Ashford Car Parking Study

Current and Future Car Parking Requirements

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Prepared for:
Spelthorne Borough Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report is by Markides Associates (MA) who have been commissioned by Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) to study the current demand for and supply of parking within Ashford Town Centre. The study also recognises that parking is only one element of a successful town centre, and has also briefly reviewed existing retail studies, the recent Grimsey report into town centres, and has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the urban realm and how this could be improved.

Ashford town centre is located approximately 3km east of Staines. The B378 runs through the centre, providing access to the A30, while Ashford train station provides regular services to Reading and London Waterloo. The town centre is within a predominately residential area and is linear in nature, with the frontage extending along Church Road and partly onto Woodthorpe Road to the train station. The Ashford Campus of the Brooklands College has relocated from Church Road to the Thomas Knyvett College further north on Stanwell Road. The vacated Church Road site is the subject of redevelopment, which should bring new residents into the centre. The Council is also considering proposals for redevelopment of the existing multi-storey car park in the centre.

A 2018 report¹ on Spelthorne’s town centres found that Ashford was a strong and healthy centre with the key anchor being the convenience goods offer, followed by reasonably strong comparison and service sectors. It has a strong local catchment, and some 37% of visitors stayed for up to half an hour, with 53% staying between 30 minutes and 2 hours. The centre benefits from its proximity to the large residential area of Ashford and the ease with which local residents can access the high street. Surveys found that the key attractions of the centre are the compact nature of the shopping streets, ease of access by foot/cycle, eating/drinking provision and the good range of independent retailers. Parking was not identified as an issue, possibly as there are service roads with free on-street parking and various off-street parking areas are provided.

In terms of mode of transport, a 2015 study² found that 44% of visitors arrived by car and 40% arrived on foot; 6.7% arrived on the bus and 4% cycled. The length of journey was primarily less than 10 minutes. 80% of people visit at least once a week with 40% visiting at least 3 times a week.

¹ Retail and Town Centre Study Update, Spelthorne Borough Council, March 2018
² Spelthorne Town Centres Study 2015, GVA
The town centre report recommended that improvements to the diversity of shops and the quality of the shopfronts will have a positive impact on the local area and such improvements should be sought.

**Grimsey Report into Town Centres**

The recent Grimsey report into town centres\(^3\) highlighted the challenges facing high street retail and recommended a strong focus on centres becoming community hubs based on health, education, entertainment, leisure and arts and crafts. The report suggested that facilities such as libraries and digital and health hubs should be part of the offering to bring back people to town centres, together with housing and some independent shops. It highlighted the social aspects of town centres, creating an environment that people want to socialise in. Parking was identified as one issue, and the focus was on ensuring low parking prices (which Ashford has) and future use of technology to identify unoccupied spaces.

**Urban Realm**

The urban realm review highlighted how the centre is quite car dominated, with the road being a barrier between the different sides of the high street and, to some degree, the layout probably encourages vehicle speeds. There are a variety of pedestrian crossings, but these are less prominent and not as easy to use than they could be. There is only a very small amount of landscaping, with few trees. Pedestrian space is separated between the footways and the island adjacent to the service roads, with little integration of the public realm ‘across’ the width of the street.

The review highlighted opportunities to introduce more landscaping, widen pedestrian areas and create more ‘places’ for people to interact, make pedestrian crossing easier and more prominent, to slow vehicle speeds and reduce vehicle dominance and potentially create more on-street parking in suitable locations.

**Current Parking**

Surveys undertaken in June 2018 have confirmed the current situation in terms of the supply of and demand for parking in different off-street and on-street locations in Ashford.

This is summarised in Table ES1, which shows that there is a total of some 450 (controlled) on-street and off-street parking spaces in the town centre. Only some 284 of these (64%) are occupied on an average weekday peak, and this drops to 232 (52%) on a Saturday. The surveys therefore show that there is an existing surplus of parking, with many of these in the multi-storey car park.

\(^3\) The Grimsey Report, 2018
### TABLE ES.1: SUMMARY OF ASHFORD TOWN CENTRE PARKING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking Area</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peak demand</td>
<td>Charging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-storey</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesco</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANPR</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Rd. On-street</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>117</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key points

Overall the key findings on the current situation are:

- The town centre is popular and busy, with few vacancies; the catchment is quite local;
- The urban realm is dominated by the road and there are improvements that can be made to create a greater sense of ‘place’ and areas for more social interaction; this should include more landscaping, better pedestrian crossings, slower vehicle speeds and more space for people; there is also the opportunity to introduce more on-street parking;
- A preliminary urban design scheme has been developed to show options for these improvements;
- Surveys have shown that only around 44% of shoppers access Ashford by car, so access by other modes is important as is the town centre environment;
- Most of the visitors to the centre stay for less than 2 hours and like the easy access to and within the centre;
- Parking supports the town centre and is quite convenient and easy to access;
- Most of the existing parking use is for short durations of stay, with this being a feature of the current use of the multi-storey car park and the parking on Church Road, where stays are limited to a maximum of 2 hours;
• There is a considerable spare parking; this is estimated at 196 spaces (weekday) and 224 (Saturday); ignoring the station and Tesco car parks (which serve particular functions) this spare capacity remains at 150 spaces on a weekday/Saturday.

• On-street parking is well-used, although there are still spare spaces;

• The Tesco and ANPR car parks experience higher occupancy levels, reaching capacity at certain times of the day or week;

• The multi-storey car park is very poorly used, with a maximum of 48 of 139 spaces used on a weekday, and less on a Saturday. Most users stay for less than 2 hours;

• There is evidence of a lack of enforcement associated with the parking on Church Road, with 7% of weekday users and 4% of Saturday users staying longer than 4 hours; these take up short-stay bays in prime locations;

The figures below summarise the current overall situation in terms of the combined peak of car park and Church Road on-street parking utilisation, highlighting spare capacity.

