

ACCESSIBILITY & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Car Park review report July 2017

Background:

In February 2017 the new car park on the site of the old Doctors Surgery was opened with an additional 44 free spaces available (maximum stay three hours). The Paddock House car park became a pay and display, there was no enforcement in February, advisory notices were placed on cars with no tickets. Penalty notices were issued from the beginning of March.

The Half Moon car park will come under the control of STC with the car park officer visiting the site. Some penalty notices were issued in February mostly related to exceeding the 12hour stay at the back of the car park. This is mostly used by resident living adjacent to the car park with no available parking where they live, and some traders vehicles.

Car Park income from 1st February 2017 (effectively 1st March) to 13th July 2017 is £2908.50. Full year income at this rate projected to be c£6.5K (ex VAT)

COX'S YARD CAR PARK NO CHARGES

4 SPACES DISABLED

2 SPACES LOADING ONLY

UNICORN CAR PARK NO CHARGES

10 SPACES UNICORN HOTEL ONLY

10 SPACES (inc 1 DISABLED) 12 HOURS

46 SPACES (inc 5 DISABLED) 3 HOURS

UNICORN NEW CAR PARK NO CHARGES

41 SPACES (inc 1 ELEC CHARGING) 3 HOURS

BRUNEL CAR PARK NO CHARGES

6 SPACES 30 MINUTES

26 SPACES (inc 3 DISABLED) 2 HOURS

HALF MOON CAR PARK NO CHARGES

9 PRIVATE SPACES

6 SPACES 30 MINUTES

23 SPACES 3 HOURS

18 SPACES 12 HOURS

MARKET PLACE CAR PARK NO CHARGES

11 SPACES (inc 2 DISABLED) 1 HOUR

PADDOCK HOUSE OVERFLOW NO CHARGES

13 SPACES 12 HOURS

PADDOCK HOUSE PAY & DISPLAY

54 SPACES (inc 1 DISABLED)

UP TO 5 HOURS £1 5 - 12 HOURS £2

Feedback received:

I note that the parking infringement occurred on a Saturday when Paddock House is almost empty. As I urged at a recent TC meeting we should not be charging in Paddock House on a Saturday as there is no demand for long-term parking outside of Monday to Friday. I am surprised that our traffic warden is patrolling Paddock House on a Saturday when the number of cars parked there is in single figures only. This appellant clearly supports Somerton businesses and I would recommend we repeal her parking infringement. The sooner we make Saturday a free parking day in Paddock house the better. This would be in the best interests of our shops.

I understand that the car parking in Somerton is being reviewed with a meeting regarding the issue scheduled to take place in July. I am emailing to give my feedback on the subject in the hope it assists the review.

As a resident of Somerton and the owner of a high street shop in the town, I am worried by the changes made in 2016 to the parking arrangements. Although I believe the increase in parking spaces is very positive, I have been concerned by the lack of free long terms spaces. My colleagues and I require regular access to our vehicles during the working day and as this often involves carrying computers and equipment it needs to be fairly close to our shop. Unfortunately, due to the low number of long term spaces available at the Half Moon Car Park, we often have to park outside residential properties such as along Sutton Road. Adding to a road congestion problem seems absurd when there is often a large number of empty short term spaces available in the Half Moon Car Park.

I would also like to express my opinion that there is inadequate long term parking options for larger vehicles in the Half Moon Car Park. Larger cars and vans are not able to access the limited number of long term spaces due to the size of the spaces and the proximity of the two rows to one another.

As part of the review, I would recommend visiting the Half Moon Car Park at 9am during the week to witness the lack of spaces and the difficulty drivers have trying to park in such tight spaces whilst the vast majority of the easily accessible short term spaces are empty.

I hope this email helps the review of parking in Somerton. Please let me know if you would like me to clarify any points or provide any further information regarding this matter. I am also able to send photos of the car park at various times of the day to illustrate the imbalance between short and long term parking if required.

To be honest I do not really know where to start. The fact is that everyone is just constantly moaning to each other (Staff and residents) about the situation and so we thought that it would probably be better if we all let you know how we felt and then hopefully something could be sorted. I can appreciate that you have already had a few complaints and I know that things are beginning to change and happen.

