APPENDIX A

Harborough District Parking Strategy

Strategy

Final

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2007 URS Corporation Ltd (URS) was commissioned by Harborough District Council (HDC) to develop a Parking Strategy for the next ten years up to 2016. Following data collection, analysis and review of information collected to support the study a baseline situation was established.

This identified that both Market Harborough and Lutterworth have car parks close to practical car-park capacity levels, however they also have car parks where occupancy levels are low and often under-utilised. In both towns total car park provision is currently adequate to cater for existing demand.

In Market Harborough car parks there is evidence that motorists stay longer than they pay for. In Lutterworth there is considerable use of the 1 hour free parking and in the shorter time periods (up to 2 hours) motorists tend to buy tickets for longer than their stay. In both towns, the majority of people parking had travelled from home, came from areas within 10 minutes drive, their main journey purpose was shopping and they rated the parking conditions well.

In the rural settlements some villages experience localised parking problems at particular times of the day, although for the remainder of the day there is normally no problem.

Alternative travel modes are generally limited in the area. Buses do not tend to meet peoples complex travel needs, although both the entire urban areas of Market Harborough and Lutterworth are within 400m of a bus stop and supported services in the District are beginning to show increasing patronage.

Walking or cycling to work is generally slightly lower than the England or the County averages, although both the urban areas of Lutterworth and Market Harborough towns are within a 15 minute walk or cycle time of the town centre

All car parks in Market Harborough are managed and operated by HDC. In Lutterworth, HDC own and operate all the P&D car parks, have an agreement for public parking in two private car parks and there is significant additional privately owned and operated parking. Stakeholder Workshops did not identify significant parking issues in the District. The introduction of parking charges had been seen as largely positive.

The introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement in July 2007 has addressed many of the highlighted on street parking issues in the District, although any displacement of vehicles from the main centres to the outlying areas will need to be identified and passed to the Highways Authority for action.

Market Harborough is performing reasonably well; is important for local shopping and is considered reasonably safe and well kept. Lutterworth has a very low comparison goods offer, although it does have more convenience in the form of the large food stores. It has a high level of walking visitors, mainly shopping related and is considered reasonably safe and attractive.

The local policy context is for continued but sustainable growth, particularly in the market towns and other larger rural and local centres, which have facilities to support this. There is an emphasis on reducing reliance on the private vehicle, number and length of journeys.

Modal shift by means of better provision for walking and cycling and public transport, in conjunction with better parking management and constraint, will be key to the delivery of the sustainable growth.

Forecast parking figures show that with no changes in parking strategy, demand for parking will exceed capacity in 2016 and this will be worse in 2026.

Parking Strategy Options were determined through Stakeholder Consultation and baseline data analysis.

These Options were evaluated using a Framework developed by URS and agreed with HDC. This evaluation clearly identified Options which could be taken forward into a Draft Parking Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of the Report

This report is the culmination of the project and presents a preferred strategy developed from the findings of the previous two reports and in consultation with Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council.

1.2. Structure of the Report

The report is set out under the following headings:

- Section 2 – Summary of Baseline Conditions.
- Section 3 – Summary of Option Evaluation.
- Section 4 – Preferred Strategy.

2. BASELINE CONDITIONS

2.1. Surveys

Parking Surveys

A programme of parking surveys to provide up to date parking demand data for the District was agreed with HDC.

Surveys were undertaken in March 2007 in both on and off street parking, HDC owned and controlled spaces and other private locations, in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and a number of local centres as agreed with HDC.

These surveys recorded parking activity at regular intervals over a 12-hour period (7am – 7pm) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the local centres, Thursday in Lutterworth and Friday in Market Harborough (these were both market days).

Plans 1 and 3 show the Market Harborough locations included in the surveys whilst Lutterworth is shown on Plan 2.

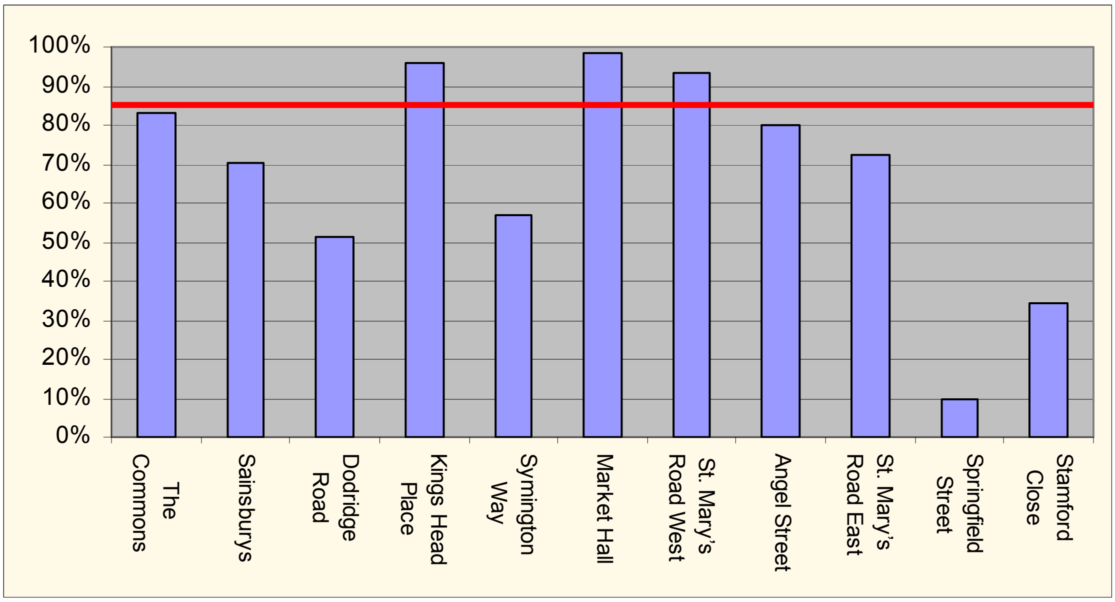
Perception Questionnaire surveys

Perception Questionnaire surveys were also undertaken in both Market Harborough and Lutterworth on the same day as the parking surveys to gather attitudinal information.

