

Shepway District Council

Transport Strategy Parking

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Transport Strategy: Parking January 2011

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Parking affects all road users, whether they are using a motorised vehicle such as a motorcycle or a car, a non motorised vehicle or bicycle, or are travelling on foot. The way in which parking is provided for various means of transport around our homes, at the places where we work or visit, therefore influences our lives and in transportation terms, the travel decisions that we make.
- 1.1.2 Shepway District Council (SDC), working with Kent County Council (KCC) as the highway authority for the district, provide and manage parking across Shepway in a number of ways:
- Public car, motorcycle and disabled vehicle parking is provided in the main towns and settlements both on-street and within car parks.
 - Private car, motorcycle and disabled vehicle parking is provided independently of SDC and KCC at residential dwellings, by employers, at some shops and by service providers, although guidelines are prescribed for all of these major land uses.
 - Cycle parking is often also provided privately (as above), as well as publicly within the main towns and settlements and at a range of 'focal' points, such as rail stations.
- 1.1.3 The district council, working with KCC, have two fundamental roles in influencing the parking resource in Shepway. The first is through the direction set out within parking guidelines although these are primarily concerned with new developments or alterations to existing land uses, which require planning consent. There are therefore limited opportunities for SDC and KCC to revisit parking arrangements for existing land uses, such as residential developments or employment sites.
- 1.1.4 The second method in which SDC are able to manage parking resources within the district is through the supply of public car parking facilities, either on street or within the public car parks which it owns, leases, or manages.

1.2 Purpose

- 1.2.1 This element of the Transport Strategy is specifically concerned with the ways in which parking is currently provided across Shepway, the identification of any issues which arise from this provision and the subsequent formulation of a strategy which seeks to enhance the management of parking.
- 1.2.2 Parking supply and associated facilities have been reviewed in relation to respective demand from an effective and efficient management perspective, within the context of the other modes which are available in the district. The management of the highway network, support of the use of other modes and the requirement for high levels of road safety to be achieved are therefore the key considerations of this element of the strategy.

1.3 Structure

1.3.1 The remainder of this section of the Transport Strategy – Parking, is set out as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the existing situation in Shepway, specifically in terms of how parking is currently provided;
- Section 3 seeks to identify the issues which currently exist; and,
- Section 4 presents the proposed strategy for parking.

2 Existing Situation

2.1 Introduction

Background

- 2.1.1 The Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006) sets out the vision for transport across the county, as per the Local Transport Plan, as being *“To provide good and safe accessibility to jobs and services for all sections of the community in Kent, and to improve the environment and health of the community by reducing congestion and pollution, widening the choice of transport available and by developing public transport, walking and cycling”*.
- 2.1.2 It is emphasised within the plan that a key strategy aim is to reduce the need for people to travel by car and that in doing-so, this can reduce the need for parking to be provided, particularly at the destination-end of a journey.
- 2.1.3 It is noted however, that for this approach to be effective, it needs to be accompanied by the provision of alternative and realistic mode choices being available and an integrated parking strategy which ensures that parking is not simply displaced to less appropriate locations, such as local streets.
- 2.1.4 Policy T19 of the Structure Plan: ‘Vehicle Parking Standards’ refers to the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG 4): Kent Vehicle Parking Standards (2006).

SPG 4 Kent Vehicle Parking Standards (2006)

- 2.1.5 The SPG 4 document has been adopted by Kent County Council. It is recognised therein that the effective management of parking is central to delivering demand management policies and as such, mixed use development is encouraged in town centres and inner urban areas, where greater transport choice is usually available.
- 2.1.6 The standards do provide a level of flexibility however, whereby differentiation is highlighted between Major Urban Areas, Principal Urban Areas (Folkestone and Hythe) and Rural Service Centres (New Romney and Lydd).
- 2.1.7 Irrespective of these sub-areas, the policy guidance emphasises the importance of promoting sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling and using public transport and notes that the strategy can be supported through targeted parking enforcement and charging mechanisms.
- 2.1.8 SPG 4 goes on to set out a series of recommended Maximum Parking Guidelines, based on the standard major land use classes and these are discussed in more detail, later in this chapter.

Interim Guidance Note 3 (2008)

- 2.1.9 Since the adoption of SPG 4, KCC in relation to their Design Guide have undertaken further work relating to their parking policy for the county, which therefore also applies to the district of Shepway.
- 2.1.10 In this case, the further work is manifested in Interim Guidance Note 3 (IGN 3) which focuses specifically on residential parking provision. It is the contention of this Transport Strategy that

IGN 3 has been developed based on the underlying ethos of SPG 4, specifically relating to promoting travel choice and encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes.

- 2.1.11 As such, SPG 4 had previously identified that through managing parking levels at journey-destinations when this can be supported by parking enforcement, charging and the availability of other travel choices, it may be possible to reduce the use of private vehicles.
- 2.1.12 By taking the starting point of most journeys as the home, IGN 3 seeks to revise the way in which residential parking standards are set, to support the overall strategy initiated through SPG 4. Thus, in town centre and edge of centre locations, maximum parking guidelines are set out which may be reduced to zero, when sufficient alternatives can be made available such that the need for car based travel is reduced.
- 2.1.13 Conversely however, in suburban and rural locations IGN 3 promotes the re-introduction of minimum parking standards. This represents a step-change in recent policy guidance in recognition that car ownership does not necessarily lead to car use. Indeed, where vehicle owners are able to park their cars safely and securely and where sufficient alternative travel options are available and where parking may be restricted at their destination, vehicles are more likely to be left at home in place of journeys being undertaken using alternative sustainable methods.
- 2.1.14 In relation to the establishment of the parking aspect of the Transport Strategy it is therefore recommended that SDC consult on and if appropriate, adopt both SPG4 and IGN3, for their wider application in the district.

2.2 Private Parking

- 2.2.1 The parking strategy outlined herein should be read in conjunction with the policy documents referred to above, which are adopted by Kent County Council. A summary of the private land use parking guidelines is provided however, in the tables below:

Residential Parking Guidelines

TABLE 2.1 Residential Parking Guidelines (per unit) – Interim Guidance Note 3

Dwelling Type	Town Centre	Edge of Centre	Suburban	Rural
Nature of Guidance	Maximum	Maximum	Minimum	Minimum
1 – 2 Bed Flats	1 space controlled	1 space not allocated	1 space not allocated	1 space not allocated
1 – 2 Bed Houses	1 space controlled	1 space allocation possible	1 space allocation possible	1.5 spaces allocation (of 1 space) possible
3 Bed Houses	1 space controlled	1 space allocation possible	1.5 spaces allocation (of 1 space) possible	2 independently accessible spaces allocation possible
4 Bed Houses	1 space controlled	1.5 spaces allocation (of 1 space) possible	2 independently accessible spaces allocation possible	2 independently accessible spaces allocation possible
Garages	Yes, but provided with areas of communal space	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Additional to above	Additional to above
Visitor Requirements	Public car parks	Communal areas 0.2 per unit maximum	On Street areas 0.2 per unit maximum	On Street areas 0.2 per unit maximum

Non-Residential Parking Guidelines

TABLE 2.2 Retail Parking Guidelines (floor area) – Supplementary Planning Guidance 4

Land Use Type	Goods Vehicles	Cars	Cycle Short Stay	Cycle Long Stay
Nature of Guidance	Maximum	Maximum	Minimum	Minimum
Food Retail up to 1000sqm	1 space per 500sqm	1 space per 18sqm	1 space per 200sqm	1 space per 200sqm
Food Retail over 1000sqm	1 space per 500sqm	1 space per 14sqm	1 space per 400sqm Minimum of 12 spaces	1 space per 400sqm Minimum of 12 spaces
Non Food Retail	1 space per 500sqm	1 space per 25sqm	-	-

