



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 5 June 2018

**To the Chair and Members of
Cabinet**

Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Bill Mordue- Portfolio Holder for Business, Skills and Economic Development	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report has been developed to support the approval and endorsement of the Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy.
2. Parking is an important asset within town centres, helping residents and visitor's access businesses and services, and providing revenue for the Council. However, oversupply of parking can be a problem as it can encourage traffic, which can have a negative impact on congestion and air quality. A surplus of surface car parks can also hinder regeneration, contributing little to the visual fabric of the townscape.
3. Ensuring an equilibrium between parking provision, parking income for the Council and effective demand management can provide a range of measurable outcomes including:
 - Greater accessibility and convenience for all key stakeholders
 - A reduction in traffic congestion
 - Improved air quality
 - Reduced carbon emissions
4. The Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy is structured into two parts: the first section contains a town centre health check which reviews existing provisions; the second section presents a strategy for long term management and aspirations of this provision, informed by the findings of the health check.

5. The headline findings of the health check are as follows:

Current Provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doncaster Town Centre current offers 6354 off-street parking spaces and 281 on-streets pay and display spaces.• 81% of current off-street provision is long stay, 60% of which is located within the town centre Inner Parking Zone.• There are currently two public electric charging points in the town centre and both provide fast charging infrastructure.
Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The majority of on-street parking areas are operating under capacity with ample supply of on-street parking to meet current demand.• There is also significant capacity within current provision of public off-street car parks. However, occupancy rates are not uniform across the town centre with higher demand for car parks within the Inner Parking Zone.• Therefore there is potential to review some locations particularly in the outer zone to make the most efficient use of space and resources.
Pricing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small differences exist between public and private off-street car parking with public long and short stay off-street car parking is slightly cheap than its private equivalent.
Benchmarking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doncaster has a higher overall off-street parking stock compared to the comparators.• Public off-street parking stock levels are similar to the comparator towns whereas private parking stock is significantly higher, with over 1800 bays more than next highest comparator Wakefield.• In terms of pricing, parking charges are in line with the comparator towns.
Consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback was generally positive with no major issues raised.• 45% of people surveyed were visiting for shopping/ leisure purposes and 55% were visiting for work.• 51% of respondents required parking for less than 4 hours for their visit.• 59% of respondents said they used Doncaster town centre car parks 3 times a week or more.

6. The aim of the Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy is to:

Ensure safe and convenient parking provision that meets the needs of businesses, visitors and commuters in a way that safeguards the long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Doncaster town centre.

7. The Strategy recognises the challenges associated with parking including:

- The reduced need to be in the town centre
- Limited parking at the Borough's Rail Park and Ride sites
- Underutilisation of the Bus Park and Ride facilities.

8. The Strategy document make the following recommendations:

Parking Provision – Monitoring & Policy Review

1. Continue to audit and review parking provision levels

Regular assessment of volume of parking stock within the town centre undertaken. This should be assessed against demand to ensure adequate provision to meet needs of the town centre whilst promoting more sustainable transport modes. In particular, monitor the impact of parking reduction and increase demand due to development in the Civic Business District.

2. Review location and volume of on-street parking

Undertake assessment of location and volume of current on-street parking within town centre to ensure optimum locations and appropriate supply.

3. Review long stay off-street parking

Long stay parking promoted outside of inner parking zone, reducing the proportion of long stay provided in town centre to optimise use of parking resources to support the local economy and benefits traders by increasing turnover of customers.

4. Promote short stay parking in Inner Parking Zone

Manage town centre off-street car parking in favour of short stay provision.

5. Monitor public parking charges to ensure in line with comparator towns

Regular review of parking charges to ensure they are competitively priced in line with comparator towns and income is safeguarded to maintain future investment.

Standards of Provision

6. Review availability of disabled parking to ensure adequate supply

Monitor distribution and demand of disabled only spaces in town centre to ensure adequate provision.

7. Ensure any new provision is high quality and secure, and provides efficient, high capacity parking

The development of new off-street car parking supported only where evidence of need is provided, is designed to suitable standard and make efficient use of resources.

Modernisation

8. Promote use of cashless parking system

Consider implementing an educational promotion on how to use cashless parking systems to encourage use.

9. Explore opportunities to implement new technologies in car parks

Investigate new technologies implemented successfully in other areas, including payment solutions such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems. Such technologies could provide cost efficiencies and improve the customer experience.

