

Basingstoke and Deane
Strategic Approach to Parking

October 2008

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Borough is located within a prosperous part of the South East and whilst a significant proportion of the population and employment in the borough is in Basingstoke Town, the borough has a large, and dispersed rural population. Basingstoke town is identified as a regional hub in the emerging South East Plan (in part because it is highly accessible by both public transport and the car). The regional hub designation is also linked to the town being a focus for economic activity which is complemented by its status as a 'Diamond' for economic growth and investment within the South East Regional Economic Strategy and a 'Growth Point'. This poses a range of challenges in terms of the role and need for parking in different parts of the borough.
- 1.2 The borough has high car ownership and reasonable access to public transport is limited predominantly to the main urban area of Basingstoke and some road corridors connecting the town with some of the smaller towns (and settlements on route). For most people the car will continue to play an important role in terms of accessing services and employment because there is no other viable option.

2 Scope of the Strategic Approach

- 2.1 A number of transport and wider community issues and objectives have been identified which relate directly to how parking is planned and managed within the borough, so that strategies and policies for parking need to be addressed in a comprehensive and integrated way. The primary focus for this framework for parking therefore is as follows:
- Consider the way we manage parking within the borough from a social and economic perspective balanced against wider objectives in relation to climate change.
 - The need to support the aims of the Central Basingstoke Vision, to ensure that central Basingstoke maintains its vitality and viability, particularly in relation to competition from other town centres and in the light of expected levels of population growth
 - In order to support the Central Basingstoke Vision, assess the capacity of the Borough Council's surface level car parks in order to make best use of the land subject to vitality, viability and accessibility objectives
 - Provide support for the economic prosperity of the borough, and in particular key employment areas including Basing View, Viables, and Chineham Business Park
 - Provide a sound basis for the setting of the Fees and Charges for Borough Council managed car parks taking into account the links to wider objectives

- Support the Borough Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy
- Provide support for access to services in smaller centres, both urban and rural (particularly in the light of limited access to public transport)
- Achieve improved access to railway stations in the borough subject to wider considerations, including the impact of improved station parking on congestion on approach roads
- Manage the impact of commuter and town centre office workers parking in residential areas
- Take forward the development of appropriate parking standards for a range of uses

2.2 This strategic approach is intended to provide a framework for decisions and policy development, supported by an Action Plan which has a particular focus on the management of car parks within the ownership of the Borough Council and which will support the 'Central Basingstoke Vision' and the regeneration of Basing View. It provides a context for understanding the various aspects of parking over which the Borough Council has responsibility and how different aspects are often interlinked so as to underpin a cross-cutting approach to decision-making.

2.3 This strategic approach will be the subject of review as a number of different documents are developed or amended, including the Borough Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy; other LDF Documents; Town Centre Access Plans (being promoted through Hampshire County Council's 2006 – 2011 Local Transport Plan); The Community Strategy and future editions of the Council Plan so as to ensure that the document continues to be robust. It should be noted that the development of the strategy has taken into account council and community aspirations which have informed the first stages of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

3 Policy Context

3.1 The policy context for developing this strategic approach includes national advice, the Regional Transport Strategy and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (the South East Plan), Hampshire County Council's second Local Transport Plan and the Council's own policies and strategies. The emerging South East Plan, for example, recognises that for areas with a large rural hinterland the car will still be the main form of transport for the foreseeable future. At the county level the second Hampshire Local Transport Plan identifies that there is a need to, wherever possible, seek to reduce car usage where appropriate or manage its impacts in the most effective way. However, recent national studies and emerging guidance have recognised the role and importance of the car in relation to the needs of business and the economy balanced against the impacts that growing congestion and climate change can have on that same economy.

The Borough Council has recently adopted a 'Central Basingstoke Vision'. The 'Central Basingstoke Vision' identifies a number of aims which should be supported by this strategic framework and subsequent actions – particularly in relation to vitality, accessibility and providing a 'day out experience'. In addition the Borough Council's economic prosperity priority and proposals for the regeneration of Basing View provide an important context for this strategy, as will the work that the Borough Council is undertaking with partners in relation to the promotion of the borough. What is critical in taking forward the Actions that support this strategic approach is an understanding of the local Basingstoke and Deane context to ensure that the strategy recognises the wider (national and regional) policy context but provides a bespoke approach suitable for the borough's needs.

4 A Vision for Parking in Basingstoke and Deane

As a basis for future policies and decisions with respect to parking and related matters, the following strategic vision and approach to parking in the Borough is proposed:

Parking Provision, access and costs in Basingstoke and Deane should:

1. Take account of forecast and planned levels of population and related housing and traffic growth, including the implications of changes to the levels of inward and outward car movements
2. Support Community and Council objectives, seeking in particular to balance the conflicting implications of economic growth, infrastructure provision, community wellbeing and climate change
3. Maintain and enhance the attractiveness and viability of Basingstoke town as a regional centre for economic, retail and cultural / leisure activities and support the continuing viability of other centres and of rural communities
4. Recognise the need to encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking and as an alternative to use of the private car and the wider benefits this can provide in terms of traffic congestion, climate change and health.
5. Identify and implement opportunities to make more efficient use of council owned car park spaces and to support improving the quality of these spaces, particularly around Basingstoke Town Centre
6. Support and maximise the opportunities for regeneration, including at Basing View and in areas of the Borough where housing regeneration is planned

Based on the above criteria Basingstoke and Deane seeks to be an exemplar, as well as learn from 'Best Practice', in every aspect of parking. This will be in terms of policies developed, decisions made, and in implementation and delivery, including maximising opportunities through:

- 1 The high quality and cost-competitiveness of existing town centre provision.
- 2 Opportunities to work with partners to improve parking at train stations within the borough.
- 3 Greater flexibility in national guidance (as reflected in emerging Planning Policy Statement 4).
- 4 Recent and emerging technologies, including novel ways of paying for parking.

Policies and decisions should also respond to the challenges of the Borough Council's climate change strategy and increasing public recognition of climate change as an issue.

This strategic framework is supported by two Annexes which set out the background to, and issues currently associated with parking within the borough together with an Action Plan to implement the proposed Strategic Approach.