

PARKING SURVEY: FOREST HALL ROAD ESTATE, STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

Date: October 2025

BACKGROUND:

The 23/24 Parking Review highlighted concerns arising from consultation that airport-related parking was occupying on-street spaces in Stansted Mountfitchet and especially in the Forest Hall area. This was making it harder for residents and their visitors to find parking close to their houses. Feedback suggested that some airport travellers park their cars on-street in the area before taking a taxi or bus to the terminal. Regular bus services, including the 150 and 7/7a, connect the estate to the airport. The 23/24 Review was unable to enumerate the scales of problem, noting that new developments in the Forest Hall area were dense and of a design which restricted off-street parking space in a district with one of the highest car ownership rates in England.

PARTIES:



CLIENT
Uttlesford District Council



CONSULTANT
Parking Matters



DRONE OPERATOR
DataMarch Ltd

Example related comments from the Parking Review consultation:

“Off street airport [driveway] parking is becoming an issue, there are 3 driveways in use in this small close of 10 houses. While there may be space for these cars, they reduce the parking capacity of the residents, which could lead to overspill parking on street”

“I am sorry to say that it is patently obvious that the majority of the dangerously parked vehicles on Walson Way are not airport parkers, but indeed residents. In particular, residents parking inconsiderately”

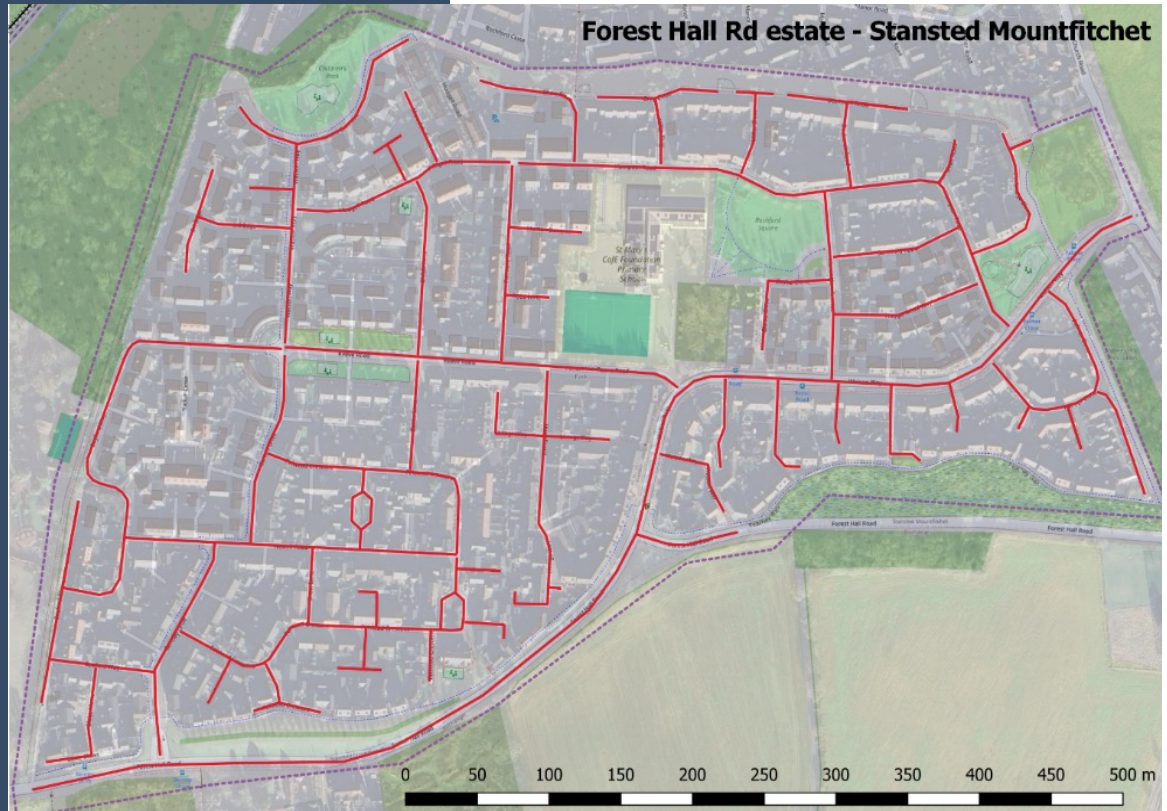
“Please encourage Stansted Airport to make their parking significantly cheaper, and make them pay for parking restrictions”

“Our neighbour slashed our car tyres for parking where we had legitimate entitlement to park, as they have decided that they want to claim rights to the gap between terraces as their own. They have no more right than us”

Incidents such as minor vandalism to vehicles, notes left on windscreens, and confrontations between local residents and individuals parking in the area have been recorded.

