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Mid Ulster Parking Strategy and Action Plan

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	5
1.1	Background	5
1.2	Parking Strategy Stages	5
2.	Baseline Review & Consultation	6
2.1	Existing Car Park Provision	6
2.2	Policy Review	6
2.3	Assessment of Usage	7
2.4	Current Management and Operational Strategies	8
2.5	Best Practice in Management and Operation	9
2.6	Current and Future Parking Needs	9
2.7	Consultation	10
3.	Parking Control Options	12
3.1	Overview	12
3.2	Consideration of Parking Control Options	15
3.3	Conclusion	15
4.	Strategy Actions	16
4.1	Introduction	16
4.2	Objectives	16
4.3	Actions for Mid Ulster District Council	16
4.3.1	Car Park Features	16
4.3.2	Parking Demand and Supply	17
4.3.3	Parking for Disabled Users	17
4.3.4	Magherafelt	17
4.3.5	Cookstown	18
4.3.6	Dungannon	19
4.3.7	Smaller Towns and Villages	19
4.4	Actions for Others	20
4.4.1	Transport NI	20
4.4.2	Translink	20
4.4.3	Private Car Park Operators	20
4.5	Action Plan	20

Tables

Table 1 - Options	13
Table 2 - Magherafelt Car Park Actions	17
Table 3 - Cookstown Car Park Actions	18
Table 4 - Dungannon Car Park Actions	19

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM have been appointed by Mid Ulster District Council to develop an off street car parking strategy and action plan which will apply to eight towns and villages within the District. An important strand of this is to ensure the appropriate provision and location of off street car parking in the Mid Ulster District Council area; this includes Castledawson, Clogher, Coalisland, Cookstown, Dungannon, Fivemiletown, Maghera and Magherafelt.

Mid Ulster District Council was formed on the 1 April 2015 and assumed responsibility for the former Cookstown, Dungannon & South Tyrone and Magherafelt Councils. As a result of Local Government Reform the Department for Infrastructure (DfI previously DRD Roads Service) transferred all its off-street car parks (excluding Park and Ride/Park and Share) to local councils on 1 April 2015. The Council is therefore now responsible for the operation of the 23 car parks previously operated by the DfI.

The purpose of the Parking Strategy is to address the overall requirement for car parking within the District in terms of availability, accessibility and convenience. Furthermore the Strategy will take account of the performance of the district's principle settlements i.e. Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt as places to work, visit and invest.

The key focus of the Strategy will evaluate and assess alternative options for consistent car parking operation throughout the District as currently there are varying tariffs and operational policies in each town and village.

1.2 Parking Strategy Stages

This strategy has been developed by following 4 stages:

- Stage 1 – Preparation and Information Gathering;
- Stage 2 – Analysis and Assessment;
- Stage 3 – Strategy Development; and
- Stage 4 – Develop the Action Plan

This strategy and action plan have been developed following completion of Stages 1 and 2 which considered the existing baseline conditions in terms of car parking provision / policies and assessment and review of usage, operation, tariffs etc. This also outlined examples of best practice in management and operation and any current or future car parking needs.

These preliminary stages also included consultation with a number of key stakeholders including Transport NI (within DfI) and Translink, but mainly via presentations to and discussions with the following groups during March 2017:

- Cookstown Town Centre Forum (7th March);
- Dungannon Regeneration Partnership (10th March); and
- Magherafelt Town Centre Partnership (29th March).

2. Baseline Review & Consultation

This chapter provides an overview of the findings of the Stage 1 and 2 studies for Mid Ulster. It also gives an overview of the consultations undertaken with a number of key stakeholders that has happened as part of Stages 1 and 2.

2.1 Existing Car Park Provision

Mid Ulster District Council operates 23 off street car parks in the following towns and villages throughout the District:

- Castledawson – 1 car park;
- Clogher – 1 car park;
- Coalisland – 2 car parks;
- Cookstown – 4 car parks;
- Dungannon – 5 car parks;
- Fivemiletown – 2 car parks;
- Maghera – 2 car parks; and
- Magherafelt – 6 car parks.

There is a mixture of free and charged car parks throughout the District with free parking in the majority i.e. 1,293 free parking spaces and 703 charged spaces. The Council-operated off street parking is free in all towns and villages except for Dungannon and Magherafelt, where there are some charged sites.

The current parking provision in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt is shown in **Figures 1 – 3** respectively.

Car parking charges are consistent across the Council area, however a different tariff regime is in place at Central car park in Magherafelt. Generally the tariff across the majority of charged Council car parks is set at 40p per hour, however a special rate of £1.00 for up to 5 hours is available. Central car park in Magherafelt is subject to an alternative parking tariff of 40p for each three hour period.

Disabled parking provision varies across car parks with some locations providing no specifically marked disabled parking provision. Three percent of the current off street parking provision is designated for disabled users.

An audit was completed of each of the Council controlled car parks and it was noted that there was a generally good standard in terms of surfacing, lighting and space size. However all of the car parks were found to lack dedicated CCTV, with some not having gates / barriers and / or appropriate signage. It was also noted that the majority of car parks included servicing or private accesses for businesses and residences.

In relation to car ownership, all areas within Mid Ulster display similar levels of car ownership with nominal differences noted between Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt. The District generally displays higher levels of car ownership in comparison with Northern Ireland; especially in terms of multiple cars per household. Between 60% and 61% of the working population travel to work by car compared to 58% in Northern Ireland. All other methods of travelling to work are comparable to the Northern Ireland figures with the exception of travelling by bus which is low within the Mid Ulster District.

2.2 Policy Review

There are a series of documents that set the scene for transport policy in Northern Ireland, and within these documents numerous specific parking policies are considered relevant when developing a parking strategy, including:

- Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS);

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- PPS3 – Access, Movement and Parking;
- PPS13 – Transportation and Land-Use;
- Regional Development Strategy (RDS);
- Regional Transport Strategy (RTS);
- Sub-Regional Transport Strategy (SRTP);
- Cookstown Area Plan;
- Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan;
- Magherafelt Area Plan; and
- Mid Ulster Local Development Plan 2030 – Preferred Options Paper.

These policies suggest that the development of a parking strategy for the District should be based on applying demand management interventions that better manage the existing car parking provision and tackle the congestion experienced in the towns during peak times.

On street parking provision and illegal parking are issues within the District and the parking strategy should seek to tackle peak hour car use with promotion of alternative sustainable modes, whilst still providing for car journeys outside peak periods.

The existing area plans identify car parks that are considered key to the success of maintaining the vitality and viability of the market town centres with policies in place to retain those identified. Future development proposals should be considered accordingly in order to prevent the loss of spaces at the identified locations.

Wider regional policies i.e. RDS, RTS, SRTP and SPPS discuss demand management, the importance of economic activity and growth to the success of hubs and clusters i.e. towns such as Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt. The area plans for these three towns have been prepared in the context of the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy which promote the shared vision of a “modern, sustainable and safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone’s quality of life”.

2.3 Assessment of Usage

There is a need to assess the turnover within the off street car parks controlled by the Council in order to further understand the characteristics of each individual town and village. AECOM carried out surveys at the car parks during September 2016 and February 2017.

There are four free of charge off street car parks available in Cookstown, each with occupancies of 50% or more. The Orritor Street and Burn Road car parks are typically full, with the other two car parks around two thirds full. Overall, around 80 – 85% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 20 – 60% in the four car parks.

Dungannon has seven car parks, four of which are charged. Occupancies at the individual car parks range between 20 – 60%, although the Perry Street East and Anne Street West (free) car parks were recorded as being full. Overall, around 55 – 65% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 20 – 70% in the seven car parks.

Magherafelt has four car parks, two of which are a mix of free and charged spaces and the remaining two are charged spaces. Occupancies at the individual car parks range between 40 – 110%. The King Street, Central and Union Road car parks are typically near to capacity or full. Overall, around 65 – 75% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 10 – 70% in the four car parks.

Most of the private car parks that are available in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt appear to be in reasonably high demand from the occupancy levels recorded during the surveys. For example the Supervalu car park in Cookstown showed 98% occupancy, and the two charged car parks on either side of Meeting Street in

DRAFT

Magherafelt showed occupancies of 80-90%. In Dungannon the Lidl/Argos car park was 80% full. The majority of the private car parks are associated with retail offerings within each town.

The surveys have shown that the most popular car parks in the three main towns of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt, based on occupancy levels are:

- Burn Road, Cookstown;
- Union Place, Cookstown;
- Anne Street West, Dungannon;
- Perry Street East, Dungannon;
- Central, Magherafelt;
- King Street, Magherafelt; and
- Union Road, Magherafelt.

It was also noted that parking volumes recorded in the February 2017 fieldwork in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt were slightly higher than those recorded in September 2016. In particular, parking volumes in Magherafelt had increased and this is worthy of note as the A31 Magherafelt Bypass opened in October 2016. Despite the Bypass opening and reducing traffic volumes in the town centre, this does not seem to have discouraged people from coming into the town and parking.

The car parks in the smaller towns and villages are generally well utilised with occupancy levels typically around 50% although the Cornmill/Lineside car park in Coalisland is approaching capacity.

It was noted that there was reasonable use of the charged car parks within the District, which suggests that tariff costs are not the primary concern for users and that convenience and location are the key considerations for those wishing to park.

A review of the parking tariffs in similar locations was carried out and it was found that the tariffs in Mid Ulster are comparable with other towns in Northern Ireland. Some of the other councils also offer a special tariff of £1 for 5 hours of parking. Both Coleraine and Omagh have varying tariffs depending on car park location and the proximity to amenities, with a slightly higher tariff of 50p per hour in some car parks.

In similar towns in the Republic of Ireland such as Clonmel, Athlone and Carlow, tariffs are higher in comparison to the Mid Ulster District i.e. equivalent to £1 per hour (more than double the price). Furthermore, maximum stay restrictions in the Council owned car parks in these towns range from a 2 to 4 hour maximum stay, these being implemented in order to encourage increased space turnover.

It was noted that some of the Council's car parks operate with an informal layout i.e. no marked spaces which can lend itself to untidy parking. This is apparent at Anne Street West in Dungannon which is designated as having 25 spaces but yet surveys showed in excess of 60 vehicles parked at one time due to the informal layout.

2.4 Current Management and Operational Strategies

Mid Ulster District Council has entered into an agency agreement with DfI Transport NI for the management of their car parks. In turn, Transport NI employ NSL through a contract to carry out the majority of the management, monitoring and enforcement functions associated with the off street parking charging regime.

Under the agency agreement, Transport NI continue to process the Parking Control Notices (PCNs) which are issued by NSL traffic attendants.

Financial data for a number of years was supplied by Mid Ulster Council. This detailed both revenue and expenditure. It is apparent that the charged parking regime currently has a revenue to cost ratio of around 4 to 1. The number of Penalty Charge Notices that are issued also cover the administration costs associated with enforcement.