**FIGURE ES.1: WEEKDAY OFF AND ON-STREET PARKING DEMAND**

**FIGURE ES.2: SATURDAY OFF AND ON-STREET PARKING DEMAND**
Conclusions and recommendations

In terms of the future of Ashford Town Centre, the study considers that:

- The town centre urban realm could be improved to reduce speeds, emphasise pedestrian crossing facilities and create a better sense of place – such enhancements could be made in conjunction with increased on-street parking, estimate at up to 50 new spaces on Church Road and some side roads;

- There is considerable spare parking capacity, particularly in the multi-storey car park; this facility is an outdated building that adds little to the town centre street scene and is aging, with the top 2 floors of parking currently out of service. The maintenance and condition of the car park will be an ongoing issue for the Council in future; this of course needs to be balanced against the potential loss of income from the car park and any potential financial benefits the Council may gain from the redevelopment.

- It is recommended that the option to redevelop the site of the multi-storey car park (for residential use) should be considered. Such a proposal would transform the depreciating asset of the car park, bring new residents and some retail space into the centre of Ashford with some affordable housing) and provide additional demand for local retail outlets, whilst also providing funding for urban realm improvements;

- The overall parking consequences of this option appear to be acceptable given the low use of the multi-storey, provided that the additional on-street spaces highlighted are created, and consideration is given to better signing of spaces;

- However, the redevelopment will mean that Ashford town centre car parking becomes primarily on-street, and some customers who currently prefer off-street parking may take time to adjust to this. To facilitate this, better signing of parking should be considered (including trial use of technology to show vacant spaces) and enforcement should encourage less long-stay use of prime short-stay bays;

- There is also the opportunity (in conjunction with the train operators/Network Rail), to increase use of the station off-street car park, which is underused. Some marketing of the off-peak and Saturday tariffs and car park availability should assist this;

- Given that on-street spaces are limited to 2 hours maximum stay, there are a few medium and long-stay users of the multi-storey car park who may need different provision on-street. In view of this, consideration could be given to providing a small element (up to 10 to 15 spaces) on Church Road east or adjacent side-streets, specifically for medium/long stay use (up to around 4 hours maximum stay).

- Consequently, it is recommended that the Council consult with stakeholders and the public on the potential streetscape proposals and the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park. The overall parking consequences of this option appear to be acceptable given the low use of the multi-storey, provided that the additional on-street spaces highlighted are created, and consideration is given to better signing of spaces;
It is recommended that the Council consult with stakeholders and the public on the potential streetscape proposals and the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park.
1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Markides Associates (MA) have been commissioned by Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) to study the current demand for and supply of car parking within Ashford Town Centre. The Council wish to establish the current supply and demand for parking at different times of the day and week, whilst also identifying recommendations on how the town centre could be improved.

1.2 The study therefore also briefly reviewed existing retail studies, the recent Grimsey report into town centres, and has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the urban realm and how this could be improved.

1.3 The study has also considered the impact of proposed and potential development, including the current development of the former Brooklands College site development and the potential impact of redeveloping the existing Multi Storey Car Park to provide a mixed-use residential (flats) and small-scale retail development.

1.4 On this basis, this report is set out on the following basis:

   - **Section 2** provides a description of the study area in terms of its retail and urban realm context, existing off-street and on-street parking provision, car parking charges and the local highway network;
   - **Section 3** provides details of car park surveys which have been undertaken;
   - **Section 4** then describes a future baseline scenario, taking account of any information on future growth in parking demand and committed land use proposals;
   - **Section 5** then provides a summary of initial urban design proposals, which provide for improvements to the town centre and for additional on-street parking spaces;
   - **Section 6** provides an assessment of the implications of the potential closure of the multi-storey car park and the predicted effect this will have due to displaced demand; and
   - **Section 7** provides recommendations in terms of changing parking controls, considering the impact of such measures, as well as wider considerations in terms of the parking supply of Ashford.

1.5 A summary and conclusions are then provided, summarising the work which has been undertaken, the identified parking provision and urban design measures and implications in terms of the proposed development of Ashford Multi Storey Car Park.
2. **STUDY AREA**

2.1 **Site Location**

Ashford town centre is located approximately 3km east of Staines. The B378 runs through the centre, providing access to the A30 and Ashford train station provides regular services to Reading and London Waterloo.

2.2 The commercial centre of Ashford is focussed on Church Road – See Figure 2.1. From its roundabout with Feltham Road in the south-east to where it crosses the railway line near Ashford Rail Station in the north-west, Church Road extends over approximately 1km, with commercial development having frontage with Church Road over approximately 650m of this length.

![Image above: part of town centre showing example service road adjacent to Church Road](image.png)

**Town centre retail summary**

2.3 The Centre is within a predominately residential area and is linear in nature with the frontage extending along Church Road and partly onto Woodthorpe Road to the train station. The Ashford Campus of the Brooklands College has relocated from Church Road to the Thomas Knyvett College further north on Stanwell Road. The vacated Church Road site is the subject of redevelopment, which should bring new residents into the centre.

2.4 A 2018 report on Spelthorne’s Town Centres found that Ashford was a strong and healthy centre with the key anchor being the convenience goods offer, followed by reasonably strong comparison and service sectors. Linked trips have been identified, and 37% of visitors stayed for up to half an hour, with 53% staying between 30 minutes and 2 hours. The centre benefits from its proximity to the large residential area of Ashford and the ease with which local residents can access the high street. The key attractions of the centre are the compact nature of the shopping streets, ease of access by foot/cycle, eating/drinking provision and
the good range of independent retailers. Parking was not identified as an issue, possibly as there are service roads with free on-street parking and various off-street parking areas are also provided.

2.5 In terms of mode of transport, a 2015 study found that 44% of visitors arrived by car and 40% arrived on foot; only 6.7% arrived on the bus and 4% cycled. The length of journey was primarily less than 10 minutes, with 21.3% of people travelling for between 10 and 20 minutes. 80% of people visit at least once a week with 40% visiting at least 3 times a week.

2.6 The town centre report recommended that Improvements to the diversity of shops and the quality of the shopfronts will have a positive impact on the local area and such improvements should be sought.