To assess the scope of airport-related parking issues in the Forest Green Road vicinity, UDC and PML evaluated various survey methodologies. Historically, 'Beat Surveys' which track vehicle durations utilised ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) technology to record license plates, a method that is both costly and labour-intensive.

As an alternative, in 2025 PML explored the use of drones in partnership with Infinite, subsequently proposing a project to UDC. This proposal was approved in late summer 2025.



Methodology:

The method described here uses a drone generated image to identify vehicles parked in the area at a specific time. This can be performed on three dates to give total numbers of parked vehicles. By overlaying the, highly accurate, images, it is possible to establish the number of vehicles that have not moved between visits. This metric can be isolated to individual roads on the estate.

DataMarch Ltd required a take-off and landing area that could be kept clear of uninvolved people. The chosen location was the grassed area adjacent to Stansted St Mary's CoE Primary School. One of the flights was taken whilst the school was in operation to achieve a baseline to compare the half term week too. Flights were timed to ensure that children were in classes.

Uttlesford District Council engaged with the residents of the estate too letting them know about the operation and its intent. On each day of operation, DataMarch Ltd performed two flights to map the entire area. It is within the Restricted Flight Zone of Stansted Airport and Infinite by DataMarch Ltd arranged suitable permissions to fly with the airport.

A 3D model of the site and a rectified-orthomosaic (detailed plan view) were generated for each day. These were then compared to assess how vehicles were parked across the reference period. A website holding this raw data and the analysis has been established to share this data and this report aims to summarise the findings. Basic inferences have been drawn from the data, but it is up to the report reader to form an opinion and probe further.

Operation:

The original plan was to start with a baseline of parking outside of half-term holidays. This was to be on 23rd October 2025, but was cancelled at short notice due to world leaders flying in for an emergency summit. This was rearranged for 4th November 2025 and successfully completed. The school was open and contact was made with them by the pilot.

The two operations during half term were taken on 27th October 2025 and 30th October 2025. It is possible that if someone is using the estate for airport parking during this peak travel time, they will be in the same place on both days. Also unlikely to be on a drive or allocated parking space.

Day 1 – 27th October 2025

Day 2 – 30th October 2025

Day 3 – 4th November 2025



Results:

The models and plan views from the project can be viewed using the following link:

<https://bit.ly/datamarch-parking-matters>

The model (point cloud format (.las)) and the detailed plan views (image format (.tif)) are also available for download from the website.

Note that each day surveyed is the result of two flights. Vehicles and objects that appear as see through were only visible in one of the flights. This helps identify moving vehicles in the survey.

Analysis:

Roads and sections of roads were analysed by placing the detailed plan view on top of each other and counting the vehicles in each area. These were then recorded as the number of vehicles on each day.

Further analysis was undertaken to establish if vehicles had been parked between:

Day 1 and Day 2
Day 1 and Day 3
Day 2 and Day 3

Care was taken to closely examine the parked details to see if they had been moved and reparked in a similar position. If so, they were not deemed to have been consistently between two dates. Residents may do this, but airport parkers can't.

Only vehicles parked on the road were considered and what were residents were excluded. This is, of course, often a value judgement, but normally not too difficult to make.

NAME	TOTAL DAY 1	TOTAL DAY 2	TOTAL DAY 3	PARKED 1 TO 2	PARKED 1 TO 3	PARKED 2 TO 3	COMMENTS
Wilkins Crescent	1	1	0	1	0	0	
Meredith Close	4	6	4	2	1	1	
Shaw Close	6	3	4	1	1	1	
Greys Close 2	9	6	6	4	2	3	Parking Bays Only
Greys Close 1	3	2	3	0	0	0	
Miller Close	4	4	8	1	0	0	Unlikely Airport Location
Gill Edge 1	0	1	1	0	0	1	Unlikely Airport Location
Gill Edge 2	3	3	2	0	0	0	
Watson Way 1	6	9	8	0	0	0	
Watson Way 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hudgell Road 1	2	3	1	1	1	0	1-2 relocates in 3
Hudgell Road 2	0	2	1	0	0	0	
Childs Lane	3	3	5	1	1	1	
Carters Drive	7	3	4	3	0	1	
Newell Road	9	12	11	2	0	1	
Hampton Road 1	17	17	17	2	0	0	
Hampton Road 2	0	2	0	0	0	0	
Dockerell Road 1	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Dockerell Road 2	5	3	2	1	0	0	1-2 relocates in 3
Harbridge Close 1	3	4	6	2	0	1	1-2 cars relocate in 3
Harbridge Close 2	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Haggerwood Way	1	0	2	0	0	0	
Sandford Road	4	2	3	1	1	1	Unlikely Airport Location
Herrington Avenue	4	3	4	0	0	2	
Clarke Close	4	5	3	1	0	0	
Morton Drive	3	4	3	2	1	1	
Reed Lane	1	1	2	0	0	0	
Palmore Road	7	10	10	0	0	0	
Reeve Road	12	20	18	5	2	3	
Bayford Way 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Bayford Way 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Banks Lane	0	1	1	0	0	0	
Bayford Way 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