When the car parks are examined on an individual basis in tandem with the usage data collected by AECOM in September 2016 and February 2017, calculations have shown that revenues per space per hour per day ranges

DRAFT

between 7 pence to 20 pence per space, per car park. This is compared to a tariff of 40 pence per hour (standard) or 20 pence per hour if the £1 for 5 hours offer is used.

It is evident that some of the busier car parks subsidise the less busy sites. Also, the lower tariff at Central car park in Magherafelt can be seen to encourage high occupancies by all day parkers.

There is no discernible difference between the amount of morning only and afternoon only parkers. In other words the data does not particularly suggest that the morning is busier than the afternoon and vice versa.

The number of PCNs issued at the Rainey St car park in Magherafelt is more than double the number at any of the other six car parks. Rainey St appears to be the busiest car park however the high number of PCNs may be related to very short stay parking where a fee is not paid, and/or the amount of vehicle servicing within the environs of the car park.

Other than the issues at Rainey St, the level of PCNs issued and therefore enforcement currently appears to be commensurate.

Furthermore it can be concluded that reducing the number of patrols from three to two per day, which commenced on 1 October 2016, did not seem to have had a detrimental effect on the number of PCNs issued and appears to be a more efficient means of carrying out enforcement.

2.5 Best Practice in Management and Operation

A review of best practice was carried out which considered how car parks should be designed in terms of layout, signage, lighting, security and access.

In overall terms, this review highlighted the following key features which could be considered applicable in developing the parking strategy:

- Ease of use in relation to payment options where applicable;
- Improved signage would aid in the redistribution of vehicles wishing to park and provide variance in preferred location;
- Improving access for pedestrians and those with mobility issues will improve the attractiveness of some car parks;
- The perception of safety in car parks is vital for continued use therefore creating defined areas with perimeter fencing, CCTV and improving the feeling of isolation at some car park locations could increase occupancy; and
- The setting of parking tariffs can be set to influence parking activity including the level of usage, and hence the traffic generated, the type of user and also length of stay i.e. space turnover and therefore increase revenue. Comparable tariffs outlined from surrounding facilities and towns are also important to consider in order to improve usage.

A key consideration in the parking strategy will be achieving parity in terms of parking charges across the council area. This needs to be carefully developed to achieve the best solution going forward.

Similarly the associated action plan will ensure that specific actions are developed for a range of stakeholders. This will ensure that clear lines of responsibility are developed and defined, maximising the potential for delivery of the respective actions.

2.6 Current and Future Parking Needs

It is important that consideration is given to how parking needs will change in the near future. The brief requested that both current and future needs and demand are considered. For the purposes of this study, this is for the next 5-10 years.

DRAFT

In light of the usage data collected by AECOM, an exercise was carried out to determine the overall level of parking demand and how this would compare with parking supply (both council and privately owned) in the future within Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.

Indicative demand forecasts were produced for 2021 and 2026, based on nominal growth rates of 1% and 5% per annum. The estimates suggested that with these growth rates there would be sufficient capacity in terms of the overall parking supply at 2021. At 2026 however, demand would be approaching capacity in the three main towns.

2.7 Consultation

As discussed earlier, the development of the strategy has included consultation with a number of key stakeholders. As parking within the three main towns in Mid Ulster is considered to be a key aspect of the strategy, discussions were held with respective town centre forums and partnerships during March 2017. These discussions comprised a presentation by AECOM on the findings to date, followed by round table discussions on parking issues and potential approaches to the strategy.

Cookstown Town Centre Forum

As expected, the primary discussion point in relation to Cookstown was the fact that the Council owned car parks were currently free to use whereas in Dungannon and Magherafelt there was a mixture of charged and free parking. It was also the only town out of 29 towns in Northern Ireland without such charges.

Naturally there was some hesitancy about the introduction of charges as potential intervention, although it was acknowledged that the surveys had shown that the Council's car parks in Cookstown were operating near to capacity and with a large proportion of all day parkers, which would limit growth in the near future.

The need for consistency in parking provision and tariffs within the District was discussed, and issues were noted with excessive demand for on-street provision in some locations. Concerns were raised that the introduction of charging could cause relocation of parking to adjacent residential side streets or nearby retail parks. This was acknowledged, however it was noted that the retail parks would be likely to react to this behaviour by introducing their own time restrictions or charging (if they did not have them already). The point was made that in relation to parking, location is key rather than the tariffs themselves. Cookstown has a good retail offer which is considered to be the main reason for its popularity; not the lack of parking charges.

There was also the need to support smaller, independent retailers, and parking should facilitate this through encouraging availability and turnover of parking spaces in the most desirable areas. The need for enforcement was discussed and this was largely associated with the current parking model (Pay & Display) which requires the associated enforcement.

The Union Place car park was also discussed and it was noted that ongoing agreements were apparently in place in relation to its use. This would require further investigation with local representatives in due course.

A separate discussion was held regarding Cookstown Market and the owner of the Market Charter, which is a document that dates back to the 1600s and relates to where the Saturday market in Cookstown can take place. It was noted that there are issues on Saturday mornings with traders who park to set-up their stalls next to the market on William Street / James Street but then remain parked there for the rest of the day as no enforcement takes place that day. This is unsightly and means there are fewer on-street spaces for others that day, and is something that could be addressed as part of the parking strategy.

Dungannon Regeneration Partnership

The discussions in Dungannon primarily focused on the duration currently allowed for on-street parking, even though this was developed to encourage space turnover. Some participants felt that it was punitive to give parking tickets for people who had run over time for genuine reasons, and if there was a way to address this it would be welcomed.

It was considered that there was a need to facilitate workers who park, however it was acknowledged that a previous pilot of making the Castle Hill car park free had been unsuccessful as it simply became full with all day parkers. Some issues with car park access were discussed and it was noted that Dungannon town centre's topography can cause some users to want to park as close to shops as possible.

DRAFT

There was an aspiration for parity in terms of parking price with the other large Mid Ulster towns, however there was also a general consensus that the overall parking offer appeared to work reasonably well and did not require significant intervention.

Magherafelt Town Centre Partnership

On-street parking issues were also noted in Magherafelt in some isolated locations. There was also a balance needed to ensure that parking for work was maintained. It was also noted that the recent implementation of the bypass had freed up traffic congestion and did not appear to have reduced off-street parking volumes.

Consistency in relation to parking price between the large towns was again mentioned. It was also noted that disabled provision should be examined in terms of the number of disabled bays within car parks and their location. There was also a desire to ensure that provision both on and off street would set a high standard for others to follow.

Transport NI

Discussion with Transport NI, who are responsible for on-street provision, noted that occupancies were generally high although there is currently not any form of on-street monitoring going on to determine accurate levels of demand. If all of the on-street spaces were used, people could move on to the off-street sites.

It was noted that the recent public realm schemes have changed the level of on-street parking in the three main towns. There were not any plans to change the current provision within the District although some minor changes such as extension to yellow lines or new disabled bays are under consideration in certain locations.

Translink

Translink operate a number of services throughout the District. They also provide a number of Park & Ride car parks. Those in Dungannon (at the bus station – 80 spaces), Craigadick (located on the intersection between the A6 and A29 south of Maghera – 128 spaces) and at Castledawson Roundabout (80 spaces) appear to be very well used, with the Castledawson Roundabout site due to be enlarged shortly. Other sites such as the recently opened Tamnamore (317 spaces) and Ballygawley (184 spaces) are typically around a third full.

A small amount of dedicated parking was provided at the bus station in Cookstown and in Magherafelt customers could use the adjacent Union Road car park. It was not felt that there were a large number of people parking in Union Road to use bus services however. In the smaller towns and villages such as Clogher and Fivemiletown, it was not considered that park and ride volumes were significant at the moment.

An issue was identified just north of the M1 J15 Stangmore Roundabout on the A29 Moy Road, with lots of layby parking seen on either sides of the carriageway, although it was not known if this was a significant number of park and ride/share users or if the parking was associated with nearby businesses located on that stretch of road. If some of these users are park and ride then a more suitable location for them to park may be at Tamnamore further east.

3. Parking Control Options

3.1 Overview

As a result of discussions with client and key stakeholders, it was considered valuable to set out a number of options for how the parking strategy could potentially be developed; the key focus being the towns of Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon.

It is important to note that these options consider approaches to parking charging and timing restrictions in relation to the Council's car parks. Charging for parking represents a key management approach to influencing where people park and for how long.

Given the outcomes of Stage 2, the provision of additional or reduced parking supply has not been considered at this juncture. It is considered that the private sector will take the lead on providing increased parking supply, mainly associated with development or as the market dictates in the future.

These strategy options are set out in Table 1. There are eight options presented, and in general they progress upwards in terms of the level of intervention to the level of paid/restricted parking.

The options are:

1. Doing Nothing
2. Making all car parks free
3. Make all car parks have between the first 1 – 3 hours free
4. Bring in charging in all three towns, but not at all sites
5. Bring in charging in all three towns, at all sites
6. Make all day tariffs comparably cheaper than short stay tariffs
7. Make short stay tariffs comparably cheaper than all day tariffs
8. Rearrange parking tariffs to provide a stronger link between location and price

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No.	Option	Explanation	Pros	Cons
1	Do Nothing	Leave car parks as they are i.e. mix of paid/free in Magherafelt and Dungannon, all free in Cookstown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change for customers to have to deal with Current arrangement is understood May be positively received locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues apparent in Cookstown with capacity Disparity between Cookstown and the other two towns Can only influence some of behaviour Parking not performing as well as it could Not in line with Council's Corporate Objectives
2	Make all car parks free	Make all car parks in the three towns free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes all parking 'fair' across the District Removes negative perception of enforcement, although some enforcement still required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No revenue generated to cover running costs, maintenance or legislation Impacts on Council budgets No control over duration of stay No ability to control demand; extra free provision may be required in the future yet with no revenue to cover it Associated congestion, pollution implications Previous pilots of making car parks free have not been successful; e.g. Castle Hill in Dungannon was full of all day parkers with no free spaces
3	1, 2 or 3 hours free in car parks	Make all paid car parks have a 1-3 hour free period to encourage short stay parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that it could encourage retail trips which are generally of this duration Reduce perception of over-zealous enforcement May encourage overall space turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All day parkers pay, whereas short duration do not – issue of fairness as the former are mainly town workers Difficulties with enforcement and proving that driver has definitely stayed over the period stated without paying Impacts on Council budgets Raises questions about how payment would work beyond this period, e.g. how would people know that they would need to stay over the time? Points towards an expensive technological solution which would probably not be balanced by reduced revenues arising from free 1-3 hour parking. The surveys show that some car parks already perform a key 'short stay' function, they have good utilisation yet they are charged sites, so questionable as to why this should be removed The 'free' period may discourage people from shopping/staying for any longer
4	Charging in all towns (portion)	Implement some charging in Cookstown to make it comparable with current provision in Magherafelt and Dungannon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would ensure parity between towns in the District May encourage space turnover in Cookstown Enables management of demand in Cookstown Also enables management of location i.e. shorter stay in locations closest to key attractions in Cookstown Introduces the concept of usage and payment within Cookstown, providing a revenue stream that is currently absent Encourages 'fair' behaviour, links usage with payment i.e. no usage, no payment Could encourage consideration of alternative transport modes in Cookstown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for overspill into adjacent streets in Cookstown Perception that parking is 'not broken' in Cookstown, so why intervene, even though occupancies are high The remaining free sites in each town are likely to remain full

