

Report to Norwich highways agency committee
19 March 2015

Item

Report of Executive Director Community and Environmental Services
Subject Disabled parking bay review

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Purpose

To note the report being taken to Norfolk County Council's Environment, Development and Transport Committee requesting to review the current approach to residential disabled parking bays, and identify any further actions for officers in advance of the next review of the county parking principles in 2017.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the attached report.

Corporate and service priorities

The Council's 'Parking Principles' set out the Council's strategy for parking, including provisions for disabled people this included as appendix A of the attached report .

Financial implications

Changes to the existing approach may have financial implications. For example, an increase in the number of instances of providing disabled parking bays would also increase the requirement to secure the relevant legal process.

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Environment, Development and Transport Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Provision of residential disabled parking bays
Date of meeting:	13 March 2015
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe, Executive Director Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact The provision of parking bays forms part of the County Council's Traffic Management Programme. This directly supports the Council's 'good infrastructure' priority. The road network, generally, is showing deterioration and despite robust asset management and targeting of resources there is insufficient funding available to stop the deterioration and the backlog of work continues to increase.	

Executive summary

In March 2014, the County Council considered and unanimously a motion relating disabled parking access. It was agreed that the provision of residential parking bays be reviewed and officers produce a report to be considered by the relevant Committee. This Committee subsequently agreed it would be useful for the County Council's Strategic Equalities Group to consider the issues prior to the Committee's consideration.

The Council's 'Parking Principles', agreed by Cabinet in 2012, set out the Council's strategy for parking, including provisions for disabled people. The principles were developed in collaboration with district councils and set out how parking will be provided and managed.

In relation to provision of residential disabled parking bays, the principles recognised the need for formal bays to be provided on streets as there will likely be residents who can benefit. However, individual bays not provided outside individual homes as individuals often move and the legal process (Traffic Regulation Order) required to secure bays is expensive. Instead, generic bays are provided that can be accessed by anyone on the street who requires them. In the past, disabled parking bays had been marked without securing TRO's but this was stopped some years ago as the spaces were not enforceable.

Recommendations:

- 1. To review the current approach to residential disabled parking bays, as set out in this report, and identify any further actions for officers in advance of the next review of the county parking principles in 2017.**

1. Proposal

- 1.1. In line with the motion agreed at County Council, the EDT Committee are asked to review the current approach to provision of residential disabled parking bays, as set out in this report, and identify any further actions for officers in advance of the next programmed review of the county parking principles.

- 1.2. As set out in the Policy and Strategy Framework report received by this Committee in October 2014, the next review of the parking principles is due in 2017.

2. Evidence

2.1. The legal, strategy and policy background

- 2.1.1. The public's right to use the highway is generally unfettered unless it is specifically restricted through legal Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) - e.g. speed, weight or height limits or waiting (parking) restrictions.
 - 2.1.2. Blue Badge Holders can lawfully park for a period of three hours on single and double yellow lines, provided they do not cause an obstruction or safety hazard. Blue Badge holders are not permitted to park in areas of the highway designated for loading.
 - 2.1.3. The Council's 'Parking Principles' set out the Council's strategy for parking, including provisions for disabled people – a full copy is included at Appendix A. As Civil Parking Enforcement Authority for Norfolk we use the principles. They were developed in collaboration with district councils and are intended to be a set of concise, easy to understand statements setting out the expectations for how parking will be provided and managed in the different circumstances that exist across the county.
 - 2.1.4. The principles cover all on and off-street public parking, but do not cover parking associated with individual developments: (e.g. housing, offices or supermarkets).
 - 2.1.5. In summary, the principles recognise the need for formal bays (i.e. those backed up with a TRO) in residential streets is because it is recognised that along an entire street there will likely be residents who would benefit from a disabled bay. The rationale for doing this is:
 - There is a need for disabled people to park close to their destination;
 - Other than residents' parking areas, disabled people will generally have or be able to find appropriate parking facilities;
 - In residents' parking areas there's justification for disabled provision.
 - 2.1.6. However, it is not considered to be good practice to put bays outside of individual homes because people move, and bays require TROs, which are expensive to secure. Parking Principles envisaged, as we deliver schemes, that a generic bay or two could be provided along a street to ensure that in general disabled people can park close to their home.
 - 2.1.7. The Council has in the past marked out disabled spaces on street without securing a TRO. In many cases this was in response to specific lobbying. The markings were not authorised (under the Traffic Signs and General Directions Regulations) and not enforceable (previously by the police or more recently by the Council under the provisions of Civil Parking Enforcement). The practice of providing unauthorised and unenforceable bays was stopped a few years ago. The Council has not gone to the expense of specifically removing any unauthorised markings, but they are removed either as part of normal wear and tear (they become worn out) or when we resurface the road.
- ### **2.2. Current position**
- 2.2.1. The Council only provides fully authorised bays secured by a TRO, but these are not specifically prescribed for an individual property owner's use.
 - 2.2.2. Requests for bays are considered as part of the Council's Traffic Management Programme (TMP). However, given the other demands placed upon the TMP requests received (which relate solely to an individual person / property) do not

