steer davies gleave

# Car Parking Study for the Central Area of Southend

Report

November 2016

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Our ref: 22958601

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# Executive Summary

1. This study reviews current and future public car parking provision in the Southend Central Area. It sets out the current level of use of the existing parking network, the potential impact of development proposals and assesses the economic importance of parking in Southend Central Area based on a recent survey of visitors to Southend Central Area.
2. Overall the Southend Central Area parking network rarely exceeds 85% occupancy, the optimum maximum occupancy used for this study. Beyond 85% occupancy, demand for travel can begin to become supressed due to issues of circulation, queuing, and a perception amongst users that they may not get a space in the car park. On the busiest day of 2015 (Saturday 22 August, a hot sunny day) the peak network demand was 87% occupancy from 15:00 to 16:00. At all other times, demand is below 85%.
3. There is, however, imbalance in the Southend Central Area parking network at peak periods with Central Area South parking (south of the central railway line) struggling to cope with peak demand (summer weekends and public holidays) while Central Area North parking has available capacity.
4. Forecasting of future supply and demand to 2021 and post-2021, based on the information currently available, shows that
    i. Regardless of whether parking supply is based on Central Area precedents (i.e. using local precedents to inform an estimated level of parking reflecting the flexibility in the Development Management Document (DMD)), or on the application of maximum standards in the DMD, the *Central Area North* network copes well with forecast demand under each growth scenario.
    ii. The *Central Area South* network also copes well on weekdays in each scenario.
    iii. The main pressure is on the *Central Area South* network on Saturdays, particularly if parking supply is based on Central Area precedents. By applying maximum standards, occupancy on Saturdays is forecast to follow a similar pattern to the data collected for August 2015 (for scenario 2 period (up to and including 2021) and scenario 3 (post 2021). This shows that the car parks will continue to exceed 85% occupancy for those busy periods.
5. A survey of Southend Central Area visitors, which asked users about how they travelled and the amount they spent in the area, demonstrated that all visitors, regardless of mode of transport used for access, contribute to the local economy by spending in Southend Central Area. According to the survey, visitors who arrived by modes other than by car spent more overall than car users. Car users spend the most per trip but tend to visit less frequently, while shoppers and bus users visit frequently while spending less per trip. Overall monthly spend by those who walk to the Southend Central Area is greater than monthly spend of those who travel by car. There was little difference in the amount spent by respondents interviewed at the seafront compared to those interviewed in the town centre.
6. The needs of car-borne visitors to Southend must be considered alongside the needs of pedestrians, bus users and users of other modes who also contribute to the economic vitality and viability of the Southend Central Area. Measures to increase the number of vehicles accessing and parking in the town centre and at the Central Area South, however, will to impact negatively on all visitors through increased congestion, worsened air quality and reduced ambience, and must be taken into account when planning future car parking provision.

## Recommendations

7. In the **short term**: (1-2 years)

- Improve travel information through an enhanced website and a new visitor / smartphone travel app for Southend;
- Develop a web enabled service which allows visitors to book and pay for parking in Southend Central Area in advance.
- Encourage more sustainable access through rail promotions and priority parking for car sharing;
- Use parking management techniques to make better use of existing capacity including designation of long-stay / short-stay car parks for weekends and public holidays during 'peak season', differential pricing which reduces the cost of under-used car parks and improved parking payment systems to enhance the user experience and facilitate extended stays;
- Increase parking supply for peak periods through a weekend and public holiday Park & Ride from Leigh-on-Sea Station and through engagement with local employers to identify spare peak period parking supply, particularly within the SCAAP area.

8. In the **medium term** (2-5 years):

- Enhance sustainable access through improved static signage and wayfinding and through exploring an integrated bike hire and electric car club;
- Improve Variable Message System technology to push information on access options and car parking availability via a variety of media and signage options;
- In addition to the forecast increase in parking supply in the period up to 2021, increase parking supply for peak periods by exploring potential use of existing parking assets (including Council-owned schools and leisure facilities but also privately-owned employment sites) with discounted or free parking along commercial bus routes;

9. In the **long term** (5-10 years):

- Consider dynamic parking management through a multi-modal travel assistant (app) which integrates public transport, taxi, walking, cycling and rideshare options based on real-time information.
- Depending on the efficacy of the above recommendations on managing peak demand, and the nature of developments within the Central Area in the next five years, consider additional parking supply in the south of the Central Area post 2021. If additional parking capacity requirements are identified, parking could be removed elsewhere from within the Southend Central Area North in line with a policy of no net gain within the Southend Central Area. This would depend on the pace of development and the benefits derived from the short to medium term measures.

# 1 Introduction

1.1 Steer Davies Gleave was commissioned by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SoSBC) to undertake a review of current and future publicly available car parking provision in the Southend Central Area. The study aimed to understand:

- Existing supply and demand for car parking;
- Future supply and demand for car parking, taking into account planned growth and future use of sites in accordance with planning policy documents;
- The economic impacts of car parking provision, particularly the correlation between the mode of travel to the Central Area and the economic success of the Central Area;
- Car parking provision in comparable seaside resorts to manage car parking and approaches to managing parking demand at peak periods; and
- Parking-related concerns of local stakeholders responding to the planning policies for the Southend Central Area.

1.2 This informed the development of recommendations for a future car parking strategy for the Southend Central Area.

## Background

1.3 Southend is undergoing extensive regeneration with a mandate of sustainable growth that seeks to work within its compact nature to create a vibrant town centre at its heart. To achieve growth, Southend wants to maximise its assets, continue to be an attractive visitor destination, and provide a good quality of life for its residents.

1.4 The Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP) seeks to develop opportunity sites within the Southend Central Area, a number of which are located on existing SoSBC-owned car parks. A robust strategy is required to ensure that future car parking provision is able to support Southend's growth.

1.5 A strong evidence base about current parking demand and supply and the potential effects of changes to parking provision in Southend is required.

1.6 There are various inputs which need to be co-ordinated into a bespoke parking strategy for the Southend Central Area. The principal of these is an understanding of the SCAAP and emerging Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CAT Scheme).

1.7 Parking is not a means to an end in itself and is only one element of the SCAAP, and therefore, should not be studied in isolation, spatially or in policy terms. Parking has an inherent transport relationship and also a planning / development relationship, as well as an important role through its impact upon wider economic, social and environmental objectives. This is why parking, and in particular this study, is important for the development of Southend and the SCAAP.

## Structure of the Report

1.8 **Section two** sets out the context including:

- Current parking provision and pricing structure;
- Policy context;
- SCAAP and feedback from stakeholders on parking; and
- Research on town parking from other seaside towns and cities.

1.9 **Section three** outlines current supply and demand for parking.

1.10 **Section four** forecasts future parking supply and demand based on development scenarios.

1.11 **Section Five** summarises the results of a Southend Central Area visitor survey.

1.12 **Section Six** provides recommendations for a future parking strategy for Southend.

# 2 Context

## Policy background

2.1 The Southend Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3): Strategy Document outlines key considerations related to Central Area parking provision. It notes that Central Area car parking demand is forecast to grow by 25% by 2021 and that this will need to be managed in a way that does not have an adverse impact on the development potential of the Central Area. Better management of car parking capacity is identified within 'Theme 1' of LTP3. The document notes that Southend Central Area has a high level of car parking, which can encourage people to drive to the Central Area rather than using other more sustainable modes. Over half of journeys to work are made by car or van within the Borough. The LTP highlights a seasonal shortfall of parking capacity in certain car parks in summer and in December.

2.2 In order to address the above considerations, the LTP outlines a number of policy measures within the document, which broadly involve: introducing parking strategies for a range of different modes of travel; making better use of on- street and off-street car parking; linking potential reduction in parking with promoting alternative modes of travel; providing sufficient parking enforcement; and introducing a Blue Badge holder strategy.

2.3 The key themes for the Southend transport strategy are:

- A thriving and sustainable local economy in the Borough;
- Minimise environmental impact, promote sustainability for a greener Borough;
- A safer Borough; and
- Reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing and for a more accessible Borough.

## Southend Central Area Action Plan

2.4 Southend-on-Sea Borough Council prepared a **Preferred Approach SCAAP** for public consultation in December 2015. This Plan includes a Policies Map for the area covered by the Plan. The SCAAP reflects the vision, strategic objectives and spatial strategy of the **Southend Core Strategy**. This is a strategic level document that provides the framework for the preparation of the SCAAP and other development planning documents up to 2021.

2.5 The Southend Central Area covers Southend town centre and the central seafront as shown in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Southend Central Area**


2.6

2.7 The purpose of the SCAAP is to give more detailed consideration to how and where regeneration and growth can sustainably be accommodated in the Southend Central Area, including the Town Centre, Central Seafront Area and gateway neighbourhoods of Victoria and Sutton.

2.8 It contains proposals for 'Policy Areas' and 'Opportunity Sites' aimed at strengthening and transforming Southend Central Area's sub-regional role as a successful retail and commercial destination, cultural hub and educational centre of excellence, leisure and tourist attraction and an excellent place to live. It also seeks to safeguard, conserve and enhance the significant biodiversity, green space and other environmental resources in the area and on the foreshore, as well as to bring about public realm and access improvements.

2.9 One of the specific policies within the document relates to Transport, Access and Public Realm. The policy aims to provide for a number of improvements to complement other policy aims and opportunity site provisions, including traffic management, car parking provision, public transport improvements, pedestrian and cycle improvements. These are contained in Policy DS5.

### The views of stakeholders

2.10 As mentioned above, SoSBC undertook public consultation on the SCAAP, starting in December 2015 and finishing in February 2016. This gave a further opportunity for stakeholders, members of the public and interested parties to respond to the preferred approach as set out in the Plan, including specific site boundaries and policies within the Southend Central Area. Our analysis involved reviewing and summarising a list of representations from the consultation. Comments related to parking and/or the wider development context were reviewed.

2.11 Fifteen stakeholders provided detailed parking-related comments to the consultation on the preferred approach to the Southend Central Area Action Plan. The comments relating to parking were grouped into eight categories: parking infrastructure; traffic; public transport; pricing; capacity and seasonality; connectivity and access; illegal parking and equality.

2.12 The feedback received is summarised in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Summary of stakeholder feedback to SCAAP consultation**

| Theme | Feedback |
|---|---|
| Parking Infrastructure | • Concern about the implications of the new developments on the availability of parking. In particular reassurances sought about the potential loss of parking from development at Tylers car park (OS6), Seaway car park and Marine Parade (OS8). Concern was also expressed about parking provision at the Museum (OS9) site which currently has no off-street parking provision.<br>• Seaway Car Park seen as gateway to town and opportunity for a large car park on that site. Some scepticism about plans for a cinema as a project that would not attract visitors.<br>• Objections to development of Clarence Road (OS16) and Alexandra Street (OS17) car parks which are seen as being important for local business and retail. |
| Traffic | • Stakeholders focused on the issues of congestion, both on a daily and seasonal basis (high traffic levels during the summer and in the run-up to Christmas), the lack of parking spaces to accommodate this demand and the potential detrimental impact of failing to capture visitor demand on the economic sustainability and projected jobs growth within the Southend Central Area.<br>• Stakeholders believe that parking capacity should be available to cope with peak periods of demand. |
| Public Transport | • Park and Ride suggested. Importance of improved connectivity and public realm from railway stations to key destinations emphasised. |
| Pricing | • Suggestion to reduce or eliminate car-parking charges on Sundays and public holiday. A suggestion that a new Seaway Car Park should give Blue Badge holders free parking.<br>• Parking charges seen as a deterrent to shopping in Southend. |
| Capacity and Seasonality | • Many of the Seafront businesses express their view that they cannot invest further in the town due to the issue of access and parking and therefore already have a declining customer base – losing business to other town centres in the area such as Basildon.<br>• Concern that the amount of parking provided for housing developments in SCAAP (particularly OS11 (Victoria Avenue), OS12 (Former Essex & Southend Water Board) and OS13 (Roots Hall Football Ground) will be insufficient.<br>• Concern about large amount of A1 retail provision at Fossetts Farm having detrimental impact on Central Area retail vitality.<br>• Possible negative effect of residents parking zones on the vitality of the Southend Central Area and availability of on and off-street parking spaces for visitors. |
| Connectivity and Access | • Transport, access and parking issues needed further consideration and are a particular issue for the Seafront businesses and tourist economy in Southend.<br>• Highway infrastructure makes (vehicular) journeys into the town prolonged and difficult meaning that many visitors and customers choose not to return.<br>• Support for improved connectivity from car parks to the Seafront and High Street Support for townscape / public realm improvements, improved connectivity/integration and the creation of active public spaces, particularly:<br>  ◦ Between Seaway Car Park and the Seafront<br>  ◦ Walking and cycling linkages via St John's Church/Pier Hill and<br>  ◦ Seaway Car Park to the Marine Parade site (OS8). |
| Illegal Parking | • Request for better enforcement / signage for the Victoria Avenue/Queensway area restricting the use of these roads to buses and taxis only. |
| Equality | • Concern that car travel is to be discouraged - viewed as discriminatory against those who cannot get on public transport and need cars to access the town<br>• Relocation of taxis to the west of College Way may leave disabled people stranded<br>• Concern that insufficient Blue Badge spaces provided. |

## Current parking provision in Southend Central Area

2.13 The main off-street car parks in Southend Central Area are shown in Table 2.2. The table also shows the operator of each car park and the payment method used for parking fees. Survey

data was collected for all of these car parks as described in Table 3.1 in the next section of this report.

**Table 2.2: Off-street car parks in Southend Central Area**

| Off-street car park | Capacity[1] | Operator | Payment method |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alexandra Street | 74 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Civic Centre Overground | 83 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Civic Centre Underground | 115 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Clarence Road | 126 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Essex Street | 197 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Fairheads Green | 211 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Former Library (The Hive and Beecroft Gallery) | 168 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Royals Shopping Centre | 426 | Royals | Pay on foot |
| Seaway | 478 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Shorefield Road | 125 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Short Street | 73 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Southend College | 215 | Southend College | Pay & Display |
| Tylers Avenue | 249 | SoSBC | Pay on foot |
| University Square | 304 | SoSBC | Pay on foot |
| Victoria Shopping Centre | 593 | Victoria Shopping Centre | Pay on foot |
| Warrior Square | 344 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| York Road | 93 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| **Total** | **3,874** | | |

2.14 There are also some large privately operated car parks for which survey data were not collected to inform this report. These are listed in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Additional privately operated car parks in Southend Central Area**

| Off-street car park | Capacity[2] | Operator | Payment method |
|---|---|---|---|
| Portcullis House | 160 (approx.) | Green Parking | Pay & Display |
| Sainsbury's | 340 | Sainsbury's | Pay & Display |
| The Range (shopping outlet) | 128 | The Range | Unknown |
| Southend Central station | 138 | NCP | Pay & Display |
| **Total** | **766** | | |

2.15 In addition to the off-street car parks listed above, there are several key pay and display on-street parking locations in Southend Central Area shown in Table 2.4.

[1] There is a difference between the number of spaces produced by the Variable Message System reports and the actual numbers. This is due to the VMS being adjusted to take account of narrow bays and system resets at 6am each morning with some cars parked overnight. Capacities in the VMS reports may vary (typically by no more than 5%). Some of the analysis in this report is based on occupancy of car parks using VMS system capacity data.

[2] See footnote 1 above

**Table 2.4: Key on-street parking locations**

| Parking area | Capacity | Operator | Payment method |
|---|---|---|---|
| Western Esplanade Central | 585 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Western Esplanade East Section | 128 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Eastern Esplanade | 67 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Clifftown Road | 11 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Elmer Avenue | 14 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Victoria Avenue | 43 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| London Road | 43 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Queens Road | 31 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Queens Road short-stay | 10 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Warrior Square | 44 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| Whitegate Road | 57 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| York Road | 20 | SoSBC | Pay & Display |
| **Total** | **1,053** | | |

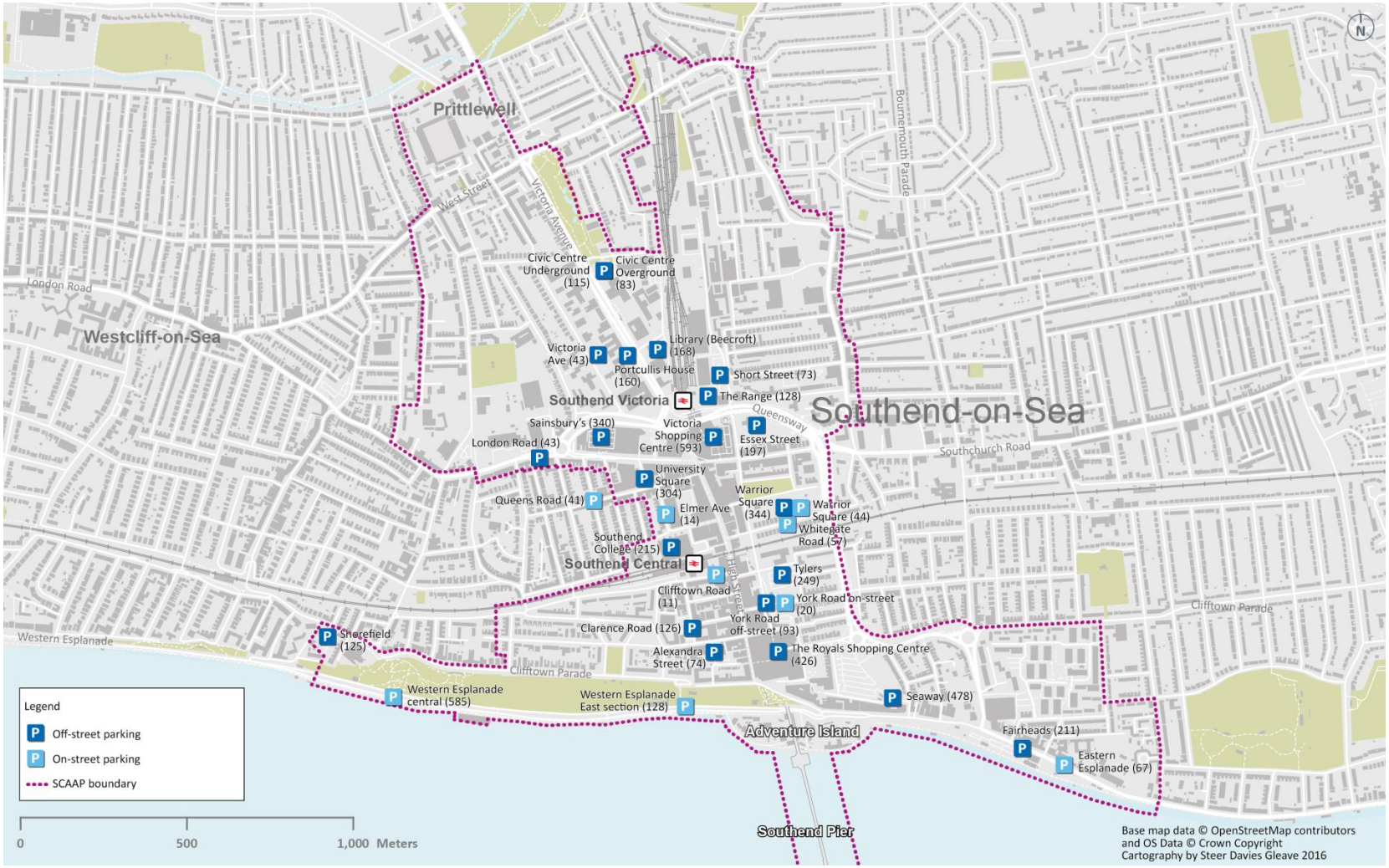
2.16 Additionally, there are two key car parks in Leigh-on-Sea, approximately 4 miles to the west of Southend Central Area, located close to Leigh-on-Sea station railway station as shown in Table 2.4. These car parks are relevant because they offer a potential park and ride by rail option for accessing Southend Central Area. **However, it should be noted that the two car parks in Leigh-on-Sea are not included in any analysis related to the capacity of the SCAAP area car parking network in this report**.

**Table 2.5: Potential park and ride locations**

| Parking area | Capacity | Operator | Payment method |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leigh-on-Sea station | 545 | NCP | Pay at kiosk |
| Two Tree Island | 86 | Essex Wildlife Trust | N/A – no charge |
| **Total** | **631** | | |

2.17 The locations of the main car parking areas in Southend are shown in Figure 2.2 which also shows the SCAAP boundary and the number of spaces in each parking area.

