



South Ayrshire Council

Parking Strategy

June 2011

South Ayrshire Parking Strategy.

In September 2010, South Ayrshire Council commissioned Colin Buchanan and Partners to provide support to help prepare a draft Parking Strategy. This draft Parking Strategy was subject to public consultation between December 2010 and February 2011. Following this consultation minor amendments to the draft strategy were made at the strategy approved by South Ayrshire Council Leadership Panel on 14th June 2011.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Colin Buchanan (CB) was commissioned by South Ayrshire Council (SAC) to prepare a parking strategy for the South Ayrshire area. The strategy is aimed at providing a consistent approach to parking restrictions and parking policy across the whole South Ayrshire area.

1.2 Car parking

- 1.2.1 Car parking is important in all settlements from the largest cities to the smallest villages. It affects the daily lives and routines of many people, across all groups of society; road users, commuters, shoppers, residents, tourists and disabled people are all faced with issues associated with car parking at some stage.
- 1.2.2 It is important to manage parking within any settlement effectively. In South Ayrshire there are a range of coastal and inland towns and villages, and they are all, to varying degrees, dependant on the economic vitality of their respective town / village centres.
- 1.2.3 Car parking has a significant impact on town centre vitality. Poor parking practices can force shoppers away from shops, obstruct traffic flow and endanger pedestrians. All of these factors can negatively impact upon the local economy. A coherent and well enforced parking strategy can, therefore, have significant benefits for local economies.
- 1.2.4 In addition to this, a parking strategy can have a significant impact upon traffic management. Parking management can encourage changes in trip patterns and the incidence of walking and cycling which has an impact on global air quality and health. Additionally, effective management of parking space coupled with appropriate signage can reduce the number of drivers crawling through the town centre seeking a parking space. These measures can reduce emissions and addresses local air quality issues as well as improving the town centre environment for pedestrians and from an aesthetic standpoint.
- 1.2.5 A parking strategy provides a framework for future changes to parking practice in South Ayrshire and ensures a consistent approach is applied across the area. The parking strategy does not detail prescriptive restrictions on how parking in any particular location should be managed, and any significant changes would need to be examined through statutory and public consultation in the normal way.

1.3 Study objectives

- 1.3.1 A total of seven study objectives have been identified which will enable a coherent and consistent approach to parking across South Ayrshire. Our objectives are as follows:
- a) Implement parking policies that improve safety and accessibility whilst supporting economic growth;
 - b) Implement parking policies that encourage walking, cycling and public transport trips in town centres;
 - c) Enhance the streetscape in conservation areas by minimising parking related signage, markings and street furniture;
 - d) Equally support the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and disabled persons as well as motorists;
 - e) Reduce the negative effects of commuter parking in residential areas;
 - f) Use technology to direct drivers to safe, secure parking and when applying parking charges ; and
 - g) Implement policies that encourage the reduction of CO² emissions.

1.4 This document

- 1.4.1 Chapter 2 outlines the policy underlying this strategy and Chapter 3 summarises the current situation with regard to parking in South Ayrshire. Chapter 4 gives a high level overview of the strategy while Chapters 5 and 6 set out a detailed action plan and describe how the strategy should be applied in practice. Chapter 7 gives monitoring and evaluation indicators.

2 Policy context

2.1 National policy

- 2.1.1 The 2004 Transport White Paper, "Scotland's Transport Future"¹ recognised the influence that government and local policy can have on travel patterns. Scotland's National Transport Strategy², published in 2006, called on local authorities to enhance their parking policies to manage demand. Road space is finite and decisions relating to allocation of available road space are important. However, it must be recognised that while demand does require management, an uninformed and inconsistent approach to this can have serious detrimental effects for local economies and for particular groups such as disabled persons and businesses which require on street loading space. A balance between demand management and meeting local needs must always be struck.
- 2.1.2 In addition, all local authorities operate in the context of a wider regional and national setting and local parking policy must reflect local economic and social trends whilst complementing policies at a strategic level.
- 2.1.3 The management of parking is a planning, as well as a transport, issue and "Scottish Planning Policy"³ (formerly SPP17) encourages planning authorities to apply maximum parking standards to on site parking at new developments to encourage modal shift away from the single occupancy car journey. SPP also suggests that parking restraint policies should be supported by measures to promote the availability of high quality public transport services and that local authorities may like to consider promoting Park & Ride schemes on commuter routes, including that which uses existing public transport networks such as the rail lines into Glasgow. SPP also recognises the importance of parking provision at strategic gateways such as ports / airports as well as accommodating particular groups e.g. disabled persons.
- 2.1.4 The needs of disabled persons have been further emphasised under the "Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009"⁴ which calls on local authorities to make all on street disabled parking bays enforceable.

2.2 Regional policy

- 2.2.1 The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan suggests that town centres located within Ayrshire's Core Investment Area and Investment Corridors should introduce the following measures:
- Discourage long-stay commuter parking within town centres and give priority to short-stay parking in areas adjacent to key retail locations;
 - Apply maximum parking standards as appropriate with regard to new development proposals;
 - Seek developer contributions, as appropriate, to supplement the overall supply of parking and improve transport services in town centres; and
 - Consider the needs of non-retail land-uses within the context of an integrated approach to parking.
- 2.2.2 Many South Ayrshire residents commute into Glasgow, many by public transport, and so parking and transport policy within Strathclyde also affects South Ayrshire. Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) produced a Park & Ride Action Plan⁵ document in 2008 which supported an expansion of Park & Ride facilities throughout the region. This

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/06/stfwf/0>

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/157751/0042649.pdf>

³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf>

⁴ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/3/pdfs/asp_20090003_en.pdf

⁵ http://www.spt.co.uk/wmslib/Documents_RTS/Action_Plans/park_ride.pdf

document stated that it was preferable for Park & Ride parking to be free but that it would be acceptable to charge where there was a need to “ minimise the use of the car park by non Park & Ride customers (in these cases it is expected that any charge made will be refunded if a public transport ticket is bought)”.

