



**North Hertfordshire District Council**  
**Parking Strategy 2019-2031**  
January 2019

The North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Strategy 2019 -2031 and associated Strategic Action Plan at Appendix A was adopted by NHDC Cabinet on 29 January 2019.

This Strategy replaces the NHDC Parking Strategy (2009 -2012) updated in 2012.

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Good parking management is an important tool that can contribute towards achieving the Council's Corporate Priorities and its economic and planning policy objectives. Having parking policies and effective enforcement in place can influence travel patterns, sustain the local economy, balance competing demands for road space, relieve congestion and contribute to sustainable outcomes.
- 1.2 This Parking Strategy covers the period 2019 to 2031, to accompany the implementation period of the proposed submission Local Plan. It updates a previous strategy and is based on the recommendations of the NHDC parking strategy review, a study undertaken by consultants on behalf of the Council<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3 The main focus of this strategy document is to provide the Council's policy framework for managing parking across the District. It sets out how parking issues are currently dealt with and identifies a number of objectives and proposed actions for which future investment may be required. The detail of how the Council proposes to implement this framework is contained in a separate document, the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*, which will be made available on the Council's website<sup>2</sup>. The Guidelines will be updated as required throughout the life of the Strategy to reflect changes in parking trends and ensure that these are aligned with the Council's priorities.
- 1.4 Whilst the Council will consider and/or record all parking requests, it should be noted that given the current background of public spending restraint and limited resources, it will not be possible to guarantee what projects/schemes will be taken forward. This would also be subject to agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority.
- 1.5 This Strategy has been prepared in consultation with key stakeholders, Local District and County Members and is supported by an assessment of local evidence as set out in the Phase 1 and Phase 2 NHDC parking strategy review reports.
- 1.6 The Service Director for Regulatory Services will be responsible for implementing the policies contained within the Strategy and reviewing the proposed strategic action plan and operational guidelines in consultation with the Relevant Executive Member for Transport<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.7 Where policies refer to consultation with "relevant stakeholders", the consultees will generally include the relevant ward and parish councillors, relevant organisations involved in town centre management, Hertfordshire County Council

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<sup>1</sup> North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Strategy Review – Phase 1 Report (Feb 2017) and Phase 2 Report (April 2018) prepared by Markides Associates - <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parking/parking-strategy>

<sup>2</sup> NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines – <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parking/parking-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> Section 14: Responsibility for Functions (delegations to Officers and the Executive) of the North Hertfordshire District Council Constitution

and Hertfordshire Constabulary. In addition, other local relevant stakeholders may also be consulted such as other car park operators<sup>4</sup>.

- 1.8 The level of technological change that may occur during the life of this strategy is likely to be considerable, including the increasing electrification and automation of the vehicle fleet. Furthermore, communications technology is leading to a change in the way consumers find information and pay for services. The strategy is conscious of these changes and therefore proposes a flexible approach to ensure future adaptation of policy.

## **2 Background to the strategy**

- 2.1 Parking availability for any type of vehicle is an important factor in determining how people travel. Parking availability also influences the vitality and viability of town centres and the design and layout of parking can affect the quality of place of residential areas. In some places on-street parking can act as a traffic calming measure, in others it is a problem for residents and businesses and can be a barrier to accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, passenger transport, emergency and other service vehicles.
- 2.2 Parking management is generally held to be primarily a balance between three key aspects:
  - *The local economy* – using parking measures to support town centres and other business locations (e.g. providing sufficient parking at appropriate pricing and duration).
  - *Travel Demand Management* - using parking controls as a means of managing traffic and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.
  - *Cost* – the costs of car parking (e.g. providing, enforcing and maintaining car parking) and where available and appropriate to fund contributions towards other related transport services.
- 2.3 All three of these aspects are important, and the Council will seek to take a balanced approach to them in this Strategy.
- 2.4 Demand for town centre parking in North Hertfordshire was affected in the last decade by the economic downturn and by changes in retail habits, as well as competition from out of town centres, which generally have free parking. The four town centres of Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston have different characteristics and environments, and are adapting to these challenges in different ways. As a result, the parking provision and tariff structures in each of the town centres may vary.
- 2.5 The pressure of non-residential parking in residential areas has increased in all of the towns and in Knebworth in particular, specifically as a result of commuter parking. Rail patronage increased at rates of between 31% and 71% at the

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<sup>4</sup> Other car park operators could include but are not limited to organisations such as the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Network Rail, Royston town Council and other private landowners/operators.

stations in North Hertfordshire between 2005/06 and 2014/15, and station car parks are generally full.

- 2.6 It is expected that the North Hertfordshire Local Plan will be adopted in 2019. At this point, there should be greater certainty on the overall level of planned growth for the area and the major development opportunities. The Council is committed to reviewing its town centre strategies to accommodate future growth and changes in retail/commercial patterns over time. This Parking Strategy will play an important role in reviewing the above strategies.
- 2.7 This Parking Strategy is intended to cover the period 2019 to 2031. It is acknowledged, however, that the Strategy should be kept under review during this period as technological and transport patterns change over time and not least because of the implications of major development opportunities in Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston and any resultant policies or strategies.

### **3 Policy context**

- 3.1 The Council's parking policies must comply with the law (particularly the Traffic Management Act 2004); and have regard to the Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions, issued in 2014. This Guidance states that enforcement authorities should design their parking policies with particular regard to:
  - managing the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic, (including pedestrians and cyclists);
  - improving road safety;
  - improving the local environment;
  - improving the quality and accessibility of public transport;
  - meeting the needs of people with disabilities, some of whom will be unable to use public transport and depend entirely on the use of a car; and
  - managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space.
- 3.2 The Council's role with regard to on-street car parking is one of the management and enforcement of all on-street parking restrictions in the District. This management and enforcement role also includes the off-street car parks the Council owns and/or manages mainly in town centres. NHDC is also the local planning authority responsible for parking standards for new development.
- 3.3 In respect of on-street parking (public roads and streets) enforcement, the Council acts on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council (the Highway Authority) under the terms of an agency agreement between the two authorities<sup>5</sup>. The Council's agreement with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC - i.e. the Highway Authority) does not include the implementation of other on-street parking controls

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<sup>5</sup> Agreements with HCC include the Highway Agency Agreement dated 24 January 2002 and Parking and Traffic Order Agency Agreement dated 17 January 2005.

(i.e. Traffic Regulation Orders – TROs) that are intended to address safety or public amenity issues.

