



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
CLIFDEN TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS
CAR PARKING SURVEY REPORT



CLIFDEN TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

PARKING REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Galway County Council (GCC) requested a review of the parking situation in the Clifden Town Centre as part of the Clifden Town Centre Enhancement Project. It was required in advance of the Planning Permission Application, and to inform Stakeholder and Steering Group consultations that a Car Parking Strategy document be prepared.

The Clifden Town Centre on-street car parking data was therefore expanded to include more locations, and a revised car parking space analysis has been undertaken. The parking situation has since been reviewed and a few additional car parking lots were added to the survey and data analysis.

1.2 ORIGINAL PARKING SURVEY

The original on-street car parking survey was carried out on the 5th November 2021 for seven hours between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm. The first week in November was outside of the peak tourist season, and international travel restrictions were also lifted four months prior to the survey date. The survey resulted in total of 225 no. on-street parking spaces and covered three main locations namely Main Street, Bridge Street and Market Street. 12 spaces out of the total were observed to be used for outdoor dining.

The on-street parking composition comprised of 33 no. parallel parking spaces and 185 no. angled parking spaces along with a loading bay location on Market Street.

Figure 1-1 shows a high-level overview of the car parks which were surveyed during the site visit and all locations fall under the Council jurisdiction. These locations were observed to be very close to the supermarkets, retail centres, small businesses and light industries within the centre of Clifden town. All the parking slots that were surveyed operated as 'pay and display'.

Figure 1-2 to Figure 1-4 provide a detailed overview of the car parking spaces on Main street, Bridge Street and Market Street respectively. There were nine car parking permit holders that were also expected to occupy spaces in the Town Centre.

