

Rotherham Town Centre Parking Strategy

December 2019



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October 2019

Foreword



As Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, parking forms an important part of my portfolio.

Parking has a significant role to play in the town centre and this strategy sets out the ways the Council seeks to manage parking in order to achieve the wider aims in transport and regeneration.

The aim of the Strategy is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to providing an appropriate level of parking provision, to meet the economic and development needs of the town as it moves forward in line with the Town Centre

Masterplan and to support the needs of businesses, residents and visitors to the town.

Parking provision, price, enforcement, maintenance and availability will all be considered in the decision making around future developments and transportation issues such as congestion and sustainable modes of transport.

The Council will undertake the enforcement of parking activities in a fair, consistent and proportionate manner.

I fully endorse this Strategy and I am convinced that it provides a firm foundation for sound decisions to be made on the future success of the town centre.

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Introduction

This document presents Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Car Parking Strategy for the Town Centre. It aligns with wider strategic objectives and supporting policy areas, recognising the role that careful planning of parking and its associated use plays in improving air quality, increasing physical activity, supporting economic activity and reducing environment impact.

The supply, management and location of car parking is essential to assist Local Authorities achieve their economic, social and environmental objectives in central areas. The provision of a clear and unambiguous parking strategy can deliver a number of localised benefits, these include;

- Support the local economy by providing access to local traders and facilitating development opportunities.
- Meet residents' needs for parking near their homes.
- Improve access to key services for special needs groups and the mobility impaired.
- Improve journey time reliability for road users by designing and managing parking facilities to reduce traffic conflicts.
- Encourage sustainable travel modes by setting parking charges at appropriate levels.
- Improve safety by ensuring that car parks are designed to industry recognised standards.
- Raise revenue for the council to reinvest in transport services

The strategy attempts to balance these competing objectives as one of the measures that can be used to promote Rotherham Town Centre as a place to live, shop, spend leisure time and as a place to invest and do business. The document provides a position statement on a number of factors, including the overall management and operation of parking in Rotherham Town Centre as well as the currently available and projected future parking capacity.

This strategy is being developed at a pertinent time, as the transport sector embarks upon extraordinary levels of transformation, derived from technological advancement resulting in significant behavioural change. As a result, the Council has a statutory and moral responsibility to respond proactively to that change, to ensure that the Council not only meets customers' expectations but that it operates its highways and systems as efficiently as possible.

Policy Context

Town Centre Masterplan

The Town Centre Masterplan outlines a long term framework for the commercial success of the Town Centre, building on a number of exciting new developments that will change the visitor and residential offer. At the heart of this revitalisation are new developments at Forge Island, high quality living and a vibrant market complex. Enhanced public spaces are key to its success as well as improved accessibility, including public transport, active travel and parking provision. Traders within the Town Centre and potential investors require parking provision to match demand. This needs to be provided at a price which does not impede economic performance whilst still promoting and not undermining public transport.

As part of the preparation of the Town Centre Masterplan; a document was produced by White Young Green Consultants titled "Rotherham Parking Strategy: Car Parking Impact Assessment". This document includes:

- A summary of relevant parking policy documents
- A review of existing parking provision
- A summary of parking usage
- A review of financial performance
- A review of charging structures
- A summary of likely future parking demand
- An assessment of alternative modes of transport
- Conclusions and recommendations

This Strategy reflects the above document although up to date information / data has been incorporated since the above document was produced in July 2017.

Local Plan

The Movement and Accessibility chapter of the Local Plan's Core Strategy recognises the need to manage demand for travel through parking policies. It outlines that the Council will work with partners and stakeholders to focus transport investment on making places more accessible and on changing travel behaviour. The Core Strategy notes that accessibility will be promoted through the proximity of people to employment, leisure, retail, health and public services by a number of measures including parking. Specifically, it notes that parking provision in town centre and other accessible sites should only be reduced if and when public transport and other sustainable modes can accommodate travel. However, any reduction will not be to such an extent that the town centre becomes unattractive when

compared to out of town shopping centres. This strategy is cognisant with this philosophy and aims to provide a multi-modal framework for future parking provision.

Rotherham Transport Strategy

The purpose of Rotherham Transport Strategy is to establish a transport policy which provides a blueprint for the Borough's transport network over the next 11 years. There is a particular focus on immediate priorities to stimulate the local economy to create jobs and to tackle transport affordability. Parking forms a major part of this strategy, with the aims and objectives consistent with the Local Plan Core Strategy.

Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy

In January 2019, the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority adopted its 4th Local Transport Plan, setting out a long term vision for the City Region's transport network. This is broadly focused around four policy objectives with economic growth and sustainability being key features within the future operation of the transport network. The strategy recognises the need for effective parking strategies to enable economic performance whilst also balancing the demand for car use against the need for more public transport and active travel behaviour. As such, although the strategy welcomes a coherent management of parking, there is also a strong recognition that provision for cycle and electric vehicle charging points are essential components of a sustainable town centre.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF outlines a high level guidance regarding parking in town centres. It states that "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".

This statement supports the development of a balanced and evidence-based parking policy which recognises the needs of different groups of users, including businesses, residents and visitors which rely on parking provision. One of the key strategic goals of the NPPF across a number of policy areas is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In practice, this implies that the provision and regulation of parking must help to improve the appeal of sustainable modes so that developments are not car dependant whilst not obstructing economic growth.

Legislation

Part 2 of the Traffic Management Act (2004) places a network management duty on Local Highway Authorities to keep all traffic flowing. The Act places a strong emphasis on the local authority taking responsibility for parking enforcement through the development and implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement. In accordance with the Traffic Management

Act 2004, the Council is expected to exercise parking enforcement powers in a fair and reasonable manner to ensure that parking restrictions and enforcement protect the operation of the highway network and bus routes from indiscriminate and unsafe parking activities.

Parking provision, management and enforcement must contribute to the delivery of the statutory Highway Network Management Duty and be reported for effectiveness through Local Transport Plans.

