



Summary of the proposals contained in the Wiltshire Council Proposed Parking Strategy

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1 Introduction

Wiltshire Council's proposed new parking strategy forms a part of the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 2011-2016 which has just been published for public consultation. The strategy provides a high-level policy position on a number of factors including:

- Overall management of car parking in Wiltshire; and
- Setting of appropriate parking charges; and

The strategy is defined as a balance between supporting economic growth and being an effective demand management tool to encourage the use of sustainable transport. The strategy is concerned with three broad categories of car parking - on-street, public off-street, and private off-street. This summary document is generally limited to the proposals for public off-street parking, i.e. in council operated car parks.

The parking strategy is structured into seven sections, two of which contain the key proposals that are being consulted on; **parking policies** and the **options for a new parking charge regime** in Wiltshire. These form the basis of this summary document.

The summary of the proposed parking strategy is given in sections 1 – 4. Section 5 provides some observations on the strategy.

The public consultation period runs from Monday 12 July to 5pm on Friday 3 September 2010. The full parking strategy document can be found on the Wiltshire Council website <http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal>

2 Policy Proposals

The strategy includes 15 proposed policies. The public and stakeholders are asked if they support each of these policies. There are additional questions asking for support or comments on 21 other parts of the strategy. These are all shown in the full parking strategy document.

3 Parking Management Proposals

The council states that it is important for it to be able to manage the county's parking spaces within a framework that provides a level of consistency. To assist in this the council is proposing that Wiltshire is divided into four bands. These are shown below.

Band 1	Salisbury
Band 2	Chippenham and Trowbridge
Band 3	Amesbury, Bradford-on-Avon, Calne, Corsham, Devizes, Durrington, Malmesbury, Marlborough, Melksham, Tidworth, Warminster, Westbury, Wootton Bassett
Band 4	All other settlements

The strategy states that the council's historical approach to parking management has been for it to provide an increased amount of inexpensive car parking spaces to meet rising demand. It suggests that this has three main disadvantages:

- it uses up valuable land which could be used for other purposes (e.g. housing, retail and employment);
- it encourages people to use their cars more which leads to increased traffic flows, congestion, climate change emissions and other traffic impacts; and
- it often requires councils to subsidise the cost of providing and managing parking facilities.

This approach is described as leading to 'predict and provide'. An alternative 'manage demand' approach is suggested which, as much as possible, supports the vitality and vibrancy of local economies, and seeks to promote more sustainable transport choices. This approach might mean, for instance:

- setting parking charges which encourage short-stay parking (e.g. for shoppers) and discourage long-stay parking (e.g. for commuters);
- locating short-stay spaces in the centre of market towns and long-stay spaces at the edges of centres; and
- reducing the number of long-stay spaces and managing the number of short-stay spaces.

The reasons for limiting, relocating and increasing charges for long-stay spaces are because:

- it is usually more practicable for commuters to use other transport modes (e.g. cycling, public transport and car sharing (see <http://www.carsharewiltshire.com>)) since their journeys are typically to and from fixed locations, and form only a small part of the day;
- commuter parking typically occupies parking spaces for the whole of the working day; and
- commuters mainly travel at peak periods when the road network is most congested.

The reasons for facilitating and encouraging short-stay parking are:

- parking spaces need to be readily available to support the vitality, vibrancy and resilience of market town centres;

- the higher turnover of spaces allows more users to be accommodated per space; and
- shoppers are more likely to travel during inter-peak periods when there is usually spare capacity on the road network.

4 Parking Charge Proposals

The strategy states that parking charges will be set to:

- discourage commuting by car while protecting the vitality and vibrancy of town centres;
- avoid wasteful competition between different locations; and
- reflect the availability of alternative, more sustainable travel modes.

The strategy recommends parking charges for each of the proposed four bands and puts forward three options for consideration.

Option 1: Conventional

This option seeks to achieve a greater degree of consistency between and within the four bands, i.e. charges steadily decrease from Band 1 to band 4 and are level within each band. It is also proposed that parking charges are introduced at all car parks.

Short-stay parking has been priced at a premium over long-stay parking (where time periods overlap) to reflect the increased convenience of short-stay car parks.

The benefits of this option are:

- Low adverse impact on the local economy.
- No overall impact on the affordability of access by private car.
- Limited changes to car park signing.