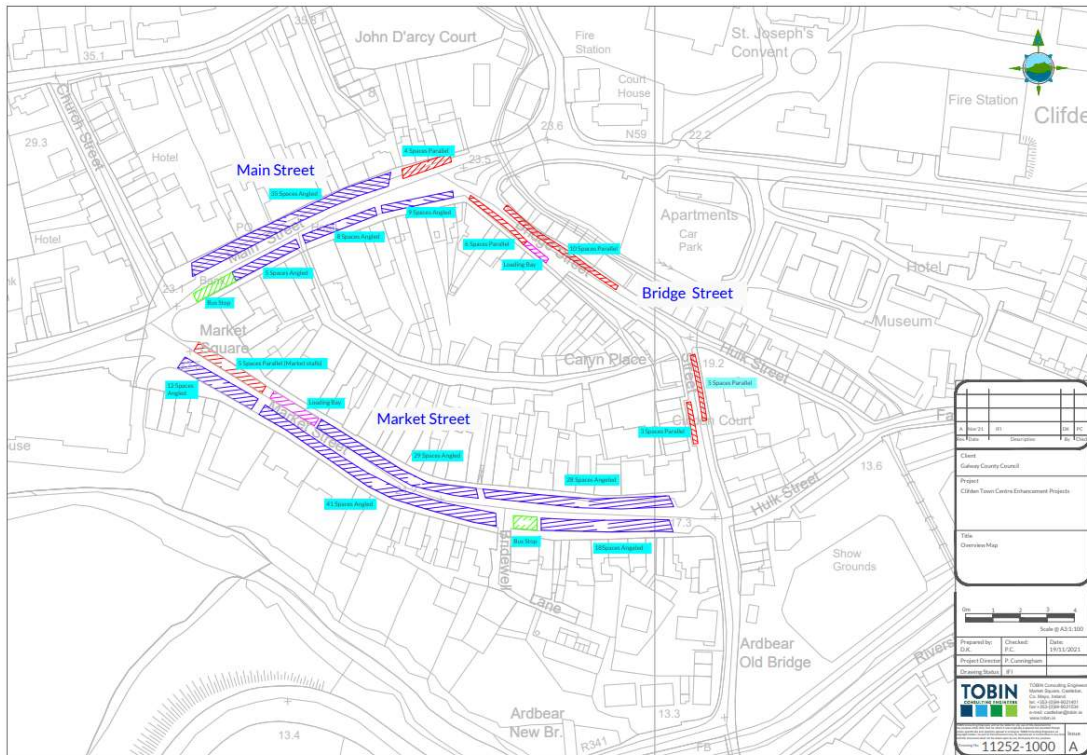


Figure 1-1 - On-Street parking locations in the Town Centre

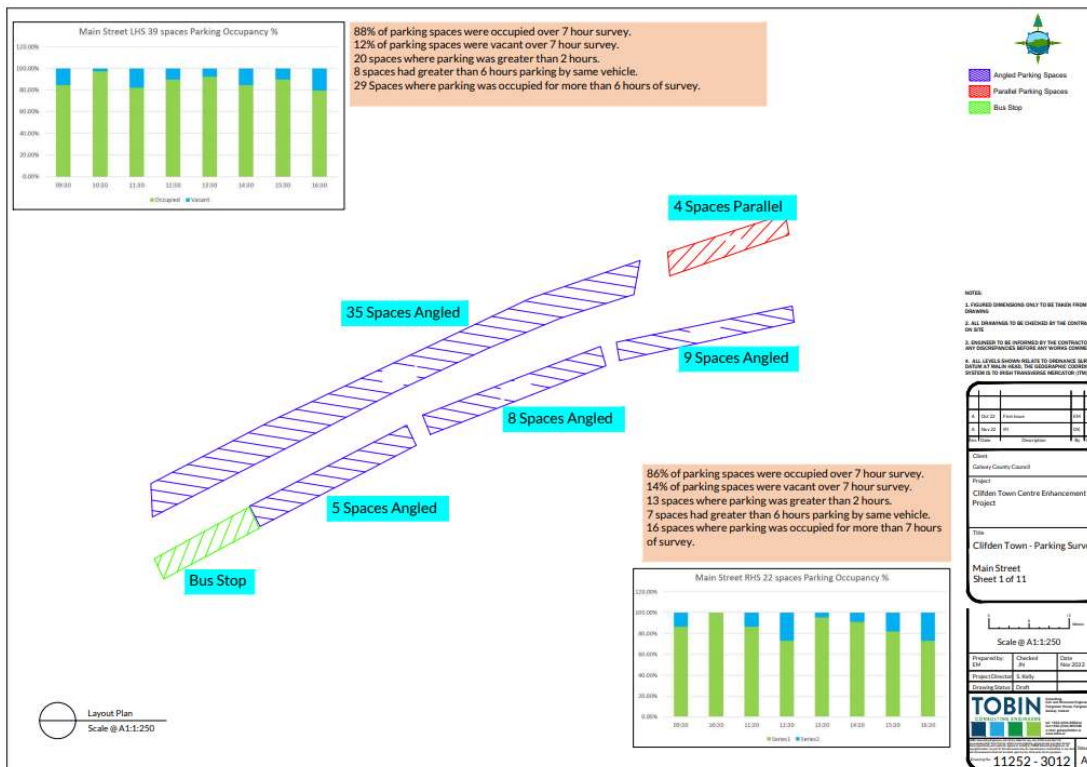


Figure 1-2 - On-Street parking locations on the Main Street

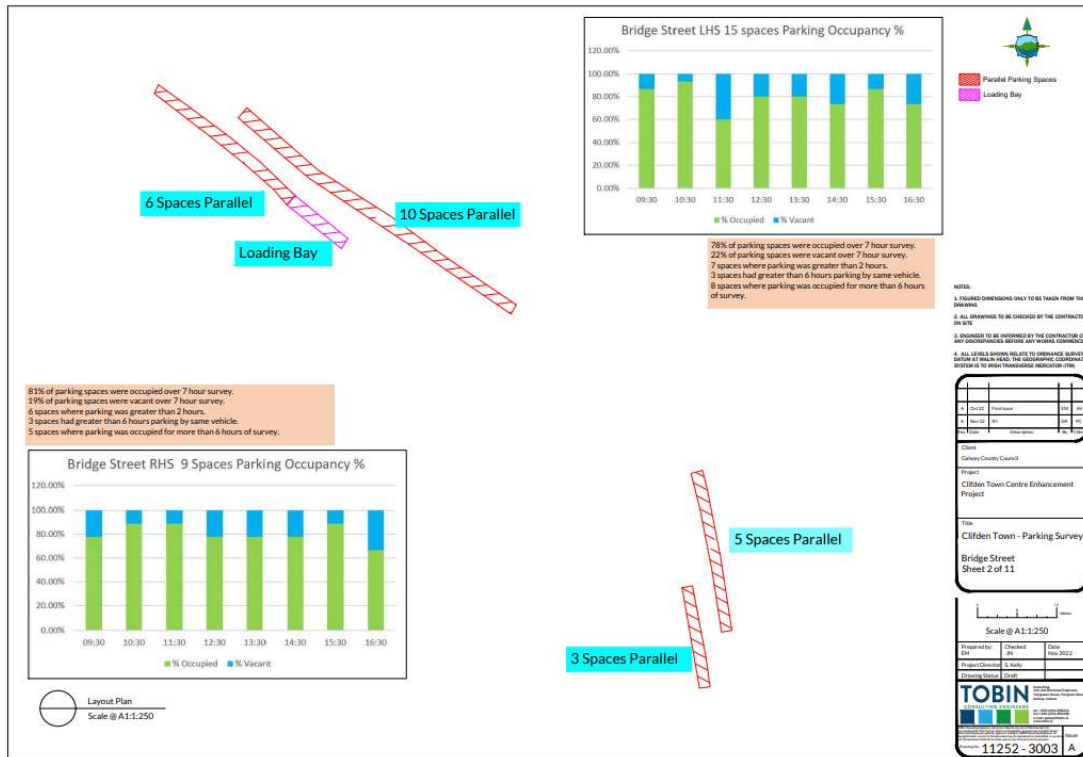


Figure 1-3 - On-Street parking locations on the Bridge Street

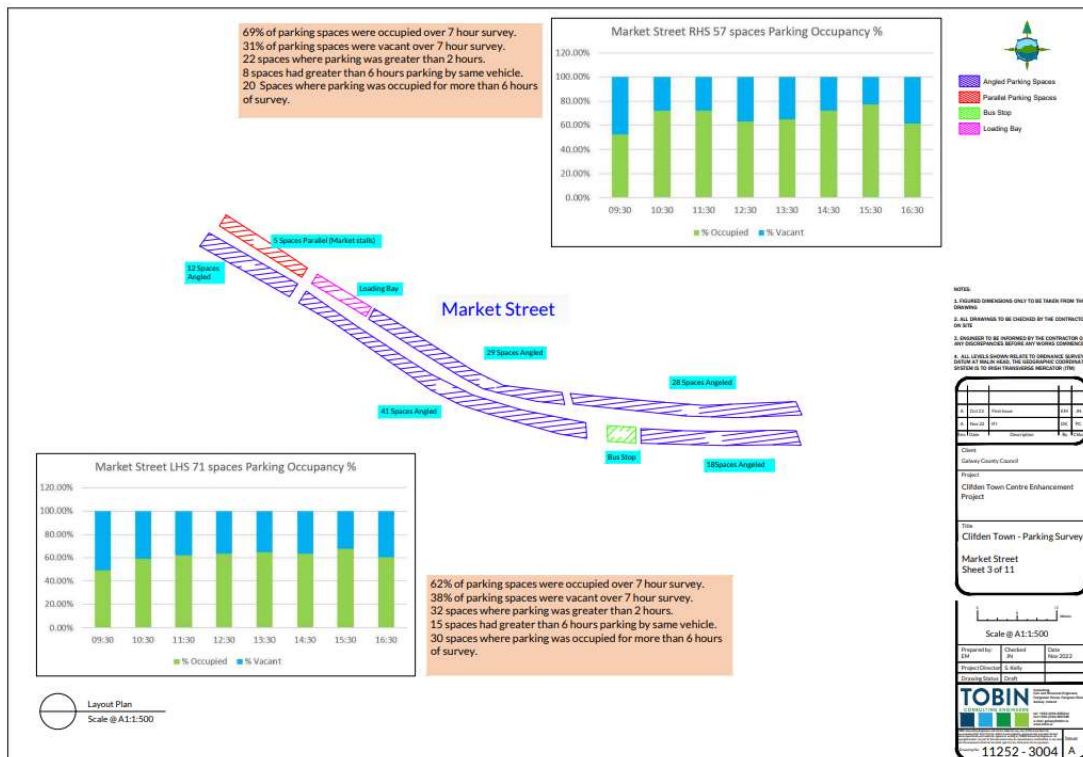


Figure 1-4 - On-Street parking locations on the Market Street

1.2.1 Parking Data Analysis

Table 1-1 below presents the long term occupancy analysis based on the original parking survey data.

Location	Total Spaces Available	Short Stay (occupied <6 hours)	Long Stays (occupied >6 hours)	% of spaces occupied >6 hours
Main Street	61	16	45	74%
Market Street	128	78	50	39%
Bridge Street	24	11	13	54%
Outdoor Dining	12 (B)	-	-	-
Total	225 (A)	-	-	-
Total Town Centre	213 (A-B)	-	-	-

Table 1-1 Long Term Occupancy analysis

A high percentage of the on-street parking spaces in the Town Centre were observed to be occupied for a period of six hours or more. The long term occupancy suggested that, a significant part of the parking was occupied by the business owners, employees & workers, and to some extent by local residents.

Figure 1-5 below illustrates that out of the total of 213 spaces, the lowest average occupancy rate at 64% was between at 9.30am while the maximum average occupancy was at 78% at 3.30pm.

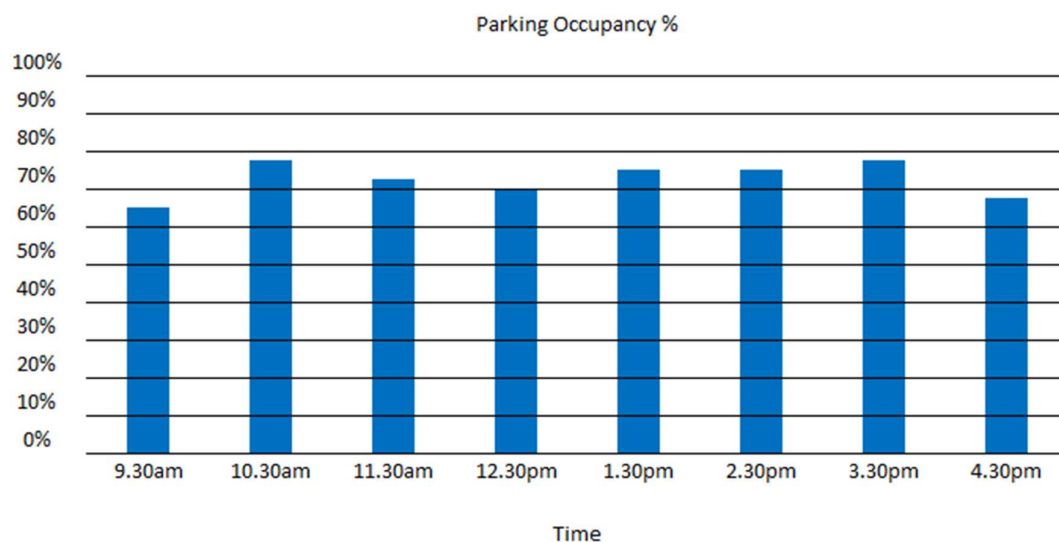


Figure 1-5 - Parking Occupancy in Clifden Town Centre (Main St, Bridge St & Market St.)

A variation was observed between the three car parks with respect to the vacancy. The highest average vacancy of the car parking surveyed can be found on Market Street, where the average vacancy was recorded at 38% on the left-hand side and 31% on the right-hand side. The lowest average vacancy was found on Main Street, where the average vacancy was recorded at just 12% on the left-hand side and 14% on the right-hand side throughout the day. The average vacancy on Bridge Street was also relatively low at 22% on the left-hand side and 19% on the right-hand side. The significantly higher rate of vacancy on Market Street relative to Main Street and Bridge Street was very evident throughout the survey.

The duration of stay at car parks located on Main Street, Bridge Street and Market Street is shown in Figure 1-6. A significant proportion of the cars were observed to be parked for a very short duration of under one hour implying visitors and shoppers. The local business owners and regular employees & workers parking in these areas were expected to have at least 5 hours or more stays, and it was observed that 18 vehicles fell into this category on the Main Street, seven vehicles on Bridge Street and 32 vehicles on Market Street. These vehicles are more likely to be either owned by local business owners, workers or residents.