**Figure 2.2: Locations of parking in Southend**



*Pricing*

2.18 The pricing levels for car parking areas within Southend Central Area are shown in Table 2.6.

**Table 2.6: Southend Central Area car parks price per hr**

| Southend Parking areas | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) | (hr/£) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Name / Price per hr (hr/£)** | **1 hrs** | **2 hrs** | **3 hrs** | **4 hrs** | **5 hrs** | **6 hrs** | **7 hrs** | **12 hrs** |
| Civic Centre | £1.00 | £1.60 | £2.40 | £4.10 | £5.10 | £6.10 | £10.20 | |
| Fairheads Green | £1.60 | £2.90 | £4.20 | £6.60 | £8.30 | £10.20 | £12.70 | |
| Library (Beecroft) | £1.00 | £1.80 | £2.50 | £4.30 | £5.40 | £6.40 | £10.50 | |
| London Road (on street) | £1.10 | £1.90 | £2.70 | £4.70 | £5.70 | £7.00 | £11.00 | |
| Portcullis (Green Parking) | £1.00 | £2.00 | £3.00 | £6.00 | £6.00 | £6.00 | £6.00 | £0.25* |
| Seaway | £1.60 | £2.90 | £4.20 | £6.60 | £8.30 | £10.20 | £10.20 | £12.70 |
| Shorefield Road | £1.00 | £2.00 | £2.80 | £4.50 | £5.60 | £7.00 | £8.50 | |
| Short Street | £1.10 | £1.60 | £2.30 | £4.00 | £5.00 | £6.00 | £10.00 | |
| The Royals Shopping Centre, Tylers Avenue, University Square, Alexandra Street, Clarence Road, Warrior Square, Essex Street | £1.00 | £2.00 | £2.80 | £4.50 | £5.50 | £7.50 | £15.00 | |
| Victoria Shopping Centre | £0.80 | £1.50 | £2.50 | £3.50 | £4.50 | £6.99 | £10.00 | |
| Western Esplanade central (on-street), Western Esplanade west section (on-street), The Leas (on-street), Eastern Esplanade (on-street), Western Esplanade East section (on-street) | £1.20 | £2.30 | £3.90 | £4.60 | £5.70 | £7.00 | £11.00 | |

**hourly price after midnight*

2.19 The cheapest first hour rate is in Victoria Shopping Centre (80p) and the most expensive is at Seaway and Fairheads Green car parks (£1.60), the average price for the first hour across all the car parks is £1.15.

2.20 In general, visitors pay a small premium to park near the seafront: Seaway and Fairheads car parks, located towards the seafront, are more expensive.

2.21 For long stay or all day parking the cheapest day rate is at Portcullis, a temporary car park, with the cheapest SoSBC car park for all day parking being Shorefield Road car park (£8.50) and the most expensive at The Royals Shopping Centre, a privately operated car park (£15). The average price per day is £11.40. The pricing is split into four bands:

- £8.50 to £10.20;
- £11.00;
- £12.00 to £12.70; and
- £15.00

2.22 Table 2.7 shows the average hourly fee for long stay (up to 7 hours) and short stay parking (up to 3 hours) in Southend Central Area. The average hourly fee is greater for long-stay parking in every car park. This is likely to have the effect of encouraging short stays and discouraging long stays.

**Table 2.7: Average hourly fees for short and long-stay parking**

| Parking area | Average hourly short stay fee (up to 3 hours) | Average hourly long-stay fee (up to 7 hours) |
|---|---|---|
| Victoria Shopping Centre | £0.79 | £0.96 |
| Civic Centre | £0.87 | £1.02 |
| Short Street | £0.89 | £1.01 |
| Library (Beecroft) | £0.91 | £1.07 |
| Shorefield Road | £0.98 | £1.08 |
| The Royals Shopping Centre, Tylers Avenue, University Square, Alexandra Street, Clarence Road, Warrior Square, Essex Street | £0.98 | £1.22 |
| London Road (on-street) | £0.98 | £1.14 |
| Portcullis (Green Parking) | £1.00 | £1.08 |
| Chalkwell Esplanade (on-street) | £1.06 | £1.16 |
| Western Esplanade central (on-street), Western Esplanade west section (on-street), The Leas (on-street), Eastern Esplanade (on-street), Western Esplanade East section (on-street)) | £1.22 | £1.24 |
| Seaway | £1.48 | £1.56 |
| Fairheads Green | £1.48 | £1.61 |

*Mix of Short and Long Stay Parking*

2.23 There is no distinction between short and long stay parking within the Southend Central Area, with most car parks offering a mix of both. Some of the Southend Central Area retail car parks (Victoria Shopping Centre and The Royals) do charge slightly less for short stay parking with an aim to encourage more shoppers to use their facilities through higher turnover of spaces.

*Payment Methods*

2.24 Currently most parking payments are made via pay and display machines, with only the Royals Shopping Centre, University Square and Victoria Shopping Centre offering a pay-on-foot payment method.

2.25 In contrast to pay and display parking, which requires users to estimate how long they plan to stay in the car park and pay in advance, pay on foot allows users to pay for the time they have stayed in the car park at the end of their stay. The user experience offered by pay-on-foot parking is generally seen as preferable as it allows users to stay in the car park for longer than they originally planned without having to purchase an additional ticket. Pay and display users may also stay for less time than they originally planned (and estimated when buying their ticket) which leads to users paying for time they have not used. This is often a frustration amongst pay and display users.

2.26 SoSBC operates 186 pay and display machines either in on- street locations or within existing car parks.

## Other relevant research

*Previous local studies*

2.27 The **Southend Parking & Movement Study** (Atkins, 2007) analysed survey data on off-street parking in Southend Central Area. In terms of off-street parking demand:

- Across all car parks a high proportion of visits (over 65%) were short stay, i.e. up to 2 hours;
- Just under half of all visits across all car parks were less than one hour (45%); and
- The level of use across the day (total turnover) was between 25% and 40% higher on the Saturday surveyed compared to the weekday. Demand for car parks on a Saturday was balanced more towards short stay parking, with significantly lower demand for long stay parking.

2.28 The **Southend Travel Survey** (Atkins, 2009) included a travel survey of visitors to Southend Central Area. It found that leisure and shopping are main purposes of visit to Southend Central Area, walking is the most frequent mode of transport, followed by bus then car. Car is more highly used among business visitors.

2.29 The **Southend Business Survey** (BMG Research 2010) found that the most important factors having an impact on businesses' performance are high energy costs (49%), parking (cost and availability) (48%), increasing competition (45%) and bureaucracy (45%). Parking is a particularly significant issue for wholesale and retail businesses and even more so for hotels and restaurants.

2.30 Parking was also thought by 41% of businesses to be foremost in terms of limitations to businesses of being located in Southend.

# 3 Parking in Southend Central Area: existing supply and demand

## Introduction

3.1 To understand the existing supply and demand for car parking in Southend Central Area, existing data sources were reviewed and analysed. Particular focus was on understanding how the parking network of around 5,500 spaces (listed in Table 2.2, and Table 2.4 in the previous section) performs at peak periods of demand. For Southend, these peak periods are in the Summer holiday season and public holidays.

3.2 The following data sources were reviewed and analysed:

- Parking surveys undertaken by an independent traffic survey company on behalf of SoSBC on:
  - Thursday 13th and Saturday 15th August 2015, covering around 3,000 spaces;
  - Wednesday 23rd, Friday 25th and Saturday 26th March 2016, covering around 1,600 spaces; and
  - Monday 30th May 2016 (May public holiday), covering around 5,000 spaces.
- Variable Messaging System data provided by SoSBC which covers around 4,000 spaces.

3.3 Car parks surveyed on each day are listed in Table 3.1 overleaf.

3.4 The parking surveys were undertaken using video cameras. For off-street car parks, cameras were used to count vehicles entering and exiting the car park from 07.00 to 19.00 on each of the survey days. For on-street parking, a similar approach was used where the cameras were used to count vehicles parked on the whole street.

3.5 The Variable Messaging System data provides counts of the number of vehicle entering and exiting each car park throughout the day for each day of the year. The primary purpose of the VMS is to provide live, up-to-date information about car parking availability via on-street signage. Collecting data on parking occupancy for analysis is an additional benefit of the system. Within the VMS dataset, there were some inconsistencies and unusual results for some days, where the automatic counting loops were not functioning correctly, or, for example queuing vehicles cover the counting loop producing unusual results. In such instances, operators will adjust the information displays to show accurate information but there may be anomalies in the datasets produced by the system.

Comparison of VMS data with video survey data for the days surveyed found that these anomalies were rare: the VMS data is on the whole accurate giving us a high level of confidence in the datasets.

3.6 Parking data are available for most off-street car parks and a selection of paid-for on-street parking areas in central Southend. The availability of data for each off-street and on-street car park is summarised in Table 3.1.

3.7 Occupancy data for Leigh-on-Sea station and Two Tree Island car park were collected in order to understand the possibility of using those car parks as Park and Ride sites. They were not included in the analysis of occupancy of the Southend Central Area.

**Table 3.1: Southend Central Area parking network and availability of occupancy data**

| Off-street car park | VMS | Parking surveys | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All days | 13 Aug 15 | 15 Aug 15 | 23 Mar 16 | 25 Mar 16 | 26 Mar 16 | 30 May 16 |
| Alexandra Street | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Civic Centre Overground | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Civic Centre Underground | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Clarence Road | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | x |
| Essex Street | ✓ | x | x | X | x | x | x |
| Fairheads Green | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Library (Beecroft) | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Royals Shopping Centre | ✓ | x | x | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Seaway | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Shorefield Road | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Short Street | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Southend College | ✓ | x | x | X | x | x | x |
| Tylers Avenue | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| University Square | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | x |
| Victoria Shopping Centre | ✓ | x | x | X | x | x | ✓ |
| Warrior Square | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| York Road | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| **On-street parking** | | | | | | | |
| Clifftown Road | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Eastern Esplanade | x | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | x |
| Elmer Avenue | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Queens Road | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Queens Road short-stay | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| The Leas | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Victoria Avenue | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Warrior Square | x | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | x |
| Western Esplanade Central | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Western Esplanade East Section | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Whitegate Road | x | ✓ | ✓ | X | x | x | ✓ |
| York Road | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| **Parking outside of Southend Central Area**[3] | | | | | | | |
| Leigh-on-Sea station | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Two Tree Island | x | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

[3] Occupancy data for Leigh-on-Sea station and Two Trees car parks were not included in the analysis of occupancy of the Southend Central Area.

3.8 The weather conditions are shown in Table 3.2. Weather conditions for August 2015 were recorded by the survey company on the day of each survey. For March and May 2016 historic weather data were taken from an online source providing historic weather data[4].

**Table 3.2: Weather conditions on survey days**

| Survey day | Weather conditions |
|---|---|
| 13 August 2015 | Dry + Sunny, highs of 22C |
| 15 August 2015 | Dry + Sunny, highs of 20C |
| 23 March 2016 | Scattered cloud with highs of 10C |
| 25 March 2016 | Highs of 15C and partly sunny, |
| 26 March 2016 | Highs of 13C and cloudy/rain |
| 30 May 2016 | Highs of 18C and mostly sunny |

3.9 This section presents the following analysis of the data available:

- Network performance at a peak period of demand (using August 2015 survey data);
- Network performance for the busiest day of the year (using VMS data);
- Network performance on typical weekdays and weekends (using VMS data);
- Network performance at Easter (using Easter 2016 survey data); and
- Network performance at May public holiday (using May 2016 survey data).

## Network performance in August 2015 (at a peak period of demand)

3.10 To understand how the parking network performs at a peak period of demand, detailed analysis of August 2015 data was undertaken. For car parks where video surveys were not undertaken, VMS data were used. The analysis explored:

- The profile of accumulation over the course of the day: for the network overall and for each individual parking area;
- The peak periods of demand;
- The spread of parking demand across the parking network;
- The busiest car parks and the availability of spaces in other car parks when the busiest ones are full; and
- For the busiest car parks, walking distances to alternative car parks with capacity at times when they are full.

**Optimum maximum occupancy for car parking**

Analysis sought to identify how often the parking network and individual car parks exceeded 85% occupancy. Beyond 85% occupancy, demand for travel can begin to become suppressed due to issues of circulation, queuing, and a perception amongst users that they may not get a space in the car park.

3.11 This analysis includes all of the key parking closest to the main shopping and tourist areas in Southend: Alexandra St, Clarence Rd, Eastern Esplanade, on-street, Essex Street, Fairheads Green, Royals Shopping Centre, Seaway, Shorefield Road, Southend College, Tylers Avenue car park, University Square, Victoria Shopping Centre, Warrior Square on-street, Warrior Square car park, Western Esplanade Central on-street parking, Whitegate Road on-street parking, York Road on-street parking and York Road car park. It excludes some car parks for which data are unavailable for the survey days (see Table 3.1 earlier in this section).

3.12 As with any town centre locality, demand for parking in the Southend Central Area arises from people making various types of journey. An important generator of demand in Southend is the visitor attractions on the seafront, a demand which varies by time of the year and by day of the week, with summer periods and weekends being the busiest.

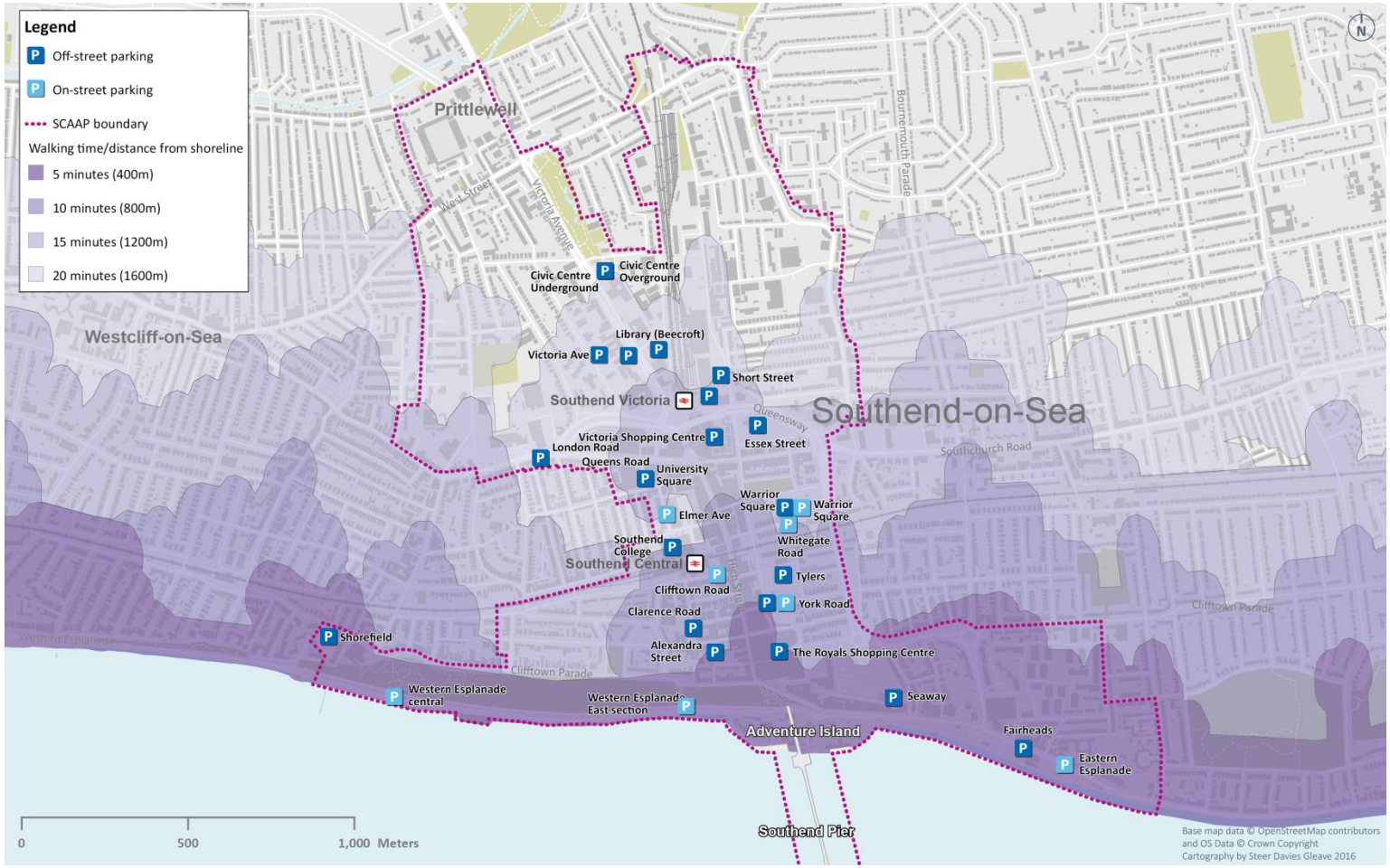
[4] Timeanddate.com

3.13 A key concern in developing the SCAAP is to maintain a level of parking that services the visitor economy. As such, the analysis sought to identify the existing supply and demand in two sub-areas of the Southend Central Area:

- The “Central Area South” (within 10 minutes’ walk of the shoreline); and
- The “Central Area North” area (more than 10 minutes’ walk from the shoreline).

3.14 Figure 3.1 shows the location of car parks in Southend Central Area and the walking times and distances from the shoreline. This mapping informed the definition of the Central Area South and Central Area North parking supply. Essentially, and as a guide, the Central Area South parking supply is considered as car parks and on-street parking areas south of Southend Central railway line with Central Area North parking north for the railway line.

**Figure 3.1: Location of parking within walking distance of the shoreline**



3.15 Table 3.3 shows the *Central Area South* parking supply and approximate walking times and distances from the shoreline.

**Table 3.3: Central Area South parking supply**

| **0-5 minutes from shoreline** | |
|---|---|
| **Car Park** | **Capacity** |
| Eastern Esplanade | **2,094** |
| Alexandra Street | |
| Fairheads | |
| Seaway | |
| Shorefield | |
| The Royals Shopping Centre | |
| Western Esplanade central | |
| Western Esplanade East Section | |
| **5-10 minutes from shoreline** | |
| **Car Park** | **Capacity** |
| Clarence Road | **406** |
| Clifftown Road | |
| Tylers | |
| York Road | |
| **Total** | |
| **Total spaces within 10 minutes' walk of shoreline** | **2,500** |

3.16 Table 3.4 shows the *Central Area North* parking supply and approximate walking times and distances from the shoreline.

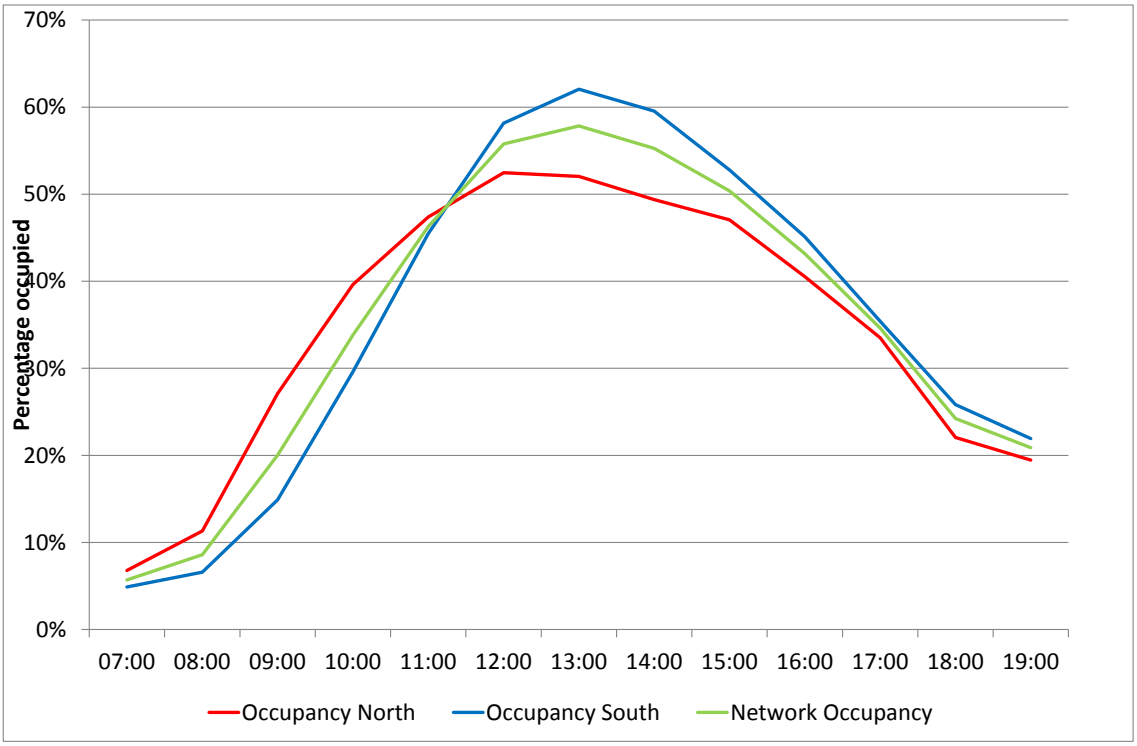
**Table 3.4: Central Area North parking supply**

| **10-15 minutes from shoreline** | |
|---|---|
| **Car Park** | **Capacity** |
| Elmer Ave | |
| Essex Street | |
| Queens Road | |
| Short Street | |
| University Square | |
| Victoria Shopping Centre | **1,667** |
| Warrior Square Off-street | |
| Warrior Square On-Street | |
| Whitegate Road | |
| **Total** | |
| **15-20 minutes from shoreline** | |
| **Car Park** | **Capacity** |
| Library (Beecroft) | |
| London Road | |
| Southend College | **469** |
| Victoria Ave | |
| **Total** | |
| **Total 10-20 minutes from shoreline** | **2,136** |
| **>20 minutes from shoreline** | |
| **Car Park** | **Capacity** |
| Civic Centre Underground | |
| Civic Centre Overground | **198** |
| **Total** | |
| **Total > 10 minutes from shoreline** | **2,334** |

*Thursday 13th August 2015*

3.17 The occupancy levels for parking areas in the Central Area North, Central Area South and for the entire network for each hourly period from 07:00 to 19:00 on Thursday 13th August 2015 are shown in Figure 3.2. Central Area South occupancy reached a peak of 62% occupancy between 13:00 and 14:00. Central Area North occupancy peaked earlier (between 12:00 and 13:00 at 52%).

