King's Lynn Parking Strategy 2026 to 2036

Non-Technical Strategy



Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk

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Non-Technical Strategy

This non-technical strategy document explains the key messages from the King's Lynn Parking Strategy Supporting Technical Data, prepared by Aecom for the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and focuses on what the strategy means for King's Lynn, its businesses, residents, visitors and future regeneration.

Why is a Parking Strategy Needed?

King's Lynn is the main service, employment, retail and cultural centre for West Norfolk, serving a catchment of around 250,000 people across a predominantly rural area. For many residents, particularly those living in villages and market towns with limited public transport, access to King's Lynn by car remains essential.

At the same time, the town is preparing for significant investment and regeneration through initiatives such as the King's Lynn Masterplan, the Riverfront, Guildhall project, Southgates improvements and wider town centre renewal. Some existing surface car parks may be redeveloped over time to create new homes, commercial space, public realm and visitor attractions.

The strategy therefore seeks to answer a simple question:

How can King's Lynn continue to support residents, businesses and visitors from a wide rural hinterland while creating the space needed for regeneration and improving the town centre environment?

The strategy **does not propose removing parking without replacement or mitigation**.

Instead, it recommends:

- Keeping King's Lynn accessible by car.
- Using existing parking more efficiently.
- Consolidating parking into the right locations.
- Supporting regeneration of some surface car parks.
- Providing alternative parking where needed.
- Encouraging more people to walk, cycle and use public transport where practical.
- Monitoring demand over time rather than making irreversible decisions now.

Background

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) have appointed AECOM to prepare a Car Parking Strategy for the two towns of King's Lynn and Hunstanton up to 2036. This report presents a car parking strategy specifically for King's Lynn while a separate report has been prepared for Hunstanton.

This Parking Strategy has been prepared to provide evidence to support and help inform BCKLWN in relation to emerging land use, economic development and regeneration, and transport and climate change policies and plans. It also aligns with the King's Lynn Transport Strategy (KLTS) which has been prepared and implemented to improve accessibility to and within the town by all modes with improvements to the highway network, public transport provision and walking and cycling routes. It also aligns with the King's Lynn Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which sets out key cycling routes and cycling and walking network improvements which can be implemented in the short, medium, and long term. The strategy aligns with the long-term strategic approach for developing King's Lynn from the King's Lynn Masterplan whilst allowing flexibility for it to evolve in response to changing longer term travel patterns. It will help ensure that the needs of existing and future businesses and residents within the borough, as well as visitors and commuters to the town, will be met.

King's Lynn is the most sustainable urban centre in west Norfolk and second largest settlement Norfolk; the town also serves a large rural area of circa 250,000 people. The regional and local policy documents relating to transport and parking in King's Lynn and across the Borough have been reviewed, and where appropriate, considered within the strategy set out in the Parking Strategy. In addition, the baseline scenario in terms of existing parking provision in both BCKLWN and privately-operated car parks located within King's Lynn is set out. Data relating to the existing operation of those car parks operated by BCKLWN has also been obtained and analysed to understand how each of the car parks are utilised.

Within the King's Lynn Masterplan, there are proposals to redevelop some areas of surface level car parking to achieve regeneration objectives and, in line with the recently adopted KLTS, a need to ensure the amount of car parking is appropriate for the town to thrive and encourage sustainable transport. Evidence shows that people who arrive at town centres by active travel or public transport, on average, spend more and stay for longer. Therefore, a strategy to provide alternative locations for car parking lost to redevelopment and to more effectively use existing car parking sites is proposed in this strategy.

Using the existing data and applying assumptions relating to future development and growth as well as the proposals in the King's Lynn Masterplan, it is expected that

assuming no mode shift and changes in travel patterns, BCKLWN car parks will have limited capacity in the future. However, local, and national transport policy is predicated on sustainable transport and encouraging a mode shift. A government ambition is that half of all short local journeys will be made by the active modes of walking and cycling in the future. There is strong potential for journeys within the urban core of the town to be undertaken by sustainable methods, capitalising on the walkable street network and positive use of the existing cycle network.

