

GREAT WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Great Waltham Parish Council on Street Parking and Use of Green Spaces along Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham

January 2022

Contents

1. Introduction	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
2. Executive Summary	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
3. Methodology	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
4. Current Street Scene	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
5. Findings	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
6. Conclusions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
7. Recommendations	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
8. Appendices										
Appendix 1 – Copy of Survey Form	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
Appendix 2 - Map of Great Waltham showing locations of CGR communal green areas)									..	21

1. Introduction

- 1.1. On 17th February 2020, at its monthly meeting, under agenda item 19/342, Great Waltham Parish Council (“GWPC”) resolved to conduct a survey of residents in and around Cherry Garden Road¹ (“CGR”) to better understand their thoughts and concerns relating to issues of street parking and the use of adjacent green areas².
- 1.2. The subsequent coronavirus pandemic lockdown meant that the survey could not be conducted door-to-door by councillors, as intended. This delivery method had been chosen to heighten awareness, encourage responses and promote engagement between GWPC and residents. Subsequently, the actions agreed under item 19/342 were resurrected under item 21/842 discussed at the GWPC meeting on 17th August 2021³.
- 1.3. More recent planning applications which have included proposals to create direct access driveways across the green spaces via dropped kerbs to CGR residences have been refused. GWPC’s position has not been consistent⁴. The survey was therefore conducted in part to provide the GWPC with a body of evidence to help its adoption of a uniform approach in terms of both individual planning applications and for more general lobbying purposes.
- 1.4. Because of known issues with the availability of on-street parking, GWPC is aware of the use by some residents of the green spaces for parking motor vehicles, and of the consequent damage this causes to the grass and trees. The survey looked to secure an appreciation of residents’ views on the use of green spaces for this purpose and of the preferred street scene in general.

¹ The Great Waltham Village Design Statement says CGR is ‘characterised by housing being set well back from the road, bordered by mature hedges and pleasant greensward areas’. It goes on to say that ‘[a]fter the Second World War, Great Waltham village was considerably expanded with the building of local authority housing in Barrack Lane and what became Cherry Garden Road and Duffries Close. Pairs of small-scale two storey houses or bungalows, designed by Stanley Braggs on a “Garden City” plan, are set close together with large gardens to the rear, to enable tenants to grow their own vegetables - an important economic necessity in Post War Britain. Roofs are clad in concrete tiles, walls are of brick and render, windows and doors are mainly in timber and painted and boundaries to the street are marked by clipped privet hedges’, and in terms of development, ‘in addition to the general guidelines shown, the following points apply [to CGR]:

- Any new development should provide terraced housing or pairs of houses.
- Alterations and extensions should complement the existing character of the area.
- Boundary treatment, if any, should consist of privet hedges, or mixed native species hedges if on the edge of the village’.

See Great Waltham Village Design Statement (2002), *Settlement Patterns*, p.5 and *The Built Environment*, p.8. Available at: <https://e-voice.org.uk/greatwalthamparish/a/42828277-44441493>. (Accessed 12th November, 2021).

² This is the formally recorded minute of (a) agenda item 19/342, (b) the discussion and (c) resolution:

- (a) “To highlight the concerns with vehicular parking on greens and unauthorised access over greens for parking in front of homes. A proposal to explore the options for alleviating congestion/ parking difficulties in Cherry Garden Road. To engage highways and CHP in management/ cooperation in finding solutions where possible.
- (b) “The area does not provide enough off-road parking for modern households and road parking is a problem. Cars and Vans are parking on the green areas, causing contention and damage. The green areas are owned by Chelmsford City Council. Requests for driveways across the greensward appear to be addressed inconsistently by the Chelmsford City Council Planning department. Associated drop kerbs and driveways need to [be] paid for by individual homeowners. The Parish Council can appreciate that residents should have more of a say in their environment and it is important to understand their views.
- (c) “Resolution: The Parish Council to create a specific survey of Cherry Garden Road and discuss the results with CHP and CCC if appropriate”.

³ This is the formally recorded minute of (a) agenda item 21/842, (b) the discussion and (c) resolution:

- (a) “Update on and review of resolution 19/342 (The Parish Council to create a specific survey of Cherry Garden Road and discuss the results with CHP and CCC if appropriate).
- (b) “Concerns raised that a varying approach had been taken by City Council, over several years, on applications for cross green driveways on Cherry Garden Road. Before challenging them, GWPC need to know the collective preference of residents in terms of retaining the greens or giving some up for off road parking or access.
- (c) “Resolution Cllr Gilbert and Cllr Palmer to create a survey for review by the Parish Council”.

N.B. The item as recorded on the agenda was: ‘Review of draft survey to Cherry Garden Road residents (see original agenda item 19/342), with a view to agreement and roll-out – Cllrs. Palmer & Gilbert’. A draft survey document was discussed and agreed at the meeting.

⁴ In relation to application 19/02002/FUL which included a ‘new vehicle cross over, driveway and parking area’ the GWPC comments was: “The Parish [Council] does not consider this land [that is, the greensward area in front of the property] as a particularly valuable amenity The Parish Council regards a bigger benefit in taking cars off the road and supports the vehicular access. We note that it’s a sizeable extension and suggest that due consideration is given to the adjacent property. We note that this enables the extended family to be in one dwelling”. This can be compared to the comment under application 20/01083/FUL, a ‘proposed formation of access across verge’: “The Parish Council objects on the further lose (sic) of the greensward”.

