

Mole Valley Parking Strategy

14/11/06



This strategy was adopted by Mole Valley District Council and Surrey County Council in November 2006

Introduction

In 2005 Mole Valley District Council, in collaboration with Surrey County Council, commissioned a fundamental review of “on” and “off” street parking and employed Colin Buchanan (Parking consultants) to undertake a study within the Mole Valley area and to produce a draft parking strategy.

Colin Buchanan’s report and draft strategy was considered and accepted by the relevant committees of authorities. The business community, parish and residential groups, and stakeholders at large were consulted on the draft strategy. Their comments were given due consideration before the preparation of this final strategy.

The Mole Valley Parking Strategy fits within an overall framework of parking documents previously produced, specifically the “Local Area Parking Management Plan November 2003” and “A Parking Strategy for Surrey March 2003”.

The strategy contains a number of high level parking objectives, which affect both ‘on-street’ and ‘off-street’ parking facilities within the Mole Valley area. It will be necessary for both authorities to implement various actions to achieve the strategy’s overall objectives.

Background

Parking management is important for a variety of reasons:

- for the local economy, to encourage visitors and shoppers;
- for residents, who need to have access to parking near their homes and at the places they visit, and for those living in rural villages who need to use their cars to access goods and services in the main towns;
- for businesses, who need access to essential car parking and loading facilities;
- for special needs groups, such as people with mobility difficulties. Who need to access goods and services by car;
- for commuters, who travel to local jobs and for local residents who commute out of the district by rail;
- for raising revenue for the council to support other public services and help keep Council Tax down;
- for making sure there is a choice of practical and sustainable methods of transport while reducing car use;
- for aiding congestion and road safety; and

- for dealing with the ever growing demand for parking.

Current Off Street Parking Supply

- Mole Valley has 2,243 off street parking spaces available to the public (including the Swan Centre). This number is made up of 516 short-stay spaces, 1,505 mixed short and long-stay spaces and 222 long-stay spaces. Demand is currently variable between car parks with most 'prime' centre car parks full at peak times, while some car parks located on the outskirts of town centres or certain levels of multi-storey car parks have space available most of the time.
- Parking is a 'derived demand', in the sense that the need for parking depends on people using car parks to pick up goods and use services. The demand is generally driven by an increase in town centre activities such as shopping or by a rise in population figures. The population growth is not expected grow significantly and no major new developments are currently confirmed for the main town centres, however it is possible that existing car parks and other sites in both Dorking and Leatherhead could be affected by development in the future.
- Current projections reveal that no major increase in the overall parking supply will be necessary over the next 10 years, although how demand is managed in existing car parks and on the street does need to be reviewed. However, any new major developments in the town centres could affect the demand for existing car parking spaces and supply will need to be reconsidered as developments are proposed.

On Street Parking

Surrey County Council is the responsible Authority for managing the streets on behalf of road users. That responsibility includes the provision of "on" street parking places, the introduction of controls and restrictions to regulate waiting, loading and unloading, and the enforcement of those regulations on the public highway. The County Council has entered into an agreement with Mole Valley District Council to enforce the "on" street restrictions on their behalf.

Objective 1 - To support and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- Protecting existing off-street spaces in the town centres through planning controls.
- To provide enough short-stay parking for town centre users by making sure new developments replace any existing parking they take, and also provide new parking where the development increases demand.
- To move long-stay parking to areas on the edge of the town centers
- Improve quality of prime large car parks
- Subject to highway safety considerations, seek to maximise opportunities for short duration “on” street parking spaces within town and village centres
- Increase parking supply on Saturdays
- Make more efficient use of existing parking supply
- Ensure some parking is available for workers

Objective 2 - To manage parking provision in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable travel choices

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- Re-allocate long-stay parking to areas located on the edge of the town centres by introducing a time limit (or a charging structure which achieves that) in certain town centre car parks.
- Make sure the price structure for long-stay car parking does not encourage higher levels of car use. Achieve this by steadily reducing over time any ‘discount’ for season tickets and long-stay. Future price levels could take into account the cost of public transport in Mole Valley.

- Control "on" street parking by considering Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) with residents' parking provision, in Dorking and Leatherhead, but keep some space for town centre shoppers and those who commute by car.

