

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS'

# PARKING STRATEGY

## 2022-2042



2020

HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS

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## Foreword

*The parking strategy is designed to help support our vision for Babergh and Mid Suffolk which is “**to build great communities with bright and healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home**” by shaping the future growth of the districts, enhancing the quality of the local environment as well as providing a prospectus for investment through regeneration of our town centres and rural villages.*

*The parking strategy is a key means of enhancing our already strong and vibrant districts and reinforces the importance of everyone having access to sufficient, safe, and easy to use parking facilities for cars and other vehicle types, at suitable hours of the day (or night).*

*The strategy at a high level needs to identify parking demand and supply for the next 20 years, it needs to reflect national guidance as it applies to both the future of town centres and commuting patterns, reflect the changing needs of transport in so far as this is possible, anticipate patterns of demand, and most importantly, be capable of adaptation.*

*The detail of why, how and what we will do to make this a reality is explained in this document and we invite you to support this vision by working with us.*



Councillor Elisabeth Malvisi  
Cabinet Member for Environment  
Babergh District Council Councillor



Councillor Jessica Fleming  
Cabinet Member for Environment  
Mid Suffolk District Council

# 1. Introduction

[2020 Consultancy](#) was commissioned by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to prepare a parking strategy covering both off-street car parks and the provision of on-street parking. We are seeking to develop a parking strategy that aligns with the councils' vision, which is designed to shape the future growth of the districts, enhance the quality of the local environment, and provide a prospectus for investment.



## 2. Our parking strategy

At the heart of this parking strategy is the principle that there is sufficient parking provision for all, in appropriate locations to ensure the success of our communities and the local economy and to enhance the quality of the environment.

This parking strategy contains recommendations, that we believe can bring real change to how we travel and how we help deliver the wider ambitions for our communities and places.

***Parking that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors***



## Recognition of policy

Parking plays an important role in providing and facilitating key economic and service functions by allowing vehicle access. Lack of parking provision can be detrimental to economic and social functions, over provision can be similarly damaging as key space may provide more effective alternative uses.

[The Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011](#) sets out Suffolk County Council's proposals for transport provision in the county for the next 20 years. The key ambition is to support the local economy, attract world class businesses, and support and develop the local workforce, in the context of a shift towards a low carbon economy which has a direct impact on parking.

## Our objectives



Understand existing parking provision, ensure that parking supports the councils' economic growth aspirations



Evaluate and interpret current parking behaviours



Provide appropriate / correct level of parking provision to meet everyone's needs giving consideration to variable seasonal demand, population growth, regeneration / development.



Identify improvements that will achieve a better parking experience for everyone.



Support the Councils aims to achieve a more sustainable provision – promote sustainable modes of travel eg LCWIP / Sustainable Travel Vision, electric vehicles etc



Ensure that on-street parking provision is utilised to protect key areas i.e. town centres, tourist hotspots, residents parking areas etc.



### 3. Our parking service

It is vital that the councils provide adequate provision and should consider all aspects of parking to ensure a positive first impression for everyone.

- **Parking directional signage and wayfinding**

Car park way finding and directional signage are key visual aids which assist people when deciding where they want to park.

Lack of appropriate signage does not create an efficient town centre parking experience and is likely to result in certain car parks being used regardless of the intended location.

 The councils' should consider developing a branding strategy that can be incorporated into signage and wayfinding eg specific use of colours and route numbers. These can be supported through monolith signs that include maps and key information.

Once the car is parked, then wayfinding signage is used to direct people to their destination. This is most commonly done using finger posts.

- **Enforcement and management of our car parks**



Civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers in Suffolk moved from the Police to [Suffolk County Council \(SCC\)](#), in April 2020. The aim of which was to decrease unlawful parking within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.


Ipswich Borough and West Suffolk Councils manage the enforcement of all council owned car parks (off-street) as well enforcing illegally parked vehicles on the highway (on-street) on behalf of Suffolk County Council (as the Highways Authority).

Management of parking falls into two broad areas: enforcement and back-office management.

 Councils to consider and investigate the best and most cost-effective way of delivering enforcement whilst acknowledging that this customer facing service requires a dedicated resource.

- **Car park payment**

In car parks where payment is required, pay and display machines are in place and provide users with options on how they can pay for their parking sessions including coin, debit and credit card (chip & pin or contactless) and by mobile device via an app. Payment options do vary across the car parks.

 Regular review of parking charges / benchmarking with other parking providers. Further improvements made to pay and display machines and reviewing the effectiveness of pay on exit systems

▪ **Designated car park spaces**



There is a need to have designated spaces in car parks to offer parking for blue badge holders and those with young children. They offer a wider space to provide improved access, and will also be in closer proximity to the intended destination.