2.3 Local policy

2.3.1 South Ayrshire Council's Local Transport Strategy (2009-2014)⁶ sets maximum parking standards for local use, considers the introduction of decriminalised parking, discusses the potential of Park & Ride, and mentions the issues relating to cycle parking and to congestion around schools. Specifically, it highlights the following parking related issues:

- secure cycle parking is not generally available;
- car parking demand in Ayr town centre is frequently not met;
- car park signing is not consistent across the Council area;
- the mixture of car park charging mechanisms currently provided is confusing;
- lack of off street capacity in Prestwick town centre;
- voucher parking system in Ayr is poorly understood by visitors;
- lack of overnight lorry parking facilities adjacent to the trunk road network;
- poor level of enforcement of voucher parking bays and parking restrictions; and
- long-term on road car parking occurring in north Prestwick associated with Prestwick Airport.

2.3.2 A parking management plan for central Ayr was introduced in the early 1990's with the stated aim of using a controlled parking zone (CPZ) and pricing policy to:

- encourage short-stay use of the town centre car parks;
- encourage long-stay use of the free car parks on the periphery of the town centre; and to,
- implement a signing strategy to direct drivers via specific routes to a range of short and long-stay parking areas.

2.3.3 Policy measures 13 to 16 made specific statements in relation to parking:

- P13 The Council will review provision, usage, management and charging mechanisms for parking;
- P14 The Council will promote the provision of parking facilities for cars, pedal and motorcycles, goods vehicles and coaches, including the provision of adequate parking facilities and access arrangements for people with mobility difficulties where appropriate;
- P15 The Council will implement a strategy in the urban centres, including the imposition and review of restrictions and charges, where appropriate, and manage the demand to encourage the efficient use of available parking spaces, for parking within town centres. Contributions in lieu of car parking will also be sought for town centre developments, where full car parking standards cannot be met on site; and
- P16 The Council will ensure good management of publicly available parking facilities.

2.3.4 SAC are planning to introduce Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) and a necessary stage in this is to develop a parking policy / strategy which is consistent with, and contributes to, overall transport policies, and in particular, has regard to:

- the need to maintain and, where possible, improve the flow of traffic;
- the need to improve safety and environmental considerations;
- improving the quality and accessibility of public transport, including discouraging car use where road conditions and public transport facilities justify it;

⁶ <http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/documents?file=LTS Main Doc Issued with SEA.pdf>

- the needs of local residents, shops and businesses, including drivers making deliveries or collecting goods;
- the particular needs of people with disabilities, bearing in mind that in some cases people with disabilities are unable to use public transport and are entirely dependent on the use of a car;
- the need for coach parking, especially in areas where there is a high concentration of tourist attractions and hotels, and for parking facilities for motorcyclists; and
- the needs of pedal cyclists, especially in areas where parking controls are being used to discourage car use and encourage cycle use.

3 Current provision and issues

3.1 Current provision

3.1.1 Parking provision in South Ayrshire is currently provided in a range of on and off street locations. In the largest town, Ayr, parking is a combination of:

- On street (Charging);
- On street (Free);
- Off street (Charging, South Ayrshire Council & Private Operators);
- Off street (Free, South Ayrshire Council) ;
- Off street (private non-residential); and
- Off street (private residential).

3.1.2 In Prestwick and Troon there is also a mix of on and off street provision with on street space controlled by limited waiting restrictions in the central areas and uncontrolled elsewhere. There is no Pay & Display parking and all off street space is uncontrolled (free). Enforceable dedicated on street parking is provided for disabled persons in Ayr, Girvan, Prestwick and Troon. In most of the smaller settlements both on and off street parking (where available) is unrestricted.

3.1.3 The Rail Station at Ayr has its own Pay & Display car park and there are free car parks at Troon and Prestwick Rail Stations. Girvan and Maybole Rail Stations have small car parks which are free to use. Newton-on-Ayr, Barassie and Barrhill Rail Stations have on street provision only, with the parking at Barrhill Rail Station particularly limited. Prestwick Airport Rail Station has no parking provision at all .

3.2 Current parking practice

Parking supply and management

3.2.1 Under normal circumstances there is not an absolute lack of parking anywhere in South Ayrshire and controlled parking space typically has a peak daytime occupancy of about 60-70%. This does not mean that there are not localised parking issues or that parking could not be better managed.

3.2.2 In Ayr town centre the existing parking policies applied since the early 1990's already incorporated much of the best practice which would be expected from a parking strategy. Central restrictions encourage commuters and other long stay users into long stay parking areas on the periphery of the town centre while signage directs shoppers to short stay parking within the central area. Limited waiting areas on the edge of the centre allow medium length stays.

3.2.3 Ayr High Street is closed to general traffic between 06:00 and 18:00 and only delivery vehicles, disabled drivers, buses, taxis, bicycles and emergency services vehicles are permitted to enter. Only disabled persons (with valid Blue Badges) are permitted to park on the High Street and there are also designated loading areas to facilitate business deliveries. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is some abuse of disabled and loading bays on the High Street but this is generally at a low level.

3.2.4 Outwith Ayr High Street, on street parking in the centre of Ayr is controlled by a voucher parking scheme which allows stays of two to three hours depending on location. Voucher parking spaces are not always well used. The LTS notes the scheme is poorly understood, particularly amongst visitors to the town, and that the number of retailers stocking the vouchers is limited. Off street parking in the central area is Pay & Display, mainly controlled by private sector operators.

- 3.2.5 In Prestwick, the main off street provision is in the Bellevue Road car park, behind the Co-Op at the northern end of Main Street and at the Rail Station. Rail Station parking caters primarily for commuters with destinations in Glasgow and will fill early in the mornings. The Co-Op car park is clearly aimed at Co-Op customers (though there are no obvious moves to enforce this) leaving the primary provision for visitors to central Prestwick at Bellevue Road. Bellevue Road car park is not clearly signposted. On street provision is controlled by limited waiting restrictions, with a thirty minute maximum stay, in the central area. Given this short maximum stay, surprisingly few vehicles can be observed coming and going from the limited waiting spaces on Main Street with most of the turnover occurring at bus stops and on taxi ranks. It seems likely that the limited waiting space in Prestwick is not generally enforced or used for its intended purposes and this, in turn, encourages further use of less suitable space.
- 3.2.6 Troon also has a mix of poorly signposted off street space and limited waiting, although on street space is more limited due to the historic street layout. Poor turnover from the limited waiting space was less readily observed in Troon but it is likely that it occurs.
- 3.2.7 Shorefront car parks in Troon, Prestwick and Ayr are empty for much of the year but will be busy on fine summer days. Additionally, the run up to the Christmas period is likely to put pressure on shoppers' parking, especially within Ayr.