DRAFT

No.	Option	Explanation	Pros	Cons
5	Charging in all towns (all sites)	Make all council car parks charged in all three towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures a completely consistent provision across the towns in the District Consistent pricing and enforcement Provides better management of demand overall within towns Provides a revenue stream to reflect usage of <u>all</u> car parks Could encourage consideration of alternative transport modes in the towns, depending on tariffs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to be negatively received and opposed at the moment Perception that could cause more issues than it solves at the moment Could cause overspill onto adjacent streets Additional parking equipment and enforcement would be required
6	All day cheaper than short stay tariffs	Make it comparably cheaper to park all day than it is to park short stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that workers (who would generally park all day) pay less 'per hour' than short stay e.g. shoppers, appointments Prioritise provision towards all day parkers e.g. town workers May be possible to allocate permits/badges to bona fide local workers to benefit from lower parking rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need to allocate certain car parks accordingly Could be used by non-workers to park all day for a low price, which is not the intention Could detract from attractiveness of towns for short stay parking May result in a high degree of all day parking, leaving fewer opportunities for short stay Could lower revenues as fewer parking acts for shorter durations
7	All day more expensive than short stay tariffs	Make it comparably cheaper to park for short durations than all day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that short stay parking acts pay 'less per hour' than all day parking acts Prioritises provision towards short stay parkers e.g. shoppers Could reduce the extent of all day parkers, thereby increasing turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could be viewed negatively by local businesses/employees May be difficult to allocate car parks accordingly Some users could park all day but just pay for two 'short stay' tickets one after the other Could reduce space for all day parking Could lower revenues as fewer parking acts for longer durations
8	Rearrangement of parking according to location	Maintain current arrangement, except introduce some charges to Cookstown. Generally make the most desirable car parks paid, and further out free/cheaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that short stay acts occur closest to key attractors, long stay acts are further out Provides a better match between price and desirability Improves turnover in key sites Reduces unsightly swathes of cars parked all day in key locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding on which sites should be treated differently could be difficult or contentious Individual town layouts may not be conducive to this approach; there could be local issues Need to introduce a second set of tariffs

DRAFT

3.2 Consideration of Parking Control Options

In relation to the first option, doing nothing, this option is not considered feasible, primarily because of the evident capacity issues in Cookstown and the need for consistency in approach across the District. Whilst users would not have to accommodate any changes in a 'Do Nothing' scenario, user inertia is not considered a significant enough reason for inaction.

Similarly, making all of the car parks free which is the second option, which might appear 'fair' across the towns would actually create inequalities amongst people who were unable to find a space and those who could, simply because they arrived first. This would remove any revenue and influence over parking and has been tried and tested before and found to be unworkable. It would also have a significant impact on Council budgets.

There would be inherent difficulties with allowing between one to three hours free within the car parks. Whilst it could encourage usage for short term parking, it would be difficult to monitor and could be open to abuse and would reduce revenues significantly.

Implementing charging in some or all of the car parks in the towns (options 4 and 5 respectively) would provide greater control over parking acts, enable better management of the car parks and facilitate ongoing monitoring. There is a need to rearrange park acts by location in order to make the towns function better, and charging is the most appropriate mechanism for doing this.

Whilst there is potential for overspill onto adjacent streets, this is likely to reduce in future as users would prefer to park in a car park. The main benefits would likely be increased turnover, management and parity between the towns. It would also provide a link between parking use and payment.

Charging at all sites would likely be negatively perceived, particularly in Cookstown, so it is suggested that partial charging could be implemented initially. This would provide the benefits listed above without a significant level of expenditure (P&D machines, signage and enforcement costs).

Options six and seven consider variable tariffs to prioritise long or short stay parking respectively. This is considered potentially viable in the long term, although more work would be needed to understand user needs more fully. Either of these options could inadvertently discourage some types of parking which could have an overall negative impact on how the towns perform. At this moment in time it is not recommended that tariffs are adjusted to reflect user type.

The final option proposes a rearrangement of parking according to location, with the most desirable locations again costing the most. This is also theoretically viable, however the three town centres are geographically compact so it may be difficult to allocate car parks appropriately. In other words, the car parks in some towns are all located within a similar distance of the centre of the town. However, this may be an option for the future.

3.3 Conclusion

Taking all of these options into account, it is concluded that the introduction of charging in Cookstown to ensure parity with the other two towns is of critical importance. More control of parking acts is also considered necessary in some of the other existing car parks in Dungannon and Magherafelt.

This approach will provide greater control over parking acts, enable better management of the car parks and facilitate ongoing monitoring. There is a need to rearrange park acts by location in order to make the towns function better, and charging is the most appropriate mechanism for doing this.

It is also considered necessary to then review how parking should perform in each town, and this is discussed in the next chapter.

4. Strategy Actions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter firstly sets out the objectives for the parking strategy. It then sets out the rationale for the individual actions for the parking strategy. Initially, actions for Mid Ulster District Council are considered. It then moves on to consider actions that could be completed by other parties such as Transport NI, Translink and other car park operators.

The Action Plan is also provided at the end of this chapter. It lists the individual actions, timescales and the stakeholders involved.

4.2 Objectives

In conjunction with the Council, a set of objectives for the parking strategy have been developed. These primarily consider the Council's economic, social and environmental objectives and include consideration of the issues identified in Mid Ulster during the Stage 1 and 2 assessments.

The objectives for the Mid Ulster Parking Strategy are as follows:

1. Ensuring a consistency of approach to parking across the District
2. Providing an appropriate level of parking to support economic vitality
3. Ensuring that parking takes place in appropriate locations
4. Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities
5. Providing high quality parking and information, ideally through technology
6. Providing parking for all types of users

4.3 Actions for Mid Ulster District Council

4.3.1 Car Park Features

This study has shown that there are a number of car parks that perform different functions to others and there are some key features that should be considered in order to ensure that the car parks are fit for purpose.

As such it is recommended that the Council review each of their car parks in respect of ensuring that:

- the car park layouts are adequate for vehicles to circulate;
- parking space size is appropriate;
- car parks are regularly maintained and cleaned;
- safety for users for addressed i.e. no unobstructed views, adequate lighting etc;
- there is adequate signage on approach to the car parks to reduce unnecessary circulation;
- internal signage is appropriate;
- payment systems (where applicable) are easy to use;
- operation through 'pay on foot' (i.e. barriers) should be implemented where possible; and that
- cashless parking is promoted.

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There are two nationally recognised car park accreditation ‘standards’ which can be sought to reflect high quality in provision. The first is the ‘Park Mark’ standard which examines how car parks can be improved to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and how provision can be improved for disabled users and parents with children, including increasing the number of dedicated spaces set aside for disabled users and families.

The second is the Disabled Parking Accreditation (DPA). The DPA focuses on improving the personal mobility of disabled motorists and recognises off-street parking facilities which are more accessible to disabled people.

It is noted that the Meadowlane car park in Magherafelt has already met both the Park Mark standard and the DPA. It is recommended that the Council investigates the process and investment required to achieve these two standards for their car parks.

4.3.2 Parking Demand and Supply

It is important to assess the level of parking demand on a regular basis. Demand ebbs and flows throughout the year, so it is important to monitor at comparable times each year to identify trends. This monitoring should record occupancy and duration of stay on weekdays in the first instance, with data also recorded on Saturday if necessary.

The increase of parking supply is not advocated as part of this strategy as there is adequate supply in Magherafelt and Dungannon based on the survey data. The capacity issues in Cookstown can be addressed to an extent through the introduction of a management regime, which is discussed in section 4.3.5, via a change in parking behaviour through the introduction of charging.

There are also some localised issues which could be addressed. It should be noted that private sector input may provide additional parking provision as the market dictates.

There are however forthcoming changes to parking supply that are coming forward as part of development and these are also detailed in the next sections.

4.3.3 Parking for Disabled Users

In addition to seeking DPA accreditation as detailed above, it is recommended 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.

Changes to provision in the respective towns are detailed in the next sections.

4.3.4 Magherafelt

The four existing car parks in Magherafelt are listed in Table 2. The table lists the current and proposed arrangements and the associated reasoning.

Table 2 - Magherafelt Car Park Actions

Site	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Reasoning
King Street	Free to users	Free parking maintained.	Located further out of the town centre, better suited to all day parkers. This will encourage these users to park here rather than other sites.
Central	36 free spaces 80 charged spaces	All spaces to become charged. Tariff changed to be consistent with the other car parks. Pay on foot to be implemented.	This is a key town centre site, and desirability should be reflected by charging. The lower tariff in Central does not align with desirability and should be changed. Introducing pay on foot will remove the need for enforcement and provides a better way of operating the car park.

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Site	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Reasoning
Union Road	91 free spaces 101 charged spaces	The number of free spaces should be reduced. The area between Castledawson Road and the bus station should be reallocated as disabled and parent & child spaces. Pay on foot to be piloted.	There are a high number of all day parkers in the free section and a better balance is needed. The area of the car park mentioned is located closest to the attractors, which is a key consideration for disabled users and parents with children. The layout of Union Road lends itself to a pay on foot pilot and this should be investigated. This would reduce the need for enforcement.
Rainey Street	241 charges spaces	Implement pay on foot within the car park through redesign, including access/egress with shopping centre car park. Reallocate more spaces around the car park as disabled, parent & child spaces. Any remaining spaces to be Pay & Display.	This is a high turnover car park, and implementing pay on foot would provide a better user experience and reduce/remove parking tickets. It would require a redesign however. Providing more spaces for disabled users and parents with children is necessary in this key location.

The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require management then the King Street site and remainder of Union Road should both be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

4.3.5 Cookstown

The four existing car parks in Cookstown are listed in Table 3. The table lists the current and proposed arrangements and the associated reasoning.

Table 3 - Cookstown Car Park Actions

Site	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Reasoning
Loy Street	54 free spaces	Free parking maintained	This car park is located further out from the centre of the town and all day parkers should be encouraged to park here.
Union Place	117 free spaces	Charging introduced. Possibly a pay on foot layout.	Union Place is a key site, located adjacent to William Street. Its desirability should be reflected by charging. A pay on foot layout would provide a better user experience. It would require a redesign.
Orritor Street	129 free spaces	Free parking maintained.	Orritor Street has spare capacity to accommodate transfer from the adjacent Burn Road. Further away from William Street than Burn Road, which is reflected in free provision.
Burn Road	106 free spaces	Charging introduced. Likely to be a pay on foot arrangement. Link through to Orritor Street to be maintained if possible.	Burn Road has the highest proportion of all day parkers and is located adjacent to William Street and therefore is slightly more desirable than Orritor Street. This would be reflected in charging. Layout would require redesign if pay on foot is to be implemented.