- 1.5. A key event which highlighted the significant issue of street parking was the closure in 2020 of Main Road, Great Waltham near the church because of a failed drain. Traffic (including large commercial vehicles and buses) was diverted up South Street, down CGR and into Barrack Lane (and vice versa). This created gridlocks because large vehicles could not navigate through the parked cars on CGR. Notwithstanding the wisdom of using CGR as part of the diversion route in the first instance (although practical alternatives would also experience difficulties), residents have remarked that even on a day-to-day basis it is often difficult to negotiate the road especially when large parked or oncoming vehicles are encountered. However, because not all residents are drivers, GWPC was keen to understand the range of concerns.
- 1.6. This report includes an executive summary, details of the methodology used, a review of the current street scene, detailed findings from the survey responses, conclusions and recommendations for GWPC to consider to further action.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The overall response rate to the survey was 28.8%, increasing to 36.0% for CGR residences. These percentages are regarded as being sufficient to draw statistically valid and meaningful conclusions from the derived data.
- 2.2. The overwhelming majority of CGR residents own one or more vehicles, and are therefore likely to be impacted by issues identified in the survey, to a greater or lesser extent.
- 2.3. The calculated motor vehicle owning ratio per residence in CGR is 1:2.4. This is unlikely to alter downwards without significant structural changes in relation to access to public or other alternative types of transport.
- 2.4. Despite many residences having off-road parking facilities there is evidence also of an 'over spill' of vehicles from them which translates into increased on-road parking.
- 2.5. Significant issues and concerns have been raised by residents in relation to vehicle parking on CGR, accessing driveways and the (mis-)use of green areas for parking purposes.
- 2.6. Without existing off-road parking facilitated by dropped kerbs current vehicle ownership levels would significantly outweigh the on-road parking capacity.
- 2.7. Any change which allows more dropped kerbs to increase off-road parking will only have significant benefit if residences facing green areas are included.
- 2.8. On balance, there is a reluctant willingness for some parts of the green areas to be used to alleviate the parking issues identified. However, a minority of respondents disapprove of this approach.
- 2.9. The public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development are not regularly used by non-Blossom Way residents, although the facility is sometimes used by their visitors.
- 2.10. Respondents report potential/actual obstruction of emergency vehicles because of parked vehicles on CGR. This inconvenience also extends to the making non-emergency deliveries.
- 2.11. More considerate parking would improve, but not materially eradicate, the fundamental issues identified with parking. Pedestrians too are impacted by parking issues, both in terms of safety and inconvenience.
- 2.12. It is unclear whether uses of the green areas for recreation and leisure (and by inference for being used to park vehicles) are permitted, and which authority would administer such permissions.

- 2.13. Without public charging points, the present configuration of CGR seems to make it unsuitable for accommodating the charging of residents' electric vehicles when they are parked on the road.
- 2.14. Changes to the overall street scene would be necessary to accommodate more parking spaces, but there is no appetite to extend this to the construction of buildings on the green areas.
- 2.15. The introduction of a speed limit along CGR is unlikely to materially improve the current situation.
- 2.16. Further stakeholder engagement is crucial to identify key responsibilities and accountabilities with a view to then identifying possible solutions to the issues raised.
- 2.17. It is recommended that GWPC clarifies the current authorised uses permitted in relation to recreational and leisure activities on the CGR communal green areas, and to establish how residents are informed of any such permissions.
- 2.18. It is recommended that GWPC clarifies the legal position in relation to driving across and/or parking on the CGR communal green areas, and to establish whether, and if so, how residents are made aware of any legal duties.
- 2.19. It is recommended that GWPC creates a working group to initiate and develop engagement with all stakeholders affected by or concerned with the issues raised. It is further recommended that the working group's terms of reference include being tasked with identifying viable initiatives and working with third parties to progress implementation. Such stakeholders should include, but not necessarily be restricted to, Essex County Council (in particular Essex Highways), Chelmsford City Council, Chelmsford Housing Partnership (CHP), emergency services and representatives of local residents.
- 2.20. It is recommended that GWPC agrees and issues a documented policy in relation to its approach when considering planning applications at CGR residences which potentially impact street parking and/or the green areas.
- 2.21. It is recommended that GWPC issues communications/guidances on the availability of public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development and on the issues arising from inconsiderate parking along CGR.
- 2.22. It is recommended that GWPC identifies any future proposed updates to the Great Waltham Village Design Statement.

3. Methodology

- 3.1. Based on the direction received from GWPC resolutions a survey document was prepared (see Appendix 1) to seek information from residents. The content and format of the survey form was approved by GWPC at its meeting on 18th October 2021⁵. The survey requested both quantitative and qualitative data to provide the most comprehensive feedback in a relatively succinct format.
- 3.2. The survey was conducted anonymously. That is, the residents consulted were not required to confirm their names, exact addresses or other identifiable personal information⁶.

⁵ N.B. The item 19/896 as recorded on the agenda was: 'Review of draft survey to Cherry Garden Road residents (see original agenda item 19/342), with a view to agreement and roll-out – Cllrs. Palmer & Gilbert'. The formally reported minute of the discussion was: 'Review of draft survey to Cherry Garden Road residents (see original agenda item 19/342), with a view to agreement and roll-out. Discussion around some of the wording. Planned to be deliver by Hand to each resident in Cherry Garden Road. They will then be collected or Surveys can be returned via the Parish Letter box at the Great Waltham Village Hall or – Emailed to the Parish Clerk'.

⁶ The survey form's preamble stated 'Your responses will remain confidential – they will be grouped with others' feedback to produce overall findings'.

- 3.3. The survey form contained 23 possible separate responses. 14 required simple Yes/No answers. 3 demanded quantitative responses. The remainder offered the opportunity for free format qualitative responses, of which one was, in effect, mandatory⁷. The form was designed with the need to produce meaningful analyses and assessments in mind.
- 3.4. The residences surveyed were in CGR itself, Blossom Way (off CGR) and Barrack Lane (which joins CGR at its northern end). All of these residences were felt to be the most directly affected by parking on CGR and the use of CGR green spaces.
- 3.5. All residences surveyed were visited with a view to making direct contact by handing the survey form over in person. This delivery mechanism was completed by four GWPC councillors during the last week of October and first week of November 2021. The survey form requested completed responses by 30th November 2021.
- 3.6. In the majority of cases one of the four councillors were able to speak directly to residents and hand over a survey form. However, contact could not be made at some residences, so the form was posted through letterboxes.
- 3.7. In total, one way or another, 104 survey forms were left with residents. 75 for CGR residences, 10 for those in Blossom Way and 19 for Barrack Lane.
- 3.8. To complement and offer context for the findings of the survey, a walk-by survey of CGR was conducted to better understand the current positioning of residences (whether adjacent to the road or a green area) and the location of existing dropped kerbs (which facilitate direct access across the pavement to individual residences).

