

Agenda Item No: 9
Report To: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 19th December 2019
Report Title: Automatic Number Plate Recognition Installation
Report Author & Job Title: Mandy Cracknell
Team Leader – Parking, Highways and Transportation
Portfolio Holder Cllr. Jo Gideon
Portfolio Holder for: Community Safety and Wellbeing



Summary: To introduce an Automatic Number Plate Recognition and barrier system at Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks and assess suitability for remaining council parking estate thereafter.

Key Decision: YES

Significantly Affected Wards: Victoria

Recommendations: **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Approve the implementation of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) at Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks.**
- II. Approve the necessary funds to deliver the ANPR solution in accordance with the estimates provided.**
- III. Delegate authority to Head of Community Safety and Wellbeing, to effect and complete all necessary steps for the implementation of ANPR at Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks.**
- IV. Receive further update reports as necessary.**

Policy Overview: The Council's Corporate Plan identifies Enterprising Ashford, (stimulating economic investment and growth), as a key priority. The growth that is being achieved will result in an increase in demand for parking over the next decade.

ANPR systems and the associated technology provides visitors with a secure and efficient parking service. When

combined with appropriate charging fees, ANPR provides the operator with opportunities for a greater return on investment and on-going service improvement. The proposal supports the objectives of the Town Centre Framework.

Financial Implications:

The capital cost of an ANPR system for Elwick Place and Victoria Road is estimated at £160,000. This covers equipment and ground works plus a provisional sum for miscellaneous equipment and third-party back office IT systems.

There will be on-going additional operational expenditure in the region of £30,000 per year. It is anticipated that the initial capital expenditure and on-going annual operational expenditure will be covered by parking receipts and efficiencies achieved as a consequence of this and other digital transformation that is taking place within the parking service.

Legal Implications:

Planning permission is not required. The works are considered to have permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (Part 12 Class A).

Vehicle registrations marks are defined as personal data because the operator is able to identify an individual from information held together with the ability to obtain keep details from the DVLA. A Data Protection Impact Assessment is required and will be completed shortly.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

See Appendix A

Other Material Implications:

The greatest staffing impact of the project will be on the project manager, Team Leader for Parking, Highways and Transportation as well as on the Operations Officer and Technical Officer. It will also affect the parking and business support team.

The project implementation will be accommodated within existing resources but some reduction in normal service standards may result e.g. longer turnaround times for work. It is anticipated that the work for other core and extended team members will equally be incorporated into existing resources.

There will be some changes associated with a move to ANPR for our civil enforcement officers e.g. a slight reduction in off-street to on-street but this is not considered significant at this point in time. They will also be involved in the project roll out e.g. providing guidance to customers within the car parks, and

will moving forwards answer ANPR assistance calls during car parking charging periods.

**Exempt from
Publication:**

No

**Background
Papers:**

None

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Report Title: Automatic Number Plate Recognition Installation

Introduction and Background

1. The council is keen to see a significant improvement to the way in which customers access and use its car parks. ANPR allows customers to leave their vehicles for as long as they wish, paying for time used on exit. It makes moving to online payment methods easier as well as enabling advanced booking.
2. The vision is to implement ANPR in all suitable car parks, providing a payment system which is as flexible as possible. Upgrading to a state-of-the-art technology solution will enable this to be achieved. At this stage, the project primarily relates to Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks. ANPR will ensure that members of public enjoy improved traffic flow and improved parking facilities. There should also be an increase in pedestrian footfall in the town centre as parking becomes easier and more cost effective to use.
3. This initiative goes hand in hand with the economic development of the town centre which will continue at pace with a number of major development schemes already underway and is in line with:
 - Projected year on year growth in the local population
 - Projected year on year growth in commuters and rail users
 - Demand for off-street parking
 - Growth in on-street controls which will increase usage of off-street facilities
4. In order to respond, the council's parking strategy needs to:
 - Manage the supply, location and pricing of parking to support local economic growth and the prosperity of the town centre
 - Effectively manage the direction of short and long stay parking to meet the needs of town centre developments
 - Provide payment systems which are as flexible as possible. Upgrading to a state-of-the-art technology solution will enable this to be achieved. We need to bring the latest parking technology to Ashford district to make our car parks as easy and simple for customers to use.
 - Provide high quality parking facilities that create demand and attract usage

Proposal/Current Position

5. The Elwick Place car park has been in operation for almost a year. During this period it has been identified as the preferred location for an ANPR conversion.