Residential parking

- 3.2.8 As residents typically leave residential areas early in the morning and other users arrive later the use of parking space within some residential areas by commuters and other users is not necessarily problematic. It becomes problematic when residents arriving back earlier than usual and are unable to find space or when it reaches a level where safety and / or traffic flow are compromised, or where older housing was designed with a supply of parking which is now inadequate. Under these circumstances measures to meet the needs of residents may be required.
- 3.2.9 Within the controlled parking zone in central Ayr, residents can buy permits allowing them to keep their vehicle near to their residence. On the edge of the controlled parking zone there are some localised areas where there is pressure on residential parking space, notably Bellevue Road and Riverside Place. Similarly, The Prestwick Parking Study⁷, identified issues with daytime residential parking in Prestwick but, given the large amount of space potentially available, it is unlikely that this issue is widespread and problems with a lack of space overnight have not been identified.

Disabled parking

- 3.2.10 There are dedicated, and enforceable, disabled bays in South Ayrshire's town centres and the number of bays which are enforceable are being gradually expanded under the Disabled Persons Parking Places Act, 2009. Additionally disabled persons are currently able to park free of charge and (generally) without time limit in Pay & Display bays and on single and double yellow lines, if safe to do so.

Non-car modes

- 3.2.11 Strategic bus and rail services encourage commuter parking, particularly at Troon, Prestwick and Ayr Rail Stations. Local bus services offer good, high frequency suburban coverage in Ayr and Prestwick. Walk and cycle signposting in South Ayrshire is good.

⁷ Prestwick Parking Study 2008. Undertaken by Jacobs on behalf of South Ayrshire Council

4 Strategy overview

4.1 Our strategy vision statement

- 4.1.1 To ensure that road users can find suitable parking spaces which enhance the economic health and vitality of South Ayrshire.

4.2 Policy statement

- 4.2.1 It is the policy of SAC to:

- monitor parking usage;
- address issues which cause particular areas of parking to be poorly used;
- provide parking which meets the needs of specific user groups (including disabled persons);
- manage parking demand such that particular classes of users are encouraged to use spaces which are appropriate for their needs;
- ensure effective enforcement of parking restrictions;
- provide additional parking only if demand management measures are ineffective.;
- consider the requirements for Park & Ride trips to/from Glasgow; and to
- consider the needs of those without detailed local knowledge.

4.3 Parking charter

- 4.3.1 Our Parking Charter sets out our vision and strategy for the provision and management of parking within South Ayrshire. In essence our Parking Charter is a contract between the Council and South Ayrshire's road users. To this end, the Council undertakes to monitor and manage parking usage in a way which ensures that parking space is used appropriately. To assist users, the Council undertakes to provide clear information and signposting, and to provide a forum for comment on parking related issues and queries. In return, the Council requires all road users to park legally and appropriately.

- 4.3.2 This strategy covers the period 2011 – 2020. Its success will be dependent on the successful delivery of its Action Plan. The Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed every three years.

5 Action plan

5.1 Approach

5.1.1 The parking strategy measures have been defined by considering the various parking related issues which might arise in South Ayrshire and the ways in which these issues might be addressed.

5.2 The measures

5.2.1 A summary list of the strategy measures is shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Strategy measures summary

Group	Measure	
Monitoring	SM1	Monitor parking usage and availability.
Maximise use of available supply	SM2	Improve maintenance of on and off street parking areas.
	SM3	Improve signposting to encourage the use of all sites.
	SM4	Invest in new, flexible, user-friendly, payment technology.
Meet the needs of specific groups	SM5	Ensure adequate provision for groups with particular needs. Disabled, Cyclists, Pedestrians, HGV & Coaches, Motor homes.
Manage demand	SM6	Link controls to town centre accessibility and vitality.
	SM7	Review / implement length of stay restrictions.
	SM8	Review / implement parking charges.
	SM9	Review / implement controlled parking zone coverage.
	SM10	Ensure a co-ordinated approach.
	SM11	Support parking management at major employment / educational locations.
	SM12	Maximise use of non-car modes and car sharing.
Enforcement	SM13	Ensure effective enforcement of restrictions.
Provide new supply	SM14	If demand management fails then consider the provision of additional parking spaces.
	SM15	Provide parking for new developments up to the levels set in the maximum parking standards.
Strategic links	SM16	Work with SPT to increase the use of strategic bus and rail services while minimising local impacts.
Non-locals	SM17	Ensure adequate provision for tourists and other visitors and maximise their use of non-car modes and car sharing.

5.2.2 The first stage in addressing any parking problem is to identify its existence and the first strategy measure (SM1) is intended to facilitate this. Parking problems will generally arise from inappropriate parking or overcrowding in particular locations.

5.2.3 As it is rare to find that there is an absolute lack of parking overall, the first step towards addressing issues is to ensure that use of the supply which is available is maximised by ensuring that it is well maintained, signposted and user friendly (SM2 to SM4). It is also necessary to ensure a sufficient parking supply is provided to meet the needs of specific user groups with particular needs (SM5). This will primarily mean ensuring that there are enough enforceable disabled bays but may also mean checking the levels of loading provision, providing dedicated overnight parking for HGVs and addressing any issues arising from an absolute lack of parking space for residents.

5.2.4 If measures SM2 to SM5 do not address the issue then is it likely that demand management will be required. In general terms, it is to be expected that those who arrive in a town earliest in the day (mainly commuters) will park as close as possible to desirable destinations. Many of these users then park in spaces all day and prevent shoppers and visitors arriving later from finding a parking space. This issue can be addressed using demand management measures. These demand management

measures encourage long stay users away from central parking spaces so as to leave space available for shorter stay users. This can be achieved either by moving the demand (encouraging the use of peripheral space) or by reducing demand (encouraging the use of car sharing and alternative modes). The first stage in demand management should be to consider what is appropriate for the location in question and this should be done with reference to its accessibility and vitality (SM6). Following on from this, SM7, SM8 and SM9 deal with the kind of parking restrictions which might be applied, and SM10 addresses the issue of coordinating different types of provision and provision in different locations. SM11 addresses the management of parking at major centres of employment and education.

