

SUMMARY

of the

STEVENAGE PARKING STRATEGY

Supporting Document to the
STEVENAGE TRANSPORT STRATEGY



First Issue 2004

Stevenage
BOROUGH COUNCIL

FOREWORD

Five years ago, the Stevenage Transport Forum, in partnership with both the Stevenage Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council developed the Stevenage Transport Strategy and since then there has been significant progress in relation to some of the actions listed in the strategy. This is reflected in the 2nd Edition of the Transport Strategy issued in 2002.

Other local strategies are being developed to support the Stevenage Transport Strategy. In 2002 the Stevenage Cycling Strategy was launched. It is anticipated that a Stevenage Walking Strategy and a Stevenage Passenger Transport Strategy will be developed over the next few years.

The Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and Supplementary Planning Guidance outline the need for an integrated parking and land use strategy in the Town Centre.

Although, Stevenage has an excellent road infrastructure, good rail services and a reasonable bus service, we cannot afford to be complacent. Already we are beginning to see much more congestion at peak times, particularly around the town centre. If the parking issues in the Town Centre are not properly addressed, then the Aims and Objectives of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy could be undermined.

The railway station, built in the 60's, does not reflect the town's status as a major railhead for both commuter and long distance rail travel. If our aspirations for the future role of Stevenage station in rail travel are to be realised, then we have to ensure that parking problems at the station are addressed.

Parking problems are not confined to the Town Centre. Many of our residential streets suffer chronic parking congestion causing safety hazards and environmental damage to verges. Although the Council has already spent over £1 million trying to solve these parking problems, this level of investment cannot be sustained and we will need to find more innovative methods of dealing with the problem.

The High Street in the Old Town is an attractive feature of Stevenage with its unique blend of 'specialist' retail outlets, service industries, light industrial units, public houses, restaurants, food take-away establishments and residential units. However, this is in danger of being devalued due to parking problems and conflicts that currently occur.

The objectives of this Parking Strategy and the strategies put forward provide a framework not only for tackling the existing parking problems facing the town but also to help deal with future parking pressures. Many of the actions proposed in the strategy can be implemented fairly quickly whilst others will require extensive planning, development and further consultation with those directly affected.

July 2004

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INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Stevenage is located on two major strategic transport routes – the East Coast main railway line and A1(M) motorway – about 30 miles north of London. Stevenage interacts with neighbouring towns, especially Letchworth, Hitchin and Welwyn Garden City for shopping, leisure and employment purposes, as a result of its good communication links. 61% of the economically active population both live and work in Stevenage. This means that less than 40% of people commute out of the town to work, a much lower figure than most other towns in Hertfordshire.

ROADS AND TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKING

Stevenage has an excellent road infrastructure, with dual carriageways forming many of the primary routes around the town. This means that there is less congestion in Stevenage, even at peak hours, compared with other towns in Hertfordshire.

A review of car parking policy is central to meeting many objectives including the reduction in car use. There are over 3,500 car-parking spaces in and around the Town Centre, providing both short and long-term parking for those using the Town Centre facilities and the railway station.

RAILWAY STATION PARKING

Stevenage is currently served by both Great North Eastern Railways (GNER) and West Anglia Great Northern (WAGN), providing local services to nearby towns, destinations on the east coast line, such as York and Scotland, and services to London and the rest of the country.



Stevenage is considered to be a major railhead for both commuter and long-distance rail services. However, the station itself is in urgent need of major improvements befitting of a major railhead. There is also a threat to the provision of long-distance rail services from Stevenage due to long-term proposals by the train operating company to locate a major 'parkway' station at the intersection of the A1(M) and the M25. Both train operating companies operating from Stevenage cite parking for rail commuters as a hindrance to improved rail services and have made representations to the Council for increased provision.

PARKING IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The parking problems in residential areas have largely been inherited as a result of poor road design, an inadequate supply of off-street spaces, the growth in car ownership or a combination of the three. It is widely known that off-street parking provision in parts of the town was designed on the basis of 1 car being owned for every 8 households.



The situation is worsening in terms of parking congestion and environmental damage due to the continued growth in car ownership. Car ownership shows no sign of slowing down. Hertfordshire now has the third highest car ownership in Britain (0.5 cars per person).

The numbers of vehicles has increased to such a level that indiscriminate parking is now rife in many locations. It is commonplace to find vehicles parked around junctions, causing visibility problems; parked on footways, across driveways and garage accesses, causing obstruction; and parked on verges and ornamental grassed areas causing damage and nuisance

INTRODUCTION

Verge parking has become so common that the “green” concept on which many residential areas have been designed is being eroded. It is now commonplace in most residential roads for the streetscape to be dominated by the car. The Bye-Law introduced to prevent verge parking is in urgent need of review and many verges and ornamental areas have been, and still are being, removed to increase the number of off-street spaces. This increases the stock and thus reduces the parking problems in those streets that are treated. However, this approach can only be applied to those streets where there are grassed areas that can be removed. Many streets do not fall into this category and it would, therefore, be inappropriate to rely exclusively on this strategy in the long term.

A new approach, that could either supplement or replace the existing one, is required and is likely to involve more radical and innovative measures in order to provide solutions to the widespread parking problems.

BUS SERVICES

Generally, daytime bus services in Stevenage, particularly during peak periods, are relatively frequent and well used. However, the majority of users at these times are those people who do not, in any case, have access to a car.

The long-stay car parks in the Town Centre are used mostly by rail commuters (railway station car parks) and Town Centre workers (other long-stay car parks). These car parks are almost full every weekday. There is increasing pressure for the provision of more short-stay car parks. Buses can play a vital role in relieving this pressure provided the frequency and quality of bus services are improved.



POLICY CONTEXT

GOVERNMENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Current Government policy towards Town Centre parking provision is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13): Transport (March 2001).

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TRANSPORT POLICY

The Structure Plan Review to 2011 sets out a sustainable basis to land use policy and introduces mechanisms whereby planning can help to meet transport objectives. The County Council's Local Transport Plan helps shape much of the transport policy in Stevenage.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL POLICIES

- **Stevenage District Plan**

The Stevenage District Plan (2nd review) for the period up to 2011 is now at an advanced stage and is expected to be adopted during 2004. The plan includes policies on transport, which support, complement and integrate with the County Council's **Local Transport Plan**. The impending District Plan earmarks land adjacent to the existing rail station for use as a Bus/Rail Interchange.

- **Town Centre Regeneration Policy - Framework**

The **Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Strategy** and *Supplementary Planning Guidance* outline the need for an integrated parking and land use strategy.

- **Stevenage Transport Strategy**

The main Objectives of the **Stevenage Transport Strategy** are as follows: -

AIM 1: To reduce the need to travel

AIM 2: To promote & support the use of travel methods other than the car

AIM 3: To promote a better quality of life in the town through transport initiatives

- **Proposed Stevenage Parking Strategy**

The objectives of the proposed **Stevenage Parking Strategy** are integrated with the objectives of the **Stevenage Transport Strategy** in order to ensure that both strategies can be successfully implemented.

