

# Northamptonshire Parking Strategy

## Fit for Purpose



January 2013



(Blank Page)



# Northamptonshire Parking Strategy

## Contacts and Further Information

This is Northamptonshire County Council's Parking Strategy.

It sets out the overarching vision for parking within Northamptonshire and sets out our strategy to achieve it. This strategy is one of a series of thematic daughter documents to the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan that was adopted in April 2012.

Consultation on the first batch of the thematic strategies, including this Parking Strategy, took place between 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012. A summary of the consultation responses can be found on our website at:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Transport/TP/Pages/NTP-thematic-strategies.aspx>

If you have any problems accessing Northamptonshire County Council's website or do not have access to the internet, please contact us using the details below.

This strategy was approved and adopted by Northamptonshire County Council's Cabinet in December 2012.

This strategy together with the other Batch 1 daughter documents and the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan itself can be viewed on the County Council's website at:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Transport/TP/pages/northamptonshire-transportation-plan.aspx>

Should you have any queries regarding this strategy, please contact the Transport Planning Team.

Transport Planning  
Northamptonshire County Council  
County Hall  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

Email: [LTPconsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:LTPconsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

(Blank Page)



## Contents

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page No</b>
Northamptonshire Transportation Plan	<b>7</b>
Introduction and Overview	<b>11</b>
National Policy	<b>12</b>
Local Policy	<b>13</b>
Northamptonshire Parking Policies	<b>15</b>
Overview of Current Situation	<b>16</b>
Civil Parking Enforcement	<b>18</b>
Residents Parking	<b>19</b>
Development Related Parking Standards	<b>20</b>
Blue Badge Scheme	<b>21</b>
Park and Ride	<b>21</b>
Lorry Parking	<b>21</b>
Strategy Delivery	<b>23</b>
Strategy Funding	<b>24</b>
Monitoring and Review	<b>24</b>
Appendix 1: Summary of Policies	<b>25</b>

(Blank Page)



## Northamptonshire Transportation Plan: Fit for Purpose

Transportation is not an end in itself. The movement of people and goods takes place not for its own sake, but to fulfil the diverse needs and desires of the public. Therefore the County Council's transport policies are similarly promoted for their effect on other specific goals, priorities and objectives, rather than as an end in themselves.

### Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Vision:

For Transport and Travel to contribute towards making Northamptonshire a great place to live and work, through creating tangible transport options to satisfy individual needs and to encourage more sustainable travel. The transport system will provide fast and efficient movement of people and goods, and will be accessible for all. Expanding networks and capacity of networks in Northamptonshire will be fully integrated into new developments and regeneration areas to support more sustainable communities.

Economic growth and prosperity is a top priority for Northamptonshire and connectivity has a vital role to play in encouraging businesses to locate to the area, and getting people to work and services such as education and health, as well as to leisure activities and for shopping. Improved technology and local accessibility will reduce the need to travel, whilst supporting economic growth, within a low carbon environment and Northamptonshire will become an exemplar for the latest developments in information technology, fuel technology, and new forms of transport.

The county council will work in partnership with all stakeholders and the wider community to deliver this transport vision and strategy.

This transportation plan needs to be both aspirational and realistic at the same time. Current economic climates mean that transport is certainly in a more austere time than in the last 15 to 20 years and this plan needs to reflect that but at the same time still plan for future growth .

The overall aim for this Transportation Plan is:  
**'Northamptonshire Transportation - Fit for..... Purpose'**

The aim 'fit for purpose' means creating a network that delivers exactly what Northamptonshire needs to be able to function plus what it needs to be able to grow.

This overarching aim can then be broken down into six objectives that have been chosen to guide this Transportation Plan. These objectives have been drawn up to reflect the issues which have been identified as locally important through consultation, while at the same time reflecting wider national and local policy context. These objectives have been deliberately chosen to reflect the main impacts that transport can have on the wider community, rather than being linked to particular schemes or measures. They form the basis upon which the policies and programmes contained in this Plan have been developed.

1. **Fit for.....the Future** – creating a transport system that supports and encourages growth and plans for the future impacts of growth, whilst successfully providing benefits for the County.