- 3.4 As well as complying with relevant legislation this strategy must also be read alongside the County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4), the NHDC Transport Strategy, the emerging North Central Hertfordshire Growth Transport Plan, Town Centre Strategies, the Local Development Framework and other relevant supporting documents to provide the full picture on how a balance can be struck between environmental protection, economic growth, accessibility, health improvement and social inclusion.
- 3.5 There is also a range of national, regional and local policy that is relevant to this parking strategy. Some of the key aims and objectives of these policies are set out below:
- 3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 3.7 The Secretary of State for Transport also issued in 2016 Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions, which sets out the policy framework for Civil Parking Enforcement. It explains how to approach, carry out and review parking enforcement.
- 3.8 Countywide policy on parking is set out in the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which was adopted by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in May 2018<sup>6</sup>. The Local Transport Plan adopts a transport user hierarchy policy which gives priority to more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Policy 4 of the LTP4 stresses the importance of parking as a traffic demand management tool.  
  
*The County Council considers greater traffic demand management to be essential in the county's urban areas in the next five years to achieve modal shift and improve sustainable travel provision. This can only currently be achieved efficiently and effectively through parking restrictions and charging applied to on-street, off-street and potentially at workplace parking. The county council will work with the district and borough councils and other key stakeholders to develop locally appropriate strategies.*
- 3.9 The main principles of the County's transport vision have been replicated in the NHDC Transport Strategy, published in October 2017<sup>7</sup> as supporting evidence to the Submission Local Plan.
- 3.10 The NHDC Proposed Submission Local Plan contains parking standards and refers to the NHDC Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) *Vehicle Parking at*

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<sup>6</sup> HCC Local Transport Plan 4 - <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/transport-planning/local-transport-plan.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> NHDC Transport Strategy 2017 – listed as ED14 - <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-examination/examination-documents>



*New Developments.* The emerging Local Plan also identifies several transport related policies which will affect North Hertfordshire's town centres:

- Parking is one tool that can be used to influence travel demand and mode of travel. It is now recognised and accepted that, in most locations, demand management through parking is most appropriate at the trip destination (for example commercial, leisure and retail parking).
- The locations of parking areas should ensure that they create safe and secure places to leave and access vehicles.

#### **4 Parking Strategy Objectives**

4.1 Based on the above background, policy and the available information<sup>8</sup> on parking in NHDC, the core objectives of the Parking Strategy are proposed as follows:

1. To manage the volume and type of on- and off-street parking in a balanced approach to meet NHDC, HCC and national policy objectives, including the need to achieve mode shift away from private car use and to help support the vitality of town centres.
2. To ensure that the quantity and type of on-street parking provision and kerbside space is managed and enforced to seek to balance the current and future demands of residents, businesses and visitors.
3. To keep under review the effectiveness of on-street restrictions within the District, and to work with HCC where safety and congestion is or could be an issue.
4. To ensure that Council-owned car parks are maintained to an appropriate standard, that there is sufficient space to meet demand and to aid traffic circulation.
5. To operate the car parking service with an efficient and effective use of available resources and within the financial constraints and objectives set by the Council.

4.2 These objectives are reflected in the overall policy framework set out in section 2 of the Strategy.

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<sup>8</sup> Information from the Phase 1 and Phase 2 NHDC Parking Strategy Review studies, NHDC car park usage figures, correspondence with local councillors, HCC and local residents, etc.

## SECTION 2: POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 5 Management and resources

#### **Policy 1 - Management and resources**

In order to deliver this Parking Strategy, the Council is committed to finding the most efficient and effective use of resources to implement improvements and manage the parking service on a day to day basis.

- 5.1 The management of on and off-street parking in the district falls into two broad categories. Firstly, the enforcement of on and off-street parking (i.e. the public 'face' of the service) and secondly, the back-office management which assists the enforcement function as well as day to day management of issues such as Season Ticket and Residents Permit applications as well as customer queries.
- 5.2 Managing car park payment machines (in terms of ticket machines, the cash collection, planned and reactive maintenance) as well as monitoring the status of machines also falls within the day to day management function. In addition, the Council allocates resources to physical maintenance of car parks, again on a planned and reactive basis.
- 5.3 With regard to on-street parking the Council, in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary, prepares and implements new or amended Traffic Regulation Orders, principally for Controlled Parking Zones. The Council will consider the implementation of limited waiting/parking restrictions where there is a justified parking issue.
- 5.4 The entire daily management resource covers both town centres and elsewhere in the District, both on and off-street, so changes to one aspect of the service as a result of this Strategy are likely to have implications for the whole service resource. The level of resources available will dictate how the Strategy will be delivered and the service is managed.
- 5.5 The Council is acutely aware of the limitations on its resources and as such seeks to achieve the most efficient and effective ways of working, and to regularly review the scale of its operations with a view to ensuring that parking management and enforcement remains financially sustainable in accordance with its Medium-term Financial Strategy (MTFS)<sup>9</sup>.

### 6 Town centres

#### ***Off-street parking in town centres***

#### **Policy 2 - Off-street Car Park Capacity in Town Centres**

The Council will periodically review the level of off-street car parking capacity in each of the town centres. The Council will aim to manage the overall level of capacity in line with policy objectives for town centre vitality, while seeking to

<sup>9</sup> The current MTFS sets out the Council's financial implications and policy framework for the period 2019/20 to 2023/24 - <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-performance-and-data/budgets-and-spending/medium-term-financial-strategy>

minimise environmental impacts, recognising the need for encouraging sustainable travel and adapting to new technology and trends in parking. The Council will consider the balance required between short and longer-stay parking needs in its reviews.

The Council will manage its off-street car parks in a financially responsible manner. Where appropriate, the Council will work with other off-street parking operators to seek to ensure that the combined car parking capacity in town centres meets policy objectives and is financially sustainable.