TOWN CENTRE

PARKING ISSUES

- Parking Demand/Parking Provision (Short Stay/Long Stay)
- Parking Charges;
- Provision for Disabled People;
- Role of Passenger Transport;
- Impact on the Existing Highway Network;
- Prioritising Car Parking Investment;
- Parking provision for meeting the needs of new commercial development in the Town Centre.
- Town Centre Development;



STRATEGY

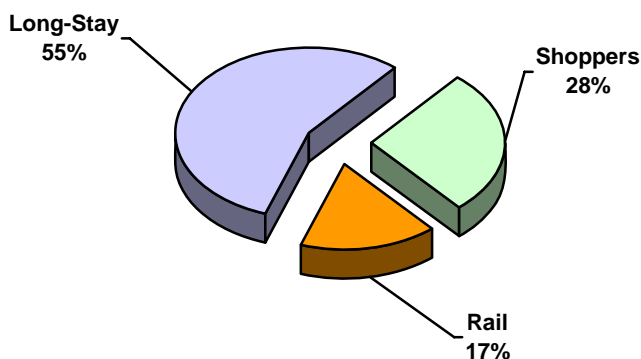
- Parking Demand/Parking Provision

The two categories where growth in business is already outstripping parking provision are 'shoppers' and 'rail commuters'. This 'growth' is likely to continue growing at a rate of 5% per annum. The Council believes that re-designating some of the long-stay car parks as 'shoppers' and 'rail commuters' car parks can accommodate this need in the short term. Furthermore, the aspiration to provide up to 2000 rail commuter parking spaces in the longer term can only be achieved by 'decking over' the existing railway car parks.

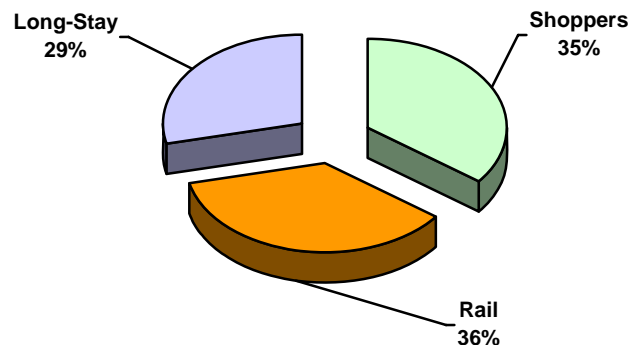
In view of the above, the Council has set targets for future growth in parking provision but which at the same time reduces the proportion of non-rail commuter long-term parking provision in the context of the overall parking provision. Those targets are: -

CATEGORY	Current Provision		Short-term Target		Medium-term target (5-yrs)		Long-term Target (10-yrs)	
	No.	% split	No.	% split	No.	% split	No.	% split
Shoppers	867	28%	1116	35%	1400	37%	1750	35%
Rail	524	17%	700	22%	1000	26%	1800	36%
Other Long Stay	1760	55%	1418	43%	1418	37%	1418	29%
TOTALS	3151		3234		3818		4968	

Parking Split – Current Provision



Parking Split - Long Term Target (10-year)



STRATEGY (Cont'd)

● Car Park Charges

The income generated from Town Centre car parks contributes towards the cost of maintaining the Town Centre and for re-investment in the parking facilities themselves. It is, therefore, vital that charges continue to be applied. In setting and/or reviewing car park charges the Council will take into account a number of variable and conflicting issues. This will allow a balanced approach to be taken between supply and demand; income generation; the need to ensure the economic well being of the town centre and encouragement of future growth; and parking restraints to achieve a modal shift from the car to alternative forms of travel.

● Parking Provision For Disabled People

- ▶ The Council will continue to monitor the use of existing 'blue badge holder' parking spaces within the Town Centre car parks and the demand for additional spaces.
- ▶ Road space within the Town Centre is limited and providing additional on-street spaces will be difficult. However, the Council will monitor the use of the existing road space (in particular, loading/unloading bays) in the service roads to see if there is further scope for increasing the number of 'blue badge holder' spaces.

● Role Of Buses (and Trains) in Reducing Parking Demand

- ▶ In order to enhance the role of buses/trains in Stevenage, the Council will work in partnership with the County Council and bus/rail operators to help implement strategies that assist in securing *improved/better quality bus/rail services* as well as innovative "through bus/rail ticketing" schemes in Stevenage.
- ▶ In conjunction with the above the Council will consider aligning long-stay parking charges with the equivalent return bus fare as an incentive to achieve the desired modal shift from car to bus.

● Reducing Town Centre Road Congestion

- ▶ If, through re-generation and/or other major developments, more shoppers are attracted to the Town Centre, the surrounding highways will become increasingly congested. Some reduction in potential congestion might be achieved by encouraging 'through' traffic to use other routes.
- ▶ The Council will continue to support the widening of the A1(M) to 3-lanes as this will not only benefit the town generally but may also discourage north-south 'through' traffic in the Town Centre. The Council will also ask the Hertfordshire County Council to consider developing a **Stevenage Ring Road** using Gunnelswood Road; Broadhall Way; Gresley Way and Martins Way as a possible means of discouraging east-west 'through' traffic.

● Commercial Development – Parking Demands

- ▶ Generally, the Council will require major regeneration schemes in the Town Centre to provide on-site multi-storey car parks to meet the needs of both the new development and to replace any public car parking spaces that are lost. Developers of smaller schemes will be required to make financial contributions towards alternative off-site parking provision. The approach will be flexible to ensure that The Council will, as far as is practicable, ensure that the regeneration of the Town Centre is not constrained.
- ▶ Insofar as Town Centre residential development is concerned the opportunities for shared use parking and car free developments will be encouraged.