4. Current Street Scene

- 4.1. CGR is characterised by residences on both sides of the road⁸. Between the road and each property there is a pavement and also, for some, a green space. That is, some residences are set back further from the road than others. (See Appendix 2 for map showing the locations of the communal green areas).
- 4.2. A walk-by survey of CGR observed:
 - 4.2.1. 38 (50.0%) residences are ‘on the road’, while 36 (47.4%) residences also have a green area between them and the road. There are 2 bungalows (2.6% of residences) which have neither direct access to the road nor face a green area.
 - 4.2.2. 34 (89.5%) of residences with access to the road already have dropped kerbs.
 - 4.2.3. 8 (22.0%) of residences adjacent to a green area already have dropped kerbs and a (shared) drive across the green area.
 - 4.2.4. Therefore, 42 (55.3%) of residences already have a facility to park vehicles off the road.
- 4.3 These data vary for each section of CGR and will be referenced accordingly in section 5. below to assist the interpretation of the survey form responses. The table below indicates the current situation by each section of CGR.

⁷ That is, Question 7, where a request for further information was made notwithstanding whether an initial Y or N response was made.

⁸ Predominantly semi-detached houses or bungalows, but also a small number of terraced houses/bungalows (that is, with three or more residences in one structure).

Section	Direct Access to Road		With Green Between Property and Road		Bungalow (see 4.2.1 above)
	Total	Existing Dropped Kerb	Total	Existing Dropped Kerb	
Nos. 1 – 28 incl.	17	14 (82.4%)	12	0 (0.0%)	0
Nos. 29 – 56 incl.	13	12 (92.3%)	15	5 (33.3%)	0
Nos. 57 – 81 incl.	8	8 (100%)	9	3 (33.3%)	2
Total	38	34 (89.5%)	36	8 (22.2%)	2

4.4 Along CGR there is evidence that:

4.4.1 Notwithstanding the absence of a dropped kerb indicating authorised access, some residences have been modified to include parking facilities which can only be accessed by driving over a raised kerb and/or across a green area; and

4.4.2 The green areas – some more than others – are used to park vehicles, with consequent (in place significant) unsightly damage to the grass. It may also be that growth of some of the cherry trees on the green areas has been adversely affected by this type of use.

4.5 With the number of vehicles per property (discussed in 5.5 below) and the fact that the access required at the location of dropped kerbs in effect reduces capacity, on-road parking spaces in some parts of CGR is at a premium. This has the knock-on effect of making through travel typically difficult and potentially hazardous. This ongoing issue has been highlighted in the extreme on those occasions when CGR has been used as part of the diversion route when Main Road through the village has been closed to repair water mains – this created complete gridlock on more than one occasion.

5. Findings

5.1. 31 completed survey form responses were received (see table below for response rates).

	Residences Surveyed ⁹	Responses	Response Rate
Cherry Garden Rd.	75	27	36.0%
Blossom Way	10	1	10.0%
Barrack Lane	19	3	15.8%
Total	104	31	28.8%

The response rates (especially the significantly higher one from CGR residents, who one can assume have a greater vested interest in making their thoughts known) are regarded as being sufficient to offer robust indicators of residents' thoughts and comments on current issues and concerns.

5.2. **Q.1 Where do you live?** Residents in CGR were asked to indicate in which section of the road they reside. This question was posed to assess whether any perceived issues were greater in one part of the road. The response rates to each section are shown in the table below:

	Residences Surveyed	Responses	Response Rate
Nos. 1 – 28 incl.†	29	13	44.8%
Nos. 29 – 56 incl. †	29	8	27.6%
Nos. 57 – 81 incl.	17	6	35.3%
Total	75	27	36.0%

† These sections include sub-divided residences 28a and 56a. Also, even numbers go up to 66 only.

Ostensibly these response rates suggest residents in low numbered residences have more concerns. One comment in response to Q.8 said:

⁹ There are 76 individual properties in CGR. At all residences but one where a councillor spoke to a resident a survey form was accepted. When no one was available a form was posted through the door. Hence, the number of survey forms accepted is 75, compared to the 76 total residences count.

“Road not designed for more than 1 vehicle per household although problem is more acute at top [southern] end of Cherry Garden Road”.

There is a principal difference at the southern end in that none of the residences facing a green area have access across the green via a dropped kerb, whereas one-third of such residences in the rest of the road do (see table in 4.3 above). However, because of the relatively small numbers involved any inference that comments were received for this reason must be treated with caution. Indeed, many other comments from Nos. 1-28 residents reflected issues which affect the whole road, not just the southern end, such as the ability to drive from one end to the other and the damage to the green areas, which in practice tend to predominantly affect the middle and northern sections.

- 5.3. **Q.2 How long have you lived at your address?** All but one respondent answered this question. Of the 30 who did, the average period of residency was 19.7 years, ranging between 11 months and 51 years. The median value in the range was 13.3 years. The survey is therefore informed by a cumulative total of over 590 years residency in and around CGR. These data offer reassurance that the comments supplied are based on longstanding experiences of the issues identified.
- 5.4. **Q.3 Do you own or rent your home?** 8 respondents (25.8%) said they rented their residences. The remainder (74.2%) were home owners. However, without an understanding of the overall split of the 104 residences surveyed it is difficult to extrapolate from the data definitive conclusions such as whether homeowners (with more of a vested financial interest in their home) are more concerned than renters. Intuitively one could reasonably assume this may be the case, but the survey does not offer anything conclusive. Also, as they stand, the data provide no discernible correlation between the length of residency and type of tenure in relation to opinions on issues such as street parking and the future use of green areas.
- 5.5. **Q.4 How many motor cars/vans are owned by members of your household?** All 31 respondents had at least one vehicle, but one CGR resident did not say how many (so is excluded from the table below). The overall responses and those just for CGR residents were:

	1	2	3	4+	Total
CGR Only	11 (42.3%)	8 (30.8%)	3 (11.5%)	4 (15.4%)	26 (100%)
All	13 (43.3%)	10 (33.3%)	3 (10.0%)	4 (13.3%)	30 (100%)

There is a possibility that residents who do not have vehicles were put off responding to the survey by the absence of a ‘0 vehicles’ option. However, from the door-to-door conversations and the visible evidence (of vehicles on driveways or adjacent to residences) it is clear that most residents own or have access to at least one motor vehicle. As a wider issue, outside the scope of this report, this seems to affirm the absence of alternative, viable forms of public transport for the overwhelming majority of residents.