- 6.1 The four towns of Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City, Baldock and Royston are different in terms of demand for parking, reflecting the different retail and servicing offer in each town as well as their physical characteristics. Each of the town centres is affected by other longer-term trends such as the competition from out of centre retail formats not necessarily within the District, the continuing growth in online sales and the increasing importance of hospitality and leisure for town centre vitality.
- 6.2 The availability of car parking supports the town centres and the level of demand for parking in each town reflects the variations between the amount of shops, services and destinations in each town. There are privately owned and operated car parks in Hitchin and Letchworth Garden City that, combined with Council owned and operated car parks and off-street parking provide a varied amount of parking in terms of on and off-street, short and long-stay, location, charging periods and price.
- 6.3 The Phase 1 and 2 parking strategy review studies do not advocate significant changes in the volume and type of parking in NHDC. However they acknowledge that changes in the provision of off-street parking capacity may need to be considered in the light of changing user needs and potentially as a result of development opportunities in the town centres.
- 6.4 Differential tariffs between car parks within towns and also between towns have been in place since 2009. This approach has been adopted to reflect the different demands for parking between and even within town centres.
- 6.5 When reviewing car parking capacity and tariffs, NHDC will continue to work with external parties such as Network Rail and the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to adopt a coordinated approach in each town. Charging policies (price and timing) in private car parks can have significant implications for surrounding streets and car parks. The Council will maintain a dialogue with other car park providers/operators in order to ensure that parking provision as a whole does not have unacceptable impacts on other car parks or on-street locations.
- 6.6 Parking surveys conducted in 2016 confirmed that the balance between short and long-stay off-street parking broadly reflects current demand. There is significant demand for short-stay on-street and off-street parking in all the town centres. Long-stay car parks are located on the edge of the town centres and are used for both short and long-stay parking at different times. The Council continues to keep the balance of short-stay and long-stay parking under review.

- 6.7 Currently on-street parking within town centres is free of charge<sup>10</sup>, while off-street parking is charged during the daytime Monday to Saturday. On-street parking in 'core' shopping streets as well as more peripheral areas provides a significant additional parking resource and is especially important for Disabled Badge Holder access as well as for servicing and loading. The majority of this parking is short-stay although some uncontrolled longer stay on-street parking conflicts with residents' parking in peripheral streets.
- 6.8 An assessment of current demand and supply in, and priorities for, each of the town centres and Knebworth was documented in the Parking Strategy Review phase 1 report (February 2017). In general, there is sufficient capacity for all types of parking in town centres. There are, however, some pressures as follows:
- Despite there being capacity in off-street car parks, there is pressure on the free and convenient on-street parking in all of the town centres.
  - In several of the town centres there is high demand for the most popular short-stay car parks while other car parks are under-utilised<sup>11</sup> despite price incentives (the Multi Storey Car Parks – MSCPs - in Hitchin and Letchworth Garden City, Town Hall/Civic Centre in Royston).
  - In Hitchin and Royston, there is less capacity available on market days, both on and off-street.
  - Future developments planned via the Town Centre Strategies may place more pressure on off-street parking provision.
- 6.9 The Council will consider the following principles when providing for town centre parking:
- Support the objectives of the Town Centre Strategies to protect the vitality, social and environmental amenity of the towns;
  - Consider parking provision in the context of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and Transport Strategy objectives, to create towns where walking, cycling and public transport are encouraged and support strategies to address climate change and air quality;
  - Improve the ease of use of all parking facilities, i.e. the customer experience, and ensure a smooth transition to new technologies;
  - Provide information for users and decision makers to aid the management of parking;
  - Ensure that on- and off-street parking should cover the cost of providing the service ; and
  - Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders where appropriate.

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<sup>10</sup> With the exception of a small number of paid on-street spaces in Royston.

<sup>11</sup> The definition of under-utilisation will depend on the individual street or car park, but in general a car park is regarded as approaching utilisation when demand exceeds 85% of capacity (see e.g. the CIHT Guidelines for Parking Management Strategies, 2005) – this is to allow for some spare capacity for arriving vehicles.

### **Policy 3 - Physical Improvements and Maintenance of Car Parks**

The Council will prepare and periodically review a programme of physical improvements for its car parks, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders where appropriate and subject to funding availability.

- 6.10 The quality and safety of off-street car parks is often a key consideration for car park users. This often falls into two basic categories – the quality, convenience and safety of the car park and the quality, safety and convenience of the route from the car park to town centre shops and services. Much of the latter will be dealt with via Town Centre Strategies and development proposals as they come forward.
- 6.11 Section 3 of this strategy sets out current investment priorities in the Strategic Action Plan, which may change over the life of the Parking Strategy.

### **Policy 4 – Off-Street Car Park Management System**

The Council will continue to assess the most appropriate off-street parking management systems and payment mechanisms on a case-by-case basis. The relevant considerations and criteria for this assessment are set out in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.

- 6.12 NHDC car parks are currently operated on a Pay and Display basis. The most recent replacement of payment machines was completed seven years ago, and the indicative lifespan of the latter equipment is 10 to 13 years. The Council also has a mobile phone payment system as an alternative for registered users and can be used to top up the duration of a visit.
- 6.13 The Council recognises that Pay and Display may not always be the most appropriate system for charging and will investigate alternative methods on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.14 One alternative could be the introduction of Pay on Foot systems, where users do not decide on their duration of stay up-front and pay for parking on the return to their vehicle. The Council would also consider how Pay on Foot or other alternative systems could be used for season ticket holders and other groups of registered users in car parks where these systems are proposed.
- 6.15 The Council is committed to collecting accurate data on car park usage and will investigate how any future systems can record all vehicles, including those not paying at the point of use such as season ticket users and Disabled Badge holders. The introduction of any new off-street parking management system will be considered in light of the assessment criteria set out in the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines* and will be subject to a positive business case.
- 6.16 The Council will also consider, on a case-by-case basis, the potential for acceptance of different payment types, including those not using cash.

### **Policy 5 – Off-street Car Park Tariff Reviews**

The Council will review tariffs and other types of registered permits each year in accordance with its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Council will also undertake a more detailed review of its tariffs as appropriate but at least once during the life of the Strategy. The criteria for the tariff reviews are set out in the document *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*, which will be updated as required to align with future strategies or policies.

The Council will charge for replacement lost, stolen or damaged parking permits. The charge will be levied to cover administration costs only. The level of charge will be reviewed alongside other parking charges.

- 6.17 The patterns of parking demand vary considerably between the towns in the District, where differential tariff structures have been used within the towns to manage demand for 'prime' short-stay car parks and improve the utilisation of less popular car parks throughout the day. This has included the introduction of off-peak incentives in certain towns to manage demand and to encourage users to stay longer, thereby supporting town centre businesses.
- 6.18 Any review of parking tariffs such as the annual review of inflation, will take into consideration these differences in parking demand and will be undertaken in accordance with the criteria set out in the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*. The Council will monitor the usage of its car parks and undertake discussions with the relevant town centre managers and organisations to understand the impact of proposed tariff changes.
- 6.19 A full and detailed review of parking tariffs will take place when considered appropriate during the life of the parking strategy.
- 6.20 The Council may issue a number of different types of registered permits within its tariff structure, such as season tickets within its long-stay car parks. The types of permits and eligibility for such permits will be set out in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*. The cost and review of such permits will be in accordance with the Councils MTFS. The Council will charge a reasonable administrative fee for replacing lost, stolen or damaged parking permits.

