



Uttlesford
District Council

Uttlesford Parking Review

Appendix C – Stage 1 report

October 2022

Prepared by

parking
matters

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1. Introduction

This document forms Appendix A to the Summary Report to the Uttlesford Parking Review and establishes a 'Base Case' by outlining the initial technical work undertaken during the first phase of the project and the consultation task carried out in May 2022.

1.1 Why Manage Parking

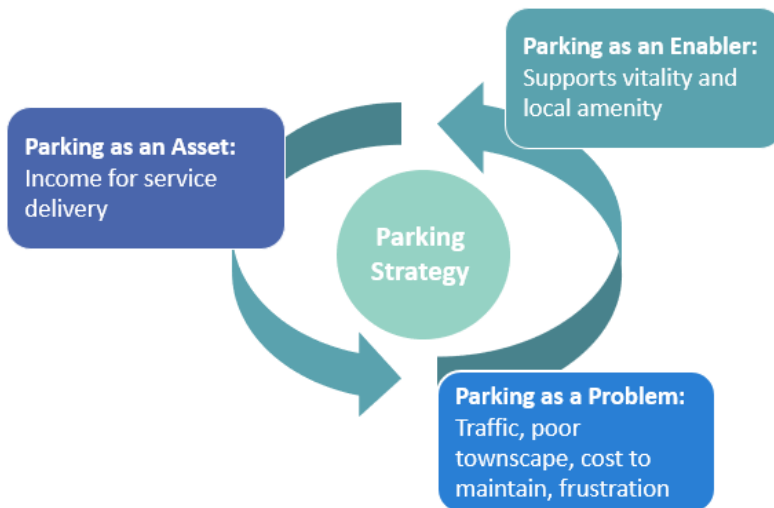
Car parking space is a finite resource. Private cars spend only an estimated 3-4% of their time in transit, with 80% of their time parked at home and 16% parked at a destination¹.

A typical car park bay takes up around 12m² of space² and when circulation, entrances/exits and ramps are accounted for, this increases to around 23m² for surface car parks and over 32m² per space for multi-storey car parks. Meanwhile, towns and cities are getting denser³, putting more strain on parking availability.

Parking is also an important and valuable resource for residents and their visitors, and an important part of supporting the vitality of towns and villages and their local economies. For local authorities, off-street parking is an important asset providing a tool for town centre management and revenue to deliver important services within the limits set out by national legislation⁴.

If the asset is poorly managed, car parking can have a detrimental impact on how towns and cities look and function: encouraging traffic, contributing to a poor townscape, and costing money to maintain. 'Cruising' whilst searching for parking can generate vehicle mileage, generating congestion and contributing to emissions⁵. Figure 1 illustrates our understanding of these factors and how a Parking Strategy should work to achieve a balance between economy, townscape, income and sustainability.

Figure 1. How are parking strategy should balance wider objectives



¹ RAC Foundation. July 2012. Spaced out: perspectives on parking policy <http://www.racfoundation.org/research/mobility/spaced-out-perspectives-on-parking>

² Northern Ireland Government. May 2017. Parking Standards, General Considerations. https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/supplementary_guidance/spg_other/parking/parking_standards_considerations.htm

³ Smith, Duncan. August 2015. The rebirth of Britain's inner cities, mapped. <http://www.citymetric.com/skylines/rebirth-britains-inner-cities-mapped-1356>

⁴ British Parking Association. August 2011. Parking Practice Notes, p10. <http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/Library/ppns/PPN1%20-%20Charging%20for%20Parking%20-%20Aug%202011.pdf>

⁵ Shoup, Donald. 2007. Cruising for Parking. <http://shoup.bol.ucla.edu/CruisingForParkingAccess.pdf>

1.2 The Project Team

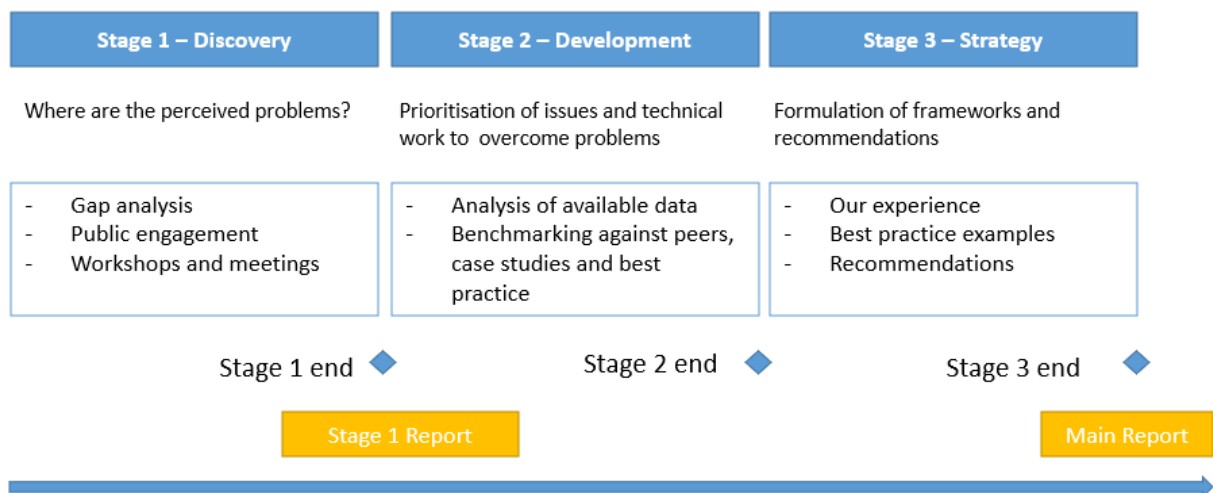
The project has been led by with the PML team working in partnership with key officers of Uttlesford District Council and the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) who bring invaluable local knowledge and experience. PML are an expert parking consultancy, having provided advice to both public and private sector clients for over twenty years in the UK and abroad. We bring a combination of expertise including property, strategy, technology and operations and significant experience in delivering for local authorities.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology is based upon our understanding of Uttlesford’s specific geography and profile. A staged approach was been applied to maintain project momentum and provide a structure with clear gateways to define the required objectives and outputs.

A key feature of this project is the broad scope, which includes off-street car parks, residential parking, on-street parking and issues specific to Uttlesford such as having one of London’s major airports located within the district. This was addressed with a wide-ranging discovery phase, which harnessed public knowledge to identify where the perceived problems are, following which our technical knowledge and experience was used to prioritise and consider strategic solutions.

Figure 2. Methodology Summary



2. Parking Wider Context

Societal and demographic changes, together with technological innovations, are transforming the way people work, spend their leisure time, travel and shop. Cars will increasingly be ‘connected’, and drivers will expect their car or app to find and pay for their parking automatically.

The expansion in the number of electric vehicles, connected cars and, longer-term, the introduction of autonomous vehicles will create both challenges and opportunities for parking services and transport managers. At the same time, the impact on the demand for both parking and parking services needs to be planned for in the context of a climate emergency and an urgent need to reduce the impact of cars and congestion on unacceptably high levels of air pollution.

The way that the public expects to pay for parking is also changing. In most instances parking is a relatively small spend and, prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, cash remained the most common method of payment. However, the use of contactless payment in society has been growing quickly, spurred on by banks looking to optimise operational efficiencies and growing customer confidence in and familiarity with this technology. This, and the increasing popularity of apps such as Apple Pay, Android Pay, PayPal, etc. mean that drivers increasingly expect cashless solutions to pay for their parking. For the operator cashless payment enhances operational efficiency, provides valuable data opportunities, and removes the potential for theft.

2.1 How Parking can impact and support districts and towns

Parking management is important to local communities, helping residents and visitors to access businesses and services and to support local economies. For local authorities, off-street parking is an important asset providing a tool for town centre management and a source of revenue to deliver important services within the limits set out by national legislation⁶.

Poorly managed parking assets can have a detrimental impact on how towns and cities look and function; encouraging traffic, contributing to a poor townscape, exacerbating air pollution and poor health and inequality. ‘Cruising’ for parking can generate vehicle mileage as users search for spaces, generating congestion and contributing to emissions⁷. Figure 2 below illustrates how a parking strategy should work to achieve a balance between economy, townscape, income and sustainability.

Town centres are changing as the retail offering evolves, making the economic environment more challenging for retail-based town centres⁸.

Whilst parking charges are often raised by traders and businesses as a barrier to footfall and dwell time, the available evidence, such as that carried out by Mingardo et al. at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam⁹ suggests a more complex picture. To summarise:

- The British Parking Association (BPA) National Survey found that people value location and personal safety above tariffs;
- The UK based association of Town and City Management concluded that *“the general availability of spaces is felt to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting. Traffic flow and parking signage have as much, if not greater, effect on their decision to visit the town centre, how long they spend there, and how much money they spend.”*

⁶ British Parking Association. August 2011. Parking Practice Notes, p10.

<http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/Library/ppns/PPN1%20-%20Charging%20for%20Parking%20-%20Aug%202011.pdf>

⁷ Shoup, Donald. 2007. Cruising for Parking. <http://shoup.bol.ucla.edu/CruisingForParkingAccess.pdf>

⁸ Springboard. 2013. Re-Think! Parking on the High Street Report

⁹ <https://www.eur.nl/en/upt/our-experts/giuliano-mingardo>

- Where this is a link between footfall and parking, it tends to be that higher value destinations with higher footfall charge more, and that the general availability of spaces is felt by visitors to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting¹⁰;
- Parking is only one a whole number of factors that influence people’s decision to visit a town centre as shown in Figure 3, from the Re-Think! Report published by Springboard.

Figure 3: Factors influencing the success of a town centre (Re-Think! Parking on the High Street Report)



In summary, reducing car parking charges is unlikely to have the desired effect of stimulating economic activity, and bringing with it the negative aspects of a poorly managed parking estate without the desired uplift in visitors.

For a successful future, the district needs to attract visitors, shoppers and employers to its towns. Changing customer expectations and the changing role of technology provide both opportunities and threats, as connected vehicles help users to make more informed choices about their destinations. A well-managed, maintained and safe parking estate will support this process.

2.2 Climate Change and Air Quality

Carbon reduction targets will require parking policy and management to play a key role in delivering solutions to reduce emissions and to encourage the use of low emission vehicles. The change from a carbon and car-based economy to a low carbon one is likely to see a change from a car ownership to a car sharing model with mobility rather than ownership as the key. Changes are likely to occur gradually, and the Council must manage and facilitate the transition while maintaining and improving the economic vitality of the district.

¹⁰ Atkins. The effect of Parking Policy in England: Stage 1 Final Report

Forecasting future demand for electric vehicle charging stations in car parks is complex and difficult. EV technology is changing rapidly as car manufacturers try to improve the usability of their products. New designs have a greater range and use faster charging technology. There are other potentially disruptive technologies (in-road induction, hydrogen powered vehicles, etc) that will emerge over the next 10 years.