10. Increase supply of publically available electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Pursue funding for electric vehicles charging point in convenient and accessible locations and ensure provision in new car park developments through the planning system.

11. Promote the installation of charging infrastructure that meets the requirements of the user

Ensure fast charging infrastructure is prioritised in the Inner Parking Zone to encourage use by short stay users and promote high turnover of charging

spaces. Slower charging infrastructure is only appropriate in specific circumstances, such as long stay commuter parking outside of the town centre.

Park and Ride Facilities

12. Encourage increase in parking capacity at rail park and ride stations where required

Work with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) and Network Rail to explore opportunities to increase parking constraints at popular rail park and rides.

13. Promote use of bus park and ride facilities

Work with SYPTTE and Bus Operators to improve attractiveness of bus park and ride to commuters, this will reduce the demand for long stay parking in the town centres

14. Consider promotion of park and ride facilities during peak parking demand periods

Work with SYPTTE and Bus Operators to explore opportunities to encourage use of park and ride during peak parking demand periods during the run up to Christmas, such as advertising campaigns and promotional pricing offers.

15. Seek funding to install electric vehicle charging at park and rides.

Work with partners to explore funding opportunities to provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure at park and ride facilities.

Cycling

16. Ensure cycle parking is implemented at new developments

Where new developments take place in the town centre, ensure inclusive of cycling facilities such as adequate secure cycle parking.

17. Promote cycling to local business in the town centre area

Where possible supply local existing businesses with advice and potential match funding to install cycle parking.

EXEMPT REPORT

8. Not Exempt

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. The recommendations for this report are to:

- Endorse the Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy
- Commitment to production of the Doncaster Town Centre Car Parking Health Check on an annual basis.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

10. An endorsed Town Centre Parking Strategy can enable a balanced approach to be taken with respect to the provision of public car parking. The Strategy takes into account of the need for the town centre to be attractive to employers and visitors, while encouraging the use of public transport and

active travel to reduce congestion and improve the local environment. Ensuring an equilibrium between parking provision, parking income for the Council and effective demand management can provide a range of measurable outcomes including:

- Greater accessibility and convenience for all key stakeholders
- A reduction in traffic congestion
- Improved air quality
- Reduced carbon emissions

Commitment to an annual health check of parking will ensure provision meets the needs of citizens for the long term.

BACKGROUND

10. At present the Council does not have an adopted Town Centre Parking Strategy. Having an adopted strategy is required in order to optimise parking provision, support the local economy and vitality of the town, whilst at the same time promoting the use of more sustainable transport modes. It is intended that this review will be carried annually to monitor changes in supply and revise the approach to provision accordingly.
11. Historically parking in the Town Centre was a major stakeholder issues in Doncaster, as it has been across the Country. However, parking in the Town Centre is not as contentious as it once was. Annual traffic count surveys indicate that car usage in the town centre has decreased by 23% over the past decade. This is at odds with overall car usage across the Borough, where traffic count surveys record a 7% increase since 2006.
12. Nationally, town centres have seen the disappearance of independent shops and we have seen a shift in how and where people buy goods and services. Demand to be in the town centre has reduced considerably over the years as online shopping with associated home delivery has increased significantly.
13. Car Parking can play a role in attracting visitors to the town centre. The Borough has not had a formal recognised Parking Strategy since 2002, when the Council published 'A Sense of Direction- a Car Parking Framework for Doncaster'. The document was developed to take into account major redevelopments such as St George's Bridge and the Interchange.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11. Two options have been considered:

- **Do something-** To develop and implement the Town Centre Parking Strategy
- **Do nothing-** The absence of an adopted Town Centre Parking Strategy restricts the ability of the Council to understand if the provision of car parking is or isn't meeting the demand.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

14. The Strategy contains two elements:

- A health check that reviews current provision, demand, pricing, benchmarking and consultation which will be reviewed on annual basis through regular monitoring.
- The strategy which aims to optimise parking provision, support the local economy and vitality of the town, whilst promoting the use of sustainable modes to access the town centre.

