

## BARGOED TOWN CENTRE PARKING STRATEGY

### Introduction

Current public policy encourages the use of public transport and walking and cycling as alternatives means of transport to the private car. In town centres, however, and in particular smaller town centres in competition with out of town stores with ample free car parking, access to convenient and free or reasonably priced parking spaces is vital to the viability and vitality of the centre.

Nevertheless we must not lose sight of the long-term aim to encourage more sustainable means of access to town centres. Indeed a major strength of most town centres is that they are also hubs of the local public transport system.

The vitality and viability of Bargoed town centre has been declining for many years and so it is particularly important that the town centre's car parking offer is attractive and accessible to potential customers.

Major changes have taken place recently and more are planned in the town centre over the next two years – changes that will affect the quantity, quality, location and cost of car parking spaces that serve the centre's many different user groups. A brief discussion of those groups is therefore a useful starting point for considering a parking strategy.

### Users

Car parking policy in town centres has to address the very different needs of the varying groups of potential users of parking space, including:-

- Shoppers who will need parking spaces for varying but relatively short periods of time over the 'working day' (8am to 6pm) that are safe, convenient, well managed and appropriately priced.
- Town centre workers including people who work in shops and offices in the town centre who will want a parking space for the entire working day
- Commuters who are using the town centre's public transport facilities, particularly rail transport, to travel to jobs elsewhere. As with town centre workers, usually the need is for a space throughout the working day but in locational terms, as close to the relevant public transport facility as possible.
- Residents of flats over shops in the town centre and dwellings in nearby residential streets. Some will require parking spaces in the evenings only, if they use their vehicle to drive to work elsewhere. Others will require the parking space for all or part of the working day.
- Disabled drivers who may also be in one of the above categories but who will need parking spaces as close as possible to their destination at locations which do not present physical obstacles to their progress once they leave the vehicle.
- The night economy Some businesses, principally leisure oriented, will need spaces outside the working day for workers and customers. Such businesses, which include cinemas, takeaways and other 'A3' uses, pubs and drinking clubs do most of their trade after 6pm but many also trade during the afternoon.

Reconciling the needs of these disparate users is difficult but an important distinction is to be made between shoppers and customers of the evening economy, who require short term parking and workers, commuters and residents, who require long term car parking. Car parking spaces to serve

the former group are usually used several times during the day by different customers, thus accommodating far greater numbers of users than equivalent spaces for workers and residents.

In some cases, use of spaces can be complementary, particularly where one group requires spaces during the working day and another group needs parking provision during the evening and night.

Therefore the efficiency of use of spaces is important, not just numbers.

### **The Council's car parking standards.**

In November 2010 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Car Parking Standards based on the Wales Parking Standards produced by the County Surveyors' Society in 2008. The CCBC document allocated each part of the county borough to one of 5 parking policy zones, depending on the density of urbanisation and access to public transport. Bargoed Town Centre is allocated as Zone 3 -Urban, described as:-

*“very much part of a substantial built up area with a number of basic local facilities within 400m walking distance. A range of bus routes offering up to 6 buses per hour; the range of destinations offering practical access to most but not all essential facilities. The curtilage of the site restricts, to an extent, what car parking can be provided. There are likely to be some restrictions on on-street parking and other available off-street parking is severely limited or non-existent.”<sup>1</sup>*

This quite accurately describes Bargoed town centre except for the final sentence. Bargoed has “substantial amounts of off-street parking available to the public” which is a characteristic of zone 2. In practice, there is no difference in the car parking standards applied to zones 2 and 3 in the guidance.

Significantly, the guidance states that “*The scale of parking provision varies throughout Wales and local priorities will dictate the manner in which the standards are used*”<sup>2</sup>. Some flexibility in the use of the standards is therefore recommended by the guidance.

