

# KEY PRINCIPLES

# COVENT GARDEN CAR PARK REDEVELOPMENT: BID UPDATE

# BACKGROUND

BID Leamington represents 400 retail & leisure businesses in the town centre. Over 230 have fed back to us. We welcome investment and an approach which reflects local business interests.

- 1 Partnership working is best. Transparency and open dialogue is the cornerstone of how we work.**
- 2 We know the car park needs attention and welcome a new one. We accept there will be some disruption and are ready to help.**
- 3 Local businesses understand the financial pressures facing everyone including the Local Authority.**
- 4 A managed displacement plan requires planning & investment. Decisions must reflect 'what is best for the town?' and genuinely account for the impact on business.**
- 5 We welcome a strategic approach to planning for our future together.**

Following the WDC Public Meeting in July, BID Leamington suggested a joint independent review of the town's Covent Garden displacement car parking plan. WYG consultants were chosen and below is a summary of the key conclusions and outstanding issues they found:

- A Displacement Plan (DP) is of critical importance.
- Without a DP, there would be a significant shortfall in car parks for shoppers and workers causing frustration, congestion & potential economic and reputational harm.
- The DP needs to provide for all 468 lost spaces and reflect the needs of different people. They have been defined as 'short stay' and 'long stay' users (see defn to right).
- Review of the existing WDC Displacement Plan (including existing 'spare' spaces) found there is a shortfall of long stay spaces (workers) during the weekday and a shortfall of short stay spaces (shoppers) on Saturdays - which is a critical trading day.
- The shortfall in car parks is accentuated until Station Approach CP opens in Dec 2019.
- Other challenges, largely related to location, were:
  - That new parking options in the DP are focused in the south, potentially impacting residential areas to the north, if users do not go there and choose to park on street.
  - The footfall and economies of local businesses may be impacted as shoppers park away from the Covent Garden area.
  - Moving users from one large car park into many smaller ones that are a greater distance away, presents a behavioural change and communication challenge.
  - There is a heavy reliance on on-street parking which is controlled by WCC.
- To help mitigate this 29 recommendations have been made to create additional parking as well as measures such as signage, communications, marketing, events and partnership working. These are welcomed but details need to be finalised and agreed.
- A number of options for new spaces are suggested - including Riverside House on weekdays (50) as well as weekends (260), new and re-purposing off-street spaces eg. Archery Rd, Princes Dr and a number of changes to on-street parking layouts.
- A number of options are high risk or need planning permission, so there is still uncertainty and on-going work and assessment is required.
- If ALL options are adopted, there will be enough long stay (worker spaces) and just enough short stay spaces, however the location related challenges remain. Prior to Station Approach CP opening, it will be especially tight for long stay users (workers).
- Also, further measures, such as temporary park and ride services, should be considered, when demand is higher than average eg. events, Christmas months etc.
- If any of the recommendations are not delivered or delayed there will be a shortfall in spaces. Also, this assumes full uptake of proposed options by the desired users eg. all 94 spaces for long stay users on the far side of Victoria Park (Princes Dr).
- There is more to do before a final DP can be understood so work is on-going.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

- To establish if a Displacement Plan (DP) is needed.
- To agree the scale of the plan ie. how many spaces need to be found and for who (people working and people shopping/visiting).
- To understand if the proposed WDC DP is sufficient and identify ways to improve it.

## HOW MUCH IS IT USED?

- Covent Garden is often full at peak trading times and when the demand for spaces exceeds supply, it has been observed to back up the road.
- On average 800 people use Covent Garden per day. During peak times this is almost 950 per day.

## SHORT VS LONG STAY?

- 'Short Stay' users park for less than 4 hours and are likely to be shoppers /visitors who need parking in close walking distance (less than 800m).
- 'Long Stay' users are parking for more than 4 hours so are likely to be local staff /day visitors who may be prepared to walk a little further.

## RECENT UPDATES ...

- 30th Oct meeting: Chris Elliott (WDC Chief Exec) agreed to explore further spaces during the week at Riverside House which is welcomed.
- 6th Nov: Archery Rd planning application was recently refused.
- New companies are coming to the town centre soon. Their staff parking needs should also be considered.

Prepared 12 November 2018

BID Leamington is seeking reassurances that a robust Displacement Plan is in place, before the closure of Covent Garden CP, or a one year deferral to plan for this.

