



Ashburton District Parking Strategy

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The *Strategy*

Why is parking management important?

Public parking can be found across our district in a range of environments.

Our parking supply includes spaces that are marked with signage and road markings, but also unmarked spaces which can be found anywhere along roads where parking is not prohibited, for example on residential streets.

The public parking in our district is a shared resource that is available for everyone to use. However, the use of the parking supply varies, for example there is higher demand for parking in certain areas, such as town centres.

Management of our parking supply helps to make sure the parking supply is used as effectively as possible. This is important for the following reasons:

- It helps maintain the right balance of short and long-term parking. For example, by preventing long-term parking next to important destinations like shops so that space is available for short-term parking (customers).
- It keeps space free for those who need it most, for example for mobility parking, loading, coaches, taxis, and electric vehicles (at charging locations).
- It can encourage people to travel by other means if they are able to, for example by walking or cycling.



What does this strategy include?

This document sets out our approach to managing parking for motor vehicles and other vehicles (such as bicycles) in the district.

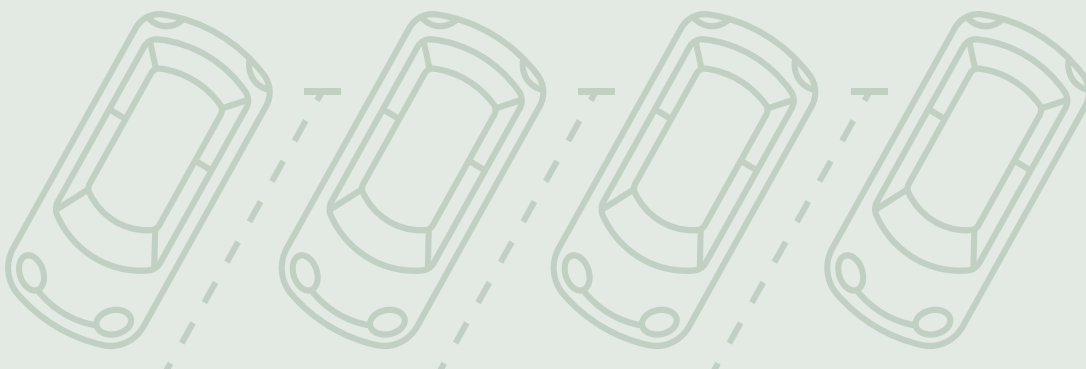
The strategy:

- Outlines what we are trying to achieve in managing the parking supply
- Summarises the interventions available to be used for customer, visitor, staff, and resident parking
- Puts forward a long-term plan for addressing known and anticipated car parking issues.

This strategy is designed to guide Council decision making on our parking supply. It is structured as follows:

- Strategy – outlines the approaches and objectives for our parking management
- Action Plan – explains how the objectives will be achieved

Though this is a district-wide strategy, many of the objectives will be most relevant to our larger towns. This is because the demand for parking is highest in these locations.



Why do we need a strategy?

The Strategy provides a framework for managing the parking supply so that it is used in a way that is efficient and effective for everyone.

This means balancing the needs of different users to meet their respective demands while also working towards the district's economic, social and environmental objectives.

Managing our district's parking supply requires regular consideration of how parking is being used and whether that use is best for the people who live and work here, and also visitors to the district.

The Parking Strategy for our district was last updated in 2011. Since that time, much has changed. Population growth has increased the demand for transport options in our town centres.

Government priorities have shifted to put greater emphasis on well-being and quality of life. And, with New Zealand declaring a climate emergency in 2020, we have a responsibility to encourage transport options with improved environmental outcomes. The new Strategy provides direction on how parking should be managed and what interventions can be used to encourage effective use of parking resources.



How has this strategy been prepared?

A review of relevant strategies and plans

The Parking Strategy needs to align with national, regional and local strategies and plans. This includes the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport, National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD), the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) that sets out regional land transport priorities, the Ashburton District Plan that provides the planning framework for our district and the Long-Term Plan. It also aligns with our other strategies, in particular the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

Alignment with best practice methods

To make sure we are establishing our Parking Strategy in accordance with current best practice, we have looked at the methods that are currently in use in New Zealand. This includes the National Parking Management Guidance published by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, which sets out best-practice management of public parking in New Zealand.

A review of current parking in our district and how it is used

We looked at the parking that is currently available in our district and how it is being used. For Ashburton Town Centre this involved site observations and surveys to tabulate parking spaces and measure how the parking is used.