TABLE 2.3 B-Class Parking Guidelines (floor area) – Supplementary Planning Guidance 4

Land Use Type	Goods Vehicles	Cars	Cycle Short Stay	Cycle Long Stay
Nature of Guidance	Maximum	Maximum	Minimum	Minimum
B1 Business				
Up to 500sqm	By Agreement	1 space per 20sqm	1 space per 1000 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces	1 space per 200 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces
500 to 2500sqm	By Agreement	1 space per 25sqm		
Over 2500sqm	By Agreement	1 space per 30sqm		
High-Tech	1 space per 200sqm	1 space per 35sqm		
B2 General Industrial				
Up to 200sqm	By Agreement	3 spaces	1 space per 1000 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces	1 space per 200 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces
Over 200sqm	1 space per 200sqm	1 space per 50sqm		
B8 Storage and Distribution				
Storage & Distribution	1 space per 300sqm	1 space per 110sqm	1 space per 1000 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces	1 space per 200 sqm Minimum of 2 spaces
Wholesale Trade Distribution	1 space per 300sqm	1 space per 35sqm		

TABLE 2.4 Assembly & Leisure Parking Guidelines – Supplementary Planning Guidance 4

Land Use Type	Cars	Cycle Short Stay	Cycle Long Stay
Nature of Guidance	Maximum	Minimum	Minimum
Cinemas, Concert Halls, Conference Centres, Bingo Halls	1 space per 5 seats	See below	See below
Social Clubs, Discos, Dance Halls, Ballrooms	1 space per 22sqm		
Multi-Activity Sports & Leisure Centres, Swimming Pools, Ice Rinks, Health & Fitness Centres, Gymnasiums	1 space per 22sqm + 1 space per 15 seats		
Marinas & other Boating Facilities	1 space per mooring / berth		
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats + 1 coach space per 300sqm		
Bowling Green/Centres/ Alleys, Snooker Halls, Tennis/Squash/Badminton Courts	3 spaces per lane/court/table + 1 space per 15 seats for spectators		
Outdoor Sports Facilities, Playing Fields	1 space per 2 participants + 1 space per 15 spectators		
Golf Courses & Driving Ranges	3 spaces per hole/bay		
Equestrian Centres, Riding Stables	1 space per stable		
Historic Houses & Gardens, Country Parks	1 space per 400 visitors per annum + 1 coach space per 5000sqm		
Theme Parks, Leisure Parks	1 space per 200 visitors per annum + 1 coach space per 5000sqm		
Other Uses	1 space per 22sqm		
Leisure & Entertainment Venues	See above	1 space per 300sqm	1 space per 300sqm
Sports Facilities & Venues		1 space per 10 participants + 10%	1 space per 10 staff

Additional Parking Provision

- 2.2.2 The guidance set out within SPG 4 also includes allowances for disabled parking spaces and should therefore be consulted directly. It is important to note however, that designated parking spaces which are allocated for the use of those with mobility impairments are treated as part of the overall level of parking provision, not in addition to it.
- 2.2.3 Finally, in terms of motorcycle parking, SPG 4 intimates that for residential development space may be available within the curtilage of a property or in a garage. Nonetheless, motorcycles may need to be considered for residential development and when done so, should be considered in addition to car and cycle parking provision.
- 2.2.4 For non-residential development SPG 4 states that a minimum of one motorcycle parking space should be provided, with an additional space being provided for every 20 car parking spaces.

2.3 Public Parking

- 2.3.1 Public parking takes the form of on-street spaces, which can be provided informally (unmarked bays) or formally (for example, within Controlled Parking Zones), and off street spaces which are usually provided within car parks.

On Street Parking

- 2.3.2 On Street parking is provided across the Shepway District and is generally not restricted in terms of the amount of time that parking can occur for, who can use the parking spaces or in terms of payment (eg. pay & display).
- 2.3.3 In more suburban and rural areas it is less usual for on street parking to be formally controlled or managed, unless particular conflicts exist. These may take the form of safety concerns, at junctions or pinch-points, or conflicts between different users. In this case, there may be an issue with who uses the spaces to park.
- 2.3.4 For example, in residential areas when home owners are more likely to be out during the day, road space may be taken up by people parking for the purposes of local employment should an industrial park be located nearby, because the location is convenient for people to meet up (and car share beyond that point) or for people to change mode, perhaps at a rail station.
- 2.3.5 In local centres and towns however, there is often more impetus for street parking facilities to be managed as there is likely to be a greater level of interaction between the activities and movements which take place in these locations.
- 2.3.6 In Shepway, Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) are currently in place in some locations, usually in the form of road markings restricting parking at conflict points such as junctions. There are also waiting restrictions in place which restrict on street parking, particularly in the vicinity of the seafront in Folkestone, to between two and three hours at some locations.
- 2.3.7 Overall however, the vast majority of on street parking across the Shepway District is unrestricted, meaning:
- The use of on street parking can be used by any road user;
 - There are no time restrictions concerning how long the space can be used; and,

- There are no charges applied to the user, for the use of the space.

Off Street Parking

- 2.3.8 Car parks are provided in the major settlements of Shepway, most notably including Folkestone, Sandgate, Hythe and New Romney. The majority of these car parks are council owned / operated, although there are also some privately operated car parks, including NCP facilities in Folkestone.
- 2.3.9 A blanket parking charge of £1.10 per hour applies across the district, with the exception of New Romney where parking is £0.50 for the first hour and £1.10 for each hour thereafter. Charges do not apply to disabled users or motorcycles.
- 2.3.10 Season tickets are available at a cost of £500 per annum, which entitles the user to park in any long stay car park in Shepway. This equates to £1.40, per day.
- 2.3.11 As the major urban area in Shepway, the majority of public car parking facilities are provided in Folkestone. As such, there are a total of 14 car parks (although three of these are not currently in use) with a combined parking capacity of 1685 car spaces. A summary of the off street parking provision in Folkestone is provided below in **TABLE 2.5**.

TABLE 2.5 Off Street Parking Facilities – Folkestone

Car Park	Ownership	Number of Spaces (Total)	Disabled Spaces (Marked Bay)	Motorcycle Spaces (Marked Bay)
A – Upper Payer Park	SDC Lease	47	4	
B – Pleydell Gardens	SDC	41	2	
C – Foresters Way	SDC Lease	27	2	
D – Tram Road	SDC	66	6	
E – Harbourside	SDC	10	1	
F – Shellon Street	SDC	64	2	2
G – Leas Cliff Hall	SDC Lease	176	4	
H – Rotunda	SDC Lease	202	7	
I – Marina ¹	Folkestone Estate	124		
J – Marine Parade ¹	Folkestone Estate	102	3	
K – Lower Payers Park ¹	SDC Lease	29	6	2
L – Bouverie Place	Warner Estate	570		
M – Bouverie Square ²	National Car Parks	203		
N – Cheriton Place	Private	24		
Total		1685	37	4

¹Not in Use ²Excludes Saga spaces

- 2.3.12 The locations of the car parks referred to above are illustrated at **FIGURE 2.1**.

2.4 Existing Trends

- 2.4.1 A review of publicly available data in addition to supplementary information which has been provided by SDC has been undertaken, in order to consider existing parking trends in Shepway.

Private Parking

- 2.4.2 According to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006), 22% of households in Kent do not have access to a car. A review of the latest available Census (2001) data indicates however, that on average there are 1.24 cars per household across the county.
- 2.4.3 Given that over one-fifth of households have been reported as not having access to a car, this therefore suggests that there are a number of households which will have two or more cars, indicating a potential disparity between types of households and their associated car ownership levels, as well as the geography of the county.
- 2.4.4 Undertaking the same Census analysis for Shepway indeed indicates that average car ownership levels are lower than that of Kent as a whole, standing at 1.15 cars per household in the district.
- 2.4.5 Considering this data in more detail has confirmed that residents who live in houses tend to have greater access to a car, whilst those that live in flats often have reduced access. A summary of the car ownership Census data for Shepway is provided below in **TABLE 2.6**.

