Chichester District Car Park Strategy 2010-2020
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Portfolio holder’s statement

The new car parking strategy for the next 10 years has taken us some time to prepare and many hours of discussion. The Car Parking forum has met very regularly and represented a variety of different interest groups throughout the District with all shades of opinion. Needless to say, we have not always been unanimous in our findings. However, what we have tried to do in this new strategy is to represent the major views that were expressed and which featured in our discussions.

We also discussed a large number of details, which do not appear in these pages. To do so would make the document unnecessarily long. However, these details have been well documented in the Forum’s minutes and the many reports, which we received and considered. These reports are listed at the back and, together with our minutes, they are available on the District Council website.

Public car parking is an important element of our local infrastructure. The rural nature of our district and the fact that it attracts many commuters and tourists heightens the importance of public parking to our communities. Provided and managed well it can contribute to the attractiveness, convenience and prosperity of a place to do business, visit or live in. Done badly it can contribute to congestion, have a negative impact on appearance and compromise the safety of road users.

This strategy attempts to balance the often-competing demands for space from car users and pedestrians and ensure that the public car parking service continues to meet the various needs of users over the next 10 years. This will not be easy and there are environmental and technological challenges and opportunities ahead of us. However, I believe this strategy, with regular review and the involvement of all partners, will ensure that the parking service continues to play the vital role expected and required.

Councillor Derek James
Portfolio holder for Community Safety
September 2010
Executive summary

The District Council, following consultation with stakeholders and with the support of the Chichester District Parking Forum, has approved the following strategy for public off-street car parking in the district.

Car parking is extremely important to the district in view of the reliance on the motor car in a large rural area and is essential to a large proportion of the population, both resident and visiting, to access vital services. Predicted growth in the use of the motorcar within our district suggests an additional 500 spaces, in relation to Chichester city alone, and a net increase of 60 spaces in Midhurst, will be required over the ten-year period of this Strategy. There is also an understanding that the desirability and chances of identifying and funding the provision of large new car parks within settlements presents a major challenge. However, the impact of the motor car on the city, our towns and villages suggests a need to manage our parking stock in a way that derives benefits to users whilst at the same time helping to militate against any negative effects that its use might have.

As a result the District Council has determined that the strategy, in relation to Chichester City, subject to the approval of separate business cases, should be based on the following principles for the next ten years:

1. Maximise the capacity of the existing stock by the introduction of, and search for, small scale innovative solutions
2. That additional capacity should be sought initially through at least one park and ride site, based on the principles of recognised best practice, through collaboration with partners and operators.
3. Provision for increased decked parking should be sought depending upon identified need and funding.

With regard to those other settlements outside of Chichester city a series of local parking plans have been developed in consultation with local communities. This strategy reflects those arrangements, which are generally designed to ensure that spaces are managed in a way that is convenient and appropriate for the needs of users.

The Strategy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
Introduction

The District Council owns and manages 4,200 public parking spaces in Chichester city. A further 1,353 spaces are provided in Fernhurst, Midhurst, Petworth, East Wittering and Selsey which are currently free to the user but where the introduction of some charges is planned for April 2011. An additional 900 spaces are located in car parks owned by the District Council in Bracklesham Bay, East Wittering and Bosham where charges are currently levied via a franchised operator. In 2009/10 total income from all car parks was circa £3.8m and expenditure was circa £1.1m. The Council undertakes the management of the majority of the car parks using its own directly employed car parks service located in the car parks office in Market Rd, Chichester.

The development of the Council’s public car parking service has been guided in the past by the previous strategy, which expired in March 2010. The key strategic objective of the previous strategy was that when spare capacity in the existing off-street parking stock in Chichester city dipped below 300 spaces then additional capacity was to be provided via Park and Ride. Whilst this condition came close to being met in 2008 the global recession that has occurred since has led to a reduction in demand for parking. However, as the economy recovers it is anticipated that demand will increase placing pressure on the existing stock.

The need for public off-street car parking in other settlements was covered by a series of Parking Action Plans that were informed by local stakeholders. The strategic principles of these plans have been brought forward into this renewed strategy.