usually gain sufficient prioritisation to find their way into the programme for delivery.

- 2.2.3. The need for and provision of parking spaces for the disabled is considered in all highway improvement schemes, and when undertaking significant road resurfacing works undertaken by the Council.
- 2.2.4. For Norwich City, the highways service is carried out by the City Council under the Highways Agency agreement. The approach taken is similar to the County Council in that requests relating to individuals are not generally taken forward. Provision around community hubs is provided e.g. doctors surgeries.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. Changes to the existing approach may have financial implications. For example, an increase in the number of instance of providing disabled parking bays would also increase the requirement to secure the relevant legal process - Traffic Regulation Orders - which is a relatively expensive process to implement.
- 3.2. Allocation of funding from the Council's Traffic Management programme is carried out in a priority basis as sufficient funding is not available to cover all schemes.

4. Issues, risks and innovation

4.1. Equality and diversity

- 4.1.1. The County Council's Strategic Equality Group, Chaired by the Deputy Leader, considered a report on the current approach to disabled parking bays at their meeting on 22 January 2014. The report included information on equality considerations, as follows:-

The potentially vulnerable service users who benefit from accessible highway services (including parking) are disabled and older people. In particular, they may have mobility problems which mean they may use mobility aids (e.g. walking sticks, wheelchairs etc.) and so need footways and roads that are accessible to them.

The motion considered by County Council related specifically to residential parking and the information above summarised the current approach. In terms of parking provision more generally, there are a number of different ways that needs are taken into account and provision made. This includes:-

- Dedicated disabled spaces at retail sites e.g. supermarkets;
- Off-street car parking (which is the responsibility of district councils);
- Blue badge scheme, administered by the County Council and enables enhanced on-street parking for those who meet the relevant criteria;
- Provision at community facilities and hubs e.g. doctors surgeries;
- Shopmobility provision at public transport interchanges and main urban centres (e.g. there is provision at Norwich and King's Lynn bus stations and some retail parks e.g. Chapelfield).

Much of this provision is considered and required through planning processes.

Information is not held on the totality of disabled parking provision available in urban centres or across the County as a whole.

- 4.1.2. The Strategic Equalities Group raised a general concern about on-street disabled parking provision and felt that more should be provided.

5. Background

- 5.1 In March 2014, the County Council considered and unanimously agreed the

Parking Principles – approved by Cabinet 12 July 2012

Introduction

Car parking is a key determinant affecting a range of factors including the economic buoyancy of town centres and how people choose to travel. The availability and pricing of car parks, together with how long people are allowed to park for affects economic vitality, growth, traffic demand, sustainable transport, mode shift and air quality. It is widely recognised that the parking end of a private vehicle trip is one of the strongest factors affecting private vehicle trip decision making and usage. The parking principles recognise that in a largely rural area like Norfolk, account needs to be taken of the fact that, for many trips, travel by car will be the only realistic option.

This note sets out draft parking principles that can be used, together with consideration of the particular local circumstances that exist, as a guide to assist the county council in decision-making:

- How the county council plans, provides and controls provision of car parking (numbers of spaces, charging regimes, lengths of stay, etc...)
- About when, or if, changes will be made to parking restrictions, setting out that major initiatives like residents parking schemes would be undertaken only where funding can be secured from outside sources – like district / town councils – or fully funded from CPE. This funding requirement includes feasibility, design and implementation, and ongoing revenue.
- To put car parking provision in the context of facilitating effective delivery of other services and objectives (to ensure economic vitality, encourage people to travel sustainably, consistency of policy in relation to CPE operation).

The intention is to have a clear set of principles that can be applied consistently across the county with the aim of supporting the economic vitality of the county.

The principles do not provide a green light that parking will be amended in accordance with the guidance in the principles. Changes will only be made where there is a strong, well supported case for which funding can be found. This will mean that many proposals could only be taken forward if external funding is forthcoming (or the proposals are self-financing). This funding would need to take into account not only the design and implementation costs but also any ongoing revenue issues like upkeep of equipment.