By approving the Strategy it will allow the Council to gain an annual understanding of the health of parking in the town centre. It will also allow the recommendation of the Strategy document to be implemented which commits to a series of proposals that will provide improvements in the following areas:

- Monitoring and Policy Review
- Standards of Provision
- Modernisation
- Park and Ride facilities
- Cycle Parking facilities

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

15.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better access to good fulfilling work• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish• Inward Investment	<p>Town Centre Parking Provision can be linked to the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre in improving access for employment and securing inward investment.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport• Everyone takes responsibility for	<p>Town Centre Parking provision can be linked to the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre in attracting visitors and shoppers. The Strategy document also recognises the importance of providing appropriate and adequate Cycle Parking within the town centre to encourage people to travel by active modes.</p>

	keeping Doncaster Clean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	None
	Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	Provision of adequate disabled car parking.
	Connected Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

16. The main risk is the Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy is not endorsed this could have potential impact on the Council's ability to understand the health of parking in the town centre and to optimism the parking provision.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [NJD 19/03/18]

17. There are no specific legal implications relating to this report.

The adoption of a town centre parking strategy will assist the Council in optimising parking provision, supporting the local economy whilst also promoting more sustainable modes of transport.

The proposal to review the strategy on an annual basis allows the Council to address and respond to changes in the approach to and the provision of parking spaces.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [DR 15/03/18]

18. The endorsement of the Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy does not in itself carry any direct financial implications. However, a number of the recommendations within that document will require specific advice and implications to be considered as and when they are further developed. This is expected to be concluded by further reports relating to individual projects as they come forward. Whilst considering each initiative the Council should not only be mindful of the direct cost of delivery but also the consequences of any changes to parking income on the revenue budget.

The annual health check is intended to be undertaken by parking services and the transportation unit, with the associated cost (mainly staff time) being managed within the existing revenue budget provision.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [CR 15/03/2018]

19. There are no direct HR related implications in relation to this corporate report and the detailed Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 16/3/18]

20. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this report.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [CEH 16/03/18]

21. Doncaster Public Health supports the development of an urban centre that provides a safe, accessible environment to utilise sustainable modes of transport. The Car Park Strategy recommends the regular assessment of the provision of car parking in Doncaster Town Centre. We would recommend that the health impacts are considered especially in relation to increasing the availability and accessibility that may make car use attractive.

Encouraging reliance on cars as a mode of transport results in congestion, poor air quality, increased noise pollution and reduction in the perception of safety for pedestrians and cyclists. This in turn results in the increased incidences of lung and heart disease, asthma in children, reduction in physical activity levels and in relation to noise pollution; hearing impairments and sleep disturbance.

Not only are these impacts on health but also on the broader economy as the less healthy our residents the less productive we are as a borough. The economic impacts of road congestion are far reaching to individuals, businesses, the environment and the wider economy. Delays are a major concern for businesses as they reduce productivity, increase costs, and can damage reputations. It is important to consider the flow of people and not just traffic, particularly when many vehicles have a single occupant.

In addition, evidence commissioned by the Department of Transport in 2017 reviewed 55 sources of evidence and found that in relation to the impacts on local retail spending: investment in cycling and walking is often associated with increases in retail spending at the local level, which one study estimated to be around 30% on average. There is a positive association between cycling and walking infrastructure and property values. There is evidence that walking and cycling projects typically increase land value by between 70 and 300% that walking interventions increase retail and commercial rents by around 10-30% and that homes near cycle paths have higher sales prices. The report highlights that a potential barrier to realising the local economic benefits is that local retailers may be reluctant to support walking and cycling interventions due to a belief that reduced car access would have negative impacts on their revenue. However, there is evidence that retailers tend to over-estimate the importance of the car in accessing local retail facilities. For example, one study in Bristol found that retailers estimated that 41% of their customers arrived by car and 6% cycled when the actual figures were 22% and 10% respectively. Reference: Investing in cycling and walking: rapid evidence assessment: A report for the Department for Transport, October 2016.

The strategy does consider the promotion and the increase in facilities for electric vehicles but we would prefer to have a gradual reduction in car use into the town centre to develop Doncaster as vibrant, sustainable and attractive place to live and visit.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [KP 15/03/18]

22. Decision makers must consider the Council's duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty at s149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not share that protected characteristic

CONSULTATION

23. The Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders within the Council. Wider consultation has been undertaken through Business Doncaster, through surveys to visitors and businesses to the town centre.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

24. Doncaster Town Centre Parking Strategy, March 2018

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