There are currently 56 blue badge holder spaces in Babergh car parks (3.5% of the total offering), and 44 blue badge holder spaces in Mid Suffolk (4.3% of the total offering).

Any charges and time constraints for Blue Badge holders are displayed on the tariff boards located within each car park. There are currently no concessions for parent and child spaces.



Carry out a detailed review of all car park designation spaces to determine where improvements can be made to accommodate everyone.

▪ **Electric vehicle charging**

There are currently 20 Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points across the districts, details below:

| Car Park                                  | Location   | Total EV charge points |
|---|------------|------------------------|
| Station Road (Kingfisher leisure centre)  | Sudbury    | 10                     |
| Prentice Street                           | Lavenham   | 2                      |
| The Cock Horse Inn                        | Lavenham   | 2                      |
| Magdalen Road                             | Hadleigh   | 2                      |
| <b>TOTAL EV CHARGE POINTS - BABERGH</b>   |            | <b>16</b>              |
| Cross Street                              | Eye        | 2                      |
| Ipswich Street                            | Stowmarket | 2                      |
| <b>TOTAL EV CHARGE POINTS MID SUFFOLK</b> |            | <b>4</b>               |

The sale of electric vehicles is expected to rise considerably, especially with the ban of new petrol / diesel vehicles from 2030.



**Councils' parking webpages**



Promotion and increase of EV charge point facilities across the districts is vital. The delivery of additional EV charge points should be aligned with the sale of electric vehicles.

The councils' website may be the first port of call to understand parking arrangements and locations. This makes the website very important and so the parking pages need to be easy to interpretate, up to date, and contain key relevant information.

The councils' website currently has information about location, type and costs of parking spaces across the districts.



There is a need for further improvements as there are no interactive features i.e., opportunity to view real-time occupancy rates, and estimated usage at specific times / day of the week.

## 4. Our research and investigations

### Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to determine how the districts parking offer compares to neighbouring authorities and locations that share similar characteristics such as type of town offering, size, population, and key trip generators at a district level.

The benchmarking locations are included in the following table:

| Location Centre       | Population (2019 estimate) | Car Parks        |                        |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
|                       |                            | Total No. Spaces | % of Spaces Population |
| Babergh               | 92,036                     | 1,594            | 1.73%                  |
| Mid Suffolk           | 103,895                    | 985              | 0.95%                  |
| East Suffolk          | 249,461                    | 8377             | 3.36%                  |
| West Suffolk          | 179,045                    | 6,123            | 3.42%                  |
| Wyre Forest           | 101,291                    | 2,317            | 2.29%                  |
| East Northamptonshire | 94,527                     | 594              | 0.63%                  |

Car park pricing policies can vary between different local authorities. The average parking tariffs within Babergh and Mid-Suffolk have been benchmarked as shown below.

| Area                | Average Cost of Parking (Per Hour)                      |
|---------------------|---|
| Babergh             | Free (for first three hours) – *30p per hour (Pin mill) |
| Mid-Suffolk         | £1.00   |
| East Suffolk        | 40p - £1.40/ Hour                                       |
| Ipswich             | 70p - £1.80/ Hour                                       |
| West Suffolk        | £1.00 - £3.50/ Hour                                     |
| East Anglia         | £1.00 - £2.00/ Hour                                     |
| North Essex         | £1.20 - £2.10/ Hour                                     |
| East Cambridgeshire | Free/ £3 per day  |

The table above demonstrates that parking charges in Babergh and Mid Suffolk compare favourably with neighbouring authorities and location with similar characteristics.

### Condition surveys

An assessment of each council operated car park was undertaken. Results from this assessment inform recommendations within the strategy. Site visits took place during August 2021 when the impact of Covid-19 was still present.

Each car park was assessed against a list of criteria to provide a prioritisation list of sites that require attention.

### Vehicle occupancy surveys

Vehicle occupancy surveys were undertaken across all car parks on different days of the week (including Saturday), and at different times of the day to understand parking behaviours and demand.

Private car parks for the use of specific businesses (e.g., private staff car parks, community facilities, supermarkets etc) have not been surveyed or considered within the occupancy analysis. As district councils we are unable to influence changes within private car parks but do recognise the need to understand how much provision is available.



Car park demand was split into categories.

**< 60% occupancy** – scope for reallocation of land use or to promote use of the car park

**60-74% occupancy** – scope for additional parking without impacting the ability to locate a parking space quickly.

**75-84% occupancy** – locating a parking space can be achieved relatively quickly.

**85-94% occupancy** – likely to be challenging finding a parking space. This level of occupancy can cause frustration with drivers.

**> 94% occupancy** – likely to locate a parking space in a larger car park or extremely challenging in a smaller car park.

## Stakeholder engagement

To maximise the effectiveness of the consultation process, a two-stage engagement programme was developed.