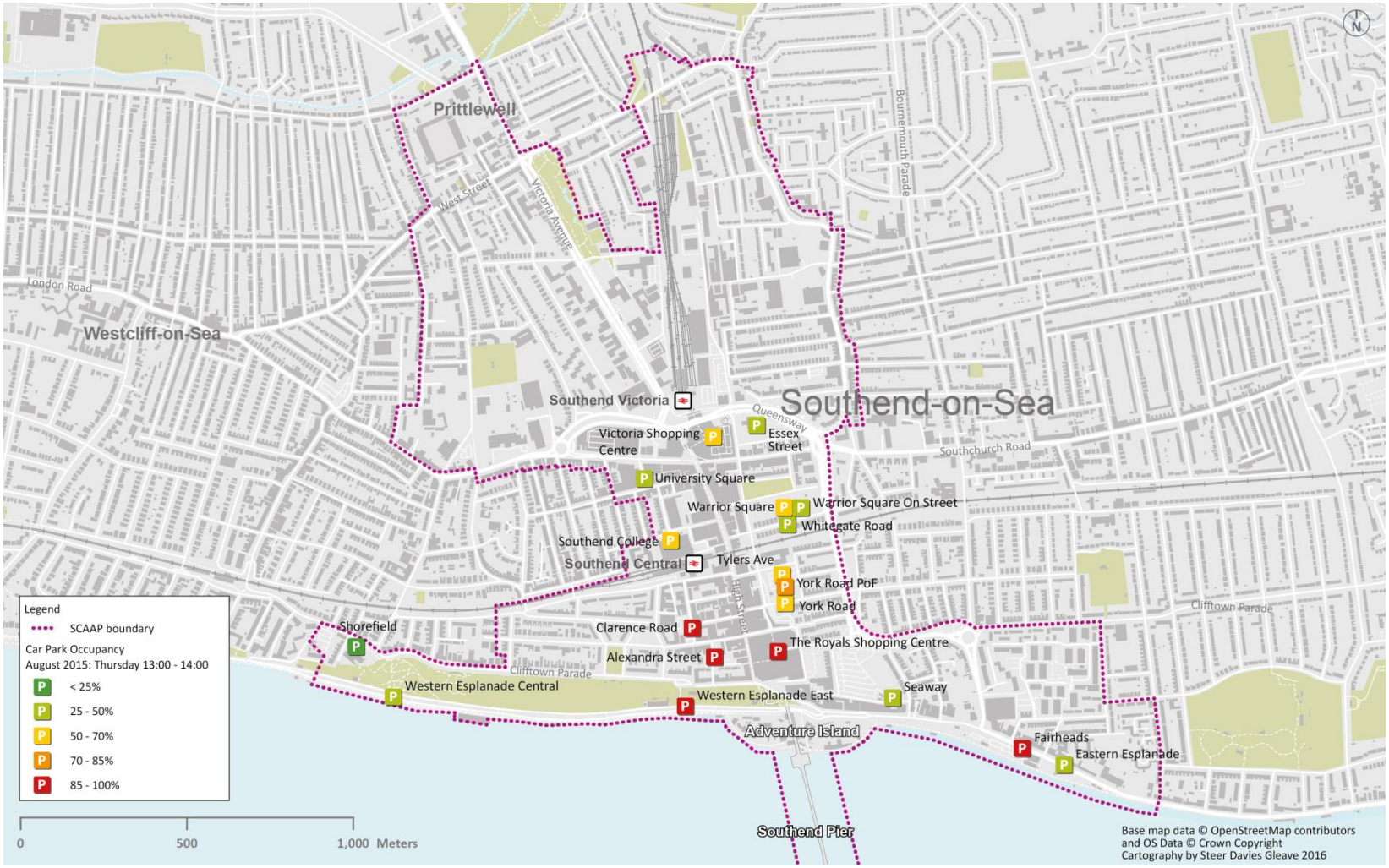
**Figure 3.2: Accumulation profile of the Central Area South, Central Area North the entire network parking areas, Thursday**[5]




3.18 Figure 3.3 shows the distribution of demand at the peak period of demand (13:00 – 14:00). It highlights the pressure on the Royals Shopping Centre, Western Esplanade East, York Road, Alexandra Street, Clarence Road and Fairheads car parks and the availability of capacity elsewhere.

[5] Using August 2015 survey data

**Figure 3.3: Distribution of demand at the peak period of demand (13:00-14:00 Thursday 13th August 2015)**



3.19 There are five parking areas within the Central Area South car parks which exceed 85% occupancy at points during the day: Clarence Road, Alexandra Street, Royals Shopping Centre, Fairheads and Western Esplanade on-street.

3.20 Table 3.5 shows the peak period of occupancy and the percentage of spaces occupied in that period for each parking area and for the network overall. Parking areas are split between Central Area South and Central Area North. Where the table shows occupancy in excess of 100% this is either due to queuing within the car parks or parking outside of marked bays.

3.21 The most popular five car parks area heavily over-subscribed at peak periods of demand around lunchtime.

**Table 3.5: Periods of maximum occupancy, Thursday**

| Area | Car Park | Maximum occupancy | Spare capacity (spaces) | Period of maximum occupancy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Central Area South** | Alexandra St | 100%+ | 0 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | Fairheads | 100%+ | 0 | 12:00-13:00 |
| | Royals Shopping Centre | 100%+ | 0 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | W. Esplanade, East on-street | 97% | 4 | 12:00-13:00 |
| | Clarence Rd | 93% | 9 | 11:00-12:00 |
| | York Road car park | 78% | 20 | 12:00-13:00 |
| | York Road (on-street) | 75% | 5 | 15:00-16:00 |
| | Tylers Ave | 68% | 80 | 12:00-13:00 |
| | Eastern Esplanade on-street | 51% | 33 | 14:00-15:00 |
| | Seaway | 40% | 270 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | W.Esplanade Central on-street | 34% | 387 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | Shorefield Road | 6% | 118 | 14:00-15:00 |
| **Central Area North** | Warrior Square P&D car park | 69% | 118 | 12:00-13:00 |
| | Southend College | 67% | 71 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | Victoria Shopping Centre | 50% | 326 | 13:00-14:00 |
| | Warrior Square on-street | 49% | 22 | 15:00-16:00 |
| | Whitegate Road on-street | 49% | 29 | 15:00-16:00 |
| | Essex Street | 47% | 104 | 12:00-14:00 |
| | University Square | 44% | 170 | 13:00-14:00 |

3.22 Aside from the five most popular parking areas, there is significant availability of spaces in alternative parking areas. It can be assumed that the high level of demand for the five most popular parking areas means that users wish to park in the locations that are close to the main shopping and tourism destinations of Southend Central Area.

3.23 There are a number of car parks with spare capacity as shown above. To understand the suitability of those car parks to absorb the excess demand from parking areas that have reached capacity, analysis of walking distances between the full car parks and the car parks with spare capacity was undertaken.

3.24 Table 3.6 shows the alternative parking provision available for users of the five most popular parking areas at the peak period of demand and the availability of spaces in alternative car

parks. For any of the five most popular car parks, there is available spare capacity in alternative car parks within a short walk, typically of around five minutes or less.

**Table 3.6: Nearest alternative parking areas for top five parking areas**

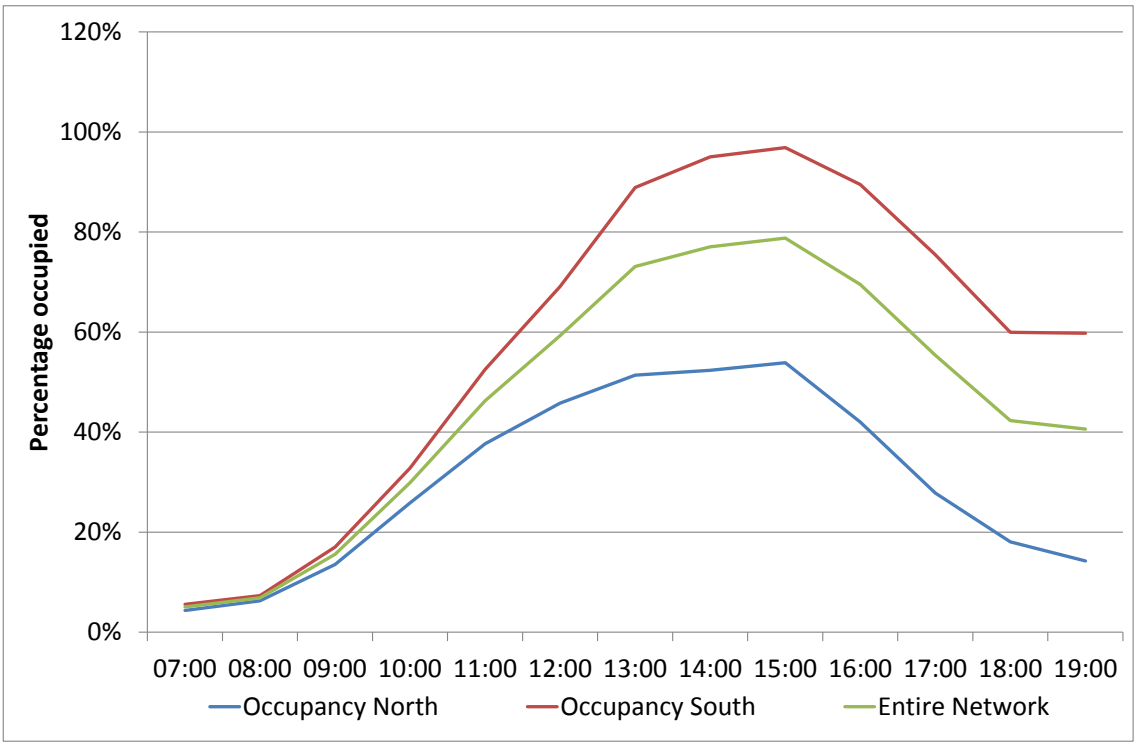
| | Max occupancy | Period of max occupancy | Nearest alternative parking area(s) | Number of spaces available | Walking time (mins)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alexandra St | 100% | 13:00 - 14:00 | Tylers Avenue | 90 | 7 |
| | | | York Road car park | 22 | 2 |
| | | | Southend College | 71 | 4 |
| | | | **Total** | **183** | |
| Fairheads | 100% | 12:00 – 13:00 | Eastern Esplanade on-street | 35 | 2 |
| | | | Seaway | 292 | 6 |
| | | | **Total** | **347** | |
| Royals Shopping Centre | 100% | 13:00 – 14:00 | Tylers Avenue | 97 | 5 |
| | | | York Road car park | 24 | 4 |
| | | | Seaway | 270 | 7 |
| | | | **Total** | **391** | |
| Western Esplanade, East Section On-street | 97% | 12:00- 13:00 | Western Esplanade Central Section | 412 | 11 |
| | | | **Total** | **412** | |
| Clarence Rd | 93% | 11:00 – 12:00 | Tylers Avenue | 86 | 6 |
| | | | York Road car park | 28 | 4 |
| | | | Southend College | 83 | 2 |
| | | | **Total** | **186** | |

*Times calculated at a walking speed of 5km/hr.

*Saturday 15 August 2015*

3.25 Figure 3.4 shows the occupancy levels for parking areas in the Central Area North, Central Area South and for the entire network for each hourly period from 07:00 to 19:00 on Saturday 15th August 2015 a day in the peak holiday period. Occupancy across the entire network peaked at 79% between 14:00 and 16:00. Central Area South occupancy reached a higher peak (97%) than Central Area North occupancy (54%). The distribution throughout the day was similar across all areas with maximum occupancies being reached between 15:00 and 16:00 which is later during the day than on a peak August weekday.

**Figure 3.4: Accumulation profile of the Central Area South, Central Area North the entire network parking areas, peak Saturday[6]**




3.26 The distribution of demand at the peak period (15:00 – 16:00) is shown in Figure 3.5. All Central Area South parking areas are close to capacity apart from Shorefield Road.

3.27 There are eleven parking areas which exceeded 85% occupancy at points during the day: Eastern Esplanade (on-street), Fairheads, Tylers Ave, Seaway, Royals Shopping Centre, Western Esplanade Central (on-street), Alexandra St, Clarence Rd, York Road pay on foot car park, York Road (on-street), Western Esplanade East Section (on-street).

3.28 Generally these car parks exceeded 85% occupancy in the period between 12:00 and 16:00. Overall the network was 78% utilised at its peak period of occupancy but there was a notable imbalance between the eleven very popular car parks, and the less popular car parks.

3.29 Table 3.7 shows the peak period of occupancy and the percentage of spaces occupied in that period for each parking area. It shows that those eleven most popular car parks, all in the Central Area South area, are heavily over-subscribed at peak periods of demand, typically in mid to late afternoon.

[6] Using August 2015 survey data

**Figure 3.5: Distribution of demand at the peak period of demand (Saturday)**

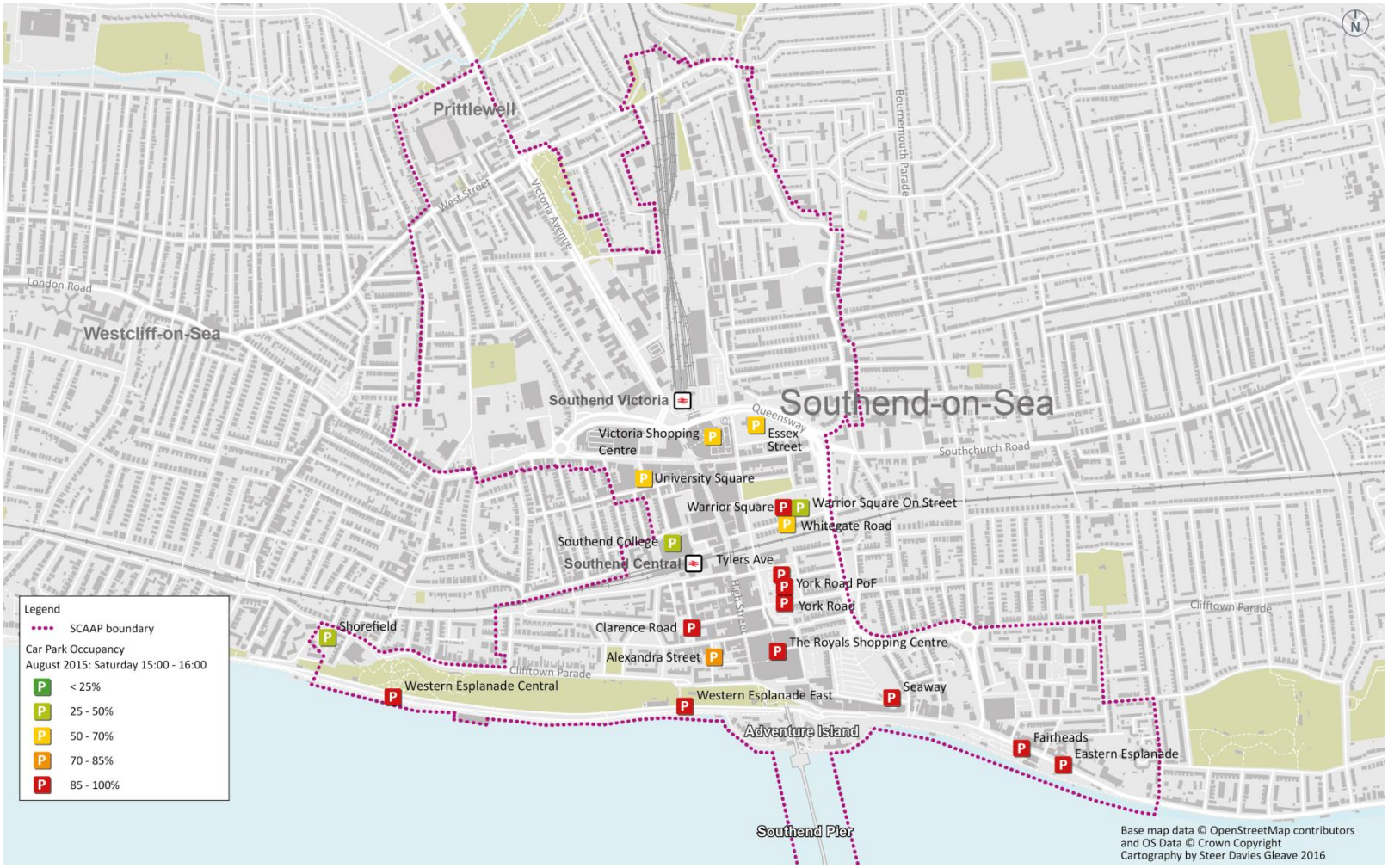


**Table 3.7: Periods of maximum occupancy, Saturday**

| Area | Location | Maximum occupancy | Period of maximum occupancy | Spare capacity (spaces) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **South** | Tylers Ave | 100% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 0 |
| | Alexandra St | 100% | 13:00 - 14:00 | 0 |
| | Clarence Rd | 100% | 14:00 – 15:00 | 0 |
| | Seaway | 100% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 0 |
| | Fairheads | 100% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 0 |
| | Western Esplanade Central on-street parking | 100% | 15:00 - 16:00 | 0 |
| | Eastern Esplanade, on-street | 100% | 15:00 - 16:00 | 0 |
| | Royals Shopping Centre | 100% | 13:00 - 14:00 | 0 |
| | York Road PoF car park | 98% | 14:00 – 15:00 | 2 |
| | York Road (on-street) | 95% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 1 |
| | Western Esplanade, East Section on-street | 93% | 14:00 – 15:00 | 9 |
| | Shorefield Road | 39% | 16:00 – 17:00 | 76 |
| **North** | Whitegate Road on-street | 61% | 07:00 – 08:00 | 22 |
| | Warrior Square P&D car park | 60% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 150 |
| | Victoria Shopping Centre | 59% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 265 |
| | University Square | 57% | 14:00 – 15:00 | 133 |
| | Essex Street | 57% | 13:00 – 14:00 | 84 |
| | Warrior Square on-street | 41% | 15:00 – 16:00 | 26 |
| | Southend College | 30% | 14:00 – 15:00 | 150 |

3.30 While there is availability of spaces in alternative parking areas at peak periods of demand, it is not always located within a short walk of the most popular car parks. Table 3.8 shows the alternative parking provision available for users of the top eleven parking areas at the peak period of demand, the availability of spaces in those car parks and the walking times to alternatives.

3.31 The table shows that at the periods of maximum occupancy for the most popular car parks (typically mid to late afternoon) there are around 900 – 1,000 unoccupied spaces in the less popular parking areas.

3.32 For more isolated Central Area South parking areas, such as Eastern Esplanade, Fairheads and Seaway, the nearest alternative car parks with spare capacity are 15-20 minutes away, which may be deemed too long a walk by many users. For others, there is spare capacity within 5-10 minutes' walk.

**Table 3.8: Nearest alternative parking areas for most popular parking areas: peak Saturday**

| | | | Spaces available in alternative car parks | | | | | | | | | Walking time | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Most popular car parks | **Maximum occupancy** | **Start of hourly Period of maximum occupancy** | Whitegate Road on-street | Warrior Square P&D car park | Victoria Shopping Centre | Essex Street | University Square | Warrior Square on-street | Shorefield Road | Southend College | **Total** | Whitegate Road on-street | Warrior Square P&D car park | Victoria Shopping Centre | Essex Street | University Square | Warrior Square on-street | Shorefield Road | Southend College |
| Eastern Esplanade (on-street) | **100%+** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 16 | 19 | 21 | 19 | 22 | 16 | 26 | 17 |
| Fairheads | **100%+** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 15 | 18 | 19 | 18 | 20 | 14 | 25 | 15 |
| Tylers Ave | **100%+** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 17 | 4 |
| Seaway | **100%+** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 10 | 12 | 14 | 13 | 16 | 9 | 22 | 11 |
| Royals Shopping Centre | **100%+** | **13:00** | 29 | 158 | 296 | 84 | 142 | 37 | 109 | 151 | **1006** | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 17 | 5 |
| Western Esplanade Central (on-street) | **100%** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 17 | 21 | 5 | 15 |
| Alexandra St | **100%** | **13:00** | 29 | 158 | 296 | 84 | 142 | 37 | 109 | 151 | **1006** | 8 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 14 | 4 |
| Clarence Rd | **100%** | **14:00** | 24 | 166 | 270 | 105 | 133 | 31 | 99 | 150 | **978** | 8 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 8 | 14 | 2 |
| York Road pay on foot car park | **98%** | **14:00** | 24 | 166 | 270 | 105 | 133 | 31 | 99 | 150 | **978** | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 17 | 4 |
| York Road (on-street) | **95%** | **15:00** | 28 | 150 | 265 | 88 | 143 | 26 | 80 | 151 | **931** | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 17 | 4 |

** For some time periods there is also some spare capacity within the most popular car parks (e.g. occupancy at Alexandra Street peaks at 100% at 13:00 but has spare spaces at 15:00 when occupancy is at 78%).

The table represents a Saturday in the peak period. It is not a typical Saturday when demand is much lower. Over the course of the year, a similar level of demand is experienced on 1 day in 10 days (see Figure 3.7)

## Network performance for the busiest day of the year

3.33 Analysis of the Variable Messaging System (VMS) database was undertaken to identify the busiest day of period from May 2015 to May 2016. The VMS database covers 16 parking areas within the Southend Central Area[7], covering about 4,000 parking spaces as listed in Table 3.1. Data are presented as hourly counts of vehicles entering and exiting the 15 parking areas and the total accumulation of vehicles parked[8]. The analysis the VMS dataset sought to identify the busiest hourly periods across the network.