Background to parking provision

Public parking facilities covered include parking on-street and in off-street car parks. On-street, parking is not a right but is permitted (provided it is safe and doesn't cause an obstruction) unless there is a traffic regulation order specifying otherwise. A traffic regulation order may prohibit parking (shown by yellow lines), or restrict it (eg applying a time restriction). The county council is responsible for managing on-street car parking, although in Norwich this is carried out by Norwich City Council on behalf of the county council.

Off-street public parking is generally provided in car parks, operated by district councils or private companies. Most car parks in Norfolk are operated by the district councils except in Norwich where a substantial amount of the off-street stock is run by private car park operators alongside some city council car parks. Regulations applying to off-street car parks are covered in off-street parking orders and set out for motorists through signing at the car park.

What the principles cover

These parking principles cover parking for which the county council is responsible: on-street provision and off-street Park and Ride facilities. They do not cover the numbers of spaces at new development. Norfolk County Council's Parking Standards and district councils' development management policies will be used for this purpose. Additionally, they do not cover parking provided for individual premises like supermarket car parks or that which is publicly available (eg in a public car park).

The parking principles do not cover public transport facilities like bus stops, coach dropping-off facilities or taxi ranks. These facilities are important and are part of the general provision that local authorities make, usually on-street. Although they would have to be considered as part of general consideration of the different competing demands for kerb space, they are not considered as part of this guidance.

Contents

Core principles – amount and location of parking

- 1: Whole settlement parking management
- 2: Parking provision (amount and location)
 - 2.1 Parking provision in urban areas
 - 2.2 Parking provision in towns
 - 2.3 Parking provision in other areas
- 3: Parking provision (time periods and charges)
 - 3.1 Urban areas
 - 3.2 Towns
 - 3.3 Other areas
- 4: Alternative pricing structures
 - 4.1 Complementary infrastructure
 - 4.2 Differential control mechanisms

Provision for individual user-groups

- 5: Parking facilities for people with disabilities
- 6: Parking for people using public transport
 - 6.1 Rail stations in urban areas
 - 6.2 Rail stations in rural areas or in towns
 - 6.3 Bus stations in urban areas
 - 6.4 Bus interchanges in towns
- 7: Coach and bus parking
 - 7.1 Coach parking
 - 7.2 Coach dropping-off and picking-up facilities
- 8: Cycle parking
- 9: Facilities for Heavy Goods Vehicles
 - 9.1 HGV Layover / rest facilities
 - 9.2 HGV loading / unloading facilities in towns and urban areas
- 10: Motorbike parking

General Principles

- 11: Maintenance
- 12: Quality of parking provision
- 13: Information about and signing to facilities

Core principles – amount and location of parking

Whole settlement parking management

1 Parking management forms part of a wider set of complementary traffic management measures that affect places, including how they perform economically and how they feel to people who live there or visit. It is important that the context of the whole settlement is taken into account when thinking about parking, rather than simply considering what to do with parking at an individual location. This will allow consideration of factors including how parking (or the control of it) might affect the economic vitality of an area, and how changes in one location might have knock-on effects elsewhere in the settlement.

2 Whole settlement parking management plans should take into account, amongst other things, relevant Local Development Documents, *Connecting Norfolk* (the county's 3rd Local Transport Plan) and any detailed transport implementation plans that may have been produced. If restrictions are to be introduced, removed or changed, consideration will have to be given to how effective enforcement of any restrictions can be carried out and to how the changes might affect parking revenues (for example if charges are to be introduced or curtailed).

3 There will clearly be a cost to undertaking a parking study or plan, and this may be relatively large across towns or urban areas. Such studies should only be undertaken where external funding can be found, or the proposals are self-financing (eg from permit or other parking charges).

Parking Principle 1: Whole settlement parking management

Parking management will be considered across the whole settlement taking into account, amongst other things: economic vitality, parking demand and supply, displacement of parking demand, sustainable transport and highway safety. Changes to restrictions should consider how effective enforcement of any restrictions can be carried out and to how the changes might affect parking revenues.

Whole settlement parking management plans will only be undertaken where funding can be identified.

Amount and location of parking within settlements

Note: In the following principles:

Urban areas are defined as:

1. Norwich built-up area
2. King's Lynn town and the adjacent built up area
3. Great Yarmouth and Gorleston built-up area.