### **Principles of a long-term parking strategy**

1. All categories of users except the disabled should be encouraged to use public transport or walking/cycling to access town centre facilities.
2. Car parking provision for shoppers should be safe, convenient for the shops and priced at a level that maintains the town's viability as a shopping centre.
3. Pedestrian links between car parks and the main shopping streets in Bargoed should be safe, convenient and direct.
4. The Bargoed Park & Ride car park should be for long-term (i.e. all-day) parking and managed accordingly.
5. All other permanent car parks close to the town centre should be for short-term parking to favour shoppers and managed accordingly.
6. Provision should be made for long term commuter parking on the fringes of the town centre if possible
7. Disabled drivers should be able to access all parts of the town centre conveniently, though not all access routes need be DDA compliant.

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<sup>1</sup> Car Parking Standards Part 1. CCBC November 2010. page 7 para. A5.3

<sup>2</sup> Ibid p. 9 para. A6.1

8. Areas should be reserved for residents' parking and shopper parking in streets within walking distance of the town centre. The fact that residing near a town centre has both advantages and consequences needs to be recognised.
9. Parking numbers should be monitored on a regular basis to identify trends and problems that may occur.

### Current (May 2012) Parking Provision in Bargoed

The town centre's main car parks and areas of on-street parking in 2012 are shown on Plan 1 and those expected to be in place by 2014 are shown on Plan 2.

#### Bargoed town centre car parks

Plan ref. No.	Car Park	No. Spaces 1999	No. spaces May 2012	No. spaces Dec 2014	Status
3	St Gwladys	-	25	25	P&D
2	Emporium	46	46	46	P&D
1	Hanbury Road	97	125	75	Free
5	Central ('rugby club')	30	0	0	Free
5&6	Cardiff Road	100	50	0	Free
5	North Lane	-	0	0	Free
4	Park & Ride	-	90	90	Free
8	Interim southern car park	-	30	40	Free
9	Morrisons lower	-	0	256	3 hours free
9	Morrisons upper	-	0	156	3 hours free
7	Bus Station	-	0	17	P&D
10	Restaurants car park	-	0	20	3 hours free
	TOTAL	273	366	725	

The town centre therefore currently has an off-street car parking capacity of 366, a substantial increase from a decade ago, but 100 fewer than recently as we have lost the spaces on the Morrisons development site. Much of the car parking provision is in new, purpose built car parks but most of it is at a different level from the town centre shops so that access to and from the car parks to Hanbury Road and High Street is an important consideration.

The overall public parking provision compares well with the larger centre of Caerphilly (336 spaces) but is less than Blackwood (673 spaces). Both Caerphilly and Blackwood have additionally hundreds of free spaces associated with edge of centre retail stores however.-

### Car Park Management

Bargoed's town centre car parks do not sufficiently differentiate between long and short-term parking. Only the relatively small Emporium and St Gwladys car parks charge for parking, so the remainder tend to fill up with commuters early in the day, to the disadvantage of shoppers. The Park & Ride car park is intended to serve commuters but it may be desirable to introduce management measures to deter long term parking in shopper car parks, especially when the new retail development is completed as that will be the policy pursued by Morrisons in its 412 space car park.

Complementary to this, some car parking provision should be made for long term parking for those who work in the town centre either in the provision of new parking spaces on the fringe of the town centre or designation of some car parks or parts of them for long term parking, possibly enforced through a charging regime.

Private developments in the town are normally encouraged to provide parking spaces for employees where appropriate through the planning system but in the vicinity of the new transport interchange in the north of the town centre the Council should try to encourage use of public transport through Travel Plans rather than private parking spaces.

### **Monitoring**

Recent spot checks of the public car parks between 9.00 - 9.30am in the morning have revealed that the car parks are between 55% and 67% occupied at that time, implying that over half the public parking spaces may be taken up by workers in the town centre.

### On-street parking

All of the town centres in Caerphilly county borough adjoin residential areas comprising dense terraced housing with no off street parking provision of their own. Residents with cars therefore have to park on street but in the streets within walking distance of the town centre there is also pressure from shoppers and town centre workers looking for convenient parking spaces.