3.34 **The busiest day was Saturday 22nd August 2015 which was the only day during which during which network occupancy across the Southend Central Area reached or exceeded 85%** (i.e. the point beyond which parking demand may begin to become suppressed). On that day, the peaks of demand were:

- 87% occupancy from 15:00 to 16:00; and
- 85% occupancy from 16:00 to 17:00.

3.35 On Saturday 22nd August 2015, during the peak hour (15:00 to 16:00), there were still 450 spaces available in the Southend Central Area network, and five parking areas had occupancy below 85% (i.e. had visible spare capacity). These car parks were all in the Central Area North.

3.36 The spare capacity available can be summarised as follows:

Central Area North

- Southend College 49% spare capacity
- Essex Street 22% spare capacity
- University Square 34% spare capacity
- Victoria Shopping Centre 19% spare capacity
- Warrior Square (off-street) 52% spare capacity
- Clarence Road 6% spare capacity
- Royals Shopping Centre 9% spare capacity

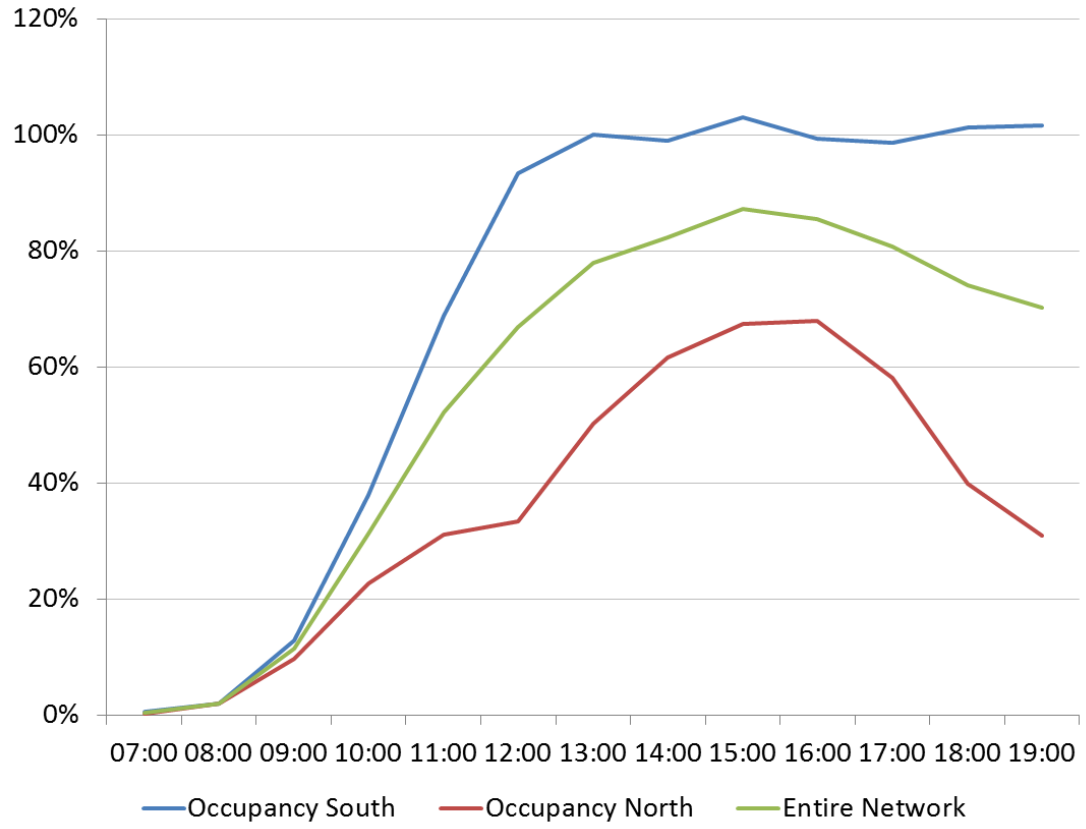
3.37 There was no spare capacity at the following car parks:

- Shorefield Road
- Western Esplanade
- Seaway
- Fairheads Green
- Alexandra Street

3.38 The occupancy profile of the Central Area South, Central Area North and overall network for each hourly period between 07:00 and 19:00 on Saturday 22 August 2015 is shown in Figure 3.6. The number of spaces occupied across the network peaked at 87% between 15:00 and 16:00. Occupancy in the Central Area South car parks was at or exceeding capacity from 13:00 to 19:00. Central Area North occupancy peaked at 68% between 15:00 and 16:00 then declined to 30% by 19:00.

[8] Data were removed from the analysis where there were no recordings (as opposed to a recording of zero, with the assumption that missing data represented an error. Recordings in excess of 110% were capped at 110% on the assumption that whilst there can be some over-capacity from circulating vehicles and 'double' or inappropriate parking, recordings over 110% could be assumed to be erroneous. For example, further investigation has shown that when a car is stationary over a VMS loop, abnormally high and multiple counts can be registered despite there only being one vehicle.

**Figure 3.6: Accumulation profile of the whole network, busiest day of year**




## Number of "peak" days

3.39 Table 3.9 displays the number of days in the sample year upon which each parking area exceeded 85% occupancy for one or more hours a day, and the average number of hours on each of those days that 85% occupancy was exceeded. There is almost always spare capacity at Victoria Shopping Centre and University Square.

**Table 3.9: Number of days a year and hours that parking areas exceed 85% occupancy (May 2015 – May 2016 VMS Data)**

| Parking Area | Location | Parking type | Number of days a year in excess of 85% occupancy for one hour or more | Average number of hours a when occupancy is in excess of 85%[9] | Peak hour (modal average) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shorefield Road | Central Area South | Off-street | 251 | 4.1 | 21:00 – 22:00 |
| Alexandra Road | Central Area South | Off- street | 224 | 8.1 | 15:00 – 16:00 |
| Clarence Road | Central Area South | Off-street | 219 | 2.4 | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| Royals Shopping | Central Area South | Off-street | 207 | 4.0 | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| Fairheads Green | Central Area South | Off-street | 166 | 5.5 | 14:00 – 15:00 |
| Southend College | Central Area North | Off-street | 164 | 6.8 | 12:00 – 13:00 |

[9] On the days when occupancy exceeds 85%

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tylers Avenue | Central Area South | Off-street | 124 | 3.2 | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| Western Esplanade[10] | Central Area South | On-street | 83 | 4.1 | 14:00 – 15:00 |
| Seaway[11] | Central Area South | Off-street | 64 | 4.0 | 15:00 – 16:00 |
| Warrior Square[12] | Central Area North | Off-street | 63 | 6.7 | 14:00 – 15:00 |
| Essex Street | Central Area North | Off-street | 61 | 8.3 | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| Victoria Shopping | Central Area North | Off-street | 13 | 1.2 | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| University Square | Central Area North | Off-street | 5 | 1.6 | 14:00 – 15:00 |

**3.40** **Evidence from the VMS data suggests that, whilst occupancy rates in individual car parks reach or exceed 85% on a number of days during the year, the overall network occupancy in Southend rarely does – indeed it did so only once in the entire year between May 2015 and May 2016.**

3.41 Even on the busiest day of the year, there were still spaces available in a number of car parks. Of these car parks with availability, the following are highlighted by both the VMS and survey data as regularly having space during peak hours, including on 'typical' weekdays and weekends:

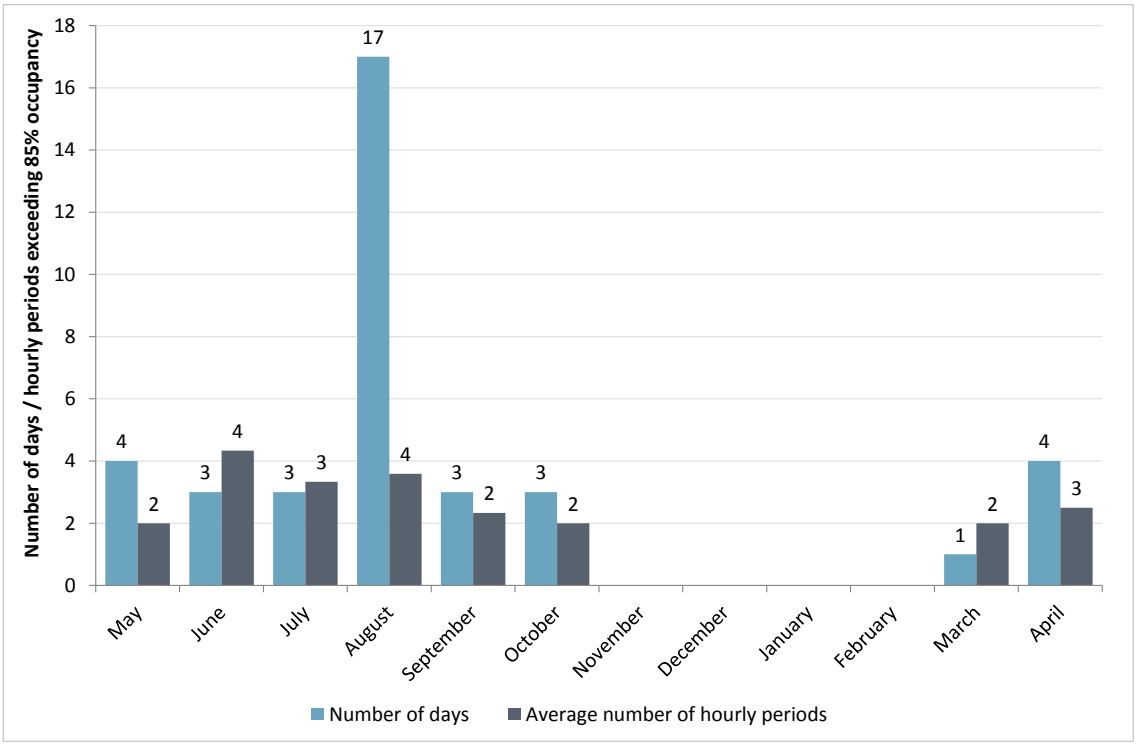
- Shorefield Road
- University Square
- Victoria Shopping Centre
- Warrior Square

3.42 **For the Central Area South parking areas as a whole, the number of days on which occupancy exceeded 85% was 38 between May 2015 and 2016**. These tended to be in the summer holiday periods with the greatest number in any month being in August 2015. Figure 3.7 shows the number of days per month when occupancy of the Central Area South network exceeded 85% and the average number of hours in each day that this high occupancy was reached.

[10] For Western Esplanade, VMS covers a slightly different number of spaces (500) to that which was surveyed in the video surveys

[12] There are also 44 on-street parking spaces at Warrior Square for which there is no VMS parking occupancy data. (Closed at weekends).

**Figure 3.7: Distribution of high occupancy periods: May 2015 –April 2016**




3.43 Parking in the Central Area North did not exceed 85% occupancy on any occasion during the period between May 2015 and April 2016.

## Typical demand

3.44 Analysis was also completed to show network occupancy on a 'typical' weekday and Saturday out of season. Tuesday 1st March 2016 and Saturday 13th February 2016 were chosen as examples of typical parking demand. These days were chosen as they were neither very busy nor quiet days and are outside of holiday periods i.e. peak periods. There were no particular activities that generated significant additional demand on those days.

3.45 On **Tuesday 1st March 2016**, average network occupancy between 07:00 and 19:00 was 32%.

3.46 Car parks that exceeded 85% occupancy during the day were:

- Southend College from 09:00 to 16:00;
- Royals Shopping Centre from 12:00 to 14:00; and
- Shorefield Road from 19:00 to 23:00.

3.47 During the peak hour (13:00 to 14:00), overall network occupancy was 52. There were still 1,933 spaces available in the Southend Central Area, and 10 of the 15 parking areas had occupancy below 85% (i.e. had visible spare capacity). These car parks were:

*Central Area South*

- Shorefield Road 95% spare capacity
- Seaway 91% spare capacity
- Western Esplanade 91% spare capacity
- Fairheads Green 82% spare capacity
- Alexandra Road 31% spare capacity

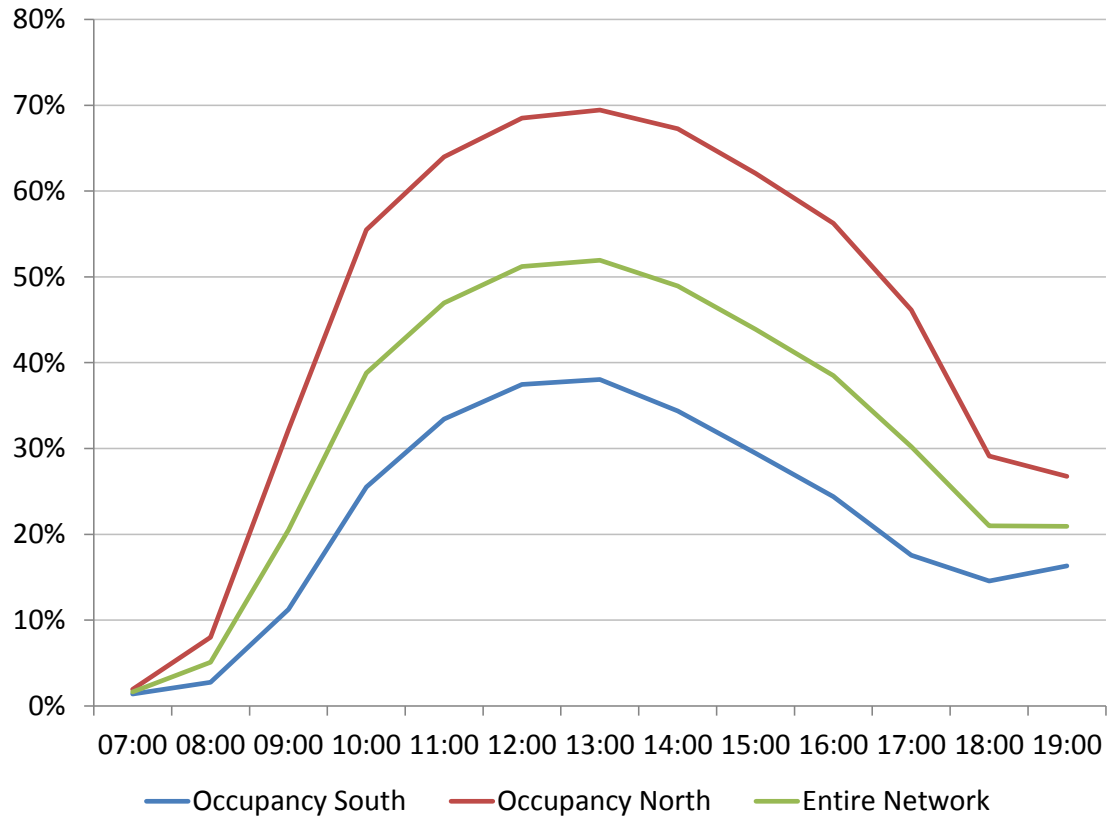
*Central Area North*

- Victoria Shopping Centre 48% spare capacity
- Warrior Square 37% spare capacity

- University Square 37% spare capacity
- Tylers Avenue 23% spare capacity
- Clarence Road 17% spare capacity

3.48 Figure 3.8 shows the occupancy of the Central Area South, Central Area North and entire network, for each hourly period between 07:00 and 19:00. The number of spaces occupied across the network peaked between 13:00 and 14:00, representing 52% occupancy. Central Area North parking areas were occupied to a greater extent than Central Area South parking areas with max occupancy reached between 13:00 and 14:00, reaching 69%. Within the same period of the day Central Area South occupancy also peaked, however only 38% of parking spaces were occupied.

**Figure 3.8: Accumulation profile of the Central Area South, Central Area North and entire network, typical weekday**




3.49 On **Saturday 13th February 2016**, average network occupancy between 07:00 and 19:00 was 34%. The following car parks reached 85% capacity or above:

- Royals Shopping Centre was 100% occupied from 11:00. The VMS shows 100% occupancy until 23:00 - this may be a result of operator over-ride in order to show the car park as full on road signs.
- Alexandra Road was 100% occupied from 11:00. The VMS shows 100% occupancy until 23:00 - this may be a result of operator over-ride in order to show the car park as full on road signs.
- Tylers Avenue was in excess of 85% occupied from 11:00 to 17:00.
- Clarence Road was in excess of 85% occupied from 13:00 to 16:00.

3.50 During the peak hour (14:00 to 15:00), occupancy of the overall network was 60%. There were still 1,585 spaces available in the Southend Central Area, and 9 of the 15 parking areas had occupancy below 85% (i.e. had visible spare capacity). These car parks were:

*Central Area South*

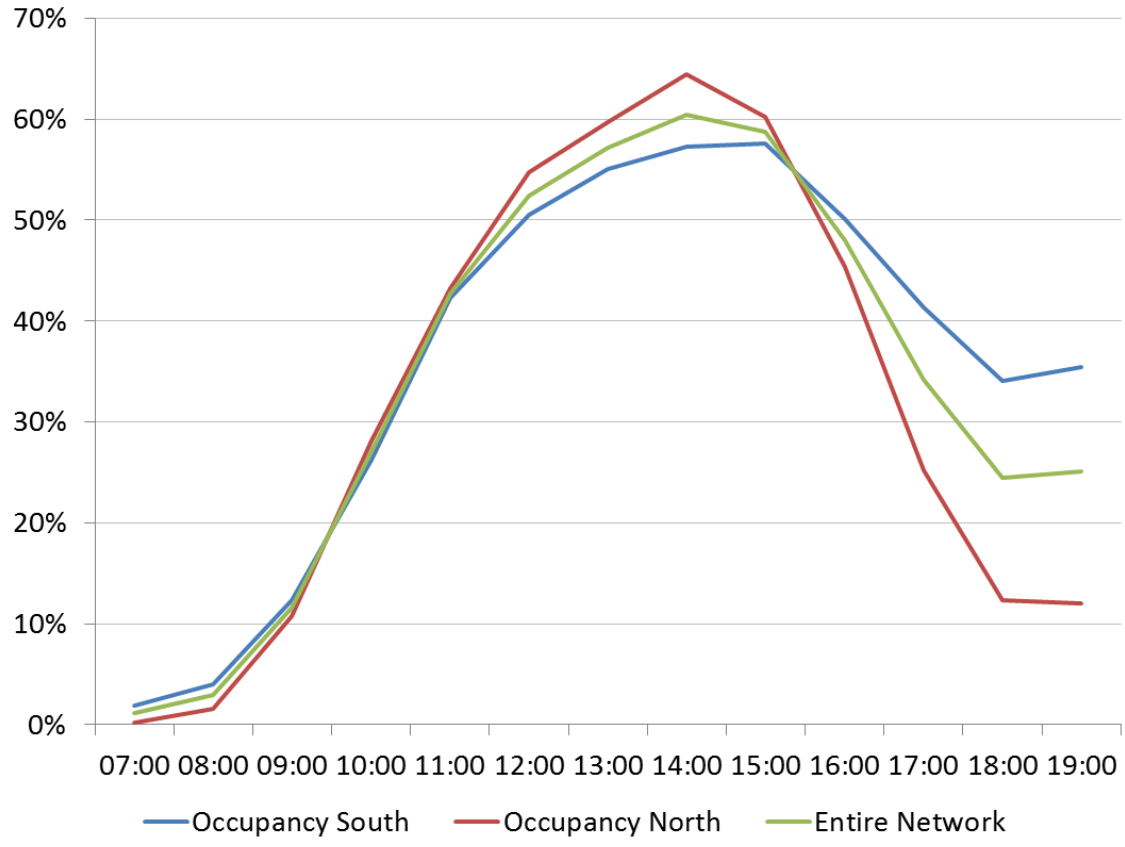
- Shorefield Road 92% spare capacity
- Western Esplanade 89% spare capacity
- Seaway 68% spare capacity
- Fairheads Green 23% spare capacity

*Central Area North*

- Southend College 56% spare capacity
- Warrior Square 40% spare capacity
- Essex Street 35% spare capacity
- University Square 33% spare capacity
- Victoria Shopping Centre 28% spare capacity

3.51 Figure 3.9 shows the occupancy for the Central Area South, Central Area North and the entire network for each hourly period between 07:00 and 19:00. The number of spaces occupied across the network peaked at 60% between 14:00 and 15:00 with Central Area South occupancy being lower than Central Area North occupancy. The occupancy distribution between Central Area North and Central Area South parking showed greater uniformity than on a typical weekday (when the Central Area North is busier) or the busiest day (when the Central Area South is busier).

**Figure 3.9: Accumulation profile of the Central Area South, Central Area North and entire network, typical Saturday**




## Easter 2016 surveys

3.52 Parking occupancy surveys were undertaken in the Easter period in Southend on the following dates:

- Wednesday 23rd March;
- Friday 25th March (public holiday); and
- Saturday 26th March.

3.53 The surveys covered fifteen Central Area North parking areas: Civic Centre Overground, Civic Centre Underground, Library (Beecroft), London Road, Short Street, York Road, Chalkwell Esplanade, Clifftown Road (on-street), Elmer Avenue (on-street), Queens Road (on-street), The Leas (on-street), Victoria Avenue (on-street), Western Esplanade Central and Western Esplanade East Section, York Road (on-street).