2.2. Results

Off Street Occupancy Patterns

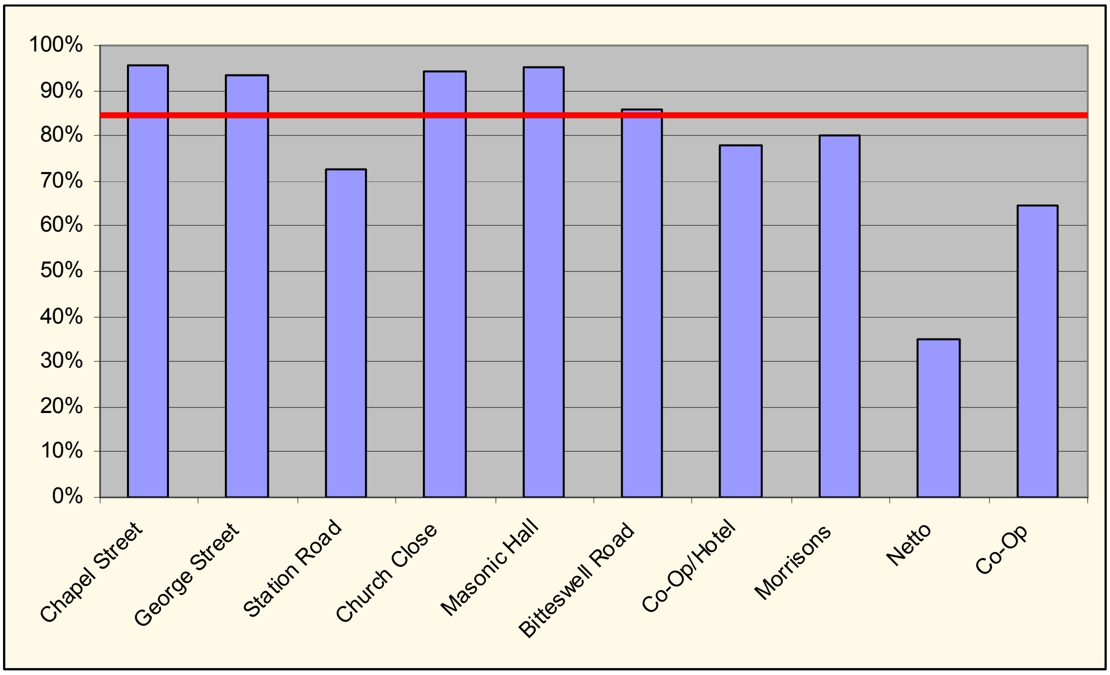
Market Harborough
Figure 2.1 Market Harborough Car Park Occupancy Patterns.



Lutterworth

Figure 2.2 below shows the key results for the car parks surveyed in Lutterworth.

Figure 2.2 Lutterworth Car Park Occupancy Patterns.



The red line indicates the 85% notional capacity used in the study. This is the widely recognised level at which vehicles can search for a space within a reasonable time, without delay or impacting on the surrounding highway network.

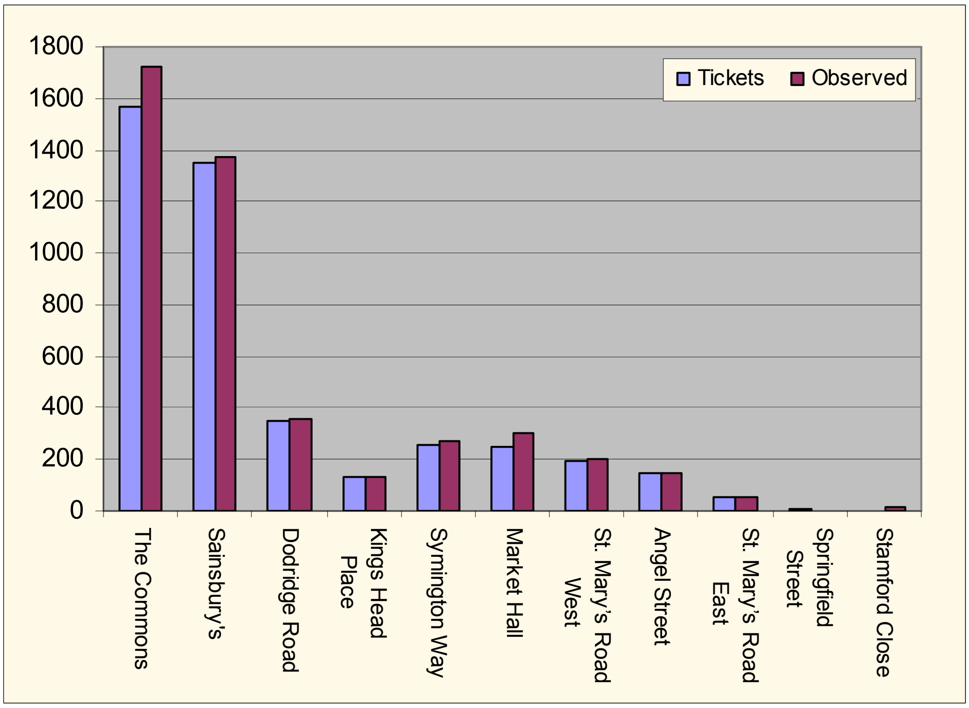
From the figures above it is clear that:

- In both Market Harborough and Lutterworth some car parks exceed the notional capacity level, typically those closest to the town centres, or main facilities.
- There are also other car parks in the towns where the occupancy levels are low and under-utilised.
- In both towns total car park provision is currently adequate to cater for the total observed demand.

Observed Versus Tickets

In order to check consistency of observed survey data with HDC recorded data an exercise was undertaken which compared the number of tickets sold in each of the car parks on the day of the surveys, with the number of vehicles recorded by the surveys and the length of time each vehicle parked for. Figure 2.3 below sets out the results of this work for Market Harborough.

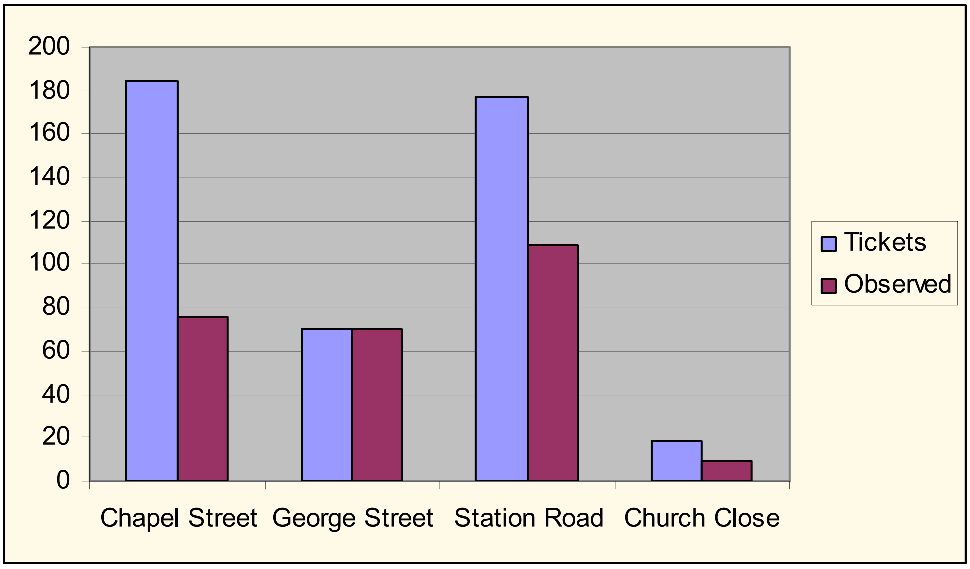
Figure 2.3 Tickets Versus Observed in Market Harborough



It may be seen from the figure above that the observed parking data collected was very comparable to the recorded ticket data.

Further analysis of the durations of stay showed that in most car parks there is evidence that motorists stay longer than they pay for.

