

CITY CENTRE CAR PARKING ACTION PLAN

Consultation Draft – March 2014

Aims

This Car Parking Action Plan aims to improve and simplify the parking experience for city residents, workers and visitors contributing to creating a thriving city centre supporting business, retail, leisure and residential uses.

Why do we need an Action Plan?

An action plan is required to provide new parking arrangements that respond to business needs and help develop a thriving city centre economy in line with the Economic Action Plan. Much has changed (and is still changing) in the city centre since the parking zones, tariffs and infrastructure were established in 1999 for on-street parking, and the 1980's for off-street car parks, which are now outdated and need to be reviewed. The changes include:

- New shops and offices have opened in new locations
- New attractions are being created in the Old Town area
- Demand for parking has consequently moved
- New car parks have been provided
- Public realm improvements and new pedestrian and cycle facilities have in some cases required alternative parking provision
- The national economic climate has resulted in temporary poor quality car parks being opened which create a poor impression of the city centre and undermine usage of better quality permanent car parks
- Many car parks require investment to bring them up to modern standards.

This Action Plan aims to:

- ensure it is simple and easy to park in the city centre, and that city centre workers, shoppers and visitors have a positive experience on arrival
- ensure we have the right level of parking in the right locations including the closure of unauthorised car parks
- deliver continual improvements in quality across all public car parks in the city centre whether publicly or privately operated
- contribute towards effective management of traffic in the city centre
- ensure that the city remains competitive with our neighbouring cities

- In general Leicester's parking charges are lower than nearby competing cities
 - The City Council has no intention of introducing a work place parking levy
- confirm that any fee and fine surpluses will continue to be reinvested in car parking and transport related infrastructure
- form the basis to explore opportunities to work with other car park operators to deliver consistency of branding, standards, charges and operations where possible

City Centre Parking – Creating a Thriving City Centre and Improving the Visitor Experience

1. On-street parking

On street parking is both very popular and convenient, particularly in the heart of the city centre, for people who wish to make relatively short visits to specific locations when off-street parking is less suitable. In other locations it provides for longer stays, cheaper charges for those prepared to walk further and in some outer locations provides all day parking for edge of city centre employment sites. In some streets where cycle facilities or wider footways are required these can only be provided by removing some on-street parking because of the restricted width of the roads. Where this happens we aim to provide new parking opportunities to compensate. As the evening economy expands we aim to support it by providing additional evening parking spaces across the city centre.

At present on-street parking charges are too complicated and these will be simplified. Many of the pay and display machines are old and require replacement and the opportunity will be taken to remove the requirement to enter registration numbers in the machines and simplify payment. Currently spaces in the central shopping areas are free on Sundays but often these are occupied all day by workers, preventing a turnover of use which can have an adverse impact, often on smaller independent shops. A small charge and limiting waiting to a maximum of 3 hours will help to tackle this issue.

- Total on-street daytime spaces currently available – 1300
- We have already created 385 new free evening spaces and about 20 additional daytime pay and display spaces
- We have also established an in-house integrated enforcement service to improve how we manage car parking

Proposals: Zones and Charges

- **Action 1** – Introduce fewer simpler parking zones, reduce number of zones from 8 to 4 (see plan in Appendix)
- **Action 2** – Introduce a new charging approach based on location and demand with a simpler structure and fewer charging bands, rising in whole pounds to make payment easier – see table below

Proposed on street parking charges

Time	Centre Proposed	Centre Current	Outer Proposed	Outer Current
½ hr	-	£1.10	-	-
1 hr	£1.00	£1.70	-	£1.00
1½ hrs	-	£2.40	-	-
2 hrs	£3.00	£3.00	£1.00	£1.50
3 hrs	Maximum stay 2hrs		£2.00	£2.00
Sunday and Bank Holidays	£1 for 3 hrs maximum	Free	Free	Free

Time	Long stay Proposed	Long Stay Current	Highfield St Proposed	Highfield St Current
1 hr	-	70p	-	20p
2 hrs	-	-	-	
3 hrs	£1.00	£1.20	£1.00	50p
12 hrs	£4.00	£3.20	Maximum stay 3 hrs	
Sunday and Bank Holidays	Free	Free	Free	Free

- **Action 3** – review parking areas in and around the City Centre to increase numbers of daytime and evening parking spaces provided wherever possible.

Proposals: Pay and Display Machine Renewal

- **Action 4** – replace all on-street pay and display machines in 2014 with a simpler model, removing the need to enter car registration numbers and including clear eye-catching signs highlighting charges

2. Surface level car parks

Surface level car parks provide a useful alternative for some people who do not like multi-storey car parks. They also support non-central locations, where there is specific demand, and supplement on-street parking provision. Temporary car parks on potential development sites which are provided to poor standards are not acceptable and enforcement action will be taken against unauthorised car parks.

Parking charges are currently too complicated and will be simplified and brought into line with other comparable car parks or nearby on-street parking charges. Additional high quality permanent short stay public surface level parking is required to serve the Old Town and Lanes areas and new car parks are planned

on land adjacent to the Newarke Street multi-storey car park and at St Nicholas Circle (subject to agreement with NCP).

