



**LANCASTER**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

*Promoting City, Coast & Countryside*

# **DRAFT PARKING STRATEGY**

**September 2013**

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ACTION PLAN

AP1 – AP12

## A PARKING STRATEGY FOR LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The City Council is aware that a comprehensive approach to parking management will improve the service provided directly to customers whilst also meeting the wider public needs of sustainability and amenity.

The first comprehensive review of parking was undertaken in 2003/04 and the outcome of the review was approved by Cabinet in March 2004. In the years that followed the Strategy has been reviewed, revised and updated, the latest version was agreed in October 2008 and is now ready for updating. This new strategy is intended as a guidance document which needs to be flexible and kept under review at all times.

Lancaster District contains the coastal towns of Morecambe and Heysham, the historic City of Lancaster, the railway town of Carnforth and an extensive rural area. Its population was estimated at 139,700 in 2012.

The District is approaching a period of great challenges and changes and this strategy recognises the opportunities for the Parking Service to assist in the achievement of the Council's key aims and objectives. The main challenges will arise from the following new initiatives:

- The Heysham – M6 Link Road
- The new park and ride facility at junction 34 of the M6;
- The potential development of Lancaster Castle as a major tourist attraction;
- The redevelopment of the Canal Corridor North site;
- The opportunity to upgrade Morecambe town centre through the Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP).

### 2. CROSS-DISTRICT POLICY CONTEXT

#### 2.1. National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework, published in 2012, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It replaces a number of earlier guidance documents.

There specific sections in the new guidance which are relevant to this Strategy:

- *Ensuring the vitality of Town Centres;*
- *Supporting a prosperous rural economy;*
- *Promoting sustainable transport.*

The latter section of the guidance contains a specific reference to car parking in town centres:

*“Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles. They should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres. Parking enforcement should be proportionate.”*

## 2.2. Lancaster Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2003-2021) was adopted in July 2006. The Strategy outlines a spatial vision of a sustainable District whose quality of life and standards of development will lead the North West, comprising a prosperous knowledge-based City, a regenerated Coast and a conserved Countryside. It also explains where new homes and jobs will be located, which areas will be regenerated and which areas will be conserved. It will be complemented by more detailed documents dealing with land allocations and development policies.

The Core Strategy includes specific policies relating to Transportation. Policy E2 includes the following objective:

*“The Council will work with partners to promote the following transportation measure:*

- *Integrating the provision and management of car parking and park and ride in Lancaster and Morecambe and managing parking (including disabled parking) in association with development;”*

The Council has prepared a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes. Some Guidance strengthens policy issues in relation to specific areas – for example:

- SPG6 – Lancaster City Centre Strategy (2004)
- SPG11 – Morecambe Town Centre Strategy (2004)

Other Guidance relates to the redevelopment of land which contains car parking and seeks to preserve the provision – for example:

- SPG8 – Canal Corridor North Development Brief (2004)
- SPG9 – Canal Corridor South Development Brief (2004)
- SPG17 – Morecambe Central Promenade Development Brief (2005)

Some of these SPGs are being replaced by up to date Development Plan Documents. This strategy recognises the policies and constraints imposed by the Guidance.

### 2.3. Lancaster City Council Corporate Plan and Priorities 2013-2014

The Corporate Plan contains a revised vision for the Council which was approved by the Cabinet on 17 July 2013. It reads:

*"A sustainable self-contained and varied group of communities, comprising:*

- **Morecambe and Heysham** – a confident community with a regenerated living, working and leisure environment;
- **Lancaster** – a prosperous historic city with a thriving knowledge economy;
- **Carnforth** – a successful market town and service centre for North Lancashire and South Cumbria; and
- A conserved, enhanced and diversified **Coast and Countryside** with a network of vibrant rural communities; which will lead the north west in its quality of life and environmental and design standards and within which sustainable housing, economic and retail development to meet local needs will be supported."

The Plan includes four priority areas – Economic Growth; Health and Wellbeing; Green, Clean and Safe places; Community Leadership – and identifies actions to progress each of the areas.

### 2.4. Lancashire County Council Local Transport Plan 2011-2021

The Local Transport Plan includes as one of its priorities the need to "improve access into areas of economic growth and regeneration".and includes the following objectives:

- Introduce **Park and Ride sites** serving major employment areas or supporting city centre development, principally in Preston and Lancaster.
- Promote sustainable **travel options to important visitor destinations.**
- Work with district councils to **deliver adequate parking** to allow access to services and ensure that it is priced and managed to support strong retail economies within our towns and cities whilst ensuring that public transport is a viable alternative for many journeys.

The Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan for 2012/13 – 2014/2015 recognises that Lancaster District is one of Lancashire's key economic centres and Lancaster City Centre has been identified as having the capacity to generate substantial growth and new jobs in the professional and service sectors.

Under this Implementation Plan, Lancashire County Council will invest £47.38 million on highways and transport services in Lancaster, with £21.840 million of capital funding and £25.54 million of revenue support. This will be targeted at:

- reducing congestion and delay to strengthen Lancaster's economic competitiveness, improve connectivity to Heysham Port and tackle Morecambe's relative isolation
- supporting the District's achievements in encouraging a culture of cycling and walking
- supporting Carnforth's role as a local transport hub to accessing Lancaster's hinterland.

## **2.5. Heysham – M6 Link Road**

This new road will complete the link between the Port of Heysham and the M6 motorway at Junction 34 and will run to the north of Lancaster and Morecambe. Funding has been approved and work is due to start in the autumn of 2013 with completion in 2015.

The new road is intended to;

- reduce traffic flows in Lancaster city centre
- reduce delays on journeys to the Port of Heysham;
- support the local economy;
- improve access to business areas north of River Lune;
- take through traffic out of residential and commercial areas;
- reduce road casualties and improve air quality;
- allow reallocation of highway space to walking, cycling, public transport and the public realm.

The scheme also includes the provision of a 550 space park and ride car park adjacent to junction 34. This is intended to serve both commuters and visitors to Lancaster. Details of the bus routes into the city centre have yet to be finalised. The site will require motorway direction signs at both junctions 33 and 34.