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based																																			
<p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p>To ensure that the total parking stock in the Town Centre is sufficient to meet the needs of the town and to constantly review the split between long-stay and short-stay parking provision ensuring that a balance is struck that provides a disincentive to car borne work trips, yet maintains a sufficient number of spaces to cater for future growth in shoppers and rail commuter requirements.</p>	<p>1. The Council will seek to meet the targets set out in this strategy for future parking provision whilst at the same time reducing the proportion of non-rail commuter long-term parking provision in the context of the overall parking provision. Those targets are: -</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="705 475 1460 836"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">Immediate</th> <th colspan="2">Medium Term (5-year)</th> <th colspan="2">Long Term (10-year)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Short Stay</td> <td>1116</td> <td>35%</td> <td>1400</td> <td>37%</td> <td>1750</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rail Commuter</td> <td>700</td> <td>22%</td> <td>1000</td> <td>26%</td> <td>1800</td> <td>36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Long-stay</td> <td>1418</td> <td>43%</td> <td>1418</td> <td>37%</td> <td>1418</td> <td>29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>3234</td> <td></td> <td>3818</td> <td></td> <td>4968</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>2. The Council, through its own Green Travel Plan, will seek to encourage its own employees to use alternative forms of transport to the car for work travel purposes by exploring the possibility of offering a bus/rail season ticket in lieu of a car park season ticket possibly linked to a discount package with retailers/leisure centre/rail operators.</p> <p>3. That in view of the Council's intention to reduce the proportion of non-rail commuter long-term parking provision in the context of the overall parking provision the feasibility of introducing a <i>commuter</i> 'park-and-ride' facility within the town will be investigated.</p>		Immediate		Medium Term (5-year)		Long Term (10-year)		Short Stay	1116	35%	1400	37%	1750	35%	Rail Commuter	700	22%	1000	26%	1800	36%	Other Long-stay	1418	43%	1418	37%	1418	29%	TOTAL	3234		3818		4968		<p>1. The Council's strategy for meeting the existing shortfall in the provision of 'shoppers' and 'rail commuter' parking will be to consider: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-designating the Swinggate and Daneshill car parks, as well as the new temporary car park to be built on the adjoining 'Fun Centre' site, as one short stay car park. Re-designating the remaining two car parks, 'P' and 'H' (adjacent to the Leisure Centre and Danesgate respectively), as "Rail Commuter Car Parks" but with a dual tariff to allow evening/weekend use by non-rail commuters. <p>2. The Council's longer term strategy for meeting any future growth in demand for 'shoppers' and 'rail commuter' parking will be to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that any development on existing car parks replaces the parking spaces lost as well as providing for any increase in trade likely to arise from growth brought about by the development itself; Consider 'decking' over the existing railway car parks in order to embrace the Council's vision for a Bus/Rail Interchange on the site of and adjacent to the existing rail station subject to being able to identify an appropriate source of funding for such work. Encourage customers using long-stay car parks to use alternative modes of transport by the use of parking demand management tools and to consider converting any spare capacity achieved to 'short-stay' parking.
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TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that the equipment used to control the Council's Town Centre Car Parks is easy and convenient to use by customers whilst minimising any 'parking fee abuse' and any detrimental impact on the surrounding highway network caused by queuing.</i></p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will consider replacing the existing control equipment with 'pay on foot' equipment as an on-going programme with priority being given to short-stay car parks subject to the necessary funding being available. 2. That in the event of new parking facilities being provided as a result of any development on existing car parks, the developer will be required to install 'pay on foot' control equipment compatible with the Council's equipment.
<p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p><i>To continue taking advantage of the potential for generating other income associated with the Town Centre Car Parks through commercial opportunities and parking incentives.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's strategy is to encompass all revenue generating initiatives, which not only enhances the income generated but also improves customer perceptions of the service provided. 2. The Council will consider introducing other commercial activities within car parks provided such activities generate additional income and customer goodwill and have the potential for increasing the use of the car parks without adversely impinging on the core business. 3. The Council will continue to encourage retail/leisure businesses within the Town Centre to provide incentives for their customers through discounted car park tickets. 	

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 4</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that parking charges at the Town Centre car parks generate sufficient profit for supporting other services provided by the Council and for re-investment in the service itself whilst at the same time reflecting a balanced approach between supply and demand; the need to ensure the economic well-being of the town centre and encouragement of future growth; and parking restraints to achieve a modal shift from the car to alternative modes of travel.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's strategy in relation to pricing structures at Town Centre car parks will be to undertake pricing reviews at least once a year in the context of local circumstances, the viability of the Town Centre as a retail centre and the national economy. 2. In reviewing its car parks charging structure, the Council will adopt a balanced approach between supply and demand; income generation; the need to ensure the economic well being of the town centre and encouragement of future growth; and parking restraints to achieve a modal shift from the car to alternative forms of transport. 3. The Council will develop a formal Business Plan for its Parking Services to include any park-and-ride and parking enforcement operation that might be developed in due course. 	
<p><u>Objective 5</u></p> <p><i>To seek to improve the parking service in the Town Centre by ensuring that the service is accessible to all and to ensure that sufficient parking spaces, both on-street and off-street, are provided for use by "orange/blue badge" holders.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will consider extending the concessionary car park season ticket scheme to applicants living outside the town boundary provided they are 'blue badge' holders and are not in receipt of a concessionary bus pass. 2. That, where there is a requirement on a developer to replace any parking spaces lost through development on an existing car park, the developer will also be required to provide, as part of the replaced spaces, a number of 'orange/blue badge' parking spaces either on-street, if possible, or off-street. 3. Through the Stevenage Freight Quality Partnership, the Council will explore how best to co-ordinate the number and timing of goods vehicle deliveries in the town centre with a view to possibly releasing some road space for shared use between goods vehicles and orange/blue badge holders. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will continually monitor the use of existing road space on the service roads within the Town Centre and, where such road space is not required for or not being used for loading/unloading purposes, will consider re-designating those spaces as 'orange/blue badge' parking spaces provided it is safe to do so from a highways safety point of view. 2. The Council will consider providing additional 'orange/blue badge' parking spaces along the service roads by making use of spaces within an adjoining surface level car parks, if feasible, and making them accessible directly from the service roads subject to funding being made available through the Council's Forward Plan process.

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 6</u></p> <p><i>To encourage those people who work in and around the Town Centre or commute by rail from Stevenage to use buses for work travel or travel to the railway station rather than the private car.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to encourage a modal shift from the car to buses for 'work travel to/from the Town Centre' and 'travel to the railway station', the Council will continue working in partnership with the Hertfordshire County Council to implement their Bus and Intalink Strategies with particular emphasis on: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> λ seeking improvements in quality and frequency of bus services λ Introducing and expanding 'through bus/rail ticketing' schemes. 2. When setting its parking charges for long-stay parking (non-rail commuters), the Council will take into account the cost of the equivalent return bus fare in Stevenage so that the level of parking charge encourages a modal shift from the car to buses for 'work travel. 3. The Council will undertake discussions with the public transport providers on parking provision generally and public transport users in order to crystallise the link between parking & transport strategies and particularly as a means of monitoring the impact of the parking strategy on public transport use. 	<p>In order to mitigate the potential impact that congestion might have on bus services, to develop a Quality Bus Partnership in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council and bus operators, with particular emphasis on investigating the need for bus priority measures around the Town Centre and other congestion black spots.</p>
<p><u>Objective 7</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that the highway network in and around the Town Centre is as free-flowing as possible in order to ensure that easy access to shops and leisure facilities is maintained and to minimise the nuisance caused by 'shopper and commuter' parking in residential areas in close proximity to the Town Centre.</i></p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> λ make representations to the Hertfordshire County Council to develop a Stevenage Ring Road to make better use of any spare capacity on Gunnelswood Road, Broadhall Way, Gresley Way and Martins Way and to include such a project in its 5-year Local Transport Plan; λ Through the consultation process relating to the Government's London to South Midlands Multi-modal study, support the inclusion of the A1(M) widening in the Government's major road improvement programme. 	

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 8</u></p> <p><i>To target capital investment in car parks at essential maintenance of the fabric of the car parks and achieving the aims and strategies for Town Centre parking as set out in the overall Stevenage Parking Strategy.</i></p>		<p>That, subject to inclusion in the Council's Forward Plan, the Council's investment programme for Town Centre parking will be focused on achieving the objectives set out in the Stevenage Parking Strategy with priority being given initially to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● re-designating Swingate/Daneshill/'Fun Centre' car parks, as one short stay car park. ● re-designating car parks, 'P' and 'H' (adjacent to the Leisure Centre and Danesgate respectively), as Rail Commuter Car Parks." ● Replacing the existing CCTV system in the St. Georges Way MSCP with a new system linked to the Town Centre CCTV system. ● improving the car park service to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and ensuring that the service is accessible to all users; ● increasing the number of 'orange/blue badge' parking spaces within the Town Centre service roads; ● replacing the existing control equipment with 'pay on foot' equipment as an on-going rolling programme; ● In partnership with other organisations involved in the bus and rail industries, consider 'decking over' the existing railway car parks in order to embrace the Council's vision for a Bus/Rail Interchange on the site of and adjacent to the existing rail station.