**Stage one** was a fact-finding opportunity, allowing stakeholders to comment on the councils' existing parking arrangements through a public online questionnaire which was open for six weeks and received 1,248 responses. Promotion included council website updates, social media posts, posters displayed in car parks as well as [local press coverage](#)



This was achieved through stakeholder briefings, roadshow events and a second public online questionnaire, which received 2,004 responses, bringing the total of completed questionnaires to 3,252.

## The future of parking

With the future adoption of the [Joint Local Plan](#), regeneration and increasing car ownership, the demand for parking is likely to increase.

The Department for Transport has developed a model, [Trip End Model Presentation Programme \(TEMPRo\)](#), that is designed to estimate growth in traffic and is based on predictions which include future housing, population, car ownership, trip rates and employment.

| Town / Village | Spaces |              | Weekday |       |       |       | Saturday |       |       |       |
|----------------|--------|--------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
|                |        |              | 10am    | 12pm  | 2pm   | 4pm   | 10am     | 12pm  | 2pm   | 4pm   |
|                | Total  | % Blue Badge | % Occ   | % Occ | % Occ | % Occ | % Occ    | % Occ | % Occ | % Occ |
| Sudbury        | 1,106  | 3.25         | 56      | 58    | 51    | 40    | 59       | 68    | 58    | 46    |
| Hadleigh       | 313    | 5.1          | 61      | 59    | 56    | 41    | 71       | 77    | 53    | 45    |
| Lavenham       | 110    | 3.25         | 48      | 74    | 71    | 37    | 61       | 84    | 67    | 53    |
| Pin Mill       | 43     | 0            | 40      | 53    | 44    | 28    | 51       | 67    | 53    | 33    |
| Holbrook       | 16     | 0            | 0       | 0     | 6     | 13    | 0        | 0     | 6     | 13    |
| Raydon         | 6      | 0            | 17      | 33    | 67    | 50    | 33       | 17    | 50    | 17    |
| Debenham       | 15     | 6.6          | 100     | 100   | 93    | 67    | 93       | 100   | 80    | 53    |
| Eye            | 107    | 5.6          | 64      | 84    | 75    | 61    | 73       | 90    | 82    | 65    |
| Needham Market | 58     | 8.6          | 81      | 83    | 78    | 54    | 75       | 92    | 68    | 53    |
| Stowmarket     | 781    | 4.1          | 74      | 76    | 67    | 56    | 77       | 82    | 75    | 45    |
| Woolpit        | 24     | 0            | 21      | 46    | 29    | 17    | 33       | 42    | 38    | 17    |

Key stakeholders (district, town and parish councillors, transport groups, business groups, education establishments etc.) were invited to attend virtual workshops which contained a presentation. The purpose of which was to outline the results of the condition and occupancy surveys and provide opportunity for feedback.

**Stage two** sought feedback on the recommendations established as part of the stage one engagement.

Using the parking survey data collected from council owned car parks as the baseline, it is possible to determine the growth in car parks over a 20-year period, broken down into five-year periods to track the occupancy rates.

The results of the forecasting tool across council owned car parks between 2022 and 2042 is shown in the table below.

The baseline data used when forecasting was the peak data, and so the forecasts do not take into consideration the impact of any strategy recommendations e.g improvements to public transport and active travel infrastructure will likely reduce the amount of single occupancy journeys made.

The councils' have partnered with other Suffolk Local Authorities to create The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP). The SCCP are committed to making Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030. The parking strategy recommendations focus on supporting this goal, which aims to reduce future parking demand.

The councils' also have ambitious [regeneration plans](#) to improve town centres across the districts. The plans seek to reduce town centre traffic congestion, positively impacting future parking capacity which may result in other recommendations having greater priority.



It is recommended that the planning process for delivery of new parking sites should commence when parking occupancy rates reach 85% across an area i.e., town centre.

| Car park       | 2022 % occupied | 2027 % occupied | 2032 % occupied | 2037 % occupied | 2042 % occupied |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Sudbury        | 74              | 77              | 79              | 82              | 84              |
| Lavenham       | 83              | 86              | 89              | 92              | 94              |
| Hadleigh       | 80              | 83              | 86              | 88              | 91              |
| Raydon         | 50              | 52              | 54              | 56              | 57              |
| Pin Mill       | 67              | 70              | 73              | 75              | 77              |
| Lower Holbrook | 19              | 20              | 20              | 21              | 21              |
| Debenham       | 100             | 104             | 108             | 112             | 115             |
| Eye            | 94              | 98              | 101             | 105             | 108             |
| Needham Market | 92              | 96              | 99              | 103             | 106             |
| Stowmarket     | 83              | 87              | 90              | 93              | 96              |
| Woolpit        | 75              | 78              | 81              | 84              | 86              |

Parking demand above 85%,  
 Parking demand between 50%-84  
 Parking demand below 50%.