Figure 2.4 Tickets Versus Observed in Lutterworth



From the above table, it may be seen that in all but one car park the number of tickets issued varies from the number of vehicles observed entering during our survey. Further analysis of the durations of stay indicates that:

- In Lutterworth there is considerable use of the 1 hour free parking in the Chapel St., George St. and Station Road car parks.
- In the shorter time periods (up to 2 hours) motorists tend to buy tickets for longer than their stay and at all times in Chapel Street.
- There is a particular issue of non-payment in the up to 4 hours period in the small Church Close car park.

On-Street Occupancy patterns

This data was collected prior to the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the District which commenced in July 2007.

Market Harborough

There are various restrictions for on street parking in Market Harborough, Table 1 below sets out the survey results for the on-street parking areas studied.

Table 1 Market Harborough On-Street Parking Occupancy Patterns

		Occupancy			Maximum as % of	Average as % of
On-Street Area	Capacity	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Capacity	Capacity
St. Mary's Road	22	4	23	16	**105**	72
Church Square/Church Street	19	4	19	10	**100**	52
Adam and Eve Street	8	2	9	7	**113**	85
High Street	70	11	75	52	**107**	74
Abbey Street	15	4	19	12	**127**	82
Bowden Lane	9	1	11	7	**122**	78
Roman Way	35	0	37	22	**106**	63
Coventry Road (north side)	3	2	6	4	**200**	133
Coventry Road (south side)	30	15	27	21	**90**	70
Fairfield Road	11	6	12	9	**109**	82
Total	**222**	**49**	**238**	**160**	**107**	**72**
Burnmill Road	20	0	8	4	40%	20%

The observed on-street parking patterns in Market Harborough indicate:

- a high level of disregard for the existing on-street restrictions,
- a considerable number of people parking for longer than the current restrictions allow.

Lutterworth

Table 2 Lutterworth On-Street Parking Occupancy Patterns

On-Street Area	Capacity	Occupancy Minimum	Maximum	Average	Maximum as % of Capacity	Average as % of Capacity
Church Street	18	6	17	12	94%	67%
Total	**18**	**6**	**17**	**12**	**94%**	**67%**

The observed on–street parking patterns in Lutterworth indicate:

- people park for longer than permitted by the current restrictions.

Perception Questionnaire surveys

Perception questionnaire surveys were undertaken in all the off-street car parks surveyed. Key findings are outlined below

Market Harborough

Of those surveyed:

- The majority of respondents had travelled from home
- 52% of these came from Market Harborough or the immediate area
- More than 80% came to town for shopping reasons
- The majority stayed for less than 2 hours,
- Nearly all found a parking space within less than 5 minutes and
- Were largely satisfied with the parking conditions.

Lutterworth

Of those surveyed:

- 93% of respondents had travelled from home
- Over 94% of these originated within the immediate Lutterworth area, taking less than 10 minutes to get there
- Over 98% parked within 5 minutes of arriving in the town
- The main journey purpose was shopping and
- Most rated the parking conditions well.

Rural settlement parking surveys

The on and off-street surveys in the rural settlements indicated that although there is usually adequate parking, some villages experience localised problems at particular times of the day, close to main facilities and services. For the remainder of the day there is generally no problem.

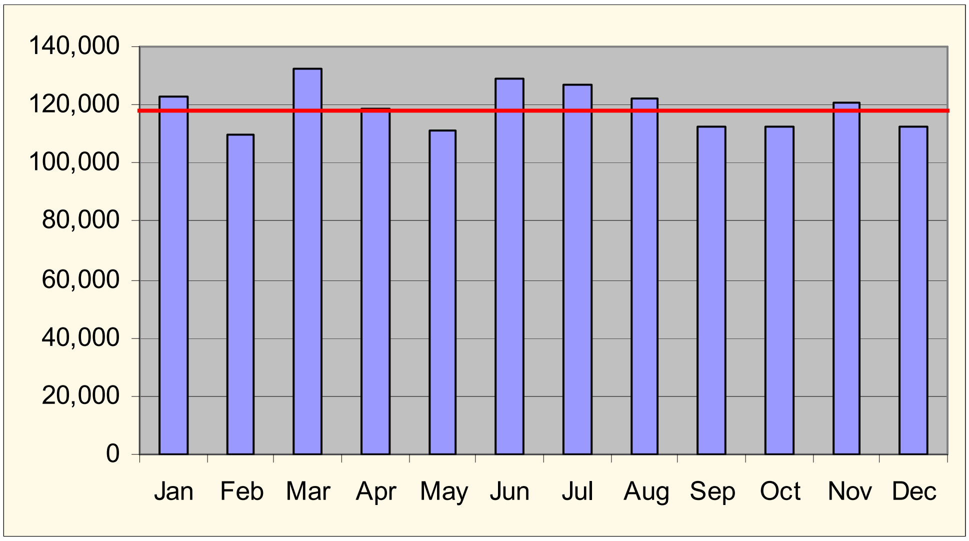
2.3. Other Traffic data

Adjustment Factors

In order to ascertain the robustness of the observed parking data collected. and whether any adjustment factors would need to be applied, investigation of daily and annual traffic and parking ticket data for the Market Harborough and Lutterworth areas was carried out.

This exercise led to agreement with HDC that ticket sales were more relevant to parking acts than the annual traffic flows. Figure 2.5 below sets out the 2006 monthly ticket sales profile.

Figure 2.5 Annual Ticket Sale Trend for Harborough District (2006)



The figure above indicates that the survey month of March recorded the highest number of tickets sold in 2006.

Additional assessment of the daily ticket profile for each town indicated that the surveyed days also represented the busiest day of the week in both the respective towns. No daily or seasonal adjustments were therefore required to be applied to the observed data.

Private Non-Residential Parking Data

The details of the locations and amounts of Private Non-Residential (PNR) parking provision within Market Harborough were supplied by HDC. This is shown in Table 3 overleaf.

Table 3 Private Non Residential Parking in Market Harborough

Location	No. Spaces
Kwik Save	36
Mistrys	50
The Teak Company	30
Lim Watts	15
The Angel	60
The Three Swans	60
Willow Court	30
Other	10
Total	291

The amount of PNR parking has an impact on the effectiveness of parking policy and management. The 291 PNR spaces are mainly related to shopping and hotel functions, which attract car trips into the town centre and will be subject to increased pressure in the future as the number of car borne trips increases as a result of forecast growth.

2.4. Accessibility Assessment

Public Transport Provision

Market Harborough

Key findings about bus services in Market Harborough are as follows:

- There are currently twenty bus services that serve Market Harborough, three are either fully or partially supported by Leicestershire County Council, the remainder are operated commercially.
- Seven of these services operate at an hourly frequency during the day Monday to Saturday the remainder operate a very irregular service with sometimes only one bus a week.
- The Monday to Saturday evening service is very poor.
- There are currently no Sunday and Bank Holiday services.
- The bus services link Market Harborough to a number of key destinations within the region including principally Leicester, Lutterworth and Northampton.

