

Canterbury Parking Strategy

2006 to 2016

A sustainable approach to balance the needs of residents, businesses and visitors and to help reduce traffic congestion

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1. Introduction

This strategy sets out Canterbury City Council's approach to parking issues in Canterbury, providing a policy framework and specific targets and objectives for the period 2006 to 2016. The strategy covers all aspects of parking including:

- on and off-street parking;
- Park and Ride;
- future parking demand;
- residential parking standards and enforcement;
- management issues.

The document has been developed following a full review of the previous and current parking and transport strategies and in particular the PARC (Park and Ride in Canterbury) Plan, which it now replaces.

It is one of a number of council transportation documents that include the Canterbury District Transport Action Plan (2004), the Canterbury District Walking and Cycling Strategy (2003) and the Canterbury Bus Strategy (2002).

2. Aim of the parking strategy

The aim of the parking strategy is to help improve the quality of life of the people of Canterbury by establishing a balance between the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of the whole community.

The strategy aims to reduce the need for drivers to travel to and from the city centre reflecting concerns about the impact of traffic congestion on the environment and historic fabric of the city, while providing parking provisions that meet a sustainable demand.

Parking cannot be considered in isolation and the objectives need to reflect the council's overall aims. The principles need to be consistent with other key documents including the Canterbury District Transport Action Plan, Corporate Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy and the Disability Equality Scheme. It is also important that parking policies are compatible with the council's economic objectives for the city.

3. Policy context

This section describes the policy context in which Canterbury's parking strategy will be set. The parking policies at national, regional and local level are summarised, along with relevant transportation policies.

3.1 National Parking Policy

National government influences the provision and management of parking through policy, legislation and advice. Policies are primarily delivered through Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes and Planning Policy Statements (PPS). Their aim has been to influence those involved with planning and development to achieve sustainable development that stimulates growth while minimising the impact on the built and natural environments.

There are two PPGs and a PPS that are relevant to the provision and management of parking:

PPS3: Housing (replaces PPG3)

PPG6: Town Centres and Retail Development

PPG13: Transport

PPS3: Housing

This Planning Policy Statement replaced PPG3 in November 2006.

It states that local planning authorities should, with stakeholders and communities, develop residential parking policies for their areas. These must consider expected levels of car ownership, the importance of promoting good design and the need to use land efficiently.

It replaces the guidance on residential parking standards in PPG13 by outlining the wider duty of local authorities to promote sustainable transport choices and consider local circumstances when developing car parking policies.

PPS6: Planning for Town Centres

This Planning Policy Statement replaced PPG6 in 2005.

The core principle is that sustainable development should underpin planning.

The key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by planning for the growth and development of existing centres, and promoting and enhancing existing centres by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services, in a good environment that is accessible to all.

In transport terms this means that developments should be well served by various means of travel. In particular, it means promoting sustainable transport choices including reducing the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use.

PPG13: Transport

PPG13 provides the most comprehensive advice on parking, aiming to secure sustainable development from a transport perspective. A reduction in the rate of traffic growth and car dependency and greater use of alternative forms of transport are integral to this objective.

Studies have shown that the availability of car parking is a major factor affecting the mode of transport chosen, and is even more significant than the availability of public transport. Reducing the amount of parking in new developments is therefore essential as part of planning and transport measures to promote sustainable travel choices.

PPG13 emphasises the use of parking charges as a control mechanism and recommends a regional co-ordinated approach.

It sets out eight principles that local authorities should adopt when developing and implementing parking policy. Each of these principles is designed to ensure that the parking policy:

- helps to promote sustainable travel choices;
- maintains and supports the vitality and viability of city centres;
- maximises access to community facilities for everyone; and
- protects the environment in which people live.

Park and Ride

PPG13 states the following with regards to Park and Ride schemes:

- Park and Ride schemes, in appropriate circumstances, can help promote more sustainable travel patterns, both at local and strategic levels, and improve the accessibility and attractiveness of town centres. Schemes can vary considerably in size and purpose and may be based around bus, light rail or rail. Well designed and well conceived schemes should be given favourable treatment through the planning system.
- Schemes need to be developed as an integral part of the planning and transport strategy for the area, and should be included in the local transport plan and, where possible, in the development plan.
- Schemes need to be subject to robust assessment, including consideration of alternative sites and the impact on local amenity, and travel impacts, including traffic reduction and generation. Where their use is appropriate, schemes need to be designed and implemented in association with other measures, such as public transport improvements, traffic management and parking controls. Schemes should not be designed to increase significantly the total public parking stock available in a town and care should be taken (for example through tariff structures) to avoid encouraging additional travel, and especially commuting, by car. Schemes must be designed for use by disabled people, and to promote the potential for walking, cycling and motorcycle journeys to and from the site. They should also be designed and operated in order to maximise safety in the area and for those using the schemes.

A New Deal for Transport (1998) and the Transport Act 2000

The 1998 Transport White Paper set out the government's strategy to create a better, more integrated transport system to tackle the problems of congestion and pollution, promote transport choice and reduce car dependency. The key parking element within this paper related to workplace charging.

The Transport Act 2000 set out legislation for workplace charging. This is considered more in Section 8.0 but in essence it enables local authorities to levy a charge on private workplace parking spaces. The levy is primarily aimed at helping to address peak hour congestion with any revenue raised being used to fund transport improvements.

3.2 Regional Parking Policy

The South East Plan 2006

The South East Plan is produced by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) and sets out the vision for the south east of England until 2026. It outlines how the region should respond to the challenges of housing, the economy, transport and protecting the environment. The aim is to ensure that the southeast remains economically successful and an attractive place to live for future generations.

The Regional Parking Policy states that local authorities should seek a level of parking that is more demanding than set out in PPG13.

Policy T7: Parking states that Local Development Documents and Local Transport Plans should together:

- adopt restraint-based maximum levels of parking provision for non-residential developments, linked to an integrated programme of public transport and accessibility improvements;
- set maximum parking standards for B1 land uses within the range 1:30m² and 1:100m²;

- set maximum parking standards for other non residential land uses in line with PPG13, reducing provision below this in locations with good public transport;
- include policies and proposals for the management of the total parking stock within regional hubs that are consistent with these limits;
- apply guidance set out in PPG3 on residential parking standards, reflecting local circumstances;
- support an increase in the provision in parking at rail stations where appropriate; and
- ensure the provision of sufficient cycle parking at new developments including secure cycle storage for new flats and houses that lack garages.

The Local Transport Plan for Kent 2006 to 2011

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Kent 2006 to 2011 states that effective management of parking is central to delivering LTP2 Objective of Demand Management. Kent's district councils are responsible for the practical application of parking policy within a framework set by the county council, which aims to:

- produce and implement local parking plans compatible with LTP2 covering the 12 district areas in Kent;
- promote reduced/maximum parking standards to contribute to sustainable communities and new developments; and
- deliver best practice in parking management through the Kent Parking Group.

The LTP states that locally determined targets should be included within local parking plans, including reductions in total parking provisions where alternative sustainable travel options are introduced.

Kent County Council has adopted maximum vehicle parking standards for different categories of land use and these are supplied as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG4) to Policy TP16 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (appendix A).

The LTP Policy for to parking is **Policy DM4: Parking and Traffic Management** which, states:

"KCC will encourage a reduction in congestion and pollution through traffic and parking management."

A number of practical measures are stated including:

- marketing of sustainable transport options within parking operations;
- targeted enforcement particularly to keep bus stops clear and around schools to support school travel plans;
- increasing car park charges to favour a public transport service, where a viable alternative exists, for example in towns with park and ride systems; and
- restraining car use through the management of car parking both on-street and in new developments.

The LTP outcomes of Policy DM4 are:

- reduced congestion
- greater choice of transport
- improved air quality
- improved accessibility

Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006

The Kent and Medway Structure Plan sets the strategic planning framework for the protection of the environment, major transport priorities and the scale, pattern and broad location of new development, including the provision of new housing and major economic development.

The plan aims to reduce the need for people to travel by car, which should in turn reduce the amount of parking needed. It states that the availability of parking has a significant influence on the choice of transport and managing the supply of parking can encourage people to choose alternative and more sustainable forms of travel.

The parking policy in this document is **TP19** Vehicle Parking Standards, which states:

“Development proposals should comply with the respective vehicle parking policies and maximum standards adopted by Kent County Council and Medway Council and where agreed with the local transport authority, more stringent standards in local development documents.”

Park and Ride

The plan supports Park and Ride schemes as part of a balanced transport policy and accepts that they can help to reduce congestion in town centres. The relevant policy is Policy **TP10** entitled “Supporting Park and Ride” and it states that “bus and rail based Park and Ride facilities to serve both town centres and major traffic generators will be supported where they form part of an overall transport strategy for an area, including reduced parking in town centres, increased parking charges and bus priority measures linking the facilities to the town centre. Where appropriate contributions towards such facilities shall be sought from developers.”

3.3 Local Parking Policy

Canterbury’s current parking policy has been formulated through a series of approved documents, the most significant of which is the PARC Plan (Park and Ride in Canterbury). The latest approved version is from 1995.

In addition to national and regional policies, other local documents have helped to develop and influence parking policy.

The main principles and objectives relating to parking are contained in the following documents:

The PARC Plan (1988, 1995)

- To provide for the future parking demand using Park and Ride sites situated on the edge of the city.
- To implement a charging structure that allows mainly short stay parking in city centre car parks.
- To control on-street parking to improve parking for residents while allowing some short stay parking on streets around the city centre.
- To require developers of sites close to the city centre to contribute to future Park and Ride provision under planning agreements.

The Canterbury District Transport Action Plan 2004-2014 (Unlocking the Gridlock)

- Extend on-street parking controls and review the methods of payment.
- Improve residents’ parking facilities.
- Extend Park and Ride provision.
- Offer a more flexible Park and Ride service and improve integration with local rural bus services and school services.

Canterbury District Local Plan 2006

- **Policy C6:** Land identified on the proposals map at Harbledown for a Park and Ride site will be safeguarded for that purpose.
- **Policy C7:** The site adjacent to the existing Park and Ride site in Sturry Road, as shown on the proposals map, is safeguarded for expansion of the Park and Ride facility.

- **Policy C9:** Canterbury City Council will apply Kent County Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards to development proposals, subject to local variations.

- **Policy C10:** Within the historic Canterbury city, Canterbury West Conservation Area... the council will require that on-street parking for retail, office or commercial development will be restricted to operational use only. The same will apply in other areas where on-street parking controls exist, subject to there being scope for reasonable access to the proposed development through various transport modes.

Financial considerations towards Park and Ride facilities and/or measures to enhance accessibility by other transport modes, will be negotiated with developers.

The likely effect of domestic rail services using the Channel Tunnel Rail Link on Canterbury West railway station has yet to be established. It is possible that additional public parking will be needed to make the best use of the opportunity presented by these services.

- **Policy H1:** Permits residential development on sites allocated for housing on the proposal map (this includes some city centre car parks).

