

**A SUSTAINABLE PARKING STRATEGY
FOR GUILDFORD
2016**

A sustainable parking strategy for Guildford

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1. Introduction

Guildford Borough is a picturesque part of Surrey. Guildford is the county town and is the largest settlement in the borough. It is close to the A3 and has good train links to London and the rest of the rail network. The historic market town is a thriving and popular destination but suffers from traffic congestion particularly during the morning and evening peaks. The Town Centre Masterplan sets out plans for the town and the area around to expand and to attract more businesses and housing. The visitors' strategy has the aim of increasing visitor spend by 50% by 2020.

2. Why have a parking strategy?

Research by the RAC Foundation suggests that the average car is parked at home for 80% of the time, parked elsewhere for about 16.5% of the time and only used 3.5% of the time. Whenever a car moves it has to go from one parking space to another, so providing and controlling parking spaces has a strong influence on traffic movements into the town and borough.

There are number of strands to parking management but in essence it is a balance between three key factors:

Regeneration – using parking measures to support town centre regeneration (e.g. providing more and/or cheaper parking to attract shoppers and businesses)

Restraint – using parking controls as a means of restraining/managing traffic (e.g. to reduce congestion), improving environmental quality (e.g. air pollution) and/or to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes (e.g. cycling and buses).

Revenue – securing sufficient revenue to cover costs of providing car parking and using any surplus revenue to fund other important services. It must be noted that council's provide car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and it has been ruled that the powers should be used to manage traffic and not raise revenue. On-street parking and parking enforcement cannot be used to raise revenue either and the use of any surplus from these areas is controlled and can only be used to support highway projects. In Guildford Borough, the surplus generated from on-street parking charges is used to fund the park and ride.

The pursuit of one of these factors alone will potentially result in the other two being compromised. (Source: Institute of Highways and Transportation- Parking Strategies and Management)

Our parking strategy needs to consider these factors and find the right balance for Guildford and present proposals for delivering the desired outcomes.

3. What the strategy covers

The majority of parking and congestion occurs in Guildford and so most of the major issues occur in or around the town centre but the town centre cannot be considered in isolation. While the focus of the strategy is Guildford Town centre it considers parking issues around the borough.

4. Context

This parking strategy is designed to assist with the delivery and to compliment other key plans and strategies adopted by Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council

Guildford Town and Approaches Movement Study
Guildford Borough Council's Visitor Strategy 2014 -20
Strategic Parking Review (2014)
The Local Plan GBC (out for consultation)
The Town Centre Master Plan
Local Transport Strategy SCC
GBC Transport Strategy

Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) contains a vision "to help people to meet their transport and travel needs effectively, reliably, safely and sustainably within Surrey, in order to promote economic vibrancy, protect and enhance the environment and improve the quality of life". Surrey County Council's Parking Strategy, which forms part of LTP3, describes the vision for parking as "provide parking where appropriate, control parking where necessary" and the objectives are stated as:

- Reduce congestion caused by parked vehicles
- Make the best use of parking space available
- Enforce parking restrictions fairly and efficiently
- Provide appropriate parking where needed

5. Future Demand and Developments

Parking policy is a tool to support other aims and objectives and needs to be flexible to respond to developments. While we need to shape the policy around what we anticipate will happen in the future we need to be ready to review and amend it if the situation changes.

There are currently around 5,100 public parking spaces provided by Guildford Borough Council. There are also privately run car park below Debenhams (appx 60 spaces) and at Waitrose (170 spaces) Guildford Main Line (420 spaces) and London Road Stations (113 spaces). This makes a total of around 5,800 public car park spaces serving the town.

The Parking Business Plans over the last few years have been promoting a “drive to not through” strategy. This approach requires parking at interceptor car parks on the routes into the town and means parking will be further than it currently is from the centre. Users will spend more time getting to and from the car parks on foot.

The Town Centre Masterplan (the Masterplan) sets an exciting vision for the future of the town with less traffic and congestion in the centre and the development of a number of existing surface car parks into open spaces and some for development. Greater pedestrianisation will remove a considerable amount of on-street parking in the centre. There are proposals for higher density housing and this can create a greater demand for on-street parking for residents and their visitors. The Masterplan has more ambitious development plans for business and retail than considered by Steer Davies Gleave.

The Visitor’s Strategy has the ambition of increasing visitor spend by 50% by 2020. This supports the idea of more visitors staying longer and spending more. There are plans to expand considerably the retail offer. An improved retail centre will increase the average dwell times for each user. This means that car parking spaces will be occupied for longer and more spaces are required to meet the need.

In order to assess future need for off- street parking in 2014 Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) produced a Strategic Parking Review, which looked at the current level of off-street parking in Guildford Town Centre and considered anticipated future development.

The study concluded that the current level of parking provision could be sufficient during weekdays. The study found that on Saturdays the provision of short stay parking in the town centre would be less than required but this demand could be met if short stay users where persuaded to use the long stay car parks further from the centre.

In arriving at these conclusions, there were a number of assumptions

- The level of on-street parking remained the same
- The new developments were built with the maximum level of permitted parking
- The occupancy levels would go above the 85% considered good practice
- There would be no additional space for peak time demands at Christmas and other busy times

A number of these assumptions have changed.

- The level of on-street parking is likely to reduce with pedestrianisation
- There is greater development envisaged now than when the study was conducted
- The developments, particularly retail developments, are unlikely to be built with the maximum level of permitted parking
- Occupancy levels in the car parks have increased since the study was done
- We need some flexibility for peak time demands at Christmas and other busy times

This strategy has been formulated on the basis that we will need around 5% more public parking. This will absorb the reduction in on-street parking and extra travelling time on foot to and from the car parks. This will be subject to transport assessment and planning permission on a site-by-site basis.

