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D I S T R I C T

Craven District Council Parking Strategy 2014 – 2019

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Introduction

Craven District Councils previous parking strategic objectives were produced in 2009. The Council's Corporate Leadership Team has commissioned a new parking strategy to cover the period 2014 – 2019 to reflect both recent changes to the economic climate and recent changes to service delivery. The strategy will help the Council to plan its current and future parking provision and service management requirements.

The economic downturn has affected town centres and demand for parking generally. However, this strategy will aim to provide a platform for determining future demand and potential supply of car parking provision within the District with reference to a range of users and to look at how this can be met without detriment to the environment or economic vitality and viability of Craven District.

Research undertaken to help inform this parking strategy provide strong indications that private car use is continuing to increase and will do so for the foreseeable future, especially with regard to the demand for access to town centres and visitor attractions. Parking availability of any type of vehicle is an important factor in determining how people travel. It also influences the vitality and viability of town centres. However, the capacity of the roads and the provision of car parking space to meet this demand are neither practical nor sustainable. Notwithstanding that, accessibility to town centres must be maintained to assist in maintaining economic prosperity. Only towns with high inner-city quality and good quality alternative forms of accessibility can afford to restrict access by private car. That said, cars should not be seen as the only means of transport and there is a balance to be struck between providing and restricting car parking, in turn balancing environmental protection, economic growth, accessibility, health improvement and social inclusion.

In more rural areas, such as Craven, recognition needs to made that effective alternative transport methods may never be possible e.g. bus services, which face constant threat in rural areas. Private cars will, therefore, remain the only travel option for many people.

The development of a parking strategy needs to take into account a number of factors:

- consideration of all users e.g. residents, shoppers, visitors, local businesses, and workers
- Contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre by providing more short stay than long stay parking
- Regulations to be implemented and enforced effectively
- A revenue surplus required to allow for re-investment

- Appropriate charging that meets with the Council's overall aims for finance, and quality of provision
- Consideration of the Council's sustainability objectives (as defined through the Climate Change Business Plan) balancing the need for car usage with public transport where feasible

This strategy will consider each of the following facets:

- Designated off-street car parks
- Disabled parking provision
- Coach parking provision
- Taxi waiting areas
- HGV overnight parking provision

In considering the above, the effects and impacts of a number of variables will be considered, in both the short and longer-term, as follows:

- Capacity, location and need of off-street parking provision
- Car parking tariffs
- Public transport availability, cost and proximity
- Demand for car parking, both current and future
- Environmental impacts

Settlement Hierarchy

It is generally recognised that different policy levers are relevant and effective in different circumstances. In particular, size of settlement and the nature and role of its commercial centre significantly affect the nature of parking demands and options for its supply and management. A settlement hierarchy can assist in applying different policy levers. The hierarchy for settlements in Craven consists of:

Large Market Town - Skipton
Market Town – Settle, Bentham
Rural Centre – Ingleton, Crosshills, Gargrave,
Rural villages - Hellifield, Embsay, Cononley, Farnhill

It is through this hierarchy that the car parking strategy will be developed for each area of the District.

Developing a Parking Strategy

The key question for developing a car parking strategy is "how can parking in service centres be managed to best support the local economy and the needs of the residents?"

1. Parking is a service, and the service has to be managed properly. A "free for all" i.e. no restrictions, no charge and no enforcement approach is not an option in good management

2. A good quality service will meet the needs of its customers, e.g. shoppers, visitors, workers and residents. The parking stock needs to be allocated to meet the differing needs of customers. Correct allocation will ensure the stock is used efficiently, both reducing underused locations and reducing the pressure on the most popular sites. Effective enforcement will be a key element.

3. It is important to acknowledge the role parking plays in the economic vitality of a centre. However, of equal importance, parking must be acknowledged as only one element affecting whether people visit a centre or not. The town's competitiveness will depend on many factors including quality of shopping experience, the proximity of competing centres and the quality of other attractions within/close to the centre.

4. Where possible the parking strategy should aim to integrate with wider transportation strategies. By doing this other appropriate measures can be considered to improve access to centres through other modes of transport. This will encourage those that are able to use alternatives to do so, freeing up parking spaces for the many that do not, and may never, have alternative modes of travel available to them.

5. The operational objectives of a parking service should include:
   - To provide a high quality service for all its customers
   - For key users to have good access to the service centre
   - A high quality enforcement regime controlling illegal parking
   - A revenue income for the council to re-invest into parking projects and maintenance

6. A clear appreciation of the broad customer expectations needs to be understood i.e:
   - A car park available in a convenient location, good quality and well signposted
   - A parking space available to park for as long as required
   - A well laid out car park that feels safe e.g. well lit
   - Cost is fair, reflecting the quality of the facility, although it is important to note that for many cost is the least important consideration. This is particularly the

case for visitors and to a lesser extent for shoppers. However, workers will usually seek cheaper locations, although these are likely to be more remote.

Meeting the requirements of customers can be broken down as follows:

Residents who live within the service centre
- Close to home as possible parking mainly late afternoon, evening / weekends
- Will not want their street full of other peoples vehicles

Shoppers
- Needs will vary depending on shopping experience available within the centre
- The larger the centre the longer the stay
- The shorter the stay, the closer the shopper will want to park

Visitors
- Day visitors to a tourist destination may require 3-5 hours parking
- Will require clear directional signage to the car parks and then from there to the visitor attractions

Local businesses
- As well as servicing and deliveries, local businesses will often look for parking schemes available for their staff.