2. **Fit for.....the Community** – through the transport system help to maintain and create safe, successful, strong, cohesive and sustainable communities where people are actively involved in shaping the places where they live.

3. **Fit to.....Choose** – ensuring that the people of Northamptonshire have the information and the options available to them to be able to choose the best form of transport for each journey that they make.

4. **Fit for.....Economic Growth** – creating a transport system that supports economic growth, regeneration and a thriving local economy and successfully provides for population and business growth.

5. **Fit for.....the Environment** – to deliver a transport system that minimises and wherever possible reduces the effect of travel on the built, natural and historic environment.

6. **Fit for.....Best Value** - being clear about our priorities for investment and focusing on value for money by prioritising what we spend money on and how it can be beneficial for the county as a whole and search for alternative sources of funding.

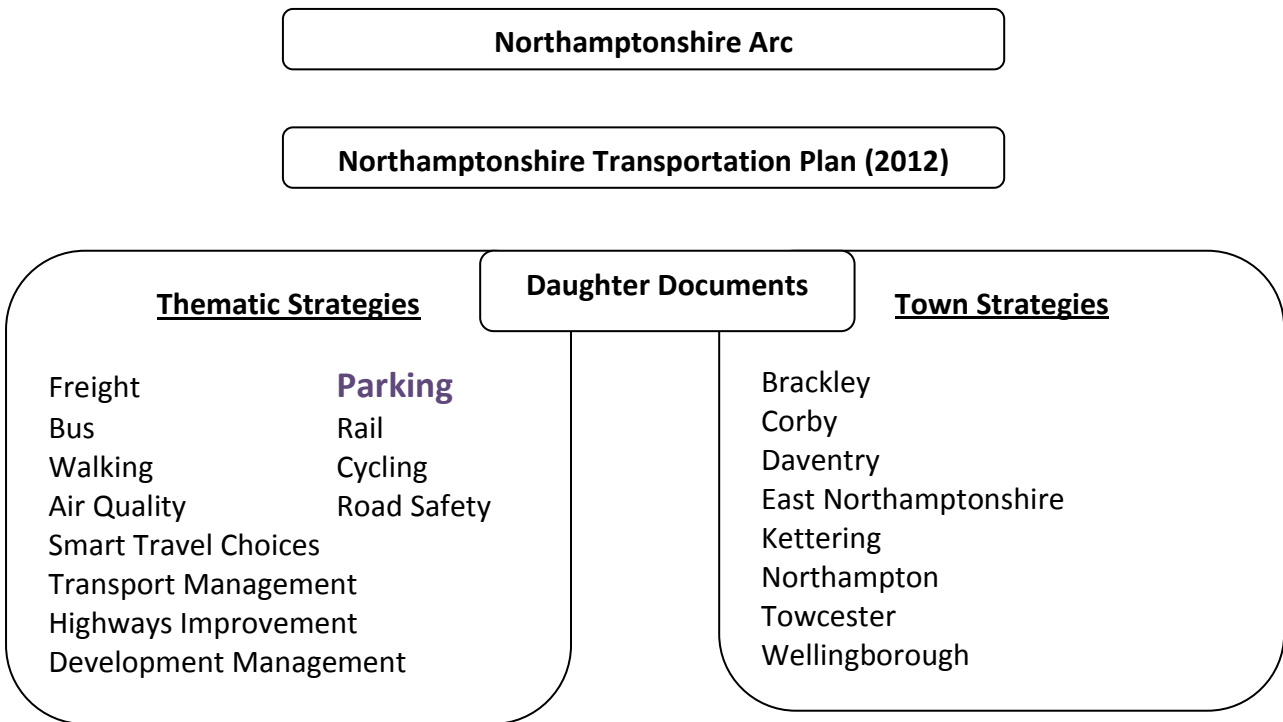


## Daughter Documents

This Strategy is the part of a series of documents which will eventually form the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan ‘suite of documents’. This suite of documents will include strategies or plans covering a range of transport themes and also detailed geographic strategies or plans for the Northamptonshire’s main towns.

Thematic strategies or plans are being developed as daughter documents to the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan, of which the Parking Strategy is one.