The remaining increase in demand will need to be absorbed by changes to more sustainable modes. This needs to be monitored and if circumstances change, the figure needs to be adjusted.

Unless there is sufficient convenient parking on each route into the town, drivers will drive through the town to reach parking space they prefer. Car parks need to be developed to replace those lost and these spaces need to be locations to intercept traffic heading for the town centre. We need to time the developments so that there is always an adequate supply of parking to support businesses in the town.

Strategic Objectives

To reduce parking in the very centre of the town and replace it by developing existing or building new car parks at “interceptor” locations and hence encouraging a drive to and not through approach which reduces congestion in the centre.

To look to increase the amount of public car parking space available to allow for increased demand caused by a reduction in on-street parking and longer stay lengths. (subject to further transport assessment)

6. High Level Aims

The challenge of improving access to the town centre without increasing congestion highlights the need to encourage a change in mode of travel away from the car wherever possible and promote more sustainable modes of transport including cycling, walking and public transport. The parking strategy can assist this aim but not deliver it. It needs to work with other policies and strategies to develop the required approach.

When encouraging use of alternative means of transport we need to bear in mind that competing centres surround Guildford and that visitors and businesses choose to come here. The change of mode needs to be encouraged by making the more sustainable options more attractive to users rather than making access by car unattractive and potentially driving business and visitors to other destinations.

We need to offer attractive choices for people coming to Guildford and ensure people are aware of all the options particularly non-car options.

Any change in habits will come about gradually and we need to monitor progress and adapt our approach accordingly to ensure Guildford’s position is enhanced.

As a high level approach we need to

- **encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes including park and ride**
- **review the provision of car parks to encourage drivers to park and return directly along main routes in a “drive to, not through” approach**
- **to look to maintain capacity for off-street parking but in interceptor car parks which take traffic off the roads before it reaches the centre and reduce congestion in the centre**
- **provide a balanced mixture of parking options including park and ride, car parks and on street parking, needed to support a vibrant economy**
- **annually review parking tariffs and usage centred on the town centre in order to maintain a hierarchy of charges. Public on-street parking to have the highest tariff and for the cost of parking to reduce the further a driver parks from the centre**
- **keep park and ride fares low compared to parking charges, and to promote it as an alternative to parking in or near the town centre**
- **develop more park and ride sites subject to appropriate business cases and encourage greater use of existing sites**
- **monitor all available indicators to ensure that the local economy continues to be successful and to ensure that customers and businesses continue to choose to do business in Guildford**
- **use on-street parking controls to support the objectives listed above, to maintain safe traffic flow and where necessary, and where supported by the local community, prioritise space for residents**

7. Current Attitudes to Driving and Parking

In 2015, Social and Market Strategic Research (SMSR) conducted a consultation on people’s attitudes towards parking in Guildford. The highlights of the findings are listed below:

- **72%** cited LOCATION as most IMPORTANT factor when choosing a CAR PARK;
- **56%** stated NOTHING would encourage them to come to Guildford town centre by means other than by CAR;
- **18%** stated MORE frequent bus services would encourage them to NOT use their CAR;
- **43%** stated NOTHING has PREVENTED them from using PARK AND RIDE services in the past;
- ONLY **9%** cite CONGESTION/LACK OF SPACES/LACK OF INFORMATION/HOURS OF OPERATION/UNRELIABILITY for NOT using PARK AND RIDE;
- **76%** say NOTHING would encourage them to USE the PARK AND RIDE services or use it MORE frequently;

- **31%** FAIRLY/VERY dissatisfied with LOCAL TRAFFIC CONGESTION when using CAR PARKS;
- **54%** would PREFER to park CLOSE to the town centre and pay MORE;
- **25%** would PREFER to park FURTHER AWAY from the town centre and pay LESS

These findings show that it is going to be difficult to make quick and dramatic changes in people's behaviour but they also show there is scope for encouraging more people to use other methods. There are large numbers who say they would not use park and ride but focusing on those who would can make a difference. Furthermore looking at the reasons why people do not want to change and addressing them will help.

A survey carried out by Surrey County Council in 2010 showed that the average household income of someone using a car park in Guildford was likely to be 66% more than the household income of someone using park and ride. Increasing the cost of town centre parking can make people think about where to park but also about whether to come to Guildford or go to a different location. The difference in household income highlights the difficulty in using cost as the main factor in persuading people to change. The main emphasis needs to be on making the choices we want people to make attractive and convenient.

8. Intercepting Traffic

The first opportunity to capture traffic heading to the town is at a park and ride site. Drivers not tempted by this option then need to be encouraged to use an "interceptor" car park. Park and ride and car parks appeal to different users groups and so a combination of both are required to capture as much traffic as possible. Finally on-street parking is usually the closest and most convenient form of parking but because of this it needs to be the most heavily restricted otherwise a demand will be created which cannot be met and congestion will result. The following sections of the strategy follow this route starting with park and ride and ending with on-street parking.