3.54 Despite it being identified that the SCAAP car parking network has adequate provision overall for typical demand, the Central Area South network coped less well during the less predictable seasonal demand. Leigh-on-Sea station and Two Tree Island car parks were therefore surveyed as there is a potentially feasible option for visitors to Southend to park at the nearby area of Leigh-on-Sea and travel to Southend by train, as a form of Metro service. There are six trains per hour from Leigh-on-Sea to Southend, the journey time is around ten minutes and tickets cost £2.80 (super off-peak day return). Leigh-on-Sea station has capacity for 545 cars so provides a source of parking within a short train ride of Southend. Weekend and public holiday daily parking rates are £2.30 so a public holiday or weekend visitor could park and ride all day for £5.10.

3.55 Two Tree Island car park is located within walking distance of the Leigh-on-Sea Station – it could act as a back-up or reserve option in the event that Leigh-on-Sea station car park is full.

3.56 The overall trend is that Central Area North car parks are well used on weekdays but less so at weekends / bank holidays, while the car parks close to and in the Central Area South are quieter mid-week but near to capacity at weekends.

3.57 The surveys found that Leigh-on-Sea station car park and Two Tree Island car park were little used on weekends and public holidays.

## May public holiday 2016 surveys

3.58 Additional car park occupancy surveys were conducted on the late May public holiday (Monday 30th May) to provide further evidence of car parking patterns in Southend on public holidays. The May surveys provide survey data for 30 parking areas surveyed (shown in Table 3.1), representing 4,500 spaces.

3.59 The results follow a similar trend to the Easter weekend surveys: car parks in Central Area South, were busiest while those in Central Area North were quiet.

3.60 The following car parks were particularly busy on the May public holiday, experiencing utilisation in excess of 95%.

*Central Area North:*

- London Road (maximum capacity 95% at 5:30pm)
- Queens Road (maximum capacity 94% between 6:00pm and 7:00pm)
- Queens Road short stay (maximum capacity 100% several times between 11:45am and 4:00pm)
- Alexandra Street (maximum capacity 105% at 12:45pm, 2:30pm and 4pm)

*Central Area South:*

- Clifftown Road (maximum capacity 91% at 12:45pm and between 2:00pm and 3:00pm)
- Elmer Avenue (maximum capacity 100% at 4:30pm)
- Fairheads Green (maximum capacity 113% at 2:45pm)

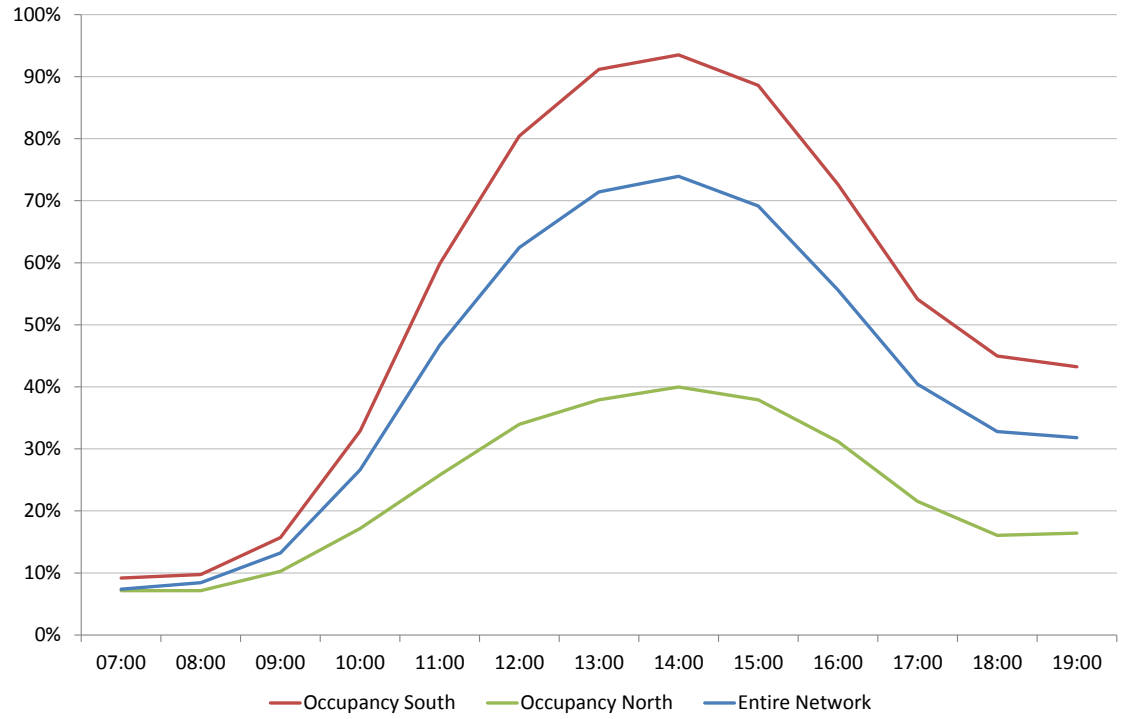
- Seaway (maximum capacity 108% 1:30pm)
- Western Esplanade Central Reservation (maximum capacity 108% at 2:45pm)
- Western Esplanade Eastern (maximum capacity 100% between 11:15 and 11:45 and between 15:00 and 15:45)
- York Road (maximum capacity 100% at 12:45pm)
- York Road on-street (maximum capacity 100% several times between 11:30am and 2:00pm)

3.61 The northernmost Central Area North car parks were much quieter, with the Civic Centre Overground, Civic Centre Underground, Library (Beecroft) and Short Street less than 10% utilised throughout the day.

3.62 Figure 3.10 shows the accumulation profile for the Central Area North, Central Area South and entire parking network on the May public holiday. The figures exclude Leigh-on-Sea station and Two Tree Island car parks[13]. At the peak period of overall occupancy (2pm), there were 3,336 spaces occupied (74%) and 1,176 available spaces. Car parks with over 100 spaces available included:

- Civic Centre underground (113 spaces);
- Library (Beecroft) (166 spaces);
- Shorefield Road (107 spaces);
- Victoria Shopping Centre (192 spaces); and
- Leigh-on-Sea station (458 spaces) (Not included in Figure 3.9).

**Figure 3.10: Accumulation profile for Central Area South, Central Area North and entire network, May public holiday**




[13] Total capacity reduced to 4,083 spaces.

3.63 In Leigh-on-Sea, the station car park and nearby Two Tree Island car park were both quiet on the public holiday Monday, with maximum occupancies of 16% and 5% respectively, highlighting the potential use of spare capacity at convenient park and ride sites.

## Benchmarking

3.64 To understand how parking provision compares with similar seaside towns, parking provision in Blackpool, Brighton and Bournemouth was reviewed. These comparator towns were benchmarked against Southend for:

- number of long and short stay spaces;
- number of visitors;
- pricing structures;

3.65 Information about the number of spaces available was collected by means of a desk top based internet search of Local Council and other websites. As such, the dataset may not be comprehensive and should be used as an indication of provision rather than definitive.

*Immediate seafront*

3.66 The immediate seafront as this is the area which is easiest to define in each location and the key area of concern amongst stakeholders. The immediate seafront is essentially the road which runs along the seafront including on-street parking on that road and in off-street car parks accessed directly from it: in Southend's case the Esplanade.

3.67 Table 3.10 shows the number of immediate seafront spaces provided and the overall level of provision by number of annual visitors. The number of immediate seafront spaces per 1,000 annual visitors provided in Southend (0.56) and per 1,000 population (8.5) is the highest of all four resorts.

**Table 3.10: Provision of parking spaces on the immediate seafront by number of annual visitors and population**

| | Total spaces | Total tourism (Day Visits and All overnight tourism combined)14 | Immediate seafront spaces per 1,000 annual visitors | Population[15] | Immediate seafront spaces per spaces per 1,000 population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Southend* | 1,517 | 2,686,815 | 0.56 | 177,931 | 8.5 |
| Bournemouth | 282 | 9,445,561 | 0.10 | 191,390 | 1.5 |
| Brighton | 937 | 6,813,373 | 0.04 | 281,076 | 3.3 |
| Blackpool | 243 | 10,658,748 | 0.02 | 140,501 | 1.7 |

**includes Western Esplanade, Seaway, Fairheads and Eastern Esplanade.*

*Central Area*

3.68 Information about the provision of parking in central areas of Bournemouth, Blackpool and Brighton was collected through collation of information available on Council websites, each of which clearly labelled its central area car parks. In any urban area, the definition of the central area will vary according to the layout and characteristics of the town so local definitions may vary– the exercise is intended to give an indication of overall level of provision.

[14] Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) 2014

[15] ONS, MYE2: Population Estimates by single year of age and sex for local authorities in the UK, mid-2014

3.69 Table 3.11 shows the number of spaces provided in the central area overall and the level of provision by resident population. The number of central area spaces per 1,000 residents in Southend is 32, more than Brighton (21) but less than Blackpool (41) and Bournemouth (35).

3.70 In terms of provision of parking spaces per 1,000 annual visitors, Southend has more (2.1) than the other resorts (Bournemouth 1.0, Brighton 0.6, Blackpool 0.5).

**Table 3.11: Provision of parking spaces in the central area by number of annual visitors and population**

| | Total spaces | Total tourism (Day Visits and All overnight tourism combined)16 | Central area spaces per 1,000 annual visitors | Total population | Spaces per 1,000 residents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Southend | 5,647 | 2,686,815 | 2.1 | 177,931 | 32 |
| Brighton | 6,653 | 6,813,373 | 0.6 | 281,076 | 21 |
| Bournemouth | 4,562 | 9,445,561 | 1.0 | 191,390 | 35 |
| Blackpool | 5,810 | 10,658,748 | 0.5 | 140,501 | 41 |

3.71 For all Central Area car parks, shows the average hourly rates for short stay parking (up to 4 hours). Parking in Southend is notably cheaper than in other resorts at an average of £1.11 per hour, less than half the average hourly rate in Brighton (£2.74).

**Table 3.12: Average hourly rates for short stay parking**

| | Average hourly fee short stay (up to 4 hours) |
|---|---|
| Brighton | £2.74 |
| Blackpool | £1.61 |
| Bournemouth | £1.55 |
| **Southend** | **£1.11** |

3.72 Table 3.13 shows the average hourly rates for long stay parking (from 4-7 hours). The average rate for long-stay parking in Southend (£1.29) is higher than in Bournemouth (£1.13) and Blackpool (£1.10) but still significantly lower than in Brighton (£2.52). Southend is the only resort where the average hourly fee for long stay parking is higher than the average hourly rate for short stay parking. It is possible that this encourages use of short-stay parking by residents in Southend who then occupy spaces for local trips that could be used by longer distance visitors who are less likely to have alternative travel options.

**Table 3.13: Average hourly rates for long stay parking**

| | Average hourly fee long stay (4-7 hours) |
|---|---|
| Brighton | £2.52 |
| **Southend** | **£1.29** |
| Bournemouth | £1.13 |
| Blackpool | £1.10 |

### Approaches to managing peak demand

3.73 Council officers in Blackpool, Bournemouth and Brighton and Hove were consulted on their approach to managing car parking.

[16] Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) 2014

*Blackpool: key points*

3.74 Rather than having a specific strategy to deal with peaks and troughs in parking demand, Blackpool aims to develop a 12 months a year visitor economy to increase the number of visitors during the non-busy times. There are parking offers during off-peak periods to stimulate patronage. Discounts of 50% on parking fees are offered through a visitor accommodation voucher book that can be purchased by accommodation providers in Blackpool. Guests can purchase the vouchers from their accommodation provider at a cost of £5 each, allowing them to park for 24 hours on selected Blackpool Council car parks.

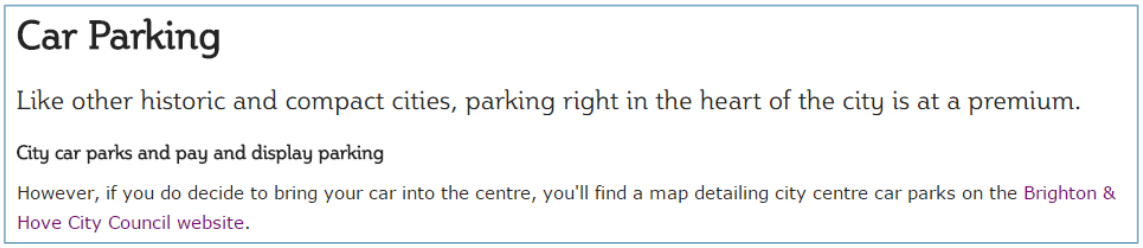
3.75 Blackpool has acres of parking capacity on former railway land which is linked to the M55 motorway directly by a link road built in the 1980s which funnels car borne visitors directly into the car parks. Most of the parking capacity remains unused for much of the year. The amount of parking available in Blackpool means that Park and Ride is not an option that has been found to be financially sustainable, though it has been explored.

3.76 Figure 3.11 shows the location of the visitor car parking in Blackpool. The image shows that the main parking areas are located around 400 metres from the seafront, not on the immediate seafront. An equivalent distance in Southend would be the northern end of the pier to Tylers car park. Close to the Central and North piers (the principal areas of tourist activity) there is little or no on-street parking on the Promenade: visitors are encouraged to park inland and walk to the main attractions.

**Figure 3.11: Aerial view of Blackpool showing main visitor parking areas**

*Brighton- key points*

3.77 A review of the approach taken to accommodating peak demand in Brighton was undertaken. A key facet of the approach in Brighton is the use of online messaging to influence travel behaviour and inform users of their travel options prior to visiting. For example, in order to manage expectations of visitors the Visit Brighton website's parking page contains a prominent message regarding the limited availability of parking in the city centre.



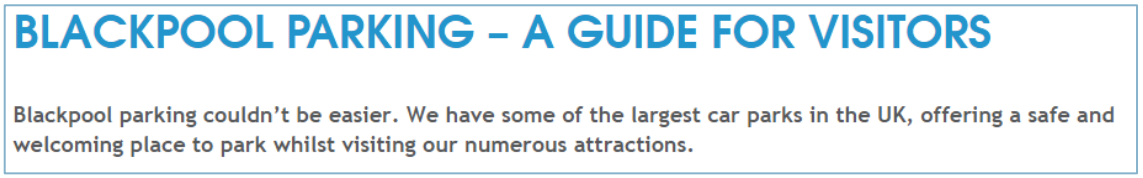
Car Parking

Like other historic and compact cities, parking right in the heart of the city is at a premium.

City car parks and pay and display parking

However, if you do decide to bring your car into the centre, you'll find a map detailing city centre car parks on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

3.78 In contrast, the Visit Blackpool website emphasises the ease of parking and large amount of parking availability.



BLACKPOOL PARKING – A GUIDE FOR VISITORS

Blackpool parking couldn't be easier. We have some of the largest car parks in the UK, offering a safe and welcoming place to park whilst visiting our numerous attractions.

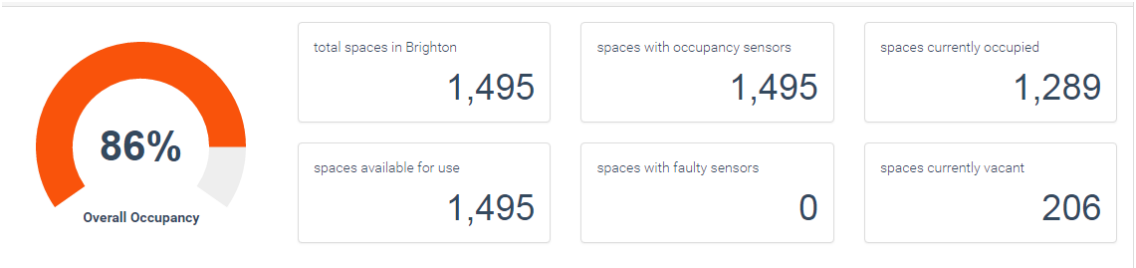
3.79 A Park and Ride service is offered for travel to central Brighton. It operates from the outskirts into the city centre as an alternative option to driving into the city and is included within the Council's car parking information on the website. It offers free parking and a £5 individual or £10 family all-day bus ticket. The Park and Ride service is operated as a regular commercially operated public service that serves all bus stops en route, rather than a bespoke Park and Ride bus. This increases the long-term viability of the service, making it less dependent on Park and Ride users for its income – given the seasonal nature of peak demand, a route which depended wholly on Park and Ride custom may not be financially viable.

3.80 A map of car parking locations is contained on the Journey On section of the Brighton and Hove Council website. Journey On is a journey planning portal which includes a public transport, walking and cycling journey planner, roadworks map and information, live traffic news, live bus and train times and links to the Council's Parking and Transport Twitter account.

3.81 There is a web page for each car park showing location, opening hours and prices (similar to the SoSBC parking pages). In addition, a short video (around 1 minute) is provided for each car park. The video includes photographs of the car parks and their environs, has a voiceover which describes the nearby attractions and features of the car park[17]. The videos help visitors to familiarise themselves with their car parking options and provide information in an alternative format which may be more easily accessed and understood by some users than text information.

3.82 Live occupancy information for parks within the core central area of Brighton is provided online, similar to the VMS data displayed for Southend. The image below shows how this is presented online.

[17] An example video can be found at: **https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/parking-and-travel/parking/regency-square-car-park**




| Car Park | Current Occupancy | Capacity | Available |
|---|---|---|---|
| London Road | 62% | 510 | 196 |
| Regency Square | 98% | 497 | 11 |
| The Lanes | 100% | 350 | -1 |
| Trafalgar Street | 100% | 138 | 0 |

3.83 In Brighton, a local priority is to maintain the unique features of the historic central area and limit the negative environmental impacts of vehicular traffic. One approach used is to provide underground parking at Regency Square as shown below. This approach combines provision of parking with protection of a sensitive area as shown in the images below.

*Bournemouth*

3.84 While variable pricing is used in Bournemouth to encourage use of less used car parks, (£4 all day in the Central Car Park, 5 minutes' walk from the beach) many day visitors accessing the

beach still prefer to park in Bath Road Car Park which is adjacent to the seafront for £15 per day in summer.

3.85 Similar to Southend most Bournemouth town centre car parks have occupancy monitoring which then sets local VMS showing which car parks are full and also direct drivers to alternative parking. During office hours strategic Traffic Information VMS signs are also used to direct drivers to car parks with available spaces. This is particularly important during the summer months when seafront car parks fill quickly.

3.86 There are set up strategies on Bournemouth's UTMC system which automatically set these signs when the office is not staffed.

3.87 During large events (Air Festival and Wheels Festival) the traffic control room is staffed from 08:00 – 23:00 both during the week and at weekends, and use both the static and additional portable VMS to direct traffic. For these events Park & Ride sites are set up to reduce the demands on town centre car parks.

*Overview*

3.88 The examples of Bournemouth, Brighton and Blackpool provide different approaches to dealing with peak demand. The key features of the approach in Blackpool are:

- Large amount of visitor parking within 500 metres of the seafront but not on the immediate seafront.
- Large amount of parking is unused for much of the year.
- Road system designed to "funnel" visitors into visitor car parks.
- Little or no discouragement to drive to Blackpool, alternative travel options presented on different websites and no integrated journey planning portal.

3.89 The key features of Brighton's approach are:

- Pre-journey information emphasises limited availability of parking.
- Integrated journey planning portal provides information about alternative travel options alongside parking information.
- A Park and Ride service is provided using parking at a Sports Centre on the outskirts of the city, with services provided by a commercial operator on a regular bus route.

3.90 Strategic local priorities and socio-economic factors influence the approaches to car parking. Blackpool is the fourth most deprived local authority area in the UK, Southend is the 105$^{th}$ and Brighton 109$^{th}$. A high level of deprivation in Blackpool arguably affects the Local Authority's ability to influence travel behaviour: pressure to facilitate travel into the town by any means (in order to realise the potential economic benefits) outweighs the pressure to reduce car use.

3.91 In Bournemouth, variable pricing is used to encourage use of car parks with spare capacity along with signage showing live capacity information. This is supported by Park and Ride for events.

*Transferability of approaches to Southend Central Area*

3.92 **There is a limited amount of spare land within the Southend Central Area to provide a similar type of parking provision as in Blackpool, nor would it be economically viable to maintain a large amount of empty car parking for much of the year.** Working with local tourist bodies and accommodation providers to encourage visitors into Southend by providing discounted parking is one approach in Blackpool which could be explored in more detail for Southend.

3.93 Approaches in Brighton are more transferable, particularly:

- Integration of online car parking information within a local travel portal providing a "one-stop-shop" for local travel information.

- Provision of a park and ride service for peak periods, using an existing public transport link and available spare parking and public transport capacity.
- Limiting the visual and environmental impact of car parking provision through the use of underground car parks, though underground car parks are a more expensive option. Costs of providing car parking will vary according to the site but range at around £10-12,500 per space for deck car park, and £1,000 -£2,000 a space for surface car park. Underground car parking is significantly more expensive, depending on the site and design but would likely be upwards of £20,000 per space.
- Bournemouth takes a similar approach to Southend, using VMS on key access routes to direct drivers to parking areas with spare capacity. This is supported by cheaper rates to use those car parks, (though the VMS does not display those rates). Feedback from Bournemouth noted that beach users prefer to park on the seafront parking regardless of cost so any variable pricing strategy would need to be supported by information, marketing and promotion of discounted rates.