The responses indicate that multiple vehicle households are more common than single vehicle ones. A number of comments agreed that the original design of CGR took into account a far lower motor vehicle-owning society, hence many of the issues created by the increased numbers.

The results imply that between them the 31 respondents contribute at least 58 vehicles to the neighbourhood (52 for CGR residences). Using the survey response rate, but remaining mindful of there being some ‘0 vehicles’ residences, this extrapolates into approximately 180 vehicles overall and 160 in CGR alone. That is, vehicle ownership ratios per property of 1:1.6 overall and 1:2.4 in CGR.

Such data suggest, but cannot without further research be used to confirm, different household mixes in CGR residences compared to Blossom Way and Barrack Lane. For example, more inhabitants, and therefore more vehicle drivers, per property.

- 5.6. **Q.5 Is there direct authorised access to the road from your property by a dropped kerb?** This question was included to establish any correlation between having a dropped kerb (and thus being able to avoid parking on the road) and an inclination to respond.

The survey results show that of the 31 respondents 20 had direct authorised access. For the 27 CGR residences the figure was 17. A further breakdown for the three CGR sections is shown below:

	Y	N	Total
Nos. 1 – 28 incl.	9 (69.2%)	4 (30.8%)	13 (100%)
Nos. 29 – 56 incl.	4 (50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	8 (100%)
Nos. 57 – 81 incl.	4 (66.7%)	2 (33.3%)	6 (100%)
Total	17 (63.0%)	10 (37.0%)	27 (100%)

These data can be compared with those cited in 4.2 above. Recalling the 55.3% of residences with an existing dropped kerb, the equivalent figure above (63.0%) indicates a higher propensity for this cohort to respond to the survey. Again, however, the small numbers involved demand caution in drawing firm conclusions, although difficulties accessing one's property because of parked vehicles on the road may have provoked a greater inclination to respond.

- 5.7. **Q.6 Where do you park your vehicle(s) overnight?** As respondents were asked to tick all options that apply, because of multi-vehicle residences, the figures derived here do not match the total number of responses, nor can they be used to directly identify a total number of vehicles. Rather, they show the location(s) used to parked vehicles overnight. The table below shows the data both overall and just for CGR residents:

	CGR Only	All
Garage (on your property)	1	1
Driveway (on your property)	17	21
Road	10	10
Pavement	0	0
Blossom Way public space	4	4
On a green area along the road	2	2

However, ostensibly these data imply, using the derived ratio cited in 5.5 above, that CGR residents park 66 of their vehicles on the road itself ((10 x 2.4)/36% response rate), with the remaining 94 or so being parked elsewhere. That is, 58.7% of their vehicles are already off the road and not contributing to on-road parking issues. This correlates with the 55.3% of residences having dropped kerbs (see 4.2.4 above).

- 5.8. **Q.7 Do you ever use the public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development?** When Blossom Way was developed the Parish Council was able to secure access to parking spaces for general public use. This survey is the first opportunity to understand the extent of their use by residents. 5 CGR residents indicated that they occasionally use the facility for either themselves or visitors, sometimes because street parking spaces are not available.

One resident from Barrack Lane reported that they no longer use the facility because they were subjected to unacceptable 'verbal abuse [...] from a resident'. This suggests that not all parishioners are familiar with the rights of access to and permitted use of some of the parking spaces on the Blossom Way development.

The reasons for not using the facility included having own driveway, it being too far away and it being more convenient to park elsewhere.

- 5.9. **Q.8 Do you consider there to be issues or problems with parking on Cherry Garden Road?**
30 respondents answer ‘Y’ to this question, and the one who said ‘N’ went on to cite a number of issues in the free format section – it may well be that the ‘N’ box had been ticked incorrectly.

Having answered ‘Y’ respondents were asked to outline the nature of the issues or problems. The following themes (with selections of comments) were identified:

Lack of parking spaces on the road.

- “Not enough parking spaces. The situation is dire”.*
- “So many people have problems parking anywhere near their homes”.*
- “Having only 1 car I’m still struggling to find parking spot as there are too many cars parked on the road”.*
- “There is simply not enough room to park all the car’s (sic) that there are in the road”.*
- “Too many cars parked on the road - struggles with 2 way traffic”.*
- “Just a lack of parking”.*
- “Too many cars for the limited amount of spaces”.*
- “Cannot find spaces to park”.*
- “Too many vehicles, not enough off road parking”.*
- “Not enough parking space in Cherry Garden Rd, resulting in, sometimes, difficulty passing parked vehicles but also the use of greenswards for parking through necessity”.*

Use of the road

- “Too many cars parked on road so driving down is difficult”.*
- “Cause obstructions for access for emergency vehicles”.*
- “[...] irresponsible parking stops larger vehicle access i.e. ambulance, fire engine etc.”*
- “Emergency vehicles struggle to get through road”*
- “Emergency vehicles struggle to pass and unsuitable for diversions”.*
- “Vehicles parking not allowing larger vehicles to have free access i.e. Fire engines, Ambulances etc.”*
- “Bin day - Friday. Road constantly blocked”.*
- “It’s just difficult (usually) to drive from one end to the other? Don’t go there on bin day!!!”*
- “Diversions from main road are through CGR”.*
- “[...] difficulty passing parked vehicles [...]”.*
- “[...] struggles with 2 way traffic”.*
- “Parking by the road side which causes traffic sometimes or too tight road to pass”.*
- “Some difficulties with deliveries”.*

Inconsiderate parking

- “People overhanging onto our driveway”.*
- “Parking opposite people’s driveway entrances”.*
- “People occasionally park across the pavement, hindering pedestrians”.*
- “Not enough parking, poorly parked cars and vans”.*

“[...] some people don't think about parking closer to each other's cars to let others in. Some people do that on purpose so they can save spaces for other people in their house with cars so when they get home there is space for them”.

Parking difficulties for visitors and guests

“Nowhere for guests to park”

“Visitors leaving my driveway have an obstructed view due to all the cars/vans parked along side”.

Damage to the green areas

“Parking on the green spaces”.

“Grass areas are becoming damaged/eroded”.

“Erosion of green spaces by vehicles”.

“[...] the use of greenswards for parking through necessity”.