9. Park and Ride

Purpose:

- To remove traffic from the flow before it reaches the town centre and thereby reducing congestion in the centre.
- To target workers driving to work or others who travel during the peak times to reduce congestion when it is at its worse.
- To encourage other users to park and ride to reduce traffic pressure and make the environment less car dominated

Table 1- Current Park and Ride Provision

Site	No. of Spaces	Average spaces used	Max spaces used	Average spaces used	Max spaces used	No. of return trips per year	Net Cost 15-16
		Mon-Fri*	Mon-Fri*	Sat*	Sat*		
Artington	725	435 (60%)	489(67%)	242(33%)	258 (36%)	186,000	151,000
Spectrum	1000+ shared	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	104,000	118,000
Merrow	325	198 (61%)	263 (81%)	175 (54%)	220 (67%)	128,000	190,000
Onslow	550	204 (37%)	284 (52%)	66 (12%)	93 (17%)	38,000	275,000
						456,000	734,000

*data from September 2015

The data above shows that there were over 900,000 trips (over 450,000 returns) on the park and ride service and this makes a significant contribution to removing traffic, which could otherwise have entered the town centre.

The Appeal of Park and Ride

Park and ride is a convenient way of getting directly to the centre of town, it avoids the user having to navigate, drive in congested areas, and is relatively cheap. The low cost offers advantages for those working in the town particularly in sectors with lower wages like service industries. It also appeals to older visitors who do not want to drive in congestion and to tourists who will not know the area.

There are no bus priority measures serving the Guildford Park and Ride services so the buses are likely to take the same time as the journey would in a car. There is therefore a time penalty for users of the park and ride as they have to park and wait for a bus. The reliability and frequency of service is key in minimising this disadvantage. The Guildford Town Approaches Movement Study (GTAMS) proposes a sustainable movement corridor and this could improve the bus links to Onslow and Spectrum and any future site in the North East (Gosden Hill).

Park and ride and car parking appeal to different users for different reasons and we need to maximise the benefit of both options to intercept as much traffic as possible. It is important to maintain a price differential between town centre parking and the park and ride but we also need to make park and ride more convenient for users and reduce the journey time.

Impact on road network

Park and ride takes traffic off the road network before it reaches the centre and reduces congestion in the centre. It does not always reduce the number of journeys made by car as some may decide to drive to the park and ride rather making a journey entirely by public transport.

There are two main groups of people who may wish to use park and ride (a) people going to work and (b) people visiting the town for shopping, leisure or other activities. Attracting workers to use the park and ride takes the demand off the roads during the morning and evening peaks and has the most positive effect on reducing congestion. However workers will tend to park for long periods, normally the full working day, and so each one is likely to occupy a parking space all day. Visitors, on average, tend to stay shorter periods and so the space they use in the car park could accommodate several vehicles a day. The times visitors travel tends to be outside the morning and evening peaks so there is less impact on peak congestion.

It therefore follows that a park and ride site needs more spaces to accommodate workers than it would to accommodate the same number of trips by shoppers or visitors. Providing park and ride for workers has the highest impact on congestion but the travel times are concentrated around the morning and evening peaks. Shoppers and visitors will be more spread out over the day and will have less impact on congestion but provide a more even flow of passengers for the bus services and make a service throughout the day more cost effective.

Strategic Aim

When space at park and ride sites becomes limited to prioritise long stay parkers over shoppers as removing these from the traffic flow has greatest effect on congestion

Pricing

Another characteristic that affects use and charging policy is the fact that workers tend to travel alone whereas shoppers and visitors are more often in groups. The park and ride bus charges for each adult passenger whereas the town centre car parks charge per car. Each fare-paying adult can be accompanied by two children under 16 without additional charge. However, the fare structure means three friends going shopping and using the park and ride will have to pay three fares whereas they could pay for one car in a car park.

It is hard to charge on the bus per car because the bus driver will not be able to know which car passengers travelled in. A charge for parking at the park and ride sites would attract VAT, which would mean 20% more would have to be charged to make the same amount of income assuming there was no impact on usage.

Some park and ride sites charge more for people travelling in the morning peak, as they are likely to be working and be parked for most of the day. Against this the greatest benefit in terms of reducing congestion is to encourage workers to use the park and ride.

Capacity

Spectrum is a shared site with the leisure centre and measures have been introduced to promote shorter stay parking near the centre for its customers. None of the other park and rides sites normally reach capacity. Artington and Mellow get full on a few weekdays in the lead up to Christmas but the rest of the time there is spare capacity. None of the three park and ride only sites gets full on a Saturday.

This spare capacity allows us to encourage all users and helps avoid deciding whether the services should be targeted at a particular group. In the longer term, the greatest benefit to reduce congestion in the town would come from targeting park and ride at workers as this would reduce peak time congestion.

There are some who use the park and ride sites for reasons other than to catch the bus and some who park and walk. The location of Onslow makes it appealing for people visiting nearby institutions like the hospital and university. Once the site is fully constructed, there will be a barrier system and users will need to validate a ticket on the bus to get out of the car park. At other sites, surveys have shown that the level of non-park and ride users is low compared to those parking and riding and while control measures could be introduced, the cost of these is likely to outweigh any benefit.

Cost of Park and Ride

The cost of running bus services and maintaining the sites is higher than the income received. Table 1 (at the start of section 9) shows all the sites need to be subsidised. In November 2015, a nominal charge of £1 return was introduced for concessionary pass holders who qualify based on age and this means that some of the cost of the service is now being met by these users and will improve the overall position.

The current cost of park and ride is met from the surplus produced from on-street parking which is created from the on-street pay and display charges. The Town Centre Masterplan proposes more pedestrianisation and if this affects the amount of on-street parking a new funding or different funding source will need to be found to support the park and ride.

The funding to build park and ride sites has often been met from grants on land acquired through the planning process. Experience in Guildford and elsewhere in the country shows that park and ride sites cost money to run. It is vital that any assessment of the viability of a site includes a realistic assessment of the cost of running it and where the funds needed will be found. While funds are limited there is a limit to the number of sites which can be provided and it is important that decisions are taken to ensure that the sites that are built provide maximum benefit and at a sustainable cost.