- 5.2.5 SM12 address ways in which total demand might be addressed and SM13 ensures that measures which are put in place are enforced and operate as planned.
- 5.2.6 If demand management measures are ineffective, and further controls would be inappropriate, then consideration should be given to introducing new supply (SM14). Given the known tendency of new parking facilities to encourage additional traffic on the network, the provision of additional parking supply should be considered as a last resort under normal circumstances. The exception to this is where new developments are concerned. When appropriate, additional parking should be supplied up to the levels set by the maximum parking standards (SM15).
- 5.2.7 Finally, SM16 recognises the important impact that parking policies in the regional transport area can have on South Ayrshire and SM17 address the needs of those who are unfamiliar with the area.

5.3 Town centre hierarchy

- 5.3.1 Individual locations cannot be treated identically in terms of parking management as they all, clearly, have their own individual needs and circumstances. Similarly, producing separate strategies for each individual location would be overly restrictive and damage overall coordination. As an alternative, the towns can be grouped into hierarchies which are intended to provide a guide which can then be used to apply suitable strategy measures in an appropriate fashion. The hierarchies should be subject to review and should be overridden where there is a change in the case of particular local circumstances which demand particular interventions.
- 5.3.2 Although all towns are different, it might be expected that towns which appear at the same level in all three hierarchies will have broadly similar parking restrictions and controls unless there are notable special circumstance.
- 5.3.3 The hierarchy system is emphatically not intended to indicate that problems should be addressed first in Level 1 locations, second in Level 2 locations and last in Level 3 locations. Work should be prioritised on the basis of the numbers of people being affected by specific parking problems and the severity of any effects. The hierarchies are not intended to be league tables of any kind, therefore towns are listed alphabetically within the hierarchy levels.
- 5.3.4 The hierarchy is based on where the greater number and severity of parking problems are and the vitality of the town centre. The hierarchy is shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Town centre hierarchy

Level 1 town centres	Level 2 town centres	Level 3 town centres
Ayr	Prestwick Troon	Coylton Dundonald Girvan Maybole Mossblown All other locations

5.4 Transport interchange hierarchy

- 5.4.1 Although they may not lie within Level 1 town centres, major transport interchanges may be subject to a similar level of parking stress. Within South Ayrshire, the largest major interchange is Prestwick Airport with Ayr and Prestwick town centre also offering possibilities for significant bus and rail interchange. Prestwick and Troon Rail Stations are extensively used for car to rail transfers. An overall hierarchy of transport interchange locations is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Transport interchange hierarchy

Level 1 transport interchange locations	Level 2 transport interchange locations	Level 3 transport interchange locations
Ayr Rail Station Ayr Bus Station Prestwick Airport	Prestwick Rail Station Troon Rail Station Troon Ferry Port <i>Proposed Park & Ride at Monkton</i>	Barassie Rail Station Barrhill Rail Station Girvan Rail Station Maybole Rail Station Newton-on-Ayr Rail Station All other locations

5.5 Other important locations

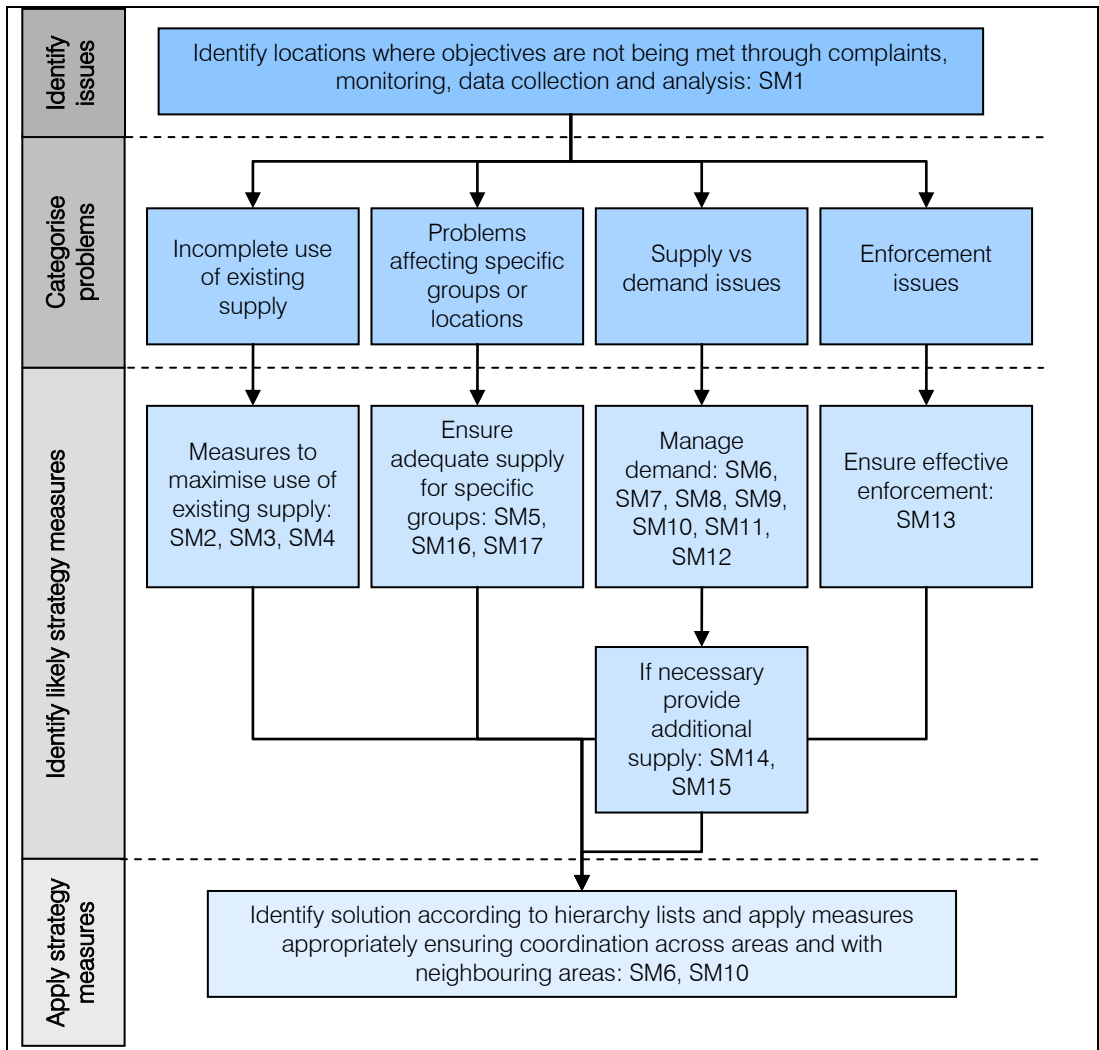
- 5.5.1 Although they may not lie within the defined hierarchies, other individual locations may also suffer from parking stress at times. These typically include major event locations and popular tourist destinations, particularly those with an unpredictable level of demand such as beaches in the summer months. No attempt has been made to define a hierarchy for these but problems at these locations should be addressed by selecting an appropriate hierarchy level as required.