Workers
- Full or half day parking provision at as little cost as possible
- Low paid workers may try and find "free" parking away from car parks

To meet all of the aforementioned requirements the parking service should, where possible and practicable, implement a:

- Integrated management of all parking provision including on-street parking
- Well-structured charging regime
- Charging structure that reflects the needs of the individual towns
- Charging structure that reflects the needs of the parking user

Ideally, to achieve the above to its fullest extent, parking services needs to provide:

- Some on-street short stay parking spaces that are charged
- Short stay, higher cost off-street parking closest to the central shopping areas, ideally with maximum stay of, say, 2 hours
- Short and medium stay parking further from the centre for longer trips and in tourist centres conveniently located for the attractions
- Long stay parking at a greater distance with tariffs set to suit both full and part time workers, including parking schemes for local businesses
- Where circumstances demand, residential permit parking arrangements
- Clear directional signage

In all cases the charges would need to be set at a level that reflects the nature of the town; at a level which will ensure proper management of the parking service whilst not having an adverse effect on the local economy.

Policy Context

There is a range of national, regional and local policy that is relevant to parking, promoting the vitality and viability of town centres, assisting residents and businesses and seeking to minimise the impact on Climate Change.

In 2012 the Government published its new National Planning Policy Framework. Section 3 of the Framework entitled Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy which refers to parking provision for both new building developments and town centre parking as follows:

> *"39. If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account:*
> * *the accessibility of the development;*
> * *the type, mix and use of development;*
> * *the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
> * *local car ownership levels; and*
> * *an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles.*
>
> *40. Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles. They should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres. Parking enforcement should be proportionate."*

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Further to the National Planning Policy Framework new planning guidance was published in August 2013 which provides further detail in terms of town centre parking provision stating that councils should understand the important role appropriate parking facilities can play in rejuvenating shops, high streets and town centres:

> *"The quality of parking in town centres is important; it should be convenient, safe and secure. Parking charges should be appropriate and not undermine the vitality of town centres and local shops, and parking enforcement should be proportionate."*
>
> *"This positive approach should include seeking to improve the quality of parking in town centres (in line with the National Planning Policy Framework) and, where it is necessary to ensure the vitality of town centres, the quantity too. Local authorities should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town*

> *centres and parking enforcement should be proportionate, avoiding unfairly penalising drivers."*

National Planning Guidance 2013

The North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Parking Strategy (October 2011) states that:

> *"Successfully managing on-street parking provision has a major impact on the transport network. The benefits include:*
> * *Reducing congestion*
> * *Improving localised air quality*
> * *Improving road safety*
> * *Maintaining access to and encouraging use of public transport*
> * *Balancing on and off street parking supply and demand*
> * *Helping businesses with collections and deliveries*
> * *Enabling residents to park near to their properties"*

NYCC Parking Strategy, October 2013

The NYCC Parking Strategy, in its key principles, goes on to describe the importance of the relationship between on and off street parking:

> *"As previously stated the County Council has no direct control over the provision of off-street parking. Nevertheless there is a commitment to joint working with district councils and other partners to ensure that on and off street parking provision complement each other.*
>
> *Effective on-street parking management measures help to balance on and off street parking supply and demand. The inter-relationship should encourage drivers to park in designated on-street spaces for short visits and deter those wanting to park on-street for longer periods. This creates more available designated on-street spaces and helps to ensure that the provision is used by the intended categories of user namely short stay visitors, shoppers and disabled drivers."*

NYCC Parking Strategy, October 2013

On parking space numbers and impact on the local economy of parking charges the NYCC strategy comments:

> *"7.4 A study by the Transport Research Laboratory identified a common misconception that providing as many parking spaces as possible is the best way to manage parking so as to maximise access. Rather, the key is to ensure that the parking stock is used efficiently so that the availability of spaces matches demand wherever possible. The effective management of parking provision is therefore as important as the absolute number of parking spaces provided.*
>
> *7.5 There is a potential conflict between using parking as a means of facilitating car use, and as a means of selectively controlling car accessibility (and thereby car use). In North Yorkshire a balanced approach is required to meet the needs of different communities. The rural nature of the county means many people rely on the car to*

> *access key services and sufficient parking provision at certain locations is therefore required. However, where viable alternatives to the car exist, on-street parking provision will be managed to encourage use of these alternatives.*
>
> *7.7 Many people fear that making changes to the way that parking is managed, including new parking charges, will adversely affect an area's economy. However, the limited evidence which does exist suggests it is the broader retail, commercial leisure or tourism offer which is the primary factor affecting a town's competitiveness, not the provision of parking. There is no evidence that visitors use alternative destinations more."*

NYCC Parking Strategy, October 2013

Craven District Council has produced an Economic Development Strategy, this strategy sets out four key themes, Enabling Business Growth, Developing the Rural Economy**,** Revitalising our Towns and Villages and Capitalising on Education and Skills. The Strategy comments specifically on parking in Skipton:

> *"As the District's principal service centre, welcoming hundreds of commuters, shoppers and visitors every day, the management and impact of traffic on the town centre is an important issue; in particular, the provision of car parking. The Council fully acknowledges the negative environmental impacts of car usage and will do all within its power to encourage alternative provision; however, it recognises that the provision of quality car parking will continue to be a key requirement for the majority of people coming into, and making use of the services in the town centre."*

The Council's own Corporate Priorities, appropriate to the car parking strategy are focussed on an Enterprising Craven and a Green Craven.

Key features of the strategy that support the above priorities are as follows:

Enterprising Craven – provision of a balance of on and off street, short and long stay parking with appropriate tariffs supports the retail and business functions of town centres. The strategy does not seek to provide an excessive amount of car parking but, at its heart, provides for the need to promote the economic vitality and viability of town and village centres. Further, the strategy will support the use of town centre car parking to help ensure that towns in the district remain important retail and service destinations in their own right.

Greener Craven – The need to reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions is a key consideration of the green agenda. Whilst it is acknowledged that car usage is essential in a sparsely rural area, the Car Parking Strategy will contribute by encouraging use of and acknowledge the existing use of alternative modes of travel being used where possible. In addition, in town centres the strategy supports the need to minimise circulating traffic by way of balancing on and off street parking provision.

Car Park Strategy Aims

1. Provide good quality public car parking facilities appropriate to service the needs of the main service centres across the District.

