

**Acton Business Forum  
16 – 18 Crown Street  
Acton W3 8SB**

Phil Burns  
Head of Parking  
London Borough of Ealing  
Perceval House  
14/16 Uxbridge Road  
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5 March 2008

Dear Phil,

I am writing to summarise the points made to you by Acton business people at the Acton Business Forum meeting which you kindly attended at the George and Dragon in Acton on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February.

#### Loading

Concerns were expressed about the difficulties caused to businesses by the current loading regime.

There are not enough loading bays and some of them are poorly marked.

The 'three minute rule' is oppressive. Businesses loading and unloading cannot always demonstrate loading activity when the loading bay is at a distance from the premises concerned. This is a particular problem in Acton High Street, and Churchfield Road. There is a further problem on Saturdays. Many of the loading bays are only available Monday to Friday, yet Saturday is the busiest trading day for many businesses. Loading bays should be available for business use on Saturdays too.

There are specific problems in the important Vale business district, the triangle of roads formed by Warple Way, Canham Road, and Stanley Gardens. Parking on the street is currently free and is invariably all taken by 08.00. Loading then becomes impossible for businesses with no drive-in area. This situation is going to get much worse when the huge Factory Quarter residential development is completed.

#### Signage

Signage to council car parks in Acton is almost non-existent. This puts Acton businesses at a disadvantage since there is no possibility of parking anywhere on the town's chief commercial street – Acton High Street. Anyone driving through and seeing a shop they wish to visit thinks that parking is quite impossible and drives on to Ealing – where the multi-storey car parks are well signed.

#### Enforcement

Acton businesses welcome the news that the Council plans to publish clear 'rules of engagement' setting out exactly what is allowed and what is not. However there is a widespread belief that the wardens operating in Acton are not sufficiently well trained and often do not themselves know what the rules are. They seem to operate a policy of 'if in doubt, give it a ticket'. There is a general feeling that over-zealous enforcement is

squeezing the commercial life out of the town. A view was also expressed that some wardens are less than impartial and have over-friendly relations with certain businesses. We welcome your assurance that any such behaviour is not condoned.

#### Residential v Business

While shopping customers struggle to find somewhere to park, residential spaces lie unused in the residential streets immediately adjacent to the High Street and Churchfield Road. It would be a big help to businesses if some of these residential bays could be converted to dual use. 'Stop and shop' bays should be available on to Saturdays to help customers use the shops on the most important business day of the week.

#### Conclusion

Of course businesses understand that space on the borough's roads is a finite resource, but businesses feel that the balance is currently weighted against them. Small adjustments along the lines suggested here would go a long way to making life a bit easier for Acton businesses.

I would like, once again, to thank you for taking the time to visit Acton last week and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Morris  
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