Obstruction of pavements

“[...] issue with vehicle mounting footpath causing damage which lead to danger for pedestrians”.

“People parking badly on pavement [...]”.

These themes are instructive in identifying residents’ predominant concerns. They continue to be reflected in responses to later questions, especially in the final free format section for ‘other comments’.

5.10. As responses to the statement **Q.9 Along Cherry Garden Road, between the road and gardens, there are a number of communal green areas for residents’ recreational and leisure purposes**, respondents were invited to indicate a preference for a number of options. The responses received are shown in the table below:

	Y	N	Qualified Answer	Not Answered	Total
Is your home immediately adjacent to one of these areas?	16 (51.6%)	15 (48.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31 (100%)
Would you like to keep these areas for their intended purpose?	14 (45.2%)	14 (45.2%)	1 (3.2%)	2 (6.4%)	31 (100%)
Would you support any change of their intended use to provide more parking spaces?	22 (71.0%)	6 (19.3%)	3 (9.7%)	0 (0%)	31 (100%)
Do you think motor vehicles should be prohibited and/or physically prevented from parking on or driving across these areas?	11 (35.5%)	15 (48.4%)	2 (6.4%)	3 (9.7%)	31 (100%)
Do you think the green areas could be used in other ways?	19 (61.3%)	8	1 (3.2%)	3 (9.7%)	31 (100%)

The response to adjacency to a green area closely reflects the situation on the ground (see 4.2.1 above). That is, there is a roughly 50/50 split between residences with direct access to the road and those faced by a green area.

By cross-referencing the responses, of the 16 residents immediately adjacent to a green area (and therefore perhaps most likely to be affected by any future changes), 7 answered that they wished

to keep them for their intended purpose. However, 11 also said they would support a change of use, 3 thought vehicles should be prohibited/prevented from parking on or driving on them, and 11 thought they could be used in different ways.

A review of data on the same basis but just for CGR residents provides the results shown in the following table:

	Y	N	Qualified Answer	Not Answered	Total
Is your home immediately adjacent to one of these areas?	15 (55.5%)	12 (44.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	27 (100%)
Would you like to keep these areas for their intended purpose?	14 (51.8%)	13 (48.1%)	0 (0%)	2 (7.4%)	27 (100%)
Would you support any change of their intended use to provide more parking spaces?	19 (70.4%)	6 (22.2%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0%)	27 (100%)
Do you think motor vehicles should be prohibited and/or physically prevented from parking on or driving across these areas?	9 (33.3%)	14 (51.8%)	2 (7.4%)	2 (7.4%)	27 (100%)
Do you think the green areas could be used in other ways?	18 (66.7%)	7 (25.9%)	1 (3.7%)	1 (3.7%)	27 (100%)

Again, by cross-referencing the responses, of the 15 residents immediately adjacent to a green area (and therefore perhaps most likely to be affected by any future changes), 7 said they wished to keep them for their intended purpose, but 11 said they would support a change of use, 2 thought vehicles should be prohibited/prevented from parking on or driving on them, and 11 thought they could be used in different ways.

Having answered the five Y/N questions, respondents were encouraged to offer further free format comments. A representative selection is quoted below. These responses and comments identify a general recognition that while the green areas are regarded as a community asset in their current form, their partial use to alleviate the parking issues could be a reluctant compromise. The real conflict between wishing to retain the areas as they are and recognising a need for change is well reflected in the data which suggest that while on one hand roughly one-half of residents would 'like to keep these areas for their intended purpose', at the same time approximately two-thirds also think the areas could be 'used in other ways', with over 70% saying they would support 'their intended use to provide more parking spaces'.

The comments received also identify conflicting views which the Parish Council may wish to have clarified. For instance, what restrictions, if any, are there on recreational use on the green areas.

The unsuitability of the present configuration to accommodate the charging of electric vehicles is mentioned.

In addition, some possible solutions/enhancements are identified. For example:

- proactive planting of wildflowers and management of the greens accordingly;
- extending the laybys along the road and/or introduce parking spaces into some of the green areas;

- making available dropped kerbs/driveways at those residences which do not already have them;
- using parking grids or mesh to stabilise the green areas;
- introducing yellow lines to prohibit parking in some places as part of reconfiguration of the green areas to provide more parking space;
- converting CGR into a one-way street and/or introducing a speed limit (ideas also mentioned elsewhere, particularly in the final section of the survey).

However, not all views were mutually compatible – some ideas would conflict with the views of others, particularly those who desire the green areas to remain the same. This selection of comments was received:

“The green areas are never used for leisure or recreational purposes. People just tended to park on these areas if unable to park in road and this just churns up the grass specially in wet weather”.

“The greens are hardly ever used. Children aren't allowed to play with a ball and I have seen children playing on them. [...]”.

“It would be nice to keep the cherry trees”.

“We would be supportive of limited mowing (twice a year) and the planting of wildflowers, to encourage wildlife. This would support higher numbers of insects which feed local wildlife. [...]”.

“It's important to keep green spaces and trees. Driveways across should never have been allowed. Parking could be cut into path and minimal amount of green & paths moved back.”

“Not sure these [areas] were provided for recreational purposes as signs have been erected in the past stating 'No Ball Games'. We would like to see dropped kerbs alongside the green areas. We would like to see the green area inlaid with a mesh which would allow vehicles to park on it with little or no damage to the grass. The grass would grow through the mesh and the appearance of the road would remain somewhat the same.”

“We do love having the green outside our house but it doesn't get used for anything so turning it into some sort of car parking would be a great idea. It would be a shame to do it but needs must I'm afraid”.

“The green spaces are important + should be maintained or further enhanced with successional cherry trees to replace old ones. However, access to houses without drives could be beneficial. Some sort of hybrid option? Green round tree root area, then grasscrete?”

“If green spaces are to stay as they are then vehicles should be prohibited from parking on them.”

“The green areas have considerable depth. It would be possible to create parking spaces on some of the green, still leaving part of it as green space behind - which could then be protected. Currently the greens look so poor as they are churned up - some of the space needs to be re-developed as parking spaces.”

“Lovely to see children playing on the greens. Cycling round the paths - learning. Love to see more trees planted on the greens. Its why we moved here.”

“[Vehicles should be prohibited/prevented] if other options available.