Towns are defined as:

Acle	Attleborough	Aylsham	Blofield
Bradwell	Brundall	Caister-on-Sea	Cromer
Diss	Dereham	Downham Market	Fakenham
Harleston	Hethersett	Hingham	Holt
Hoveton	Hunstanton	Loddon/ Chedgrave	Long Stratton
Poringland/ Framingham Earl	Reepham	Sheringham	Stalham
Thetford	North Walsham	Wells-next-the- Sea	Watton
Swaffham	Wroxham	Wymondham	

Time periods are defined as:

- Short Term: less than 2 hours
- Medium Term: 2- 5 hours
- Long Term: more than 5 hours.

Urban areas

4 Controlled provision and availability of car parking can play an important part in ensuring the economic buoyancy of areas by enabling people to gain access. It is also one part of a wider set of measures to manage urban traffic congestion and encourage people to use alternative forms of transport. Restricting the number of spaces or limiting the availability of long-stay car parking can have a significant effect on traffic volumes, providing that these measures are complemented by the provision of adequate alternative options, such as park and ride.

5 Given this, it might be considered that there is a 'right' amount of parking to serve the centre of urban areas. This amount of parking would need to take account of the nature of the individual settlement as it is now, and also consider the amount of growth planned in the area. It would be appropriate for consideration of all of these factors to lead to a guideline on the amount of parking that might be appropriate within each of the urban areas. Within Norwich, this is already established, with the guideline amount being expressed as a maximum number of spaces. Whilst a maximum might not be appropriate in the other urban areas, a steer on the overall quantum would be a helpful guide. For Great Yarmouth, the demands for the town centre and the seafront would need to be considered as two distinct, but overlapping, issues.

6 Park and ride can provide alternative long-stay parking provision for urban areas, reducing congestion and emissions from transport. Norwich is currently served by six Park and Ride sites. The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy Implementation Plan (NATSIP) identifies possible expansion of Postwick as park of Postwick hub. It also identifies in the longer term that a further possible site at Trowse could be provided if long term parking provision in the city centre is further reduced. The existing parking balance in Norwich is the controlling factor which dictates that park and ride is currently working as a subsidised service. Park and ride has also been suggested for King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth, amongst other places. However, in the short term at least, further expansion of existing park and ride systems, or new systems, will be not implemented unless the costs of provision and ongoing operation can be met, eg they operate on a purely commercial basis .

7 Parking for local residents / businesses, through a residents parking scheme may be appropriate in the urban areas, if supported by the local community and identified through the whole settlement parking work (Principle 1). In such cases, a residents parking scheme would be undertaken only where funding can be secured from outside sources or the parking management across the area will be self-financing. This funding requirement includes feasibility, design and implementation, and ongoing revenue. Where such schemes are implemented, the provision of one disabled parking space (which couldn't however be assigned to an individual user or property) per street should be considered.

8 Within urban areas, it has become common practice to sell space in car parks for contract parking. This normally allows companies to buy space in car parks – at a discount – for commuter parking. In some cases this means that parts of urban centre car parks, which according to these principles should favour short-medium stay demand, are being used for long-stay commuter parking. It would be appropriate to limit or restrict this practice, although the limitations would need to be considered on a case-by-case

basis, taking into account factors such as the ability of the firms who buy this space being able to attract employees and the overall demand for car park spaces in the urban centre.

Towns

9 The issues within the towns are similar to those described above for urban areas, except that park and ride would not be appropriate due to the size of the settlements and contract parking is not normally an issue. Guidance on the overall quantum of parking in the settlement might be appropriate for the larger towns.

Out of town developments

10 The above principles generally relate to parking for the centre of towns and urban areas. However, there are some places on the edge of settlements that attract parking demand, such as out of town retail parks, supermarkets, leisure centres or business parks. Most will have their own off-street provision provided as part of the development. This will have been thought about as part of the planning process and is covered in other advice: see Parking Principle 13.

11 It might be appropriate to consider parking restrictions, including residents parking in the urban centres, to manage parking demand where there are evidenced problems relating to safety, maintaining or managing traffic flow, or amenity reasons.

Hotspots including coastal villages

12 At hotspots, where demand for parking could exceed available parking supply, restrictions on parking may be appropriate for the purposes of safety, maintaining or managing traffic flow, or amenity reasons.