6 Applying the strategy measures

6.1 Addressing the issues

6.1.1 Once a parking problem has been identified, consideration must be given to choosing appropriate strategy measures to address the issue as well as how these measures should be applied. The process of selecting appropriate measures is summarised in Figure 6.1: Identifying and addressing the issues.

Figure 6.1: Identifying and addressing the issues



6.2 Monitoring

SM1 – Monitor parking usage and availability

- 6.2.1 It is good practice to manage car parks such that 10-15% of spaces are available at peak times⁸. When occupancy levels go above 85%, users begin to have difficulty in finding a parking space. This can result in vehicles cruising as they look for free spaces and this begins to have an impact on traffic flow, safety, air quality and aesthetic considerations.
- 6.2.2 The identification of car parks where usage exceeds 85% of capacity can be achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, regular parking surveys can monitor usage across the day and can indicate the typical arrival times and lengths of stay in particular locations. This approach can be particularly useful for identifying areas which should, ideally, be accommodating short stay users but where commuters are blocking parking spaces early in the morning. This approach can also allow an assessment of the extent to which limited waiting restrictions are being complied with, however, this approach is expensive. Spot checks can provide a more cost effective alternative, particularly in locations where issues are prevalent. Complaints from members of the public can also be a useful source of information.
- 6.2.3 Care should be taken to avoid an overly reactive approach. A great many locations will be full occasionally, at particular times of year, or because of special events. Ideally, parking provision should not cater for these unusual peaks and only those locations where demand regularly exceeds supply should be flagged for attention.
- 6.2.4 In Level 1 locations, some consideration should be given to assessing the use of the available parking every three years or so, but in other locations it is likely that problems can be addressed as and when they arise.

6.3 Maximise use of available supply

SM2 – Improve maintenance of on and off street parking areas

- 6.3.1 Poorly maintained parking areas give rise to a perception of insecurity amongst users. Regular maintenance can therefore encourage the use of sites which might otherwise be poorly used.

SM3 – Improve signposting to encourage the use of all sites

- 6.3.2 It is often the case that some people familiar with a town will have developed limited parking habits and may not know the location of all of the available car parking. This problem is particularly prevalent with off street sites which may only be visible from certain parts of the road network. This will tend to put pressure on those parts of the parking supply which are readily located, often those areas which are most central. Clear and consistent signage can help all users to locate suitable parking space and pedestrian signposting can assist them in reaching their final destination. In Level 1 locations, signage should enable users to follow one or more search routes so that they can move on from one car park to the next as those car parks encountered earlier prove to be full. Signage should also distinguish between short stay and long stay parking. In other locations, search routes are unlikely to be required but available parking should be signposted off main roads and from central locations as appropriate.

⁸ CIHT Parking Strategies & Management

SM4 – Invest in new, flexible, user-friendly, payment technology

- 6.3.3 In Ayr, on-street charges are applied by the use of pre-paid vouchers bought from local retailers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this system is poorly understood by visitors and SAC have expressed interest in reviewing the method of applying on-street charges. Pay and Display machines , on-line payment or Pay by Phone methods may be more visitor friendly and could be used to supplement or replace the pre-paid vouchers. A public consultation carried out in January 2011 showed that 34% of respondents preferred to use Pay & Display Machines whilst 25% preferred pre-paid vouchers. The introduction of some on-street charging methods are dependent on compatible enforcement technology that would be introduced within a decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) scheme.

6.3.4 Meet the needs of specific groups

SM5 – Ensure adequate provision for groups with particular needs

- 6.3.5 There are some groups of users who cannot readily park elsewhere, or use an alternative mode, and so must be provided with an appropriate supply of parking space. These groups include disabled persons (with valid Blue Badges), residents, drivers making deliveries, HGV drivers and coach drivers.
- 6.3.6 Blue Badges allow disabled persons to park in dedicated disabled bays, in Pay & Display space free of charge (and usually without a time limit) and on no waiting restrictions. Overall, therefore, there is rarely an absolute lack of supply for disabled persons. However, these users, by definition, have mobility problems and so the location of the available space is of high importance. In addition, the operation and enforcement of the available space is also important. There is an unacceptable level of abuse of disabled bays both by those not displaying a Blue Badge and by those displaying an invalid badge (either because it was issued to someone else or because it is counterfeit). The high incidence of advisory disabled bays does not help in their proper enforcement and this issue is being addressed by SAC under the Disabled Persons Parking Places Act, 2009.
- 6.3.7 Residents within the controlled parking zone in central Ayr have access to a residents' permit scheme which allows them to keep a vehicle within the controlled zone at a reasonable cost. Residents' permit schemes prevent residents in central areas from being inconvenienced unduly by other users of their parking. Residents' permits can also be used to influence levels of car ownership and the extent to which this is appropriate depends on the accessibility and vitality of the area in question.
- 6.3.8 Delivery drivers have to be able to park next to their final destination as it is impractical to move deliveries any distance. Similarly, it is only feasible to carry out a proportion of deliveries outside of busy periods and so there must be adequate space for loading. Like disabled bays, loading bays are often used for informal short stay parking and so enforcement is an important aspect of the proper operation of these facilities.
- 6.3.9 By law, HGV drivers have to take regular breaks and cannot drive for more than 10 hours in any one day. They therefore have to stop overnight and the provision of suitable space for them to do so is important. However, the precise requirements for such space in South Ayrshire will depend on trip patterns through it. For example much of the through traffic in South Ayrshire is likely to be heading for the Troon and Loch Ryan Ferry Ports. As breaks are likely to be more conveniently taken in conjunction with the ferry crossing, in many cases, it may be that the requirement for overnight parking focuses on the ports themselves rather than any intermediate locations. HGV operators and trade groups are likely to be able to advise on locations where there is an insufficient supply.
- 6.3.10 Coach drivers are also subject to driving time restrictions by law but, more importantly, their passengers will usually want to attend events / stop overnight. Coach drivers therefore need to be directed to suitable quality parking locations to leave their coaches.
- 6.3.11 In some cases it may be appropriate to consider provision, usually in the form of a permit scheme, for those who are required to drive around, and park repeatedly in, controlled areas. These schemes should not be undertaken lightly as it may become increasingly difficult to decide where the line should be drawn between those who are subject to the usual parking restrictions and those who benefit from a certain amount of special treatment.