- Total surface car park spaces currently available – 479
- We have already taken action to close five unauthorised surface level car parks to remove unsightly temporary activity, enhance road safety by removing inappropriate traffic levels and movements, and encourage development on these sites.
- We have opened a new car park adjacent to Phoenix Square to serve specific needs at the cinema and wider Cultural Quarter.

Proposals: Charges

- **Action 5** – Introduce a new charging approach on council operated surface car parks based on location and demand with a simpler structure and fewer charge bands rising in whole pounds to make payment easier – see table below

Proposed surface level car park charges

Time	Granville Rd/ Victoria Park Proposed	Granville Rd/ Victoria Park Current	St Margaret's Pastures Proposed	St Margaret's Pastures Current
1 hr	-	£1.10	-	£1.10
2 hrs	£1.00	£1.60	£1.00	£1.80
3 hrs	£2.00	£2.50	£2.00	£2.30
4 hrs	-	£3.20	-	£2.80
6 hrs	-	£4.10	-	£3.40
9 hrs	-	£5.00	-	£3.60
12 hrs	£4.00	£5.20	£4.00	£4.00
Evening	£2.00	£1.80	Free	Free
Sundays and Bank Holidays	Free	Free	£1 for 3hrs maximum	Free

Time	Dover Street Proposed	Dover Street Current	Phoenix Square Proposed	Phoenix Square Current	Newarke St Proposed
1 hr	£1.00	£1.40	-	£1.00	£1.00
2 hrs	-	£2.50	£1.00	£1.50	-
3 hrs	£3.00	£3.30	£2.00	£2.00	£3.00
4 hrs	£4.00	£4.10	-	-	£4.00
6 hrs	£6.00	£6.70	-	-	Maximum stay 4hrs
9 hrs	£8.00	£7.80	-	-	
12 hrs	£9.00	£8.80	£4.00	£4.00	
Evening	£2.00	£1.60	Free	???	
Sundays and Bank	£1 for 3hrs	Free	£1 for 3hrs	Free	£1 for 3hrs

Holidays	maximum		maximum		maximum
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Proposals: Pay and display machines and car park provision

- **Action 6** – Provide new pay and display machines in 2014 with a simpler model removing the need to enter car registration numbers and including clear signage. Also to introduce the option of payment by credit and debit card
- **Action 7** – Plan to provide new surface level car parks, to serve the developing Old Town area and the Lanes, adjacent to Newarke Street multi-storey car park and at St Nicholas Circle, subject to NCP agreement
- **Action 8** – integrate Granville Road and Victoria Park car parks to create a single high quality car park

Proposals: Control of Unauthorised Car Parks

- **Action 9** – To continue the programme of targeted enforcement activity to remove unauthorised sites causing highway safety and amenity issues and which frustrate city centre physical regeneration

3. Multi-storey car parks

Multi-storey car parks provide the majority of parking in the City Centre, over 7,500 spaces, of which 950 are operated by the City Council in two car parks. Highcross operate two car parks (3,000 spaces) and NCP operate the remaining six car parks (3,600 spaces).

Proposals: Charges

- **Action 10** – Introduce a simpler charging structure at City Council car parks as shown below

Time	Haymarket and Newarke St Proposed	Current tariffs Haymarket	Current tariffs Newarke St
1 hr	£1.00	£1.40	£1.40
2 hrs	-	£2.50	£2.30
3 hrs	£3.00	£3.30	£3.00
4 hrs	£4.00	£4.10	£3.80
6 hrs	£6.00	£6.70	£5.60
9 hrs	£8.00	£7.80	£6.60
12 hrs	£9.00	£8.80	£7.30
Evening	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00
Sunday	£1.00	£1.60	£1.60

Proposals: Car park management

- **Action 11** – To explore opportunities to work in partnership with other operators to improve the quality of the visitor experience. This could include consistency of branding, appearance and standards and appropriate charging structures across all car parks

Proposals: Improving Car Park Conditions

- **Action 12** – Improve and maintain the condition of City Council operated car parks at a high standard with thorough cleansing, new signing and on-going maintenance

4. Parking for Disabled People

The City Council already provides free parking for blue badge holders in all its car parks and larger spaces for blue badge holders are reserved in convenient locations. Blue badge holders can park on-street for up to three hours on yellow lines where there is no loading ban and where they will not cause an obstruction. They can also park in on-street metered bays for unlimited periods free of charge. In addition the City Council has provided designated parking spaces for blue badge holders in on-street locations close to popular destinations and around the edge of the pedestrian zone.

The City Council is providing seven parking spaces for blue badge holders at Applegate as part of the Jubilee Square scheme and will keep under review the provision of parking for blue badge holders in the city centre.

5. Links with other transport strategies

Adequate levels of car parking need to be provided to help promote a thriving city centre and this Action Plan is complementary to other strategies to encourage high quality alternatives to access the city centre including by public transport, park and ride, cycling and walking especially for those who do not have access to a car. The council's 'Connecting Leicester' initiative and programme to improve bus infrastructure support this objective.