Figures above 100% mean there is more demand than capacity

## 5. The strategy recommendations

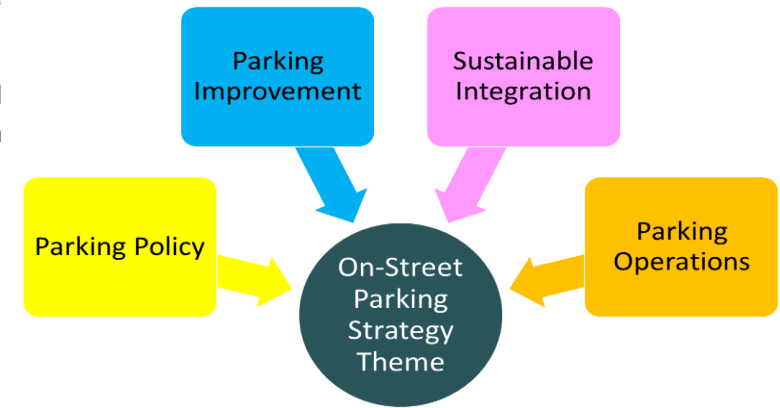
It is vital to include all potential recommendations to align and support the councils' policies, objectives, and vision. They have been grouped into a number of themes that cover both off-street and on-street parking as shown in the graphics.

Some recommendations such as EV charge points will span multiple themes e.g sustainable transport, and car park technology.

The following pages provide more detail on the recommendations

The recommendations have been assessed with reference to a series of indicators, which include:

- Economic indicators (e.g., footfall, expenditure, vacancy rates)
- Consideration of the Joint Local Plan
- Traffic movements
- Conservation and environmental
- Council parking operations.



### Off-street parking recommendations

#### Parking Capacity

The results of the forecasting outlined on page 10, highlight the possible need to provide additional parking spaces in areas that may (or do) experience parking pressure frequently.

This could be achieved by the councils' identifying potential new sites for car park construction either existing land owned by the councils', or privately owned land that is subject to acquisition.

The councils will need to work with Suffolk County Council as the highways authority to identify areas of on-street parking that can be



utilised to provide further parking in key locations i.e., town and village centres.

Since Central Government released the [LTN 1/20 guidance to promote active travel](#), new development sites have seen a noticeable improvement in the level of active travel infrastructure provided, but a reduction to the amount of parking spaces provided. This causes displacement to occur in surrounding roads.

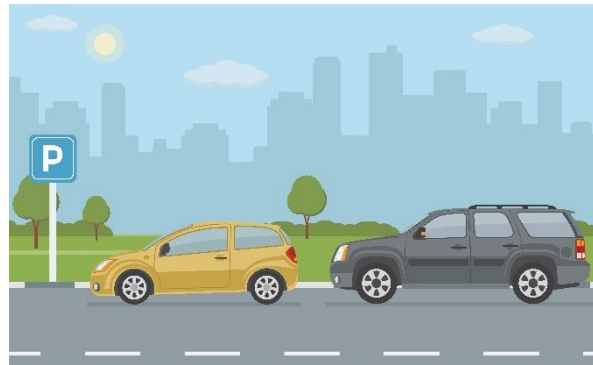
**Parking Capacity recommendations:**

- Increase parking provision in those locations that require it
- Utilise on-street parking for short-stay provision
- Safeguard parking provision for new development sites i.e., ensure the planning process includes the appropriate checks on parking surveys carried out for application e.g parking beat surveys,

**Quality of Car Parks**

Assessments undertaken across all council owned car parks highlighted the need to improve all car parks during the lifespan of this parking strategy.

There are differing requirements at each car park location, here are a few examples of areas for improvement.



Directional signage to car parks is poor and so improvements are recommended for both local road networks, and the strategic road network to provide clear guidance to visitors.



Variable Message Signs could be considered. These are digital signs that provide real time parking information i.e., the number of spaces available in car parks which will help reduce

congestion and assist the councils' carbon neutral ambitions.

Without appropriate safety measures in place, car parks can be dangerous locations, with pedestrians and vehicles sharing the same space. To safeguard all users, the strategy aims to make necessary improvements in car parks to improve safety.

A number of car parks, have old and worn machines. The aim should be to replace all machines to avoid a loss of income, which may occur if users cannot make payment and to utilise this opportunity to understand if any car park may be more effective with a pay on exit system, allowing users to pay before they leave.