TABLE 2.6 Car Ownership (Census) Data for Shepway, by Dwelling Type

Type of Dwelling	Cars Per Household
Private House	1.39
Shared Ownership House	1.22
Rented House	0.81
Private Flat	0.81
Shared Ownership Flat	0.55
Rented Flat	0.50
Average	1.15

- 2.4.6 It is thus considered that car ownership in Shepway is quite low, despite there being unrestricted on street parking controls in a number of locations across the district and surplus capacity being available within public car parks (see below).
- 2.4.7 The analysis intimates however, that if access to private vehicular travel is lower than might be expected, then accessibility needs to be provided through alternative transport modes. The role of these modes and how they are and will be promoted is considered elsewhere in this strategy but from the data available, it is clear that there is a strong relationship to parking and car ownership.

Public Parking

- 2.4.8 Of the public parking spaces which are provided across the district of Shepway, SDC have indicated that on average, they are utilised approximately 55-60% of the time (taking into account daily and seasonal variations). The initial indication therefore, is that there may be an over-provision of off-street parking and that potentially some car parks could be reduced in size or that some car parks may not be required.
- 2.4.9 To consider the utilisation of public car parks in more detail, SDC have been able to provide average annual utilisation data for a number of the car parks located in Folkestone. This information is summarised below in **TABLE 2.7** (the locations of the car parks are illustrated at **FIGURE 2.1**).

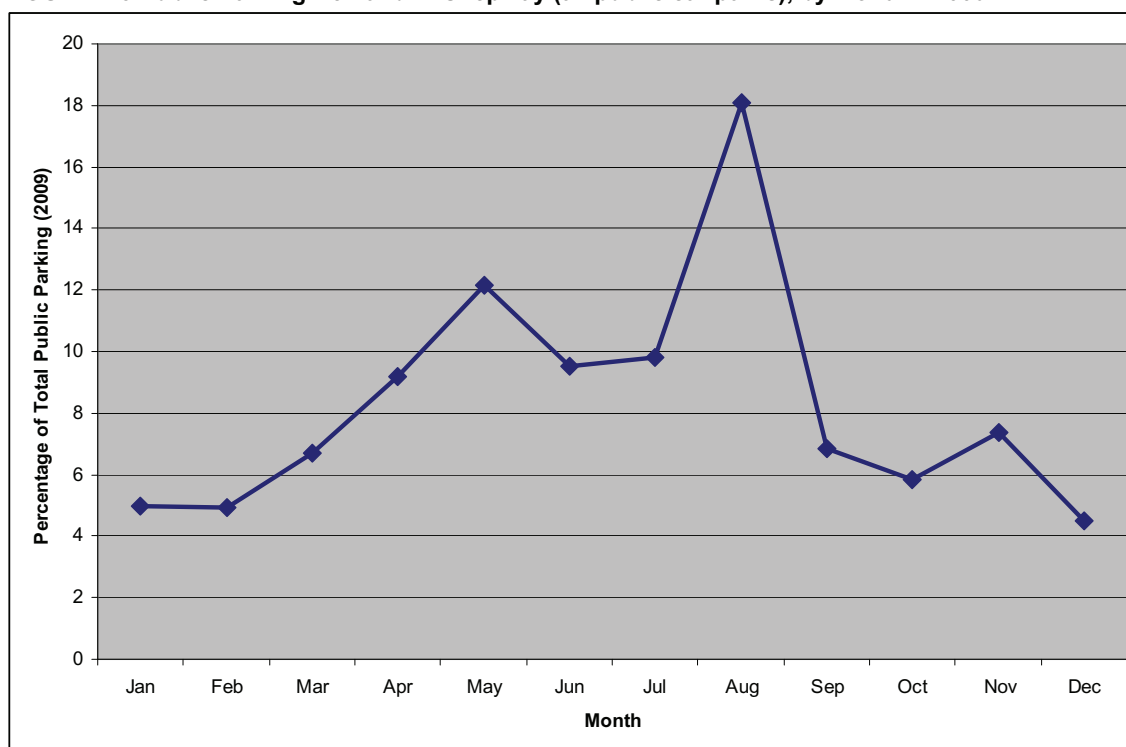
TABLE 2.7 Public Parking Utilisation – Folkestone Car Parks (2008-2009)

Car Park	Average Occupancy (%)
A – Upper Payer Park	68
B – Pleydell Gardens	65
C – Foresters Way	51
D – Tram Road	41
E – Harbourside	28
F – Shellon Street	61
G – Leas Cliff Hall	49
H – Rotunda	21
Average	43

- 2.4.10 Analysis of the data suggests that some of the smaller car parks (A, B, C and F) have the highest levels of average annual utilisation, ranging from 51-68%. Overall however, for the car parks where average annual data is available in Folkestone, the data indicates that the typical level of utilisation is approximately 43%.
- 2.4.11 Car parks E and H have the lowest levels of reported utilisation, both of which are less than 30%, over the course of the year. Car park E is one of the smallest in Folkestone with only 10 spaces provided. Car park H is much larger however (202 spaces), but is located on the Seafront. As such, it is assumed that this car park is likely to be more greatly used during the summer and at times of events, but likely to be less well used during the 'off-season'.
- 2.4.12 Overall, it is also noted that the car parks with the higher levels of utilisation are typically located nearer the town centre, with those on average being used less, located further away from the central area. This is further illustrated at **FIGURE 2.2**.
- 2.4.13 Given the geographic location of Shepway, in particular reference to its coastline, relative position to Dover and other connections to the continent and its other historical and tourist attractions it is recognised that the demand for parking will vary and at sometimes, is likely to be more utilised than at others.

- 2.4.14 SDC have also been able to provide data from ticket machines for their car parks across the district. As this data does not allow the type of ticket purchased to be considered, it is not possible to consider how many vehicles were parked in each car park or for how long. The data does allow comparative trends to be considered however, over the course of the year.
- 2.4.15 The data available covers 2009 and in line with the analysis presented above, confirms that there are considerable seasonal variations in parking demand across Shepway. January, February and December are reported as being the months when there is the lowest level of demand for public car parking spaces. From February onwards however, up until May, demand consistently increases with the greatest level of demand occurring in August, as would be expected for an area with high levels of tourism.
- 2.4.16 Assuming therefore, that average parking demand is around 55-60%, applying this trend might indicate that parking utilisation could be as low as 20% around December / January, but in excess of 80-90% or even higher, in August.
- 2.4.17 The 2009 parking data (for all Shepway District public car parks) is illustrated, by month, in **FIGURE 2.3** below. The chart shows the total amount of parking which occurs in Folkestone, according to the month in which it occurs. For example, approximately 5% of all parking occurs in January where as 18% occurs in August.