DRAFT

The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require management then the Orritor Street and Loy Street sites should both be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

4.3.6 Dungannon

The four existing car parks in Dungannon are listed in Table 4. The table lists the current and proposed arrangements and the associated reasoning.

Table 4 - Dungannon Car Park Actions

Site	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Reasoning
Scotch Street	161 free spaces 97 charged spaces	Unchanged	Car park performs reasonably well with adequate spare capacity.
Perry Street	56 free spaces 36 charged spaces	Make all spaces charged (Pay & Display) Note – site may be redeveloped as part of Masterplan	This is a desirable location adjacent to Market Square. Its desirability should be reflected by charging.
Castle Hill	100 charged spaces	Unchanged – all spaces to be charged (Pay & Display). Note – additional space to be provided by the Council through land purchase.	This is a desirable location adjacent to Market Square. Its desirability is already reflected by charging and this should be maintained.
Anne Street	25 free spaces 48 charged spaces	Anne Street E arrangement maintained (48 charged spaces). Anne Street W (25 free spaces) likely to be redeveloped. Replacement space to be provided – arrangement to be confirmed.	Anne Street E has low occupancies due to adjacent free site, however this will close as part of redevelopment opportunity. As a result occupancies may increase, therefore current arrangement should be maintained. Arrangement for Anne Street W to be confirmed as part of development.

The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require management then the remaining free spaces in Scotch Street should be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

4.3.7 Smaller Towns and Villages

There are a further eight Council car parks located in Castledawson, Clogher, Coalisland, Fivemiletown and Maghera. It should be noted that the Council does not currently have responsibility for car parks in other towns such as Moneymore, Augher and Ballygawley and therefore these have not been considered within this strategy.

Analysis of the usage of the eight car parks that the Council is responsible for has shown that the majority of them operate with ample spare capacity. The exception to this would appear to be the Cornmill/Lineside site in Coalisland which may be approaching capacity.

In Maghera and Coalisland, which are the next two largest towns after Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, there are forthcoming Public Realm schemes which should consider both on and off-street parking provision.

As such, it is considered that the actions detailed above in sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.3 are also carried out for these eight car parks, with a particular focus on regular monitoring in order to identify any particular issues.

It is not recommended at this time that changes to these car parks in terms of time limits or charges are considered. Most of these car parks are small and perform an important localised function within each of these small settlements, and it therefore such action at this time would not be considered commensurate in comparison

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with the apparent issues in Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon. However if issues arise in the future, further consideration should be given.

4.4 Actions for Others

Whilst the Council has control of off-street car parking, there are other key stakeholders who have direct and indirect parking responsibilities and influences.

4.4.1 Transport NI

Transport NI retain control of on-street car parking in addition to other highway responsibilities. Whilst Transport NI do not currently have plans to alter provision in Mid Ulster, it is recommended that this is kept under regular review.

Similarly, it is recommended that Transport NI carry out regular parking studies to inform these reviews. These studies should primarily record on-street occupancies, durations of stay and any infringements. This data can then be used to identify any particular trends and enable informed, evidence-based decision making.

As a result these studies may identify the need for greater control in on-street provision, but this will need to be examined in consultation with town centre stakeholders.

It is also recommended that Transport NI work closely with the Council to share parking data and develop appropriate signage for each town.

4.4.2 Translink

Translink operate a number of bus services in the District, many of which operate via dedicated Park and Ride sites. It is recommended that Translink continue to monitor the usage of these sites to identify trends.

In addition, Translink should regularly review the need for additional Park and Ride sites in light of future land use planning proposals and observed parking trends.

In the town centres, Translink should work with the Council to ensure that parking by bus patrons is appropriately managed and that any long term parking acts associated with bus journeys are located appropriately.

4.4.3 Private Car Park Operators

There are a number of private car park operators who provide parking for general users or as part of retail developments. These stakeholders also have a part to play in ensuring that parking 'works' in each of the towns.

These operators should ensure that the parking that they provide is used in the appropriate way by patrons. They should monitor the usage of their sites and advise the Council if they feel that patrons are not parking in an appropriate manner (e.g. all day parking in spaces intended for short stay retail trips).

The operators should seek to work collaboratively with the Council and Transport NI to ensure that the parking offer within each town is appropriate, i.e. in terms of location, price and availability.

4.5 Action Plan

The Action Plan is presented overleaf. This identifies each of the specific actions that are to be delivered within the life of the parking strategy (2026).

The action plan aligns these actions to the objectives presented in section 4.2 and identifies a timeframe and priority level. It further identifies the stakeholders involved, who should take the lead and who should provide funding. It then shows what the next steps are to ensure delivery of the action.

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Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x and abbreviation in either:

X	For Decision		For Information
Env	Committee		Council

Report on	Off Street Car Parking Strategy
Reporting Officer	Andrew Cassells, Director of Environment & Property
Contact Officer	Andrew Cassells, Director of Environment & Property

Is this report restricted for confidential business?		Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon		No	X
	Information relates to an individual		
	Information is likely to reveal identity of an individual		
	Information relates to financial or business affairs of a person (including the council)		
	Information relates to consultations or negotiations, in relation to labour relations matters		
	Information relates to claim which legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings		
	Reveals that council proposes to give a notice by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or make an order or direction under any statutory provision		
	Relates to action taken or to be taken in connection with prevention, investigation or possession of crime		

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval in relation to the implementation of the Off Street Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan.
1.2	Furthermore the report sets out the Timescale for Implementation of the Proposed Revised Arrangements for Off Street Car Parking within the Mid Ulster Council District.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Off Street Car Parking Function transferred to the Council from the then Department for Regional Development (DRD) on 1 April 2015 as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration and Local Government Reform
2.2	Members will recall that Aecom had been appointed to develop a draft Off Street Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan for consideration by the Council.

2.3	Members will further recall that they received an update on the development of the Off Street Car Parking Strategy from the Director of Environment and Property at the Environment Committee meeting of 14 March 2107.
2.4	<p>The Off Street Car Parking Strategy was developed by following four stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stage 1 – Preparation and Information Gathering 2. Stage 2- Analysis and Assessment 3. Stage 3 – Strategy Development 4. Stage 4 – Development of the Action Plan
2.5	The strategy and action plan have been developed following completion of Stages 1 and 2 which considered the existing baseline conditions in terms of car parking provision / policies and assessment and review of usage, operation, tariffs etc. This also outlined examples of best practice in management and operation and any current or future car parking needs.
2.6	<p>These preliminary stages also included consultation with a number of key stakeholders including Transport NI (within DfI) and Translink, but mainly via presentations to and discussions with the following groups during March 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cookstown Town Centre Forum (7 March) ➤ Dungannon Regeneration Partnership (10 March) ➤ Magherafelt Town Centre Partnership (29 March).
2.7	Current Operational Management
2.7.1	<p>Mid Ulster District Council has entered into an agency agreement with DfI Transport NI for the management of their car parks. In turn, Transport NI employ NSL through a contract to carry out the majority of the management, monitoring and enforcement functions associated with the off street parking charging regime. Under the agency agreement, Transport NI continue to process the Parking Control Notices (PCNs) which are issued by NSL traffic attendants.</p>
2.7.2	Financial data for a number of years was supplied to Aecom. This detailed both revenue and expenditure. It is apparent that the charged parking regime currently has a revenue to cost ratio of around 4 to 1. The number of Penalty Charge Notices that are issued also cover the administration costs associated with enforcement.
2.7.3	When the car parks are examined on an individual basis in tandem with the usage data collected by Aecom in September 2016 and February 2017, calculations have shown that revenues per space per hour per day ranges between 7 pence to 20 pence per space, per car park. This is compared to a tariff of 40 pence per hour (standard) or 20 pence per hour if the £1 for 5 hours offer is used.
2.7.4	It is evident that some of the busier car parks subsidise the less busy sites. Also, the lower tariff at Central car park in Magherafelt can be seen to encourage high occupancies by all day parkers.
2.7.5	There is no discernible difference between the amount of morning only and afternoon only parkers. In other words the data does not particularly suggest that the morning is busier than the afternoon and vice versa.
2.7.6	The number of PCNs issued at the Rainey St car park in Magherafelt is more than double the number at any of the other six car parks. Rainey St appears to be the

	<p>busiest car park however the high number of PCNs may be related to very short stay parking where a fee is not paid, and/or the amount of vehicle servicing within the environs of the car park.</p>
2.7.7	<p>Other than the issues at Rainey St, the level of PCNs issued and therefore enforcement currently appears to be commensurate.</p>
2.7.8	<p>Furthermore it can be concluded that reducing the number of patrols from three to two per day, which commenced on 1 October 2016, did not have a proportionate detrimental effect on the number of PCNs issued and appears to be a more efficient means of carrying out enforcement.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Existing Car Park Provision
3.1.1	<p>Mid Ulster District Council operates 23 off street car parks in the following towns and villages throughout the District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Castledawson 1 car park ➤ Clogher 1 car park ➤ Coalisland 2 car parks ➤ Cookstown 4 car parks ➤ Dungannon 5 car parks ➤ Fivemiletown 2 car parks ➤ Maghera 2 car parks ➤ Magherafelt 6 car parks
3.1.2	<p>There is a mixture of free and charged car parks throughout the District with free parking in the majority i.e. 1,293 free parking spaces and 703 charged spaces. The Council-operated off street parking is free in all towns and villages except for Dungannon and Magherafelt, where there are seven charged sites.</p>
3.1.3	<p>The current parking provision in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt is shown in Figures 1 – 3 respectively of Appendix 2.</p>
3.1.4	<p>Car parking charges are almost consistent across the Council area, with a different tariff regime in place at Central car park in Magherafelt. Generally the tariff across the majority of charged Council car parks is set at 40p per hour, however a special rate of £1.00 for up to 5 hours is available. Central car park in Magherafelt is subject to an alternative parking tariff of 40p for each three hour period.</p>
3.1.5	<p>Disabled parking provision varies across car parks with some locations providing no specifically marked disabled parking provision. Three percent of the current off street parking provision is designated for disabled users.</p>
3.1.6	<p>An audit was completed of each of the Council controlled car parks and it was noted that there was a generally good standard in terms of surfacing, lighting and space size.</p>
3.1.7	<p>However all of the car parks were found to lack dedicated CCTV, with some not having gates / barriers and / or appropriate signage. It was also noted that the majority of car parks included servicing or private accesses for businesses and residences.</p>