The Parking Strategy also seeks to further support tacking health inequalities as a result of West Norfolk becoming a Marmot Place. A key part of this is encouraging more active lives, aligning with the UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) updated physical activity guidelines. Guidance has been made clearer that for those who do almost no physical activity even small amounts will significantly improve their overall physical and mental health, and this increases rapidly with every increment of activity up to 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week, with the benefits increasing more slowly after that.

The Parking Strategy, in alignment with the King's Lynn Masterplan, does not seek to remove parking where it is needed. Recognising King's Lynn's role as the service centre for a large rural catchment, the strategy aims to maintain accessibility while making more efficient use of town centre land. Parking provision will be consolidated into larger, better-utilised locations, including edge-of-centre interceptor car parks, the multi storey car park and retained central car parks, allowing some surface car parks to be repurposed for regeneration, having the right spaces in the right places for different users. While supporting a shift towards more sustainable travel, the strategy acknowledges that parking will continue to play an important role in the town's future. Accessible parking and conveniently located spaces will be retained to ensure the needs of residents, visitors and those with mobility requirements continue to be met.

As the masterplan progresses over the short, medium, and long term, it will be important to take a monitor and review approach to parking. This is embedded within the Parking Strategy to assess impacts of new development in the town centre and changes in parking requirement, should this be either an increase or decrease in demand. This includes the mix and locations of long- and short-term parking and will inform the approach into the longer term acknowledging that there is more uncertainly into the future and plans need to retain flexibility.

Aims and Objectives

The strategy has been prepared to align with the long-term strategic approach for developing King's Lynn town centre whilst allowing flexibility for it to evolve in response to changing longer term travel patterns. It will help ensure that the needs of existing and future businesses and residents within the borough, as well as visitors and commuters to the town, will be met. The scope of the Parking Strategy is as follows:

Scope: To identify parking priorities and options which are informed by key stakeholder engagement and identify operational actions required to support delivery of wider strategic objectives.

The Car Parking Strategy will deliver the following strategic objectives:

Objective 1 – Support the vibrancy and vitality of King's Lynn town centre.

Objective 2 – Effective land use to support wider regeneration objectives and utilisation of land assets.

Objective 3 – Provide a strategy which underpins and supports the delivery of the economic strategy, transport strategy, King's Lynn Masterplan, and the local plan.

Objective 4 – Sustain revenue income streams for the Council, modernising operations, and efficiency.

Objective 5 – Reconcile the need for and continued use of car parking spaces with the council's net zero ambitions and the wider climate change agenda including modal shift.

What Does King's Lynn's Parking Look Like Today?