Strategic Principles

The Strategy is fundamentally supported by the following policy statement;

- The Council will maintain an appropriate level of parking provision which is commensurate with the environmental, development and economic needs of the Town Centre and its businesses, visitors and residents.
- The Council will undertake the enforcement of parking activities in a fair, consistent and proportionate manner.

In order to keep the strategy focused and aligned with corporate and regional transport objectives, it is underpinned by six core principles which demonstrate its role within the wider policy context. These are outlined below in the diagram, articulating that the six key principles are intrinsically linked together:



Access to Services, Employment, Retail and Leisure

This Strategy recognises that parking performs a valuable economic and social function for the Town Centre. It supports businesses by enabling consumers to access shops, it allows employees to access their workplaces and it allows citizens to reach education establishments. As the Town Centre dynamically changes its offer over the next few years, parking in conjunction with a pedestrian friendly environment will play in major role in the

participation of the social and cultural offer of the town. Parking policy will therefore ensure that spaces are available in the right location, at the right price for those who cannot reasonably use other modes of transport. This will also limit the time users spend searching for car parking, which unmanaged can contribute towards congestion and have a significant impact on return trips.

There are a number of key considerations:

- Parking will be available for different needs. Some users require parking for short periods located in close proximity to their final destination, while other users need parking for longer periods. Parking provision needs to be mindful of this without influencing the user's decision to come to Rotherham.
- There will be adequate parking for users who cannot reasonably be expected to use other modes, or for whom alternative modes would be substantially less efficient.
- Multi-storey and decked car parks should be located near to key attractions and should be easily accessible from the main radial roads to minimise the volume of cross-town vehicle movements.
- It is recognised that the Council's current off street parking stock is largely historical based on land availability rather than strategic locations. Additionally, some strategically located car parks were used as development sites, for example Market Street.
- The price of Council owned car parking will be set to encourage an appropriate level of turnover in relation to the location of the car park or parking space.
- Car users will have the ability to access information which will enable them to locate parking spaces quickly and efficiently, thus minimising circulation time and reducing congestion within the Town Centre.

Regeneration

Car parks are of significant size and scale, with the most effective and financially viable being placed close to key destinations. These land uses perform a variety of economic and social purposes. In order to cultivate growth in Rotherham town centre, it is necessary to retain the appropriate allocation of land for parking. It is recognised that as regeneration progresses, the pressure to take full advantage of the value of Town Centre sites will increase, therefore:

- There must be justification for land to be used for parking rather than other use.

- Parking facilities will use land as efficiently as possible. This could include integration with new developments or decked structures to minimise land take.

In relation to parking charges, car park users will pay a higher tariff when town centres are vibrant and attractive places. The development of key housing sites and the Forge Island leisure complex in the town centre will leverage investment to make the town more accessible and attractive. This stimulates footfall which then attracts further investment, resulting in fewer vacant sites and greater increases on the demand for parking (and public transport) in the town centre.

The management and provision of parking will help to create the right conditions for investment and will ensure, when possible, that land is available for development.

Support Sustainable Travel Modes

There is a fundamental link between the availability and price of parking and the use of sustainable modes. If parking is too plentiful or too cheap, car owners have little incentive to use sustainable transport (even if public transport is accessible and high quality). Declining use of public transport, as witnessed in Rotherham, has the potential to result in cuts to bus service levels due to impact on commercial viability which in turn would adversely affect the mobility of public transport users. Meanwhile, increased use of cars exacerbates congestion on the roads, which makes journey times longer and less reliable for all road users, and increased use of high emission vehicles reduces local air quality. This means that:

- The availability and price of car parking should be balanced and set at a rate which encourages the use of sustainable transport modes.
- In managing the supply and cost of car parking, there must be an incentive for car owners to use public transport.
- The availability of electric vehicle charging points at Council car parks can help support the growth of sustainable modes and help to improve air quality.

Competitive

There are a number of local characteristics of Rotherham Town Centre that have been considered when developing this Strategy. Principally, Rotherham does not have a significantly high concentration of employment meaning that parking is not largely long stay. There are also a number of development sites which are used as temporary public and private car parks, resulting in a large supply with relatively low demand meaning prices are low. There are also comparatively low levels of congestion on the highway network,

although there are key hotspots during peak hours, which mean that the car is an attractive option.

On a local level, Rotherham Town Centre competes with Parkgate and Meadowhall for consumer spending and its regional urban centres (Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster) for employees and investment. The Strategy is mindful of parking policies of neighbouring centres to ensure that the Town Centre is not disadvantaged.

The Council has worked and will continue to work with Town Centre businesses to support growth by implementing a number of initiatives which are listed below:

Tariff Changes

With effect from April 2016 the Council simplified the town centre parking charges and significantly reduced medium and long stay tariffs. This reduced the number of coins per transaction that customers have to use and has reduced over-payments at machines.

Medium (4 hour) and all day parking activities have increased significantly since the tariff changes which indicates that customers are staying in town for longer periods.

All "pay and display" parking areas in the town centre

- Free parking on each of the six Saturdays in the approach to Christmas.

The cost of this offer is embedded into the Parking Services budget which means that funding need not be sought annually.

Forge Island car park

- Free parking for 2 hours in 35 bays in Forge Island car park "Red Zone" Monday to Friday.
- Free parking all day on Saturdays in the whole of Forge Island car park.

Drummond Street car park

- Free parking for 2 hours in 35 bays in Drummond Street car park "Red Zone" Monday to Friday.
- Free parking all day on Saturdays in the whole of Drummond Street car park.

Wellgate multi storey car park

- Introduction of a 'pay on foot' system at Wellgate multi storey car park. This means that customers may park their vehicles safe in the knowledge that no penalty charge notice will be issued in the event that a delay causes them to be late returning to their vehicle.
- Free parking all day on Saturdays in the whole of Wellgate multi storey car park

Off – street town centre car parks

- Concessionary priced parking permits in some off-street car parks

Riverside, Clifton Hall and Scala car parks

- Buy 2 hours; get 2 free in Riverside, Clifton Hall and Scala car parks on Saturdays.