# 4 Parking in Southend Central Area future demand and supply

4.1 A forecast of future parking supply and peak period demand was made using information provided by SoSBC Planning Officers. This information included:

- Approved planning applications (which contain confirmed details of future land use); and
- Descriptions of policy areas and opportunity sites (which contain outline estimates of the nature of development to take place in the Southend Central Area).

4.2 We aimed to forecast future demand for publicly available parking. For the following types of development, parking provided was assumed to be available to the public:

- Shops, restaurants, cinema, museum etc.

4.3 For the following types of development, any parking provided by new developments was assumed to be for the use of that development only and not available to the public:

- Residential, Business, Hotels etc.

4.4 Residential trip demand was not taken into account – it is assumed that parking provision for residential developments accommodates the demand for parking at those sites. While there may potentially be some additional demand for parking in the public network arising from residential developments, this demand is likely to be negligible and more likely to be outside of peak times.

4.5 Assessment of the individual car parks which are likely to absorb the additional demand has not been undertaken.

4.6 Forecasting of demand is based on trips generated by similar developments in towns elsewhere, mostly in the South East. While the forecasts give an indication of likely trip generation for individual developments, it does not take into account specifically the less predictable seasonal demand generated by a seaside resort. On the whole the trip generation figures provide a sound basis on which to base forecasts for typical demand for parking in Southend.

4.7 The forecasting of future demand was based on the August 2015 video survey and VMS data, therefore the demand and capacity figures represent the data available for that day (4,420 spaces, around 80% of the total provision).

4.8 For the larger sites within Southend Central Area, trip rates were obtained from the TRICS database. TRICS is the National Standard for Trip Generation Analysis containing 7,150 directional transport surveys at over 110 types of development. TRICS provides the number of vehicles entering and exiting a site by hour throughout the day. For each development, the most appropriate data from sites, primarily within the South East, were used to forecast parking demand.

4.9 All of the trip generation figures were for weekdays – there were no available weekend surveys to use. For the most significant development (the new museum) trip generation figures were taken from the Transport Assessment submitted as part of the planning application.

4.10 Given the lack of Saturday TRICS survey data on which to base trip estimates, an uplift factor was applied to the Thursday TRICS data reflecting the greater local level of existing demand on the Saturday survey data (overall demand on Saturday was 1.3 times higher in the August 2015 surveys).

4.11 The development information provided by SoSBC included details of parking provision and allocation. Any publicly available spaces were added to the overall capacity figure.

## Scenarios

4.12 Two broad approaches to future provision of parking in the Central Area were tested:

1. **Central Area Precedents:** For new developments, providing an estimated level of parking reflecting the flexibility in the Development Management Document (DMD) parking standards for sustainable locations, based on local precedents, planning policy and the likely parking needs of the site.
2. **Maximum standards:** For new developments, applying the maximum parking standards as per the DMD.

4.13 Using this information, three growth scenarios were scoped:

- **Scenario 1**, **up to (and including) 2021**: **planning applications:** using details from approved planning applications;
- **Scenario 2, up to (and including) 2021: planning applications and SCAAP opportunity sites:** using details from approved planning applications and opportunity sites expected to be developed before the end of 2021, but for which no planning applications have yet been submitted; and
- **Scenario 3, post 2021: planning applications and all SCAAP opportunity sites:** using details from approved planning applications and all opportunity sites, including those that are not taken forward by the SCAAP and will be considered during the preparation of the Southend Local Plan (pre and post 2021).

4.14 The scenarios tested are summarised in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Scenarios tested**

| Name of scenario | Parking supply assumption | Timescale | Area |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scenario 1**, approved planning applications | N/A – based on planning applications | Up to 2021 | North and South |
| **Scenario 2**, approved planning applications plus opportunity sites | Central Area precedents | Up to 2021 | North and South |
| | Maximum standards | Up to 2021 | North and South |
| **Scenario 3**, approved planning applications plus opportunity sites | Central Area precedents | Post 2021 | North and South |
| | Maximum standards | Post 2021 | North and South |

4.15 As scenario 1 is based on actual applications, we can have a greater level of confidence that those developments will be built as described. For scenarios 2 and 3, it should be noted that a number of assumptions and estimates must be made, as there is no final detail of any developments as they are allocations rather than being an approved planning application.

**Parking supply**

4.16

4.17 Table 4.2 shows predicted approximate levels of parking supply based on estimated levels of parking supply for opportunity sites, based on typical provision for the Central Area and the

assumed judgement of the SoSBC officers according to local precedents, planning policy and the likely parking needs of the sites.

4.18 The scenario 2 and 3 totals are cumulative.

**Table 4.2: Future parking supply: based on Central Area precedents**

| Scenario | Spaces lost | Spaces gained | Net change |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scenario 1: pre 2021 planning applications** | | | |
| North | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| South | 0 | 200 to 250 | +200 to 250 |
| **Scenario 2: pre-2021 planning applications and pre-2021 opportunity sites** | | | |
| North | 250 to 300 | 0 to 50 | -200 to 250 |
| South | 850 to 900 | 1,100 to 1,200 | +250 to 350 |
| **Scenario 3: post-2021** | | | |
| North | 600 to 650 | 200 to 250 | -400 to 450 |
| South | 1,000 to 1,100 | 1,100 to 1,200 | +100 to 200 |

4.19

4.20 Table 4.2 shows future levels of parking supply if maximum parking standards are applied to opportunity sites.

**Table 4.3: Parking supply: application of maximum parking standards to scenarios 2 and 3**

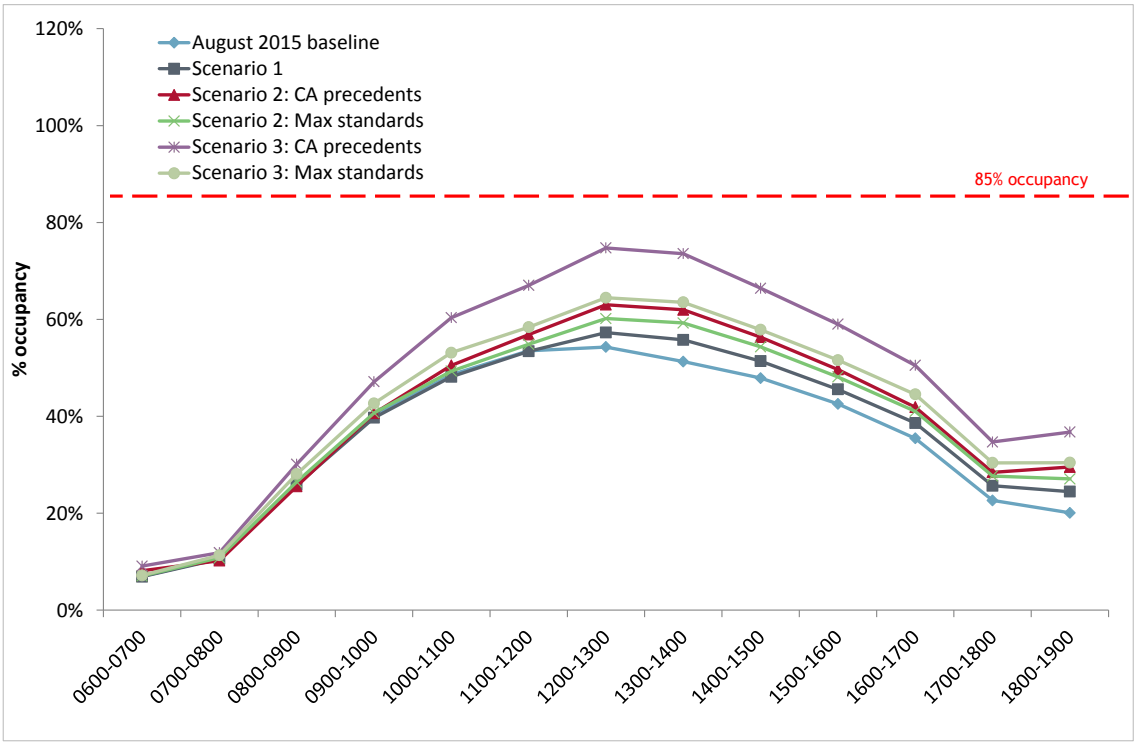
| Scenario | Spaces lost | Spaces gained | Net change |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scenario 2: pre-2021 planning applications and pre-2021 opportunity sites** | | | |
| North | 250 to 300 | 250 to 300 | +/ - 0 to 50 |
| South | 850 to 900 | 1,300 to 1,400 | +450 to 500 |
| **Scenario 3: post-2021** | | | |
| North | 600 to 650 | 550 to 600 | -0 to 100 |
| South | 1,000 to 1,100 | 1,500 to 1,600 | +400 to 500 |

## Forecasting future occupancy: Central Area North

### August weekday

4.21 The forecast future occupancy on an **August weekday** of the car parks in the Central Area North for each scenario is shown in Figure 4.1. Under all scenarios, parking demand is accommodated by the future supply.

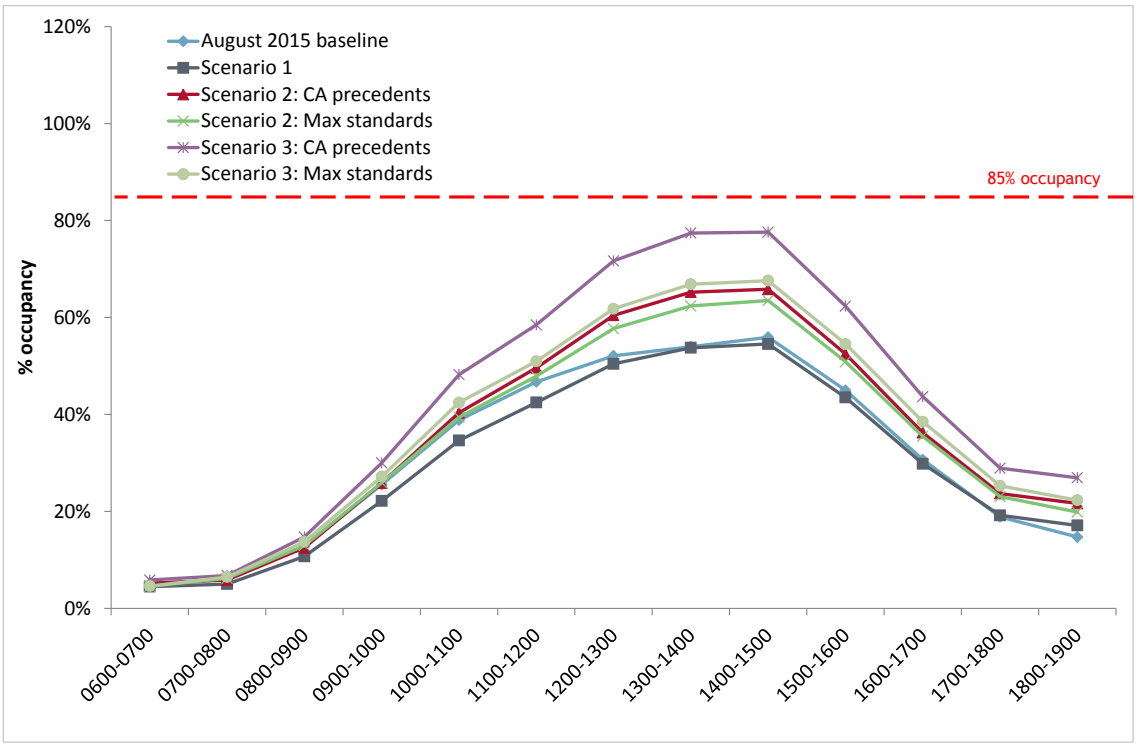
**Figure 4.1: Forecast occupancy Central Area North peak August weekday**




## August Saturday

4.22 The forecast future occupancy on an **August Saturday** of the car parks in the Central Area North for each scenario is shown in Figure 4.2. Under all scenarios, parking demand is accommodated by the future supply.

**Figure 4.2: Forecast occupancy Central Area North peak August Saturday**

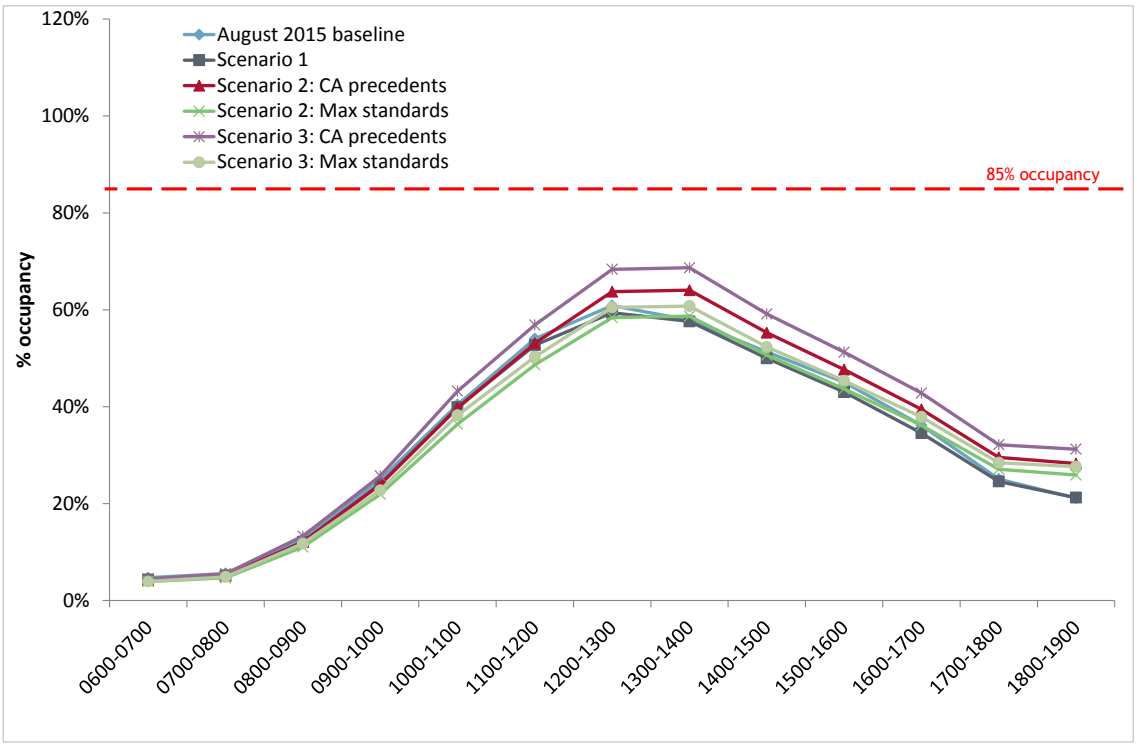


# Forecasting future occupancy: Central Area South

## August weekday

4.23 The forecast future occupancy on an **August weekday** of the car parks in the Central Area is shown in Figure 4.3. Under all scenarios, parking demand is accommodated by the future supply.

**Figure 4.3: Forecast occupancy Central Area South peak August Weekday**

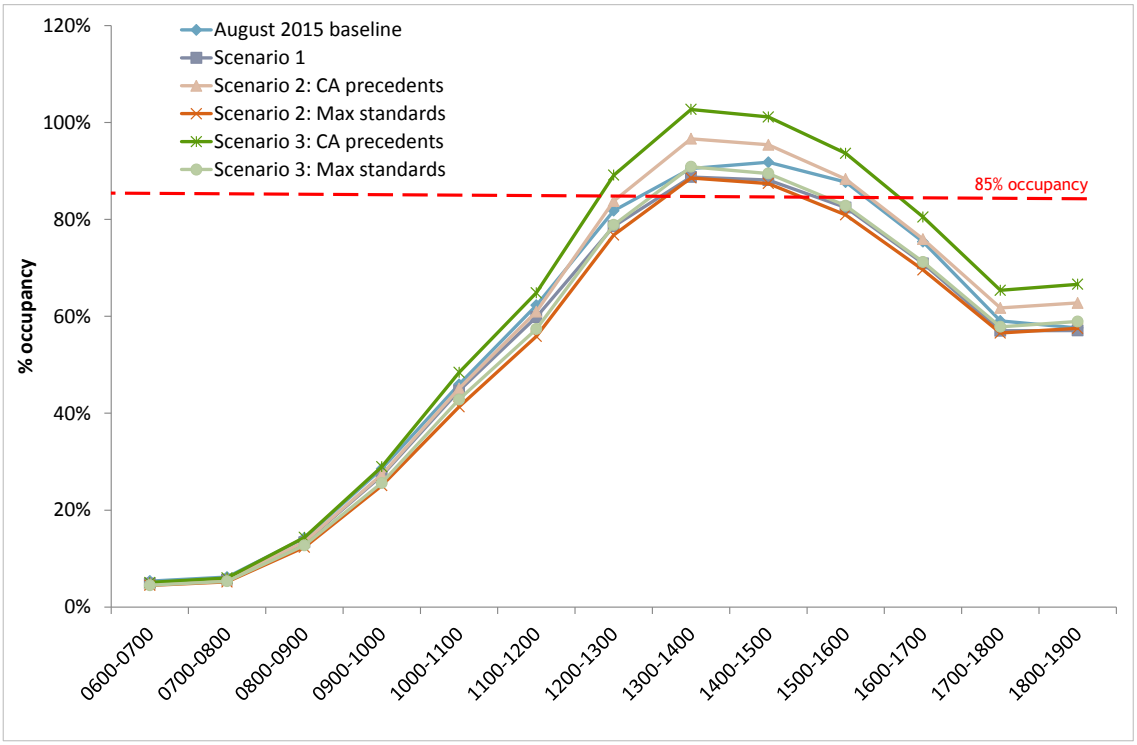



## August Saturday

4.24 The forecast future occupancy on an **August Saturday** of the car parks in the Central Area South is shown in Figure 4.4.

- Assuming parking supply is based on Central Area precedent:
  - In scenario 2, occupancy is forecast to reach a peak of 97% between 1300 and 1400 ;
  - In scenario 3, occupancy is forecast to exceed 100% between 1300 and 1500.
- Assuming parking supply is based on application of maximum standards:
  - In scenario 2, occupancy does not exceed 100% but exceeds 85% between 1300 and 1500 – occupancy levels are broadly similar to the August 2015 situation.
  - In scenario 3, the occupancy profile is similar to scenario 2 with occupancy exceeding 85% between 1300 and 1500.

**Figure 4.4: Forecast occupancy Central Area South peak August Saturday**




## Discussion

4.25 The scenarios presented above, while representing broad estimates of future supply and demand based on outline information, show that there is likely to be greatest pressure on the Central Area South parking areas in all scenarios.

4.26 Regardless of whether parking supply is based on Central Area precedents, or on the application of maximum standards, the *Central Area North* network copes well with forecast demand under each scenario.

4.27 The *Central Area South* network also copes well on weekdays in each scenario.

4.28 The main pressure is on the *Central Area South* network on Saturdays, particularly if parking supply is based on Central Area precedents. By applying maximum standards, occupancy on Saturdays is forecast to follow a similar pattern to the data collected for August 2015.

4.29 It should be noted that the scenarios were tested for demand in August, representing the peak season of demand, so are not representative of typical demand which, as described earlier, is notably lower than the existing supply.

# 5 Visitor and shopper spend survey

5.1 This section describes the survey of shoppers in Southend that was undertaken in March and May 2016 which asked shoppers about the amount they spend in Southend Central Area. It also considers similar studies elsewhere and what the results mean for parking in Southend.

5.2 Face-to-face on-street questionnaire surveys were undertaken by Vantage Surveys on behalf of SoSBC on 23rd, 25th and 26th March 2016 and on Monday 30th May 2016 in Southend Central Area. In total 849 responses were received; 236 on 23rd March, 194 on the 25th March, 159 on the 26th March and 260 on Monday 30th May.

5.3 The survey collected the following information from respondents who were approached in the street at random:

- Respondents characteristics: gender, age, home postcode, mobility impairments, ethnicity;
- Mode of Travel to Southend on the day of the survey;
- Car park used (if travelled by car);
- Number of attempts made to park in the Central Area (if travelled by car);
- Reasons for visiting the Central Area;
- Approximate amount they spent or planned to spend in Southend Central Area on the day of the survey; and
- Frequency of visiting Southend Central Area.