Workshop with councillors

A workshop was held with councillors to determine the objectives for parking. Objectives are important as they provide the forward vision of what parking management should look like in our district.



What do we have now?

We have a range of township sizes and each has different levels of parking demand and supply.

For example, some demand can be seasonal such as in Methven where the ski season creates a higher demand than other times of the year. In the Ashburton town centre there is demand due to higher levels of employment and the retail and hospitality offerings for visitors, both local and out of town.

The towns and settlements have a combination of public and private car and bicycle parking. That parking is also made up of spaces dedicated to people with mobility issues or parents with babies, or certain uses such as loading.

None of the public parking in Ashburton is paid parking. It is free, but there are some time restrictions and overstaying these can result in a fine.





How do we allocate on-street parking space?

An On-Street Parking Space Prioritisation framework sets out which types of parking takes precedence in each type of area, in most cases.

This helps to guide decision-making. For example, on a shopping street, loading, short-term and mobility spaces take priority.

This framework also informs road space allocation where other kerb-side uses such as cycle ways are proposed adjacent to the kerb.

The framework for Ashburton is shown below, noting that some streets will have a mix of uses, so a specific allocation approach may be required.

COMMERCIAL TOWN CENTRES

Loading zones

Mobility parking

Taxi/ride share

Coach/bus parking

Short stay motorcycle

Short stay general

Long stay motorcycle

Long stay general

INDUSTRIAL

Loading zones

Short stay

Mobility

Taxi/ride share

Long stay

RESIDENTIAL

Car share

Short stay, such as school pick up/drop off

Loading zones, such as outside dairies

Mobility parking

Long stay



What do we have to think about?



Household and demographics change

Our district has been growing since the late 1990s and we expect this to continue. Our current estimated population of 35,400 is expected to reach 38,600 over the next ten years.

As a consequence of our increasing population, the number of households will also grow. The district currently has 15,190 households (2021) and this is projected to grow to 16,520 by 2031. The size of households is also changing, with the average household size projected to fall from 2.50 to 2.47 by 2031. This is an important change, as we need to ensure that our services can continue to be delivered efficiently throughout our district. Our existing infrastructure is being managed to address

growth factors, and any additional infrastructure necessary due to growth is funded by development contributions.

Our population is ageing. In both our historical and forecasted population growth, the biggest growth is seen in the 65+ age group. Currently, 18.4% of our district are over 65 years and this is projected to increase to 21.7% by 2048. Our median age is currently 38.8 years, slightly older than the national median of 37.4 years. An important consideration as we plan for the future is ensuring our facilities, services and infrastructure are appropriate to serve an ageing population.



Climate change, technology and the world of work

There is uncertainty over the future effects of responses to climate change, technology, and developments in the worlds of work and commerce – such as electric vehicles, increased working from home and greater volumes of online shopping.

While climate change challenges are more long term in nature, this does not mean they are less important or less urgent. To reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change we will need to rethink our travel. This may reduce the demand for parking but also change the nature of parking. For example, people may start to car share more; providing for car sharing parking would help encourage this. There is likely to be an increase in electric vehicles including e-bikes. This means we need to think about electric charging facilities.

Transport policy should reflect the context of a diverse range of communities and individuals. Some communities, especially rural communities, have and will continue to have a high dependence on vehicles for their mobility. Urban residents, however, have more options such walking and cycling due to shorter travel distances and this should be encouraged and supported.



Mode shift and variety of mobility devices

Our Ashburton Walking and Cycling Strategy aims to increase travel by active modes and will seek increased investments in active transport infrastructure and initiatives. A second bridge across the Ashburton River with appropriate walking, and particularly cycling, infrastructure will likely result in better uptake of active transport in the future in Ashburton. This will increase the level of bicycle parking needed, including at workplaces. The types of devices used for personal mobility are also evolving with electric scooters (known as micro-mobility devices), e-bikes and larger bicycles such as cargo bikes, now readily available and used in urban settings. Providing for these will also need consideration in terms of space and location.



Urban growth

Large areas of land in Ashburton have been rezoned for residential purposes. The District Plan also allows for increases in density in inner urban areas which will result in smaller residential sections and houses that do not have garages. This may reduce car ownership per household but could also place more pressure on space for parking on the street if there is not parking on the site.



Shift in parking demand as development occurs

Over time, towns change and evolve and this requires adaptive parking management. For example, the relocation of the Ashburton Library and Civic Centre from the west to the east of West Street may see a shift in where staff park. It also needs convenient customer parking through appropriate on street parking time restrictions.