Grimsey report

2.7 The recent Grimsey Report into Britain’s town centres are also pertinent to the future of Ashford town centre. The report highlighted the challenges facing high street retail and recommended a strong focus on centres becoming community hubs based on health, education, entertainment, leisure and arts and crafts. The report suggested that facilities such as libraries and digital and health hubs should be part of the offering to bring back people to town centres, together with housing and some independent shops. It highlighted the social aspects of town centres, creating an environment that people want to socialise in.

2.8 The Grimsey report did highlight parking as one factor in town centre vitality and suggested a maximum price for stays up to 2 hours, and future use of technology to highlight where empty spaces are located. In relation to Ashford, the number of free on-street spaces with 2-hour parking limits as well as the off-street car parks means that parking is probably less of an issue.

Current Urban Realm

2.9 A preliminary review was undertaken of the current urban realm as part of the study.

2.10 The high street has the main carriageway running through it, with most on-street parking ‘off-line’ in service roads adjacent to the shops. This means that the road becomes a bit of a barrier between the different sides of the high street, and probably encourages traffic movement and speed to some degree. There are a variety of pedestrian crossings, but these are less prominent than they could be, with pedestrian refuges giving the impression that the vehicles have precedence.

2.11 There is some landscaping, and where there are mature trees this enhances the local environment; but there is scope for much more. Pedestrian space is separated between the footways and the island adjacent to the service roads, with little integration ‘across’ the width of the street. Given the amount of on-street parking in the service roads and the traffic on the road itself, the centre is dominated by vehicles.

2.12 The review highlighted opportunities to:

- introduce more landscaping;
- widen pedestrian areas and create more ‘places’ for people to interact;
- make pedestrian crossing easier and more prominent;
- slow speeds and reduce vehicle dominance; and
potentially create more on-street parking in suitable locations.

**Car parking in the town centre**

2.13 There is a mix of free on-street and (mostly) paid off-street parking available in the town centre. There are currently 4 off-street car parks available for public use:

- Ashford Multi-storey car park with **139** spaces;
- A car park adjacent to the Tesco Express with **24** spaces;
- An adjacent private car park (ANPR enforced) with **46** spaces; and
- A car park which serves Ashford rail station with **90** spaces

2.14 The charging associated with these car parks are summarised in **Table 2.2** below.

**TABLE 2.2: ASHFORD TOWN CENTRE CAR PARK CHARGES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car Park</th>
<th>Monday - Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashford Multi-Storey</td>
<td>Up to 30 mins</td>
<td>£0.40</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 2 hours</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 2 hours</td>
<td>£1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesco Car Park</td>
<td>30 minutes free parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private ANPR Car Park</td>
<td>Up to 2 hours</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 4 hours</td>
<td>£2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 6 hours</td>
<td>£3.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 8 hours</td>
<td>£4.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 24 hours</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 48 hours</td>
<td>£10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Car Park</td>
<td>Peak Daily</td>
<td>£5.20</td>
<td>£2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Off Peak Daily</td>
<td>£2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.15 There are many controlled on-street spaces along Church Road, with most of this located within service roads which run parallel and are accessed from Church Road. This parking is free and has a maximum stay of 2 hours between 7am and 7pm (Mon-Sat), with no return within 4 hours.

2.16 Whilst there is signage in place to limit the length of stay within these on-street parking areas, it is understood that enforcement of this is currently infrequent.

2.17 In addition to the parking areas described above, there are areas of uncontrolled on-street parking within the residential streets to the north-east and south-west of Church Road.
3. **CURRENT PARKING**

**Introduction**

3.1 To provide an assessment of the current situation, car park utilisation and duration of stay surveys have been undertaken within the study area described in the previous Section.

3.2 Surveys were undertaken on **Thursday 28th** and **Saturday 30th June 2018** and comprised:

- Car park occupancy and duration of stay surveys (0700-1900 hours, with an hourly beat) at the Ashford Multi-Storey Car Park and on-street parking on Church Road;
- Car park occupancy surveys (0700-1900 hours) of the Tesco, ANPR and Station car parks; and
- On-street occupancy and duration of stay surveys of the residential streets north-east and south-west of Church Road, with three-hourly beats at 0600, 0900, 1200, 1500 and 1800 hours.

**Off-street Car Park Survey Results**

3.3 As well as identifying the levels of parking and durations of stay within the different survey areas, the surveys also identified the level of parking provision within each location.

3.4 The figures below provide an estimate of the level of car park occupancy at different times of the day, for each of the surveyed car parks. Full car park survey data is provided in **Appendix A**.

3.5 The results presented in the figures show:

- A very low level of use of the multi-storey car park on a weekday (peak utilisation 35%) and on a Saturday (peak utilisation 14%);
- A higher level of use of the Tesco car park, with this generally exceeding 85% on a Saturday between the hours of 09:30 and 16:30; this is a small, free, very short-stay (maximum stay 30 minutes) car park;
- A higher level of use of the ANPR car park, with this being higher on a Saturday (100%) than a weekday (72%); and
- A maximum utilisation of 71% for the Station car park on a weekday, whilst Saturday utilisation is lower, peaking at 21%.
FIGURE 3.1: ASHFORD MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK WEEKDAY UTILISATION

![Weekday Utilisation Graph](image1)

FIGURE 3.2: ASHFORD MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK SATURDAY UTILISATION

![Saturday Utilisation Graph](image2)
### FIGURE 3.3: TESCO CAR PARK WEEKDAY UTILISATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Total Occupancy</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
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### FIGURE 3.4: TESCO CAR PARK SATURDAY UTILISATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Total Occupancy</th>
<th>Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>08:00</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>09:00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 3.5: ANPR CAR PARK WEEKDAY UTILISATION

FIGURE 3.6: ANPR CAR PARK SATURDAY UTILISATION
FIGURE 3.7: STATION CAR PARK WEEKDAY UTILISATION

FIGURE 3.8: STATION CAR PARK SATURDAY UTILISATION
3.6 Table 3.1 below provides a summary of the weekday and Saturday peak utilisation of each car park, as well as the average level of occupancy between 09:00 and 18:00 hours.