The overall aim is to provide a ring of sites around the town to offer people a choice to leave their car at the site and continue by bus or some other form of transport. The most promising area for developing the next park and ride would be to the North East of the town off the A3 to intercept traffic travelling south. We also have aspirations for a Northern park and ride. We also need more parking in the south to intercept traffic, see section 11. All future development of park and ride needs to be assessed on affordability grounds as well as transportation benefits.

Strategic Objective

To develop a ring of park and ride sites and other sites serving the main routes into Guildford, and to make decisions on which sites should be prioritised based on traffic benefits and financial sustainability of running the site.

Each site needs to be considered on its merits on two assessment criteria

(a) Traffic benefits - the amount of congestion it will reduce

(b) Financial costs – including an assessment of how running costs could be met

Any new park and ride site needs to be

- **Large enough to provide sufficient passenger throughput to support the bus service (500 spaces or more).**
- **Well designed, high quality, safe sites with toilets**
- **Served by a punctual bus service which is high quality, and reliable**
- **Travelling time is 15 minutes or less**
- **Supported by bus priority around congested spots to make travelling by park and ride more attractive than the car**
- **Close to the feeder road and have uncongested access**
- **Clearly signage and supported by good marketing**

We need to encourage a modal shift to park and ride to encourage a greater proportion of users to take this option. In this way congestion can be reduced and the services become closer to self-financing.

To encourage greater use we need to consider:

- **Making bus journeys faster and more reliable**
- **Increasing facilities on the site, possibly coffee franchise, café or convenience shops**
- **Improving the quality and facilities on the buses, Wi-Fi possibly**
- **Assisting shoppers carrying goods; with secure lockers in town, collection points etc**
- **Increasing the offer by having cycles available and the sites close to safe-cycling routes into town**
- **Encouraging users to take the river tow path at Artington, investigate a transfer by boat in the summer months**
- **More consultation with users and non users views and**
- **Reviewing the hours the services operates**
- **Longer opening hours and connections with the station**
- **Improving signage and increasing marketing and its effectiveness.**
- **Ways to encourage businesses to support, promote and develop park and ride**
- **The use of P&R to remove school traffic, to support businesses outside the town centre**

10. Public Off-Street Car Parks

Current Provision

A map of the council's public town centre car parks is attached as Appendix 1. There are 16 public car parks available seven days a week with another seven available for part of the week mainly on Saturday and Sunday.

The council's public car parks provide 5,100 spaces. There are also privately run car parks below Debenhams (appx 60 spaces), Waitrose (170 spaces) and at Guildford Main Line (420 spaces) and London Road Stations (113 spaces). By controlling the majority of public

off street parking in the town centre, we are in a strong position to influence parking behaviour.

It is estimated that between 7.00am and 7.00pm around 24% of the traffic on the gyratory is from car park users. If this can be reduced then the gyratory will flow better. At the moment, many drivers go to the car park that is most convenient to their destination. To encourage a “drive to, not through” approach there needs to be sufficient supply of convenient car park space on the main routes into the town. These car parks need to intercept the traffic before it reaches the most congested part of the town.

In adopting a “drive to, not through approach”, we cannot hope to stop everyone from travelling through the town. However, the data on the number of car park users using the gyratory shows that achieving a significant reduction will have a positive effect.

To encourage the change to “drive to not through” it is vital the pedestrian links between the interceptor car parks and the town centre need to be improved.

Purpose

- **To remove traffic from the flow before it reaches the town centre to reduce congestion**
- **To provide sufficient parking so vehicles arriving in the town do not create congestion because drivers cannot find parking**
- **To use the closest car parks to the town centre to provide for short stay visitors and shoppers**
- **Encourage long stay parking by workers and others in car parks further from the centre or ideally park and ride.**

Location

To achieve a “drive to, not though” approach we need to consider the location and access to car parks and:

- **Alter the access to car parks to provide a “drive to, not through” approach and reduce congestion (Millbrook and Bedford Road in particular).**
- **Develop car parks at key points where they can provide access to the centre without motorists needing to drive through the town to reach them.**
- **Provide sufficient parking on the key routes into the town centre to avoid congestion caused by drivers not being able to park or driving through or around to find parking**
- **Maintain or increase the number of spaces available to reduce the need to drive through**
- **Improve pedestrian links between key car parks and the town**
- **Improve signage and use modern technology like apps to help people chose the most appropriate car park**

Encouraging Change

A number of areas need to be looked at to encourage a “drive to, not through” approach

- **Revise signage to encourage use of first suitable car park, possibly on a zonal basis**
- **Develop apps and use of digital technology to better inform motorists of the choices available and to direct them**
- **Monitor usage to ensure that most workers travelling at peak times use outer car parks or park and ride to reduce congestion in the centre at peak times**

- **Use tariffs and improved pedestrian access to the town to encourage drivers to use the outer car parks particularly on Saturdays**
- **Reduce the amount of “contract” parking in the town centre and move towards season tickets in the larger car parks further from the centre making better use of space and reducing traffic into the centre**
- **Encourage park and cycle from some outer car parks**

Quality Provision

We need to provide good quality car parks which are

- **Supported by regular investment in maintaining the car parks from the car park maintenance reserve**
- **Designed and maintained to achieve the Park Mark Safer Parking Award**
- **Clearly signed for pedestrians and road users**
- **Easy to use with terms and conditions of use clearly stated**
- **Supported by easy payment options**
- **Kept clean and safe**

