Dacorum Borough Council: Proposed Parking Solutions Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document sets out a proposed policy, decision-making toolkit and prioritisation process to give a strategic approach to dealing with requests for Parking Solutions. In particular, it sets out how Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) will get the best use out of the budget allocated for this purpose, by:

- Selecting locations that are suitable, using a transparent and consistent process that supports the council's wider policy ambitions
- Prioritising eligible schemes based on need, within the available budget

1.2 What is Parking Solutions and why do people request it?

Parking Solutions includes amongst other things strengthening or paving areas of highway verges or other green space that are either:

- currently informally used for parking motor vehicles, and this needs to be formalised and accommodated (eg to prevent damage to the surface) rather than other solutions such as restricting parking
- not currently used in this way, but could be, in order to address other problems such as shortage of parking supply or obstructive parking

Depending on the situation, it may range from simply installing cellular, permeable paving (such as products involving grassy areas within a concrete grid system) to making formal, paved parking areas.

Requests for Parking Solutions may be prompted by a range of factors, such as concerns over:

- Damage to grass surfaces, adversely affecting the quality of the public realm
- Shortage of parking supply
- Availability of locations for loading and servicing commercial premises
- Obstructive parking or loading

1.3 Why do we need this policy document?

Requests for Parking Solutions are made from time to time. DBC has an allocated budget for Parking Solutions in the financial years 2024/25 to 2026/27. The requests need to be

considered appropriately and consistently, and to be prioritised to make the best use of the available budget, and in a way that supports wider policy objectives. This document sets out how DBC will achieve this.

1.4 Is this a new policy?

Dacorum does not currently have an active policy in this area.

In 2011-12 a previous Verge Hardening Project focused on areas of residential parking stress, and produced a set of prioritisation criteria and delivery approach for Parking Solutions in response. That project essentially covered only green amenity space in housing areas.

2 Responsibilities

Highways: although Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is the local highway authority, HCC has delegated the function of Parking Authority to the Borough and District Councils under agency agreements. DBC is therefore responsible for on-street parking within the district. The council operates residents' parking schemes; promotes, determines and implements Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for the purpose of parking management; and enforces parking restrictions. Parking restrictions for the purpose of ensuring safe and free flow of traffic are, however, normally implemented by HCC.

Thus DBC takes the lead on managing parking on the highway, but needs to go through HCC to implement any physical changes such as verge-hardening. DBC designs the proposed schemes, and consults on the changes. HCC will look to ensure that the proposal is safe and the TRO is correct.

Works on highways (including highway verges) can be undertaken under highway law using permitted development powers, and therefore generally do not need planning permission.

Other land: Away from highways, parking or other use of land is the owner or occupier's responsibility subject to planning law and other controls. DBC owns some land, particularly amenity areas (sometimes known as 'amenity greens' or 'green space') in residential areas. This policy therefore also applies to how DBC will look at Parking Solutions on land that it owns. Parking Solutions in these situations will generally need planning permission, but there may be exceptions that can be done under permitted development powers.

Whether a piece of land is part of the highway or not is often, but not always, clear on the ground. Sometimes the records (highway register) need to be consulted to identify this in the first instance. It will usually need to be confirmed at the feasibility study stage in any case. Note that some roads have not been adopted as highway and therefore remain, in effect, as private land.

3 Policy context

This policy aims to reflect and support wider relevant DBC and HCC policies. Appendix A1 summarises the existing policies, at the time of writing, that are *particularly* relevant to this policy. It is not an exhaustive list.

The wider policies evolve over time. This policy should therefore be seen in the light of the policies that exist at the time of considering a particular request. Appendix A2 summarises some currently known areas of relevant emerging policy.

There is a wide range of relevant policy goals, including maintaining and enhancing environmental quality, ensuring safety and good transport access for all users, and working towards net zero. Parking policy reflects these and, in particular, seeks to find the right balance between meeting parking demand and supporting travel behaviour change, taking account of the characteristics of the location. The Parking Solutions Policy will need to reflect and balance all these factors.

There are also technical policies that set out where parking (and hence potentially verge hardening) may or may not be appropriate. Finally, Parking Solutions offers potential synergies with the installation of electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs) to enable the transition to electric mobility, and both DBC and Hertfordshire have strategies for where these installations are to be prioritised.

The decision-making factors for Parking Solutions, set out in steps 1 to 5 of the process below, aim to reflect these policy considerations and to allow for situations where there are trade-offs between potentially competing objectives.

4 Budgetary context

A total budget of around £1.2 million has been allocated for Parking Solutions, split across the financial years 2024/25 through to 2026/27.

At the time of developing this policy, there are more than 80 existing requests that will need to be considered, and prioritised if accepted, once the policy is agreed. Further requests are likely to continue to be made. It is therefore unlikely to be possible to accommodate all requests. This makes it important to prioritise the requests, irrespective of whether they are existing or future ones.

5 Principles and scope of policy

5.1 Principles behind the policy

Overall the policy aims to secure best use of the available budget for Parking Solutions, in a way that is most cost-effective not only for solving the specific issues identified in requests but also in supporting DBC's overall aspirations and goals for the borough.

To this end, the principles behind the policy are:

- Requests for Parking Solutions should be dealt with appropriately and consistently, following a defined process.
- The process should allow for existing requests to be considered as well as new requests that come in over time.

- Spend should be on the basis of need and cost-effectiveness within the available budget, not first-come-first-served or 'who shouts loudest'. This involves selecting and prioritising appropriate locations as part of the process.
- It should be possible to prioritise the most promising sites easily and quickly for feasibility study, while recognising that more detailed investigation will provide firmer information on the viability of any particular location.
- The policy and prioritisation aim to balance the (sometimes competing) goals of meeting parking needs, maintaining and enhancing environmental quality, and ensuring safety and transport access for all users.
- It should also reflect not only the specific needs and issues at that location but also DBC's wider aspirations and goals for the community, such as net zero goals and supporting travel behaviour change. Again an appropriate balance is required.
- Parking Solutions should be pursued if it is the right solution to the identified parking or environmental problems at a particular location. If another solution is preferable at that location (such as measures to restrict rather than accommodate parking), this should be pursued instead. In particular, commuter parking demand is generally better managed by other approaches such as parking controls or travel demand management measures, particularly in the policy context of seeking to nudge-down commuter travel by car.
- Additional spaces created by through this policy will normally be managed as part of the overall parking supply in that location. They will not be reserved for individual users. As part of the management of the parking in an area, existing and new verge-hardening spaces may be designated (eg for loading or blue badge holders) if that is required. If nearby spaces are charged (e.g. as part of a pay-and-display scheme or resident-only parking zone), the new spaces will normally be charged as well.

5.2 What does this policy cover?

This policy document covers DBC's process and decision-making approach for dealing with requests for Parking Solutions on:

- highway land within the DBC area
- open land owned by DBC (whether in residential or non-residential areas)

up to the point where a location is taken forward for a feasibility study.

5.3 What does it not cover?

It does not cover:

- The feasibility study stage itself or the subsequent stages towards potential delivery.
- DBC's approach to pavement parking (that is, cars parked wholly or partly on footways). This is a separate issue and is also subject to potential legislative change following a government consultation in 2020. However, as described in step 4

(section 11), where the presence and impact of pavement parking is part of the context for a particular request, this will be taken into account. For example, the presence of pavement parking may be an indicator of parking stress.

