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MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL OLDCASTLE MAIN SQUARE PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT SCHEME CAR PARKING SURVEY REPORT



OLDCASTLE MAIN SQUARE PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

PARKING REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Meath County Council (MCC) requested a review of the parking situation in the Town Centre as part of the Oldcastle Main Square Public Realm Enhancement Project.

With the public realm project potentially seeing a reconfiguration of car parking, it was necessary to carry out a parking survey to assess the car parking situation pre and post design.

The parking survey was also carried out in advance of the Planning Permission Application, and to inform Stakeholder and Steering Group consultations of potential changes to the current parking configuration within the Town Centre.

The figure below shows the site's location.



Figure 1-1 Site Location

1.2 PARKING SURVEY

The parking survey was carried out on Friday, 20th January 2023 between 07:00 and 19:00. The survey interval was 15 minutes. The following streets within the Town Centre form part of the study area:

- Oliver Plunkett's Street
- The Square
- Church Street

- Railway Yard Car Park
- Barrack Street
- Cobblers Road

It must be noted that this study focused only on the marked parking bays which included accessible bays but explicitly excluded all unmarked areas, illegal parking on double yellow lines and parking in front of property accesses. As a result, all unmarked parking areas on Barrack Street and Cobblers Road were excluded from this study.

Table 1 provides detail of the roads covered under the study area and the corresponding proportion of available parking spaces by parking type.

| Location | Disabled / Accessible | Garda | Parking Bay | Total no. of Spaces | Proposed Spaces |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Oliver Plunkett's Street | 3 | - | 31 | 34 | 19 |
| The Square | 3 | - | 36 | 39 | 25 |
| Church Street | - | 2 | 12 | 12 (ex Garda) | 4 |
| Railway Yard Car Park | 3 | - | 42 | 45 | 45 |
| Barrack Street | - | - | - | - | - |
| Cobblers Road | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 9 | 2 | 121 | 130 | 93 |

Table 1-1 Parking bays per location

*It is noted that there are 45 marked spaces within the Railway Yard car park but there may be potential for more spaces upon further analysis.

1.3 PARKING DATA ANALYSIS – VEHICLE DURATION

The data which was analysed over the 12-hour period focused on the total available spaces, the number of vehicles using these spaces, the duration of parking in these spaces as well as any available capacity.

The following graphs show the number of vehicles occupying parking spaces over the 12-hour study period, and the duration of each parked vehicle in that particular space. The graphs are specific to each street and indicate the number of short, medium and long stay vehicles in each area. Short term stays are considered to be those less than 2 hours i.e. typically, people doing shopping in the town centre. Medium term occupants would be those between 2-4 hours and could be residents, tourists or those who eat out with a combination of shopping. Long term occupants (greater than 4 hours) would be residents working from home, commuters who are parking long term and travelling to neighbouring towns or owners and employees of businesses within the town.