The advantage of EVs is in better local air quality and reduced road noise. However, they do nothing to tackle congestion and traffic severance, or reduce reliance on cars. Their global environmental performance depends on energy requirements during their manufacture and how the energy to power them is generated. Like conventional cars EVs also emit particulates, this comes from brake, tyre, and road surface wear and with advances in cleaner petrol engines, they now exceed tailpipe emissions.

Wider Context - Summary

- High streets and town centres are changing nationally from retail centres to places where people want to live, work and enjoy. Parking has a role to play in this but is just one of a number of factors determining high street vitality.
- Changes in technology will play a significant role in how people decide on their destination, where they will choose to park and how they will pay for parking. Local Authorities of all sizes will need to respond to this change and to do so they will need to raise revenue to invest in new delivery models.
- Offering a variety of easy payment methods is essential for both the visitor experience and for an efficiently managed car parking service.
- There is no strong or proven link between parking charges and footfall or retail vitality. The value of the space and strength of the destination are bigger factors in customer choice of destination. Whilst unreasonably high charges would obviously deter visitors, there is little evidence of this happening in the real world as parking operators of all types generally seek the optimum commercial price.
- Evidence, although limited, suggests that if anything town centres benefit from reductions in traffic and that local customers walking or using public transport often spend more than car drivers.
- Local Authority car parks are not necessarily the optimum places for EV charging infrastructure and councils should consider their placement and how ongoing revenue costs are to be met carefully. Council car parks may have a role in helping charge vehicles in town centre locations where overnight off-street residential charging facilities are not readily available.

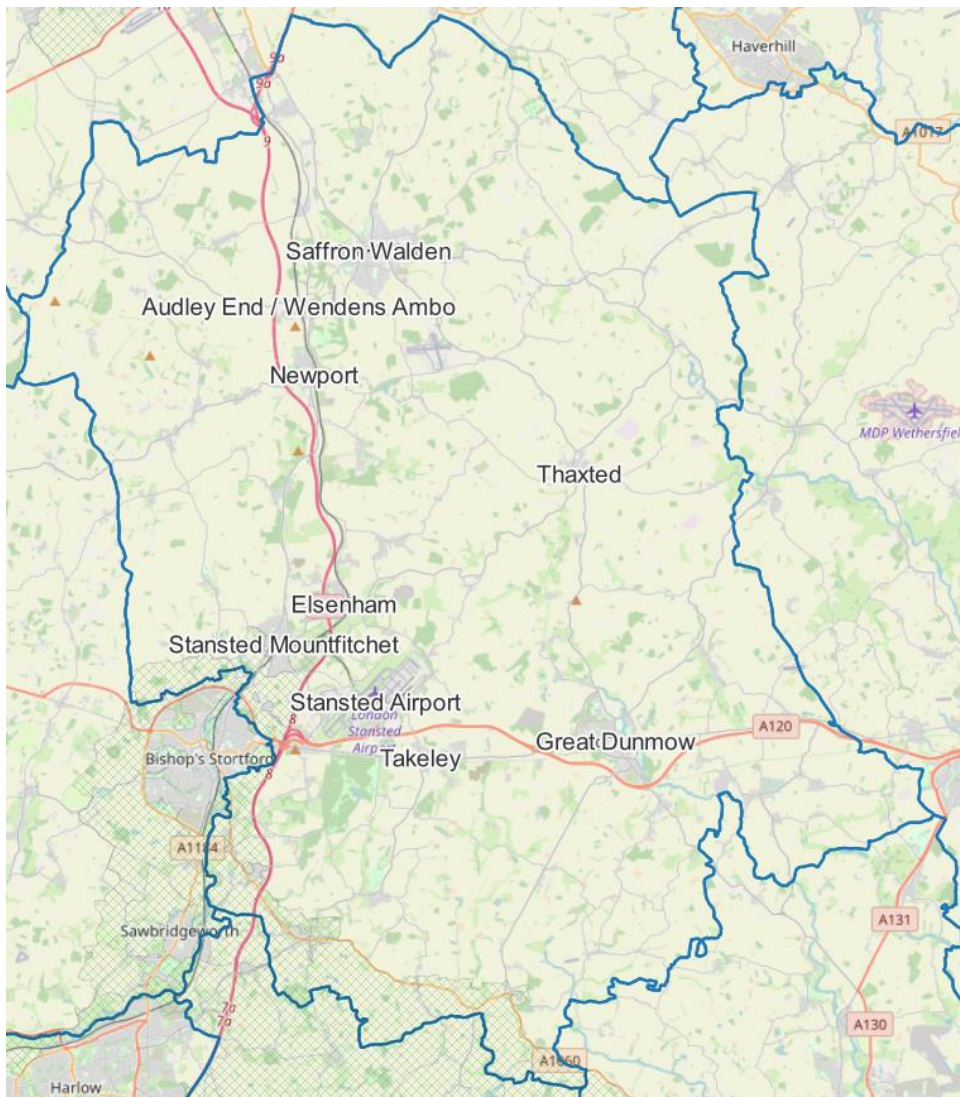
3. Uttlesford District

Uttlesford is a small district (267th of 314 local authority areas) with a population of around 90,943¹¹. The district is located within the county of Essex and has transport links to London and Cambridge as well as Stansted Airport, which sits within the district boundary. The West Anglia Mainline and the M11 pass through the district north-south with the A120 the main east-west link.

Stansted Airport is the UK’s fourth-busiest airport with 28m passengers per year¹² in 2019. It is owned by Manchester Airport Holdings, which in turn is around 60% owned by a consortium of Greater Manchester Councils. Therefore Uttlesford District does not have any control over the airport’s operations. Stansted claims to employ over 10,200 people which makes it the ‘biggest single site employer in the region’¹³ and so a valuable engine of growth in the wider area.

Uttlesford has a good ranking on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and is a generally prosperous district; within the 8th decile¹⁴. There are pockets of relative deprivation including areas in northern Saffron Walden which is within the 5th decile.

Figure 4. Overview Map of the study area



¹¹ <http://www.ons.gov.uk>, Mid 2020 figures, a reduction of around 300 from the 2019 data

¹² Civil Aviation Authority

¹³ <https://www.stanstedairport.com/community/community-support/economic-development/>

¹⁴ ONS Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, District Code: E07000078

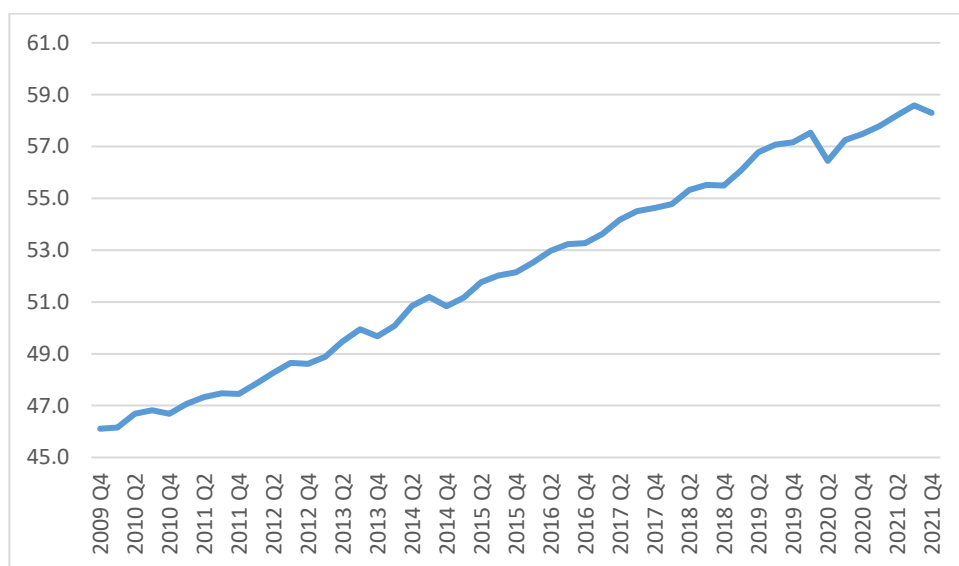
The settlements within the district are characterised by tight medieval road layouts within the town and village centres and post war neighbourhoods at various densities. Newer estates such as Priors Green in Takeley appear to be built at around 50dph, which depending on car ownership levels could be increasing pressure for on-street parking.

3.1 Car ownership and travel behaviour

There are very high levels of vehicle ownership in Uttlesford and the 2011 census reports that the district has the 10th highest car ownership of 348 districts in the country: 89.9% of households have a car/van; there are 663 car/vans per 1000 people; 5.1% of households have 4 or more cars/vans, the second highest rate of any district in the country after South Bucks¹⁵.

Whilst the 2011 data is now just over ten years old, DVLA data confirms that this trend has since continued with only a slight drop in Q4 2021 (the last quarter with data available).

Figure 5. Cars Registered in Uttlesford (000s) - Source DVLA



Although the census data is now ten years old (prior to the Covid-19 pandemic), the Travel to Work Data re-enforces the overall picture of high car ownership and use in the district, with 66% travelling by car or van, reflects the rural nature of the district and the good rail links to London and Cambridge via the railway line.

Figure 6. Travel to Work by mode (Source, ONS Census data)

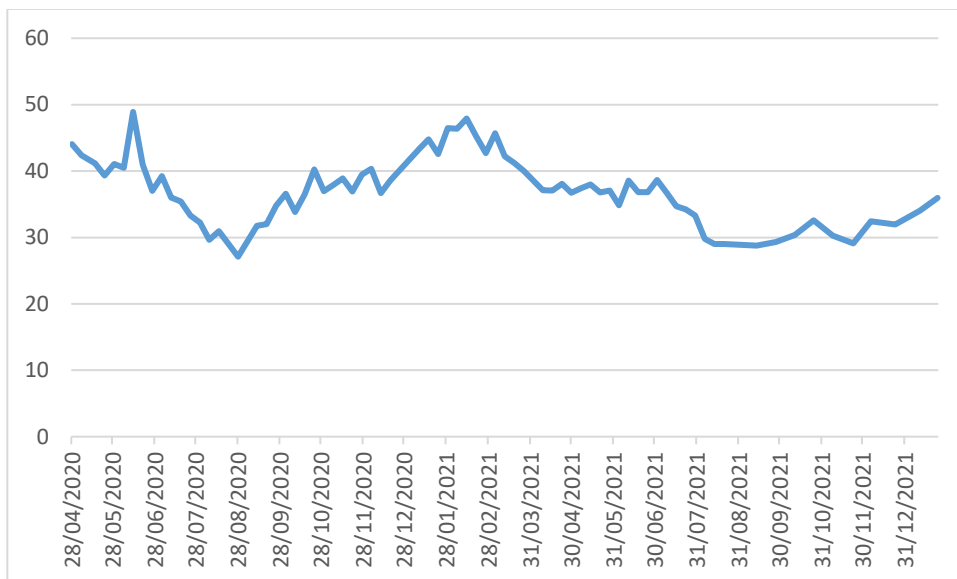
2011	Work from Home	Train	Bus	Car / Van driver	Car / Van passenger	Bicycle	On foot	Other
Uttlesford	13%	8%	1%	61%	5%	1%	9%	2%
England	9%	4%	8%	55%	6%	3%	10%	5%
<i>Difference</i>	<i>+4%</i>	<i>+4%</i>	<i>-7%</i>	<i>+6%</i>	<i>-1%</i>	<i>-2%</i>	<i>-1%</i>	<i>-3%</i> ¹⁶

¹⁵ RAC Foundation after ONS, 2011 Census

¹⁶ Difference mainly explainable by tram and metro

Working from home was already higher than the national average in 2011 and will have increased from this point as it has nationally as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic¹⁷.