- DBC's wider approach to parking for disabled people (blue badge parking), cycle parking, micromobility, off-street car parks or dedicated lorry parking. These too are separate issues. However, where they are relevant to a particular request as part of the problem or a potential part of the scheme, they will be taken into account and may form part of the management or designation of spaces within the overall area.
- Locations where landowners other than DBC are proposing Parking Solutions on their own land.
- Locations that require land owned by private landowners. These involve a more complicated process including landowner negotiation and therefore, even if pursued, would need to be progressed separately. Note that unadopted roads (ie roads that have not been adopted as public highway) come under this category. However, locations that require land owned by other public sector bodies (such as HCC non-highway land) may be considered.
- Locations that require existing developed or paved land, such as re-purposing existing car parks or garages.
- Parking provision for (or anticipated demand arising from) planned developments; this is covered in planning policy. Displacement of existing resident parking may be considered where other criteria are relevant
- Parking provision for (or anticipated demand arising from) commuters. This is covered separately in transport and planning policies, and (as described in section 5.1) verge-hardening is generally not an appropriate solution to this demand.
- Issues arising from school pick-up and drop-off. This is better addressed in a holistic manner taking account of safety and wider transport policy goals.
- Over-running of verges by larger vehicles, where carriageway geometry is the underlying issue. For example, if lorries are routinely running over verges at a tight corner, this is a highway design matter rather than a parking matter. However, if they are doing so because of obstructive parking, this would be within the scope of this policy.
- Installation of electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs). There is a separate strategy for this. However, where there is potential for installing EVCPs as part of the scheme, and this is consistent with the EVCP strategy, they may be included as part of the scheme design and implementation.

It reflects current DBC policies (as at spring 2024) and the available budget up to 2026/27. The underlying principles and process will, however, remain applicable even if adopted policies and budget levels change. Implementation can therefore be adapted accordingly.

6 Overview of decision-making process

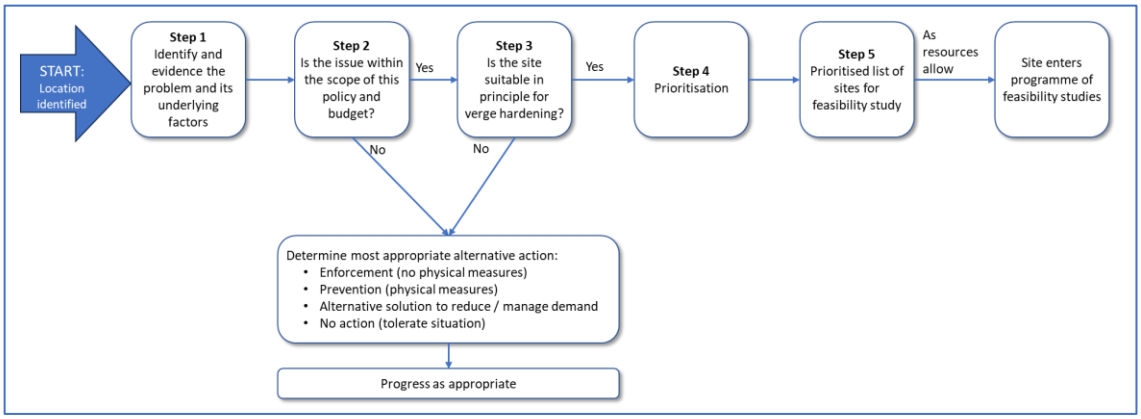
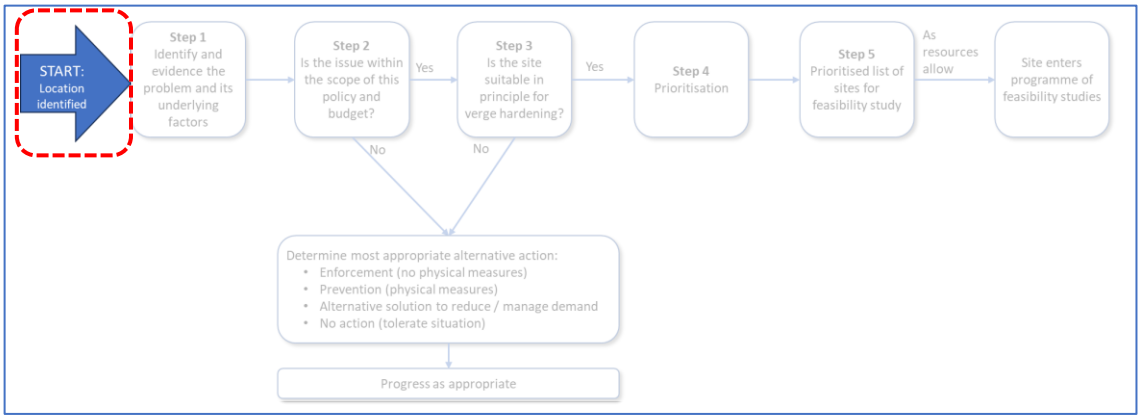


Figure 1: Overview of decision-making process

Figure 1 summarises the decision-making process. Each step shown in the process is covered in the following sections of this policy:

- The process starts when a potential location is identified through a request to the council (section 7)
- Step 1: Identify and evidence the problem and its underlying factors (section 8)
- Step 2: Is the issue within the scope of this policy and budget? (section 9)
- Step 3: Is the site suitable in principle for Parking Solutions (section 10)
- Step 4: The prioritisation process (section 11)
- Step 5: The location takes its place in the prioritised list of sites (section 12)
- Sites in the list are taken, in priority order, to the feasibility stage. Section 13 provides further information on what happens from here on.
- If the identified issue is outside the scope of this policy and budget, or if the site is unsuitable for Parking Solutions, the most appropriate alternative action will be determined (section 14).

7 Identifying potential locations



7.1 Who can make a request?

A request to consider Parking Solutions at a particular location can come from anyone, such as residents, businesses, Elected Members, DBC departments, emergency services or community groups.

7.2 How is a request made?

There is no set format for making a request, but ideally it should include:

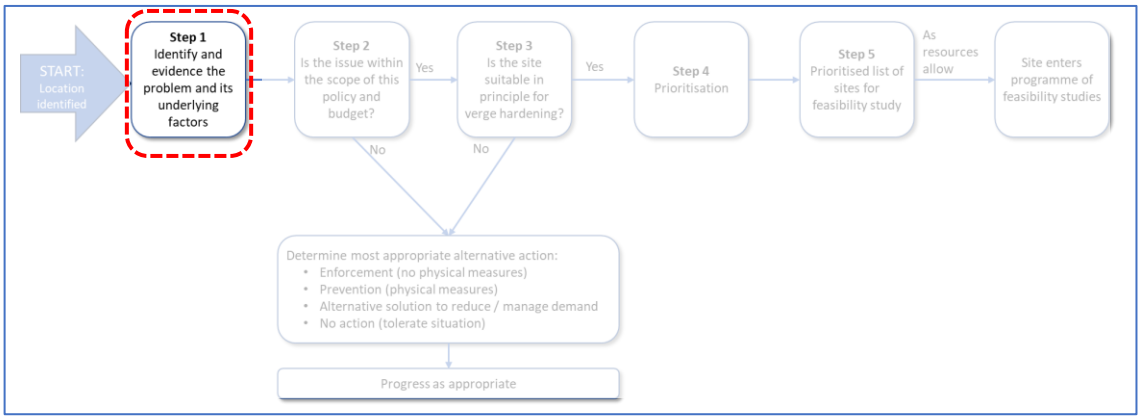
- The specific location of concern
- The basic nature of the apparent problem, with evidence where possible (eg pictures showing the damage occurring to the surface, localised congestion around the site, obstructing emergency access)
- Any other information that will help DBC identify and evaluate the problem (eg if it occurs primarily at night or on event days, any evidence as to where parking demand is coming from, e.g. residents, commuters, customers etc)
- Who to contact if further information is required (eg contact details of the person/organisation making the request)

Specific evidence such as photographs is not necessarily required at this stage, but if available it may be helpful to include it.