1.3.1 Oliver Plunkett's Street

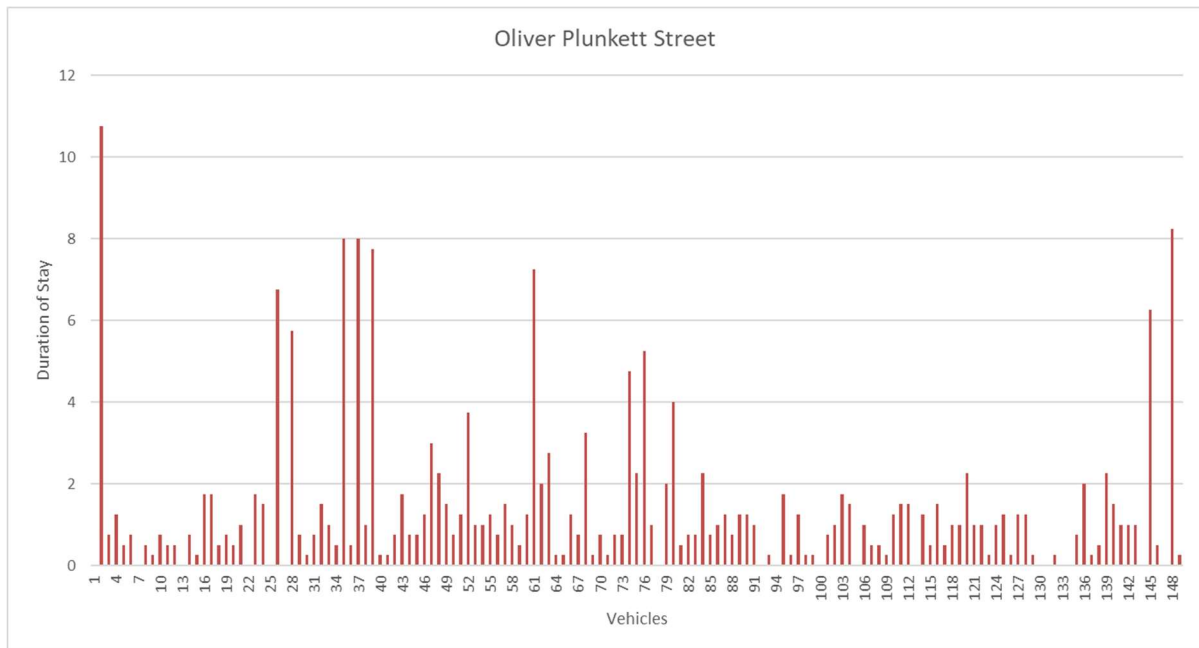


Figure 1-2 – Oliver Plunkett's Street, Duration of stay per vehicle.

The data on Oliver Plunkett's Street indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 34 spaces
- 149 total vehicles counted over the 12-hour period.
- 110 vehicles occupying spaces for less than 2 hours.
- 10 vehicles occupying spaces between 2-4 hours.
- 11 vehicles occupying spaces for longer than 4 hours.
- 1 parking bay which was not occupied the duration of the survey.
- 17 instances where vehicles parked less than 15 minutes.