Benefits of ANPR

6. The following benefits are anticipated:
 - Greater protection of existing parking revenue streams by providing the customer with a reliable, accessible, easy to use and flexible parking solution.
 - Lower system maintenance costs and a more automated parking solution.
 - A parking payment system that remains secure and compliant with industry standards.
 - A technology platform for parking that is in line with our digital transformation strategy.
 - An on-line account facility what has the potential to drive customer sign-up to the council's wider on-line portal i.e. links to other services across the council.
 - Providing it is well implemented and carefully managed, ANPR can also play a role in enabling a variety of opportunities for businesses.
 - The payment machines can be fully integrated with powerful ANPR data to match vehicle details inputted to reduce manual entry errors. Not only does this provide confidence to the motorist and an easy-to-use system but also allows us to monitor the duration of the stay along with the ability to identify whether they have paid or not
 - Integrating our pay by phone supplier with the ANPR back office systems for ease of use for customers. A further change will be a rebranding of the current Park Mobile system to the RingGo system in order to take advantage of RingGo's additional technology in line with other, local authority, rail and private companies/organisations who are making this move.

Financial and resource issues

7. The ANPR preferred provider, Sagoss (the system used in Canterbury <https://sagossgroup.com/>), have quoted capital expenditure of:
 - around £133,333 (including ground works)
 - annual revenue expenditure for licences and maintenance of £25,228
8. The quote does not include additional equipment or third-party back office IT system charges. In order to cover the as yet unquantified charges, it is recommended that in total a capital budget of up to **£160,000** is agreed.
9. The funds requested cover the ANPR and barrier systems plus payment terminals (in the car parks) and signage. It will also cover ground work and installation, back office systems and integration with relevant third party systems such as on-line accounts and payments. Example equipment is provided Appendix B.
10. There will be on-going revenue expenditure in the region of **£30,000**. It is anticipated that this will be covered through additional income and efficiencies within the parking budget.

11. ANPR information can drive continual business improvement. Camera data can provide insights into user behaviour which allows for more informed decision-making and consequent efficiency savings. Staffing costs can be both increased in terms of back office business support e.g. intercom calls, but decreased in off-street enforcement once installation takes place.

Return on investment

12. The table below highlights the financial implications of implementing an ANPR facility in Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks. It indicates ANPR is estimated to yield cash benefit to the council over a 10 year investment period. In regard to Victoria Road car park, which has yet to open, income has been based on that achieved by the Elwick Road car park car park, at £23k for this financial year. This car park has been selected for comparison purposes as we have 12 months usage history and it represent a modest level of usage. Table does not take into account variation in car park charges.

Car park	2019/2020 Financial Year Actual	2019/2020 Forecast	2020/2021 Forecast	2021/2022 Forecast
ANPR facility in Elwick Place Over next 10 years assumes 289 Spaces	To October 2019 (7 months) £101k 44491 transactions (25% reduction in transactions in Oct 19, when free parking after 3pm introduced)	Full financial Year £173k 76272 transactions Recoup investment <i>Best case scenario = £1.10 per hour x 50% capacity x 359 days use = £343k</i>	Full financial year £173K Minus maintenance and licence costs	Full financial year £173K Minus maintenance and licence costs
ANPR facility in Victoria Road car park Over next 10 years assumes 105 Spaces	Not applicable	Assuming on par with Elwick Road at 50% capacity until established would yield worst case around £40k 10,000 transactions	Full financial year £40K Minus maintenance and licence costs	Full financial year £40K Minus maintenance and licence costs

		<p>Will not re coup initial investment in year 1</p> <p><i>Best case scenario £1.10 per hour x 50% capacity x 359 days use = £230k</i></p>		
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13. The data indicates the ANPR facility is estimated to yield cash benefit to the council over the 10 year investment period.

