

Fylde Car Park Strategy

Development Services
Technical Services Section



Development Services - Technical Services Section

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Fylde Borough Council (FBC) has responsibility for managing 20 car parks with a total of approx. 1,585 spaces. The Council's car park strategy sets the policy for how the car parks are managed. The strategy was first adopted in June 2005 and this document represents the 3rd revision of that strategy.

1.2 Parking space continues to become more and more of a scarce commodity and as car ownership increases the demand to manage available car parking spaces also increases. The Council, therefore, has to have clear policy on how to manage the limited parking space under its control. As demand for this limited parking space increases it becomes more important to have a formal statement on policy to identify what the Council wants from its car parks and how this service is best delivered. This is particularly important where national and regional policies dictate that more sustainable travel choices should be actively encouraged and promoted in favour of trips made by car. This strategy continues to acknowledge these transport objectives.

1.3 The production of the 3rd revision to this Strategy is an integral part of the planning and development control process that is covered by the Regional Strategy for the North West of England (soon to be revoked by Central Government), the National Planning Policy Framework, Fylde Local Plan and by the Lancashire County Council Local Transport Plan 3. This strategy also takes into account the Fylde Borough Council Economic Development Strategy as well as recommendations made by the Portas Review, both of which take into consideration the importance of local parking provision on the economic wellbeing of town centres. This Strategy aims to support and compliment the planning guidance offered as part of the development management process. The planning process is already well documented in terms of parking policy and will, therefore, remain outside the scope of this specific Car Park Strategy. Reference should be made to these documents for guidance on parking control as part of any proposed development.

1.4 FBC is not responsible for on-street parking provision, regulation or enforcement as this is within the remit of Lancashire County Council, as the highway authority and traffic manager for the area. This Strategy only reflects the parking responsibilities and desires of FBC in terms of its off street car park provision and what it hopes to achieve by managing the space within its car parks.

1.5 FBC operates its car park enforcement duties under the Civil Parking Enforcement, formally Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement, powers which were adopted in 2008. The powers for introducing, revising, regulating and enforcing on street regulations remain a function of Lancashire County Council.

1.6 A schedule of the Council's car parks detailing current operating hours and charges is appended (Appendix A – Tariffs and Operating Hours). These

charges may be subject to change through the duration of this revised strategy.

2.0 Strategy - Aims and Objectives

2.1 In developing a Strategy, a clear hierarchy of Aims, Objectives, Policies and Proposals has been identified.

2.2 The aims are what the Strategy seeks to achieve. The aims are developed further as objectives of the Strategy, which in turn are translated into policies that the proposals will deliver.

2.3 The future of the town centres, the tourist attractions of St Annes and Lytham and the issue of sustainable transport provide the strategic context, and demonstrate the need, for a coherent and realistic off street parking Strategy. The provision of car parking is not an end in itself and hence the Strategy must recognise -

- The needs of town centres as places to live, work, visit and shop
- That much of the Fylde is rural and the use of the car is often the only means of transport to the town centres
- The large number of visitors to St Annes and Lytham, both to shop and to access the tourist attractions

3.0 Aims of the Service

The parking Strategy sets out three main aims of the service which are then developed into a series of more detailed objectives.

Aim 1

To provide the residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters with a range of safe, secure, attractive and affordable customer friendly car parks in a sustainable manner. This provision should be in line with national and regional integrated transport objectives set to address the environment, accessibility, safety, economy and congestion.

Aim 2

To ensure that parking is provided for cars, private hire coaches, bicycles, motorcycles and motorhomes, and is suitable in terms of the number of spaces, the locations and the quality of the facilities.

Aim 3

To provide a set of policies that will enable the Council to manage the parking facilities in such a way that the viability and vitality of the town centres and tourist attractions within Fylde are maintained for its residents, shoppers and visitors alike.

4.0 Objectives

4.1 To provide a parking service whose operating, maintenance and improvement costs are covered by the revenue that is generated and which also contributes to the Council's budget.

4.2 To provide short stay and some long stay parking in central town areas in support of town centre businesses.

4.3 To provide, where required, long stay parking for commuters and visitors in car parks on the periphery of town centres and at tourist attractions.

4.4 To ensure an adequate level of designated parking space is available for disabled badge holders within car parks.

4.5 To provide accessible, welcoming and clearly signed car parks where appropriate information is easily available.

4.6 To provide parking facilities that are safe and secure to use.

4.7 To ensure clear signage is provided by Lancashire County Council to the car parks from the local highway network to indicate short or long stay options.