A form will be provided on DBC's website and people will normally be directed to this form to make a request.

DBC officers will then deal with the request in-line with the rest of the process as set out below.

8 Step 1: Identify and evidence the problem and its underlying factors



In the first step, officers will establish an understanding of the problem and any underlying factors, and gather appropriate evidence if required. The aim of this stage is both to understand the situation and to gather information that helps make the decisions in the later stages.

Key questions at this stage include:

- What problem(s) are being caused? To whom?
- How often, and at what times of the day / week, does the problem occur?
- How serious or urgent is the problem?
- What is the nature and scale of the parking demand – eg residents, commuters, business workers, visitors/customers, school run, special events?
- Are there any equalities issues – e.g. obstruction of footways or dropped kerbs, or a request for a disabled bay?
- Is this a standalone location, or does it need to be considered in a wider context? For example, where there are similar requests or issues along an entire street or in a group of neighbouring streets, a multi-street approach may be needed.
- What potential sites are available? What are their characteristics, opportunities and constraints? For council-owned land, what does the Green Spaces Audit[1] say about these sites?
- What is the wider context of the location? What other existing or potential parking areas are available? Is there an underlying issue causing parking pressure, that might need to be addressed (e.g. commuters)?
- What is the planning context for the location? In particular, are there any recent or forthcoming developments with parking or other transport-related conditions (eg limits on site parking availability) that have a bearing on the situation?

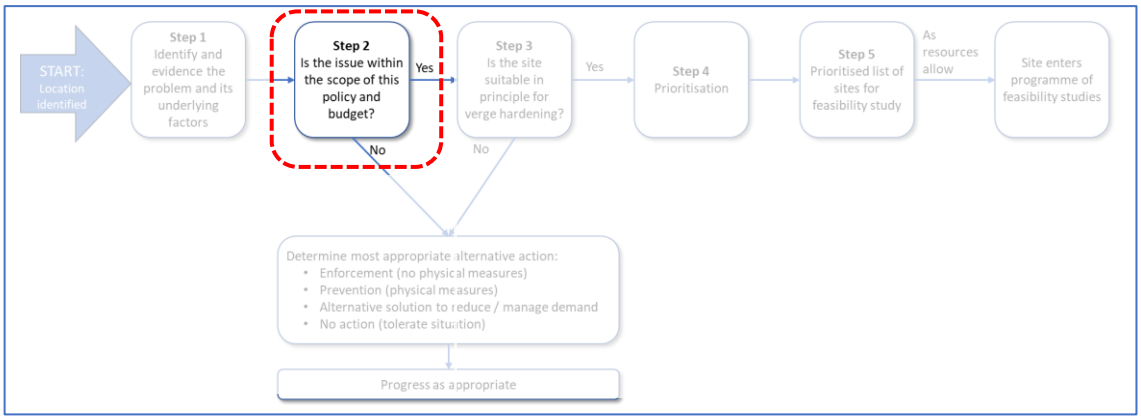
[1] The council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Strategy commits to carrying out a 'Green Spaces Audit' for all council-owned land

- Is there a need for EVCP installation in this location, and if so, would Parking Solutions help (eg by opening up locations that would not otherwise have potential for EVCPs)?
- Are there any other potential synergies between Parking Solutions and other goals or needs in this location?

Depending on the initial information, officers may need, for example, to:

- Make a site visit
- Seek comments from ward councillors
- Seek comments from other DBC or HCC teams (eg waste services, Clean Safe and Green, housing, HCC highways)
- Seek comments from the emergency services (for example, if fire access is a potential concern)
- Seek comments from other third parties (for example, if bus access is a concern)

9 Step 2: Is the issue within the scope of this policy and budget?



The issue will normally be considered to be within the scope of this policy and budget if *all* of the following apply:

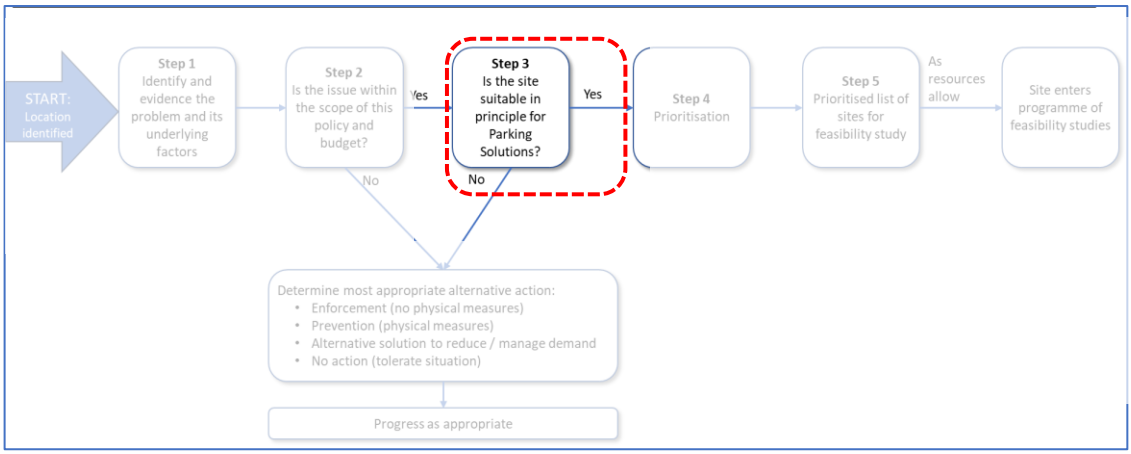
- The location of the problem is within the DBC area
- The problem or potential solution relates primarily to motor vehicle parking on highway verges or green space (see section 5.3 for examples of situations outside this scope). This could be where there is currently:
    - Parking on verges or green space, or
    - Inappropriate parking in other locations on-street or off-street, where verges or green space could be used as a solution
- The problem is not primarily related to commuter parking or school pick-up / drop-off (see section 5.3).
- The request is for Parking Solutions (defined in section 1.2).

- There is highway verge or open land owned by DBC that is potentially available (see section 5.2 for examples of land that is out of scope). This may include, but is not limited to, the specific places where the parking currently occurs.
- The request is a new one or reflects materially changed circumstances since a previous request in the same location was dealt with. (In other words, duplicate/repeat requests are out of scope unless circumstances have changed significantly since the previous time.)

If considered to be within scope, the request will be taken forward to step 3.

If not, the most appropriate alternative action will be determined (see section 14).

10 Step 3: Is the site suitable in principle for Parking Solutions?



Step 3 is to establish whether the site is suitable in principle for Parking Solutions. It will be normally be considered suitable if **all** of the following apply.

a) There are **no spare spaces available nearby**. Spaces within 100m by foot will normally be considered as 'nearby', subject to any severance and accessibility considerations. They will be considered to be 'available' if they are regularly unoccupied and people who park on the verge could normally park there instead (for free or with a charge) but choose not to

> *For example, if there is usually on-street space available around the corner within 100m, the site would be considered unsuitable in principle. If there is space available 50m away but this is on the opposite side of a dual carriageway with no pedestrian crossing, this would not count as 'nearby'.*

b) The **potential number of extra spaces** will make at least a significant contribution to addressing the problem and is likely to be cost-effective to deliver.

For example, a very small highway verge area that would only offer one extra space may be suitable for occasional use for brief stops, but would not be suitable where multiple vehicles are regularly parked.

c) Its **existing use and amenity value** as green space or for active travel is limited.

For example, converting a major part of a green space regularly used for informal recreation and dog-walking, or one that makes an important contribution to an area's character, is unlikely to be suitable. A poorly-used, rutted space of low environmental quality is more likely to be suitable.

d) The site is not **earmarked or under active consideration for other uses**.