Objective 3 - To use charges to influence parking behaviour in support of the other objectives and to maximise revenue, whilst being sensitive to the local economy.

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- To use charges to encourage one to three hour parking (and greater spending) in the town centres, by keeping a lower relative price for parking of this period of time compared to the cost of parking for longer.
- To decrease the non-residential season ticket discount over a period of time.
- To encourage more "off" street parking (rather than "on" street) by increasing on-street enforcement and consider a half hour charge in the Ashted car parks.
- To use differential charging to encourage maximum use of car parking.
- To consider the introduction of "on" street short-term paid parking in Dorking and Leatherhead town centres in conjunction with a CPZ introduction.
- To seek annual increases in the total gross "off" street car park income at least in line with the rate of inflation.

Objective 4 - To protect local residents' ability to park close to their homes

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- To extensively consult with residents living near the town centres of Dorking and Leatherhead with regard to the introduction of controlled parking zones in conjunction with Surrey County Council.

- To monitor on-street demand in the Mole Valley area in order to anticipate potential problem areas.
- In addition to residential controls, it is recommended that MVDC, in conjunction with SCC should:
 - i) review controls in Dorking High Street to reduce illegal and legal parking in locations critical for safety and congestion, and consider the need for Sunday controls;
 - ii) review the restrictions in Leatherhead High Street and consider introducing a waiting ban as well as the existing pedestrian controls.
 - iii) review on-street controls in streets surrounding Dorking and Leatherhead town centres to maximise the number of short-stay bays on-street

Objective 5 - To provide sufficient parking for people with special needs

The key policy and measure for achieving this is:

- To monitor the demand for parking for disabled motorists, cyclists, and motorcyclists in consultation with the relevant groups; and increasing this where appropriate.

Objective 6 - To ensure a high quality of parking provision

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- Improved directional signing
- Payment systems – Any new parking machines should include in the specification the use of debit and credit cards and prepayment cards.
- To improve and publicise parking information.
- Improve lighting and security in vulnerable car parks.
- Consult with local business/residents.

- To consider additional capital investment in car parks.
- Encourage local business to consider a 'business parking refund' system based on a return by traders of the parking fee for a certain spends.

Objective 7 - To ensure enforcement is adequate to achieve other objectives

The key policy and measure for achieving this is:

- To monitor the level of enforcement in order to work within the transportation objectives of the County and District Councils.

Objective 8 - To monitor parking activity

The study has highlighted a lack of robust data available on which to make future decisions about parking. It is important that an ongoing database of key parking information is maintained – this will help assist the council in making decisions on future supply and tariffs, and should help predict with greater certainty the impact of changes.

The key policies and measures for achieving this are:

- To monitor ticket sales and revenue by tariff band and car park per annum.
- To monitor occupancy rates of all car parks.
- To monitor historical price changes.
- To monitor season ticket sales by type and by year.
- To monitor the number of penalty charge notices issued.
- To monitor levels of parking compliance

Objective 9 - To ensure new development provides appropriate parking.

The key policy and measure for achieving this is:

- To adhere to the Local Area Parking Management Plan (November 2003) in relation to new development.

Planning controls must be used to ensure that new development provides appropriate parking for any new demand as well as replacing any existing public parking. This will include maximum standards for non-residential development, based around SCC standards appropriate to accessibility and location of the development. In town centres controls should be used to ensure any new parking is available to the public and is set at prices and time restrictions in line with those used in MVDC car parks. Development affecting railway station car parks should consider the wider impact of railway car parking at other off and on-street locations. Residential development should provide a minimum parking standard, which will differ between areas, with town centres requiring very low level.

APPENDIX 1

ACTIONS REQUIRED TO MEET THE AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

Objective 1: Support and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Retain existing short-stay parking	Protect existing supply through development controls.	On-going
2. Provide adequate short-stay parking for Town Centre uses	<p>Ensure any new development replaces existing parking spaces as a minimum and provides additional parking where the development is known to increase demand.</p> <p>In conjunction with an ongoing assessment of car ownership and population growth, consider within the Districts Parking Strategy any known potential developments In the longer term.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Annually</p>
3. Maximise opportunities for short term parkers	<p>In conjunction with SCC review on-street parking in Leatherhead and Dorking town centres in order to maximise the number of short stay on-street parking places and thus discourage long stay users such as commuters. Options could include a maximum stay of ½ an hour.</p> <p>Allocate long term parking in outer car parks.</p>	<p>Medium-term</p> <p>Short-term</p>