Lutterworth

Key findings about bus services in Lutterworth are as follows:

- There are currently five bus services that serve Lutterworth, two are either fully or partially supported by Leicestershire County Council. The remainder are commercially operated.
- Three of these services operate at an hourly frequency or better during the day Monday to Saturday the rest operate a very irregular service.

- There are no services operated during Monday to Saturday evening periods.
- There is currently only one service operating on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- The bus services link Lutterworth to a number of key destinations within the region including principally Leicester, Market Harborough and Rugby.

Public Transport usage data

LCC supplied information on annual trends for the supported services in Market Harborough and Lutterworth. The annual trend data on supported bus services as shown in Figures 2.6 and 2.7 below indicates that in Market Harborough patronage experienced an increase 2004-2005/6 followed by a predicted decline in 2006/7. In Lutterworth there was a steady increase between 2004-2007.

Figure 2.6 Bus Trips in Market Harborough

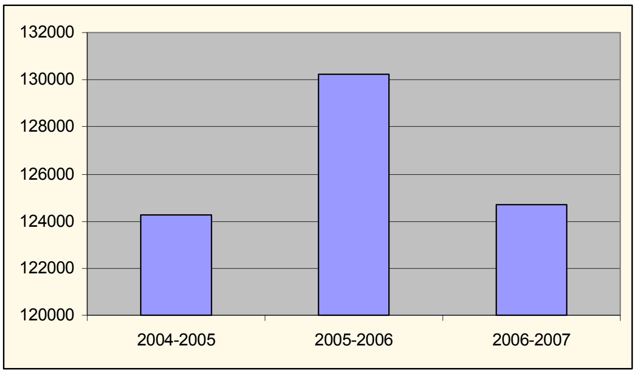
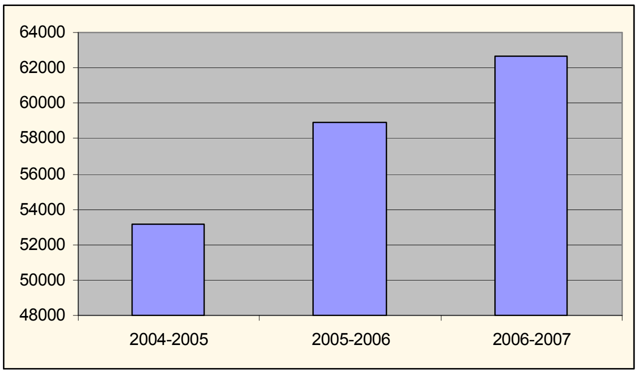


Figure 2.7 Bus Patronage in Lutterworth



LCC also supplied data on monthly supported and commercial service usage together. The data covered April – December 2006 for Harborough District and showed that there was an overall increase in bus use from April –December 2006 in Harborough District and that patronage on supported services forms the largest part of total trips in all months.

Bus Accessibility

Access to alternative modes of travel to the private car is a key element in mode share decisions. The proportion of the urban areas of Market Harborough and Lutterworth within 400m of a bus stop was identified. The results of this analysis demonstrated that the whole of both towns urban areas were within this distance.

This analysis does not take account of service provision i.e. frequency of service, times of day or day of week, but this analysis indicates that it is not access to bus stops that is the major deterrent to bus use in the District.

Walking and cycling

Mode Share

The topography in Market Harborough and the northern side of Lutterworth are relatively flat this is a positive factor for encouraging walking and cycling in the towns.

The 2001 census journey to work data of the population of Harborough District demonstrates that 9.5% of Harborough District Journeys to work are on foot. This compares to 10% England and 9% Leicestershire averages. It also shows that 2.5% cycle compared to 3% England and 3.1% Leicestershire averages. These percentages indicate that although reasonably flat Harborough District Towns do not demonstrate high walk and cycle mode share.

Walking and cycling Accessibility

An analysis of acceptable walk and cycle distances/times has been carried out for Market Harborough and Lutterworth to demonstrate the potential for walk and cycle trips in the local area.

A walk or cycle time of 15 minutes is generally accepted as a reasonable time for these modes and this equates to a walk distance of 1.5km and a cycle distance of 5km .

The results indicate that all of Lutterworth and most of Market Harborough, excluding Great Bowden, are within 1.5km/15minutes walk of the town centre. Also all the urban areas plus a large area of the surrounding towns are within a 5km/15 minute cycle ride of their respective town centre.

Location of parking

Market Harborough

Walking

Within the town centre the main car parks are situated close to the main shopping centre. Currently, the directional signage is not comprehensive and does not always indicate direction or distance to the main facilities.

Cycling

There were 4 cycle parking facilities observed in the town centre. There is clear evidence that people cycle into Market Harborough from the number of cycles chained to railings and fastened to other street furniture, however the designated current provision is not very well used, with the exception of the stand outside Sainsbury's. This appears to be due to a number of issues the most important of which is the type and location of stand used.

Lutterworth

Walking

The car parks in Lutterworth are predominantly behind the town centre. Current signing is not comprehensive and does not always indicate direction or distance to the main facilities.

Cycling

There is evidence that people cycle into Lutterworth from the number of cycles chained to railings and fastened to other street furniture, however designated cycle parking provision in the town is limited. Current provision is not very well used due to a number of issues involving the type and location of stands used.

Walking/Cycling Strategies

In September 2005 following on from work carried out by the Lutterworth Improvement Partnership (LIP) a working group was set up and produced a Cycling Network Plan.

2.5 Asset and Operational Data

Car-Park Asset Inventory

A car-park asset inventory was carried out to ascertain current conditions in existing car parks in Market Harborough and Lutterworth.

These surveys were set up in a format to be consistent with previous HDC Asset monitoring, Park Mark and other industry standard assessments.

The general condition of the car parks in the District meets acceptable standards although there were two in need of attention, notably The Commons in Market Harborough and Station Road in Lutterworth. Both of these car parks are already recognised by HDC as being in need of improvement to meet the Park Mark requirements.

Car Park Management and enforcement regime

All car parks in Market Harborough are managed and operated by HDC. However, the council owns Sainsbury's car park land but it is leased back to Sainsbury's and HDC enforces in this car park on Sainsbury's behalf.

In Lutterworth, HDC owns and operates all the P&D car parks. They have also entered into an agreement with the Methodist Church of Bitteswell Road and the Masonic Hall to maintain their car park in return for it being available for use by members of the public. In addition there is a large amount of shop-related parking that is owned and operated privately but still provides important parking space in the town.

At the time of the study HDC employed four full-time enforcement officers to cover the District and were in the process of taking on more staff to cope with the additional demands of Decimalised Parking Enforcement becoming effective in July 07.

Consultation Workshop

In addition to the surveys, collection of background information and benchmarking, stakeholder consultation was also undertaken to inform the project team of particular 'issues' relating to parking in the local area.

The consultation involved two Stakeholder Workshops one in Market Harborough and one in Lutterworth at the end of March 2007. A variety of local community and business groups, Parish Councils, emergency services, and others were invited to attend. The workshop took the form of a general discussion of relevant issues to identify areas, times, positive and negative aspects and perceptions about parking in the district. Individual meetings were also held for those unable to attend to allow their views to be heard. Written comment was also invited and as a result some further comments were received by e-mail.