Corporate Plan 2004 to 2008 and Community Strategy 2003

- To extend Park and Ride services and develop a fourth Park and Ride on the north-west side of Canterbury.

Supplementary Planning Document: Developer Contributions 2006

- New developments that will increase the need for and/or benefit from the transport actions proposed will be expected to contribute towards the funding of those actions either through a tariff quantified and justified in Local Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance or through a negotiated contribution contained within a legally binding agreement or undertaking.

4. On-street parking

4.1 Current policy

The PARC plan states the following on-street parking objectives:

- To provide improved parking facilities for city residents and short stay parking for visitors to local shops and businesses.
- That the Controlled Parking Zone scheme should provide enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover the additional restrictions and residents parking facilities.

4.2 Controlled Parking Zone

Canterbury is divided into 12 zones with on-street parking control containing 2,193 parking bays – this is called the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). A plan showing the extent can be seen in Appendix B.

A CPZ was first installed to control the on-street parking problems in the city centre in 1967. It has subsequently been modified and extended on many occasions but the most significant changes occurred after the PARC Plan was introduced. In September 1992, Stage 1 of the On-Street Parking Scheme was completed which created separate zones for the city centre and east side areas, and in October 1994 Stage 2 created zones in the south, west and north sides of the city.

The 12 zones contain three different types of control as follows:

City Centre zone : City centre residents/blue badge holder bays

There are currently 146 bays that can be used by resident permit holders only. The only exception is disabled blue badge holders who are entitled to park in these bays for a maximum period of three hours.

St Georges, St Augustines, St Gregorys, St Dunstans, St Jacobs and St Martins zones – two hour limit/resident parking bays

There are currently 839 bays that can be used by resident permit holders at all times. Non-residents are allowed to park for a maximum of two hours, using vouchers or pay and display, during Monday to Saturday 8am to 6.30pm, and parking is unrestricted at all other times.

All Saints, St Stephens, St Lawrence, St Mildreds, and Holy Cross zones – four hour limit/resident parking bays

There are currently 1,208 bays that can be used by resident permit holders at all times. Non-residents are allowed to park for a maximum of four hours using vouchers during Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm and unrestricted at all other times.

4.3 Residents' permits

Residents' on-street permits

All residents living within controlled parking zones are entitled to apply for on-street parking permits.

In the city centre zone, residents' permits currently cost £105 per annum and there are 45 people on a waiting list.

In the two-hour zones, residents' permits currently cost £65 and there are waiting lists in the following zones: St Dunstans (11 people) and St Augustines (7 people).

In the four-hour zones, residents' permits currently cost £45 and there are no waiting lists.

In zones where there are waiting lists, the entitlement to permits is restricted to one per household.

The current policy allows a 10 per cent over provision of permits to the number of spaces.

Residents' off-street permits

A residents' off-street permit is available to residents within the city centre and the two-hour zones. This permit enables residents to park free of any additional charge in any public car park except Watling Street and Whitefriars.

Two types are currently available:

- An unlimited permit, which can be used at any time. The current cost is £440.63 per annum and £600 at the Castle Street multi-storey.
- A limited permit that allows parking between 5pm-9am and any time at weekends and bank holidays. The current cost is £123.38.

There are currently 122 unlimited and 56 limited permit holders.

Visitor vouchers

Residents within the Controlled Parking Zone may purchase daily visitor vouchers to enable their visitors to park in on-street bays without time restriction.

Vouchers currently cost £2 for one day's parking and are restricted to 65 per household per annum.

4.4 Parking surveys and consultation

Parking surveys

In order to ascertain whether the current parking policies and objectives are being met or need to be modified, a comprehensive on-street parking survey and consultation exercise has been carried out.

The first part of this process involved collecting data to establish the

baseline for the current on-street parking usage. Manual parking counts were carried out in all of the existing Controlled Parking Zones at the following times:

Wednesday 19 October 2005 and Thursday 22 March 2007 (11am to 1pm)

Thursday 10 November 2005 (6.45pm to 8pm)

Saturday 12 November 2005 and Saturday 24 March 2007 (11am to 1pm)

These times were chosen to represent a typical weekday peak, evening peak and weekend peak, and to assess any reasonable differences.

They are considered typical because they were within school/university term times and not significantly influenced by Christmas trading, the tourist season or special events, for example the Canterbury Festival, Eurofair and university graduation.

The full count data obtained is shown in appendix C.

Consultation process

A leaflet was delivered during the period November 2005 to February 2006 to 22,000 households in the Canterbury area. This area comprised all CT1 postcodes and some CT2 postcodes where we were aware of existing parking problems.

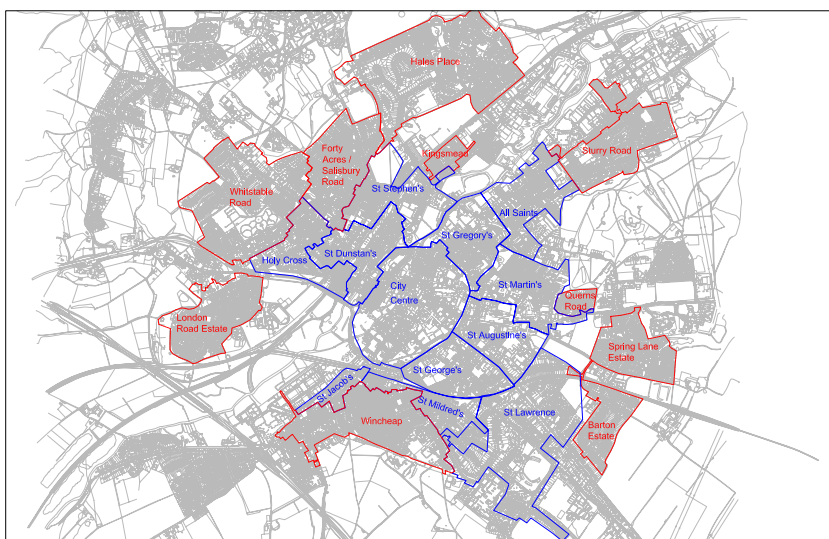


As well as the leaflet, residents were encouraged to reply online via the council's website and an article was also placed in District Life to highlight the ongoing review.

There were 1,715 responses representing a 7.8 per cent response rate. This good response rate would seem to indicate that parking issues feature very prominently in people's day to day lives.

An overall statistical summary of responses is contained in appendix D.

The responses have been divided up and analysed in existing parking zones and for areas outside of the controlled parking zone, potential zones were created to help determine trends and issues - a map showing the zones is shown on the following page.



Existing and Possible Controlled Parking Zones in Canterbury

Key:
Existing Zone Boundary ———
Possible Zone Boundary - - - - -

Summary of survey results and consultation responses

A summary of the October/November parking count results and the consultation responses for each existing and potential zone is shown in the following table:

On-Street Parking – Count data and consultation responses

Zone	Parking control	Number of bays	Number of empty bays			Number of respondents with parking problem	Most frequent comments
			Day	Eve	Sat		
City Centre	Residents only	146	45	41	38	104	27 state a lack of parking bays for residents 22 request more enforcement patrols
St Georges	Two hour	144	53	8*	49	55	26 state a lack of parking bays for residents 15 want the two hour restriction extended in evenings/Sundays
St Augustines	Two hour	83	9	15	11	33	20 state a lack of parking bays for residents
St Gregorys	Two hour	116	41	25	27	40	17 state a lack of parking bays for residents
St Dunstans	Two hour	203	69	28	52	79	23 state a lack of parking bays for resident 17 state parking causes an obstruction
St Jacobs	Two hour	50	32	14	24	3	5 state a lack of parking bays for residents
St Martins	Two hour	243	105	81	70	31	8 state too many student cars
All Saints	Four hour	339	100	108	112	30	12 state a lack of parking bays for residents
St Stephens	Four hour	156	87	38	18	44	10 state a lack of parking bays for residents

Zone	Parking control	Number of bays	Number of empty bays			Number of respondents with parking problem	Most frequent comments
			Day	Eve	Sat		
St Lawrence	Four hour	357	84	189	165	75	30 state problems caused by hospital related parking
St Mildreds	Four hour	178	54	11*	14	39	13 state a lack of parking bays for residents
Holy Cross	Four hour	178	54	55	39	20	5 state a lack of parking bays for residents
Total		2,193	733	613	619		
Potential zones							
Wincheap area						130	44 state problems caused by unlimited parking
							33 request resident parking bays
Hales Place						93	45 complain about student parking
Forty Acres area						72	12 request resident parking bays
Whitstable Road						41	18 state parking causes an obstruction
Kingsmead area						21	7 state parking causes an obstruction
Spring Lane Estate						69	28 state parking causes an obstruction
Barton Estate						36	17 state parking causes an obstruction
Querns Road area						16	10 state problems caused by unlimited parking
London Road Estate						5	No consensus
Sturry Road area						32	7 complain about student parking

* incomplete data

4.5 Analysis of results

City centre zone

It is clear that the city centre zone is not working satisfactorily for many residents. This is reflected in the large response to the consultation exercise and the fact that it has by far the largest waiting list of any zone.

The manual count data shows that there is some spare capacity in this zone but it is predominantly located in three streets: St Peters Grove, Castle Row and Gas Street. All the other bays are heavily used particularly at weekends and overnight.

The current policy of not allowing residents to purchase permits once the number of bays in a particular zone is 10 per cent over subscribed, is not providing the more efficient usage in parts of the zone where spaces are always vacant.

Therefore, there may be benefits in a more flexible approach to the waiting list system by allowing residents in roads that have known spare capacity to have a permit, regardless of their position on that list.

Action

A1: To adopt a more flexible approach to issuing of permits in streets with spare capacity, despite the overall zone being full.

Because of the medieval street layout it is difficult to provide any additional parking spaces in this zone. However it is apparent that the seven day business user car parks are generally empty overnight. It is therefore proposed to allow city centre resident permit holders and visitor vouchers holders, permission to use the St Johns Lane and Hawks Lane car parks overnight.

Action

A2: To allow vehicles with city centre on-street permits and resident visitor vouchers, permission to park in St Johns Lane and Hawks Lane business user car parks between the hours of 7pm and 7am seven days a week.

Two hour zones

The consultation revealed a perceived lack of parking spaces in the two hour zones, which was not substantiated by the manual count data.

There is a small waiting list for residents' permits in the St Dunstons and St Augustines Zones.

It is clear, however, that some visitors to the city are taking advantage of the fact that the two hour limit ends at 6.30pm Monday to Saturday and does not apply on Sundays. This is causing problems in some areas and one way of giving greater priority to residents would be to extend the two hour limit overnight and to apply on Sundays.

Action

A3: To consult with resident permit holders in the 2 hour zones on extending the two hour limit to apply 24 hours, seven days a week.

There are currently a number of 20 minute time limit parking bays that apply 24 hours a day. This restriction is intended to maximise the number of parking spaces that are available for short term parking, usually near to shops.