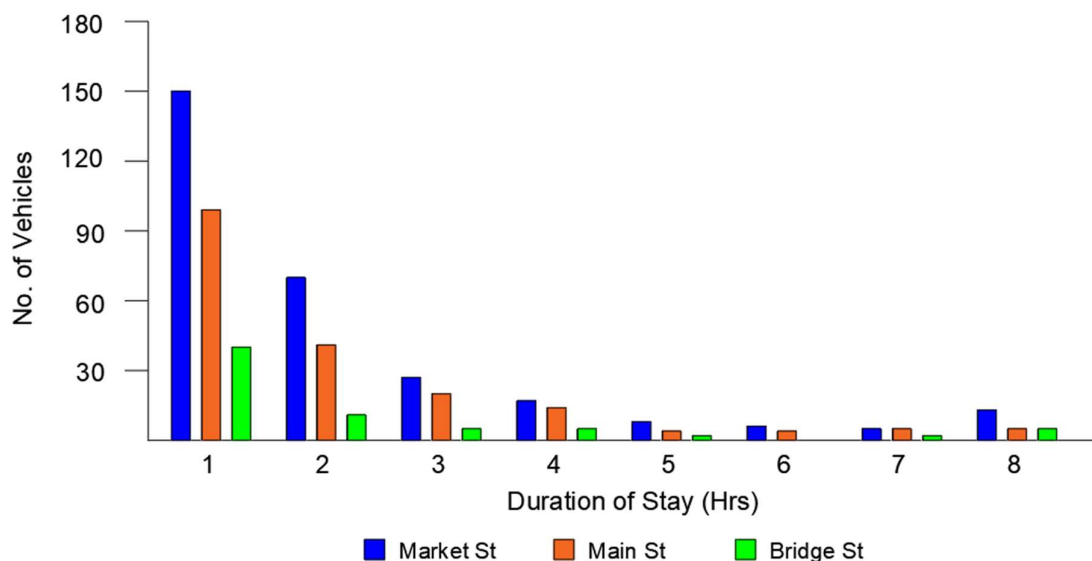


Figure 1-6 - Parking Duration in the Town Centre

The relatively longer duration of 6-8 hour stays was also observed in 'The Square' where seven vehicles were found to be parked for the whole day, and 26 vehicles parked for similar duration on the Main Street.

The traffic data from the permanent TII traffic counter situated approx. 3.5 km outside Clifden on the N59, shows that the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) in the peak holiday month of July 2021 was 3,349 vehicles. The ADT in the off-peak month of November when the parking survey took place, was significantly lower at 2,604 vehicles. The drop in ADT had a direct impact on the occupancy levels of the parking areas.

1.3 ADDITIONAL PARKING DATA UPDATE

Subsequent to the review of the parking situation in the Town Centre, some additional parking areas were identified and deemed essential to replace the car parking spaces expected to be lost as part of Town Centre enhancement project. These predominantly private car parking lots and parking areas in the near vicinity of the Town Centre, augment and supplement the on-street car parking. These are a mix of private establishments, part of government building complexes, and as well as on-street locations as presented in Figure 1-7.

The selected locations are:

- The Tourist Information Office
- The Church
- Seaview Road
- Station House
- SuperValu
- The Diocese School Parking
- Lower Bridge Street
- Church Street

An additional car parking survey was undertaken in Oct 2022 which, covered the wider area including these sites and looked at the broader context to inform the Car Parking Strategy. All sites were surveyed on same day of Tuesday, 18th October 2022 for eight hours between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

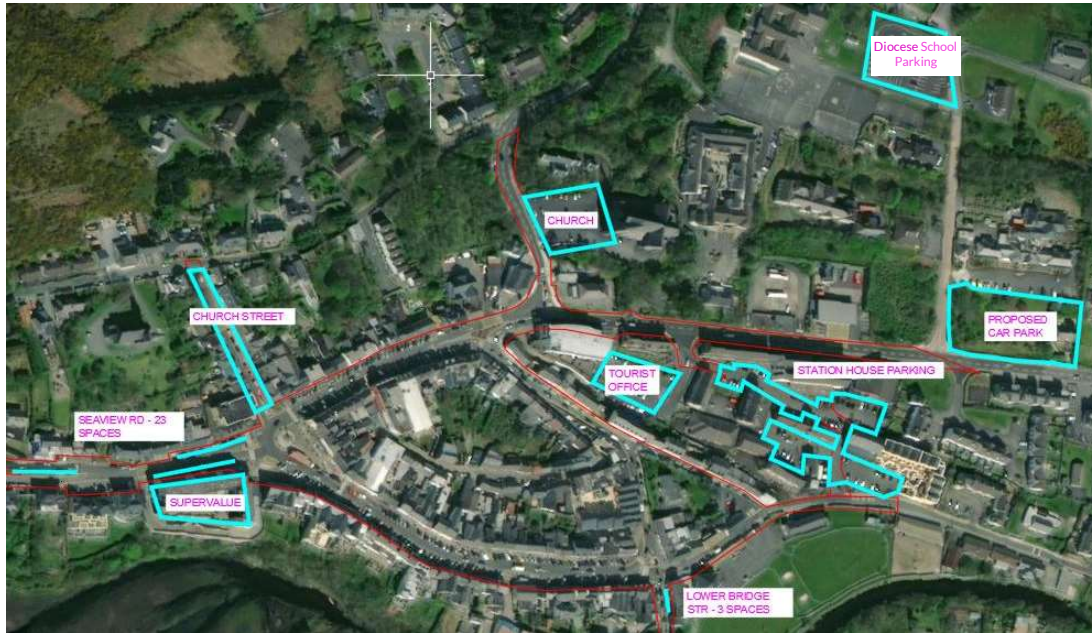


Figure 1-7 - Additional parking survey locations

1.3.1 Accessibility

Most of these lots are within walking distance to the Town Centre and therefore considered as potential sites to substitute the lost car parking spaces. The walking distances and times for the four sites with highest walking times, along with the proposed car parking location near Clifden District Hospital are presented in Table 1-2 below and have also been mapped and presented in Figure 1-8.

Location	Distance from Town Centre (m)	Walking Time (minutes)
Tourist Office	200	3.0
Church	90	1.0
Diocese School Parking	500	7.0
Station House	130	2.0
Proposed parking near District Hospital	350	4.0

Table 1-2 Walking distances and times for four main sites and proposed parking location