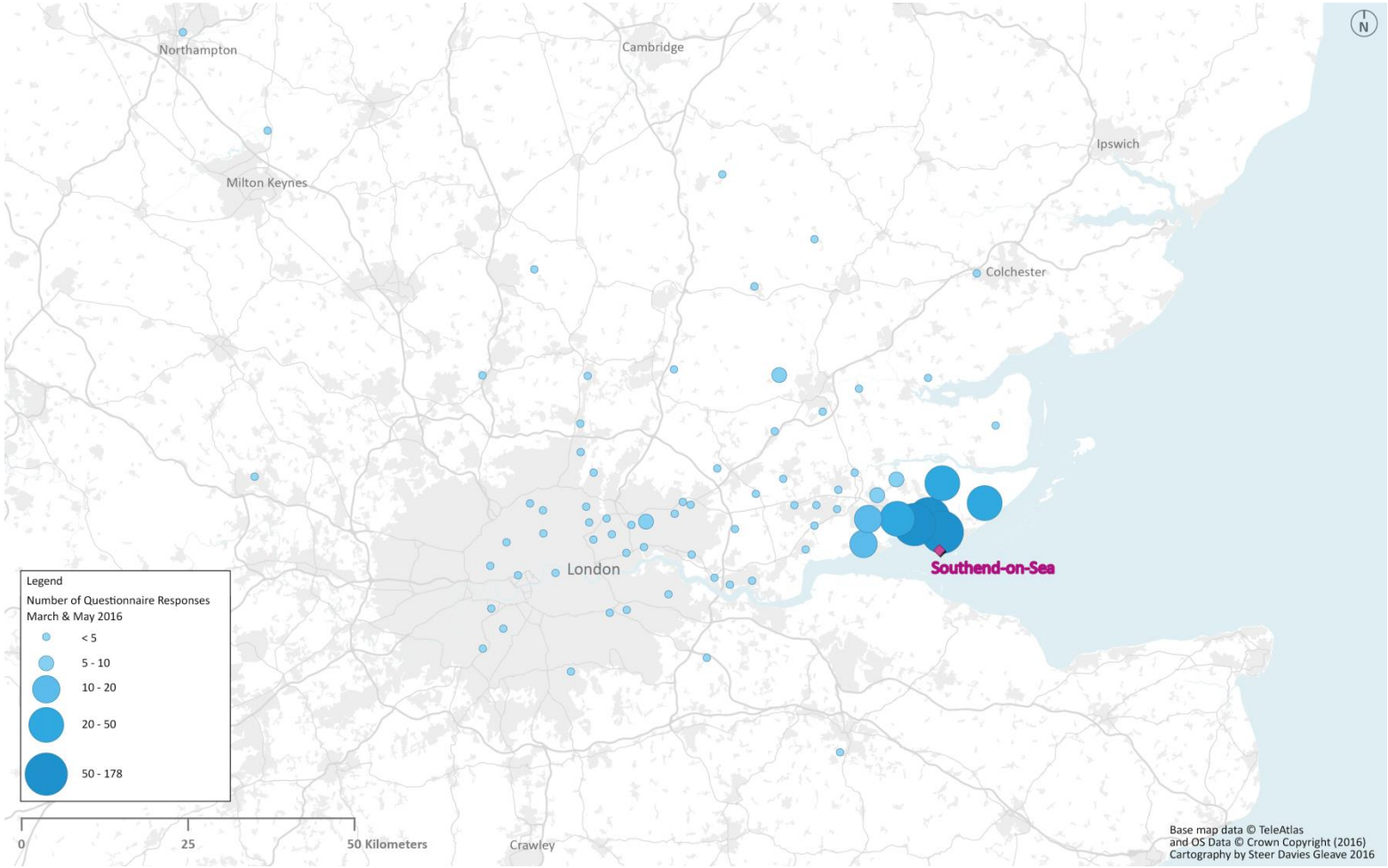
5.4 Surveys conducted in May included additional questions for respondents arriving by car as follows:

- Number of car occupants;
- Route used to access Southend Central Area;
- Whether respondents parked near the seafront;
- How easy respondents found parking near the seafront;
- Views on the helpfulness of signage to parking facilities; and
- Importance of factors considered in choice of parking location: quality, convenience, cost, safety and security of parking.

5.5 In total, 843 interviews were completed.

5.6 Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of home locations of respondents to the survey. Most (69%) were from Southend or nearby with the remaining 31% coming predominantly from London, and other parts of Essex.

**Figure 5.1: Home locations of survey respondents**



### Results

5.7 Most respondents travelled to Southend by non-car modes (71%) with only 29% arriving by car. Holidaymakers may have stated 'walk' as their primary mode despite having come to Southend by car initially (for example holidaymakers who are staying in Southend, arrived by car but walked into town from their accommodation on that day). The mode split below represents the people who were successfully interviewed and therefore may not be representative of mode split overall, though it may give a good indication.

**Table 5.1: Mode of travel to Southend**

| Mode | % of respondents |
|---|---|
| Walk | 33% |
| Car | 29% |
| Train | 18% |
| Bus | 15% |
| Other | 3% |
| Cycle | 2% |

*Average Spend*

5.8 The overall average spend for all respondents overall all survey days was £26.03.

5.9 Respondents' highest average spend (£28.63 per day) occurred on the May public holiday Monday, but was only slightly higher than the average spend on the Saturday and public holiday Friday in March (£27.85 and £27.67). At £20.81 per day, weekday spend is around a quarter less than on a weekend / public holiday.

**Table 5.2: Spend by day**

| Spend / Number of Respondents | £0 - £5 | £5 - £10 | £10 - £25 | £25 - £50 | £50 - £100 | £100 + | Average Spend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of respondents | | | | | | |
| Wed 23 March | 88 | 37 | 48 | 33 | 17 | 13 | £20.81 |
| Fri 25 March | 38 | 41 | 38 | 42 | 22 | 13 | £27.85 |
| Sat 26 March | 35 | 20 | 35 | 44 | 17 | 8 | £27.67 |
| Mon 30 May | 52 | 49 | 53 | 51 | 28 | 21 | £28.63 |

5.10 On weekdays, shopping trips generate the highest average spend at £40.23 per trip. Business trips result in around two thirds of that spend at £26.39 per trip. Only one weekday was surveyed, Wednesday 23rd March – the table below shows the results for the 236 respondents interviewed on that day. Too few respondents (less than ten) gave a journey purpose of business, Night Clubs or Seafront/Amusements to give a useful average spend figure.

**Table 5.3: Spend by purpose - weekday**

| Spend / Number of Respondents | £0 - £5 | £5 - £10 | £10 - £25 | £25 - £50 | £50 - £100 | £100 + | Average Spend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of respondents | | | | | | |
| Work | 24 | 9 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 2 | £12.30 |
| Education | 31 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 | £6.99 |
| Shopping | 6 | 3 | 20 | 15 | 11 | 9 | £40.23 |
| Leisure | 17 | 17 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 2 | £17.83 |

5.11 On weekends and the May public holiday, shopping trips and visits to the seafront generated the highest average spend (£38.93 and £38.58 per trip respectively). Leisure trips result in

around half that spend: £26.47 per trip. Too few respondents (less than ten) gave a journey purpose of Education, Business or Night Club to give a useful average spend figure.

**Table 5.4: Spend by purpose – weekend / public holiday**

| Spend / Number of Respondents | £0 - £5 | £5 - £10 | £10 - £25 | £25 - £50 | £50 - £100 | £100 + | Average Spend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work | 38 | 38 | 19 | 7 | 3 | 0 | £10.52 |
| Shopping | 11 | 13 | 41 | 56 | 31 | 14 | £38.93 |
| Leisure | 60 | 48 | 57 | 53 | 27 | 17 | £26.47 |
| Seafront/Amusements | 4 | 4 | 7 | 14 | 1 | 7 | £38.58 |
| Other | 5 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | £25.36 |

5.12 On weekdays and weekends / public holiday, those that drove to the Central Area had the highest spend per trip at £30.11 and £36.42 respectively. This is 35% higher than people who walked on weekdays and 82% higher than those who walked on weekends / public holiday.

5.13 Analysing frequency of visit to the Central Area and average spend by mode gives a picture of average spend across a month. This analysis shows that people who walk and travel by public transport to the Central Area visit more regularly. Although their spend per trip is lower, their spend over the course of a month is greater as they visit more often. It should be noted that the estimated amount that each respondent provided on the survey day may not be the same for each visit they make to the Central Area. Multiplying the spend per trip on the survey day with the number of visits per month gives an indication of the likely spend over the course of a month. A combined weekday and weekend average is provided (as the survey question about frequency of visit did not ask respondents to distinguish between weekdays and weekends).

5.14 A shown in Table 5.5, those who walked on spent an average of around £255 – more than the spend of a car driver at £145. Bus passengers are the second highest spenders at around £183 a month.

**Table 5.5: Average spend by mode per trip/per month**

| Mode | Spend per trip | Visits per month | Spend per month |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Weekdays and weekends combined average | | Weekdays and weekends combined average |
| Walk | £20.79 | 12 | £254.70 |
| Bus | £22.46 | 8 | £183.52 |
| Car | £35.25 | 4 | £145.20 |
| Train | £22.58 | 6 | £128.27 |
| Cycle | £21.32 | 5 | £112.89 |
| Other | £41.20 | 2 | £65.38 |

*Average spend by location*

5.15 Interviews were undertaken at various locations within the Southend Central Area. To understand whether there were differences in the level of average spend between respondents interviewed on the seafront and in the town centre shopping areas away from the seafront, locations were split into those two areas as shown in Table 5.6 which also shows the number of interviews completed in each location.

**Table 5.6: Interview locations**

| Interview location | Location type | Number of completed interviews |
|---|---|---|
| McDonalds (near M&S) | Non-seafront shopping area | 40 |
| Metro Bank | Non-seafront shopping area | 212 |
| Town Centre | Non-seafront shopping area | 120 |
| Outside Royals Shopping Centre | Non-seafront shopping area | 136 |
| Odeon | Non-seafront shopping area | 15 |
| Outside Victoria Shopping Centre | Non-seafront shopping area | 78 |
| Marine Parade | Seafront | 116 |
| Seafront (Adventure Island/Pier) | Seafront | 126 |
| | **Total Town Centre** | **601** |
| | **Total Seafront** | **242** |

5.16 There was a higher average spend by respondents interviewed at the seafront (£27.92) than those interviewed in Non-seafront shopping areas (£25.34). Respondents may have visited both the seafront and town centre areas on the survey day.

**Table 5.7: Average spend in seafront and non-seafront shopping areas, all modes**

| Spend | Average spend |
|---|---|
| Non-seafront shopping area | £25.34 |
| Seafront | £27.92 |

5.17 The average spend by people who travelled by car was analysed by location of interview.

5.18 As shown in Table 5.8, the average spend was similar in both locations.

**Table 5.8: Average spend in town centre and seafront locations, car drivers only**

| Average spend by location (respondents arriving by car) | Average spend | Number of respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Non-seafront shopping area | £34.17 | 163 |
| Seafront | £37.47 | 79 |

*Parking*

5.19 38% of car trips were made to the Royals and Victoria car parks. Parking along the immediate seafront was also highly utilised, with 15% of car users using parking on the Esplanade in addition to 3% parking at Fairheads which is on the immediate seafront.

**Table 5.9: Trips by car park**

| | Wed 23 March | Fri 25 March | Sat 26 March | Mon 30 May | Total | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Royals | 10 | 8 | 10 | 13 | **41** | **19%** |
| Victoria | 9 | 12 | 5 | 15 | **41** | **19%** |
| Seafront (Esplanade) | 1 | 5 | 2 | 24 | **32** | **15%** |
| Other | 6 | 8 | 0 | 14 | **28** | **13%** |
| Warrior Street | 4 | 7 | 3 | 9 | **23** | **11%** |
| Seaway | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | **10** | **5%** |
| On-street | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | **9** | **4%** |
| Sainsbury's | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | **7** | **3%** |
| Fairheads | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | **6** | **3%** |
| York Street CP | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **5** | **2%** |
| Multi-storey | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | **5** | **2%** |
| Queen Street | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | **4** | **2%** |
| **Total** | **39** | **54** | **26** | **92** | **211** | |

5.20 On weekdays and weekends, the majority of people who drive to the town centre were able to park on their first attempt (>90%). More difficulty was experienced on the public holiday however, with 14% and 22% unable to park on their first attempt on Good Friday and the May public holiday Monday respectively.

**Table 5.10: Number of attempts to park by day**

| Parking Attempts | Wed 23 March | Fri 25 March | Sat 26 March | Mon 30 May | Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Once | 95% | 91% | 92% | 78% | 90% |
| Twice | 3% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 3% |
| 3 or more | 3% | 5% | 4% | 17% | 6% |

5.21 Just under a quarter of those that visit the Central Area do so every weekday (23%), whereas only 8% do so every day. Just over 30% are weekend visitors – either every week or occasionally.

*Visits*

**Table 5.11: Frequency of visits**

| Mode | % of total |
|---|---|
| Daily, M-F | 23% |
| All Week (inc. weekend) | 8% |
| Occasionally weekends | 16% |
| Weekends | 15% |
| Fortnightly | 6% |
| Monthly | 8% |
| Other | 25% |

5.22 Those that walk to the Central Area visit most frequently with an average of 12 trips per month. Bus passengers visit eight times on average per month with car drivers making four visits.

**Table 5.12: Frequency of visits by mode**

| Mode | Daily, M-F | All Week (inc. weekend) | Occasionally Weekends | Weekends | Fortnightly | Monthly | Average Trips per Month[18] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Walk | 98 | 45 | 55 | 47 | 11 | 7 | **12** |
| Train | 33 | 3 | 16 | 9 | 9 | 11 | **6** |
| Bus | 34 | 8 | 27 | 29 | 9 | 5 | **8** |
| Car | 26 | 9 | 25 | 33 | 19 | 37 | **4** |
| Cycle | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 | **5** |
| Other | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 5 | **2** |
| Total | **194** | **66** | **133** | **123** | **52** | **65** | |

### Views and experiences of parking

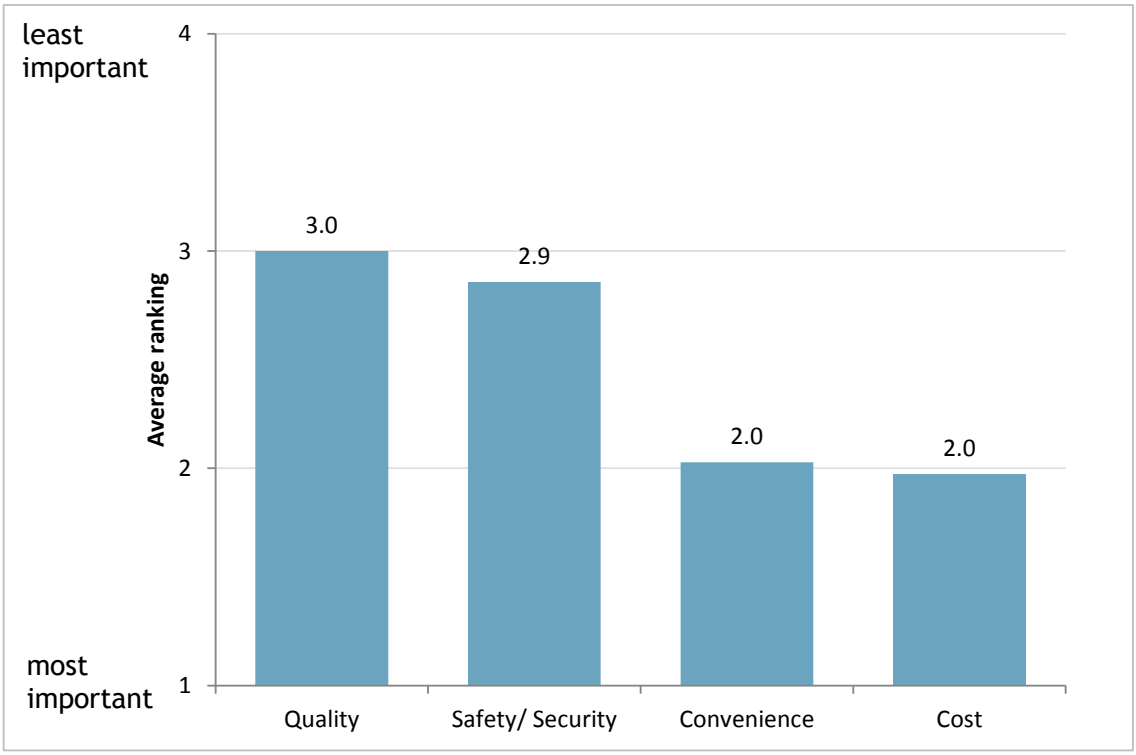
5.23 Data from the survey provides some further information about the experiences of using seafront car parks in Southend. These questions were only asked to respondents who completed the May public holiday survey.

- 94 respondents gave information about the road used to access Southend: 40% used the A13 and 60% used the A127;
- 111 respondents answered a question which asked whether they used seafront parking areas: 55% did and 45% did not;
- When asked whether it was easy to park near the seafront, 55% stated that it was easy and 45% that it was not easy. Of those respondents who did park near the seafront, three quarters stated that they found it easy to do so; and
- Respondents who travelled by car were asked to rate the importance of parking on their decision to return to Southend in the future on a scale of 1 to 10 with one being unimportant and 10 being very important. The average rating given was 7, showing that parking appears to be quite important to those who responded, though the survey did not collect information about any other factors that may influence decisions to re-visit Southend.

5.24 Respondents were also asked to rank four factors considered in choosing their parking location: quality, convenience, cost and safety/security. The average ranking provided to each factor is shown in Figure 5.2. Cost and convenience were considered more important than safety/security and quality.

[18] Estimated figure. Based on the assumption that respondents who stated they visited "Daily M-F" making 20 trips a month, "All week"= 28 trips a month, "Occasionally weekends" = 0.25 a month, "Fortnightly" = 2 trips a month, "Monthly" = 1 trip a month, "Other" = 0.25 trips a month

**Figure 5.2: Ranking of factors influencing choice of parking location**




**Economic Impacts**

5.25 The results above demonstrate that all visitors to Southend contribute to the local economy by spending in Southend Central Area. According to the survey, Central Area visitors who arrived by modes other than by car spent more overall than car users.

5.26 Car users spend the most per trip but tend to visit less frequently while shoppers and bus users visit frequently while spending less per trip. The cost of parking appears important to users of Southend car parks, although it was ranked alongside a limited number of other factors – the availability of parking is important for many but this was not included in the survey.

5.27 The survey results gathered by SoSBC relating to spend by mode of accessing the Central Area are comparable with surveys undertaken elsewhere, albeit not in directly comparable locations.

5.28 The London town centre study 2011[19] also found that those travelling by car had the highest spend per visit (£41), with those walking only spending £26 and cyclists £21. As with the results for Southend, the average spend per month was greater for walkers (£373) and bus users (£282) than for car users (£226).

5.29 A recent study in Enfield[20] aimed to understand the impacts of cycle scheme proposals on town centre vitality in a number of local town centres: Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill Broadway

5.30 In Palmers Green, the study found that car drivers and passengers represented around 26% of all visitors but 34% of all spending in the town centre. It also found that, while walkers

[19] Transport for London (2011b) Town Centre Study 2011 10062. Transport for London, London **www.tfl.gov.uk**

[20] Regeneris Consulting (2016) Economic Impact Assessment of the Cycle Enfield Scheme on the A105 Corridor Towns Centres - Executive Summary

represented 36% of all visitors, they accounted for just 29% of all spending. Overall, the value (in terms of town centre business turnover) of people arriving by modes other than car was £4.3 million compared to £2.2 million for car drivers and passengers.

5.31 For Winchmore Hill Broadway, spend by car drivers and passengers was even greater: representing 45% of all spending but only 22% of all trips. Car users contributed £4.2million to annual town centre business turnover, just less than £5.1million by users of other modes.

## Discussion

5.32 Car borne visitors to Southend need to be considered alongside the needs of pedestrians, bus users and users of other modes who also contribute to the economic vitality of the Central Area. **Measures to increase the number of vehicles accessing and parking in the Central Area and at the seafront are likely to impact negatively on all visitors through increased congestion, worse air quality and reduced ambience, and this needs to be taken into account when planning car parking provision.**

5.33 This study has shown that there is significant pressure on the seafront parking areas at times of peak demand but there is spare capacity elsewhere in the Central Area parking network. Survey data appears to suggest that price of parking is prioritised by visitors, yet there is little differentiation in the pricing of parking between the seafront car parks which are at or over capacity at peak times and the Central Area car parks which have plenty of spare capacity.

5.34 Making better use of available spare capacity within a reasonable walking distance of key destinations should be a key priority in any parking strategy for Southend Central Area.

# 6 Future parking strategy: recommendations

6.1 The following recommendations for a future parking strategy for Southend Central Area are made, based on the analysis of contained in this report.

6.2 Recommendations are grouped into short (1-2 years), medium (2-5 years) and long-term (5-10 years) under four key themes. The key themes and the rationale for the nature of the recommendations are as follows:

*Theme 1: Travel information*

6.3 **Rationale**: visitors to Southend are likely to seek information online about parking options prior to their visit and on arrival. This may be through a number of sources including the SoSBC website, Visit Southend, Parkopedia, signage and a variety of other sources. This offers a good opportunity to influence their choice of travel mode and car park and provide them with the full range of options.

*Theme 2: Sustainable access*

6.4 **Rationale** Limiting the number of vehicles accessing the Southend Central Area by encouraging the use of alternative modes and ridesharing reduces the pressure on the parking network.

*Theme 3: Parking management*

6.5 **Rationale:** There is potential to make better use of existing spare capacity in the Southend Central Area through pricing and re-designation of car parks for specific user groups. This study found an imbalance in the Central Area parking network at peak periods with Central Area South parking struggling to cope with peak demand while Central Area North parking had available capacity. Survey data also suggests that pricing of parking is important to users in choosing their car park. There are a number of parking areas to the north of Southend Central Area which offer spare capacity at periods of peak demand and which are accessible from the main road routes into Southend. Research typically finds that longer stay visitors are willing to walk further to their destination and many users are willing to walk further to cheaper car parks.

*Theme 4: Parking supply*

6.6 **Rationale:** Additional temporary capacity may be required for peak periods for accessing the seafront area. There is potential to make better use of existing parking supply, particularly within the Central Area North, which is under-used at peak periods through encouragement of Park & Ride.