2. Recognise the different characteristics of the main service centres of Craven District and liaise with key partners (business, Parish Councils, Chamber of Trade etc) in providing car-parking services appropriate to local circumstances.

3. Seek to support the vitality of service centres and local businesses through the provision and management of appropriate car parking, while recognising that car parking provision can be an important tool to help manage traffic.

4. Reduce the burden on the taxpayer and shift the cost of car parking provision towards the service users and manage the Council's car parking assets in a cost effective manner.

5. Develop effective communication with customers in order to promote the service and to gather information to inform the development of the service.

Car Park Strategy Objectives

Objective 1 – Ensure that the car park service is developed and delivered on the basis of good information on car park usage and customer needs.

Objective 2 - Ensure that car park services are being carried out to a high standard in terms of economy, efficiency, safety and effectiveness.

Objective 3 – Maintain a charging structure that maximises the use of existing car parks, whilst managing a balance between economic, environmental and traffic management objectives.

Objective 4 – Ensure adequate provision for those with particular requirements.

Objective 5 – Improve information for customers.

Objective 6 – Provide a cost effective enforcement service

Objective 7 – Continue to audit and review the level of parking availability in Craven District and plan accordingly.

Objective 8 – Ensure a cost effective and efficient car park management regime

Background

According to the 2011 census the population of the district was 55,409, an increase of 1,789 since 2001. The District has a population density of 47 people per square kilometre, placing it within the top ten most sparsely populated areas in England (the average for the country as a whole is 245 people per sq km).

The District is served by transport links, as well as by roads, the District is linked to the rail network via the Leeds-Skipton-Carlisle route (incorporating the Settle-Carlisle railway), and the Leeds-Skipton-Lancaster-Morecambe route. These routes offer services within and beyond the District. Skipton is the terminus for the Airedale line from West Yorkshire. A direct return train service to London Kings Cross operates from Skipton.

The local bus services within the District are delivered by a number of bus operators. A map at Appendix A shows the bus route coverage in Craven. As demand would expect the service in the south of the district and main service centres provides the greatest coverage, due to larger populations, with the higher, more sparsely populated areas becoming patchy in terms of bus service.

Modal Shift

A shift to increased bus use could be difficult in a District like Craven due in places to the coverage but also the timing of many of the local bus services from the rural areas makes it impossible for many to use the bus to travel to work. This is a similar situation with train travel especially in the north east of the district where no train service exists.

A shift towards walking and cycling can also be extremely difficult to achieve within a rural setting. The most likely achievement for this will come from residents located close to the service centre where accessibility is within easy reach. Whilst these people make a valuable contribution to modal shift and indeed to the sustainability objective, the level of car ownership is expected to continue to grow especially in the most rural parts of the District.

Car Parking Provision throughout the Craven District

The table below shows the car park, town/village location and number of spaces per car park for Council owned parking provision.

Number (to be cross referenced with plans attached)	Location	Standard Car Space Numbers	Disabled Car Space Numbers	Coach Space Numbers	Motor Cycle Space Numbers	Pedal Cycle Space Numbers	Comments
1	Ingleton (Community Centre)	110	8	12	0	0	
2	Ingleton (Backgate)	43					Also used as a HGV park overnight
	Ingleton Total	**153**	**8**	**12**	**0**	**0**	
3	Skipton (High Street)	303	30	12	8		
4	Skipton (Coach Street)	384	23	0	0	0	
5	Skipton (Waller Hill)	52	3	0	4	0	Shape & layout inappropriate for coach parking
6	Skipton (Cavendish Street)	172	10	0	0	0	
7	Skipton (Bunkers Hill)	8	1	0	0	0	

8	Skipton (Craven Pool)	133					
	Skipton Total	**1052**	**67**	**12**	**12**	**0**	
9	Settle (Ashfield)	127	6	2	0	0	Access/egress inappropriate for coaches
10	Settle (Greenfoot)	104	6	0	0	0	
11	Settle (Whitefriars)	56	4	5	0	0	
	Settle Total	**287**	**16**	**7**	**0**	**0**	
12	Bentham (Grasmere)	50					unmarked surface
13	Bentham (Harley Bank) – leased by CDC	30					unmarked surface
14	Bentham (Lairsgill)	35					unmarked surface
	Bentham Total	**115**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
15	Cononley (Moorfoot Lane)	9	0	0	0	0	Unmarked surface, and not large enough for coach parking
	Cononley Total	**9**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
16	Crosshills (Hall Street)	25					Unmarked surface
17	Crosshills (Milligans	42	0	0	0	0	

	Field)						
	Crosshills Total	**67**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
18	Embsay (Main Street)	27	1	0	0	0	
	Embsay Total	**27**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
19	Farnhill	10					Unmarked surface, not large enough for coach parking
	Farnhill Total	**10**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
20	Gargrave (North Street)	28	2	0	3	4	No demand for coach parking
21	Gargrave (West Street)	20					Unmarked surface
22	Gargrave (Water Street)	7					Unmarked surface, not large enough for coach parking. Scheme drawn for 18 standard & 2 disabled spaces
	Gargrave Total	**55**	**2**	**0**	**30**	**4**	
23	Hellifield (The Green)	28	2	0	3	4	No demand for coach parking
	Hellifield Total	**28**	**2**	**0**	**3**	**4**	

The above table shows …

Main components to car parking stock

Craven District, particularly Skipton, includes a range of car parking provision, not just those provided by the District Council. As well as those owned by Craven District Council, there are publicly available car parks owned and operated by others, for example in Skipton there is a car park to the rear of House of Fraser, which operates on a pay to park basis. In addition, on busy weekends and bank holidays the local Rotary club operates a pay to park car park from the Skipton Building Society car park at their office premises on the Bailey. During the week this car park is private for the sole use of the Skipton Building Society employees.