## **3. THE PARKING SERVICE**

### **3.1. Management of the Parking Service**

The Parking Service is managed by a team based in the Council's Environmental Service and is responsible for the management, operation and enforcement of the Council's public car parks in the District. This includes asset management, condition surveys, repairs and maintenance, improvements and ensuring the assets are fit for purpose. The team also administers residents parking schemes within the District and provides some other on-street services for Lancashire County Council.

In addition to working closely with Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Parking Services the team has a number of other key partners including St Nicholas Arcades, Parksafes and the current parking enforcement contractor and the Police through the *Partnership Plus* partnership arrangements.

The termination of the Lancashire Highways Partnership resulted in all highway service provision being centralised and the loss of both highway and parking staff and expertise to the County Council. Whilst this may still have an adverse effect on delivering some of the proposals contained in the strategy and the action plan the two Councils remain committed to working closely together to try to ensure a seamless provision of the overall service whilst also contributing to the wider management of parking and traffic in the District.

### 3.2. Parking Enforcement

The County Council is responsible through *Lancashire Parking Services* for the enforcement of on-street parking regulation orders. The City Council has contracted with *Lancashire Parking Services* for the enforcement of parking on the Council's off-street car parks. *Lancashire Parking Services* also undertake some of the back office administrative operations relating to the issue and progression of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). The parking team deals with formal representations in relation to PCNs and appeals submitted to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The team also reviews and maintains the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order that underpins the formal enforcement arrangements.

**Aim 1:**

To have suitable and effective parking enforcement arrangements for the City Council's car parks

- To maintain proportionate parking enforcement compatible with the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order

### 3.3. Parking Stock

Details of the current stock of off-street parking spaces is given in the table below:



Settlement	Charged			Free	City Council Permit	Total
	Council		Private			
	S/S	L/S				
Lancaster	799	444	924	1281	45	3493
Morecambe	440	1045	472	1237	30	3224
Carnforth	0	0	82	318	0	400
Heysham	0	176	0	24	0	200
Totals	1239	1665	1478	2860	75	7317

### 3.4. Future Levels of Parking Stock

It is likely that a number of the existing surface car parks will be identified for development over the next few years. These possibilities, which are likely to increase demand for parking facilities, are discussed in more detail in the sections on Lancaster and Morecambe.

#### Aim 2:

To maintain existing levels of short-stay parking to support shoppers, businesses, visitors and residents.

- Retain an appropriate stock of short stay car parking in central locations.
- Where practicable seek replacement short-stay public car parking space as part of the redevelopment of existing car parks.
- To only consider changes in short stay car parking space linked to redevelopment following full impact analysis and due consideration of overall parking and traffic management issues.
- Monitor the use of existing parking places to ensure the best use of space.

### 3.5. Off Street Tariff Structure

Parking charges are a useful mechanism for assisting with the control of demand for parking space. However, a careful balance needs to be found. If charges are too high then spaces will be underused but, conversely, if they are too low demand for spaces will increase to a level which makes them more difficult to find and increases congestion. Charges should also reflect the importance of shoppers' and local business needs and their high priority within the parking service.

The income from the parking service will also be adversely affected if the balance is not satisfactory. The revenue from parking is important for the Council as it assists with the continuing improvement of the service provided. It is essential that some revenue from parking charges income be reinvested in the parking stock to ensure an adequate maintenance regime and to fund necessary improvements.

Charges should, therefore, be set at a level which influences parking behaviour in support of the other objectives of the strategy and which maximises revenue to support the improvement of the service, encourages regeneration and the economic wellbeing of the District.

**Aim: 3**

To set charges to meet the Council's corporate objectives and budget commitments:

- Monitor car park occupancy at regular intervals in order to maximise utilisation whilst maintaining a reasonable level of availability;
- Use charges to deter long stay in short stay car parks;
- Ensure that the cost differential between on- and off-street charges is maintained in order to encourage the use of the off-street facilities and leave the on-street spaces for those prepared to pay a premium for the location;
- Ensure the views of the Town Councils, local Chambers of Commerce and Trade and the Federation of Small Businesses are taken into account when considering the Annual Review of Parking Charges.

All City Council car parks operate on a pay and display control system. Charges are reviewed annually in accordance with the Council's financial policies and demand management objectives.

Annual parking permits are available to residents and businesses and these can be used on a number of specific car parks. A limited number of space specific permits are also available for use by residents and businesses.

There are a number of privately operated car parks in Lancaster and in Morecambe. The City Council has sought to ensure that the charges at some of these car parks are comparable with those at the Council's own car parks.

**Aim: 4**

To ensure that privately operated car parks have comparable pricing structures

- Where possible, negotiate appropriate agreements with private car park operators

At present the tariff structure for the Council's car parks is uniform across the District. There are two main tariff structures for short and long stay car parks. Currently (2013) these are:

## Short Stay

Lancaster		Morecambe	
Up to 1 hour	£1.30	Up to 1 hour	£1.30
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	Up to 2 hours	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£2.70	Up to 3 hours	£2.70
Up to 4 hours	£3.40	Up to 4 hours	£3.40
Over 4 hours	£8.00	Over 4 hours	£8.00
Evening and overnight (6.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.)	£1.40		

## Long Stay

Lancaster		Morecambe	
Up to 1 hour	£1.30	Up to 1 hour	£1.00 or £1.30
Up to 3 hours	£2.20	Up to 3 hours	£2.20
Up to 5 hours	£3.70	Over 3 hours	£3.20
Over 5 hours	£6.00		
Evening and overnight (6.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.)	£1.40		

Lower tariffs apply at the more remote car parks in Morecambe (Battery Breakwater, Coastal Road and Back Brighton Terrace) and in Heysham Village.

It has been suggested that the tariff structure should be reviewed and that the same structure should not apply across the district. Normally the parking tariff applied in a centre reflects the shopper and visitor experience available in that centre. Clearly the experiences in Lancaster and in Morecambe are different. Lancaster offers a wider shopping experience and different visitor attractions to Morecambe. The shopping experience in Morecambe is smaller but the seaside visitor attraction is large. A review of the current tariff structure may assist in the promotion of Morecambe as a visitor centre and help to achieve a greater visitor dwell time.