These discussions were recorded and a Summary of Issues table was produced.

The Workshops did not identify significant parking issues in the District. The main issues centred on:

- The introduction of parking charges which had been largely positive.
- The subsequent impact of off-street parking displacement.
- General concerns about parking related local congestion and safety issues.
- Lack of enforcement/parking control mechanisms were highlighted at both events.

2.6 Other Background Data

Demographics

In order to understand the demographics of the area and how parking and any future changes impact on the residents of the district, census data has been reviewed.

Harborough District has experienced fairly high levels of growth in recent years compared to both Leicestershire and Great Britain. In 2001 Harborough District had a population of 76,559 and this was an increase of 13.24% since the 1991 census.

The age profile suggests young people may move away, but this is countered by a return later in life, or an attractiveness for the middle to older age groups.

The level of unemployment for the Harborough District is low compared to both Leicestershire and Great Britain at 1.76%. There is a high percentage of people defined as working in large employers, higher managerial occupations and higher professional occupations compared to Leicestershire and England.

Car ownership in the District is generally high compared to the national average with 91% of residents having access to private vehicular transport and there is a higher car mode share for travel in to work than within both Leicestershire or England.

The attraction of Market Harborough for employment is not as strong as other nearby centres, such as Leicester and Northampton. The majority of people working within the town are from wards within a 15km distance.

Journey to Work

Benchmarking

In order to assess how the two market towns of Market Harborough and Lutterworth compared to other similar towns in the locality, data from existing economic and retail studies was collected on types and amount of retail floorspace available, car parking and distance/time to reach them. This enabled comparator towns to be identified and agreed with HDC and further investigation to be carried out.

This demonstrated that there are fairly significant costs in travelling to other towns even if people do not perceive this to be the case.

Market Harborough, although smaller than its comparator towns, has a good range of comparison shopping and significant convenience floor space. It is performing reasonably well, is important for local shopping and is considered reasonably safe and well kept.

Lutterworth is one of the smallest towns in its comparator group and has a very low comparison goods offer, although it does have more convenience in the form of the large food stores. It has a high level of walking visitors, mainly shopping related and is considered reasonably safe and attractive.

2.7 Policy Context (Land use and Transport)

Harborough is a predominantly rural district in the County of Leicestershire. Warwickshire borders it to the west, Northamptonshire to the south and Rutland to the east. Policy areas do not always reflect the geographical context of an area but it is essential when undertaking strategy development that the wider and local policy context is understood. Options can only go forward to become ratified Actions if they accord with and support the policy context.

Since the revision of Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Regional Planning Guidance (RPG's) Structure Plans and Local Plans have been replaced with Regional

Spatial Strategies, which provide the context for the preparation of new Local Development Documents and the Local Transport Plans. This, along with National Policy Guidance, sets the framework within which the Harborough Parking Strategy will have to sit.

The local policy context is for continued but sustainable growth, particularly in the market towns and other larger rural and local centres, which have facilities to support this.

There will be an emphasis on reducing reliance on the private vehicle, number and length of journeys. Modal shift by means of better provision for walking and cycling and public transport, in conjunction with better parking management and constraint, will be key to the delivery of the sustainable growth.

3. FUTURE CONDITIONS AND OPTIONS EVALUATION

3.1. Forecasting Parking Demand

A number of methods for calculating future parking demand were discussed with HDC. These centred around combining locally or nationally produced housing growth figures, along with national traffic and car ownership forecasts, adjusted to reflect daily or seasonal variations from surveyed data if required. The various methods considered and justification for its use are set out fully in the July 2007 Future Conditions and Option Evaluation Report. The method use is as below:

> Local Authority supplied Housing growth factors x Harborough District NTEM (DTLR National Trip End Model) growth in Car ownership factors x Maximum car-park occupancy.

In order to produce the forecast parking demand, the factors produced using the method above were applied to the observed parking occupancies as set out in the Baseline Conditions Report.

The Tables below show the March 2007 observed parking patterns in Market Harborough and Lutterworth and how these are expected to change with the projected increase in households and car ownership.

Table 4 Market Harborough Future Off-Street Parking Demand (Maximum Vehicles)

Car Park	Capacity	Observed		2016		2026	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
The Commons	341	284	83	380	**111**	461	**135**
Sainsbury's	630	444	70	594	**94**	721	**114**
Dodridge Road	143	73	51	98	68	119	83
Kings Head Place	26	25	**96**	33	**129**	41	**156**
Symington Way	98	56	57	75	76	91	**93**
Market Hall	75	74	**99**	99	**132**	120	**160**
St. Mary's Road West	30	28	**93**	37	**125**	45	**152**
Short Stay Total	**1343**	**984**	**73**	**1315**	**98**	**1598**	**119**
Angel Street	94	75	80	100	**107**	122	**130**
St. Mary's Road East	54	39	72	52	**97**	63	**117**
Springfield Street	40	4	10	5	13	6	16
Stamford Close	35	12	34	16	46	19	56
Long Stay Total	**223**	**130**	**58**	**174**	**78**	**211**	**95**
Total	**1566**	**1114**	**71**	**1489**	**95**	**1809**	**116**

This table demonstrates the current uneven capacity/use levels of the existing parking provision and how with time a greater number of car parks will exceed the 85% capacity limit.

Table 5 Lutterworth Future Off-Street Parking Demand (Maximum Vehicles)

Car Park	Capacity	Observed		2016		2026	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Chapel Street	45	43	**96**	57	**126**	68	**152**
George Street	44	41	**93**	54	**123**	65	**148**
Station Road	98	71	72	93	**95**	113	**115**
Short Stay Total	**187**	**155**	**83**	**204**	**109**	**246**	**132**
Church Close	18	17	**94**	22	**124**	27	**150**
Long Stay Total	**18**	**17**	**94**	**22**	**124**	**27**	**150**
P&D Total	**205**	**172**	**84**	**226**	**110**	**273**	**133**
Masonic Hall	42	40	**95**	53	**125**	64	**151**
Bitteswell Road	14	12	**86**	16	**113**	19	**136**
Council Free Total	**56**	**52**	**93**	**68**	**122**	**83**	**147**
Morrisons	195	156	80	206	**106**	248	**127**
Netto	140	49	35	64	46	78	56
Co-Op/Hotel	50	39	78	51	**103**	62	**124**
Co-Op	45	29	64	38	**85**	46	**102**
Super Market Total	**430**	**273**	**64**	**360**	**84**	**434**	**101**
Total	**691**	**497**	**72**	**655**	**95**	**790**	**114**

This again demonstrates the current uneven capacity/use levels of the existing parking provision and how with time a greater number of car parks will exceed the 85% capacity limit.