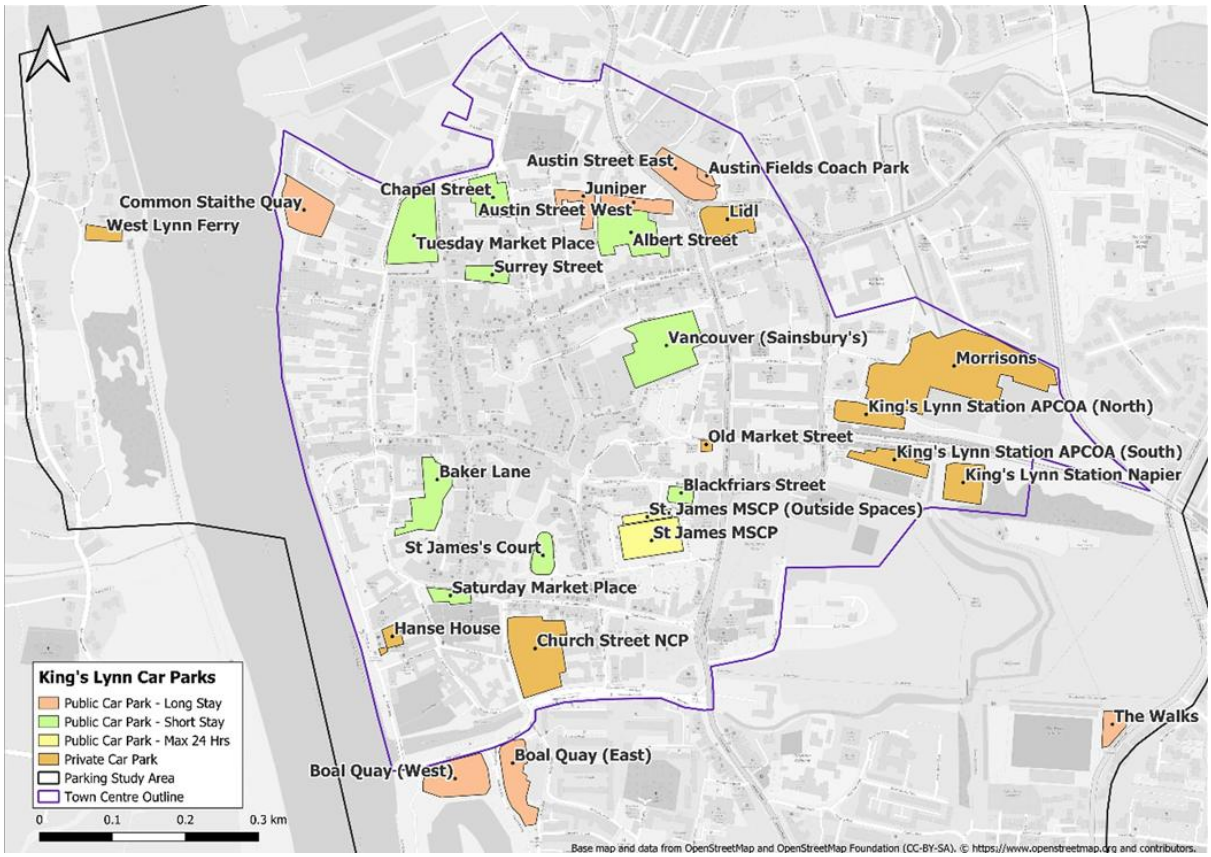


Figure 1- King's Lynn Car Parks

The Borough Council currently operates around **2,600 parking spaces** across 18 public car parks with a 68:32 split between short stay and long stay. There are nearly **1,000 additional spaces** provided by private operators.

Coach Parking

Austin Fields Coach Park hosts 6 coach parking bays.

EV Parking

28 EV parking spaces are available across three car parks, Austin Street (East), Chapel Street and St. James' Multi-Storey (outside spaces).

On-Street Pay & Display Parking

There is only one on street pay and display car parking area in the study area, located at South Quay and Purfleet Place with approximately 54 spaces.

On-Street Short Term Parking

These are spaces along the street edge that are designated as parking bays and have a sign indicating the parking restrictions in force. There are approximately 183 on street

short term spaces within the study area, of which 111 spaces are within the town centre.

On-Street Unrestricted Parking

There are large areas of on-street unrestricted car parking available in the study area. However, none of these locations are within the town centre.

On Street Disabled Parking

There are five locations with on street disabled parking within the town centre, totaling 18 bays.

CPZs and Permit Parking

There is one town-centre wide Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), as well as five Resident or Business permit parking areas in King's Lynn. Parking permits can be purchased by residents / business owners whose properties fall within the zones.

BCKLWN Operated Car Park Available Capacity

The available capacity in each of the car parks during a neutral weekday, Saturday, and Sunday as well as during the peak month weekday, Saturday and Sunday suggests that the spaces available in each of the car parks is as set out below.

