

North Tyneside Council

Draft Parking Strategy 2012 – 2016

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Parking Strategy 2012 - 2016

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1. Introduction

The new draft strategy for the period 2012-16 replaces the previous parking strategy for the Borough and seeks to provide a consistent parking strategy across the Borough which reflects the needs of all stakeholders, residents, businesses and visitors whilst seeking to provide a safe and uncongested network for all modes of transport.

Provision and pricing of car parking is a key determinant of how people travel, and while it can be used to achieve modal shift away from car use, particularly in locations best served by alternatives to the car, there is also a delicate balance to be achieved between reducing long term parking and creating enough opportunities for shorter term parking to vitalise commercial areas and support businesses in difficult economic times.

North Tyneside Council was designated a Decriminalised Parking Authority in June 2007 and since then Council-employed Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) have been undertaking civil enforcement of parking restrictions.

There has been a rapid growth in the number of residential parking permit schemes within the Borough and also a considerable increase in the number of requests for new schemes and enforcement of existing schemes. A new strategy utilising the latest technology and a customer-driven best value approach to the service over the draft new plan period is essential.

2. Policy Framework

Background

North Tyneside Council is the highway authority for the borough. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Council to manage the road network, so far as is reasonably practical, having regard for other obligations, powers and objectives, to secure the expeditious movement of traffic, taking account of neighbouring authorities' highway networks. Parking supply and management affects both the demand for motorised journeys and, indirectly, congestion levels on the network and therefore is a key consideration in managing the highway network effectively.

The aim of the parking strategy is to help improve the quality of life of the people of North Tyneside by establishing a balance between the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of the whole community.

Parking cannot be considered in isolation and the objectives need to reflect the council's overall aims. The principles need to be consistent with other key documents including the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Tyne and Wear Local Transport Plan (LTP). It is also important that parking policies are compatible with the Council's economic objectives for the Borough.

This section describes the policy context in which North Tyneside's parking strategy will be set. The parking policies at national, sub-national and local level are summarised, along with relevant transportation policies.

National Parking Policy

National government influences the provision and management of parking through policy, legislation and advice. Policies are currently delivered through Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes and Planning Policy Statements (PPS). Their aim has been to influence those involved with planning and development to achieve sustainable development that stimulates growth while minimising the impact on the built and natural environments. The government has announced its intention to replace existing planning policy guidance with a new National Planning Policy Framework.

The current planning policy guidance relevant to the provision and management of parking is contained in the following three documents:

- PPS3: Housing
- PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
- PPG13: Transport

PPS3: Housing

This Planning Policy Statement replaced PPG3 in November 2006. It states that local planning authorities should, with stakeholders and communities, develop residential parking policies for their areas. These must consider expected levels of car

ownership, the importance of promoting good design and the need to use land efficiently.

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

This Planning Policy Statement replaced PPS6 in December 2009.

It seeks to promote the vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities through focusing new economic growth and development of main town centre uses in existing centres; fostering competition between retailers and enhanced consumer choice; and protecting the historic, archaeological and architectural heritage of centres.

It also states that local authorities should set maximum parking standards for new developments (e.g. housing, office or retail developments) through their development plan. North Tyneside Council's maximum parking standards for new developments are detailed in Supplementary Planning Document LDD12 – Transport and Highways.

PPG13: Transport

PPG13, as amended in November 2010, provides guidance on the links between land use and transport, including parking.

It sets out a number of principles for parking policy, for example that the policy should promote sustainable transport choices; encourage the shared use of parking, e.g. between retail and leisure developments; and support the vitality and viability of town centres.

Sub-national Policy

The Tyne and Wear third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) took effect in April 2011, having been approved by Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) which covers North Tyneside and the other four Tyne and Wear districts. LTP3 is based on three types of measures: managing the demand for travel; managing and further integrating existing networks; and targeting new investment at top priority challenges.

It contains four policies which relate directly to parking:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Policy 12 | We will seek to coordinate the provision and pricing of publicly-owned car parks |
| Policy 13 | We will ensure that (in publicly-owned car parks) disabled parking bays are available |
| Policy 14 | We will seek to identify suitable sites for off-road lorry parking provision |
| Policy 15 | We will use a combination of engineering, education and enforcement to curb illegal (including pavement) parking |

LTP3 also supports the wider provision of cycle parking.

The other Tyne and Wear districts each have their own parking strategies: each provides a mixture of charged and free parking, designed to reflect local circumstances and support the viability of local centres.

Local Policy

Supplementary Planning Document LDD12 'Transport and Highways' forms part of North Tyneside's statutory development plan, the Local Development Framework (LDF), which sets out the Council's approach to new developments through the planning process.