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 9</u></p> <p>1. <i>To ensure that where new parking provision is made in connection with new commercial development it:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>does not adversely impact on parking needs</i> • <i>is efficient in terms of land take;</i> • <i>is conveniently located to facilities which generate the demand for parking;</i> • <i>maximises opportunities for shared use parking</i> • <i>does not impose a constraint on the regeneration of the Town Centre.</i> <p>2. <i>To ensure that where existing public parking spaces are lost through development, the overall supply of public parking spaces is maintained and the parking needs of the new development are also met.</i></p>	<p><u>New Town Centre Developments (All Developments)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generally, the Council will require major regeneration schemes in the Town Centre such as new retail developments to provide on-site multi-storey car parks to meet the needs of both the new development and to replace any public car parking spaces that are lost. 2. Generally, the Council will require smaller development schemes in the Town Centre, which will incrementally increase demand for parking, to make financial contributions towards either alternative off-site parking provision or a park-and-ride scheme. 3. Guidance on whether developers are expected to provide on-site parking or make financial contributions towards alternative off-site parking provision and/or a park-and-ride scheme will be issued as 'supplementary guidance' to this Parking Strategy. 4. The Council will require new car parks provided on-site as part of a major Town Centre development for use by the public to have management/control measures/charging regimes comparable with the Council's own car parks. 5. It will be a requirement that any car parks provided as a result of any new development for use by the public will have security measures comparable with those provided by the Council in its own car parks. 6. The Council will encourage developers of new on-site car parks on land not owned/controlled by the Council to enter into an agreement, which would allow the Council to manage such car parks on behalf of the developer. 7. The Council will, as far as is practicable, adopt a flexible approach where new parking provision is made in connection with new commercial development in order to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it maximises opportunities for shared use parking • It does not impose a constraint on the regeneration of the Town Centre. 	

TOWN CENTRE

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 9 (Continued)</u></p>	<p><u>New Town Centre Developments (On Existing Public Car Parks)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will require that new public car parks provided on-site as part of a major development on an existing public car park be fitted with control equipment specified by the Council and integrated with and linked to the Council's existing control system. 2. The Council will require that new public car parks provided on-site as part of a major development on an existing public car park be fitted with appropriate security measures including a CCTV system integrated with and linked to the Council's existing CCTV system. 3. The Council will require the management/control of new public car parks provided in association with major developments on Council owned or controlled car parks to transfer to the Council in accordance with terms and conditions to be agreed. 4. The Council will require that, in all cases of major developments resulting in the temporary loss of public car parks, alternative (temporary) parking provision such as 'park' and 'ride' facilities are provided during the construction stage except as otherwise agreed by the Council. 	
<p><u>Objective 10</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that car parking associated with residential development in the Town Centre minimises land take, maximises opportunities for car-free developments and, where appropriate, shared parking provision, avoids overspill & congestion in nearby residential areas whilst not constraining the implementation of new residential development in the Town Centre.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although the provision of on-site parking up to the maximum standard will be permitted, the Council will, as a preference, encourage car-free residential development with the provision of "car clubs" replacing the need for individuals to own cars. 2. The Council will also consider proposals for meeting parking needs associated with residential development in the Town Centre through shared use of public car parks but only where such use would not give rise to conflicts between residents' and non-residents' use of those car parks. 	

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

PARKING ISSUES

The parking issues in residential areas have been identified as:

- **General parking congestion:** On-street parking conflicts, safety hazards & obstruction.
- **Verge Parking:** General parking on verges and ornamental grassed areas causing damage and nuisance.
- **Insufficient Off-street parking**
- **Underused Garage Compounds**
- **Parking enforcement**
- **Street Scene dominated by the car**
- **Parking restrictions**
- **Provision for disabled people – ‘blue badge’ holder parking spaces**
- **Commuter/Shopper Overspill Parking:** Streets in close proximity to the Town Centre/High Street
- **Overnight/weekend lorry ban**
- **Works vans:** Increasing level of commercial vehicle parking
- **Abandoned vehicles**



STRATEGY

The strategy adopts a twofold approach:

- ▶ *Dealing with indiscriminate parking*
- ▶ *Meeting the parking needs of residents and visitors both in existing residential areas and new residential developments?*

The strategy accepts the value of the ongoing programme of providing new spaces, but recognises that with space and budget not being infinite, a new and more radical approach is required, involving innovative and creative solutions. It, therefore, suggests a whole range of measures to deal with parking problems in residential areas. These are summarised below: -

- **Parking Restrictions**

The introduction of appropriate parking restrictions to ensure that visibility requirements at junctions are met and access for pedestrians and the emergency services is maintained.
- **Blue-badge Holder Parking Spaces on the Highway**

Continue to operate the present system of assessing applications for disabled parking spaces on the highway and to review the criteria as the need arises.
- **Vehicular Crossings (Carriage Crossings)**

Where conventional methods of increasing the number of parking spaces are not possible, consider schemes that consist solely of providing residents with vehicular crossings, at no cost to themselves, to facilitate access to their gardens for off-road parking.
- **Verge Parking Bye-law**

The introduction of a mechanism that permits effective enforcement of the Verge Parking Bye-law perhaps, initially, in one area of the town as a **pilot project** in order to allow the impact of enforcement to be measured in terms of effectiveness, vehicle displacement and public reaction.

STRATEGY (Cont'd)

- **Overnight/Weekend Lorry-Parking Ban**

Investigate the feasibility of reducing the threshold weight at which enforcement of the current overnight/weekend lorry-parking ban operates so that larger commercial vans can be prevented from parking in residential streets.

- **Garage Compounds**

In the longer term, investigate the feasibility of using low-usage garage compounds, which do not currently incorporate garages, for the parking of light commercial vehicles thereby freeing up on-street parking spaces.

- **Controlled Parking Zones**

Identifying and, in the longer term implementing, appropriate measures such as controlled parking zones to prevent long-term parking migrating from the Town Centre, Railway Station, Old Town High Street and Lister Hospital to surrounding residential streets.

- **Enforcement Powers**

If the only means of addressing the problem of indiscriminate parking in residential streets is to introduce restrictions and/or controlled parking zones, then for this to be successful, enforcement cannot be left to the police. The Council will undertake a feasibility study to ascertain whether or not it is feasible for it to take on the powers available under the 1991 Road Traffic Act to designate Stevenage a Special Parking Area (SPA) and assume enforcement responsibility. If the Council decides to apply for enforcement powers and the application is successful: -

- ▶ A rolling programme of parking restrictions and/or other measures that might require enforcement.
- ▶ Other enforcement duties associated with the verge parking Byelaw, overnight/weekend lorry parking ban etc will be absorbed into any enforcement mechanism set up.