4.8 To allocate funding to allow a regular maintenance, cleansing and improvement programme to ensure those Objectives 4.1 – 4.7 are achieved.

4.9 To maintain a charging structure which is competitive with that in other local towns outside the Borough and which retains the attractiveness of the town centres as locations for shopping and employment. The Council will aim to set charges that will not discourage the use of local facilities or disadvantage local business in order that the vitality and viability of the area is maintained and improved wherever possible. The Council will consult with the local Chambers of Trade and business groups as part of this process.

4.10 To consider the future level of short and long stay parking provision in the light of alternative modes of transport.

4.11 To ensure that, where practicable, motorcycle parking facilities are provided.

4.12 To ensure that, where practicable, cycle parking facilities are provided.

4.13 To help identify locations in or near the town centres for use as coach drop off/pick up points for use by private hire coach companies and to identify locations for coach parking.

4.14 To consult with the community on the off street parking needs of the Borough.

4.15 To manage the parking enforcement service for off street parking under the powers granted through the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE); formerly Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE).

4.16 To work with Lancashire County Council in assessing changes to on-street parking provision.

4.17 To restrict the issuing of parking permits for the Council's short stay car parks in favour of the designated long stay car parks.

4.18 To monitor the performance of the car parks in terms of usage and income generation.

4.19 To allow the car parks to be used for appropriate charity or public information displays and commercial events, subject to adequate agreements being in place.

4.20 To restrict and prevent inappropriate use of the Council's car parks.

4.21 To identify opportunities for the provision of additional car parking within the Borough for the Council to consider when appropriate.

5.0 Policies

5.1 The demand for and the supply of parking spaces.

PP1.1 The demand for and the supply of car park spaces will be kept under review. New car park spaces will only be provided when there is a recognised shortage of spaces in the locality concerned and where land is available.

PP1.2 The Council, where possible, will encourage partnership work with private car park operators to help maintain sustainable levels of service and parking provision.

5.2 Short Stay Parking (Objective 4.2)

PP2 Preference will be given to short stay parking in town centres by imposing maximum lengths of stay where necessary and by introducing tariffs to reflect the desired use.

5.3 Long Stay Parking (Objective 4.3)

PP3 Long stay parking will generally be located on the periphery of town centres and at tourist attractions unless it is considered to be suitable for a specific car park.

5.4 Parking Tariffs

5.4.1 Parking tariffs are a central issue to the parking operation: as a source of dissatisfaction to some people that have to pay them; those who consider that they impede trade; as a source of revenue; and as a potential traffic and transportation management tool.

5.4.2 Objective 4.1 of this Strategy refers to securing sufficient income to cover the operational costs and to fund improvements.

5.4.3 Objective 4.9 of this Strategy seeks to establish a charging structure for parking that will maintain the competitiveness and attractiveness of the town centres. The revenue generated will also provide the funding for the maintenance programme identified in Objective 4.8. Objective 4.14 identifies the need to consult with the community, so that the tariffs are viewed with more acceptance.

5.4.4 Objective 4.17 refers to restricting permits to long stay car parks. Permits for residents and businesses are available for certain car parks. 'All' car park staff permits are issued only to those who require them for business purposes. 'All' car park Councillor permits are issued to all councillors. Temporary permits may also be available where external agencies benefit the council or the wider community.

5.4.5 Occasionally members of the public or businesses wish to use space on a car park to park a class of vehicle or object not normally allowed elsewhere or for a vehicle to be left on the car park for longer than would normally be allowed. Depending on the circumstance a dispensation may be available, charged at a rate to cover loss of income and set by the Council's Parking Services.

PP4.1 A competitive tariff structure will be maintained for all car parks serving the town centres and tourist attractions. Tariffs will be reviewed at least every two years on consideration of –

- **the need to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres and tourist attractions.**
- **the need to maximise the benefits of available car park space.**
- **the patterns of usage and turnover of spaces at each location.**
- **existing tariff rates.**
- **the need to fund maintenance and improvement works.**
- **the need to consider residents.**
- **tariffs charged by neighbouring authorities**

PP4.2 The issuing and cost of parking permits will be kept under review. The issuing of permits in premium town centre car parks will be avoided in favour of issuing permits in long stay car parks.