The shopping streets themselves are obviously the most convenient of all potential parking spaces but here conflict for spaces is at its most intense between the needs of shoppers, the disabled, loading bays, bus access, the free flow of traffic and pedestrian space.

In Bargoed this issue is as acute as in any other centre. Consequently most of the on-street parking areas in adjoining residential streets are reserved for residents only during the working day. Sections of Church Place, Greenfield Street, South Street, West Street and Cardiff Road have or are proposed to have limited waiting (30 minutes) and a section of Francis Street has limited waiting for up to one hour. Together these streets can accommodate perhaps 100 visitors' cars.

All on-street parking restrictions within the town are periodically reviewed as part of the traffic regulations order review process.

There are also large sections of these streets with no waiting at any time but some streets near the town centre – Gilfach Street and most of West Street and parts of Church Street have no parking restrictions at least on one side.

At present, while the shopping street is one-way but the carriageway has not been reduced in width, many cars (up to 70) park along Hanbury Road and High Street but this practice will gradually have to cease as the public realm works widening the footways are implemented between 2011 and 2014. Currently, illegal parking on the recently improved footways in High Street is a problem.

### **Proposed changes and Short-term parking strategy**

Major changes are proposed for Bargoed between 2012 and 2014 that will significantly affect the parking situation. There is therefore a need for a short-term parking strategy to minimise the impact on the town centre's vitality and viability.

The development of Phase 1 of the Bargoed Retail plateau which started this March and is programmed for completion by October 2013– will have major temporary and permanent affects;

- It has removed most of the temporary car parking in the south of the town centre (site 5) for most of the 22 month build period, leaving just 60 spaces on site 6 instead of approximately 150 previously.
- The developer has provided a temporary car park on part of the Phase 2 (site 8) accommodating perhaps 30 to 40 spaces, so the net loss to the southern parking areas will be around 50 spaces
- Once the development is completed however, it will have provided 412 new parking spaces (site 9) – 256 at plateau level and 156 on the level above, almost doubling the town centre's car

parking capacity, though of course there will be a consequent increase in demand for parking.

- These spaces will be under the control of the supermarket operator, who will restrict parking times to 3 hours. Management of the Hanbury Road car park will have to be consistent with the Morrisons parking regime.

In addition to these changes, 50 parking spaces in the Hanbury Road car park (1) may be lost if plans to develop a new public space behind the new library are implemented.

On the plus side, a 17 space public car park is to be provided as part of the bus station works (7), adjacent to the former Woolworth building. This area will be used as a site compound during the whole of the public realm works (March 2011 to April 2013).

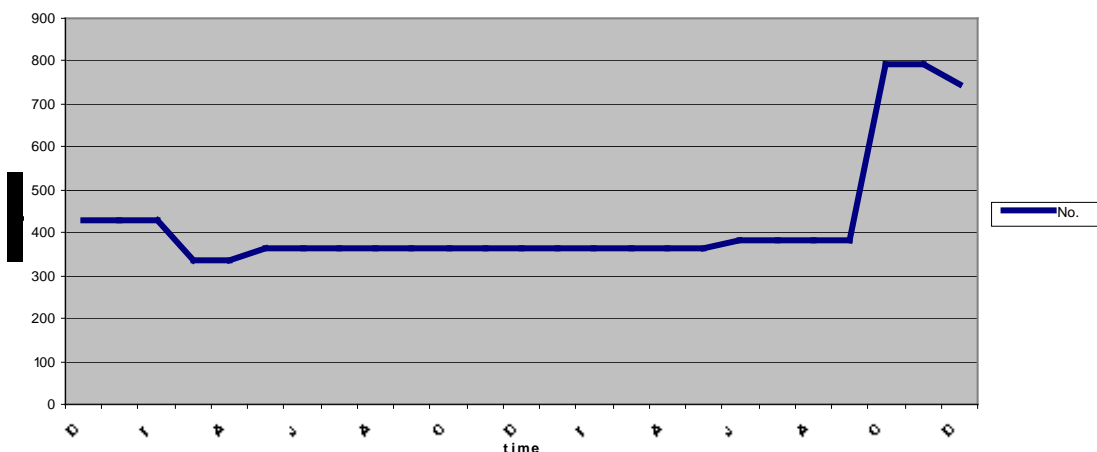
The public realm works will also spell the end of significant on-street parking on Hanbury Road and High Street – a *de facto* loss of perhaps 50-70 spaces