People or businesses who are submitting a planning application can consult LDD12 for details of the Council's requirements for parking. Appendix 6 sets out the Council's maximum standards for car parking, and Appendix 5 the minimum standards for cycle parking, which apply to all new developments.

Summary

Policy at national, sub-national and local level makes it clear that parking policy should be used to support the vitality and viability of town centres by providing for visitors such as shoppers while restricting long-stay commuter parking in the retail core. The Council also has a duty to manage the road network efficiently, which requires appropriate management of parking.

3. Car Parking Strategic Aims

The strategy has eight strategic aims to deliver a high standard car parking service throughout North Tyneside. Section 5 gives further detail on how we will deliver these aims.

- 1. Support North Tyneside's economy, our local businesses and our town and neighbourhood centres through consistent parking arrangements which support the vitality of the borough's commercial centres and wider regeneration aims;**
- 2. Provide an effective and efficient parking service, which manages income and revenue to enable the service to be fully funded and parking charges to be in line with the Council's wider policy objectives;**
- 3. Manage parking to ensure a safe environment for all our customers, including appropriate parking enforcement outside schools and improved lighting and security measures for car parks**
- 4. Serve the requirements of the community of North Tyneside as a whole by providing an appropriate level and range of car parking arrangements and restrictions, such as residents' parking permit schemes, in areas where these are required;**
- 5. Ensure that all new developments follow best practice with regard to parking;**
- 6. Recognise the importance of car parking management in influencing travel choices and promoting sustainable transport;**
- 7. Communicate regularly and effectively with all stakeholders in order to promote and improve the relevance of services and better meet the community's requirements;**
- 8. Ensure that customers are treated efficiently, effectively and fairly.**

4 Information and Issues

a) Town Centres

North Tyneside has four main town centres of which three, North Shields, Wallsend and Whitley Bay, have a wide range of uses such as retail, services and other businesses as well as many residential properties. In all three some off-street parking is available but a substantial proportion of parking is in on-street bays, often on partially or wholly residential streets. The parking needs of residents, who are eligible for parking permits, must be carefully balanced with those of other users.

Killingworth town centre was constructed more recently than the other town centres and is focussed mainly on retail uses, with no residential properties in the town centre itself. The town centre is served by privately owned supermarket-style car parks, which are free to use. There is no significant on-street parking in the town centre.

Other district centres within the borough such as Tynemouth, Longbenton, Forest Hall and Monkseaton are served by both on- and off- street parking.

The Council has introduced a number of on-street charged parking places, primarily adjacent to commercial areas where the demand for parking is high to support the viability and vitality of the area. These have been introduced to encourage a more effective turnover of the available kerbside space, whilst including an exemption for residents.

Parking in the Council managed off-street facilities is offered free of charge to encourage usage but length of stay restricted to ensure that a high turnover of the space is achieved. In addition to Council-run parking provision, commercially operated car parks are located at the Forum in Wallsend; the Beacon Centre in North Shields; and Park View shopping centre in Whitley Bay.

b) Foreshore Parking

Parking is provided at 16 separate locations along the Foreshore between St Mary's Island (Whitley Bay) and Low Lights (North Shields).

The Foreshore car parks are primarily utilised by leisure visitors, many from outside the borough. It is important that the visitor parking is of a high standard with well-maintained car parks with modern machines and facilities to assist in encouraging the continuing growth in tourism in the area and return visits. The Council will regularly review its parking control regime for leisure facilities in order to support tourism in the area.

An annual permit is available to park in any of the Council-run charged parking facilities along the Foreshore. At present there is no restriction on who can apply or the number of Foreshore permits that are available to each applicant.

c) Residential Parking

The Council receives numerous requests for Resident Parking Schemes. In general, requests fall within one of four categories:

- Residential amenity affected by commuter parking (all day)
- Residential amenity affected on a regular basis for short periods by influx of traffic (e.g. traffic associated with schools, parks, etc.)
- Insufficient kerbside space in residential area
- Certain streets under more 'parking' pressure than neighbouring streets.

Many of North Tyneside distinct town centres have residential areas nearby, while a number of the borough's residential areas adjoin large employment sites. As a result there are some residential streets which experience high levels of car parking by non-residents, e.g. for commuting or shopping

Due to the level of demand and expectation from residents seeking inclusion within the Councils Residents Parking Schemes, on 13 September 2010 Cabinet adopted new criteria to ensure that requests are considered in a consistent manner. A residents' parking scheme is most appropriate where;

- the uncontrolled demand for on-street parking will be close to or exceed kerb capacity on a regular basis and
- extraneous parking (i.e. parking not generated in the area itself) contributes significantly to that demand.