6.4 Manage demand

SM6 – Link controls to town centre accessibility and vitality

- 6.4.1 Parking demand management measures are intended to discourage the use of desirable parking spaces. However, it is not the case that this should be achieved by discouraging visits to the destination in question entirely. Detailed consideration therefore needs to be given to applying management measures which are appropriate for a specific location.
- 6.4.2 Level 1 town centres which typically have high economic vitality, limited economic competition, excess demand for space and reasonable access to alternative modes can accommodate more stringent controls. Locations out with the town centre must be treated more sensitively. However, this does not necessarily mean that parking controls should be avoided entirely. If there is no parking control then commuters will take the most desirable spaces and shoppers arriving later cannot find suitable space at all. This scenario discourages shopping trips. A system of limited waiting, even with a long allowed stay will still shift commuters and increase the attractiveness of the destination as a whole.

SM7 – Review / implement length of stay restrictions

- 6.4.3 Length of stay restrictions are often a good first step towards parking demand management, however, they do have some drawbacks. Firstly, the period of the allowed stay needs to be considered carefully. Having widely varying controlled periods, allowed stays and return periods across a local authority area is confusing for users and it is generally best to have a fixed subset of combinations. The type of trip being made to the location then needs to be considered. If for example, there are a large number of convenience stores at a location then typical users will make short visits for a few items of shopping, here short limited stays are entirely appropriate, at least for the area immediately outside the shops. If there are a lot of comparison stores and few locations which will generate short trips then a longer minimum stay is likely to be appropriate as having too restrictive a control will just result in space being underused.
- 6.4.4 Secondly, length of stay restrictions tend to suffer from a high degree of non compliance. This is partly due to individual drivers and partly due to issues associated with effective enforcement. Length of stay restrictions are often introduced in locations where aggressive enforcement is unjustified. In order to catch those overstaying with any degree of regularity, vehicles must be recorded with a frequency at least equal to the length of the allowed stay.
- 6.4.5 Length of stay restrictions will often be appropriate in Level 2 locations, and occasionally in Level 3 locations as well as in the more peripheral areas of level 1 locations. Length of stay restrictions are less commonly used in off street locations as the extra distance to the final destination makes them unattractive to users.

SM8 – Review / implement parking charges

- 6.4.6 Pay & Display parking generally results in more effective turnover than length of stay restrictions. This is partly because users are encouraged to pay for periods as short as possible (to minimise their expenditure) and partly because the time the vehicle should leave is clearly displayed. However, charges should not be used where there is a significant risk of discouraging trips entirely and can be difficult to install in the absence of a reasonable level of political and public support.

- 6.4.7 Ayr town centre has an established charging regime that requires to be reviewed. The Level 2 locations, Prestwick and Troon, probably do not require parking charges at present but small scale schemes could possibly be introduced in future. Charging in the Level 3 locations is unlikely to be appropriate in the foreseeable future.
- 6.4.8 Typically charges are introduced initially in off street locations in combination with length of stay controls on street to prevent unbalanced use of the on and off street space. On street charges would only usually be anticipated in Level 1 locations.
- 6.4.9 Where charges are well established, their level should be reviewed regularly (every three years or so) to ensure that the overall price and the distribution of short and long stay parking is still appropriate.

SM9 – Review / implement controlled parking zone coverage

- 6.4.10 Where there are existing controlled parking zones, the areas covered should be regularly reviewed (every three years) to ensure that they are still appropriate. Areas on the zone boundary should also be assessed to ensure that they are not suffering from too many issues due to displaced parking which may indicate that the controlled parking zone requires extension. Elsewhere, if it is found that restrictions are covering an increasingly large area then it may be appropriate to combine these into controlled zones in order to simplify the experience for users. Typically, controlled zones would incorporate central controlled areas with short allowed stays and / or charging surrounded by longer stay areas. At present only the Level 1 town centre, Ayr is likely to require use of this measure.

SM10 – ensure a co-ordinated approach

- 6.4.11 A coordinated approach to parking control is vital to prevent unanticipated shifts in trip patterns. Firstly, there needs to be a similar level of control in on and off street locations. This does not mean that there should be the same controls on and off street but it does mean that short stay Pay & Display car parks should not be adjacent to uncontrolled on street parking and that short length of stay restrictions on street should not be very close to uncontrolled off street space.
- 6.4.12 Secondly, it is advantageous if controls are similar in publically and privately controlled locations. This can be difficult to achieve but it is quite often the case that some free supermarket car parks attract inappropriate parking by commuters, whilst overly expensive private car parks are underused putting pressure on adjacent parking supply.
- 6.4.13 Finally, there needs to be a coordinated approach in adjacent centres, particularly where these are in competition. The hierarchy system is intended to address this to a degree but consideration should also be given to competing centres outside South Ayrshire such as Irvine, Kilmarnock and Glasgow.

SM11 – Support parking management at major employment / educational locations

- 6.5.14 Major employment and educational locations can often be significant users of parking space. Additionally, they can often provide an excellent forum for encouraging modal shift and / or more appropriate parking behaviour. SAC does currently support travel planning and parking management at these locations.