3.1.8	In relation to car ownership, all areas within Mid Ulster display similar levels of car ownership with nominal differences noted between Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.
3.1.9	The District generally displays higher levels of car ownership in comparison with Northern Ireland; especially in terms of multiple cars per household. Between 60% and 61% of the working population travel to work by car compared to 58% in Northern Ireland. All other methods of travelling to work are comparable to the Northern Ireland figures with the exception of travelling by bus which is low within the Mid Ulster District.
3.2	Assessment of Usage
3.2.1	There is a need to assess the turnover within the off street car parks controlled by the Council in order to further understand the characteristics of each individual town and village. AECOM carried out surveys at the car parks during September 2016 and February 2017.
3.2.2	<p>Cookstown</p> <p>There are four free of charge off street car parks available in Cookstown, each with occupancies of 50% or more. <u>The Orritor Street and Burn Road car parks are typically full</u>, with the other two car parks around two thirds full.</p> <p>Overall, around 80 – 85% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 20 – 60% in the four car parks.</p>
3.2.3	<p>Dungannon</p> <p>Dungannon has seven car parks, four of which are charged. Occupancies at the individual car parks range between 20 – 60%, although the Perry Street East and Anne Street West (free) car parks were recorded as being full. Overall, around 55 – 65% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 20 – 70% in the seven car parks.</p>
3.2.4	<p>Magherafelt</p> <p>Magherafelt has four car parks, two of which are a mix of free and charged spaces and the remaining two are charged spaces. Occupancies at the individual car parks range between 40 – 110%. <u>The King Street, Central and Union Road car parks are typically near to capacity or full.</u> Overall, around 65 – 75% of Council owned spaces are occupied at any one time. All day parking rates appear to be between 10 – 70% in the four car parks.</p>
3.2.5	Most of the private car parks that are available in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt appear to be in reasonably high demand from the occupancy levels recorded during the surveys. For example the Supervalu car park in Cookstown showed 98% occupancy, and the two charged car parks on either side of Meeting Street in Magherafelt showed occupancies of 80-90%. In Dungannon the Lidl/Argos car park was 80% full. The majority of the private car parks are associated with retail offerings within each town.
3.2.6	<p>The surveys have shown that the most popular car parks in the three main towns of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt, based on occupancy levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Burn Road, Cookstown;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Union Place, Cookstown; ➤ Anne Street West, Dungannon; ➤ Perry Street East, Dungannon; ➤ Central, Magherafelt; ➤ King Street, Magherafelt; and ➤ Union Road, Magherafelt.
3.2.7	<p>It was also noted that parking volumes recorded in the February 2017 fieldwork in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt were slightly higher than those recorded in September 2016. In particular, parking volumes in Magherafelt had increased and this is worthy of note as the A31 Magherafelt Bypass opened in October 2016. Despite the Bypass opening and reducing traffic volumes in the town centre, this does not seem to have discouraged people from coming into the town and parking.</p>
3.2.8	<p>The car parks in the smaller towns and villages are generally well utilised with occupancy levels typically around 50% although the Cornmill/Lineside car park in Coalisland is approaching capacity.</p>
3.2.9	<p>It was noted that there was reasonable use of the charged car parks within the District, which suggests that tariff costs are not the primary concern for users and that convenience and location are the key considerations for those wishing to park.</p>
3.2.10	<p>A review of the parking tariffs in similar locations was carried out and it was found that the tariffs in Mid Ulster are comparable with other towns in Northern Ireland. Some of the other councils also offer a special tariff of £1 for 5 hours of parking.</p>
3.2.11	<p>Both Coleraine and Omagh have varying tariffs depending on car park location and the proximity to amenities, with a slightly higher tariff of 50p per hour in some car parks. In similar towns in the Republic of Ireland such as Clonmel, Athlone and Carlow, tariffs are higher in comparison to the Mid Ulster District i.e. equivalent to £1 per hour (more than double the price). Furthermore, maximum stay restrictions in the Council owned car parks in these towns range from a 2 to 4 hour maximum stay, these being implemented in order to encourage increased space turnover.</p>
3.2.12	<p>It was noted that some of the Council's car parks operate with an informal layout i.e. no marked spaces which can lend itself to untidy parking. This is apparent at Anne Street West in Dungannon which is designated as having 25 spaces but yet surveys showed in excess of 60 vehicles parked at one time due to the informal layout.</p>
3.3	<p>Best practice in Management and Operation</p>
3.3.1	<p>A review of best practice was carried out which considered how car parks should be designed in terms of layout, signage, lighting, security and access.</p>
3.3.2	<p>In overall terms, this review highlighted the following key features which could be considered applicable in developing the parking strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ease of use in relation to payment options where applicable ➤ Improved signage would aid in the redistribution of vehicles wishing to park and provide variance in preferred location ➤ Improving access for pedestrians and those with mobility issues will improve the attractiveness of some car parks; ➤ The perception of safety in car parks is vital for continued use therefore creating defined areas with perimeter fencing, CCTV and improving the feeling of isolation at some car park locations could increase occupancy

	<p>➤ The setting of parking tariffs can be set to influence parking activity including the level of usage, and hence the traffic generated, the type of user and also length of stay i.e. space turnover and therefore increase revenue. Comparable tariffs outlined from surrounding facilities and towns are also important to consider in order to improve usage.</p>
3.3.3	A key consideration in the parking strategy will be achieving parity in terms of parking charges across the council area. This needs to be carefully developed to achieve the best solution going forward.
3.3.4	Similarly the associated action plan will ensure that specific actions are developed for a range of stakeholders. This will ensure that clear lines of responsibility are developed and defined, maximising the potential for delivery of the respective actions.
3.4	Current and Future parking Needs
3.4.1	It is important that consideration is given to how parking needs will change in the near future. The brief requested that both current and future needs and demand are considered. For the purposes of this study, this is for the next 5-10 years. In light of the usage data collected by AECOM, an exercise was carried out to determine the overall level of parking demand and how this would compare with parking supply (both council and privately owned) in the future within Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.
3.4.2	Indicative demand forecasts were produced for 2021 and 2026, based on nominal growth rates of 1% and 5% per annum. The estimates suggested that with these growth rates there would be sufficient capacity in terms of the overall parking supply at 2021. At 2026 however, demand would be approaching capacity in the three main towns.
3.4.3	As a result of discussions with key stakeholders, it was considered valuable to set out a number of options for how the parking strategy could potentially be developed; the key focus being the towns of Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon.
3.4.4	It is important to note that these options consider approaches to parking charging and timing restrictions in relation to the Council's car parks. Charging for parking represents a key management approach to influencing where people park and for how long.
3.4.5	Given the outcomes of Stage 2, the provision of additional or reduced parking supply has not been considered at this juncture. It is considered that the private sector will take the lead on providing increased parking supply, mainly associated with development or as the market dictates in the future.
3.5	Options
3.5.1	These strategy options are set out in Table 1. There are eight options presented, and in general they progress upwards in terms of the level of intervention to the level of paid/restricted parking.
3.5.2	The options are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doing Nothing 2. Making all car parks free 3. Make all car parks have between the first 1 – 3 hours free 4. Bring in charging in all three towns, but not at all sites 5. Bring in charging in all three towns, at all sites

6. Make all day tariffs comparably cheaper than short stay tariffs
7. Make short stay tariffs comparably cheaper than all day tariffs
8. Rearrange parking tariffs to provide a stronger link between location and price

3.5.3

The following Table sets out the advantages and disadvantages of each of the eight options.

Explanation	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Do Nothing		
Leave car parks as they are i.e. mix of paid/free in Magherafelt and Dungannon, all free in Cookstown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No change for customers ➤ Current arrangements understood ➤ May be positively received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Issues apparent in Cookstown with capacity ➤ Disparity between Cookstown and the other two towns ➤ Can only influence some of the behaviour ➤ Parking not performing as well as it could
Option 2: Make all Car Parks free		
Make all car parks in the three main towns free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Makes all parking 'fair' across the District ➤ Removes negative perception of enforcement, although some enforcement still required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No revenue generated to cover running costs, maintenance or legislation ➤ Impacts on Council budgets ➤ No control over duration of stay ➤ No ability to control demand; extra free provision may be required in the future yet with no revenue to cover it ➤ Associated congestion, pollution implications ➤ Previous pilots of making car parks free have not been successful; e.g. Castle Hill in Dungannon was full of all day parkers with no free spaces
Option 3: 1, 2 or 3 hours free in car parks		
Make all paid car parks have a 1-3 hour free period to encourage short stay parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Perception that it could encourage retail trips which are generally of this duration ➤ Reduce perception of over-zealous enforcement ➤ May encourage overall space turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All day parkers pay, whereas short duration do not – issue of fairness as the former are mainly town workers ➤ Difficulties with enforcement and proving that driver has definitely stayed over the period stated without paying ➤ Impacts on Council budgets ➤ Raises questions about how payment would work beyond this period, e.g. how would people know

			<p>that they would need to stay over the time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Points towards an expensive technological solution which would probably not be balanced by reduced revenues arising from free 1-3 hour parking. ➤ The surveys show that some car parks already perform a key 'short stay' function, they have good utilisation yet they are charged sites, so questionable as to why this should be removed ➤ The 'free' period may discourage people from shopping/staying for any longer
	Option 4: Charging in all towns (portion)		
	Implement some charging in Cookstown to make it comparable with current provision in Magherafelt and Dungannon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Would ensure parity between towns in the District ➤ May encourage space turnover in Cookstown ➤ Enables management of demand in Cookstown ➤ Also enables management of location i.e. shorter stay in locations closest to key attractions in Cookstown ➤ Introduces the concept of usage and payment within Cookstown, providing a revenue stream that is currently absent ➤ Encourages 'fair' behaviour, links usage with payment i.e. no usage, no payment ➤ Could encourage consideration of alternative transport modes in Cookstown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Potential for overspill into adjacent streets in Cookstown ➤ Perception that parking is 'not broken' in Cookstown, so why intervene, even though occupancies are high ➤ The remaining free sites in each town are likely to remain full ➤ May be a need to ensure that the proportion of paid and free sites are similar in the three towns
	Option 5: Charging in all towns (all sites)		
	Make all council car parks charged in all three towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures a completely consistent provision across the towns in the District ➤ Consistent pricing and enforcement ➤ Provides better management of demand overall within towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Likely to be negatively received and opposed at the moment ➤ Perception that could cause more issues than it solves at the moment ➤ Could cause overspill onto adjacent streets ➤ Additional parking equipment and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides a revenue stream to reflect usage of all car parks ➤ Could encourage consideration of alternative transport modes in the towns, depending on tariffs 	enforcement would be required
Option 6: All day cheaper than short stay tariffs		
Make it comparably cheaper to park all day than it is to park short stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that workers (who would generally park all day) pay less 'per hour' than short stay e.g. shoppers, appointments ➤ Prioritise provision towards all day parkers e.g. town workers ➤ May be possible to allocate permits/badges to bona fide local workers to benefit from lower parking rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May need to allocate certain car parks accordingly ➤ Could be used by non-workers to park all day for a low price, which is not the intention ➤ Could detract from attractiveness of towns for short stay parking ➤ May result in a high degree of all day parking, leaving fewer opportunities for short stay ➤ Could lower revenues as fewer parking acts for shorter durations
Option 7: All day more expensive than short stay tariffs		
Make it comparably cheaper to park for short durations than all day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that short stay parking acts pay 'less per hour' than all day parking acts ➤ Prioritises provision towards short stay parkers e.g. shoppers ➤ Could reduce the extent of all day parkers, thereby increasing turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Could be viewed negatively by local businesses/employees ➤ May be difficult to allocate car parks accordingly ➤ Some users could park all day but just pay for two 'short stay' tickets one after the other ➤ Could reduce space for all day parking ➤ Could lower revenues as fewer parking acts for longer durations
Option 8: Rearrangement of parking according to location		
Maintain current arrangement, except introduce some charges to Cookstown. Generally make the most desirable car parks paid, and further out free/cheaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that short stay acts occur closest to key attractors, long stay acts are further out ➤ Provides a better match between price and desirability ➤ Improves turnover in key sites ➤ Reduces unsightly swathes of cars parked all day in key locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Deciding on which sites should be treated differently could be difficult or contentious ➤ Individual town layouts may not be conducive to this approach; there could be local issues ➤ Need to introduce a second set of tariffs