Figure 7. Homeworking in Great Britain (ONS)



Parking implications of home working are reported as higher pressure on residential roads and significant reduction in commuter parking at railway stations and in city centres.

, The nearest station to Saffron Walden is Audley End which is about 2.5 miles west of the town centre. This represents a 50 min walk or 20 min cycle ride along busy roads with narrow pavements and no street lighting. There are regular bus services, although the last one leaves at 19:20 which may not provide sufficient flexibility for travellers or commuters.

During the study consultation stage, respondents from Saffron Walden suggested that rail commuting could be a reason for high car ownership, as a second car is required for travel to and from the station, although it would be difficult to enumerate this.

3.2 Public Transport provision

The railway provides services between Cambridge and London with several stations in the district along the B1383 corridor, with frequent services (generally hourly) to Great Chesterford, Wendens Ambo, Newport, Elsenham, and Stansted Mountfitchet.

Bus services between the main towns within Uttlesford are generally lower frequency with less than one an hour, and finish early in the evening. The main routes include:

Route No.	First	Last	Route	Frequency
6	07:30	21:00	Saffron Walden – Thaxted – Debden – Stansted Airport	Every 1/ 2hrs
301	07:15	19:20	Saffron Walden – Audley End – Newport – Widdington Stansted Mountfitchet – Bishops Stortford	Hourly
313/A	09:00	14:00	Saffron Walden – Debden – Thaxted – Great Dunmow	2- 4 daily
7	06:00	19:00 ¹⁸	Saffron Walden – Gt. Chesterford – Cambridge	Hourly

There are some higher frequency bus routes which serve Takeley, Stansted Mountfitchet and Great Dunmow as they connect larger towns such as Chelmsford, Southend, Colchester, and Harlow to Stanstead Airport, including some services which are effectively 24hrs. These include:

¹⁷ ONS Home Working and spending during the Covid 19 pandemic – Jan 2022

¹⁸ Last bus from Saffron W. to Cambridge is 20:00.

Route No.	First	Last	Route	Frequency
X30	24hrs		Southend – Chelmsford – Great Dunmow – Stansted Airport	Hourly
133	04:00	00:15	Braintree – Great Dunmow – Takeley – Stansted Airport	Hourly
508/509/510	24hrs		Harlow – Bishops Stortford – Takeley – Stansted Airport	Hourly
5	08:15	20:20	Bishops Stortford – Hatfield Heath – Takeley – Standard Airport	Every 1/ 2hrs

Both the less than hourly frequency and early finish of bus services, coupled with no railway station, will contribute to higher car use and ownership in Saffron Walden.

3.3 Summary and Implications

The rural nature of the district combined with limited public transport options results in high travel to work by car (pre-pandemic) and car ownership. This increases pressure on parking both on and off-street. This view is supported by the information in the next section.

4. Local Policy and previous Studies

There are a number of important policy documents and previous studies to be considered regarding planning and transport policy, as well as a Parking Review study carried out in 2015. These are considered below.

4.1 The Essex County Local Transport Plan (2011)

Uttlesford is included in the 'West Essex' area of the **Local Transport Plan (LTP)**. The LTP recognises the attractiveness of area given its strategic transport links such as the M11, Stansted Airport and the West Anglia Mainline:

"Saffron Walden is a historic town with a population of over 15,000 with opportunities for growth in the town limited by the historic street layout. The town is served by road via the M11 and by rail by the station at Audley End, situated some distance from the town."

Connectivity by public transport is highly variable across the county, with some major centres very well connected, but with fewer options for rural areas.

The district is largely rural, but with three key urban areas and several villages with their own requirements and problems. Public transport-based solutions that may reduce parking pressure in large urban areas to, are less effective in rural areas. A different suite of policies will be required.

4.2 Housing and the Emerging Local Plan

Uttlesford has a housing affordability ratio of 12 times average annual earnings compared with 7 for England and the 47th highest average house price of 331 districts in England. The '**2021 – 2026 Housing Strategy**' and '**Housing for New Communities in Uttlesford and Braintree**' reports outline the scale of the challenge in providing housing in the district as it continues to grow to a predicted 103,00 people by 2034.

The previous Local Plan was adopted in 2005 and the district is working to produce a new one. There is no public version of the draft plan at the time of writing and therefore no specific information on the location of additional housing for an increased population. However, The 'Call for Sites' process and discussions with officers suggest that strategic development will be accommodated within planned extensions to the main towns and villages as well as a 'Garden Village' between Great Dunmow and Stansted Airport.

Publicly available figures suggest 17,000 new homes by 2040. There are already plans in place for over 4,000 homes which means the council would need to identify additional land for around 13,000 homes to meet the potential housing requirement in the plan period¹⁹.

¹⁹ <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7268/Local-Plan-Council-receives-many-more-sites-than-required-in-Call-for-Sites>

4.3 Essex Design Guide and Parking Standards

The **Essex Design Guide** sets out the county's approach to locally distinctive design and place making, whilst recognising that the county faces many challenges including increasing demand, high house prices and constrained land availability. This has led to some developments being completed at high financial cost and the expense of quality. The design guide was reviewed in 2018. Included in the design guide are the **Essex Parking Standards**.

Published in 2009 to replace the '**2001 Vehicle Parking Standards**' the '**Parking Standards, Design and Good Practice**' document²⁰, reviews a host of recent developments across Essex and further afield. Although none were in Uttlesford, many of these developments had characteristics similar to many of the newer estates in Uttlesford's towns and villages. It discovered common practices including:

- Rear parking courts which were poorly located, unattractive and underused, often used for wheelie bins and recycling storage containers rather than for parked vehicles;
- Garages that were too small to accommodate modern cars with 78% not being used to store vehicles²¹;
- Parking bays of an inadequate size to accommodate modern vehicles;
- Setbacks from garages and gates leading to vehicle parking in front of garages and blocking footways.

The most significant conclusion was that car ownership outweighs parking spaces within residential developments and:

"Government advice to reduce car travel through reducing availability of parking at origin and destination has not worked at origins, therefore vehicle parking standards need to be increased, along with sustainable transport measures".

The parking standards now in place use the previous maximum standard, which have now become the minimum standards for flats and houses as follows²²:

Use	Minimum
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
Visitor spaces	0.25 spaces per dwelling, rounded up to nearest whole number

Whilst these parking standards set out clear guidance on the number of spaces to be provided, the design guide sets out the design and layout of new developments. However, the two documents do not entirely agree on the solution. For example, the Parking Standards document presents a range of solutions including, on-street parallel parking, garages, set-back driveways, undercrofts, rear parking courts and parking squares whereas the **Essex Design Guide Design Detail Document** (v3 p23) states:

"The satisfactory enclosure of urban space becomes impossible when houses are set back from the road to accommodate private parking spaces – as may occur when houses feature integrated garages, or when they form a row of terraces without designated parking beneath or behind the houses."

Furthermore, the Design Detail Document also states the following:

"Car parking facilities should be designed with future adaptation in mind – notably the anticipated decline in private car ownership and the commensurate increase in the use of on-demand autonomous vehicles."

²⁰ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/media/1960/essex-parking-standards.pdf>

²¹ Mouchel residents study 2007

²² Page 64 of the 2009 Essex Parking Standards

²³ Design Details Document V3, 2018

Given recent the trends in car ownership (see 3.1) and that the prospects for self-driving cars has already receded²⁴, this statement should perhaps be reviewed. A key trend however is the move to electric vehicles. This creates a desire for off-street parking where charging can be carried out via a chargepoint connected to the property.

4.4 The 2015 Parking Review

The **Uttlesford District Car Parking Review** dated November 2015 (the '2015 Review') focussed on the three town centres, included a comprehensive consultation exercise, and proposed specific recommendations for towns, car parks and streets.

The consultation included surveys of the general public in the street and reported that visitors were happy with the town centres as places to visit. Even parking, which normally results in comments about price and availability was positively viewed.

Saffron Walden

The consultation indicated a mix of regular users and visitors from further afield. The factors that most affected visitors' choice of parking was convenience (71%), availability of spaces (53%), duration of stay (29%) and cost (26%). Businesses were positive about the convenience (68%) of parking provision in the town and most negative about the duration of stay (73%) followed by cost (61%).

The overall picture was of a town centre under pressure at peak times and locations and that on-street parking in the town centre suffered from low turnover (measured at 3-6%) thus limiting availability of short stay parking for local shops and services.

Great Dunmow

The consultation suggested a higher proportion of older, regular, convenience shoppers who come to the town for durations of up to 2 hours. Feedback was positive, with 78% saying they were conveniently located. Choice was affected by convenience (71%), followed by cost (38%), duration (33%) and availability (27%). Businesses were less positive, with widespread calls for cheaper or free parking.

The overall picture was of a town where car parking availability was under pressure at peak times, especially on market days. On-street parking was considered to be at 'critical levels' and likely to be hampering casual 'pop-and-shop' spending.

Stansted Mountfitchet

At the time of the weekend surveys, most of the village centre users were visiting town for convenient shopping (50%) and leisure (26%). The 2015 Review found that there was capacity in both Lower St and Crafton Green noting that Crafton Green was 'underutilised'. On-street parking was at full capacity on weekends. Businesses cited a deficit of on-street short stay parking.

Key points and changes since the 2015 Review

Recommendation and changes since the Review include: -

- Better payment options, including cashless and use of pay-by-phone which have been implemented;
- The difference between on-street and off-street tariffs: on-street was then cheaper than off-street, rates have now been harmonised;
- Recommendations for estate condition and wayfinding, seem to have improved markedly since 2015 based on the pictures provided in the 2015 Review and our site visits;
- Crafton Green car park was underutilised and Lower Street car park was often full, which no longer appears to be the case;

²⁴ E.g. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/mar/27/how-self-driving-cars-got-stuck-in-the-slow-lane>

- The recommendation for a general increase in tariffs to bring UDC car parks in line with other small towns has not taken place; and
- That season tickets were exceptional value.