Rural areas, including villages

13 The demand for car parking is generally lower once outside the urban areas, towns and hotspots like coastal villages. There is often no need for car parking provision over and above what is available on-street and off-street in facilities dedicated for use by visitors to an individual premises (eg offices or supermarkets). In most cases there will be no problem with parked vehicles – either the need for more parking, or from vehicles parking badly on the road. Furthermore, restrictions on parking in more remote areas will be difficult to enforce and is unlikely to be effective in controlling parking.

14 In these locations, the presumption will be that on-street parking restrictions would not be introduced unless there was an evidenced safety problem.

Parking Principle 2: Parking provision (amount and location)

2.1 Parking provision in urban areas

Guidance on the overall quantum of car parking provision for the centre of urban areas (and Great Yarmouth seafront) should be agreed. A guide to the amount of parking will be determined in the context of the whole settlement parking management, and in conjunction with district councils taking into account, amongst other things: the likely future demand for car parking given planned levels of growth; availability of public transport services, walking and cycling; and the total quantum of parking available including such as provided by Park and Ride.

In the centre of urban areas on -street parking should favour short and medium stay demand. Long-stay provision should be provided at edge-of-centre locations or, in the case of Norwich, Park and Ride.

The preference for long-stay parking provision for Norwich city centre is Park and Ride. Further expansion will be considered only where its provision can be funded and where the ongoing running costs can be met. The expectation would be that the ongoing running costs are met from passenger revenue.

For King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth Park and Ride will be supported in policy terms but promoters would need to show how its provision and ongoing costs would be met (both construction and operation in the long-term).

2.2 Parking provision in towns

Guidance on the overall quantum of car parking provision for the centre of towns may be appropriate for the larger towns.

In the centre of towns on-street parking should favour short and medium-stay demand. Long-stay provision should be provided at edge-of-centre locations.

2.3 Parking provision in other areas

Public parking provision over and above what is available on-street would not generally be provided elsewhere (including locations in towns and urban areas away from the centre/edge of centre, in villages, and in rural areas). In such locations, parking should be limited to that associated with individual developments (eg at business parks) agreed through the development management and planning processes. However, additional parking provision may be appropriate at hotspots including coastal villages or where a town serves a large rural hinterland. In such cases demand for parking may regularly exceed available parking supply and provision may be appropriate. This could be charged.

On-street parking would normally be unrestricted away from areas where waiting and loading restrictions are required for highway safety reasons.

Parking Principle 3: Parking provision (time periods and charges)

3.1 Urban areas

The expectation would be that on-street car parking in the centre of urban areas (and Great Yarmouth seafront) is charged. This charge should be set at a premium to local scheduled bus services or park and ride services.

On-street parking should be restricted to shorter-stays than off-street and at a higher charge (where appropriate).

It may be appropriate to consider residents parking schemes in the urban areas where there is a proven need and local support. Residents parking schemes would be implemented only where funding for design, implementation and ongoing revenue costs is available. There would be an expectation that the funding comes external sources and / or the proposal will be self-financing.

3.2 Towns

On-street parking charges in, especially the larger, towns may be appropriate, particularly in the centre of towns where demand exceeds supply, and there are adequate alternatives (in the form of sustainable transport opportunities).

On-street parking should be restricted to shorter-stays than off-street and at a higher charge (where appropriate).

It may be appropriate to consider management of parking in residential areas adjacent to the town centres to avoid problems of overspill parking in these areas. In exceptional cases, residents parking schemes may be appropriate.

3.3 Other areas

Outside of the towns and urban areas on-street parking restrictions would not normally be introduced unless there was an evidenced safety problem.

At hotspots including coastal villages, where demand for parking regularly exceeds available parking supply and is causing a demonstrable problem, on-street parking restrictions may be appropriate for the purposes of maintaining or managing traffic flow, safety, or amenity reasons. This parking provision could attract a charge. The needs of people with disabilities will need to be considered (see principle 5).

Alternative pricing structures

15 The Local Transport Plan for the county, *Connecting Norfolk*, recognises that many trips in Norfolk will continue to be undertaken by car because of the lack of viability of other travel choices for many trips, or simply because people's lifestyles are built around car travel and these habits will be difficult to change. However, car travel can lead to problems including poor air quality and carbon emissions. These problems could be mitigated at least in part by encouraging a greener vehicle fleet, and this can be done through provision of appropriate infrastructure or other mechanisms such as differential charging mechanisms. Differential charging may be more appropriate in situations where people purchase parking over a long period of time; for example residents' parking permits, car park season tickets.

16 The county council is a partner in Evalu8, the east of England arm of government's Plugged in Places initiative, to roll-out charging points for electric vehicles. Charging points provided under this initiative benefit from a central administration function that includes, amongst other things, a user-booking system for the posts. Charging points installed for general public use should be incorporated into this network, branded as Source East.