Clearly any review of the tariff structure will need to take in to account the overall financial situation and the need to maintain car park income.

**Aim 5:**

To ensure that the parking tariffs levied reasonably reflect the shopper and visitor experiences in the various centres, whilst ensuring that the parking account is not adversely affected by any changes:

- Undertake a review of the current tariff structure, with a view to achieving a greater visitor dwell time
- Consult widely on any changes proposed
- Ensure that the changes do not have an adverse effect on the parking account.

**3.6. On Street Tariff Structure**

On street pay an display parking spaces provide additional short-term parking around Lancaster city centre to complement the off street parking stock. On street parking charges should always be set a higher level to encourage the use of off street car parks and to discourage drivers from circulating around the city and increasing traffic congestion. The approach on charging is referred to as having 'differential charges'

Lancaster's Three Tier Forum considered a briefing note in 2012 following a number of years when the differential charges had not been maintained. This highlighted the need for the relevant Officers and Members to work closely together to ensure a coordinated approach is taken each year when determining the level of parking charges in the Lancaster District.

**Aim 6:**

County and City Officers and Members work closely together to achieve the synchronisation of the deliberations and recommendations for on-street and off-street parking charges

- To maintain differential charging between on-street and off-street parking

**3.7. Parksafe**

The Parksafe car park has 276 spaces and is a partnership between the operator and the City Council. The car park has operated completely crime free since opening in 2001. The car park offers guaranteed security parking provided the customer complies with all the correct parking procedures.

Parksafe has an agreement with the City Council that ensures the tariff structure for this car park is always higher than the Council's central car parks in view of the guaranteed security. The car park agreement provides for the further refurbishment of the car park and maintaining the guaranteed security parking facility.

Retaining control of these parking spaces in Lancaster has been strategically important in terms of managing the parking stock. The car park is in very close proximity to Lancaster Castle and can provide secure 24/7 parking to assist with the castle's potential future uses.

### **3.8. Medium Term Corporate Property Strategy 2011-14**

The 2011-2014 Medium Term Corporate Property Strategy (MTCPS), sets out the strategic direction for the management of the Council's property portfolio during this three year period, reflecting all the other relevant government policies, council plans and strategies.

The aims and objectives of the MTCPS are to:

- highlight the progress made against the key performance targets and property improvements implemented over the last year
- set out the key asset management tasks and targets for the forthcoming year.

The way that the Council manages its land and property assets has a direct impact on both the quality of services that it delivers to the public and the quality of the environment. It is therefore important that efficient and effective use is made of these assets to support corporate and service objectives.

The strategy identifies a number of other objectives against which the Council's asset portfolio should be addressed including:-

- Fit for purpose and compliance with Statutory /Regulatory codes
- Value for Money
- Improved Corporate Management
- Sustainability
- To serve the Council's Corporate Priorities
- Enabling

Car parks are a significant part of the Council's diverse and widespread portfolio of land and property assets throughout the district. Car parks are also important from the wider management of both parking and traffic and are a valuable access and amenity facility for residents, businesses and visitors. It is crucially important that the management of car parks is both compatible with the MTCPS and this strategy to support the wider aims of the Council including Economic Growth, Health and Wellbeing, Green Clean and Safe places and Community Leadership.

**Aim 7:**

To provide, maintain, review, manage and develop car parks to support the Medium Term Corporate Property Strategy and the vision and priorities of the Council.

- Monitor the parking service to ensure that the Parking Strategy and the Medium Term Corporate Property Strategy are properly co-ordinated.

### 3.9. Key Issues for the Parking Service

The public expectation of the quality of car parks has increased in recent years and the customer now expects a well managed, clean, attractive and secure car park. For visitors the car park often provides the first impression of the destination and can colour their whole experience of the visit; frequently determining whether or not they return on second and subsequent occasions. The impression, therefore, is important in economic terms to the District.

There are a number of new initiatives that will need to be considered which will enhance the parking experience for residents and visitors:

- The introduction of a telephone payment option;
- The introduction of virtual parking permits;
- The provision of tourist information points

There is also some pressure for new environmentally friendly initiatives, e.g.:

- The provision of charging points for electric vehicles;
- Restricting the use, at a reduced tariff, of one car park to low emission vehicles.

**Aim 8:**

To provide a high quality parking service which is efficient, responsive to the user's needs, providing assets of the highest design and appearance and as secure and safe as possible, whilst identifying the impact on budgets:

- Where possible respond to enquiries within 7 working days
- Provide a freephone number for customer enquiries, linked to the Council's Customer Services Centre
- Consult with representative groups on proposed changes to parking schemes
- Ensure that all car parks are adequately surfaced
- Provide a high standard of lighting in car parks, whilst avoiding unnecessary light pollution
- Ensure that routes to car parks are clearly signed
- Consider the provision of variable message signing which provides car park space information to drivers and reduces unnecessary journeys on high volume traffic routes
- Provide regular car park patrols to enhance security and provide a service to customers
- Ensure that all car parks are regularly cleaned; that landscaped areas are well maintained and that any graffiti is promptly removed
- Ensure that pedestrian routes to and from and within car parks are attractive, well signed, secure and safe
- Consider the provision of tourist information boards at key car parks
- Implement a programme of re-marking to ensure a minimum space width of 2.4m, whilst recognising this may reduce the allocation of parking spaces
- Provide suitable management information on usage, parking trends and occupancy rates
- Investigate options for energy saving
- Investigate and consider the introduction of a telephone and / or electronic payment option at Pay and Display car parks
- Consider the introduction of virtual permits
- Consider the provision of electric vehicle charging points at suitable locations
- Consider the provision of a dedicated car park for low emission vehicles
- Ensure effective and efficient maintenance arrangements are in place for pay and display machines
- Ensure continuous improvement in parking stock

### **3.10. Parking for Specialist Groups**

#### **3.10.1. Residents**

The Council recognises that residents expect that they will be able to park in the vicinity of their homes and has determined that the needs of residents have the highest priority within the previously agreed parking hierarchy.