In order to provide more overnight parking for residents there may be a case for removing this restriction overnight in order to free up the parking bays for longer term parking. This would exclude those 20 minute bays that are situated near shops or food outlets that are open in the evenings.

Action

A4: To carry out consultation on allowing vehicles displaying valid on-street permits and resident visitor vouchers unlimited parking in some 20 minute bays after 6.30pm, seven days a week.

Four hour zones

The consultation again revealed a perceived lack of parking spaces that was not substantiated by the manual count data and there are no waiting lists for residents' permits.

The survey results do show that there are some areas on the fringes of the four hour residents' parking zones where long term parking by non-residents is causing problems. The largest response was from residents living just outside the St Lawrence zone who stated problems resulting from parking by hospital staff and visitors.

It is therefore proposed to consult with residents in these areas on whether they wish to join the St Lawrence CPZ.

Action

A5: To consult with residents in Cromwell Road (part), Lesley Avenue and Winchester Avenue on joining the St Lawrence CPZ.

There are also problems in two roads located just outside of the St Stephens zone: Roseacre Close and Hanover Close (although a section of this road is already within the CPZ). It is proposed to consult with residents in these roads to establish whether they wish to join the CPZ.

Action

A6: To consult with residents in Roseacre Close and Hanover Close (part) on whether they wish to join the CPZ.

Potential new zones

There were two potential zones where the number of responses would seem to indicate that parking problems exist but where no changes are currently being recommended - these areas are Hales Place and Wincheap.

Hales Place

In the potential Hales Place zone, 123 responses were received.

The main problem stated (45) was the amount and location of student parking. However when it came to suggesting solutions only 12 responses were received requesting residents only parking i.e. that the area becomes a controlled parking zone. There were 13 responses that more car parks are built on verges/green areas.

Without any consensus it is difficult to propose any parking changes to a problem that is due, in the main, to the predominance of houses in multiple occupancy.

However, a number of requests were made for yellow lines to deter indiscriminate parking on corners and bends and these safety issues will be looked at separately as part of the annual Traffic Regulation Review process.

Wincheap

In the potential Wincheap zone, 166 responses were received.

The main problem stated (44) was the number of drivers parking just outside the existing controlled parking zone to walk into the city to shop or work. The solution suggested by most of these residents was that their street be brought into the current St Mildreds zone.

However these requests were spread over 14 different streets with eight being the most received from residents in any one street - Oxford Street.

In order to bring a road into a controlled parking zone, we normally look for at least 75 per cent of those residents who need to park on street to be in favour – using this consultation exercise as an indication, it would appear that a figure well below 50 per cent would be achieved.

It may well be that the level of opinion in favour of parking control changes in the future, due to the predicted growth in traffic and parking demand. Therefore it is proposed that the Wincheap area is closely monitored and further consultation may be necessary in the future.

In both these zones there are many houses occupied by tenants and this tends to result in a lower response rate when carrying out consultation exercises. This fact will need to be taken into consideration if formal consultation is carried out in the future.

Action

A7: To monitor parking problems in the Wincheap area and assess when the level of concern justifies further consultation with residents on bringing additional streets into the CPZ.

Other Problem Areas

The uncontrolled parking at the Toddlers Cove car park end of Whitehall Road is causing passing difficulties for vehicles due to the narrow width of the road. In addition, the proposed Chartham to Canterbury cycle route will also be signed along this road. Investigations are therefore needed to control the amount and duration of parking that is permitted, and to ensure that the road is safe for all users.

Action

A29: To investigate restricting and controlling parking in the section of Whitehall Road, between Toddlers Cove car park and the Rheims Way over bridge.

4.6 Conclusions

It is clear that many of the parking problems are being caused by the simple fact that there are too many cars for the amount of parking spaces that can be provided. This issue is exacerbated in areas where many houses are in multiple occupancy.

In some areas it is also evident that non residents are taking advantage of unlimited parking and this is causing problems for some residents, particularly overnight.

The actions identified will seek to shift the balance back in favour of residents while still allowing some short term on-street parking.

Principle

P1: To provide improved parking facilities for residents while allowing some short stay parking for visitors to local shops and businesses.

5. Off-street parking

5.1 Introduction

This section considers off-street parking in terms of public car parks that can be used by any motorist. A separate section considers private non residential parking and business user parking in the city.

There are currently 19 public car parks serving the city centre including three Park and Ride car parks, providing a total capacity of 4,505 spaces.

This total includes the Whitefriars multi-storey, which is not owned or controlled by the council, but excludes two car parks which serve the Wincheap area: Cow Lane and Maynard Road.

5.2 Current policy

The current off-street parking strategy for Canterbury is also contained in the PARC Plan. The principles are to have a balanced parking strategy that provides high quality Park and Ride car parks for long stay parking, while maintaining some city centre car parks and allowing some controlled on-street parking for short stay parking.

The strategy is aimed at reducing the need for traffic to enter the city to seek car parking spaces, which left unchecked would threaten both the historic fabric and quality of the environment in the city.

The PARC plan states the following off-street parking objectives:

- To provide for the future parking demand using Park and Ride sites situated on the edge of the city.
- To implement a charging structure that allows mainly short stay parking in city centre car parks.

5.3 PARC plan

The 1995 document contained an 18-point action plan and a review of each of these points is considered in appendix E.

Most of the targets have been fully or partially achieved.

The one exception is the target to release a number of city centre car parks for housing development. Of the seven sites allocated within the previous Local Plan, only two have been delivered to date.

The significant parking changes since 1995 have been as follows:

- 1997: redevelopment of Lower Chantry Lane car park (loss of 73 spaces);
- 1999: Car Park Management System, including variable message signs installed;
- 2000: United Reformed Church construction on Watling Street car park (loss of 89 spaces);
- 2000: Northgate Doctors Surgery Development (loss of 106 spaces);
- 2000: decriminalised parking enforcement commenced;
- 2001: Watling Street multi-storey car park closes (loss of 594 spaces);
- 2001: New Dover Road Park and Ride opens (gain of 599 spaces);
- 2002: Whitefriars multi-storey opens (gain of 530 spaces).

Overall there has been a net gain of 267 off-street parking spaces and a shift of 332 spaces from the city centre to Park and Ride sites, so this has been in line with the policy objectives.

5.4 Parking surveys

In order to confidently make decisions regarding the future strategy for the city's off-street parking and to establish whether the current principles are still valid, baseline data in the form of parking counts and survey information has been gathered.

Two manual parking counts were carried out in October/November and March, on a weekday and a Saturday at all 19 car parks serving the city centre. The counts were taken between 11am and 1pm.

A weekday evening count was also carried out in October at around 7pm.

These times and dates were chosen to represent peak usage figures on a weekday, an evening and at weekends, and to give an indication of seasonal fluctuations.

A summary of the count results from the October/November counts is shown in the table below and the full count data is contained in Appendix C.

Car Park	Bays	Weekday count		Evening count		Weekend count	
		Empty	% Empty	Empty	% Empty	Empty	% Empty
Castle Row	89	19	21%	81	91%	0	0%
Castle Street MS	460	325	71%	437	95%	54	12%
Dover Street	32	0	0%	30	94%	0	0%
Holmans Meadow	172	23	13%	139	81%	0	0%
Longport	105	8	8%	65	62%	0	0%
Millers Field	46	7	15%	0	0%	0	0%
North Lane	44	2	5%	2	5%	0	0%
Northgate	55	14	25%	20	36%	19	34%
Pound Lane	148	33	22%	5	3%	0	0%
Queningate	102	8	8%	15	15%	0	0%
Rosemary Lane	96	7	7%	66	69%	8	8%
St Johns	212	176	83%	204	96%	54	25%
St Radigunds	304	103	34%	73	24%	0	0%
Station Road West	135	89	66%	86	64%	56	41%
Watling Street	178	5	3%	157	88%	1	1%
New Dover Rd P&R	600	78	13%	549	92%	-30*	0%
Sturry Rd P&R	598	204	34%	577	97%	180	30%
Wincheap P&R	599	150	25%	580	97%	0	0%
Whitefriars MS	530	15	3%	375	71%	0	0%
TOTAL	4505	1266	28%	3461	77%	372	8%

* 30 temporary additional spaces located

5.5 Analysis of Data

Weekday

On the weekday peak, there were 1,266 empty car parking spaces.

The car parks having the most spare capacity were: Castle Street multi-storey (325 spaces), Sturry Road Park and Ride (204 spaces) and St Johns (176 spaces).

Castle Street usage has suffered the most since the opening of the Whitefriars multi-storey, falling from 31,000 vehicles per annum in 2003 to

15,000 vehicles in 2005. It also suffers because of congestion at the Wincheap roundabout which makes it particularly difficult for vehicles to exit from Castle Street. However, a new Pay on Foot system entry/exit system has recently been installed together with improved night-time security arrangements, and usage is gradually increasing.

St Johns car park has historically been the most under used car park, primarily because drivers wishing to park on that side of the city will tend to park in St Radigunds car park because it is slightly closer to the city centre, but also because of the “free” two hour car parking at Sainsburys.

The significant spare capacity in Sturry Road Park and Ride is a more recent trend and has probably been caused by a combination of the following factors: the opening of the Whitefriars multi-storey, the opening of Westwood Cross and traffic congestion at the A28 Vauxhall roundabout, which serves several retail parks as well as the Park and Ride access road.

The three most popular car parks in terms of the numbers of cars parked were New Dover Road Park and Ride (522), Wincheap Park and Ride (449) and the Whitefriars multi-storey (515).

The popularity of New Dover Road and Wincheap Park and Rides reflects the success of attracting weekday commuter parking, and the Whitefriars multi-storey has re-established the location as the most popular short stay parking destination for shoppers.

Evening

On the evening peak, there were 3,461 empty car parking spaces.

As expected there was considerable spare capacity in most of the car parks, particularly those in the outer areas of the city.

However, many car parks closest to the main night time economy areas of the city were full or nearly full: Pound Lane (143 cars – 97 per cent full), St Radigunds (231 cars – 76 per cent full), Millers Field (46 cars – 100 per cent full), North Lane (42 cars – 95 per cent full).

The limited usage in many car parks during the evenings and overnight does provide an opportunity to solve some of the problems that residents are currently experiencing in several areas. And, as part of the review of the on-street parking, consideration will be given to measures that would encourage evening visitors to use some car parks, instead of parking on-street.

Weekend

On the weekend peak, there were just 372 empty parking spaces, that is 4,133 cars parked out of a total capacity of 4,505 (92 per cent full).

Similar to the weekday peak, the main car parks having spare capacity were: Sturry Road Park and Ride (180 spaces), Station Road West (56 spaces) Castle Street multi-storey (54 spaces) and St Johns (54 spaces).

All the other car parks were at, or very near to, capacity and it should be noted that at New Dover Road temporary space was found for an additional 30 vehicles.

