senior Citizens Parking Permit to be reinstated with unlimited daily usage with a cost of £80 to £100 per registered vehicle and with a Concessionary rate of £40 for means tested qualifying residents.

I was born in St Albans 1950 and been resident all my life. I currently have a Senior Citizen Car Park Permit.

Last year 2023/2024, annual cost for this permit was £35 for up to a 3 hour visit.

I understand that for 2025/2026 that the proposed charge for the same parking period will be £190.

This increase in cost over those 2 years of over 400% cannot be as a result of the increased cost of the management and administration of the car parks. If the cost of maintaining the car parks has dramatically increased, then why has the standard costs of car parking charges not followed a proportional pattern or will they do so?

How can the increase to £190pa be justified?

On the basis this is not based on a substantiated increase in car park operational costs, then it can only be considered a penalty to force pensioners to use the bus services or deter pensioners from visiting the city centre. I do use the bus service but do not wish to be totally reliant on it. I cannot accept an increase of such an unjustified magnitude and therefore accept that my visits into the city centre will be drastically reduced, with obvious loss of patronage to the retailers, market, facilities and attractions of the city.

Charging £190 per annum to means-tested Senior Citizens? Way over the top. Your car park charges are high enough already. Some senior citizens who have mobility issues but not a blue badge will be badly affected.

The removal of the standard previous SCP this year will certainly affect our own ongoing parking in the City and will therefore result in loss of revenue for the council which was previously guaranteed through the permit purchase.

Completely against charging, if you are going to then why is the permit only going to be available to people aged 70+, should be available to all people of pensionable age. Looks like you have just plucked an age out of the air. Government acknowledges people of pensionable age.

I can't even work out how to read what the proposal is! But I understand it's a permit for older people who don't want to use digital methods to pay for parking.....then please explain why oh why are you conducting your consultation online....thereby deliberately excluding the very people the idea is aimed at?! You really need to do better, this is ridiculous.

Comment boxes should be put in places this demographic visit such as doctors surgeries, the library, chemists, churches, local shops and cafes.

My feedback on the proposals as ive seen on Facebook is that they are prohibitively expensive and should include onstreet parking as older people often need to park close to where they are visiting for mobility and carrying shopping reasons. In my shop we often help carry shopping to peoples cars.

I am concerned that life is getting very difficult for those who can't use a smart phone including elderly people.

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed increase in the cost of parking permits for pensioners to £190 per year. This represents an almost fivefold increase compared to the previous scheme, which cost £40 per year.

Such a steep rise is totally unacceptable, particularly as it disproportionately affects pensioners, many of whom are on fixed incomes and are already grappling with the rising cost of living. The proposed fee increase is excessive and shows a lack of consideration for our elderly residents, who often rely on their cars for independence, daily errands, and essential appointments.

While I understand that costs may need to be adjusted periodically, a hike of this magnitude is unreasonable. It is effectively pricing pensioners out of using council car parks, which is both unfair and discriminatory. This decision could have serious implications for the mobility and quality of life of older residents.

I urge the Council to reconsider this proposal and either retain the current pricing or introduce a more modest, gradual increase that does not unfairly burden our elderly population.

I hope the Council will listen to the voices of residents and make a decision that reflects fairness and community support.

The change of the senior parking permit to being means tested is appalling as is the removal of the pensioner winter fuel payments. Just because a pensioner is not receiving help from the government does not mean that they are well off. I think whatever cost/benefit analyses has been done must be wide of the mark.

How much money do you think you are 'losing' with the current senior parking permit? Without metrics this is surely guesswork, but I expect that it is a lot less than is being discussed.

How often and for how long do you think pensioners will park in town? If some one parks in the town for 2 hours once a week they will currently pay £192.40. The same as the £190 proposal, so pointless. Staying for 3 hours seems extremely unlikely. The more likely parking for 1 hour once a week costs £109.20, so the proposal is again pointless.

The belief must be that the removal of the senior parking permit will result in more money will be paid by pensioners, but why should this happen? The likely reality is that pensioners will simply stop using the town centre. When you can go to M&S at London Colney to meet your friends in the cafes there and not pay for parking, why visit the town centre?

Personally (I am a pensioner with a senior parking permit) I now visit the town centre less and less. When my permit expires I will think seriously about whether I want to pay the parking tax and am more likely to go elsewhere where there is free parking.

P.S. Access to this survey is NOT straightforward. I have a degree in Computer Science and I puzzled over how to open this panel. I also was surprised that I had to fill in details that should have been pre-populated. Also why should I have to consent for 'my details being used' in order to submit (or is this just badly phrased?)

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This is an ill thought out response to the widespread public dissatisfaction with the proposed parking charges. Do SADC know who use the town centre parking spaces?

Why is Rothamsted Avenue not included in the planned new charges?

Surely the residents parking permit should allow parking in the 298 on street spaces?

If SADC believe that over 70 year olds need help with digital services, then implement a district wide programme.

These proposals just illustrate how ridiculous poorly thought through this whole parking proposal is. No one in Harpenden wants it because it will damage the town.

Just admit you are wrong and apologise for trying to damage Harpenden with incompetence policies like this.

But I expect you will ignore the will of the people and press ahead with your warped lid dem ideology to destroy the high street and local businesses.

Why this is restricted to born before 1954? – I wholly object to this proposal.

Partly

The proposal for a parking permit for residents aged 70+ is appropriate but

a) two visits each day should be allowed

b) the cost should be no more than £100, a figure which itself would be appropriate

Senior citizens' car parking permits

I have tried to send an email to the address given in the Herts Advertiser but it has been returned as undeliverable.

I hope this will be considered in this format.

I welcome the decision to reinstate car parking permits for senior citizens but would like to comment on the detail of the proposals.

The cost of £190.

This is an extraordinarily high cost. I live in Wheathampstead and many of the elderly who currently have parking permits (or did so until recently) only visit Harpenden occasionally to go to the doctors', opticians or banks. Visits to the doctors' are increasingly a problem as we are often unable to get an appointment in Wheathampstead but are forced to go to Harpenden instead. As is recognised in the proposals, the use of the payment machines is a worrying problem for this group and £190 is an enormous amount for very few visits in the year.

The other effect of this high cost is that many, myself included, will not renew my permit, but limit visits to Harpenden to unavoidable visits only.

The limit of one visit a day

Not many people will want to visit more than once a day, but those who do may be forced to do so for medical reasons or because they have forgotten something. These visits are likely to be short and not breach the 3 hours.

Age of eligibility

Offering the permits to those over 70 is generous. Many of the 70 - 80 year olds will be able to manage the machines. The cost to the council could be reduced by limiting the permits to those aged 80 and over.

3 hour limit

The reinstatement of this limit is also welcome. Not many people will wish to make use of it but it does allow for a doctor or optician's visit plus shopping or a coffee if wanted.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of the consultation.