Developing the Service

We can also develop the service by

- **Working with the business community to run offers that attract more customers to the town at less busy times**
- **Looking at new and existing technologies to enhance the user experience and make parking easier to find and a better experience.**
- **Using new technology like “booking” spaces can be developed to make use of areas where parking is not currently practical**
- **Looking at ways of making car parks integrate into their surrounds and the town less dominated by the car**

Pricing

In terms of setting tariffs for car parks we need to

- **Maintain a price differential with the highest charge in the centre and outer car parks at a lower charge**
- **Ensure a price differential which encourages the use of park and ride over a car park**
- **Monitor usage of the car parks with other modes of transport to ensure a change in car park usage is resulting in an increase in other modes rather than less people coming to Guildford**
- **Compare charges with other competing towns and centres to ensure Guildford remains competitive and attractive as a destination**
- **Maintain the efficiency of the operation and within the policy context maximise surplus income**

11. Balancing provision to intercept demand

Introduction

In 2015, a study commissioned by Highways England interviewed users in the larger car parks about a number of factors including where they started their journey. Using this data

our transport planners have estimated the routes that drivers followed. Tables 2 & 3 below shows the findings.

Table 2 – Demand for Car Parks

Main Route(s) into town centre	Demand Percentage Users (within 15km)	Demand Percentage Users (within 20km)
A25/A3(N)/A246/A320	37%	34%
A281/A248	17%	14%
A3100	11%	7%
A31/A3(S)/ Onslow (Guildford Park Road)	22%	26%
A322/A323	13%	14%

Table 2 shows the demand from people coming from a 15km radius and a 20 km radius. The data also allows us to estimate the proportion of vehicles using the main car parks that travel round the gyratory to the major car parks. .

Table 3 – Impact on the Gyratory

Main Public Car Parks	12 Hour (0700-1900 hrs) Arriving Flows	Percentage Arriving Using the Gyratory
A25/A3(N)/A246/A320 Corridor		
Leapale	771	35%
York Road	863	26%
G Live	363	51%
Bright Hill	285	42%
Castle	952	50%

A281/A248 Corridor		
Millbrook	545	52%
A31/A3(S)/Onslow Corridor		
Farnham Road	881	58%
Guildford Park Road	292	52%
A322/A323 Corridor		
Mary Road	356	51%
Bedford Road (Multi-storey)	1617	50%
Bedford Road (surface)	393	100%

In the next section of the Strategy, we analyse the demand for parking from different routes into the town and those arriving in the centre. The figures use existing demand and with the level of development planned over the next 20 years these demands will change and we need to be flexible and adapt to this.

Central Car Parks

The Masterplan and other developments plan to remove many of the surface car parks which currently provide space in the centre. This will help encourage vehicles to park further out and before they reach the more congested centre. This is consistent with “a drive to not through” policy. The parking will be replaced slightly further out from the centre. To compensate we must improve pedestrian access from the inceptor car parks into the town.

The Masterplan also proposes greater pedestrianisation in the centre, which is likely to lead to a reduction in public on-street parking. The demand for this parking will be pushed further out.

Ultimately, Leapale Road Multi Storey, which is required to provide parking for the North Street Development, may become one of the only central car park available. As the number of central car parks and parking spaces reduce the demand for the remaining spaces will increase. With modern technology, a booking system could be developed and drivers without a booking diverted or not permitted into the centre. This would remove the potential for congestion caused by a lack of space in car parks like Leapale Road.

Table 4- Central Car Parks - supply and demand

Roads included	Car Parks	Spaces	Current demand % from 20km	% of GBC car parking now	Proposed changes	% resulting
All	Leapale Rd. Commercial Rd Old Police Stat. North Street Bedford Rd Surface Total	384 52 62 47 68 613	The demand can come from any direction	12%	Commercial Rd Old Police Station, North St and Bedford Surface due to be removed	7%

Vehicles Travelling from the North East and East

There are a number of different routes drivers can take to access the town from this direction and so a variety of interceptor car parks are required. The main changes proposed by the Masterplan are a development on Bright Hill and on the Upper High Street car park. It is important that car parking is maintained on Bright Hill as it intercepts traffic heading further down Sydenham Road. Sydenham Road often becomes congested with vehicles queuing for Castle car park so Bright Hill car park is vital to relieve the pressure on Castle car park. Bright Hill is also the nearest car park to Mount Alvernia Hospital and provides parking for outpatients and visitors.

Future developments elsewhere and an increase in Guildford's attraction as a regional centre are likely to result in considerably higher volume of traffic coming from this direction. A park and ride site off the A3 serving this route would help reduce demand in the centre. Mellow park and ride is well used and a park and ride closer to the A3 could absorb some of future increases in demand.

There is already an under provision between the percentage demand from this direction and the supply. It is recommended to increase the parking in York Road Multi Storey car park by around 300 spaces. One option is to provide underground parking with open green space on top. Bright Hill is also important and a development on this site could include addition public parking spaces of around 56 spaces to absorb current demand and reduce pressure on Castle Car Park.

York Road is currently designated a long stay car park but is used by both shoppers/visitors and long stay users. To be an interceptor car park and remove more traffic heading for the centre the pedestrian access to the town centre could be improved. It has good links to Chertsey Street and to the Upper High Street during the day through Allen House grounds. In the evening when Allen House grounds are locked the access is up the access road and is poor. This needs to be improved and could be incorporated in any development of parking on the site.

There is also an opportunity to develop better access from Chertsey Street to a new development on the North Street site by creating a footpath through The Bars.