5.6 Setting the demand baseline for future parking provision

Where to set the demand baseline on which future parking provision should be based is a key question.

If set too high, then the consequence of many empty parking spaces represents an inefficient use of assets.

If set too low the following consequences are likely:

- increased congestion as drivers search for spaces;
- constrained economic growth for business/employment opportunities;
- Canterbury's position a major retail hub threatened; and
- reduced economic benefits brought by tourism and culture.

The Institution of Highways and Transportation report 'Parking Strategies and Management 2005' states that peak demand should not exceed 85 per

cent of supply at any parking location.

As stated in the Parking Aims (2.0), the parking strategy must be compatible with the council's other objectives, in particular maintaining the economic viability of the city.

As the weekend is economically the most important period of the week for the retail and leisure and tourism sectors, it is proposed to use the Saturday demand figure as the baseline for future parking provision.

However, as parking demand varies throughout the year a decision is also needed on where to set this Saturday baseline. It is clearly not sustainable to provide parking that meets the very highest level of parking demand throughout the year and a reasonable balance needs to be reached.

There are automatic vehicle counters now situated at all our Park and Ride sites, and the usage data provides a very good indication of seasonal parking demand fluctuations throughout the city. The usage figures for the years 2005 and 2006 are contained in appendix F1 and F2.

It is evident from these figures that, unsurprisingly, the highest demand for parking is on the lead up to Christmas and it is accepted that additional parking spaces should be provided to meet this demand. In previous years this has been met through an additional Park and Ride at the Canterbury University and using private business car parks.

It is therefore proposed that the baseline for future parking provision is set at the peak Saturday demand excluding the peak Christmas period, when additional spaces will be provided.

The use of suitable private business car parks should also be considered to meet the normal Saturday demand.

Principle

P2: To base future off-street parking provision on the peak Saturday demand, outside of the peak Christmas period.

Using the automatic vehicle count data at the Park and Ride sites, we can rank the two Saturdays on which the manual counts were carried out in terms of highest demand throughout the year.

	12 November	24 March
New Dover Road	6th highest	15th highest
Wincheap	5th highest	15th highest
Sturry Road	10th highest	21st highest

It is evident from the Park and Ride data that the demand for parking increases significantly from the second or third Saturday in November up to the first weekend in January.

Therefore, as the first set of counts were taken on the second Saturday in November, it could be argued that the data was marginally affected by Christmas demand and a reduction factor should be applied.

It is proposed to calculate this factor using the difference between usage at the Park and Ride sites on 12 November, and usage on the next highest Saturday outside of the Christmas period. This calculation is shown in appendix G and gives an estimate of the current peak Saturday parking demand outside of the peak Christmas period, as 3,869 vehicles.

5.7 Predicting parking growth

One of the five key aims of the Canterbury District Transport Action Plan is to reduce travel demand and to encourage more journeys by sustainable means. One of the main ways this can be achieved is by managing demand through parking controls. It is hoped that the actions identified will eventually help to achieve this objective.

However, it is also important to consider the implications of continued car growth and to have a flexible strategy that is able to cope with increases in parking demand. The method generally accepted as the most accurate at forecasting parking demand is to use trip growth factors for the National Trip End Model (TEMPO) and then to adjust those figures to take into

account local issues such as planned highway improvements, housing and land use development.

In July 2005, Jacobs Babbie were commissioned by Kent County Council to update the existing Canterbury traffic model as part of a traffic forecasting exercise for the years 2011 and 2026.

The methodology used is complex and certain assumptions were necessary, such as which developments or projects would be delivered and in what year. However, it is probably the best guide to predicting future traffic growth and therefore parking demand for Canterbury.

Period	Growth factor
2004 to 2011	1.11 (11 per cent growth or 1.57 per cent per annum)
2004 to 2026	1.30 (30 per cent growth or 1.36 per cent per annum)

These growth factors are in line with the Kent County Council's Local Transport Plan target to restrict traffic growth to less than 2 per cent per annum and the Canterbury District Action Plan target of 1.6 per cent per annum.

For the predicted parking demand figures that follow, an average figure of 1.5 per cent growth per annum has been applied to the 2006 count figures for the forecast years 2011 and 2016.

Principle

P3: To continue to manage parking demand and to adopt a flexible strategy capable of meeting a predicted growth of 1.5 per cent per annum.

5.8 Parking strategy to reduce congestion

As discussed in the sections above, we will be setting the baseline for future parking provision on Saturday usage that meets the peak demand outside of the Christmas period, and applying a 1.5 per cent increase per annum to allow for parking growth.

However we are not adopting an unsustainable 'predict and provide' approach. The parking strategy is a key component in a balanced traffic management plan aimed at reducing car usage and dependency and easing congestion.

This has been the fundamental principle of the PARC plan and needs to continue if the traffic reduction and congestion objectives in the Canterbury District Transport Action Plan are to be realised.

The principle is not only to provide for future sustainable growth at Park and Ride sites, but at the same time reduce the amount of car parking available in the city centre. It is this shift in parking provision that produces the traffic reduction and congestion benefits.

To meet that aim, the Canterbury District Local Plan (2006) has allocated a number of city centre car parks for mainly housing and/or employment use to 2011.

An allocation does not necessarily mean the loss of all car parking, as options for building over and retaining all or some of the spaces will be considered.

This policy meets two key objectives:

- To continue the shift in parking from the city centre to Park and Ride car parks situated at the edge of the city.
- To maximise housing development on land that has been previously developed within the urban areas.

In accordance with government guidance, the council has identified through its Urban Housing Capacity Study (UHCS) numerous sites within urban areas that are already developed and have the potential to accommodate new housing development or mixed-use development that incorporates residential units.

It is a national objective that 60% of all new housing development should be built on previously developed land.

The car parks which currently have an allocation for housing are as follows:

CA507 Castle Row car park: Capacity reduced from 89 to 65 – loss of 24 spaces

CA278 Northgate car park: All 55 spaces lost

CA043B Rosemary Lane car park: All 96 spaces lost

CA477 Holmans Meadow and Dover Street car parks: Allow a 20 per cent reduction, capacity reduced from 204 to 163 - loss of 41 spaces

CA347 Longport car park (Ivy Lane North): Capacity reduced from 105 to 84 – loss of 21 spaces

CA281 Hawks Lane: All 38 business user spaces lost and reallocated in other car parks

CA286 St Johns Lane car park: All 19 business user spaces lost and reallocated in other car parks

CA047 St Radigunds car park (St Radigunds Place): Capacity reduced from 304 to 270 – loss of 34 spaces

As well as housing allocations the following car parks are also affected by other Local Plan allocations:

Station Road West car park for employment

Allow a 20 per cent reduction, capacity reduced from 135 to 108 – loss of 27 spaces

North Lane as an Open Space

Allow a 20 per cent reduction, capacity reduced from 44 to 36 – loss of 8 spaces

The total loss in city centre parking through Local Plan allocations is estimated at 363 spaces which represents 8 per cent of the current capacity.

In addition, St Johns car park has planning permission for conversion into a coach park to replace the Kingsmead coach park, which will be lost as part

of the Kingsmead development (phase two). If this goes ahead it would result in the loss of 212 spaces.

The combined total loss of car parking spaces within the time span of Local Plan to 2011 is $363 + 212 = 575$ spaces.

Principle

P4: To continue a gradual redistribution in parking provision from the city centre car parks to Park and Ride sites, provided that there is sufficient overall capacity.

5.9 Parking demand and provision table 2006 to 2016

This table shows the current peak Saturday demand outside the peak Christmas period, increased by 1.5 per cent per annum and with provision reduced in line with Local Plan allocations.

	2006	2011	2016
Provision	4505	3930	3930
Demand	3869	4168	4490
Surplus/deficit	+636	-238	-560

This shows that by 2011 there will be a predicted shortfall of 238 spaces and by 2016 a predicted shortfall of 560 spaces.

It is proposed that the principles of the PARC Plan are continued to meet this future demand.

Principle

P5 : To meet any increases in parking demand by extending Park and Ride provision while retaining sufficient short stay parking in the city centre.

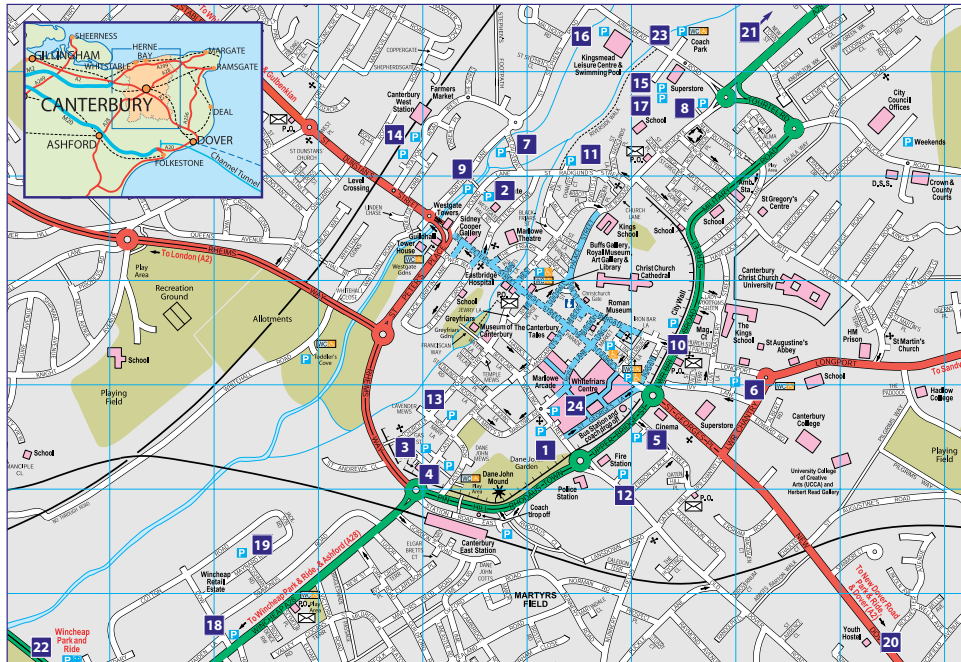
However, in order for a parking strategy to be effective it is not simply a case of meeting demand. Accessibility is vital if car journeys are to be reduced.

5.10 Car park accessibility

It is essential that car parks are situated in locations that are easily accessible to drivers entering the city on each of the major routes. If this is not the case, drivers are forced to make unnecessary cross-city journeys to find spaces, adding to the congestion particularly around the ring road.

Therefore, it is worth considering the distribution of the spaces from the Saturday count in March in terms of their suitability and convenience for traffic entering Canterbury.

The plan shows the location of the car parks in relation to all the major routes into the city.