## Short-term (1-2 years) recommendations

*Travel information*

**Recommendation S1: improved website and new travel app**

**6.7** Develop an improved website and a new visitor / smartphone travel app for Southend which has functionality for details of attractions, events and key locations; journey planning; travel offers and competitions; and real time travel information, including push messages and messages through social media. There is an opportunity to use information from a smartphone travel app and the public wi-fi network to better understand visitor movement patterns, for example, to what extent visitors move within the Central Area between north and south? .

Such data collection will be useful not only to plan parking and access to the central area but also could be shared with local businesses.

6.8 For parking information, the current SoSBC website does provide a range of information but the information could be enhanced in the following ways:

1. Provide clear signposting for day visitors, highlighting the car parks available to them particularly those which offer attractive long-stay parking rates.
2. Use information from this study to advise visitors of car parks which are likely to be busy at peak periods.
3. Consider showing an online map of parking locations within the SoSBC website, rather than through Parkopedia. There is a risk that information on Parkopedia is not up to date or accurate.
4. Give users accurate information about walking distances from car parks to the Central Area and seafront in order that users can make informed decisions about where to park based on the amount they are willing to pay for parking and the distance they are willing to walk.
5. Encourage users to follow appropriate social media accounts (for example SoSBC / Visit Southend Twitter and Facebook) so that visitors can be provided with information before and during their journey. This then provide the opportunity to take a Travel Demand Management approach to peak periods which seeks to inform visitors about where and when the parking and road networks will be busy and advice on alternative car parking options.

**Recommendation S2: Ability to reserve and pay for parking in Southend at specified car parks / on-street parking bays.**

6.9 Enable visitors to book and pay for parking in Southend Central Area in advance. Many visitors will value the provision of a guaranteed space (which may be offered at a discount in a currently under-used car park). Advance booking data will help to understand likely levels of demand and this can be used to plan parking arrangements for periods of high demand, Sustainable Access. Booking should be through the online tools developed in recommendation S1.

*Sustainable Access*

**Recommendation S3 Discounted rail fares and entry to attractions**

6.10 Explore options for promotions for discounted rail fares and entry to attractions, similar to the popular “2 for 1” offers to rail users for London attractions.

**Recommendation S4 Priority car sharing spaces**

6.11 Provide priority parking for car sharing (e.g. High Occupancy Vehicles) in the most attractive parking locations.

*Parking Management*

6.12 **Rationale:** There is potential to make better use of existing spare capacity in the Southend Central Area through pricing and re-designation of car parks for specific user groups. This study found an imbalance in the Central Area parking network at peak periods with Central Area South parking struggling to cope with demand while Central Area North had available capacity. Survey data also suggests that pricing of parking is important to users in choosing their car park. There are a number of parking areas to the north of Southend Central Area which offer spare capacity at periods of peak demand and which are accessible from the main

road routes into Southend. Research typically finds that longer stay visitors are willing to walk further to their destination and many users are willing to walk further to cheaper car parks[21].

**Recommendation S5: Designate long-stay / short-stay car parks for peak periods**

6.13 Designate long-stay and short-stay car parks for weekends and public holidays during 'peak season' by local shopping vs. visitor car parks to encourage more effective use / turnover of spaces.

6.14 Non-local visitors to Southend are less likely to be familiar with Central Area car parking options and more likely to want long-stay parking, compared for example to local shoppers. The current arrangement means that the two groups are in competition for parking spaces in all car parks. One option to address this would be to designate some car parks for long-stay parking only and some for short-stay parking.

6.15 Those which would be most suitable for short-stay parking are smaller car parks which require a large turnover of spaces (Alexandra Street, Clarence Road) and those which are designed primarily for shopper parking or closest to the main shopping areas (Royals Shopping Centre, Tylers).

6.16 Seaways car park is an attractive car park for visitors to Southend, located close to the main access road and the seafront. As such, this may be suitable as a long-stay car park in its current form, though there would need to be short stay parking provided for any cinema and restaurant development on the site.

**Recommendation S6: Differential pricing**

6.17 Altering the parking pricing structure to offer significant discounts on under-used car parks further away from the seafront would spread demand. A possible disadvantage is that visitors would not visit the seafront if they park further away – given that the seafront and its attractions are amongst the main reasons for visitors coming to Southend at peak times (weekends and public holiday), this is unlikely.

6.18 Car parks where discounted parking could be provided include:

- Warrior Square
- Civic Centre
- University Square
- Southend College
- Library (Beecroft)
- Essex Street
- Short Street
- Shorefield Road

6.19 Promoting these sites as “Weekend Park & Walk” is another option which may engage potential users and make clear to visitors that they are not located close to the main attractions. This approach provides an opportunity for the overall visitor experience to be enhanced – High Street links most of the above car parks to the seafront and offers a pleasant pedestrianised route through to the attractive seafront area, giving a positive welcome to Southend (compared for example to driving on Queensway, potentially queuing to get into a car park, struggling to find a space etc.). The “Welcome” to Southend will be further enhanced by the Victoria Gateway proposals contained within the SCAAP.

[21] https://www.viewsbank.com/content/drivers-will-walk-half-mile-avoid-parking-charges
https://www.jtlu.org/index.php/jtlu/article/viewFile/568/699

6.20 Differential pricing - greater differential between Central Area 'South Zone' and Central Area 'North Zone'; greater differentiation between short-stay and long-stay by car parking (possibly at weekends and public holidays during 'peak season' only - see above); and removal of constraints on tariffs of private parking.

**Recommendation S7: Improve payment systems**

6.21 Improve parking payment systems to enhance the customer experience, such as payment on exit, mobile payment, online payment in advance. Wherever possible, flexible payment mechanisms should be used to allow visitors to easily extend their stays.

*Parking Supply*

**Recommendation S8: Park and Ride from Leigh-on-Sea station**

6.22 This study has also shown that there is spare weekend and public holiday capacity at Leigh-on-Sea train station to supplement the Central Area parking network at peak periods. Offering a park and ride option would be popular with many visitors, particularly those who are not familiar with the Central Area. Appropriate signage would be required on access routes. There is a possible disadvantage of directing traffic along the A13 through residential areas of South Benfleet and Hadleigh rather than the A127 which is more suited to handling large amounts of traffic. However, user survey data showed that the A13 was used by 40% of respondents so the overall impact may be minimal. Any proposal to use Leigh-on-Sea station would need to take into account the regular car boot sale currently held on the car park.

**Recommendation S9: Engage with employers to identify spare peak period parking supply**

6.23 To further supplement the parking network at peak times, it is recommended that SoSBC liaises with large employers in the town to negotiate use of their car parks for the public at weekends and on public holidays.

## Medium Term (2-5 years) recommendations

*Travel information*

6.24 No specific recommendations are made: ongoing improvements to website and visitor travel app.

*Sustainable Access*

**Recommendation M1: Improved static signage and wayfinding**

6.25 Review existing signage arrangements to promote central area access by more sustainable modes and better use of excess parking capacity.

**Recommendation M2: Integrated bike hire and e-car club offer**

6.26 Enhance the mobility options of all visitors, by providing bike hire and access to electric cars for short term hires during their visit to Southend Central Area. By providing a mobility option for journeys that are too long to walk, a public bike hire scheme with strategically located docking stations and an electric car club with parking spaces for key attractions and locations reduces the need for visitors to bring their own car.

*Parking Management*

**Recommendation M3: Improved VMS and co-ordinated messaging**

6.27 Building on recommendations S1 and M1, improve the variable messaging on car parking availability via alternative media including websites, the new travel app and social media. Targeted messaging and offers can help make better use of spare capacity in the Southend Central Area parking network and any Park and Ride sites introduced.

*Parking Supply*

**Recommendation M4: Park and Ride 'Lite'**

6.28 Explore potential use of existing parking assets (such as schools, leisure facilities and employment sites) with discounted or free parking along commercial bus routes. Bus-based options providing seasonal park and ride could include:

- Parking at car parks to the north of the Central Area (e.g. Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue and The Hive and Beecroft Gallery) which are linked to the Central Area and seafront (Eastern Esplanade) by the number 9 Shoeburyness to Rayleigh bus service. Discounted parking rates and accompanying bus information and simplified ticketing would be required to support this.
- Parking at schools on Prittlewell Chase: Southend High School for Boys, Chase High School, Westcliff High Schools) particularly during August. Suitable bus route options linking directly to the seafront would need to be identified as most routes terminate at the Travel Centre. This option offers the potential for parking to be offered for free (as in Brighton) with users paying for their onward trip into Southend Central Area.
- Using parking provided at the Roots Hall Stadium site and any new development there in the longer term.
- In the longer term, potential Fossetts Farm Stadium (stadium-based Park and Ride sites operate in Derby, Reading and Leeds amongst others).

## Long-term (5-10 years) recommendations

*Travel information*

6.29 No specific recommendations: assume ongoing delivery of short and medium measures.

*Sustainable Access*

6.30 No specific recommendations: assume ongoing delivery of short and medium measures.

*Parking Management*

**Recommendation L1: Dynamic parking**

6.31 Consider dynamic parking management in the context of broader mobility management and innovation. A multi-modal travel assistant (app) which integrates public transport, taxi, walking, cycling and rideshare options based on real-time information would present both regular and infrequent travellers to Southend with more information about travel options. If this solution were also used to pay for and validate parking, and navigate drivers to the appropriate space this would help to reduce congestion by dynamically distributing parking demand. When combined with dynamic pricing of spaces and other incentives for more sustainable travel, a dynamic parking tool can play an integral role in striking a balance between parking revenues, space utilisation and congestion reduction.

6.32 Such a tool offers the ability to vary pricing in real time to incentivise short term changes in parking demand to alternative car parks and modes (linked to travel information and messaging).

*Parking Supply*

**Recommendation L2: Additional parking supply in the south of the Central Area**

6.33 The option to build additional parking in close proximity to seafront (i.e. Central Area 'South Zone') could be considered after the SCAAP period (post 2021). Decisions about additional parking supply should be based on analysis of publicly accessible parking levels in development scenarios and on efficacy of other short and medium-term measures at providing improved access. If additional parking capacity requirements are identified, parking

should be removed elsewhere from within Southend Central Area North in line with policy of no net gain within the Southend Central Area.

6.34 Table 6.1 summarises the short, medium and long-term recommendations.

**Table 6.1: Short, Medium and Long-term measures**

| Strategy Area | Travel Information | Sustainable Access | Parking Management | Parking Supply |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short Term: 1 to 2 years** | **S1** Improved website and visitor travel app | **S3** Rail promotions for discounted rail fares and entry to attractions | **S5** Designate long-stay / short-stay car parks for weekends and public holidays during 'peak season | **S8** Encourage weekend and public holiday Park & Ride from Leigh-on-Sea Station. |
| | **S2** Ability to reserve and pay for parking in Southend at specified car parks / on-street parking bays. | **S4** Priority parking for car sharing (e.g. High Occupancy Vehicles). | **S6** Differential pricing | **S9** Engage with employers to identify spare peak period parking supply |
| | | | **S7** Improve parking payment systems. | |
| **Medium Term: 2 to 5 years** | | **M1** Improved static signage and wayfinding | **M3** Improved VMS and co-ordinated messaging | **M4** Park and Ride 'Lite' – making use of existing assets |
| | | **M2** Integrated bike hire and e-car club | | |
| **Long Term: 5 to 10 years** | | | **L1** Dynamic parking | **L2** Additional parking supply in the south of the Central Area. |

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# Appendices

# A Representations from Stakeholders

## Background

A.1 SoSBC undertook further consultation on SCAAP, starting in December 2015 and finishing in February 2016. This gave a further opportunity for stakeholders, members of the public and interested parties to respond to the preferred approach as set out in the Plan, including specific site boundaries and policies within the Southend Central Area. Our analysis involved reviewing and summarising a list of supplied representations from the consultation. We reviewed and excluded those comments not related to parking or wider development context, and then grouped the remaining comments into eight broad categories as detailed below.

## Summary of Responses

A.2 Fifteen stakeholders provided detailed comments to the consultation on the preferred approach to the Southend Central Area Action Plan. The comments relating to parking were grouped into eight categories: parking infrastructure; traffic; public transport; pricing; capacity and seasonality; connectivity and access; illegal parking and equality.

*Parking Infrastructure*

A.3 Stakeholders were primarily concerned about the implications of the developments on the availability of space for parking infrastructure. A number of stakeholders wanted assurance that existing public car park provision would be retained, particularly at the Tylers (OS6), Seaway Car park and Marine Parade (OS8), and Museum (OS9) sites. One stakeholder noted that the construction method for creating the Museum would involve extensive ground work, which could utilise the lower levels for a covered car park.

A.4 The use of valuable land for projects that would not attract visitors to Southend e.g. a cinema at the Seaway Car park and Marine Parade site (OS8) also drew criticism. The Seaway Car Park (OS8) was described by a number of stakeholders as key gateway site for both the Town and Seafront and that there was an opportunity to provide greatly enhanced public car park provision as part of the overall site redevelopment. It was mentioned that, due to the topography of the Seaway Car Park, there might be an opportunity to cut into the site and accommodate ~1500 parking spaces arranged over several floors.

A.5 A number of stakeholders stated that they were against redevelopment of the Clarence Road (OS16) and Alexandra Street (OS17) Car Parks on the basis that both are needed for local business and for access to The Royals Shopping Centre, shops on the High Street and cafes and restaurants. It was mentioned that local businesses including care agencies, accountants, lawyers etc. need short term spaces for their customers and that if clients do not find somewhere to park nearby, e.g. in the Clarence Road area, the business will relocate somewhere else and this would have an effect on employment levels.

A.6 One stakeholder thought that there is an opportunity to include a public car park in a wholesale mixed use redevelopment of the Empire Theatre on Alexandra Street (destroyed by arson in 2015) as a large basement already exists there.

A.7 Another stakeholder stated that they agreed with the proposed approach to the management of transport, access and the public realm in the SCAAP, with the proviso that the plans should be amended to state that SoSBC 'will maintain car parking capacity at a level that supports the vitality and viability of the town centre' rather than 'seeking to maintain car parking capacity....'.

*Traffic*

A.8 Stakeholders focused on the issues of congestion, both on a daily and seasonal basis (high traffic levels during the summer and in the run-up to Christmas), the lack of parking spaces to accommodate this demand and the potential detrimental impact of failing to capture visitor demand on the economic sustainability and projected jobs growth within the Southend Central Area.

A.9 It is clear that this is one of the issues where stakeholders and SoSBC have differing priorities and this is a source of frustration and misunderstanding. The Council wants to increase visitor numbers, but are aware of competing land uses, and possible detrimental impacts. Local businesses, on the other hand, welcome the opportunity to draw higher numbers of visitors, and hence business, to the area by providing sufficient parking.

A.10 Some members of the BID, Stockvale Group and representatives of the Seafront businesses suggested that one way in which the congestion into the town centre could be improved is for an additional ~4000 parking spaces to be made accessible and available within close proximity to the Seafront and core High Street Area. They note that the day visitor attraction industry, particularly family attractions such as the Seafront, receives the vast majority of its income in a few weeks of the year (generally coinciding with the school holidays). During this peak period they think that a visitor attraction business needs to be able to accommodate every visitor that wants to visit as these peak days effectively subsidise the operation for the rest of the year.

A.11 A couple of stakeholders stated that they had reviewed Blackpool's Local Plan: Blackpool is similarly a seaside town and a comparable seaside resort. They report that, as part of the Blackpool Core Strategy Consultation, the seafront businesses made clear representation regarding the impact of traffic and parking on the sustainability and future growth of Blackpool as a tourist resort and destination of choice. The [Blackpool] Seafront business representation noted that the major attractions that make Blackpool a tourist destination rely on easy access to car parking and good access from car parks to the attractions by foot and public transport. The [Blackpool] Seafront businesses further noted that this matter is often not well understood by councils, who generally consider that it is not necessary to plan car parking for peak periods only. The stakeholder reports that the representations made by the Seafront businesses in Blackpool persuaded the Government Inspector of their position and the Inspector's report went on to conclude that 'car parks need to accommodate peak weekend/ public holiday parking'[22].

[22] This statement has not been checked for accuracy.

A.12 One stakeholder questioned how many cars would be added to the area as a consequence of the development of a large number of residential flats and noted that serious attention would need to be given to the routes these vehicles would need to take to enter/exit the town centre.

*Public Transport*

A.13 With regard to public transport, a couple of stakeholders queried whether the SoSBC had considered a Park and Ride scheme for Southend, noting that they work well in Chelmsford and other regional towns. SoSBC 's response was that Park and Ride schemes have been considered a number of times in recent years but rejected mainly on the lack of evidence for feasibility, given the limited land available and linear peninsula geography of the town. They state that the provision of Park and Ride would only be feasible outside the SCAAP boundaries and those options will be kept under review as part of the ongoing Local Transport Plan provisions and development of the Southend Local Plan.

A.14 The reliance of Southend's Seafront and High street businesses on being easily accessible by foot or public transport (in addition to car parks) was noted by one stakeholder, along with the suggestion that there could be an improvement in the public realm and pedestrian connectivity from the central railway station to the Seafront via Tylers Avenue and the High Street.

*Pricing*

A.15 A number of stakeholders noted that additional capacity is not the only consideration when looking to accommodate parking demand: the price matters too. One stakeholder noted that it is a significant factor affecting where visitors choose to shop, especially when some business benefit from free parking. The same stakeholder bemoaned a general reluctance to acknowledge the importance of car travel in sustaining the area's economy and they perceived an over-emphasis on policies that suppress the car in favour of other modes. Another stakeholder suggested reducing or eliminating all car-parking charges on Sundays and public holiday and at hospital car parks, whilst another suggested that a new Seaway Car Park should recognise blue badges and give them free parking.

A.16 One stakeholder reported the finding of a RICS paper, 'High Streets Adapting for Change', which discusses parking charges and out of town retail (often providing free parking). The stakeholder notes that, since 2007, many local authorities have increased their parking charges significantly and that this has also happened in the Southend Central Area. It is highlighted that this is in contrast to the smaller districts of wider Southend on Sea, Leigh-on-Sea and Southchurch where SoSBC has extended free parking to 2 hours. In the stakeholder's view this is a deterrent for people coming into Southend particularly for shopping and that, combined with the poor spatial and environmental quality, it is a contributing factor to the decline of Southend's Town Centre.

*Capacity and Seasonality*

A.17 As mentioned previously, many Seafront businesses feel these issues (particularly related to peak periods for car parking) are not understood by the Local Authority and as such the level of tourism and investment has peaked. Many of the Seafront businesses express their view that they cannot invest further in the town due to the issue of access and parking and therefore already have a declining customer base – losing business to other town centres in the area such as Basildon.

A.18 Other concerns were around the amount of parking that would be made available for additional housing proposed to be built on sites OS11 (Victoria Avenue), OS12 (Former Essex & Southend Water Board) and OS13 (Roots Hall Football Ground). The proportion 15% is mentioned a number of times i.e. that unless the developers of these housing sites are forced to provide parking 15% in excess of the developments requirements there will be serious parking problems in the area.

A.19 One stakeholder commented that the Fossetts Farm stadium proposal (planned for land off Eastern Avenue) to include a large amount of A1 retail provision would have a major impact on the town centre and would highly likely to lead to a decline of an already struggling retail offer within the High Street. The stakeholder was also concerned that the highway connection and infrastructure would not support the level of traffic journeys that the proposals at Roots Hall is likely to generate.

A.20 One stakeholder commented on the possible negative effect of residents parking zones on the vitality of the town centre and availability of on and off-street parking spaces for visitors.

*Connectivity and Access*

A.21 Stakeholders expressed the view that transport, access and parking issues needed further consideration and are a particular issue for the Seafront businesses and tourist economy in Southend. One stakeholder commented that the highway infrastructure makes journeys into the town prolonged and difficult meaning that many visitors and customers choose not to return.

A.22 Many stakeholders were supportive of townscape improvements, improvements to the public realm, improved connectivity/integration and the creation of active public spaces, in addition to improved connectivity from car parks to the Seafront and High Street. Connections specifically highlighted included that between Seaway Car Park and the Seafront, walking and cycling linkages via St John's Church/Pier Hill and Seaway Car Park to the Marine Parade site (OS8). One stakeholder stated that enhancing local linkages would help to increase footfall, encourage linked trips and help to bolster the vitality and viability of the town centre.

*Illegal Parking*

A.23 One stakeholder commented that there needs to be signs in the Victoria Avenue/Queensway area restricting the use of these roads to buses and taxis only. The stakeholder notes that problems with congestion are compounded by some vehicle owners/ delivery drivers parking their vehicles on the pavement before the side entrance to the rail station thereby blocking the visibility of pedestrians wishing to cross the road from the station.

*Equality*

A.24 A number of stakeholders were concerned that the proposals do not give due consideration to how people of all ages and abilities, including elderly and/or disabled, mums with children and buggies etc. are going to access and navigate a changed and regenerated town centre or how it will cater for all kinds of visitors. One stakeholder took umbrage at the statement that car travel is to be discouraged, something they viewed as discriminatory against those who cannot get on public transport and need cars to access the town. Another noted that the Southend Local Transport Plan 3 reports an expected rise in the population of over-65s and that the aim to make all public transport accessible by 2017 did not appear likely.

A.25 One stakeholder describes the relocation of taxis to the west of College Way as discriminatory as it will leave anyone with a walking difficulties 'stranded'. The same stakeholder also believes there are not enough disabled parking spaces and removing them goes against Equality legislation.

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