Many residents will require access to long stay parking and an annual permit scheme is available for certain long stay car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe.

The City and County Councils have recognised that commuter parking in residential areas adjacent to the centres of Lancaster and Morecambe has a negative effect on the quality of life of residents living in those areas. The introduction of residents' parking schemes has assisted with the resolution of these problems although there is always the risk of the displaced vehicles parking in adjacent residential areas. The needs of residents' visitors and businesses' customers in the area should be considered. Additional schemes will be considered as the needs arises.

Details of the scheme and the types of permit available are published in the Council's guide on Residents' Parking Schemes which is available on the Council's website.

The demand for residents parking permits is increasing as more new high occupancy dwellings are constructed in the centres of both Lancaster and Morecambe. In line with Planning Policy many of these developments have little or no off-street parking provision. Amended Traffic Regulation Orders for Residents' Parking Schemes have been introduced to remove the eligibility for residents of buildings in areas with good accessibility that have been or will be granted planning permission on the basis of reduced off-street parking provision. A register of these excluded properties is maintained in the parking office.

The cost of administering the residents parking schemes is retained in a separate account for Lancashire County Council. The City Council is currently reviewing these costs and the arrangements for visitor parking as these are becoming disproportionate compared with the overall cost of administering the schemes. Simplified and more user friendly visitor parking arrangements are being investigated and will be introduced subject to appropriate consultation and provided a satisfactory level of control can be maintained

The transfer of staffing resources to the County Council, following the termination of the Lancashire Highways Partnership, has resulted in the City Council having less influence over the implementation of additional residents' parking schemes. The County Council is



also reviewing the priority given to traffic regulation orders for resident's parking schemes and the future approach on the identification, assessment, funding and implementation of additional schemes. Whilst the aims set out below are the Council's preference, it is recognised that these aspirations may not be met without the County Council actively making resources available.

**Aim 9:**

To maintain effective administrative arrangements to support the ongoing operation of residents' parking schemes:

- Review visitor parking arrangements and to reduce the cost of administering the residents parking zones
- Make provision for annual permits for residents to be available for use on certain car parks
- Monitor the demand for permits and review the schemes regularly.

**3.10.2. Parking for the Disabled**

Whilst the majority of this strategy relates to parking of the private car, consideration should be given to the needs of all users and types of transport.

Those with mobility impairments should be catered for by reserving an adequate number of appropriately dimensioned parking spaces for "Blue Badge" holders in the central areas.

The issues relating to parking for the disabled are covered in more detail in the Lancaster and Morecambe sections of this strategy.

**Aim 10:**

To seek to meet the needs of all users and types of transport.

- Set aside 6% of the total off street car parking space for "Blue Badge" holders in suitable car parks where a demand is proven;
- Improve public information on parking provision.

### 3.10.3. Coach and Lorry Parking

Coach Parking is essential to the District as a whole for tourism reasons.

The arrangements in Lancaster and Morecambe are discussed in the specialist sections of this strategy.

The construction of the Truckhaven lorry parking facility near to junction 35 of the M6 at Carnforth has removed the need for a local facility within the District.

### 3.10.4. Cycle and Motor Cycle Parking

The City Council has determined that availability and quality of cycle and motorcycle parking at key destinations is a major element in encouraging a modal shift from private car to more sustainable forms of transport.

Concern has been expressed about the need for the provision of additional secure cycle and motor cycle parking facilities. These should be in convenient, visible, well lit locations.

**Aim 11:**

To improve the availability and quality of parking at key destinations

- Provide convenient safe and secure cycle parking at new points convenient to town centres and at places of interest and amenity, in line with the Council's aspiration to achieve increased levels of cycling in the district;
- Increase secure cycle and motor cycle parking provision at suitable locations to meet increasing demand;
- Encourage, where possible, provision of sheltered cycle and motor cycle parking
- Ensure that where appropriate new developments have cycle parking integrated at the design stage through the planning process

### 3.10.5. Taxi Ranks

The City Council recognises that taxis are part of the public transport system and that the provision of suitable taxi ranks on the highway network is essential. Maintaining the provision of these facilities is also important when considering redevelopment proposals, major road works and parking and traffic management issues.

**Aim 12:**

To work as required with Lancashire County Council, Licensing Services and all stakeholders on the provision and maintenance of taxi ranks in the district

- To ensure an adequate provision of suitable taxi ranks

**3.10.6. Motor Home Parking**

There is an increasing demand for parking for motor homes which are usually too high to enter car parks with height barriers and are often too wide and too long to be accommodated in a standard size parking bay.

Local Authorities often feel the need to provide height barriers at car parks in order to discourage illegal occupation of the land.

In Morecambe there are several car parks without height barriers and these can accommodate larger vehicles although these are not identified on the car park map nor are they sign posted.

Concerns have also been expressed about the increasing number of motor homes parking overnight on Marine Road. This needs to be monitored and if the practice continues to grow revised parking restrictions may be required.

**Aim 13:**

To consider the provision of parking for motor homes:

- Ensure that there is adequate parking provision – a distribution of larger parking bays;
- Improve direction signage to the appropriate car parks
- Monitor overnight parking on Marine Road and consider revised parking restrictions if the issue becomes untenable.

## 4. LANCASTER

### 4.1. Policy Context

#### 4.1.1. Lancaster Canal Corridor North Development Brief (Supplementary Planning Guidance Note No. 8 – Lancaster District Local Plan)

This document, prepared in 2002, relates to the area between the city centre and the canal. The area forms the gateway to the commercial heart of the city and it contains a number of important listed buildings. The area is now being actively considered for redevelopment - see section 4.2.2.

There are a number of key objectives, including:

- All new buildings, car parks, footpaths and open spaces to be fully accessible to people with limited mobility and other disabilities;
- Retained and enhanced city centre shopper and visitor parking;
- In the longer term, the redevelopment of other previously used sites and long stay commuter car parks.