Stakeholders who have met regularly, via the Chichester District Parking forum, to develop their ideas and views, have informed the Strategy. The Forum comprises representatives from:

- Chichester Residents’ Associations Co-ordination Group
- The City Centre Partnership
- West Sussex Association for the Disabled
- Chichester Chamber of Commerce
- The Federation of Small Business
- Sussex Police
- West Sussex County Council
- Chichester City Council

In addition District Council members and appropriate officers attend Forum meetings. Representatives from other settlements attended on an ad-hoc basis to inform local strategies.

The Council commissioned traffic consultants Mott MacDonald to provide technical support and have been informed by the work of others, including the Historic Towns Forum and Winchester City Council.

The contribution of all of these individuals and their respective organisations to the development of this strategy is acknowledged here.
Context

This strategy has not been prepared in isolation. The District has strong transport links with other areas in West Sussex, as well as places in Hampshire and Surrey. Influences on car parking do not stop at local authority boundaries. Indeed 17.9%¹ of those people employed in the District travel 6-12 miles (10-20km) to work (higher than any other district in County) and this level of daily commuting places extra pressure on the transport infrastructure and public parking in particular. District Council consultants, Mott MacDonald have estimated that over the life of this strategy demand for parking will rise in Chichester city by 500 spaces² and in Midhurst by 60 spaces.

This strategy plays an important role in supporting the objectives of other key strategic documents. Key themes within the Chichester Sustainable Community Strategy 2006-2026 emphasise the provision and promotion of alternative modes of transport to the car; identify the need for more housing across all tenures³, improved transport systems, the attraction and development of new businesses in the district and improvements to market towns to encourage growth and activity. New development will also take place in the absence of minimum parking standards, which, unless progress is made with the adoption of alternative means of transport, is likely to place additional pressure on the public parking stock. The Strategy also identifies the need to achieve a sensitive balance that protects the environment – the unique selling point of the district.

The West Sussex Transport Plan 2006-2016 contains key objectives to: reduce congestion by widening travel choice; improve road safety, accessibility, integration and the environment whilst enhancing economic performance. It identifies that in rural areas, demand responsive and flexible services help improve access. More people are now making use of dial-a-ride services, which provide essential door-to-door transport for people who cannot access public transport. Rural Bus Challenge funds have allowed the introduction of demand responsive services in Midhurst and Petworth. However, public satisfaction with bus services has not risen as fast as anticipated and cycle use did not increase as much as expected. In this context, and with 80% of the district’s population living outside of Chichester city, there will remain heavy reliance upon the motorcar; borne out by the fact that just 16.4%⁴ of households in the District have no car (compared to 18.9% West Sussex; 19.4% SE England and 26.8% nationally). The Plan suggests the consideration of charging mechanisms in conjunction with measures to facilitate sustainable travel. It also identifies the important role that managing and controlling parking can have on the reduction of congestion and

¹ Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2001
² Source: Chichester parking options review, November 2008: Mott MacDonald – using National TEMPRO (Department for Transport) trip model.
³ Identified in the emerging Core Strategy and will contribute to the growth in demand for public parking spaces. The South East Plan 2001-2016 identifies 9600 new homes will have to be built in the District between 2006 and 2026.
⁴ Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2001
the provision of spaces in accordance with local needs and priorities. The Plan targeted an increase in the proportion of journey to work trips by sustainable modes (public transport, walk and cycle) across the County, from 27.8% in 2000/01 to 30.8% in 2010/11.

The local context is reflected in the **Chichester Local Transport Strategy** that identifies the need to reduce traffic levels, improve safety, air quality and maintain economic activity, reduce pollution and congestion and improve accessibility. Indeed, residents in Chichester District have to travel further\(^5\) to access food stores, doctor’s surgeries, post office and schools than anywhere else in the county, emphasising the crucial role that transport generally and the car specifically plays in daily life.

"Properly planned transport can make a huge difference to an area. It can make places of work, education, shopping, leisure or health care easy to get to. It can enhance the local environment making places more attractive for visitors and businesses". (Chichester Local Transport Strategy)

Chichester District has the highest district CO\(_2\) emission in the county at 8.42 tonnes per head\(^6\) - 33% of this from transport emissions. This emphasises the need to manage traffic movements efficiently and reduce levels where possible. This requires a need to continue to seek opportunities to minimise the need for people to travel, in order to relieve the pressure on the road network.