### **Policy 6 - Charging for Evenings, Sundays and Bank Holidays**

The Council will consider charging for parking for evenings, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Any review will be carried out in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and will consider the factors set out in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.

- 6.21 Currently there is no charge for Sunday, evening or bank holiday parking in town centres. Over the last years some towns have seen increased activity on Sundays and during the evenings. In Hitchin, the most popular car parks are operating at or near capacity on Sundays, and consideration may need to be given to demand management to ensure all potential users of the car park are given an opportunity to park. Long-stay car parking, for example, may conflict

with that of shoppers or visitors. It is noted that currently competing town centres in neighbouring districts and boroughs also charge on a Sunday. Likewise several car parks, notably Biggin Lane and St Mary's Square in Hitchin, are operating at or near capacity in the evening periods. In Letchworth Garden City, the Town Hall car park is well-positioned for the cinema/theatre and restaurants and therefore reaches full occupancy in the evenings and on Sunday afternoons.

- 6.22 The NHDC Parking Strategy Review Phase 1 Report identifies that there is a case for a gradual introduction of Sunday and evening charges where this can assist in managing demand for the most popular car parks. However, the review recommended that these measures should be introduced on a trial basis and in incremental steps. This will be based on the economic circumstances of the town centres at the time and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines set out the factors that would need to be taken into consideration when considering introducing such charging.

#### **Policy 7 - Other Services in Council Car Parks**

The Council will consider opportunities for providing other services and temporary uses within its car parks. In some cases, services may be provided by third parties and in all cases, consideration will be given to the appropriateness of the service provided and/or the use as well as the implications for use of the car park and town centre generally.

The Council will consider charging for the service or for the temporary use of its car parks.

- 6.23 In line with modern car park operations, there is potential for other services to be provided in off-street car parks in the district. Where appropriate some of these services may benefit car park users and the Council will consider opportunities on a case-by-case basis. Services could include:

1. Advertising on tickets, ticket machines or elsewhere;
2. Promotion or marketing initiatives;
3. Other events associated with town centre promotion or activities;
4. Other appropriate commercial activities.

- 6.24 Where such opportunities involve the temporary closure of all or part of a car park, the Council will consider charging to cover any potential loss in income, any associated administration costs and any other reasonably incurred costs.

#### ***On-street Parking in Town Centres***

#### **Policy 8 – On-Street Parking Provision**

In consultation with relevant stakeholders the Council will review provision of on-street parking as and when circumstances change in town centres. Consideration will be given to the overall quantum and balance in duration of stay of on-street parking spaces. The Council will aim to manage the overall level of capacity in line with policy objectives for town centre vitality, while seeking to minimise environmental impacts, recognising the need for encouraging sustainable travel

and adapting to new technology and trends in parking. The Council will also consider during the design and enforcement of on-street controls the needs of bus operations.

The Council will continue to pursue a general policy of very short-stay parking in core streets, short and medium stay parking in peripheral streets and medium to longer stay parking in streets further out from the centre, subject to provision not conflicting with other demands or giving rise to safety, access or amenity concerns.

- 6.25 There is a considerable amount of on-street parking in town centres. Much of this parking is as close, if not closer, to main shopping areas than off-street parking. This makes it popular and survey information indicates that turnover of spaces is significant.
- 6.26 On-street parking is currently free of charge and this, coupled with the short-stay parking restrictions in place, means vehicles moving through town centres searching for on-street parking, often when there is spare capacity in off-street car parks. In some cases, this puts circulating traffic in areas where pedestrian activity is busiest.
- 6.27 On-street parking generally falls into a number of categories:
- Very short-stay (less than 30 minutes)
  - Short-stay (less than 2 hours)
  - Medium stay (2 to 4 hours)
  - Long-stay (4+ hours includes commuters)
  - Disabled Badge holder parking
  - Loading and servicing
  - Residents
- 6.28 The Council regularly reviews the provision of on-street parking, especially where Town Centre Strategies are progressing and the demand for or need for on-street parking may change over time. The principle of very short/short-stay parking in the core shopping areas to support retail activity and short/medium/longer stay parking further away from shops is the preferred approach. The Council also recognises the social aspects of town centres and will take this into consideration with regard to such activities on a case by case basis.
- 6.29 From time to time there may be a need to review the provision of on-street parking in town centres, for example where servicing, emergency vehicles and buses have reported difficulty accessing key destinations. The provision and layout of on-street parking may also be reviewed as part of wider urban realm improvements and the potential for improving sustainable travel.

#### **Policy 9 - Charging for On-street Parking**

The Council will consider the case for on-street parking charges on a case-by-case basis in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Consideration will also be given to appropriate parking management and payment mechanisms. The criteria for considering on-street charging and tariff reviews are set out in the document *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.



- 6.30 On-street parking in town centres in the district is generally free. This is an anomaly given that off-street parking for the same duration is generally charged. It is typical in town centres that the more in-demand parking such as on-street is charged, and is usually charged at a higher rate than off-street car parks.
- 6.31 The Council is concerned about the implications for town centre vitality and viability of the volumes of traffic circulating in town centres. Yet some free parking, particularly very short-stay parking, can also support the local retail convenience offer, and it is common practice in some towns to see parking restrictions of 20 or 30 minutes in such streets.
- 6.32 Furthermore, the Council manages the enforcement of on-street parking controls in town centres. The costs involved in staffing and costs incurred with the lines, signs and Orders, are not off-set by users paying for the service at source, as is the case in off-street car parks.
- 6.33 Town Centre Strategies identify the need for increased pedestrian priority measures as well as the need for town centre users to use car parks on the edges of shopping areas and walk rather than circulate by car through core town centre streets. In summary there is a balance between providing on-street parking in town centres, the cost of managing that provision and the implications for town centres as shopping environments and the volume of traffic it generates.
- 6.34 Charging for on-street parking is one way of managing these impacts and is in line with managing parking elsewhere in car parks and on-street parking in residential areas (i.e. via permit charges). The Phase 2 NHDC Parking Strategy Review Report recommended that over time on-street parking in town centres should be either charged at a level at least comparable to adjacent off-street parking, or restricted to 20 or 30 minutes if it is to remain free of charge. On-street charging does not necessarily require cash parking meters, which could become redundant within the timeframe of this strategy, and could initially be implemented on a trial basis by using cashless mobile phone technology for 'premium' spaces closest to the shops. The criteria for considering and introducing on-street charging is set out in the relevant section of the NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines.
- 6.35 On-street charged parking may also be appropriate in some locations outside of the town centres, notably in relation to commuter parking (see policy 18).

