

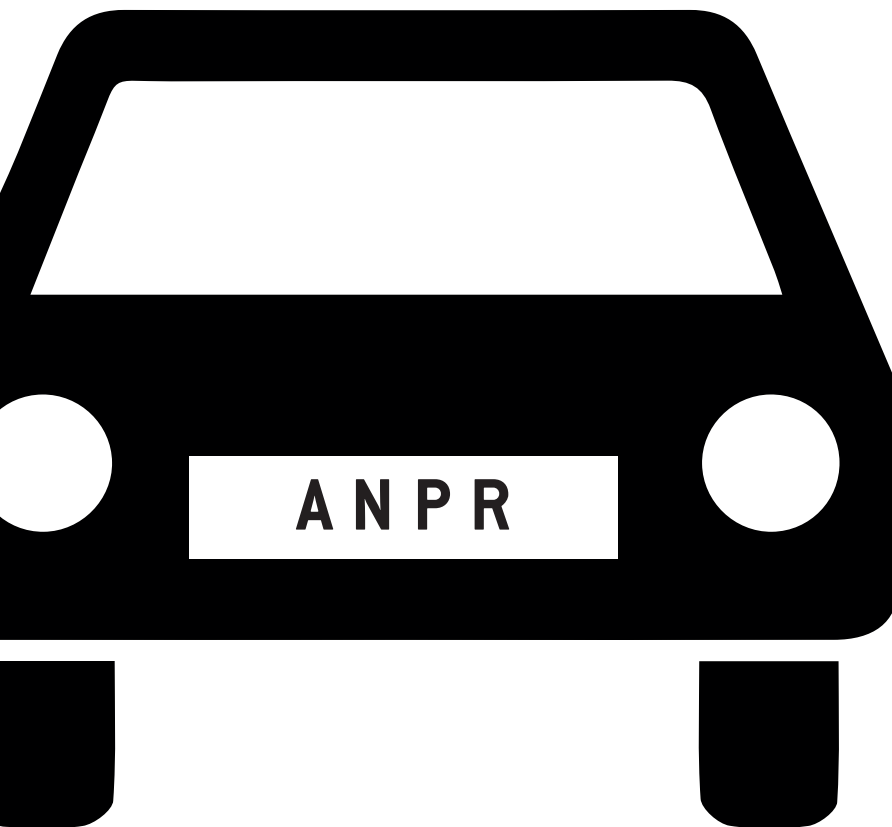
Drive your
business aims
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| Well-deployed, ANPR should create a better parking experience.

While it may have had its teething troubles – in the main due to poor enforcement practices rather than because of any inherent issues with technology – Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is a system that can deliver substantial benefits to car park operators and consumers alike. This paper from NCP explores those benefits and outlines the commercial benefits of such systems.



No consumer uses parking for the joy of it. Parking, rather, is a necessary step in a journey to an end destination – whether a retail outlet, shopping centre, leisure attraction or travel hub.

The aim of the best parking experiences therefore, has to be to make this stepping stone an almost invisible and frictionless part of a consumer journey.



And it pays to improve the customer parking experience: 70% of consumers believe themselves to be more loyal to a parking site where parking is easy.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (or ANPR) is one of the key technologies that can deliver this kind of frictionless experience for consumers and a myriad of benefits for landlords and retail owners that successfully deploy and manage it.

The age in which customers would queue at barriers, queue to pay for tickets – in the not-distant-past using cash only – and then queue once again to exit a car park through a barrier will soon be over.

ANPR could be the technology that offers landlords and parking operators the opportunity to replace that experience.



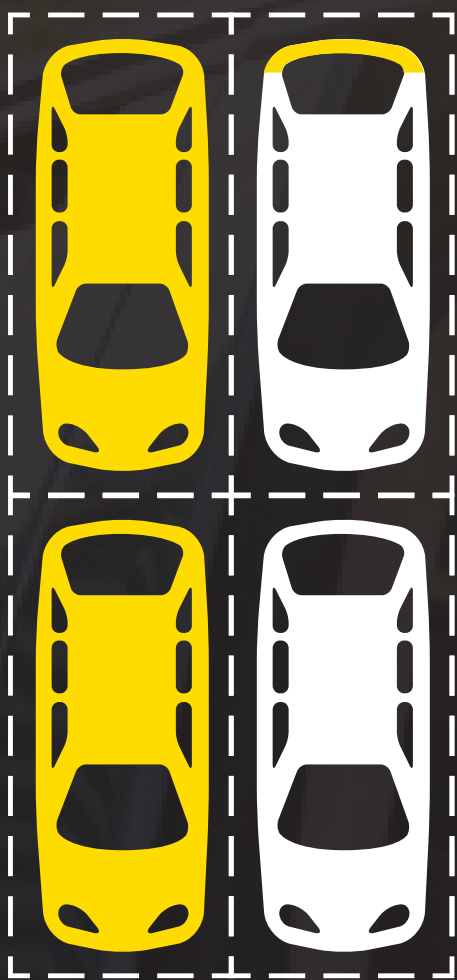
Customer would have existing (digitally managed and mobile compatible) account with the payment method of their choice enabled.