Table 5- Vehicles travelling from the North East and the East – supply and demand

Roads included	Car Parks	No. of Spaces	Demand % from 20km	% of GBC car parking now	Proposed changes	% resulting
A25 A3(N) A246 A320	York Rd G Live Bright Hill Castle Upper High St. Tunsgate St Josephs Total	605 220 144 350 49 64 71 1,503	34%	29%	Upper High St to be developed. Aim to increase parking on York Road and Bright Hill. Additional 356 spaces	34%

Vehicles Travelling from the North

With the development of North Street demand for access to this area is likely to increase and the parking provision needs to increase to prevent an under supply and congestion this causes. A large retail offer is likely to draw shoppers from a larger area and access down the A3 in particular. The area around the courts is being considered for development and this provides an opportunity to increase parking around the Mary Road site. It is recommended to look at around 300 additional spaces on this site. This redeveloped car park could link to Bedford Road Multi Storey and have a direct link through to the shopping centre.

Bedford Road Multi Storey is currently two unconnected car parks. The first has an entrance on Bedford Road and can only be accessed from the gyratory. The second has an entrance on Laundry Road. Both car parks have their exits on to Onslow Street which can get very congested. The traffic flow around the gyratory can be reduced by reorganising the car park so vehicles can only enter from the Woodbridge Road direction. The car park can get very congested when Onslow Street is congested and better exiting arrangements need to be looked at as part of the development of the area.

Table 6- Vehicles travelling from the North – supply and demand

Roads included	Car Parks	Number of Spaces	Demand % from 20km	% of GBC car parking now	Proposed Changes	% resulting
A322 A323	Bedford Road Multi Storey Mary Road	1033 107 1140	14%	22%	Increase parking on the Mary Road site by around 300	26%

Vehicles travelling from the South

There is a considerable mismatch between the demand coming from the south and the existing supply of parking in the town. The Masterplan highlights developing Portsmouth Road car park as a square and this will remove parking that is currently available to visitors on Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and on weekday evenings after 6pm. . The Masterplan also suggests that the on-street parking in Millmead (44 spaces) should be removed and an open space developed. The potential development of the Millmead council offices is also contemplated. This site currently provides parking at weekends. In total, it is planned to remove the 44 permanent on-street spaces in Millmead and reduce the parking capacity by 277 spaces at weekends.

There are also significant housing developments planned to the south of the borough and if this goes forward, there will be increased demand.

The only significant car park serving traffic from this direction is Millbrook on the A281. There are no permanent car parks on the A3100. Artington park and ride is on the A3100 and already takes traffic out of this route. There is spare capacity at Artington. The demand from this direction shows that park and ride cannot replace all the need for parking closer to the town. Currently the majority of this demand will travel around the gyratory because there is inadequate parking in the south.

We need to look to put more parking on Millbrook in a sensitive development and at best, 80 additional spaces could be accommodated subject to planning permission. There are constraints on developing this site caused by the fact the majority of the car park being in the flood plain and the fact the site is in a conservation area. Even with more space on Millbrook, there will be a considerable short fall in parking which will be exacerbated by proposed developments. We need to:

- Look to provide public parking as part of a development of the current council offices at Millmead
- Consider creating the ability for traffic to go eastwards towards Castle and Tunsgate car parks before it reaches the gyratory.
- Look to procure a site on which to build a car park
- Consider developing Stone Bridge depot as a park and cycle site or adapted park and ride
- Reconsider plans to develop existing car parks on this route or
- Accept that there is an imbalance in the south and a higher proportion of traffic will travel through the town to find a car park

Millbrook car park currently suffers from an exit, which forces all cars leaving to turn left and go round the gyratory. There are plans to introduce a right turn out of the car park, which will allow vehicles to leave without travelling on the gyratory.

Table 7- Vehicles travelling from the South – supply and demand

Roads included	Car Parks	Number of Spaces	Demand % from 20km	% of car parking now	Proposed changes	% resulting
A281/ A248 A3100	Millbrook Shalford Park Portsm'th Rd Millmead Hse Lawn rd Total	244 66 98 28 107 535	21%	10%	Portsmouth Road and Millmead H'se to be developed but 80 more spaces on Millbrook	7%

Vehicles travelling from the West

There is currently a good balance between the supply and demand from the West but demand is likely to increase with development. The route is also served by the latest park and ride site at Onslow.

However, the access to the town on foot from the car parks is not good and both car parks tend to be used by long stay users, which means shorter stay visitors will drive across the bridge and use another town centre car park.

The access from Guildford Park car park to the station and through that into the town is set to improve with the development of the existing site to include a multi storey and by a station development, which it is hoped will allow direct access from the new multi storey to the station. Plans to develop the station has shown all its parking on the East side which means drivers arriving from the West will need to travel across the gyratory.

There is also an opportunity to improve access from Farnham Road Multi Storey into the town by a footbridge across the tracks and emerging on to Friary Bridge. An alternative is to improve access on foot over the Farnham Road bridge.

Table 8- Vehicles Travelling from the West – supply and demand

Roads included	Car Parks	Number of Spaces	Demand % from 20km	% of car parking now	Proposed changes	% resulting
A3(s) A31	Farnham Rd Guildford Pk	917 400 1,317	26%	27% (26%)	Guildford Park being replaced	24%

A table showing the proposed changes to car parks is attached as appendix 2.

12. Private Car Parks

There are a number of privately run public car parks in the town centre including, Debenhams, Waitrose, and car parks at the main line and London Road stations. We need to seek to influence the use of these so they are consistent with the overall strategy. To encourage parking as far from the centre as possible and having pricing that is consistent with encouraging this. It is also important that pricing is consistent with the rest of the town centre so demand is not distorted. The planning permission for Waitrose requires them not to charge less for parking than Bedford Road multi storey car park, although they can offer to refund the parking charge to people shopping in the store.