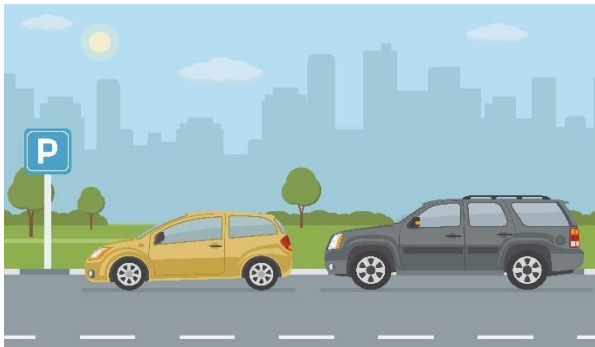
**Quality of car parks recommendations:**

- Car park improvement regime
- Undertake car park signage strategy
- Increase the safety provision in car parks
- Improve the appearance of car parks to create a more welcoming environment
- Upgrade Pay and Display machines in car parks that have parking charges in place

## Parking Charges

The use of flexible parking tariffs is an option to be considered allowing potential implementation of relatively easy and transparent adjustment mechanisms. This approach could involve adjusting tariffs by location, over time or for specific events to achieve desirable changes in travel behaviour.

An alternative to adjusting parking tariffs could be to offer concessions within identified car parks. For example, if there is low usage in one car park, concessions are offered to increase usage.



it is recommended to carry out a regular benchmarking exercise with neighbouring local authorities and towns with similar characteristics that have parking charges in place to monitor parking tariffs. This will help to avoid a situation where visitors may be

attracted to other locations based on a better parking offer.

### Parking charges recommendations:

- Offer a flexible parking tariff structure in their car parks that charge
- Carry out regular benchmarking exercises on charges in neighbouring areas
- Review parking charges every other year ensuring they reflect the economy of the local and neighbouring areas

## Car Parking Designation

Full or partial conversion of some long-stay car parking to provide additional short-stay capacity might be considered in some locations where existing parking supply is limited.

This recommendation could promote more efficient use of car parks by relocating long-stay commuter parking towards those in more peripheral locations and allowing shorter-stay parking and a greater turnover of parking activity, closer to key retail and trip generators.

Understanding the primary usage of each car park is key to supporting the car park designation which will link to other recommendations e.g improvements to signage

### Car parking designation recommendations:

The councils should identify the most likely destinations and user groups for each car park (e.g., residents, visitors, shoppers, employees) to determine if they should be long or short stay car parks or a combination of both.

## Sustainable Transport

Providing good quality sustainable travel options can reduce the need for additional parking spaces and help reduce congestion and the associated detrimental environmental impacts of excessive car use.

Electric vehicle (EV) charging points are already provided across the districts. EV charging points help to promote sustainable transport modes and improve air quality. Increasing the number of charging spaces will almost certainly be required as EVs become more popular and technology develops further.

An EV policy will need to be developed for the charging of fees with consideration given to free parking to encourage use, if vehicles are using the charging points. Given the current number of EV charging points, it is likely that additional spaces will be required over the lifetime of the strategy to increase supply.

There are those car parks that serve public transport stations, which provides an



opportunity to integrate car parks and sustainable transport encouraging users to use public transport for onward journeys.

The councils' have recently developed a [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan \(LCWIP\)](#) and a [Sustainable Travel Vision](#), both of which can support the reduction in parking demand including walking and cycling routes, secure bicycle parking facilities and mobility hubs in key locations.

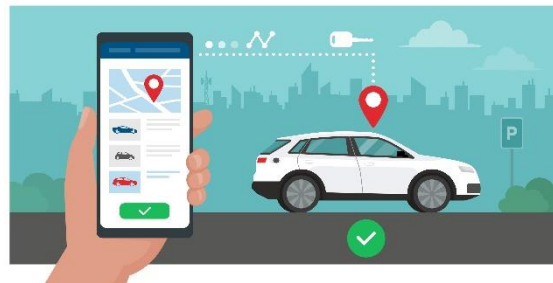
Alongside secure bicycle parking, there is also an opportunity for a Docked bike or E-Scooter schemes, with car parks providing the storage facilities.



With traffic volumes reaching all-time highs, and the cost of fuel crisis, car clubs are becoming increasingly popular. A car club enables users to create a membership with a car club provider and book a vehicle that is located in a convenient place for a period of time. The user is only charged for the time using

the car making it much more efficient for drivers who do not need to travel frequently.

The councils could consider partnering with a car club provider to allocate car club bays in some of its lower occupancy car parks. A car club bay does not require any supporting infrastructure.



**Sustainable transport recommendations:**

- Promote active travel and public transport to reduce parking demand
- Increase Electric Vehicle charge points in car parks
- Install safe secure bicycle parking facilities as well as safe access to / from them
- Investigate partnerships with car club providers
- Consider the implementation of docked bikes, e-bikes, and e-scooters in car parks

**Land Use**

By the year 2042, the forecasting of growth in car parks predicts as many as 14 car parks will be at or over capacity. A further 10 will be at or over the 85% threshold meaning that, 24 out of the 35 (66%) of car parks may need increasing in size. For many of these car parks, expansion will not be possible.