SM12 – Maximise use of non-car modes and car sharing

- 6.5.15 Walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing can all help to reduce the pressure on parking at popular destinations. The range of methods which can be used to increase the use of these modes is extensive but commonly includes such features as:
- signage;
 - cycle parking;

- changing, storage and shower facilities at workplaces;
- improved access to bus and rail stations;
- improved facilities at bus stops, stations and rail stations;
- workplace / personal travel planning;
- season ticket grants;
- information campaigns;
- websites to help drivers find car share partners; and,
- Planning and Road agreements between developers and SAC.

6.5 Enforcement

SM13 – ensure effective enforcement of restrictions

- 6.5.1 No matter how well a parking management scheme is designed it will not operate effectively without enforcement, as local users will quickly learn that it is safe to ignore the restrictions.
- 6.5.2 Education campaigns can have some impact, particularly where aspects of the restrictions are poorly understood, but there is no real substitute for appropriate enforcement. SAC are planning to introduce a DPE scheme which is likely to improve both the level of enforcement and the degree to which the Council can target enforcement activities.

6.6 Provide new supply

SM14 – If demand management fails then provide additional parking spaces

- 6.6.1 In some locations, shifts in trip patterns may mean that the supply of parking is wholly inadequate and demand cannot be brought in line with supply by using demand management measures. In these cases, consideration should be given to supplying increased parking provision. This situation will most regularly arise in areas of older housing where the supply of on street space is insufficient to accommodate current car ownership levels, and where historic street layouts limit space but strict controls are not justified given the nature of the centre in question.

SM15 – Provide parking for new developments up to the levels set in the maximum parking standards

- 6.6.2 Major new developments lead to increased parking demand and this should be catered for by the application of LTS policies and the appropriate road design standard. Where possible new developments should be located so as to maximise the potential use of non car modes and lower provision may be adequate in particularly accessible locations.

6.7 Strategic links

SM16 – Work with SPT to increase the use of strategic bus and rail services while minimising local impacts

- 6.7.1 Many of South Ayrshire's residents commute into Glasgow and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport is keen that as many of these journeys as possible should be by non-car modes and car sharing in order to minimise pressure on the road network as well as parking spaces. This approach may create knock-on impacts for the towns in South Ayrshire by encouraging parking at transport interchanges, the majority of which are in town centre locations. SPT's Park & Ride Action Plan prefers that Park & Ride parking be free but notes that charges are acceptable where there is a need to "minimise the use of

the car park by non Park & Ride customers (in these cases it is expected that any charge made will be refunded if a public transport ticket is bought)".

6.7.2 At Ayr Rail Station it is likely that the removal of parking charges would result in the use of the station car park by commuters with destinations in Ayr and so it is likely that charges will have to be retained. Charges are not in force at any other Rail Station in South Ayrshire and it does not presently appear likely that charges will be required.

6.7.3 A dedicated bus based Park & Ride site has been proposed at Monkton. The introduction of this facility would be unlikely to cause local problems as it is out with a town centre.

6.7.4 Consideration should also be given to maximising the number of users accessing stops, stations and Park & Ride sites on foot or by bicycle.

6.8 Visitors and tourists

SM17 – Ensure adequate provision for tourists and other visitors and maximise their use of non-car modes and car sharing

6.8.1 Those who are not familiar with a town can put unusual pressure on parking due to a poor knowledge of what is available. For example, installing one hour limited waiting outside a museum which typically takes more than an hour to go around is more likely to damage the museum's patronage than to address local parking issues. Signage is of great value in assisting tourists and other visitors and enables them to find both a suitable parking space and, once parked, to visit key tourist destinations.

6.8.2 Tourists and other visitors can also be encouraged to use non-car modes, particularly where this can be related to recreational walking or cycling. Key to this process is the provision of information and this should be widely available.

6.9 Appropriate application of the measures

6.9.1 Table 6.4 gives a suggested framework for the appropriate application of the strategy measures at the three different hierarchical levels.

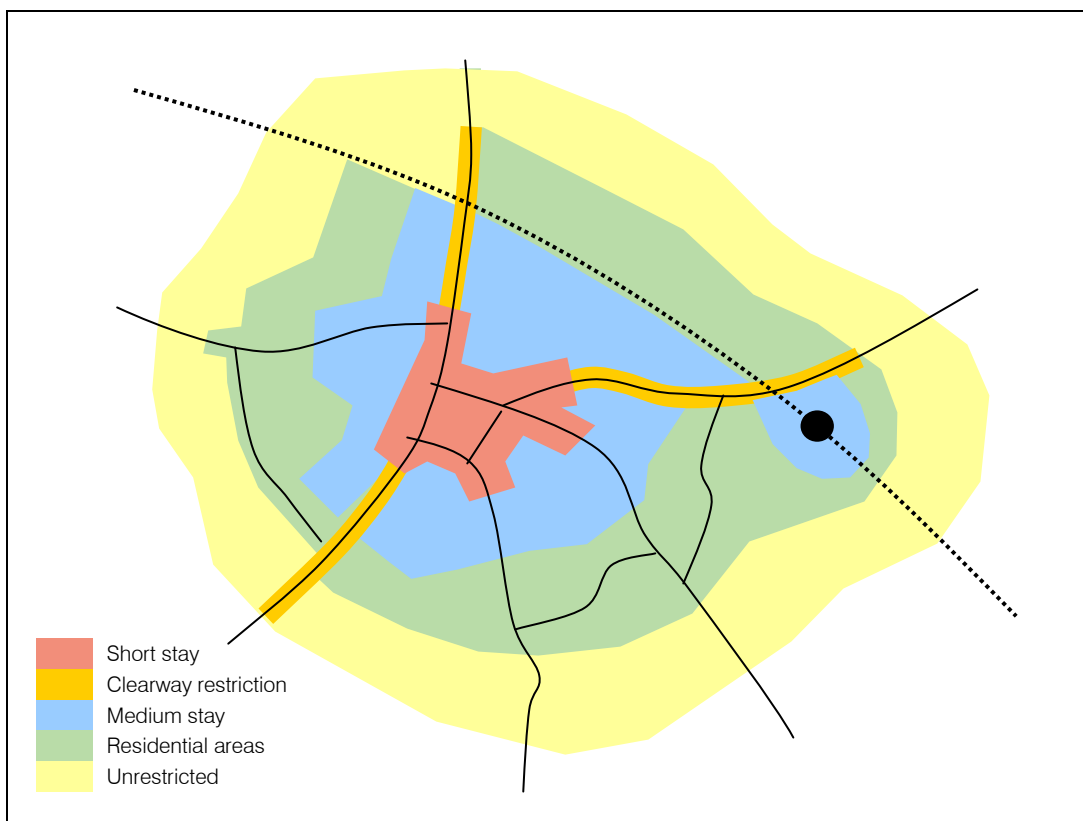
6.9.2 Figure 6.2 shows how parking controls might be applied geographically in a typical town centre and table 6.5 details typical conditions of where restrictions would be applied