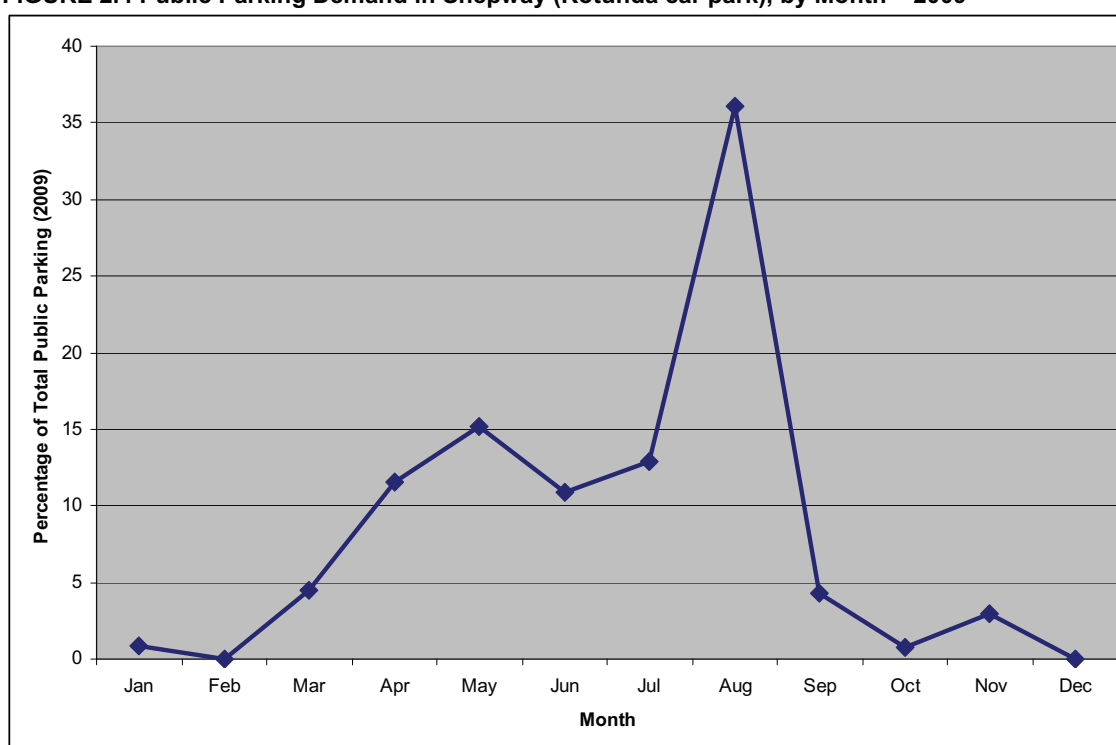
FIGURE 2.3 Public Parking Demand in Shepway (all public car parks), by Month – 2009



- 2.4.18 To consider this information in more detail, the same monthly demand analysis has been undertaken for a single car park. In this case, the data for the Rotunda Car Park as one of Folkestone's larger facilities, has been analysed.

- 2.4.19 This analysis has confirmed that the profile of parking demand at the Rotunda is very similar to the general profile for Shepway as a whole. In summary, demand is at its lowest in January, February and December (and October in the case of the Rotunda), and increases between February and May and peaks in August.
- 2.4.20 It is noted however, that parking demand at the Rotunda is reported as being extremely low during the winter months in comparison with August, which accounts for 35% of all parking in this car park, over the course of the year (2009).
- 2.4.21 The 2009 parking data for the Rotunda car park is illustrated, by month, in **FIGURE 2.4** below.

FIGURE 2.4 Public Parking Demand in Shepway (Rotunda car park), by Month – 2009



- 2.4.22 There are some Variable Message Signs (VMS) near to Folkestone town centre which inform drivers of which car parks are open and where spaces are available. It is understood from SDC that the implementation of this system has assisted in balancing parking utilisation, although a number of car parks remain under-utilised. In particular, it was noted that use of the Leas Cliff Hall car park is not maximised, mainly due to its location and drivers not easily being able to find and access it.
- 2.4.23 Operationally, SDC operate pay & display systems in their car parks meaning that drivers pay when they arrive at a car park, in advance of their stay, based on the anticipated duration of their visit.
- 2.4.24 This system allows drivers to top-up their ticket however, up to the maximum permissible stay at the respective car park, should the user wish to stay for a longer period than they first expected, rather than needing to leave the car park once their time is up. This provides environmental benefits and reduces the amount of time that might need to be spent searching for an alternative space or car park.

- 2.4.25 In addition to the ticket machines which are located within the car parks, SDC also run the 'RingGo' pay by phone system, which allows car park users to pay for their parking ticket by mobile phone.
- 2.4.26 It is understood that SDC process a gross revenue of approximately £900,000 per annum from parking charges in the district, plus approximately £400,000 per annum which is accrued through the enforcement of penalty charges.

3 Issue Identification

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section is concerned with the identification of underlying issues relating to parking within Shepway, such that the Transport Strategy can be delivered and implemented with a view to addressing these particular matters.
- 3.1.2 With this in mind, issues have been identified based around the private and public forms of parking that are available and have been reported thus far. Where appropriate, these have been further sub-divided into the geographic areas of the district.

3.2 Private Parking

- 3.2.1 Throughout the preparation of the Transport Strategy and through consultation with SDC, KCC, the Highways Agency and the wide range of stakeholders who have been engaged through the Workshop Consultation exercises, particular issues regarding private parking have tended to focus around two main areas which will be discussed in turn:

- Places of Employment; and,
- New Developments.

Places of Employment

- 3.2.2 Two main issues have been raised relating to the existing provision of parking facilities associated with key employers in the district.
- 3.2.3 The first of these relates to the provision of parking associated with major employers in Folkestone, whereby it has been identified that insufficient parking capacity is available on some sites, meaning that employees tend to park off site, often in local streets and residential roads. In doing so, this can make some vehicle manoeuvres more difficult and can also contribute towards road safety issues.
- 3.2.4 The second issue relates to some of the business and industrial parks which are located in the rural areas of the district. Representatives, through the Workshop Consultation programme, have indicated that insufficient parking facilities are available and that this is impacting on the ability to undertake their business activities and can also affect the ability to attract other businesses on to these sites.

New Developments

- 3.2.5 A review of the relevant policies have been undertaken regarding the provision of parking facilities associated with new developments. Fundamentally, a juxtaposition exists between the over-provision of parking which raises concerns that it facilitates unrestrained car use compared with under-provision which can lead to parking issues occurring, both on and off-site, which can be detrimental to the environment as well as safety.

- 3.2.6 The key issue in this case therefore centres around ensuring that a balanced level of parking provision is determined and delivered which will be to the benefit of the development itself, as well as its integration with the surrounding area.

3.3 Public Parking

- 3.3.1 A number of matters relating to public parking have been raised during the preparation of the Transport Strategy and as part of the Workshop Consultation exercises. These relate to:

- On Street Parking (in towns and town centres)
- Off Street Parking
- Parking at rail stations
- Cycle Parking

On Street Parking

- 3.3.2 On Street parking is provided across the district on a first come-first served basis in most cases, meaning that any road user is able to park in an available space.
- 3.3.3 Observations and information gathered as part of consultation exercises associated with this Transport Strategy have identified that in the major towns particularly, there is a considerable amount of on street parking. This has both positive and negative implications, the most significant of which have been summarised below in **TABLE 3.1**.

TABLE 3.1 On Street Parking in Shepway – Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
On Street parking spaces are available for a range of users	On Street parking can affect vehicle movement and flow on the highway (operational and safety implications)
On Street parking is generally free in Shepway	Parking restrictions at junctions or conflict points need to be enforced, but not charging for spaces may encourage inappropriate / illegal parking
Drivers may be able to park nearer to their home / place of work, than if they need to park off-street	Conflicts may exist between different users (eg. people parking for work may prevent residents from parking near their house)
	On Street parking can be unsightly and make roads appear more cluttered or less safe
	On Street parking may reduce the number of people that use formal car parks (revenue) or indeed other modes (sustainability / convenience)

- 3.3.4 In summary, on street parking can make visiting or working in a town such as Folkestone easier, as it may not be necessary to have to find and access a car park and in many cases, it is possible to park for free.
- 3.3.5 It is noted however, that Folkestone's streets in particular have been observed to be very well used in terms of parking which can be unsightly, lead to the perception of roads being narrower

and less safe and create conflicts between users of the parking spaces. Furthermore, the extensive use of on street parking is likely to reduce the overall use of Folkestone's formal parking resources and could impact on visitors and users of the town centres travel decisions.