For example, a site on housing amenity land that is being considered or reserved for future housing infill is unlikely to be suitable.

e) The **environmental impacts** are likely to be acceptable or can be made acceptable through a proportionate level of mitigation.

For example, a site that involves felling mature trees that are not near the end of their life, or paving a verge that is being actively managed for biodiversity, is unlikely to be suitable.

f) The **safety and security impacts** are likely to be acceptable or can be made acceptable through a proportionate level of mitigation.

For example, a site that requires vehicles to cross a heavily-used footway very near a school, or that is within a visibility splay at a junction, is unlikely to be suitable.

g) The site is likely to be **deliverable** cost-effectively, bearing in mind the available budget and its timescales.

For example, a site that involves moving statutory undertakers' plant, or substantial civil engineering structures, is unlikely to be suitable.

h) Parking Solutions in this location would **be a solution**, rather than simply moving or exacerbating an underlying problem.

For example, verge hardening is unlikely to be a solution to parking associated with antisocial behaviour such as 'car meets' - which is better tackled by addressing the behaviour or by restricting this parking.

i) Use of the site **would not undermine nearby planning conditions or wider policies and strategies.**

Some key examples of where this might be the case are given in Table 1 on page 13.

j) Parking Solutions under this policy is the **most appropriate solution** in this location. There is no practical alternative that is more effective or more in line with policy, that should be pursued in the first instance.

For example, where the problem relates to special events on certain days, the site is unlikely to be suitable. Event traffic management measures should be considered instead.

As another example, parking on a particular verge involves lorries loading/unloading or short-stay visitor parking. There is under-used residential permit parking nearby. DBC would normally seek first to reallocate some of the residential parking space to these other uses, and would come back to verge hardening if this did not prove practical.

As another example, there is residential parking pressure but an office block around the corner has its own car park dedicated to employee parking that is never full and is accessed directly off the street. DBC would normally seek first to engage with the owner to see if they will offer spaces to residents (with or without charge), and would come back to verge hardening if this was not successful.

k) There are no **other, better sites nearby that should be taken forward instead.** 'Better' in this instance means a site that would serve the same or similar demand but would have less impact or would be easier to deliver. Alternative sites within 100m by foot will normally be considered as 'nearby', subject to any severance and accessibility considerations. This criterion aims to ensure that within a particular location the best site is taken forward, even if it is not the exact site that was originally suggested. It does not prevent two or more sites from being taken forward together if both sites are needed to address the problem.

For example, verge hardening has been requested on a green space outside some homes. It meets all the other criteria. However, there is an alternative site nearby that also meets the criteria and would accommodate a similar number of vehicles but would have less conflict with pedestrian movements. This alternative site will be taken forward instead.

This step is an initial decision aimed at identifying the sites that are likely to be suitable. It will not be an exhaustive investigation. The factors listed above will be considered in more detail at the feasibility study stage if the site is taken forward to that point. The examples given with each factor are illustrative and do not represent the full range of considerations.

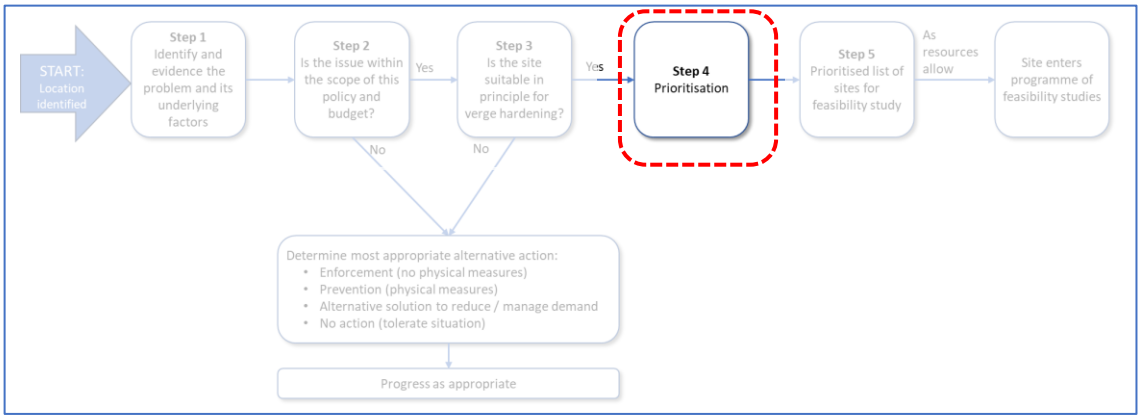
If the site is considered to be suitable in principle, the request will be taken forward to step 4. If a better site (that is also suitable in principle) is identified nearby, that site will be taken forward to step 4 instead (see criterion k).

If not, the most appropriate alternative action will be determined (see section 14).

Table 1: Examples of where Parking Solutions might undermine planning conditions or wider policies

Example situation	Typical decision and rationale
The parking demand is wholly or mainly from a recent development where the level or use of parking was determined in the planning process. *For example, a standalone development with little or no other parking demand in the area.*	Parking Solutions will not normally be undertaken. This is because accommodating excess parking in this way could undermine planning policy or set undesirable precedents. Alternative solutions should be considered in the first instance. DBC may also seek to restrict parking on the verge (see section 14).
The parking demand is from a mixture of recent development (as above) and historic, long-established uses. *For example, a mixed area of long-established residential uses and more recent infill development.*	Parking Solutions will not normally be undertaken as a standalone solution. This is because accommodating excess parking from the recent development in this way would undermine the intent of the planning consent and the underlying policy. Alternative solutions should be considered in the first instance that provide suitable parking for residents without undermining the planning consent. For example, a controlled parking zone could be considered. DBC may also seek to restrict parking on the verge (see section 14).
The location (or the sites generating the parking demand in this location) is/are in accessibility zone 1 or 2 as set out in the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (see section 3 above)	Parking Solutions is unlikely to be acceptable. This reflects the SPD's policy to encourage or 'nudge' a gradual downward trend in car ownership and use in the most accessible locations.
This table is not an exhaustive list but illustrates some key examples. It is based on current planning policies at the time of writing. Any future changes in planning policy may be reflected in changes to this Parking Solutions policy.	

11 Step 4: Prioritisation



Step 4 is to assess the priority which this location should have, compared to other locations which have reached this stage. This will be done by scoring the location against the criteria in Table 2 below. The site's total score will determine its place in the 'queue' of sites for investigation (see step 5).

Again, this step is an initial assessment aimed at prioritising the order in which sites are taken to feasibility stage. It is not an exhaustive investigation. The factors listed below will be considered in more detail at the feasibility study stage if the site is taken forward to that point.

As described in step 1 (section 8), some locations may need a multi-street approach. If so, the scoring would be done on that multi-street basis.