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\(^5\) Sources: IMD 2007 West Sussex Rural Access to Services Programme; Evidence Baseline (2008)/ IMD 2004

\(^6\) Source: Local and Regional CO2 Emissions Estimates for 2005 - 2006 for the UK, DEFRA

The plan distinguishes the differing transport challenges of the urban area compared to the rural areas. Within the urban area (Chichester city and its immediate surroundings) there is a need to investigate future parking demands and continue to develop parking strategies to manage this demand, through the review of spaces and parking charges. In this regard the West Sussex Transport Plan 2006-2016 seeks to limit the growth in the number of vehicles entering Chichester Urban Areas between 7am and 10 am on an average weekday to 0.8% per annum. In addition to investigate the possibility of new technology to direct cars to available parking spaces within car parks within Chichester City and the future role of Park and Ride. Parking provision needs to be properly managed, with improved control over parking in residential areas and local centres. However, the **A27** is vital to transport provision within Chichester and the wider region and continued delays in central government funding for its improvement might hamper progress in terms of housing provision and adequate infrastructure links to any park and ride solution.

Within the rural area the dominance of traffic within the centres of Petworth, Midhurst, Selsey and other communities reduces their attraction and therefore the time people spend there. The availability of parking spaces at these locations, particularly for the disabled, can also make them unattractive. The creation of a **South Downs National Park**, covering most of the northern rural part of the District may to lead to an increase in visitors to the area, many of whom will arrive by car or coach, which will need to be managed carefully.

The County Council’s policy on parking charges is contained within the **Integrated**
Parking Strategy. This sets out a framework within which Chichester District Council should develop detailed policies, such as this strategy, to reflect local needs and priorities. In particular the Integrated Parking Strategy identifies the link between economic viability and adequate car parking in town centres, optimises the use of conveniently located short stay spaces, locate long-stay spaces in less central locations and the need to review charges to ensure that schemes cover operating costs.

“Expensive, remote or insecure car parking, poor public transport, badly designed charging schemes and delivery restrictions deter visitors, curtail visits and stifle business potential” Source: British Retail Consortium, 2009, 21st Century High Streets: a new vision for our town centres.

The District Council will prepare the Local Development Framework (LDF). A key focus of its Core Strategy will be how future development in the District can be managed so that it benefits the local area. As transport is one of the main concerns when considering new development, the LDF (or any subsequent replacement) and any future proposals will need to take into account the issues raised within this Strategy. This will include the need to identify potential park and ride sites as well as informing the strategy of potential new developments and the impact on the need for off-street public parking.

This strategy is therefore written within this policy context and should be seen as part of an overall transport strategy. For Chichester City, in particular, the timing of possible improvements to A27 will need to be taken into account. If highway improvements take place, they will be accompanied by a package of measures that seeks to improve accessibility by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Improvements to the A27 may improve the opportunity to create Park & Ride sites. Management of the supply of car parking in the City Centre (either in terms of supply or pricing) will be required to ensure the success of the overall package of measures to improve movement and accessibility in and around the City.

The likelihood of improvements to A27 should become clearer over the next 12-15 months. Work currently underway on “Delivering a Sustainable Transport Strategy” (DaSTS) is due to lead to a decision by the Department for Transport in the spring of 2012. Nevertheless improvements to the A27 are unlikely before 2018.

It is therefore essential that this Strategy is mindful of the importance of the often-changing context within which it is written. Whilst the Council owns and manages over 6500 spaces across the District the impact of private parking and on-street capacity should not be overlooked. The pace of technological change is also changing the context – from motor car engine technology, to methods of charging using the mobile phone, and messaging services for public transport. The adoption of such technology will be investigated as this strategy is reviewed to ensure that any contributions it can make towards delivering the vision are exploited.
**Vision**

This Strategy has been written to deliver the vision, approved by the Council’s Executive Board at their meeting in May 2008, for the delivery of off-street public parking in the district as follows:

“To provide and manage a range of safe, secure, attractive, well maintained and affordable car parking that meets the needs of residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters, in a manner compatible with the settlements’ character and environment, and so ensure the economic well-being of the District”
Objectives

This strategy has been written to deliver the vision described above. The strategy was determined following an analysis of several different options for the city and the preparation of parking action plans for rural settlements. The options were tested against the following objectives to ensure that the best options were selected:

- The option should be sustainable over the long term
- The option should be inclusive of the needs of residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters.
- The option should be compatible with the character and environment of the location being considered.
- The option should provide safe, secure, attractive and well maintained parking facilities
- The option should be affordable.
- The option should assist in improving the economic well being of the District or area to which it applies.
- The option should assist in improving the efficiency of the road network.