3.6	Consideration of Parking Control Options
3.6.1	In relation to the first option, doing nothing, this option is not considered feasible, primarily because of the evident capacity issues in Cookstown and the need for consistency in approach across the District. Whilst users would not have to accommodate any changes in a 'Do Nothing' scenario, user inertia is not considered a significant enough reason for inaction.
3.6.2	Similarly, making all of the car parks free which is the second option, which might appear 'fair' across the towns would actually create inequalities amongst people who were unable to find a space and those who could, simply because they arrived first. This would remove any revenue and influence over parking and has been tried and tested before and found to be unworkable. It would also have a significant impact on Council budgets.
3.6.3	There would be inherent difficulties with allowing between one to three hours free within the car parks. Whilst it could encourage usage for short term parking, it would be difficult to monitor and could be open to abuse and would reduce revenues significantly.
3.6.4	Implementing charging in some or all of the car parks in the towns (Options 4 and 5 respectively) would provide greater control over parking acts, enable better management of the car parks and facilitate ongoing monitoring. There is a need to rearrange park acts by location in order to make the towns function better, and charging is the most appropriate mechanism for doing this. Whilst there is potential for overspill onto adjacent streets, this is likely to reduce in future as users would prefer to park in a car park. The main benefits would likely be increased turnover, management and parity between the towns. It would also provide a link between parking use and payment.
3.6.5	Charging at all sites would likely be negatively perceived, particularly in Cookstown, so it is suggested that partial charging could be implemented initially. This would provide the benefits listed above without a significant level of expenditure (P&D machines, signage and enforcement costs).
3.6.6	Options six and seven consider variable tariffs to prioritise long or short stay parking respectively. This is considered potentially viable in the long term, although more work would be needed to understand user needs more fully. Either of these options could inadvertently discourage some types of parking which could have an overall negative impact on how the towns perform. At this moment in time it is not recommended that tariffs are adjusted to reflect user type.
3.6.7	The final option proposes a rearrangement of parking according to location, with the most desirable locations again costing the most. This is also theoretically viable, however the three town centres are geographically compact so it may be difficult to allocate car parks appropriately. In other words, the car parks in some towns are all located within a similar distance of the centre of the town. However, this may be an option for the future.
3.7	Conclusion
3.7.1	Taking all of these options into account, it is concluded that the introduction of charging in Cookstown to ensure parity with the other two towns is of critical importance. More control of parking acts is also considered necessary in some of the other existing car parks in Dungannon and Magherafelt.

3.7.2	This approach will provide greater control over parking acts, enable better management of the car parks and facilitate ongoing monitoring. There is a need to rearrange park acts by location in order to make the towns function better, and charging is the most appropriate mechanism for doing this.
3.7.2	It is therefore considered that Option 4 provides the preferred approach.
3.8	Action Plan
3.8.1	<p>Objectives</p> <p>The objectives for the Mid Ulster Parking Strategy are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring a consistency of approach to parking across the District 2. Providing an appropriate level of parking to support economic vitality 3. Ensuring that parking takes place in appropriate locations 4. Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities 5. Providing high quality parking and information, ideally through technology 6. Providing parking for all types of users
3.8.2	<p>Car Park Features</p> <p>It is recommended that the Council review each of their car parks in respect of ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the car park layouts are adequate for vehicles to circulate ➤ parking space size is appropriate ➤ car parks are regularly maintained and cleaned ➤ safety for users for addressed i.e. no unobstructed views, adequate lighting etc ➤ there is adequate signage on approach to the car parks to reduce unnecessary circulation ➤ internal signage is appropriate ➤ payment systems (where applicable) are easy to use ➤ operation through 'pay on foot' (i.e. barriers) should be implemented where possible ➤ cashless parking is promoted. <p>There are two nationally recognised car park accreditation 'standards' which can be sought to reflect high quality in provision. The first is the 'Park Mark' standard which examines how car parks can be improved to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and how provision can be improved for disabled users and parents with children, including increasing the number of dedicated spaces set aside for disabled users and families.</p> <p>The second is the Disabled Parking Accreditation (DPA). The DPA focuses on improving the personal mobility of disabled motorists and recognises off-street parking facilities which are more accessible to disabled people.</p> <p>It is noted that the Meadowlane car park in Magherafelt has already met both the Park Mark standard and the DPA. It is recommended that the Council investigates the process and investment required to achieve these two standards for their car parks.</p>
3.8.3	Parking Supply & Demand

It is important to assess the level of parking demand on a regular basis. Demand ebbs and flows throughout the year, so it is important to monitor at comparable times each year to identify trends. This monitoring should record occupancy and duration of stay on weekdays in the first instance, with data also recorded on Saturday if necessary. The increase of parking supply is not advocated as part of this strategy as there is adequate supply in Magherafelt and Dungannon based on the survey data. The capacity issues in Cookstown can be addressed to an extent through the introduction of a management regime via a change in parking behaviour through the introduction of charging.

There are also some localised issues which could be addressed. It should be noted that private sector input may provide additional parking provision as the market dictates.

There are however forthcoming changes to parking supply that are coming forward as part of development.

3.8.4 Parking for Disabled Users

In addition to seeking DPA accreditation as detailed above, it is recommended 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.

3.8.5 Magherafelt

Current Arrangements	Proposed Arrangements	Reasoning
King Street		
Free to Users	Free Paring Maintained	Located further out of the town centre, better suited to all day parkers. This will encourage these users to park here rather than other sites.
Central		
36 free spaces 80 charged spaces	All spaces to become charged Tariff charged to be consistent with other car parks Pay on Foot to be implemented	This is a key town centre site, and desirability should be reflected by charging. The lower tariff in Central does not align with desirability and should be changed. Introducing pay on foot will remove the need for enforcement and provides a better way of operating the car park.
Union Road		
91 free spaces 101 charged spaces	The number of free spaces should be reduced. The area between Union Road and the bus station should be reallocated as disabled and parent & child spaces. Pay on foot to be piloted.	There are a high number of all-day parkers in the free section and a better balance is needed. The area of the car park mentioned is located closest to the attractors, which is a key consideration for disabled

		users and parents with children. The layout of Union Road lends itself to a pay on foot pilot and this should be investigated. This would reduce the need for enforcement.
Rainey Street		
241 charged spaces	Implement pay on foot within the car park through redesign, including access/egress with shopping centre car park. Reallocate more spaces around the car park as disabled, parent & child spaces. Any remaining spaces to be Pay & Display.	This is a high turnover car park, and implementing pay on foot would provide a better user experience and reduce/remove parking tickets. It would require a redesign however. Providing more spaces for disabled users and parents with children is necessary in this key location.

The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require management then the King Street site and remainder of Union Road should both be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

3.8.6

Cookstown

Current Arrangements	Proposed Arrangements	Reasoning
Loy Street		
54 free spaces	Free parking maintained	This car park is located further out from the centre of the town and all day parkers should be encouraged to park here.
Union Place		
117 free spaces	Charging introduced Possibly a pay on foot layout	Union Place is a key site, located adjacent to William Street. Its desirability should be reflected by charging. A pay on foot layout would provide a better user experience. It would require a redesign.
Orritor Street		
129 free spaces	Free parking maintained	Orritor Street has spare capacity to accommodate transfer from the adjacent Burn Road. Further away from William Street than Burn Road, which is reflected in free provision.
Burn Road		

106 free spaces	Charging introduced Likely to be a pay on foot arrangements Link through to Orritor Street maintained	Burn Road has the highest proportion of all day parkers and is located adjacent to William Street and therefore is slightly more desirable than Orritor Street. This would be reflected in charging. Layout would require redesign if pay on foot is to be implemented.
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The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require management then the Orritor Street and Loy Street sites should both be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

3.8.7 **Dungannon**

Current Arrangements	Proposed Arrangements	Reasoning
Scotch Street		
161 free spaces 97 charged spaces	Unchanged	Car park performs reasonably well with adequate spare capacity.
Perry Street		
56 free spaces 36 charged spaces	Make all spaces charged (Pay & Display) Note – site may be redeveloped as part of Masterplan	This is a desirable location adjacent to Market Square. Its desirability should be reflected by charging.
Castle Hill		
100 charged spaces	Unchanged – all spaces to be charged (Pay & Display). Note – additional space to be provided by the Council through land purchase.	This is a desirable location adjacent to Market Square. Its desirability is already reflected by charging and this should be maintained.
Anne Street		
25 free spaces 48 charged spaces	Anne Street E arrangement maintained (48 charged spaces). Anne Street W (25 free spaces) likely to be redeveloped. Replacement space to be provided – arrangement to be confirmed.	Anne Street E has low occupancies due to adjacent free site, however this will close as part of redevelopment opportunity. As a result occupancies may increase, therefore current arrangement should be maintained. Arrangement for Anne Street W to be confirmed as part of development.

The above proposed arrangements should be implemented in the short term (1-2 years) and then reviewed in light of usage data. If parking demand continues to require

management then the remaining free spaces in Scotch Street should be converted to charged parking within the timescales of the strategy (2026).

3.8.8

Smaller Towns and Villages

There are a further eight Council car parks located in Castledawson, Clogher, Coalisland, Fivemiletown and Maghera. It should be noted that the Council does not currently have responsibility for car parks in other towns such as Moneymore, Augher and Ballygawley and therefore these have not been considered within this strategy.

Analysis of the usage of the eight car parks that the Council is responsible for has shown that the majority of them operate with ample spare capacity. The exception to this would appear to be the Cornmill/Lineside site in Coalisland which may be approaching capacity.

In Maghera and Coalisland, which are the next two largest towns after Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, there are forthcoming Public Realm schemes which should consider both on and off-street parking provision.

As such, it is considered that the actions detailed above (Car Park Features) are also carried out for these eight car parks, with a particular focus on regular monitoring in order to identify any particular issues.

