

Appendix D

16. Parking Issues and Financial Modelling

- 16.1 Having adequate car parking facilities is particularly important in helping to deliver the Council's visioning that supports regeneration of the town centre, helps manage air quality and reduce congestion, whilst seeking to improve the commercial vitality of our towns, encourage greater footfall and to improve the public realm and streetscape enhancements. The supply and provision of adequate, accessible and good quality car parking is important to visitors and residents alike.
- 16.2 The quality and availability of off-street car parking, including realistic charges compared with other travel modes has an impact on the number of people visiting our towns and using the facilities they have to offer.

Our Towns in more detail:

Hadleigh

- 16.3 Hadleigh currently exhibits some parking availability pressure, with Long Stay capacity at Magdalen Road having built to high levels; it is possible that re-booking may be occurring in order to gain an all-day stay, with the 3-hour tickets currently being the only controls in the short stay car parks. Saturday afternoon stays do seem to be consistent with the morning and weekdays, and may cause overstays. Additional controls are therefore recommended.
- 16.4 Some long stay parking pressure is reported in the Railway Walk car park impacting walkers finding short term spaces, and a change to maximum stay is recommended here. For residential parking it would be advantageous to seek alternatives for the Benton Street area of Hadleigh if land were to become available.
- 16.5 There are limited on-street controls on the highway nearby if further controls are to be implemented and work with the County Council will be required to prevent parking flooding into nearby residential streets; the town should form part of a wider study, to include a review of roadside restrictions and forward planning in case there were ever any future changes, particularly to on-street parking in High Street.

Interventions and Principles:- See Part 6 and Table 8 in Appendix A

Lavenham

- 16.6 Lavenham very broadly follows the pattern found in Hadleigh, although it is to be remembered that the study was carried out in February. It is expected that a great many more tourist stays would be seen during the summer months.
- 16.7 It is recommended to make a further study of the parking demands in Lavenham – together with the Parish Council – including more seasonal leisure and tourism pressures. Casual observations during the summer months confirm that the usage and impacts, at times other than the study revealed, are higher.
- 16.8 It should be noted that an informal ‘honesty box’ approach is being operated in the two Babergh car parks in Lavenham with a request to leave £2-£3 per stay; the parking orders, which stipulate no charge, do enable the issuance of penalties (“fines”) for certain types of civil parking contravention.
- 16.9 A wider ‘Parish Partnership’ approach should be adopted for Lavenham to further the development of parking in Lavenham and make best use of the facilities and aspirations for future developments, in partnership with the Parish Council – but with

the District retaining control. A case study showing how this approach has worked elsewhere can be found in Appendix C.

Interventions and Principles:- See Part 6 and Table 8 in Appendix A

Sudbury

- 16.10 The town, through the Vision groups, have bid and prepared pipeline business cases for external funding opportunities - including county, regional and central government relating to high street regeneration, heritage and cultural, energy and decarbonisation and active travel. Part of this includes an ambition to deliver improved cycling and walking routes across the town, especially linking Belle Vue with the Croft and Water Meadows.
- 16.11 Parking provision needs better branding, wayfinding and promotion. Feedback suggests that visitors neither know where to find parking nor the best choices for their visit. Better support for visitors is needed including wayfinding from the rail station and car parks.
- 16.12 Shoppers' car parks within the one-way gyratory in Sudbury show the greatest pressure of any in the District, and there is a need for controls in these locations in order to make the best use of the space available. Whilst these car parks are at capacity and locating a space difficult, other car parks could stand more usage.
- 16.13 Against a timeline of up to 5 years, more space may need to be made available pending all visioning and redevelopment taking place.