**TABLE 3.1: SUMMARY OF CAR PARK OCCUPANCY SURVEYS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car Park</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peak occupancy</td>
<td>0900-1800 Avg</td>
<td>Peak occupancy</td>
<td>0900-1800 Avg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-storey</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesco</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>113%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>117%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANPR</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>111%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 An estimate of overall off-street parking demand is given in Figures 3.9 and 3.10 – we note that each of the surveyed car parks has a different role to play within Ashford in terms of length of stay and the purpose of their use at different times of the day and on different days of the week, and this needs to be understood when looking at the overall supply of parking.

**FIGURE 3.9: TOTAL OFF-STREET CAR PARKING WEEKDAY UTILISATION**
3.8 The profiles above confirm that there is considerable spare capacity within the existing off-street car parks of Ashford. Whilst most of this spare capacity exists within the multi-storey car park, there is also spare capacity in other car parks and on-street.

**Multi-Storey Car Park Survey Results**

3.9 In terms of the multi-storey car park, the surveyed maximum level of occupancy is 48 vehicles with this occurring around 12:00 hours on a weekday. The average surveyed occupancy between 09:00 and 18:00 hours on a weekday was 34 vehicles, whilst surveyed occupancy levels were typically above 40 vehicles between 10:15 and 14:30 hours on a weekday.

3.10 Surveyed occupancy levels on a Saturday were found to be considerably lower with a peak occupancy level of 20 vehicles around 10:45 and 12:15. The average surveyed occupancy levels between 09:00 and 18:00 was 12 vehicles, whilst outside of the identified peaks, occupancy rarely exceeds 15 vehicles.

3.11 In addition to occupancy surveys, duration of stay surveys were also undertaken at the multi-storey car park. The results of these are summarised in **Table 3.2**.

**TABLE 3.2: SUMMARY OF MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK DURATION OF STAY SURVEYS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duration of Stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-1hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekday</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.12 These results are shown graphically below, confirming the predominant short-stay use throughout each day.

**FIGURE 3.11: MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK DURATIONS OF STAY**

3.13 The results show that on both a weekday and a Saturday, most users stay for up to 1 hour, with few users staying longer than 3 hours, notably on a Saturday. It’s worth noting that any stay longer than 2 hours incurs the same £1.50 charge on both a weekday and a Saturday.

**Church Road On-Street Survey Results**

3.14 Surveys of the on-street parking provided adjacent to Church Road (including on the service roads) included an assessment of the number of cars which can be accommodated within the spaces provided. These comprise:

- 140 standard parking bays either immediately alongside Church Road or accessed from the adjacent service roads, including 2 ‘Police’ bays;
- 8 disabled parking bays; and
- 11 motorcycle parking bays

3.15 The total on-street controlled parking space provision is therefore 148 car park spaces, as well as one bay with 11 motorcycle parking spaces.

3.16 Focussing on the locations where designated parking bays (standard, disabled and motorcycle) are provided, the figures below provide illustrations of weekday and Saturday utilisation throughout each day.
The figures indicate that on both a weekday and a Saturday, utilisation peaks at just below 120 spaces (115 on a weekday and 117 on a Saturday), thereby showing that at the peak of occupancy there are in the region of 35 on-street parking spaces available (excluding motorcycle parking spaces – these were always empty at the time of surveys). Both the weekday and Saturday peaks are reached at around 09:00 hours, with the overall level of utilisation remaining at a similar level until 15:00 to 17:00 hours.
3.18 In addition to recording the parking accumulation in these areas, the surveys also recorded
the duration of stay of vehicles parked adjacent to Church Road. This information is
summarised in the table below.

**TABLE 3.3: SUMMARY OF CHURCH ROAD PARKING DURATION OF STAY SURVEYS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duration of Stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-1hr 1-2 hrs 2-3 hrs 3-4 hrs 4-5 hrs 5-6 hrs 6-7 hrs 7-8 hrs 8-9 hrs 9-10hrs 10-11hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekday</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.19 The results presented above show that, on both a weekday and a Saturday, most vehicles
are parked for less than 1 hour, with moderate numbers staying between 1 and 2 hours.
These areas of parking have a 2-hour maximum stay (with no return within 4 hours), and
therefore if being rigorously enforced, there ought to be few or no vehicles staying beyond
2 hours.

3.20 The survey results show some vehicles staying more than 2 hours, notably within the 2-3
hours timeframe, although a small number of vehicles were recorded as staying all day. In
total 58 (7%) of vehicles on a weekday and 38 (4%) of vehicles on a Saturday stay more than
2 hours.

3.21 These results are shown graphically below, confirming the predominant short-stay use
during the day.

**FIGURE 3.14: CHURCH ROAD PARKING DURATIONS OF STAY**

3.22 Therefore, in summary, although the results show a relatively low number of vehicles staying
longer than the permitted 2 hours, each of these vehicles obviously take up capacity that
higher-turnover short-stay parking could use. Each vehicle staying 6 hours or so probably takes up the space that could be sued by 3-6 other vehicles staying for 1-2 hours. This is indicative of a lack of enforcement, which would free up the short-stay spaces – of course any displaced parking impacts would need to be considered.

3.23 In addition to the use of designated parking bays, the surveys also incorporated observations of parking taking place on sections of single-yellow lines and adjacent to drop kerbs on Church Road. Parking in such areas was found to be very minor, with:

- 2 short-stay vehicles parked adjacent to drop kerbs and 4 short-stay vehicles parked on single-yellow lines throughout the weekday survey; and
- 1 short-stay vehicle parked adjacent to a drop kerb and 1 short-stay vehicle parked on a single-yellow line throughout the Saturday survey.