The disbenefits of this option are:

- Negligible impact on reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, noise and air pollutants.
- Limited encouragement for people to use sustainable transport modes.
- No increase in parking revenue to enable the council to fund sustainable transport modes.

The indicative parking charges for each of the four bands in this option are shown in appendix A.

Option 2: Balanced

This option builds on the proposals put forward in Option 1 by modestly increasing charges in the larger Band 1 and 2 towns of Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge (where sustainable transport alternatives are more readily available), with smaller increases elsewhere.

The benefits of this option are:

- Low adverse impact on the local economy.
- Small negative impact on the affordability of access by private car.

- Some further encouragement for people to use the Park & Ride services in Salisbury.

The disbenefits of this option are:

- Limited impact on reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, noise and air pollutants.
- Limited encouragement for people to use sustainable transport modes.

The indicative parking charges for each of the four bands in this option are shown in appendix A.

Option 3; Radical

This option builds on the proposals put forward in Option 1 through modest to significant increases across the bands. As with Option 2, the level of increases are higher in the Band 1 and 2 towns of Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge where sustainable transport alternatives are more readily available.

The benefits of this option are:

- Positive impact on reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, noise and air pollutants.
- Encouragement for people to use sustainable transport modes.
- Significant increase in parking revenue to enable the council to fund sustainable transport modes.
- Strong further encouragement for people to use the Park & Ride services in Salisbury.

The disbenefits of this option are:

- Potential adverse impact on the local economy if town footfall levels are reduced.
- Significant negative impact on the affordability of access by private car.
- Significant changes to car park signing.

The indicative parking charges for each of the four bands in this option are shown in appendix A.

5 Observations

Economic v social and environmental objectives

The strategy states that one aim of the strategy including the parking charge regime, and Local Transport Plan 3 is to support the local economy by making it easier for shoppers and tourists to visit Wiltshire's market towns. The strategy also stresses, however, that there are other aims such as the need to encourage sustainable travel modes and help reduce reliance on the private car by setting parking charges at *appropriate* levels.

The strategy acknowledges that there are tensions between economic, social and environmental objectives and states that the parking strategy needs to 'find a balance between supporting economic growth and being an effective demand management tool to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives'.

The impression gained is that the emphasis of the parking strategy / parking charges regime is on the social and environmental objectives rather than on supporting businesses through boosting the economy. For example the strategy states that car parking needs to be carefully managed in order to help achieve the Local Transport Plan objectives. There are 11 objectives of which just one relates to supporting the economy; the other 10 are more concerned with social and environmental issues.

The strategy clearly states that parking charges will be set to:

- Discourage commuting by car while protecting the vitality and vibrancy of town centres;
- Avoid wasteful competition between different locations; and
- Reflect the availability of alternative, more sustainable travel modes.

It is also stated that parking charges will be used to manage demand. This suggests that increases in demand (i.e. more people coming to Salisbury for shopping, business or leisure) will be discouraged.

Opportunities for town and parish councils

The strategy states that there will be an opportunity for Band 3 towns to buy back a small proportion of short-stay spaces from Wiltshire Council to offer as free parking spaces. There is also a provision for Band 4 towns to take over the costs of operating and managing the car parks as an alternative to parking charges being set by Wiltshire Council. No such opportunities are offered to Salisbury City Council.

Visitor Attraction parking

The strategy states that the Wiltshire Council will work with tourist attractions to develop and implement transport assessments, green travel plans and other 'smarter choices' measures to reduce the demand for visitor parking.

Park and Ride

The strategy states that Wiltshire Council will review city centre long-stay parking provision and charges and utilise parking revenues to support the operation and maintenance of park and ride sites. The strategy does not contain any charging proposals for Salisbury's park and ride sites.

Parking management

The strategy proposes an extension of existing pay on foot, pay and display and text parking. There are no proposals to introduce pay-on-exit parking.

Parking charges

Overall research for the strategy found that parking charges in Wiltshire were significantly lower than in surrounding local authority areas and particularly compared to competitor towns.

It is proposed that parking charges are introduced at all car parks, i.e. there will be no free Wiltshire Council car parks in Wiltshire.

Parking charges will be reviewed every five years based on the factors outlined in Policy 3. Parking charges will be reviewed annually based on an assessment of parking charges in neighbouring areas and the prevailing retail prices index at the time.