5.5 Parking for Disabled Person Vehicles (Objective 4.4)

5.5.1 There are 92 spaces in the Council's car parks designated for blue badge holders. This represents an average of 5.7% of the parking spaces

available in all these car parks. LCC mobility guidelines recommend that in town centre (short stay) car parks 6% of spaces be reserved for blue badge holders. The Council presently provides 9.2% of spaces in short stay/town centre car parks for disabled users.

5.5.2 Where practical the council aims to meet the suggested guidance set out in the Department for Transport's 'Parking for Disabled People'. Where individual charged car parks fall short of these guidelines the Council will aim to make relevant appropriate improvements as resources permit.

5.5.3 It is considered that the current level of short stay/town centre provision is adequate and generally satisfies the demand.

5.5.4 It is considered fair to maintain a policy of charging disabled badge holders when parked outside one of the designated disabled parking bays. When parked in a marked disabled bay with a valid permit and parking clock correctly shown three hours free parking will apply.

5.5.5 Designated disabled bays within the car parks are required to be clearly signed to reflect the desired use.

PP5 The provision of disabled blue badge holder parking in car parks will be maintained in terms of number of spaces unless it can be demonstrated that -

- **there is a shortage of spaces for badge holders and additional spaces can be identified; or**
- **there is a surplus of spaces for badge holders and an appropriate number can be reallocated for other users.**

5.6 Safety and Security (Objective 4.6)

5.6.1 An important consideration in influencing peoples views of a car park and whether it is a place they will continue to visit, is whether they feel safe for themselves and their vehicle. Factors relevant to safety and security include lighting, visibility, layout, accessibility and security barriers.

PP6 The issues of personal safety and vehicle security at car parks will be a priority. Measures will include –

- **High quality lighting**
- **Minimising obstruction of sight lines for motorists and pedestrians**
- **Regulating arrangements for pedestrian and vehicle access**
- **Regular patrols and enforcement by Civil Enforcement Officers**

5.7 Coach Parking (Objective 4.13)

5.7.1 Tourism is a major part of the economies of the towns in Fylde served by many national, regional and local coach companies. Demand for spaces

will vary throughout the year and provision will continue to be made available where there is a sufficient demand.

PP7 To identify appropriate off street locations for long stay coach parking.

5.8 Improvement and Maintenance of Parking Infrastructure

5.8.1 A major determining factor in people's experience of visiting the towns of Fylde is the quality of the environment. The first place those visitors often see and experience once they leave their car is the car park. Consequently, the quality of the parking infrastructure is important and should create a good first impression to those visitors.

5.8.2 Financially, the Council is limited in what it can achieve and how quickly it can be achieved. It is important, however, that a good standard of parking is achieved and maintained. There has been limited investment made in the Council's car parks for many years and they all require continued capital investment if their long term use is to be sustained.

5.8.3 Prior to implementing significant improvement or maintenance of any car park a scheme will be designed, in conjunction with the Council's Regeneration Team, in order to achieve the best possible efficient layout, landscaping and integration within its surrounding area.

5.8.3 The pay and display equipment in all the Council's car parks was replaced in January 2005 and is now linked to a central computer to enable real time detailed car park monitoring. Further machines have been added since.

PP8 The parking infrastructure will be improved and maintained to a high standard to encourage their use and to ensure that the car parks are welcoming locations at which to park.

5.9 Enforcement (Objective 4.15)

5.9.1 The Council is currently responsible for parking enforcement for off street car parking under Civil Parking Enforcement powers. Lancashire County Council is responsible for on street enforcement.

5.9.2 The enforcement contractor will continue to maintain a high level of enforcement and uniformed presence in the Council's car parks. This will offer advantages in terms of safety and security for the customers and also provide enforcement of the car park regulations.

PP9.1 The Council will continue to manage the enforcement of parking regulations in its off street car parks in a positive, consistent and transparent manner.

PP9.2 The Council will work with its enforcement contractor to promote a wider understanding and acceptance of parking enforcement for the customer.

5.10 Use of the Car Parks (Objective 4.19)

5.10.1 The car parks are used for various events, displays, markets and public information exercises throughout the year subject to appropriate risk assessments, insurances and agreements being in place.

5.10.2 Applications to hold events on car parks will be assessed on the cost to the council and local businesses through lost income against the proposed benefit of the event to those attending or money raised for charity.