There is provision for a new direct access route to the replacement parking from the north in order to remove the current "rat running" traffic from unsuitable routes.

The guidance includes specific proposals for the St. Leonardgate car parks area. These are currently long stay car parks on different levels and of unsuitable quality. The guidance envisages the retention of a significant quantity of city centre shopper and visitor parking on the site and adopts a flexible approach to its design.

### 4.2. Key Issues

#### 4.2.1. Park and Ride

The Heysham – M6 link includes the provision of a 550 space park and ride facility adjacent to junction 34. The bus route in to the city centre will be along Caton Road although the detailed route and stopping points within the city centre have yet to be finalised.

Ideally the tariff structure for the park and ride will make it attractive to both commuters and visitors who might otherwise use city centre car parks. The site will be attractive to commuters travelling from the north and the east but less so for those travelling from the south and from Morecambe. Therefore it will not be possible to significantly increase the long stay tariff on city centre car parks without disadvantaging commuters travelling from

the south and the west. A significant change in the long stay tariff will only be possible when a ring of park and ride sites has been established.

However, the number of long stay parking spaces in the city centre will need to be kept under review and if necessary reduced to assist the development of the use of the new park and ride facility.

The existing Auction Mart car park (estimated capacity 125 spaces) might prove to be a useful "interceptor" car park for commuters travelling from the south. The capacity could be increased by decking the car park and this might be funded by a commercial development of part of the site.

**Aim 14:**

To assist the development of the use of the new park and ride facility at M6 junction 34

- Monitor the use of city centre long stay car parks;
- Consider reducing the number of long stay spaces available whilst ensuring the commuters travelling from the south and west are not adversely affected;
- Continue to investigate the possible redevelopment of the Auction Mart car park as an "interceptor" commuter car park.

#### 4.2.2. City Centre Redevelopment

The redevelopment opportunities described in the Canal Corridor North SPG are currently at the detailed design stage. The scheme under consideration would provide a significant opportunity to improve the city's shopping attraction which will increase visitor numbers and therefore the demand for parking places.

The scheme would directly affect a number of existing car parks:

- Long stay
    - Upper St. Leonardgate                      115 spaces
    - Lodge Street                                      30 spaces
    - Edward Street                                      95 spaces
  - Short stay
    - Lower St. Leonardgate                      66 spaces
- Total    306 spaces

The development, which it is hoped will open in 2017/18, would include a 700 space car park accessed directly from a new road link from the north of the site. At this stage no decisions have been made about the operation of the car park other than an agreement to align charges with the Council's other central car parks.

The development would also remove the current 6 space coach parking facility at Upper St. Leonardgate – see section 4.2.7.

Another consequence of the redevelopment of this area would be the loss of the currently preferred access route from the north to the Council's car parks south of Moor Lane. There will be a risk that this would result in a significant increase in traffic movements in the streets east of Dalton Square. Therefore, there will be a need to monitor these traffic movements and, if necessary, to review the ongoing suitability of some of these car parks.

A particular problem will arise during the construction period which is likely to last for around two years. A total of 306 car and 6 coach parking spaces will be lost.

**Aim 15:**

To manage the consequences of the Canal Corridor North Development

- Manage the loss of parking spaces during the construction period
- Identify alternative coach parking facilities
- Review and monitor the access routes to the short stay car parks south of Moor Lane

**4.2.3. Tourism**

Tourism is very important to the economy of the City. The closure of Lancaster Prison in March 2011 has enabled the Duchy of Lancaster to consider the development of an ambitious re-branding of Lancaster Castle as a major tourist attraction. The concept for the visitor attraction is "*a museum highlighting judicial and penal history in Britain throughout the last 1000 years*". A number of the prison buildings may be converted and historic structures such as Adrian's Tower, the Keep and the Witches Dungeon used to illustrate the castle as a place of incarceration. Consideration is also being given to the development of part of the site as a hotel of 50 – 75 rooms. Subject to the necessary permissions being obtained it is hoped that all the new attractions will be open by 2017.

The development of the castle is likely to significantly increase the number of visitors to the city centre. Many will use the new park and ride at junction 34 of the M6 but others will seek parking in the city centre. The location of the Parksafes car park close to the castle will be ideal for visitors to the castle and an arrangement for residents of the new hotel may also be possible.

However, it is hoped that visitors to the City will seek to enjoy both the castle and the upgraded city centre shopping experience – see section 4.2.5. The short stay car parks south of Moor Lane would be ideal for visitors seeking to stroll through the centre to the castle.

It is anticipated that the normal length of stay would be around four hours but it will be necessary to monitor this and to ensure that the car park tariff structure continues to meet the needs of day visitors.

There will be a need to ensure that there are adequate facilities for coaches to park and to drop off and pick up their passengers in the city centre – see also section 4.2.7.

Similarly some additional provision for parking for the disabled close to the castle might be required.

**Aim 16:**

To ensure that the parking service provides for the needs of visitors.

- Ensure that the tariff structure reflects the needs of the day visitors;
- Ensure that the car park vehicular and pedestrian signage guides visitors to the appropriate car parks and thence to the city centre and the castle;
- Review coach set down and pick up facilities in the city centre;

**4.2.4. Filming in Lancaster District**

The City Council works in partnership with the Lancashire Film Office to promote the District as a first class location for film and television. The Council will provide help and advice to film and television producers considering filming in the District. This will include identifying suitable locations, booking accommodation, parking and traffic management.

**Aim: 17**

To assist the development of the District as a location for film and television productions:

- Where possible support the parking needs of film and television production crews.

#### **4.2.5. Public Realm**

There are a number of initiatives in place which are designed to enhance the quality of the central pedestrian shopping area of the city:

##### **4.2.5.1. Lancaster Square Routes**

Lancaster Square Routes aims to rejuvenate the important historic city centre, strengthening its position as a quality destination both for visitors and residents of the District.

The first phase of improvements was completed during the winter of 2011/12. It included the repaving of the centre of Market Square and Frances Passage and also new LED lighting.