Revenue Generation

The ways in which Councils in the UK can provide or change parking schemes including the setting of parking prices and the allocation of any surplus parking income is tightly regulated in law. Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984) imposes a general duty on the Council to exercise its function to "secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway". Collectively, these criteria may be referred to as "traffic management purposes".

Section 45 gives the Local Authority the power to designate parking places on a highway; to charge for the use of them and to issue parking permits for a charge. Section 55 of the Act places a duty on the Local Authority to keep an account of their income and expenditure in respect of designated parking places. This includes pay and display income. The ring-fenced account is referred to as the Parking Account with a number of specific areas on which parking income can be spent.

Section 55(4) of the Act sets out the purposes for which any surplus income in respect of designated parking places can be used. These purposes include:

- Provision and maintenance of off street parking
- Meeting costs incurred in the provision or operation of public transport
- Highway and road improvements and maintenance
- Reducing environmental pollution
- Provision of free public outdoor recreational facilities

In accordance with these functions, the provision of parking generates surplus revenue for the Council but this is not the primary purpose of charging for publicly owned parking spaces (Appendix 3). There is a need for the Council to continue to run a financially sustainable parking service whilst at the same time seeking ways through innovation and technology to reduce the operational and management costs of the parking service.

The Council's Annual Parking Account is published on the Council's website. This includes relevant statistical and financial information.

Parking enforcement undertaken by the Council does not generate a surplus but it is self-financing.

Mobility and Safety

There are specific requirements of Electric Vehicle (EV) users and cyclists and these are considered within the Strategy. EV users require access to public charging points to ensure that they have the confidence to use their vehicles. This will also play a considerable role in changing the general public's perception and aid the transition from more traditional forms of vehicle propulsion. Previously, the limited EV charging provision in the town centre may have been a barrier to attracting EV users to travel to Rotherham. However, this has been addressed through the Clean Air Zone Early Measures Fund which has funded a total of 14 public charging points in Council operated car parks to ensure Rotherham is a place where EV users can work and visit.

The Council will continue to measure the effectiveness and usage of these points, to determine where new installations will be needed in the future as demand for this infrastructure is expected to increase.

High quality cycle provision in the town centre is a continuing commitment as the Council promotes active lifestyle through modal choice. Currently, there are a number of cycle routes into the town centre with accompanying cycle storage and parking. However, the location and quantity will be reviewed to ensure that this is in the right location to maximise usage and attractiveness.

The needs of motorcycle users have been considered and motorcycle parking is available in existing off-street car parks and in on-street spaces. Motorcycle users are not subject to charges for parking in the town centre.

Safety and security of those using the Town Centre car parks is of paramount importance. If users of the car park do not feel comfortable leaving their vehicle, paying at the machine or walking to their destination then this can become a significant barrier. This strategy recognises the role that connecting walking routes and lighting can play in the customer experience and how this reflects the impression of the wider Town Centre. By ensuring

that safety and security is a fundamental component of car parking design and maintenance, then this can help make people feel more comfortable when interacting with the Town Centre and its wider offer.

Current Position

The Strategy determines the appropriate location and type of parking to support the aims of the Town Centre Masterplan. The Strategy therefore distinguishes between shopper and leisure based short and medium term parking, and longer commuter based parking. This is split between on-street and off-street provision and between permanent and temporary off-street parking.

The Council has a robust database on the supply and demand for car parking in the town centre. This section summarises the key points that have been considered in developing this Strategy.

Existing Parking Facilities

The town centre is served by a mix of Council owned and managed and private off street car parks. The Council also operates on-street parking in the town centre. The number of spaces is as follows:

- Off Street: Short Stay Council (up to 4 hours) 117, Long stay Council 1163 and Long stay private 750
- On Street: 316 bays mostly short stay but some long stay bays in the outer town centre.

Current Parking Usage

Occupancy levels of the off street car parks are highest on normal working days i.e. Monday to Friday. On these days the highest occupancy levels are between 10:00 and 14:00.

A summary of off – street occupancy levels is attached as Appendix 1

A summary of on street occupancy levels is attached as Appendix 2

Enforcement

The National Planning Policy Framework states that parking enforcement should be proportionate.

The Council's approach to enforcement reflects the National Planning Policy Framework in that its Civil Enforcement Officers are deployed in such a way to act as ambassadors for the town. Enforcement is undertaken in a fair, consistent and transparent manner. Civil Enforcement Officers are trained and receive refresher training in Customer Care in addition to the City & Guilds qualification in Parking.

The objectives of parking enforcement are as follows:

- To maintain and improve the free and safe flow of traffic, thereby making Rotherham a more pleasant and environmentally safe place to live, work and visit.
- To improve the quality and accessibility of public transport, especially buses on Quality Bus Corridors, by discouraging the use of cars where road conditions and public transport facilities justify this. This is to encourage an environmentally friendly lifestyle.
- To actively support the needs of people with disabilities, bearing in mind that in some cases they are unable to use public transport and are entirely dependent upon the use of a car.
- To actively discourage indiscriminate parking as this can cause obstruction to other motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and contribute to congestion.
- To actively support Local Transport Plan targets and objectives and to help fulfil the requirements of The Traffic Management Act 2004, in particular those helping to reduce congestion and improving road safety.

The Council deploys Civil Enforcement Officers to cover the town centre charging hours (08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Saturday). In addition, intermittent patrols are undertaken to cover early evenings. Ad-hoc patrols outside normal hours are also undertaken on a needs basis, for example; joint patrols involving South Yorkshire Police and / or the Council's Licensing Team.

The Council has been nationally recognised for its work in combatting fraudulent use of blue badges. The Council has prosecuted significant numbers of cases involving drivers using badges registered to people who were not present or deceased people.

The Council also deploys a mobile CCTV vehicle which is used to patrol outside schools borough wide and restricted bus-stops.