NAME	TOTAL DAY 1	TOTAL DAY 2	TOTAL DAY 3	PARKED 1 TO 2	PARKED 1 TO 3	PARKED 2 TO 3	COMMENTS
Blake Mews	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Bentley Drive	6	2	4	1	1	1	
Felstead Crescent 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Watson Way 1	6	9	8	0	0	0	
Watson Way 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	Felstead Crescent 2
Felstead Crescent 1	9	11	6	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Felstead Crescent 4	2	1	2	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 6	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 8	3	3	1	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Felstead Crescent 12	1	1	0	1	0	0	
Forest Hall Road	14	13	9	7	2	3	
Livings Way 1	3	4	3	2	0	0	
Livings Way 2	2	4	3	0	0	1	
Livings Way 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Walson Way 1	19	13	15	8	4	5	
Walson Way 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Walson Way 3	1	3	2	0	0	2	
Walson Way 4	1	1	2	0	0	0	
Walson Way 5	1	1	2	1	1	1	
Walson Way 6	2	3	1	0	0	1	
Walson Way 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Palmer Close 1	5	3	4	2	0	0	1-2 cars relocate in 3
Palmer Close 2	0	1	0	0	0	0	
Palmer Close 3	1	1	1	0	0	1	
Palmer Court 4	6	5	4	0	0	0	

Survey Conclusions:

While beat surveys inherently have limitations as it is impossible to definitely confirm the exact the purpose of a parking event; , from the survey, most roads exhibit parking behaviour that appear to be natural vehicle movements by residents and not longer stay airport parking.

Vehicles parked from days one to two are potential airport users. On several occasions however, the vehicles parked from days one to two were apparent in day three but had moved slightly. This indicates they were local, but simply not moved between the first two dates.

There are several roads that had a high number of vehicles stationary between day one and two. They also exhibited a high number between day one and day three, indicating a higher probability of being parked for airport use.