They'd drive into their parking location of their choice, having been made aware of the availability of spaces through digital signage, and park for as long as they wish, before leaving and being charged automatically for their stay.

However, this vision is not one that lies only in the far-flung future. At present, a host of travellers using car parks across the **London Underground parking estate** find this their daily parking experience. As a result of our partnership with LUL we've installed technology solutions incorporating ANPR cameras which provides this improved parking experience. Since the rollout of this solution customer satisfaction has risen, usage and occupancy have risen, enforcement costs have fallen and revenues have grown across the LUL sites.

The development of a frictionless experience has benefits for all parties. In the retail context, it benefits customers, reduces aborted trips caused by issues or concerns with parking, makes the retail experience easier and increases dwell-times.

At the same time, deployment of ANPR has been shown to reduce misuse of free parking environments because of visible cameras and information to motorists about that presence.



55% of shoppers, avoid visiting a shopping centre because of concerns over a lack of parking availability - through it being too busy or difficult an experience. So ensuring that spaces are being used legitimately enhances customer experience – reducing misuse and over-staying and freeing-up valuable parking assets.

So, the benefits of an ANPR solution at a customer experience level can reap rewards.



| Clarity and fairness

Many consumers will say that their greatest frustration with parking enforcement is a sense that they have been unfairly treated. By-and-large, where enforcement is required and a customer has clear evidence that they have infringed – they are happy to concede.



**Automatic Number Plate Recognition
in operation (ANPR)**

Where it is successfully deployed, ANPR can enable clearer and fairer enforcement of rules from a customer perspective – as long as adequate information is provided on-site.

Generally speaking, ANPR systems are recognised as charging appropriately and correctly - and as being less prone to “human error” than non-technology-led systems.



The use of ANPR in sites enables operators to flex the way enforcement is approached. Adding in a layer of human review to the enforcement process can actually increase compliance and improve customer experience. Such a “considerate” approach to enforcement assesses data to understand context and treats customers more fairly than relying on the technology alone. E.g. the cameras may have read the customers number plate wrongly, and where the technology would have deemed the customer to have contravened, the human review would see that the customer may well have paid and the PCN would not be issued at all.



The technology can enable an environment in which customers feel they are treated more fairly and consistently. Where there is clarity over the rules, the volume of infringements can be driven down, which will, in turn, drive more compliance.

“Pay how you choose”

Few environments have seen the impact of technology disruption to a higher degree and at greater pace over the last ten years than the consumer payments category.

The shift to contactless payments and increasingly to mobile have been some of the swiftest changes in consumer behaviour ever witnessed. And with those shifts comes a cost for business.

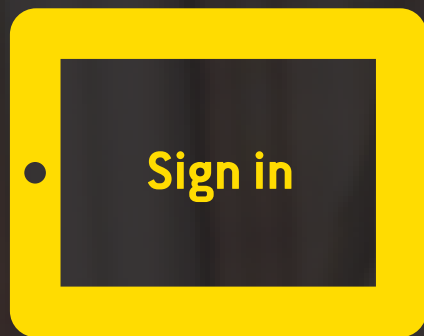


Consumers are now demanding an ever-increasing range of payment methods.

Some will demand contactless card payments (which have become one of the fastest-adopted payment technologies in history). Others will want to rely on mobile payments through technologies such as Apple Pay, Android or Paypal. At the same time, others will want to use app-based payments or text message-based accounts.

And with each of these new technologies new costs come in a physical payment environment.

However, with an account-based relationship powered by ANPR, new payment methods are relatively easy and cost-effective to implement.



If a customer can be incentivised to sign-up to a parking account in which personal information, payment details and number plate data are securely stored, responses to shifts in payment behaviours can swiftly and effectively be implemented without the need for major scale physical roll-outs.

