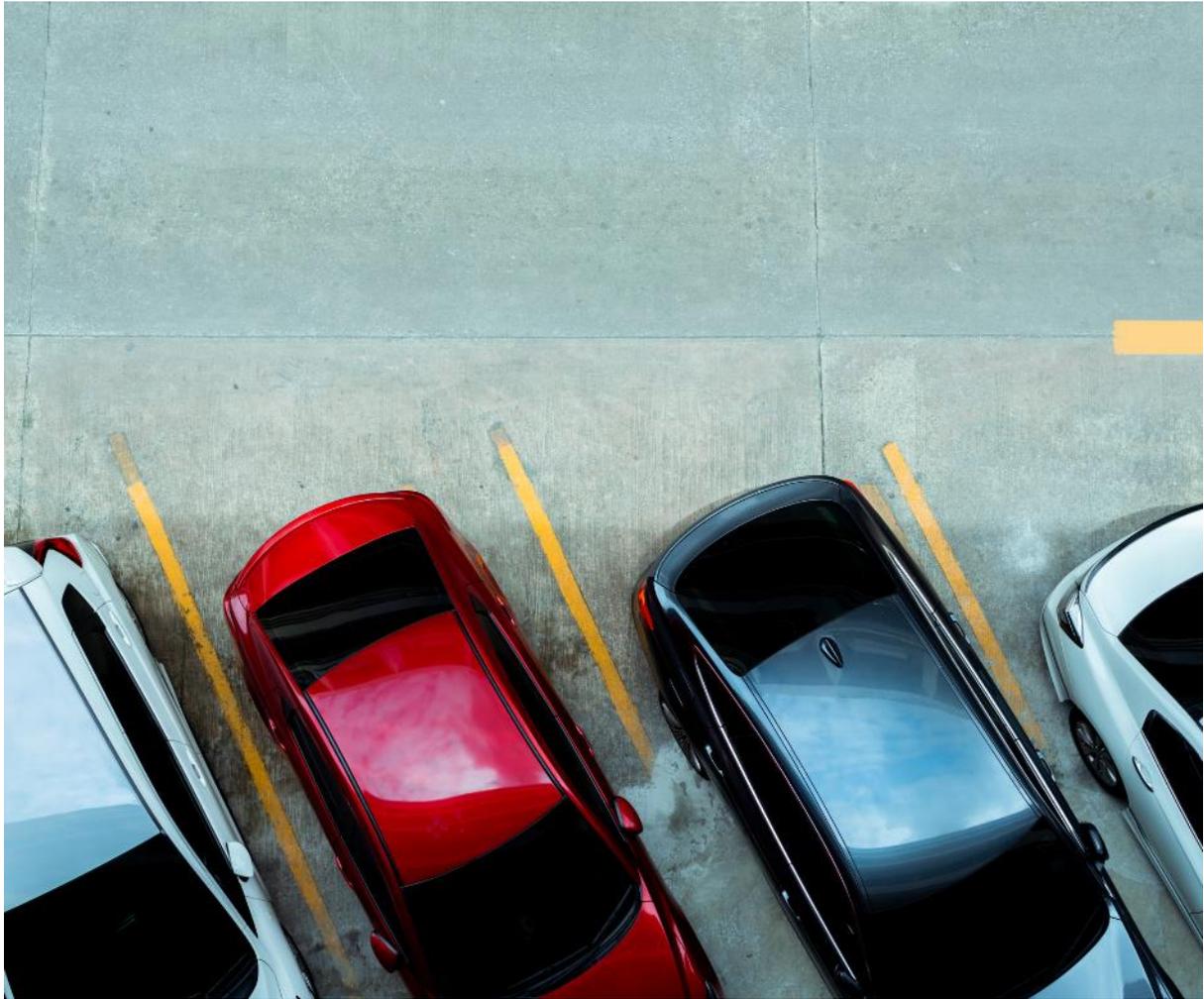

Off-Street Car Parking Strategy 2022 – 2030



Elmbridge
Borough Council
... bridging the communities ...