3.9

Implementation Timescales

A draft implementation timescale is detailed in the following table;

Timescale	Event
July 2017	Adoption of Option 4 by Environment Committee for Public Consultation
August-October 2017	12 week Public Consultation period
November 2017	Report to Environment Committee on the outcome of Public Consultation with agreement on the final preferred option
December 2017	Report to Policy & Resources Committee requesting permission to modify the Off Street Car Parking Administrative Order
January-February 2018	Consultation on the Amended Off Street Car Parking Administrative Order
March 2018	Report to Policy & Resources Committee to agree the amended Off Street Car Parking Administrative Order
April-June 2018	Implementation of the Actions as set out in this Report following adoption of the amended Off Street Car Parking Administrative Order

The above timetable is indicative and clearly dependent on the agreement of Council.

4.0

Other Considerations

4.1

Financial & Human Resources Implications

Financial: There are no immediate financial implications in the current financial year (2017/2018). Final Agreement of the Strategy will be supported by a costed Implementation Plan in relation to the proposed actions contained within this report.

	Human: Considerable Officer time in developing the Strategy.
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>DCAN 11: Access for People with Disabilities; In order to comply with DCAN 11 it will be necessary to increase the number of Disabled Parking Spaces by 43 spaces across the 23 Off Street Car Parks.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>The Council has agreed to harmonise service delivery across the whole of the Mid Ulster District. The implementation of this Off Street Car Parking Strategy is therefore reducing the risk of the Council being challenged in this regard.</p>
5.0	<u>Recommendation(s)</u>
5.1	That the Committee recommends to Council that Option 4 as detailed in this report is adopted as the Preferred Strategy Option and that the Council agrees to enter into a twelve week Public Consultation period in relation to the Preferred Option and associated actions.
6.0	<u>Documents Attached & References</u>
6.1	Appendix 1: Stage 1 & 2 Baseline Report (Aecom)
6.2	Appendix 2: Mid Ulster Parking Strategy and Action Plan



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Draft Off Street Car Park Strategy and Action Plan: Consultation Response Booklet

The Off Street Car Parking Function transferred to the Council from the then Department for Regional Development (DRD) on 1 April 2015 as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration and Local Government Reform.

At present Mid Ulster District Council operates 21 off street car parks in the following towns and villages throughout the District:

- Castledawson 1 car park
- Clogher 1 car park
- Coalisland 2 car parks
- Cookstown 4 car parks
- Dungannon 5 car parks
- Fivemiletown 2 car parks
- Maghera 2 car parks
- Magherafelt 4 car parks

In 2016 Council commissioned consultants to help develop a ten year Off Street Car Park Strategy and Action Plan for Mid Ulster, a document that sets out how we can provide quality off street parking provision. In developing the Strategy we have engaged with a number of key stakeholders including Transport NI (within DfI), Translink, Cookstown Town Centre Forum, Dungannon Regeneration Partnership, and Magherafelt Town Centre Partnership.

We would now like to have your views on Option 4 of the draft strategy and action plan.

OBJECTIVES

Q1 A set of objectives for the parking strategy have been developed. These primarily consider the Council's economic, social and environmental objectives as follows:

- Ensuring a consistency of approach to parking across the District
- Providing an appropriate level of parking to support economic vitality
- Ensuring that parking takes place in appropriate locations
- Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities
- Providing high quality parking and information, ideally through technology
- Providing parking for all types of users

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the objectives?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree the objectives are achievable?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If not, please explain why?

PARKING FEATURES & STANDARDS

Q3 Some car parks perform different functions from others and key features must be considered to ensure car parks are fit for purpose, When thinking about parking, please rank the features below in order of importance to you where 1 is the most important and 9 is least important: (please select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Car park layouts are adequate for vehicles to circulate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parking space size is appropriate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Car parks are regularly maintained and cleaned
<input type="checkbox"/>	User Safety (e.g. no unobstructed views, adequate lighting)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate signage on approach to car parks to reduce unnecessary circulation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate Internal signage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Payment systems (where applicable) are easy to use
<input type="checkbox"/>	Operation through 'pay of foot' (i.e. barriers should be implemented where applicable and practically possible)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cashless parking is promoted

Q4 There are a number of nationally recognised car parking accreditation standards which can be sought to reflect high quality parking provision and user experience (e.g. Park Mark or Disabled Parking Accreditation)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with investment in obtaining recognised car parking accreditation standards in Council's Off Street Car Parks?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree accreditation standards are achievable?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Q6 In addition to seeking Disabled Parking Accreditation as detailed above, it is recommended 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.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with proposals to improved park accessibility for users?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If not, please explain why?

OUR APPROACH – MAGHERAFELT TOWN CENTRE

Q7 There are a number of proposals for the Council car parks in Magherafelt Town Centre as follows:

- a. King Street – Free parking maintained, subject to current demand, as its located further away from the town centre its better suited to all day parkers. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for King Street?*

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- b. Central – Free parking to be removed and all spaces to become charged due to its proximity to the town centre. The tariffs changed to be consistent with other town centre car park locations, and Pay on foot implemented reducing the need for enforcement.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Central?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- c. Union Road – The number of free parking spaces to be reduced to better manage parking turnover and all spaces to become charged due to its proximity to the town centre. The area between Castledawson Road and the bus station should be reallocated as disabled and parent and child spaces, and Pay on foot pilot scheme implemented reducing the need for enforcement.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Union Road?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- d. Rainey Street – Reallocate more spaces as disabled and parent and child spaces. Remove pay and display parking as far as practically possible and introduce Pay on foot through a redesigned layout including access/egress with the shopping centre car park to improve the user experience.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Rainey Street?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If you disagree with any part of Q7, please explain why?

OUR APPROACH – COOKSTOWN TOWN CENTRE

Q8 There are a number of proposals for the Council car parks in Cookstown Town Centre as follows:

- a. Loy Street – Free parking maintained, subject to current demand, as it is located further away from the town centre it is better suited to all day parkers. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Loy Street?*

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- b. Union Place – Free parking to be removed and all spaces to become charged due to its proximity to the town centre. Pay on foot system to be implemented through a redesigned layout to provide a better user experience. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Union Place?*

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- c. Orritor Street – Free parking maintained, subject to current demand, with capacity to accommodate transfer from the adjacent Burn Road. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Orritor Street?*

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- d. Burn Road – Free parking to be removed and all spaces to become charged due to its proximity to the town centre. Pay on foot system to be implemented through a redesigned layout, including linkage to Orritor Street car park to provide a better user experience. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Burn Road?*

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If you disagree with any part of Q8, please explain why?

OUR APPROACH – DUNGANNON TOWN CENTRE

Q9 There are a number of proposals for the Council car parks in Dungannon Town Centre as follows:

- a. Scotch Street – Free parking maintained, subject to current demand.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Scotch Street?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- b. Perry Street – Free parking to be removed and all spaces to become charged due to its proximity to the town centre.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Perry Street?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- c. Castle Hill – Charged parking to be retained due to its proximity to the town centre.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Castle Hill?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

- d. Ann Street – Charged parking to be retained in Ann Street East, with Ann Street West site to be redeveloped with replacement space to be provided.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal for Anne Street?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If you disagree with any part of Q9, please explain why?

OUR APPROACH – SMALLER TOWNS AND VILLAGES

There are a further eight Council car parks located in Castledawson, Clogher, Coalisland, Fivemiletown and Maghera. Analysis of the usage of the eight car parks that the Council is responsible for has shown that the majority of them operate with ample spare capacity. The exception to this would appear to be the Cornmill/Lineside site in Coalisland which may be approaching capacity.

In Maghera and Coalisland, which are the next two largest towns after Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon, there are forthcoming Public Realm schemes which should consider parking provision. It is not recommended at this time that changes to these car parks in terms of time limits or charges are considered, unless there are changes in current demand. Improvements to features and standards will be considered.

Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals for the Smaller towns and Villages?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If not, please explain why?

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Transport NI retain control of on-street car parking in addition to other highway responsibilities. Whilst Transport NI do not currently have plans to alter provision in Mid Ulster, it is recommended that this is kept under regular review, including regular monitoring of parking acts.

Translink operate a number of bus services in the District, many of which operate via dedicated Park and Ride sites. It is recommended that Translink continue to monitor the usage of these sites to identify trends in relation parking and the town centres.

There are a number of private car park operators who provide parking for general users or as part of retail developments. These stakeholders also have a part to play in ensuring that parking 'works' in each of the towns.

All stakeholder should seek to work collaboratively with the to ensure that the parking offer within each town is appropriate.

Q11 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals for Stakeholders to monitor demand regularly and work collaboratively?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

If not, please explain why?

Thank you for completing the survey.

The closing date for responses is Friday 29 December 2017.

Please return your survey to Arlene Mcllwath, Environment and Property Department, Council Offices, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN, E:
arlene.mcilwrath@midulstercouncil.org

Technical Note

Project

Mid Ulster Parking Strategy

Client

Mid Ulster
District Council

Date

14.02.18

Job No.

60563245

Author

Claire McComish

Checked

Peter Morrow

Approved

Peter Morrow

Parking Usage and Duration Surveys – February 2018

BACKGROUND

AECOM has been appointed by Mid Ulster District Council to develop an off-street parking strategy and action plan. The work to date has included surveys of usage in the council's car parks. Previous surveys were undertaken in September 2016 and February 2017.

The Council requested AECOM to carry out like-for-like surveys in February 2018 to those that were done in February 2017 at the council's car parks in Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon.

This technical note details the data collected in February 2018 and compares it with the previously collected data.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

AECOM carried out the surveys on Wednesday 7th February via manual observation. The weather conditions were cold with patches of rain occurring the day. No disruptions were noted within the three town centres and all of the car parks were fully accessible.

Data was collected at each car park twice during the day; first between 10:00 – 12:00 and then between 14:00 – 16:00. On both occasions the surveyors recorded the number of vehicles parked in each site and also recorded partial registration numbers of each vehicle.

The data was then collated into analysis software and the number of parked vehicles was summed. The partial registration numbers were then matched between the morning and afternoon in order to provide an estimate of how many vehicles were noted on both occasions, and therefore to provide an estimation of how many vehicles were parked for a long duration (+4 hours).

RESULTS AND COMPARISON

The results of the surveys for each car park are shown in the following tables for each of the three respective towns.

The tables firstly show the number of vehicles recorded and the resultant occupancy. The tables also show the number of vehicles that were seen in the morning only, the afternoon only, and also matched between the two periods and therefore determined to be long stay.

The final row of the tables shows the estimated proportion of parked vehicles that are long stay in comparison to the totals parked during each of the two periods. So by way of example, if 50 vehicles were seen in both periods and the total parked was 70 in the morning and 80 in the afternoon, the estimated proportion of long stay would be the average of $50/70$ (71%) and $50/80$ (63%) = 67% overall.

The final tables show the overall results for each the towns as a whole.

