



Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy

Action Plan and Impact Assessment - Tarporley

January 2019

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Cheshire West and Chester
Council

Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy

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Issue and Revision Record

Revision	Date	Originator	Checker	Approver	Description
A	December 2018	HJ PP	NO	CH	First draft
B	January 2019	HJ	NO	CH	Revised Issue
C	January 2019	HJ PP	NO	CH	Final Issue
D	January 2019	HJ	NO	CH	Final Issue

Document reference: 376376 | 5 | A

Information class: Standard

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Document Context	1
1.2	Document Structure	1
2	Definition of Proposed Parking Measures	2
2.1	Introduction	2
2.2	Impact Assessment Scope	2
2.3	Changes since Parking Strategy	2
2.4	Additional Off-street Parking Capacity	2
2.5	Parking Control Measures	3
2.6	Car Park Quality Improvements	4
3	Parking Measures Impact Assessment	6
3.1	Introduction	6
3.2	Economic Impact Assessment	6
3.3	Social and Environmental Impact Assessment	6
3.4	Equality Analysis	6
4	Findings, Recommendations and Next Steps	8
4.1	Findings	8
4.2	Recommendations	8
4.3	Next Steps	8
	Appendices	10
A.	Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma	11

1 Introduction

1.1 Document Context

Mott MacDonald has been commissioned by Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWaC) to undertake the Cheshire West & Chester Parking Study. The primary aim of this study is to:

Carry out a review of all parking-related matters in Cheshire West and Chester to identify options and recommend future actions that are consistent with the corporate and sub-regional strategies and policies alongside future development and regeneration proposals.

Based on an extensive data collection and stakeholder consultation exercise, a Strategy Report was produced in 2016 which contained time-bound strategy recommendations for the following centres:

- Chester
- Ellesmere Port
- Northwich
- Winsford
- Neston and Parkgate
- Helsby
- Frodsham
- Rural areas (including Tarporley and Malpas etc).

The strategy was then subject to widespread public consultation, after which the recommendations were adopted by the Council, subject to pre-implementation Action Plans being prepared for each centre. These include Impact Assessments for any notable parking measures being proposed. The purpose of the Impact Assessments is to assess the potential economic, social, environmental and equality impacts of these measures, and to identify suitable mitigation where appropriate.

This document presents the Impact Assessment for Tarporley.

1.2 Document Structure

This Impact Assessment document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 defines the specific measures proposed for Tarporley in the Parking Strategy, noting any changes which have taken place since the strategy was published.
- Section 3 then describes the likely impact that these measures will have based on our analysis. This is separated into three sections:
 - Economic Impacts – mainly associated with parking control changes
 - Social and Environmental Impacts – mainly associated with any potential displacement of car parking together with mitigating measures and the impact on air quality
 - Equality Analysis – mainly associated with varying impacts on protected user groups within the town
- Section 4 then provides a summary of the findings and recommendations from the Action Plan and presents a commentary on next steps to implementation

2 Definition of Proposed Parking Measures

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide some definition to the parking measures proposed for Tarporley by the Parking Strategy and to note any relevant change in conditions since the strategy was published.

2.2 Impact Assessment Scope

The scope of the Impact Assessment for Tarporley is to assess the impacts and any potential mitigation required for the following measures proposed by the Parking Strategy:

1. Assess feasibility of bringing additional land into use for parking
2. Revision of control methods for off-street and on-street parking to support the local economy and cater for retail and leisure users

Further definition for each of these measures is provided in the following subsections.

2.3 Changes since Parking Strategy

Since the Parking Strategy was published, the following parking-related changes have taken place in Tarporley:

- A 3-hour maximum stay restriction (with staff exemption) has been implemented at the Community Centre car park to reserve capacity for centre users. Recent surveys show that these restrictions are being observed and that spare capacity was observed at all times.
- 2-hour maximum stay bays have been introduced on High Street to prioritise capacity for shoppers and visitors. This provides about 40 short-stay spaces and leaves about 25 unrestricted spaces on High Street, and recent surveys show that these new restrictions are being largely observed.
- The 30-space British Legion car park has been closed for redevelopment but will reopen as a 31-space car park in early 2019.

2.4 Additional Off-street Parking Capacity

There is a likely future need for more long-stay parking capacity in Tarporley. Recent length-of-stay surveys showed the Bell Meadow Court car park to be full for much of a weekday, with 81 per cent of used spaces occupied for more than four hours. Surveys on High Street also show some over-demand for long-stay parking. The reopening of the British Legion car park will provide some relief to this situation, but it is noted that similarly high utilisation levels in the main retail area were also observed during our 2016 surveys when the British Legion car park was open.

