

EVIDENCE BASE F: CAR PARKING

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North Somerset Core Strategy policy CS11.

Adequate parking must be provided and managed to meet the needs of anticipated users (residents, workers and visitors) in usable spaces. Overall parking provision must ensure a balance between good urban design, highway safety, residential amenity and promoting town centre attractiveness and vitality. New developments must seek to maximise off street provision, assess where on-street provision may be appropriate, demonstrate that buses, service and emergency vehicles are not restricted, and ensure that the road network is safe for all users.

- F.1 Backwell has a shortage of car parking and the 2010 Backwell Community Plan (BCP) identified needs for additional car parking spaces at:
- The Railway Station
 - Near the shopping areas at Rodney Road, West Town Road and Backwell Cross Roads
- F.2 **Nailsea and Backwell Railway Station.** The Station car park is inadequate. Cars park at nearby locations including Moor Lane, Long Thorn, Waverley Road, Amberlands and Backwell Lake. Some drivers park in these areas by choice; others only when the Station car park is full. Residents complain that parked cars cause obstruction and are a safety hazard.



Parked cars along Moor Lane

- F.3 North Somerset Council (NSC), responding to the BCPlan and other requests, propose to construct a Station car park extension in 2014. In April 2012 the Council approved:
- a) construction of an extension that will increase the capacity of the car park from 120 to 303 spaces;
 - b) £700,000 to be borrowed to fund the construction;
 - c) parking charges to be introduced to repay the loan;
 - d) pay and display charges in the car park to apply 7 days per week at £1.50 before 10am weekdays, then £1 after 10am or on weekends and bank holidays.
- F.4 *'A pay and display charge would be in line with policy objectives which include introducing charges where appropriate to deter car use....[and]may help encourage those living nearby to walk or cycle and those living further away to car share or catch the bus. The availability of spaces would then improve for other users and make the rail option more attractive.'*[NSCouncil]
- F.5 **BACKWELL FUTURE** supports the car park extension and accepts that charging is unavoidable. It should deter motorists who currently drive to Backwell in order to avoid parking charges at other railway station car parks.
- F.6 Backwell Parish Council considers that there is a high risk that more motorists will seek to park in nearby locations in order to avoid the Station parking charges. **BACKWELL FUTURE** therefore proposes that parking restrictions are introduced in appropriate areas. Possible options would be a 2 hour limit 8am to 6pm or residents' permits. Parking restrictions to be enforced. The Parish Council will consult local residents and North Somerset Council (NSC) about proposals.

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F.7 NSC advise that it 'will assess whether there is a requirement for parking restrictions in the nearby roads after the new parking charges have had time to bed in....restrictions will be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order....which involves public consultation'.



F.8 **Car parking near shopping areas.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* endorses North Somerset Council's Core Strategy, policy CS21, to deliver a prosperous economy strengthening local centres (that also serve rural areas) by ensuring that there is a range of facilities and that these are retained. It is essential to the viability and sustainability of village shops and businesses that parking for customers should be adequate and also that better provision is made for walking and cycling to the shops.

F.9 **Rodney Road.** Existing public car parking comprises:

- 10 road-side spaces near the Newsagents and Off-Licence
- 9 road-side spaces by the Spar shop
- 12 off-road spaces in the car park by the Off-licence (2hr)

F.10 Within working hours, parking spaces are invariably insufficient

and many vehicles park along Rodney Road towards Embercourt Drive causing obstruction to traffic. Additionally, congestion occurs at the Rodney Road/West Town Road junction when junction traffic encounters vehicles waiting to park.



F.11 Parking in the Rodney Road area is unrestricted except for the off-road car park where a 2 hour limit applies, but apparently is unenforced. It appears that many vehicles park all day and short duration shoppers often find it difficult to find a space.

F.12 Four options have been identified to provide additional parking in or near Rodney Road. They are presented in order of likely lowest cost, to public funds, per additional space.

F.13 **OPTION 1.** The Benedicts (formerly Ettrick) Garage and Red Cross Hall sites have recently been sold. The purchaser is aware that *BACKWELL FUTURE* will require that an area of public parking be included in any proposal to redevelop these sites, subject to the approval of the highway authority. Details of a planning application are awaited. Option 1 is subject to agreement with the land owner.

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Benedicts (formerly Ettrick) Garage, West Town Road

- F.14 **OPTION 2.** There are 10 spaces in the lay-by between the Off-Licence and the Newsagents in Rodney Road. Cars park parallel to the pavement. The pavement is more than 6 metres wide and, by reducing the width by about 2 metres (not by the ATM kiosk); cars would be able to park at 45° to the shops. In this way an additional 7 car spaces can be created. Widening the lay-by would leave an adequate pavement within highway-land adjacent to the private pavement that abuts the shops.