- **New Developments**

The Council's recently adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on parking standards for all types of developments is based on maximum parking standards. As well as explaining how residential parking standards apply, it provides guidance on car free residential developments, mixed-use developments, and how new developments should avoid exacerbating parking problems in existing residential areas. In addition, developers will be made aware that the Council fully supports Home Zone principles and will encourage Developers to adopt them and car-free or car-share residential developments in appropriate locations wherever possible.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	'Project Based' Strategy
<p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that vehicles parked in residential streets do not compromise safety, access for pedestrians, access for the emergency services and the environment.</i></p>	<p>The Council will utilise such measures as are currently deemed appropriate to ensure that visibility requirements at junctions are met, access for pedestrians and access for the emergency services is maintained and that verges and ornamental grassed areas are adequately protected.</p>	<p>The Council will arrange to undertake surveys of each individual residential street in order to determine the maximum level of parking that can be accommodated without detriment to safety.</p>
<p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p><i>To achieve a balance between providing additional off-street car parking spaces and retaining sufficient verges and ornamental grassed areas so as to maintain sufficient "green areas" for the amenity of residents whilst recognising that in some areas of the town the originally designed level of car ownership has been considerably exceeded leading to the environmental problems and indiscriminate parking identified as issues in this strategy.</i></p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View conversion of grassed areas to parking as just one of a range of initiatives for increasing the number of off-street spaces and not the automatic choice. • Seek to mitigate the conflict between the requirement for additional parking and the requirement for maintaining the amenity of the area by applying a high standard of design as part of any scheme. 	<p>The Council will ensure that where a scheme is based on converting a verge or grassed areas to parking high quality design standards will be developed by a combination of landscape architecture and spatial design principles with the requirements of highway safety and the use of high quality materials and soft landscaping.</p>
<p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that verges and grassed ornamental areas are free of parking whilst recognising that in some areas of the town parking provision does not meet basic levels.</i></p>	<p>The Council will consider the introduction of an effective mechanism that permits enforcement to be carried out to deal with parking on grassed areas and to use it to deal with general verge parking and parking on ornamental areas where such parking cannot be justified.</p>	<p>In terms of erecting posts to protect grassed areas, the existing unofficial approach of using them only to prevent parking on a verge adjacent to a junction or where a grassed area is being used as a short cut between two roads will become official Council Policy.</p>
<p><u>Objective 4</u></p> <p><i>To educate and inform residents of the problems caused by indiscriminate parking and to encourage them to park in a manner that allows access and does not cause unnecessary obstructions.</i></p>	<p>Either as a result of being identified by survey or following a complaint by a resident, or where there is insufficient space to increase parking provision, the Council will launch a publicity campaign to encourage residents to park as considerately as possible and to carefully consider the impact of acquiring additional cars within the household.</p>	<p>The Council will identify those streets where indiscriminate parking causes access or obstruction problems, particularly for the Emergency Services as part of the street-by-street surveys.</p>

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES (Continued)

Objective	Statement of Intent	'Project Based' Strategy
<p><u>Objective 5</u></p> <p><i>To reduce the number of commercial vehicles parking in residential streets and thus limit the adverse effect on residents.</i></p>		<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out a study to ascertain the reasons for the growth of commercial vehicles parking in residential streets. • determine a suitable threshold weight, possibly linked to taxation class, over which all commercial vehicles will be prohibited from parking in residential streets in the event that a blanket ban on all commercial vehicles is not feasible.
<p><u>Objective 6</u></p> <p><i>To reduce the number of illegally parked vehicles both on the highway and in designated parking areas.</i></p>	<p>The Council will use the complete range of powers available to it to ensure that abandoned, untaxed and other illegally parked vehicles are removed as quickly as possible.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 7</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that residential streets are free of commuter parking.</i></p>	<p>The Council will consider putting in place appropriate measures to prevent long-term parking migrating from the Town Centre, Old Town or other centres such as Lister Hospital to surrounding residential streets.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 8</u></p> <p><i>To continue to offer the facility for disabled drivers to apply for parking spaces on the highway outside their house.</i></p>		<p>The Council will continue to operate the present system of assessing applications for disabled parking spaces on the highway and to review the criteria as the need arises.</p>
<p><u>Objective 9</u></p> <p><i>To introduce a system of ranking parking problems in residential streets that is both fair and equitable.</i></p>	<p>The Council will use the new ranking system to generate a new priority list for the introduction of residential parking schemes.</p>	<p>The Council will devise a system of ranking parking problems in residential areas that compares the level of parking provision available with the number of associated dwellings, on a street by street basis.</p>

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES (Continued)

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	'Project Based' Strategy
<p><u>Objective 10</u></p> <p><i>To provide better parking management in residential areas by the introduction of speed reducing measures.</i></p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor the effectiveness of "Home Zones" introduced in the UK. • maintain a register of "Home Zones" introduced across the UK and to identify best practice in terms of effective design. • delay the introduction of Home Zones on a retrofit basis until such a time as there is a degree of certainty that funds will be made available year on year to enable the process of implementation to be a continuous one. 	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use speed-reducing features in future parking schemes, if appropriate. • include sufficient features in the design to reduce speeds so as to qualify for 20mph-zone status where speed-reducing features are an integral part of a residential parking scheme.
<p><u>Objective 11</u></p> <p><i>To continue the Council's programme of residential parking schemes in those streets where there is acute parking congestion and where the provision of additional spaces will result in better management of the parking situation.</i></p>	<p>The Council will develop a new ranking system, which will be used to generate a new priority list for the introduction of residential parking schemes.</p>	<p>For the time being the Council will continue to give consideration to the provision of funding through the annual capital allocation to allow residential parking schemes to be implemented.</p>
<p><u>Objective 12</u></p> <p><i>To introduce maximum residential parking standards for new developments which will be consistent with the objectives of the Parking Strategy, whilst according with Government policy.</i></p>	<p>The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance setting out the Borough Council's new approach towards vehicle parking provision in new developments was adopted in 2003.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 13</u></p> <p><i>To introduce Home Zone principles in as many new residential schemes as possible.</i></p>	<p>Developers will be made aware that the Council fully supports Home Zone principles and will be encouraged to adopt them wherever possible.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 14</u></p> <p><i>To support car free and car share developments</i></p>	<p>The Council will support and encourage Developers to introduce car free or car share residential developments in appropriate locations.</p>	

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

LONG TERM STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	'Project Based' Strategy
<p><u>Objective 15</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that any parking restrictions introduced are effectively enforced.</i></p>	<p>The Council has agreed to apply for the powers available under the 1991 Road Traffic Act for designating Stevenage a Special Parking Area (SPA) and allowing the Borough Council to assume responsibility for the enforcement of parking restrictions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If granted parking enforcement powers, the Council will consider introducing a rolling programme of parking restrictions in order to permit on-street indiscriminate parking to be dealt with. 2. If granted parking enforcement powers, the Council will include enforcement of on-street 'blue badge' holder parking spaces in the overall system of enforcement .
<p><u>Objective 16</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that any measures put in place to prevent long-term parking migrating from the Town Centre, Old Town and/or other centres such as Lister Hospital, to surrounding residential streets are effective and can be effectively enforced.</i></p>		<p>The Council will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify those roads close to the High Street, Railway Station, Town Centre and any other centres where long-term parking occurs on a regular basis and at the earliest opportunity to incorporate those streets into a Controlled Parking Zone. • consider the implications relating to the enforcement of a CPZ and determine whether to introduce it as part of an overall Special Parking Area (SPA).
<p><u>Objective 17</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that, in the event of the weight limit specified in the current 'Overnight/Weekend Lorry Parking Ban' being lowered, alternative parking facilities exist for those commercial vehicles captured by the lower weight limit.</i></p>	<p>The Council will attempt to identify suitable locations, on a neighbourhood basis, that can be designated as parking areas for light commercial vehicles and to specify an upper limit of vehicle that can be left in a residential street.</p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out any necessary improvements to make these designated areas safe and secure; • determine an upper weight limit for these parking areas so as to avoid heavy goods vehicles using them and thus being brought into residential areas; • encompass the enforcement of any new Lorry Ban Order in the overall enforcement regime should decriminalisation be adopted.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