Table 6 Market Harborough Future On-Street Parking Demand Pre decriminalised parking introduction (Maximum Vehicles)

On-Street Area	Capacity	Occupancy					
		Observed		2016		2026	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
St. Mary's Road	22	23	**105**	31	**140**	37	**170**
Church Square/Church Street	19	19	**100**	25	**134**	31	**162**
Adam and Eve Street	8	9	**113**	12	**150**	15	**183**
High Street	70	75	**107**	100	**143**	122	**174**
Abbey Street	15	19	**127**	25	**169**	31	**206**
Bowden Lane	9	11	**122**	15	**163**	18	**198**
Roman Way	35	37	**106**	49	**141**	60	**172**
Coventry Road (north side)	3	6	**200**	8	**267**	10	**325**
Coventry Road (south side)	30	27	**90**	36	**120**	44	**146**
Fairfield Road	11	12	**109**	16	**146**	19	**177**
Total	**222**	**238**	**107**	**329**	**148**	**400**	**180**

From the table above it is possible to see that observed demand for on-street parking at the time of the survey exceeds provision and it is all currently over capacity.

Table 7 Lutterworth Future On-Street Parking Demand pre decriminalised parking introduction (Maximum Vehicles)

		Occupancy					
		Observed		2016		2026	
On-Street Area	Capacity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Church Street	18	17	94	22	124	27	150
Total	**18**	**17**	**94**	**22**	**124**	**27**	**150**

The table above shows that 100% capacity will soon be exceeded.

Table 8 below is a summary of the total numbers of vehicles parked off-street for both Market Harborough and Lutterworth.

Table 8 Future Off-Street Parking Demand (Maximum Vehicles)

	No.	Observed		2016		2026	
Town Centre	Spaces	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Market Harborough	1566	1114	71	1489	95	1809	116
Lutterworth	691	497	72	655	95	790	114

This table demonstrates that currently there is spare parking capacity within both towns and, although it is very close, there will still be some capacity in 2016, but this will have been exceeded in 2026.

Table 9 Indicates the overall figures for on and off street parking demand combined.

Table 9 Future On and Off street combined Parking Demand (Maximum Vehicles)

	No.	Observed		2016		2026	
Town Centre	Spaces	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Market Harborough	1788	1352	76%	1807	101%	2196	123%
Lutterworth	709	514	73%	677	95%	817	115%

From this table it is possible to see that the total maximum number of vehicles parked in both town centres is currently well within the 85% level in the observed data, however this is expected to exceed 85% of capacity by 2016 and 2026.

3.2 Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE)

The analysis of the observed parking data undertaken and reported in the Baseline Conditions Report indicates that in addition to a high level of illegal parking on street, due in part to the lack of on street enforcement at the time of the surveys, the June 2007 Baseline Conditions Report concluded that improved enforcement of both the on and off-street parking was a key issue in terms of management of parking in the town centres.

Surveys were therefore carried out on the 25th April 2008 in on street areas to assess the impact of the introduction of decriminalised parking, The on street surveys are tabled below for Lutterworth and Market Harborough.

Table 10 Market Harborough Future On-Street Parking Demand Post decriminalised parking introduction (Maximum Vehicles)

On-Street Area	Capacity	Occupancy: Observed Max Occupancy Post.	Pre	Difference %	comments
St. Mary's Road	22	8	23	-59	
Church Square/Church Street	19	10	19	-47	
Adam and Eve Street	8	7	9	-1	
High Street	70	24	75	-59	
Abbey Street	15	10	19	-12	
Bowden Lane	9	3	11	-48	
Roman Way	35	17	37	-46	
Coventry Road (north side)	3	6	6	150	
Coventry Road (south side)	30	16	27	-58	
Fairfield Road	11	12	12	17	
Total	**222**	**113**	**238**	**16%**	

From the table above it is possible to see that currently observed useage of on-street parking has decreased by over 16% in Market Harborough since the introduction of decriminalised parking. In Lutterworth the useage has not altered and remains close to capacity.

Table 11 Lutterworth Future On-Street Parking Demand post decriminalised parking introduction (Maximum Vehicles)

		Occupancy					
		Observed		2016		2026	
On-Street Area	Capacity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Church Street	18	17	94	22	124	27	150
Total	**18**	**17**	**94**	**22**	**124**	**27**	**150**

The recent (July 2007) introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) can be seen to have improved the enforcement level on street, resulting in an increased capacity available in the on street parking areas in the District. The improved enforcement of on-street parking will inevitably create displacement of illegal on–street parking acts to off-street car parks This will create additional demand in the off-street car parks.

In order to assess likely impacts of DPE it has been assumed that all displaced parking acts will move into the off-street car parks, which is a worst case scenario. In reality it is likely that some of the parking acts will a) be displaced elsewhere, onto other uncontrolled roads in or adjacent to the town centre b) will find other modes of travel, or c) will not come into the town at all.

Tables 6 and 7 illustrate the extent of the observed parking acts over and above the current capacity of on-street parking available. Table 9 demonstrates that there is currently significant spare capacity to accommodate the potential displacement more stringent enforcement will create. This will however become more difficult in time as the spare capacity is taken up by growth in demand.

With no changes to current parking, overall there is sufficient off-street parking provision to cater for the current observed demand. On-street parking also has sufficient capacity since the introduction of decriminalised parking.

However the current capacity is insufficient to cater for future parking demand created by already planned local growth in housing and car ownership by 2016.

If current provision and travel behaviour therefore remains the same the demand and over-capacity is likely to worsen, may spread to other un-regulated areas and will likely cause significant local safety, congestion, accessibility and air quality issues on the local roads.

3.3 Options Derivation

3.3.1 Stakeholder Workshops

Following on from the two evening Stakeholder Workshop Sessions undertaken in both Market Harborough and Lutterworth, as part of the Data Collection Task of the study two further Workshops were held at the beginning of June.

At these Workshops, summary results of the study parking surveys were presented and again through group discussion stimulated the generation of ideas or ‘options’ to deal with the parking issues identified by these and in Workshop 1. The final results of this exercise were then translated into a list of Options for evaluation.

Some additional options were also identified by URS based on the data analysis. These options were:

- Operational/Asset Management
    - Parking Enforcement
    - Signage,
    - Long and Short stay parking,
    - Parking Durations,

  - Parking Charging structure,
  - Business parking permits,
  - Disabled parking provision,
  - Physical infrastructure,
  - District TRO Review
  - Technological solutions
  - Shared/multi use parking
  - Personal safety
- Demand Management
  - Travel behaviour/modal shift
  - Land use planning policies
  - More/better walking and cycling facilities
  - Personal safety
  - Public transport
  - Bus Fares
  - Cycle parking
  - Parking Standards
  - Local facilities
  - Edge of town Parking
- Predict and Provide
  - Use of any available land for parking
  - Exchange of land
  - Positive support for parking in planning policy
  - Restrict additional development
  - Free parking

3.4 Option Appraisal

An evaluation appraisal framework has been developed by URS and agreed with HDC. This sets out a range of considerations against which the 'options' identified in 3.3 above could be systematically evaluated. It also allowed a comparative analysis of options to help in the final selection of those to be taken further forward in the strategy development process.