13. On-Street Parking Public Parking

Purpose

- To provide access to the town for short trips
- To provide for visitors where the driver needs to be close to their destination

Current Provision

There are just under 500 pay and display parking spaces around Guildford town centre. The most central spaces limit stays to 30 minutes, ones further from the centre have a two hour limit and some around Mount Alvernia Hospital allow three hours parking.

Changes

Some on-street parking is necessary to support short trips or where the driver is, for example, shopping for heavy or bulky goods. There is also a need to serve those who cannot walk great distances. There is a separate section on disabled parking. The Masterplan proposes greater pedestrianisation and this will push parking further away from the centre and create a less car-dominated centre. This is likely to lead to more visitors trying to park in residential areas and measures are discussed to control this. It is hard to provide flexibility for residents' visitors without allowing non-resident visitors to park. The non-residents would do so to avoid car park tariffs and one way of discouraging this is to have on-street pay and display. This provides flexibility to residents' visitors and is likely to ensure there is more space for residents and their visitors by discouraging non-resident parking.

A demand for on-street parking which is not met can lead to vehicles circulating looking for space and causing congestion. We are working with a company funded by Innovate UK to create a parking platform which will provide drivers live and predictive information on where to find parking. Part of this system will include adding sensors to on-street parking spaces and this will be key in informing motorists at an early stage in their journey about availability. It will also be invaluable in implementing change.

Strategic Objective

To support greater pedestrianisation by reviewing on street pay and display for visitors and safe guarding residential areas.

Parking for People with Disabilities

One key group that needs convenient access and parking are disabled people and particularly blue badge holders. The council provides disabled parking spaces in its on-street, in its car parks and it supports a Shopmobility unit within its Bedford Road Multi Storey car park. The elongated nature of Guildford's shopping area, the topography and the proposal to move parking further from the centre makes on-street parking the best option for the disabled or mobility impaired.

Strategic Objective

To provide sufficient blue badge parking within pedestrian schemes if access to shops is more than 50m from the available parking.

14. Residents Parking Schemes

Purpose

- To provide priority for residents and other key users in areas that would be subject to significant levels of non-resident parking if parking was uncontrolled

Location

In and around Guildford Town Centre there are an estimated 3,661 permit bays and 2,234 are dual use and 1,427 are permit only. The controlled area is split into 10 catchment areas labelled A to J. A map showing the catchment areas is attached as Appendix 3.

Current controls

- Where permit schemes are introduced residents with off-street parking are required to use it so the limited amount of space on-street can be used by those without off-street space
- Permit issue is limited to a maximum of two permits per household with the number being dependent on the number of cars kept at the property and the amount of off-street parking space associated with a property.
- In area D (see table below) which consists of the town centre there is a limit of 261 permits that can be issued. Residents go on a waiting list and receive a permit when there is space. While waiting they can receive a permit for one car in an adjacent area.

- Depending on the level of pressure on parking there will be a mixture of permit only space and dual use space. Dual use space can be used by permit holders without time limit and non-permit holders for a limited period of time or unlimited parking spaces.
- The aim of introducing a scheme is to provide sufficient parking for residents while minimise potential displacement to other areas.
- With the exception of a small area around G Live the controls apply Monday to Saturday 8.30am to 6.00pm. There are no controls on Sunday. Around G Live the controls apply seven days a week from 8.30am to 9.00pm.
- Residents parking schemes need to be cost neutral and so the cost of the permit will be linked to the cost of running the scheme. Currently the charge is £50 for the first permit and £80 for a second permit.
- There is a discount for vehicles with smaller engines and for electric vehicles and others powered entirely by alternative fuels.
- Residents are able to buy daily visitors permits subject to a limit per year.

The table below shows the number of permits on issue in each catchment area compared to the total number of spaces in that catchment area.

Table 9 - Residents permits -spaces and numbers

Area	Total number of parking spaces	Number of permit only	Number of shared use	Number of permits (Jan 16)	Ratio permits to space for permit holders
A	804	520	283	966	1.2
B	385	250	133	390	1
C	341	142	185	339	1
D	702	117	212	261	0.8*
E	322	178	143	263	0.8
F	735	200	535	364	0.5
G	119	0	119	44	0.4
H	274	0	274	69	0.3
I	695	20	350 (322**)	115	0.2
J	476	4	417 (53**)	148	0.3

*In area D there is a limit placed on the number of permits issued and 340 pay and display only parking bays

** Unrestricted parking bays

A residents parking scheme can operate successfully with more permits than spaces because at any one time people will be away in their cars. Many residents are usually away in their cars during the day and usually return in the evening. The current hours of control for most of scheme are 8.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Saturday and the greatest pressure on finding space occurs in the evening. The aim of the scheme is to give residents priority to park over non-residents. A scheme that operates in the evening or at night will have a greater effect on residents returning home and is only beneficial to residents if there are large numbers of non-residents trying to park in the area.

Changes over time

The Masterplan envisages higher density residential development in the centre and more space for pedestrians. On-street parking space for residents is likely to reduce and we need to be able to respond to this. There are a number of interventions we can make to ease this pressure.

Car Clubs

Car Clubs encourage less car ownership by providing cars that can be hired at convenient points within the local community. The car club in Guildford is set to expand from two cars to seven with three of these being Electric Vehicles. To increase their visibility the cars will be placed in residential streets. The success of this will enable further expansion. The more cars that can be supported the more convenient it is for residents using the service and in turn the more attractive it becomes to new members.