Finally, of course, ANPR also enables landlords and operators to deploy resources away from monitoring their sites – as it automates what has hitherto been a manual operation. At the same time, with fewer physical assets, maintaining pace with technology developments becomes a less onerous investment for parking operators and site managers.

Developing a data-led approach

ANPR has offered one way in which landlords can start to understand their customers through the parking experience.

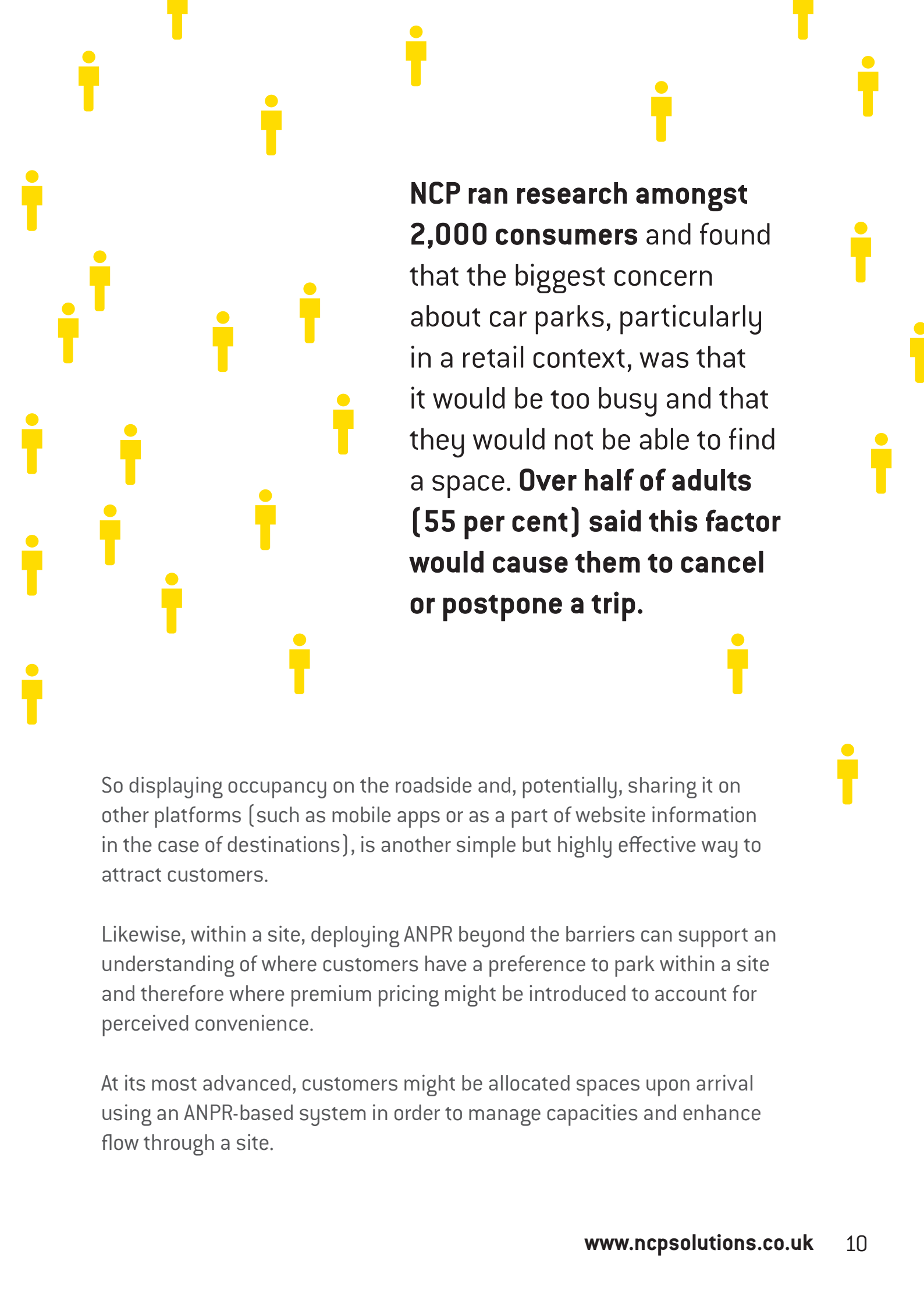


Offering a way to see who is entering a car park (based on internal data collection and analysis), **ANPR can be a powerful tool to understand, influence and predict customer behaviours.**

However, in most sites, ANPR is used simply as a tool of (often crude) enforcement, rather than to genuinely enhance customer understanding. Taking a time-stamp photo of a registration plate on entry and another on exit helps in tracking frequency and duration of visit. But ANPR can be used for more than this alone.