With development growth also planned for Tarporley over the coming years, it is recommended that opportunities be pursued in the short-term to provide additional long-stay off-street parking capacity in the main retail area of the village. It is estimated that a capacity of between 50 and 100 extra spaces should be sufficient to accommodate valid suppressed and future growth demand in the short-to-medium term without generating significant unnecessary car trips. This could potentially be provided through delivering an extension to an existing car park and/or through a new car park delivered, for example, via an appropriate planning agreement. The usage of any new parking should be monitored after implementation to understand its contribution to the overall public parking situation in the village and to identify if any residual parking capacity shortfalls remain.

2.5 Parking Control Measures

2.5.1 Scope of Parking Provision

The following table lists the publicly available parking areas in Tarporley which are covered by this Action Plan.

Table 1: Publicly available car parking covered by Tarporley Action Plan

Ref	Name	Current Control	Capacity
-	High Street (surveyed between Forest Road and The Avenue)	Combination of 2-hour max stay bays and unrestricted parking	c.40 short-stay and c.25 unrestricted – 65 total
PU75	Tarporley Community Centre	Max stay 3 hours	61
PU80	Bell Meadow Court	None	84

Source: MM

2.5.2 Current Parking Usage

Length of stay surveys were carried out at all of these parking areas between 8am and 6pm on a school term-time weekday and Saturday in October 2018.

Based on this data where available, the following tables show for a weekday and Saturday:

- The average parking area occupancy across each survey period (where measured or calculated)
- The maximum parking area occupancy achieved during the survey period
- The average length-of-stay per vehicle (where measured or calculated)
- Parking control recommendations

Table 2: Existing parking usage and control recommendations – Weekday

Ref	Name	Car Park Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	Parking Control Recommendation
		Avg	Max		
-	High Street	76%	85%	2	Maintain enforcement of short-stay bays
PU75	Community Centre	38%	95%	1.6	No change required
PU80	Bell Meadow Court	89%	98%	4.7	No change required

Source: Survey 2018

Table 3: Existing parking usage and control recommendations – Saturday

Ref	Name	Car Park Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	Parking Control Recommendation
		Avg	Max		
-	High Street	75%	86%	2.6	As above
PU75	Community Centre	31%	66%	2.3	As above
PU80	Bell Meadow Court	82%	90%	3.9	As above

Source: Survey 2018

This data shows that the High Street and the Bell Meadow Court car park are used intensively throughout both survey days, confirming the need for more parking capacity in this main retail part of the village. It also shows that Bell Meadow Court is used primarily for medium-to-long stay parking, whereas the High Street is used by a mix of short-stay (retail) and longer-stay (commuters and resident) parking. Overall, this is the right usage balance for these parking areas, though it is important to maintain enforcement of the High Street bays to ensure that priority on this street is given to short-stay customer parking.

The Community Centre car park, on the other hand, is less utilised, as this is more remote from the main retail area and is also subject to a 3-hour parking restriction which deters long-stay commuter-type parking. This reserves capacity for community centre users and so the restriction is fulfilling its intended function.

2.5.3 Proposed Parking Management Measures

2.5.3.1 Without new additional parking capacity

Until additional new off-street parking capacity can be provided in Tarporley (in addition to the reopening of the British Legion car park), it is recommended that public parking in Tarporley be managed as follows:

- The current car park and on-street controls to be maintained, as these are encouraging the most appropriate use of existing supply
- Enforcement of the short-stay bays on High Street to be maintained and intensified if non-compliance levels increase, in order to prioritise parking for retail customers
- The availability of capacity on High Street for essential residential parking demand to be monitored and offered a degree of protection if insufficient
- The British Legion car park, once reopened, to be operated in the same way as the Bell Meadow Court car park, i.e. unrestricted to allow and encourage long-stay parking

2.5.3.2 With new additional parking capacity

Once additional new off-street parking capacity is provided in Tarporley, the management of parking will depend on whether or not parking charges are required to fund the provision and running of the new facility.

Should the facility not require the introduction of parking charges, then the above parking management measures will apply and, in addition, it is recommended that:

- The High Street in the main retail area to be reserved for short-stay and essential residential parking only, to maximise priority for retail customers
- The new car park to be operated in the same way as the Bell Meadow Court car park, i.e. unrestricted to allow and encourage long-stay parking

However, should the facility require the introduction of parking charges to fund its provision and maintenance, then it is recommended that public parking in Tarporley be managed as follows:

- The High Street in the main retail area to be reserved for short-stay and essential residential parking only, to maximise priority for retail customers, and enforcement of the bays to be maintained and intensified if non-compliance levels increase
- A sufficient level of off-street capacity to be designated for long-stay (four-plus hour) parking and subject to a modest flat-rate tariff, with all remaining off-street capacity subject to a four-hour maximum stay limit. This combination will provide for the retail core's long-stay parking needs while ensuring sufficient and accessible capacity for short-stay retail users

The potential economic, social, environmental and equality impacts of these proposals are considered in Section 3 of this document.