Parking Principle 4: Alternative pricing structures

4.1 Complementary infrastructure

Complementary infrastructure like charging posts for electric vehicles is appropriate in locations where parking is permitted. Public facilities should be part of the Source East network.

4.2 Differential control mechanisms

Differential mechanisms are appropriate to encourage more efficient vehicles. These mechanisms could include differential charging regimes based on recognised categories of vehicle classification (eg CO2 emissions) and apply to on or off-street provision.

Provision for individual user-groups

Facilities for people with disabilities

17 Around one in five people have a disability. One in seven has an impairment that affects mobility. The National Travel Survey shows that access to a car is one of the most important factors in the amount of travelling people do, with many relying on cars to get about. Whether as a driver or passenger, the ease with which people can reach their destination is nearly always determined by where the car can be parked.

18 Government guidance suggests that parking for people with disabilities should not be no further from places like a bank, post office or large store than as little as 50 metres for people who use a stick.

19 However, although it is important to consider facilities for people with disabilities, there will be other competing demands for spaces, especially on-street, including loading and unloading, bus stops, etc... This will need to be considered in the round. Where there is an absolute need to keep the road free from stopped vehicles, loading restrictions might be appropriate to prevent stopped / parked vehicles (including goods vehicles or blue badge holders' cars) disrupting traffic flow.

Parking Principle 5: Parking facilities for people with disabilities

Dedicated on-street parking for people with disabilities should be provided at locations close to services and facilities. The amount of parking will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account factors such as demand, other competing demands for kerb space, alternative off-street facilities and safety.

Consistent standards across the county should be aimed for.

Parking for people using public transport

20 Parking at bus and rail stations is useful, even in urban centres where sustainable transport might provide viable travel options, as it encourages people to use the bus or train for the lengthier part of their journey. The amount of parking will need to be assessed in the light of demand and other factors including land availability and other travel options. Such provision will usually be provided by the train operators. This section gives guidance about how the county council would work with providers in relation to parking at interchange facilities.

21 The expectation is that in the urban areas at least, parking for both bus and train interchanges (where provided) would be charged (ie people would have to pay for it). The assessment would need to consider how charges might affect people's choices including whether they would be discouraged from using public transport and whether charges were likely to result in displacement of vehicles to nearby streets.

22 Charges may be appropriate at interchanges in other locations, but would need to be considered in relation to the whole-settlement parking management in the area: for example whether charges or restrictions applied in other on and off-street provision. Whole-settlement parking management is covered in more detail in Principles 1, 2 and 3.

23 Parking for train services (and airports) normally attracts a charge, especially since much of this provision is provided by train / airport operators who customarily charge. Drivers are therefore likely to expect car parking charges and it would not be unreasonable that all such facilities are charged, where provided, although consideration will need to be given to whether this might displace parking onto nearby streets.

24 At bus interchanges, car parking will not normally be required since most people will be using public transport for the whole of their trip. However, there is experience that in some market towns, drivers are taking advantage of free public car parking facilities in order to leave their car at that town in order to catch the bus into (especially) Norwich. By doing this they can avoid having to drive into Norwich and find, and pay for, car parking during the day. In such cases, it may be appropriate to consider parking controls to avoid commuters to urban areas using the parking facilities that have been designed for visitors to the market towns. These controls need to be carefully thought through in order to avoid commuters choosing to drive the whole way into the urban area rather than using public transport for part of the trip. An alternative to parking control might be to provide dedicated parking facilities for bus users.

25 There is limited capacity for people to carry bikes on trains and so at rail stations secure cycle parking should be provided in order that people can cycle to and from the station. A separate county council document, *Design Spoke*, covers cycle parking in detail and should be referred to when looking at cycle parking provision.

Parking Principle 6: Parking for people using public transport

6.1 Rail stations in urban areas

Car parking at stations in urban areas may be appropriate. Provision will need to be assessed in the light of demand and other factors including land availability and other travel options. Picking up / dropping off facilities should be provided. There is an expectation that parking will be charged.

Secure cycle parking should be provided to meet demand. A proportion of this should be in the form of bike lockers.

6.2 Rail stations in rural areas or in towns

Long-stay parking provision at stations may be appropriate, particularly in areas where public transport services are not so good. There should be provision of picking up / dropping off facilities. There is an expectation that parking will be charged, although an assessment would need to consider any knock-on effects such as displacement of all-day parking into other nearby areas.