When formulating individual schemes pursuant to this strategy they will also be tested against these objectives to ensure they contribute to the vision.
Chichester City - options appraised

The following options were appraised in order to inform the final strategy:

- **Do nothing**
- **Do minimum**
- **Provide additional multi-storey capacity at the Cattle Market car park (leave remaining stock intact)**
- **Provide additional multi-storey capacity at the Cattle Market car park (close selected central car parks)**
- **Provide Park and Ride with selected central car park closures**

**Do nothing** – this assumes that no changes are made to the existing parking stock in terms of either capacity or means of operation. Over time, assuming customers do not switch mode of transport the existing stock will become saturated in those locations where demand is anticipated to increase (i.e. Midhurst and Chichester) leading to congestion, pollution. This option was therefore discounted.

**Do minimum** – this involves a series of small measures including the provision of variable messaging signing to key car parks in Chichester, minor increases in parking capacity and the adoption of “smarter choices”\(^7\) in partnership with West Sussex County Council. It is estimated that if effective, this will reduce the demand for parking spaces by 150 over the life of the strategy as well as making access to the existing stock for those who continue to need or choose to use it more convenient. The Council’s charging policies for car parking will also be sensitively used to influence demand without impacting on the local economy. This option is relatively low cost (£1.13m) and has the potential to reduce the need to provide additional capacity to satisfy demand. There are consequential benefits in terms of the impact on the environment. This is the favoured option and the key strategic policy of this strategy. However, the risk is that the modal shift doesn’t occur to the extent required and therefore further options were explored to provide back up.

**Provide additional decked capacity at the Cattle Market car park (leave remaining stock intact)** – this involves the construction of an additional 600 spaces by decking the existing car park. The net capital cost of this option is estimated to exceed £22.4m (2009 prices) and in the current financial climate is not affordable. Neither the return on investment at current parking charge levels nor the benefit that enabling development could bring make this a viable project at present. In addition the establishment of significant additional parking capacity at or close to Chichester city centre is likely to add to congestion and pollution. Therefore, whilst not discounted entirely, this option is unlikely to contribute in the early years of the strategy.

**Provide additional decked capacity at the Cattle Market car park (close selected central car parks)** – this option performs slightly better than the previous option since the net cost is lower due to the receipts obtained and congestion in the centre is reduced as a result of closing and selling some central Chichester car parks. However, as with the above option, whilst not discounted entirely, it is unlikely

\(^7\) Smarter Choices involves policies that are aimed at encouraging a modal shift away from the use of the motorcar to walking, cycling, public transport or car sharing and thus decrease the demand for parking spaces.
to contribute in the early years of the strategy.

*Provide Park and Ride with selected central car park closures* – this option provides an additional 800 spaces in a peripheral location(s) at an estimated net capital cost of £2.9m - £3.3m (2009 prices excluding land purchase) and annual revenue costs estimated at £220k - £300k per annum\(^8\). It also intercepts traffic before it gets to the city centre and in conjunction with the closure of some central car parks is likely to have a positive impact on congestion, pollution and the environment. This option is therefore the initial early years fall back option should the do minimum option fail to deliver the expected benefits. It is recognised however, that the A27 works are not scheduled until 2018 at earliest and that this might affect the timing/phasing of any park and ride scheme. Further study will be required to analyse the effectiveness of this option fully.

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\(^8\) These costs could be reduced considerably if existing bus services formed the core service and if central parking charges were increased.
Off-street parking provision in Chichester District

In order to deliver the vision in the most beneficial way i.e. lowest cost, maximum benefit, the off-street parking provision for the district will be developed in accordance with the following strategic principles.