Other daughter documents cover the following areas:



### The Northamptonshire Arc

The Northamptonshire Arc was adopted by Northamptonshire County Council cabinet in 2010 as a document that will help guide future economic growth and prosperity in the county. The document outlines the importance healthier travel has on the importance of the economy in Northamptonshire.



The Northamptonshire Arc is underpinned by the pursuit of three high level outcomes.

- Transformed connectivity
- A naturally resilient and low carbon Northamptonshire
- A stronger and greener economy.

## Northamptonshire Parking Strategy

The following table shows how the Parking Strategy ties in with the six over-arching Northamptonshire Transportation Plan objectives:

	Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Overarching Objectives					
	Fit for..... the Future	Fit for..... the Community	Fit to..... Choose	Fit for..... Economic Growth	Fit for..... the Environment	Fit for..... Best Value
Parking Strategy	Appropriate parking standards and effective parking management will support growth in the county for both cars and motorcycles.	We will work with communities to manage parking appropriately in their areas.	Parking management and introducing parking standards are important tools in encouraging people to use sustainable transport modes.	Minimising the impact of parking on the highway network will increase the efficiency of the supply chain.	Reducing the impact of parking will benefit the local environment.	Parking management will be done within the constraints of our budget and has the potential for income generation.

## Introduction and overview

Car parking is an important issue when considering transportation topics which is often overlooked. This is surprising as travel by car is the main mode of travel for most people and all those cars need to be parked. It is estimated that cars spend 90% of their time parked.

Well planned and managed parking can help the county to achieve its economic, social and environmental objectives. In particular, a managed approach to parking can:

- support the local economy ( by making it easy for shoppers , commuters and tourists to visit Northamptonshire’s towns)
- encourage sustainable travel modes and help reduce reliance on the private car (by setting parking charges at appropriate levels and allowing an appropriate level of parking in new developments )
- meet residents’ needs for car parking near their homes (by introducing Residents’ Parking Zones)
- improve journey time reliability for road users (by designing and managing on-street parking facilities to reduce traffic conflicts and delays)
- raise revenue for the authorities within the county to reinvest in transport services and measures

The parking strategy will enable the aims of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan in terms of parking provision and parking management to be applied in such a way that it can operate as a means of reducing congestion, encouraging traffic restraint and supporting alternative modes of transport. The parking strategy also provides policies that support economic regeneration of Northamptonshire by firstly encouraging car parking in the most appropriate locations and secondly by getting the balance of parking within developments correct.

The Parking Strategy’s aim is to provide guidance about how the County Council will deal with parking related issues.

The objectives of the Parking Strategy include:

1. Managing parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres by ensuring the needs of shoppers and visitors are prioritised

2. Managing parking in order to meet the needs of residents who live within towns, in villages and in rural areas
3. Managing parking on the highway network to encourage the use of public transport
4. Managing parking effectively in order to reduce trips from new developments by car

## National Policy

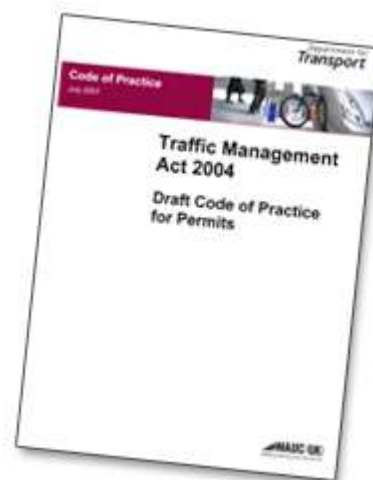
The Traffic Management Act 2004 sets out a statutory and network management duty for all local authorities to ensure the effective management of their road networks and details the mechanisms through which this is to be achieved. Of particular importance to the parking strategy is Part 6 which provides for the civil enforcement of parking and traffic contraventions. This primary legislation came into effect on 31 March 2008 and determines the enforcement mechanisms that can be used by local authorities in order to effectively manage their road networks.

National Government policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The transport section strongly leads on sustainable travel and congestion management.

## Traffic Management Act 2004

The Department for Transport issued both the statutory and the operational guidance to Civil Parking Enforcement in March 2008. This guidance states that Civil Parking Enforcement should contribute to the authority's transport objectives, and that a good enforcement regime is one that uses quality-based standards that the public understands which are enforced fairly, accurately and promptly. Civil enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004 would enable the council as the Highways and Traffic Authority to carry out its duty and ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on its road network through effective enforcement of parking and waiting and loading restrictions.