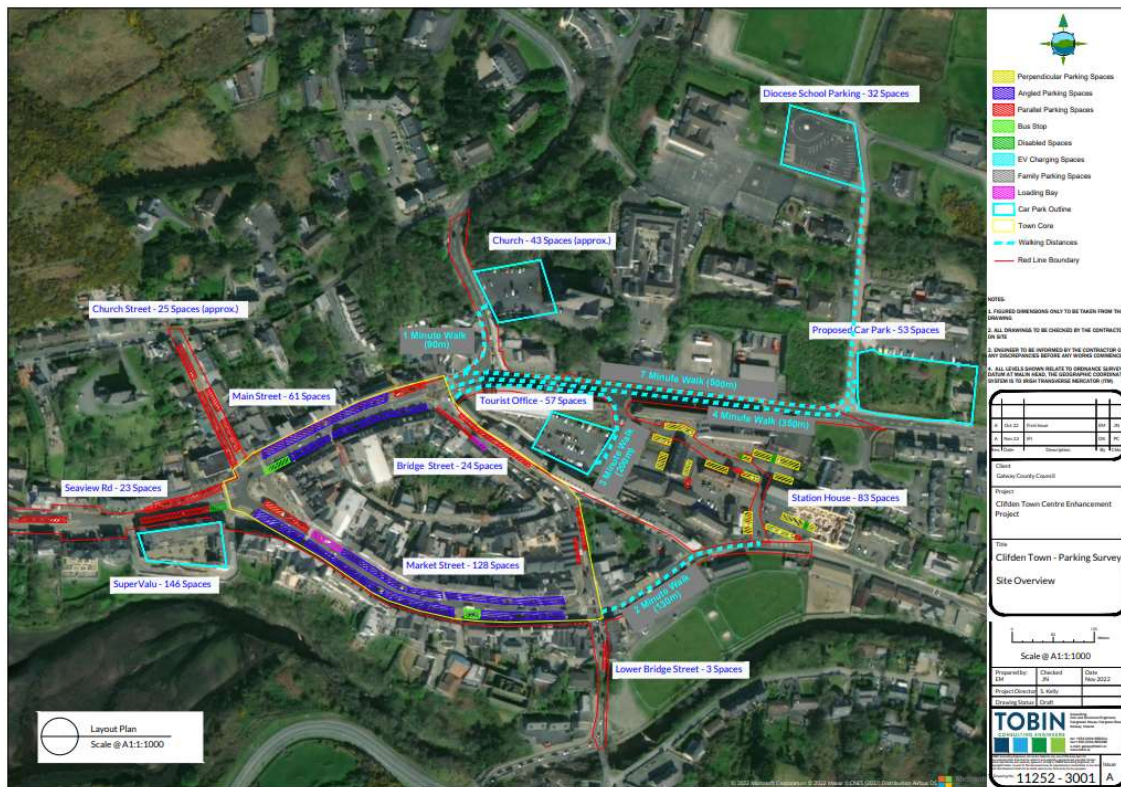


Figure 1-8 - Walking distances/times to the additional parking locations

The Diocese School parking lot with 32 spaces is furthest away with seven minutes of walking time whereas the Church parking with 43 spaces is short walk away at only one minute. It's worth noting that the proposed parking near Clifden District Hospital is approx. four minutes by walking from the Town Centre. The proposed car park would contain 53 spaces and would include regular parking bays, EV charging bays and accessible parking bays.

The Tourist Office contains 57 spaces and the shortest walking route would be along footpaths on the N59 (Galway Road), which would take approx. 3 minutes. Alternatively, pedestrians could walk into the Town Centre via Station House but it would be a longer route resulting in additional 4 minutes. Station House contains 83 spaces along its streets and pedestrians could access the Town Centre in approx. 2 minutes via The Low Road/Hulk Street or via the N59 (Galway Road).

The other four sites are very close to the Town Centre boundary and therefore not considered for the accessibility analysis.

1.3.2 Additional Parking Data Analysis

Table 1-3 shows the long term occupancy analysis based on the additional parking survey data.

Location	Total Spaces Available	Short Stay (occupied <6 hours)	Long Stays (occupied >6 hours)	% of spaces occupied >6 hours
Tourist Office	57	33	24	42%
SuperValu Level-1	42	32	10	24%
SuperValu Level-2	52	38	14	27%
SuperValu Level-3	52	49	3	6%
Church	43	34	9	21%
Diocese School Parking	32	9	23	72%
Seaview Road	23	14	9	39%
Lower Bridge Street	3	1	2	67%
Station House	83	61	22	27%
Church Street (Left side)	16	11	5	31%
Church Street (Right side)	9	6	3	33%
Total	412	288	124	30%

Table 1-3 Additional locations long term occupancy analysis

Figure 1-9 to Figure 1-12 present the parking layout, characteristics and parking analysis for the eight additional parking sites. The Diocese School parking and Lower Bridge Street locations are observed to have more than 65% long stay parking whereas SuperValu Level-3 is found to have least long stay of 6%. All other sites have approx. 40% or lower long stay parking. High percentage of short occupancy at these sites suggest good potential for absorbing spill over parking from Town Centre.

The sites vary in terms of their composition and structure. The Tourist Office is a mix of parallel, perpendicular, disabled Electric Vehicle (EV) parking and congregated in a compact fashion whereas Station house has Church Street is all parallel parking. Table 1-4 below provides an insight into characteristics of parking composition on all additional parking locations.

Location	Parallel	Perpendicular	Disabled	EV	Family
Tourist Office	6	46	3	2	-
SuperValu	-	134	3	-	9
Church	-	43	-	-	-
Diocese School Parking	-	29	3	-	-
Seaview Road	21	-	2	-	-
Lower Bridge Street	3	-	-	-	-
Station House	3	77	3	-	-
Church Street (Left side)	25	-	-	-	-
Total	58	330	14	2	9

Table 1-4 Additional parking site characteristics

It must be noted that the survey only considered marked parking spaces. Vehicles that may have been informally parked in other unmarked areas were neither included this survey nor considered for analysis. Also to note, the Church car park was observed to be completely unmarked and appropriate assumptions were made on its capacity based on regular sized parking bays (2.4m x 6m) along with assumed internal traffic circulation. Similarly, some assumptions have been made for the Church Street where parking is allocated but individual bays are not marked.