### ***Other types of parking in town centres***

#### **Policy 10 - Parking for Disabled Badge Holders**

The Council will maintain its policy of providing free parking for disabled Badge Holders both on- and off-street in a variety of locations around town centres. Where circumstances change (for example associated with a new car park management system, development proposals or demand for more pedestrian priority) the views of relevant stakeholders will be sought on future provision for Disabled Badge holders.

Where demand justifies it, the Council will also seek to identify and provide parking space for mobility scooters.

Pedestrian priority measures will be designed with the needs of Disabled Badge holders' parking needs as a key consideration.

- 6.36 The Council has maintained a policy of providing free on-street and off-street parking for Disabled Badge holders in a variety of locations in town centres. This reflects the need for Disabled Badge holders to park near their destination. The number of Disabled Badge holders in the district is expected to rise in line with an ageing population and qualifying criteria, and there is, at times, great demand for prime Disabled Badge holder spaces. The opportunity for increasing provision in key destinations is limited. There is also a considerable amount of abuse of Disabled Badge Holder parking bays by non-Disabled Badge Holders, especially on a short-stay basis and will be addressed as part of the Council's parking management and enforcement role.

#### **Policy 11 - Servicing and Loading**

The Council will seek to maintain servicing and delivery access for businesses and residential properties in town centres. As proposals from Town Centre Strategies come forward, the ability to maintain servicing and delivery access throughout the day in certain parts of town centres may be limited, therefore needing a more flexible or managed solution.

In consultation with relevant stakeholders the Council will review servicing and delivery access as and when circumstances require. The preference will be to serve properties from the rear where possible and, if not possible, from the street outside of peak shopping hours.

Pedestrian priority measures will be designed with the needs of servicing and delivery access as a key consideration.

- 6.37 Another key issue for town centres is the availability of service access and loading bays for shops and businesses. Currently loading bays are provided in locations where demand for on-street parking is high, road space is often limited and specific provision is needed to assist business deliveries. The Town Centre Strategies identify potential demand for pedestrian priority measures and increased retail provision in town centres. Pressure for servicing and loading access will increase in town centres, potentially being directly at odds with the ability to carry out servicing and deliveries where pedestrian priority becomes more in-demand.
- 6.38 There is restricted access to core shopping streets in Hitchin on Saturdays. This, along with experience from outside the district, suggests that there are ways of maintaining service access alongside demand for greater pedestrian priority.

### **Policy 12 - Emergency Services' Access**

The Council will consider requests from the Emergency Services in relation to any locations where it is considered that parking is consistently impeding emergency service access.

Pedestrian priority measures will be designed with the needs of the Emergency Services as a key consideration.

- 6.39 Emergency access in town centres is a key consideration and many of the issues associated with it are similar to those affecting servicing and deliveries, although obviously the need to preserve human life overrides the need for any other access or parking requirements. The emergency services will park wherever needed in an emergency and the Council seeks to support their ability to get access into town centres and not be impeded by other parking. Much of this issue is a matter for the management and enforcement of town centre parking.

### **Policy 13 - Powered Two-Wheeler and Bicycle Parking**

The Council will consider, as part of reviews or changes in town centres, how appropriate parking facilities for powered two wheelers and bicycles can be provided. The most appropriate mechanism for delivering improvements is via the NHDC Transport Strategy or Town Centre Strategies and/or new development proposals, and the principle of small-scale provision at a variety of locations in town centres is the starting point.

- 6.40 Increased use of bicycles and powered two wheelers can help reduce congestion in town centres and pressure on car parking. Increased bicycle use also helps reduce carbon emissions and the Council's proposed Cycle and Pedestrian Strategy alongside emerging North Central Hertfordshire Growth Transport Plan will identify improvements to routes to and from town centres for bicycles and the need for additional cycle parking.
- 6.41 Security and shelter are key issues for both types of two wheeled user. Both are able to park free of charge and bicycle parking stands are generally situated at various locations around town centres. Powered two wheelers can park in designated areas in off-street car parks, on-street or in other informal locations, often sharing with bicycle parking.

### **Policy 14 - Taxi Parking**

The Council will consider the provision of appropriate parking for taxi operators at key destinations that balances the need for convenient access for operators and customers with the wider demands of town centres, railway stations and other areas where specific demand for taxi parking is identified.

- 6.42 Taxis provide an important service, especially for journeys to and from Town Centres and Railway Stations. As such the Council is keen to ensure a provision of taxi parking and waiting in accessible locations. Provision will reflect that demand for taxi parking often varies and can increase at peak times.

- 6.43 The taxi/hackney carriage and private hire industries are undergoing a period of change due to rapid technological developments, and changes to the governance of on-demand mobility services is inevitable during the life of this Strategy. Changes to licensing arrangements, including aspects such as the eligibility to wait at NHDC taxi ranks, will be dealt with through NHDC Licensing policy.

#### **Policy 15 - Bus, coach, HGV and caravan/trailer parking**

The Council will consider the provision of parking for Buses, Coaches, HGVs and caravans/trailers as and when demand is identified. This will include consideration of appropriate directional signing and information and, if relevant, charging.

- 6.44 Currently the Council provides Coach and Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) 24-hour parking in Woodside car park in Hitchin. The Council will consider provision for similar parking where demand arises. Provision for such parking will be made on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration both the location of the proposed parking and access routes in consultation with HCC as the Highway Authority and other relevant stakeholders, including bus and coach operators.

#### **Policy 16 – Electric Vehicle Charging in town centres**

The Council will consider the case for electric vehicle charging points in off-street car parks and review the use of existing bays. The Council may offer discounted or free parking to electric vehicles whilst being charged for a limited period to encourage their take-up, although over time these bays will revert to standard tariffs.

The Council, in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority, will also consider the case for on-street electric vehicle charging points where this is regarded as viable, practical and necessary.