Site specific recommendations will be considered in the next stage of this study alongside other options for action.

4.5 Implications for the next stage

The implications of planned growth for this parking review are threefold: firstly, that additional pressure on existing car parks and parking space in the towns could arise from additional development and population growth; secondly, that there is an opportunity to influence policy in new developments; and finally, proposals to tackle existing parking issues in the district could potentially be facilitated through the new developments and planning gain.

The 2015 Review provides a comprehensive spread of views on the town centres and customers' attitudes, and some of its recommendations have been implemented (e.g. cashless parking).

5. Off-street Parking Estate

The Council manages around 1,452 spaces across 12 public car parks in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet. Three of these car parks are managed but not owned by the Council and a further site at the council offices, is only available for public parking on weekends.

The parking estate is managed by NEPP under a service level agreement (SLA). The scope of this review does not include assessing the SLA or this arrangement.

5.1 Tariffs and Financial Performance

We have used the 2019/20 financial data as to represent the position pre-Covid-19. Although there has been some recovery from Covid in 2021/22 the position going forward remains unclear. However, transaction figures suggest that the car parks are busy again, and so the 2019/20 numbers are likely to provide a useful baseline.

The table below shows the tariffs for car parks where parking is paid for.

Town	Name		30 mins	1 hr	Up to 3 hrs	Up to 9 hrs	Season p.a
G. Dunmow	Angel Lane	Short Stay	£0.40	£0.60	£1.20	Max 3hrs	
G. Dunmow	Chequers Lane	Short Stay	£0.40	£0.60	£1.20	Max 3hrs	
G. Dunmow	New Street	Short Stay	£0.40	£0.60	£1.20	Max 3hrs	
G. Dunmow	White Street	Long Stay	£0.40	£0.60	£1.20	£3.50	£300
Saffron W.	Fairycroft	Short Stay	£0.50	£0.70	£2.00	Max 3 hrs	
Saffron W.	Rose & Crown	Short Stay	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20	Max 2 hrs	
Saffron W.	Swan Meadow	Long Stay		£1.20	£2.00	£3.50	£300
Saffron W.	S. Meadow - Coach	Short Stay			£3.00	£6.00	
Saffron W.	The Common	Short Stay	£0.50	£0.70	£2.00	Max 3 hrs	
Stansted M.	Crafton Green	Long Stay	£0.40	£0.60	£1.20	£3.00	various
Stansted M.	Lower Street	Mixed	£0.40	£0.60	£1.30	£4.70	various
Stansted M.	Lower St – Coach	Long Stay				£6.00	

Stage 2 of this review will carry out a benchmarking exercise to consider how tariffs compare with other places with similar characteristics. At this stage, the tariffs appear to be much lower than would normally be expected given the vitality and attractiveness of the towns as destinations. This is especially the case in Saffron Walden, where the higher order retail²⁵ and numerous attractions make the town attractive for tourism.

Tariffs have not been reviewed since at least 2008. If tariffs had risen with inflation the 1hr 60p tariff would now be 89p, and the 9-hour tariff would be £5.18p.

The net income of the car parks is shown below. Fairycroft and Crafton Green are managed by UDC but not owned by the district and so the income is shared between the owner and UDC. Fairycroft is also subject to 1hr rebates for Waitrose shoppers.

We have used the 2019/20 figures to calculate the yield. For public parking operated by local authorities we consider £1,000 or more per space per year to be a good yield for an hourly tariff of c50p (inc. VAT). That this is achieved in many locations demonstrates that the car parks are generally busy with a high turnover.

Although revenues and yield were impacted significantly by the Covid-19 Pandemic, transaction data suggests a strong recovery since the beginning of 2022.

²⁵ Saffron Walden is ranked 62nd out of 1000 centres in the Harper Dennis Hobbs Retail Index.

Figure 8. Income and yields for P&D car parks across the district

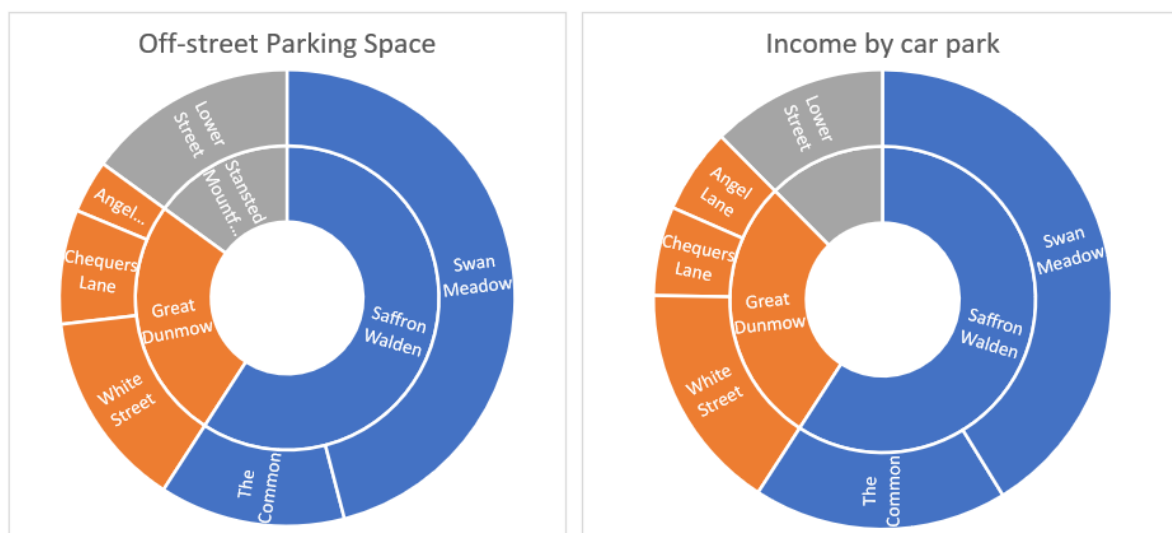
Great Dunmow	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Spaces	19/20 Yield
Angel Lane	£32,712.45	£16,174.10	£21,878.30	31	£1,055.24
Chequers Lane	£34,211.70	£14,654.70	£21,766.65	67	£510.62
New Street	£12,904.15	£6,833.50	£8,987.95	11	£1,173.10
White Street	£88,017.25	£63,544.05	£119,993.61	116	£758.77
Saffron Walden	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Spaces	19/20 Yield
Fairycroft Road ¹	£350,848.55	£165,848.75	£272,605.00	294	£1,193.36
Rose & Crown ¹	£27,886.90	£19,570.25	£26,211.35	27	£1,032.85
Swan Meadow	£224,872.10	£92,709.35	£152,509.40	380	£591.77
The Common	£97,760.50	£48,746.30	£115,040.10	109	£896.89
Stansted Mountfitchet	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Spaces	19/20 Yield
Crafton Green ¹	£27,459.65	£13,079.60	£25,756.40	51	£538.42
Lower Street ²	£67,936.04	£24,552.95	£39,809.15	138	£492.29
Totals	£964,609.29	£465,713.55	£804,557.91	1,094	£881.73

(1) – Fairycroft and Rose and Crown are operated by UDC but owned by third parties. (2) – Only publicly available UDC operated P&D counted.

Parking supply and income share by car park across the district is remarkably balanced, possibly reflecting high utilisation rates across the board. The highest supply of off-street parking is in Saffron Walden. Great Dunmow provides a very marginally higher proportion of the income.

Fairycroft is operated by UDC on behalf of the owner. A refund offer is provided by the supermarket for their customers. When these refunds are subtracted, income is around £150,000 p.a. or £519 per space.

Figure 9. Off-street parking supply compared to proportion of income (2018/19 figures)



Occupancy ‘beats’ surveys in the off-street car parks took place in week commencing 9th May on a neutral weekday between 08:00 and 21:00 and were carried out by a reputable survey company based in Essex. The results of these surveys are discussed below. As a ‘rule of thumb’, car parks are considered full at or above an 80% occupancy (to account for circulation and turnover).

5.2 Great Dunmow

There are four car parks in Great Dunmow, which are owned and operated by UDC.

Name	Ownership	Type	Size	Max Stay	Blue Badge	EV	Reserved	Gen. Spaces
Angel Lane	UDC	P&D	31	3hrs	2	0		29
Chequers Lane	UDC	P&D	67	3hrs	3	8		56
New Street	UDC	P&D	11	3hrs	1	0		10
White Street	UDC	P&D	172	9hrs	9	8	56	99

Angel Lane is reserved for market stalls on Tuesdays. White Street includes 56 Season Tickets. There are 16 EV bays, all of which are 7kW floor/post mounted dual outlet fast chargers.

		CAPACITY	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00
Great Dunmow	Angel Lane	31	71%	58%	42%	58%	71%	90%	68%	74%	77%	77%	58%	39%	26%	23%
Great Dunmow	Chequers Lane	67	82%	81%	58%	67%	72%	55%	61%	63%	55%	58%	67%	46%	39%	33%
Great Dunmow	New Street	11	55%	73%	73%	82%	82%	73%	100%	91%	64%	82%	73%	64%	18%	
Great Dunmow	White Street	172	72%	80%	87%	91%	97%	90%	81%	84%	83%	69%	60%	51%	41%	30%

All four car parks are close to the 80% threshold for much of the day and are busy from early in the morning until the early evening. In terms of revenues the highest yields are New Street and Angel Lane at £1,173 and £1,055 per space per year.

5.3 Saffron Walden

Although UDC operates six car parks in the town, it owns only two public pay and display car parks; Swan Meadow and The Common. Additionally at weekends the spaces at London Road Council Offices are available for public use.

Name	Ownership	Type	Size	Max Stay	Blue Badge	EV	Reserved	Gen. Spaces
Catons Lane	Other	Free	53	3hrs	1	0		10
The Common	UDC	P&D	109	3hrs	6	2		101
Fairycroft Road	Other	P&D	294	3hrs	18	8	12	288
Rose and Crown	Other	P&D	37	3hrs	2	0	9	25
London Road	UDC	Free	~110	All day	~8	8	Mon-Fri	0
Swan Meadow	UDC	P&D	394	9hrs	10	4		380

There are 2 publicly available EV bays in the Common and 2 in London Road. There were unfortunately some issues with the survey data from Swan Meadow at time of writing which should be rectified during the next stage.

		CAPACITY	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00
Saffron Walden	Fairycroft	294	45%	54%	59%	63%	66%	73%	77%	79%	76%	81%	77%	70%	52%	36%
Saffron Walden	Rose & Crown	27	59%	67%	70%	74%	74%	70%	74%	81%	67%	59%	67%	67%	44%	30%
Saffron Walden	The Common	109	43%	50%	63%	66%	72%	81%	83%	72%	62%	50%	45%	32%	35%	0%
Saffron Walden	Catons Lane	53	74%	77%	79%	79%	70%	75%	75%	70%	83%	77%	60%	49%	21%	23%

The above four car parks are close to the 80% threshold for much of the day and are busy from early in the morning until the early evening.