2.6 Car Park Quality Improvements

One element of the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy is to improve the quality of car parks across the borough. The spot check surveys undertaken in 2016 showed that car parks in Tarporley were generally of a good standard. The British Legion car park was the only one to receive a score lower than 'good', but its current refurbishment means that its quality will be raised to a higher standard than when surveyed previously.

All car parks in Tarporley would benefit from new signage within them, which accurately conveys the maximum stay restrictions for the car park. Directional signage to the car parks from the highway network, especially at the gateways into the village, would help visitors know where long stay and short stay parking provision is located.

In addition to signage, the Community Centre car park (PU75) lacks lighting, while Bell Meadow Court car park (PU80) lacks Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras. The implementation of lighting and CCTV cameras respectively would improve the quality of these car parks and create an increased sense of safety for users. The British Legion car park should include lighting and possibly CCTV cameras if it doesn't already.

If modest charges are introduced in some of Tarporley's car parks payment machines would need to be installed. These should offer a variety of payment methods – cash and card, as per the payment machines in Chester.

3 Parking Measures Impact Assessment

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present an assessment of the potential impacts of the parking measures proposed for Tarporley and to identify appropriate mitigation where required.

3.2 Economic Impact Assessment

The above recommended parking measures will either involve no change to the current provision of free public parking in Tarporley or the introduction of a modest charge for parking stays of more than four hours in some car parks, depending on the future scenario observed. As this latter charge would affect very few retail customers in Tarporley, it is concluded that retail vitality in the village centre would not be significantly affected by its introduction.

By contrast, however, the above changes will involve additional new parking capacity in Tarporley which should have a positive economic impact through reducing parking congestion and thereby reducing barriers to trade in the village.

Overall, therefore, it is concluded that the proposed parking measures for Tarporley will have a net positive economic impact on the village.

3.3 Social and Environmental Impact Assessment

The primary social and environmental impacts associated with the changes proposed for parking in Tarporley are related to any displacement effects as a result of changes, particularly in relation to tariffs.

The only potential proposal which could result in parking displacement in Tarporley is the introduction of a modest parking charge for parking stays of over four hours. The main mitigation to deter displacement through this measure will be the complementary measure of subjecting all other available off-street car parks to a maximum-stay limit of four hours. Options for further displacement to residential streets are limited in the area around the main retail core, but this potential effect should nonetheless be monitored and mitigated through future parking control schemes if necessary.

3.4 Equality Analysis

The third and final set of potential impacts that will be reviewed in light of the proposed changes associated with the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy are those linked to equality and diversity. As a local authority and public organisation, Cheshire West and Chester Council has a duty to evaluate the impact of each of its schemes on protected groups. It does this by completing an Equality Analysis to capture the level of impact under a number of strategic headings.

This assessment has been completed for the Tarporley components of the Parking Strategy and is appended to this document as Appendix A. The following sub-sections summarise each of the main findings in cases where there is considered to be a non-neutral impact on equality and diversity.

3.4.1 Race and Ethnicity

There is a potential barrier to using parking services for those whose first language is not English. The strategy will need to consider prioritised options for communication to contain this impact.

Impact: Low Negative

3.4.2 Summary

To summarise, the equality analysis has awarded the scheme a '**Low Impact**' score and recommends a process of continuous monitoring with outcomes to be reviewed in three years.

4 Findings, Recommendations and Next Steps

4.1 Findings

From the analysis undertaken in this Action Plan for Tarporley with respect to the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy, it is concluded that the predicted impacts of the strategy will be mainly positive for the town centre and that, where potentially negative, can be resolved through appropriate monitoring and mitigation. The impact assessment results are summarised as follows:

4.1.1 Economic Impacts

Through increasing parking capacity in the village and maintaining free parking for retail customers, it is concluded that the proposed parking measures for Tarporley will have a net positive economic impact on the village.

4.1.2 Social and Environmental Impacts

The only potential proposal which could result in parking displacement in Tarporley is the introduction of a modest parking charge for parking stays of over four hours. The main mitigation to deter displacement through this measure will be the complementary measure of subjecting all other available off-street car parks to a maximum-stay limit of four hours. Options for further displacement to residential streets are limited in the area around the main retail core, but this potential effect should nonetheless be monitored and mitigated through parking control schemes if necessary.

4.1.3 Equality Analysis

The equality analysis has awarded the scheme a 'Low Impact' score and recommends a process of continuous monitoring with outcomes to be reviewed in three years.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on an extensive data collection and stakeholder consultation exercise, a Strategy Report was produced in 2016 which contained time-bound strategy recommendations for Tarporley. These included:

- Implement short and long stay parking restrictions to better manage stock for retail and leisure use
- Introduce a mixture of limited waiting time restrictions on High Street to meet different users' needs, possibly including additional measures to protect High Street residents.