		Available Spaces					
Car Parks	Capacity	March (Neutral)			December (Peak)		
		Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Albert Street	131	89	45	91	23	0	74
Austin Street (East)*	126	25	62	99	25	0	91
Austin Street (West)*	113	0	56	79	0	23	96
Baker Lane	90	13	0	36	0	0	0
Blackfriars Street	33	2	0	0	9	0	0
Boal Quay*	359	209	127	265	174	86	272
Chapel Street	83	57	5	61	15	0	18
Common Staithe Quay*	154	31	0	61	0	0	31
Juniper*	51	42	25	42	15	0	39
Saturday Market Place	32	1	0	0	0	0	6
St James Court	61	6	0	17	0	0	11
St. James MSCP	678	517	174	467	343	168	370
Surrey Street	40	5	2	12	0	0	8
Tuesday Market Place	224	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vancouver Quarter	411	295	232	319	192	0	238
The Walks	30	22	3	0	22	12	27
Total	**2616**	**1264**	**731**	**1549**	**799**	**272**	**1254**

**Long stay car parks where permits can be used.*

Figure 2 - Available Capacity at BCKLWN Operated Car Parks

Key findings include:

Parking is Generally Working Well

- Usage and income have both increased since before the pandemic.
- There is spare parking capacity across the network.
- The St James Multi-Storey Car Park has significant unused capacity much of the time.
- Most parking pressure occurs on Saturdays and during the Christmas period.

Parking is Spread Across Too Many Sites

The town relies on many relatively small surface car parks.

This makes parking harder to manage, creates unnecessary vehicle movements around the town centre, uses valuable development land in a sustainable location and makes it harder for visitors to know where spaces are available.

Future Pressures and Challenges

- If growth and regeneration proceed as planned in order to achieve the wider regeneration and growth strategic aims, some car parks could be lost to redevelopment.
- Without a planned and evidence led approach, future parking demand could become a challenge, particularly during peak periods.
- A greater number of car parking spaces designated for disabled users in car parks close to town centre amenities could be provided to align with Norfolk County Council Parking Standards.
- Signage to cars parks is fragmented in places making it harder to navigate.

How Does Parking Support Regeneration?

A significant theme throughout the strategy is that parking must support, rather than prevent, regeneration. For King's Lynn, the redevelopment of town centre surface car parks for residential and commercial development can be a powerful regeneration tool because it helps address several long-standing economic, housing, environmental, and place-making objectives simultaneously.

1. **Increases Town Centre Living and Footfall**

   Many town centre car parks occupy strategically located land close to shops, services, workplaces, and public transport. Redeveloping these sites for housing can:

   - Increase the resident population in the town centre.
   - Support local businesses through greater year-round spending.

- Improve vitality outside normal shopping hours, particularly the evening economy.
- Create a safer and more active town centre through increased natural surveillance.

For King's Lynn, this aligns with ambitions to strengthen the core town centre economy and support independent retailers and hospitality businesses as set out in the Pride in Place 10 Year Vision.

2. Makes Better Use of Underutilised Land

Surface car parks are generally a low-density land use in highly accessible locations. Redevelopment can:

- Deliver significantly greater economic value per hectare.
- Generate council tax and business rates income.
- Unlock development opportunities without requiring greenfield expansion.
- Improve the visual quality of key gateway sites.

In planning terms, this represents efficient use of previously developed urban land, inline with the government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) previously developed land first policy.

3. Supports Housing Delivery Targets

King's Lynn and West Norfolk continue to face housing demand pressures, particularly for:

- Affordable housing.
- Homes for younger people.
- Specialist and later living accommodation.
- Build-to-rent and town centre apartments.

Town centre car parks can often accommodate a range of housing mix developments including higher density, affordable housing within walking distance of services and public transport. This reduces reliance on peripheral, less sustainable rural housing and supports sustainable growth.

4. Strengthens the Town Centre

Redeveloping council-owned car parks can act as a catalyst for wider private sector investment by:

- Demonstrating confidence in the town centre.
- Increasing development values.
- Creating opportunities for complementary commercial uses.
- Improving the public realm.

This approach is commonly used in regeneration programmes where public sector land ownership enables market transformation.