Several options:

- *put laybys in all green areas (or parking spaces). Keeps some green area but allow for 2 way traffic.*
- *put 1 driveway in centre of green areas and ring road to allow all houses to have option of drive. Keeps green space.*
- *make CGR 1 way street with parking only on 1 side of road.”*

"We are told the future is electric so we will all need to change cars for that to happen we need to be near our homes".

"[...] I only really used to park on the green to save using [on road] spaces for others. [...] I think these areas should be allowed to be driveways for residents".

"It would be great if we could have dropped kerbs so we could have driveways. This would keep the roads clear and also more convenient when I have people to stay. Always have to apologise for parking when I have people over!"

"Please use the green areas for car parking to make Cherry Garden Road safer for motorists and pedestrians".

"[Support of use of green areas to provide more parking] if opposite green, as ours not parked on by anyone. [...] It's easy to see where issues are on this road by looking at churned up grass & poor parking."

"May be if there were cut outs we would not have to use green areas."

"Parts of the green areas could be used for parking, on lawn parking grids, as long as some of the area is left as grass with trees".

"These green areas should be developed to allow off road parking for all residents whilst maintaining some green areas, trees etc. double yellows should then be implemented along the road".

"We should have access across the green to our gardens. New builds are required to have parking for 2 vehicles, can this not be retrospectively applied to existing properties. These properties were built before properties had multiple vehicles so should the road not be modernised to accommodate current vehicle situation".

"The 2 lay by areas in central Cherry Garden Road could be extended so vehicles could be parked lengthways thus accommodating more vehicles".

"I would support possible use of part of green space to provide more parking. [...]"

"Some of the green could be used for parking - not all."

- 5.11. As responses to the statement **Q.10 The Great Waltham Parish Plan says Cherry Garden Road was designed and built with 'houses set well back from the road, bordered by mature hedges and pleasant greensward areas'**, respondents were invited to indicate whether they agreed that 'this original street scene should be maintained'. 11 respondents agreed. 15 did not. 3 gave qualified answers. 2 did not respond.

Again, respondents were invited to supplement their responses with free format comments. A selection of these is included below. Again, the comments reflect a range of opinions, with many naturally aligning with previous responses on the desirability (or not) of altering the use of the green areas and reiterating some of the issues raised previously in relation to parking. In particular, the reluctant recognition that improved parking is most likely to need some use of the green areas in a frequent leitmotif.

"Unfortunately not many houses only have one car and more parking spaces are needed".

"We don't believe any buildings should go on green spaces. Perhaps parking spaces rather than driveways in large green areas so some green area remains."

"[...] The disabled lady who lives in one of greens cannot get anywhere near her house. Driveways is an excellent idea also. Personally I am fed up with having to run the gauntlet of a long line of cars to get out of Cherry Garden".

"Driveways are essential".

"We would be strongly opposed to the development of any of the green spaces, which would ruin the appearance of Cherry Garden Road".

"I think having an extra parking spots/ driveways will be a good idea"

"Certain residents continue to regularly park vehicles on the green. This not only looks unsightly but also prevents maintenance i.e. grass cutting to be completed. No. [redacted] is a particular concern as they parked on the green area - yet have a drive and a dropped kerb!!!"

"[The original street scene should be maintained] as far as is possible. If residents to the rear of the green spaces wished to access their front gardens or property for vehicle parking then at their expense they could extend the inlaid mesh to access their property."

"I think it's essential that the parking is sorted out so yes having driveways would be a great help or just by taking part of the green area away to make into parking would be good, or just keep the green area but allows us to park on it".

"Perhaps a hybrid solution would maintain the integrity of the original street scene, and provide further access to properties across the greens in the form of grasscrete or similar. Aesthetically more pleasing + better for flood run off/ carbon capture than hard surfaces".

"We have to move with the times and extra parking in CGR is now essential".

"[The original street scene should be] modified. [S]ome of the green should be cut into to create parking spaces, while still retaining the rest of the green space behind the parking bays."

"Only where there is an existing path and it must serve two properties".

"We do not want to see these areas built upon, as this was an attraction to us when we purchased our property"

"CGR developed in 40/ 50's. Most houses now have 2+ cars. Therefore, original plan is obsolete. No space for extra buildings. Driveways should be encouraged + supported by Parish Council where possible. Too many recent applications have been opposed by Parish Council but no solutions raised!"

"I think times change as much as I love green spaces we need to adapt to the environment we live in now with more cars etc..."

"Yes definitely as stated above. Would improve driving down the road also. [...] I always have to reverse as there is a car coming in the opposite direction".

"Driveways and car parks please".

"No objections to people having driveway but no further dwellings as built up enough".

"Driveways which allow grass to grow through should be allowed and would not look unsightly".

"[...] Definitely no more houses. Some shared driveways or dedicated parking but only on lawn parking grids, not concrete."

"The plan was based on an age when most households had no or very little access to a motor vehicle. It is not suitable for modern living".

"No more houses should be built. However existing houses should have vehicle access from the road to enable off street parking, which can cause safety issues".

"Driveways must not [be] built across the greenswards".

"So long as any development/ change of use is sympathetic to the existing areas".

"[...] In reality, we probably have more cars now + so while it would be nice to keep to this design, is it realistic in 2021? We must be realistic + practical".

"More drop kerbs to allow off road parking - this may become more necessary as electric cars will need charging points".

5.12. In the final section of the survey respondents were invited to **Please use the space below to make any other comments in relation to the questions raised here.** Many of the responses reiterated themes and issues highlighted in response to previous questions. Nevertheless, the following selection of comments provide further useful insight:

"To discourage so many people using Cherry Garden as a rat run it would be a good idea to make it a 20 mile an hour speed, not speed bumps though. People on the greens may not have enough room for a driveway, so using the greens for parking will be essential. The parking situation is going to get much worse if greens and driveways are not used".

"Although we have a drive to our property it is sometimes very difficult to get in and out due to vehicles being parked so close to the driveway. It's also dangerous as you cannot see oncoming traffic".

"Clearly there are issues with parking on Cherry Garden Road. These are partly historic, due to the fact that many properties were built in the 1950s and not given driveways or direct access to the road. Also, many households own multiple vehicles parked on the street, often opposite driveways or on grass communal areas. However, that said, we would rather live with this than develop the existing green spaces, which would ruin the look and appearance of the road (i.e. village/ rural feel vs highly developed/ urban look)".