The situation in the Half Moon Car Park is ridiculous. We have only 18 spaces between residents and people working within Somerton. It doesn't help the fact that people who live in King Ina Road and Behind Berry who have more than two cars are also using these spaces. The rest of the car park during the day is completely empty. It doesn't seem to make any difference as to what time you arrive in the morning either. I have now on 8 occasion in the last 3 weeks had to pay and park in the spaces in the long stay at the rear of Williams. We need more spaces! Please would you consider also

perhaps including the spaces along the wall next to the new properties that were built. Ideally it would be nice if we could have the whole top end of the car park like we used to previously. I know that it is also a problem for people who live in the flats in the main town that do not have parking.

Permits might be another option but from talking to other employees I know you are not keen on this.

I will just briefly mention your heartless car parking warden. I know that there has been some issues and she has been spoken to but she is not doing Somerton any good. We have now had about six customers who have been given tickets either because they were parked on the white line and not in the space and another because she didn't have her clock up in the windscreen with her disabled badge get parking tickets and have refused never to shop in Somerton again. We haven't seen them since and they were loyal customers who have been shopping in Somerton for years. She also left tickets on many vehicles in the Long Stay in the Half Moon Car Park, our company vehicle included, but I know that these have now been cancelled.

Somerton is a lovely, friendly community and everyone says what a pleasure it is to shop here but if you're not careful it will end up like places like Shepton Mallet. As soon as they started charging in the car parks and shops were built outside of the town it completely died. The majority of the main shops in the High Street are now either boarded up or Charity Shops.

I hope that you will take in account what I have said and other people that are contacting you. Please let us have more spaces!!!!

I am a resident in Somerton, I have lived in Somerton for 4 years, my current address is tiddlywinks,west street, as you can see from my address I live on the high street.

When yourselves decided to review the time restrictions on the various car parks in Somerton especially the Half moon car park I emailed my concerns to urselfs about where and how the various residents/shop owners were going to park their car, especially the residents who do not have parking attached to their dwellings.

I was led to believe by yourselves that if the restrictions were changed that you then would look into permits or designated bays for residents.

This has never happened.

Recently the residents and shop owners have been receiving parking tickets for parking in the half moon car park for over 12 hours/overnight (even though the ticket attendants cannot monitor movement after 5pm,so not knowing when cars are being moved and returned in same place)

In the 4 years I have been parking my vehicle there I have never received a ticket, on the occasion I have attached I received a ticket and cancelled it.

The response is below.

On the same occasion Stacey's butchers received a ticket as well,

I would be grateful if you're selves could respond with a solution or any information you may have to resolve this situation

Hi Terry I sent an email to you a few month ago about how the lack of parking would affect the residents of Somerton, Now it's eventually happened and several residents have received parking tickets for overstaying in the 12hr car park? ??? Can anyone tell me what if anything we can do

about this!!! As I said earlier a permit scheme should be in place for those who can't park anywhere near our home. Yours Sincerely Gary caithness, Questers Cottage The Triangle

I gather from Soria that the 12-hour limits are being enforced to discourage residential parking, particularly in Half Moon where residents have been using the car park for overnight parking. I have an appeal on hold at the moment from a lady who has been parking for a number of years and parked at 4pm and was issued with a PCN at around 11am the following morning, she has a young child and is finding it difficult to constantly ensure the car is moved. She's also mentioned that residents were told there would be some type of permit scheme for them which hasn't yet happened.

Hi,

I thought I should relay a couple of comments that my customers have made regarding the new parking.

1. 'The signage as to which parts are free and which are not is not clear, and would appear to be ambiguous'
2. A visitor to Somerton had 'one wheel slightly over the white line, due to the close parking of a neighbouring car' and was ticketed, and commented the 'I will never come back to Somerton to shop again'

Please note, these are observations to invite solutions, not criticisms.

- The signage should be clearer, this should and could be easily accomplished. There is a potential for challenge, which would be costly.
 - A degree of intelligence should be employed when ticketing vehicles, (if the parking attendant drives enough people away from Somerton, you won't need the extra parking anyway).
-

I am in the process of buying 7 Brunel Close, Somerton TA11 6LW. Could you please tell me if there is any provision for parking for residents of Brunel Close. There is a free car park in front of the house but the maximum stay is 1.5 hours. Will I have to purchase a permit?

Half Moon car-park.

1, 3 off residents have utilised parking at Half Moon car park for many years, but have now received parking tickets issued by our traffic warden for over staying 12hrs in the free long stay area. Can we look at permits to allow these three, to park in any of the three hour bays (we could charge)? This will mainly be in the evening as all work during the day (one is a trader and lives above a shop in West Street).