Key to Car Parks

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Watling Street | 13 Rosemary Lane |
| 2 Pound Lane | 14 Station Road West |
| 3 Castle Street Multi-Storey | 15 St Johns Nursery |
| 4 Castle Row | 16 Kingsmead Leisure Centre |
| 5 Dover Street | 17 St Johns Nursery (Leisure centre) |
| 6 Longport | 18 Cow Lane |
| 7 Millers Field | 19 Maynard Road |
| 8 Northgate | 20 New Dover Road Park and Ride |
| 9 North Lane | 21 Sturry Road Park and Ride |
| 10 Queningate | 22 Wincheap Park and Ride |
| 11 St Radigunds | 23 Kingsmead Coach Park |
| 12 Holmans Meadow | 24 Whitefriars |

By allocating the car parks to the most suitable routes into the city, a much clearer picture is revealed on how effective the current parking strategy is at reducing vehicle movements.

The premium short stay car parks of Watling Street and Whitefriars multi-storey are so central they are considered neutral in terms of their geographical location.

North Eastern Approach (A28, A291 Herne Bay, Thanet)

Sturry Road Park and Ride, Northgate, St Radigunds, St Johns

Total number of spaces 1169

Empty spaces on March count 413

Northern Approach (A290 Whitstable)

Station Road West, North Lane, Rosemary Lane, Pound Lane, Millers Field

Total number of spaces 469

Empty spaces on March count 27

North Western Approach (A2 London)

No ideally placed car parks

South Western Approach (A28 Ashford)

Wincheap Park and Ride, Castle Street Multi-Storey, Castle Row

Total number of spaces 1148

Empty spaces on March 226

Eastern Approach (A257 Sandwich)

Longport, Queningate

Total number of spaces 207

Empty spaces on March count 7

South Eastern Approach (A2 Dover)

New Dover Road Park and Ride, Dover Street, Holmans Meadow

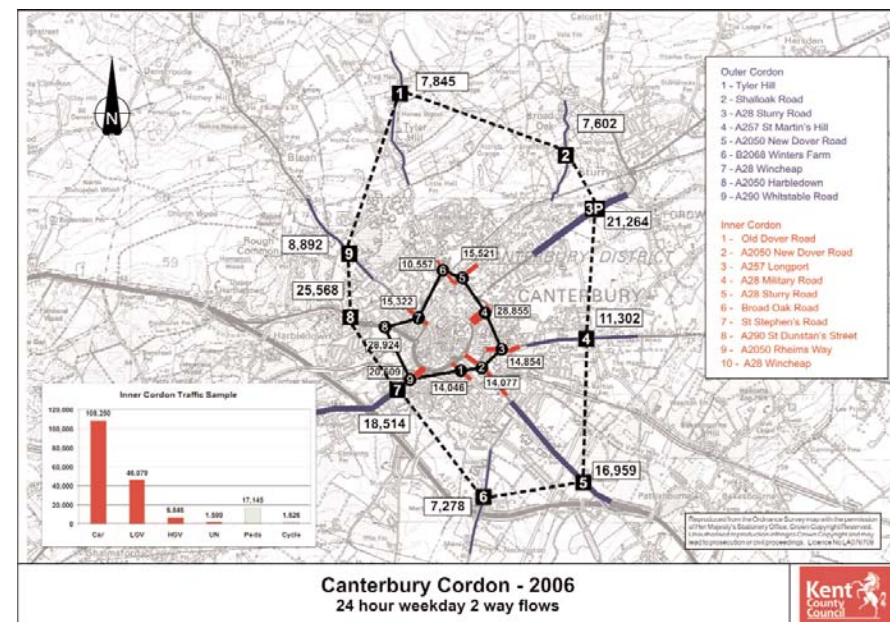
Total number of spaces 804

Empty spaces on March count 74

This exercise reveals two important facts:

- Of these 747 empty spaces, 413 (55 per cent) were to the north of the city, ideally placed only for traffic entering the city from Herne Bay or Thanet.
- The north-western approach, which is the busiest route into the city, is not ideally served by any public car parks.

The following map shows the two-way annual average daily traffic flows for the main routes into and around the city. The A2/A2050 approach is by far the busiest with 25,568 vehicles.



Drivers from the north-western approach are currently having to make cross city journeys to use existing Park and Ride facilities, or are forced to park in city centre car parks.

This poor accessibility issue puts the current supply/demand table into perspective and is the reason why a Park and Ride to serve vehicles entering the city from the A2/A2050 corridor is a key transport objective in the Canterbury District Transport Action Plan.

Action

A8: To provide a Park and Ride site that intercepts vehicles from the north-western approach into the city.

5.11 Other factors affecting parking demand

There are a number of other factors which will affect off-street parking demand and capacity in the future:

- (a) New residential developments that provide a low level of car parking in line with the planning policy.
- (b) New business and educational developments that provide a low level of car parking in line with planning policy.
- (c) Introduction of new fast train services in 2009 may increase demand for commuter parking in the Canterbury West Station area.
- (d) Use of Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges to provide links to schools, colleges and for large employers.
- (e) Extending on-street parking controls in favour of residents.
- (f) Impact on Canterbury from growth of Ashford and Thames Gateway.
- (g) Increased use of internet shopping.
- (h) Investment in East Kent Coastal Towns which may reduce retail 'leakage' to Canterbury

The objective of modal shift from the car to other forms of transport is taken into account in the annual traffic/parking growth target of 1.5 per cent per annum.

With the exception of points (g) and (h), all the other factors are likely to increase the demand for off-street parking within the period of this strategy.

It should therefore be accepted that the predicted shortfall of spaces shown in the Parking Demand and Provision Table are conservative estimates, and the ability to increase capacity above these predictions by providing additional Park and Ride spaces must be considered.

The parking demand implication of many of these factors is difficult to predict and further studies will be required in the future. One particular study relates to point (c) above and is included as an off-street parking action.

Action

A30: To investigate and plan for parking demand changes resulting from the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) domestic service from Canterbury West railway station.

5.12 Park and Ride

Canterbury is currently served by three purpose built full time Park and Ride sites covering three of the main approaches to the city - from the north east (A28 and A291), south east (A2) and south west (A28). Over eight million people have used these Park and Ride services in the last 12 years, representing a saving of nearly four million car journeys into and out of the city centre.

Increasing the number of Park and Ride spaces can be achieved by either constructing new sites or extending sites.

New sites

It is evident from Section 5.10 Car park accessibility, that a Park and Ride site serving the north-western (A2) approach into the city is essential to intercept vehicles before they enter the city. Land north of Hall Place, Harbledown has been safeguarded in the local plan for this purpose.

All the sites options are currently being evaluated and a decision on a preferred site is expected in autumn 2007.

The other main routes into the city currently not served by Park and Ride sites are the A290 from Whitstable and A257 from Sandwich. Both these routes are served by regular bus services (the Triangle and Diamond routes) and have recently undergone substantial investment from Stagecoach, Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council as part of a Quality Bus Partnership.

It is not ideal for Park and Ride operations to compete with high quality regular bus services, as this bus patronage could be adversely affected. Therefore, a site situated on these routes is not considered appropriate at this time.

Increasing capacity

New Dover Road Park and Ride

There is a definite need to increase the number of spaces at New Dover Road as this site frequently reaches capacity. It may be possible to construct a 150 to 200 space extension and a traffic impact assessment is currently being carried out.

However, it is unlikely that a major expansion will be possible because of Highways Agency objections to any development that would significantly increase traffic movements at the A2 Bridge junction.

Action

A9: To implement a 150 to 200 space expansion at New Dover Road Park and Ride.

Wincheap

The existing site is constrained by the River Stour and the A2 and no significant expansion is possible. A limited expansion into the allotments may be possible and this should be investigated.

If an A2 off-slip from the London direction can be provided at Wincheap as part of the redevelopment plans of the Wincheap Industrial Estate, this would cut through the current facility. As such, the potential for a major expansion that could also cater for traffic from the north-west will be investigated.

Action

A10: To investigate a limited expansion at the current Wincheap Park and Ride site and a more significant expansion as part of the Wincheap Industrial Estate redevelopment, which would also cater for traffic from the north-west.

Sturry Road

Land is safeguarded within the Local Plan for expansion. However the current usage figures do not suggest that this will be necessary within the life of this strategy.

It is more important therefore to make this site more attractive to motorists, and this is being addressed in three ways:

- (i) The introduction of new bus priority measures along the Sturry Road which will speed up bus journey times.
- (ii) The construction of a new slip road into the facility which would avoid congestion at the Vauxhall roundabout.
- (iii) New variable message signage.

Action

A11: To implement measures to make Sturry Road Park and Ride more attractive to motorists and increase usage.

At the same time as increasing capacity at Park and Ride sites, we must consider ways of increasing usage and overcoming the barriers that stop some motorists from using them.

Hours of operation

The current hours of operation at the Park and Ride sites are 7am to 7.30pm Monday to Saturday and on Sunday from 10am to 6pm at New Dover Road.

It is not possible at the moment to operate a Sunday service from Wincheap because a boot fair is held there every week and the current demand at Sturry Road does not justify extending the operation to seven days a week.

However, there does appear to be a need to extend the service in the evenings, particularly when there is late night shopping in the city - this already happens in the build up to Christmas. A trial is to be carried out to extend the hours of operation to 8.30pm on Thursday evenings at all three sites.

Action

A12: To continually review the hours of operation of Park and Ride in consultation with local employers and retailers, and to trial an extension in the hours of operation to 8.30pm on Thursday evenings, for a 10 week period.

Increasing bus capacity/frequency at peak times

A new bus contract will be let in 2008 and this provides the opportunity to increase capacity and frequency of buses at the peak times.

Action

A13: To investigate ways of increasing passenger capacity on Park and Ride buses at peak times.

Improve Park and Ride bus journey times

It is important that Park and Ride bus frequencies are reliable and journey times into the city centre are less than for other motorists, particularly in the congested peak hours.

This is mainly achieved through the provision of bus lanes and it is important that this redistribution of road space is continued.

Principle

P6: To continue to support the introduction of new bus lanes that improve journey times for Park and Ride and service buses.

Tariffs

All day parking and unlimited travel is currently only £2 for the driver and up to six passengers. From surveys carried out we know that this is considered very good value for money and cost is not a factor which deters usage.

A flexicard is also available to regular users, which provides a 20 per cent discount.

The cost of on and off-street parking charges are considered annually and the tariff structure must continue to encourage long stay parking at Park and Ride sites.

Additional facilities

One reason given by shoppers for not using Park and Ride is the convenience of dropping off purchases in their cars and then staying in the city to go to restaurants, museums and so on.

Some of the large department stores offer an arrangement whereby purchases can be securely stored for later collection. Extending these "customer collect by car" services to enable goods to be taken and stored at Park and Ride sites has been investigated in the past but it has not been possible, mainly due to management issues and a reluctance from retailers. However as this issue is seen by some people to be a fundamental reason not to use Park and Ride, it is worth pursuing.

Action

A14: To explore ways of providing a customer goods collection service at Park and Ride sites.

Publicity

Canterbury has been very successful at promoting Park and Ride through advertising, leaflets, and bus livery using the effective “straight into the heart of the city” branding. Due to this success, and the capacity issues at New Dover Road, a major promotional campaign is not required in the short term.