As well as publicly available car parks there are a number of private car parks that make a significant contribution to the overall parking provision for the area. Again examples of these are most prominent in Skipton with the car park provided at the HML premises on Gargrave Road for the use of HML staff during work hours and Skipton Auction Mart, providing a valuable level of parking for auction days. Both of these car parks have, however, also been used for parking when there are large scale events taking place in the town centre. On these occasions park and ride schemes are often operational.

It should be noted that Skipton Castle has planning permission for the provision of a 200 vehicle car park and it is understood that work is progressing on the completion of this facility.

A study to show the full extent of parking provided by private organisations should be undertaken to help inform the future demand of parking provision within Craven District.

Rationalisation of car parks

As well as its car parks Craven District Council owns a large number of other land holdings comparative to the size of organisation of varying sizes and uses. As part of its land holding review process it is vital that the authority includes its car park stock in that process.

Skipton

It is considered that the car parks in Skipton are, at present, appropriate for the size of town they service and considered an asset due to their purpose, functionality and value for money in operating. However, Skipton does present challenges in both coach and taxi traffic parking. This coupled with the potential increase in demand for car parking once the economy improves should be considered as a holistic project by the authority. It is likely that in the future investment into increased/improved provision for coaches, taxi's and cars will be required.

Settle

Settle is the Districts second largest town centre and as such it is felt vital to include car parking provision within the town centre. Whilst all three of the Council's car parks are located within or directly adjacent to the town centre, the Greenfoot car park is perceived to be some way out of the centre due to the location of the access route. It is considered that the Greenfoot car park is underutilised and on the face of it, does not add a significant amount of value to the car parking offer for Settle. An in-depth assessment of the parking provision requirements for Settle should be undertaken to ascertain whether the car parks should be rationalised.

Ingleton

The Council's main car park in Ingleton is the Community Centre car park. This is a well used car park, although the Community Centre free use of the facility contributes significantly to the utilisation of this car park. It is considered that the Community Centre car park should be retained and presents a support mechanism to the local economy.

Conversely, the Backgate site is underutilised and does not represent good value for money. This car park is currently used predominantly by lorry drivers/operators to park overnight. Whilst this is a pay and display car park very little revenue is generated. In addition areas subject to continuous HGV usage are known to degenerate the surfaces more quickly than cars and this car park is therefore prone to higher maintenance costs. It is acknowledged that the local community use this site to access the field beyond on its gala days. The Council should consider the use/value of holding this site and work with the local community to agree a solution for the gala parade.

Bentham

There are essentially three car parks in Bentham. All of which have been provided free of charge. This has not only posed a maintenance capability issue for the Council, the main town centre car park has also been strangled by long stay/commuter traffic, which in turn has a detrimental impact on the town centre economy. The introduction of pay and display on the main town centre car park would ensure a higher turnover of parking spaces providing the ability for shoppers and visitors to the town to find somewhere to park. This has proven successful elsewhere and can only have a positive impact on the vitality of the town and assist the local economy in an already difficult climate. To counter the loss of parking for commuters and long stay parkers it is considered that the car park situated on the edge of the town (Lairsgill) could continue to be provided free of charge.

In addition to owning its own car parking sites, the Council is in a very unusual position of leasing a site in High Bentham, away from the town centre to provide an additional car park, which is primarily used by local residents who lack parking outside their homes, and village hall users. The Council pays for the running and maintenance costs of providing this car park as well as incurring an annual lease fee. The car park would generate little by way of income to cover the costs of operating the car park and it is therefore uneconomic for the Council to provide such a facility, which also does not support the vitality of the town centre given its location. The Council should review its provision of this car park, study the lease terms and undertake an assessment on whether to end its agreement with the landlord when the lease/break clause will allow.

Gargrave

Gargrave is a small service centre and the Council currently holds 3 sites as car parks within the village, which have traditionally been free of charge. The North Street car park is well used by visitors of the village, however, it is understood that many of these visitors are long stay parkers who use Gargrave as a base to park and walk. This car park underwent major resurfacing investment by the Council a few years ago. It is recommended that due to its proximity to the village centre, together with its size, the introduction of pay and display should be considered.

The West Street car park on the other hand is mainly utilised by local residents and users of the village hall opposite. Consideration to the introduction of a residents pay for parking permit scheme should be given on this car park, which would contribute significantly towards the running costs.

The car park on Water Street is very small and generally, its use is limited. It is considered that this site does not contribute significantly to the local economy and therefore its future use and holding by the Council should be considered in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Plan criteria.

Hellifield

The car park at Hellifield, which is free, is adjacent to the pub car park, it is used by an extremely small number of HGV's and is subject to access rights by a neighbour. Other than this the car park gets very little use. The Council should carry out an assessment of the value of retaining this site in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Plan criteria.

Embsay

Situated opposite the village hall in the centre of Embsay, the car park operates free of charge at present. Over the years the car park has been subject to vehicles and trailers being left on the site for long periods of time. The car parks main value to the village of Embsay is to the village hall, which, does not have a car park of its own. However, the Council should carry out an assessment on the value of retaining this site in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Plan criteria.

Crosshills

One of the car parks in Crosshills (Milligans Field) is part owned by the Co-op and therefore well utilised, as is the second car park (Hall Street) on the opposite side of the road. Being currently free these car parks are open to abuse by neighbouring businesses, that tend to use the car parks to lay over vehicles, which in turn impedes the ability of shoppers to the centre to be able to park. As Crosshills is a busy service centre these car parks should be managed to encourage turnover of space for visitors and to support the local economy.

Cononley

Situated on Moorfoot Lane, the Council owns a small, linier piece of land that is used by local residents as a parking area sufficient for approximately 9 cars. Sandwiched between a narrow lane and residential properties the land has little potential for alternative uses. It is also not cost effective to introduce charges.

Farnhill

Similar to Moorfoot Lane above, the Council owns a small piece of land in Farnhill that is used by local residents as a parking area sufficient for no more than 10 vehicles.