The guidance explains that the aim of enforcement authorities should be to increase compliance with parking regulations. This can be accomplished through parking controls which are clear, well designed, legal and enforced.



### **National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

The National Planning Policy Framework views transport policies as vital in facilitating development as well as contributing to sustainability and health. The policy direction retains the commitment to reducing the need to travel but acknowledges that the transport system requires a balance to allow a wider choice as to the mode.

The policy states that, where practical, solutions should support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. To this end, development should be located in areas that facilitate the use of sustainable transport modes.

### **Local Policy**

Currently, parking standards for use in Northampton are taken from the Northamptonshire Supplementary Planning Guidance on parking standards, which was prepared collaboratively between the district and borough councils of Northamptonshire and adopted in 2003. The Supplementary Planning Guidance is still relevant for non residential uses but residential parking has been superseded by the standards set out in the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (2008)



### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (2003)**

Supplementary Planning Guidance on Parking was issued by the County Council in September 2003. The purpose of the document was originally to clarify the interpretation of policies and proposals in the County Structure Plan with respect to parking. Standards are proposed in the document for parking provision associated with;

- new housing development - superseded by the standards set out in the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (2008)
- commercial development including retail and office premises; and
- development associated with educational establishments and community facilities.

A lower level of private non-residential parking provision is required in areas within or close to town centres. In designated town centre areas, apart from in exceptional circumstances where parking is required to support the economic vitality and viability of the town centre, no further private non-residential parking should be provided and on zones on the edge of the town centres parking should be provided to a level of 50% of the agreed standard.

### **Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (2008)**

The Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide replaces the Design Guide for Residential Roads, which was based on Design Bulletin 32, first published in 1977, and its companion guide Places, Streets and Movement, these were replaced by Manual for Streets in 2007, which this guide is based on.

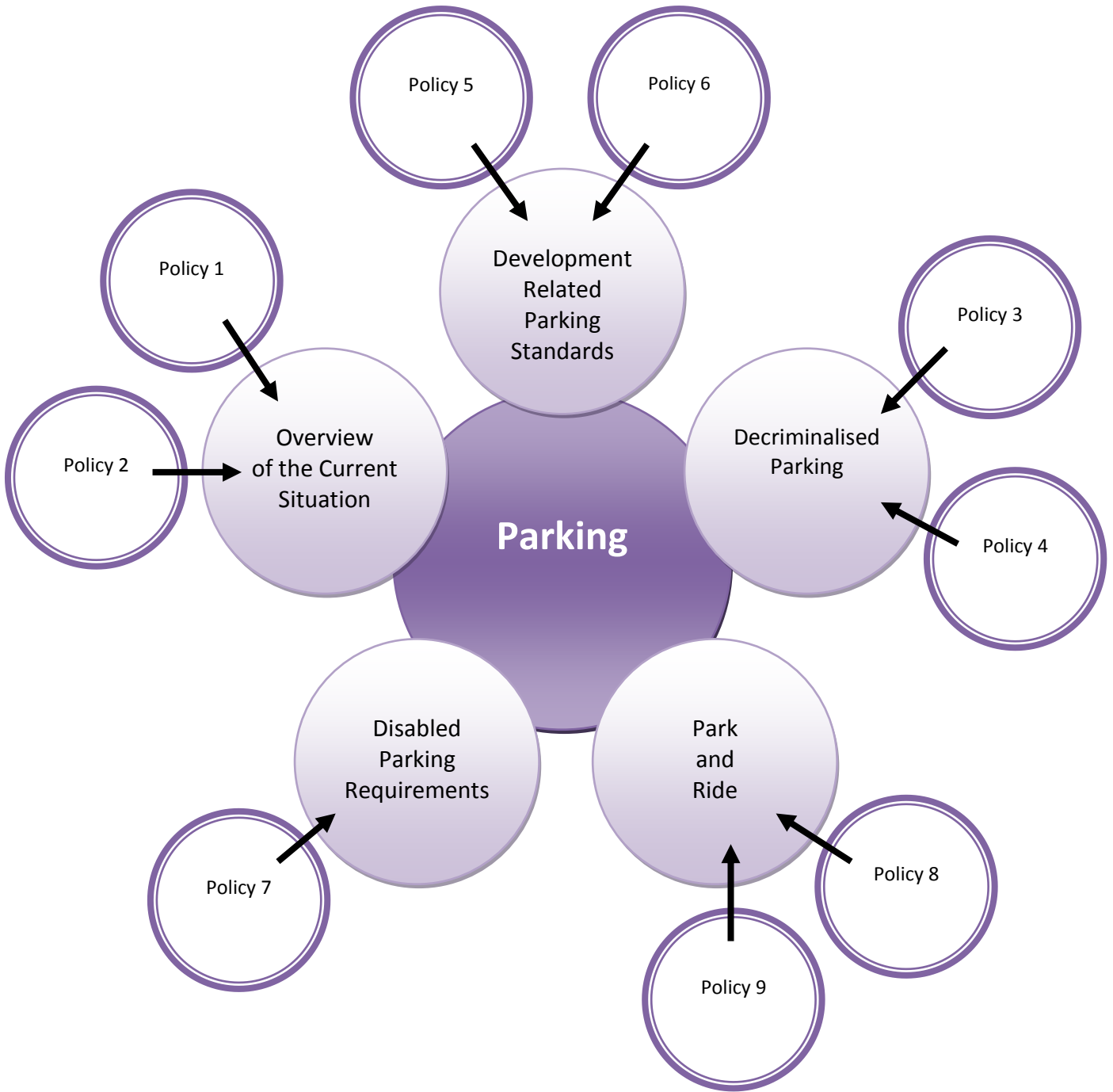
The aim of the guide is to follow Manual for Streets lead by putting well-designed residential streets at the heart of sustainable communities. The environmental impact of transport is often overlooked in the planning of new developments, truly sustainable development will consider carbon emissions from transport in the design. The guide works to recognise the importance of assigning higher priority to pedestrians and cyclists, while allowing for vehicle movements, thus creating places that work for all members of the community.