3.24 Therefore, the surveys have shown that very little parking takes place outside of designated parking bays.

Summary of Car Parks and Church Road Peak Parking Demand

3.25 Having considered the demand of both the car parks and Church Road, assessments have been undertaken to consider how the total peak parking demand is split between different areas, in addition to the available spare capacity at the peak of demand on both a weekday and a Saturday. This is summarised in the figures below.
3.26 Assuming that the Tesco and Station car parks have particular functions, the figures below provide a summary of the current situation, without taking account of the spare capacity which exists within these car parks.
The figures above therefore confirm the extent of spare capacity which currently exists within designated parking areas in Ashford, which can be summarised as:

- 196 spaces on a weekday, taking account of all car parks
- 224 spaces on a Saturday, taking account of all car parks
- 150 spaces on a weekday, excluding the Tesco and Station car parks
- 153 spaces on a Saturday, excluding the Tesco and Station car parks

Residential Streets Survey Results

Surveys were also undertaken on primarily residential roads either side of Church Road. Prior to these surveys being undertaken, the roads were reviewed to identify where on-
street parking was prevalent on these roads, to inform the extent of surveys undertaken on these roads. The location of these roads is shown in Figure 2.1.

3.29 Beat surveys on a 3-hourly basis were undertaken on these roads on each of the survey days. Full survey results are included in Appendix A. The full survey results provide a record of all available road space on these roads, not only including disabled spaces, legal footway parking, parking bays and parking perpendicular to the road, as well as other unrestricted parking, but also incorporating road space described as ‘bus stop’, ‘drop kerb’, ‘double-yellow’, ‘pedestrian crossing’, ‘single-yellow’, ‘undesirable’ and ‘white line’ parking.

3.30 The results presented below show the total level of parking surveyed taking place in each street - the capacity is assumed to relate to ‘legal’ parking only, i.e. disabled spaces, legally on footways, within parking bays, parking perpendicular to the road, as well as other unrestricted parking. This therefore demonstrates any locations where the surveyed parking taking place exceeds the road space available in terms of acceptable parking spaces.

3.31 In Table 3.4, where a survey result is shown to be the same as the acceptable parking capacity of the street it is shown highlighted green and where it exceeds the acceptable parking capacity it is shown highlighted orange – all other locations are below capacity.

### Table 3.4: Summary of Residential Road Occupancy Surveys – Capacity and Vehicles Parked

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>06:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Road</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percy Avenue</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland Grove</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownrigg Road</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mead Way</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Way</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Crescent</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford Crescent</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarendon Road</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princes Road</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley Road</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Road</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copthorne Chase</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleridge Road</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaucer Road</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Parade</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Approach</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodthorpe Road</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>624</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.32 The results above show that the parking which takes place on the majority of streets does not exceed the capacity of these streets in terms of acceptable parking locations. Moreover, the results also show that, overall, the level of parking that takes place on these streets does not exceed the acceptable parking capacity on these streets, both on a weekday and on a Saturday.
However, there are certain streets where the level of on-street parking was found to exceed the acceptable parking capacity provided. The pattern on a weekday and a Saturday is generally similar on these streets, whilst all of these streets are in relatively close proximity to one another and are located to the south-western side of Church Road.

It should also be noted that, due to the nature of these streets, where parking has been observed to take place in locations such as ‘drop kerb’ or ‘white line’, this could be associated with vehicles associated with adjacent properties and would therefore not necessarily be a concern in terms of residential use.

Nevertheless, the figures are indicative of a high level of parking demand on certain residential streets, namely Percy Avenue, Dudley Road, Ford Road and Coleridge Road.

In addition to occupancy levels, the surveys also recorded the durations of stay on a street by street basis, with these being in 3-hourly increments given the beat surveys were undertaken on a 3-hourly basis. A summary of these results is presented in Table 3.5 below.

**TABLE 3.5: SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL ROAD DURATION OF STAY SURVEYS – VEHICLES PARKED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Road</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percy Avenue</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland Grove</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownrigg Road</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mead Way</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Way</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Crescent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford Crescent</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarendon Road</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princes Road</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley Road</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Road</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copthorne Chase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleridge Road</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaucer Road</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Parade</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Approach</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodthorpe Road</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>599</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
<td><strong>104</strong></td>
<td><strong>188</strong></td>
<td><strong>517</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noticeable from the results that there is a high level of short-stay use on the residential roads on both a weekday and a Saturday, with durations of stay between 0 and 3 hours being the dominant pattern on all roads. It is assumed that this is indicative of the roads being used to some degree by town centre visitors.
Summary of Current Situation

In summary the assessment of the current situation has shown that:

- The multi-storey car park has a low level of use, notably on a Saturday when peak demand does not exceed 20 vehicles, whilst the peak weekday demand is 35% (48 occupied spaces);

- The other off-street car parks have varying levels of use, with the Tesco car park being at capacity on a weekday and Saturday; the ANPR car park is at capacity on a Saturday and is some 72% full on a weekday. The Station car park has a lower level of use, noticeably, as would be expected, on a Saturday (21%) whilst it peaks at 71% on a weekday;

- In combination, throughout both a weekday and a Saturday, the off-street car parks have considerable spare capacity, although most of this can be attributed to the multi-storey car park;

- Most of the multi-storey car park use is less than 2 hours (63% on a weekday and 78% on a Saturday) with minimal use beyond 3 hours on both a weekday and a Saturday;

- Surveys of Church Road have shown a similar level and pattern of use on both a weekday and a Saturday, with maximum utilisation levels peaking at about 9am each day and remaining consistent until the late afternoon;

- The Church Road surveys have shown that at the peak level of occupancy, there are in the region of 35 spare spaces available along the length of Church Road, on both a weekday and a Saturday;

- Most vehicles surveyed within the parking on Church Road stay less than 1 hour. There is a small but important set of vehicles staying in excess of the permitted maximum 2 hours (notably on a weekday), with this being indicative of a lack of enforcement;

- There is some on-street parking by visitors taking place on local residential streets, with some streets experiencing high parking levels;

Whilst the assessment of the current situation has shown there to be spare capacity on both a weekday and a Saturday throughout the day, it is important to be aware how demand might change in the future. This is therefore given consideration in the following section.
4. **Future Baseline Scenario**

**Introduction**

4.1 This section of the study considers future influences on car parking supply and demand within Ashford, in order to provide future baseline scenario. Specifically, this refers to:

- Development, either currently being implemented or proposed; and
- Potential changes in car parking demand in the centre of Ashford, with forecasting based upon Tempro growth factors (a Department for Transport national trip forecasting dataset).