Park and Rides as transport interchanges

It is worth considering the possibility of extending the transport facilities offered at Park and Ride sites.

Facilities are already provided for overnight camper van parking at New Dover Road, and more recently Canterbury College and the Health Trust have started running mini-bus services to their premises from this Park and Ride site.

Park and Ride is now seen by large employers as a convenient way of addressing their travel plan objectives of reducing on-site parking for staff, students or visitors. The success of these planning policies is one of the reasons that New Dover Road requires expansion.

There is potential to use the Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges for network buses linking higher academic establishment and the major employers in the city. This would provide significant traffic reduction benefits in the city.

The possibility of using Park and Ride sites in connection with coach drop-offs is also worth investigating.

Action

A15: To investigate through the Travel Plan Forum the potential of using Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges.

Information signage

It is vital that drivers are provided with reliable and up to date information regarding parking spaces in the city.

A car park management system consisting of variable message signs displaying the number of car park spaces (linked backed to a control centre at the council offices) was introduced in 1999 at a cost of £230,000. This is only eight years old but the technology has developed rapidly and nowadays much more intelligent and interactive systems are available. It is proposed to replace and expand the current car park management system.

The system will make use of new technology to provide more targeted and effective traffic and parking information; for instance, by linking with the Urban Traffic Management Centre (UTMC) in Maidstone, traffic and congestion reports could be displayed as well as real-time information on parking and journey times into the city centre.

Currently only six car parks are covered by the variable message signs: New Dover Road and Wincheap Park and Ride, Castle Street multi-storey, Castle Row, Watling Street and the Whitefriars multi-storey.

The coverage will be extended to include all of the main city centre car parks and Sturry Road Park and Ride.

It is particularly important to advise motorists before they reach our Park and Ride sites if city centre car parks are full or if there is congestion around the ring road to enable them to make informed decisions on where to park. Greater use will also be made of providing real time information on the internet and via WAP services available on most mobile phones.

Previous studies have shown that up to 30 per cent of urban traffic can be accounted for by drivers driving to, or searching for, car parking spaces. The information that will be provided will allow drivers to decide at a much earlier stage of their journey at which car park they are most likely to find a space.

This advanced car park management system will reduce the time and frustration spent searching for spaces and consequently ease traffic congestion in Canterbury.

Action

A16: To replace the current limited car park management system with a UTMC compatible one, extend coverage to all main car parks and provide variable message signs capable of displaying real-time traffic and parking information.

5.13 Conclusions

This section has considered the PARC Plan principles and reviewed progress in implementing the previous targets. It has assessed the manual parking data and considered the principles on which to base future parking provision. It has predicted what the future parking demand is likely to be and how this should be met.

In conclusion, the two most significant aspects regarding the off-street parking strategy are as follows:

The strategy is not based on an unsustainable 'predict and provide' approach but is part of an approved, balanced, transport action plan that aims to reduce car dependency and usage, and manage parking demand.

To be effective in reducing car journeys into the city it is important to gradually reduce the amount of city centre car parking and to extend provision at Park and Ride sites that are strategically located to intercept traffic on all the major routes.

6. Business user parking

6.1 Permit System

Discounted parking permits are available to business users who need to park close to their place of work in order to undertake regular journeys to and from that place of business throughout the day.

To apply for a business user permit, applicants need to declare that the need for the permit is for operational reasons, and not simply for convenience.

There are currently two categories of business user permits in Canterbury: seven day and five day permits.

Seven day permit holders are able to park in dedicated bays in Hawks Lane (38 spaces) and St Johns Lane (19 spaces) business user car parks, and also in reserved bays in St Radigunds Street (6 spaces), Pound Lane (8 spaces) and Rosemary Lane (9 spaces) car parks. The total number of seven-day parking spaces is 80 and there are currently 83 permit holders. The current cost of a permit is £675 per year. There are currently 16 people on a waiting list for a seven-day permit.

Five-day permit holders can currently park in any bay in Rosemary Lane and Castle Row car parks and by a separate arrangement at Castle Street multi-storey. There are currently 128 permit holders and the current cost of a permit is £525 per annum at Rosemary Lane and Castle Row and £750 at Castle Street multi-storey car park.

6.2 Business user survey

In order to ascertain whether these arrangements are working satisfactorily, a survey of business users has been undertaken and the results are shown in appendix H.

The key conclusions reached are as follows:

- Most business users are satisfied with the current arrangements.
- Some seven day business users commented that it would be better to revert back to having a permit allocated for a specific car park to avoid having to search for a space.
- Some five day business users would prefer to park in other car parks closer to their place of work.

It is evident from the survey that the parking arrangements for business users in the city are generally working satisfactorily and the council is committed to providing an appropriate level of business user parking spaces in the city.

Principle

P7: To continue to provide an appropriate level of business user parking spaces in the city centre.

Although some seven-day users indicated a preference for a previous permit system where they were allocated a parking space at a specific car park, the current arrangements offer more flexibility, and is welcomed by most users.

There are no plans at present to change the arrangements for the seven-day users. However, the local plan does allocate the Hawks Lane and St Johns Lane car parks for residential/mixed development. If and when the council decides to release these car parks, then a decision on how to reallocate these reserved parking spaces will need to be made.

These seven-day business spaces are not used overnight and they are located in the same areas that many city centre residents are experiencing problems finding a parking space. It is proposed to allow vehicles with city centre on-street permits and resident visitor vouchers permission to park in St Johns Lane and Hawks Lane car parks between the hours of 7pm and 7am seven days a week. This action is contained in the On-Street Section.

Five-day users can currently park in only three car parks, located close to each other on the western side of the city. These are not conveniently located for all businesses so it is proposed to change these arrangements to allow five-day users permission to park at any long stay car park, in addition to Castle Row, Rosemary Lane and Castle Street multi-storey.

Action

A17: To allow five-day business user permit holders permission to park in any long stay car park in addition to Castle Row, Rosemary Lane and Castle Street multi-storey car parks.

7. Private non-residential (PNR) parking

7.1 Background

Private non-residential parking is usually defined as off-street parking provided to meet the needs of any non-residential development. It is privately controlled and not available for general public use, and most often described as office parking.

The 1989 PARC Plan first identified that a considerable number of traffic movements occurred in the peak hours across the city centre due to the existence of large numbers of PNR car parking areas. It was estimated at that time that some 2,500 parking spaces existed. The planning policy adopted restricted the provision of these car parking areas in the future. For office and shopping developments, parking was limited to operational needs only, with the balance provided through commuted payments to the overall parking policy.

The 1995 PARC Plan stated that developments in the city since 1989 had contributed around £1 million in commuted payments towards providing approximately 200 spaces outside of the city in lieu of spaces 'on site'. The planning policy at that time went even further by saying that generally there should be no operational (as well as non-operational parking) provided for retail or office developments within the City Centre Conservation Area.

The planning policy of commuted payments in lieu of city centre parking spaces continued until 2000 and the most significant example of this policy was the Whitefriars redevelopment which contributed £500,000 towards the New Dover Road Park and Ride.

In 2000, planning guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG 13) changed the emphasis from minimum parking standards to maximum standards, and travel plans became necessary for larger developments.

7.2 Current PNR parking

The most recent Valuation Office Agency Rating List (2005) shows that there are at least 3,663 private off-street non-residential parking spaces in the CT1 area (appendix I).

This would seem to indicate that either the estimates contained in the previous parking strategies were incorrect or that the planning policies have not been sufficient to restrain the growth in this private parking provision.

It is worth considering the distribution of current business spaces. Although the spaces are spread between 276 businesses, the top seven providers account for 2,133 spaces or 58 per cent of the total.

Those top seven employers in terms of private non-residential parking spaces in the CT1 postcode area are listed below:

Kent and Canterbury Hospital – 819 (plus 284 visitor)
Canterbury City Council, Chaucer Road – 332
Canterbury College*¹ New Dover Road – 230
Becket House, New Dover Road – 228
Christ Church College, North Holmes Road – 198
Nutwood House (Social Services), Chaucer Road -- 176
Crown and County Court *² Chaucer Road – approx 150

*¹ Final figure when current redevelopment is completed

*² Not declared on ratings list so number of spaces is estimated

It is clear that these major business employers need to adopt sustainable travel plans, including taking measures to reduce the amount of parking they provide, if the targets to reduce car usage are to be realised.

In order to help employers with their travel plans and to identify potential ways in which shared transport objectives could be mutually obtained through partnership working, it is proposed that the council will take the lead in setting up a Travel Plan Forum.

Action

A18: To set up a Travel Plan Forum for the major employers and higher academic establishments in Canterbury to promote and develop travel plans and investigate partnership working with stakeholders and transport providers.

8. Workplace charging

The Transport Act 2000 allows English and Welsh local authorities to introduce either road user charging or workplace charging. In 2002 draft regulations were issued for consultation by the Department for Transport entitled "Road User Charging and Workplace Parking Levy Regulations". The results of this consultation were published in 2005.

The legislation effectively allows local authorities to charge companies and organisations such as universities a levy for each commuter car space provided at the workplace. All net revenue raised must be spent on transport purposes.

No local authority has currently applied to implement a workplace charging scheme mainly because of public opposition. Studies seem to show that road user charging is likely to be more effective at removing cars and tackling congestion.

The Canterbury District Transport Action Plan concludes that workplace charging is not considered suitable within the plan period, that is to 2014.

The Local Transport Plan for Kent (2006 to 2011) states that KCC does not support the introduction of workplace parking charges at this time.

9. Parking standards for residential developments

9.1 Background

The current parking standards for new residential developments are contained in the Local Plan (2006): Policy C9 states that the council will apply Kent County Council's adopted vehicle parking standards to development proposals, subject to the local variations (these standards are contained in Appendix A).

The local variations referred to in Policy C9 are further explained under section 7.50 of the Local Plan, entitled residential parking:

"In areas of on-street parking control aimed at preventing general long stay parking, the amount of vehicle parking provided with the residential developments can be reduced, and even minimised, without detriment to safety or the street scene, subject to effective enforcement and, where appropriate, carefully devised residents' parking schemes."

This local variation statement is in line with the recent Planning Policy Statement PPS3 which states that local planning authorities should develop residential parking policies for their own areas, taking into account expected levels of car ownership, the importance of promoting good design and the need to use land efficiently.

A guidance note has recently been produced for PPS3 that states that local planning authorities should adopt residential parking standards that are based on car ownership levels obtained from census data. The census data should be considered for each ward within a district. This information will then be used to develop a parking matrix to determine maximum standards for different types of location, for example, city centre, urban, suburban, rural and remote rural. Consideration also needs to be given to the availability of alternative modes of transport and the location of services.

Action

A19: To produce a residential parking standard matrix for the Canterbury District in line with PPS3 which considers the availability of alternative modes of transport.