<p>4. Relocate long-stay parking to peripheral locations.</p>	<p>In central shoppers car parks maintain a maximum of 3 hours stay or an effective tariff structure to ensure high turnover and usage thus encouraging peripheral long-stay parking.</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>5. Improve quality of 'prime' large car parks</p>	<p>If new development funding permits consider improving car parking provision at the Swan Centre and St. Martins Walk.</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p>6. Increase parking supply on Saturdays</p>	<p>Encourage parking at Pippbrook Council offices on Saturday through better signing, publicity and tariffs. Permit some long-term parking here for example through the relocation of Royal Mail vehicles from Reigate Rd car park.</p> <p>Allow Saturday short-stay parking to take place in the contract spaces in Station Road, Leatherhead. Review allocation of short stay and contract parking in Station Road to reflect the use of the Bull Hill Depot site when this new car park is operational and when the new development at Station Rd/Bull Hill is complete.</p> <p>Consider with SCC improvements to the pedestrian access between Bull Hill car park, Station Road car park and the Town Centre.</p>	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Medium-term</p>
<p>7. Make more efficient use of existing supply</p>	<p>Review with SCC possible provision of more short-stay on-street parking in and around town centers</p>	<p>Short-term</p>

Objective 2: Manage parking provision in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable travel choices

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Reallocate longer-term parking to peripheral areas	Monitor and review parking supply to ensure that long stay parking is maintained in peripheral areas and that short stay users remain centrally located within the town centres.	Short and Medium-term
2. Ensure pricing of long-stay car parking does not encourage higher car use	Reduce season ticket discount over time. Long stay parking charges will be benchmarked against neighbouring Councils and any privately operated car parks.	On-going On-going
3. Control on-street parking, while retaining some provision for shoppers and those who commute by car, the latter in more peripheral streets	Work with SCC to introducing Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Dorking and Leatherhead	Short and Medium-term

Objective 3: Use charges to influence parking behaviour in support of the other objectives and to maximise revenue, whilst being sensitive to the local economy.

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Use tariffs to encourage shoppers parking (and greater spend) in town centres	In central retail locations ensure car park tariffs are set such that shopper usage is optimised. This will involve setting attractive tariffs that reflect typical lengths of stay for shoppers.	On-going
2. To increase season ticket discount	Review season ticket discount	Annual

<p>3. Encourage more off-street use in Ashted and Bookham</p>	<p>Review enforcement regime and parking layout both on-street and off-street. With SCC consider limited waiting on-street provided effective enforcement can be resourced.</p> <p>Look at ways in which the off-street car parks could be made more attractive to users either through maintenance or accessibility.</p> <p>Introduce a half hour charging tariff in Ashted</p>	<p>Short and Medium-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p>
<p>4. Use differential charging to encourage maximum use of car parking</p>	<p>Consider cheaper parking –</p> <p>Dorking - Lower levels of St. Martins Walk (any day) and Pippbrook</p> <p>Leatherhead - Station Road and Randall's Road (Saturdays) to encourage higher usage.</p>	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p>
<p>5. Set appropriate on-street parking charges</p>	<p>In conjunction with SCC consider the introduction of maximum stay on-street paid for parking to ensure appropriate level of turnover of premium spaces.</p>	<p>Short and Medium-term</p>
<p>6. To maintain annual off-street car park income</p>	<p>To seek annual increase in the total off street car park income at least in line with inflation.</p>	<p>Annual</p>

Objective 4: Protect local residents ability to park close to their homes

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
<p>1. Consult on introducing a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in Dorking and Leatherhead.</p>	<p>Together with SCC develop a proposal to introduce CPZs to Dorking and Leatherhead. The proposed scheme will aim to improve road safety and give priority to residents whilst</p>	<p>Short and Medium term</p>

	<p>maintaining and supporting the viability of local businesses.</p> <p>Potential options could include all day and mixed use residents bays, limited paid for on-street parking in prime locations and long stay general use bays in appropriate peripheral areas.</p>	
2. Monitor on-street demand in Dorking, Leatherhead, Ashted and Bookham	Monitoring to be on-going using daily statistics and reported monthly.	On-going Monthly
3. Review controls	A comprehensive annual review of parking performance and strategy will be carried out and published.	Annually