Action *Plan*

What are our objectives?

We have five objectives that guide this strategy and future parking decisions.

A

Support placemaking, amenity and good urban design outcomes

When used effectively, parking management can help to make our town centres safer, more vibrant, sustainable and equitable. This makes our town centres places where people like to spend time. For example, this means supporting our new streetscape upgrades in the Ashburton town centre with parking management that complements the high-quality urban environment we have provided.



B**Support the economic development of town centres**

Managing parking appropriately can help to improve the local economy. This can be done by prioritising parking spaces in town centres for uses that help businesses, like short-term parking and loading, while prioritising quieter and more appropriate locations for long-term parking or camper vans to help bring in tourists. Parking spaces can also be flexible over time for parking or uses such as outdoor dining if a café is using the building but may convert back to a car park if the café moves.

**C****Support environmental outcomes**

Parking needs to be managed in a way that moves us towards achieving a balanced and sustainable environment. We can do this by providing dedicated parking for emerging technologies and schemes, such as electric vehicles and car sharing, and encouraging more environmentally friendly forms of transport like walking and cycling/micro-mobility.



D Support the Walking and Cycling Strategy

The methods we use to manage parking will have an impact on walking and cycling. This strategy needs to be aligned with our Walking and Cycling Strategy and help to accomplish its objectives. This means making bicycle parking available near to key destinations; and prioritising street space for walking and cycling rather than parking on key walking and cycling routes.



E Ensure parking is managed for the context

Parking needs to be managed in a way that makes sense for our district and the localities within it. Not all places are the same and our strategy needs to be tailored for our people. This means parking restrictions are appropriate for the level of parking demand; and enforcement of parking restrictions is effective and affordable to the Council. This also could involve technology such as parking space sensors and associated Apps.





What are the potential methods?

District Plan policies

District Plan parking policies set out the outcomes we are trying to achieve in terms of parking. Because projects such as new streets and land developments need to align with the District Plan, setting policies that align with this strategy will make sure future projects help to achieve its objectives.

District Plan rules

The District Plan will no longer require a minimum number of car parks for a development. This removal of ‘minimums’ was a requirement of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. However, the rules can require that a developer outlines how parking will be addressed for the development through an Integrated Transport Assessment. The rules can also set out the design requirements and what level of mobility and bicycle parking is provided.



Develop Parking Management Plans (PMPs)

Parking Management Plans (PMPs) set out the appropriate interventions/measures that will be used to manage parking in specific areas and how a specific area will meet the objectives of this Parking Strategy. We will develop plans for each of our towns and larger settlements. The first plan to be prepared will be for the Ashburton town centre.

The Parking Management Plan for each town or settlement will address the specific situation in that location. These plans will target known problems using the interventions described in the action plan while helping to meet the overall plan objectives. The same interventions won't necessarily apply in every town or settlement.

The Parking Management Plan for each town or settlement will include:

- An assessment of current parking patterns. For instance, how much parking there is, how it is used and when it is most busy.
- An assessment of how parking supply and demand is likely to change in the future, for example as a result of new developments and Council projects.
- Recommended short-, medium- and long-term parking management measures.

Time restrictions

Setting time restrictions on parking spaces ensures appropriate turnover. Time restrictions will be shorter when there is a lot of demand to park in a certain place for short-term visits, such as outside shops. Longer time restrictions might be useful where recreational activities occur such as a gym. This ensures that more people get a chance to use the parking spaces appropriately. If time restrictions are set too long, not enough people will get to use them. If they are set too short, we will be forcing people to move their car - even if the space isn't needed by someone else.



Electric vehicle charging

Providing parking spaces for alternative technologies helps to encourage their adoption. By providing electric vehicle charging spaces we can support their uptake. This will require working with the sectors best placed to provide the charging infrastructure.

The location of charging stations and associated parking spaces needs to consider where the need is most likely. Currently there are charging stations in the West Street car park, in Rakaia adjacent to the Salmon site and public toilets, and in Methven at the I-Hub.



Travel plans

A travel plan is a package of actions designed by a workplace, school or other organisation to encourage safe, healthy and sustainable travel options. These plans have benefits to organisations that include: reduced travel costs for businesses, reduced pressure on business car parking space, improved health and fewer sick days for staff who choose to cycle or walk, and a more motivated workforce.