LONG TERM STRATEGIES (Continued)

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	'Project Based' Strategy
<p><u>Objective 18</u></p> <p><i>To improve the on-street parking situation by encouraging as many residents as possible to apply for carriage crossings where appropriate.</i></p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider setting aside a proportion of any annual residential parking allocation to enable appropriate subsidies to be offered to residents, across the board, to encourage more people to apply for carriage crossings. actively promote any new initiatives so that residents are aware, in advance, of the new arrangements regarding the provision of carriage crossings. 	<p>In roads where conventional methods of increasing the number of parking spaces are not possible, schemes that consist solely of providing residents with crossings, at no cost to themselves, to facilitate access to their gardens will be considered by the Council.</p>
<p><u>Objective 19</u></p> <p><i>To make better use of garage compounds and to encourage greater usage where appropriate.</i></p>		<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider improving maintenance, lighting and where possible accessibility of those compounds that incorporate garages. consider improving lighting and security at those compounds which do not currently incorporate garages and investigate the feasibility of using them for the parking of light commercial vehicles or other alternative off-road parking, subject to the development of a strategy on the future use of garage compounds.
<p><u>Objective 20</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that the current level of 'communal' parking area is maintained.</i></p>	<p>Applications for the purchase of Council-owned non-highway parking hardstands in residential areas will be refused unless the loss can be compensated for by the construction of an equivalent number of additional communal parking spaces funded by the applicant.</p>	

HIGH STREET & SURROUNDING OLD TOWN AREAS

PARKING ISSUES

The existing parking issues in the Old Town have been identified as:

- **Safety hazards** caused by the parking layouts along the High Street
- **Competition for space** in the High Street itself, particularly at the southern end;
- **Lack of short-stay parking facilities** which discourages growth in retail activity;
- **Free parking** which does not encourage Old Town workers to seek alternative transport modes for work travel; is inconsistent with Town Centre parking and does not generate any income to reinvest in the parking service itself;
- **Visual impact of and parking conflicts** within the Lorry Park:
- **Parking overspill** from the commercial/retail centres into the surrounding residential streets;
- **Migration of commuter parking** (rail users & Town Centre workers) to the southern section of the High Street, the Lorry Park and partly to Old Town residential areas.
- **Parking restrictions – enforcement** (Added Note: The Hertfordshire Constabulary withdrew the Traffic Warden Service in 2004 and Stevenage Borough Council has since taken on that responsibility)



STRATEGY

In summary, the strategies developed recognise that the High Street and surrounding Old Town area is a unique blend of '*specialist*' (arguably) *retail outlets, service industries, light industrial units, public houses, restaurants, food take-away establishments* and *residential units*. The area, therefore, attracts both long-term and short-term parking. In addition, the area is in close proximity to the older established *residential areas* of the Old Town.

If parking restrictions and/or controlled parking zones are introduced in the High Street and adjoining Old Town area to help solve some of the parking problems, they will only be effective if properly enforced. The enforcement of parking restrictions and dealing with other parking nuisances is a key issue and the Council has already signalled its intention in the residential parking section that it will consider applying for the powers available under the 1991 Road Traffic Act to designate Stevenage a Special Parking Area (SPA) and assume enforcement responsibility.

The results of the feasibility study will indicate whether or not the introduction of restrictions etc in the High Street and adjoining residential areas can be successfully enforced. It is not intended to introduce such measures separately or in isolation but to include them in any town-wide rolling programme that might be developed.

The strategy, therefore, seeks to address the parking issues in the High Street and adjoining Old Town area as follows: -

- **Short Term Parking**
To consider the introduction of measures to re-designate the parking provision along the High Street as short stay parking.

STRATEGY (Cont'd)

- **Long-term parking**

To cater for long-term parking in the other car parks in Primett Road/Church Lane (except the Waitrose Car Park, which should remain short-stay).
- **Parking Demand Management Tools**

The possible introduction of parking demand management tools such as: -

 - ▶ Charging for long-stay parking (Primett Road/Church Lane) to provide a disincentive to car borne work trips and much needed income to reinvest in the service
 - ▶ On-street parking restrictions and/or controlled parking zones to reduce parking problems along the High Street and surrounding residential areas.
- **Lorry Park**
 - ▶ To seek to remove the Lorry Park from its current location, which would have the added benefit of enhancing this area of the Old Town.
 - ▶ Asking the County Council to recognise the importance of the Lorry Park to Hertfordshire in transportation terms and to include a bid in their 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan for funding to relocate the Lorry Park (including the provision of toilet/rest facilities) to a more suitable site either in Stevenage or close by in North Hertfordshire.
- **'Gyratory' System - North End Of The High Street**

Asking the County Council to include a bid in their 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan for the required funding to implement an appropriate scheme that removes the 'gyratory' system from the north end of the High Street.
- **High Street**
 - ▶ As a longer term aim, implementing a comprehensive scheme along the High Street which retains vehicular access and provides a properly managed parking regime, yet at the same time creates an improved environment for pedestrians, cyclists and passenger transport users.
 - ▶ Asking the County Council to include a bid in their 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan for a comprehensive scheme along the High Street on the basis that the scheme will also remove the existing highway safety hazards that exist along the High Street.

HIGH STREET & ADJOINING OLD TOWN AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p><i>To review the split between long-stay and short-stay parking provision in the High Street and surrounding areas of the Old Town to ensure that a balance is struck that provides a disincentive to car borne work trips, yet maintains a sufficient number of spaces to help generate increased retail activity in this part of the Old Town.</i></p>	<p>In order to achieve a balanced split between short-stay and long-stay parking provision, the Council will maintain the Waitrose car park as a short-stay car park and will consider the introduction of measures to re-designate the parking provision along the High Street as short stay parking whilst catering for long-term parking in the other car parks in Primett Road/Church Lane.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to provide a disincentive to car borne work trips, the Council will, through the use of parking demand management tools, seek to reduce the demand for long-stay parking in the High Street and surrounding areas by encouraging people to use alternative modes of transport. 2. In the event of a park-and-ride facility being provided in the town, consideration will be given to extending the service to cover the Old Town as well as the Town Centre.
<p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that the management of car parks in the Old Town is consistent with the management of the Town Centre Car Parks and to use parking demand management tools to achieve a modal shift from the car to alternative modes of travel.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Council will investigate the feasibility of introducing charges for long-term parking in the Primett Road & Church Lane car parks so as to be consistent with the strategy for Town Centre car parks. 2 In undertaking the above investigation, the Council will take into account the need to achieve a balance between supply and demand; the need to ensure the economic well being of the Old Town (High Street) whilst encouraging future growth; and the use of parking restraints to achieve a modal shift from the car to alternative forms of transport. 	

