

## Covent Garden MSCP Displacement Plan

### Background

In September 2022, Cabinet concluded that the aging Covent Garden Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP) should be demolished following the outcome of further structural investigation work. Recent inspections highlighted increasing structural maintenance and repair costs and related health and safety concerns, and together with a recent rise in the level of anti-social behaviour in and around the MSCP, it has meant that secure closure of the car park is needed from a safety perspective. However, the short stay surface car park remains open for now, retaining 80 parking spaces of which 8 are mobility bays.

The pandemic has changed the ways in which many people work. As home and agile working have increased, demand for parking has generally reduced. Covent Garden MSCP has seen reductions in both capacity and use over the years, and more recently levels 5 and 6 were closed following unacceptable anti-social behaviour in unused sections of the upper floors. The MSCP parking capacity has reduced to 270 spaces comprising of 234 regular and 36 parent and child bays on the ground floor.

### Parking Availability in Leamington Spa

The table below shows a summary table of Pay and Display parking availability in Leamington Spa. In collecting this data, a sample full week of vehicle usage each month has been compiled to compare Covent Garden MSCP and Covent Garden Surface car park usage with all other WDC short and long stay car parks.

Date Sample Period		Covent Garden Multi Storey Long Stay		Covent Garden Surface Short Stay		All Other Short Stay		All Other Long Stay		Overall P&D Parking Usage		Total Parking Used
		Cars	Occupancy	Cars	Occupancy	Spaces	Occupancy	Spaces	Occupancy	Cars	Spaces	Occupancy
Oct	Week	138	35%	39	49%	51	75%	453	42%	177	504	47%
	Wkend	73	19%	45	56%	17	91%	478	42%	118	495	43%
Nov	Week	157	40%	44	55%	50	74%	466	39%	200	516	48%
	Wkend	99	25%	59	73%	24	87%	532	39%	158	556	42%
Dec	Week	151	56%	48	60%	50	73%	529	33%	199	579	47%
	Wkend	129	48%	53	67%	41	66%	553	30%	182	594	45%
Jan	Week	151	56%	35	43%	49	77%	439	43%	186	488	53%
	Wkend	103	38%	67	83%	20	91%	572	28%	169	592	44%

Table: Summary Table of Pay and Display parking availability in Leamington Spa (Oct 22-Jan 23)

This sample has been recorded over one of the busiest periods of the year, in the run up to and throughout the Christmas season, including free parking on Sundays, and even then, demonstrates that there is good availability for car park users in Leamington.

In January, Covent Garden MSCP had average occupancy of 56% on weekdays, and just 38% occupancy at the weekend. The alternative parking options proposed are based on evidence which confirms that the other town centre car parks can accommodate the MSCP displacement.

### **Displacement Parking**

In addition to the parking availability demonstrated in the table above, there is free car parking at Riverside House for a temporary period, with capacity for 175 spaces. Access for car park users will be on weekdays between the hours of 7.30am and 7.30pm, alongside Council staff parking.

Once the car park has been demolished it should be possible to re provide 120 parking spaces on the footprint of the MSCP for town centre use for the short to medium term period.

In past years the Council has made significant parking improvements in Leamington; Princes Drive and Archery Road car parks have both been refurbished and additional spaces added at Court Street (+92), Upper Grove Street (+26) and Station Approach (+99).

Parking charges have been reduced in Old Town car parks at Court Street, Bath Place, Packington Place and Station Approach since January 2023. Tariffs have reduced to £1 - 1hr, £2 - 2hr or £3 all day at both Station Approach off De Normanville Avenue and Lower Road.

### **Season Ticket Holders**

Season Ticket holders have already been notified of alternative parking locations where they can use their existing permits. They also have the option to request a refund for the remaining period outstanding by contacting [Parking@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:Parking@warwickdc.gov.uk), telephone 01926 456128 or by completing the online form at <https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/xfp/form/279>.

Existing Covent Garden MSCP season ticket holders can continue to use these at our long stay car parks at St Peters MSCP, Upper Grove Street and Adelaide Bridge. Existing 'The Space' resident season tickets can also be used in Covent Garden surface car park overnight between 5pm and 9am 7 days a week. There are no plans to enable the renewal of season tickets for the time being but the existing season ticket threshold numbers on other car parks will be reviewed to enable the future use by current Covent Garden season ticket holders should they wish to acquire them

### **Parking Options**

- **During the week:** There is likely to be availability at Covent Garden Surface (short stay), in addition to availability at Adelaide Bridge, St Peters MSCP, Court St, Bath Place, Station Approach Lower, Station Approach Upper and Upper Grove St.
- **At the weekend:** There is likely to be availability at: Adelaide Bridge, St Peters MSCP, Court St, Bath Place, Rosefield St, Station Approach Lower, Station Approach Upper and Upper Grove St.

- **Busy locations:** Chandos St (**short stay**), Bedford St (**short stay**) Packington Place and Rosefield St (weekdays).
- **Commuters:** Bath Place is inexpensive with the current £1, £2, or £3 all day parking prices. Station Approach and Lower Road are good locations.

There are proposals for a 'Park and Ride' car park on the outskirts of Leamington in the future which should be delivered in the next two years or so. The Asps Park and Ride will help to reduce congestion, pollution and improve the town centre air quality.

### Choose how you move – Walking Distances

To assist visitors to the town centre and to support our "Choose how you move" initiative, which encourages more sustainable travel modes and informed choices, the following distance and walking times from all town centre car parks should give some guidance. These are based on a central destination of the Warwick Road/Parade crossroads from each car park. Visitors are likely to choose a car park to suit their purpose and duration of stay where walking times can be reduced according to where they plan to visit.

Car Park	Short/Long Stay	Spaces	Walking (Miles/Mins)	
			Distance	Time
Chandos Street	Short	151	0.1	3
Royal Priors MSCP	Long	440	0.1	3
Covent Garden Surface	Short	80	0.2	4
Bedford Street	Short	49	0.2	4
M&S Surface	Short	21	0.2	4
Upper Grove Street	Long	26	0.3	6
St Peters MSCP	Long	383	0.3	6
Rosefield Street	Long	45	0.4	8
Adelaide Bridge	Long	45	0.5	9
Riverside House	Long	175	0.5	10
Station Approach	Long	99	0.6	11
Station Approach Lower Road	Long	30	0.6	11
Bath Place	Long	53	0.6	11
Packington Place	Long	32	0.6	13
Court Street	Long	116	0.7	13
		1745	Less than 1 mile/15 mins	

Table 2: Walking Distances to car parks from junction of Warwick Street and the Parade

### Communication Plan

The full Communication Plan is at Appendix 4 to the Cabinet paper

Our communications plan will run across all our platforms to reach businesses and visitors to the town centre, as well as targeting permit holders with clear alternatives of where they can park in Leamington Spa.

Our website will identify alternative car parks as well as the distances from any given car park to a point in the centre of town, so that visitors can consider an option that might earn them points on our "Choose how you move" initiative to swap for savings or contributions to charity.

Social media will provide continuous and more urgent messages as we near the closure date, linking to the website for further detail of alternative parking.

Posters at the car park and leaflets will contain a QR code to link to the website, again to find alternative car parking for those who arrive at Covent Garden.

A press release and signage will highlight that the car park is closed and advise that CCTV is still in operation to reassure residents and visitors that safety is still a priority.

A pack can be provided for Councillors and partners for reference, containing our key messages.