A second phase is due to commence early in 2014 and this involves the improvement of Horseshoe Corner, Penny Street and further works in Market Square.

##### **4.2.5.2. Lancaster Pedestrian Zone**

The pedestrian zone provides public realm and vehicle access to the much of the city centre. There is concern that permitted vehicle circulation and parking in the zone has risen and is now commonly at levels counter to the purposes of the pedestrian zone.

The introduction of an experimental traffic regulation order has been agreed which would be subject to the statutory consultation process. The aim of the order would be to introduce a phased approach to changing how traffic is managed within the zone, for the City Council to revise the local permit system and to agree improved enforcement arrangements with the County Council and the Police.

This approach would allow the impact of the experimental order on vehicular access and pedestrian amenity to be evaluated and further proposals to be brought forward that are achievable and fit for the present and future purposes of the zone.

##### **4.2.5.3. Lancaster Business Improvement District (BID)**

This new partnership between businesses, the local authorities and other organisations seeks to improve the local trading environment. A levy on local



businesses will support a number of new initiatives and will provide additional impetus to existing projects.

**Aim 18:**

To support the improvement of the public realm in the city centre:

- Introduce and maintain an effective permit administration system to meet the needs of the experimental traffic regulation order and any subsequent orders
- Contribute to the effective enforcement of the experimental parking and moving traffic contraventions
- Remove all vehicles, except those issued with permits, from the pedestrian zone;
- Strengthen the criteria for the issue of access permits to tradespersons;
- Review the provision of on street parking for the disabled in the streets peripheral to the city centre.
- Consider any parking initiatives arising from the Lancaster Bid.

#### 4.2.6. Parking for the Disabled

##### 4.2.6.1. Off Street

Government advice (*Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/95 - "Parking for Disabled People" DfT*) on the provision of parking facilities for the disabled is that the following formulae should be used to assess the number of spaces at each location:

For shopping, recreation and leisure facilities:

For car parks with less than 200 spaces	Three bays or 6% of the total capacity whichever is the greater
For car parks with more than 200 spaces	Four bays + 4% of the total capacity

Research has shown that few, if any, Local Authorities meet those standards. The current "norm" appears to be around 4% of the total parking stock but this is seldom distributed evenly throughout the car parks. The tendency is to make greater provision at the most convenient car parks and less at the more remote, usually long stay, car parks. At small car parks with less than 25 spaces provision of one or two spaces would be reasonable.

An assessment of the existing car parks has indicated a need to increase the number of spaces for the disabled by around 20. These should be provided at appropriately located car parks where there are safe and suitable routes to the central area.

Disabled badge holders are currently entitled to park free of charge without a time restriction on all of the Council's car parks. There is an increasing trend for local authorities to review such arrangements. Options include:

- Charging disabled badge holders for all parking;
- Charging disabled badge holders for parking for periods in excess of three hours;
- Including disabled badge holders in any maximum stay regulations at short stay car parks.

Each of these options has some drawbacks and these will need to be considered if a review of the current policy is undertaken.

#### **4.2.6.2. On Street**

There are a number of parking bays for the disabled in the streets peripheral to the city centre. More will be provided within the Canal Corridor North redevelopment scheme.

However it will be necessary to review this provision in the light of the new access restrictions in the pedestrian zone.

#### **Aim 19:**

To make adequate provision for the disabled to park safely and conveniently:

- Increase the provision of special parking bays for the disabled in suitable car parks and ensure that access routes are safe and convenient;
- Review the off street charging policy;
- Review the on street provision of parking spaces for the disabled.

#### **4.2.7. Coach Parking**

The current coach parking facilities at Upper St. Leonardgate car park (6 spaces) will be lost with the Canal Corridor North redevelopment scheme. The predicted increase in visitor numbers will generate more coach borne visitors. However coach operators will only include Lancaster in their schedules if their vehicles can be conveniently and securely accommodated, with suitable facilities for their drivers. New coach parking facilities will need to be identified prior to the closure of the existing facility.

As many of the coach trips will be primarily to the castle, it has been suggested that coach parking might be possible as part of redevelopments on St. George's Quay.

Coach operators will also wish to be able to set down and pick up their passengers, many of whom will be elderly, at convenient points in the city centre – close to the shops and the tourist attractions.

**Aim 20:**

To make suitable provision for coaches:

- Identify a suitable location for coach parking with adequate facilities for drivers;
- Provide conveniently located coach set down and pick up points in the city centre.

**4.2.8. Car Park Signage**

When the new Canal Corridor North redevelopment is completed it will be necessary to review the direction signage into the city centre, taking into account the new park and ride facility at junction 34.

With revised car park locations and more tourists attracted to the castle it will also be appropriate to review the pedestrian route signage in the city centre. The major routes from the main car parks to the central shopping areas and the castle should be identified and it will also greatly assist visitors not familiar with the layout of the central area to sign the routes back to the main car parks.

Another improvement which would be of benefit to both local residents and visitors would be the provision on the main routes in to the city of automated space availability signs for the major car parks.

**Aim 21:**

To ensure that visitors can easily identify their route to a suitable car park and thence to their intended destination(s);

- Undertake a review of vehicular signage to the major car parks following the opening of the new park and ride and the Canal Corridor North redevelopment;
- Review the signage of pedestrian routes from and to the main car parks;
- Consider the feasibility of introduction of automated car park space availability signage on the major routes into the city centre.

## 5. MORECAMBE

### 5.1. Policy Context

#### 5.1.1. Morecambe Area Action Plan

The Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) identifies central Morecambe as the main regeneration area within the District. The Morecambe Area Action plan is a formal Development Plan Document which focuses on redevelopment.