Secure cycle parking should be provided to meet demand. A proportion of this should be in the form of bike lockers.

6.3 Bus stations in urban areas

Car parking at bus stations/interchanges in urban areas may be appropriate. Provision will need to be assessed in the light of demand and other factors including land availability and other travel options. Picking up / dropping off facilities should be provided. There is an expectation that parking will be charged.

Secure cycle parking should be provided to meet demand. A proportion of this should be in the form of bike lockers.

6.4 Bus interchanges in towns

In some towns where there is evidence that people use free parking facilities in the town in order to commute onwards by bus into the urban centres, there may be a need to consider the provision of car parking facilities for the bus interchange / services.

Secure cycle parking, with a proportion in the form of bike lockers, may be appropriate.

Coach and bus parking and facilities in major towns and at tourist hotspots

26 Many visitors arrive in the urban areas by coach. Coach parties may be visiting the town itself or visiting a particular attraction. Coaches will need access into the town with a dropping-off / pick-up point close to, or at, the attraction they are visiting. As well as needing dropping-off facilities close to these attractions, the coaches will need a place to park longer-stay before returning to pick up their passengers. These parking areas will ideally include facilities such as restrooms. In the Norwich area longer-term coach parking at a designated park and ride site is being progressed to overcome the lack of suitable long stay coach parking within Norwich City centre.

Parking Principle 7: Coach and bus parking

7.1 Coach parking

Parking for long-distance buses and coaches is appropriate for major centres or other areas attracting large numbers of coaches. Parking should be conveniently located to, but not necessarily at or adjacent to, dropping-off areas and include facilities such as restrooms.

Cycle parking

27 *Connecting Norfolk* aims to secure a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling. However, people are only likely to cycle if they are confident that there are adequate facilities to put their bikes at, or close to, their destinations. Hence it is important that cycle parking is available at places including transport interchanges, workplaces, shopping centres or visitor attractions. The standard and quality of provision at each of these will be dependent on a number of different factors including how long people will leave their bikes for.

28 A separate county council document, *Design Spoke*, covers cycle parking in detail and should be referred to when considering cycle provision. Parking at interchanges is covered in Parking Principle 6.

Parking Principle 8: Cycle parking

Sufficient bicycle parking, both covered and uncovered, should be provided to meet demand. A proportion of this should be secure cycle storage accessible to both casual and long term commuter users, and the remainder of the Sheffield stand type, meeting minimum spacing requirements.

Facilities for Heavy Goods Vehicles

29 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) which operate from within the county have to operate from licensed premises; this is generally where HGVs are stored / parked overnight or when not out on business. The county council provides transport advice to the traffic commissioner on HGV operator licensing proposals, which includes an assessment of the adequacy of the site for the number of HGVs (tractor and trailer units) proposed. These facilities are provided by the operator.

30 In addition to this, there may be some HGVs which, whilst on business in the county need to stop overnight. There is some limited evidence of vehicles using laybys. Generally this does not cause a problem, although it's unlikely there will be wash facilities or toilets for the drivers. However, in some cases, it might cause a worry to

adjacent residents or a nuisance if the unit has a generator going overnight for refrigeration purposes. Some district councils have secured local bylaws which prevent overnight parking in some lay-bys. The county council would not usually introduce parking restrictions in such cases due to the practical enforcement issues this would create.

31 Although in principle, subject to consideration of the detail, dedicated overnight / rest facilities for HGV drivers are supported, there will be an issue about the cost of constructing and ongoing running of the facilities. Local authorities would not generally provide or run the facilities.

Parking Principle 9: Facilities for Heavy Goods Vehicles

9.1 HGV Layover / rest facilities

Facilities for HGVs would in principle be supported provided there is evidence of need and the costs of provision and ongoing running can be met. These will include appropriate facilities such as toilets and shower facilities.

9.2 HGV loading / unloading facilities in towns and urban areas

Adequate loading facilities either on or off-street within town and urban centres should generally be provided, although consideration will need to be given in each case to the competing demands for kerb space (or off-street facilities).

Motorbike parking

32 Although motorbikes (including mopeds) currently form a small proportion of the vehicles on the roads, they nevertheless provide a travel choice for people who don't want to use, or can't afford to run a car. This might include young people who are able to run a moped before being able to drive a car.

Parking Principle 10: Motorbike parking

Facilities for motorbike parking are appropriate either on-street or off-street in the centres of market towns and urban areas. Provision will need to take account of factors such as demand and other competing demands for kerb space.