- 6.45 The Council expects to see a significant electrification of the vehicle fleet over the life of this Strategy. Government guidance relating to on- and off-street parking for electric vehicles is being updated to guide the prioritisation of the rollout of charging infrastructure and put in place a financially sustainable model for charging infrastructure. The Council will prepare an electric vehicle parking strategy and will ensure that any detailed guidance is kept under regular review in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.
- 6.46 The Council will also consider with Hertfordshire County Council the case for on-street electric vehicle charging points where this is regarded as viable, practical and necessary.

## ***Employee parking***

### **Policy 17 – Employee parking schemes**

The Council will consider proposals from employers and other organisations such as the BIDs representing employers in any of the town centres in the district for an employee parking scheme. The criteria for an employee parking scheme are set out in the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.

- 6.47 The town centre management organisations in North Hertfordshire have highlighted the affordability of long-stay parking as of concern. The retail and leisure sectors have a large proportion of employees on or near the minimum wage, for whom the long-stay parking tariffs represent a significant proportion of their net earnings. Furthermore, the increasing use of flexible, part-time and zero-hour contracts means that employees on lower wages are less likely to be able to take advantage of season ticket discounts.
- 6.48 The Council will consider employee parking schemes proposed by town centre BIDs or employers if they fulfil certain criteria as set out in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*, including consideration of impact on sustainable travel alternatives.

## **7 Residential and other non-Town Centre Areas**

- 7.1 One important theme from the Phase 1 and 2 parking review studies undertaken in the NHDC town centres and Knebworth was the growing commuter parking issue around the railway stations.
- 7.2 In addition to rail-based commuters, in some areas of NHDC, parking pressure from people employed in the town centres is also an issue on residential streets, and the controlled parking policies set out below will be applicable to both commuter and employee parking issues.

## ***Commuter Parking***

### **Policy 18 – Commuter parking**

In locations which meet the criteria and provide the evidence as set out in the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*, the Council will consider measures to manage commuter parking demand and supply through a combination of demand management, parking controls and additional commuter parking capacity.

- 7.3 The top priority for the Council and relevant stakeholders such as Network Rail and the train operating companies should be to reduce parking demand at stations by increasing the potential for mode shift to public transport, walking and cycling, and investigating whether bus services or new demand-responsive

transport services<sup>12</sup> could provide access from nearby villages to stations at a competitive price and viability.

7.4 Following consideration of the needs for sustainable transport as described in 7.3 above, the following measures may also be appropriate at some stations:

- Where capacity is available, the Council can allow rail commuters to use existing under-utilised NHDC car parks near stations with a competitive pricing strategy. Rail commuters can be considered as a distinct market segment, and commuter spaces can be marketed and branded separately from other season ticket holders.
- The Council can expand CPZs further while providing some on-street commuter bays in appropriate locations where residents have off-street parking and where these bays can be accommodated safely (as set out in policy 19 and the associated Operational Guidance). These spaces could be marketed and paid for using existing or new systems.
- The Council will continue to work with station operators to provide more car parking around stations or provide more car parking on Council-owned land if available.

### ***Controlled parking***

#### **Policy 19 - Identifying On-Street Parking Problem Areas and Potential Solutions**

The Council will publish and update its guidance for residential parking controls as part of the NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines. This provides guidance to assist residents, local councillors and relevant stakeholders in assessing on-street parking problem areas, how to provide evidence to the Council of issues, early consultation and identifying potential solutions including parking controls.

The Council will continue to implement measures to manage on-street parking in accepted problem areas, subject to funding availability and according to a regularly updated and prioritised programme of work.

7.5 The District Council has been managing on-street parking controls for a number of years and has considerable experience of the most appropriate way of addressing parking issues in residential areas. The agreement that the Council has with Hertfordshire County Council permits the District Council to implement Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that provide for parking, mainly in the form of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).

7.6 The Council now manages CPZs that cover a large proportion of the residential areas of Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City, Baldock and Royston, as well as

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<sup>12</sup> A range of transport services that are enabled by technology and can be adapted to customers' need are collectively termed Mobility-as-a-Service. While many of these services are being trialled in large urban areas, some may also prove to be beneficial around small towns with little scheduled public transport. These could include everything from demand-responsive minibuses, 'ride-sharing' platforms such as Uber, or car/e-bike/bike share systems operating either with fixed stations or as dockless systems.

several streets in Knebworth. The Operational Guidelines linked to this Strategy addresses the ongoing management of CPZs. It sets out the policies for establishing new CPZs, or reviewing existing CPZs, with a view to establishing a financially sustainable system where CPZs and other on-street parking are self-financing.

- 7.7 Other TROs are implemented from time to time in the districts that are mainly to do with preventing parking and/or promoting safety and public amenity. Whilst the District Council may enforce these types of parking restrictions, they remain the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council to implement.
- 7.8 The overall aim is to minimise the effects of on-street parking upon road safety, bus operations, congestion and the environment. The general principles of an area wide approach and detailed guidance on criteria to determine specific solutions on a street-by-street basis are contained in the residential parking controls section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.
- 7.9 The provision of CPZs has previously been focussed on removing non-residential car parking in residential areas, normally long-stay and mainly associated with commuters, employees and town centre users. The CPZ's implemented to date have been successful in achieving the removal of non-residential parking, and this has also supported policies encouraging sustainable travel. However, experience over the last few years has shown that:
- Non-residential parking problems migrate, not always to the most likely areas;
  - Controlled Parking Zones are expensive with regard to design, implementation, maintenance and enforcement.
  - There are potentially other ways of managing non-residential parking that may be as effective in terms of removing non-residential parking but not being as costly to implement and manage as CPZs. This could include retaining some on-street parking (which can often function as a traffic-calming measure), and potentially charging for some long-stay on-street parking in appropriate locations.
- 7.10 In considering areas for parking control the Council will need to consider the wider implications of any parking restrictions for all road users. The Council will also identify whether there is any scope for delivering parking improvements in conjunction with other highways works being undertaken, for example, maintenance or safety engineering schemes.
- 7.11 In order to implement measures to support residents' or businesses parking, the Council will continue to seek their support before moving to implementation. The Council seeks to ensure that Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are used in a way that is as clear and simple for users as it can be.
- 7.12 Where residents, local councillors and/or relevant stakeholders believe that action to control parking in non-town-centre locations is needed, they should consult the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*. This document provides practical advice on gathering evidence about parking stress, how to identify the appropriate area for public consultation, recommends methods of consulting residents and businesses, required thresholds of support and

criteria to be applied in identifying problem areas. Where it can be shown that these criteria are met, the Council will investigate the issue and subject to available resources consider working with the promoters in identifying potential solutions.