The headline objective for the MAAP is to improve how the centre of Morecambe looks (APPEARANCE), how it feels (AMBIENCE) and how it works (ACTIVITY) and specifically to achieve:

- A Morecambe that makes the most of its natural and build heritage assets, that has a positive sense of place, a clear identity and is better positioned as a visitor destination;
- A central area that is a strong social hub, safer, more pleasant and more enjoyable to be in whether to live, work or play;
- A more viable, vital and economically productive centre with a service sector offering the goods and services that people need;
- A stronger housing market with better housing and a more cohesive, better balanced residential community;
- A more efficient transport network and infrastructure that better connects the area with its surroundings, makes for easy movement to, from and within the area and that encourages people to travel in the most sustainable ways.

The plan adopts a spatial approach to driving higher footfall and so to get the conditions for investment right. The essential elements of this spatial approach include:

- **Well considered, clear signage of vehicle routes to and from Morecambe** on all route approaches including via Lancaster and Carnforth and well located long and short stay parking options in central Morecambe;
- **Changes to highway and parking arrangements** to make traffic circulation more efficient and reduce excess traffic circulation and with parking located and managed in a way as to feed footfall into the town centre;
- **Much improved signage for pedestrians throughout central Morecambe** with quality information/interpretation points.

The Plan is structured to include:

- Four Spatial Policies
  - MAAP SP1. Key Pedestrian Routes and Spaces
  - MAAP SP2. Investment Exemptions
  - MAAP SP3. Morecambe Main Seafront and Promenade
  - MAAP SP4. Town Centre

The spatial approach seeks to develop a strong heart for the town conveniently served by bus and rail arrival points and car parking.

- Six Development Opportunity Sites
  - MAAP DO1. The Battery
  - MAAP DO2. Strategic Leisure – Seafront Headland, Central Promenade
  - MAAP DO3. The Arndale and area
  - MAAP DO4. West View
  - MAAP DO5. Festival Market and area
  - MAAP DO6. Former Frontierland site
- A series of thirteen Action Sets
  - AS1. Managing and maintaining streets and spaces
  - AS2. Improving the condition of buildings and encouraging beneficial occupancy
  - AS3. Improving key routes for pedestrians and cyclists
  - AS4. Further encourage business investment and development
  - AS5. Central seafront and main beach
  - AS6. Western seafront and beach
  - AS7. Seafront headland, central promenade
  - AS8. The town centre
  - AS9. Edge of centre retail park
  - AS10. Traffic route signage to and from central morecambe
  - AS11. Parking provision and management
  - AS12. Bus and coach services
  - AS13. Rail services
  - AS14 Plan delivery

Whilst only AS11 deals specifically with parking provision and management a number of other Action Sets refer to car parking. Key references are noted below:

- AS5 suggests the adjustment of Marine Road car park no.2 to create a high quality pedestrian route to the town centre and some changes to car park no. 1 to provide for a coach drop off point.

- AS8 has a number of proposals which affect the existing parking arrangements:
  - Transform the street space between Barclays and the Post Office as a public space of real quality with a shared surface treatment to make it much more pedestrian friendly and a fitting focus for the entrance to the Arndale from here. As part of this revised traffic arrangements at the junction of Market Street and Euston Road these to include some changes to turning and parking arrangements including for taxis;
  - Improve the pedestrian environment immediately around the library and make a good route for pedestrian across the Library car park to Market Street;
  - Pending any future redevelopment better sign and upgrade the much underused West View car park prospectively including investment in security and surveillance;
  - Improve arrangements for coach drop off and pick up.

Section 10 of the MAAP relates to Travel and Transport. A key element of the plan is a set of actions to re-cast how central Morecambe works in terms of transportation, arrival and parking. These are about making central Morecambe work much better particularly for pedestrians and help increase footfall. The plan recognises that good parking provision is essential to the vitality and viability of the town centre and that in Morecambe car parking availability readily meets demand at most times. Indeed a very many times total capacity is way in excess of demand.

Of particular concern is the fact that the current parking choices increase traffic movements with drivers circulating to locate their preferred choice of parking location. The plan is concerned that whilst parking is essential it is the predominant land use within central Morecambe.

AS11 includes a number of proposals relating to parking:

- That the City and County Councils should prepare a joint plan for changes to transportation and vehicle parking within the plan area; covering both on and off street parking;
- The joint plan to be consistent with the MAAP and be informed by the proposed MAAP Topic Paper 6 (Access, Transport and Parking) and to include the following aims:
  - The main routes into the town to afford a hierarchy of parking choices with longer stay provision the first choice available with shorter stay choices closer into the town centre where possible;
  - Traffic circulation is reduced;
  - Highway and parking signage is well considered and clear as to the choices of parking available;
  - Much vehicle parking is provided towards and at the edges of the town centre with less at the heart of the town itself;

- The location, pricing and management of on street parking to complement that provided off street and not attract people away from off street provision.

AS11 further suggest the following parameters for parking:

- Make parking facilities work as first stop information points, helping to direct footfall to the town centre and other areas/destinations of interest;
- Provide for legitimate needs for short duration parking close to key service providers including the Post Office, banks and building societies;
- Consider the needs of appropriate residential parking;
- Bring the provision of dedicated disabled bays within and around the town centre up to the national guideline standard;
- Provide for coach drop off and pick up within or very close to the town centre;
- Increase parking provision in certain locations either by increasing efficiencies in the use of the space or bringing other underused areas into use for parking;
- Target that change to net public parking provision within the plan area over the plan period to not make more than a 10% loss in spaces;
- Keep net consequential changes to city council parking incomes close to revenue neutral or better.

Certain car parks and areas of car parking will be decommissioned as part of the changes in land use. The potential sites for this are identified in the list of development opportunity sites.

## 5.2. Key Issues

### 5.2.1. Variable Demand for Parking

As highlighted in the Morecambe Area Action Plan there is a very large variation in the demand for parking in Morecambe. Usage of the car parks is both seasonal and weather related. Some car parks are designated long stay and some short stay. The usage of these car parks will need to be kept under review.

However, despite the wide choice of car parks and the fact that spaces are available most of the time there is a problem with traffic circulating around the narrow streets in the town centre searching for free parking places or driving to a favourite location. This is detrimental to the environment of the town centre and presents difficulties for pedestrians.