It has long been understood that the completion and operation of all five park and ride sites would lead to a gradual increase in the charges for long-stay parking in the city centre; the rationale being that this would increase the usage of the park and ride service. This is acknowledged in the parking strategy. There appears, however, to be an emphasis in the strategy on significantly increasing charges for short stay parking. The strategy states, for example, that short-stay parking has been priced at a premium over long-stay parking.

Salisbury parking charges (Monday – Saturday)

The new parking charges proposed in the strategy will, when they are agreed, be implemented from 1 April 2011.

The strategy proposes that the charge for a 3 hour short stay in Salisbury will be between 16% and 53% more expensive than the current charge. The proposed Salisbury charge is between 25% and 43% more expensive than the proposed charge for the same stay in Chippenham or Trowbridge.

The strategy proposes that the charge for a 5 hour short stay in Salisbury will be between 7% and 50% more expensive than the current charge. The proposed Salisbury charge is between 28% and 37% more expensive than the proposed charge for the same stay in Chippenham or Trowbridge.

Salisbury parking charges (Sunday)

The strategy proposes that the charge for a one hour stay in Salisbury will be 66% greater than the proposed charge for the same length of stay in Chippenham or Trowbridge. The charge for staying all-day in Salisbury will be 33% more than the proposed charge in Chippenham or Trowbridge.

Appendix A

Proposed Off-Street Parking Charges (Monday – Saturday)

Option 1 - Conventional - Parking Charges								
Area / Band	Length of Stay	<1hr	<2hr	<3hr	<4hr	<5hr	<8hr	All day
Salisbury	Short	£1.20	£2.90	£3.50	-	-	-	-
Salisbury	Long	£1.10	£2.80	£3.30	£3.80	£4.50	£6.00	£6.00
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Short	£1.00	£1.30	£2.80	-	-	-	-
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Long	£0.80	£1.10	£2.20	£2.50	£3.50	£4.50	£5.00
3	Short	£0.40	£1.00	£1.80	-	-	-	-
3	Long	£0.30	£0.90	£1.70	£2.10	£2.70	£4.40	£4.80
4	Short	£0.30	£0.90	£1.70	-	-	-	-
4	Long	£0.20	£0.80	£1.60	£2.00	£2.50	£4.20	£4.50

Option 2 - Balanced - Parking Charges								
Area / Band	Length of Stay	<1hr	<2hr	<3hr	<4hr	<5hr	<8hr	All day
Salisbury	Short	£1.30	£3.20	£3.70	-	-	-	-
Salisbury	Long	£1.20	£3.10	£3.60	£4.20	£4.90	£6.60	£6.60
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Short	£1.00	£1.40	£2.90	-	-	-	-
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Long	£0.90	£1.20	£2.40	£2.80	£3.90	£5.00	£5.50
3	Short	£0.40	£1.10	£1.90	-	-	-	-
3	Long	£0.30	£1.00	£1.80	£2.20	£2.80	£4.60	£5.00
4	Short	£0.30	£0.90	£1.80	-	-	-	-
4	Long	£0.20	£0.80	£1.70	£2.10	£2.60	£4.40	£4.70

Option 3 - Radical - Parking Charges								
Area / Band	Length of Stay	<1hr	<2hr	<3hr	<4hr	<5hr	<8hr	All day
Salisbury	Short	£1.60	£3.90	£4.60	-	-	-	-
Salisbury	Long	£1.50	£3.80	£4.50	£5.30	£6.30	£8.60	£8.60
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Short	£1.20	£1.60	£3.20	-	-	-	-
Chippenham & Trowbridge	Long	£1.00	£1.50	£2.90	£3.30	£4.60	£5.90	£6.50
3	Short	£0.50	£1.20	£2.10	-	-	-	-
3	Long	£0.40	£1.10	£2.00	£2.50	£3.20	£5.30	£5.80
4	Short	£0.30	£1.00	£1.90	-	-	-	-
4	Long	£0.20	£0.90	£1.80	£2.20	£2.80	£4.60	£5.00

Proposed Off-Street Parking Charges (Sunday)

Band / Area	One Hour Charge	All-day Charge
1: Salisbury	£0.50	£2.00
2: Chippenham and Trowbridge	£0.30	£1.50
3	£0.20	£1.00
4	£0.10	£0.50