I do not own a smart phone and therefore am unable to access any parking charge measures which ask you to pay by an app or phone. I am 73 years old and do try to walk into town as much as possible, but there are times when I need the car and need to park but won't be able to do this if it needs to be done by phone. I think the idea of an access permit is good, but I think the charge is way too expensive especially as it assumes I would go into town every day, which I most definitely do not and I don't think many pensioners or anybody does, unless they work in town. I use cash most of the time and consider all these cashless things we have to do as discriminatory.

Could you have an up front payment card instead so we could put say £50 pounds on to use in the car parks and top it up as we need to rather than charge us pensioners for parking when we would not be parking? A bit like pay as you go phone card and the travel cards the post office do for holidays. One assumes an access card would just be pushed into the pay machines so the up front card could be too. It would then be up to the individual to top up when needed.

The proposal is similar to the senior parking permit that was terminated by the City council. Just a couple of years ago we had a very good scheme which cost around £35/40 pa for 3 hours parking - this was then cut to just 2 hours, before restricting access to only senior citizens on benefits. Whilst I would welcome the reinstatement of the original scheme, I cannot believe the Council has decided to quadruple the cost to £190. This is exploitation of the city's senior residents. Surely a £50 fee would be more likely to succeed in getting more seniors to visit the City centre shops and make more money than a few paying £190 pa (the law of diminishing returns!)

The proposal states that only those born in 1954 or earlier are eligible for the scheme. That means, I think, that you want to limit access to the scheme to those aged 70 and over. I have two objections to this element of the proposal. The first is the arbitrary selection of age 70 - the recognised identification for senior citizens is when they are entitled to their state pension. My second objection is that as phrased, entitlement to this access permit will reduce year on year as those born before 1954 sadly pass away! I am 68, born in 1956 and although I will be 70 in 18 months, I will never be born in 1954 or earlier!! Surely the proposal should state an age and not a year of birth.

I consider that the proposal is ageist as not just elderly residents are unable to access parking using contactless or smart phones.

Many residents neither possess a smart phone nor do they have a bank account which gives them a bank card or credit card

There is a wide digital divide in the community not just among the elderly

I'm sure that this consultation is a sham as the Council have already decided to introduce the Access Pass as this will mean that the Council will have a meaningful cash injection

The proposal whilst potentially helping a small number of residents who will struggle or are unable to pay for parking using a parking app does not address the fact that in the initial consultation regarding the implementation of cashless parking 40% of respondents were against it.

The proposal does not identify what proportion of residents are able or likely to want to pay £190 per year for a parking permit. It does not explain why a date of those born before 1954 are eligible and those after are not.

There are many other groups of people who do not own a smartphone or wish to use a parking app are being discriminated against by the implementation of app only based parking payment across the area.

I do not fall into the eligible group but still have no desire to use a parking app. I object to having my payment details etc recorded by a third party for security reasons.

When I have been forced to use similar apps I have found them inefficient for me as a user and delete them whenever possible.

I do not always carry a phone when out and about and do not consider I should be forced to do so.

<p>I consider the implementation of these systems discriminatory and basically bullying people.</p> <p>I accept that a proportion of people are happy to go this way but your initial consultation said that 40% did not support cashless parking by app yet you appear to be continuing down the path of imposing it on all residents which is undemocratic.</p>
<p>The cost is too expensive and the target audience restrictive. I am 64 so not part of your target group. I live a mile away from the High St in Harpenden and could not walk that distance with a couple of bags of shopping . Therefore I will either drive to Southdown and shop there or Aldis at Gypsy Lane. I will not therefore be popping in to any other of the Harpenden shops as I do now . If the parking pass was cheaper and available to my age group I would consider it. As as an aside I have just returned from Burford in the Cotswolds. The beautiful High st has free parking both sides of the road and a free car park. The place was buzzing and great to see.</p>
<p>The cost of £190 a year is very high and seems to assume a high frequency of parking. If this is intended to deter older people from using their cars in the City it may work. However, if it is intended to encourage the residents to park their cars it is a poor proposal. As a bus pass is free, this seems to be more of a deterrent than an help to older people. Something in the order of £20-£30 a year might be a reasonable charge. Why 1954? what is the reason for such a date? Is this going to be changed regularly, or be fixed for a number of years?</p>
<p>This proposal is out of line with both national pensionable age and reality of the residents of Harpenden. Eligibility for The Senior Parking Permit that has been removed was correctly in line with pensionable age and to now create a 'born before 1954' criteria is So Very Wrong; it is 100% discrimination to those of national pensionable age born after 1954. Is the proposed requirement 70 + years and therefore needs annual adjustment of birth date or to be set at 1954? Either way it is both unjustifiable and unfair whilst also unrealistic in support for local residents. Conceptually So Wrong, and that's before the cost element is considered. Please adjust the eligibility to be in line with national pensionable age.</p>
<p>Two points: 1. What financial arrangements have been made between the district who are introducing this scheme and the town council who own Lydekker Park car park? I presume they are receiving a share of the permit income and have agreed to the plans? 2. Does SADC know of any other council in the country that runs a discounted flat fee access permit for senior citizen parking? I've been unable to find one and would like to see examples of other areas where such a policy has proven useful and a success to both residents and council finances.</p>
<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Why is this being proposed? What is wrong with the current senior and silver permit scheme for those who need regular access? £190 sounds like a heck of a lot to me.</p> <p>For occasional use what people, particular older people, need is to be able to pay by cash. Payment by phone, is, for those of us who have them, a nightmare to be avoided at all costs (and I used to be an IT expert). I know for a fact that my partner would not be able to manage at all, because she hardly ever uses her phone, so has not got the skills, and is terrified by the risks she see in use a phone for this. This isn't a joke, not that unusual.</p> <p>It isn't just older people who don't use smart phones. I detest using a phone to pay and need another option. Why should the elderly be limited in how often and for how long they can park?</p>
<p>This scheme is unnecessary. Instead all car parks within St Albans should be required to provide car parked ticket machines offering both cash and debit / credit card methods.</p> <p>Digital payment methods not just discriminates against the elderly, but also discriminates against people with learning difficulties and people that don't have mobile phones.</p> <p>For everybody else digital payments are inconvenient and time consuming.</p> <p>Digital payments are introduced by car park operators purely for their own financial gain - 1) to cut costs from managing the ticket machines, 2) they deliberately make paying for parking more difficult which increases the risk of customers not paying properly thus enabling the operators to charge lucrative fines, and 3) to harvest personal data which they can then sell on.</p>
<p>Partly Support</p>

I applaud the Council for recognising the difficulties some older citizens have in coping with the constantly changing digital age and especially the use of smart parking etc.
 I would however question why the age limit of 70 years was chosen to qualify for a year long access pass.
 I feel that not making this available to all persons of state pension age is a mistake and creates sub tiers within an already accepted strata of the population !
 Please consider amending this before proceeding with any implementation .

To be clear I absolutely am against the introduction of parking charges and the removal of the senior citizens parking permit. The council simply don't have a clue how to run the district and they are simply following central government's attacks on pensioners. HOWEVER , if the charges do come in (and they will) then this scheme will help those older people who have difficulty dealing with the digital world. My proposal though is that the payment of £190 for an annual pass be spread across the year so that the pensioners cash flow can be managed. I don't think that is too much to ask. Thank you.