There are a significant number of on street parking places which contribute to the traffic problems and it would be prudent to review the use of these spaces; perhaps converting more in to parking bays for the residents in the town centre or additional provision for the disabled. It will be necessary to strike a balance between the needs of residents, shoppers, visitors and those who work in the town centre.

**Aim 22:**

To ensure that the parking requirements of all users are met.

- Regularly review the mix of long and short stay off street parking
- Undertake a review of on street parking in the town centre and consider the provision of additional permit parking for residents

**5.2.2. Redevelopment**

Despite the fact that on some occasions in the peak of the tourist season all car parking spaces are likely to be occupied, a number of the car parks are regularly underused and should be considered as potential redevelopment sites. The potential sites are identified in the Morecambe Area Action Plan and are likely to include those listed below. If all were to be redeveloped there would be a significant loss of parking stock:

Car Park	Total Spaces, incl. disabled	Disabled spaces
<b>Council Operated</b>		
Bus Station	18	4
Goods Yard	66	4
Marine Road 2	18	2
Pedder Street	72	3
Sub-total	174	13
<b>Privately Operated</b>		
Winter Gardens	425 (approx)	Not known
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	

This level of loss of spaces will require careful management in order to ensure that the new developments replace the lost spaces and also provide for any additional parking demand generated by the developments themselves. There will also be potential difficulties during construction periods when the old parking will be lost and any potential replacement parking may not have been constructed.



**Aim 23:**

To maintain adequate provision of parking during and after any redevelopment of existing car parks.

- To ensure that the effects of any redevelopment of existing car parks are minimised;
- To ensure that when redevelopment occurs it follows that appropriate car parking arrangements are made.

**5.2.3. Parking for the Disabled****5.2.3.1. Off Street**

An assessment of the existing car parks has indicated that in comparison with the recommended standards (see section 4.2.6.1) there are sufficient parking spaces for the disabled in Morecambe. However, it is always prudent to monitor the use of these spaces as the distribution, whilst compliance with the guidance, may not meet the actual demand.

The charging options described in section 4.2.6.1 apply equally to the car parks in Morecambe.

**5.2.3.2. On Street**

As previously mentioned there are some issues with general traffic searching for on street parking spaces in the town centre. To ease the volume of the circulating traffic consideration could be given to the conversion of some of the available parking spaces to parking for the disabled.

**Aim 24:**

To ensure that adequate provision is made for parking space for the disabled:

- Monitor the distribution of the off street provision and adjust if the demand so justifies;
- Review the provision of on street parking for the disabled in the town centre.

#### 5.2.4. Coach Parking

There are three existing coach parking facilities in Morecambe:

- A dedicated coach park adjacent to the Morrisons Supermarket – caters for the day trip coaches
- Winter Gardens - caters for day trip coaches
- Back Brighton Car Park – a low cost facility which tends to cater for parking coaches bringing parties staying in one of the sea front hotels
- Battery Breakwater Car Park – caters for day trip coaches

The coach parking facilities appear to meet the current coach parking needs but the situation will require monitoring. However, there is a need to consider the provision of suitably located coach drop off and pick up points for both day trip coaches and those servicing the hotels

**Aim 25:**

To ensure that there is adequate provision for coach parking:

- Monitor the use of the existing facilities and consider additional provision if necessary;
- Review the provision of suitable drop off and pick up points.

#### 5.2.5. Car Park Signage

There are concerns about the current directional signage to the public car parks. The signs need to direct motorists, particular the visitors who may be unfamiliar with the area, to the most convenient car park for their intended destination. The routes should avoid where possible unnecessary circulation within the central area. Ideally drivers should be directed to the most suitable car park.

The Morecambe Area Action Plan has identified a need for improved signage of the main pedestrian routes to and from the town centre and the key attractions.

**Aim 26:**

To improve directional signage to the main car parks:

- Undertake a review of directional signage to the main car parks and update when redevelopment takes place
- Review pedestrian route signage from the main car parks to and from the town centre and key attractions.

**6. CARNFORTH**

Carnforth is an important local centre providing access to Morecambe Bay and the Arnside Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The traffic and parking problems in Carnforth are long standing. There is a need to maintain the current parking facilities at the railway station as these serve both rail travellers and visitors to the town centre. The car park, which is privately operated, provides for both short and long stay parking.

There are also two supermarket car parks which are often used by shoppers visiting the town centre as well as the supermarkets. A two hour maximum stay applies at the supermarket car parks.

There are issues about the on street parking in the town centre; notably Market Street.

**Aim 27:**

To protect the existing parking facilities in the town centre:

- Maintain the parking facility at the railway station;
- Monitor parking in Market Street and, if necessary, work with the County Council to amend the parking restrictions;
- Consider additional parking provision if a suitable development opportunity arises.

## 7. HEYSHAM

Currently, there are no problems with parking in Heysham – there are facilities at the port and a large council operated car park in the village.

The completion of the Heysham – M6 link road may provide the catalyst for the expansion of the operations at the port and this may create new parking issues, both on and off street.

**Aim 28:**

To assist the expansion of the port at Heysham:

- Work with the port authorities to ensure that parking problems do not inhibit the commercial expansion of the port.

## 8. RURAL AREAS

At many of the District's popular tourist attractions in the rural areas, car parking demand can exceed supply. This can lead to environmentally damaging and obstructive on-road parking. In some locations additional parking facilities may be appropriate.

**Aim 28:**

To review parking provision at the more popular rural tourist attractions.

- Assess the environmental and road safety impact of existing parking demand.
- Where appropriate consider the provision of additional facilities.
- Investigate the potential improvements available for parking at Glasson Dock which is in private ownership of the Canal and River Trust.

## 9. PARKING STANDARDS ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The Council has set out its parking standards for new developments in appendix C of the Development Management DPD.

**Aim 30:**

To ensure compliance with the detailed standards set out in the DPD:

- Impose maximum standards for non-residential development, using the criteria for parking provision and operational parking set out in the DPD.
- Encourage developer contributions to ensure adequate accessibility to new developments by all modes with the emphasis on achieving the greatest degree of access by public transport, walking and cycling.