Consideration should be given to identifying parcels of land that could be acquired to provide new parking sites. The location would be critical to the ideal size.

As a popular tourist destination, the districts are likely to be subject to higher usage at peak periods. This will be one of the reasons for the parking pressure shown in the parking surveys already undertaken.

A way to maintain and potentially increase visitors to our districts is to improve coach parking facilities within car parks. This requirement should be assessed on location, and suitability of the car park.

Car parks are often empty overnight with no parking charges in place, which means utilising the car park for alternative uses is not going to impact occupancy and income generation. Enabling motorhomes to park overnight in car parks provides the opportunity for additional

income to then be reinvested into the parking service to improve the car parks.



Other alternative uses for car parks in the evening, such as specific events i.e., drive-in cinemas should also be investigated.

**Land use recommendations:**

- Identify locations where there is support for additional parking spaces e.g. new car park, Park & Ride and /or Park & Cycle
- Review and understand local coach parking requirements
- Consider the introduction of overnight charges for motorhomes in suitable car parks or alternative evening events.

**Car Park Technology**

Mobile and digital technology is increasingly important in the operation and use of car parking systems. New pay machines have the ability to accept card and contactless payments and a pay by phone facility i.e. parking apps. Improving mobile payment

methods can help to reduce the need for users to return to their vehicle to extend the length of stay. A Pay on exit system would also support extended stays, both methods could lead to increased dwell times and increased expenditure in the local economy.

New technology can also help back-office operations, particularly in relation to the use of intelligent, targeted tariffs and variable message signs.

Variable Message Signs (VMS) provides drivers with information relating to the availability of car park spaces, which will help to save time, reduce congestion and use the parking assets more efficiently.

Investigating the use of VMS across the districts is recommended to start immediately as one of



the most important short-term actions. This will provide information

Consideration should be given to how technology impacts the councils' parking webpages, such as live car parking information, the ability to setup parking accounts that can automatically pay for parking when visiting a car park, and more detail on EV charging points.

New technology has the potential to improve the efficiency and management of car parks by automating various operations i.e. virtual permits, and providing more information to the back office.

**Car park technology recommendations:**

- Investigate the installation of Pay on Exit systems in all suitable chargeable car parks
- Provide facilities for new vehicle technologies and management (e.g. priority parking spaces)
- Investigate using variable message signs (e.g. signs which could display the number of spaces available in real time)
- Make further improvements to the councils' parking webpages
- Consider smart parking integration e.g., parking apps and virtual permits.

## Car Park Enforcement

The replacement of Pay & Display machines and the transfer of all car parking permits to a virtual system would improve the parking management function and make the enforcement operation more straight forward i.e. removing issues such as lost/damaged permits or how permits are displayed as well as the pay & display machines providing real-time information to the enforcement operation through targeted staff resources.

It is recommended to carry out a detailed assessment of the existing car park enforcement and management arrangements to identify the most effective model moving forward.

Any assessment work undertaken should consider all financial implications – costs and savings, of any potential model.

## On-Street Parking Recommendations

On-Street parking supports the commercial needs of businesses and key trip generators that are located within the area e.g town and village centres, amenities, and outdoor environments such as walking routes.

To help increase the attractiveness of a location, the provision of both on-street and off-street parking is important.



On-street parking is also required for residents that do not have access to off-street parking. This means it is important to ensure that on-street parking locations are functional and enhance the destination overall, for everyone. There are instances where on-street parking capacity and specific areas can increase congestion in keys areas.

As part of the research and investigation phase of the parking strategy, 2020 Consultancy investigated the current on-street parking provision across both districts. High-level

assessments were carried out to evaluate on-street parking.

## Parking policy

Updating or creating parking policy provides greater flexibility for recommendations to be developed and integrated. Parking policy can provide a framework to support improvements to on-street parking. Without policy there is a risk that recommendations implemented will not be successful or there will be inconsistencies.

A Resident Parking Scheme (RPS) is a street or area where parking controls are introduced with an exemption for permit holders, traditionally residents or local businesses. This is often implemented in areas that have high volumes of vehicles parking that are not residents of that area or street such as commuters. Parking in residential streets without restriction allows all-day parking without charge.

An RPS provides priority to permit holders during times of operation and prevents vehicles without a parking permit from parking all day. There are a number of methods to achieving a successful RPS e.g some schemes prevent parking all-day without a permit or restrict parking for short periods.

Schemes require a policy to illustrate the criteria for such a scheme. For instance, how many permits each house is entitled to, the cost of the permits, and how many visitor permits are allowed.