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Foreword

The council is on a journey to transform its services, and car parks are a valuable asset that provides the council with a tool to shape places; contribute to thriving businesses and vibrant high streets whilst being environmentally and financially sustainable. Car park net income is invested in environmental services, and this is to the benefit of all.

This off-street car parking strategy reflects the council's ambitious and innovative approach. The council has a wide range of car parks across town and village centres, almost every car park has a different issue. Our transformative approach will evaluate each car park to help deliver our vision of achieving environmentally sustainable, and economically thriving communities.

The actions detailed in this strategy are purposefully agile, there is no one way to do things. Our communities are unique, and we aim to constantly collaborate with stakeholders to ensure actions best suits their needs.

At the heart of this strategy is the principle that there are enough off-street car parking spaces in appropriate locations to support thriving communities and to improve the quality of our environment. Elmbridge will be a leading promoter for climate change and sustainability action. To achieve this, we need to understand what purpose car parking fulfils and what patterns of usage individual car parks have. We also need to understand what influences parking choices, and to promote and increase more sustainable modes of transport.

The council takes the view that car parks should be able to cover its costs. Well-used car parking is an essential economic asset, but underused car parking is a wasted resource for which there may be a better use for the local community.

The overall aim of this car parking strategy is to provide and manage a range of safe, secure, well-maintained and affordable off-street car parking that meets the needs of residents, shoppers, businesses, visitors and commuters in a way to ensure the long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the borough.

Councillor Robin Stephens

Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and Local Economy

Background

The Council operates 27 public car parks in the borough through a parking order, which offer approximately 2,500 off-street pay and display spaces for visitors to its towns and villages. These are all surface car parks and serve a mixture of town and village centres and railway stations in the borough.

A list of the car parks and a map showing their locations are provided in this strategy. There is also free limited stay on-street parking in the vicinity of all of the car parks.

The review of our current parking strategy began in July 2022, supported by consultancy, which provided additional specialist expertise.

Our key priority was to receive feedback from residents and businesses about our car parks in the borough. A parking consultation survey was undertaken between 20 July and 13 September 2022. Over 4,600 surveys were completed, which is a very good response rate.

Feedback is very positive, demonstrating highly effective management of our car parks. 4,607 surveys were completed, which is a very good response rate.

Satisfaction with car parks was generally high with the majority of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with our car parks, 87% of customers are happy with cleanliness, 82% with lighting, 79% with safety and security and 85% with markings and signage.

Feedback was also received as follows:

- Covid-19 has reduced use of the borough's car parks by c20%;
- Location and then price were the top two factors when choosing where to park;
- Nearly 80% preferred to pay by electronic means;
- 27% either owned or planned to buy a 'plug-in' electric vehicle in the next year, with 24% expressing that they would use EV charge points in car parks; and
- As we would expect when users are asked about tariff prices, 60% responded that shorter stay charges are high but longer stays were considered better value.

The full results of the consultation survey are on our website www.xxxxxx

We will regularly update the website, keeping residents and businesses informed about how their feedback has helped shape the future direction of car parking.

In addition to the specialist support received from parking consultants, a cross party members group collaborated to support the parking strategy review, sharing views and local issues experienced.

Strategy Objectives

There are 4 key objectives contained in the strategy, these support the key deliverables in the councils Vision Delivery Plan 2030.

Customisation of car parks - to reflect the individual natures of our communities

Customisation leads to a better customer experience. The strategy recognises that our car parks in the borough would benefit from a more localised approach. Our communities are unique, and we wish to continue to collaborate with stakeholders to ensure actions best suit their needs.

The aim is for car parks to help support and improve the vibrancy of the local town or village. To achieve this, we aim to undertake more work and analysis for each car park, listen to residents and business and work with stakeholders to achieve the best outcome for them.

To date we have identified several actions we intend to consider, and these are in *Appendix A – Action Plan to Delivery the Strategy*. However, this is only the beginning of our transformation journey. By 2030 our aim is that all our car parks will have actively supported and contributed to the vibrancy of the local town/ village and encouraged our high streets to continue to be great places to live, work, shop and play.

