

Report on	Off Street Car Park: Accessible Parking
Date of Meeting	5 th December 2022
Reporting Officer	Terry Scullion, AD Property Services
Contact Officer	Terry Scullion, AD Property Services

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members on accessible car parking in Council's Off Street Car Parks and seek members approval to implement feasible parking accessibility improvements.
2.0	Background
2.1	The control of Off Street Car Parking commenced on 1 April 2015 with the transfer of the function from the DRD, Transport NI to the Mid Ulster District Council. In total the Council operates 23 Off Street Car Parks across the District. Seven of these contain charged spaces whilst some eighteen contain free spaces (two car parks in Magherafelt contain both charged and free spaces). In total there are 1,996 in total, including 60 accessible car parking spaces. A table giving the distribution of car parks and spaces is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
2.2	As members will be aware Transport NI employ, through a contract, NSL to carry out many of the management, monitoring and enforcement functions associated with the Off Street parking charging regime. Under the Agency Agreement Dfl, Transport NI continue to process the Parking Control Notices (PCN's) which are issued by the Traffic Attendants who are NSL employees.
2.3	As members will be aware in July 2022 the Environment Committee agreed to explore opportunities to improve accessible parking, particularly more family friendly parking provision in Council's Office Street Car Parks.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Accessible parking provision varies across car parks with some locations providing no disabled parking provision. In total for the Council District, 3% of the current off street parking provision is designated for disabled users.

<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p>	<p>There is no specific provision for Child and Care Giver parking in Council's off street car parks. Current guidance such as: Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure or BS8300:2009 Code of practice provide advice on disabled parking and wider spaces that are non-designated. Guidance would recommend that the Council review the number of disabled spaces provided in each of their car parks and compare them with guidance to ensure that a suitable number of spaces is required. This should also consider individual space size.</p> <p>As well as future proofing for an aging population, any future changes to parking spaces could be non-designated wider spaces that anyone, including families can avail of and be prepared in case more accessible spaces are required by population change requirements in the future.</p> <p>If Members wished to mark out and designate spaces as being dedicated to Children and their Care Givers were feasible and practical, Council would need its own guidance for use such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue badge holders would be advised to use these spaces in the absence of additional accessible parking • These spaces are usually to facilitate carers and children up to 12years old only • Heavily pregnant women can also advised to use these spaces <p>Also just to note that these types of spaces are most useful when they are adjacent to dropped kerb provision and pay points and/or close to the front of the car park, preventing the need for children to walk across busy areas.</p> <p>It is recommended to Committee that plans to implement additional accessibility car parking across the off street car parks as part of future planned improvements works, and that the matter is further considered at the January meeting of the Disability Forum to help inform future implementation plans. However approval is sought to pilot the implementation of upto three non-designated family friendly spaces in Union Street Car Park in Magherafelt.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Cost to implement additional non-designated car parking spaces in Union Street Car Park, Magherafelt funded from Off Street Car Park budget provision at a cost estimate of less than £1,000. Other future accessibility works would be linked to budget provision as part of planned refurbishment or improvement works.</p> <p>Human: Engagement with Council's Corporate Policy and Equality Officer, Mid Ulster Disability Form and Dfl.</p>

	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The primary Risk Management issues are in relation to Council setting a precedent on restrictive use and displacement of public parking provision in a busy town centre location, balanced with meeting the current and future needs of car park users.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>Off Street Car Parks are available to all members of the public and may only be restricted in terms of charging and access to certain vehicle types. Off Street Car Parks include designated spaces for Disabled Badge Holders.</p> <p>In order to comply with guidance it will be necessary to increase the number of accessible parking spaces across the 23 Off Street Car Parks by approximately 50%. Any variation to the parking restrictions would be subject to screening.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>Mid Ulster is highly dependent on travel by car and suffers from a deficit in Public Transport; Off Street Car Parks assist in the provision of access to towns and villages. Any variation to parking restrictions would be subject to screening.</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p>
5.1	<p>Members are asked to note the contents of this report and to approve the implementation of improved accessible parking across Mid Ulster Off Street Car Parks in the future, including the implementation of up to three additional non-designated family friendly spaces car parking spaces in Union Street Car Park, Magherafelt.</p>
6.0	<p>Documents Attached & References</p>
6.1	<p>Appendix 1: Off Street Car Parks In Mid Ulster list and provision</p>