1.3.2 The Square

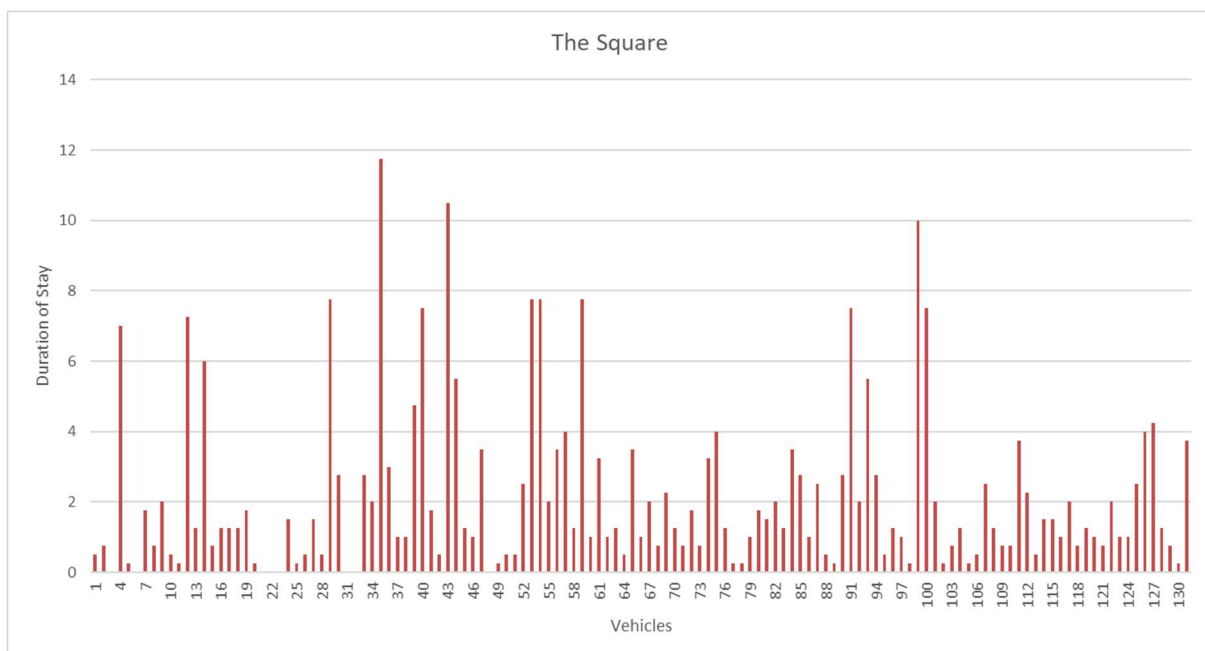


Figure 1-3 The Square, Duration of stay per vehicle.

The data on The Square indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 39 spaces
- 131 total vehicles counted over the 12-hour period.
- 83 vehicles occupying spaces for less than 2 hours.
- 23 vehicles occupying spaces between 2-4 hours.
- 17 vehicles occupying spaces for longer than 4 hours.
- All parking bays were occupied at some point during the survey.
- 8 instances where vehicles parked less than 15 minutes.

1.3.3 Church Street



Figure 1-4 Church Street, Duration of stay per vehicle.

The data on Church Street indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 12 spaces + 2 Garda spaces
- 33 total vehicles counted over the 12-hour period.
- 17 vehicles occupying spaces for less than 2 hours.
- 3 vehicles occupying spaces between 2-4 hours.
- 11 vehicles occupying spaces for longer than 4 hours.
- All parking bays were occupied at some point during the survey.
- 1 instance where a vehicle parked less than 15 minutes.
- 2 Garda spaces - one space was occupied for 15 minutes; the other space was not occupied for the duration of the survey.

1.3.4 Railway Yard Car Park

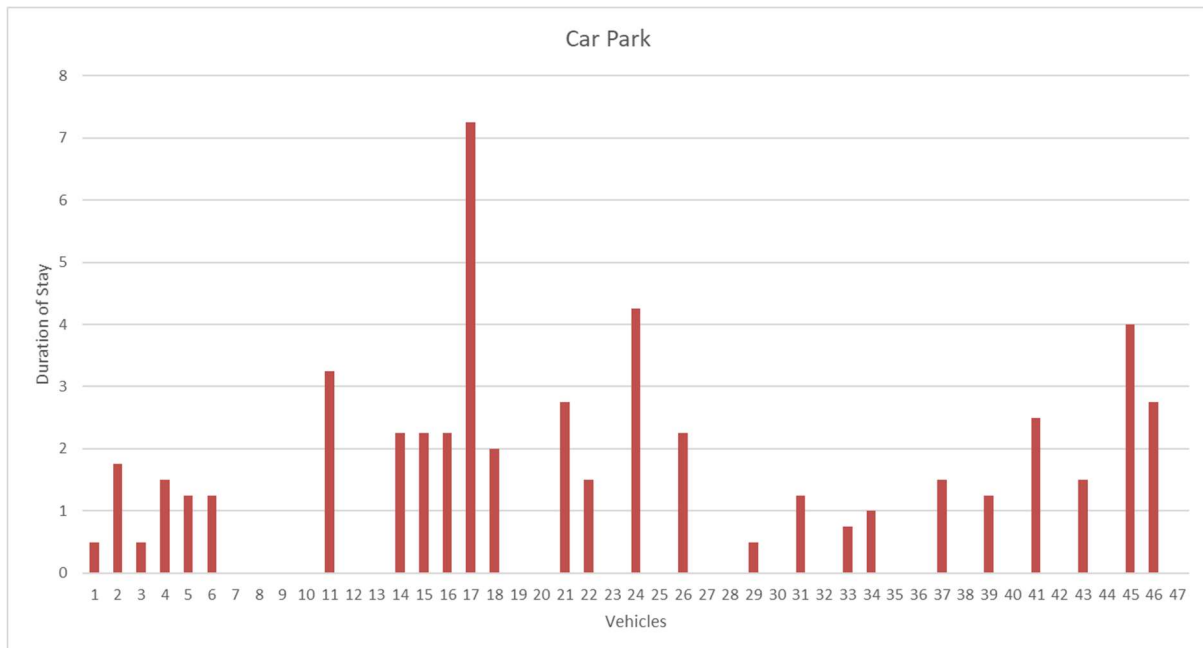


Figure 1-5 Railway Yard Car Park, Duration of stay per vehicle.