4.2 These are considered in further detail below.

**Former Brooklands College Development**

4.3 Reference has been made to the approved redevelopment of the former Brooklands College site. The development, which was granted planning approval in December 2017 (Appn. Ref. 17/01274/FUL), comprises the construction of new buildings between one and five storeys to accommodate 357 dwellings (use class C3); 619sqm of flexible commercial floorspace (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1(a)); 442sqm of education floorspace (use class D1); the provision of public open space; associated car parking, cycle parking; access and related infrastructure, and associated works.

4.4 With work having since started on site, the key considerations in terms of this Ashford Car Park Study are the impact on parking supply and demand for Ashford as a whole.

4.5 It is noted that Condition 13 of the planning approval states that “the development shall not be occupied until a Parking Management Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented upon first occupation and for each subsequent occupation of the development”. The decision notice goes on to say that the Parking Management Plan shall be in a similar format to that dated 22nd September 2016 submitted to support application 16/00972/FUL and shall include details of how fines are to be calculated, and the frequency of checking parking within the site.

4.6 Additionally, Condition 29 of the planning approval states that “the parking spaces shown on the submitted plan be constructed and the spaces shall be completed prior to the completion of the dwellings to which they relate, and thereafter the approved facilities together with the means of access thereto shall be maintained as approved and be reserved for the benefit of the development hereby permitted”.

4.7 A review of the Transport Assessment (TA), dated July 2017 submitted to accompany the planning application has confirmed that:

- 501 spaces are proposed on the site associated with the proposed residential units, this having been agreed with Surrey County Council (SCC) to provide 1 parking space per dwelling, with 20% being unallocated;
- 4 car parking spaces retained on site for staff associated with the Brooklands College hair training salon being retained on site;
It is considered that, given that the vast majority of visitors to the proposed retail facilities will be existing trips to the town centre or internal trips made by residents of the site, it was agreed with SCC Highways that the provision of 9 spaces for commercial floorspace would be appropriate, whilst it is also stated that a parking beat survey has been undertaken which demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity on the surrounding roads to accommodate additional visitors to the town centre should the demand for spaces exceed those provided on the site;

- to ensure the appropriate use of the parking on the site, a management company will be employed to monitor the vehicles parked on the site and undertake enforcement as necessary.

The TA provides details of parking beat surveys undertaken in May 2016 to demonstrate that there was adequate spare on-street parking capacity on local roads, including Church Road, in the event that the parking proposed as part of the development was insufficient to accommodate the associated demand.

Whilst this confirms that there was spare capacity (as has also been confirmed through the surveys undertaken as part of this study), the TA does not provide any detailed analysis as to the potential or extent to which the on-street parking might be used by visitors to the development. It is also important to be aware that the retail facilities and amenity space proposed as part of the development will give rise to the potential for increased durations of stay within the centre of Ashford. There are 2 aspects to consider in relation to this:

- Firstly, increased durations of stay (even within the 2-hour maximum stay which applies to the parking areas adjacent to Church Road) will reduce the turnover of spaces throughout the course of a day; and
- Secondly, increased durations of stay may also lead to more instances of vehicles staying beyond the permitted maximum of 2 hours and therefore enforcement of the parking on Church Road will increasingly become a requirement

It is therefore considered that this development will have some impact on the availability and turnover of on-street parking spaces within the centre of Ashford and therefore it is important that there is some spare capacity within the overall future parking provision of Ashford to make an allowance for this.

As a further point regarding the development of the former Brooklands College site, it is also worth noting that the as part of the access design onto Church Road, the 3 parking spaces to the west of the access and opposite the multi-storey car park entrance, are to be removed. This change is taken account of in the following Section which provides details of changes to the layout of parking on and adjacent to Church Road.

**Changes in Future Parking Demand**

Housing trajectory data and planning (jobs) data contained within the TEMPRO DfT trip-generation database provides some guide to potential changes in parking demand over the next 10 years.

Data from the 2011 Census shows that there were 40,887 dwelling within the Spelthorne Borough area. Analysis of total completions and housing trajectory data contained within Spelthorne Borough Council’s ‘Planning Monitoring Report 2016’ indicates that this figure
has risen to around 43,000 by 2018 and is predicted to rise to around 44,900 by 2028, a rise of around 4.3%.

4.14 Reference to TEMPRO planning data for the same 2018-2028 time period, indicates a 3.5% increase in jobs for the Spelthorne area.

4.15 The average (3.9%) of these two figures has therefore been taken to provide an indication of potential increases in parking demand over the next 10 years and has been applied to the base demand.
5. **PRELIMINARY URBAN DESIGN PROPOSALS**

**Introduction**

5.1 The urban design review by CIVIX identified a number of issues and opportunities. This has resulted in a broad assessment of the potential for change and an initial indicative concept design for discussion with stakeholders and the public.

**Urban Design Strategy**

5.2 The key principles used in this design were:

- Reduce dominance of the car by slowing speeds, reducing vehicle moving space, and were possible creating new places for pedestrians to interact and rest;
- Enhancing pedestrian crossing points;
- Increasing the amount of landscaping, particularly trees; and
- Increasing on-street parking in appropriate places.

5.3 The sketch proposals (see Appendix B) also illustrate the opportunity to simplify and enhance the street scene, creating areas of space that facilitate car parking, but also provide an adaptable area for community events/markets. These types of opportunities are seen by many experts to hold the future of the survival of the high street. It is also suggested that junction designs can be improved, with the key change being at a relocated war memorial, creating a new ‘place’.