Although there are no schools within the town centre; the enforcement of school keep clear markings is an integral part of the Council's Parking Enforcement Policy and it is undertaken in a robust manner.

Town Centre enforcement is undertaken giving priority to contraventions as follows:

- Restricted bus stops
- Blue badge bays
- Peak period waiting and loading
- Single / double yellow lines on strategic routes
- Pedestrianised Areas waiting / loading
- Taxi ranks
- Road junctions where restrictions exist
- Pay & Display
- Residents' permit spaces
- District shopping areas – any restrictions
- Double yellow on non-strategic routes

The Council takes action against persistent evaders by impounding vehicles. The current process allows for such action when vehicles are the subject of three outstanding penalty charge notices (PCNs) with removal being authorised upon the issue of the fourth PCN.

Whilst parking enforcement will remain their core duty, the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers will also receive training in undertaking enforcement of other crimes such as littering, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour.

Charging Structure

The National Planning Policy Framework states that Local Authorities should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres.

The Council changed its tariffs with effect from April 2016. Long stay charges were reduced from £6.50 per day to £3.50 per day in the core town centre car parks. This has resulted in a 300% increase in all day sales.

The Parking Impact Assessment produced by White Young Green as part of the Town Centre Masterplan indicates that the current tariffs are at appropriate levels and should not be increased for the foreseeable future.

Rotherham Council's parking tariffs compare favourably with those of neighbouring Local Authorities. The current tariffs are tabled in Appendix 4.

Shared Use Standards

The DfT wrote to all Highway authorities on the 1st October 2018 explaining that; the Inclusive Transport Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework published in July, states all Local Authorities should pause before the introduction of any new shared space schemes that feature a level surface, and which are at the design stage.

The information provided by the DfT to clarify what types of schemes are to be paused is indicated below.

- The focus of the pause is on level-surface schemes in areas with relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movement, such as high streets and town centres (outside of pedestrian zones).
- A level surface is a design feature in which the level difference between the footway and the carriageway is removed.

All local Authorities need to ensure that every scheme is designed with the needs of different users in mind, creating places that are attractive and work well for everyone, whilst satisfy their obligations under the equalities legislation. This revised position on shared space therefore adds more complexity within the design of shared spaces and parking provision.

Future Position

The number and location of on and off street parking facilities can be significantly influenced by town centre development projects, this includes;

- housing and employment growth throughout Rotherham and the sub region;
- commercial and cultural development in the town centre;
- the provision of sustainable transport modes; and
- the cost, location and supply of parking.

By understanding the relationship between these factors, the Strategy will shape the demand for parking in the long term to minimise the need for new provision. The Strategy recognises that simply providing additional parking is rarely an adequate solution to the transport and economic challenges the town centre faces. The understanding and recognition of the knock on implications of this relationship will be important in future decision making.

Specifically in relation to the impact of growth, when studying the feasibility of developments it is vital that due consideration is given to parking issues, namely:

- What temporary effect will the site development works have on the availability of parking facilities and what alternative arrangements will be put in place
- How many parking activities is the completed development likely to generate
- Will the completed development result in any permanent loss of existing parking facilities and, if so, what alternative provision will be made
- Where is the development in relation to public transport facilities (bus stops / tram / train stations etc?)
- Where is the development in relation to suitable pedestrian access routes

The current and known future development sites are detailed individually in Appendix 5.

Delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan and its associated development opportunities will remove some existing parking provision, whilst also generating new demand for parking. However, it is planned that the reduction in parking supply will be offset, to some extent, by enhancements to public realm, cycle infrastructure and sustainable transport, thereby effecting modal shift away from the car. In addition, the provision of new, permanent parking provision may be delivered as part of the new development projects (such as the Forge Island development) which will help to accommodate new demand.

Currently in Rotherham, as sites get cleared for development they are used as temporary parking facilities. In response to this, there is sufficient land for parking activity and there is a risk that if this is lost, other land needs to be identified or increasing the capacity of the existing parking stock. Examples of means of achieving this could be decking or smaller parking spaces.

The ongoing requirement for "Residents Only Parking Schemes" will be reviewed annually. This is because relocation of town centre hubs, for example when the Council moved into Riverside House from offices at the opposite side of the town centre, may influence decisions for the abolition of schemes or the introduction of new schemes.

Where it is essential to provide new parking to facilitate town centre growth, this will be located in highly accessible areas of the town centre, especially for short and medium stay parking, close to the key attractors.

Demand for cycle parking and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points is likely to increase in the next decade as the uptake of EVs increases and cycling levels rise following the delivery of the transport and active travel investment programmes.

The White Young Green document "Rotherham Parking Strategy: Car Parking Impact Assessment" states:

The parking density described in this document measures the actual parking stock and reflects historic policies for provision in the town centre. With current national and local policy steering towards more sustainable development and travel patterns, the introduction of stricter parking controls on parking can be seen as a way of managing demand. Para 7.3 of the Council's document "Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Parking Standards Good Practice Guidance 2014" states: *In town centre and local shopping centre locations, car parking requirements for individual developments will be judged against the level of overall publicly available car parking space in the locality. Rotherham town centre has a number of public car parks, both long and short stay and as such it may not be necessary to provide additional parking as part of the development.*

The Objectives

Having explained the core principles, the Strategy now outlines the implications of the provision and management of car parking in Rotherham town centre.

Location of Future Parking

Short and Medium Stay

Discussion with Town Centre businesses has clearly indicated that traders and service providers need access to short and long stay parking as close to the core retail area as possible. These car parks should be easily accessible from the key pedestrian routes to trading areas to enable shoppers and business visitors to gain easy access to the town offer.

Where possible, car parks will be evenly dispersed on strategic corridors within the Town Centre to enable traffic to access car parks soon after exiting the core radial network. This will reduce the need for vehicles to circulate searching for parking spaces which conflicts with bus, cycling and pedestrian movements.