5. Supports Sustainable Transport Objectives

National planning policy increasingly promotes:

- Walking.
- Cycling.
- Public transport.
- Reduced car dependency.

For King's Lynn, this complements wider ambitions around active travel and improving connections between the railway station, town centre, waterfront and employment areas.

6. Improves Townscape and Heritage Settings

Some existing car parks create gaps in the urban fabric, poor frontage onto streets and weak connections between key destinations.

Well-designed development can help to restore and improve the heritage assets of the town centre. Given King's Lynn's exceptional historic environment, sensitive redevelopment can enhance the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings.

7. Creates Long-Term Revenue for the Borough Council

While car parks generate parking income, development can create longer-term value through:

Benefit	Potential Outcome
Land value release	Capital receipts
Residential development	Council Tax revenues
Commercial space	Business rates income
Joint venture schemes	Development returns
Increased footfall	Secondary town centre economic benefits

Many councils are now reviewing whether low-value surface parking represents the best use of centrally located land assets.

8. Supports Net Zero and Climate Objectives

Town centre regeneration typically delivers:

- Reduced travel distances.
- Lower transport emissions.
- More energy-efficient buildings.
- Brownfield development instead of greenfield release.

These outcomes align with both local climate ambitions and national planning policy.

Masterplan Opportunity Sites

Several existing surface car parks and area of parking have been identified as potential development opportunities through the Local Plan and King's Lynn Masterplan process, including locations such as:

- Boal Quay
- Church Street
- Common Staithe Quay
- Chapel Street
- Parts of Tuesday Market Place, for public realm improvements
- Parts of Saturday Market Place, for public realm improvements
- Other surface car parks within the town centre.
- On-Street Car Parking at South Quay and Baxters Plain

Redeveloping appropriate sites could help deliver:

- New homes.
- New business space.
- Improved public realm.
- Better riverfront environments.
- Enhanced visitor attractions.
- A more attractive and economically successful town centre.

The strategy recognises that this can only happen successfully if replacement parking arrangements are considered alongside redevelopment proposals. The locations identified are opportunities for further assessment, not agreed proposals to remove parking or redevelop sites at this time.

What is the Long-Term Vision?

The strategy proposes moving away from a model based on numerous town centre surface car parks. Instead, the long-term vision is:

"The Right Spaces in the Right Places"

This means:

- Retaining convenient central parking where needed, including increased disabled spaces.
- Making better use of existing larger car parks.
- Providing replacement "Interceptor" parking on the edge of the town centre where appropriate to replace sites that are redeveloped.
- Improving walking connections from parking locations to destinations.
- Creating travel hubs and intercept parking opportunities that reduce unnecessary traffic in central areas.

Travel Hubs, Informal Park & Ride and New Car Parks

A traditional permanent Park & Ride was considered but was not recommended due to its cost and complexity.

Instead, the strategy recommends:

Travel Hubs and new Interceptor Car Parks

Potential locations include:

- King's Lynn Enterprise Park (KLEP)
- Port and Timber Yard area.
- West Lynn (Park and Sail)
- Land north of Wisbech Road
- Expansion of car parking around Morrisons/Matalan/the train station subject to landowner ambitions.



Figure 3 – Travel Hub at King's Lynn Enterprise Park (KLEP)

These hubs could:

- Provide additional parking.
- Connect with existing bus services.
- Support walking and cycling.
- Remove some traffic from the town centre.
- Help accommodate parking displaced by regeneration.

Supporting Businesses and Visitors

The strategy recognises that the town centre economy depends upon convenient access and does not seek to discourage visitors.

Recommendations include:

Better Signage

Many car parks are poorly signed or under-used because visitors cannot easily find them. Improved signage and real-time information could help distribute demand more evenly across the network.

Improved Visitor Experience

The strategy encourages:

- Better quality parking environments, including the size of parking spaces and ANPR barrier control and associated fee structure at applicable sites.
- Improvements to the St James Multi-Storey Car Park and others where relevant.
- Enhanced wayfinding.
- Better information for visitors.