- 7.13 When assessing the case for changes to controlled parking areas, residential amenity is not the sole criterion that NHDC needs to consider- other issues such as the needs of local businesses and safety are also important considerations. While controlled parking is used to restrict use of residential streets for parking by non-residents, its purpose is not to guarantee each resident an on-street parking space in front of their property. In some streets with little off-street parking, it is simply not possible to allocate controlled parking areas to meet the demand from all residents.
- 7.14 The Council operates a programme of work that is agreed by the Director of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Member responsible for Transport. The work programme is regularly reviewed and prioritised according to the severity of the issue at hand, available funding and resources. Where appropriate the Council will investigate other ways of seeking funding and resources to implement the work programme. This could be by way of planning obligations through development schemes within a local area or through the Hertfordshire County Councillor Locality budgets.

#### **Policy 20 - Small-Scale Parking Improvements**

The Council will keep under review an implementation programme, subject to funding and resources availability, of small-scale parking improvements in locations where parking is hindering service and emergency vehicle access or public transport operations or is having other significant impacts as set out in the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines* for this policy.

Parking issues that are largely safety related will be referred to Hertfordshire County Council to address.

- 7.15 There are a number of other smaller scale issues associated with providing or managing on-street parking that are not area wide. The Council is aware of many of these and maintains a list of potential schemes as part of its programme of works, and recognises that from time to time additional problem locations will be added and this list will need to be flexible enough to respond to changes. Whilst the Council has no specific budget to deal with these small area issues, it will still monitor the issues as they may form part of a larger area issue that it may be able to seek to resolve, or it may be able to implement the schemes as part of a larger scheme.
- 7.16 In addition, the Council is also aware of the environmental impact of on-street parking in some areas (e.g. on verges or footways) and will need to undertake further work to fully investigate this issue to ascertain the authority responsible and options with regard to resolving any long-term issues.
- 7.17 Many of the smaller scale issues identified including any future work on verge and pavement parking will need to be implemented by Hertfordshire County



Council either in full or in partnership with the District Council. Agreement on a programme for these measures will be made with the County Council.

### **Policy 21 - Review of Existing Controlled Parking Zones**

The Council may as and when circumstances require, review an existing CPZ in order to determine whether it remains 'fit for purpose'. In consultation with relevant stakeholders, a programme for amending such CPZs will then be drawn up where it is considered appropriate to do so.

- 7.18 From time to time the Council may seek to conduct a review of one or more CPZs. Reviews will consider how well they operate, whether a CPZ is the most appropriate way of addressing parking issues and whether a zone needs to be amended in any way. Where the take up of residents' permits is lower than originally planned, the cost to the Council of managing these areas may justify a review. This review will also consider if there is available capacity for charged on-street parking within the CPZ area as that would contribute to the costs of its management.
- 7.19 Part of the review process will include the pricing of residents' permits and potential concessions on permits as well other issues such as whether to increase prices for multiple car owning properties or restrict the number of permits available per property as is standard practice in other Local Authorities.

### **Policy 22 – On-Street Disabled Badge Holder Parking Bays**

Applications for on-street Disabled Badge Holder parking bays will be directed towards Hertfordshire County Council where applications will be assessed on case-by-case basis and the assessment will focus on eligibility criteria as well as site specific circumstances.

- 7.20 With increasing numbers of cars parking in the district's streets, many residents experience difficulty parking close to their homes. Whilst all drivers can suffer inconvenience at times, disabled drivers are more seriously affected. In recognising the special needs of disabled drivers, NHDC in consultation with HCC seeks to assist those who are most disadvantaged by mobility problems. Requests for providing on-street Disabled Badge Holder Parking bays adjacent to residential properties are referred to Hertfordshire County Council. Applicants should refer to the HCC website<sup>13</sup> for more information on the eligibility criteria and application process.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/disabled-parking-bay/disabled-parking-bay.aspx>

### **Policy 23 – Sale of Permits to Non-residents in Controlled Parking Zones**

The Council may consider selling permits to non-residents in Controlled Parking Zones. A decision on whether to sell permits to non-residents will be made based on evidence of available spare capacity and in consultation with relevant stakeholders including Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority, having regard to the criteria set out in the relevant section of the *NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.

- 7.21 The Council recognises that where CPZ's were previously designed to favour residents and exclude commuters or employees and have been successful, this has in some cases resulted in under-utilised road space where there is very little use of the available on-street space during the day. In several CPZ zones the take up of permits is low and the net effect is increased cost to the Council to manage these zones, due to lower than required income to cover costs and spare space in locations where demand for parking would be high if left unrestricted. Each zone is different and site-specific circumstances also have an influence on spare space (e.g. number of dropped kerbs).
- 7.22 There is potential to sell permits to non-residents in each zone on a managed basis. This will help cover costs, reduce migration of parking and keep resident permit prices lower than might otherwise be the case.
- 7.23 Residents in CPZs may be concerned that the return of non-residents could in particular cases negate some benefits of the controls, particularly as they pay an annual sum for their permits. Any such proposals will need to carefully consider how such provision might affect CPZ benefits, and how these could help cover the cost of permit schemes and, therefore, help keep resident permit prices down.
- 7.24 The policy set out above seeks to cover the whole district but each case will need to be considered on its merits. The guiding principle is to promote residents' parking. It is intended that the policy applies to all existing and any future permit parking schemes. The policy should not be applied in a way that conflicts with other policy aims such as the promotion of safe conditions for walking and cycling.

## **8 Parking at new developments**

### **Policy 24 – Parking at New Development and Existing Controlled Parking Zones**

The Council will continue to adopt and periodically review their Supplementary Planning Document *Parking Standards at New Development* on parking policy and standards for new development. The Council will consider the need for including residents of new developments in existing CPZs on a case by case basis, with reference to the criteria set out in *the NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines*.

- 8.1 The Council has Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) guidance on the parking policy and standards to be applied to all new development, *Parking*

*Standards at New Development.* This will be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing development pressures and demand for parking of all types, including cycle and powered two wheeler parking.