As a general principle, short stay on-street parking will be located in central areas to increase turnover with a spaces reserved for disabled users. In the more outlying areas of the Town Centre, these will be reserved for medium stay. Where there is no evidence of demand for either, these will be designated as long stay.

Disabled parking spaces should also be promoted as close to the town centre core as possible whilst also being provided close to attractors on the fringe of the town centre. The provision of dedicated disabled parking spaces off street and at strategic on street locations will provide spaces where demand has been evidenced, but needs to be accommodated in the most appropriate location to keep traffic moving on the highway. Requests for very short stay (30 mins max) on street parking is a recurring request from businesses.

As the Town Centre matures and develops over the delivery period of the Masterplan, the Council will continually review the location and capacity of disabled parking bays to ensure that access to new facilities (cultural hubs and key destinations) are maintained.

From 30th August 2019 the Blue Badge Scheme was expanded and now people with "hidden disabilities" may be eligible for blue badges. Whilst it is not a legislative requirement; the Council will investigate the feasibility of implementing additional designated parking facilities. Locations to be considered for such facilities include but are not limited to:

- On street locations currently the subject of double yellow line restrictions
- On street locations on the outskirts of "pedestrian zones"

- Additional designated disabled spaces within off-street car parks

The expansion of the scheme is also likely to result in an increase of fraudulent use of blue badges, for example by family members. The Parking Enforcement Team will receive refresher training as required to ensure that Rotherham Council remains at the forefront of the fight against blue badge fraud.

Long Stay

Long stay car parks will be located further from the core to avoid detracting from other uses. They will be located close to the entry points into the Town Centre from the A630 in the west and north and Moorgate Road, Drummond Street area in the east and south. This will ensure that vehicles will be intercepted on the network before they reach the town centre core.

With a growing need for a balanced and integrated transport network, long stay parking pricing and availability must be sympathetic to the policy requirement to encourage the use of sustainable transport, especially for commuting purposes. In addition, long stay parking provision will be located in the most suitable locations, with the focus on central/core parking provision being maintained for short stay parking. This will help support the retail needs of town centre businesses and encourage more shopper related uses in prime retail locations.

Residential

A common and reoccurring issue in suburbs surrounding the town centre is the effect of displaced long stay parking if supply is too low or costs are too high, as commuters seek free on-street and long stay parking further afield. Using the tools available through the Traffic Management Act, the Strategy prioritises the ability of residents to access on-street parking spaces close to their residences over the needs of commuters. In light of this and as future developments increase housing supply in the town centre, the policy on residential parking zones will be continuously reviewed and new residential zones will be considered where there is evidence of a commuter parking problem.

Park and Ride

Park and Ride facilities are located at strategic locations across the sub region and are attached to key transport infrastructure such as train stations and the tram stops. At present, in Rotherham, there is limited parking provision available at stations, with the exception of Swinton where a dedicated large car park is provided. Recently, the introduction of the Tram Train pilot scheme between Sheffield and Parkgate has proved successful, with Park and Ride options now being sought at the Parkgate terminus as well as within the Town Centre. This infrastructure is essential to support the tram train's continued use and attractiveness. New opportunities will be explored through available

funding sources, such as a new park and ride at Magna and Parkgate, as part of a regional integrated transport investment package.

Park and Ride sites are operated by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) and Northern Rail. SYLTE is accountable to the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority with the role to encourage the maximum use of public transport throughout South Yorkshire and to promote growth of the public transport network. It works closely with transport service operators, local councils and other key stakeholders to develop the network and services across the county.

In addition, where possible, funding bids and planning consent requirements will be considered to provide additional park and ride spaces where relevant to build on existing park and ride options.

Supply by Type

On-Street

The parking needs of shoppers, disabled people and business visitors will continue to require kerbside, on street parking as this is often the closest way they can get to their final destination. These spaces are in high demand and are priced accordingly. . This will ensure that the on-street parking in these locations has a high turnover and remains commercially viable.

Within the core of the Town Centre, on-street parking should be located in appropriate locations which do not restrict the safe and efficient flow of traffic, including pedestrians. Evidence from numerous studies and supported by the Town Centre Masterplan suggests that main thoroughfares should be void from moving vehicle traffic and parking movements focused at 'entry' points to the Town Centre offer.

Currently pedestrians can walk without fear from motor vehicles during the peak times of pedestrian activity due to a series of Traffic Regulation Orders which restrict vehicle movements in the core Town Centre. A recent document prepared by the charity 'Living Streets' suggests that case studies have identified that well planned improvements to public spaces can boost footfall and trading by up to 40%. It further suggested that many car journeys are short and as the volume of goods purchased is small these trips could be made on foot.

It is often assumed that more parking is the way to improve struggling town centres. Research across Europe has identified that the quality of public spaces is directly linked to peoples' perception of the attractiveness of an area contributing towards their quality of life and influencing where they shop. Any changes to the town centre's pedestrian offer could adversely affect public perception of the area.

Notwithstanding this, the current kerbside space in the Town Centre should be continually investigated to understand if areas could be better utilised or rationalised in areas where there is limited demand.

Off-Street (permanent, temporary)

Like most towns in the United Kingdom, town centres struggle to accommodate the increased traffic movements associated with their growth and the related parking. In accordance with this and as a measure to control future parking provision, where possible, new parking should be provided in off-street locations.

New off-street parking should be provided to serve new developments and transport interchanges and the number of spaces provided should follow the parking guidelines set out by Rotherham's Local Plan.

Incorporated within New Developments

In town centre and local shopping centre locations, car parking requirements for individual developments will be judged against the level of overall publicly available car parking space in the locality.

Rotherham Town Centre has a number of public car parks, both long and short stay and as such it may not be necessary to provide additional parking as part of the development. In the other town and suburban centres in the borough, the parking supply is variable and consideration will be given to local conditions when parking requirements are agreed for developments. Where development is proposed in town or local shopping centre locations sustainable

Events and Seasonal

Through the Council's Temporary Suspension of Parking Restrictions Protocol (Appendix 6), provisions can be made to accommodate the parking needs of seasonal changes or specific events. There is an application process which allows the Council to understand what the impact will be and this enables an informed decision to take place and implement an appropriate solution.