Wholly Support

As an elderly resident, I strongly believe it would be a good idea to allow elderly residents to park near the town centre free of charge so they can shop (especially if they have limited walking ability).

Appendix B- Email Consultation Responses

Wholly Object

I wish to object to the proposal of a pass costing £190 for people born before 1954.

My issues are :-

- 1) The cost compared to the current fee for 2 years (already restricted from 3 years !)
- 2) Why 1954 ? - makes no sense ! - Surely should be actual PENSIONERS ! ie anyone getting the state pension

NO to all St Albans D C hair brained plans to cripple Harpenden Town centre, destroy retail businesses, charge elderly and everyone a fortune to park etc etc.

Waste of council tax money on signs, machines, enforcement. All attacking the old and vulnerable just to support LibDem pretensions to be Eco friendly. If I could walk or cycle, carry heavy shopping etc, I would gladly do so, but I cannot, so need to use my car but will, reluctantly like so many others, have to reduce my visits to Harpenden town centre, which will die without support.

Ps your website is wrongly set up so consultation not possible so no one can object (or support)! Suggest you sort it out!

As a current user of yearly senior citizen until March 2025 We would NOT purchase an access pass for £190 per year . As previous e mail to you we would refrain from visiting both St Albans and Harpenden centres by car and shop at shopping centres like M&S London Colney or John Lewis Welwyn Garden City or even Roaring Meg Stevenage where parking is either FREE or far more reasonable than your proposed charge of £2.50 per hour.

So farewell to our trips by car to St Albans and Harpenden centres after March 2025. We may visit by bus but not for large shopping as too difficult to car large shopping. We will have all our food shopping delivered by Sainsburys or others.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my thoughts regarding your latest parking proposal; I would be pleased if you could take the trouble to at least read through to the end.

Where does the limitation year pre-1954 come from? (Finger in the air to bump up profits?) Are you inferring that you are better informed than the government of the day who currently state that anyone born before (September at present) 1958 merits a state-funded pension? Why do you believe that car owners should be treated differently - with no chance of a pass for a further 4 years? I presume that this will be a running target, constantly changing, or will it die with residents as they grow older? Please, clarification here is needed: how can I otherwise be expected to accept the proposal? Do you have further (expensive) resource to manage this effectively? I wonder if the additional income from managing this (age acceptance, 3 hours max, once per day, etc.) will be able to balance the extra resource needed?

How has the figure of £190 been calculated: almost 5 (FIVE) times the current charge for a 'free' parking pass? I cannot understand any logic behind this thoughtless, (typically LibDem) approach.

You also lay claim to the fact that this pass is needed by some 'new tech illiterates' (my words), citing OAPs; if so, why (again) is 1954 taken to be the cut-off year? Do you believe that anyone born since then has had sufficient formal schooling to be computer savvy? Obviously you are far too young and inexperienced to make such decisions if you believe this to be the case. Again, I ask, if not then how can you explain that date? Is it possible to sensibly furnish me with a plausible answer?

Do you have any plans to assist the OAPs who may be living just above the bread line (no additional support) but now are expected to fork out the extra significant amount when their tight budgets have already been planned (and that's prior to the loss of the Winter fuel relief). Or is this a nice and simple 'one size fits all' typical non-thinking LibDem strategy where you're aware that a large majority of the population could afford this - and ignore those who will find it particularly difficult. Is this really catering to the thoughts and feelings of the people you are supposed to be representing - hardly caring - for?

You claim a need for additional income to maintain services. I understand how this is in effect most probably illegal, but won't take that further. However, from a Harpenden viewpoint (for which I am aware many of the Council have not even visited the town) I am acutely aware of very significant illegal parking both within the town centre and numerous residential roads around. I would consider it a 'no brainer' that you firstly monitor and properly police this aspect of local parking: I am certain that issuing appropriate fines would very quickly cover the warden costs required (hardly 'additional' warden costs since they are practically never to be found in the town, apart from an occasional token gesture) and equally would provide some of the extra funding you are looking for.

I appreciate that further funding is no doubt required in some areas to maintain a service, but more careful thinking, leading to sensible planning and an open approach to the issues, so bringing a majority of local residents with you, would be a much improved and preferred way forward, as at present I do not have either sufficient information nor reasoning to accept this proposal.

I accept that the charge should be increased But not to such a high cost. Many seniors are managing on only a state pension & already facing higher heating costs this winter. Please look at the overall picture & reduce this new exorbitant charge plan

This is an astonishingly high price to pay for parking. How many senior people go out and park for 3 hours every day to make this charge even viable. I am stunned by the short-sightedness of the people making these decisions. An increase is inevitable but this increase is clearly to deter seniors from using the facility. A reasonable increase would have been accepted and brought in lots of revenue per annum, in advance. I believe it was only made so you can say "we offered you an alternative."

In addition the High Street in Harpenden will suffer greatly from the proposed hourly charges. No-one can shop in 1 hour, including walking time, and 2 hours parking will add a hefty £5 to the shopping bill. I have also heard a suggestion that housing is to be built in Waitrose car park. Exactly where will customers be able to park to get their shopping. Are we to lose this supermarket in Harpenden?

I do not understand why several poles every 2 feet apart have been erected at the Memorial site, at what cost? We need parking rights not more floral arrangements and Christmas lighting. In tough times these are just unnecessary. It seems the Lib Dems are intent on ruining Harpenden, its shops and supermarkets. Be aware there is a price to pay for making the wrong decisions. Don't count on future votes to get control and mess it up.

Great idea but an extortionate price. Most old people like myself don't want to go into town every day. Maybe once or twice a week. Taking away the senior citizens parking pass and replacing with this is just another way of hurting pensioners! Shame on SADC.

Now that you have taken away the "Pensioners Parking Permit" Which by the way was very helpful. You are now proposing a £190 pa permit to the so called "Boomers" generation!

This is an extortionate uplift from the £40 previous permit. Not everyone wants to travel everyday.
It is your sole intention to punish pensioners who rely more on the use of the car to shop.

You will start a decline in High Street shopping trips and retailers and eateries will suffer from your decisions and more shopping will go online!
It is difficult to understand why Pensioners have to be seen to be the Bankers for inept Government.!

How can you make such an increase, £40 to £190 is not on. Maybe the Prime Minister needs to know about this inflation busting increase, doubling £40 would be more acceptable to pensioners and the local shops would benefit..

I have just read about the £190 proposed charge for 3 hours parking .

I have paid for this facility for sometime & I believe the latest payment was £45 . It is vital that pensioners are able to go into town for the benefit of their well being , also to promote the ability to be self sufficient & most importantly reduce loneliness. .There are a number of meeting places, amenities & clubs that people would like to join in with in the town .Having to pay at the meters is not always an easy task due to lack of change , not using cards & also lack of an App .As a result people will not go to town , they will go elsewhere & a thriving community becomes a dead community.