In contrast to the development of an RPS, which aims to mitigate residential parking demand during the day, there are areas where parking demand is much higher in the evening. This can cause parking pressure in residential streets with limited on-street parking available. There are few interventions to mitigate against this. RPS schemes will not work as there will be no enforcement, and it's likely that all vehicles will be residential.

There are locations where residential roads are close to an off-street car park. As they are often empty or subject to low occupancy rates overnight, consideration could be given to enabling residents to park overnight, which will help minimise on-street pressure.

On-street parking capacity is an issue in a number of locations. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a need to create new homes and developments, it is important to ensure that the impact of creating them does not adversely impact the existing on-street parking provision.

**Parking policy recommendations:**

- Consult and introduce resident parking schemes in identified locations
- Allow residents to park in council owned car parks overnight
- Potential development sites should include appropriate car parking.



**Parking improvement**

Whilst it is not possible for the councils to have a full understanding of all parking issues across the districts, especially given the size and that we have both urban and rural areas. This parking strategy has provided the opportunity

identify improvement for those areas of parking that require intervention.

There are two very noticeable opportunities for improvement. They are:

1. Mitigating verge, pavement and open space parking, in residential areas.
2. Ensuring the most appropriate parking restrictions are in place to support parking acts, both off-street, and on-street.

The most effective solutions to mitigate verge, pavement and open space parking also falls into two categories:

1. Provide additional parking capacity that removes the need to park on grass verges and open spaces.
2. Implement measures to protect grass verges and open spaces.

An initial assessment will determine very quickly, what is causing verge, pavement and open space parking to occur. Assessments could be based on individual locations, or specific areas such as housing association sites.

There are various on-street waiting restrictions in place that suit the specific area in which they are located. They either restrict the length of time vehicles can wait or restrict vehicles



parking in specific areas either at any time or at certain times.

**Parking improvement recommendations:**

- Undertake verge and pavement parking studies in all locations where there is a known problem
- Assess all on-street parking restrictions ensuring they are still relevant.

**Sustainable integration**

Sustainable integration with on-street parking can be achieved using a multi-modal approach to transport e.g car club schemes which focus on the use of vehicles as a mode of transport but having a scheme in place is likely to reduce the number of vehicles in the region, especially those making infrequent trips.

Providing a good taxi service with taxi ranks located in all key areas, including those near public transport stations and bus stops will also reduce the need for vehicle trips.

If there is sufficient parking capacity within car parks and in nearby streets, it may be possible to reduce the areas of on-street parking to allow segregated active travel routes. Installing on-street EV charge points will help to encourage the purchasing of electric vehicles in all locations.

**Sustainable integration recommendations:**

- Investigate the introduction of car club schemes
- Undertake taxi demand studies to determine if the appropriate number of taxi ranks are in place across the districts
- Undertake study to determine the requirements for on-street EV charge points
- Determine any areas where on-street parking can be removed to support cycling routes contained in the LCWIP.

**Parking operations**

It is acknowledged that in many instances, on-street parking provides premium parking places which are often located close to the key trip generators i.e., town / village centres, tourist hotspots etc.

It is not unusual to see parking charges in operation in these types of locations due to the benefits these parking places bring. With this in mind, charging for these parking spaces is recommended.

These type of premium parking places along with other locations outside of the core area should be part of an improvement regime to ensure good quality signage and road markings are in place, to reduce the possibility of appeals against Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).



It is recommended to develop an asset register of all locations and when signs and road markings were replaced. This record will be a useful resource over the lifetime of the parking strategy.

**Parking operations recommendations:**

- Ensure that all traffic regulation orders are up to date and relevant.
- Consider the introduction of parking charges in core / premium on-street locations in town and village centres
- Undertake a signage and road marking improvement review to avoid any issues with PCN issue.



## 6. Our actions

There is a crucial need to understand when the parking strategy recommendations should be delivered through the creation of a prioritised action and implementation plan. The next few pages outline the recommendations broken down into early interventions as well as short, medium and long-term actions.

### Early interventions

There are a number of recommendations that can be delivered within 12 months following approval of the parking strategy.

| Recommendation Theme  | Type       | Recommendation  | Lead Authority | Stakeholder support BDC | Stakeholder support MSDC |
|-----------------------|------------|---|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Quality of car parks  | off-street | Car park improvement maintenance programme                            | BMSDC          | 81%                     | 85%                      |
|                       |            | Carry out car park signage review and develop and implementation plan | BMSDC          | 64%                     | 69%                      |
| Sustainable transport | off-street | Promote active travel to reduce parking demand                        | SCC            | 76%                     | 70%                      |
| Land use development  | off-street | Understand coach parking requirement                                  | BMSDC          | 65%                     | 42%                      |
|                       |            | Allow overnight parking for motorhomes in car parks                   | BMSDC          | 54%                     | 49%                      |
| Car park technology   | off-street | Improve Council's parking website                                     | BMSDC          | 51%                     | 52%                      |