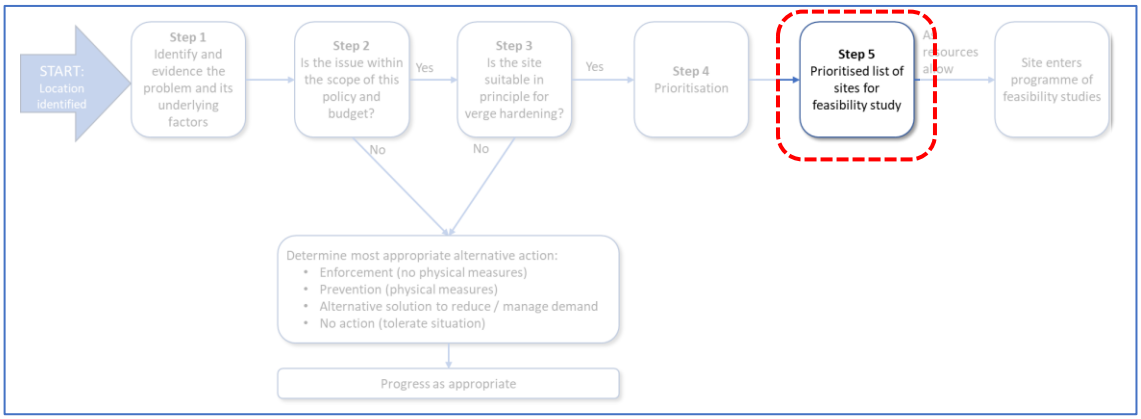
Table 2: Prioritisation criteria

Criterion	**Possible scores and typical situations receiving that score**	**Max available score**
What is the level of parking stress? In particular, how frequent and how serious is any environmental damage, obstruction, congestion or safety issue that it causes? The issues could occur on carriageways, footways, verges and/or private land.	0 – Only low-volume and occasional parking on the verge (eg up to one vehicle at certain times of day). Little or no environmental damage, obstruction or safety impact 1 – Low volumes and/or more-than occasional parking, causing minor environmental damage or obstruction 2 – More significant volumes and more often, perhaps at most times or certain regular times on most days, causing frequent delays or congestion and / or locally significant environmental damage and/or threatening the amenity value of open space or viability of local businesses, but not affecting emergency access 3 – Parking at most times on most days, causing frequent obstruction affecting emergency access or bus access, and/or a significant safety issue	3

Criterion	Possible scores and typical situations receiving that score	Max available score
Are there spare spaces available nearby that people could use but are choosing not to?	0 – There are spaces easily available (normally within 100m on foot) that people could use but are choosing not to, for convenience and/or price. 1 – There are spaces available in the 100-250m range (by foot) that people could use but are choosing not to, for convenience and/or price. 2 – There are no spare spaces available within a reasonable distance	2
How much parking space is there already, compared to what would be expected in this type of area?	0 – The existing level of spaces per unit of development in the immediate area is considerably above what would be applied to new developments under current parking policy. 1 – The existing level of spaces unit of development in the immediate area is broadly in line with (+/- 20%) what would be applied to new developments under current parking policy. 2 – The existing level of spaces per unit of development in the immediate area is considerably below what would be applied to new developments under current parking policy.	2
What will the environmental impact be? (Other than carbon impacts, which are scored in their own right – see below)	0 - There is likely to be locally-substantial negative environmental impact (the site was only just acceptable in principle in environmental terms) 1 – There is likely to be a minor negative environmental impact 2 – The environmental impact is likely to be broadly neutral, assuming reasonable design and appropriate mitigation measures 3 – The environmental impact is likely to be positive – for example, the site is currently unsightly or rutted and detracts from the street scene, or the current situation is threatening the amenity value of open space	3
How deliverable is the location? Considering highway access, consents, other technical issues, and likely scale of cost. Construction, operation and maintenance should all be considered. Potential unintended consequences, such as attracting parking from elsewhere, should also be considered.	0 - Difficult or expensive to deliver for substantial reasons (the site was only just acceptable in principle in this respect) 1 – Significant complexities, risks or site-specific costs for construction or maintenance 2 – Minor complexities or risks but still relatively deliverable and maintainable 3 - Very straightforward site with few constraints and not requiring planning consent (eg highway verge). Very little incremental maintenance cost	3

Criterion	Possible scores and typical situations receiving that score	Max available score
What is the likely level of public and stakeholder support for this location? (Separate from the technical deliverability of securing consents which is covered above)	0 – Likely to be widely opposed. Perhaps substantial reputational risk 1 – Likely to divide opinion 2 – Likely to be broadly supported, although there may be concerns or queries about particular aspects 3 - Likely to be widely supported. Few or no likely concerns from stakeholders or public.	3
Does the site have potential for alternative uses in the future?	0 – A large site with clear potential for alternative amenity or development uses in the future (whether or not a particular use is currently identified). It would not be appropriate to sterilize this site with parking. 1 – There is some potential for alternative uses, such as local amenity features, but parking would also be a broadly reasonable use. 2 – There is little or no prospect of alternative uses, and/or there is other available space nearby for any such uses	2
Does the site support an identified EV charging need? Does it have the potential to produce, or avoid, 'footway clutter' from EVCPs? Are there already some EVCPs nearby?	0 – There is no identified need for additional EV charging in this location, and/or the location is not practical for EV charging 1 – The location has some potential for additional EV charging but is not in an area of high priority for this or already has some EVCPs nearby; and/or there are uncertainties about its feasibility from the EVCP point of view 2 – The location is an area of high priority for EV charging (see DBC policy) and there are no or insufficient EVCPs already, the verge hardening 'unlocks' EVCP installation that would not otherwise take place or would be less effective, and the location is feasible from the EVCP point of view.	2
What is the likely whole-life carbon impact of verge-hardening here?	0 – The location will be carbon-intensive (relative to other Parking Solutions schemes) - eg by requiring more paving material than usual 1 – The location is typical in this respect 2 – The location will have low carbon intensity (relative to other verge-hardening schemes) – eg by requiring less paving material than usual	2
Does the site support local shops and businesses?	0 – The site does not support any local shops and businesses – eg it is entirely residential 1 – The site has some support for local shops and businesses – eg serving 1-2 premises in an otherwise residential area 2 – The location particularly supports local shops and businesses particularly where it causes displacement and people are discouraged due to availability – eg by addressing a problem in a shopping parade	2

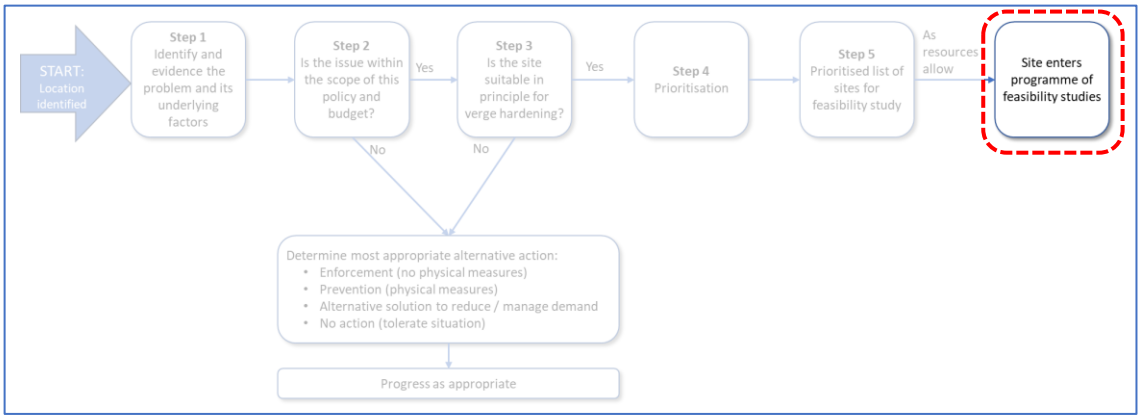
12 Step 5: Prioritised list of sites for feasibility study



As described under step 4, the score received in the prioritisation exercise will determine the site's place in the prioritised list of sites for feasibility study. Locations will be sent to HCC for feasibility study, as resources allow, in this order of priority.

Initially, all existing requests will all be prioritised to create the initial list. As new requests come in, they will also be prioritised and added to the list in the appropriate position. This means the highest-priority sites in the list will always be taken forward first, even if they have been identified more recently than some other sites.

13 What happens next



The policy described above covers the assessment and prioritisation of schemes up to the point where they enter a programme of feasibility studies for delivery (or alternatively a more appropriate alternative action has been determined).

At this point, the council will tell the person making the request that the site has been considered suitable in principle and has been included in the list of sites for further study.

As this is a new policy, and because of the large number of existing requests that will need to be assessed initially, it is not currently practical to set out routinely-expected timescales for reaching this point. This may become possible once experience has been gained with operating this policy and the existing requests have been dealt with.