Where residential permit schemes exist it is important that permits are available for non residents with essential access needs in the permit areas and as such a number of permits and vouchers are available for different situations and locations.

Permit Types Available:

Resident Permits

Permits for Care Home Residents

Business Permits

Annual Permit

Community Worker Permits

Permits for Churches and Community Centres

Supplementary Vouchers (Bed and Breakfast/Hotel establishments, landlords and tradesmen)

d) Pavement Parking

The impact of motor vehicles parking on the pavement or verge can cause damage, danger and obstruction to road users especially pedestrians, including disabled people, visually impaired, older people and those with prams or pushchairs and can also cause environmental damage to kerb stones, grassed areas, pavements and to the services underneath the footway. Repairing such damage can be costly and there is potential for the Council to be faced with claims for injuries received resulting from damaged or defective pavements. The Council is working with partners in Tyne and Wear to discourage inconsiderate pavement parking.

Currently there is no ban on pavement parking, outside London, owing to the wide range of circumstances and locations where pavement parking occurs. In North Tyneside, Northumbria Police are responsible for enforcing obstructions of the highway and footpaths where no other parking restrictions are in force e.g. yellow lines.

e) Parking for People with Disabilities

The Blue Badge scheme was introduced in 1971. It provides parking concessions for severely disabled people to enable them to park without charge on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours and in on-street parking bays. In England, badges are issued by local authorities to individuals and organisations who meet the criteria set out in legislation. In North Tyneside, holders of a disabled badge may also park without charge in any bay in a Council-operated off-street car park.

The Government announced on 14 February 2011 a major programme of reforms to the Blue Badge scheme to address issues of abuse.

Blue Badge Bays, North Tyneside Council install two types of disabled bays in the borough. These are:

i) Formal bay with signs

Usually introduced in town centres adjacent to public buildings/facilities where there is an expectation that they will be well used by a variety of disabled badge holders. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is required to enable enforcement.

ii) Advisory bay with road markings only

In order to help people who have serious health problems affecting their mobility who have no existing off street parking facilities, the Council can mark the highway outside their property to enable them to park their vehicle as close to their home as possible.

Disabled parking bays (formal or advisory) are a facility for disabled people and all disabled car users are allowed to park within them - they are not for the sole use of an individual. A valid disabled badge must be displayed while the vehicle is in the bay.

f) Parking outside Schools

Illegal and dangerous parking too close to school entrances is a national problem. The lives of young children and their parents can be put at risk by parked vehicles obscuring pedestrians from the view of passing drivers.

g) Private Car Parks

In addition to Council controlled parking, all four town centres have significant privately operated parking facilities and it is important to engage with owners of these facilities in order to address parking consistently.

h) Coach Parking

Coach visits to North Tyneside are primarily to the Foreshore, with facilities being provided at Blue Reef Car Park, Tynemouth; Brierdene Car Park, Whitley Bay; and St Mary's Island (North) Car Park, Whitley Bay.

i) Motorcycle Parking

Motorcycles can park free of charge in all on and off street charged car parks, with a number being supported by dedicated reserved bays and secure motorcycle racks.

j) Cycle Parking

Objectives of the 2010-14 Cycling Strategy include to provide cycle facilities to support local journeys; and to strengthen partnership working with schools, colleges, employers and NHS trusts, both of which support the increased provision of cycle parking. The Council will make it easier to cycle for local journeys by providing more accessible cycle parking, particularly in town and local centres.

k) Freight Parking

One of the objectives of the Regional Freight Strategy for the North East is to monitor all official and unofficial lorry parking facilities and identify locations where further facilities are required as an action for local authorities.

North Tyneside Council works with Tyne & Wear Freight Quality Partnership and is a partner in the production of the Tyne & Wear Freight Map, which indicates the best routes for use by heavy commercial vehicles. However whilst there are no parking facilities at present, possible future sites are currently being examined.

l) Safety and Security

The Park Mark, Safer Parking Award is an initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) designed to reduce crime and the fear of crime within parking facilities. Owners/operators of parking facilities are required to adopt an active management strategy to reduce crime.

The Safer Parking Scheme is managed by the British Parking Association in conjunction with the Association of Chief Police Officers. The scheme was introduced by the Government in order to promote safe and secure parking facilities all over the country. High security standards reduce the fear and perception of crime.

In North Tyneside, 23 parking facilities have been awarded the Park Mark Award.

m) Customer Services

It is important that the highest standards of customer service are applied by our parking staff. The rapid growth in the number of permit holders and requests for service have increased demands on the existing systems, which need to be streamlined and incorporate the latest technology for customers.