- 3.3.6 For example, if shoppers are able to drive to Folkestone and park on the side of the road for free they may make several short duration trips, by car. Alternatively, if drivers were encouraged to park in formal car parks where charges apply, they may be more inclined to stay for a longer period, and potentially spend more time and money in the town. Another option is that drivers may decide to use an alternative mode of travel for short duration trips, should parking be managed in a different way.
- 3.3.7 The key consideration on this point however, is that changes to parking management in Shepway and Folkestone specifically as the main urban area could have implications on peoples travel decisions meaning that they decide to go elsewhere for work, leisure or retail purposes, such as Canterbury, Dover or Ashford. This will therefore be considered in more detail, as part of the formulation of the parking strategy.
- 3.3.8 An example of on street parking in Shepway is illustrated below, in **FIGURE 3.1**.

FIGURE 3.1 On Street Parking in Shepway



Off Street Parking

- 3.3.9 Off Street parking is provided at a number of locations, across the district, which is able to cater for car drivers, as well as motorcycle riders, disabled users and buses and / or taxis, in some cases.
- 3.3.10 The key issue which has been identified as affecting public, off street parking in Shepway, is capacity. Conversely however, rather than issues having been raised regarding the requirement for more spaces or additional car parks to be provided, the issue that has arisen concerns underused parking facilities.
- 3.3.11 On average, SDC have advised that 55-60% of spaces in car parks across the district are utilised on a typical day, over the course of the year. On an average day therefore, approximately 40% of the spaces provided in public car parks in Shepway can be unused thereby indicating that surplus parking capacity is being provided.
- 3.3.12 It is noted however, that significant seasonal variations exist in Shepway, meaning that there is increased demand for parking particularly in the summer months when there are more visitors. The parking strategy presented herein has therefore considered public car parking in relation to the demand and supply that has been observed, within the context of these seasonal patterns.

Parking at Rail Stations

- 3.3.13 Parking facilities at rail stations have specifically been identified through the Workshop Consultation undertaken during June and July 2010. The short section that follows summarises the parking facilities which are provided at each of Shepway's four rail stations and the associated issues that have been identified.

Folkestone Central

- 3.3.14 Folkestone Central rail station is located in the largest urban area within Shepway and as such, supports the greatest number of rail journeys (starting and / or ending) within the district. In light of this, it also possesses the greatest opportunity to attract travellers to interchange with rail at the station from the widest selection of modes, given that the station is accessible to the town on foot, by bicycle, public transport, taxi and car.
- 3.3.15 A range of parking facilities are provided at the station, as summarised below:
- 15 Sheffield Stands (30 cycle parking locking points)
 - Accommodation for eight taxis (to layover)
 - 4 drop off bays (based on 20 minute waiting restrictions)
 - 3 Disabled parking bays
 - 64 Vehicle parking bays
- 3.3.16 The parking facilities at Folkestone Central rail station are illustrated below in **FIGURE 3.2**.

FIGURE 3.2 Parking Facilities at Folkestone Central Rail Station



- 3.3.17 No particular issues have been raised relating to parking facilities at this station.

Folkestone West

- 3.3.18 Folkestone West rail station is located slightly further away from the main urban area of Folkestone and as such, is less accessible to some more sustainable modes of travel. In light of this, there is less parking provision for taxi's and bicycles and a greater amount of parking for private vehicles. It is noted however, that provision is made for four coaches.

3.3.19 The parking facilities available (combined for the north and south sides of the rail line) are summarised below:

- 9 Sheffield Stands (18 cycle parking locking points)
- Accommodation for two taxis (to layover)
- 4 Coach parking bays
- 3 drop off bays (based on 20 minute waiting restrictions)
- 4 Disabled parking bays
- 95 Vehicle parking bays

3.3.20 The parking facilities at Folkestone West rail station are illustrated below in **FIGURE 3.3**.

FIGURE 3.3 Parking Facilities at Folkestone West Rail Station



3.3.21 It is understood that proposals were recently discussed for additional car parking to be provided at Folkestone West and that Network Rail investigated the possibility of acquiring an adjacent site to serve as a car park.

3.3.22 To support this strategy, SDC have implemented Controlled Parking Zones within the local area surrounding the station to encourage drivers to park within the car park(s), rather than at the side of the road. It is currently understood however, that additional car parking facilities are not able to be provided and that further investigations will be required, particularly in regard to the identification of appropriate land resources and the scale to which any additional provision should be made.

Sandling

3.3.23 Sandling station predominantly serves the town in which it is located and as such, is used by fewer rail passengers than its neighbouring stations in Folkestone. For its local catchment however, the station is accessible to a range of users including cyclists and those who wish to interchange to / from bus travel.

3.3.24 The parking facilities at the station are summarised below:

- 2 Sheffield Stands (4 cycle parking locking points)

- 6 Cycle Lockers
- 2 drop off bays (based on 20 minute waiting restrictions)
- 2 Disabled parking bays
- 92 Vehicle parking bays

3.3.25 The parking facilities at Sandling rail station are illustrated below in **FIGURE 3.4**.

FIGURE 3.4 Parking Facilities at Sandling Rail Station



3.3.26 It is understood that Sandling's primary role is to serve its local catchment area although car parking facilities are provided which can serve people living locally as well as those who may drive to the station and interchange onto rail, for onward travel. As such, the scope of Sandling's services are understood to be widened to areas in the district, further afield than the town itself.

3.3.27 Given Sandling's relative location to Folkestone, this station is considered to provide an important role in providing access to rail services for some of the more rural areas of the district, particularly those to the west of Folkestone, although it is recognised that in this context, Sandling competes with a number of other stations, including Ashford.

Westenhanger

3.3.28 The rail station at Westenhanger provides the fourth opportunity to access rail travel within Shepway and is located towards the north of the district, furthest away from Folkestone.

3.3.29 The station is relatively small and has the fewest number of rail journeys made per annum, of the four stations in the district.

3.3.30 There is limited access to the station by foot and cycle as there are no primary urban areas in the immediate vicinity. There are also no bus services which pass directly adjacent to the station. As such, the station primarily serves car drivers or those who are dropped off / picked up by car.

3.3.31 However, there are relatively limited parking facilities at the station, as summarised below:

- No formal cycle parking facilities are provided (see **FIGURE 3.5** below)
- 1 Disabled parking bay
- 9 Vehicle parking bays (within the station area)

- 6 vehicle spaces (unmarked, on the approach road to the station)

3.3.32 The parking facilities at Westenhanger rail station are illustrated below in **FIGURE 3.5**.

FIGURE 3.5 Parking Facilities at Westenhanger Rail Station



- 3.3.33 Westenhanger rail station is accessed from the south, via Stone Street. This is a minor residential road with uncontrolled, on street parking provided. As such, a number of station users were observed to park their vehicles along Stone Street, particularly toward the northern section which is closest to the station, and then walk into the station.
- 3.3.34 As such, it is noted that there are potential parking issues at Westenhanger and conflicts may therefore arise between residents and users of the station.
- 3.3.35 Furthermore, it is noted that parking charges apply at Sandling, for drivers who park their vehicles in the station car park whereas currently, it is possible to park for free in the vicinity of Westenhanger station. In light of this, it is likely that some drivers who are travelling from outside of Sandling to access the rail network may choose to travel further to Westenhanger as they are able to park for free and their rail ticket is slightly cheaper (day single is £4.00, as opposed to £4.20), assuming they are travelling north towards Ashford.