Supply and Demand

The economic downturn clearly affects town centres and demand for parking. However, there is an opportunity to plan for returning high levels of demand and the Council should use the Car Park Strategy as a catalyst to appraise and plan for the future accordingly. Once the study to ascertain the current private parking provision is complete the Council will be able to more accurately forecast what the future parking demands for the district are likely to be. A study to determine future demand will need to include the economic trend for each settlement according to it hierarchical status, public transport alternatives and their trends, the changing consumer demographics, the changing offer of neighbouring and competing destinations etc.

In the short term, capacity will not be an issue in any of the Council owned car parks. In fact, as set out elsewhere in this strategy, there is a case for rationalisation of some car parks in certain areas. In the medium term, subject to the economic climate and town centre vitality, there is a high probability that the capacity for Skipton may need to increase if investment into the towns offer continues to take place. In reviewing Skipton it would be useful to include the taxi rank issues that are encountered on Waller Hill car park/taxi rank and the coach parking, which is currently accommodated on the High Street car park through the provision of 12 coach parking bays.

At present the Council does not collect regular parking usage statistics and has in the past relied on manual parking counts and some basic information collected from the pay & display machines. It is recommended that a usage data collection and analysis process be put in place, at the very least for Skipton, in order to begin a trends and capacity appraisal to inform the long term parking requirements for the town. A similar approach should also be adopted for each of the P&D areas if viable to do so.

The car parking strategy needs to keep abreast of actual movements for an accurate picture of future demands to be captured in light of evolving trends. It is essential that actual changes are monitored regularly and carefully to ensure that decisions flowing from the strategy are taken using the most up to date data. At the time of developing this Parking Strategy the Council were in the process of purchasing a number of new Pay & Display machines. The inclusion of an intelligent software system through the machine management system was an integral part of the machine purchase. It is also understood that the Council is putting in place a Pay & Display machine rolling replacement programme. This will allow, eventually for all machines to be linked to the management system. This will answer the requirement for data capture and analysis.

Management and Resources

The management of off street parking in the district falls into two broad categories. Firstly the enforcement of parking (i.e. the public face of the service) and secondly, the back office management which assists the enforcement function as well as the day to day management, of issues such as permit applications and customer queries. Managing the Pay and Display machines, in terms of cash collection, planned and reactive maintenance, as well as monitoring the status of machines also falls within the day to day management function. In addition the Council allocates resources to physical maintenance of car parks, again on a planned and reactive basis.

The Council has a finite amount of resource available and the Car Parking Service is included in limitations on resources. The Council should, therefore, be seeking to operate the car park service as efficiently and effectively as possible, including taking advantage of back office software management systems which in essence can provide a system to:

- Monitor Pay & Display terminals to:
    - Immediately identify when a machine develops a fault, the nature of the fault and generates alerts accordingly
    - Generates alerts if batteries are running low
    - Generates alerts if ticket stock in the machine is running low
- Provide instant financial information
- Provide statistical report on, for example, usage
- Provide periodic income reports
- Improves and speeds up Pay & Display machine programme alterations
- Enhances cash collection process with electronic audit tickets

Such systems will ultimately save on staff resource by allowing for the limited resources available to react to specifics rather than having to undertake regular

physical checks across the P&D machine stock (almost spanning the entire length of the district) to ensure machines are working correctly and stocked with tickets. Additionally, the manual data input to produce reports and income spreadsheets is no longer required allowing the limited resources to be proactive on developing project to maximise usage of the car parks.

Parking Enforcement

In May 2013 the Council transferred it parking enforcement over to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) to dovetail with the introduction of CPE on-street by North Yorkshire County Council. Working with North Yorkshire County Council, the Council agreed that with the introduction of CPE the most cost effective method of delivery was through an authority that already operates the scheme. As a consequence the enforcement operation has been contracted to Harrogate Borough Council with the introduction of CPE.

CPE is now consistently applied across both on-street and off-street parking throughout the District, which is the best scenario from a user perspective. However, this has provided challenges for the Council's car parking operation, as the service has effectively been split up and therefore has had an impact on the staffing of the service with some posts transferring to Harrogate Council for the enforcement. In addition, these changes have impacted on the Parking Managers post as they are no longer responsible for the enforcement operation. As a consequence the Parking Service is currently going through a period of transition to reshape and redefine the service delivery and staffing structure.

It is important for the Council to consider and investigate the best and most cost effective way of delivering the service whilst acknowledging that this important, customer facing service does still require dedicated resource.

Stock Condition

Car Park surfaces, boundaries and peripheral infrastructure

The condition of the Council's car parks varies depending on usage and whether they are pay & display or free car parks. In order for the Council to provide a good quality parking provision across its entire stock, investment should be considered for all car parks on the same merit. However, by the same token, all parking stock should generate an income to cover the costs of their repair and maintenance. It would be too simplistic to consider past costs in isolation as the true amount of investment required has not been spent and therefore not reflective of true cost for

the Council to operate. A charge for car parking is not only the best way to manage parking turnover, but also the best way to maintain good quality parking stock.

P&D machines

Many of the Council's pay and display machines are extremely aged and many of these beyond their economic life. The Council should, following an initial replacement project, develop a rolling programme for machine replacement. In addition much benefit is gained by having a robust servicing and maintenance programme in place to minimise the amount of time and cost incurred through ad-hoc repairs from faults.

Tariff Boards

A comprehensive tariff board replacement programme should be undertaken on charged for Council car parks as soon as feasibly possible following the introduction of CPE where the rules governing enforcement differ from previous arrangements. The boards have been amended on transfer to CPE; however, these were done with cover plates and should now be properly replaced.

It is vital that any changes to car parking orders include the replacement of tariff boards and this action should be included in an amendments checklist.

Signage

 The location and wording of signage in car parks is essential to ensuring effective car parking management and enforcement. It is recommended that a comprehensive review of all car parking signage is undertaken as an early action followed by period programmed signage reviews.

