

Ms Kate Taylor
Willand Parish Clerk
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Willand
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Devon EX15 2RS

Contact: Mrs Jill May
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Our ref: JM/CF/SH

4 May 2020

Dear Ms Taylor

Car Parking at Somerlea, Willand

I have been liaising with Councillor Barry Warren regarding issues relating to parking at Somerlea, one of the District Council's housing estates in Willand. I understand that the Parish Council made a number of proposals relating to parking arrangements on this estate in 2018. In particular, the Parish Council asked that consideration be given to the conversion of some grass verges to provide additional parking bays.

I appreciate that parking problems can be very emotive causing anxiety to those who find it hard to park their vehicles close to their homes. However, many of our estates, including that at Somerlea, were built in the era before mass car ownership.

I can confirm that the District Council has given the proposals made by the Parish Council serious consideration and various colleagues including those working within the Housing Service have been consulted. Unfortunately, I have to inform you and the Parish Council that the District Council is unable to progress the suggestions made with regard to the grass verges in Somerlea.

As you may be aware, less than 50% of the homes on the estate remain in the ownership of the District Council.

Most of the areas identified by the Parish Council as being suitable for potential off street parking are designated as adopted highway. Devon County Council has never maintained this land which remains in the ownership of the Housing Service.

Alternative formats are available and requests will be considered on an individual basis.
Please telephone 01884 255255 or email customerfirst@middevon.gov.uk

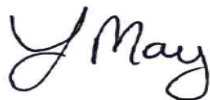
Given that the Housing Service is funded through a ring-fenced account, the Housing Revenue Account, with the rents paid by our tenants covering the cost of the management and maintenance of our homes and estates, the District Council would have to seek reimbursement from other residents to cover the cost of any improvements.

Furthermore, given that only a limited number of additional spaces would result from the conversion of the grass verges, we anticipate that there would be a need to implement a system of paid for parking. To manage this, the scheme would have to be added to the Traffic Regulation Order. Any ongoing costs would have to be divided up so that the Housing Revenue Account was not subsidising a benefit which would be enjoyed by those who are not tenants. The District Council would therefore have to recover the costs of this from those private householders who might be expected to benefit from the provision of additional parking spaces. The cost of the administration involved in recharging non-tenants for the improvement work and then managing the parking scheme cannot be justified given the limited amount of benefit which would result from it being implemented.

I appreciate that this may not have been the response that the Parish Council was hoping for but, under the circumstances, I cannot justify the work involved in moving forward with the scheme proposed by the Parish Council.

Please contact Mrs Claire Fry, Group Manager for Housing Services using her email address: cfry@middevon.gov.uk if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely



Jill May
Director of Corporate Affairs & Business Transformation