Cycle Parking

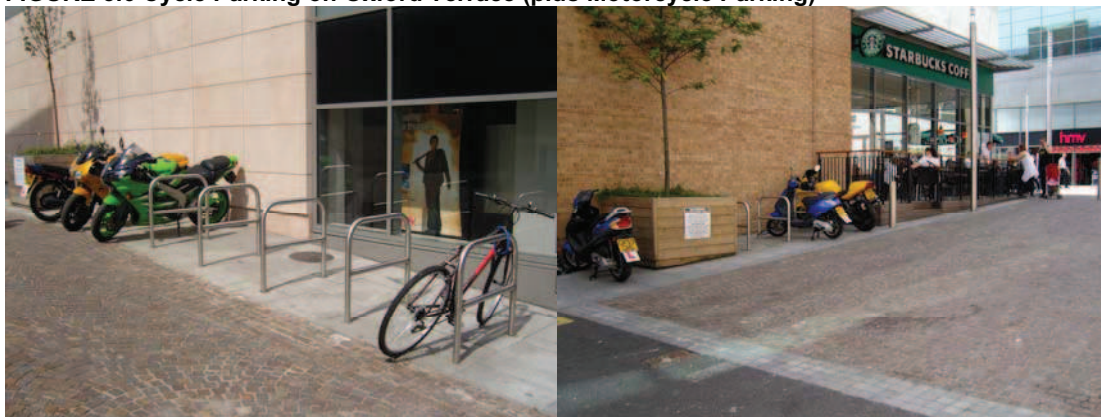
- 3.3.36 Public cycle parking is provided throughout the district on a relatively ad hoc basis, as with most locations throughout the country. There are two primary locations for cycle parking however, the first being at transport interchanges and the second being on street, in the vicinity of service centres and amenity provision. These are discussed in turn, below:

Transport Interchanges

- 3.3.37 Cycle parking at the four rail stations located within Shepway has already been discussed elsewhere in this report. To summarise however, formal facilities are provided at both of the stations in Folkestone and at Sandling, although no formal facilities are provided at Westenhanger.
- 3.3.38 The majority of cycle parking at the rail stations is provided in the form of Sheffield Stands, although it is noted that 6 cycle lockers are provided at Sandling. These facilities were generally observed to be well used, although none were recorded as being fully utilised indicating that some spare capacity is typically available.

- 3.3.39 The bus station in Shepway is located in Folkestone town centre, at Bouverie Place. It is noted that no cycle parking facilities are provided at the bus station itself. The nearest cycle parking facilities are provided at the Bouverie Place Shopping Centre, an example of which is located on Oxford Terrace, as illustrated in **FIGURE 3.6** below.

FIGURE 3.6 Cycle Parking on Oxford Terrace (plus Motorcycle Parking)



On Street Cycle Parking

- 3.3.40 Public cycle parking is provided in Folkestone, Hythe and New Romney, as well as some other locations. In most cases, the parking facilities take the form of Sheffield Stands, which cyclists are able to lock their bicycles to. Some alternative, more modern forms of cycle locking facilities are also provided however, with examples illustrated below in **FIGURE 3.7**, for Hythe and New Romney respectively.

FIGURE 3.7 Cycle Parking in Hythe (Left) and New Romney (Right)



- 3.3.41 It is noted that in some more rural areas, cycle parking may be less well overlooked than in more urban or town centre locations, meaning that security and the perception of security may be reduced.
- 3.3.42 In particular, it was observed that cycle parking was well used at the rail stations and was also quite well used in Folkestone town centre. In New Romney and Hythe however, cycle parking stands were usually under-utilised and on occasion, not used at all (**FIGURE 3.7** above).

4 Transport Strategy

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This parking strategy has been developed within the context of the overall supply and demand of parking within the Shepway District. It has considered the management of the highway network and therefore, implications for road safety. It also seeks to support the use of sustainable modes of transport, as a broader objective of the overall Transport Strategy.
- 4.1.2 Consideration has been given to both private and public forms of parking and a summary of the potential measures that could be progressed through the implementation of the Transport Strategy are provided in this chapter.

4.2 Private Parking

- 4.2.1 It is noted that there is a relatively low level of private car ownership within Shepway, when compared with the wider county of Kent. On average, analysis has indicated that each household in the district has access to 1.15 private cars.
- 4.2.2 The workshop and consultation process did not identify any significant issues relating to private residential parking however (for existing areas), although employment sites were discussed.

Places of Employment

- 4.2.3 In more central locations such as Folkestone, the availability of car parking at employment sites was raised as an area of concern, particularly when parking was displaced off site, into local streets. Similarly, the issue of under provision was also raised for employment sites in less urban settings, including business and industrial parks such as those at Link Park and Shearway Business Park.
- 4.2.4 In the more central locations, it is considered that parking supply may be able to be better managed through a joined-up strategy combining both off-street (private) parking as well as the resources which SDC are able to provide, both on and off street. This is discussed in more detail below.
- 4.2.5 In terms of the industrial park sites, it is considered that there is a role for Kent County Council, as local highway authority, to be consulted on regarding the levels of existing provision that are available and whether or not this can be supplemented. In this case however, the land owners and site operators would be likely to need to be able to identify additional space at or adjacent to their sites which could be converted for the use of parking. Any subsequent proposals would then need to be considered by KCC, on a site by site basis, to ensure that their parking standards are appropriately taken into account.
- 4.2.6 In both cases, for the businesses located in the town centres and industrial parks, the role of Travel Plans has been identified as being a key mechanism which could increase travel awareness amongst staff and the employers themselves. Through introducing workplace Travel Plans it may be possible for a range of benefits to be derived, which could include the following:

- Reduced car parking demand, through:
 - Car Sharing
 - Increased travel on foot or by bicycle
 - Increased use of public transport
 - Consideration of other working practice options
- Improved efficiency, through design and layout
- Improved perception of the business, by local people and staff and visitors
- Reduced environmental impact

4.2.7 Kent County Council provide their own guidance on the preparation of Workplace Travel Plans, contained within their Guidance on Transport Assessment and Travel Plan document (October 2008).

4.2.8 However, it is recognised that it may be difficult to encourage existing employers who have established businesses to prepare such documents and undertake the associated measures. As such, as an introductory exercise it is recommended that SDC and KCC undertake some initial site reviews which could identify the sites / businesses where the most significant results would be expected to be achieved (refer also to the **SMARTER CHOICES NOTE**).

4.2.9 These findings could be presented to the businesses and assistance could be provided to them to prepare their Travel Plans, by way of a partnership approach. The initial site reviews could include the consideration of the following key characteristics:

- Size of site / business – approximate number of staff on site
- Number of parking facilities provided on site
- Availability of alternative parking within the local area
- Relative location – ease of access by walking and cycling
- Access to public transport modes

New Developments

4.2.10 The provision of new developments within the District, as currently being proposed through the Core Strategy, will provide a real opportunity to provide appropriate parking facilities, through the planning process. This Parking Strategy has already summarised the guidance which is available from KCC and the overall Transport Strategy therefore fully supports the careful application of this guidance at all new developments.

4.2.11 Of critical importance however, is for the supply of parking at each site to be considered within the context of opportunities which will exist to travel using modes other than the private car and on larger sites, where more than one land use will be provided, how the parking supply can be provided and managed in relation to the associated demand.