Monitoring and Review - the capacity and use of off-street public parking will be regularly monitored to inform the need for future action, in particular to monitor the effectiveness of the “do minimum” option to encourage the use of alternative means of transportation and reduce congestion. This will target a reduction in 50 car trips per day per annum as a result of smarter choices. It will also ensure that the layouts of car parks make optimum use of the space available and that an undesirable amount of deflection into residential areas doesn’t occur. The need for park and ride will be triggered when the spare capacity in Chichester City car parks dips below 300 spaces. An annual review report will be produced with recommendations for further action as required.

Financing - the District Council’s ability to fund capital projects from its own resources is significantly diminished with no new funding available and existing capital allocated. Where there is a proven business case and a satisfactory return on investment then borrowing might be considered or internal short term funding supported where the payback is very quick. There is an assumption (as occurs typically elsewhere where Park and Ride forms part of an integrated strategy to reduce traffic in town centres) that any capital/set-up costs associated with Park and ride will be met by West Sussex County Council. However, developer contributions will be sought from Section 106 contributions where appropriate to support the needs of this strategy.

Charging – charges will be reviewed periodically and the principle of user pays will prevail. The level of charges will ensure that charges do not adversely impact the local economy, have undesirable displacement consequences and that they encourage use of off-street spaces rather than on-street provision in order to reduce incidences of congestion and improve road safety. Charges will also ensure that short-term spaces are available in convenient locations and that long-term needs are provided out of centre where possible. Care would need to be taken in adopting a pricing strategy for Park and Ride that would encourage its use in preference to car parks closer to the city centre without unduly penalising car park users for whom Park and Ride, because of its location, would not be an attractive option.

Where there are on-street charges the pricing of on and off-street parking needs to be simultaneously

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9 Chichester District Council’s contribution to the West Sussex County Council Variable Messaging Service is currently protected, as is a contribution to the Smarter Choices study from the Climate Change Partnership.
determined\textsuperscript{10}. This will be undertaken in close liaison with West Sussex County Council as highway authority.

There will be no charges for motorcyclists and scooters and as charging technology allows consideration will be given to differential parking rates for lower polluting vehicles.

\textit{Management} – the District Council is committed to the safety, security and convenience of customers, their vehicles and possessions while using a Council car park. In undertaking our day-to-day management function we will provide:

- Parking facilities that are well maintained, clean and illuminated to a high standard
- Clearly displayed information on parking charges and where to pay
- Clear signage to assist with traffic management
- Defined spaces for Disabled Badge Holders provided to approved national standards
- Regular maintenance and repair of equipment to keep disruption to a minimum
- Routine patrols by courteous, qualified and well trained uniformed staff who are able to assist

- CCTV and the “Safer Car Parks Award” for most car parks for the safety and security of customers.

The introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) in April 2010 has encouraged compliance with on-street regulations and therefore better use of off-street facilities or alternative modes of transport.

The council currently adopts a pay and display method where charging applies. The Council will continue to keep the method of payment under review in order that this most suits the varied needs of customers. The Council will continually keep under review technological advances in machinery and remote information (such as on-street information regarding vacant spaces and sustainable solutions) and where a business case exists will introduce new systems, in partnership with others where appropriate.

\textbf{Chichester city:}

\textit{Do-minimum} – the District Council will participate in the study to be led by West Sussex County Council’s “smarter choices” programme designed to reduce the reliance upon the motorcar as the preferred means of transport. The district council will also contribute to the County Council’s variable messaging signage (VMS) project so as to make it easier for customers to find vacant off-street

\textsuperscript{10} Source: Calthorp, Prost and Dender, 2000, Parking Policies and Road Pricing, Urban Studies, Volume 37, Issue 1, January 2000
spaces in the long-term car parks in Chichester City. The District Council will also continually review and implement, subject to a proven business case, minor increases in capacity of existing car parks by more effective layouts and modest extensions. In the early years this will include peripheral extensions (90 - 100 spaces) to Northgate car park, Chichester.

Park and ride (Chichester City) – there are now over 60 park and ride schemes operating successfully nationally. Should the “do-minimum” option fail to deliver the vision and monitoring suggests additional capacity is required for Chichester city then initially a Park and Ride Implementation Study will be prepared in conjunction with West Sussex County Council, to include consideration on charging, location, operation (hours/cost), funding, central car park closure, partnership, timing and routing. The service will be focussed on commuters and will draw on the experience of other successful schemes. This suggests that any Park and Ride scheme must be planned so as to encourage use in preference to driving into the centre whilst at the same time providing for the needs of those who genuinely require provision closer to the centre.