Good directional signage from the outskirts of the town through the centre to the car parks is essential for visitors to the town. Good directional signage may help in reducing the number of vehicles parking on street, in residential areas, which can become a source of frustration to local residents. It is noted that the Council has recently reviewed its directional signage in and around Skipton, together with North Yorkshire County Council and it was agreed that the directional signage on the approaches to the town centre were adequate, whilst some additional signage has been added to the town centre. Similar exercises should be undertaken for all locations where the Council operates car parks.

Tariff Review

Local Authorities are able to provide and charge for the provision of car parking spaces. There are however, conflicting views over the charging element. A common topic of conflicting viewpoints is whether parking should generate the maximum income possible or be subsidised to the perceived benefit of local traders and users, in many cases not local tax payers. That said there is a strong demand for public car parking, with local authorities well placed to deliver the provision and should make best use of their assets by charging a fair market rate for their use, in accordance with audit advice.

Tariff structures and their appropriateness are extremely important in managing parking provision. They can be instrumental in matching supply to demand by controlling durations and turnover, deterring or preventing certain user groups, eg. Commuters or making specific provisions for categories e.g. local workers

It is generally acknowledged that charging for car parking is accepted by motorists and the charge, to a greater degree, unlikely to affect where users will park. The choice of site is usually determined by convenience rather than cost. In setting charges the Council should consider how they will:

- support the economic vitality of the centre
- Make best use of the Council's assets
- Recover costs and thus maintain and improve the asset

It is considered necessary for Craven District Council charges to be comparable on the basis of similar settlements in order not to encourage excessive out migration to neighbouring authorities. A review of charges, summarised at Appendix B shows that Craven is currently comparable with towns of a similar size and visitor offer. Notwithstanding that, Skipton's closest neighbours, Ilkley and Keighley both offer cheaper parking tariffs, but the size and/or offer of both these towns are not comparable. Future charging reviews should follow a similar process of comparison to measure Craven against its neighbours to ensure car parking prices are not a motivation for visitors to go elsewhere.

Skipton has a pop and shop scheme on its High Street car park to encourage shop stays by local residents for local shopping. The Council should undertake a periodic programmed review of the scheme to help inform the performance, charging regime, and where possible, the economic benefit of the car parks. Consideration could also be given to putting the pop and shop in an alternative car park which is convenient for the town centre e.g. Coach Street or Waller Hill car parks and in other locations

across the district. A review of tariffs in terms of managing turnover i.e. between short and long stay should be undertaken as soon as possible by the Council to provide assurances that the charging structure is helping to manage the traffic through appropriate parking regimes and helping to achieve the objectives of this strategy.

Layout Review

The Council has previously undertaken some ad-hoc and limited layout reviews on some of its car parks, however, this should be a regularly programmed activity seeking to review each car park to determine if there are any opportunities to revise access, circulation or bay layout to increase capacity and/or improve movement around the car parks thus contributing a minimisation of traffic issues on the highways. This can be particularly useful where demand profiles show that an imbalance between demand and supply is small and therefore such a review could meet the increased demand through this action alone.

Coaches
Within Craven District coach parties are a very distinct element of car park user on Skipton High Street car park. The Council currently provides parking spaces for:

- 12 coaches in Skipton's High Street car park
- 5 coaches in Settle, whitefiars car park
- 12 coaches in Ingleton's Community Centre car park

For both Settle and Ingleton it is considered that there is an over provision of coach parking spaces as they are rarely full in Settle and coaches not often seen on the Community Centre car park in Ingleton. However, the opposite could be said for Skipton, with the height of the summer season estimating upwards of 80 coaches visiting in one day.

Coach overflow in Skipton currently drops passengers off in the High Street car park, leaving the car park, laying over either at Skipton Auction Mart, under an arrangement the Council has with the Auction Mart, or in laybys on the periphery of the town centre, returning to the High Street car park to pick up passengers before moving on to their next destination.

Due to the limited number of coach parking spaces, no designated drop off points and limited staff resource to manage the coach movements, the Council should undertake a holistic assessment of all its parking provision in Skipton to assess whether improvements could be made to coach parking and management.

In addition, assessments of the Coach Parking provision in both Settle and Ingleton should be carried out to ascertain the potential positive results of reducing the number of coach parking spaces.

In the meantime the Council's Select Committee has recommended that the use of Skipton Town Council's Town Centre ambassadors be considered to assist in managing the coach traffic on the High Street Car Park, subject to cost.

Taxi's

Taxi's provide a valuable service in rural areas, especially for those who do not have access to a private car. This is particularly prevalent in Skipton where the main taxi rank is situated in Waller Hill car park, adjacent to the bus station and centrally located for the town centre.

Whilst the location of the taxi rank is ideal, the area of the rank is, in itself, too small for the number of taxi's waiting. This leads to taxi's parking around the perimeter of the car parking spaces on Waller Hill car park which are laid out in a semi-circle. Such a situation leads to conflict between taxi drivers and private car users looking to park in Waller Hill car park. The council should include the provision of the taxi rank in its holistic assessment of car parking provision in Skipton to ascertain whether a larger area can be designated for the taxi rank, without compromising the number of car parking spaces that service the town centre.

Permits

The Council operates a permit scheme for residents, non-residents and businesses. Business permits are available as long stay permits that can be purchased by a business for use by its staff and/or visitors of Skipton, Settle and Ingleton.

Craven residents can purchase a residents permit, which provides them with a preferential rate and a range of maximum stay options from up to 2 hours to unlimited. The non-residents permit is provided for people who may be regular visitors to the area and provides for unlimited parking throughout the day.

The Council should regularly review the prices together with the aims and objectives of the parking strategy for the permit scheme. It is understood that charge reviews are carried out as part of the Council's fees and charges setting annual process. It would also be beneficial to undertake an up to date study to compare Craven's permit scheme charges with those of other similar towns e.g. market towns.