The data on the Railways Yard Car Park indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 45 spaces
- 47 total vehicles counted over the 12-hour period.
- 15 vehicles occupying spaces for less than 2 hours.
- 9 vehicles occupying spaces between 2-4 hours.
- 2 vehicles occupying spaces for longer than 4 hours.
- 20 parking bays which was not occupied the duration of the survey.
- 1 instance where vehicles parked less than 15 minutes.

Table 1-2 presents the parking analysis for the entire town centre with regards to vehicle parking duration:

| Location | Total Spaces Available | Short Stay (occupied <2 hours) | Medium Stays (occupied 2-4 hours) | Long Stays (occupied >4 hours) |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Oliver Plunkett's Street | 34 | 110 | 10 | 11 (32% of total capacity) |
| The Square | 39 | 83 | 23 | 17 (44% of total capacity) |
| Church Street | 14 | 17 | 3 | 11 (79% of total capacity) |
| Railway Yard Car Park | 45 | 15 | 9 | 2 (4% of total capacity) |
| Total | 132 | 225 | 45 | 41 |

Table 1-2 Duration of stay of vehicles per location.

It can be grasped from the data that there is a high turnover of vehicles within Oliver Plunkett's Street and The Square. These are the areas close to shops and restaurants and central to the

town’s core. There is a fair number of long stays within these 2 areas which reduce its capacity during the day.

Church Street is on the east-west thoroughfare (R154) and as such is the smallest of the parking areas with this being a narrow, busy street. Church Street sees fewer rotations on parking and upon closer inspection there is a high number of long stays on Church Street.

With regards to the Railway Yard Car Park, it is apparently under-utilised with some 20 of the 45 bays (44%) remaining empty over the course of the day. The car park is located approximately 200 m northeast of the town centre which is approximately a 3-minute walk.

1.4 PARKING DATA ANALYSIS – PARKING SPACE OCCUPANCY

Further analysis of the data considers the occupancy of the individual spaces over the 12-hour survey period. These would take into account the cumulative vehicle durations per space. This would be indicative of available capacity of a parking bay over the 12-hour period. Again, this was carried out on each location.