"Speed limit for Cherry Garden should be 15 mph. We have our own drive but are unable to drive off it safely due to cars & large van parked so close to dropped kerb. One way would not work as we are unable to reverse onto our drive & have to reverse into the road at odd angles with great difficulty. [...] Doesn't help 1 household has drive of about 8 cars [and parking 3/4 others] road. Visitors to our home can never park. If traffic was to drive one way, feel more people would speed".

"The parking issues in Cherry Garden Road must not go unaddressed. In future with young families there will be a further increase in the number of vehicles in the road. Any mesh laid should be recyclable plastic. If the street is devoid of parked vehicles then traffic will speed through Cherry Garden Road with consequent danger to residents/ others".

"I am totally (we) fed up with not being able to park anywhere near our house, it doesn't matter what the time is during the day or night there isn't anywhere to park, so we end up miles away like Blossom Way or sometimes even by Hatchfields which is totally unacceptable especially when you have got lots of shopping or when it is dark as we just don't feel safe enough as there's not enough street lights in our road/ village. There's never enough room for visitors to park either [...] I love this village but we are looking into moving house just because of the parking situation which makes us feel sad but it's just beyond a joke not having anywhere to park".

"Young cherry trees are being damaged by mowers in Cherry Garden Road + vandalism in Blossom Way. Protection of these is vital + more planting if we want to keep the original street scene intact, plus benefits to biodiversity, pollution control, water run off capture, human wellbeing etc!! Second car/ multiple car ownership - would enhancement of local active travel options influence this positively? E.g. car club based at village hall with booking system, and extension of E-scooter scheme to extend to Gt Waltham via a cycleway".

"We would love Cherry Garden Rd to remain as is, but understand that it cannot due to the amount of vehicles. We utilise as much of our drive as possible to enable neighbours without driveways to park. However exiting our property is not always easy due to parking. Driveways or lay-bys is one answer".

"Why is there not better use of existing road side parking - create herring bone configuration. Parking on the grass should be banned as it had killed new trees in the past. Can there not be parking at the back of the houses?"

"[...] Many homes still owned by CHP so they should contribute/ help towards a solution".

"I've had my van broken into and stolen [...] I would really love to have a driveway so I can secure my vehicle. [...] I would just like the same opportunity as my neighbour [to have a driveway to my property] to secure my vehicle. [...]"

"If we could have driveways, we could also keep the green areas between the house, still in keeping with the original design when the houses were built".

"The greens were never allowed for residents recreation of leisure, unless this has changed recently? Instead if this [drawing of existing layby configuration] build this [drawing of new layby configuration with use of some green area to allow cars to drive into rather than parking parallel to the road]"

"We remember the council putting dropped curbs (sic) for some residence a few years back, some paid for this option. Why since more cars as families have older children living at home longer is this refused by council from new requests? We have a youth issue in village it's dangerous they cycle no lights in a busy parked road will an accident happen then action taken?"

"Where we live emergency vehicles have no access, unable to hire skips if necessary".

"We need to retain as much greenery as possible, and plant more trees. There must be an environmental way to provide parking without resorting to swathes of concrete/tarmac because it is cheaper".

"When the bungalows were built, you would not expect the residents to have vehicles. Now days nearly every resident has a vehicle. You could take out the side garden [house number redacted] and put parking spaces in for the bungalows. It is not just an issue with residents. Visitors have nowhere to park".

"The greenswards are part of the heritage of Cherry Garden Road. They serve a purpose in the look of the road and safety for children playing. There should not be any more driveways built across the greens and bollards should be in place to stop parking as this destroys the greens in winter and is also a hazard for pedestrians. We were told that a street light could not be put on the bottom of C.G.R. because spoils the look of the road, so would driveways across the greens".

"Very sad to see cars + vans on green areas which results in it being churned up/ tyre marks etc... [...]"

"Possible suggestion that Cherry Garden be made one way with indented parking as greens (only part of green area used at each area)".

6. Conclusions

- 6.1. The survey supplies robust data from a sufficiently wide range of respondents for meaningful conclusions to be drawn. However, caution has to be exercised when cohorts are sub-divided, but overall, their consistent nature the comments received can be taken as representative and dependable. The longevity of residencies and quality of comments provides further comfort that respondents have well observed and fully rounded experiences to share

- 6.2. The significant issues and concerns raised by residents in relation to vehicle parking on CGR, the difficulty of access to driveways and the (mis-)use of green areas for parking purpose needs to be addressed.
- 6.3. Without the existence of significant off-road parking facilitated by dropped kerbs, current vehicle ownership levels would significantly outweigh the on-road parking capacity. However, this does beg the question of whether vehicle ownership would be as high if only on-road facilities existed, and, perhaps, more pertinently, whether creating more off-road capacity in future (whether by some use of the green areas or allowing more dropped kerbs) might actually encourage even greater vehicle ownership.
- 6.4. The option to allow more dropped kerbs in future will only have significant benefit if it applies equally to residences facing green areas, given that 90% of 'direct access' residences already have the facility. However, because of the access requirement when creating a dropped kerb, generally this means one less vehicle can park on the road and may well create further issues in relation to access to/from off-road parking facilities.
- 6.5. There is no discernible or statistically significant correlation between length of residency and type of tenure data and issues such as the desire (or not) to see the green areas used for parking or the nature of the issues created by on-road parking.
- 6.6. While the universal vehicle ownership of survey respondents is unlikely to be reflected fully across every CGR residence, it is safe to conclude that the overwhelming majority of residents own or have access to one or more vehicles, and are therefore likely to be impacted by issues identified in the survey, to a greater or lesser extent.
- 6.7. The motor vehicle owning ratio per residence observed (1:2.4 for CGR), is unlikely to alter downwards in the short- or medium-term without significant structural changes in relation to access to public or other alternative types of transport.
- 6.8. Although the survey data does not confirm conclusively, there is evidence that the existing off-road parking facilities at some residences are insufficient to cater for the actual number of vehicles owned. That is, despite an off-road facility there is likely to exist an 'over spill' of vehicles from these residences which translates into increased on-road parking.
- 6.9. Overall, on balance, residents indicate a reluctant willingness for some parts of the green areas to be used to alleviate the parking issues identified. However, it should be recognised that a minority of respondents disapprove of this approach. This suggests any development in this area would need to be accomplished recognising this range of opinions. Any changes to the green areas to accommodate parked vehicles must be done sympathetically and with a view to enhance the current street scene, using innovate, integrated design solutions, including environmentally friendly initiatives such as also encouraging a greater diversity of flora (that is, not just grass) and more trees.
- 6.10. Because the public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development are not regularly used by non-Blossom Way residents, although the facility is sometimes used by visitors (because of the absence of on-road CGR spaces), further communication to increase awareness of the resource may be required.
- 6.11. The potential/actual obstruction of emergency vehicles because of parked vehicles on CGR is particularly troublesome and should be addressed. The inconvenience created for non-emergency deliveries etc. is also a concern which demands attention.
- 6.12. More considerate parking would improve, but not materially eradicate, the fundamental issues identified with parking.