To encourage further take up the Council should consider investing in a periodic marketing campaign to promote the permit scheme.

Disabled Parking

Wider spaces for disabled motorists are provided in the vast majority of the Council's pay and display car parks, where appropriate to do so, with provision being consistent with the Equalities Act requirements.

It is of vital importance that disabled spaces are located with as much convenience as possible to the users destination, payment mechanisms should be accessible and consideration should be given to user friendly methods of payment as well as pay and display machines e.g. pay by phone, wave and pay, pre-paid scratch cards etc.. Pay & display machines will need to be located in disabled friendly locations and be disability compliant meeting the British Standard to do so. However, pre-paid scratch cards are a good way of easing the time and possible physical aspects of obtaining a ticket from a machine that could remain a barrier for certain categories of disability. In addition, it must be acknowledged that for many disabled users it can often take a longer period of time to get to and from their activity within the town centre and this should be acknowledged in the pricing structure for disabled users.

In 2012 the Council introduced pay & display parking charges for disabled users. The charges applied to blue badge holders that parked in a standard space according to the standard charges. Users parked in a disabled bay were entitled to three hours free parking. Following a review of these charges the Council approved changes to the fees to bring them all in line with standard space charges. Whether charges apply in other local authority areas and at what level varies across the Country. Appendix B also includes a snapshot of disabled charges in those areas where information was collected.

The Council should ensure that it undertakes regular reviews of its disabled spaces (location and number), payment methods including access to and allowance of additional time to accommodate a disabled persons time to get to their destination and back to their vehicle again e.g. 1 hours additional free parking.

Maximising usage

Parking Permits

The car parks owned and operated by the Council are valuable assets and it is of vital importance that the Council continue to develop and improve the services and facilities available from the car parks, maximising usage as far as possible, to help support the maintenance of them into the long term future. For example the Council already facilitates business, residents and non-residents parking permit schemes and this provision should be enhanced and promoted as far as possible.

Additional Complimentary usage

The Council should further investigate the merits of providing paid for pitches in the car park for vendors to trade from. Car parks invariably include areas that cannot be marked out as parking bays and would otherwise be dead space. Utilising these areas that would be attractive to vendors due to the high footfall in car parks would make a significant contribution to the maximisation of space use within the car park and also contribute to the income derived from the asset.

Generally, the Council's car parks are not maximised to their full potential on an evening, after 6pm becoming large expanses of empty tarmac. The Council should undertake feasibility studies into the provision of "add on" facilities and/or evening/overnight charging in the car parks. For example, as a tourist area it may be appropriate for investment to be made into overnight parking of motorhomes and/or the provision of pay to use electric charging points.

HGV Parking

The Council has recently undergone a Select Committee review of HVG overnight parking in its car parks with a recommendation to progress the charging of HVG's for parking overnight in its car parks. Through this parking strategy it is recommended therefore that further feasibility works be undertaken to fully quantify the viability of introducing such charges.   It may be possible for example to implement a more cost effective scheme if the evening charges for cars was extended, however, this would all need to be measured against the additional enforcement costs that would be incurred.

Pricing Policy

As a management tool a charging regime is instrumental in procuring turnover of parking bays, which in turn can have a positive effect on a town or centres vitality. Tariff structures are extremely important in managing parking provision, being instrumental in matching supply to demand by controlling durations and turnover, deterring or preventing certain users groups such as commuters or making specific provision for categories such as local workers. Alternatively or in addition, they can be used to re-direct users so that demand on capacity is more evenly distributed.

Payment systems

To date the payment system has only been by coin only pay and display machines on arrival. There are many other payment options that can be considered particularly with the assistance of advancing technology.

Chip and pin has been an option to include on pay & display machines for a number of years. However, more recently there has been the addition of wave & pay, a method of payment made by card but without the need to insert it into the machine and key in a pin. Other methods that are becoming more widespread are 'pay by

phone', which can also be used as a top up payment method and useful for visitors who find they need/wish to stay longer than originally paid parking for and can therefore top up their parking without having to return to the car park. This can also work with payment schemes through participating retailers. Scratch cards can also be another form of payment and often found in areas where disabled drivers are subject to pay and display charges.

As stated elsewhere in this strategy, at the time of writing this document the Council were in the process of procuring a number of new Pay & Display machines, where it is understood will include both chip & pin and wave pay payment options as well as the coin payment method. It is recommended that as part of the Council's rolling programme of machine replacement all new machines include, as a minimum, coin and cashless payment options.

On-Street Parking

North Yorkshire County Council is responsible for on-street parking in North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire County Council state:

"Successfully managing on-street parking provision has major benefits for the road network, including:
•Enabling residents to park near to their properties;
•Helping businesses with deliveries;
•Improving access to public transport;
•Improving air quality;
•Improving road safety;
•Making it easier to park in town centres which benefits the local economy; and
•Reducing congestion.

We have a legal obligation to keep the roads free moving, safe and available to all users and we use parking, waiting and loading restrictions to achieve this".

CDC will support North Yorkshire County Council in its endeavours encouraging Residential Parking Zones, controlled Parking Zones and waiting and loading restrictions as appropriate.