2, Two Transit size parking bays for traders required (too big for the 12 hr. allocated spaces), to be located at top of car park. This would free up two of the 12hrs parking bays.

Also bear in mind this car park always have free spaces and is never full to capacity.

3, The six, thirty minute bays are poorly identified with fresh tarmac and line deterioration making it difficult for a motorist to see. Also the identifying signage is very poor.

It may have already been brought to the council's attention that there is an issue with the traffic flow in/out of the 'Unicorn' car park.

The issue I refer to is the 'right of way' and directions for cars entering the car park via King Ina Road. See attachment.

A sign in Behind Berry directs shoppers into King Ina Road and then over the rail bridge (one way) into the car park. But once across the bridge all traffic must continue on either to the Long Term (pay) car park or turn right into the short term (free) parking area.

Anyone wishing to make use of the 2 or 3 hour free parking spaces is forced, due to the road markings and signs, to drive straight through the short term park then turn right into West Street (a horrible but necessary junction) and then right again into the car park via the Unicorn entrance! This obviously adds to the traffic entering an already busy/narrow West Street.

I would like the council to re-examine the 'right of way' layout to see if it can be worked that traffic crossing the bridge into the car park could be given priority to turn into the 2 and 3 hour parking areas without having to drive back out onto the main road and into the park a few meters further on?

In addition; please reconsider making the King Ina Road bridge 'two-way' again.

It would allow traffic leaving the car park (other than those in the short-stay area) to get to Behind Berry without having to add to the West Street traffic and the 'horrible' junction.

I have used the bridge for the three years that I have lived here to get from King Ina Road to the car park (and car park to King Ina Road prior to it becoming one-way) and at no time did I encounter a problem with traffic flow on the bridge.

In my experience the drivers were invariably courteous and allowed oncoming traffic to clear the bridge before moving on to it, at which point they had the 'right of way' over oncoming vehicles. In short; it worked!

I don't imagine a 'weight problem' is an issue for the bridge as vans and delivery lorries are able to use it (in *both* directions) and there would not be room for more than two cars on the bridge regardless of whether it is 'one' or 'two' way.

I understand that as an old town Somerton was not originally designed to cope with motor traffic, and that finding the best solution will never be perfect, but please do consider changing the 'right of way' in the car park and allowing traffic to use the bridge in both directions.

Also have had a clearer look at them now and noticed that sign on the right (Market Square car park) refers to a specific off street order, this has been superseded by the 2016 order and may well again this year. I've looked at our signs and they usually just refer to 'off street order'. The signs also refer to Market Place whereas the order refers to it as Market Square and that's what Soria puts on her Penalty Notices.

Sign on the left, relating back to the appeal from the lady who thought it was 2 – hours, is it possible to distinguish the restrictions further, could be construed that the logos for parking and disabled parking are not linked to the adjacent time limits ...perhaps a line separating them?

Thought you'd like to know that we had a case go to the Tribunal regarding a Penalty Notice issued in Brunel – vehicle was parked halfway between the 2 time limit signs, driver said not clear and in

any case thought she had 4 hours. Tribunal saw in our favour, no indication that 4 hours given anywhere in the car parks and if can't driver might not be able to read entry sign as driving in, sufficient to alert you to its presence and therefore require checking once on foot.

Points for discussion:

Parking charges, are we happy with the current charging structure and at what frequency should it be reviewed

Permit Parking, an number of residents have requested parking permits, what is our view on these requests

Residents parking issues, should we change the time restrictions in some of our car parks or offer permits

Signage, see notes below.

Unicorn Car Park:

1. Remove 12 hour from Unicorn (10 spaces) and increase 12 hour by a similar number in Half Moon after resurfacing (drains need to be checked before this can be done). Then the 12 hour spaces would be only in two places, leaving more 3 hour spaces nearer to the shops.

or

Behind the Unicorn, sign on the post to add 9 bays 1 disabled bay with arrow for 12hour Long Stay parking.

2. White lining on main entrance into car park road past the Unicorn is fading now needs re doing

3. Virtual Footpath(WHITE LINING ON THE FLOOR WITH THE OUTLINE OF A WALKING MAN) to be put from the drop kerb by the right of the toilets area to run across the road then run up the left side of the road across the white road hatchings to stop at the T junction at the rail bridge.