Procurement arrangements

14. The council is able to draw on an existing agreement with a neighbouring council to implement the ANPR system.

Expected Programme of works

15. Subject to the approval of the recommendations contained within this report, the aim is to install ANPR in Elwick Place in the New Year. There will be minimum disruption to existing users and protection for local businesses during this period.
16. It is anticipated that delegated authority will be given to progress the appointment of an approved contractor to develop and deliver the ANPR solution as set out within the recommendations to this report.
17. The anticipated delivery programme based on key milestones are as follows:

Activity	Target completion date
Cabinet approval	December 2019
Site visit	December 2019
Instruction to preferred supplier/contract award	December 2019
Equipment manufactured / configured	January 2020
Systems installed / tested and training	January 2020
Construction complete	February 2020
ANPR live	February / March 2020

18. The above represents the timeline for installation at Elwick Place car park. It is anticipated that Victoria Road car park will follow later in 2020/21. The exact timeline for Victoria Road has yet to be determined and detailed survey work is necessary.

Customer arrangements

19. The aim is to create an identity for ticketless car parks, to raise the awareness of the advantages of ticketless parking, and to encourage customers to set up an online account by changing buying behaviour. Those with online accounts never need go near a payment machine.
20. Users will be asked to sign up for a new account with the council, providing their vehicle and payment details, which will allow them to pay automatically. Signing up will be easy, fast and secure.
21. Customers will also be able to pay by cash, credit card and by phone.
22. While it is likely that there will a high level of satisfaction with the new arrangements, there will be a need to interact with our customers if difficulties are experienced. Calls will be answered by the parking team within the car park changing periods and civil enforcement officer shift patterns. Out of hours there will be a link into the Ashford Monitoring Centre.

Implications and Risk Assessment

23. The risk assessment for this project is under regular review, however, a summary of the current position is provided as follows:

Risk 1 – Disruption for existing customers during the installation of ANPR

While the physical installation of ANPR is unlikely to cause problems for our customers, there will no doubt be teething problems as people get used to the new payment arrangements. Additional support will be provided by our parking staff in the early days and suitable guidance provided on-line.

Risk 2 – Financial risks

An economic downturn could affect income streams if demand for parking drops. This is, however, a risk relevant to all our car parks and is not exacerbated by introducing an ANPR system. Such systems enable dynamic parking charges and therefore are a positive in terms of encouraging use and being flexible to changing customer demand. Changing social behaviour could see a shift from car usage which again results in less demand for public parking.

Risk 3 – Technology risk

Customers may not welcome the change. This project seeks to utilise technology that has been tested by other operators, so this risk is reduced.

Risk 4 – Legal/Site limitations

Victoria Road car park has yet to transfer into council ownership and there is a risk that legal or site limitations would prevent this car park from being appropriate for an ANPR system. If this were the case, the funding secured for ANPR could be utilised in an alternative car park.

Equalities Impact Assessment

24. An equality impact assessment as provided at Appendix A. No negative impacts have been identified. The proposed project will, on completion, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it by increasing the quantity and quality of both general use and dedicated disabled parking at Elwick Place Car Park.
25. The decision to introduce ANPR will not give rise to unlawful discrimination.
26. Mitigation measures have been identified for the installation phase of the project to address negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics.
27. Ongoing monitoring for the project will be carried out by the Project Manager

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

28. The system being recommended was the subject of an extensive trial in a neighbouring borough. Following a trial period, the effectiveness and popularity of the system was demonstrated on the basis of the positive feedback on customer's experience. During the pilot, 89% of customers reported that the ANPR parking experience was better than the previous pay and display system. It is believed that feedback will be equally positive once the system has been introduced and customers have adapted to the change and the advantages it provides.
29. In the case of the Elwick Place car park, both the cinema and hotel are aware and supportive of the plans to introduce ANPR. They are being kept updated on this project.
30. There is an option to place additional pay stations in the cinema and hotel and this will be discussed with the companies involved upon agreement to install ANPR.
31. The Project Manager is in contact with the Ashford Disabled Access Group and they will attend their next meeting in February 2020.