In order to ensure that the Council is able to respond promptly should the need for Park and Ride transpire it is essential that appropriate provision is made within the LDF (or any subsequent replacement) for site(s) to be earmarked for such use. The site(s) should ideally be located on the outside of the A27 ring road with a capacity of at least 800 spaces so as to serve vehicles approaching from the east and the west.

It is recognised that the A27 works are not scheduled until 2018 at earliest and that this might affect the timing/phasing of any park and ride scheme.

In the meantime the District Council continues to support a Christmas Park and Ride in conjunction with Chichester College to deal with peak demand at this time of the year.

Additional Chichester city centre capacity via decked development of existing car park – this option will be kept under review should the need arise and finance become available. Any proposal will need to consider the likely impact on congestion and the views of stakeholder groups.

Rural locations – local parking plans:

Bosham – this car park is operated under lease by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy and is an important harbour related resource. Capacity is felt to be sufficient and charges are in place. Apart from on-going management/maintenance there are no strategic issues relating to this car park.

East Wittering and Bracklesham Bay – There is sufficient capacity to deal with demand but the existing spaces
require improved management\textsuperscript{11} to ensure that they deliver convenient capacity for those with short term needs wishing to visit local shops and the peaks in demand that occur during the summer months. Therefore the Northern Crescent car park should be designated a short stay car park to encourage a reduction in use by long-term parkers and encourage a turnover of spaces for those wishing to find a convenient short stay space close to the shops and other local services. Provide an improved long stay facility on the Marine Drive car park with an increased surfaced area. When the opportunity presents itself at the end of the current franchise and post Civil Parking Enforcement, the in-house management of the seasonal car parks at both Marine Drive and Bracklesham Bay can be considered.

\textit{Midhurst} – demand predictions have identified the need for a net increase of 60 spaces over the life of this strategy together with improved provision for coach parking. Opportunities exist for this additional capacity to be provided in conjunction with the Grange redevelopment scheme approved by CDC in 2010 and estimated for completion in 2012. Monitoring and review of capacity and demand will also be critical in view of the establishment of a National Park with effect from April 2010 and the establishment of the Cowdray Heritage visitor attraction.

\textit{Petworth} – again there is sufficient capacity but management is required\textsuperscript{11} to encourage long-stay users to park further away from the centre. Therefore the Sylvia Beaufoy car park will be designated and managed as a long stay car park. Coach parking spaces within Pound Road car park together with the delivery facility are to be retained and protected.

\textit{Selsey} – capacity is considered sufficient with the only strategic policy related to the closure of East Beach car park at night to reduce incidences of anti-social behaviour.

\textit{Fernhurst} – capacity is considered to be adequate and no strategic changes are envisaged at present.

\textit{Other rural locations} – whilst the District Council do not own or manage any off-street parking in other settlements the important role that these facilities can play is recognised here. The Council will consider involvement in new parking facilities where for example major new development is proposed and will, where possible via the planning system, seek to protect community based local parking facilities.

\textsuperscript{11} This was to be controlled via a parking disk but the Council has subsequently decided to introduce charges to cover costs.
Conclusion

This strategy has been prepared following discussion and debate with many stakeholders. Its delivery and success will rely on the continued input and cooperation of many partners to ensure that the public car parking stock plays the vital role in the economic, social and environmental prosperity of the community. The strategy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains on track to deliver the objectives set.
## Action plan

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\(^{12}\) The Annual Review will include: smarter choices programme; number of vacant spaces at peak times; % of journeys to work by alternative modes (WSCC); growth in the number of vehicles entering Chichester urban area between 7am and 10am to no more than 0.8% per annum (WSCC); charging levels, technological advances and development pressures
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<tr>
<td>50 additional spaces at New Park</td>
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<td>90/100 additional spaces at Northgate</td>
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<td>Car Park infrastructure review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surface part of Marine Drive car park, East Wittering</td>
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<td>X</td>
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Appendices and Background documents

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