In the process of completing the Appraisal Framework significant additional assessment had to be undertaken. This included investigation of various issues in order to be able to make a judgement on whether the option was viable.

The following gives some information on the type of analysis carried out, however more detailed information is included in the July 2007 Future Conditions and Option Evaluation Report (FCOE).

3.5 Appraisal Process

3.5.1 Policy Compliance

This part of the evaluation checks potential strategy options in terms of their compliance or "fit" within the current policy framework within which any HDC Parking Strategy should comply. A full policy review is contained in Appendix D of the FCOE but Table 10 below is a summary of that review.

Table 10 Policy Compliance Summary

NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
PPG 13 • Promote: more sustainable transport choices; accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. • Reduce the need to travel, especially by car. **The Future of Transport** Sustained investment over the long term. Secondly, improvements in transport management And thirdly, planning ahead. Underlying objective: balancing the need to travel with the need to improve quality of life.	**RSS** Core Objectives: • Address social exclusion • Enhance Quality of Life • Improve Health • Promote and improve economic prosperity • Improve accessibility • Protect the environment • Step change to biodiversity • Promote prudent use of resources • Reduce scale and impact of climate change • Promote good design Spatial Strategy: • Sequential approach to development • Sustainable site selection • Better development design • Concentrating Development in urban areas **RTS** • Promote accessibility • Support regeneration • Promote linkages • Improve safety • Reduce congestion • Promote modal shift Policy 47 Regional Car Parking Standards:	**LDF** Framework Objectives: • Meet strategic housing requirements and local needs • Meet employment requirements, foster economic growth, maintain high employment. • Locate new development in sustainable locations • Protect and enhance community services, facilities, open space and infrastructure. • Protect and enhance Districts rural landscape, settlement pattern, natural environment and biodiversity. • Safeguard and enhance Districts character and built heritage • Protect and promote economic viability and vitality • Promote good design • Encourage alternative modes of transport • Minimise waste, maximise re-cycling • Minimise energy demand, maximise use of renewable energy • Promote sustainable tourism • Encourage re-use of brownfield sites in sustainable locations. **LTP** 5 key themes: • Providing the right transport conditions to help economic growth • Improving access to facilities for all • Reducing transport's impact on the environment • Keeping transport safe, • Making sure that our highway assets are properly maintained and renewed Six objectives: • Tackling congestion • Improving access to facilities • Reducing road casualties • Improving air quality • Reducing the impact of traffic Managing transport assets

3.6 Operational Asset Management

The observed parking data indicates that in both towns some car parks are currently operating either at or over capacity, whilst others are operating well below capacity. This unequal use of the existing parking provision means that it can appear that there is a shortage of parking in the town, particularly in those car parks closest to the centres.

This causes local queues, subsequent air quality, congestion and safety issues and ultimately may affect the economic viability of the town. However it has been demonstrated that overall, there is sufficient capacity in both towns car parking provision, even with displacement due to DPE, to cater for current demand and for some time in the future – almost to 2016, if efficiently used.

A number of initiatives have therefore been considered to help maximise available capacity from current parking provision within the town centres both on and off-street in the short-term and to avoid the local issues becoming further local problems.

The aim of the initiatives considered below is therefore to avoid additional local issues occurring whilst allowing time for Regional, Countywide, and any potential local alternative longer-term initiatives to encourage modal shift and travel behaviour change to be implemented and impact.

Options that have been considered as part of the evaluation process are outlined below, with full details of the analysis included in the Future Conditions and Options Report.

3.6.1 Parking Enforcement

Higher Levels of Enforcement was considered. The introduction of DPE has improved the operation of the on and off street areas ensuring better compliance with existing parking restrictions which will facilitate a higher turnover of vehicles parked, creating more opportunity for people wanting to park in the Town Centres to do so.

3.6.2 Signage

Better signing was discussed. Advanced advisory directional signage would be beneficial in directing less familiar drivers to the most appropriate long or short stay car park.

3.6.3 Long-stay Short-stay balance

One particular issue raised by the observed parking data is the different functions performed and requirements of long and short stay car parks and if there would be any benefits in changing these. These requirements differ between the two town centres of Market Harborough and Lutterworth.

Market Harborough

The majority of parking acts (95%) were under 4 hours and defined as short stay.

The current Parking TRO's allow both long and short stay parking in all the town car parks. This causes spaces closest to the town centre to be occupied for a long period of the day by one vehicle, and forces short stay visitors into other, less convenient locations further from the town centre.

If these vehicles were to be removed from those car parks closest to the town centre then there would be a greater number of spaces available for those visitors requiring to park for less than 4 hours (175 acts over the day rather than 52, catering for an additional 123 visitors to the town centre).

If this were introduced throughout the town centre the increase in the number of spaces would help increase car park capacity, without any other changes, for a longer period of time. This would also have the effect of increasing the revenue per space.

In addition, if illegal short stay on-street parking acts were displaced into one of the car parks, this would improve traffic flow, congestion and safety issues.

Lutterworth

The current situation in Lutterworth is very different than that in Market Harborough as the majority of the current parking provision in Lutterworth is not owned or operated by HDC. The fact that only the HDC car parks currently charge means that any attempt to alter the current operation of car parks in the town is likely to result in displacement of vehicles from the HDC operated car parks to wider areas of the town and greater use of the free car parks in the town. For this reason it was not proposed to alter the current arrangements in the town centre.

3.6.4 Parking Durations

It has been established that there is significantly more short-term than long-term parking demand in the towns and much of this is for less than 2 hours. The benefits of changing the charging structure to reflect this demand were examined.

The duration of parking acts allowed in any given car park, if properly enforced, can have a dramatic impact on the number of vehicles that can be accommodated over the day.

In Market Harborough 93% of parking acts were for less than 2 hours. Therefore, if one of the town centre car parks were converted to have a maximum stay of 2 hours then this would further increase the capacity of the current parking provision in the town centre. This would mean that the current level of parking provision would cater for the projected increase in parking for longer, whilst initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the longer term are achieved.

From observation of parking patterns and function it is considered that The Commons car park would suit this role best.

The possibility of reducing the length of time motorists can park for on the High Street to 30 minutes was also considered, as local shop owners had reported long-stay parking in this area as reducing the availability of the spaces for genuine shoppers and business visitors.

3.6.5 Charging Structure

Parking demand is sensitive to the cost of parking. Investigation of the observed parking data has shown that in Market Harborough in particular people are parking in long stay car parks for less than one hour and are prepared to pay the higher long stay charge.

Comparison with other similar competing towns within the local area, demonstrated that in all cases, parking charges in Market Harborough are significantly less than other benchmarked towns and that parking demand in the District is fairly inelastic with respect to price. There is therefore potential to increase charges in the District to increase revenue and to offset costs associated with other improved management and enforcement measures. As a demand management tool, however, prices would have to be increased substantially to have a marked effect on demand. This is because demand is fairly inelastic with respect to price for certain trips.

Parking price will have different impacts depending on the journey purposes and mode shares. For example if the journey purpose is work then this will still continue if prices go up, but the parking may be forced out of the regulated area or the travel will be done another way such as walk, cycle, car share or bus.