Even more frightening people will stay at home & suffer from consequences such as poor mental health & loneliness . As prices rise pensioners do not have any extra funds & £190 is out of reach .A very poor decision if parking fees go ahead & parking permit is reviewed for over £70s . £ 190 is an outrageous price to charge pensioners who are at times struggling with rising costs. .Perhaps there may be some cuts to be made in other sections of the Community where people benefit from financial gains & don't actually need it

I think £190 per year is too expensive for many.

Many people who are on a pension and single would struggle to pay this and it would be discriminatory.

In addition to this there are many people with injuries and diseases such as MS, Parkinson's and Arthritis for example who are neither old enough to qualify or sick enough to have a Blue Badge. They would lose out on a lot of their independence incurring extra costs going out.

This cost is outrageous. A hike from £40 for 2 hours to £190 for 3 I'd trying to take advantage of elderly people who want this service and are not happy with technology.

One day you the Council will be an old age pensioner! Think again.

Don't be ridiculous, the proposed increase in charges is criminal.

Please make a response to the Consultation easier. I could not see where this could be done online. Why have you not used hyperlinks in the document to make this easier for those who wish to respond to this "Consultation" (see highlights in document below). The links are:

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/TROS>

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Car%20Park%20Access%20Permit.pdf>

The Proposal:

Introduce an 'Access Permit' available for residents born before 1954 and who are the registered keeper of the vehicle to purchase a permit for the said vehicle for £190 per annum to enable the Access Permit holder only to park the said vehicle for one session per day for up to 3 hours in any Council operated paid car park.

Objection to this Proposal:

I OBJECT TO THIS PROPOSAL.

1. Current Scheme:

Costs £40 per annum

2. New Scheme:

Proposed fee is £190 per annum. This is beyond extortion. This is a profligate excess and sees and uses residents as nothing short of "cash cows". I have written to local Councillors of the Libdems abuse of trust of residents as they keep hiking prices way beyond inflation in several areas.

The current rate of inflation is below 5%, yet the Liberal Democrat leadership seeks to bring in a charge over 300% higher than the current cost and at the expense of those on a pension. Not all seniors in the City and District of St Albans are wealthy! I do not see any mention of a lower fee or exemption for those on means tested benefits.

3. Access limited to one parking session per day:

There are many "seniors" who do not have a Blue Badge. They can get around, but need to drive their car to another area of the City (St Albans) or Town (Harpenden) or any of our villages. This "ONE SESSION PER DAY ACCESS" is not workable on that basis. It is too restrictive and punitive. Furthermore, the term "access" is somewhat of an oxymoron. This strict limitation does not give seniors "access" in a way which is needed and MUST be changed if this awful scheme is to go ahead.

4. I object to this Proposal and ask the City & District Council of St Albans to go back to the drawing board and bring back a fairer priced permit AND with the flexibility to park in several places in a day.

I hope that many residents of the area will object to this Proposal. It is being done because we have just accepted everything else. There has to be a line somewhere. Freedom and democracy are things we have to fight for, even using pen and paper or the keyboard.

Please confirm receipt of my OBJECTION to this Proposal.

I am writing to object to the New parking permits rules for St Albans and Harpenden. I strongly disagree with raising the cost of parking to £190 for Adam, having paid £45 approximately for last year's permit, there is no way I could possibly afford £190. I have asked all my friends the same question and everybody agrees that only the wealthy will be able to afford this new rule.

Having lived all my life in Harpenden, it upsets me to see the way it is going now, shops shutting and people moving away from Harpenden. Encourage people to visit our town and shop in our town because it is a beautiful place to live.

Pensioners used to get 3 hours parking when the annual cost was about £30. Then the council reduced it to 2 hours then no permit if you were not on income support.

Well thanks St Albans Council we used to go into Harpenden town regularly have some lunch a bit of shopping, then the main shop in Sainsbury's.

Well Sainsbury's don't lose out we now go to Welwyn Garden City , 3 hours free parking in Sainsbury's if you spend £10 (no brainer). Such a pity that you are determined to ruin retail in Harpenden.

As one of your target market here are my views:

On average I walk into town and back when I meet someone for coffee or visit the Library.(When the weather is dry).

I drive into town when i have shopping and park in Waitrose where I do the bulk of my shopping.

When the weather is cold or wet I drive and park beyond the High Street where parking is free.

Knowing the roads I always manage to find a place even if it means a bit of a walk.

I would resent paying a large annual fee if I used the Council Car parks as would a number of my friends.

I would hope that plans for permit parking are not extended.

I have read about the proposal to introduce a annual access pass for those born before 1954 and which will cost £190 a year.

I would like to state that:

1. The proposed cost of £190.00 a year is far too high and I and my Wife will not come into Harpenden and St Albans anymore. Instead we will shop in Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage , or Dunstable, or even Tesco where parking charges are much lower and it is easier to buy a parking ticket. They all welcome older people.
2. If we would like to go out for lunch or a coffee we will go instead to garden centres and anywhere that welcomes older people.
3. The SADC parking team do not or even want to understand the needs of older people. I downloaded the Harpenden Station App from Google only to find that I had subscribed to a games company that wanted to charge £30 a month. My bank helped me to stop the payments. Most parking machines are broken now or will not take change.
4. Many older people volunteer for charities and other work to help others. Their work is essential. This proposal will prevent anyone from volunteering in Harpenden and St Albans.
5. Older people were previously paying £40 a year for a permit. There is no way that older people will be able to pay more in parking without a permit and hence for SADC to recuperate more parking money.
6. As people get older their ability to use phones dextrous diminishes so there will always be a need to make allowances for older people.

This over-priced 'sop' thrown to the over 70's in the hope of reducing the widespread outrage at the imposition of on-street parking charges is unlikely to be effective. Few will pay it and many will simply avoid coming into Harpenden. Motorists are, by definition, mobile and there are many local alternatives which provide free parking. Charity shops in particular will lose many of their volunteers who are perfectly willing to give their time for free but will not see why they should have to pay for the privilege.

The present parking arrangements (set up after consultation with local business-leaders) work perfectly well as they are, and Harpenden's High Street with its combination of local businesses (including several successful charity shops) and two competing supermarkets has continued to thrive though Lockdown and recession. High-streets up-an-down the country are failing due to lack of 'foot-fall' frequently triggered off by short-sighted councillors making it difficult and/or expensive to park. It seems to have escaped the attention of SDAC that, in the past financial year, income from commercial rates fell by about 8%.

Partly Object

In response to the consultation I think this is a good idea, but I would like to object to the arbitrary date of 'before 1954'. Surely this should be aligned to the state pension age or a particular age such as 75. Then older people become eligible as they get older and are less able to use mobile apps because of failing eyesight, etc.

Please can you take into account my comments when considering and hopefully amending the terms of the proposed Access Permit.

- Note that with the advent of personal leasing that the registered keeper may not be the local resident but a leasing company or vehicle manufacturer. A copy of the V5C relating to the vehicle along with confirmation of residency should be sufficient.
- I do not understand why an arbitrary date of birth before "1954" is relevant to the change. Surely it should be linked to the statutory retirement age (currently 66) if not the same as the concessionary travel permit in London of age 60?
- I cannot agree to the proposed annual charge of £190 as I believe this is excessive for someone who may only use it once or twice a week. Particularly compared to the previous permit. I do not consider the term "subsidised" which I have seen used to describe it as at all accurate. Subsidised by whom? Any income for using a car park is surely incremental if the alternative is that the rate payer doesn't bother coming into town but goes somewhere else to shop or for recreation.
- I would support a lower charge of say £80-£90 per annum for anyone over the state retirement age. Please note I do not currently qualify for this permit but would hope to take advantage in the future.
- I think the restriction of one session per day for 3 hours is not unreasonable.

Additional points I would like taken into consideration are as follows;

- By providing seniors with easier parking options they can maintain more independence and social engagement.
- Business in Harpenden and St Albans would benefit from increased footfall and income in these straightened times. Seniors have the time (and hopefully the funds) to support shops and eating establishments during the day when they will be quieter.
- Attendance at medical appointments would be far easier without the hassle and worry of paying for parking – but not at £190 per annum. Seniors tend to, unfortunately, have more medical appointments.
- Seniors could park close to their appointments reducing the possibility of falling/tripping on poorly maintained footpaths rather than parking further away.
- Encouraging seniors to stay active and involved helps promote mental and physical health. Cheaper parking will allow them to participate in activities they might have to otherwise forgo.
- Offering a reduced charge to seniors shows that the local authority values them rather than seeks to curtail their activities.
- By encouraging seniors to use car parks during the day it will reduce pressure at other busier times.
- Many senior citizens live on a fixed income and paying £190 for the ease of use and accessibility will be a high price to many.

- Waiting for public transport with delays and in inclement weather will dissuade many from venturing out at all.
- Older residents may not have access to smart phones or be able to download parking apps so the annual parking permit has been popular due to this.
- Many residents would prefer from an online safety point of view to pay by cash which is another reason that the previous arrangement was appreciated.

My opinion is that the this proposed Access Permit is a hurried response to the universal condemnation of the withdrawal of the previous facility and I have not seen any financial workings to show why the change was necessary or how the council thinks the revenue the change *may* generate offsets the reduction in the physical and mental wellbeing of those we should be most caring for.

I am sure the council will have noted the negative publicity that the withdrawal to the Winter Fuel Allowance other than to those receiving pension credit has attracted especially with the admission that that it didn't receive any financial analysis prior to the announcement nor was it part of any manifesto.

I believe the council would receive far more political kudos by admitting its mistake and reinstating the previous arrangements albeit with a modest increase in annual charge.

I do hope that this will be the case,

Please could you let me have details of the proposed changes to Senior Parking permits. I gather that a proposal has been made but I have been unable to find the details. I gather that the cost may be £190 compared to the £40 previously. If this is the case it would be an almost 5 times the original which I would regard as highly excessive.

Partly Support

This latest proposal to make available a Parking Pass for £190 p.a. (for those born before 1954) to allow 3 hours parking **PER DAY** is at last a sensible proposal. However it should not be limited to **just one** visit per day as this would be an unnecessary restriction and probably difficult to monitor and enforce. The likelihood of local residents wishing to make more than one journey to park their car in one of the districts car parks is fairly remote. Therefore please extend some flexibility and allow unlimited parking visits per day and where each visit can be up to 3 hours.

I think that reintroducing the permit parking is a good idea as some car drivers have struggled since it's has been stopped. They feel isolated as they are not on a main buses route to be able to use the bus permit. The yearly fee of £190, needs to be considered bearing in mind it was £40.....this is nearly a 500% rise. I agree it should be 3 hours as some people have mobility problems and 2 hours isn't an enough bearing in mind lots of the car parks are out of town I would be prepared to pay £60 a year but definitely not £190.

With regard to the proposal for a reinstatement of a senior citizen's parking pass - I would welcome this. However to increase this to £190 per annum is an extortionate increase.

I have now changed my shopping habits - a more reasonable price for a permit of under £100 would encourage me to return to town centres. I had to give up recently in a StAlbans car park near the Waffle House as the machine just didn't work properly and kept returning my bank card. I don't hear very well and dislike having to use a mobile phone to park.

I am a Harpenden resident and have lived in Harpenden since the mid 1970s. My late husband was born here.

I was delighted to read that an access permit is being considered for residents born before 1954, but shocked by the proposed price of £190 per annum. I feel that most eligible people would not get value for money at this price, and would struggle to pay it annually. Most of us of this age would not be using the council owned car parks more than once a week. I'm a very active 78 year-old, but I don't park in town more than once or twice a fortnight. I would

suggest £75 - £100 would be more acceptable and possible for a majority of us . At £190 we would be paying an awful lot for our lack of competence with technology

I would like to make the following points about the withdrawal of pensioner parking permits:

1. Many elderly people find it very difficult and worrying to use apps etc for parking. Unlike younger people they have not used them or computers for work in the past. Not everyone has a smart phone.
2. As someone of 76, I would be happy to pay more for the permit but I get discouraged from going to various car parks if I am not sure I know exactly how they operate. Often one does not know if there are machines which take money, cards or just phone numbers for apps which may differ from place to place.
3. When the Council decided to stop the permits one of the councillors said she did not think that one group of people should get an advantage with parking. Clearly, she is young and fit. It appears that employees of the Leisure Centre in Amenbury Lane get special parking arrangements and presumably most of them are youngish and fit.
4. I cannot understand why the Council would want local businesses to fail because of a lack of footfall. Many elderly people do not shop on line and wish to go to shops. They should be encouraged to go out and about. Loneliness is a mental health issue. People running classes, for instance at Park Hall in Harpenden, will find numbers go down if parking is difficult and very expensive.
5. I personally would rather avoid all the difficulties of parking and go to Harpenden and Welwyn Garden City etc by bus but the buses are so infrequent and unreliable. More difficult for elderly people to wait around for buses in the cold. I have tried using buses over the last year or so and I have been left some way away with no bus arriving although it is on the timetable.
6. I and most of my friends volunteer in various capacities. We give our time happily for our communities but some help with parking when needed would be welcome.

The proposed changes from the former Senior Citizens parking permit seem intentionally brutal.

A more progressive approach would be to make the charge £100 per annum i.e. the equivalent of one one hour parking per week and retain the ability to register two cars as you have already introduced the means to do that under the current permit.

While I would welcome the proposal in principle it seems to me that the idea is ludicrous on many levels. SADC as recently removed the 'Senior Citizens parking permits for car parks' that I subscribed to. This cost £40 rather than the £190 fee for the new permit. As a resident of one of the villages I valued the earlier scheme despite the time limit being reduced from three to two hours a couple of years ago. I would support the reintroduction of the original Senior Citizens parking permit for all those of retirement age and not just for those on Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support. I would not support any scheme that charged £190 as I think this amount is excessive.

Comments on the published proposals

I welcome the proposal to restore access to a Parking Permit for older residents who do not meet the requirements for a means-tested permit (continuing at the long-standing rate of £40 a year).

I also welcome the proposal to restore the time limit to 3 hours.