Rodney Road near the off-licence

- F.15 The **Parish Council has agreed**, since the November 2012 Draft Plan, that Option 2 should go ahead. North Somerset Council Highways Dept is developing the design.
- F.16 **OPTION 3.** Construction of a car park, adjacent to West Town Road, at the eastern end of Backwell Playing Fields site. This option has not been investigated though the Fields trustees are aware of the concept. It is 200 metres from Rodney Road and, if designated for all-day parking, would benefit the Rodney Road area and the Methodist Church. A transport assessment would be needed on the impact upon public highways.
- F.17 **OPTION 4.** There are small areas of land near the Spar shop and former HSBC bank. These would require the removal of flower beds and small trees and therefore loss of amenity. Land ownership would need to be established.
- F.18 **Parking near the village cross-roads.** Parking is required for shoppers, those attending functions at the WI Hall and Parish halls, plus those who park and ride on the buses.
- F.19 Existing public car parking spaces comprise:
- 11 lay-by spaces in Dark Lane (unlimited)
 - 4 lay-by spaces by the restaurant in Dark Lane (1hr)
 - 3 lay-by spaces by the Chemists in West Town Road (1hr)
 - 5 spaces opposite the WI Hall, Station Road (1hr)
 - 2 lay-by spaces below the WI Hall, Station Road (unlimited)
 - Customer parking: Indian restaurant (2) and Mica store (10).
- F.20 At the upper end of the lay-by spaces in Dark Lane, an existing half-space could be extended to form a full parking space. This could be achieved by removing part of the pavement that is generous at this point, subject to agreement with the highway authority. This is the only option that has been identified near to the village cross-roads.

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- F.21 **Parking near the Post Office.** Existing spaces comprise:
- 5 roadside places in front of Backwell Medical Centre (1 hr);
 - 10 customer places at the Post Office/Fish Shop/Hairdresser.
- F.22 No options have been identified for new spaces at this location.
- F.23 **Parking for business staff.** It is reported that some staff working at local businesses often park cars, all day, in the unrestricted lay-bys thereby preventing the use of these parking spaces by customers and those on business.
- F.24 *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes that the business community develop a forum to see if there is a way in which staff can park away from spaces that are near to shops and other businesses.
- F.25 **Parking restrictions.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* recommends that in order to secure parking availability for shoppers and help sustain the viability of local businesses, parking restrictions should apply:
- a) 2 hour time limit at all lay-bys;
 - b) 2 hour time limit in the Rodney Road car park;
 - c) Parking restrictions need to be enforced with penalties.
- F.26 Introduction of parking restrictions requires a legal process and a traffic regulation order. Advertising, legal and administration costs could be around £2000. The Police have the authority to enforce the restrictions on the public highway and North Somerset Council have the authority to enforce time limits off of the highway.

BACKWELL FUTURE's policy strategy is to reduce the need for car parking where practical and to provide additional parking spaces where necessary. The strategy includes:

1. Promoting, with assistance from local groups, initiatives to reduce car travel;
2. Provision of more cycle racks where appropriate;
3. Requesting local businesses to review arrangements for the parking of staff cars away from the lay-bys near shops.
4. Consulting residents and businesses about parking restrictions and agree with Avon and Somerset Police the arrangements for enforcement.
5. The potential provision of public car spaces on the Benedicts (formerly Ettrick) Garage Red Cross frontage, should a planning application be received to redevelop that site.
6. Implementing a scheme to widen lay-by parking in Rodney Road in conjunction with North Somerset Council.
7. Mandatory parking provision, adjacent to key services, for people with restricted mobility.
8. Provision of customer parking when shops, business and service premises are re-developed in the Local Centre.

- F.27 **St Andrew's Church.** There is inadequate public parking near to the Church. Vehicles park along Church Lane and at Court Close. Difficulties arise when Church services are very busy and when village clubs and societies meet on Church premises. In addition this is a popular assembly point for walkers who use this part of Church Lane to park their vehicles. At times passage by wider vehicles is difficult, even impossible.

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F.28 Opposite the Church there is an area of land, until recently an orchard, between Court Farm and the village War Memorial. The Church has, in the past, unsuccessfully sought consent to use part of this land as a car park. This land is in the Green Belt. Provision of car parking is permissible in the Green Belt provided the layout, design and landscaping of the scheme preserves the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

F.29 *BACKWELL FUTURE* designates the frontage of this field as a Car Park to serve the Church and other users subject to detail and satisfactory arrangements for access to the field behind for the landowner and agreement on maintenance. It is expected that St Andrew's Church would, in liaison with the Parish Council, be the prime mover in obtaining the consent of the landowner and arranging detailed design. It is expected that the Church would meet the majority of the costs.

F.30 **Parking near the Junior School.** There is a staff car park at the rear of Backwell St Andrews Junior School, but there are no nearby lay-by or off-road parking spaces. Consequently parents park their vehicles for considerable distances along Church Lane and Dark Lane. Congestion regularly occurs at School drop-off and pick-up times and when there is a special event at the School.



Parking in Dark Lane

F.31 At the date of drafting *BACKWELL FUTURE* the owners of the disused Coles Quarry are proposing to redevelop that site. Part of the scheme would provide school parking near the rear of the Junior School. A planning application is awaited. This proposal has both benefits and drawbacks that are referred to in more detail in the Development section of this Plan.

F.32 **Parking generally.** All car parking plans will be subject to the North Somerset Parking Standards SPD.

F.33 The Parish Council will discuss with North Somerset Council whether the appointment of a Parking Warden is a practical option.