Car Park Strategy Action Plan

Objective	Action	Timescales					Milestones (by when)	Responsible Officer
		14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19		
Objective 1 – Ensure that the car park service is developed and delivered on the basis of good information on car park usage and customer needs.	a) Review the adequacy of data collated on customer satisfaction and car park use. b) Undertake regular surveys to establish user patterns, needs and expectations. c) collect and analyse usage data (either through appropriate software or manual methods) . d) collect data on car park occupancy using the information to refine car parking provision to moderate demand and patterns of use e.g. time of day parking	√ √ √					**Oct 14** – review data held on customer satisfaction & car park use to establish baseline **Nov 14** – establish survey procedure & frequency plan to include survey template, survey/data collection mediums & analysis method **Mar 15** – begun process of data collection & analysis in accordance with procedure & programme	Car Parking Officer

Objective	Actions							Milestones	Responsible Officer
Objective 2 - Ensure that car park services are being carried out to a high standard in terms of economy, efficiency, safety and effectiveness.	a) Review and determine appropriate standards for the maintenance, design, provision of ancillary facilities and equipment. b) Establish satisfactory safety standards for CDC car parks and implement a phased programme to reach those standards. c) Implement a fully funded regular maintenance and inspection programme to ensure agreed standards are achieved. d) explore the possibility of and implement where feasible partnering or other parking management options e) explore and take up where possible management of other third party car parking facilities f) Establish an amendments checklist for changes to be made as a result of parking order amendments	√ √ √ √ √							**July 14** – Review current maintenance arrangements for ancillary facilities & equipment **Aug 14** – Establish new maintenance arrangements for above **Oct 14** – Review & update inspection programme **Mar 15** – Establish process for reviewing parking management arrangements/exploring partnering opportunities **Sept 14** – checklist established	Car Parking Officer
Objective 3 – Maintain a charging structure that maximises the use of existing car parks, whilst managing a balance between economic, environmental and traffic management objectives.	a) Agree and keep under review a structured charging policy for Council public car parks. b) Make provision for loyalty schemes linked with local retailers c) Make provision for residents' and other parking permits d) Feasibility study to ascertain viability of overnight charging for HGV's	√		√ √ √					**Nov 14** – Review process for car park charges developed **Sept 16** – review with recommendations for improvements on parking permit scheme complete **Mar 17** – Feasibility study for retailer/car park fees loyalty scheme complete **Sept 16** – Feasibility study complete for overnight charging of HVG parking	

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Objective	Actions							Milestones	
Objective 4 – Ensure adequate provision for those with particular requirements.	a) To make adequate provision of parking for the disabled.	√		√		√		**July 14, Mar 17 & Mar 19** – Complete review of disabled parking provision	
	b) Review the management of lorry and coach provision within car parks.	√						**Dec 14** – Policy for car park use for events etc developed and agreed	
	c) Extend the provision of well-designed, secure cycle parks in council car parks.	√						**Feb 15** – vending opportunities on car parks explored, & where approved ready to advertise pitches	
	d) Establish a policy concerning the use of car parks for purposes other than public car parking for example public or community events.				√			**Sept 15** – review of HGV & coach parking provision complete	
	e) investigate and implement where viable "add on" provision within car parks e.g. electric charging points, vending, overnight campervan parking				√			**Mar 16** – electric charging points explored & where approved implemented	
	f) commission study & implement feasible actions for improving taxi waiting & coach drop off/parking arrangements				√			**May 16** – cycle park provision extended where appropriate	
					√			**Mar 17** – Overnight campervan parking provision explored and where approved implemented	
					√	√		**Mar 19** – Improvements to taxi waiting and coach drop off/parking implemented.	
Objective 5 – Improve information for customers.	a) Update and improve the provision of car park signage.	√						**Aug 14** – car park signage reviewed and new/alterations implemented	
	b) Make available comprehensive and up to date information on the car park service through the Council's website and other IT and more traditional means of literature.			√				**Sept 15** – car park information produced/updated & published	
	c) Explore provision of visitor information at key car parks in association with parish and town councils.			√				**Mar 16** – provision of visitor information from car parks explored with Parish/Town Council & implemented where agreed	
	d) review and improve as necessary car parking directional signage throughout district			√				**April 15** – Review and improvements made to car parking directional signage as necessary	

Objective	Actions						Milestones	
Objective 6 – Provide a cost effective enforcement service	a) Consider ways of optimising car park and on-street parking management to minimise cost and maximise use of parking to the benefit of users and surrounding areas and facilities. b) Investigate alternative enforcement methods e.g. via ANPR			√			**July 16** – establish template/process for investigating feasibility of different parking management tools **Dec 16** – options appraisal on enforcement methods complete	
				√				
Objective 7 – Continue to audit and review the level of parking availability in Craven District and plan accordingly.	a) Undertake a review of Council car park stocks in order to identify the level of demand and any deficiencies or improvements so required. b) Review short and long stay parking allocations for Council public car parks. c) Review the relationship between provisions of the service in main centres with that of the smaller villages. d) Keep under review and proactively pursue development opportunities that increase the overall level of public parking provision for the District. e) Commission study to map current provision by private providers. f) Commission a study on the likely increase in car parking need in the District over the short medium and long term. g) undertake review and revise car park layout designs	√					**Mar 16** – Develop audit framework to review car parking demand including split of long & short stay provision **Mar 16** – Study to establish likely needs for car parking in medium & long term complete **Mar 16** – study to map privately provided parking **Mar 16 & Mar 18** - review and revisions made to car park layout as identified as improvement	
		√						
		√						
		√		√				

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| Objective 8 – Ensure a cost effective and efficient car park management regime | a) Implement chip & pin and wave & pay payment methods through pay & display machines
b) Provide a pay by phone payment option
c) Implement a back office management system linked to pay & display machines
d) Investigate and implement where feasible payment solution linked to ANPR
e) investigate real time parking information for drivers to assist in finding available spaces efficiently and to understand tariffs applicable at relevant times of day/night
g) work in partnership with local traders/Chamber of Trade to implement reward schemes and encouragement of off peak trips to town centre
h) undertake marketing of permit scheme | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ √ √ √ | **Sept 14** – Establish programme for P&D machine replacement to include cashless payment systems
July 15 – Implementation of pay by phone system
Mar 17 – options appraisal with trade stakeholders on reward schemes & encouraging off peak trips to town centre complete
Mar 19 – investigation to real time parking information availability complete
Mar 19 – options appraisal for payment options linked to ANPR complete
Dec/Jan each year – advertising campaign promoting parking permits undertaken | |