HIGH STREET & ADJOINING OLD TOWN AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p><i>To reduce or remove the detrimental visual impact that a lorry park has on this part of the Old Town and to consider how best to remove the parking conflicts that occur between cars and lorries due to its dual use as a car and lorry park.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 That in order to reduce the parking conflicts and remove the detrimental visual impact, the Council will continue its search for an alternative and more suitable site for the lorry park but relocation will only occur after a suitable alternative site has been found, either with appropriate facilities or after such facilities have been developed and the site is ready for occupation. 2 In the event of the Lorry Park being relocated and subject to the demand for car parking in the Old Town remaining at its current level, the parking area in Primett Road, currently being used for lorry parking will remain as a public parking facility. 	<p>The Council will ask the Hertfordshire County Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - • recognise the contribution the Lorry Park makes to 'transportation' within Hertfordshire • include a bid in their 2006 – 2011 Local Transport Plan for funding to relocate the Lorry Park (including the provision of toilet/rest facilities) to a more suitable site either in Stevenage or North Hertfordshire.
<p><u>Objective 4</u></p> <p><i>To seek to improve the parking service in the Primett Road car parks by ensuring that the service is accessible to all and to ensure that sufficient parking spaces are provided for use by "orange/blue badge" holders.</i></p>	<p>The Council will assess the need to provide additional "orange/blue badge" holder parking spaces in the Primett Road and Church Lane car parks so as to comply with current national recommendations and will constantly monitor the off-street parking service to ensure that it is accessible to all users.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 If as a result of such an assessment it is decided that 'blue badge' holder spaces should be provided in the Church Lane car parks, the Council will improve the access to/from these smaller car parks. 2 If parking charges are introduced at the Primett Road Car Parks, the Council will extend the concessionary car park season ticket scheme to include these car parks within the scheme.
<p><u>Objective 5</u></p> <p><i>To reduce the parking nuisance caused by migration of both long-term and short-term parking to the residential streets adjacent to the High Street, Old Town.</i></p>	<p>The Council will use the same strategies developed for Residential Areas for ensuring that residential streets in close proximity to the High Street are free of commuter and other overspill parking.</p>	

HIGH STREET & ADJOINING OLD TOWN AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 6</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that any parking restrictions within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) introduced in the Old Town are effectively enforced.</i></p>	<p>If the Council is granted parking enforcement powers available under the 1991 Road Traffic Act, then the enforcement of any parking restrictions in the Old Town will be incorporated into a Town-wide enforcement regime.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 7</u></p> <p><i>To seek to improve the provision of on-street parking facilities in the High Street for "orange/blue badge" holders.</i></p>	<p>The Council will ensure that sufficient parking spaces are provided in the High Street for use by "orange/blue badge" holders and will constantly monitor the parking facilities to ensure that they are accessible to all users.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 8</u></p> <p><i>To reduce the detrimental impact of the James Way/Lytton Way 'gyratory' system on the north section of the High Street.</i></p>		<p>The Council will ask the Hertfordshire County Council to include a bid in their 2006 – 2011 Local Transport Plan for funding to implement a highway improvement scheme that removes the existing 'gyratory' system from the north end of the High Street.</p>
<p><u>Objective 9</u></p> <p><i>To retain vehicular access to the High Street and provide a properly managed parking regime, yet at the same time improve highway safety and create an improved environment for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.</i></p>		<p>The Council will: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Promote a comprehensive scheme that balances the need for vehicular access and parking provision with the necessary improvements to encourage walking, cycling and public transport patronage. 2 Seek to identify appropriate sources of funding for implementing the above scheme and will also ask the Hertfordshire County Council to include a bid in their 2006 – 2011 Local Transport Plan on the basis that the scheme will remove existing highway safety hazards that exist along the High Street.

HIGH STREET & ADJOINING OLD TOWN AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 10</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that the High Street remains a thriving commercial centre, providing local shopping facilities and employment opportunities both for the immediate residential area and the town as a whole and to preserve and enhance the quality of the environment of the High Street area.</i></p>	<p>The Council will use the same strategies developed for the Town Centre to meet the objectives relating to Commercial Development and Regeneration in the High Street.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 11</u></p> <p><i>To introduce maximum residential parking standards for new developments in the High Street and surrounding Old Town area which will be consistent with the objectives of the Parking Strategy, whilst according with Government policy.</i></p>	<p>The Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the same strategies developed for the Town Centre for determining parking standards associated with residential development in the High Street (or close proximity). ● Use the same strategies developed for residential areas for determining parking standards associated with residential development in other areas of the Old Town. 	

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

PARKING ISSUES

There are fewer parking problems in the Neighbourhood Centres compared to the Town Centre, High Street and residential areas. However, the parking issues in these areas have been identified as: -

- **Parking Provision/Needs:**
- **Parking Provision and facilities for Disabled People:**
- **Status of Neighbourhood Centre car parks**



STRATEGY

Local residents value neighbourhood centres highly for their convenience and accessibility. In a recent MORI survey residents were asked what would encourage them to use the centres more often and the number citing 'improved parking' as an issue was insignificant. On the other hand, a consultation with shop traders in 2001 indicated that parking provision had a major influence on their long-term plan to continue trading within the parade.

Taking a balanced approach, the strategy, therefore, seeks to address the issues identified above as follows: -