Strategic Objective

Support and promote the development of car clubs as an alternative to residents owning cars.

Creating More Space for Residents

The proportion of space reserved for residents will need to increase to help address the pressure caused by development and the proportion provided for dual use reduced. The remaining dual use spaces maybe attractive to town centre visitors as an alternative to paid for parking in car parks. To discourage unnecessary parking but still allow flexible use for residents' visitors, trades people and for visitors to businesses and facilities based outside the town centre the remaining dual use should be converted to pay and display. This takes away the incentive to avoid parking charges but still leaves the space accessible to those who may need to use it but do not hold permits.

We also need to consider increase the hours parking controls apply to cover Sundays and longer into the evening.

In car parks, the demand from visitors occurs during the day and generally, they are, less well used at night particularly those further from the centre. We will look at offers to allow residents to use this space and where possible and demand justifies it to develop car parks for residents.

Strategic Objectives

To respond to greater pressure in residential areas by increasing the proportion of residents only parking places.

To ensure spaces are available for residents at times outside our existing controls Monday to Saturday 8.30am to 6pm but considering Sunday controls and controls into the evening

Look to support residents by offering off peak space in car parks with off peak capacity

Permit Free Developments

Where there is already parking pressure in an area a substantial development can make the situation worse if more residents choose to have cars and there is not the space within the development. Existing residents also oppose new developments on the basis that they are likely to increase the parking pressure.

This can be avoided if the development is declared permit free at the planning stage. This requires the adoption of the measure as a planning policy and a change in the Traffic Regulation Order. It is suggested that this is only applied to large developments where there will normally be an opportunity to provide some parking within the development.

Restricting the use of the public highway in this way is a strong measure and is only likely to be justified in the parking catchment areas with greatest pressure. Table 9 above shows that the areas where a large development will have greatest affect are A,B,C and D.

Strategic Objective

To address the potential for a significant increase in parking pressure in residential areas A,B,C and D caused by large developments by making new developments over 5 units permit free.

15. Electric and Ultra Low Cars

In 2007 we introduced concessions for electric vehicles that allow three hours free parking in pay and display car parks after one hour had been purchased. There are also free parking bays in Bedford Road Multi Storey car park for small electric vehicles. To benefit from these concessions drivers had to sign up to the councils "green" permit scheme. This allows us to monitor the number of electric vehicles and increase facilities in response to an increasing demand.

Table 10 – Increase in the number of electric cars in the Green Scheme

Year	2007-11	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. joining scheme	4	3	5	14	21	
Total in scheme	4	7	13	27	48	60

The use of electric vehicles is still low but growth is expected to continue. In January 2016 the Guildford Borough Council’s Executive agreed a recommendation to implementation of charging points at two key interceptor car parks. We need to continue to monitor the usage of electric vehicles and increase our facilities accordingly.

Charging points in the town centre should provide a fast charge of 80% in 2 to 3 hours. If we look to provide charging at key points on long distance roads these should provide a rapid charge of around 80% in 20 minutes.

For the fast charging points, it is recommended that there is no cost for charging but with the normal payment for parking. This will encourage the use of electric vehicles without encouraging unnecessary trips into the town centre to charge.

The question of definition has arisen as there are now many different variants on electric vehicles. Our policy has been to allow vehicles powered solely by electricity into the green scheme. This excludes some vehicles with “range extenders” which are small petrol engines used to generate electricity to extend the range. There are now vehicles classified by the government as “ultra-low” which produce 75g or less of CO2 per kilometre from the tailpipe and a minimum 10 miles zero-emission driving. At the moment, all cars which can achieve this use electric power to turn the wheels to some degree, from 100% electric cars to a plug in hybrid and an extended range electric vehicle. It is recommended we adopt the definition of “ ultra low vehicles” rather than using purely electric.

The residents permit scheme also offers vehicles powered entirely by an alternative fuel source permits at a reduced charge and it is recommended we should update the definition to “ultra low “vehicles.

Strategic Objective

Encourage greater use of electric and “ultra low vehicles” by providing charging points in key interceptor car parks, parking concessions and discounted permits for residents with cars which qualify.

To establish “fast” charging points which provide 80% charge in 2 to 3 hours in town centre locations and large new developments.

16. Outside Guildford Town Centre

In areas outside Guildford town centre, particularly in villages, parking is often an issue around shops, stations and public facilities like hospitals. We also want to support access to recreational sites and other amenities.

We will consider appropriate on-street parking controls to promote a turnover of space around shopping parades.

In areas where parking by people visiting a facility becomes a problem for residents in their local area, we will consider parking restrictions to ensure the parking is safe. Where there is support from the local community we will consider residents permit schemes.

In areas where the Guildford Borough Council has car parks we can look to control these so they provide parking for the intended purpose. Around some of our open spaces, there are car parks, which are used by people parking for work so where appropriate controls can be used to ensure people can get access to the open space.

17. Enforcement

Enforcement is an important part of delivering the strategy. We need to ensure there is sufficient deterrent to encourage motorists to comply with the regulations which we set governing the use of car parks and on street parking. Enforcement is most effective when people understand why it is being carried out and support the general principles. Our enforcement needs to be firm but fair and have a purpose rather than simply applying rules.

Guildford has a very good record and we have consistently had one of the lowest rates of appeal against our Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) in the country. We also have a good payment rate for our PCNs. These two factors together help to show we are issuing good quality PCNs and when they are challenged we respond clearly and fairly.

We need to maintain the firm and fair enforcement approach. A fundamental review of the service revealed that we need to expand the hours we cover to provide deterrent outside the working day and the hours our enforcement officers work are being reviewed.