This guide shows that applying a rigid parking standard across a development is not always the best option and encourages developers and planning authorities to review parking inline with the location of the development and the housing typology that is being proposed. i.e. a development in a rural area which has low levels of accessibility to local facilities may need more parking facilities than a development in a town centre location. The parking section looks at current trends in Northamptonshire and suggests that more accessible locations (e.g. town centres) generally have lower car ownership than less accessible areas (e.g. rural areas) thus different parking standards could be applied in new developments to reflect this. It also shows how different forms of parking are suitable depending on the type of household, for example for a terrace of houses shared parking areas, either in courtyards or on street bay parking can be more suitable than driveways, however larger family homes parking find on driveway may be suitable.

### **Northamptonshire Transportation Plan (2012)**

The 2012 Northamptonshire Transport Plan has been recently adopted by the Council and the transport policies contained within it suite of documents will inform Northamptonshire for some years to come. To this end the plan ties in with other strategies in the county including The Northamptonshire Arc and the Local Development Documents which identify locations for growth.

# Northamptonshire Parking Policies



## Overview of the current situation

There are three categories of car parking in Northamptonshire. These are:

- On-street – Parking within the adopted highway boundary that is regulated by the Highway Authority which may be subject to charge or limit to the length of stay. Enforcement of parking regulations has historically been carried out by the Police but following the process of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement can be carried out by the Highway Authority or its agent
- Public off-street – Parking areas often provided by Borough and District Councils, which are open to the public. These car parks often attract a tariff and/or limits on length of stay.
- Private off-street – Parking that is privately owned for use by the owners, typically residential, employers, retailers and leisure facilities. This category includes commercial parking operations.

On street parking is the only type of parking that the County Council has direct control over, and can change the level and type of provision.

The majority of parking within the County's towns is provided by off-street, publically operated car parks and on-street car parking. Additional privately owned car parking is administered by supermarkets and retail parks. The map below shows the distribution of car parking in the main towns throughout the County.