Additionally, there are two small parcels of land used for parking on Debden Road. Residents and businesses share this space in an informal arrangement, often double parking, and leaving their phone numbers / business cards on dashboards to allow other users to ring and request that the car is moved as required. There is pressure from some residents to make these sites resident only. Our estimate is that if 'formalised' the parcels could accommodate about 8 cars each (perhaps 10 in the northern parcel). The surveys showed that these sites were over their 'formal' capacity for much of the day. Formalised would therefore result in a reduction in available space.

Figure 10. Parking Survey for Debden Rd informal parking

			08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00
Saffron Walden	Debden Rd N	8	88%	113%	113%	113%	125%	100%	88%	100%	113%	100%	88%	113%	63%	50%
Saffron Walden	Debden Rd S	8	75%	88%	100%	113%	113%	125%	125%	113%	100%	100%	113%	75%	50%	50%

5.4 Stansted Mountfitchet

There are two UDC operated car parks in Stansted Mountfitchet. Only Lower Street is UDC owned and operated.

Name	Ownership	Type	Size	Max Stay	Blue Badge	EV	Reserved	Gen. Spaces
Crafton Green	Parish	P&D	52	9hrs	4	8*	4	42
Lower St	Complex	P&D	210	9hrs	9		63	101

* of which 2 bays are exclusively for EVs

Crafton Green has 51 spaces in total, but 13 have restrictions on usage. Three are allocated to the Mountfitchet Hub which houses the library and Parish Council, and two bays are reserved for EVs when charging.

Figure 11. Parking Survey for Crafton Green

		CAPACITY	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00
Stansted M.	Crafton St	51	80%	82%	84%	80%	80%	76%	86%	88%	94%	76%	80%	51%	37%	27%

Crafton green is very full for most of the day from 08:00 until 19:00.

Lower Street car park is very complex with separate sections allocated to different users. The current situation has emerged over a number of years.

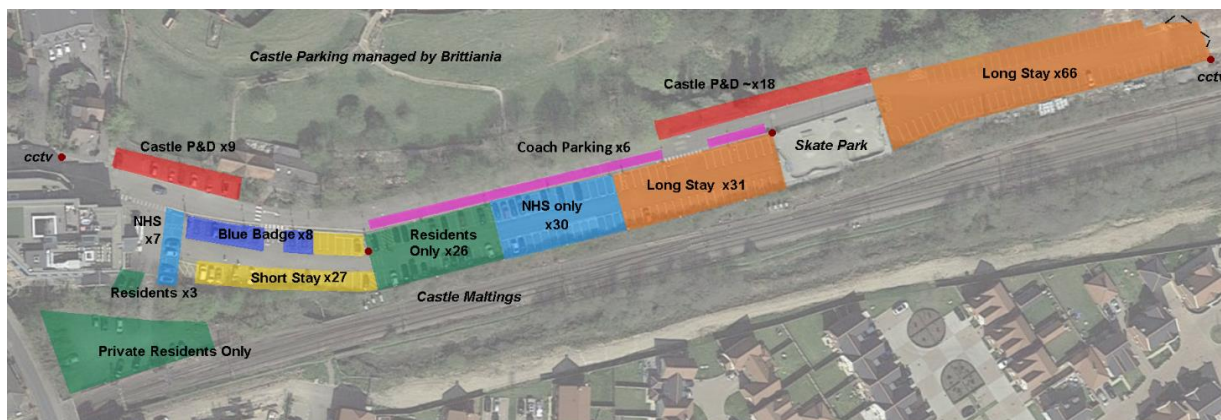


Figure 12. Parking Survey for Lower Street

			08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00
Lower Street	Castle P&D east	9	56%	89%	89%	89%	78%	67%	89%	89%	89%	89%	44%	78%	33%	22%
Lower Street	Residents east	3	33%	67%	33%	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	100%	67%	67%	67%	33%	67%
Lower Street	NHS east	7	43%	71%	71%	71%	71%	57%	71%	86%	86%	86%	71%	29%	14%	0%
Lower Street	Short Stay	27	56%	67%	44%	67%	70%	78%	59%	56%	70%	44%	30%	22%	22%	19%
Lower Street	Short Stay Blue Badge	8	50%	50%	50%	63%	50%	38%	50%	50%	50%	25%	63%	25%	25%	13%
Lower Street	NHS west	30	20%	30%	37%	73%	80%	97%	83%	97%	90%	60%	37%	27%	23%	3%
Lower Street	Long Stay west	31	71%	74%	71%	74%	77%	61%	71%	74%	87%	71%	61%	58%	39%	23%
Lower Street	Coach Parking	6	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%	50%	33%	17%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Lower Street	Long Stay east	66	14%	18%	17%	21%	20%	18%	18%	18%	17%	18%	20%	14%	12%	12%

The car park includes two sections of long stay parking, with lower occupancies seen in the section furthest from the railway station and town centre. Two strips of Pay & Display operated by the Castle run along the northern edge. To the east is a complex layout which includes parking reserved for the doctor’s surgery and residents of the nearby flats, both of which are well used.

There is a long-term lease agreement in place with the property management company who manages the Maltings. The parish reported that the long stay parking, even east of the skate park, was very full before the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey suggests that demand has now reduced.

5.5 Length of stay – Transactions by tariff band

The most popular tariff is two hours, which could be result from a combination of the ease of contactless payment and the low tariffs in the district meaning that customers over pay in case they wish to stay longer.

Figure 13 Ticket purchase by time - average May - June 2022



5.6 The Estate Condition

An audit of the Council’s off-street car parks was undertaken in April 2022. The purpose of the audit was to establish the baseline of existing facilities and identify any notable issues and instances of good practice. Figure 14 provides a summary of the audit.

Figure 14 - Car Park Condition Audit Summary

Car Park	Payment Options	Accessibility	Security and Safety	Condition	Signage and Wayfinding
Saffron Walden					
The Common	G	G	G	G	G
Fairycroft Road	G	G	G	A	A
Rose & Crown	G	G	G	A	R
Swan Meadow	G	G	G	G	G
London Road	N/A	G	G	G	A
Catons Lane	N/A	G	G	G	G
Great Dunmow					
Angel Lane	G	G	G	G	G
Chequers Lane	G	G	G	G	G
New Street	G	G	A	R	A
White Street	G	G	G	G	G
Stansted Mountfitchet					
Crafton Green	G	G	G	G	G
Lower Street	G	G	G	A	G

KEY

Green (G) indicates good practice

Amber (A) indicated some minor issues

Red (R) indicates fundamental issues against the criteria.

The key issues identified include:

- Available payment options are good with card payment and payment by phone available in all car parks, in addition to cash in many locations. Current card payment issues, however, are causing problems in car parks in Great Dunmow where cash payment is unavailable.
- Some of the surface level car parks (Rose and Crown, Saffron Walden and New Street, Great Dunmow) are of poor quality with worn line marking.
- Highway signage and wayfinding could be improved in some locations. For example, at Fairycroft Road car park, pedestrian wayfinding to the town centre could be provided at the pedestrian exits. Highway parking information signs can be a particular issue where town centre car parks are small and scattered around the town and where car park names lack meaning for casual visitors. Signage should make clear whether car parks are short or long stay and ‘P’ signs should direct vehicles to all car parks. There is currently no signage from the highway to the Rose & Crown car park for example.
- Car park signage is untidy in some locations (Fairycroft Road and Lower Street) providing a poor first impression to visitors.
- There is no sense of destination when walking out of most car parks and town centre maps are not available at all car parks.

Poor legibility and information on signage can lead to cars circulating to find spaces in the town centre, exacerbating congestion and air quality issues and generally providing a poor initial impression of the town. Onward destination information is also important to help customers quickly find their way once they have arrived, through the provision of legible wayfinding information. This will offer a good first impression. For example, key routes between car parks and town centre can be improved both with physical improvements and digital information to improve the customer experience.

Digital apps will also help with wayfinding, and it is therefore essential that open source data is available, at least confirming the location of car parks and the number of spaces.

Figure 15 – Signage issues



Figure 17 – No Wayfinding signage for pedestrians

Figure 16 - No pedestrian signage on this exit at Faircroft Road



Figure 18 - Worn baylining (New Street)



6. On-street Parking

Uttlesford is a two-tier authority area. This means that as the Highways Authority the County Council is responsible for on-street parking. In Uttlesford, the North Essex Parking Partnership is charged with on and off-street enforcement.

Colchester Borough Council acts on behalf of the North Essex Parking Partnership and exercises the delegated powers of the traffic authority (Essex County Council) granted under an Agreement and an Order under Sections 9 and 10 and Parts III and IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984²⁶.

6.1 Known Issues

During the initial research and inception phase we were made aware of several on-street issues across the district's roads, the most significant of which are included in the table below:

Issue	Source	Location	Description
On street capacity	Districts and Councils	Main towns	General capacity deficit on-street close to town centres / employment areas
Traditional and narrow streets	District	Main towns	High densities and traditional street layouts with narrow roads, which cannot accommodate on-street parking
Residents parking schemes	District / NEPP	Main towns	Localised problems with insufficient space for residents to park even within residents parking scheme areas
Airport Fly Parking	District	Takeley and Stansted Mountfitchet	Airport customers are leaving their cars for long periods of time in residential roads and using buses or taxis to get to the airport
Driveway Selling	Research	Villages with stations and/or close to the Airport	Residents using popular websites / apps to rent their driveways to commuters / airport customers. This could be displacing residential parking on-street
Controlled Parking Zones	District / NEPP	Takeley and the south	Some 1hr restriction CPZs are unpopular with residents but, other residents do not want Resident Permit Parking Zones
Local congestion	District	Main Towns	Arterial routes suffer from delays and difficulty with circulation, partially as a result of on-street parking
Development Pressure	District / County	District Wide	Windfall development often does not supply sufficient parking, adding to on-street pressure
Debden Road	District	Saffron Walden	Two small land parcels currently used by local residents and businesses to park, with competing demands over their use.

A key objective of this project will be to ascertain the scale and specifics of these issues, drawing on available evidence and the consultation.

6.2 Residents Parking schemes

As well as on-street pay and display, limited waiting restrictions and TRO's to protect junctions and for traffic circulatory reasons, there are a number of other types of restriction including, resident parking Schemes (RPS), 'Red Routes' and Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ).

The local residents' parking zones are small in comparison to many towns and cities. This perhaps relates to the NEPP policy of only allowing schemes where 70% of residents have supported the scheme via petition.