4. To remove one of the charging bays (burn off the white lining on the tarmac) leaving

5. Introduce kerbing to stop drivers driving through the bays from the Unicorn into Brunel.

There are 4 of these which are OK



Two of these need complete revamp as the four above



Remove 12 hour bays and revert to 3 hours



Rewrite in corporate style



Move higher up wall to improve visibility



Brunel:

2. Change Brunel from 2 hrs to 3 hrs to avoid confusion. Retain current 30 min bays.

Change to “Max stay 3 hours, or 30 mins in designated bays”



Make a duplicate of above to replace old one and change top notice from 2hrs to 3 hrs

Cox's Yard:

No change required



Half Moon Car Park

1. Increase 12 hour by a 10 spaces after resurfacing (drains need to be checked before this can be done). Also change 12 hour spaces to 48 or 72 hours and monitor effect (if any)

Signs (2) on West Street need renewing

Include "Free" and "Long and short stay"

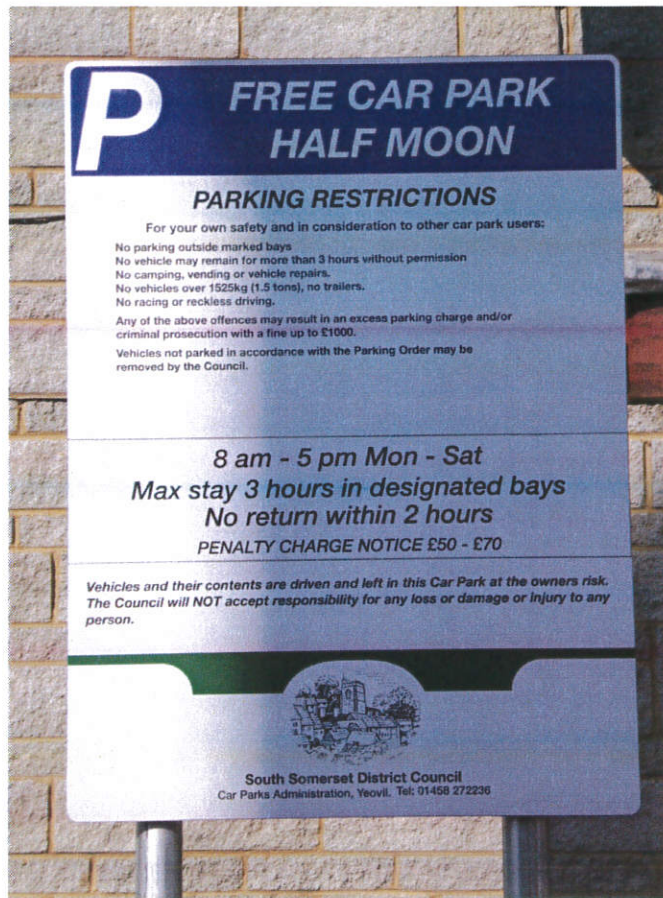
Remove reference to recycling centre



In the 30 minute bays weight limit to change and remove reference to 12 hour stay



In the 3 hour bays (2) weight limit to change



In 12 hour bay weight limit to change

Remove "8am - 5pm Mon-Sat"

Remove "No return within 2 hours"

Leave 12 hour max, but do not enforce for now

Increase number of 12 hour bays



MARKET SQUARE

Need another of these to affix on the tree railing (or perhaps amend this one to include the operating hours).



This needs a revamp:



or perhaps combine the two!

Paddock House:

These two signs need the word "Free" inserting, and perhaps need doing properly in corporate style



This one is a good example of how the signs should look



General:

Change all weight limits to 3.5t (some are currently shown as 1.525t)