9.2 Recent and current major residential developments

The following developments have been promoted as model developments with parking provision set at levels to discourage travel by car.

Completed

Station Road West development	460 units	396 spaces (0.86 per unit)
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Under construction

Tannery development	444 units	283 spaces (0.64 per unit)
Telephone House development	260 units	243 spaces (0.93 per unit)
Kingsmead Phase 1	264 units	179 spaces (0.68 per unit)

Proposed

Wincheap		to be agreed
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9.3 Policy issues

This local variation policy brings into question two main issues: what level of car parking provision is appropriate and whether residents of these developments should be allowed on or off-street parking permits.

The planning policy of low car parking provision in new sustainable developments close to the city centre is a key part of the overall traffic management strategy to reduce travel demand and car usage.

This approach started in the 1980s for the city's conservation areas but is now considered for all new developments where on-street parking controls exist.

The Station Road West development, which was fully completed in 2000, was the first major residential development to provide parking at a ratio of less than one space to one unit.

The Tannery ,Telephone House and Kingsmead developments currently under construction have followed this sustainable approach and is evident that low car parking provision has not adversely affected the marketable value of properties.

This must be seen as a positive step forward in reducing travel demand and car dependency and should be continued.

Principle

P8: To continue the local planning policy of low car parking provision in sustainable developments, to reduce car usage and dependency in line with PPS3.

However there are concerns that the policy is being undermined by allowing residents in these developments to have on-street or off-street car parking permits.

There are currently 32 residents in the roads built as part of the Station Road West development who have permits to park either on or off-street. This has certainly been a major factor in the St Dunstons zone reaching capacity and has caused problems with a lack of overnight parking in some roads in the adjacent St Stephens zone.

These 32 residents represent exactly 50 per cent of the difference between a one car parking space to one unit provision at the Station Road West development.

If the same demand is reflected at current and proposed developments then we will see an additional 132 cars parked either on-street or in city centre car parks.

The two opposing policy stances would be either to allow residents of low car provision developments the same entitlement to on or off-street permits as all other residents, or to fully uphold the planning principles and not allow any entitlement.

In practice, a more flexible approach is required that allows the council the ability to issue permits in areas where there is clear evidence of spare capacity and where it will not be to the detriment of other residents or shoppers/visitors to the city.

This may mean creating a new off-peak residents' permit that only allows parking overnight and not during the day at weekends when demand for parking in city centre car parks is at its highest.

Principle

P9: To allow residents of low car parking provision developments the ability to purchase on or off-street parking permits only where there is clear evidence of spare capacity.

Action

A20: To consider introducing a new off-street overnight residents' permit for residents of low car parking provision developments.

The success of residential developments that have very low car parking space to unit ratios does depend on many factors.

However two vital ingredients are a high degree of accessibility to services and amenities by sustainable forms of transport and effective parking controls in surrounding roads. Cycle parking standards and the use of car clubs are also important considerations.

10. Parking for disabled people

It is recognised that cars are often the only viable form of transport for some residents and it is essential that those drivers with mobility problems have sufficient parking provision. It is also important that a sufficient number of blue badge holder spaces are situated close to the city centre.

The council will seek to increase the amount of disabled spaces where possible and will ensure that if some city centre parking spaces are reduced in line the local plan allocations, then this will not result in an overall reduction in the number of dedicated disabled bays provided.

Principle

P10: To ensure that disabled car parking spaces are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and access requirements, and are provided in accordance with Kent Vehicle Parking Standards and national guidance.

A summary of the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards, including the minimum standards for the provision of parking for mobility impaired people, is contained in Appendix A.

Blue Badge holder drivers can currently park free of charge at the following places within the city centre:

- Orange Street Car Park: 18 dedicated disabled parking bays – unlimited time
- Canterbury Lane: 16 dedicated disabled parking bays – unlimited time
- Public car parks: dedicated blue badge holder bays, any available space – unlimited time
- Any on-street parking bay in the City Centre zone: three hour limit
- Any on-street parking bays in two hour and four hour zones: three hours free then additional time by ticket/voucher

Until recently, the ticket machines in city centre car parks were not accessible to wheelchair users and therefore the free parking period was unlimited. Now that ticket machines are disability compliant, it is proposed to introduce a three-hour free limit in all public car parks (except Orange Street) in line with the on-street restrictions. The duration can be extended by buying a ticket. The council approved this principle in March 2003.

Dedicated Blue Badge holder bays are provided in all car parks except Millers Field, Rosemary Lane, St Radigunds and Station Road West. It is proposed to introduce dedicated bays into all city council owned car parks in accordance with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards and national guidance. Usage will also be periodically monitored in order to assess the demand for additional provision.

Action

A21: To provide Blue Badge holder parking spaces in all off-street car parks in accordance with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards, and to introduce a three hour free limit in car parks.

10.1 Park and Ride

The Park and Ride is operated using low floor buses with kneeling mechanisms and the interior layouts are designed specifically to accommodate wheelchair users. Special restraining belts are available so that passengers can travel securely in their wheelchairs.

10.2 Shop Mobility scheme

A Shop Mobility scheme is operated in Canterbury that allows anyone with a mobility problem the ability to move around the city using scooters or wheelchairs (either manual or powered). They can be used on an hourly, daily or weekly basis, Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm, and 9.30am to 3.30pm on bank holidays.

It is located on the second floor of the Whitefriars multi-storey car park and offers free parking for Blue Badge holders for up to three hours and accessible toilets. The scheme is sponsored by the council, Land Securities, local businesses and has support from user donations.

11. Management and enforcement

11.1 Introduction/background

Historically, local councils and the police had undertaken parking enforcement. In Canterbury, the police were responsible for all on-street issues as part of a criminal law process. The council attended only to off-street parking places, which were covered by civil law procedures.

In Kent, this changed when Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) was introduced during the 1990's; the police handed over some of their on-street responsibilities, until then undertaken by Traffic Wardens, to councils. From that time, DPE has been undertaken through a formal agreement with the county council under the provisions of the Road Traffic Act 1991 and is carried out under terms of guidance issued by the Home Office.

The majority of councils, including Canterbury, took these powers in 2000 and this reorganisation of parking enforcement enabled day-to-day operational issues, both on and off-street, to be managed as one single service by each district council across the county.

It is important that administrative separation is maintained between on and off-street matters as the Highway Authority (Kent County Council) has ultimate responsibility for on-street functions that, under the terms of the agreement mentioned earlier, are undertaken by Canterbury City Council.

Parking enforcement is carried out under the provisions of the Road Traffic Act 1991 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Penalty charge notices (PCNs) are issued where a parking attendant believes a contravention of the Off Street Parking Places Order (OSPPO) or a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has occurred. Home Office guidance provides standard references or codes for contraventions of parking and traffic regulation orders and it is against these that PCNs are cross referenced. Parking attendants undergo rigorous training before they become involved with the enforcement process.

In Canterbury the service operates with 23 parking attendants and 4.5 supervisors covering Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable and the rural areas. The extent of operations covers on and off-street parking places as well as areas controlled by yellow line restrictions and school keep clear markings. There are 4,400 on-street and 5,895 off-street parking spaces and in excess of 105km of yellow lines. Canterbury operates the single largest DPE scheme in Kent.

11.2 Off-street

At present, the off-street parking mix in Canterbury includes short to long-stay options and Park and Ride. There are 11 car parks offering 1,563 short stay spaces; four car parks offering 615 long-stay spaces and three sites offering 1,797 Park and Ride spaces; a total of 3,930 spaces (this excludes the Whitefriars car park).

The Park and Ride and Castle Street multi-storey car parks provide a pay on foot management system that is very effective, easy to use and requires minimal staff resources to control. Other car parks use the widely recognised pay and display system of operation that is dependent upon staff patrolling to manage use.

With the exception of Park and Ride sites and Castle Street multi-storey (where barrier controlled entry/exit systems are used) all car parks are patrolled daily by parking attendants who will check for the presence of valid pay and display tickets, as well as the manner in which vehicles are parked. This is a relatively straightforward process.

In the future it may be possible to carry out enforcement using vehicle number plate recognition cameras. Legislation that will allow this is contained within the draft Traffic Management Act and would need to be adopted by Kent County Council. This would reduce the need for enforcement patrols by parking attendants at car parks, allowing them concentrate on on-street issues.

Action

A22: To investigate the installation of vehicle number plate recognition cameras to carry out enforcement at public car parks, subject to compliance with the appropriate legislation and approval by the Highway Authority.

11.3 On-street

On-street there are 2,193 spaces with a mix of options for use by residents only, two and four-hour free time limited, voucher parking and on-street pay and display.

The on-street parking survey revealed that many residents, particularly in the City Centre zone, were not satisfied about a perceived lack of enforcement particularly in the evenings.

The proposed changes in the two hour zones, which would mean non permit holders are not able to park overnight, will also increase the pressure to provide a greater level of evening enforcement.

Action

A23: To consider increasing the level of evening enforcement including targeting problem areas, particularly in the City Centre zone.

The illegal use of disabled Blue Badge bays by motorists and abuse of the Blue Badge system are also issues that will be given a greater priority.

Targeted enforcement will also be carried out where there are problems of dangerous parking in the vicinity of schools particularly those with approved Travel Plans.

Action

A24: To give greater priority to targeted enforcement of Blue Badge holder parking bays and parking outside schools.

The voucher parking system that originally operated in all of the two hour zones has been replaced by Pay and Display in two of the zones. This experience has shown that Pay and Display works well because it is more convenient for drivers, the council does not have to administer a contract for supply of the vouchers and enforcement is also more straightforward.

The voucher system is not well understood by drivers. It is also inconvenient since drivers have to locate an outlet and buy vouchers in order to pay for parking.

Experience has shown that the cost of installing the Pay and Display machines is quickly recovered because parking income increases significantly when Pay and Display is introduced.

Action

A25: To change the remaining two hour voucher parking areas to Pay and Display.

The time limited bays demand a very high level of enforcement and staff input, requiring first and second visits at either two or four hours apart that require every vehicle to be logged. For the four hour bays alone, it has been estimated that the staff costs of this logging amount to almost £200,000 per year. Pay and Display is a far more efficient management system and, on the strength of the costs of logging, serious consideration must be given to extending its use far more widely across the city.

Action

A26: To investigate implementing on-street Pay and Display in the four hour zones.

11.4 Wider issues

In an endeavour to improve DPE operations across the county, parking managers have agreed a new policy guidance document. This is intended to promote consistency of process as well as clarity and transparency;

councils will work to an agreed set of policy guidelines and members have approved this approach. This document is accessible to the public via the council's website.

Parking enforcement assists with the proper management of traffic and parking places. Income derived is an important element of the council's budgetary arrangements. It is important that the correct balance between expected levels of enforcement and proper management of parking places is maintained. Accordingly, staffing levels have been approved by members to reflect this.

It is important to note that parking attendants carry out a range of duties not directly related to their enforcement role. They are, for example, often the first recognisable representatives of authority seen by visitors to our district. They act daily as ambassadors for the council and are often called upon to give help and advice.