5. Strategic Aims, Actions and Objectives

1. Support North Tyneside's economy, our local businesses and our town and neighbourhood centres through consistent parking arrangements which support the vitality of the borough's commercial centres and wider regeneration aims;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Continually review the operation of existing town centre on and off-street parking policy to support visitor growth and retail vitality
- b) Engage with private car park owners
- c) The expansion of pay by phone to all pay and display facilities in town centres, allowing the opportunity for users to extend their stay remotely in appropriate locations
- d) Explore opportunities to acquire land adjacent to car parks with the aim of increasing the capacity of surface car parks
- e) In the design and installation of car parking facilities, aim to protect the built and natural environment
- f) Review, with stakeholders, Town Centre signing and provide additional signing at key locations including "Additional Parking" signs
- g) Identify areas with the Chambers of Trade / Town Centre Manager and Shopping Centre Operators for additional parking should demand be identified

2. Provide an effective and efficient parking service, which manages income and revenue to enable the service to be fully funded and parking charges to be in line with the Council's wider policy objectives;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Continue to review the in-house operation of car parking enforcement and publish an annual report outlining its performance
- b) Carry out an annual review of charges in charged parking facilities
- c) Carry out an annual assessment of on and off-street parking usage to ensure tariffs are set to achieve optimum usage

- d) Identify and secure external funding opportunities e.g. introducing an enforcement/safety vehicle funded by the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative

3. Manage parking to ensure a safe environment for all our customers, including appropriate parking enforcement outside schools and improved lighting and security measures for car parks;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Enforce on-street car parking regulations to deliver a reduction in anti-social and dangerous parking
- b) To highlight road safety outside schools, the Council will deploy a range of publicity measures, school initiatives and enforcement campaigns including a camera enforcement vehicle
- c) Continue to improve the Council's car parking stock towards the Safer Parking Standard through infrastructure improvements e.g. better lighting
- d) Contribute to the crime reduction aims of the Council Strategic Plan and monitor levels of crime and social misbehaviour in car parks, controlled parking zones and general on street car parking

4. Serve the requirements of the community of North Tyneside as a whole by providing an appropriate level and range of car parking arrangements and restrictions, such as residents' parking permit schemes, in areas where these are required;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Undertake the assessment of all outstanding requests for permit parking schemes and develop a programme of implementation for all those locations that meet the criteria for a scheme
- b) To provide information leaflets and an article in the Council magazine to inform motorists and residents of the regulations related to parking on pavements and verges
- c) Engage with Nexus and the Metro concessionaire to look to provide additional parking at Metro stations and interchanges

5. Ensure that all new developments follow best practice with regard to parking;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Ensure that appropriate car parking provision is a consideration for new development, and enable, where appropriate, Section 106 agreements to include contributions to car park improvements
- b) The protection of car parking income to be considered in any agreements relating to town centre redevelopment
- c) 'Shared use' parking to be supported and encouraged in new developments, e.g. when the same car park serves a retail centre in the daytime and a leisure development in the evening

- d) When improving parking facilities, make parking regulations less complex where possible
- e) Explore opportunities to acquire land adjacent to car parks with the aim of increasing the capacity of surface car parks

6. Recognise the importance of car parking management in influencing travel choices and promoting sustainable transport;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Engage with Nexus to provide additional parking at Metro stations and interchanges
- b) Continue the provision of electric car charging points within town centres and along the Foreshore
- c) Identify areas with the Chambers of Trade and the Town Centre Manager and shopping centre operators for additional cycle parking should demand be identified

7. Communicate regularly and effectively with all stakeholders in order to promote and improve the relevance of services and better meet the community's requirements;

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Provide regular updates at Area Forums
- b) Regularly attend business group and Chamber of Trade and Commerce meetings
- c) Investigate new coach parking opportunities with operators' representatives, ensuring greater awareness of available coach parking facilities
- d) Improve enforcement of bus stop parking restrictions, to reduce the issue of illegal parking at bus stops, in consultation with bus operators
- e) Regularly monitor disabled parking bays in town centres through ongoing liaison with representatives from disabled people's groups
- f) Take account of the specific needs of commercial freight and passenger transport operators
- g) Work proactively with the Tyne and Wear Freight Quality Partnership
- h) To consult regularly with the Hackney Carriage Association to establish new taxi ranks in areas of sufficient demand

8. Ensure that customers are treated efficiently, effectively and fairly.

Key actions and objectives:

- a) Collect customer satisfaction data on annual basis including 'mystery shopping'
- b) Maintain an up-to-date web page providing information on the Council's parking service
- c) Provide for online access to relevant services, including permits

- d) The expansion of pay by phone to all pay and display facilities in town centres
- e) Introduce a streamlined residents' parking permit system
- f) Ongoing staff training
- g) Support motorists to improve their understanding of parking regulations using Council publications and media opportunities

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