1.4.1 Oliver Plunkett’s Street

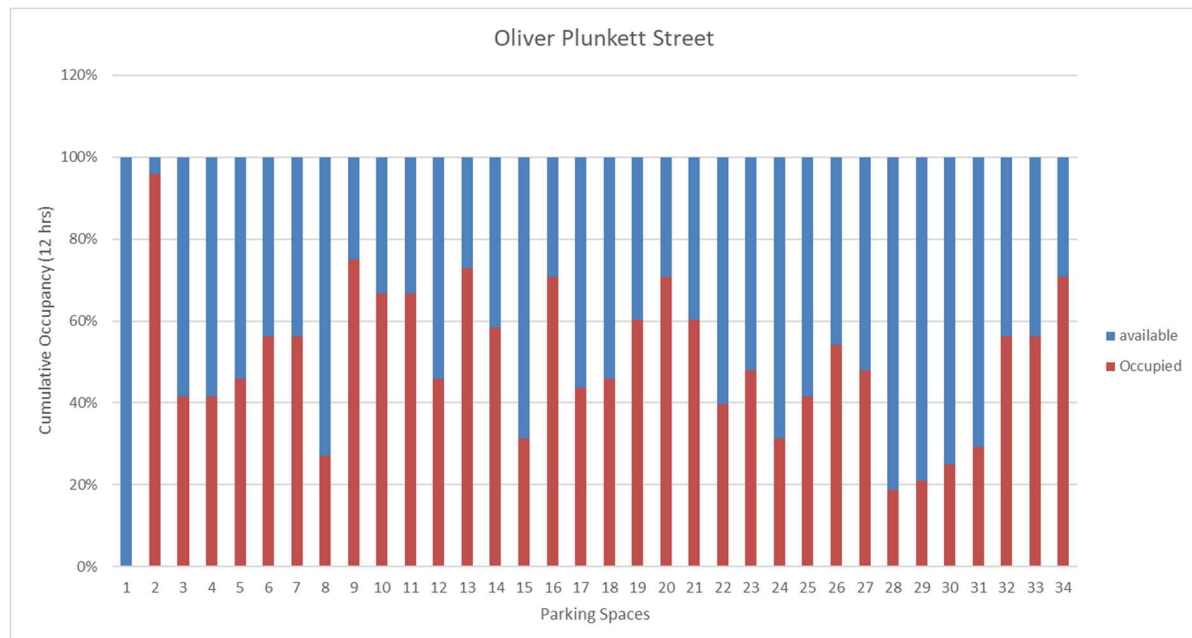


Figure 1-6 Oliver Plunkett’s Street, Parking Space occupancy

The data on Oliver Plunkett’s Street indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 34 spaces
- Average vacancy of 51% over the 12-hour survey period
- 1 parking bay was not occupied for the entire the duration of the survey.

1.4.2 The Square

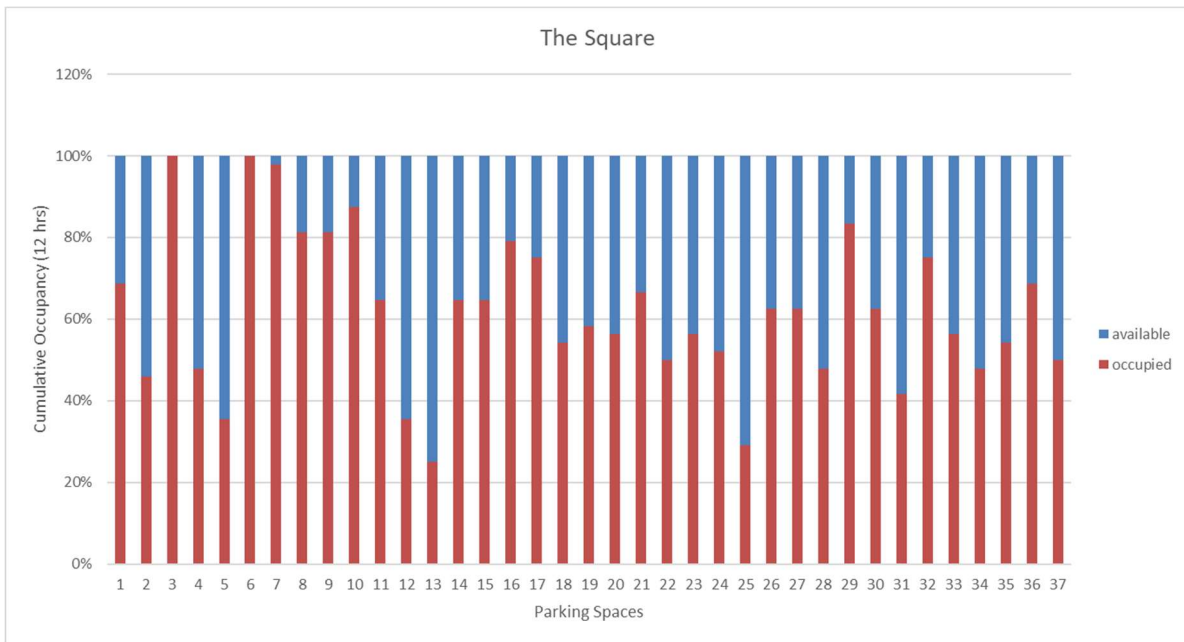


Figure 1-7 The Square, Parking Space occupancy

The data on The Square indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 39 spaces
- Average vacancy of 38% over the 12-hour survey period
- Nearly 3 instances where spaces were occupied for more than 12 hours.