11.5 Tariff structure

Parking charges form part of the council's wider transportation and traffic management strategies. The protection of historic fabric, maintenance of urban environments and control of vehicle movements, as parts of various plans, has been council policy for many years.

Income received is of benefit to the council and thereby the wider community, supporting the provision of services to residents and visitors. The council strives to encourage the maximum use of its car parks and thus economic activity across the district, seeking to make the whole area attractive for residents, workers, visitors and shoppers.

It is important that council parking tariffs are seen to be fair and reasonable. If the right balance is not maintained, there is a danger of visitors and shoppers choosing to go elsewhere and the consequential impact of this on the local economy has to be considered.

Short stay parking locally has historically been on the basis of tariffs up to 5

hours, although most other councils opt for a range of between 2 to 4 hours. Usage statistics that are available at all our short stay car parks reveal that over 80 per cent of stays are currently between 3 and 3.75 hours. There is therefore a strong case for changing the short-stay tariff system to encourage stays longer than 4 hours at long-stay or Park and Ride car parks. This should be considered as part of the annual review of charges.

There is also the issue of social inclusion. It is recognised that cars may be the only viable form of transport for some residents particularly those in rural areas where public transport systems do not provide a suitable alternative. Care must be taken to ensure that charges are set at a level proportionate with the economic viability of the city and consideration given to those groups identified through the Equalities Impact Assessment process.

Parking charges are important tools that encourage drivers to park in the most appropriate place; they are a mechanism that enables the council to deliver an efficient and responsive service in the context of demand and strategic policy aims. In all cases, tariffs must appear reasonable to those who use our parking places; they also need to be easily understood as complicated tariff structures will deter use and discourage return visits.

In Canterbury, there is currently a range of options:

- Short Stay and Short Stay Premium – for shoppers and visitors
- Long Stay – for commuters and all-day visitors
- Park and Ride – for shoppers, commuters, visitors and students
- Residents' parking

Parking cards are available for use in any payment machine: on street, off street and Park & Ride. They offer a discounted parking charge and, with the proposal to extend on street pay and display, will be more widely advertised.

Principles

P11: To retain the current range of off-street and on-street tariff options and to assess charges annually to ensure they are set at levels to encourage usage in the most appropriate places.

P12: To ensure that the Controlled Parking Zone scheme provides enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover the additional restrictions and residents' parking facilities.

In order to encourage more widespread use of vehicles that are less environmentally damaging, it is proposed to investigate the introduction of a lower annual permit charge for lower polluting vehicles. This could be based either on alternative fuel cars or on emissions ratings.

Action

A27: To investigate the introduction of a reduced annual permit charge for low polluting vehicles.

12. Pavement parking

12.1 Legal position and main concerns

There is no specific national legislation that bans vehicles parking on pavements.

However section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 makes it an offence to obstruct a highway without lawful authority. The footway is part of a highway and therefore the police can issue a fixed penalty notice for such obstruction.

The Highway Code advises that motorists should not park on pavements as it can cause an obstruction and seriously inconvenience pedestrians, people in wheelchairs or with visual impairment and people with prams or pushchairs.

Footway parking generates complaints from all over the district. The main concerns are:

- (a) parked cars cause serious obstruction to pedestrians;
- (b) cars cause damage to paving slabs and to the structure of the pavement, requiring expensive repairs;
- (c) uneven pavements result in trip hazards for pedestrians and create an unsightly environment.

Local traffic authorities can make traffic regulation orders, under powers in the Road Traffic Act 1984, to both ban pavement parking in certain areas and allow specific exemptions from the ban.

12.2 Trial pavement parking ban

A trial is currently taking place that has introduced parking prohibitions on pavements at five locations across the district, with a view to investigating whether such prohibitions could, in future, be applied more widely.

An amendment to the current on-street parking Traffic Regulation Order has been made and an additional contravention code has been introduced to enable enforcement by Parking Attendants.

While the aims of restricting pavement parking are likely to attract community support, it is important to recognise that there will be a number of technical, operational, legal and financial hurdles to overcome.

In most cases, people park on the pavement because a road is narrow and parking on the road could obstruct free passage of vehicles. If pavement parking is to be banned in narrow streets, then alternative convenient parking provision may need to be established. Unless this can be provided, residents may be less enthusiastic about the introduction of new restrictions.

Given that large parts of the district have narrow streets, many of them of historic character, it may be unrealistic to anticipate a blanket ban on pavement parking in all areas. There are however some streets where no parking restrictions currently exist, which do not have width constraints and pavement parking can have no justification.

In reality, each street has to be considered on its own merit and it will be essential to gain consensus within the local community before introducing new restrictions.

The trial is due to end in April 2008, at which time a decision will be made on whether to extend the enforcement of pavement parking to other areas. If it is extended, then the implications of increasing resources will need to be considered.

Action

A28: To monitor the effects of the pavement parking trial and then consider whether this enforcement policy should be extended or continued.

13. Financial implications

This strategy identifies a number of parking related actions that have direct (capital) or indirect (revenue) implications. Many of these actions are already contained within the council's capital programme for funding, or part funding, through the general fund.

However all proposals are subject to permission being sought and obtained at the appropriate time.

In order for those actions not identified to proceed, detailed costings and bids will also need approval through the council's financial appraisal process.

For the purpose of this strategy, those actions that have capital or revenue implications have been identified in the summary in Section 14 using the symbol £C (capital) or £R (revenue).

14. Summary of principles and actions

A summary of the parking principles and the associated actions from all sections, that are to be adopted for the period 2006 to 2016, are listed below :

(£C/£R represent actions that will have capital or revenue financial implications)

Principles

On-street

P1: To provide improved parking facilities for residents while allowing some short stay parking for visitors to local shops and businesses.

Off-street

P2: To base future off-street parking provision on the peak Saturday demand outside of the peak Christmas period.

P3: To continue to manage parking demand and to adopt a flexible strategy capable of meeting a predicted growth of 1.5 per cent per annum.

P4: To continue a gradual redistribution in parking provision from city centre car parks to Park and Ride sites, provided that there is sufficient overall capacity.

P5: To meet any increases in parking demand by extending Park and Ride provision while retaining sufficient short stay parking in the city centre.

P6: To continue to support the introduction of new bus lanes that improve journey times for Park and Ride and service buses.

Business Users

P7: To continue to provide an appropriate level of business user parking spaces in the city centre.

New residential developments

P8: To continue the local planning policy of low car parking provision in sustainable developments, to reduce car usage and dependency in line with PPS3.

P9: To allow residents of low car parking provision developments the ability to purchase on or off-street parking permits only in areas where there is clear evidence of spare capacity at all times.

Parking for disabled people

P10: To ensure that disabled car parking spaces are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and access requirements, and are provided in accordance with Kent Vehicle Parking Standards and national guidance.

Management and enforcement

P11: To retain the current range of off-street and on-street tariff options and to assess charges annually to ensure they are set at levels to encourage usage in the most appropriate places.

P12: To ensure that the Controlled Parking Zone scheme provides enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover the additional restrictions and residents parking facilities.

Actions

On-street

A1: To adopt a more flexible approach to the issuing of permits in streets with spare parking capacity, despite the overall zone being full.

A2: To allow vehicles with city centre on-street permits and resident visitor vouchers, permission to park in St Johns Lane and Hawks Lane business user car parks between the hours of 7pm and 7am seven days a week.

A3: To consult with resident permit holders in the two hour zones on extending the two hour limit to apply 24 hours, seven days a week. (£R)

A4: To carry out consultation on allowing vehicles displaying valid on-street permits and resident visitor vouchers, unlimited parking in some 20 minute bays after 6.30pm, seven days a week.

A5: To consult with residents in Cromwell Road (part), Lesley Avenue and Winchester Avenue on joining the St Lawrence CPZ. (£C)

A6: To consult with residents in Roseacre Close and Hanover Close (part) on whether they wish to join the CPZ. (£C)

A7: To monitor parking problems in the Wincheap area and assess when the level of concern justifies further consultation with residents on bringing additional streets into the CPZ.

A29: To investigate restricting and controlling parking in the section of Whitehall Road between Toddlers Cove car park and the Rheims Way over bridge.

Off-street

A8: To provide a Park and Ride site that intercepts vehicles from the north-western approach into the city. (£C/R)

A9: To implement a 150 to 200 space expansion at New Dover Road Park and Ride. (£C)

A10: To investigate a limited expansion at the current Wincheap Park and Ride site and a more significant expansion as part of the Wincheap Industrial Estate redevelopment, which would also cater for traffic from the north-west (£C/R).

A11: To implement measures to make Sturry Road Park and Ride more attractive to motorists and increase usage. (£C)

A12: To continually review the hours of operation of Park and Ride in consultation with local employers and retailers, and to trial an extension in the hours of operation to 8.30pm on Thursday evenings, for a 10 week period.

A13: To investigate ways of increasing passenger capacity on Park and Ride buses at peak times.

A14: To explore ways of providing a customer goods collection service at Park and Ride sites. (£R)

A15: To investigate, through the Travel Plan Forum, the potential of using Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges.

A16: To replace the current limited car park management system with a UTMC compatible one, extend coverage to all main car parks and provide variable message signs capable of displaying real-time traffic and parking information. (£C)

A30: To investigate and plan for parking demand changes resulting from the CTRL fast-link service from Canterbury West railway station.

Business users and private non-residential parking

A17: To allow five day business user permit holders permission to park in any Long Stay car park in addition to Castle Street Multi-Storey, Castle Row and Rosemary Lane car parks.

A18: To set up a Travel Plan Forum for the major employers and higher academic establishments in Canterbury to promote and develop travel plans and investigate partnership working with stakeholders and transport providers.

New residential developments

A19: To produce a residential parking standard matrix for the Canterbury District in line with PPS3 that considers the availability of alternative modes of transport.

A20: To consider introducing a new off-street overnight residents' permit for residents of low car parking provision developments.

Disabled Blue Badge drivers

A21: To provide Blue Badge holder parking spaces in all off-street car parks in accordance with the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards, and to introduce a three hour free limit in car parks. (£R)

Management and enforcement

A22: To investigate the installation of vehicle number plate recognition cameras to carry out enforcement at public car parks, subject to compliance with the appropriate legislation and approval by the Highway Authority. (£C/R)

A23: To consider increasing the level of evening enforcement including targeting problem areas, particularly in the City Centre zone. (£R)

A24: To give greater priority to targeted enforcement of Blue Badge holder parking bays and parking outside of schools. (£R)

A25: To change the remaining two hour voucher parking areas to pay and display. (£C)

A26: To investigate implementing on-street pay and display in the four hour zones.

A27: To investigate the introduction of a reduced annual permit charge for low polluting vehicles.

Pavement parking

A28: To monitor the effects of the pavement parking trial and then consider whether this enforcement policy should be extended or continued. (£R)