These are proposed in order to meet the following aims:

1. To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday and Saturday
2. To better manage demand at limited car parking facilities and allocate the most appropriate parking locations to the most appropriate user groups.

It is considered that the recommendations on tariffs and quality will achieve these aims without significant negative impact under the headings described above. As such the recommendations are upheld following this analysis.

4.3 Next Steps

Following the publication of this Action Plan for Tarporley, the following programme of measures is recommended:

- Monitor usage of existing and any new car parking: Ongoing
- Enforce maximum stay restrictions: Ongoing
- Monitor displacement on to surrounding residential streets: Ongoing
- Evaluate whether resident parking controls are required for residential streets, including High Street: October 2019
- Explore opportunities for additional long-stay parking provision and continue to monitor the situation with a view to introducing additional controls if required at a point in the future: Ongoing

Appendices

A. Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma

11

A. Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma

Tarpoley Parking Action Plan

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

In 2016 a borough wide parking strategy was developed with recommendations to provide a consistency of quality and management of local authority parking stock. Following a period of public consultation this was approved by full council in June 2017. Parking Action Plans have now been produced for key local centres to progress the implementation of the strategy.

Lead officer: Mike Lester (Project Manager and Advisor, Parking Services)

Stakeholders: Residents and representative groups, businesses, and Town and Parish Councils

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do
 While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes
 Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			

<p>Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)</p>			<p>Barrier to using services for those whose first language is not English. – Will need to consider prioritised options for communication to contain this impact. Low Impact</p>
<p>Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Gender</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Gender identity (gender reassignment)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Religion and belief</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)</p>	<p>Some concerns have been raised regarding the potential introduction of charging and maximum stay lengths, which could have a negative impact on age categories with traditionally lower levels of income such as school leavers, students, and senior citizens.</p>		

	<p>The possible introduction of tariffs would raise the price of parking; however, the prices would be low and short stay parking (both in on-street parking bays and in car parks) will remain free. The designation and enforcement of different car parking locations for different user groups will enable older people, who are likely to be short stay users and less mobile, to park closer to the core retail area.</p> <p>Net Neutral Impact</p>		
Carers	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on this group.</p>		
Rural communities	<p>Some concerns have been raised regarding the possible introduction of tariffs, that these proposals could have a negative impact on car reliant individuals. Tariffs are only one option for Tarporley and would only apply to long stay car parking in the event of investment being required. If tariffs are introduced, they would be modest and only for long-stay parking; short stay parking will remain free.</p> <p>Net Neutral Impact</p>		

<p>Areas of deprivation</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised about the negative impact on car users generated by the implementation of tariffs. Tariffs will be modest and for long stay users only. When compared to the cost of running a vehicle in general, they are low meaning that impacts will be minimal. The enforcement of maximum stay restrictions will help generate turnover of spaces in the retail areas, thus supporting economic vitality of retail provision.</p> <p>Net Neutral Impact</p>		
<p>Human rights</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on Human Rights.</p>		
<p>Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any impact on Health and Wellbeing.</p>		
<p>Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)</p>	<p>Equality compliance is embedded within the council's policy and procedure with regards to infrastructure works undertaken by the council's term contractor and with regard to procurement of car</p>		

	park payment and management technology.		
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Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

A 12-week public consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the borough wide parking strategy. The consultation was widely publicised including media releases, publication on the Council website and through the Council's social media channels and public events.

The consultation documents were made available on the Council's website were provided on request in hard copy format. Consultation documents were available in a variety of formats (including audio, Braille, large print, and other languages) and consultation surveys could be completed on-line or by completing a printed copy.

The feedback received has influenced the development of the strategy. Proposals to introduce charging for disabled parking has not been progressed following concerns received that in some cases individuals with a disability may have a lower income and introducing charges would have a negative impact on this group.

At the request of the council's Scrutiny Panel an economic analysis of impact of introducing the Tarporley Car Parking Action Plan on the economic performance of Tarporley has been undertaken. In addition, a social/environmental analysis of impact of introducing measures has been undertaken (e.g. displacement), triggering the need for any mitigating measures such as additional restrictions or residential parking zones; or air quality benefits or disbenefits.

It is considered that the measures proposed will achieve the objectives below without significant negative impact.

- To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday
- To better manage demand at limited car parking facilities and allocate the most appropriate parking locations to the most appropriate user groups.

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Review impact of Parking Action Plans	Monitor for adverse trends	Medium	Trends adversely affecting residents and visitors are identified at an early stage	Manager, Parking Services	December 2020

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Sign off	
Lead officer:	Mike Lester – Manager, Parking Services
Approved by Tier 4 Manager:	Vanessa Griffiths - Manager, Regulatory Services
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	Low impact - 2021

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website