1.4.3 Church Street

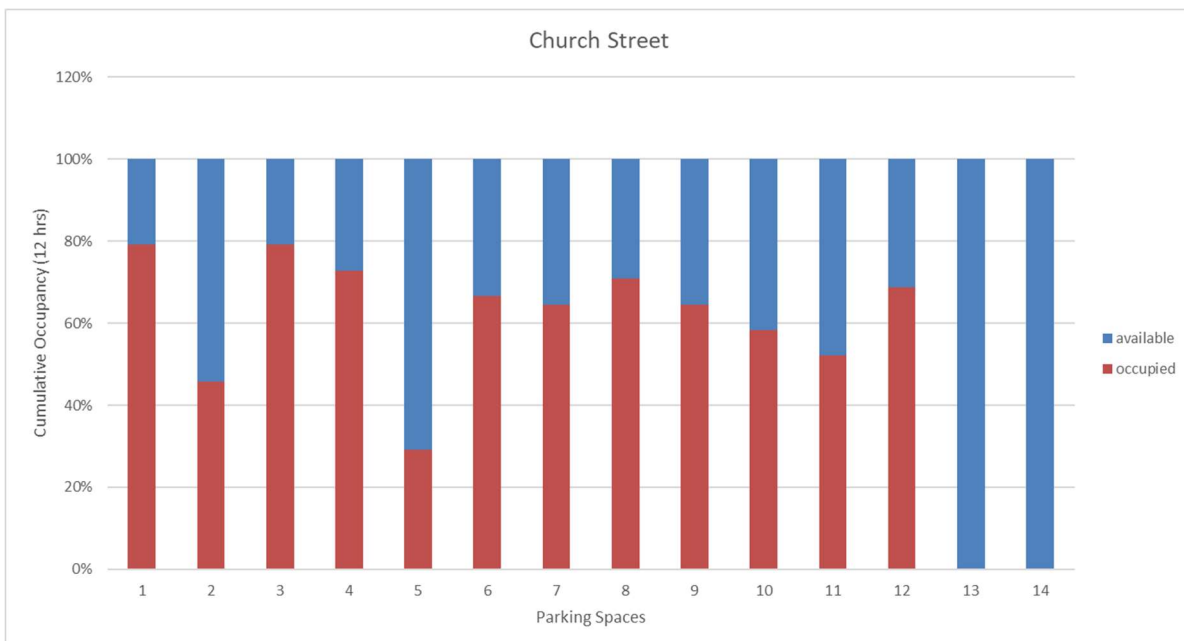


Figure 1-8 Church Street, Parking Space occupancy

The data on The Square indicates the following:

- Total capacity of 12 spaces + 2 for Garda
- Average vacancy of 37% over the 12-hour survey period
- 2 garda spaces have been excluded from the capacity calculation being reserved for Garda vehicles.

