Car Parking

4.194   The managed provision of car parking is important to attract new development to the city centre; to encourage a switch to walking, cycling and public transport in a highly accessible city centre location; and to minimise land take thus creating high quality urban places. There is already a sufficient capacity of car park spaces in the city centre. Therefore the aim is to maintain the existing overall level of car parking rather than to increase it. However there will be a need for some targeted additional car parking, particularly to encourage and directly associated with office development.

4.195   Within this overall approach a shift of commuter and some visitor car parking from the inner to the outer city centre (including the western MDZ) will be encouraged. As part of this shift, it may be appropriate to close and redevelop some of the existing inner city centre car parks. Each case will be considered on its merits in terms of the degree to which it will help deliver the wider development strategy; and affect the viability and operation of the existing city centre.

4.196   The maintenance of existing levels of shorter stay public car park provision for some visitors and for shoppers adjacent to the existing or expanded main shopping area is supported, to maintain the viability of the shopping area. Some provision could be redeveloped to create better quality car parks, potentially as part of wider redevelopment proposals. These could, for example, include consolidating existing surface level car parking in the MDZ into new multi storey facilities, to create development land. There is spare capacity in existing shopping car parks and further retail development does not necessarily generate additional trips. If new retail and leisure proposals include additional car parking, the need for this should be carefully demonstrated, taking account of existing nearby parking provision. It is recognised that any food superstore developments will require convenient parking provision.

4.197   Good pedestrian links will be created from all these car parks, to connect to the strategic links and key destinations within the city centre.

4.198   The Council's Parking Strategy (2008) proposed no overall increase in city centre car parking. However the level of car parking is a key determinant in attracting development to the highly accessible city centre in the first place. This helps to manage and reduce car use (particularly when associated with development travel plans). In addition the primary aim of car parking policy is to reduce car use rather than car ownership. City centre living is likely to encourage some people not to own a car. Nevertheless appropriate car parking provision should be made for residential developments.

4.199   To achieve the overall aim of reducing car use, a managed approach will be taken to the level of car parking in new development. The 2008 Parking Strategy is superseded by this Plan. Policy CS 19 sets out a general approach for the amount of car parking which will be supported as part of new developments. The actual level of provision for a specific development will be determined taking account of:

1.   The city centre car parking standards set out in Table 8;

2.   The distance of the development from