5.4 The Urban Design Strategy focusses on redesigning the layouts of car parking along Church Road, not only with the aim of providing more parking provision but improving the layout and design of the streetscape to improve the experience and its performance for all town centre users. This includes:

- The provision of additional disabled parking spaces within the service roads adjacent to Church Road;
- The provision of additional cycle parking facilities;
- Creating a sense of place and a greener environment, whilst simplifying movement patterns and spatial organisation;
- Reprioritising design hierarchies; and
- Installing electric vehicle (EV) charging points

**Preliminary Urban Design Proposal**

5.5 These are summarised below, with sketches in Appendix B, which also contains a list of locations where additional car parking spaces can be provided.

5.6 In general:

- New trees are proposed at various locations and increases in pedestrian footways
- Some parts of the service roads with parking redesigned as flexible ‘shared space’ adaptable for events such as markets – level surfaces, flexible lighting etc.
• Side road ‘entry treatments;’ to create level surfaces for pedestrians across side roads;

5.7 Working from Church Road in the north-west towards the south-east, the principal features of this proposal are summarised below:

• The provision of a ramp up to a raised Church Road table area with pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the Tesco/ANPR car park entrance;
• Echelon parking and flexible space within the service road adjacent to the Sainsbury’s Local store;
• Echelon parking and flexible space within the service road adjacent to Costa Coffee;
• Pedestrian crossing over Church Road maintained in this location;
• 5 extra spaces provided on the east side of Church Road in the vicinity of Santander;
• Pedestrian crossing over Church Road maintained near Santander;
• Echelon parking and flexible space within the service road on the southern side of Church Road, to the east of junction with Dudley Road;
• Pedestrian crossing facility on Church Road connecting multi-storey site with former Brooklands College site;
• Echelon parking within the service road adjacent to the Co-op store and pedestrian crossing facilities maintained in this location;
• Reconfiguring parking on service road between junctions with Fordbridge Road and Elmcroft Drive and maintain and enhance pedestrian crossing facilities with new central island to reduce speeds;
• Reconfiguration and raised treatment of Fordbridge Road junction, with reduction of carriageway and increased pedestrian space; war memorial to be relocated to side of junction, and ‘place’ created around this with ornamental planting;
• Echelon parking on service road between junctions with Elmcroft Drive and Percy Avenue, with pedestrian crossing maintained;

5.8 The combination of these proposals in conjunction with the small loss of parking as part of the access proposal for the former Brooklands College site development is therefore expected to result in the potential delivery of up to approximately 30 additional spaces.

5.9 In addition to the descriptions provided above, the possibility of providing additional on-street parking on some of the side roads near Church Road has also been considered. The provision of 3 spaces on Dudley Road, 8 spaces on Brownrigg Road, 6 spaces on Parkland Road and 3 spaces on Percy Avenue is considered appropriate, as illustrated within the information included within Appendix B. This would provide a further 20 parking spaces for visitors.
6. **ASSESSMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK**

**Introduction**

6.1 One option for the town centre is the redevelopment of the existing multi-storey car park. As shown above, this has very low occupancy and will become an increasing maintenance burden for the council. Redevelopment could help to bring more residents and retail to the town centre, and fund possible urban realm improvements, although it is also likely to result in a loss of income to the council. The potential parking impact is summarised below.

6.2 The surveys of the existing multi-storey car park use have confirmed that it is predominantly used on a short-stay basis, with most vehicles staying less than 1 hour and very few vehicles staying more than 3 hours. Given this pattern of use, with the closure of the multi-storey car park, it is reasonable to assume that:

- The majority of short-stay use vehicles would be likely to transfer to on-street parking, with the Church Road parking being the closest alternative;
- There is also potential for short-stay use vehicles to transfer to the ANPR car park, which has the same £1.00 charge for a stay of up to 2 hours, whilst a stay of up to 4 hours is £2.00 versus the £1.50 for any stay over 2 hours in the multi-storey car park;
- It is less likely that long-stay use would transfer to the ANPR car park, which charges £4.00 for a stay of up to 8 hours and £5.00 for a stay of up to 24 hours or the more remote Station car park, which has a £5.20 weekday peak daily charge and £2.00 Saturday daily charge. However, the Station car park does have a cheaper post-peak parking charge.
Assessment

6.3 In view of the above, the Table below summarises the assumptions used to assess the impact of relocation of the vehicles currently using the multi-storey car park.

TABLE 5.1: SUMMARY OF MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK DEMAND RELOCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duration of Stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekday</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed relocation with multi-storey closure

- Would most likely transfer to Church Road on-street, with ANPR car park also being an option.
- Likely to transfer to ANPR car park which has a similar charge for up to 4 hours.
- Less likely to transfer to ANPR or Station car parks on a weekday, due to higher parking charges. Could use the Station car park on a Saturday, when charges are lower. Overall, there is potential that this demand will transfer to nearby streets with uncontrolled parking.

6.4 It is important to note that the car parking demand figures presented in Table 5.1 do not occur at the same time of the day. Therefore, for example, whilst 55 cars park up to 1 hour on a weekday, these are spread throughout the day and would not all transfer to alternative parking locations at the same time.
Further analysis has been undertaken to break down the split between short (up to 2 hours), medium (2 to 4 hours) and long (over 4 hours) stay use of the multi-storey car park at different times of the day on each of the survey days. This is summarised in Table 5.2.

**TABLE 5.2: SPLIT OF SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG-STAY USE THROUGHOUT THE DAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07:00</td>
<td>08:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week-day</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satur-day</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the figures above:
- the maximum requirement for relocating short stay demand would be 29 vehicles at 10:00 hours on a weekday and 10 vehicles at 12:00 hours on a Saturday;
- the maximum requirement for relocating medium stay demand would be 12 vehicles at 10:00 on a weekday and 2 vehicles at various times on a Saturday; and
- the maximum requirement for relocating long stay demand would be 6 vehicles at 11:00 and 13:00 hours on a weekday and 4 vehicles between 10:00 and 14:00 hours on a Saturday

Section 5 notes that the urban design proposals are likely to create some 30 additional on-street parking spaces, while there is also the possibility of a further 20 in selected side streets. Given that the surveys of the on-street parking on Church Road have shown that there is in the region of 35 unused spaces on both a weekday and a Saturday, a total of 85 spare on-street spaces should be available in future. Of the total provision, 3 spaces are expected to be lost as part of the access requirements for the former Brooklands College site development.