- **Current Parking Provision:**
Using parking standards that would apply to new developments of the same scale, the Council will determine whether or not any of the areas currently set aside for parking could be released to facilitate any future re-generation/re-development in the neighbourhood centres.
- **Determining Parking Provision:**
That, in determining the level of parking facilities that should be provided, the Council will take the following requirements into consideration: -
 - ▶ The future viability of the centre
 - ▶ Staff parking and the parking demand generated by any community and/or other non-retail uses of the centre (including health centres and the like)
 - ▶ Servicing arrangements, taking into account the 'class of use' of each retail unit.
- **Facilities for People with Disabilities:**
The Council will ensure that the number of "blue badge" holder parking spaces at the Neighbourhood Centres complies with current national recommendations, subject to a minimum of 1. The Council will ensure that appropriate facilities such as tactile paving, ramps, hand-railing and dropped kerbs where necessary are provided along the route from the parking areas to the shopping area.
- **Management of Parking Areas:**
Some car parks are designated as highway whilst others are non-highway either privately owned or owned by the Council. Where possible, there is a need to rationalise the status of the Neighbourhood Centre car parks in order to create a single 'management' regime to facilitate a uniform and consistent approach to their management and, in particular, to control misuse. The Council will, therefore, investigate whether or not the status of the Neighbourhood Centre car parks can be rationalised in order to create a single 'management' regime for dealing with maintenance and enforcement.
- **Development & Regeneration:**
The Council will use policies contained in the District Plan and guidance provided in any Supplementary Planning Guidance, to determine parking standards for any development that may be provided at any existing neighbourhood centre through a Neighbourhood Centre Regeneration Strategy.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p><i>To provide a disincentive to car borne trips to the neighbourhood centres and to ensure that any future re-generation/re-development of these centres can be facilitated.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will determine the maximum parking facilities that should be provided at each of the major neighbourhood centres consistent with the parking standards that would currently apply to new developments of a similar scale whilst bearing in mind the need to ensure the economic well-being, future viability and attractiveness of each centre. 2. In determining the appropriate parking facilities that should be provided, the requirements for staff parking as well as parking demand generated by any community and/or other non-retail facilities provided at the centre will be taken into account. 3. Where garage courts form part of the Neighbourhood Centre, their occupancy levels and suitability for retention will be investigated in order to determine whether they can be replaced or the level of provision reduced to facilitate any future re-generation/re-development in the neighbourhood centres. 4. The Council will examine the areas currently set aside for servicing to determine the scope for rationalisation so that any future re-generation/re-development in the neighbourhood centres can be facilitated. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council may consider removing any parking areas or part of a parking area, identified as surplus to requirements from the exercise identified in Statements of Intent 1 & 2 in order to make such areas available for the future re-generation/re-development of the neighbourhood centres. 2. The parking provision at any centres, identified as being inadequate, as a result of the actions in Statements of Intent 1 & 2, will not be increased but the Council may, instead, examine ways of improving throughputs and parking layouts.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p><i>To seek to improve the parking service provided at Neighbourhood Centres by ensuring that the service is accessible to all and that sufficient parking spaces are provided for use by “orange/blue badge” holders.</i></p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will ensure that the number of “orange/blue badge” holder parking spaces at the Neighbourhood Centres complies with current national recommendations subject to the provision of one space as a minimum. 2. The Council will undertake a survey of the routes between the parking areas and centre facilities and, if necessary, will implement a programme of improvements such as ramps, dropped kerbs, hand-railing, tactile paving etc to ensure that access for people with disabilities is not unreasonably difficult.
<p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p><i>To rationalise the status of the Neighbourhood Centre car parks in order to create a single and consistent ‘management’ & ‘enforcement’ regime.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provided it is appropriate to do so, practicably and financially, the Council will, in conjunction with the highway authority (Hertfordshire County Council), investigate the feasibility of removing the highway status from those neighbourhood centre car parks currently designated as public highway in order to bring management and maintenance responsibility under the control of one authority, namely the Council. 2. If the highway status of the above car parks is successfully removed, the Council will expect Hertfordshire County Council to adopt as highway an equivalent area of non-highway thoroughfares currently under the control of the Council. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If, through investigations, it is determined that the removal of the highway status from those neighbourhood centre car parks currently designated as highway is not practicable or possible, the Council will consider the implementation of controls, permissible under either the Road Traffic Regulation Act or the Highways Act, to prevent the car parks from being misused. 2. Where the car parks are not designated as highway or where the highways status is successfully removed, the Council will consider implementing ‘Conditions of Use’ that will help reduce any misuse

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 4</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that a mix of uses is promoted at the Neighbourhood Centres in order to maintain and enhance their use and attractiveness.</i></p>	<p>The Council will develop a strategy for the regeneration of the Neighbourhood Centres that is consistent with the objectives set out in the Stevenage District Plan Second Review and the Stevenage Parking Strategy.</p>	

EMPLOYMENT AREAS

PARKING ISSUES

The two main employment areas, Gunnelswood Road and Wedgewood Way, Pin Green are reasonably well planned in that they are accessed direct off the principal road network without the necessity for vehicles to travel along or park in nearby residential roads.



As with Neighbourhood Centres, there are fewer parking problems in the Employment Areas compared to the Town Centre, High Street and residential areas. Furthermore, there are no significant overspill parking problems in nearby residential areas that need to be addressed through this Parking Strategy and, therefore, the focus of the strategy is on the following issues: -

- Enforcement of existing/future parking restrictions
- Reducing car borne work trips
- Future development.

STRATEGY

The strategy, therefore, seeks to address the above issues as follows: -

● **Parking Restrictions**

It is important for the roads in the main employment areas to remain relatively clear of parked vehicles for the efficient movement of goods and equipment. The Police's decision to withdraw the Traffic Warden Service from April 2004 could result in a significant increase in indiscriminate on-street parking. Such congestion could impede the efficient movement of goods and, as a result, might impede the Council's efforts to encourage existing employers to remain in Stevenage and/or attract new investment in both areas. Therefore, in the event of the Council adopting the parking enforcement powers under the Road Traffic Act 1991, enforcement of parking restrictions on the main streets within the employment areas will be incorporated in any enforcement regime developed.

● **Modal Shift**

In order to encourage a modal shift from the car to alternative forms of transport for 'work travel', the Council will encourage employers to develop and implement 'green' travel plans and form local partnerships with bus operators in order to provide employee incentives for using buses for work travel.

● **Bus Services**

- ▶ Encourage Bus operators to improve the quality and frequency of bus services to/from the Employment Areas.
- ▶ Continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council and the bus operators to secure improvements to bus services in response to any major developments.
- ▶ Where appropriate, contributions towards improving bus services in the Employment Areas will be sought from developers of any new developments in those areas.

● **Pedestrian/cycleway routes**

The County Council will be encouraged to ensure that those pedestrian/cycleway routes to and within the employment areas are well maintained and safe.

● **Development/Regeneration**

Generally, parking standards for any industrial/commercial development in the Employment Areas will be determined by using the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on parking provision.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Objective	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that access to and the efficient movement of goods within the two employment areas is not unduly impeded.</i></p>	<p>That in the event of the Council adopting the powers under Road Traffic Act 1991, enforcement of parking restrictions on the main streets within the employment areas will be incorporated in any enforcement regime developed.</p>	
<p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p><i>To seek to reduce car borne work trips and, hence, existing parking requirements in the Employment Areas.</i></p>	<p>In order to encourage a modal shift from the car to alternative forms of transport for 'work travel' to/from the Employment Areas, the Council will: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through the Stevenage Transport Forum and other such partnership forums encourage employers to develop and implement 'green' travel plans. ● Encourage employers to form local partnerships with bus operators in order to provide employee incentives for using buses for work travel. ● Work with Hertfordshire County Council and bus operators to identify how bus services to the Gunnels Wood Employment Area could be improved if the Stevenage West development proceeds. ● Seek contributions from new developments towards improving bus services in the Employment Areas where appropriate. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue working in partnership with the Hertfordshire County Council to implement their Bus and Intalink Strategies with particular emphasis on seeking improvements in the quality and frequency of bus services to/from the Employment Areas. 2. Through joint working with Hertfordshire County Council, seek to ensure that those pedestrian/cycleway routes to and within the employment areas are well maintained and safe. 3. In the event of a park-and-ride facility being provided in the town, the Council will discuss with major employers the feasibility of extending the service to also cover the Employment Areas.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

<i>Objective</i>	Statement of Intent/Policy	Project Based
<p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p><i>To determine the parking standards that should apply to any development in the two main employment areas consistent with meeting the employment objectives of the District Plan.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will determine parking standards for any industrial/commercial development in the Employment Areas by using its Supplementary Planning Guidance on parking provision. 2. In exceptional circumstances parking provision more than maximum standards may be permitted where it can be demonstrated that this is essential for avoiding parking problems such as overspill into residential areas and congestion caused by on-street parking. 	