Other Options Considered

32. Option 1 – Do Nothing i.e. no ANPR

There is a need, especially in the case of the Elwick Place car park, to introduce a system that allows for dynamic parking payment arrangements in line with the mixed usage of this car park. Beyond this specific car park, we know that ANPR systems are accepted by customers and are increasingly welcomed as the technology is used in many private car parking situations. It is also believed that ANPR will maximise the potential of this and other car parks.

33. Option 2 – Install ANPR at an alternative car park

Edinburgh Road is another car park that would potentially benefit from conversion to ANPR. The land is in the ownership council, the car park layout is suitable, and its use especially for short-term parking for shopping means that ANPR will encourage longer stays and greater usage.

34. This may not be a preferred option at this stage but should be explored moving forward.

35. **Option 3 - Install ANPR on Elwick Road but not Victoria Road**

As there are both legal and practical site issues to be resolved in relation to Victoria Road car park, it is sensible to progress the Elwick Road car park first and potentially install ANPR in an alternative car park if it became impractical to install in Victoria Road.

Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended

36. The preferred option is to pursue immediate installation of ANPR in Elwick Road car park. Upon satisfactory conclusion of the legal and practical site issues at Victoria Road to then install ANPR in this or, if necessary, an alternative car park (Edinburgh Road being a possible alternative). This option addresses the immediate need to introduce a system at Elwick Road that gives us greater ability to move to easier and on line payment methods, as well as advance booking. It recognises the desire to also introduce a system at Victoria Road car park but accepts this might not be possible. In this situation a further report would be prepared for cabinet.

Next Steps in Process

37. Following agreement work would commence to install ANPR into Elwick Place car park and have it functioning by spring 2020.

38. Working with our communications team we can encourage, promote and influence users through signage, communications and social media to use Elwick Place car park. This also works to support any redevelopment and temporary closure of other car parks as part of the town regeneration plans.

Conclusion

39. It is anticipated that introducing ANPR will improve customer experience and has the potential to maximise income streams for the council as well as leading to operational efficiencies. The recommendation to introduce ANPR at the Elwick Place car park can be implemented immediately with Victoria Road car park (or an alternative if necessary) following on shortly afterwards. There is no doubt that use of this technology will greatly improve the off-street parking service. By employing the system developed by our neighbouring council we are able to build on their successes and take advantage of the significant research they undertook and procurement work carried out. Our aspiration is to introduce ANPR in all appropriate car parks across the Borough in due course. Where necessary, additional reports will be provided to cabinet.

Portfolio Holder's Views

40. Every day, businesses spanning the private and public sectors are struggling to improve the quality and convenience of their car parks. They are doing this through ANPR providing a simple, cost effective and reliable approach to parking for their customers. No longer will customers have to worry about the stress of ticket loss or returning to top-up, and when they are ready to leave they have lots of choice as to how to pay for their parking session. With online accounts they never have to go near a terminal again. This project represents a major advance for our parking service and I have no hesitation in supporting the recommendations made.

Cllr Jo Gideon, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing

Contact and Email

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Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

Lead officer:	Mandy Cracknell/Sheila Davison
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop 	Approval in principle to proceed with proposed installation of ANPR in Elwick Place Car Park
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	19 th December 2019
Summary of the proposed decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? 	<p>The proposed decision will be to introduce an ANPR and barrier system at Elwick Place and Victoria Road car parks.</p> <p>Use of this technology provides visitors with a secure and efficient parking service. When combined with appropriate charging fees, ANPR provides the operator with opportunities for a greater return on investment.</p> <p>The expected outcomes and benefits of an ANPR system are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in satisfaction with parking for our residents, business and visitors and for customers to report that the ANPR parking experience was better than the previous pay and display system. • Greater protection of existing parking revenue streams by providing the customer with a reliable, accessible, easy to use and flexible parking solution. • Lower system maintenance costs and more automated parking solution. • A parking payment systems that remains secure and compliant with industry standards. • A technology platform for parking that is in line with our digital transformation strategy. • An on-line account facility what has the potential to drive customer sign-up to the council’s wider on-line portal i.e. links to other services across the council. <p>Providing it is well implemented and carefully managed, ANPR can also play a role in enabling a variety of opportunities for businesses.</p> <p>The payment machines can be fully integrated with powerful ANPR data to match vehicle details inputted to reduce manual entry errors. Not only does this provide confidence to the motorist and an easy-to-use system but</p>