The plan involves a survey of how staff travel to work, developing and implementing actions to encourage and support staff to walk, cycle, use public transport or carpool, and checking the progress towards the benefits the travel plan aims to achieve.

Bicycle and micro-mobility parking

Providing good quality bicycle parking at both public and private destinations is important to support cycling as a mode of transport. The Walking and Cycling Strategy includes an action to identify where public cycle parking is needed. Private cycle parking is encouraged through the District Plan requirements.

Bicycle parking is similar to car parking in that some parking is short-term and some is all day. All day parking for bicycles could include secure bike cages in public car park areas. Consideration of parking for other micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters will also be important. This needs to consider ways to prevent parked devices blocking the footpath.





Carpooling and car share schemes

Providing car-pooling spaces and car sharing spaces (for formal vehicle sharing schemes) in Council car parks and on streets, can increase the number of people using these travel options. We would also promote the installation of these spaces in private parking areas through our District Plan policies and rules.



Mobility parking policy

Council already has a Mobility Parking Policy. The policy outlines that Council provides designated mobility parking spaces in various locations throughout the district. Each request for a mobility parking space is considered and approved by Council on a case-by-case basis.

It also describes where mobility permit holders are entitled to the parking concessions when parking in a standard time-limited or metered/sensored space. As per the Action Plan, it is proposed that the policy is extended to include an over 80 years old Parking Exemption. An exemption card would be issued for display in the car and entitles holders to the same parking privileges as Mobility Card holders.

How will the objectives be achieved?

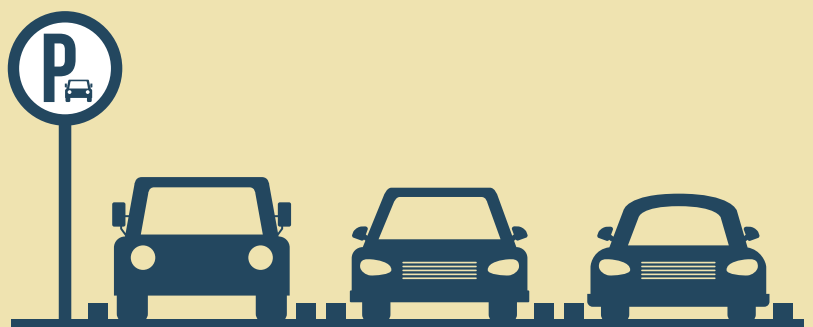
The Action Plan

To achieve these objectives, a number of possible interventions (methods) have been identified. Some actions overlap as they help meet more than one objective.

	OBJECTIVE	INTERVENTIONS (METHODS)
A	Support placemaking, amenity and good urban design outcomes	1. Implement District Plan Policies that highlight the impacts of providing inappropriate levels of parking, both too little and too much parking
		2. Implement District Plan Policies and Rules for town centres to ensure appropriate development outcomes and the relationship with parking (e.g. PC4)
		3. Require Integrated Transport Assessments for development of certain scales/activities showing how parking will be managed
		4. Implement District Plan Policies and Rules, and design guidelines for new streets, providing for good parking design, particularly in town centres
		5. Use time restrictions on parking spaces that ensure appropriate turnover to support the surrounding business needs
B	Support the economic development of town centres	1. Develop Parking Management Plans (PMPs) for towns and larger settlements (initially Ashburton town centre, then others to follow)
		2. Provide an appropriate level of off-street parking (long stay visitors)
		3. Use enforcement to ensure appropriate turnover and use of parking spaces occurring
		4. Update the Mobility Parking policy to include age-related parking (over 80 years)

C	Support environmental outcomes	1.	Facilitate the provision of EV charging spaces, carpooling spaces, car sharing spaces in Council car parks/streets and promote these in private parking areas through District Plan policies
		2.	Provide bicycle and motorcycle parking on streets and in Council car parks
		3.	Implement District Plan requirements for bicycle parking
		4.	Promote the development of Travel Plans for business and organisations to help reduce demand for parking.
D	Support the Walking and Cycling Strategy	1.	Provide bicycle parking on streets and in Council car parks
		2.	Implement District Plan requirements for bicycle parking supply and design
E	Ensure parking is managed appropriately for the context	1.	Continue to operate an appropriate enforcement funding model
		2.	Monitor parking demand and regularly review restrictions as well as potential future pricing models
		3.	Support any new Council off-street parking with assessments of demand/need and cost analysis
		4.	Implement monitoring and enforcement systems to ensure that parking is responsive to changes in demand





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Ashburton
DISTRICT COUNCIL