On the one hand, managers can use ANPR data to build relationships with individual visitors; relatively frequent visitors might be offered incentives to stay for longer or to encourage them to visit more often, for example. Those who use a site during evenings (for example to go to a cinema) might be offered incentives to arrive earlier and shop or to enjoy a meal. Using data in this way can begin to drive real commercial outcomes.

At the same time, simple uses of data derived from car parks, such as occupancy signage, alleviates a major concern for consumers and can attract them to specific destinations.



NCP ran research amongst 2,000 consumers and found that the biggest concern about car parks, particularly in a retail context, was that it would be too busy and that they would not be able to find a space. **Over half of adults (55 per cent) said this factor would cause them to cancel or postpone a trip.**

So displaying occupancy on the roadside and, potentially, sharing it on other platforms (such as mobile apps or as a part of website information in the case of destinations), is another simple but highly effective way to attract customers.

Likewise, within a site, deploying ANPR beyond the barriers can support an understanding of where customers have a preference to park within a site and therefore where premium pricing might be introduced to account for perceived convenience.

At its most advanced, customers might be allocated spaces upon arrival using an ANPR-based system in order to manage capacities and enhance flow through a site.

Fit for the future

Where the future lies in road use is a matter for conjecture and many theories abound.

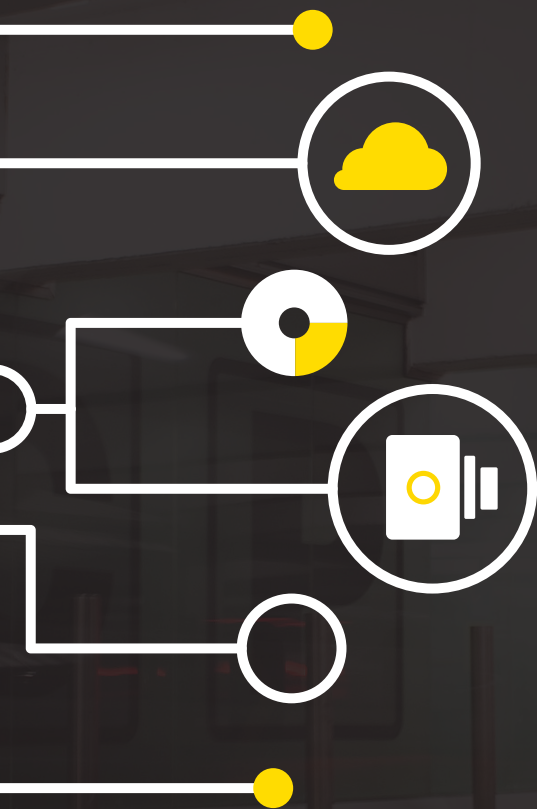
However, what is certain is that consumers' use of motor vehicles is changing. And that parking operations will have to change with them. ANPR has a potential role in these developments as a widely used and cost-effective technology to underpin future developments.

In-car technologies will undoubtedly evolve to enable customers to park in a variety of locations – through deals brokered either by manufacturers or by technology providers that become part of an application-based eco-system for future in-car platforms (think of them as apps that run on an iOS developed for in-car use).



ANPR could be the recognition system that underpins these technologies. For example an app in **a motorist's vehicle might guide them to parking in a location** where the technology knows there is available space.

ANPR would identify the customer and a GPS-enabled in-car payment solution would be triggered to make payment as the driver leaves – their departure timed using the same ANPR triggers.



Implementing ANPR solutions now would make parking sites **future-fit** as these developments roll out more widely.

For sites where parking is free, a connected, technology based system knowing that a specific customer has entered (for example) a retailer's site might trigger an in-car application to show specifically-designed offers to incentivise specific behaviours or purchases.



In conclusion

ANPR may not (at least according to media reports) have had the easiest introduction in parking environments. But well-implemented and carefully managed, it has a role in enabling a host of opportunities for landlords and retailers.

As the leading parking operator in the UK market, we've embraced ANPR technology and a data driven approach, and are applying it across our own estate, seeing valuable revenue growth and operational learnings. Using this experience we've created a range of flexible **car park managed services** designed around meeting our clients' business needs to help them to drive more value from their parking offer, including a return on investment where required.

Services including revenue management and considerate enforcement, managed by an experienced in house team, are just some of the solutions we offer to turn parking into a business asset.

**To find out more about how we can help your parking drive your business needs, get in touch.
www.ncpsolutions.co.uk/contact-us**

