

# Parking Schemes

## Parking schemes included in the UTP

Scheme Reference	Scheme Name	Timescale	Page Number
PM1	Increase parking enforcement, for example through the use of permits	Short	205
PM6	Review the number of disabled parking spaces in the town centre	Short	207
PM7	Improve awareness of the multi-storey car park ( <i>addressed through PM3</i> )	Short	211
PM3	Introduce real time information for car parks to show available spaces	Medium	213

## Parking schemes not included in the UTP

Scheme Reference	Scheme Name	Timescale	Page Number
PM5	Introduce cheaper car parking in off-peak periods	Short	209
PM8	Introduce a residents parking scheme	Medium	215

<b>Scheme Name</b>	Increase parking enforcement, for example through the use of permits	
<b>Scheme Reference:</b>	PM1	
<b>Problem References:</b>	P2 P5 P9	Problems with on street parking in parts of Hitchin (St. Andrews Place area etc) Commuter parking in residential areas Inappropriate parking obstructs sight lines at junctions
<b>Scheme Status:</b>	This scheme is included in the UTP as a recommended policy	

### Description of Proposals

Hitchin has a number of Controlled Parking Zones in place which are intended to address existing parking problems. However, as indicated through the stakeholder consultation there are still a number of areas in the town affected by non-residents parking, largely as a result of people migrating from other controlled areas but also as a result of other changes both in terms of employment uses and even timetable changes for rail services.

Policy 19 of the North Herts Parking Strategy concerns future parking control areas and states that the Council will identify and keep under review a programme of parking controls for areas in need of assistance. Such areas will be categorised within the following broad categories:

1. Area with an existing problem
2. Area requiring further investigation
3. Area to be monitored for potential future problems

The parking strategy indicates that the resources allocated to delivering solutions to those areas included within categories 1 and 2 above will dictate when and what solutions can be delivered. In terms of specific locations in which commuter parking is considered problematic, details were not given during the stakeholder consultation, so at present it remains unclear as to where the need for residents permits exists. The introduction of a permit scheme (and its associated costs) would also require detailed consultation with all the relevant parties, a process which can often be quite complicated, as many competing interests are at stake.

North Herts District Council have identified locations in Hitchin which experience parking pressure and will be considered further. These include:

- Grays Lane/West Hill area to west of town centre
- Hollow Lane area to east of town centre
- Common Rise/Meadowbank area
- Ickleford Road/Lancaster Road/Bunyan Road area

In addition, NHDC have indicated that reviews of the following existing parking management areas will be carried out:

- Tilehouse Street CPZ
- Standhill Road/Cemetery Road area
- Benslow Rise/The Avenue area CPZ
- The Triangle CPZ
- Whinbush Road CPZ
- The Willows estate CPZ

Design Considerations	Proposed Solutions	Are solutions sufficient to overcome issues? (Y/N)

<b>Links to other UTP schemes:</b>	PM9- Implement the North Herts Parking Strategy 2009-19
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<b>Contribution to Objectives / Indicators:</b>	UTP Objectives	3) Improve the accessibility of key destinations for all users
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Outline Cost Analysis		
Works Element	Est. Cost	Notes
<b>TOTAL COST FOR DELIVERY</b>		

Deliverability Assessment		
Can the scheme be delivered within the highway boundary?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered without third party involvement?	Y	N
Do all elements of the scheme involve standard work processes?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered in the short term?	Y	N

<b>Scheme Name</b>	Review the number of disabled parking spaces in the town centre	
<b>Scheme Reference:</b>	PM6	
<b>Problem References:</b>	W13	Lack of provision for the mobility impaired at key destinations in Hitchin, particularly the rail station
<b>Scheme Status:</b>	This scheme is included in the UTP as a recommended policy	

### Description of Proposals

The need to provide disabled parking spaces for Blue Badge holders is recognised as being a key part of improving the accessibility of the town centre for all users. North Herts District Council maintains a policy of providing parking for Blue Badge Holders in a variety of locations in town centres, reflecting the need for Blue Badge Holders to park near their destination on grounds of reduced accessibility.

The North Herts Parking Strategy 2009-19 recognises that there is, at times, great demand for prime Blue Badge Holder spaces and the opportunity for increasing provision in key destinations is limited. It is also acknowledged that there is a considerable amount of abuse of Blue Badge Holder parking bays by non-Blue Badge Holders, especially on a short stay basis.

Policy 10 of the parking strategy relates specifically to Parking for Blue Badge Holders and states that the Council will 'maintain its policy of providing free parking for Blue Badge Holders both on and off street in a variety of locations around town centres. Where circumstances change (for example associated with a new car park management system, development proposals or demand for more pedestrian priority) the views of stakeholders, the Area Committee, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary will be sought on future provision for Blue Badge Holders'.