Once the site has been included in the list for further study, the subsequent process and timeline depends on the nature of the scheme and the availability of resources to progress it. Figure 2 shows the typical process. It may take one or two years from entering the programme to delivery on the ground, particularly if planning permission is required.

Although in principle sites will be taken through the process in order of priority as identified in step 4, the feasibility stage or subsequent events may require the priority order for delivery to be amended. For example, a scheme that is ready for delivery may move ahead of a scheme that initially had a higher priority but has subsequently encountered issues.

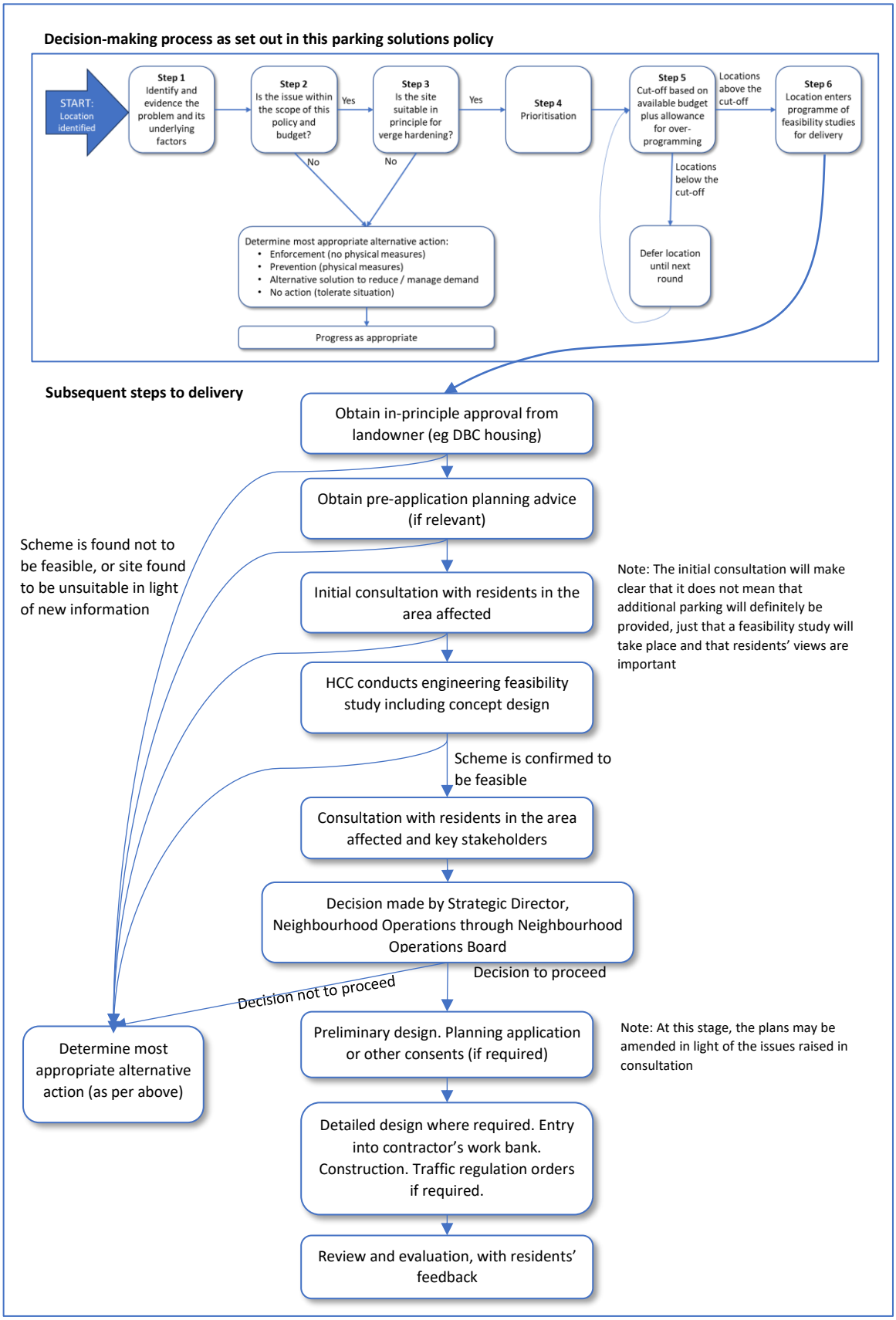
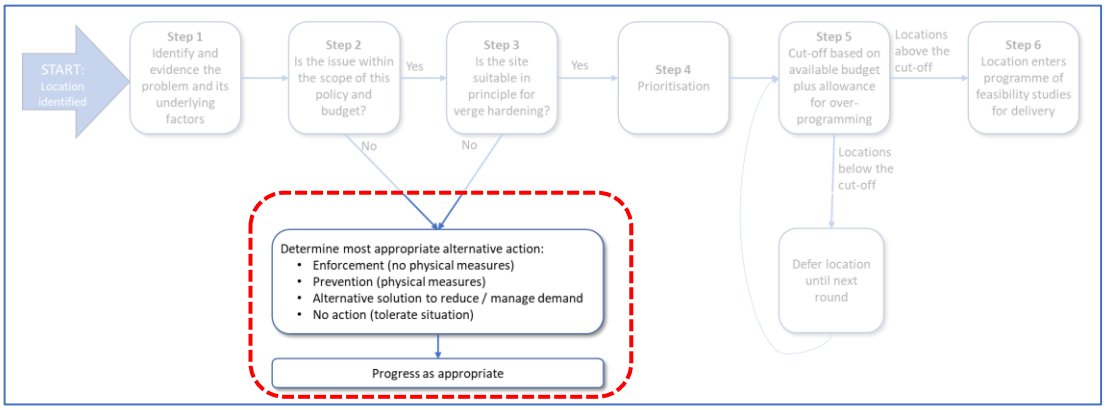


Figure 2: Overview of subsequent steps to delivery

14 Potential alternatives to verge hardening



Not all requested sites will be taken into the prioritised list of sites for feasibility study. Some will involve issues outside the scope of this policy (as described in step 2), and others will be unsuitable for Parking Solutions (as described in step 3). It is also possible that the feasibility study will show a site to be unsuitable (see section 13).

In these cases, the council will determine, on a case-by-case basis, the most appropriate action to take instead. This will normally be one of the following options:

- Implement parking restrictions
- Increase the level of enforcement of existing restrictions
- Install physical measures to prevent parking on the verge
- Progress an alternative solution to reduce or manage parking demand
- Take no further action

If further action is required, this will be taken forward under the appropriate process, as budgets and resources allow. Some actions, such as implementing parking restrictions, may be able to be funded from the Parking Solutions budget. Others may require an alternative budget.

At this point, the council will tell the person making the request what the outcome was.

15 Re-submission if circumstances have changed

If a site has been rejected as being outside the scope of this policy or as being unsuitable, but there has subsequently been a material change in circumstances or policy, the request can be re-submitted. In this case the request should say what has changed since the original assessment that means it should now be re-considered.

When such a re-submission is made, the earlier assessment will be reviewed to confirm what has changed, and whether that affects the assessment. Only matters have changed will be re-assessed. This will take account of any other action that has already been taken or programmed in response to the original request.

This is not an opportunity to 'appeal' an earlier decision where matters have not changed.

If a site has been included in the prioritised list for further investigation, but has not started feasibility study within two years, it will be reviewed to see if any circumstances have changed. If so, the prioritisation score will be reviewed and may be updated. Apart from this, the prioritisation score will not normally be updated. This is in order to make most effective use of available resources. This does not prevent suggested sites from being addressed as part of other processes such as planning applications.