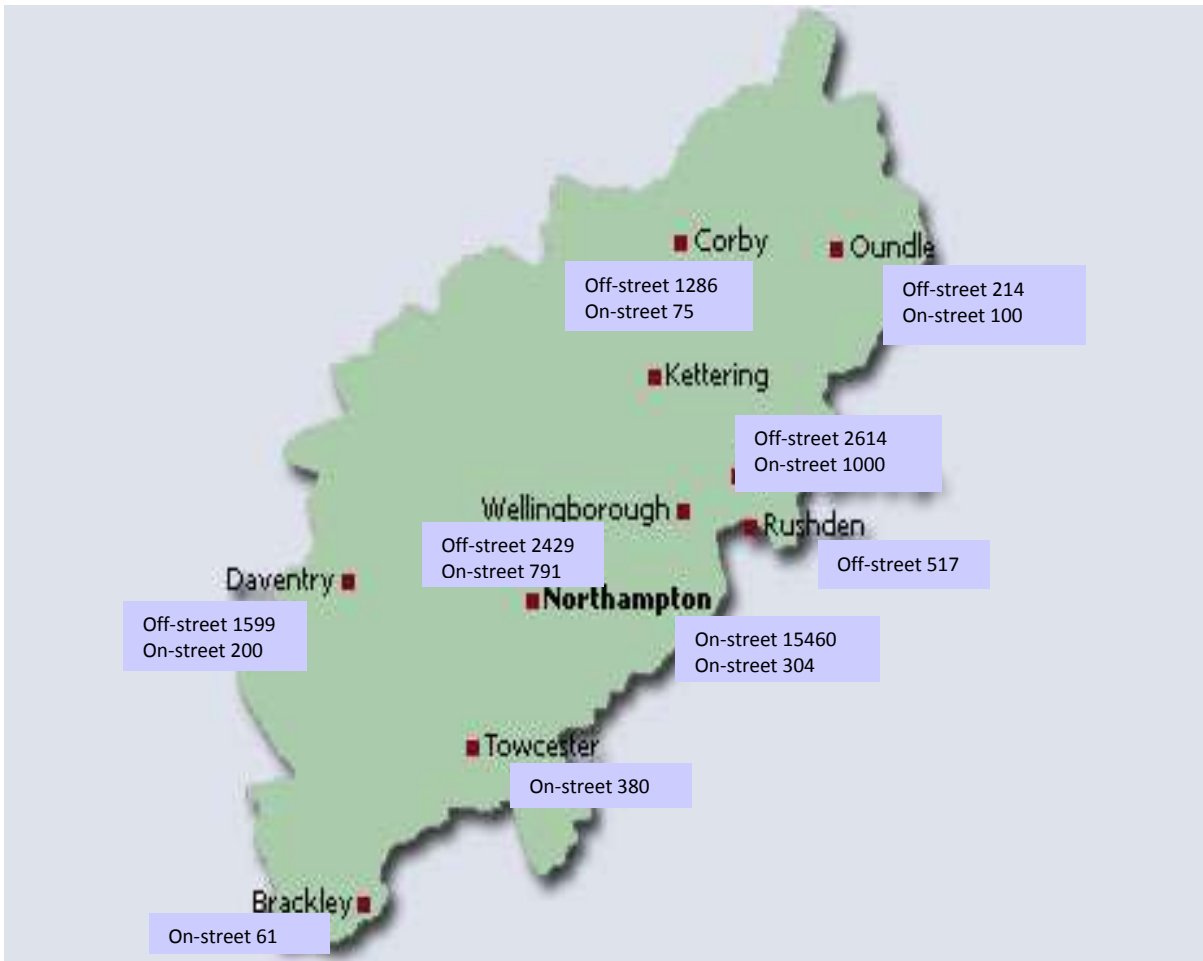


Figure 1: Town centre car parking provision in Northamptonshire

**Parking Policy 1**

Where additional public car parks are planned these will only be provided in town centres where the surrounding highway network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed new car park.

**Parking Policy 2**

New or replacement car parks will be located on radial routes to act as interceptor facilities.