The current pricing policy on permits is as follows:

- Annual Resident Permits: £70.00 for the first permit, and £102.00 for the second
- Visitor Permits: 10 Stays of 24 hours at £11.50 and 6 stays of 6 Hours at £6.00
- Carers Permits: £30.00 for 12 months (requires evidence)
- Traders Permits: £230.00 for 12 months
- Concessionary Permits for those in receipt of the higher mobility component of Disability Living Allowance

²⁶ As stated in Traffic Regulation Orders

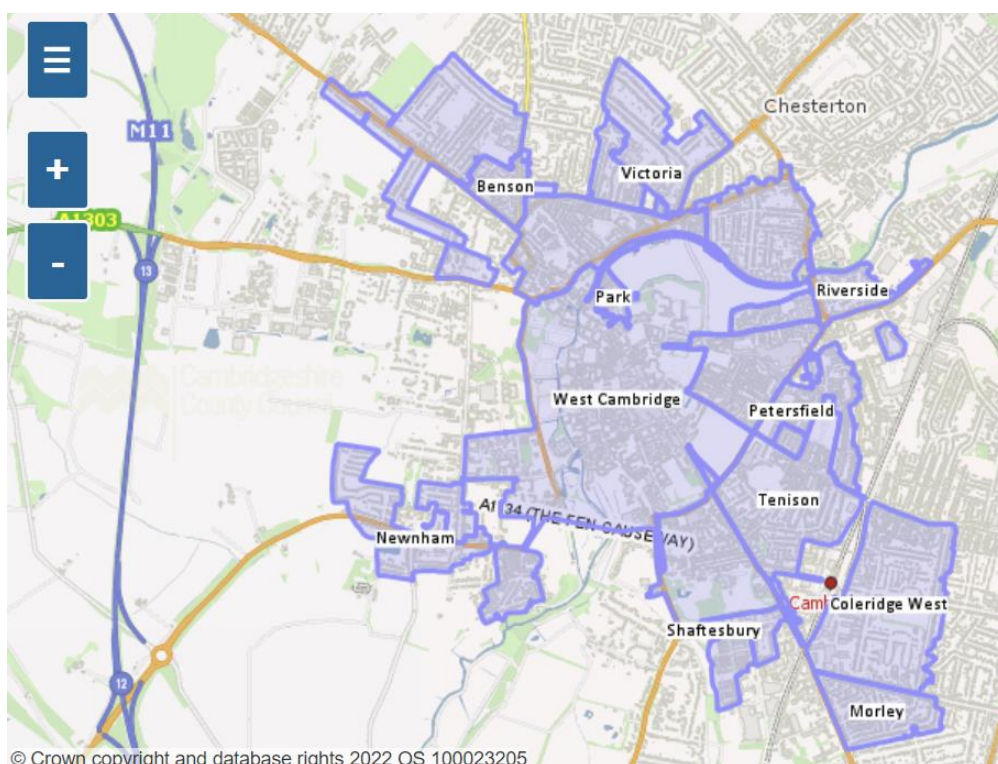
Holiday, second or unoccupied properties are not eligible for a resident parking permit.

RPS policies vary significantly across the country depending on the objectives of the local authority. In Cambridge the council clearly sets out its objectives for residents’ parking schemes:

“The provision for Resident Parking Schemes takes into account the aims of the County Council’s strategic transport objectives (LTP) and the needs of residents and local communities whilst supporting and promoting sustainable transport as a means of reducing congestion, carbon emissions and air pollution.”²⁷

In some of the larger towns and cities, second or further resident permits per household are severely restricted. This can cause problems with shared houses and larger families. Pricing can vary based upon the environmental performance of the car. Locally, the policies of Cambridgeshire RPS are a good example of a clear and comprehensive approach. Most of the inner part of the city is covered by Controlled Parking Zones or Residents’ Parking Schemes.

Figure 19. Example of larger residents parking schemes in Cambridge



6.3 Controlled Parking Zones

CPZs are a tool to restrict waiting and parking. A CPZ is an area where parking controls are introduced to protect the kerbside from parking demand for circulation, safety and to prioritise the parking needs of residents, their visitors, and those of local businesses.

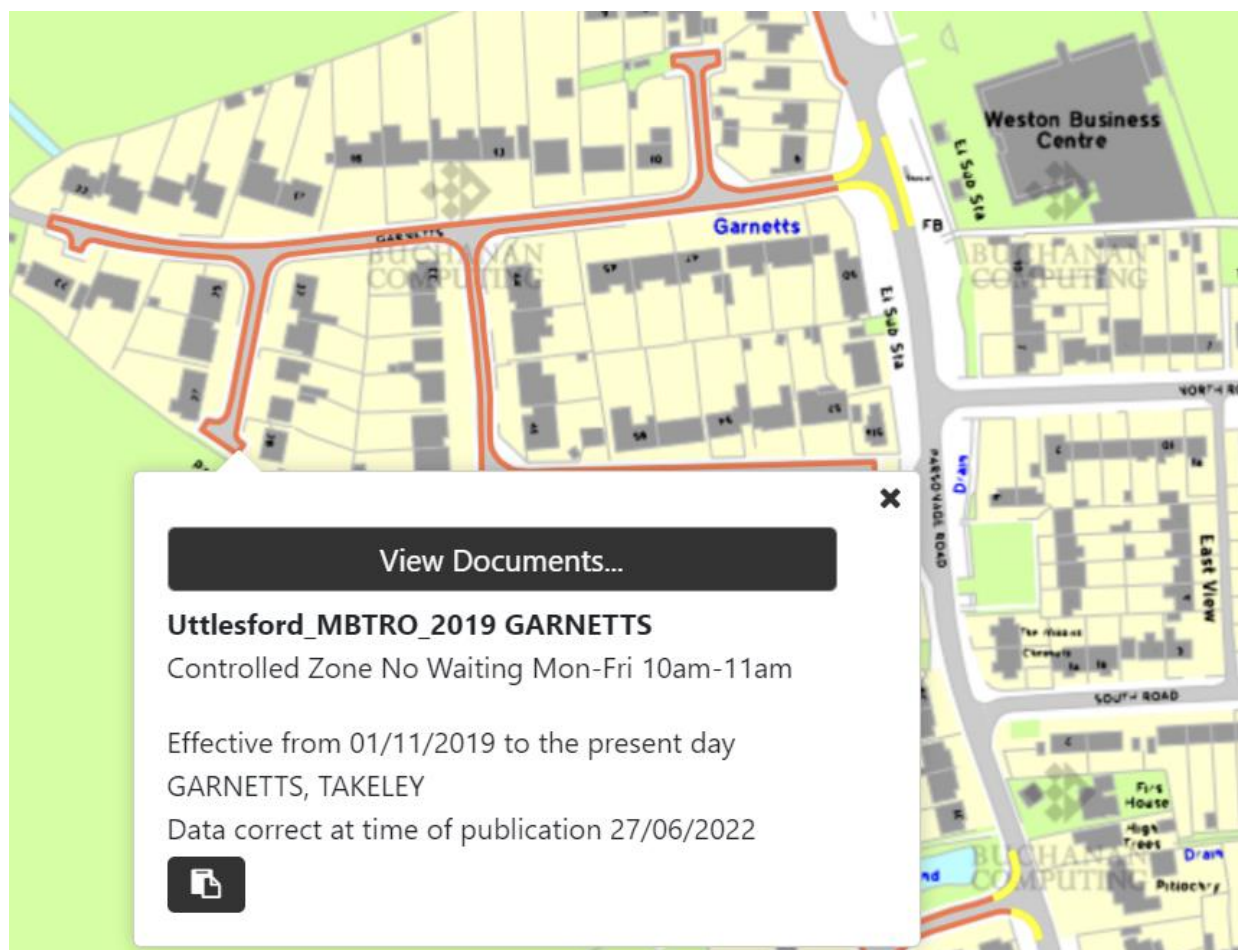
In a CPZ, parking bays are marked on the carriageway to indicate to motorists where they can park and yellow lines to indicate parking restrictions or no parking. Streets are subject to parking controls as indicated on the zone entry signs or signs located near the restrictions and kerb side signs. A CPZ must be marked by large street signs at the entrance.

CPZs have been deployed in Takeley which prohibit parking for short periods of time during the day to stop airport and commuter parking on residential roads. This includes the Garnetts estate, Chestnut Way, Roseacres, Hawthorn Close and The Pastures, which all have a No Waiting Mon-Fri 10am – 11am

²⁷ <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/parking-services/resident-parking-schemes/resident-parking-scheme-policy>

restriction. Whilst such restrictions can be inconvenient for residents, they are an effective and affordable way to stop commuters and long-stay airport parking, and crucially do not require the infrastructure and administration of an RPZ.

Figure 20: Example of controlled zone in Takeley



6.4 Red Routes

Red Route clearways establish routes where vehicles cannot legally stop to park or load or unload. This prohibition applies to the footway and verge as well as the carriageway and does not include any signed and marked lay-bys or bays. Although initially used in urban areas, there are two in Uttlesford; around Hatfield Forest. The main purpose of this red route is to protect the narrow lanes from parking and destruction of verges. There is ample (although not free) parking provided by the National Trust within the Hatfield Forest Park estate.

6.5 Buchanan Order Management Report - 2021

NEPP commissioned Buchanan Order Management to carry out an on-street parking review for Saffron Walden in September 2021 (the '2021 Report') to cover the town centre and surrounding residential streets.

The key objective of the 2021 Report was to determine whether additional permit parking places could be recommended to alleviate the permit holder parking pressure as the demand for permits exceeded supply. To assess this, on-street parking capacity was considered and surveys carried out using 'beat surveys' which took place across the town as at three times throughout the survey days:

- Between 6am and 8am – to identify resident parking demand;
- Between 9am and 12 noon – to identify morning visitor demand;
- Between 3pm and 6pm – to identify afternoon visitor demand.

In busy streets around destinations such as town centres, such surveys would be expected to find the volume of parking reducing after 8am as residents go to work, the arrival of inbound visitors in the morning, and the reverse in the afternoon as drivers seek out unrestricted locations that are free to park whilst being conveniently located for their destination.

The 2021 Report found that parking demand in and around the town increased significantly throughout the day. Residential streets throughout the area showed different characteristics. Many streets close to the town centre are narrow, densely populated with terraced housing and have no provision for off-street parking.

The key conclusions of the 2021 Report were:

- *“there is little kerbside within the survey area that is not already restricted. The majority of double yellow and single yellow lines are there to avoid obstruction and unsafe parking, especially where narrow streets would have serious issues if more parking was permitted.”*
- And in order to : *“achieve an increase in permit parking in these circumstances requires a redistribution of kerb-side management in favour of residents, which may compromise necessary provisions for other motorists, or safety if parking restrictions are changed for parking places.”*

In summary, demand for on-street parking exceeds supply, and except for a few cases outlined in the 2021 Report, supply cannot be increased without causing severe inconvenience for other users. The full recommendations of the 2021 Report will be considered in Stage 2 of this project.

6.6 Saffron Walden ‘Tetra Tech’ study

This is a 2022 Study of parking and loading in Saffron Walden in order to inform the Local Plan’s traffic modelling work and understand existing conditions in the town centre.

It looked in detail at Hill St / George St, Church St. and the High St. The main conclusions were:

- Parking and loading activity on Hill St. / George St. is common but has little impact on the movement of vehicles passing through
- The main area of concern was around the Saffron Public House where loading did cause delay
- Parking on double yellow lines was relatively common and this did contribute to delays
- The average time for illegal parking was 6 minutes, meaning enforcement would be very difficult especially as there is no clear definition of parking compared to loading.

6.7 Saffron Walden Town Council

Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC) provided a formal written response during the consultation task and an online workshop was held to consider some of the local issues. SWTC are aware of ongoing issues and have recently carried out their own consultations regarding parking in the town.

One suggestion: *There is very limited scope for any additional residents parking in Saffron Walden, particularly the Town Centre. An alternative solution could be shared resident permit and pay and display spaces. For example, street parking could be allocated to residents permit bays ...[which] can be used as short stay pay and display spaces for visitors, i.e., 30 minutes to one hour.*

Other points brought up by SWTC:

- Parked cars blocking delivery lorries on Hill Street and making it difficult to drive out of Market Street;
- Issues with the pay and display machines not accepting card payment in Swan Meadow car park, which has now been resolved;
- An emissions-based permit cost for residents parking schemes.

At the full SWTC meeting in March 2022²⁸, the Council resolved to recommend to the County Council that Market Hill and the Market Place are closed to general traffic except for Tuesdays and Saturdays to allow access for the market.

²⁸ <https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/calender-event/full-council-meeting-march-2/>

Figure 21. Extract from the SWTC Phase 2 report: Summary of changes to the town centre

Recommendations

- To formally request Essex Highways consider **partially closing the roads** (with the exception on Tuesday and Saturdays for the Market, which would remain unchanged)
- Respondents favoured the partial closure to be in place all of the time, i.e. all day, everyday
- This partial closure would allow cars along King Street and down Market Street (illustrated in yellow)
- Market Hill would be closed to traffic (illustrated in red)
- And this would leave the Market Square pedestrianised
- Suitable signage and safety barriers will be required and will need to be agreed and ordered



6.8 Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council (SMPC) supplied information to the district council in 2013 as part of a scrutiny committee report²⁹ and supplied further information in July 2022 to include the following:

- There are too many vehicles, and the number continues to grow, for the parking space available;
- Too many residents with off-street parking leave their car on-street and use garages for other purposes;
- Commuter and Airport Parking is growing with an increasing number of people leaving their cars, albeit, legally on street to avoid station / airport parking charges.
- Parking restrictions when introduced, may benefit one group of residents, but the problem may be displaced or impact other groups of residents negatively.
- Reconfiguration of Lower Street to increase capacity generally and especially for short-stay users;
- Potential for more space at Crafton Green through purchase or lease of land.

Whether parking restrictions take the form of Controlled Zones with limited waiting for short periods or Resident Parking Areas is contentious, as residents would be inconvenienced by the former and have to pay for the administrative costs of the latter through permits.

It is recognised that Lower Street car park layout is complicated, but that re-organisation will be difficult given the historic arrangements and competing requirements between different types of users.

Crafton Street car park is busy and options for increasing capacity are limited.

²⁹ <https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Scrutiny%20Committee/201310151930/Agenda/Document%208.pdf>

7. Consultation

The key objective for the consultation as part of this study was to ascertain the geography, scale and type of problems experienced by residents and other local stakeholders. This was successfully achieved, not least through the use of Uttlesford's very capable 'Let's Talk' platform.

7.1 Who we asked and how

Different stakeholders view parking (and land use / transport projects more generally) with 'different lenses' based upon their interest. We responded to this by tailoring communications methods to different audiences.

Previous reports and press articles suggested that parking has been discussed extensively across the district in the past. We were aware of the risk of 'consultation fatigue', where the same questions are asked numerous times. To avoid this we asked specific questions about locations rather than general questions about the amount of price of parking. For example, Saffron Walden Town Council carried out an extensive consultation exercise in 2021.

To mitigate this, we used Uttlesford's 'Lets Talk' platform to promote the survey and wrote to the UDC consultee list with a promotional A5 flyer as a PDF (See Appendix A). The survey was open from **Monday 23rd May to Sunday 12th June 2022** (to take account of the Jubilee weekend).

The table below shows how specific groups and organisations were contacted and the activity that emerged as a result.

Stakeholder	Description	Interest	How we engaged	When
Council Planning team and NEPP	Council teams within UDC and NEPP	As the local plan is being developed, the Parking Review must link with this.	Through the UDC project team / MS teams	June 2022
Councillors	Key UDC ward councillors	Interests of their constituents and communities	3 x Individual meetings with a County, District and Parish councillor	June 2022
Towns / Parishes (Saffron Walden, Gt. Dunmow, Stansted)	Town council's and Parishes.	Interests of their constituents and communities	Online Town Workshop with Saffron Walden Written response from Stansted Mountfitchet	June 2022
Car Park Users	People that use car parks and on-street spaces	What are their issues, what would make parking more pleasant and convenient	Promote online survey through UDC council channels	May / June 2022
Residents	Local residents	What are their issues, how can parking contribute to their local area	Promote online survey through UDC council channels	May / June 2022

The main lesson learned from the consultation task was that the category of 'on-street marked bays' was confusing and should have been 'on-street non-residential' as this was confused with the residential parking category.

7.2 Survey Results

Overall statistics include:

Responses:

- 314 comments via the online portal (once duplicates were removed)
- An additional 28 comments via email which were added to the GIS layer and database

Subjects mentioned:

- Residential parking: 152
- Airport parking: 89
- Council car parks: 36
- Commuter parking: 21
- On-street (marked bays): 28
- Loading and unloading: 16.

Consultation result templates are included in Appendix B and are summarised below. Obvious spelling errors in quotes have been corrected, otherwise quotes were left unchanged.

Great Dunmow

The overall concerns in Great Dunmow tended to be parking availability in the town centre and problems with traffic circulation as a result of loading and unloading on the High Street. The current issue (as of June 2022) of credit/debit cards being declined at payment machines was also mentioned. There are general issues with on-street capacity in the northern part of the town, with complaints about verge parking.

Some quotes from the comments:

"Yesterday I had an emergency GP app for my baby ... there was no parking at all in town, could the market not be in Foakes hall car park?" – G. Dunmow.

"I'm disgusted that there is not a single car park in Dunmow that takes cash, what are you supposed to do if you don't have a bank card that works in these types of machines or don't understand how to do it (not everyone is technically minded)"- G. Dunmow

"I like the new cash free ticket machines" – G. Dunmow

Saffron Walden

The overall message in Saffron Walden was concerning a lack of parking availability for both residents and visitors. There were frequent comments about the pavement parking on the major routes such as Debden and Thaxted roads, with difficult circulation being the result of on-street parking. There were some specific and very local issues on roads within the town centre.

Some quotes from the comments:

"Most of the day these [residents parking] spaces are unused. It would be so helpful to have more free parking in the town." – Castle Street

"West Road in Saffron Walden invariably has cars parked, often on both sides, most of the way down. Many of them, especially towards the Debden Road end, park well over the pavement. This makes it impossible for wheelchairs and prams to pass, and even difficult for pedestrians" – Debden Road

"Restrictions are ignored. Only access for HGVs to other parts of the town, and so if cars are parked then HGVs mount kerbs to move around. This causes significant noise and vibration to nearby resident[s], including waking their family up. Restrictions should be increased to include Sundays and allow deliveries but stop parking." – Hill Street

Stansted Mountfitchet

Stansted Mountfitchet presented a wide range of complex and difficult issues which centred around insufficient capacity for residents. Town centre complaints centred around availability for visitors to businesses, with specific issues on road such as on the B1051, Grove Rd. Further out in the Foresthall estate, the main impression is of a chronic shortage of spaces to park residents' vehicles and a mixed picture of whether it is airport parking or residents to blame.

Some quotes from the comments:

“Off street airport [driveway] parking is becoming an issue, there are ... 3 driveways in use in this small close of 10 houses. While there may be space for these cars, they reduce the parking capacity of the residents, which could lead to overspill parking on street” – Stansted Mountfitchet

“I am sorry to say that it is patently obvious that the majority of the dangerously parked vehicles on Walson Way are not airport parkers, but indeed residents. In particular, residents parking inconsiderately” – Foresthall Park

“Please encourage Stansted Airport to make their parking significantly cheaper, and make them pay for parking restrictions” – Stansted Area

“Our neighbour slashed our car tyres for parking where we had legitimate entitlement to park, as they have decided that they want to claim rights to the gap between terraces as their own. They have no more right than us” – Foresthall park

Takeley and the Priors Green estate

Airport parking dominates the comments, with some responses about school drop-off and pickup in Priors Green, a reasonably new housing estate.

“Lived here for 24 years and all the time airport parking even though there are signs saying no airport parking residents only but still get people parking here and us residents had to pay for cones to put it on the side of the road to stop the airport Parker” – Takeley

“This road is congested with cars, poor site lines, residents not using their allocated parking spaces at the back of their homes” – Priors Green

Elsenham

Airport and commuter parking (for the railway station) make up the majority of the comments, but there are also comments about a lack of parking on residential streets.

“Had airport Parkers on my driveway stating they had paid just park to do so. They had taxi waiting. Told them to go as I knew nothing about it. I was told to report it to the police as just park committing fraud” – Elsenham

“Parking at the shops is very difficult, and sometimes parking is wholly or partly on the pavement.”

Newport

Comments about residential and school parking around Cherry Gardens Lane. Observations made on site visits regarding difficult circulation on London Road / High Street were supported by multiple comments, where parking and a mix of local and through traffic, agricultural and HGV traffic, causes problems of circulation through the village.

“Inconsiderate and dangerous parking on High St has caused several very near misses. With the increase of homes and vehicles in the district, it makes sense for High St to become double yellow lined to ensure traffic flow and safety” – Newport

Great Chesterford

Residential parking on High Street / South Street causing circulation problems and difficulties at junctions.

Thaxted

On-street and pavement parking along Newbiggen Street and Mill End, with a number of commenters suggesting that the car parks should be used by residents and that junctions need protection. A phone conversation with a Parish Councillor provided further details of the Newbiggen problem, namely that in order to park as close to their houses as possible (and without an alternative) cars were parked

wholly or partially on the pavement. There is strong feeling locally that cars should not be parked on this street for heritage reasons. The Parish wrote to residents asking them to keep a 1m clearance between their houses and vehicles although this seems to be adhered to rarely. There is a further note that the road is very lightly trafficked by pedestrians in any case.

