

BRIEFING	TO:	Cllr Read, Leader of the Council
	DATE:	22 December 2025
	LEAD OFFICERS:	Richard Jackson Head of Highways and Flood Risk Helen Barker Head of Customer Services Steve Langrick Head of Digital Services Tim Hartley Head of Property
	TITLE:	Forge Island Car Park – Parking Charge Options

1. Background

1.1	Forge Island car park has a capacity of 340 and concessions are currently offered to cinema customers (3.5 hours free parking) and hotel guests (free parking from 16:00 to 10:00) under the terms of their tenancies.
1.2	The purpose of this report is to provide options for consideration to inform a decision on the potential parking tariff for Forge Island car park.
1.3	The tariff for 2024/25 was set as part of the “fees and charges” process. This tariff was in place for the short period of time during which charges prevailed for parking following commissioning of the ANPR system.
1.4	In January 2025, an Officer Executive Decision was approved to confirm that the current tariff and concessions to that tariff are changed to unlimited free parking for all customers of Forge Island businesses.
1.5	The current tariff was set as part of the 2025/26 “fees and charges” process, but the tariff has never been implemented due to the operational issues, the remedy for which has now been approved.
1.6	The remedy is a hybrid ticketless system with new hardware incorporated with the existing hardware.

1.7	Free parking will be offered to vehicles displaying a valid blue badge. This will be facilitated by scanning the blue badge at one of the pay stations.
1.8	Tablets will be installed within the cinema and hotel which will be used to allocate concessions to customers. This has been agreed with the cinema and hotel.
1.9	Other businesses on Forge Island do not have concessions for parking as part of their lease agreement. There are currently three occupied units (Vetro Lounge, Sygnature Dish and Heavenly Desserts) with two units still to be let.
1.10	The Property & Facilities Service have been approached by the businesses detailed above with a request for a parking concession for their customers.
1.11	There is a 30 minute grace period for drivers for enter the car park to leave without payment being required. This allows for drop off and pick up, deliveries and waste collection.
2. Key Issues	
2.1	Review of existing parking charges and concessions
2.1.1	<p>There are various issues which have been considered when determining possible changes to the tariff and the charging hours. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the car park may support wider parking within the Town Centre, its primary purpose is to support the footfall at Forge Island. • The quality of the car park in terms of security / lighting / cover etc is such that customers are likely to be willing to pay a higher tariff when visiting Forge Island. • The car park is near to Riverside House, Main Street Police Station and the Royal Mail offices. Due to the perception of the car park being safe, largely under cover and a generally favourable environment, a relatively cheap tariff will encourage use of the car park by employees of the Council, South Yorkshire Police and Royal Mail. • On occasions when football matches are played at the New York Stadium, a relatively cheap or free tariff will encourage use of the car park by customers of the Stadium. • The nature of the businesses located on Forge Island is such that most parking activities are undertaken in the evenings and at weekends.
2.2	Council Town Centre Off-Street Car Parks
2.2.1	<p>Incentives offered in off-street car parks operated by the Council in the town centre currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free parking on Saturdays and Sundays • Free one hour parking Monday to Friday • Free parking for vehicles displaying a valid blue badge
2.2.2	Council town centre off-street car parks tariffs vary slightly between each location, as shown in the following table:

Car Park	Up to 1 hr	Up to 2 hrs	Up to 4 hrs	Up to 10 hrs
Westgate	Free	N/A	£1.50	£3.10
Statutes	Free	£1.10	£2.10	£3.80
Scala	Free	£1.50	£2.00	N/A
Unity Place	Free	£1.50	£2.00	N/A
Wellgate multi storey	Free	£1.50	£2.00	£3.60
Wellgate North	Free	£2.00	N/A	N/A
Douglas Street	Free	£1.50	N/A	N/A
Clifton Hall	Free	£1.60	£2.10	£3.80
Drummond Street	Free	£1.50	£2.00	£3.60
Riverside House	N/A	N/A	N/A	Permits available – staff only, £41 / month

2.2.3 The charging hours are from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. No charges apply on Bank Holidays.

2.2.4 Wellgate multi storey permits are available to staff at a cost of £41 per month. Individual concessional permits are available to customers other than employees of the Council at a cost of £50 per month.

2.3

2.3.1 Privately Owned Town Centre Off-Street Car Parks

There are also town centre car parks that are not operated by the Council. These are summarised in the following table:

Car Park	Up to 1 hr	Up to 2 hrs	Up to 4 hrs	Up to 10 hrs
Interchange	N/A	£1.50	£2.50	£3.50
Liquid	N/A	N/A	N/A	£2.50 but £5 on match days
Trades Club	N/A	N/A	N/A	£2.00
New York Stadium*	N/A	£2.00	N/A	£5.00

2.4 *Not available on match days

2.4.1 Neighbouring Local Authorities Car Park Charges

2.4.2 The Glass Works in Barnsley town centre is a destination that offers visitors shopping, restaurants, a cinema and a bowling alley.

The tariff in all Barnsley Council's off-street car parks, including the Glass Works car park, is as follows:

Monday to Friday	£1 per hour up to a maximum charge of £5 for 24 hours
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	Weekends	Free for 3 hours, then £1 per hour up to a maximum charge of £5 for 24 hours except the Glass Works and Alhambra car parks in which the tariff is £1 for the first 3 hours, then £1 per hour up to a maximum charge of £5 for 24 hours.
2.4.3	The charging hours are 07:00 to 17:00.	
2.4.4	The Glass Works car park cinema customers are given a concession of 4 hours free parking.	
2.4.5	The Frenchgate Shopping Centre is a large shopping centre located in the city centre of Doncaster.	
2.4.6	The parking tariff in the Frenchgate shopping centre in Doncaster city centre are as follows:	
	Up to 1 hour	£1.70
	Up to 2 hours	£3.40
	Up to 3 hours	£4.20
	Up to 5 hours	£5.30
	Up to 7 hours	£6.30
	Up to 8 hours	£9.80
3. Options		
3.1	An Officer Decision will be required to reinstate parking tariffs for customers visiting the Forge Island car park. The proposed tariffs and concessions that are to be reintroduced are considered below:	
3.2	Option 1 – Retain the current tariff as per the 2025/26 “fees and charges” decision	
3.2.1	The approved tariff for Forge Island car park as per the 2025/26 fees and charges is detailed below:	
	Up to 1 hour from entry	Free
	Up to 2 hours	£1.50
	Up to 4 hours	£2.00
	Up to 24 hours	£3.60
3.2.2	The current concessions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.5 hours concession for cinema customers. Free parking for hotel guests between 16:00 and 10:00. 	
3.2.3	From the 1 st April 2026, the tariff for parking in Forge Island car park would reflect the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 detailed below, which are currently subject to approval by Cabinet and Council.	
	Up to 1 hour	Free

	Up to 2 hours	£1.50
	Up to 4 hours	£2.00
	Up to 24 hours	£3.70
3.2.4	Charging hours 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.	
3.2.5	Parking Services have managed the use of Forge Island car park following the suspension of charges and the subsequent heavy usage by non-genuine customers of Forge Island. If the tariff for Forge Island car park is reintroduced as above, it is highly likely that much of the capacity will be used by commuters, rather than customers of the businesses.	
3.2.6	The offer of free parking on Forge Island resulted in genuine customers complaining to the cinema and hotel that they were unable to find a parking space, which jeopardised rental income from these businesses.	
3.3	Option 2 (Recommended) – Offer concessions to all the businesses (i.e. current and future tenants) and introduce a new increased tariff.	
3.3.1	The car park is near to Riverside House, Main Street Police Station and the Royal Mail offices. Due to the perception of the car park being safe, largely under cover and a generally favourable environment, a relatively cheap tariff will encourage use of the car park by employees of the Council, South Yorkshire Police and Royal Mail.	
3.3.2	Vetro Lounge are now requesting a concession for their customers on a regular basis and are worried the introduction of parking charges will impact their trading. Sygnature Dish and Heavenly Desserts are not as persistent but have requested the same.	
3.3.3	The purpose of the car park, whilst it is there to support wider parking within the Town Centre, its "main" purpose is to support the footfall and the generation of trade / customers for the tenants located on Forge Island. The introduction of higher parking charges than other Town Centre car parks to deter non-Forge Island customers from parking will impact peoples' choices around visiting Forge Island and therefore impact the trading of the businesses.	
3.3.4	The proposal to offer a car parking concession to all businesses on Forge Island will mean genuine customers will not be affected by an increased tariff.	
3.3.5	With consideration of the above, an increased suggested tariff is as follows:	
	Up to 2 hours	£2.50
	Up to 4 hours	£5.00
	Up to 24 hours	£8.00
3.3.6	Charging hours 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.	
3.3.7	Justification of the increased tariff fees in Option 2: 1) The above tariff has been suggested in the knowledge that significant numbers of employees of the Council are willing to pay the day rate of £5 in the New York Stadium car park.	

	2) The charging hours, including weekends, have been suggested to deter use of the car park by people attending football matches at the New York Stadium.
3.3.8	<p>The suggested concessions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.5 hours concession for customers of the cinema (in place). • Free parking for hotel guests between 16:00 and 10:00 (in place). • A concession based on the sub-options below for all other businesses as part of the Forge Island development.
3.3.9	<u>Concession Options:</u>
3.3.10	a) Introduce a third concession for the customers of the remaining outlets, which gives them free parking for the duration of their visit to the site. This could be a 2 hour concession which would be enough time for a meal / drink. This would get complicated for people visiting multiple outlets and would be confusing to customers of the site.
3.3.11	b) Give all businesses at Forge Island the same concession of 3.5 hours, which would allow visitors to visit both the cinema and other outlets without the need to pay for parking. If they exceeded the allotted concession they would need to pay the balance of the parking charge, which would be their choice.
3.3.12	Adjacent destinations such as Parkgate and Meadowhall offers free parking to its visitors / customers and therefore parking charges at Forge Island are likely to influence customer choice.
3.3.13	Giving concessions to all customers of Forge Island will impact the income received from the car park and the business plan for the site, but charging all customers to use the site will potentially put customers off visiting the site and using the food outlets.
3.3.14	Given the difficulty we are having in attracting businesses to site, letting the units and the current volume of complaints from the tenants in respect of the car park and management of the car park it is recommended that the other outlets are given a concession equal to that of the cinema.
3.3.15	No businesses, other than the hotel and cinema, negotiated parking concession for their customers within their leases.
3.3.16	If the extension to the number of businesses on Forge Island with parking concessions is agreed, then tablets would be installed at a cost of £650 each which includes annual licences and support for each business.
3.3.17	A further 12 tablets (2 per unit) could be purchased at a total cost of £7,800. There is sufficient “head room” within the procurement procedure recently undertaken to resolve the operational issues referred to above to allow for this additional spend, subject to formal variations being undertaken to the contract.
3.3.18	The supplier has stated that the lead time for additional tablets is normally 4 to 6 weeks. However, bearing in mind the break in normal working patterns for the Christmas period, the most reasonably achievable “go live” date would be

	09/02/2026. A purchase order will have to be raised as soon as possible to facilitate the seamless supply and installation of the additional tablets.						
3.4	Option 3 – Offer no further concessions but introduce a new tariff.						
3.4.1	If no further concessions are to be offered to businesses other than the hotel and cinema, a new tariff could be introduced to try to maintain sufficient parking capacity for genuine customers of Forge Island.						
3.4.2	A suggested tariff is as follows: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Up to 2 hours</td><td>£2.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Up to 4 hours</td><td>£4.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Up to 24 hours</td><td>£6.50</td></tr> </table>	Up to 2 hours	£2.00	Up to 4 hours	£4.00	Up to 24 hours	£6.50
Up to 2 hours	£2.00						
Up to 4 hours	£4.00						
Up to 24 hours	£6.50						
3.4.3	Concessions were not offered or requested during the negotiation of the leases for Vetro Lounge, Sygnature Dish or Heavenly Desserts. When the parking system is back in operation customers to these venues will need to pay the parking charges when visiting the site.						
3.4.4	The reintroduction of fees for parking at Forge Island will be the subject of a communication campaign. This information will be drafted and managed by the Council's Communications Team based on the requirements of Parking Services and Property & Facilities Services and will commence in advance of the new parking system going live.						
4. Recommendations							
4.1	<p>Option 2 is recommended with potential consideration of extending the 3.5 hour concession to 4 hours to provide sufficient comfort for families to see a film and have a meal.</p> <p>This can be delivered by the first week of February to allow time for the installation of signage, programming of tablets and communications messaging.</p>						