With regards to Hitchin town centre, the proposals associated with the Churchgate Development include increasing the number of car parking spaces as part of redevelopment of the area. It is considered that the proposed new parking facility offers the best means of providing sufficient, high quality and centrally located disabled parking spaces. In terms of the problem of misuse of disabled spaces, UTP scheme PM1 has been developed to increase parking enforcement to tackle this issue.

It is therefore considered that the current parking strategy caters for the needs of disabled parking in the town centre and identifies the mechanisms through which the level of provision can be increased. This includes a criteria-based eligibility policy as well as a programme for implementing Blue Badge Holder Bays.

<b>Design Considerations</b>	<b>Proposed Solutions</b>	<b>Are solutions sufficient to overcome issues? (Y/N)</b>

<b>Links to other UTP schemes:</b>	PM3- Introduce real time information for car parks to show available spaces PM9- Implement the North Herts (draft) Parking Strategy 2009-19
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<b>Contribution to Objectives / Indicators:</b>	UTP Objectives	3) Improve the accessibility of key destinations for all users
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<b>Outline Cost Analysis</b>		
<b>Works Element</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>TOTAL COST FOR DELIVERY</b>		

<b>Deliverability Assessment</b>		
Can the scheme be delivered within the highway boundary?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered without third party involvement?	Y	N
Do all elements of the scheme involve standard work processes?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered in the short term?	Y	N

<b>Scheme Name</b>	Introduce cheaper car parking in off-peak periods	
<b>Scheme Reference:</b>	PM5	
<b>Problem References:</b>	P2	Problems with on street parking in parts of Hitchin (St. Andrews Place area etc)
<b>Scheme Status:</b>	This scheme is not included in the UTP	

### Description of Proposals

This scheme was raised through stakeholder consultation as it was felt that parking should be cheaper in the off-peak period. However, the North Herts Parking Strategy indicates that currently there is no charge for town centre parking in the evening or on Sundays- what is traditionally considered to be the off-peak period. Charges do apply on Saturdays as this is a period of heavy parking demand for Hitchin town centre, particularly on market day. Given the above information it is not therefore clear as to the purpose of the proposed scheme.

Policy 6 of the Parking Strategy does, however, state that the Council will consider charging for parking for evenings and Sundays when tariffs are reviewed and depending on what charging system may be in place in the future. It is understood that this review will be carried out in consultation with relevant stakeholders and will 'consider the demand for Evening and Sunday parking, economic circumstances of town centres at the time and availability of alternatives as well as resource implications for managing car parks outside current charging hours'.

It is not proposed to take this scheme forward through the UTP as, at present, parking in the off-peak period (evenings and Sundays) is currently free. If, however, further information from residents of Hitchin should be provided then this scheme will be amended accordingly when the UTP is reviewed.

Design Considerations	Proposed Solutions	Are solutions sufficient to overcome issues? (Y/N)

<b>Links to other UTP schemes:</b>	PM1- Increase parking enforcement, for example through the use of permits
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<b>Contribution to Objectives / Indicators:</b>	UTP Objectives	9) Support the economic vitality of Hitchin's shops and businesses
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Outline Cost Analysis		
Works Element	Est. Cost	Notes
<b>TOTAL COST FOR DELIVERY</b>		

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<b>Deliverability Assessment</b>		
Can the scheme be delivered within the highway boundary?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered without third party involvement?	Y	N
Do all elements of the scheme involve standard work processes?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered in the short term?	Y	N



<b>Scheme Name</b>	Improve awareness of the multi-storey car park (Lairage)	
<b>Scheme Reference:</b>	PM7	
<b>Problem References:</b>	P1	Lack of car parking within the town centre, particularly on market days
	P6	It is perceived that the Lairage car park is under used due to its location and poor access
	P7	Large number of circulatory trips by drivers searching for parking spaces
<b>Scheme Status:</b>	This scheme is addressed through PM3	

### Description of Proposals

This scheme was suggested through the stakeholder consultation in response to the perceived problem with motorists apparently not being aware of the Lairage multi-storey car park. This issue is assumed to relate to a lack of effective signing for the car park and the associated confusion which may arise due to the fact that the car park is located with the Waitrose supermarket development.

The Lairage multi-storey is accessed from Old Park Road and has a capacity of 299 long stay spaces. The cost of parking ranges from £1 for up to an hour, through to £3.50 for over three hours.