- 6.13. Pedestrians are impacted by parking issues, both in terms of safety and inconvenience.
- 6.14. It is unclear whether use of the green areas for recreation and leisure (and by inference for being used to park vehicles) is permitted, and which authority would administer such permission.
- 6.15. Without public charging points, the present configuration of CGR makes it unsuitable for accommodating the charging of electric vehicles when they are parked on the road. The ability to allow more residents to park closer to their homes would improve this situation.
- 6.16. Changes to the overall street scene would be necessary to accommodate more parking spaces, but any changes should not extend to construction of buildings on the green areas.
- 6.17. The introduction of a speed limit along CGR is unlikely to materially improve the current situation, but could be an option to consider later should other alternatives prove to not be viable or successful. Making CGR a one-way street does not seem to be a viable option.
- 6.18. Further stakeholder engagement is crucial if remedial solutions are to be initiated. All relevant agencies associated with or having an interest in the area have important voices and should be consulted to secure relevant input and insight on the issues raised by respondents. This should include higher authorities, other agencies (such as the emergency services) and organisations such as CHP.
- 6.19. Any agreed and implemented changes to the CGR street scene should be reflected in the Great Waltham Village Design Statement.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1. GWPC to clarify the current authorised uses permitted in relation to recreational and leisure activities on the CGR communal green areas, and to establish how residents are informed of any such permissions.
- 7.2. GWPC to clarify legal position in relation to driving across and/or parking on the CGR communal green areas, and to establish how residents are made aware of any legal duties.
- 7.3. GWPC to create a working group to initiate and develop engagement with all stakeholders affected by or concerned with the (a) issues of parking and (b) the use of communal green areas along CGR, with a view initially to firmly identifying current responsibilities, accountabilities, issues, concerns and opportunities for improvements. Based on this initial phase, the working group's terms of reference should then include being tasked with identifying viable initiatives and working with third parties to progress implementation of improvements which complement residents' views. Such stakeholders should include, but not necessarily be restricted to, Essex County Council (in particular Essex Highways), Chelmsford City Council, Chelmsford Housing Partnership (CHP), emergency services and representatives of local residents.
- 7.4. GWPC to agree and issue a documented policy in relation to its approach when considering planning applications at CGR residences for the introduction of dropped kerbs and driveways across communal green areas. In the light of the findings in this report, such policy should articulate a position which, all other things being equal, does not object to applications which include such changes.
- 7.5. GWPC to issue communications/guidances on the availability of public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development and on the issues arising from inconsiderate parking along CGR.
- 7.6. Based upon outcomes of agreed actions, initiatives and/or policy changes, GWPC to identify any future proposed updates to the Great Waltham Village Design Statement.

Appendix 1 (Copy of Survey Form)

Dear Resident,

- The Parish Council needs your help and insight. To better understand your views and concerns, and to inform our lobbying policies, we would like to consult with residents of Cherry Garden Road, Blossom Way and other nearby houses in relation to street parking and the communal green spaces in the area. We would therefore be grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions.
- Your responses will remain confidential – they will be grouped with others’ feedback to produce overall findings.
- You do not need to identify yourself or your house number when you submit your response, although you can include this information if you would like further contact with a councillor on this or any other matter affecting your community.

1. Where do you live? Cherry Garden Road No. 1-28 No. 29-56 No. 57-83
Blossom Way
Barrack Lane
2. How long have you lived at your address? Years months
3. Do you own or rent your home? Own Rent
4. How many motor cars/vans are owned by members of your household? 1 2 3 4+

Here we are interested to understand the number of cars/vans which are typically parked overnight in the area.

5. Is there direct authorised access to the road from your property by a dropped kerb? Yes No
6. Where do you park your vehicle(s) overnight? Garage (on your property)

Please tick all that apply.

- Driveway (on your property)
Road
Pavement
Blossom Way public space
On a green area along the road

7. Do you ever use the public parking spaces on the Blossom Way development? Yes No

If Yes, why do you choose to do so? If No, why have you chosen not to use the facility?

8. Do you consider there to be issues or problems with parking on Cherry Garden Road? Yes No

If so, please can you outline the nature of the issues/problems:

9. Along Cherry Garden Road, between the road and gardens, there are a number of communal green areas for residents' recreational and leisure purposes.

Is your home immediately adjacent to one of these areas? Yes No
Would you like to keep these areas for their intended purpose? Yes No
Would you support any change of their intended use to provide more parking spaces? Yes No
Do you think motor vehicles should be prohibited and/or physically prevented from parking on or driving across these areas? Yes No
Do you think the green areas could be used in other ways? Yes No

Please use this space to develop any thoughts you have in relation to these questions:

10. The Great Waltham Parish Plan says Cherry Garden Road was designed and built with 'houses set well back from the road, bordered by mature hedges and pleasant greensward areas'.

Do you agree that this original street scene should be maintained? Yes No

What are your thoughts on any future developments (buildings, driveways etc.) in the green spaces between the houses?

Please use the space below to make any other comments in relation to the questions raised here:

Please return this form to the Parish Council post box at Great Waltham Village Hall by 30th November 2021. Alternatively scan/save copy and email it to the Clerk at clerk@greatwalthamparishcouncil.co.uk

Appendix 2 (Map of Great Waltham showing locations of CGR communal green areas)