Digitalisation of car parks - to provide customers with high quality and easy to use services, continuing to be progressive in how they are delivered

The council is already improving services through digital initiatives. The trend in parking technology is towards digitalisation – the ability of systems to record and share data whilst removing the need for manual processes.

Our aim is to invest in appropriate technology to provide a more positive parking experience for customers and a 'smarter' parking operation.

The data provided will inform future strategy including: -

- where and how much parking there should be;

- pricing policy including dynamic charging and differential tariffs for greener vehicles, focussed concession schemes and other initiatives; and
- numbers and locations of EV charge points.

Also, with changing technology the intention is to implement easier-to-use payment methods for customers across the borough car parks.

In real time via the council website and smartphone apps, customers will be able to view parking space information, availability, restrictions and tariffs, enabling easy access to park and pay.

Customers will experience a reduction in time taken to apply for or renew permits and other permissions as well as reducing the administration burden for the council.

Environmentally sustainable methods of parking - to support Elmbridge to be a leading promoter for climate change and sustainability action

We will actively support the council's wider objectives of increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport. In some instances, customers have no alternative but to use cars and whilst this strategy is also promoting more suitable modes of transport, it is not an anti-car strategy. This is a flexible approach, subject to the developments in demand, technology and user habits.

We will continue to develop an EV charge points strategy for both on and off-street parking (with Surrey County Council)

We will review tariffs to encourage use of cleaner vehicles, encouraging the use of low emission vehicles in the Borough.

Permits/season tickets will be reviewed to help encourage alternative modes of transport, such as providing well- designed, secure cycle parks in appropriate council car parks.

Financially sustainable car parks – making financial decisions using good quality data, in an open and transparent manner

The aim is for each car park to cover its costs. Not all our car parks currently break even and underused car parking is a wasted resource which needs to be addressed. Car parking space is a valuable asset for the local community. where car parks are underutilised, initiatives will be developed to improve utilisation. These initiatives could include car valet services, drop boxes, local markets, space for affordable housing.

The need a pricing solution that best meets the particular circumstances of each car park in the medium to long term, and tariffs should be reviewed annually to ensure

they reflect the vitality of the surrounding area and are reasonable when benchmarked against similar locations.

We will create a business case for introducing focussed tariff discounts to help improve the vitality of towns and villages. We will use car park data and customer insight to measure and review tariffs accordingly.

Recognising the new working patterns post Covid-19, more flexible season tickets will be considered.

Governance

Our focus is to explore how the actions listed in the action plan can be evaluated and delivered, where appropriate. The action plan for delivering the strategy is detailed in Appendix A. This is not a full list of actions, an agile approach will be taken, actions will develop and adapt when appropriate.

To ensure controls are in place, a Car Parking Programme Board will be formed, and we will begin our work in two pilot areas, Cobham and East Molesey. In addition, we will review the underutilised car parks, aligned with our asset management programme.

Each year a review will be undertaken to inform our residents, members and council employees how the strategy is contributing to the transformation of council services.

List of Car Parks in Elmbridge

Main car parks	Location	Spaces
Cobham	Cedar Road	16
Cobham	Hollyhedge Road	206
Esher	Berguette	46
Esher	Civic Centre	191
Esher	Heather Place	29
Esher	Highwayman's Cottage	68
Walton	Ashley Park	53
Walton	Drewitt's Court	70
Walton	Manor Road	27
Weybridge	Baker Street	53
Weybridge	Churchfield Road	193
Weybridge	Monument Hill	14

Village car parks	Location	Spaces
Claygate	Hare Lane	43
Claygate	Torrington Lodge	98
East Molesey	Walton Road	150
Hersham	New Berry Lane	44
Long Ditton	Southbank	51
Oxshott	Steels Lane	30
Thames Ditton	Ashley Road	66
Walton	Halfway	72
Weybridge	Oatlands Village	54
Weybridge	York Road	42

Commuter car parks	Location	Spaces
Hersham	Walton Park	131
Walton	Mayfield Road	186
Walton	Station Avenue	253
Weybridge	Heath North	118
Weybridge	Heath South	131

Location of council car parks