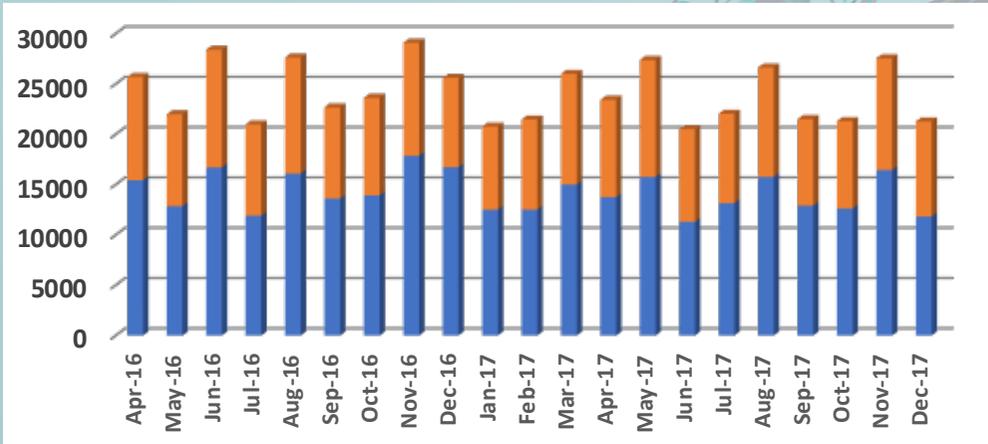
# COVENT GARDEN CAR PARK REDEVELOPMENT THE NUMBERS & KEY QUESTIONS ...



## THE BID'S 'ASK'

### 1 A DISPLACEMENT PLAN 1<sup>ST</sup>

Covent Garden Car Park - Ticket Sales (excl permits (132) & blue badge)

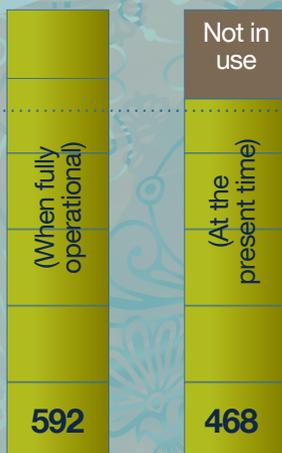


Surface Car Park ■ Multi-story ■

### 2 MORE PARKING, NOT LESS - Current & Future Car Park Spaces

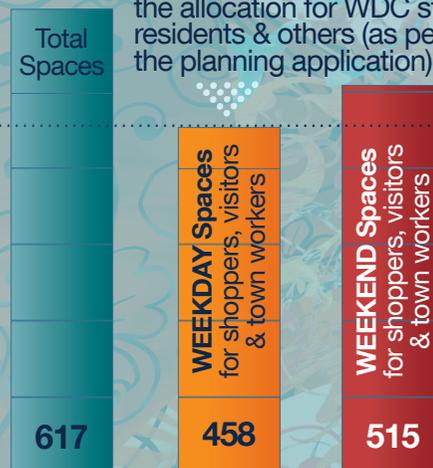
#### CURRENT PROVISION

Total Parking Spaces



#### FUTURE PROVISION

Total 'public' provision - less the allocation for WDC staff, residents & others (as per the planning application)



### OUR KEY QUESTIONS ...

On average we can expect 25,000 vehicles to use the Covent Garden Car Park every month. The lower margin is 21,000 and upper is 29,000. (source WDC Ticket Sales)

Approximately 50% of these are 'short stay' users (shoppers) who would typically look to park close to the town centre.

- ? Is enough provision being made for displaced vehicles?
- ? Will plans be ready by the time it closes in Feb 2019? What happens if not ...
- ? What will be done to re-balance the flow of footfall in the north of the town?
- ? What is in place to protect nearby businesses from development impacts (noise, dust, road closures, energy/electric etc)

In future, it appears there will be less car parking available to shoppers during weekdays and a little more on weekends - when compared to the 'current' provision with the top 2 levels out of use.

Plus, around 350 WDC Staff will also go from **260 spaces** at Riverside House to just **57 spaces** in the new scheme.

- ? What provision is being made for 200+ displaced WDC staff in the future (following the move)?
- ? What provision is there for the increasing numbers of future shoppers / customers?

### WHEN CONSULTED 2 YRS AGO ... BID *Leamington* SAID...

#### 1 A DISPLACEMENT PLAN 1<sup>ST</sup>

The car park serves 31% of the town - so let's agree a plan for where to put them when it closes for up to 2 years. Lets also build the 'car park' element first & fast.

#### 2 MORE SHOPPER PARKING

Parking is already a problem and in coming years there will be a 17% increase in demand - so please put more parking back for 'shoppers' ... not less.

#### 3 BE STRATEGIC & INSPIRE

Ideally this £50million investment would solve existing issues & inspire... Let's improve the link to the upper Parade? How about a waste facility for businesses (like in the Priors)? How about some community office space? Showcase higher environmental and social standards?

**THIS HAS NOT CHANGED ...THOUGH NO 1. IS URGENT**