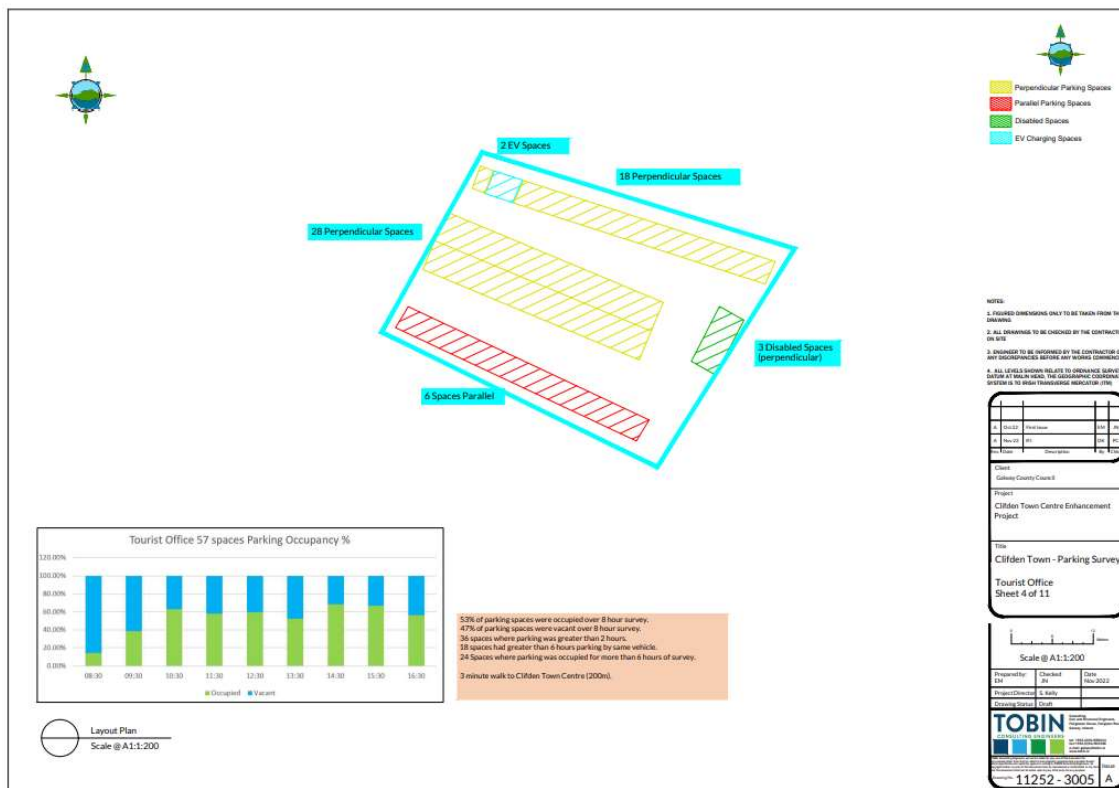


Figure 1-9 - Parking characteristics and analysis for Tourist Office

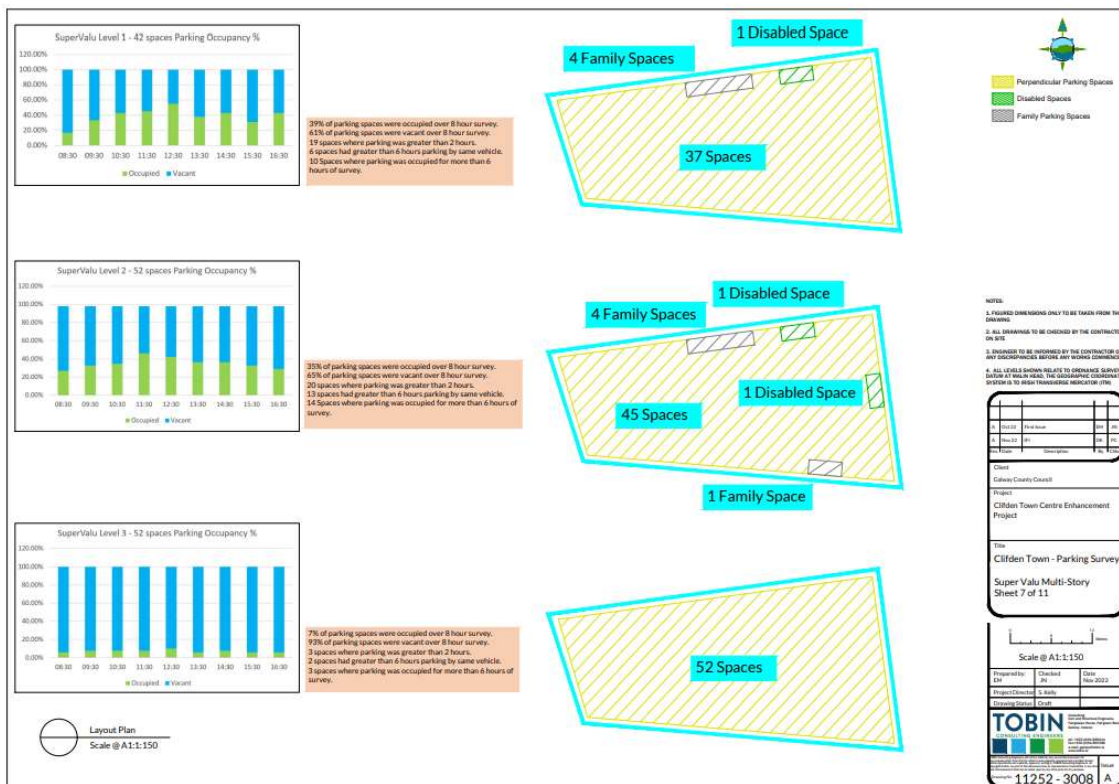


Figure 1-10 - Parking characteristics and analysis for SuperValu Multistorey

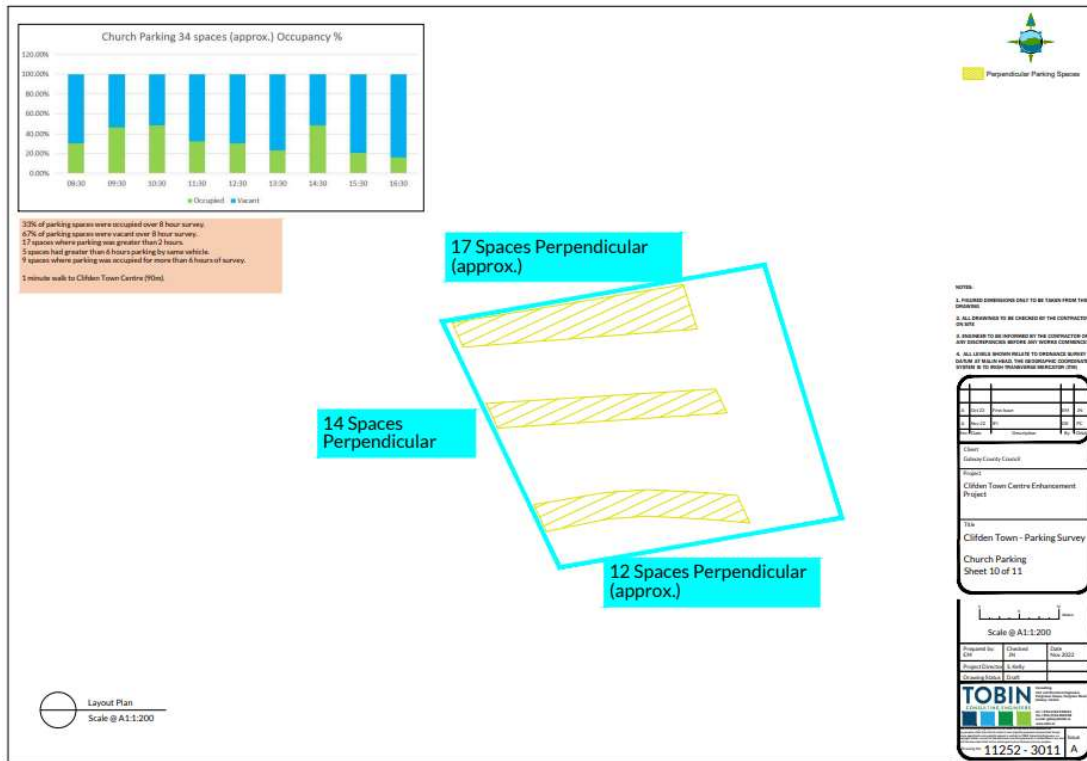


Figure 1-11 - Parking characteristics and analysis for Church

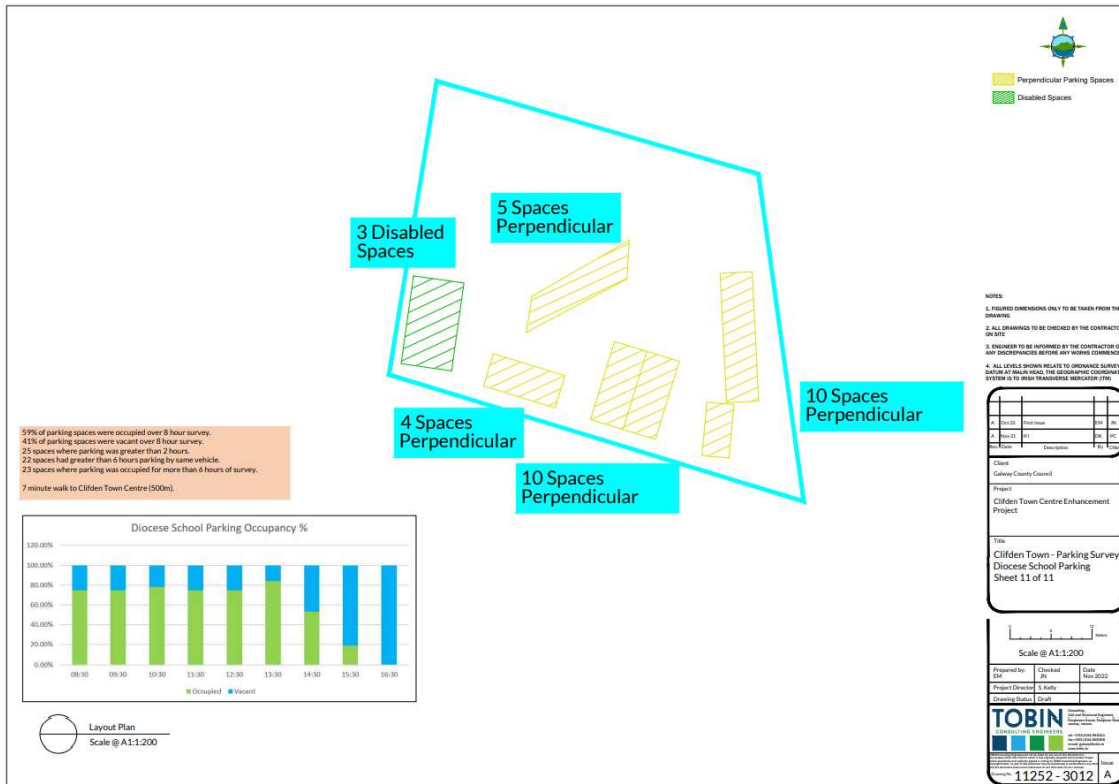


Figure 1-12 - Parking characteristics and analysis for Diocese School Parking

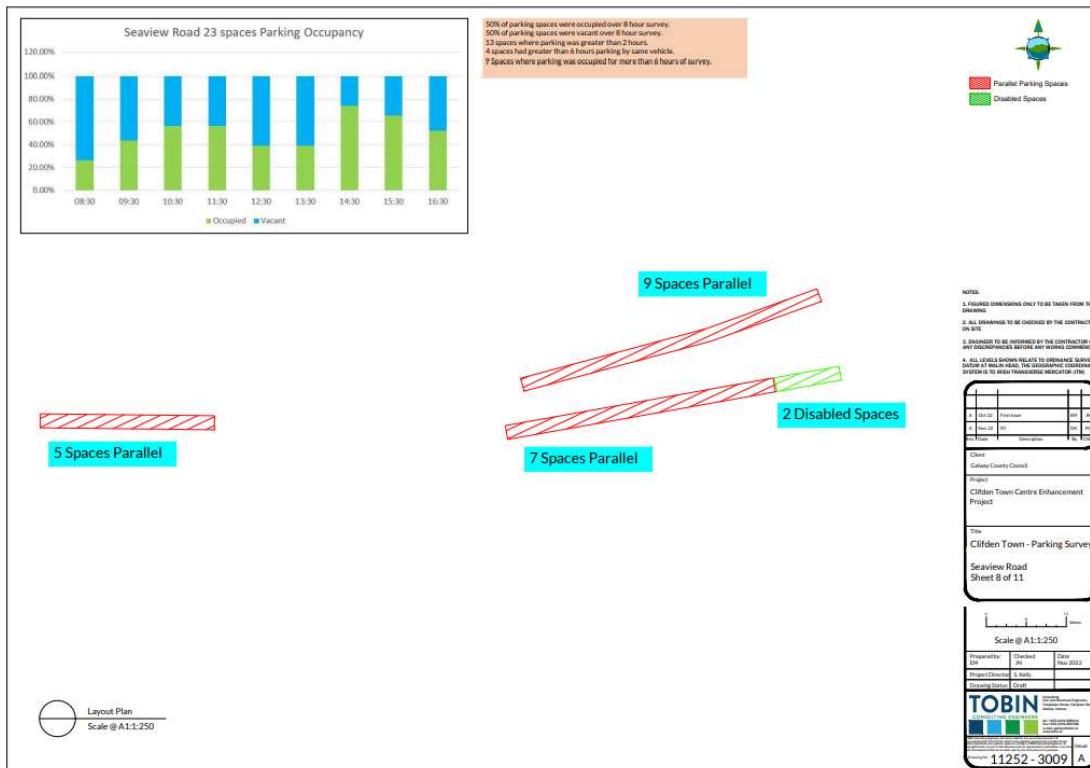


Figure 1-13 - Parking characteristics and analysis for Seaview Road

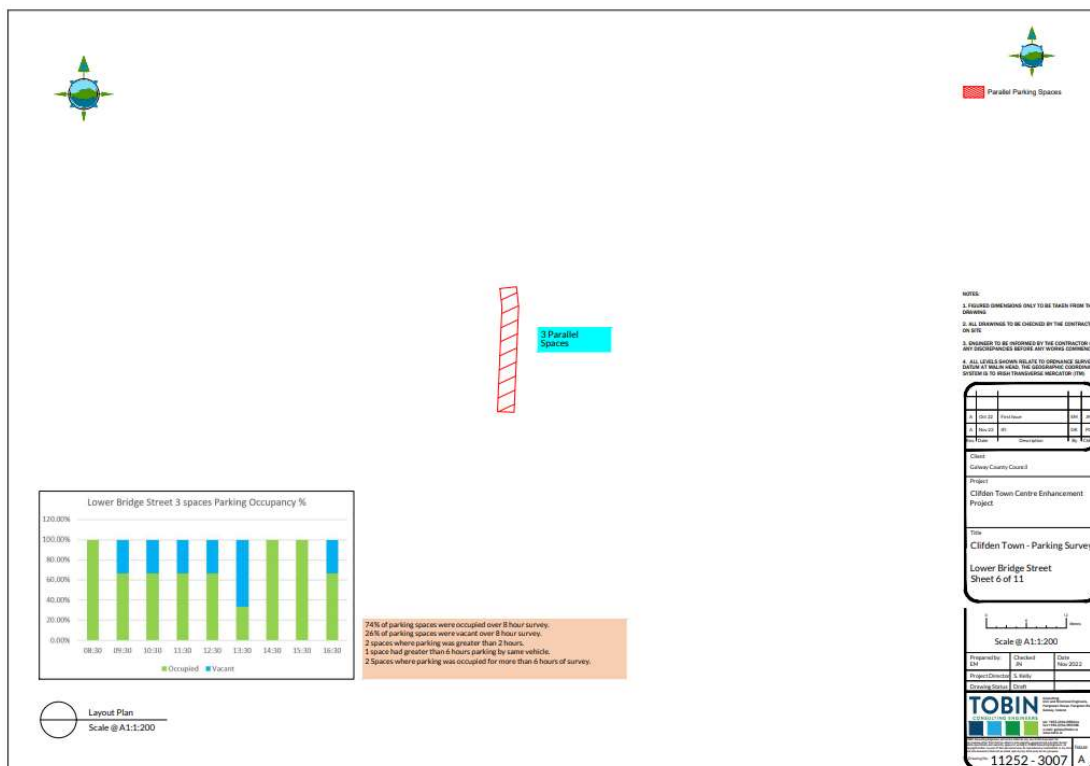


Figure 1-14 - Parking characteristics and analysis for Lower Bridge Street

below shows the distribution of retained car parking spaces, Disabled parking and loading bays under the proposed Enhancement Plan which can be found in Appendix-1.

Location	Car Spaces retained	Disabled spaces	Loading Bays
Main Street	28	4	3
Market Street	76	4	1
Bridge Street	28	0	1
Market Hill	1	0	0
Seaview	9	0	1
sub-total	142	8	
Total	150		6

Table 1-5 Car parking spaces retained in the proposed Enhancement Plan

The 63 no. lost parking spaces are expected in part, to be substituted by the vacant spaces at existing additional car parking locations (as in Table 1-3 and Table 1-4) further aided by 53 spaces at the new proposed parking near District Hospital. Appendix-1 provide details of the proposed Town Centre enhancement plan, building use mapping and Market Street typical parking area dimensions.

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. There are some parking lots which belong to the private establishments such as SuperValu, but also public establishments such as Station House and Tourist Office that, can offer much needed replacement option.

From the data obtained in from the parking study, the results conclude that there is sufficient parking within the Town Centre. Alternative car parking locations can be investigated should the need arise in the future.

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