## Civil Parking Enforcement

Illegal and inconsiderate parking affects everyone who uses the roads within Northamptonshire, therefore enforcement is important to persuade motorists to comply with the regulations in force and achieve the following benefits for all:

- Better turnover of on-street spaces arises from better enforcement, as drivers are less willing to overstay. The increase in availability of parking spaces benefits residents, local businesses, shoppers and visitors.
- Improved traffic flow, as drivers spend less time looking for a parking space. This leads to reduced congestion and an improved local environment.
- Improved road safety through better enforcement of illegal parking
- Improvement of accessibility for emergency services, public transport and utilities vehicles
- Improved accessibility for people with disabilities, as enforcement of disabled parking spaces means more spaces available
- Less parking on the footways, making life easier for pedestrians and wheelchair users.

Civil parking enforcement was introduced to Northampton Borough in July 2001 and has been extended to the other district and boroughs, apart from Kettering and Daventry where parking is still enforced by the police. However, Daventry is currently working with the County Council to progress de-criminalised parking and it is expected that de-criminalised parking will be available in Daventry from April 2013.

As part of decriminalisation process the existing waiting and permitted parking places across the county have been reviewed to ensure that they meet current needs and are appropriate to an efficient self funding parking operation. The review also included all types of limited waiting orders so allowing the setting up of a computerised master list of all yellow lines details for each borough and district.



The surplus of income over costs from the enforcement operation is available for investment in transport related facilities. The enforcement regime across the county covers the following key areas;



- Control of non-residential on-street parking, by charges and maximum stay durations;
- Control of the location, allocation, pricing and permitted durations of stay at off-street public car parks;
- Enhanced provision for specific user groups such as disabled people, and parents with children;
- Resident's parking schemes in areas bordering town centres;
- Liaison with private car park operators regarding the possible sharing of facilities.

#### **Parking Policy 3**

The County Council will work in partnership with Kettering Borough Council and Daventry District Council to enable countywide Civil Parking Enforcement

#### **Parking Policy 4**

The County Council will pursue full and effective enforcement of parking in partnership with Borough and Districts Councils where Civil Parking Enforcement is in operation.

### **Residents Parking**

Residents' parking zones are designed to help residents to park close to their homes and make it more difficult for non-residents to park. They do not reserve places exclusively for permit holders, but permit holders may park, without restriction, in the resident parking bays/areas provided in any of the streets within their designated zone.

A number of residents' parking zones are in operation in Northamptonshire. The majority of these are preferential, i.e. allow non permit holders to park for a limited period of time, usually between 1 hour and two hours.

The County Council uses the following criteria to assess applications for resident parking zones:

- Not less than 85% of the available kerbside space is occupied for more than six hours between 8am and 6pm on five or more days a week from Monday to Saturday inclusive and a bona fide need of residents is established.
- Not more than 50% of the car owning residents have, or could have, parking available within the curtilage of their own property or within 200 metres walking distance by way of garages or other private off-street space.
- The peak or normal working day demand for residents' spaces should be able to be met.
- The introduction of a scheme should not cause unacceptable problems in adjacent roads.
- The Council is satisfied that a reasonable level of enforcement of the proposals can be maintained by parking attendants.
- Permits for non-residential premises will be limited in their use to essential operational use only.
- In areas where parking space is severely limited, the introduction of reserved parking does not seriously affect the commercial viability of the area.
- After a full consultation process a minimum of 50% of the residents of the zone directly affected are in favour of the proposals.

## Development Related Parking Standards

Achieving the appropriate level of parking for a proposed development is an important traffic management tool, as it reduces congestion and encourages modal shift. Northamptonshire County Council has two documents, Supplementary Planning Guidance (2003) and the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (2008) that give local planning authorities guidance on the level of parking for various types of development. These documents are used by the Highways Development Control teams when assessing planning applications.

### **Parking Policy 5**

The County Council's Parking Policy for non residential developments can be found within the Parking – Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2003). All non-residential developments should be assessed against this document to determine the maximum parking requirement.

### **Parking Policy 6**

The County Council's parking policy guidance for residential developments is contained within the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (December 2008). All residential developments will be assessed using this guidance to determine the maximum parking requirement.

## Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge scheme allows drivers or passengers with severe mobility problems to park close to where they need to go.

The County Council fully supports concessions available to Blue Badge holders.

### Parking Policy 7

The County Council will fully meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regards to both the quality and quantity of parking provision.