For the Town Centre, events are normally planned in advance which allows for adequate publicity of any special, temporary parking arrangements. The requirements vary significantly and may include car park closures, suspension of on-street parking facilities or suspension of parking restrictions. Waivers / dispensations may be issued to vehicles but consideration must always be given to the safety of all highway users including pedestrians.

EV Charging Points

The Council has been mandated by Central Government to improve air quality at certain locations around the borough through the Clean Air Zone feasibility study process. In light of this, the Council is currently installing a series of EV charging points in the Town Centre to provide the enabling infrastructure network to start to change consumer behaviour in favour of EV or hybrid vehicles. This will continue to be supported with future provision from the public and private sector being encouraged. Charging points should be tailored to likely duration of stay: 3kW and 7-22kW charging points will be appropriate for medium and long stay car parks, while 43kW Rapid AC and DC charging points will be suitable for short stay car parks.

Cycle Parking

Public cycle parking in the town centre should be secure, well-located and, where possible, sheltered. There should be short and long stay public cycle parking, which should be designed to suit its purpose and location. Cycle parking should be provided on-street, in existing and new car parks and in other locations on sites throughout the town centre.

As part of new developments, cycle parking is encouraged through adherence with the Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Parking Standards: Good Practice Guidance Supplementary Planning Guidance. Parking for Cycles should be provided in line with council standards, developers will be expected to demonstrate that excellent cycle parking facilities are to be provided. In designing cycle parking the following should be considered;

- Is it overseen and close to a building's entrance? Being visible to passers-by increases the level of security of the parking.
- Is the parking provision distributed correctly? Although a centralised location may be suitable for some sites, distributed parking may be more appropriate for large sites with several entrances.
- Is the parking easy to locate? Clear signage, both directional to the site and on the site of the parking itself, will enable the cycle parking to be found easily.
- Does the site feel secure to use? Good levels of lighting will encourage use at different times of day and CCTV cameras maybe appropriate in some locations, especially when parking is in long term use. National accreditation and benchmarking schemes such as 'Park Mark' could provide this.
- The type of parking provision should be appropriate to its function. Ideally short stay provision should be in the form of Sheffield stands covered by some form of canopy. Long stay provision may take the form

of secure lockers or a secure covered cage. In all cases parking that only allows part of the bike to be secured should be avoided

- Cycle parking should be incorporated into the design from the start, rather than added on as an afterthought.

The current cycle parking standards will be applied to all new developments, however some discretion will be applied to avoid over or under supply where the nature of the development warrants it.

Delivery and Implementation

Based on the evidence presented within this Strategy and the objectives outlined, this chapter identifies a number of actions to ensure that the correct provision and type of parking is provided in the right place. This will support the growth ambitions of the Town Centre whilst also balancing this against the need to improve the attractiveness of sustainable modes of transport. A series of actions are detailed below:

- Occupancy levels will be reviewed annually to help ensure that the appropriate level and location of parking provision is maintained.
- The impact on parking capacity of any new development within the town centre will be monitored to manage demand and promote sustainable modes of travel
- Build on the ethos of the Rotherham Bus Partnership, working with local bus operators and SYPTTE to improve Rotherham's bus offer, so that local workers are encouraged to use public transport.
- Consideration will be given to the creation of additional short stay spaces. Identify the best locations for "priority customers", such as those with disabilities and investigate revisions to existing on-street parking restrictions.
- Results of parking beat surveys will be used to indicate where spaces are under-utilised and if they could be re-allocated.
- Annually review parking tariffs to ensure that they remain competitive.
- Consideration will be given to parking incentives for low-emission vehicles where practicable to do so.
- Work with businesses to develop travel plans that minimise car use.
- Review existing cycle parking provision and enhance where possible.
- Review advanced direction signing (signs on the approaches / periphery of the town) and individual car park location signing.
- Explore the possibility of enhancing the existing Park & Ride provision in relation to the Tram Train pilot.
- Continue the provision of EV charging points.
- Ensure the provision of EV charging points where new developments are proposed.
- Consider the needs of disabled users in all public owned car parks and ensure that key destinations have appropriate levels of disabled parking availability either on or off street.

- Ensure disabled parking bays are clearly marked, of sufficient width and conveniently located close to pedestrian exit points.
- Ensure that off-street parking facilities are clean, tidy, well-lit and user friendly. A programme of works will be delivered to achieve a high standard of cosmetic finishes to the off-street parking stock. This will be the subject of a regular maintenance schedule thereafter to sustain the high standards.
- A program of “pay and display” machine replacement will be developed and funding sought to achieve a full stock of machines with debit/credit card payment facilities including contactless payment options.

As much of the publically owned Rotherham Town Centre parking stock is located on future development sites, there needs to be a considered understanding of how the release of land for development purposes will impact on the availability parking spaces.

Where there is a new development being proposed, as part of Rotherham’s local planning permission process, the developer is required to provide the appropriate level of disabled parking. This will be enforced via the legal documentation associated with their planning approval with the intention to ensure that those with disabilities do not suffer any detriment as a result of accessibility.

The specific objectives for each site are detailed below;

- **Forge Island** – The redevelopment of Forge Island will create a destination in the heart of the Town Centre and naturally this will require parking. In light of this, the development will incorporate its own parking provision to ensure that additional pressure is not exerted on other Town Centre car parks. Moreover, the loss of Forge Island for parking will mean that a significant number of parking spaces, including ‘free red zone’ spaces are displaced. In response to this, the Council is working with the developer of Forge Island to identify if weekday parking can be maintained on the site, whilst also investigation other suitable locations in the vicinity.
- **Sheffield Road** – The current land at Sheffield Road is allocated as a Town Centre housing site which is planned for development in the very near future. As a result, the parking stock will be lost, although current performance statistics indicate that the demand can be accommodated within the existing capacity of the current Town Centre car parks.