	also allows us to monitor the duration of the stay along with the ability to identify whether they have paid or not.	
Information and research:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. Include sources and key findings. 	The income, user profile and season ticket uptake of Elwick Place car park will be monitored to establish usage trends and future demand.	The ANPR back office system will provide an invaluable tool and be used to inform the proposed decision.
<p>Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.</p> <p>When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.</p>		
Protected characteristic	Relevance to Decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of Decision Positive (Major/Minor) Negative (Major/Minor) Neutral
<u>AGE</u>	Medium	Positive (minor) – increasing supply of parking at existing site
Elderly		
Middle age	Low	Positive (minor) – increasing supply of parking at existing site
Young adult	Low	Positive (minor) – increasing supply of parking at existing site
Children	Low	Neutral
<u>DISABILITY</u>	High	Positive (major) – increasing supply of dedicated disabled parking and quality of parking environment
Physical		
Mental	High	Positive (major) – increasing supply of dedicated disabled parking and quality of parking environment
Sensory	High	Positive (major) – increasing supply of dedicated disabled parking and quality of parking environment
<u>GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT</u>	None	Neutral

<u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u>	None	Neutral
<u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u>	Low	Positive (minor) – increasing supply of parking at existing site in close proximity to town centre.
<u>RACE</u>	None	Neutral
<u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u>	None	Neutral
<u>SEX</u> Men	None	Neutral
Women	None	Neutral
<u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u>	None	Neutral
<u>ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY</u> Regular/Reserve personnel	None	Neutral
Former service personnel	None	Neutral
Service families	None	Neutral

<p>Mitigating negative impact:</p> <p>Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.</p>	<p>Customers may not welcome change.</p> <p>With the actual system, there could be negative impacts on Double visits. The main problem reported with ANPR technology is multiple short visits being recorded as one long visit and inconvenience to driver if requested for that stay payment.</p> <p>ANPR technology is not the same as CCTV technology; it does not record a continuous stream of images. Instead, a photograph is only taken and recorded when a number plate is detected. There are three separate situations to consider; character misreads, misconfiguration and number plate misses.</p> <p>Mitigation of the negative impacts on users where a numbers of incidents are reported could be determined and could just be misalignment of the ANPR cameras.</p> <p>Users may have concerns around exiting at peak times. To help manage this better, especially for infrequent and new ANPR users, we'll have a contactless pay-at-the-barrier terminal that will let users know that they haven't paid yet, how much you owe, and how to quickly pay. It will take less than 15 seconds</p>
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	<p>from stopping to exiting, and we expect this to help manage these infrequent, but occasionally troublesome, issues.</p> <p>After this installation, we will introduce a new system will also allow a pre-pay option. If you know you're going into town and will be leaving the car park by 10pm, you can pre-pay at a terminal before you leave the car park, or via mobile web or mobile app as you're walking back to the car at end of evening, helping to beat the queues at the payment machines. This will be available at all car parks that use the new ANPR machines.</p>
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Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's [Essential Guide](#), alongside fuller [PSED Technical Guidance](#).

Aim	Yes / No / N/A
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	N/A
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	N/A

<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above). Advice on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified. How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be 	<p>There are various white lists and discounts and or extras you can do for on pay by phone, permits and those vehicles entering an ANPR car park.</p> <p>The proposed project will, on completion, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it by increasing the quantum and quality of both general use and dedicated disabled parking at Elwick Place Car Park.</p> <p>The decision will not give rise to unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>Mitigation measures have been identified for the installation phase of the project to address negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring for the project will be carried out via the project Manager</p>
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undertaken and reported?	
EIA completion date:	27 th November 2019

Appendix B – Examples of ANPR equipment



Flow Plates



Barrier



Payment machine
on exit



Pay machine



ANPR camera



Signage