Investigation was carried out of the impact of increasing car parking charges on total trips and modal shift. This showed that a 10% increase in the cost of parking charges in Market Harborough could result in a 3% reduction in trips or 260 parking acts over the day. This research also indicated that increasing charges would reduce demand for parking whilst transferring trips onto other modes.

Without the addition of any additional capacity, this would enable the existing car park capacity to cater for the forecast demand for a longer period than the current arrangement will, as well as encouraging transfer to more sustainable travel modes if they were a realistic alternative. However it was recognised that raising charges to provide more capacity, without investment in alternative travel modes, would not be a sustainable solution in the longer term and may not support other social and economic objectives.

Therefore, on balance carefully introducing increased parking charges, in conjunction with increased investment in other modes of transport to achieve more sustainable travel patterns in the longer term was preferred.

3.6.6 Business Permits

Participants in the Stakeholder workshops suggested that provision be made for business related vehicles to be able to park.

For sustainability reasons it would not be possible to allow all workers to park close to their place of work but rather only to enable vehicles that are vital to the operation of the company/service to park in a convenient location.

For this reason it was suggested that the provision of any business permits should be strictly limited, and this should not be offered to any organisation with existing Private Non Residential parking.

3.6.7 Disabled parking

The current order permits blue badge holders to park for the first 3 hours free in all the HDC run car parks however the issue was raised of specific wider bays to ease access for those in wheelchairs.

Few of the car parks currently have such a provision and this would result in the loss of a few. However after considering DfT guidance it was recommended that a full review be undertaken to better accommodate this need.

3.6.8 Physical infrastructure and TRO Review

Throughout the Workshop consultation sessions it became apparent that there is significant local concern about traffic congestion and safety problems caused by illegal or inconsiderate parking in both the rural and urban areas of the District.

It was felt that many of these could be resolved by a District wide review of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) to consider:

- Existing (TRO's) – to see if they remained relevant for the current level and patterns of trip making.
- New or Revisions to TRO's to reflect current traffic and travel demands, deter parking, safety and congestion issues arising by better traffic management and enforcement.

In addition, the view was expressed in the stakeholder workshops that physical traffic management measures to better designate appropriate parking areas could be used in conjunction with or instead of TRO's. A mix of approaches to traffic management was suggested. The preference was for self-enforcing measures of a low profile and low cost.

For these reasons options for the parking strategy included a comprehensive review of TRO's by the Highways Authority, in conjunction with HDC and the Town and Parish Council's and the extension of this to consider localised schemes to better manage traffic flow, circulation and parking in these areas.

3.6.9 Technological Solutions

The issue of new and innovative ways to pay for parking were also raised at the Second Stakeholder Workshop. Suggestions included paying for parking using a credit or debit card or stored value cards (such as the Oyster card in London).

3.6.10 Shared/Multi Use Parking use

At the Workshops it was suggested that HDC investigate the possibility of entering into formal agreements on the lines of those currently in place in Lutterworth to make better use of privately run parking areas to benefit the town as a whole. The prime example of this is the Netto car park in Lutterworth which is very lightly used but could help maximise the future capacity in the town centre.

3.6.11 Land Use Planning Policy, Parking Standards

There were many suggestions in the Stakeholder Consultation Workshops of Options which would need to be addressed by the inclusion of a Policy Statement in the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) in order that future planning decisions took them in to account.

The LDF is being developed in line with National and Regional Guidance and so, to some extent, will already be considering policies which will assist in the achievement of some of these.

It was recommended that, in addition to planning policy, Parking Standards which reflect local conditions but are at a maximum and allow variable provision, depending on location (as recommended by PPG13) are developed by the District Council, also design standards for walking and cycling provision, and other issues which support modal shift.

3.6.12 Walk and Cycle Improvements

Analysis of the perception questionnaire results demonstrated that over 94% of those parking in Lutterworth came from the immediate local area compared with 52% of those parking in Market Harborough. Both urban areas are within 1.5km of their town centres. With such high numbers of very local trips and compact towns, a strong potential to improve the walk and cycle mode shares was identified.

Support for a review by the County Council and development of the Lutterworth cycle network was recommended along with the development of a similar network in Market Harborough and the larger rural settlements.

3.6.13 Public Transport

The use of a balance of measures was suggested to influence travel behaviour, reduce demand for parking and manage capacity problems in the District. This would include the simultaneous implementation of restraint measures to encourage people to consider travel by other modes along with incentives such as walking/cycling and public transport alternative travel provision.

It was recognised through consultation and outlined in the Baseline Conditions report that the ‘alternatives’ to the private car in HDC are currently poor. Buses in particular are infrequent, rarely run in the evenings and at weekends and do not meet people’s complex journey needs.

Analysis of observed parking data had highlighted the majority of parking acts are of very local origin, fairly short in length of stay and mainly for shopping purposes.

Considering the factors there is a strong case for further development of local bus services in the urban areas of the District.

3.6.14 Parking - Edge of Town Parking/Other land/Exchange of Land

Although provision of any additional parking would be contrary to the policy context, it may be that additional parking in some cases could address safety, congestion or other economic aims for an area. Additional provision was raised in the consultation workshops, and for this reason an analysis of the cost of providing additional parking was considered.

3.6.15 Free Parking

Participants in the Stakeholder workshops raised the issue of introducing a period of free parking in Market Harborough (as there currently is in Lutterworth) for the first hour.

Although this could potentially encourage more vehicular trips into the town and therefore would be considered unsustainable in transport policy terms, it was considered a positive initiative to boost the economic vitality and viability of the town in the light of competition from other areas. This option would require additional research and identification of needs.

4. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

4.1. Option Appraisal and Selection

Clear options for further consideration have emerged following the appraisal of the options determined through the consultation and data analysis stages of the study.

After discussion with HDC and LCC it was agreed which of those options should be taken forward into a future parking strategy for HDC The action plan in Appendix C has been produced from the options appraisals to provide achievable tasks that will either enable the aims in Appendix B to be either fully or partly achieved.

The remaining options were identified as those which would not be appropriate at this time for policy, resource or other reasons and would not be taken forward.

5. STRATEGY

5.1. Strategy Approach

Following the Framework Evaluation and colour coding process viable district options for inclusion in a Strategy have been identified.

These have been grouped into a realistic delivery timescale and ease of delivery as follows:

- Short-term 1-2 years. Can be delivered fairly quickly within the existing budget and resource constraints and without the assistance of those outside the two local authorities of HDC and LCC.
- Medium-term 2-5 years. Would need programming and budget approval. May need additional partners or partnerships working to deliver. Will take some time to implement.
- Long-term 5-10 years. Would take some time to bring to fruition. May need significant funding and therefore 3rd LTP/other programming and recognition. Might be more appropriate for the longer-term in case other initiatives do not work/new issues emerge.

The Strategy includes a statement of aims supporting evidence and an action plan indicating the appropriate actions in order of delivery, who would be responsible and how they might be delivered.