I would like the Team to bear in mind that there are many older residents who do not qualify for a £40 permit but still struggle to make ends meet and who, unlike most younger residents in employment, have a fixed income: most can't augment their income by expedients such as doing overtime or taking on additional part-time jobs.

I suggest the following possibilities, and ask the Team to consider them:

- 1 Introduce a greatly increased charge, but consider whether £190 can be justified A 400+ per cent increase all at once is quite hard to defend.
- 2 Introduce the increase (from £40) in two stages, the first stage now and the second stage later in 2025.
- 3 Introduce an intermediate means-tested Parking Permit for older residents who don't meet the criteria for a £40 permit. (I appreciate that this may be administratively impractical.)
- 4 Clarify the key qualifying age: "over 66" doesn't point clearly to a specific date, unlike "65 and above" or "66 and above).
- 5 Introduce two charge rates on the basis of age, such as a rate for those aged up to 80 and a lower rate for those aged 80 and above.

I assume that that the possible impact of the proposed changes (since 1 April 2024) on the local economy has been discussed with St Albans Chamber of Commerce and other relevant local organisations.

I hope a decision will be reached as quickly as possible, and then introduced immediately.

Personal comment: Since my own Permit expired I find I have been making fewer visits to the Market and shops in the centre of town.

We think the re-introduction of a prepaid permit for digitally-challenged citizens born before 1954 would be helpful. However, it is difficult to justify paying almost five times the cost of the present permit, especially with the reduced flexibility restricting parking to a single car park once in any 24 hour period.

I include my comments below to the proposal to offer a Parking Access Pass to senior citizens of 70 years of age or more.

~ I support the proposal in principle as it would enable elderly people who do not have smartphones or are not digitally accomplished to use the car parks with ease. In addition the frequent warnings from Trading Standards re scams using QR codes on ticket machines have scared them.

~ I don't understand why you have chosen 70 and not 66, the current state retirement age?

~ I do, however, believe that the proposed cost of £190 is excessive and will be a deterrent to many senior citizens to apply for the pass. I think that £150 is a figure that would feel more "achievable"

~ It is important that the elderly maintain independence and have social contact with others. This is of benefit to both mental and physical health. Enabling the elderly to visit both St Albans and Harpenden town centres at an affordable cost provides them with the opportunity to participate in both social and, as many do, volunteering activities. I believe the proposal to introduce this pass would go some way to demonstrate that the local authority has considered the elderly and recognised their significant contribution to the town

I am probably too late to send you my comments- three weeks to respond to a consultation is hardly democratic!

I think the scheme is a sensible one but I would suggest that the proposed cost of £190 is excessive. £ 150 per annum would seem to be a more reasonable cost.

Wholly Support

I think the current proposal for 3 hours at £190.00 per year for this permit is probably reasonable for those who regularly come into Harpenden to use the retail and other facilities there. Of course any increase may be hard for some but to me it seems a good proposal and I support it.

I am a Harpenden resident and over 80. I find parking machines very difficult.

Apart from Charitable activities in the town I attend my Church twice a week as well as doctor's appointments in the town.

I welcome the proposal to pay £190 pa for three hours per day parking. This would alleviate any personal stress involved in daily paying for parking.

Please give this every positive support.

I very much appreciate the Council thinking about the introduction of the new Senior scheme which will allow up to 3 hours parking per day for £190 a year.

It is still a bargain and I would urge you to go ahead with the scheme.

In view of your cancellation of the existing parking permit I think the scheme to sell a permit for £190 for 3hours a day parking is something that would be useful for many elderly people, would it apply to leased cars as well as owned vehicles?

I support the proposal to allow 3 hours parking at a cost of £190 per annum,

I did write before and suggest that if there was a need to raise funds one option was to increase the permit cost, as the convenience of the permit was very valuable to older people not familiar with parking apps etc. - that's me over 80

I also agree it should be for one vehicle but does it have to be the same vehicle every time. The current system where one can switch between 2 cars is perfect and ensures that only one car can be parked using the permit at any one time.

I've seen mention of this proposal in Herts Ad.

When I heard the previous Seniors parking permit was being phased out I was horrified. Under the previous scheme our permit allowed 3 hours, currently it is 2 hrs and removing it the time allowed comes to ZERO.

I am a Welcomer at St Albans Cathedral. This should count as adding value to the City's attractiveness to tourists.

A shift volunteering is 2hrs 15 mins. With getting to and from a CP this is 3 hours. I do this three times a week. Previously this cost me nothing. Now I have to pay for 1 hr - with PayByPhone this is £2.35. And, by the way, it's a disgrace that using an App costs more than paying by CC at the machine! So my annual cost is c £360. With removal of any Senior permit my costs will rise to over £1000pa.

This is a lot to spend to volunteer and serve the community. Many of my fellow volunteers have said they'll give up when their current permit expires.

So the reintroduction of some sort of discounted permit for Seniors would be most welcome and once a day for 3 hours is ideal.

Please do it, not just to support Seniors but to support your own City and its Tourism.

Appendix C- Written Consultation Responses

Wholly Support

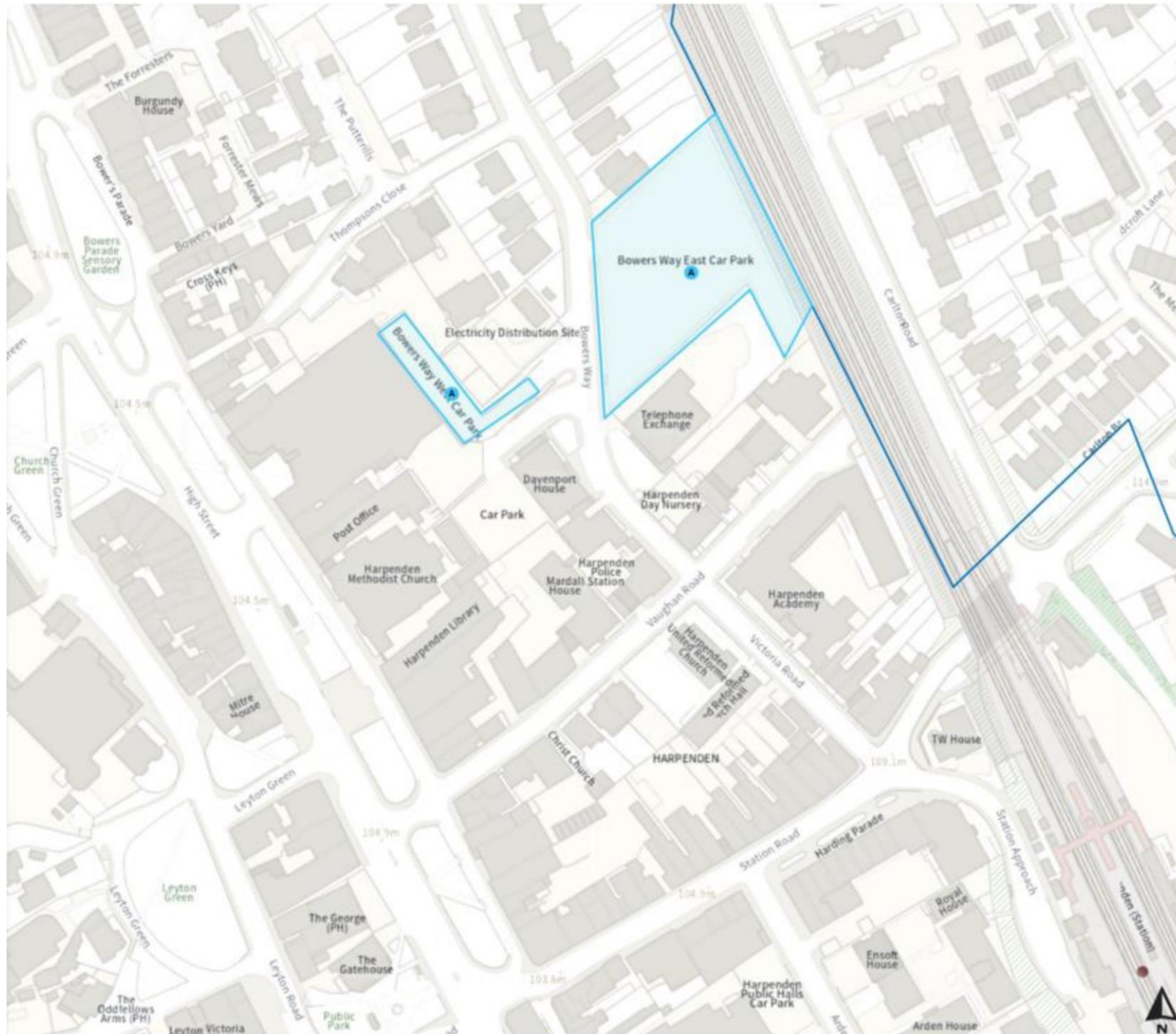
I read in the local paper about a consultation on a proposed Parking Pass for the elderly. I do at present have a Senior Citizen's permit but welcome this idea.