1.4.4 Railway Yard Car Park

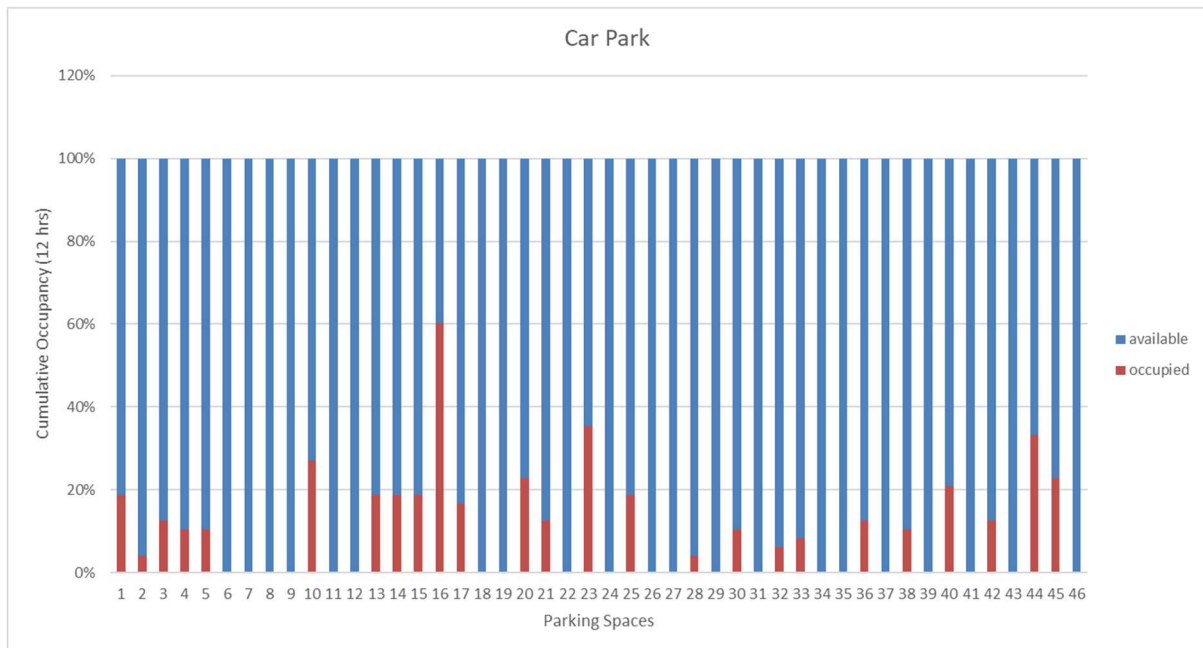


Figure 1-9 Car Park, Parking Space occupancy

- Total capacity of 45 spaces
- Average vacancy of 90% over the 12-hour survey period

Table 1-3 summarises the occupancy and availability over the project area.

| Location | Total Spaces Available | Occupancy (average) | Available (average) |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Oliver Plunkett's Street | 34 | 49% | 51% |
| The Square | 39 | 62% | 38% |
| Church Street | 14 | 63% | 37% |
| Railway Yard Car Park | 45 | 10% | 90% |

Table 1-3 Occupancy per location

The data analysed indicates approximately half of Oliver Plunkett's Street at capacity over a 12-hour period while The Square and Church Street have relatively lower capacity. The railway yard car park, due to its underutilisation offers approximately 90% of its capacity.

1.5 PARKING GAP ANALYSIS

The Town Centre is currently the focus of the proposed Public Realm design and the extent of changes to existing car parking affects the Town Centre. The existing parking configurations account for 85 total car parking spaces in the Town Centre which includes the streets listed in Table 1-1.

The proposed public realm improvement design allows retention of 48 spaces thereby implying a loss of 37 spaces in the Town Centre. It's stressed that 24 of the total 85 spaces are deemed to be unsafe and therefore would need to be removed in any case. These are the spaces close to the junction, at the Market House and at the Oldcastle Hairdressing Salon. There are other cases at the Square where reversing onto the carriageway is deemed unsafe. This brings the net loss of spaces to 13.

The Railway Yard Car Park which is located 200m away from the Town Centre can accommodate 45+ spaces. As demonstrated from our parking occupancy analysis, this is underutilised with as much as 90% spare capacity available. Relocating lost on-street car parking in the Town Centre to off-street Railway Yard car park presents a viable solution which would result in an overall net gain of parking spaces.

2.0 OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the Town Centre Enhancement project is expected to result in some loss of the on-street parking spaces; parking elsewhere in the close vicinity to the Town Centre is observed to have sufficient capacity to absorb the lost spaces. The car park northeast of the town centre is currently not used to its full potential, and it is recommended this be included in the council's plan to enhance the town's public realm.

There is a similarity in the parking profile between on-street locations with a relatively high share of short duration parking. There is also a high percentage of long stay occupants which may be better suited to off-street parking locations, freeing up the short-term rotation of vehicles. It is recommended that the new proposed design incorporates time restrictions on parking within the town centre with appropriate enforcement of same.

Appendix 1 - Proposed Draft Enhancement Plan

Appendix 2 – Parking Survey Data (on request)

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