## Park and Ride

Currently Northamptonshire has no Park and Ride facilities, and owing to the current economic climate such facilities are unlikely to be implemented in the short term. Park and Ride has historically been proposed as a modal shift measure for Northampton, and will be reconsidered over the next 10 years as one of many sustainable transport measures for the town.

Northamptonshire County Council is also considering wider Park and Ride routes as part of the aspiration to develop a Northamptonshire Arc mass transit system between major towns in Northamptonshire.

### Parking Policy 8

The County Council will work with Northampton Borough Council to consider the scale, location and management of future Park and Ride provision within Northampton.

### Parking Policy 9

The County Council will give further consideration to the introduction of inter-urban Park and Ride sites.

## Lorry Parking

The issues surrounding lorry and HGV parking is addressed in the Freight Strategy.



(Blank Page)



## Strategy Delivery

This strategy will be delivered through county-wide and local initiatives and a policy framework that secures the importance of having well managed parking.

The table below shows the links between the parking objectives (detailed earlier in the strategy), and the how and when the policies will be delivered. The final column details the links parking policies have to the other Northamptonshire Transportation Plan daughter documents.

**Table 1: Strategy Delivery**

Strategic Objective	Parking Policy	Action	Timescale	Links to other NTP documents
1	1 and 2 location of future town centre car parks	Work with district and borough council throughout the county to identify site as appropriate	On-going	Town strategies
2	3 and 4 civil parking enforcement	Review of operations, times and road markings	On-going	
4	5 and 6 parking standards	Review with districts and boroughs	2013	Smarter Travel Choices
3	7 Northampton Park and Ride	NCC will work with NBC to consider further the role of Park and Ride	Post 2013	Northampton Town Strategy, Bus Strategy, Smarter Travel Choices
3	8 inter-urban Park and Ride	Work with district and borough council throughout the county to identify appropriate routes	Post 2015	Bus Strategy

## Strategy Funding

Funding for parking schemes could come from a number of different sources:

- The Integrated Transport Block (Northamptonshire Transportation Plan)
- Central government grants
- Section 106 Agreement contributions from developers
- Developer led Infrastructure delivery secured through Section 278 agreements
- Localism
- Match funding from the public sector
- New sources of grant funding from public bodies
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Partnership with commercial operators

Reductions to the Integrated Transport Block mean that there will be less funding available for all transport schemes including parking related schemes. The Northamptonshire Arc, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and Regional Growth Fund could all offer real opportunities for the Council to take forward projects over the next few years, as could grant funding from other sources such as Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

## Monitoring and Review

The action plan will be reviewed to track the implementation of key changes and impacts of the strategy. Northamptonshire Highways will monitor progress in terms of individual projects or development.

Parking Services will be responsible for the overall monitoring and review of civil parking enforcement.



## Appendix 1 - Summary of Policies:

### **Parking Policy 1**

Where additional public car parks are planned these will only be provided in town centres where the surrounding highway network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed new car park.

### **Parking Policy 2**

New or replacement car parks will be located on radial routes to act as interceptor facilities.

### **Parking Policy 3**

The County Council will work in partnership with Kettering Borough Council and Daventry District Council to enable countywide Civil Parking Enforcement

### **Parking Policy 4**

The County Council will pursue full and effective enforcement of parking in partnership with Borough and Districts Councils where Civil Parking Enforcement is in operation.

### **Parking Policy 5**

The County Council's Parking Policy for non residential developments can be found within the Parking – Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2003). All non- residential developments should be assessed against this document to determine the maximum parking requirement.

### **Parking Policy 6**

The County Council's parking policy guidance for residential developments is contained within the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide (December 2008). All residential developments will be assessed using this guidance to determine the maximum parking requirement.

### **Parking Policy 7**

The County Council will fully meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regards to both the quality and quantity of parking provision.

### **Parking Policy 8**

The County Council will work with Northampton Borough Council to consider the scale, location and management of future Park and Ride provision within Northampton.

### **Parking Policy 9**

The County Council will give further consideration to the introduction of inter- urban Park and Ride sites.

**Northamptonshire Parking Strategy  
Fit for Purpose**

For more information please contact  
[LTPConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:LTPConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