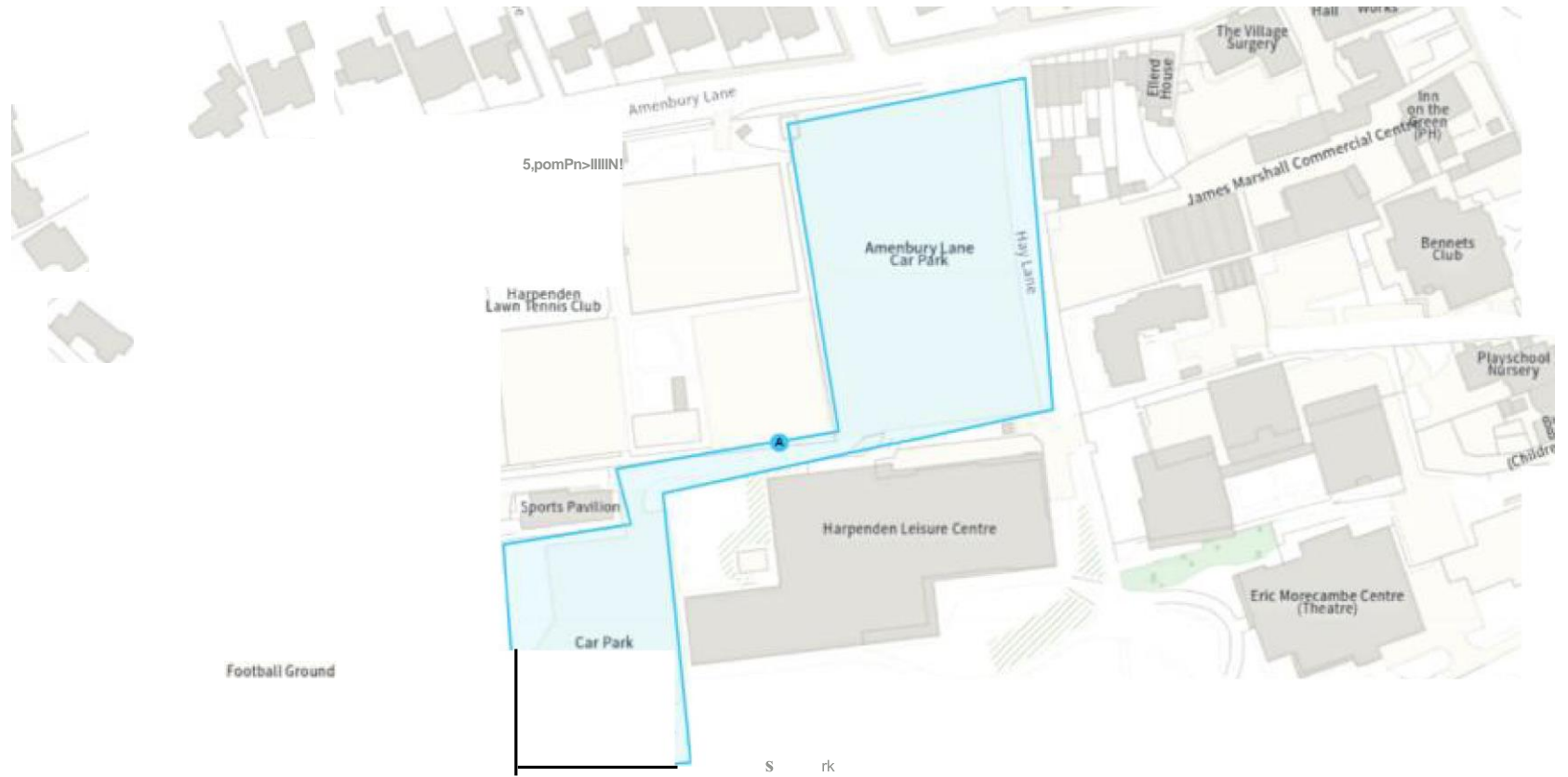
I am 76 years old and do not have a Smart Phone or indeed, a mobile phone. I see so many people in my usual Car Parks struggling to find change or saying the machine is out of order and dread when my permit runs out in February.

I would like you to that I think at £190 a year I would find this a very much easier way of parking and hope that when a decision is made it will be well publicised.