- 4.2.12 For example, where a residential development will include an element of industrial / business land use, allocated parking should not be provided for both land uses in isolation but through an effective management process. This should allow parking to be shared between the land uses whereby the maximum residential demand is likely to occur at evenings and weekends and the business demand during weekdays.
- 4.2.13 Again, a key tool in the management process will therefore be the production and implementation of Travel Plans at each of the development sites, which will be expected to follow on from and build on their respective Transport Assessments.
- 4.2.14 KCC will require that the Transport Assessments present the predicted level of trip generation that will be associated with the respective development(s) and that proposed mitigation measures are identified, in addition to the parking facilities which will be provided.
- 4.2.15 This Parking Strategy proposes however, in line with the ethos presented elsewhere in this Transport Strategy, that the associated Travel Plans for each of the developments will form a key monitoring and management tool. To this end, the trip generation levels that are predicted through the Transport Assessment process should be managed through the monitoring of the Travel Plan and form a key component of the snapshot surveys to be undertaken following the delivery of the development.
- 4.2.16 Furthermore, parking demand (relative to supply) can also be monitored to ensure that an appropriate level is provided at the development. Initially, the Travel Plan may be monitored for the first five years with subsequent monitoring requirements being agreed with KCC thereafter, depending on the success of the Travel Plan at that time.
- 4.2.17 The difference to more conventional and certainly older Travel Plans should be that flexibility will be built into the process, allowing action to be taken if targets and predictions are not being met. In the first instance, the developer should have alternative strategies in place that can be employed through the Travel Plan process, should a target not be achieved. Thereafter, there should be a function which allows KCC to draw down additional funding through the s106 agreement, allowing them to take the appropriate remedial action to mitigate the issue(s).
- 4.2.18 For example, if the Travel Plan survey identifies that after two years of the development being completed that parking on the site is exceeding demand, the developer should be able to introduce additional measures to attempt to reduce parking demand. This could take the form of further promoting sustainable travel or if necessary, providing additional parking. Should these measures not be possible or ineffective, KCC should be able to draw down additional funding to provide off site parking or fund additional parking controls in the nearby area in order to ensure that the operation of the highway and road safety are suitably managed.
- 4.2.19 Equally, it may be necessary for the developer working with the local authority, to consider how the development may impact on local parking facilities whether this be in local car parks or nearby streets. Contributions may therefore be sought for parking surveys to be undertaken prior to, during and following the implementation of the development with regard to off-site parking trends.
- 4.2.20 Where an impact is reported, a clause may be included within the contribution mechanism which allows further funding to be drawn down through the s106 agreement process, to mitigate any parking issues that have arisen for example, through the introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone.

4.3 Public Parking

4.3.1 The control of public parking facilities in the district potentially offers SDC with the greatest number of options for promoting the ethos of the Transport Strategy, through the introduction and delivery of alternative management measures. Nonetheless, it is recommended that SDC consult on and if appropriate, adopt both of KCC's SPG4 and IGN3 guidance documents, for their wider application in the district.

4.3.2 The consultation workshops which were held in Folkestone during June and July 2010 identified three core parking measures for further investigation, two of which relate to public parking (the third measure is discussed later in this chapter). These two measures are:

- P1 – To encourage better utilisation of car parks
- P2 – To manage on street parking

Better Utilisation of Car Parks

4.3.3 Shepway District Council have indicated that their public car parking stock is, on average, utilised to approximately 55-60% of its available capacity. Analysis of the available data from SDC has confirmed that the parking supply in the public car parks in Folkestone is generally under-utilised, averaging 43% over the course of a year (2009 data), thereby indicating that there may be an oversupply of public car parking.

4.3.4 However, it is noted that as a coastal district, there is a significant tourist and recreational base to Shepway meaning that a lot of visitors travel to the district at particular times of the year. The parking data confirms this, indicating that car parking utilisation in the public car parks can be as low as 20% between December and February, but much higher during May to July and potentially in excess of 90% or even at capacity in August.

4.3.5 Given that SDC, as well as local business, would therefore be unlikely to support proposals to reduce the overall provision of car parking as this could affect the number of visitors who travel to Shepway at peak times, the key objective therefore, is to seek to increase parking utilisation, whilst retaining the overall capacity.

4.3.6 In order to consider this in more detail, it is necessary to take account of both the off street car parking facilities and those provided publicly on street, so that a co-ordinated strategy can be developed.

Manage On Street Parking

4.3.7 The consultation processes undertaken as part of the development of this Transport Strategy, supported by site visits and observations in Folkestone, have indicated that on street parking facilities are readily available, generally free and subsequently, well used.

4.3.8 A situation therefore exists whereby formal car parking facilities in Folkestone are provided but are under-used at a number of times throughout the year, whilst on street parking is also available but more intensely used.

4.3.9 The use of on-street parking means that vehicles have a greater number of interactions with other highway users including other vehicles, as well as pedestrians and cyclists and buses. Drivers looking for, parking in and leaving on street spaces therefore have the potential to

reduce traffic flows on the highway and contribute towards congestion, influence bus journey times and conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.

- 4.3.10 The use of on street parking spaces therefore has the ability to affect the operation of the highway network, contribute towards accidents and whilst it is free, act as a potential loss of revenue to SDC and KCC.
- 4.3.11 Even though it is free to park in most on street spaces in Folkestone, and elsewhere in the district, the highway still needs to be maintained and parking enforcement still needs to take place at restricted locations and in the vicinity of junctions meaning that the provision of parking facilities is a cost to the local authority. Through providing the on street facilities at no cost to vehicle users to some extent, also undermines the provision of formal, maintained parking facilities in car parks when they are underutilised, as spaces which are not used do not generate revenue.
- 4.3.12 An option therefore, is for on street parking to be regulated more closely through the introduction of parking charges and associated monitoring and enforcement. However, this needs to be considered within the context of the existing car parks, rather than in isolation.

Public Parking Strategy

- 4.3.13 Taking the combined objectives discussed above; to better utilise public car parks and manage on street parking, it is thus considered that the management and control of both these parking facilities should be reviewed.
- 4.3.14 Within this context, through the considered review and introduction of on street parking charges, it is anticipated that the existing quantum of public car parking can be maintained, although more effectively utilised.
- 4.3.15 In order to support making the formal car parks more attractive, the charges to park in them should be less than those on street or offered to regular users at a discounted rate, potentially through a permit system. This should encourage drivers who currently park informally to use the car parks, thereby ensuring that these facilities are better utilised.
- 4.3.16 It is noted that some employers and local residents have reported problems with business related parking, particularly in Folkestone, and therefore the opportunity to provide business or parking permits should be considered.
- 4.3.17 Furthermore, it is noted that some comments were raised through the consultation process that some car parks are difficult to locate (particularly for visitors) and so business users or those working in Folkestone could be given permits to these car parks (eg. Leas Cliff Hall) thereby increasing utilisation and ensuring that those car parks in the most central, potentially retail related locations, have greater availability for shoppers and visitors. It would also offer a greater level of choice for tourists.
- 4.3.18 In doing so, the amount of on street parking occurring should reduce meaning that the operation of the highway network should improve. This capacity could potentially be taken up by visitors, for whom it is noted have more seasonal travel patterns and who are also more likely to be prepared to pay slightly higher parking charges to park on street, rather than in a car park, as part of a one-off or less regular visit than locals or workers.

- 4.3.19 The provision of on street parking for visitors also means that it is more visible and easier to find and use than other car parks located around the town, which could include navigating the one-way system.

Recommendations

- 4.3.20 The recommendation with regard to public parking is therefore that SDC review their management and charging policy for parking in the district, where free on street parking is currently provided alongside formal public car parks.
- 4.3.21 Where the intention is to retain the overall public car parking supply, particularly within the context of seasonal visitor demand, it is recommended that on street parking charges are introduced to encourage existing users to park in the car parks.
- 4.3.22 In doing so, it is proposed public car parking in car parks is available at a lower cost than parking on street, and could therefore result in existing off street charges being reduced. Furthermore, it is suggested that business and regular users should be entitled to discounted parking charges, potentially in the form of season tickets.
- 4.3.23 It is noted that on street parking charges already apply in other neighbouring areas, such as Dover, and that these are usually supported by resident parking schemes. As such, it is suggested that metered on street parking should only be available during day time hours, 08:00-18:00 when demand for the car parks is highest with residents being able to park on street in the vicinity of their properties according to their permit allocation during the day and exclusively during the evening, when they are most likely to be at home.
- 4.3.24 The proposed management approach will need to be considered by SDC in detail, together with the necessary enforcement measures. It is anticipated that this approach can create operational, safety and amenity benefits for residents, shoppers, employers / employees and visitors whilst achieving the overall objectives of increasing public car park utilisation and managing on street resources.