Coach and Tourism Parking

The strategy recognises the growing importance of tourism initiatives such as:

- St George's Guildhall
- The Riverfront
- The Custom House area

It recommends safeguarding and potentially increasing coach parking provision to support visitor growth alongside considering the potential for motorhome parking provision.

Supporting Residents

The strategy also includes measures designed to support local communities.

These include:

- Increasing accessible parking provision.
- Reviewing resident permit arrangements.
- Considering targeted resident parking schemes where issues arise.
- Review parking fees such as considering cheaper Sunday car park charges to offset some demand from Saturday as the peak day.
- Re-evaluation of short and long-term parking.
- Maintaining convenient parking for those with mobility needs.

Importantly, the strategy recognises that many West Norfolk residents will continue to depend on car travel for the foreseeable future.

Climate Change and Sustainable Travel

The strategy supports the Council's wider climate and transport objectives.

However, it adopts a pragmatic approach and acknowledges that many journeys in rural West Norfolk will still be made by car and King's Lynn must remain accessible. Parking remains important to the town's economy alongside modal shift which can be achieved with:

- Improved walking routes.
- Better cycling infrastructure.
- Cycle hire/micromobilty.
- Enhanced public transport.
- More electric vehicle charging.
- Consider solar car ports to existing car parks.
- Travel planning initiatives.

Key Recommendations

The main recommendations from the Parking Strategy can be summarised as:

Priority Actions

1. Develop travel hubs and interceptor parking opportunities.
2. Plan replacement parking alongside regeneration projects.
3. Improve signage and parking information.
4. Increase EV charging provision.
5. Increase accessible parking provision.
6. Improve the St James Multi-Storey Car Park and others where relevant.
7. Review permits and tariff structures.
8. Support coach and tourism parking.
9. Continue monitoring and reviewing parking demand over the parking strategy period and beyond.

Appendix 1 sets out a detailed suggested action plan for the priority actions to be considered for progression by BCKLWN for further feasibility and delivery when funding and stakeholder partner opportunities arise.

Conclusion

The strategy is fundamentally a **strategy to deliver regeneration supported by a parking, not a parking reduction, strategy**. Its central message is that King's Lynn must remain accessible and attractive while making better use of land, supporting economic growth and delivering long-term regeneration.

The Strategy set out is up to 2036. After this there is more uncertainty about future travel patterns and the levels of parking required due to technological advancements, policy changes, and social changes. These could have a significant impact on car use, and in hand with that, parking demand.

Rather than removing parking, the strategy proposes a gradual transition towards a more efficient parking network and modal shift that supports the ambitions of the King's Lynn Masterplan, protects accessibility for residents and businesses, and creates opportunities for investment, housing, public realm improvements and economic growth over the next decade. The strategy provides the evidence base and framework for future decisions. It does not in itself authorise changes to parking provision, individual redevelopment schemes or parking charges. Those would need to be considered separately, with appropriate evidence, financial assessment and approvals.

The Parking Strategy should be taken forward on a ‘monitor and review’ basis. This will ensure that an appropriate level of car parking is maintained for the town to thrive and to encourage sustainable transport.

Appendix 1: Parking Strategy Action Plan

Suggested actions & next steps do not themselves authorise changes to parking provision, individual redevelopment schemes or parking charges. Actions & next steps will be subject to the appropriate project development, consultation and scrutiny process before potential implementation.