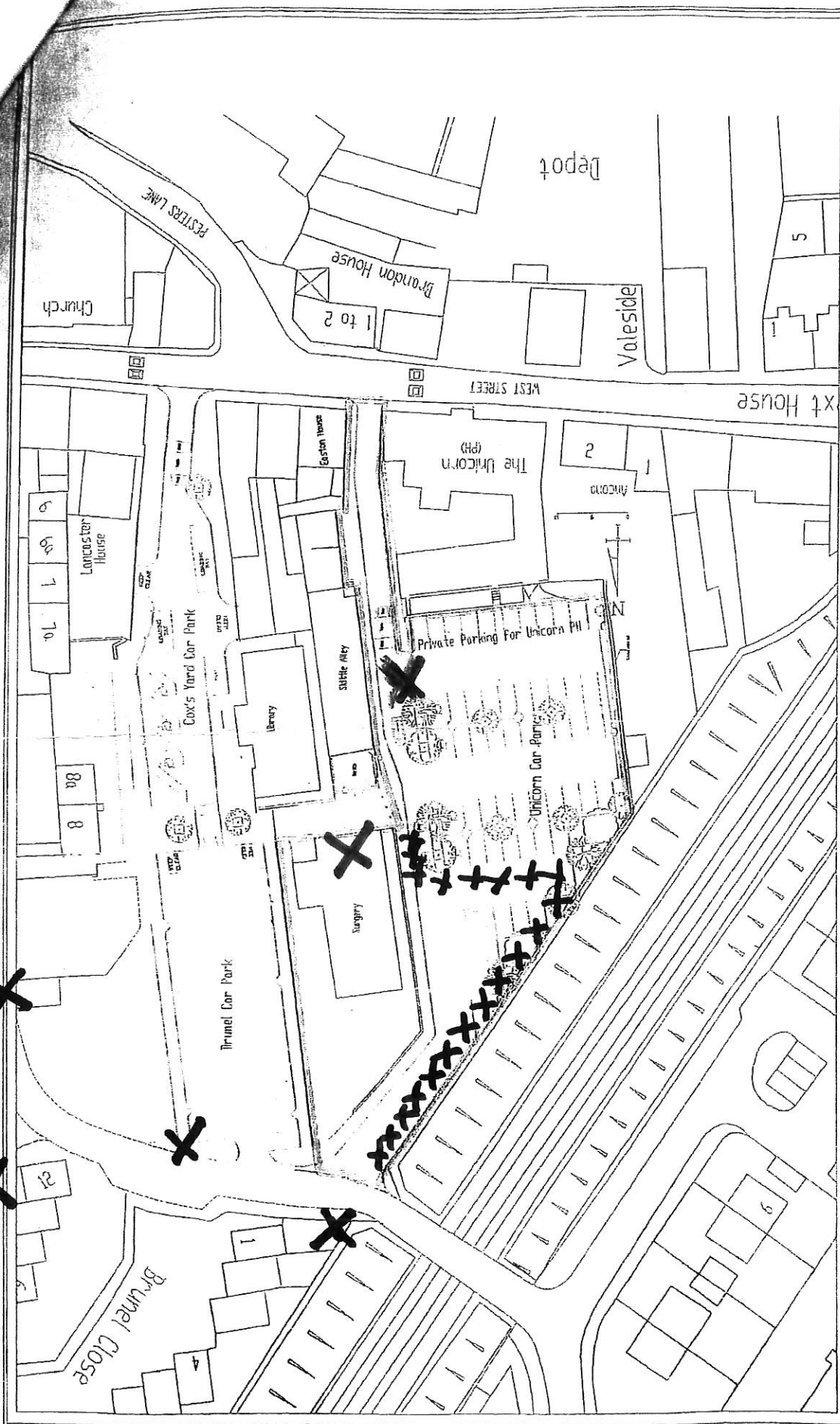
Signage

1. Improve signage indicating the exit from the car park
2. The first Blue Arrow sign on junction of bridge to attach 54 pay and display 12hour parking sign (long stay).
3. Extra pole to be put in on left hand side of pavement on the turning into the car parking area running down to Ronnie Mays. Large sign for Long stay pay and display plus arrow.
4. On the far wall running adjacent to the Paddock Car Park new sign to be fitted (WITH THE LANDLORDS PERMISSION) on the right hand side . Arrow with long stay 12hour pay and display car park.
5. Small sign on wall on left of entrance to paddock car park to be removed completely to be replaced with a larger sign to be attached to the back of the Paddock pay and display sign. New sign to have an arrow pointing right to state overflow car park (blue bays only).

Plan 4

padlock

WALL



Drawing no. AN/079/25
 Drawn by LJC Date July 03
 Scale 1:1
 Plotter scale User code



Drawing
PARKING ORDER PLAN
UNICORN, SOMERTON

South Somerset District Council
 Old Kelways, Somerton Road, Langport, TA10 9YE
 Telephone (01450) 257400 Fax (01450) 257474
 Technical Services - Area North