4.4 Parking at Rail Stations

- 4.4.1 Parking issues have been raised concerning two of Shepway's four rail stations; Folkestone West and Westenhanger. Taking these in turn:

Folkestone West

- 4.4.2 Folkestone possesses two rail stations, both of which give access to the flagship High Speed 1 (HS1) rail service. Folkestone Central, located in the town centre itself, has a limited provision of car parking but is accessible by foot, bicycle and public transport. It is subsequently the most used of all of the rail stations in the district.
- 4.4.3 Folkestone West is less accessible by sustainable modes but has slightly more car parking provision than Folkestone Central, as well as coach parking facilities.
- 4.4.4 Following detailed discussions with SDC, Network Rail, Southeastern Rail and the British Rail Board, it is noted that there are a number of parcels of land in the vicinity of Folkestone West rail station that could potentially be redeveloped to provide additional parking facilities. Furthermore, it is noted that SDC have recently implemented parking management measures

in the vicinity of the station which should support the introduction of such additional parking facilities.

4.4.5 It is recommended however, that a detailed assessment is undertaken regarding the potential introduction of additional car parking at Folkestone West to ensure that this would contribute to increasing the overall accessibility of the station and therefore the rail network, to currently suppressed rail travel demand. If this is not the case, additional parking may result in the re-allocation of trips whereby for example, some travellers who currently travel by bus to Folkestone Central station drive to Folkestone West instead.

4.4.6 The Folkestone West parking assessment should therefore give consideration to:

- Existing car parking capacity and utilisation at the station
- The number of rail passengers who currently travel to the station by car
- The demand for additional car parking at the station
 - Who the spaces would be expected to be used by
 - Where these drivers would be expected to travel from to access the station (ie. could alternative measures be promoted, such as additional bus services, in place of additional parking?)
- Pricing policy

Westenhanger

4.4.7 Westenhanger rail station is currently the least well used of the rail stations in the district and is arguably the least accessible by sustainable modes. In addition, it has relatively limited parking facilities, most of which are informally provided.

4.4.8 Asides from this, the station provides a key connection to rail travel for western areas of the district, particularly those outside of Folkestone. In order to support the continued use of the station it is considered that formalised parking arrangements should be provided at the station which may need to include the introduction of charging. This should ensure that travellers are not encouraged to travel further by car to access the rail network at Westenhanger, where car parking charges do not currently apply, instead of travelling directly to their nearest rail station, for example, at Sandling.

4.4.9 To support this approach, it is likely that improved parking management would need to be introduced on Stone Street. Informal parking along this residential route was raised as a concern as part of the consultation workshops. The provision of short stay parking restrictions and residents permits should therefore alleviate existing informal parking associated with the rail station.

4.4.10 Finally however, consideration should be given to the opportunity to enhance access to the station at Westenhanger both by sustainable modes and in terms of additional parking facilities, thereby increasing the viability of the station.

4.4.11 It is noted that three of the Strategic Sites being promoted through the Core Strategy are located in close proximity to Westenhanger rail station, at Sellindge, Lympne and most notably, Folkestone racecourse. As part of the delivery of these sites it is therefore

recommended that measures which can increase access and promote links to the station are considered in detail and promoted, wherever possible. In this context, it is recommended that consideration is given to providing formal station car parking within the racecourse development itself thereby increasing the accessibility of the station whilst mitigating potential implications of increased station use on Stone Street.

4.5 Park and Ride

4.5.1 As discussed previously, as part of the consultation workshops, three parking measures were identified and two of these related specifically to public car parking (see **SECTION 4.3**). The third measure referred to Park and Ride:

- P3 – Consider the demand for park and ride

4.5.2 There are already two established Park and Ride facilities located in Kent, at Canterbury and Maidstone. These offer those car drivers and passengers travelling to these specific towns the opportunity to transfer to bus travel, by parking their car outside of the town centre, on the basis that their journey is perceived as being quicker on the bus than in the car, and potentially cheaper.

4.5.3 There are broadly three fundamental requirements for a Park and Ride to be delivered in a way that it can effectively compete against car travel:

- **Demand** – that there is a clearly defined route into the town centre which a large amount of traffic passes along and that a site directly on this route can be identified as the park and ride site. The site must be extremely close to this key route as drivers typically have a very low propensity to drive in another direction to their intended destination.
- **Priority** – that the transfer mode (eg. bus) is perceived as providing a more efficient service to the end destination (assumed to be the town centre) than the original means of travel. The usual method in this case is for active bus priority to be provided at junctions and bus lanes to be provided alongside traffic lanes.
- **Cost** – that the cost of parking at the end destination is of a level that exceeds that of the equivalent journey which can be made using Park and Ride.

4.5.4 Where Park and Ride systems can be delivered in this manner, it is recognised that there are a number of benefits which can be derived, including:

- Reduced congestion in the town centre / at the destination
- Improved road safety (through a reduced number of vehicle movements)
- Reduced parking demand in the town centre / at the destination
- Reduced noise and atmospheric pollution (through fewer vehicle movements)

4.5.5 Given that Folkestone is Shepway's principal urban settlement it is considered that this would be likely to provide the only, potentially viable location where a Park and Ride system could be implemented. As reported in the Highway Strategy however, there is not a considerable level

of congestion in Folkestone and there is unlikely to be a significant saving in journey time between travelling into the town by car or by transferring mode onto bus.

- 4.5.6 It is noted that there is currently no active bus priority in Folkestone and only one short section of bus lane (which is understood to not be used). For a Park and Ride to be seen as attractive therefore, it is likely that considerable investment would be required both in the Park and Ride site itself and the supporting infrastructure on the route between the car park and the destination.
- 4.5.7 Fundamentally though, given that only limited levels of congestion have been reported as part of the highway review, it is considered that there is only limited bus priority measures in Folkestone because they are not required and the attractiveness of a Park and Ride facility is thus expected to be limited.
- 4.5.8 Additionally, as there are a number of short distance routes which serve the town (A259, A2034, A2033, A20 / M20) it is considered that it would be extremely difficult to extract sufficient demand from any of these routes in isolation to support a viable Park and Ride service.

4.6 Summary

- 4.6.1 This parking strategy has considered the existing issues which have been identified in the district of Shepway, including those that have been raised through the consultation workshops. As such, a number of key measures have been identified and these are summarised below:

- Promote Workplace Travel Plans for existing sites
 - To be supported by initial site reviews to consider sites with most potential
- Promote balanced parking provision at new developments
 - Supporting Travel Plans to include targets and monitoring
 - Penalties to be included which can be administered by KCC
- SDC to consult on and adopt KCC's SPG4 and IGN3 guidance documents
- Integrate management of on and off street parking
 - Review off street parking charges
 - Review permit / season ticket system for regular car park users
 - Introduce on street parking charges
- Undertake a study to consider additional car parking at Folkestone West rail station
- Review management of car parking at Westenhanger rail station
 - Formalise parking at the station
 - Review parking management on Stone Street

- Promote access to station in connection with three local Core Strategy sites
- Promote 'visible' parking provision for use by tourists
 - On Street and Off Street parking options to be made available
- Park and Ride not expected to be viable for Folkestone



Public Car Park Locations - Folkestone



Public Car Park Utilisation - Folkestone