- 8.2 As the provision of CPZs and the number of brownfield sites developed within urban areas have increased, the pressure for parking space in CPZs from new developments has intensified. The Council considers that all new development should, as far as possible, be self-sufficient in providing for future occupiers' parking insofar as there should be no unacceptable residual demand for parking in CPZs from new development.
- 8.3 Some residual parking on existing streets may be acceptable but where it is considered to add pressure to existing residents' and businesses' parking provision, new development will be required to provide for its own parking and provide a financial contribution towards any impact on adjacent parking control zones in order to protect existing residents' and businesses' parking. In some areas, e.g. residential areas outside of town centres where there is a high dependency on on-street car parking, the Council will seek provision of additional on-site car parking provision at new developments in addition to a range of measures to encourage more sustainable modes of travel in line with LTP4 (2018) policy advice, such as travel plans.
- 8.4 Where new roads are adopted and off-street parking is provided in new development, the Council will work with developers and Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that the detailed design of new development does not create unnecessary parking overspill onto existing streets, especially in areas where there is pressure for parking space. The Council will consider the availability of existing on- and off-street parking space in determining planning applications.
- 8.5 As a result of many 'brownfield' sites being redeveloped adjacent to CPZs the Council faces increasing pressure to issue permits to residents of new development. Each case will need to be considered on its merits and careful consideration will need to be given to the availability of parking space for residential areas that pre-dated the CPZ and have little or no off-street parking.

#### **Policy 25 – Electric Vehicle Charging in New Developments and On-street**

All new development should provide active and passive<sup>14</sup> off-street provision for electric vehicles in accordance with the guidance in the *NHDC Air Quality Planning Guidance* document. The Council will review its Supplementary Planning Document *Parking Standards at New Development* at appropriate times to reflect where appropriate changing requirements including advice from Hertfordshire County Council.

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<sup>14</sup> 8.22 Active provision refers to provision of an actual socket connected to the electrical supply system that vehicle owners can plug their vehicle into; Passive provision refers to the network of cables and power supply necessary so that at a future date a socket can be added easily. It is significantly cheaper and less disruptive to install the underlying infrastructure for EV charge points during construction than to retrofit later.

The Council, in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority, will also consider the need and viability of on-street charging points. These could potentially be funded by developer contributions, either in the form of planning obligation payments from new developments or the Pollution Damage Costs compensation mechanism included within the *NHDC Air Quality Planning Guidance* document for Major Scale Developments. Grant funding and business arrangements with private companies specialising in the provision of EV charging infrastructure would also represent a means of provision of on-street charging.

- 8.6 The Council supports the use of electric vehicles and it is vital that new development can cope with the expected electrification of the vehicle fleet over the life of this Strategy and beyond. The potential exists to install public on-street charging points. Since any bays would probably have to be reserved for electric vehicles only, the Council will take into account future demand and the loss of general public parking before considering whether to install any on-street bays. The relevant guidance and standards will be kept under regular review in the coming years. The Council will also prepare an electric vehicle parking strategy which will take such proposals into consideration. The Council also recognises other forms of electrically powered transport such as electric bikes may come forward during the life of this strategy, and therefore will be considered at that time.
- 8.7 The potential for on-street charging points should consider other EV charging point provision as set out in Policy 16.

## **SECTION 3: STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN AND DELIVERY**

### **9.0 Delivering the Strategy**

- 9.1 There are a number of key projects that have been identified through the preparation of the Strategy that could be taken forward in the short to medium term. These are listed in the accompanying Strategic Action Plan, at Appendix A.
- 9.2 The action plan itself is split into two categories: Short-term and Medium-term. The short-term projects are those that can be started and delivered within 1 to 3 years, whereas medium term projects have a longer timeframe and often require additional work to be completed before they can be commenced.
- 9.3 The Council is working against the current background of public spending restraint, where there is competition for allocation of the Council's scarce resources, and this will remain the case for the foreseeable future. In delivering this Strategy the Council will face the challenge of delivering value for money while maintaining and developing the parking function/service so that it remains, and is seen to be, fair, efficient, effective and responsive to change. Opportunities for third party funding will also be explored where considered appropriate.
- 9.4 There will be a number of ongoing parking challenges that the Council will need to address in future years, and careful management will be required to ensure that new parking provision and controls are aligned with the Council's economic, social, planning and transport priorities. It is often the detailed way in which parking policies are applied at the very local, street-by-street, level which requires the most careful consideration and generates most debate.
- 9.5 It will therefore be important that this Strategy remains a living document which adapts to emerging issues and provides a flexible approach to identify opportunities to review the actions and ensure that they become deliverable in the future in the light of available resources.

For further information or if you would like to discuss this Parking Strategy in more detail please contact:

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More detailed information on car parks, tariffs and Controlled Parking Zones can be found at:

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parking>

## APPENDIX A

### NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PARKING STRATEGY JANUARY 2019

#### STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Short-term (1-3 yrs)	Medium-term (3-5 yrs)
<p>PS1 Prepare and publish NHDC Parking Operational Guidelines.</p> <p>PS2 Prepare and prioritise a work programme setting out key projects from the Action Plan and to prioritise more local town and district wide parking issues.</p> <p>PS3 Subject to suitable business case for introduction of Pay on Foot trial – definition of objectives and evaluation measures for the trial, selection of trial car park, engagement with town centre management, selection of technology and procurement, set up monitoring framework and conduct baseline data collection.</p> <p>PS4 On-street parking – review of town centre bays to identify streets for reduction to max 20/30 mins and/or premium spaces and introduction of trial.</p> <p>PS5 Preparatory work for commuter parking strategy – market research with rail commuters to understand the right price benchmark and what the ‘commuter’ season ticket should include, survey of potential availability of bays.</p> <p>PS6 Approach other Hertfordshire districts/boroughs to see if there is appetite for a joint market engagement exercise to look at alternative digital payment platforms.</p> <p>PS7 Complete town wide parking reviews for Letchworth and Royston.</p> <p>PS8 Review future approach to town wide parking reviews.</p>	<p>PS2a Review and update Action plan and work programme</p> <p>PS3a Subject to successful trial, extension of pay on foot or similar technology at other appropriate council car parks</p> <p>PS5a Implement/roll out commuter parking strategy where considered appropriate</p>

Short-term (1-3 yrs)	Medium-term (3-5 yrs)
<p>PS9 Review the off street parking traffic regulation orders to accord with the policies in the Strategy.</p> <p>PS10 Investigate physical improvements to the council multistory car parks to encourage usage – review access and signage to car parks, engagement with town centre management, selection of technology to improve safety and usage, set up monitoring framework and conduct baseline data collection.</p> <p>PS11 Preparation of an electric vehicle parking strategy.</p>	