DUNGANNON

The results for the seven car parks in Dungannon (Tables 1 and 2) would suggest the following when considering the data collected on three separate occasions:

- Scotch Street South (free) – occupancy between 50-70%, up to 70% of which are long stay parkers.
- Scotch Street North (charged) – occupancy between 10-30%, up to 50% of which are long stay parkers.
- Perry Street East (free) – occupancy between 100-120%, up to 85% of which are long stay parkers.
- Perry Street East (charged) – occupancy between 20-40%, up to 60% of which are long stay parkers.
- Caste Hill (charged) – occupancy between 40-85%, up to 50% of which are long stay parkers.
- Anne Street West (free) – occupancy is currently around double the current formalised provision, up to 70% of which are long stay parkers.
- Anne Street East (charged) – occupancy between 25-30%, up to 85% of which are long stay parkers.

Overall (Table 3), it can be seen that:

- There are generally static levels of demand for the charged sites but increasing demand for the free sites.
- Overall, demand has increased over the period when the surveys have been carried out.
- The occupancy of the free car parks has increased and they are now considered to be operating at capacity (NB: there is currently ample space at Anne St W but this is part of a forthcoming development site), but there is spare capacity in the charged sites.
- The proportion of long stay parking has increased marginally in the charged sites but it has increased noticeably in the free sites.
- Around 65% of the total capacity is taken up throughout the day (NB: Anne Street West provision).
- Overall, long stay parking currently represents two-thirds of demand, which is an increase of around 15% since the first set of surveys were carried out. This represents 38% of the total number of spaces that are used for long stay parking.

Table 1 – Dungannon Occupancy Survey Results – Individual Sites Part 1

Off Street Car Parks	Scotch St South			Scotch St North			Perry St East			Perry St West		
Tariff	Free			Charged			Free			Charged		
No. of Spaces	161			97			56			36		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	111	89	71	14	20	29	68	63	61	15	8	13
AM Occ %	69%	55%	44%	14%	21%	30%	121%	113%	109%	42%	22%	36%
PM Count	114	81	93	7	23	25	66	61	57	6	9	8
PM Occ	71%	50%	58%	7%	24%	26%	118%	109%	102%	17%	25%	22%
Seen AM only	38	46	34	12	8	15	12	12	23	10	6	6
Seen PM only	41	38	56	5	11	11	10	10	19	1	7	11
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	74	43	37	2	12	14	57	51	38	5	2	2
Long Stay Parkers (%)	66%	51%	46%	21%	56%	52%	85%	82%	64%	58%	24%	20%

Source: AECOM site surveys

Table 2 – Dungannon Occupancy Survey Results – Individual Sites Part 2

Off Street Car Parks	Castle Hill			Anne Street West			Anne Street East		
Tariff	Charged			Free			Charged		
No. of Spaces	100			25*			48		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	44	51	85	49	44	65	12	13	15
AM Occ %	44%	51%	85%	196%	176%	260%	25%	27%	31%
PM Count	45	62	40	47	53	61	11	12	14
PM Occ	45%	62%	40%	188%	212%	244%	23%	25%	29%
Seen AM only	26	24	67	16	15	22	10	9	10
Seen PM only	27	35	22	14	24	18	9	8	9
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	18	27	18	34	29	43	10	4	5
Long Stay Parkers (%)	40%	48%	33%	71%	60%	68%	87%	32%	35%

Source: AECOM site surveys. *spaces not lined out

Table 3 – Dungannon Occupancy Survey Results – Overall

Off Street Car Parks	All Charged Sites			All Free Sites			All Sites		
Tariff	Charged			Free			Charged & Free		
No. of Spaces	281			242*			523		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	85	92	142	228	196	197	313	288	339
AM Occ %	30%	33%	51%	94%	81%	81%	60%	55%	65%
PM Count	69	106	87	227	195	211	296	301	298
PM Occ	25%	38%	31%	94%	81%	87%	57%	58%	57%
Seen AM only	58	47	98	66	73	79	124	120	177
Seen PM only	42	61	53	65	72	93	107	133	146
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	35	45	39	165	123	118	200	168	157
Long Stay Parkers (%)	46%	46%	36%	73%	63%	58%	66%	57%	49%

Source: AECOM site surveys. *spaces not lined out at Anne St West.

COOKSTOWN

The results for the four free car parks in Cookstown (Table 4) would suggest the following when considering the data collected on three separate occasions:

- Loy Street – occupancy between 50-75%, up to 60% of which are long stay parkers.
- Union Place – occupancy between 90-100%, up to 75% of which are long stay parkers.
- Orritor Street – occupancy between 30-70%, up to 60% of which are long stay parkers.
- Burn Road – occupancy between 90-100%, up to 75% of which are long stay parkers.
- Two out of the four car parks are effectively full for most of the day; these being Union Place and Burn Road which are located closest geographically to the centre of the town.

Overall (Table 5), it can be seen that:

- There are generally static levels of demand overall, taking up around 70-85% of available capacity.
- There appears to have been a slight drop in overall demand in the car parks between Feb 2017 and Feb 2018, although this is only around 40-60 vehicles and is not considered to be related to the influence of parking as no changes have occurred during this period.
- The proportion of long stay parking has increased from around 60% of overall demand up to nearly 70%. This represents 47% of the total number of spaces that are used for long stay parking.

Table 4 – Cookstown Occupancy Survey Results – Individual Sites

Off Street Car Parks	Loy Street			Union Place			Orritor Street			Burn Road		
Tariff	Free			Free			Free			Free		
No. of Spaces	54			117			129			106		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	29	41	31	120	120	103	43	58	75	93	110	110
AM Occ %	54%	76%	57%	103%	103%	88%	33%	45%	58%	88%	104%	104%
PM Count	29	33	27	117	103	116	43	93	87	90	109	105
PM Occ	54%	61%	50%	100%	88%	99%	33%	72%	67%	85%	103%	99%
Seen AM only	11	23	15	32	53	38	22	30	40	32	30	34
Seen PM only	11	15	11	29	36	51	22	65	52	29	29	29
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	18	18	16	89	67	65	24	28	35	61	80	76
Long Stay Parkers (%)	62%	49%	55%	75%	60%	60%	56%	39%	43%	67%	73%	71%

Source: AECOM site surveys

Table 5 – Cookstown Occupancy Survey Results – Overall

Off Street Car Parks	All Sites		
Tariff	Free		
No. of Spaces	406		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	285	329	319
AM Occ %	70%	81%	79%
PM Count	279	338	335
PM Occ	69%	83%	83%
Seen AM only	97	136	127
Seen PM only	91	145	143
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	192	193	192
Long Stay Parkers (%)	68%	58%	59%

Source: AECOM site surveys

MAGHERAFELT

The results for the six car parks in Magherafelt (Tables 6 and 7) would suggest the following when considering the data collected on three separate occasions:

- Union Road (free) – occupancy between 70-110%, up to 95% of which are long stay parkers.
- Union Road (charged) – occupancy between 50-105%, up to 40% of which are long stay parkers.
- Rainey Street (charged) – occupancy between 40-55%, up to 30% of which are long stay parkers.
- Central (free) – occupancy between 80-100%, up to 75% of which are long stay parkers.
- Central (charged) – occupancy between 40-95%, up to 80% of which are long stay parkers.
- King Street (free) – occupancy between 40-100%, up to 70% of which are long stay parkers
- Two out of the six car parks are effectively full for most of the day; these being Union Road (free) and Central (free).

Overall (Table 8), it can be seen that:

- There are generally static levels of demand overall, if not slightly declining between Feb 2017 and Feb 2018 overall, taking up around 60% of available capacity.
- There appears to have been a slight drop in overall demand in the car parks between Feb 2017 and Feb 2018, of around 60-120 vehicles, but this is not considered to be related to the influence of parking as no changes have occurred during this period.
- The proportion of long stay parking has stayed fairly constant at around 40-50% of overall demand. This represents 24% of the total number of spaces that are used for long stay parking.

Table 6 – Magherafelt Occupancy Survey Results – Individual Sites Part 1

Off Street Car Parks	Union Road Free			Union Road Charged			Rainey Street		
Tariff	Free			Charged			Charged		
No. of Spaces	91			101			241		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	97	100	99	80	84	104	100	113	104
AM Occ %	107%	110%	109%	79%	83%	103%	41%	47%	43%
PM Count	74	93	63	53	65	106	95	133	106
PM Occ	81%	102%	69%	52%	64%	105%	39%	55%	44%
Seen AM only	53	32	25	65	56	46	73	83	82
Seen PM only	30	25	19	38	37	29	68	103	84
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	46	68	74	17	28	17	31	30	22
Long Stay Parkers (%)	55%	71%	96%	27%	38%	16%	32%	25%	21%

Source: AECOM site surveys

Table 7 – Magherafelt Occupancy Survey Results – Individual Sites Part 2

Off Street Car Parks	Central Free			Central Charged			King Street		
Tariff	Free			Charged			Free		
No. of Spaces	38			80			42		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	35	37	37	47	77	69	22	37	43
AM Occ %	92%	97%	97%	59%	96%	86%	52%	88%	102%
PM Count	29	32	38	33	73	63	17	32	38
PM Occ	76%	84%	100%	41%	91%	79%	40%	76%	90%
Seen AM only	17	12	10	26	17	32	12	12	15
Seen PM only	11	7	11	12	13	26	7	7	10
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	18	25	27	21	60	37	11	15	28
Long Stay Parkers (%)	57%	73%	72%	54%	80%	56%	57%	44%	69%

Source: AECOM site surveys.

Table 8 – Magherafelt Occupancy Survey Results – Overall

Off Street Car Parks	All Charged Sites			All Free Sites			All Sites		
Tariff	Charged			Free			Charged & Free		
No. of Spaces	422			171			593		
Date	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16	Feb-18	Feb-17	Sep-16
AM Count	227	274	277	154	174	179	381	448	456
AM Occ %	54%	65%	66%	90%	102%	105%	64%	76%	77%
PM Count	181	271	275	120	157	139	301	428	414
PM Occ	43%	64%	65%	70%	92%	81%	51%	72%	70%
Seen AM only	164	156	160	82	56	50	246	212	210
Seen PM only	118	153	139	48	39	40	166	192	179
Long Stay Parkers (no.)	69	118	76	75	108	129	144	226	205
Long Stay Parkers (%)	34%	43%	28%	56%	65%	82%	43%	52%	47%

Source: AECOM site surveys.

OVERALL

In overall terms, there are similar levels of total demand for parking in the council sites when comparing Dungannon and Cookstown, with around 300 vehicles parked in both towns at any one time. In Magherafelt there are slightly more vehicles parked (300-400).

This demand uses up just under 60% of capacity in Dungannon and Magherafelt, but takes up nearly 70% of capacity in Cookstown.

In terms of long stay parking, it is estimated that there are around 200 vehicles parked in both Dungannon and Cookstown for this purpose at any one time, whereas in Magherafelt around 150 vehicles are parking for long stay.