Types of stay, types of provision, controls, options for charging, Interventions and Principles:- See Part 6 and Table 8 in Appendix A

- 16.14 Belle Vue, Hamilton Road Quarter and Market Hill are the Sudbury Vision Steering Group's main focus given the recent town centre master planning and regeneration opportunities to support the economy of Sudbury. Viable redevelopment of the area, including the large area of derelict undeveloped land in Hamilton Road, requires the bus station moving to on-street stops around the town with supporting highways pinch points and junction improvements.
- 16.15 Any redevelopment or highways improvements schemes affecting the Station Road carparks and off-street lorry parking may impact on available spaces or necessitate a reconfiguration/re-marking. Also redirecting lorry parking away from town centre and exploring alternative options for market traders and coach layover will be necessary and is underway.
- 16.16 The town centre study outputs have also observed that the Girling Street/Newton Road junction suffers from capacity issues, and that the Great Eastern Road junction with Station Road (the 'Waitrose Junction') does not run smoothly. This might be alleviated further if a car park access were provided directly onto Cornard Road near the Underwood Garage.
- 16.17 Provision should be made in car parks to assist with and support the changes and investments planned, and this might include changes to car park circulation and a highway scheme to help traffic flow, and provision of other sustainable transport features such as cycle parking and e-cycle and EV charging.
- 16.18 Beside the developments and Vision programme in the town centre itself, projected population growth (e.g. at Chilton Woods) and new facilities may increase town centre usage. In addition, any future plans for a hotel in Hamilton Road area would need to rely on existing town centre parking and not create additional spaces – which could for example be supported by evening parking at Great Eastern Road (Roy's) car park.

- 16.19 The town centre as it exists is difficult for pedestrians in and around Market Hill, and with the high density of vehicles and flows (for example parked private vehicle reversing out into strategic route traffic flow). More town centre living is anticipated including elderly populations. There is no western bypass so the A131 remains high capacity and strategic network route.
- 16.20 Retail-led town centres have been in sharp decline, not just due to Covid-19, but the emergency has exacerbated the situation. With the regeneration planned, a more pedestrian friendly town centre will be one of the unique characteristics which can be built upon and a trend predicted as part of the evolution of towns – especially with Market Hill potentially being redesignated as a flexible use and pedestrian/event space. A parking scheme (for instance special season tickets) which caters for and supports town centre workers would be welcomed by traders.
- 16.21 Within the town centre it is planned to facilitate on-street bus and coach stops. Time limited/drop and pickup parking bays and new bus stops can help to improve user experience. In addition, a potential coach stop could be provided at the bottom of Market Hill (King Street side near library). With bus stops placed strategically around the town on street, and in better locations for service users, we expect reduced fuel miles for operators and a benefit for the environment.
- 16.22 In designing and branding specific areas for parking we will work with the highways authority to prioritise blue badge parking for elderly/mobility impaired in the main amenity and services areas (e.g. near banks), whilst taxis have sufficient space given constraints of town congestion and can wait anywhere that on-street controls allow, and – especially with improvements in technology – private hire vehicles can go directly to where they are called.
- 16.23 Finally, and most importantly, is the need to integrate Active Travel and sustainable transport modes. We need to promote non-car active travel and pedestrian / cycleway connectivity, and make links to and from the proposed green routeway. We are working with Suffolk County Council and partners to improve the infrastructure cyclists particularly in the towns. This improved infrastructure will include additional routes and paths as well as solar battery powered storage. Sudbury has a high level of residents (4%) that cycle to work being double the national average. Therefore, we need to ensure we have suitable provision. This infrastructure needs to be considered alongside parking need.

Sudbury Highway related issues

- 16.24 The highway around the Sudbury town centre is already controlled with waiting restrictions within a 5-10-minute walk of the town centre. The details can be found at the Suffolk TraffWeb site:- <https://www.suffolktraffweb.uk/main.html>. Changes to car park controls are unlikely to have any unforeseen highway impacts.
- 16.25 There is a proposal to investigate resident parking on-street, which would fit in well with these proposals to better manage the car parks.
- 16.26 The geography of Sudbury must also be a factor with Market Hill and the one-way system providing a barrier to circulation around town and between car parks. This may also be a factor in congestion and air quality issues.

North Street, Girling Street and Mill Lane car parks

- 16.27 Most stays in the shopper's car parks on a weekday were comparatively short events, with some longer stays taking up bays for longer durations. Remember that the study was conducted in February and represents a 'best case' in terms of occupancy – it is suggested that the car park would be more congested at different points in the year.