The changing parking provision in Bargoed over the next two years is illustrated in the table and diagram below;-

**Total Capacity of Bargoed off-street car parks**

Total spaces	Event	Timescale
273	Capacity in 1999	1999
431	Capacity in December 2011	2011
337	Retail development removes 94 spaces (site 5)	April 2012
366	Retail development adds temp spaces on site 8	May 2012
383	Bus Station car park adds 17 spaces (7)	June 2013
795	Retail development provides 412 permanent spaces (9)	November 2013
745	Up to 50 spaces lost to public open space behind library (1)	December 2013
685	Phase 2 development removes 60 temporary spaces during construction (6)	?
725	Completed Phase 2 development creates 40 public parking spaces (10)	?

**BARGOED CAR PARKING CAPACITY**

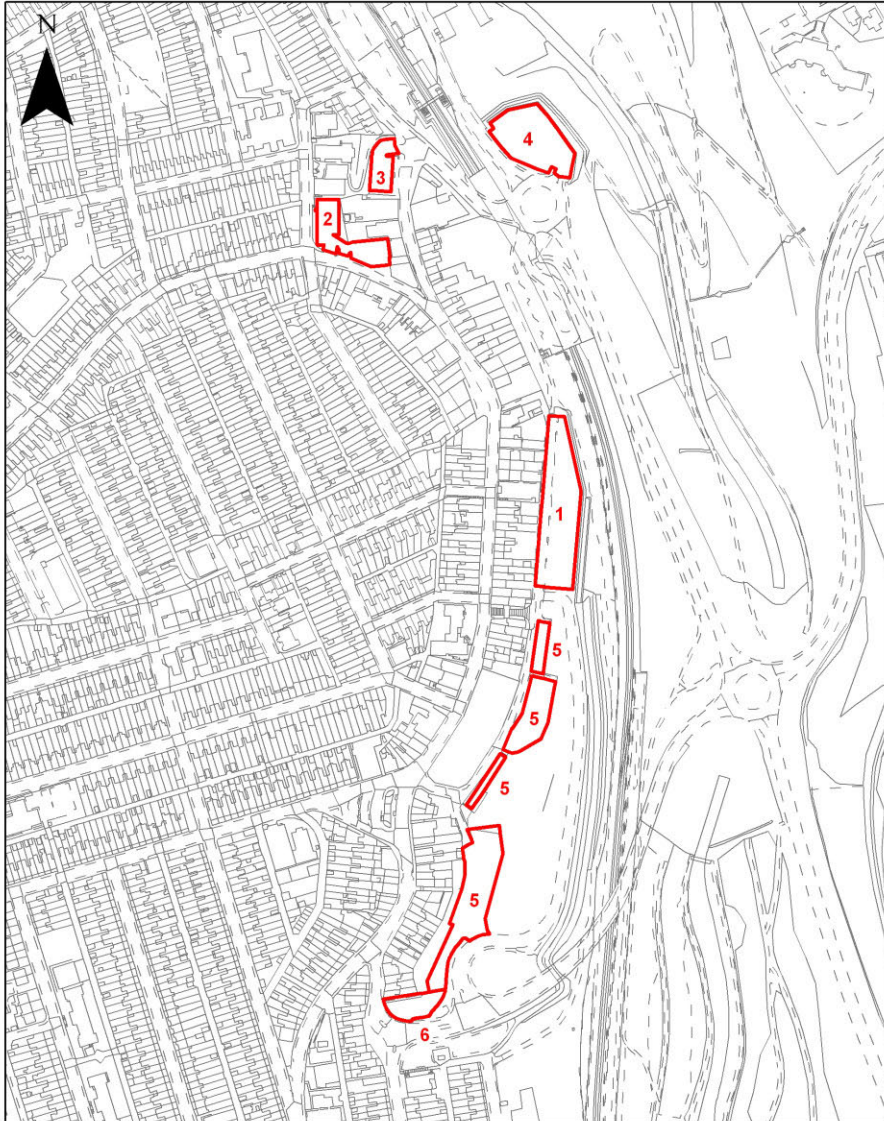


Therefore although parking capacity has been reduced by the Bargoed Retail Plateau development there should be sufficient to meet the town centre's need through the development period. There will be another, less drastic reduction in parking capacity while Phase 2 of the plateau is under construction but by then the town centre will have the benefit of the 412 spaces in Phase 1.

# PLAN 1

Bargoed Car Parks 2011

1:4,000



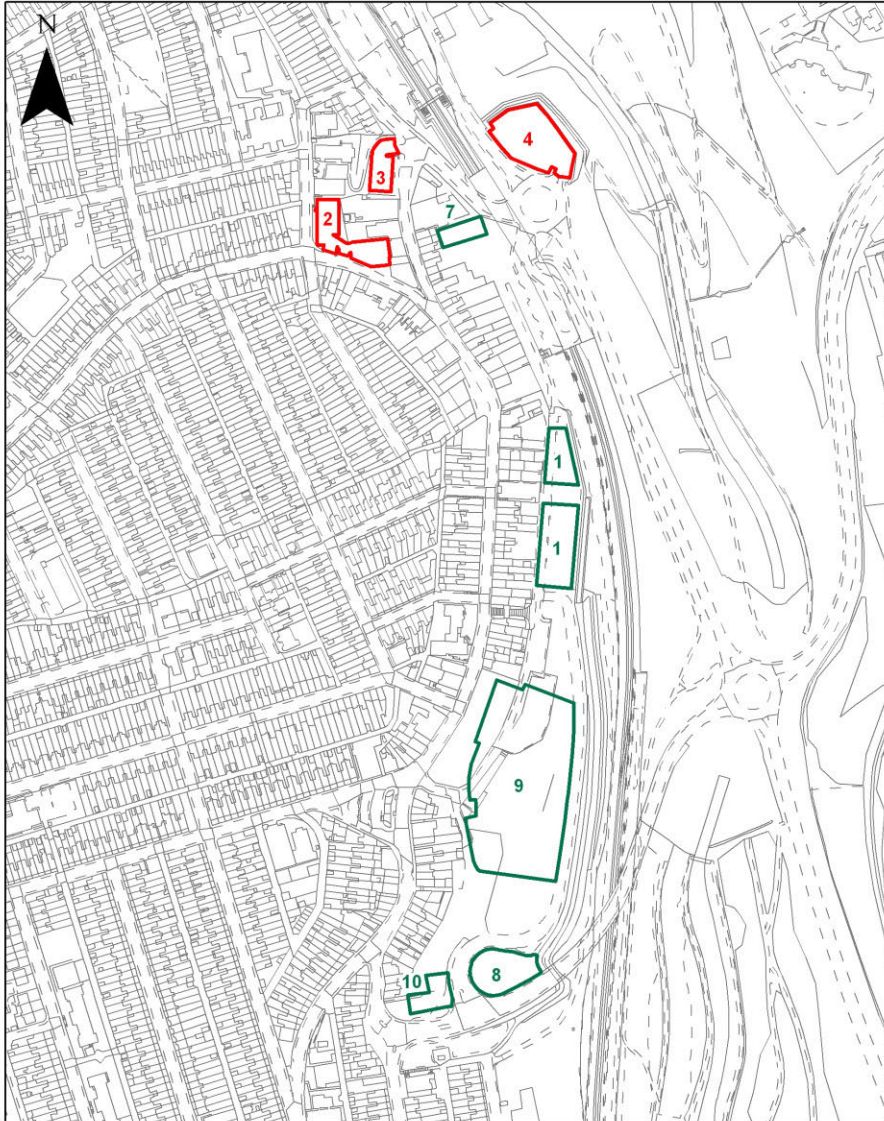
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# PLAN 2