On this basis, on a weekday it is estimated that the 29 short-stay vehicles displaced from the multi-storey car park should be able to find on-street spare spaces leaving a further 56 spaces free. The further 18 medium and long-stay vehicles will also be able to be accommodated but would need controlled spaces of longer than 2 hours or would use nearby side streets.

In addition, to the above spare on-street spaces, there are also spare spaces in the ANPR car park on a weekday (13 spaces) and the station car park on a weekday (26 spaces) and Saturday (65 spaces).

Overall, there is thus believed to be adequate spare capacity in the parking system on a weekday to accommodate the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park.
6.11 We note that the changes in parking supply may lead to some additional demand in side streets, although these are predominantly by the few medium and long-stay parkers, and this should not be a significant issue.

6.12 We also note that this analysis represents the predicted peak weekday and Saturday scenarios, whilst for much of the day (outside of the 10:00 to 11:00 period on a weekday and outside of the 10:00 to 13:00 period on a Saturday) it is considered that there would be a low level of impact in terms of increased demand for parking on residential streets.
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review of existing situation

7.1 Overall the key conclusions on the current situation are:

- The town centre is popular and busy, with few vacancies; the catchment is quite local;
- The urban realm is dominated by the road and there are improvements that can be made to create a greater sense of ‘place’ and areas for more social interaction; this should include more landscaping, better pedestrian crossings, slower vehicle speeds and more space for people; there is also the opportunity to introduce more on-street parking;
- A preliminary urban design scheme has been developed to show options for these improvements;
- Surveys have shown that only around 44% of shoppers access Ashford by car, so access by other modes is important as is the town centre environment;
- Most of the visitors to the centre stay for less than 2 hours and like the easy access to and within the centre;
- Parking supports the town centre and is quite convenient and easy to access;
- Most of the existing parking use is for short durations of stay, with this being a feature of the current use of the multi-storey car park and the parking on Church Road, where stays are limited to a maximum of 2 hours;
- There is considerable spare parking; this is estimated at 196 spaces (weekday) and 224 (Saturday); ignoring the station and Tesco car parks (which serve particular functions) this spare capacity remains at 150 spaces on a weekday/Saturday.
- On-street parking is well-used, although there are still spare spaces;
- The Tesco and ANPR car parks experience higher occupancy levels, reaching capacity at certain times of the day or week;
- The multi-storey car park is very poorly used, with a maximum of 48 of 139 spaces used on a weekday, and less on a Saturday. Most users stay for less than 2 hours;
- There is evidence of a lack of enforcement associated with the parking on Church Road, with 7% of weekday users and 4% of Saturday users staying longer than 4 hours; these take up short-stay bays in prime locations;

Recommendations

7.2 In terms of the future of Ashford Town Centre, the study recommends that:

- The town centre urban realm should be improved to reduce speeds, emphasise pedestrian crossing facilities and create a better sense of place, including provision of flexible space for markets and other community events. These enhancements should be made in conjunction with increased on-street parking, estimated at up to 50 new spaces on Church Road and some side roads;
• There is considerable spare parking capacity, particularly in the multi-storey car park; this facility is an outdated building that adds little to the town centre street scene and is aging, with the top 2 floors of parking currently out of service. The maintenance and condition of the car park will be an ongoing issue for the Council in future; this of course needs to be balanced against the potential loss of income from the car park and any potential financial benefits the Council may gain from the redevelopment.

• It is recommended that the option to redevelop the site of the multi-storey car park (for residential use) should be considered. Such a proposal would transform the depreciating asset of the car park, bring new residents and some retail space into the centre of Ashford with some affordable housing and provide additional demand for local retail outlets, whilst also providing funding for urban realm improvements;

• The overall parking consequences of this option appear to be acceptable given the low use of the multi-storey, provided that the additional on-street spaces highlighted are created, and consideration is given to better signing of spaces;

• However, the redevelopment will mean that Ashford town centre car parking becomes primarily on-street, and some customers who currently prefer off-street parking may take time to adjust to this. To facilitate this, better signing of parking should be considered (including trial use of technology to show vacant spaces) and enforcement should encourage less long-stay use of prime short-stay bays;

• There is also the opportunity (in conjunction with the train operators/Network Rail), to increase use of the station off-street car park, which is underused. Some marketing of the off-peak and Saturday tariffs and car park availability should assist this;

• Given that on-street spaces are limited to 2 hours maximum stay, there are a few medium and long-stay users of the multi-storey car park who may need different provision on-street. In view of this, consideration could be given to providing a small element (up to 10 to 15 spaces) on Church Road east or adjacent side-streets, specifically for medium/long stay use (up to say 4 hours maximum stay).

• Consequently, it is recommended that the Council consult with stakeholders and the public on the potential streetscape proposals and the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park.
New on-street parking spaces proposed as part of the urban design proposals

Working from Church Road in the north-west towards the south-east:

• 5 extra parking spaces (including 1 disabled space) + 1 motorcycle space through the provision of echelon parking within the service road adjacent to the Sainsbury’s Local store;
• 8 extra spaces (including 2 disabled spaces) through the provision of echelon parking within the service road adjacent to Costa Coffee;
• 5 extra spaces provided on the east side of Church Road in the vicinity of Santander;
• 4 extra spaces (including 1 disabled) + 1 motorcycle space through the provision of echelon parking within the service road on the southern side of Church Road, to the east of junction with Dudley Road;
• 1 extra spaces (including 1 disabled) + 1 motorcycle space through the provision of echelon parking within the service road adjacent to the Co-op store;
• 0 spaces lost/gained + 1 motorcycle space through reconfiguring parking on service road between junctions with Fordbridge Road and Elmcroft Drive;
• 9 extra spaces (including 2 disabled) + 1 motorcycle space through the provision of echelon parking on service road between junctions with Elmcroft Drive and Percy Avenue; and
• 3 extra spaces on southern side of Church Road between junction with Percy Avenue and Feltham Hill Road;