5.10.3 Where the event is non-charitable and/or makes a profit for the organisers a reasonable charge will be made to cover lost income.

5.10.4 To protect parking for town centre businesses, events will be discouraged from town centre car parks with other options considered first.

PP10 The Council will consider the use of the car parks for various events, displays, markets and public information exercises subject to adequate agreements being in place.

5.11 Safety and Security (Objective 4.19)

5.11.1 The Council will monitor and review the overnight use of the car parks and recommend change to policy where necessary.

PP11 To respond where necessary to issues relating to overnight parking.

5.12 Motorhomes, HGV's, horseboxes and Overnight Parking

5.12.1 The Council recognises that there needs to be provision in its car parks to accommodate the parking of motorhomes and, on occasions, HGV's.

5.12.2 Motorhoming groups have for a long time lobbied the Council to improve parking provision for them during the day as well as offering a provision for 'wild camping' overnight. The Council has considered the views of local residents as well as visiting motorhomers in reaching a compromise.

5.12.3 Horse riders have for a long time exercised horses along St Annes Beach leading many to park horseboxes on some car parks. To ensure the Council is not held liable for any damaged caused to other vehicles

only those with associated third party horse insurance are able to use designated car parks for loading/unloading of horses.

PP12.1 The Council will allow daytime parking for motorhomes in its designated long stay car parks.

PP12.2 The Council will not permit the parking of HGV's in its car parks without specific permission.

PP12.3 The Council will not permit overnight parking by HGV's in any of its car parks.

PP12.4 The Council will allow overnight parking of motorhomes on designated car parks only. Depending on public opinion further sites may be considered. The provision of facilities for motorhomes will be assessed and implemented where financially viable.

PP12.5 The Council will allow the loading and unloading of horses from horseboxes on designated car parks on the condition that appropriate insurance is held and a permit is obtained.

5.13 Christmas Parking

5.13.1 The Council, at budget formation time, will give consideration to the introduction of a reduced pay and display tariff for the build up to the Christmas period.

PP13 The Council will consider the implementation of a parking tariff concession on an annual basis and build into the council's budget as necessary.

5.14 Car Park Operation

5.14.1 The pay and display operation of the car parks has been reviewed in order to consider alternative pay on foot systems. The current operation is considered to be most appropriate for all car parks.

5.14.2 Pay on foot systems have been considered and not deemed appropriate for the car parks due to the following factors.

- Capital investment required for infrastructure
- Car park layouts not conducive to one way entry/exit systems
- Control barriers visually intrusive
- 24hr control will be required
- Car park size/turnover cannot justify capital investment

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Within the policy context established in the preceding section, a number of initial proposals can be identified at this stage for implementation during the period prior to the next review of the strategy.

- PP4 Parking Tariffs

Review tariffs and permits. Consider re-structuring tariffs eg to introduce shorter payment periods, offer a premium transferable visitors day ticket for all long stay car parks and a multi-day ticket on Lytham station. Consider introduction of a residents permit for multiple car parks.

- PP5 Provision for Blue Badge Holders

Where required and possible provide additional disabled bays in appropriate places on charged car parks to meet suggested DfT guidelines.

- PP6 Safety and Security

Lighting improvements - Lytham Station car park, Lytham
CCTV improvements - Fairhaven Road car park, St Annes

- PP8 Maintenance and Improvement

Resurfacing Improvements – Fairhaven Lake car park
Wall improvements – North Promenade car park
Wall improvements – reducing impact of sand accumulation at North Promenade and North Beach car parks
Drainage improvements – Initiate program of gully clearance
Drainage improvements – North Beach divert rainwater run-off from sewerage system to a soak-away

- PP12.4 Overnight motorhome parking

Review success of pilot project. Assess feasibility of improving facilities and potential for extending to other locations.

6.2 Ongoing policy implementation will be dependent on resources and budgets being made available on an annual basis. Other external revenue streams will be explored to secure funding to assist implementation of the policy where possible.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

The Fylde car park strategy will not remain static but will evolve to keep pace with changes in national and local policy and with changes in demand. This Strategy has a set of core Aims, Objectives and Policies from which the detailed proposals to be implemented will emerge. As a result, there will be a need for continued ongoing monitoring and review. To enable this Car Park Services will be monitored against the following targets:

T1 Car park ticket sales against expected income

T2 The number of events held in car parks

T3 The number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued