Parking Justification Summary Sheet

Project: Hinchingbrooke Country Park – Car Park Expansion
Date: May 2025
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Overview

This justification supports the planning application for expanding the existing parking provision at Hinchingbrooke Country Park. The proposal is based on clear evidence of seasonal and event-driven peaks in visitor numbers, as well as the strategic need to manage visitor access sustainably and safely.

Visitor Footfall Analysis

- **Data Source:** Footfall Monitor (Mar 2024 – Feb 2025)
- **Key Findings:**
    - Consistent weekly footfall patterns, with significant peaks on weekends.
    - Summer peak (May–August 2024) shows footfall exceeding 4,000 visitors/day, particularly during school holidays and events.
    - Shoulder seasons (Mar–May and Sept–Oct) show moderate footfall, typically 800–1,500/day.
    - Winter months (Nov–Feb) show markedly lower usage (under 500/day).

Current Parking Provision

- 80 standard spaces, two disabled
- Overflow observed during peak periods, leading to:
    - Cars parking on grass verges and adjacent residential roads
    - Increased congestion and safety concerns
    - Diminished visitor experience

Proposed Expansion

- 95 standard bays, 24 disabled

- Designed to accommodate ‘design day’ usage, estimated to cover 95% of annual demand.
- Acknowledgement that extreme peak days (e.g., school holidays, special events) may still exceed capacity.

Justification

- Improved Visitor Experience: Reduces queuing, illegal parking, and traffic spill-over into neighbouring areas.
- Data-Driven Forecasting: Enables event day planning, including:
    - Use of overflow arrangements
    - Promotion of sustainable transport modes (cycling, walking, public transport)
    - Pre-visit communication to manage visitor behaviour

Sustainability & Mitigation

- Modal Shift Support:
    - Improved pedestrian and cycle access
    - Promotion of local bus services and park & walk schemes
- Education & Signage: Encourage car-sharing, off-peak visits, and low-impact access

Policy Compliance

- Supports local and national planning objectives:
    - Reducing car dominance
    - Promoting green travel choices
    - Improving access to green spaces

Conclusion

While the proposed expansion will not fully eliminate parking stress on the busiest days, it is a proportionate, data-informed response that balances operational capacity with environmental and community considerations. It will allow

Hinchingbrooke Country Park to operate effectively across much of the year while managing exceptional days through strategic overflow and active travel incentives