General Principles

Adequate maintenance of signs, lines and orders

33 It is important that it is clear to the public the restrictions that are in place. For this reason alone, the signs, lines and traffic regulation orders should be kept in good order and up to date. In addition, *Connecting Norfolk* identifies maintaining the existing asset as a priority whilst, as part of taking on powers for civil parking enforcement (CPE) a review of Traffic Regulation Orders and signing has been undertaken to ensure that they are all in order and that parking restrictions are able to be enforced. In the future the county council will be adopting map-based schedules for traffic regulation orders, which will be an important part of the effective ongoing management of traffic regulation orders.

Parking Principle 11: Maintenance

The county council will endeavour to ensure that signs and road markings for on-street waiting and loading restrictions are inspected in accordance with the Transport Asset Management Plan, and that Traffic Regulation Orders are maintained, accurate and up to date.

Quality of parking provision

34 Parking provision needs to be perceived as safe and secure in order that people feel confident using it, and customers will expect a certain quality of provision, particularly where they have to pay to use the facility. These principles do not set out quality standards as it's considered that this should be decided on a case-by-case basis. However, in the design of parking provision, consideration should be given to, amongst other things, lighting, ease of use of pay machines, including for people using a wheelchair or with other disabilities, whether it's necessary to cover the facility with CCTV, whether the facility should be staffed, the quality of information including about charges or time restrictions, and condition of the car park surfacing.

Parking Principle 12: Quality of parking provision

All parking provision should be of an acceptable quality, easy for everyone to use and designed and maintained to give users the confidence that it is safe and secure.

Information about and signing to facilities

35 The amount of parking and the restrictions imposed can be an important factor in determining how people choose to travel and consequently the environment within the town or city centre. Drivers circulating around town centres trying to find parking, or trying to find free (no-cost) parking spaces, can cause congestion. This can be particularly aggravated where drivers queue on the road for car parking, blocking the free circulation of other traffic.

36 Providing drivers with information about car parking can be helpful to address the issues. This information can take many forms including: static direction signs to parking facilities; variable message signs indicating how many spaces are available at car parks, on a real-time basis; or web-based information. Signing is useful, particularly as part of a settlement-wide plan.

Parking Principle 13: Information about and signing to facilities

Adequate signing and information about car parking facilities should be considered where this will help motorists and traffic management within the settlement.

Parking for events and occasions

37 Special events like the Royal Norfolk Show, football matches, firework displays or even Christmas shopping can attract large numbers of motorists within a very short time period. It is very important that events like this are properly co-ordinated and managed to avoid road safety or congestion issues. In Norwich for example traffic marshals are employed at peak Christmas shopping periods to manage car park queues and avoid queuing vehicles blocking the road network.

Parking Principle 14: Parking for events and occasions

Where events or occasions will attract large numbers of motorists within short periods of time, event management plans will need to be worked up and agreed to manage traffic flows and maintain safety.

Timing of restrictions – including seasonal restrictions

38 Many on-street restrictions apply only to busier periods when there is a need to manage the traffic. Typically, this will apply in towns and urban areas when restrictions have implemented during daytime hours to keep them free of parked cars and hence keep traffic moving. During the quieter evening and night time periods parking may be acceptable to meet demand from, especially, residents. The periods of these restrictions will vary from place to place dependent on the local circumstances. (Typically, restrictions might apply from 8am to 6pm, or 7am to 7pm.) Although the time period might vary from town to town, care should be taken to ensure that restrictions apply consistently across the whole town (ie the time period is the same on different roads across the area). This will avoid motorists being confused about which time period applies to different streets and will make enforcement more practicable.

39 Similarly, where seasonal waiting restrictions apply, the time period should be consistent across a town or urban area to avoid confusion.

Parking Principle 15: Timing of restrictions – including seasonal restrictions

The time period of daytime only on-street waiting restrictions should be the same across the town or urban area. However, the times may be different for different towns.

The time period of any seasonal waiting restrictions should also be consistent across a town or urban area.

Parking around schools

40 Parking around schools is a particularly problematic issue. It may generally be appropriate to manage this parking through on-street waiting restrictions and school-keep-clear markings. However, the restrictions introduced will be dependent on the particular circumstances, to be decided in conjunction with the local community and the school.

Parking Principle 16: Parking around schools

On-street parking restrictions and school-keep-clear markings may be appropriate around schools. The measures will be dependent on the individual circumstances and decided in conjunction with the local community and the school.