Intervention	Description	Suggested Actions & Next Steps
Travel Hubs	More viable form as opposed to a permanent park & ride option whilst still addressing capacity issues. New Travel Hubs can provide informal park & ride provision to meet future demand along existing public transport and cycle network routes. Locations such as King's Lynn Enterprise Park (KLEP) travel hub and land at King's Lynn Port.	Masterplan integration and project development at identified travel hub sites. KLEP Travel Hub already under development through the Towns Fund programme which will create additional capacity in the short term.
Expansion of existing / New Car Parks	New car parks within or near King's Lynn town centre to consolidate existing car parks into one area to unlock redevelopment proposals and divert vehicular traffic from the town centre. New car parks should include EV charging, cycle parking and links for other active and sustainable modes.	Develop business cases for following new/expansion of long-term car park sites; -New/enlarged Car Park at West Lynn (offering park and sail) -New Car Park at King's Lynn Port and Timber Yard (interceptor car park for consolidation) - Land North of Wisbech Road - Expansion of car parking around Morrisons/Matalan/the train station (subject to landowner ambitions).
Reduction of Existing Car Parks for redevelopment	Sites which have been identified for alternative uses to support wider regeneration ambitions have been removed in the future scenarios. In the longer term, once appropriate replacement has been provided (above), this includes potential removal of spaces at; - Boal Quay - Church Street - Blackfriars Street	Progress developer partner interest in parallel with the above to align phasing of new parking provision ahead of development coming forward.

	- St James Court - Chapel Street - Common Staithe Quay - Juniper, Austin Street West & Albert Street	
Reduction of Existing Car Parks for Placemaking	Removing Parking from Tuesday Market Place & Saturday Market Place to create a pedestrian-focused town centre environment would go a long way towards making the town more attractive to visitors and residents. However, the prominent location and high usage of Tuesday Market Place means that removal of car parking would need to be provided somewhere nearby, such as at the port. This should therefore be treated as an option to consider only in conjunction with reprovision nearby.	Medium-long term ambition subject to appropriate levels of replacement/new parking being provided before spaces are reduced.
Existing On-Street Car Parking	Baxter's Plain – Blackfriars Street and Paradise Parade has been identified for reduction of car parking to allow public realm improvements to be delivered through STARS. -South Quay – reduced parking provision to enable implementation of Riverfront Public realm proposals from the King's Lynn Masterplan including at South Quay.	Baxter's Plain scheme to progress to delivery through NCC's STARS project (for completion 2028). South Quay - Medium-long term ambition.
Parking Provision	Incorporate appropriate provision for; -EV charging, - accessible parking spaces. - introducing residents-only parking in areas where residents identify parking issues. - Motorhome parking provision (potential locations include West Lynn and Port Area). -Increase Coach Parking provision for coaches at the new proposed Port and Timber Yard car park to support the improved tourism offer	Consider appropriate levels of these features at design stages of new parking provision.
Car Park Design	-Consider improvements to St James MSCP. -Consider adding Solar Car Ports	Business operations to develop business case for improvements.

	- Formalise parking spaces at unmarked car parks to maximised use for short term parking. - consider increasing the size of some individual parking spaces to accommodate larger vehicles. - consider locations for ANPR and barrier-controlled parking.	
Parking Charges & Permits	-Consider Increase to parking charges to align with increased inflation. -Introduce seasonal / smart tariffs; smart tariffs could help manage parking demand, with pricing of car parks linked to expected demand. Monitoring would be needed to respond to any subsequent change in demand. -Cheaper Sunday car park charges; to encourage visitors on Sundays and help redistribute some weekend parking demand. - Introduce more flexible parking permits; re-evaluation of short and long-term parking to help optimise existing car park usage, particularly in the event of future changes to overall car parking capacity - ANPR barrier control parking at applicable sites with associated fee structure.	Business Operations to progress review.
Mode Shift	-Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) Scheme(s) -Introduce local bike hire scheme - would provide an alternative way of travelling supporting mode shift and active travel. -Promote Liftshare schemes for local employers. -Establish mobility hubs in King's Lynn as recommended in KLTS	Borough Council to work in partnership with Norfolk County Council to progress these opportunities
Signage/Monitoring	Audit the existing signage provision and add or replace any signs required. Consider upgrades to counting systems and provision of live information on an app and / or on the VMS signage.	Business Operations to progress review.