Appendix A: Policy context

A1 Currently adopted policies

This table sets out some key policies that, at the time of writing, are *particularly* relevant to Parking Solutions. It is not an exhaustive list.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Dacorum Borough Council policies		
Shaping the future of Dacorum: Our Growth and Infrastructure Strategy to 2050 https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/dacorum-growth-and-infratstructure-strategy-to-2050.pdf?sfvrsn=a0fa089e_6	• Being a sustainable borough with a strong awareness of its impact on the environment • Making effective use of land, while protecting the countryside and existing communities • Well-maintained green spaces where the environment is protected and flourishing, and biodiversity is protected • Meeting the challenges of climate change and net zero (the council has declared a Climate Emergency) • An area where people can travel easily and sustainably, with a transport network that has a positive influence on quality of life: this will require new approaches, to reduce reliance on cars and reduce the amount of traffic in key areas. On transport specifically, the vision is of a sustainable, easily accessible transport network in which public transport is the preferred option, reducing reliance on cars. There is also a need to ensure the right approach to car parking. The council's commitments include improving movement across the town and making it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport.	Need to reflect and balance this range of considerations
Corporate Plan 2020-2025 https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/vision-priorities	How the council will deliver its key priorities which are: • A clean, safe and enjoyable environment • Building strong and vibrant communities • Ensuring economic growth and prosperity • Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need • Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery • Climate and Ecological Emergency - working to deliver net zero carbon. These priorities tell teams what to focus on when they are designing and delivering services. The council also recognise the importance of taking an evidence-based approach and making decisions based on a sound understanding of the issues and the latest research into what does and does not work.	Need for well-informed, evidence-based decisions. Need to support council priorities including environmental and community goals and net zero.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Core Strategy (adopted December 2013)	Policy CS8, although set in the context of new development, sets out relevant principles: **POLICY CS8: Sustainable Transport** **All new development will contribute to a well connected and accessible transport system whose principles are to:** **(a) give priority to the needs of other road and passenger transport users over the private car in the following order:** **• pedestrians** **• cyclists** **• passenger transport (buses, trains and taxis)** **• powered two wheeled vehicles** **• other motor vehicles;** **(b) ensure good access for people with disabilities;** **(c) ensure passenger transport is integrated with movement on roads, footways and cycleways;** **(d) create safer and continuous footpath and cycle networks, particularly in the towns;** **(e) maintain and extend the rural rights of way network;** **(f) improve road safety and air quality;** **(g) strengthen links to and between key facilities (bus and railway stations, hospitals, main employers and town centres); and** **(h) provide sufficient, safe and convenient parking based on car parking standards*: the application of those standards will take account of the accessibility of the location, promoting economic development and regeneration, supporting shopping areas, safeguarding residential amenity and ensuring highway safety.** **Development proposals will also contribute to the implementation of the strategies and priorities set out in the Local Transport Plan and local Urban Transport Plans.** **Footnote: * The Council's car parking standards are available in a separate document.** Policy CS9 states that "Local road space will be shared and designed to allow the safe movement of all users. In villages and the countryside, special regard will be paid to the effect of new development and traffic on the safety and environmental character of country lanes." Policies CS11, CS12 and CS13 seek to ensure that development avoids large areas dominated by car parking, preserves attractive streetscapes, avoids disturbance to surrounding properties and retains important trees or replaces them with suitable species if their loss is justified. Some place-specific aspects of the Core Strategy refer to parking, such as in Bovingdon.	Parking Solutions can support wider policy both by providing appropriate parking but also supporting other aspects such as maintaining accessibility for other users and any place-specific policies. Parking Solutions should be in line with the urban design policies. For example, it should not lead to large areas being dominated by car parking.
Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (Adopted July 2017) https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-strategic-planning/site-allocations	• Parking strategies and standards can be used as tools, where appropriate, to address the level of parking provision in town centres and in the wider area. This complements other elements of the transport infrastructure. • Existing provision for public car parking should be maintained. • Effective management of parking facilities can help encourage a modal shift towards sustainable transport.	Parking Solutions policy need not necessarily be aimed wholly at meeting parking demand. It can also support travel behaviour change where appropriate.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Saved policies from the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/dacorum-borough-local-plan-adopted-2004---post-adoption-of-core-strategy-and-site-allocations-dpds.pdf?sfvrsn=a300339e_2 See also the policy advice note on this: https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/policy-advice-note.pdf?sfvrsn=81473c9e_8	• Policy 55 (traffic management) supports consideration of traffic management measures, including those designed to facilitate and control parking. Schemes will be promoted where an appropriate balance between road safety, environmental benefits, and traffic flow can be achieved. Design will take account of all modes and minimise visual impacts as far as possible. • Policy 57 (provision and management of parking) sets out further policies for providing and managing parking space, but remains valid only to the extent that it confirms with the National Planning Policy Framework. Note also that policy 49 (which is cross-referenced in policy 57) no longer applies.	Need to recognise this range of factors
Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (adopted November 2020) https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/draft-parking-standards-supplementary-planning-document.pdf?sfvrsn=4	Sets car and cycle parking standards for different types of development. Although focused on new developments, it provides relevant context for the role of parking and Dacorum's approach to it, and the Parking Solutions policy should be compatible with this SPD. The SPD highlights that parking can have an impact on the economic vitality of town centres, help manage congestion, influence patterns of development and the liveability of communities, and affect the way people access key services and facilities. Insufficient parking can result in on-street parking stress and unsafe or obstructive parking, with frustration for residents and businesses. However, parking is also an important travel demand tool, and lower parking provision can, in the right circumstances, also lead to lower car ownership and use. The SPD aims to provide a balance between those two aspects. Given local transport policy, the SPD aims to encourage a gradual downward trend in car ownership and use in the most accessible locations. Elsewhere in the borough, car ownership is likely to remain the same or increase slowly over time. It therefore sets out a standard level of parking provision (not a maximum or minimum), around which there is some flexibility for certain locations. The standard is based around three accessibility zones for parking standards, reflecting different access to local facilities and public transport and therefore the potential to have lower car ownership. The zones are: • Zone 1 – Highest Accessibility – the immediate 'core' of central Hemel Hempstead • Zone 2- High Accessibility – easy walking distance of the centre of Hemel Hempstead. • Zone 3 - Lower Accessibility – the rest of the borough Departures from the standard may be agreed or required in exceptional circumstances.	Parking Solutions should support (and not undermine) wider parking policy, including the balance between avoiding parking stress and managing travel demand. The accessibility zones may be a relevant factor in the extent of verge hardening that can be supported in particular locations.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Electric Vehicle Strategy https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/climate-change/electric-vehicles/electric-vehicle-strategy-summary	DBC aims to support the uptake of electric vehicles and the implementation of appropriate charging infrastructure throughout Dacorum. **EV3: Destination Charging:** The primary short-term focus will be on fast and rapid destination charging, including in Council-owned car parks and other destination areas where we own land. Potential DBC-owned locations will need to undergo feasibility studies to ensure they are suitable, and will rely on commercial partners and/or government funding. This programme of work will need to be developed and delivered over several phases. **EV 5: On-Street Charging:** Areas will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine what infrastructure is suitable. On highways, this will typically involve collaboration with HCC. DBC also aims to tie the Parking Solutions project together with EVCP installation on Council-owned land. As explained in the strategy, installing on-street charging will be more of a medium-term priority and the short-term will involve information gathering for this.	There is potential for Parking Solutions to include EVCP installation, depending on the particular location. It will not necessarily be the case that a Parking Solutions location is also a priority for EVCP installation, or vice versa. This is considered further in section 11.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Climate and ecological emergency strategy https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/climate-and-ecological-emergency/climate-and-ecological-emergency-strategy.pdf?sfvrsn=da6e049e_4	Sets out five key objectives: 1. Reach net-zero emissions as an organisation by 2030. 2. Reach net-zero emissions for our Council housing stock as quickly as possible, by 2050 at the latest. 3. Support the borough in reducing its emissions and reaching net-zero as quickly as possible, by 2050 at the latest. 4. Support the borough in improving biodiversity. 5. Support the borough in creating more sustainable communities. The four key themes the council is focusing on to achieve these objectives are: 1. Sustainable Transport (see below) 2. Energy Use in Buildings 3. Improving Biodiversity (see below) 4. Sustainable Communities Switching to EVs will be a crucial step in order to lower emissions. However, the strategy acknowledges that we must also drastically reduce the number of journeys made by car. As part of the new Local Plan, the council will develop and implement a sustainable transport plan to encourage a move away from cars to walking, cycling and use of public transport, together with a strategy for electric vehicle charging [see above]. The council will also encourage individuals to rethink their regular journeys. The council also seeks to improve biodiversity on a local level through direct actions such as growing more trees, plants and flowers, improving green spaces for local wildlife and other measures. Safeguarding existing trees and focusing on the carbon management hierarchy will be important. The council will carry out a 'Green Spaces Audit' for all council-owned land. The council will lead by example in reducing carbon emissions year on year. It will use our powers, such as Town Planning, to require all new development to be as low carbon as is possible	Parking Solutions will need to reflect the developing transport policies and to align with the aspirations for electric vehicle charging. Parking Solutions should support biodiversity as far as practical, such as by safeguarding existing trees. The selection of sites, materials used, and construction methods should support the council's commitment to reduce its own emissions year and year should ensure schemes are as low-carbon as possible.

