

### **Wimborne Town Centre Car Parking Strategy**

The Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy is unsound as it does not in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report or elsewhere, effectively identify or address the key issues relating to, the adequacy of current or future car parking provision in Wimborne - Particularly in relation to future development, infrastructure and economic sustainability responsibilities, under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The First Question I would like to ask is:

**“What is parking for?” and “Who is it for”?**

The answer is clear for private operators - Their assets need to make a profit.

For local authorities it is less clear.

Is parking about raising revenue for local services?

Is it a service to the public, residents and visitors alike?

Or, is it to support businesses as part of an economic regeneration strategy?

**The key message is “don’t leave things to chance” and don’t be unclear!**

Having a plan for parking as part of a wider transport strategy that clearly states what the parking is for, is vital.

**That is why there must be a best management study to understand the parking issues and needs for Wimborne for the next 20 years.**

**A proper strategy for car parking in all places and times of the day is vital.**

The second Question I would like to ask:

**Is there a relationship between car parking provision and town centre prosperity?**

Why is this Important for Local Authorities and Local Communities?

Across the UK there is a continuing trend towards devolution; from the Central Government to the national administrations, from national administrations to local government, and from local government to local communities.

Less and less are rules and regulations being dictated centrally, giving communities and local authorities greater discretion over issues such as planning and economic development.

The Localism Act 2011 (England), Local Government Finance Act 2012 (England) and the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill (Scotland) are providing impetus to this process.

**Increased fiscal accountability is, in many cases, being paired with this greater decision-making and economic responsibility. For example, the Local Government Finance Act 2012 in England will allow local authorities to retain a proportion of what they collect in non-domestic rates (or business rates).**

**In reality there is no such thing as a free parking space; someone, somewhere is paying for it to be provided, serviced and maintained. The important question is who and is there a proper strategy for car parking in all places and times of the day?**

continued.....

**Local authority, tax payers, local businesses, residents, or the users? Ultimately, local government must begin to view the health of the local business community as the health of their own organisation and implement policies that support local businesses and that must include car parking.**

With this in mind, and in light of the Portas Review, the Association of Town & City Management (ATCM), the British Parking Association (BPA), Springboard Research Ltd and Parking Data & Research International (PDRI) joined forces to explore what evidence could be collated and what could be learned regarding the relationship between car parking provision and town centre prosperity.

**The Core Strategy should include a detailed Best Management Review of Car Parking Provision, I am referring to the structure of the charges, location of the car parks, quantity of spaces, designation of spaces for disabled users, safety and security measures and payment methods.**

## A Town Centre Strategy for Car Parking

The type of data to be included:

- Population size (and potential changes in population)
- Social demographics
- Current and Future Employment profile
- Geography of the catchment
- Present and Future Car ownership
- Public transport infrastructure and usage
- Existing and future town centre provision and business mix
- Physical characteristics of the town centre
- Spend and footfall patterns
- Vacancy rates
- Market share
- Competing destinations within catchment and town centre leakage
- Parking occupancy
- Cost of providing car parking (including depreciation and maintenance management)

**Gathering the appropriate data may lead to altering some of the following dimensions to Car Parking provision:**

- Cost, Structure and pricing policy (differentiation between short and long term, weekdays and weekends, peak and off-peak)
- Quantity of spaces and Location within town centre (for example, proximity to amenities, major access routes, or other modes of transport)
- Types of car parking (for example, on-street, off street, pay and display, pay on exit, barrier operated)
- Targeting of specific types of users (for example, shoppers, commuters, leisure users)
- Payment methods, Enforcement and fines
- Security measures
- Provision for disabled users

A best management review must involve consultation with all stakeholders in the Town  
Chris Slocock – Wimborne Business Improvement District