Bargoed Car Parks 2014

1:4,000



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## BARGOED TOWN PARKING STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

	What?	Why?	Action	Target Date	Cost	Who?	Comment/Progress
1.	<b>Parking strategy</b>	Identify long and short term parking requirements for the town	Officers to prepare a draft strategy for consultation	June 2012	Nil	RT & CC	Completed
			Undertake consultation with all stakeholders	June & July 2012	Nil	RT?	Delayed by formation of new TCMG
			Finalise the strategy				
			Agree parking management plan with Morrisons				
2.	<b>Charging regime and waiting restrictions</b>	Ensure compatibility between retail development parking management and CCBC parking management	Review car parking charges and waiting restrictions to				
3.	<b>Car parking surveys</b>	Monitor usage and trends in car parks	Undertake usage surveys of all identified parking areas: between 09:00 & 10:00 (e.g. second Tuesday of every month?) each month	Monthly surveys with six monthly update reports to TCMG	Nil	HS	
4.	<b>On street parking</b>	Monitor parking on Hanbury Road and High Street	Monthly checks on usage	As above	Nil	TM	
			Liaise with the Police on enforcement issues	Report as and when required	Nil	TM	
			Review TRO requirements as construction progresses	Oct 2013 (Phase 1) to end 2014 (phase 2)?	tbc	TM with design team	



5.	<b>Bus station car park</b>	Implement CCBC controls	Prepare and make TRO to introduce formal controls to the car park	April 2013	tbc	TM	
			Commence enforcement	April 2013 on	Incl.	TM	
Version 2 Last updated 21 September 2012 (CC)							

## **BARGOED TOWN PARKING STRATEGY – Communication Strategy (Draft)**

### Purpose

The purpose of the communication strategy is to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility for communicating the Council's actions for developing and progressing this parking strategy.

The communication strategy must clearly set out what methods and frequency of communication the Council will use, who is responsible for their management and the points of contact for any enquiries.

### Main contacts roles and responsibilities

- Roger Tanner (Strategic Planning & Urban Renewal Manager): to manage all direct communications with Members, Town Council and the developer for the retail plateau development. Also to approve any public communications prior to issue.
- Allan Dallimore (Team Leader - Urban Renewal): responsible for the management and delivery of the regeneration works on Hanbury Road and High Street and any interfaces with the retail plateau development
- Andrew Highway (Town Centre Manager): to manage all enquiries and communications with the local traders and Chamber of Trade
- Clive Campbell: to manage the communications relating to traffic management, management of the Council's off street car parks, public transport and transportation.
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development: overall responsibility for the Bargoed regeneration strategy.
- Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation and Engineering responsible for managing the political decision making process for issues specific to this strategy and directing officer activities.

### Methods of Communication

- Reports to the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group: as and when required via Roger Tanner and Clive Campbell
- Bargoed Town Centre News: issued monthly and managed via Andrew Highway.
- Bargoed website: updated as and when information is available via Andrew Highway

### Points of Contact

Roger Tanner for any enquiries relating to the retail plateau development, parking strategy and issues not covered elsewhere

Allan Dallimore for all enquiries relating to the regeneration works

Andrew Highway for all enquiries relating to traders

Clive Campbell for all enquiries relating to car park management, traffic management, public transport and transportation

### Stakeholders

Ward Members

Town Council

Bargoed Town Centre Management Group

Greater Bargoed Partnership

Chamber of Trade

Traders

Local community

Simons Construction

Morrisons

Rockspring (funders and prospective purchasers of the Plateau development)

Cinema operator (to be appointed)

Other interested parties

Police

Contact list

Name, position, organisation, email and telephone number.