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Other policies		
Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) (2018-2031) (May 2018) https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/transport-planning/local-transport-plan.aspx	Travel behaviour change will need to be supported where appropriate by a greater emphasis on demand management, such as with the development of plans to constrain car use through parking charges and supply (p7) Any proposals would need to be tailored to specific locations where sustainable travel options exist or can be improved so there are real alternatives to car travel available (p50-51 and Policy 4) The county council will focus on making more efficient use of highway capacity via… control of on-street vehicle parking in line with the Network Management Strategy (Policy 12) Illegal parking can also cause unnecessary congestion and safety issues. In order to prevent this and reduce the impact of anything that decreases the efficiency of the network, the county council will work in partnership with Highways England, utility companies, neighbouring authorities, the police and district/borough councils to maintain a safe and reliable highway network (p75)	Parking Solutions policy need not necessarily be aimed wholly at meeting parking demand. It can also support travel behaviour change where appropriate. Parking Solutions policy should support more efficient use of highway capacity by reducing the impact of illegal parking on unnecessary congestion and safety.
South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan (endorsed in 2020) Developed in partnership with Dacorum Borough Council. https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/transport-planning/transport-policy-and-supporting-strategies.aspx#:~:text=The%20South%20West%20Herts%20Growth%20and%20Transport%20Plan	There should be a presumption against providing additional parking on roads. Where there is opportunity to re-evaluate the place and movement function of a road or corridor, consideration could be given to reviewing the provision of on-road parking spaces in consultation with local residents and businesses. Where any reduction in on-road parking provision is proposed, consideration should be given to the opportunities this could afford to improving conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and the efficient movement of bus services (p177)	Parking Solutions should take this principle into account

Policy Document	Key relevant points	Main implications for Parking Solutions Policy
Hertfordshire County Council Network Management Strategy 2023-2028 https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/doc/planning/hcc-nm-strategyjuly23.pdf	Sets out how HCC will manage the highway network in a fair, inclusive and transparent way in accordance with its statutory duties and wider policies (para 1.2) Active network management will help deliver a good sense of place whilst sensitively considering the safety needs of all users and the competing demands of all those wanting to use the limited highway space (para 3.2). HCC will work in partnership with the District Councils to manage on-street vehicle parking, including controlling verge parking and introducing clearways as appropriate, and enforce parking restrictions to promote network efficiency and reflect the transport user hierarchy (Movement Related Policies table) and to reduce demand, thereby reducing the domination by motor vehicles (Place Related Policies table)	Parking Solutions policy needs to be seen as part of an overall approach to parking and to wider network management. The policy factors involved include sense of place, safety, the competing demands of different users, the transport user hierarchy and reducing demand. These will need to be balanced as appropriate in each case.
HCC Electric Vehicle strategy https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/news-and-campaigns/electric-vehicles.aspx#ourstrategy	Where feasible, off-street charging in council-owned car parks should be considered as a first option for both local and destination charging. After this, opportunities for chargepoints in other off-street locations in the form of hubs on other public-owned land should be investigated. Where neither of these options are possible or become insufficient to meet growing demand the potential for on-street chargepoints should be considered. This could include hubs on available highway land.	
Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide **3rd Edition** **Section 4 - Design Standards and Advice** **Chapter 9 – Vehicle Parking Facilities** https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/highways/development-management/section-4-design-standards-and-advice.pdf	Sets out technical requirements for the location and design of on-street parking. In particular: • Where unassigned spaces are provided on the carriageway, or on-street parking is likely to occur, the carriageway should be a minimum of 5.5m wide. If simultaneous parking on both sides of the carriageway is likely, a minimum width of 7m should be provided. (Note: this in effect sets out the carriageway width above which on-street parking would not normally be considered obstructive, subject to the further considerations below). • Parking provision shall not be located within the visibility splays at junctions and accesses. Parking areas should not obstruct forward visibility requirements, turning areas or inhibit the movement of refuse vehicles, buses or the emergency services. • It also sets out required dimensions for parking spaces and manoeuvring areas. • Drivers should be encouraged to regard the footway as reserved for pedestrians unless it is specifically marked for use. Public information and education programmes can help to influence attitudes in line with this objective. Footway parking can be discouraged by installing physical measures such as bollards, raised planters or other street furniture, but these can add to clutter and discourage walking if designed poorly.	This policy sets out, in effect, the carriageway width above which on-street parking would not normally be considered obstructive, subject to the other considerations listed. Parking Solutions should only take place where technically suitable (eg not within visibility splays, and where the spaces can have suitable dimensions) Parking Solutions (including its definition of what constitutes a problem) should be aligned with this policy on footway parking.

A2 Emerging policies

This section sets out some policy areas that, at the time of writing, are emerging but not yet agreed or adopted, and are *particularly* relevant to Parking Solutions. Again, it is not an exhaustive list.

Emerging local plan: The Council has committed to an early partial review (EPR) of its Core Strategy which will be delivered through the new Dacorum local plan to 2040. This new plan will, once adopted, replace the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, Core Strategy and 'saved policies' from the Dacorum Borough Local Plan. A pre-submission consultation draft (Regulation 18) is due to be published in late 2024.

The transport topic paper (supporting this plan) sets out a proposed vision for the town of Hemel Hempstead in which (inter alia) "Streets are no longer dominated by parking with parking spaces repurposed to create new amenity and/or economic value in the town centre and where children are safe to play outside their homes." Furthermore, under this vision, "Car ownership is no longer a necessity for most people making trips within the town, and car sharing becomes a mainstream form of car use, surpassing ownership in time."

Biodiversity net gain: The Council is currently (at the time of writing) reviewing the actions it can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity, in line with the strengthened biodiversity duty introduced by the Environment Act 2021[2]. A list of policies and objectives arising from this review will be published once they have been formally agreed. The decisions on Parking Solutions will take account of those policies where relevant.

At the HCC level, the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership (HNRP) has been established to collaboratively develop Hertfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Again, decisions on Parking Solutions will take account of any relevant policies once the LNRS has been agreed.

[2] https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/landscape-recreation/biodiversity-and-conservation