- 16.28 North Street and Girling Street car parks are reaching the capacity where locating a space is found to be more difficult. These car parks should be branded for shoppers' use only and the maximum stay tailored to suit. Mill Lane car park has very specific issues and has the potential to be resident permit only.
- 16.29 The Mill Lane car park should be reconfigured and given over for the use of residents at all times since there are some specific issues and concerns relating to car park charging at this location and air quality management issues locally – and this site should be given over to resident permit parking only.
- 16.30 Shoppers' car parks with a 5-10-minute walk – those in Gt Eastern Road, have more capacity to take further traffic, although there are some redevelopment options for parts of this site which may compromise capacity in the medium term. The car parks including long stay are further from the centre and appear to have sufficient capacity – aside from the Station car park.
- 16.31 Consideration could be given to increasing controls or introducing daytime charging – in both North Street and Girling Street in order to encourage additional use of the alternative locations in Station Road (Kingfisher).
- 16.32 The current ticketing arrangement could encourage the practice of re-booking at lunchtime to gain a full day stay, clogging up spaces which could be used by shoppers to increase footfall, and it is recommended to increase the level of controls to protect the spaces available for shoppers.

Great Eastern Road and Station Road car parks

- 16.33 Usage is such that, when a customer arrives, there is likely to be space to park, although at busy times – especially during the morning – there may be a search.
- 16.34 Consideration could be given to increasing controls, especially on Saturday afternoons, to encourage lunchtime turnover and discourage space blocking through stays into the afternoon after needing a 3-hour ticket only until 12 noon.
- 16.35 The rail station car park should remain long stay only, as now but reflect at least the same tariff as other locations. Tariffs should also take into consideration the comparison with the average cost of a middle-distance bus fare.
- 16.36 The stay data shows that peak usage is between 11am and 3pm, and that most stays are comparatively short events. Some longer stays were however found to be blocking up spaces in the shopper's car parks. It is therefore recommended to introduce Saturday afternoon controls.
- 16.37 It is also recommended to increase patrols of the car parks and consider introducing additional controls in the shopper's car parks closest to the town centre, as alternative capacity exists nearby.
- 16.38 Any income from any charging if it were considered for introduction could be used to offset additional patrols and improvements to the general car park environment, and also offset the additional costs which would need to be considered arising from changes including machine adaptation, tariff board updating and any ongoing cash collection.

Resident usage overnight

- 16.39 Residents' car parks are provided in outlying areas and most seem to have sufficient capacity, although Ballingdon Street and the Blackfriars car parks do reach capacity overnight. There may be capacity to offer Resident Season Tickets for overnight usage in other public car parks – the only conflicting usage being weekends, and especially Saturdays, when capacity must be carefully planned.

16.40 The Mill Lane car park should be reconfigured and given over for the use of residents at all times. Thought should be given as to the reconstruction of some off the poor facilities for residents, possibly leading to increased usage.

Location	Sold
Station Road, Sudbury (Kingfisher Leisure Centre)	33
The Station, Sudbury	75
Magdalen Street, Hadleigh	33

16.41 We currently do not have any permits on the waiting list.

16.42 The price for season tickets is set in the schedule to the parking order – this needs to keep pace with the daily tariff (all day parking) but be representative of proportionate use – e.g. 180 days or 220 days p.a. allowing for leave and weekends.

Outlying car parks

16.43 Fewer issues were found with the other, smaller car parks – such as that at Lower Holbrook.

16.44 The small car park at Pin Mill was found to be near capacity on some occasions and there is a recommendation to increase the fees charged here which are otherwise very low at just 30p/hour, considering the tourist nature of much of the casual parking, in order to encourage turnover and the use of alternatives. It is recommended to increase the charge to 50p/hour. It is of note that this is the only car park that fully covers its costs.

16.45 There is a recommendation to review the provision at Pin Mill to see if there may be scope to increase the size of the parking area.

Interventions and Principles:- See Part 6 and Table 8 in Appendix A

To build for the peak, or build for the average?

16.46 At some points in the year, the car parks may become full – but on many other days the reserve capacity stands empty and is of no use. It is suggested elsewhere that excess capacity can be put to better use by selling overcapacity for other uses.

There is an important balance to be struck, and an appropriate mixture of spaces for the desired uses – together with proportionate controls – must be provided and explored in a future strategy study.