Table 6.4: Applying the strategy measures at different hierarchy

levels – summary

Measure	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
SM1 Monitor parking usage and availability	every three years and as issues arise	as issues arise	
SM2 Improve maintenance of on and off street parking areas	sufficient to keep parking areas in a good state of repair		
SM3 Improve signposting to encourage the use of all sites	create parking search routes	signpost from main streets / central areas	
SM4 Invest in new, flexible, user-friendly, payment technology	as appropriate		
SM5 Ensure adequate provision for groups with particular needs	as required		
SM6 Link controls to town centre accessibility and vitality	strict control	moderate control	limited control
SM7 Review / implement length of stay restrictions	encourage medium stays on the periphery of the central area	short central stays and medium length less central stays	to discourage central long stay
SM8 Review / implement parking charges	appropriate in central areas	appropriate in some central areas	probably inappropriate
SM9 Review / implement controlled parking zone coverage	appropriate in central areas	probably unnecessary at present	
SM10 Ensure a co-ordinated approach	coordinate on and off street controls, public and private controls and controls in competing centres		
SM11 Support parking management at major employment / educational locations	wherever possible		
SM12 Maximise use of non-car modes and car sharing	wherever possible		
SM13 Ensure effective enforcement of restrictions	wherever possible		
SM14 If demand management fails then provide additional parking spaces	provision of additional supply should be avoided where possible	if necessary	
SM15 Provide parking for new developments up to the levels set in the maximum parking standards	as required		
SM16 Work with SPT to increase the use of strategic bus and rail services while minimising local impacts	as required		
SM17 Ensure adequate provision for tourists and other visitors and maximise their use of non-car modes and car sharing	as required		

Figure 6.2: Indicative parking controls in a typical town centre



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Table 6.5 Typical On Road parking restrictions

Type of On-Road Parking Restriction	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4	Condition 5	Typical Example of where restriction would be applied
		Day	Restricted Hours	Permitted Parking Period	Types of vehicle or exemption	
No Stopping	At Any Time	-	-	-	-	Clearway restriction on high speed roads, A79 Loop Road
	At Peak Times	Mon - Sat	08:00 - 9:30, 16:00 - 18:00	-	-	Urban Clearway restriction on arterial commuter routes
	At Specified Times	Mon - Fri	08:00 - 18:00	-	-	At School Keep Clear road markings
	At Specified Times	-	-	-	Taxi for taxi bays and buses for bus bays	In town centres
Can be combined	No Loading	At Any Time	Mon- Sun			At junctions and along parts of commuter and bus routes.
		At Peak Times	Mon - Fri	08:00 - 9:30, 16:00 - 18:00		Along parts of commuter and bus routes.
		At Specified Times	-	-		In pedestrian areas
	No Waiting	At Any Time	-			At junctions and along parts of commuter and bus routes.
		At Peak Times	Mon - Fri			Along parts of commuter and bus routes.
		At Specified Times	-	-		Near to town centres
Limited Waiting	During specified Days & Times	Mon - Sat	08:00 - 18:00	Maximum 1 hour waiting in town centres	Permit Holders (Residents & Doctors) exempt from time limit	In town centres where longer stay off -road parking is available
				Maximum 3 hour waiting in any 4 hours near town centres	Permit Holders (Residents & Doctors) exempt from time limit	In mixed use area close to town centres

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Table 6.5 (continued). Typical On Road parking restrictions

Type of On-Road Parking Restriction	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4	Condition 5	Typical Example of where restriction would be applied
		Day	Restricted Hours	Permitted Parking Period	Types of vehicle or exemption	
Residents Only Parking	At Any Time					In area with very limited space
	At Specified Days & Times	Mon - Fri	10:00 - 16:00			In areas where commuter parking is detrimental to residents quality of life
Disabled Person's Parking Place	At Any Time	-		No maximum stay period		In residential areas
	At Any Time	-		Maximum stay period 2 hours		In town centres and pedestrian zones
	At Specified Days & Times	-	010:00 - 16:00	Maximum stay period 2 hours		In town centres and pedestrian zones where residents can park during the evening
Taxi Parking	At Any Time	-				Near Bus & Train stations
	At Specified Days & Times	-				Near shops, pubs and nightclubs
Coach Parking	At Specified Days & Times					Drop off & pick up areas near shops, theatre & seafront
Cycles & Motorcycle Parking	Unrestricted					

7 Monitoring and evaluation

7.1 A successful strategy

7.1.1 A successful parking strategy is one which ensures that road users can find suitable parking spaces and which enhances town centre economic health and vitality without an undue detrimental impact on town centre residents or on road safety. This can, however, be hard to assess and so the following Key Performance Indicators are proposed (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Key performance indicators

Measure	Target
Effective use of supplied parking	In central and peripheral areas peak usage should not regularly exceed 85% of the total supply. Similarly it should not regularly be less than 50% except at locations where demand is seasonal.
Road safety	Reduce road traffic accidents in all areas in line with government targets.
Accessibility	All locations should be accessible for pedestrians and cyclists (unless there are pressing safety considerations). Level 1 locations should have a good level of public transport accessibility and in other locations public transport accessibility should be as good as is possible.
Economic growth	Town centre economies should grow in line with national / regional averages.
Use of non-car modes	Maximise the opportunities for the use of non-car modes in line with the LTS.
Attractive streetscapes and reduced emissions	Minimise parking search behaviour through signage and demand management.
Use of appropriate technology	Maximise the availability of VMS and user friendly payment technologies.
Appropriate supply for specific user groups	Adequate parking supplied for specific groups, specifically disabled persons.
Impact on residents	Residents should usually be able to park in the parking area / street closest to their residence.

END