

DARTFORD TOWN CENTRE PARKING STUDY

Dartford Town Centre is a vibrant focus for activity in the Borough; it is host to a number of businesses (both small and large) and recreation facilities in and around the town centre. In addition to this, Dartford train station is the busiest station in Kent according to Network Rail.

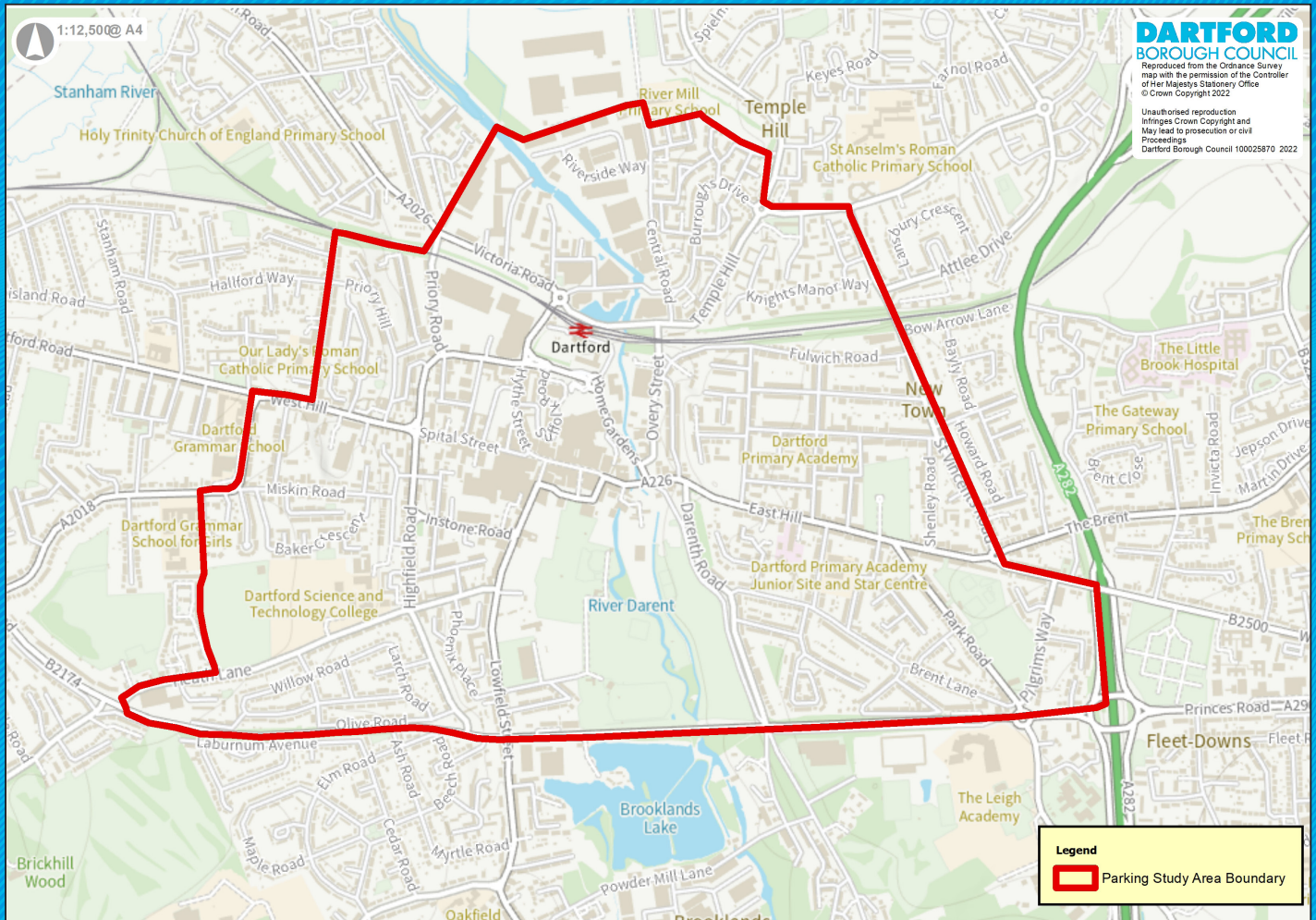
Yet parking on many residential streets close to the town centre is uncontrolled and effectively provides free parking for long stay users. Long stay car parking in most of the Council's car parks is only £5 for over 4 hours, but is often under-used. Short stay parking in the town centre area starts at just 50p per half hour one of the cheapest in Kent.



There is, however, increasing parking pressure on the streets around the town centre due to long stay parking on the streets; which is not in connection with the properties along the street. Residents have asked the Council to look at solutions.

We want to find out more details of the parking issues and what causes them; so that we can look at solutions. We are therefore undertaking a Parking Study of the town centre and its surrounds, covering an area approximately a 10 minute walk time from the station and High Street. We are seeking views of businesses and residents in the area in order to understand the issues and demands for parking.

Map showing Parking Study Area Boundary



Given the large scale of the area, we are unable to consult everyone at the same time, so we are phasing the study and will be consulting and surveying a defined area at any one time.

Parking Study: what is the first stage?

We will write to all commercial and residential properties in the area and will also undertake surveys of the parking on the streets in that area.

The Parking Study can only look at public roads, and we will also consider the use of public car parks in the area. The Council cannot consult on privately maintained roads or parking areas.

Once we have the result of the survey responses, these will be considered and where appropriate a draft scheme for proposed parking controls will be drawn up. A further consultation will then be carried out on the detailed scheme.

Examples of different Parking Restrictions which could be considered

- A Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) - Is a network of streets that are covered by parking controls, each road is marked out by bays, that allow permit parking and by single yellow lines that have a period of restriction. CPZ's can be enforced for any amount of time, from a minimum of 2 hours to all day. CPZ's are used to deter non-residential parking. For instance, parking in an area could be permit only between 10.00 -12.00am to prevent commuter parking. Parking at other times would be unrestricted and not subject to a permit.
- Double Yellow Lines are used mainly at junctions to prohibit parking taking place 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These measures are introduced to improve road safety. (It is unusual for double yellow lines to be installed along an entire road.)
- Single yellow line restrictions - a section of road can be covered by single yellow lines that could have an enforcement period which varies from one hour to all day. These restrictions can deter parking, however, there can be no exemptions for parking on the lines during the period of restriction, so residents could not have a parking permit to allow parking during the restriction. (Unless you have a disabled blue badge, where you can park for a maximum period of 3 hours, with a badge clearly on display).
- Short stay bays, pay and display/pay by phone parking bays. These are normally used in conjunction with a CPZ and are useful in areas where there are shops and businesses. This allows short term parking for visitors to the area. The hours of operation of these bays can work alongside a wider area parking control.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of parking schemes?

Advantages

- All-day parking will be prevented on-street and drivers who wish to park in the town centre will be directed to use the public car parks
- Improved access for emergency and refuse vehicles along streets
- Reduce the amount of vehicles coming and going on-street, improving air quality in residential roads
- Promotes use of alternative forms of transport for long stay parkers. E.g. encouraging commuters to use Fastrack to the town centre

Disadvantages

- Permits, if a CPZ is implemented, permits will need to be purchased by residents/business wishing to park during the period of restriction.
- The numbers of permits per household have to be limited in order to enable sufficient road space and are currently limited to 1 permit per household.
- Parking can be displaced to nearby uncontrolled roads
- Potential for increase in street clutter, such as signs and lines.

Scan the QR code



The parking study questionnaire
can be completed on-line please
scan the QR code

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