Yours Faithfully

Appendix D- Maps



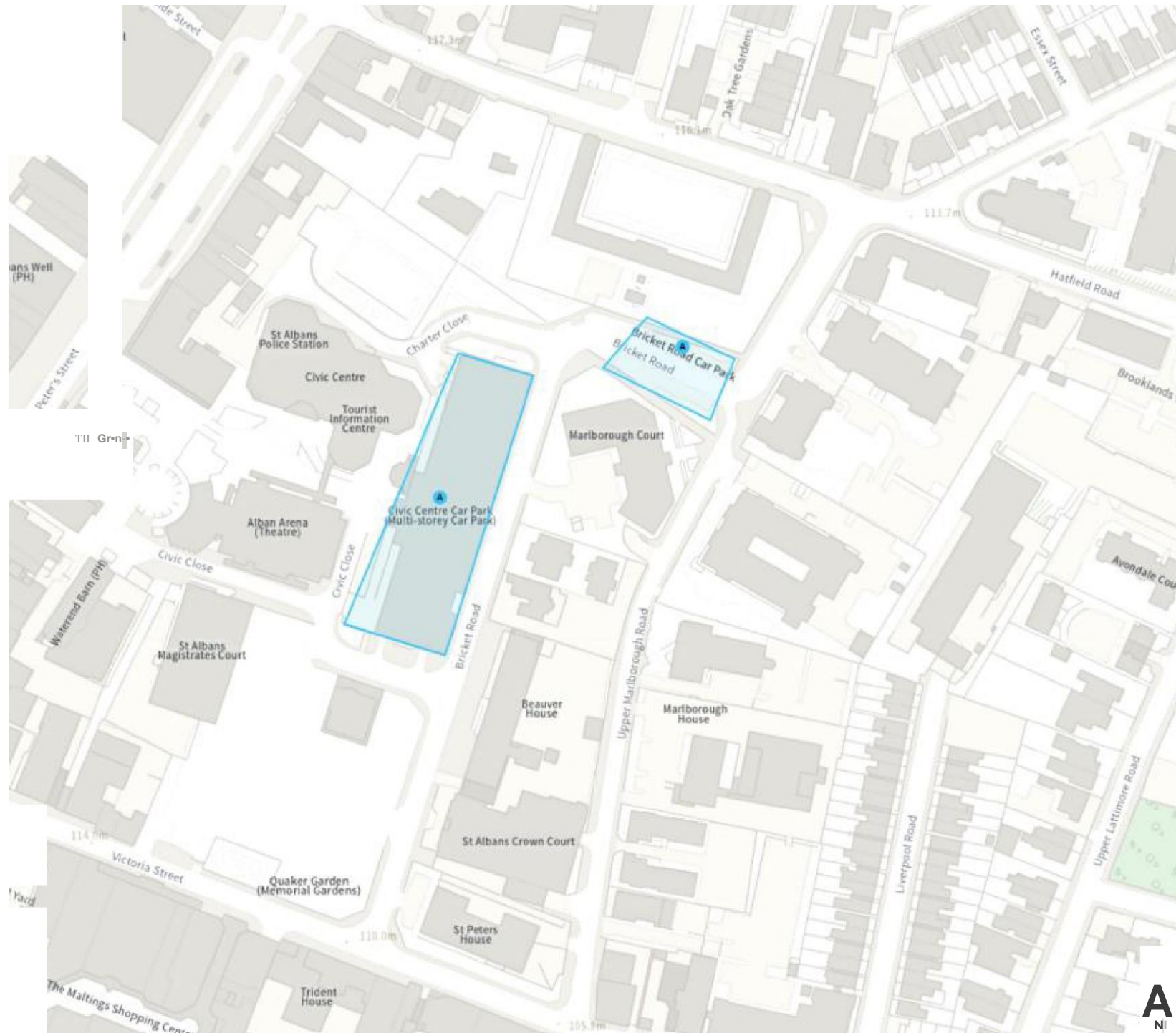


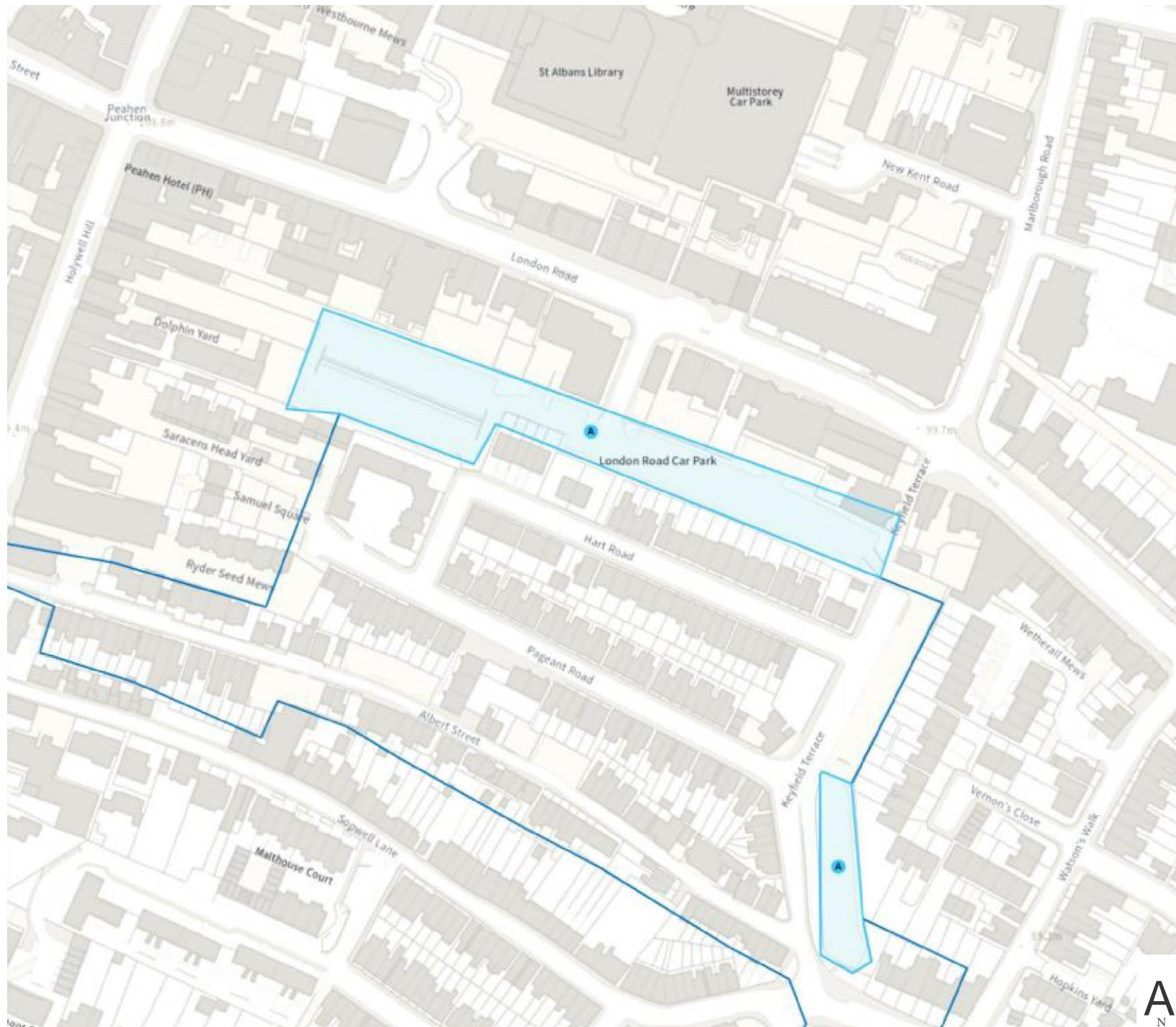
Football Ground

S rk

iothamsted Park Play A











Verulamium Park
Childrens
Play Area

A
N

Sports Pavilion



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N