### Short Term Actions

Short-term actions should include the highest priority recommendations based on the level of stakeholder support (stage two online questionnaire), the approximate cost to deliver and the lead authority, and deliver actions within a five-year period.

| Recommendation Theme    | Type       | Recommendation   | Lead Authority | Stakeholder support BDC | Stakeholder support MSDC |
|-------------------------|------------|--|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Quality of car parks    | off-street | Increase safety within car parks   | BMSDC          | 63%                     | 68%                      |
|                         |            | Upgrade the pay and display machines   | BMSDC          | 50%                     | 63%                      |
| Sustainable transport   | off-street | Increase Electric Vehicle charge points in their car parks   | BMSDC          | 63%                     | 62%                      |
|                         |            | Investigate partnerships with car club providers   | BMSDC          | 29%                     | 28%                      |
| Sustainable highways    | on-street  | Investigate partnerships with car club providers   | BMSDC          | 27%                     | 25%                      |
|                         |            | Understand taxi demand in key locations  | SCC            | 63%                     | 59%                      |
| Car Park Technology     | off-street | Investigate the installation of Pay on Exit systems in all suitable chargeable car parks   | BMSDC          | 38%                     | 46%                      |
|                         |            | Provide facilities for new vehicle technologies and management (e.g. priority parking spaces)  | BMSDC          | 49%                     | 54%                      |
|                         |            | Investigate using variable message signs (e.g. signs which could display the number of spaces available in real time) Signs  | SCC            | 46%                     | 54%                      |
|                         |            | Consider smart parking integration e.g. parking apps and virtual permits   | BMSDC          | 47%                     | 53%                      |
| Parking Capacity        | off-street | Suffolk County Council should provide on street parking where possible   | SCC            | 63%                     | 67%                      |
|                         |            | Potential development sites should include appropriate car parking   | BMSDC          | 98%                     | 96%                      |
| Parking Improvement     | on-street  | Undertake verge, pavement and open spaces parking studies in all locations where there is a known problem  | SCC            | 84%                     | 87%                      |
|                         |            | Assess all on-street parking restrictions ensuring they are still relevant   | SCC            | 90%                     | 92%                      |
| Parking Charges         | off-street | Offer a flexible parking tariff structure in their car parks that charge   | BMSDC          | 58%                     | 75%                      |
|                         |            | Carry out regular benchmarking exercises on charges in neighbouring areas  | BMSDC          | 49%                     | 59%                      |
| Car Parking Designation | off-street | The councils should identify the most likely destinations and user groups for each car park (e.g. residents, visitors, shoppers, employees) to determine if they should be long or short stay car parks or a combination of both | BMSDC          | 78%                     | 80%                      |
| Enforcement             | off-street | Increase efficiency of enforcement operation   | BMSDC          | -                       | -                        |

### Medium / Long-Term Actions

Some of these recommendations may not be required due to short or medium-term recommendations reducing the parking pressure. However, it is important they are acknowledged and actioned if and when required.

The priority should be more focused on the need for action as opposed to stakeholder support, although this is still an important consideration. It also means that there will be longer for the councils to prepare for implementation.

| Recommendation Theme  | Type       | Recommendation  | Lead Authority | Stakeholder support BDC | Stakeholder support MSDC |
|-----------------------|------------|---|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Quality of car parks  | off-street | Improve the public realm  | BMSDC          |                         |                          |
| Sustainable transport | off-street | Install safe secure bicycle parking facilities  | BMSDC          | 80%                     | 81%                      |
|                       |            | Consider implementing docked bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters in car parks   | BMSDC          | 41%                     | 38%                      |
| Sustainable highways  | on-street  | Investigate the potential for on-street Electric Vehicle charge points  | BMSDC / SCC    | 54%                     | 56%                      |
|                       |            | Identify local walking, cycling and travel routes that may impact on-street parking   | SCC            | 75%                     | 74%                      |
| Parking Capacity      | off-street | Capacity shortfalls may need to be considered where demand for parking outweighs supply   | BMSDC          | 65%                     | 65%                      |
| Parking Charges       | off-street | Review parking charges every other year to reflect surrounding area   | BMSDC          | 55%                     | 67%                      |
| Parking operations    | on-street  | Consider the introduction of parking charges for key on-street provision such as core town centre areas to manage demand and increase turnover of spaces. | SCC            | 31%                     | 36%                      |
|                       |            | Consult and introduce resident parking schemes in identified locations  | BMSDC / SCC    | 63%                     | 64%                      |
| Land use development  | off-street | Identify locations where there is support for additional parking supply   | BMSDC          | 76%                     | 79%                      |
| Enforcement           | off-street | Review enforcement management procedures  | BMSDC          | -                       | -                        |