- **The Statutes** – Located next to the Train Station and close to Riverside House, this car park is an attractive location for commuter/long stay car parking associated with local employment and informal tram/train or rail based park and ride. This site is also a development plot but will be retained until later in this phased development. It is assumed that once Forge Island phase 1 is developed the parking on the Statutes will migrate to Forge Island (subject to agreement).
- **Rotherham Interchange** – the Council will continue to work in collaboration with SYPTA to maximise the use of the Rotherham Interchange Car Park. This will include promoting it as location for short stay, short stay and permit parking.
- **Town Centre On Street** – there will be a continual review of the Town Centre on-street car parking stock as part of the ongoing Public Realm improvements, additional bays will be created at priority locations.
- **Wellgate Multi-storey** – This car park will remain an important asset to the parking stock within the Town Centre. To improve the safety and security of the car park, the Council will build on recent investment to investigate future options regarding further refurbishment works.
- **Drummond Street** – Given its strategic position, this car park is a very popular location and attracts a large number of both short and long stay users. Recent initiatives such as the red zone have further increased its attractiveness and the Council will continue to identify other measures to ensure its usage is optimised to meet the needs of the Town Centre, whether this is long stay, short stay and at what proportions these are allocated.

The operations of third party car parks are within the functioning control and decision making of the owners therefore the Council has limited control over their provision and charges. However, it is intended that the Council will investigate ways of working with third party car park operators to ensure that the supply of parking matches the needs of the Town Centre and its businesses.

Appendix 1 - Off Street car parks occupancy levels

Car Park	Average occupancy	Comment
Drummond Street	High	Often 100% occupied, particularly since the allocation of 35 bays to form a free parking "Red Zone". Popular with market shoppers and attendees of college.
Clifton Hall	High	Popular with market shoppers and attendees of college.
Wellgate multi storey	High	130 all day permit holders
Douglas Street	Medium	Popular with Job Centre users. Low short stay tariff.
Wellgate North	High	Short stay. Popular with users of Wellgate businesses, Post Office etc.
Sheffield Road	Medium	Long stay almost exclusively used by Council employees based in Riverside House. Low tariff (£2 all day)
Unity Place	Low	
Riverside	Medium	
Scala	High	
Forge Island	High	Very popular with shoppers due to the 2 hours free in the Red Zone. Also popular for commuters and permit holders (120) for all day parking.
Bailey House	Medium	Mostly long stay activities
Interchange (SYPTTE)	Figure not available but likely to be high.	Due to re-open after refurb in April 2019. Will be state of the art car park with tariff to match the Council's core town centre car parks.
Westgate (Private)	Medium	Almost all long stay commuter parking
Liquid (Private)	High	Almost all long stay commuter parking
Brinsworth Street (Private)	Medium	Almost all long stay commuter parking

Appendix 2 - On Street occupancy levels

Location	Occupancy level	Comment
Market Street	High	
Main Street o/s & opposite Post Office	High	Many users are collecting parcels from PO
Main Street bridge	High	Many users visiting or working in Riverside House
Westgate o/s Post Office	High	Many users are collecting parcels from PO
Westgate below Post Office	Low	
Ship Hill	Medium	
Moorgate o/s Town Hall	High	High density of businesses (Solicitors, Estate Agents etc)
The Crofts	High	High density of businesses (Solicitors, Estate Agents etc)
Stanley Street	Medium	Intermittently high due to Mosque
Mansfield Road	Medium	Intermittently high due to Mosque
Wellgate (town centre end)	High	
Wellgate (Masons Arms)	Medium	
Upper Wellgate	Low	
Doncaster Gate	Medium	
Percy Street	Medium	
Howard Street	High	College and market nearby
Eastwood Lane	High	College and market nearby
Wharnccliffe Street	High	College and market nearby
Masbrough Street	High	Mainly long stay commuter parking
Chapel Walk	Low	Intermittently high due to Mosque

Appendix 3 - Current Parking Tariffs

Off – Street

Car Park	30 mins (£)	1 hour (£)	2 hours (£)	4 hours (£)	All day (£)
Drummond Street			1.50	2.00	3.50
Clifton Hall			1.50	2.00	3.50
Wellgate mscp			1.50	2.00	3.50
Forge Island			1.00	2.00	3.50 *
The Statutes			1.00	2.00	3.50 *
Scala			1.50	2.00	
Wellgate North	0.50	1.00			
Riverside		0.50	1.00	2.00	
Douglas Street	0.50	1.00	1.50		
Sheffield Road					2.00
Bailey House 3				1.00	2.00
York Road				1.00	2.00
Unity Place	0.20	0.50	1.50	2.00	

* With effect from 01/04/2019

On Street

Duration	30 mins (£)	1 hour (£)	2 hours (£)	4 hours (£)	All day (£)
Core town centre	1.00	1.50	3.00	N/A	N/A
Outer town centre	0.20	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00

Appendix 4 - Known Development Sites

FORGE ISLAND

- This site is the subject of development which is due to commence in mid 2020 2019.
- The leisure-led development is key to the future vitality of the town centre, and will act as a catalyst for further investments. A successful development will transform the town centre and hopefully attract significant numbers of visitors. Accordingly, this strategy needs to give consideration to the phases prior to, during and after completion of the development.
- Forge Island is the town centre's busiest off-street car park with an average of approximately 1000 parking activities per day.
- During the development of Forge Island the impact of the loss of the car park must not be underestimated and it is vital that acceptable alternative parking places are available to customers. These customers will be ad-hoc visitors to the town for shopping and / or business and commuters, some of which are employees of the Council who hold permits for which a monthly fee is paid.
- Upon completion of the Forge Island development the site is expected to offer a total of around 350 parking spaces. This is in excess of the 309 spaces currently available in the car park.