There are two off-street car parks managed by the Parish Council in the village. Both are free. Anecdotally these tend to be used by residents although there is no survey or other data to corroborate this.

“The B184 is a major route, this is why we can't have a 20mph limit apparently. Yet cars can park on either side of this stretch, either blocking the road or, worse, blocking the pavement” - Thaxted

“Resident should not be allowed to park [on Newbiggen Street]. they park on the pavement and prevent the flow of traffic. there is a free car park a short walk away!” - Thaxted

Barnston

Even this far away from the Airport, there were complaints about airport parking. Barnston is on a very good regular bus route to Stansted Airport.

Other villages

Complaints about parking on-street and at junctions. In Fitch Green a relatively new housing estate, there were two comments about residential parking on streets. In Radwinter, there were very localised issues regarding parking at junctions on Church Hill.

Hatfield Forest

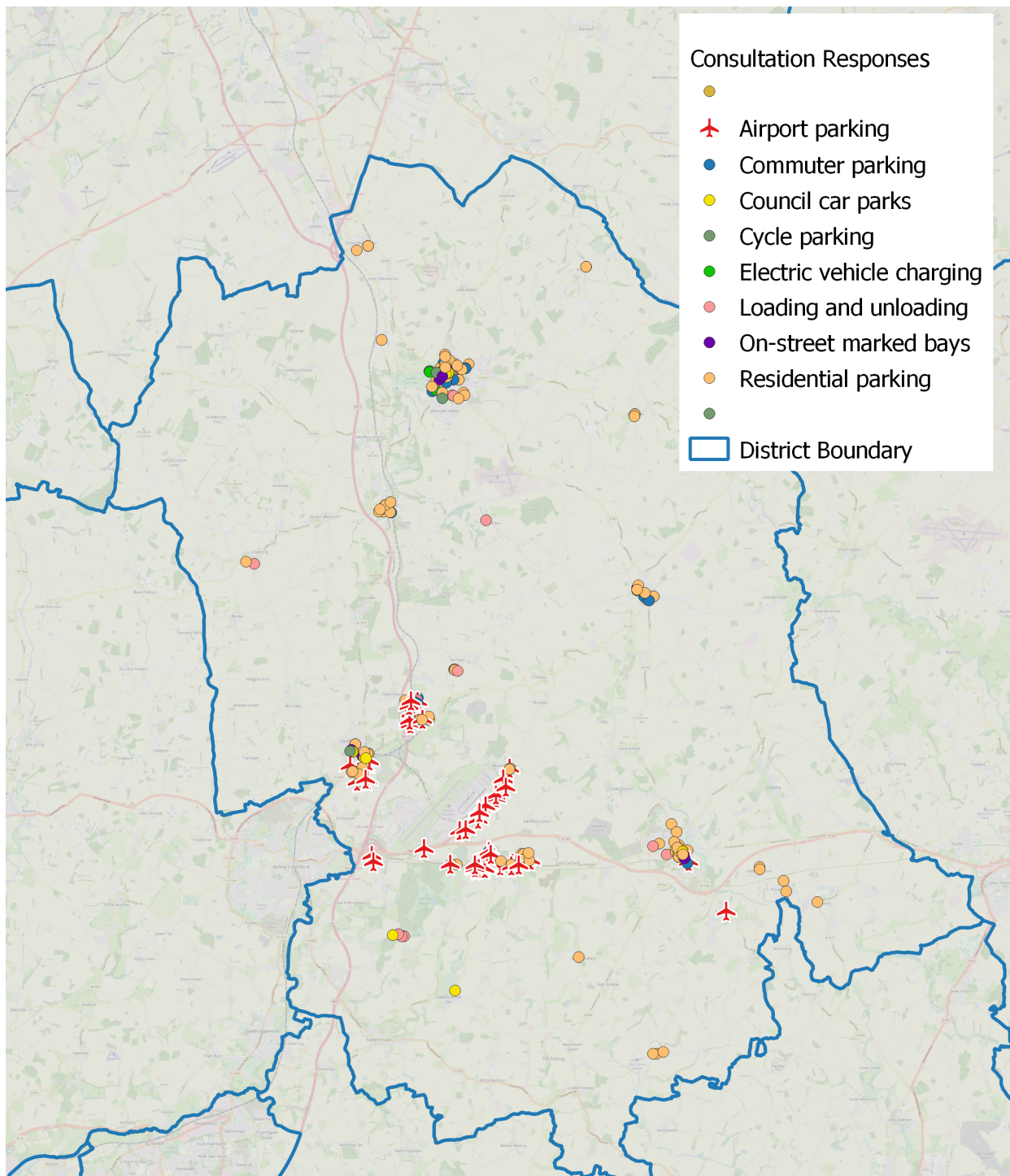
Specific issue with regards to the red route being incorrectly implemented and two commenters unhappy that it is hard to park and access the public footpaths.

7.3 Consultation Conclusions

The wide variety of responses from across the district have provided a rich and useful data set with which to achieve one of the primary objectives of the first stage of the review, answering the key question of where and what are the perceived problems.

There is a perception even within some of the smaller villages of a parking problem. Although much of this is 'typical' of most towns and cities in England, for example, congestion around schools and along arterial routes, the consultation and evidence supplied by the town councils provides clarity and credibility to the perceived problems faced by communities in Uttlesford which were outlined in section 6.1.

Figure 22. Map of consultation responses (see appendix for detailed maps)



8. Stage 1 - Conclusions

Our experience of working in districts across the country, the information provided, and the consultation feedback all suggest that Uttlesford has a genuine problem with parking. Whilst many issues sit within the normal set of problems faced up and down the country, such as parking on arterial roads, school pick-up and drop-off congestion, this seems to be exacerbated in the towns in Uttlesford given their narrow streets and roads, airport parking and high levels of car ownership.

With regards to off-street parking, the surveys and transaction and financial data, demonstrate that there is some capacity in Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet, albeit in the two large car parks which are some way out of the main residential areas.

8.1 Contributing Factors

The main problem can be attributed to insufficient on-street, and in some locations, off-street parking availability. There are several contributing factors to this situation discussed below.

As set out in section 1, the district is very rural in nature despite its proximity to Cambridge and London. Uttlesford is categorised by DEFRA as an 'R80' district, the most rural category. It is also prosperous, in the 80th decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation and with high house prices, with the 47th highest house prices in England. These factors combined, result in one of the highest car ownership levels in the country.

The impact of rurality and high car ownership on the ability of transport providers to operate viable bus services and their frequency is well understood³⁰. Poor public transport services further encourage high car ownership and use which further undermines the viability of rural bus services creating a cycle of decline. Given an ageing population, mobility issues beyond parking may become more important in the future³¹.

One of the biggest issues which emerged from the consultation was the number of complaints from relatively new developments, such as Priors Green and Cooper Smith Road areas of Takeley and the Foresthall Park area of Stansted Mountfitchet. Although airport parking was firmly blamed by most respondents, others recognised that there was also a problem with high car ownership and the estate layout.

In older parts of the district's towns, narrow streets are a particular problem e.g. in Saffron Walden on routes such as Debden Rd and Thaxted Rd. As the 2021 Buchanan Order Management Report found, there are few on-street opportunities to increase the supply, as most protected kerbsides need to remain so on congestion or safety grounds.

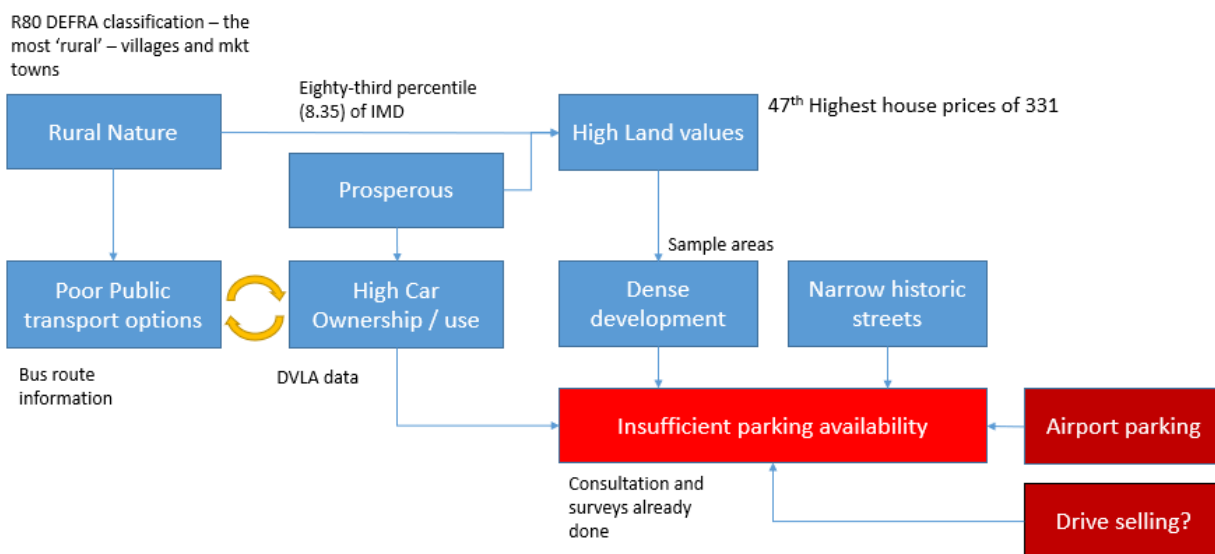
All of these problems appear to be further exacerbated by airport parking and, potentially, by drive selling which according to the consultation could be displacing residents' cars on to neighbourhood streets.

³⁰ <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/The-Future-of-Rural-Bus-Services.pdf>

³¹ Government Office for Science, Inequalities in Mobility and Access in the UK Transport System, 2019

The figure below summarises our understanding of the contributing factors:

Figure 23. Our understanding of the causes of the main problem



8.2 Implications for the next stage

The approach for the next stage of this study must be to address the significant problems, both thematically (e.g. school loading) and geographically (e.g. airport waiting in Parsonage Rd) by considering suitable approaches to provide remedies.

The problems are complex and for many, there will not be a ‘right’ answer, but instead a series of options all of which will have capital / revenue implications and create winners and losers. Difficult decisions will need to be made locally, but sufficient information should be provided to help in this process.

For each significant problem the next stage will need to consider:

- How the problems have arisen;
- The way it has been tackled in other places;
- Options for action; and
- Implications for action including cost, regulatory, and impact on different groups of people.

This must be framed within a Strategy which should consider:

- The balance between on and off-street parking;
- Tariffs and other charges to influence behaviour;
- Wider transport and parking policy;
- Implications for other policy, such as planning; and
- An Action Plan for change.