Objective 5: Provide enough parking for people with special needs

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Review parking for disabled motorists, cyclists, and motorcyclists;	<p>Review existing provision and adjust supply where appropriate, to meet requirements of users with special needs.</p> <p>Promote and encourage alternative modes of travel.</p>	<p>Short-term and on-going</p> <p>On-going</p>

Objective 6: Ensure a high quality of parking provision

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Improve signing to car parks	Review all signage with a view to improving information for new users. Consideration to be given to providing short stay and long stay signage. The proposals will aim to reduce travel time and improve road safety	Short and Medium-term
2. Review pay and display payment systems	When appropriate ensure pay and display machines can take credit card payments	Short and medium-term
3. Provide more information on parking to residents and visitors	Information on the internet to be enhanced. Parking to be publicised through the provision of leaflets, good news articles in local newspapers, working with schools to raise transport awareness (e.g. poster competition) and to educate new drivers etc.	On-going On-going
4. Improve lighting and security at car parks	Review of all car parks with a view to improving safety for drivers and pedestrians. Review to include pedestrian route signage, town centre information as well as lighting, security measures and quality of maintenance.	Short and Medium-term
5. Consultation with local business/ residents	Continue to consult with residents, commuters, visitors and businesses on parking matters. Consult annually on Parking Strategy with relevant town centre and residents groups.	On-going Annually
6. Invest in car park maintenance	Develop a detailed planned maintenance programme (with forecasting for 3 years) for all of the Districts car parks.	Annually

7. Discuss possible traders reimbursement of parking scheme	Work with local retailers to encourage parking initiatives such as reimbursing parking frees for a certain spend.	Medium-term
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Objective 7: Ensure enforcement is adequate to achieve other objectives

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
<p>1. Ensure enforcement resources are adequate for objectives</p> <p>2. Increase enforcement in locations subject to congestion/safety issues</p>	<p>Establish new enforcement regime with additional resource (2 Parking Attendants) to meet service objectives.</p> <p>Review time allocated and financial implications of continuing to provide an 'in house' cash collection service as opposed to an externalised service.</p>	<p>Short –term</p> <p>Short and Medium-term</p>
3 & 4. Review on-street controls in sensitive locations	In conjunction with SCC identify and review all 'hot spot' areas such as Leatherhead & Dorking High Street.	Ongoing
5. Ensure enforcement is fair and consistent and that procedures are publicised	<p>Continue to develop and review parking enforcement policy utilising feedback from residents, visitors, commuters, businesses as well as PCN and parking machine data.</p> <p>Publicise annual parking strategy in leaflet format outlining enforcement policy.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>

Objective 8: Monitor parking activity

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Develop a monitoring programme to enable better future decision-making.	Monitor ticket sales and revenue Monitor occupancy rates Monitor historical prices changes Monitor season ticket sales Monitor Penalty Charge Notices (inc. PCN “Hot spots areas”) Monitor levels of parking compliance against enforcement regime	Ongoing

Objective 9: Ensure new development provides appropriate parking

Policy/ Measure	Action	Timescale
1. Impose maximum standards for non-residential development	Ensure parking standards for new developments comply with Mole Valley’s Local Development Framework and SCC’s Structure Plan. Ensure any new development replaces existing parking spaces as a minimum and provides additional parking where the development is known to increase demand.	Ongoing
2. Ensure residential development provides a minimum parking standard	Consideration of provision for residential developments to be to ‘minimum parking standards’ taking into account the nature and location of the development.	Ongoing
3. Require development to contribute to the provision of alternatives to the car where appropriate	Ensure developers are committed to alternative transport initiatives and solutions that incorporate new ideas and approaches to parking and transportation.	Ongoing
4. Ensure that tariff control is retained by MVDC and that	That parking policy takes into account local issues and supports the viability	On-going

parking in town centres will be available to the general public wherever possible.	of active town centres and rural areas. Any review of parking will look to efficiently utilise the limited available space both off-street and on-street.	
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For the purposes of this Action Plan:

- Short term*** - ***0 – 2 years***
- Medium term*** - ***2 – 4 years***
- Long term*** - ***Over 4 years***