FORMER MAGISTRATES COURT SITE

- This site will eventually form part of the wider Forge Island scheme and be developed for residential, but development will not commence until the Forge Island site has been completed.
- The Council has planning approval for a 90 space car park on the site to be implemented until the site is developed. These spaces will be in addition to the 40 spaces already available on this site which is now known as The Statutes car park.

SHEFFIELD ROAD CAR PARKS

- Sheffield Road operates as both a staff and public car park which accommodates approximately 200 cars daily, Monday to Friday. The car park are proposed as residential development - are due to commence late in 2019 or early 2020.

Appendix 5 – Events Protocol

Temporary Suspension of Parking Restrictions Protocol

This protocol applies to events/gatherings for which temporary arrangements can be made for parking activities. Temporary parking arrangements can be applied for many types of events, for example:

- Town Centre events such as Armed Forces Day
- Gatherings at places of worship

Town Centre Events

Town Centre events are normally planned in advance which allows for adequate publicity of any special, temporary parking arrangements. The requirements vary significantly and may include car park closures, suspension of on-street parking facilities or suspension of parking restrictions. Waivers / dispensations may be issued to vehicles but consideration must always be given to the safety of all highway users including pedestrians.

Gatherings at places of worship

This applies to places of worship for all faiths in locations throughout the borough.

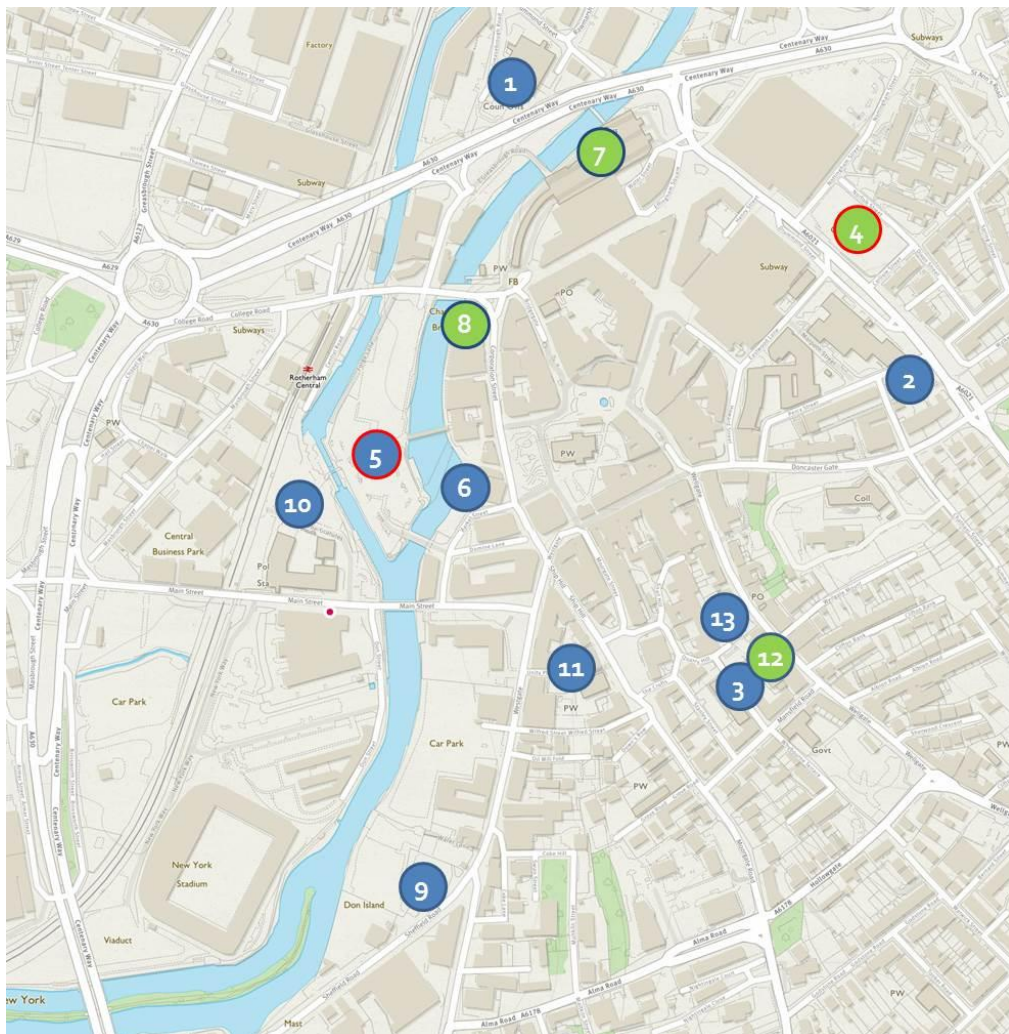
Funerals/Weddings etc

It is important that early contact is made with the Parking team so that they can implement the procedures as soon as is possible.

- The Parking Services Team should be contacted with the following details:
 - Time and date of the event
 - Location of the event
 - Contact name, number and email address
- The Parking Services Team will confirm by email agreed arrangements.
- A Civil Enforcement Officer will be allocated to attend the event prior to commencement to ensure that:
 - Where possible, vehicles are parked legally.
 - Where legal parking is not reasonably available, drivers are advised regarding where to park their vehicles and that temporary dispensations are in place.

- When “Pay and Display” bays are used the appropriate payment is made
- The Parking Services Manager (or Officer deputising in his absence) will agree a reasonable timescale for enforcement patrols to be suspended in the event that the bereaved family reside within a Residents Only Parking Zone.

Appendix 6 – Map of Town Centre Car Parks



Rotherham Town Centre Council Owned Car Parks

- Key**
- Red Zone Car Park
 - EV Charge Point
 - 1 Bailey House
 - 2 Clifton Lane
 - 3 Douglas Street
 - 4 Drummond Street
 - 5 Forge Island
 - 6 Riverside
 - 7 Rotherham Interchange
 - 8 Scala
 - 9 Sheffield Road
 - 10 The Statutes
 - 11 Unity Place
 - 12 Wellgate Multi-storey
 - 13 Wellgate North