WALSON WAY



WALSON WAY 1



WALSON WAY 2



WALSON WAY 3

PARKED DAY 1 TO 2 - 8 VEHICLES

PARKED DAY 1 TO 3 - 5 VEHICLES

FOREST HALL ROAD



FOREST HALL ROAD DAY 1



FOREST HALL ROAD DAY 2



FOREST HALL ROAD DAY 3

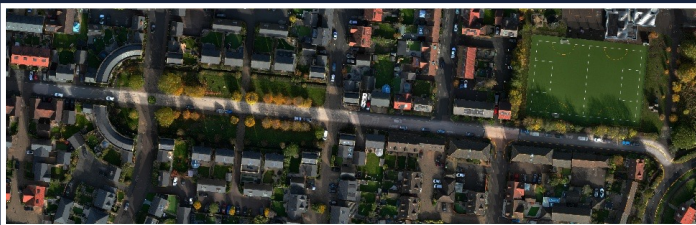
PARKED DAY 1 TO 2 - 7 VEHICLES

PARKED DAY 1 TO 3 - 3 VEHICLES

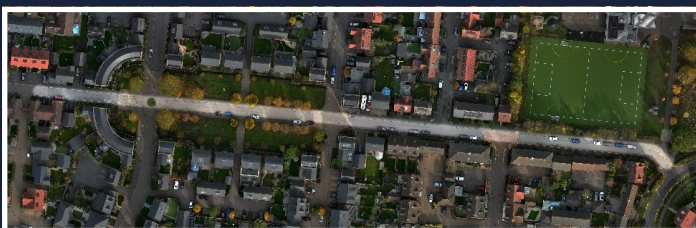
REEVE ROAD



REEVE ROAD DAY 1



REEVE ROAD DAY 2



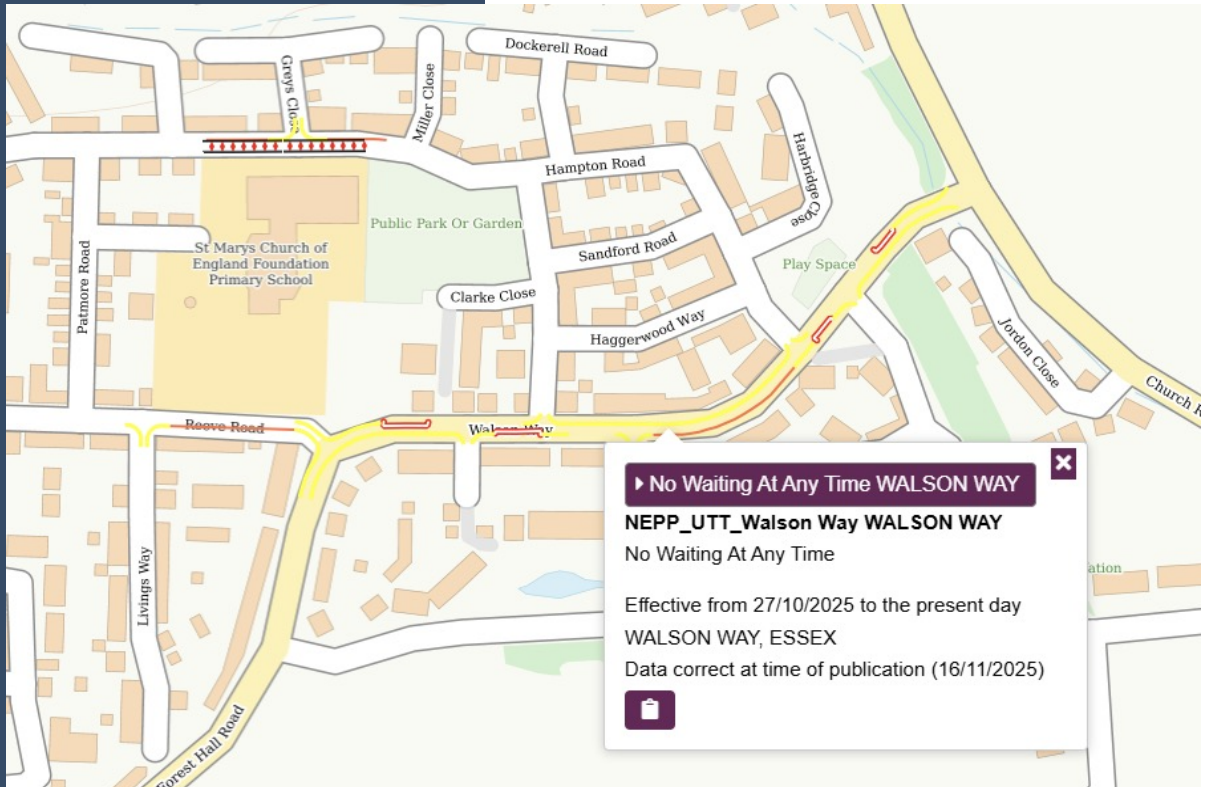
REEVE ROAD DAY 3

PARKED DAY 1 TO 2 - 5 VEHICLES

PARKED DAY 1 TO 3 - 3 VEHICLES

On initial analysis, Walson Way, Forest Hall Road and Reeve Road are experiencing multiple vehicles that are parked during the test period without reparking. The reason for this may be to avoid official airport parking.

It should be noted that they are the longer roads on the survey and hence more likely to have more vehicles parked along them. These roads also appear to have more space for non-residential parking and are easily accessible.



Further Analysis:

The week before the surveys took place Essex County Council (ECC) implemented a Traffic Regulation Order which installed single and double yellow lines on Walson Way, the main bus route and distribution road through the Forest Hall area.

This scheme was implemented so recently that the paint appears visibly fresh, and there are still sections where paint could not be applied owing to parked vehicles obstructing access.

The baseline survey had to be rescheduled to after the scheme's deployment because of VIP movements at Stansted Airport on the originally planned date so a 'before and after' comparison was not possible.

Initial imagery indicates that the newly marked lines effectively maintained a clear route for buses and through traffic.

The survey results indicate that parking attributable to airport usage was at a low level during the period assessed. Potential factors influencing these findings include:

- The time of year. Although the survey coincided with a half-term week and higher flight prices, which could imply increased demand, conducting surveys during the summer holiday period may yield different outcomes.
- Improvements following the 2023 parking review, potentially resulting from initiatives by local councils, community efforts, airport policies, or changes in motorist behaviour.

Other Considerations:

The survey methodology has been validated as effective and can be implemented in other regions nationwide. This approach offers local authorities and stakeholders a cost-efficient means of gathering data for beat surveys. UDC, PML and Infinity should promote this project and method for wider industry benefit.

Report and Survey:

Parking Matters and DataMarch Ltd

Date of Report:

18th November 2025

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