UTP scheme PM3 is intended to Introduce real time information for the car parks in Hitchin to show available spaces. These matrix signs will be highly visible and will not only increase the awareness of motorists as to the location of car parks but also provide up to date information relating to available capacity. It is intended that the Lairage car park will be included within this scheme which will help to address the perceived problem with this location. In addition, UTP scheme HM28 is designed to review the road signing within Hitchin, which will include the car park signing around the town. This will help to ensure that motorists are fully aware of parking locations in the town and therefore reduce the number of circulatory trips made in search of available spaces.

It is therefore considered that this scheme is addressed through other UTP schemes.

### Supporting Photograph(s):



*Existing access from Old Park Road*

Design Considerations	Proposed Solutions	Are solutions sufficient to overcome issues? (Y/N)

<b>Links to other UTP schemes:</b>	PM3- Introduce real time information for car parks to show available spaces HM28- Review road signing within Hitchin
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<b>Contribution to Objectives / Indicators:</b>	UTP Objectives	6) Direct traffic more appropriately across/through the town 9) Support the economic vitality of Hitchin's shops and businesses
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Outline Cost Analysis		
Works Element	Est. Cost	Notes
<b>TOTAL COST FOR DELIVERY</b>		

Deliverability Assessment		
Can the scheme be delivered within the highway boundary?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered without third party involvement?	Y	N
Do all elements of the scheme involve standard work processes?	Y	N
Can the scheme be delivered in the short term?	Y	N

**Scheme:**

Introduce real time information for car parks to show available spaces

**Scheme Reference:**

PM3

**Scheme Status:**

This scheme is included in the UTP

**Purpose:**

This scheme was proposed at the stakeholder consultation in response to a perceived lack of effective signing to the town centre car parks, leading to drivers making circulatory trips searching for car parks/available spaces. To implement an effective and consistent scheme it would require matrix signs to be installed across the town centre at each of the short and long stay car parks. This scheme would require an extensive programme of works and would require a significant financial investment.

The Hitchin Town Centre Initiative Business Improvement District (BID) contains a number of objectives related to parking, which includes the use of Variable Message Signs. Funding associated with the Town Centre Initiative may therefore be applicable to helping deliver this scheme.

**Supporting photographs:**

*Brand Street car park – The introduction of real time information would update motorists as to the availability of parking spaces in Town Centre car parks*



*An example of a real time parking information sign*

**Benefits:**

- Decreased congestion;
- Increased driver satisfaction; and
- Improved public image of town centre.

**Risks:**

- Drivers do not change their behaviour to use the signs that direct them to an appropriate car park.

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**Indicative Cost:**

For the purpose of costing the scheme the following sums are assumed:

Display sign - £10,000 each

System hardware and set up at each car park - £8,000

Computer car park management system – £50,000

**Scheme:**

Introduce a residents parking scheme

**Scheme Reference:**

PM8

**Scheme Status:**

This scheme is not included in the UTP

**Purpose:**

This scheme was suggested through the stakeholder consultation and reflected a number of perceived issues with non-residents parking in areas of Hitchin. Specific locations for a residents parking scheme were not identified, so this scheme could be applicable to a number of areas in the town.

North Herts Council currently operates residents parking schemes throughout the District. Those residents living in streets with permit parking schemes are eligible to purchase permits, of which three types are available:

- Residents Permit  
Cost £58.00 for 12 months
- Visitor Permit  
Cost £58.00 for 12 months  
Limited to one per household.
- Visitor Tickets  
Cost £7.50 per book of 10.

The North Herts Parking Strategy (2009-19) indicates that The Council manages 12 Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) in residential areas of Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston. The Strategy states that these zones have been successful in removing non-residential parking although the original intention was for CPZ's to be self financing. This, however, has not been the case. With further demand for residents parking schemes, it is understood that the current Strategy will consider whether there is potential for additional CPZ's, how they may be provided and whether existing CPZ's need to be reviewed in the light of the past few years' experiences.

**Risks:**

- Non-residential parking problems migrate, not always to the most likely areas
- Controlled Parking Zones are expensive and income from permits does not always cover the cost of implementing and managing the zones.
- CPZ's may not be the most effective means of addressing this issue

**Conclusion:**

This scheme indicates that there is demand for residents parking schemes in Hitchin, although it is not clear as to the exact locations where this provision is required. It is considered that the North Herts Parking Strategy acknowledges this issue and provides the appropriate policy framework through which to implement controlled parking zones. As indicated above, there have been a number of findings from the experience of operating CPZ's in the District, particularly in relation to the costs of implementation, which need to be carefully considered. It is not therefore proposed to implement a residents parking scheme through the UTP as such a scheme would need to be progressed through the processes highlighted in the parking strategy. If, however, specific locations are subsequently identified then the recommendations of this scheme can be amended accordingly when the UTP is reviewed.

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