

**BRIEFING PAPER
CITY CENTRE CAR PARKING NOVEMBER 2024**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report provides seeks to provide Scrutiny with an overview of the Councils current city centre Off Street car parking, looking at the availability and use, alongside opportunities to support new housing in the city centre. The report also sets out the current challenges with City Centre car parks and sets out the mitigation in response to these challenges.
- 1.2. This report focuses on the Councils Off Street car parks within the area of the City Centre, which includes Mutley Plain, Millbay and Bretonside.

2. PARKING PROVISION

- 2.1. The City Council has 19 public car parks within the city centre providing a total parking capacity of 3077 parking spaces (see appendix 1). There are 9 shorts stay car parks accounting for 397 parking spaces (13%) and 10 long stay car parks accounting for 2680 parking spaces (87%).
- 2.2. Most of the city centre car parking is provided across the five multi-storey car parks which account for 2365 parking spaces (or 77%) of all the Councils off street parking spaces.

3. PARKING UTILISATION

- 3.1. The utilisation of car parks varies, figure 1.2 sets out which car parks frequently experience parking demand greater than the availability of parking, which car parks may occasionally experience demand above availability and which car parks experience demand below the availability of parking.
- 3.2. It should be noted that there are very infrequent occasions whereby demand for parking is exceptionally high, such as when the city hosts the annual fireworks competition, where all car parks can achieve full occupancy. This period of exceptionally high demand does not represent 'normal' everyday levels of demand.

Figure 1.2 – Utilisation Summary

Utilisation	Car Parks
Demand regularly exceeds availability	Exchange Street, Guildhall and North Hill

Demand can exceed availability		Derry's Cross, Cornwall Street East, Cornwall Street West, and Mayflower House Court, Mutley Barracks
Demand lower than availability		Colin Campbell Court*, Courtney Street, Marks and Spencer, Mayflower East, Mayflower West, Napier Terrace, Plymouth City Market, Regent Street, St Andrews Street, Theatre Royal and Western Approach

4. CAR PARK CHALLENGES

4.1. The Council is committed to providing clean and safe parking, where motorists have a positive customer experience when visiting the city centre. The service faces some challenges with City Centre car parks, these include:

Quality and Investment

4.2. The Council maintains the safe operation of these car parks, with all car parks subject to inspections, planned and reactive maintenance. As with all buildings and structures works may be required to ensure such facilities can continue to operate for years to come. In 2023/24 works totalling £2M were completed across the multi-storey car parks, works which extended the life of the car parks for the next 15 to 20 years. Such works, whilst critically important to maintain the asset, are not always work that deliver cosmetic improvements more linked to raising customer experience. As such, there remain challenges around how we can deliver programmes of works specifically focused on raising quality and user experience.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Criminal Damage

4.3. A number of car parks have been subjected to levels of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Whilst these behaviours are because of a minority of individuals, the impact of such behaviours is significant, not just in terms of costs to effect repairs or cleansing, but reputationally if experienced by customers.

5. RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES

5.1. In response to these challenges the Council has a range of measures, these include:

- Options are being explored to consider works to further raise quality and user experience across city centre car parks.
- A multi-agency approach is being taken in response to the anti-social and criminal damage, calling upon the collaborative efforts and expertise of key partners, including the police, Safer Plymouth, Community Connections, Plymouth Against Retail Crime, Streets Services Teams, and Youth Services.

- Work is being undertaken to explore opportunities to improve and upgrade the existing CCTV across the car parks, as part of this work CCTV systems are currently being updated within the popular Western Approach car park. These works will help reassure visitors of a safe and secure parking experience.
- Lighting has been upgraded across a number of car parks as part of measures to create a safe and secure parking experience.
- Payment systems have been updated across all the car parks, providing customers with a much greater choice of payment options.
- Additional cleansing services have been introduced across the city centre car parks to respond to increased demands and to ensure that car parks can continue to be maintained to standard our customers should expect.
- Over four hundred extra wide parking bays have been installed across the city centre car parks over the last year, making parking easier and improving customer experience.

6. LOOKING FORWARD – FUTURE CHANGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1. Considering that demand for off street parking is consistently below the total availability off-street parking, there is clearly an opportunity to explore the use of car parks to support future housing developments. In doing so there are a number of considerations that present a basis for discussion and further work:

Future growth in parking demand

- 6.2. Modelling data derived from the Plymouth Highway Assignment Model (HAM3) projects future growth in journeys and demand for City Centre parking in Plymouth. This data and projections are to be reviewed in consideration to the latest growth models in helping to accurately determine the ability and extent to which City Centre car parks may be able to support future city centre housing development.

Car Dependency

- 6.3. Considering commitment to sustainable transport and climate change, it is reasonable to review the dependency of the car with some City Centre developments and opportunities for car free development.

Asset Life

- 6.4. Most of the City Centres parking capacity, and therein potential to support future housing developments, is within the City Centre multi-storey car parks. The recent £2M investment was focused on undertaking key works to maintain the operation of these car parks for the next 15-20 years. In the lifespan of housing this is a short timeline. As with any aging assets, there is the potential for the costs of maintaining such structures to increase and it is not possible to guarantee

that any, or all, of these car parks will be operation beyond the next 15 to 20 years.

7. SUMMARY

- 7.1. There is currently sufficient supply of off-street parking to meet current demand for parking in the city centre; however, modelling forecasts growth in journeys and demand for parking over time. Some further work is required to assess the level of support that parking can provide housing developments in the future, with consideration needed to ongoing use of the car and long-term viability of car parks to support developments.
- 7.2. Some of the City Centre car parks have been experiencing challenges with anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Measures have been implemented, which includes supporting vulnerable persons, to support managing these challenges; positive impacts have already been achieved in reducing these challenges.

Appendix I – City Centre Car Parking

Car Park	Surface / Multi-Storey	Parking Provision	Long Stay / Short Stay
Bretonside B	Surface	5	Short stay
Bretonside C	Surface	16	Short stay
Colin Campbell Court*	Surface	155	Short stay
Cornwall Street East	Surface	52	Short stay
Cornwall Street West	Surface	13	Short stay
Courtney Street	Surface	30	Short stay
Derry's Cross	Surface	71	Long stay
Exchange Street	Surface	18	Short stay
Guildhall	Surface	42	Long stay
Marks and Spencer	Surface	19	Short stay
Mayflower East	Multi-storey	292	Long stay
Mayflower House Court	Surface	75	Long stay
Mayflower West	Surface	81	Long stay
Napier Terrace	Multi-storey	299	Long stay
Mutley Barracks	Surface	24	Short Stay
North Hill	Surface	35	Long stay
Plymouth City Market	Surface	65	Short stay
Regent Street	Multi-storey	268	Long stay
St Andrews Street	Surface	11	Long stay
Theatre Royal	Multi-storey	505	Long stay
Western Approach	Multi-storey	1001	Long stay
Total		3077	

* Includes reduction to support city centre developments