

Car Parking Strategy Action Plan – Written Responses/Feedback to Questionnaire

Figures in brackets (3) indicate where a duplicate comment has been made

Q1. The proposed Action Plan seeks to appropriately balance the competing demands for parking by introducing a tailored approach to meet the individual needs of each of our towns.

- Makes sense but not when reasoning behind certain statements appears based on a false premise
- People will travel to the town with the least expensive parking
- I do not use Huntingdon for shopping because it is slow and difficult to access
- Needs to account for all users needs, not those just living and working in town (2)
- Why should those in Huntingdon be penalised over other market towns?

Q2. Our Consultants have identified particular levels of high demand for car parking in Huntingdon, relating to the high number of office-based workers in the town and the issues related to the proximity of the rail station to the town centre.

a) The proposed changes for Huntingdon seek to discourage rail commuters from using town centre car parks.

- This penalises everyone, not just rail commuters. Extend rail station car parks (16) and reduce charges to encourage commuters to park there (2)
- Need to improve parking for commuters. Their income is spent in Huntingdon's shops and on Council Tax. They are not pariahs but welcome cash to local economy (2)
- Hinchingbrooke school suffers from illegally parked cars. Any proposal that increases the likelihood of this happening will shift the cost to the school for deterrent measures
- Long-stay charges should match those of rail station parking or be higher
- Need to ensure rail commuters do not park on-street (2)
- Add decked car parks at the rail station
- Provide additional parking on Mill Common to benefit all in Huntingdon
- Need better liaison with rail companies
- Rail commuters will still opt to park in cheaper town centre car parks
- Rail commuters have as much right to park as Huntingdon office workers (3)
- Unfair & unreasonable to distinguish between where people work, everyone should have a choice
- Need to ensure you don't penalise those working in the town

b) To recognise the nature of the leisure usage at Riverside car park in Huntingdon, it is proposed to provide a designated short-stay area for parking, with reduced charges, as well as allowing short-term parking within longer-stay areas.

- I think higher charges for long periods my put off visitors for recreation i.e. walking the river to the Hemingfords
- How can they be 'reduced charges, when currently free? If you are going to charge and more for the longer you park, fair enough
- Better to make Riverside, Huntingdon 4 hours max and apply to all car parks and roads within 1 mile of station. Why does anyone need to park more than 4 hours?
- Free parking is important and should not be abolished/there should be no changes
- Impossible to find a space in Riverside, Huntingdon after 9am
- The Council policies are crippling town centre businesses and are barely keeping afloat
- Short-stay inside the ring-road is often full

- What leisure usage? Work parking is more important
- There ought to be an area for free parking to allow locals/others to enjoy Riverside

Q3. It is proposed to introduce long-stay parking charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place Car Parks for the reasons outlined in Q2. In St. Neots, due to the high leisure usage at Riverside and currently less demand on town centre car parks overall, it is proposed that Riverside Car Park remains free of charge as well as Cambridge Road, the latter pending further improvement and review.

- Why not charge there to? Then you can charge less elsewhere
- If you introduce charges, I will likely shop elsewhere where facilities are better i.e. Peterborough
- This does not consider knock-on effects to Hinchingsbrooke school/hospital (2)
- Support recognition of importance of Riverside, Huntingdon as green space. We would like the Strategy to ensure that this will be protected from future development
- Parking at Brampton Road should not be on greenfield land
- Disincentive for Huntingdon if free parking ceases
- Could Riverside, Huntingdon have free short-stay?
- Will encourage more people to St. Neots
- Why single out Huntingdon? St. Neots' problem is just as bad
- Both should remain free. The Council has caused the problem by allowing Luminus to build on its car park
- Increasing car park charges in St. Neots will affect local businesses

Q4. In order to contribute to the Climate Change agenda, it is proposed that the Council recognise the benefit to the environment of encouraging the use of cars that produce less carbon emissions by proposing Season Ticket/Resident Permit discounts for qualifying vehicles.

a) It is proposed that a 25% discount be offered over the standard cost of a Season Ticket or Residents Permit?

b) It has been suggested that the Council should go further and offer greater discounts, possibly free parking, for certain other qualifying low emission vehicles?

- Free parking for carbon emissions below 100
- This discriminates in favour of those who can afford a new car and can possibly afford higher charges. Also encourages a throwaway attitude to perfectly serviceable cars (3)
- Makes sense to provide incentives to offset costs of those prepared to use them (2)
- Verifying low emission could create a management problem
- No real impact on CO2, better to turn off traffic lights at off-peak times
- Should be a 5-year action to allow people to time to consider when changing their car
- Green travel should be encouraged
- Could charges be increased for large 4x4's (4). Accept difficult to manage
- HDC must encourage low emission ownership (2)
- Any vehicle takes up a space (2)
- The Council should devote its time to more important matters than this
- A bit gimmicky but does provide an incentive

Q5. Residents Season Tickets & Permits are offered to those who have limited or no off-street car parking. It has been suggested that the current and proposed charging levels are far too low to encourage those living in town centres to consider using less polluting cars, alternative forms of transport or to reduce their use of the car.

Do you consider that Residents Season Tickets & Permits are too cheap and not encouraging the use of alternative forms of travel for those living in town centres? –

- There are no viable alternatives to the car, public transport is inflexible & costly, no buses to station from Eynesbury Manor and not at 6am when I go to work
- The public transport system is not adequate yet to justify such a measure
- In a village I have free parking. Why should those living in town have to pay?
- You cannot encourage people to live in towns and then penalise them
- Residents of Ingram St. may be prepared to pay more if they could be guaranteed a parking space. Why should we pay more if we can't park? (2)
- They choose to live with limited parking, why should they be subsidised
- You may penalise the less-well off
- Too low. Everyone should pay the same
- It is not the Council's role to influence a person's choice of vehicle
- Too cheap – compare the cost with what residents pay in Cambridge
- This smacks of a stealth tax and too oppressive on households
- Residents permits should be free (2), they have enough to contend with
- Perhaps more control should be made on the number of permits issued per household

Q6. For those working an average 5-day week in Huntingdon, St. Neots or St. Ives, it is currently around 30% cheaper to purchase a standard 12 or 6-month Season Ticket rather than pay a daily parking charge.

Do you consider that this current policy gives far too great a discount or fail to encourage people to consider other forms of travel?

- Many people who have season tickets catch the bus to work in Cambridge or Bar Hill. If you double prices, they may as well drive to Cambridge and save the bus fare as well
- Encourage other forms of travel by making more available and at reasonable cost
- Giving works a discount is discriminatory to the elderly, disabled and unemployed
- Definitely not. A season ticket discount should be applauded
- Why as much as 30%. Reduction could encourage other forms of transport
- Everyone should pay the same
- The discount is far too low

Q7. To address the continuing need for short-term parking, it is proposed that the car parks at Mill Common, Huntingdon and Tan Yard at St. Neots will only allow short-term car parking with long-term parking moving to other car parks at the edge of each town centre;

a) Do you support this approach?

b) Is it unreasonable to expect people who park all-day to walk a short distance into Huntingdon or St. Neots town centres?

- With the proviso that disabled users are properly catered for
- We support this if it stops people denying residents (Ingram St.) parking spaces
- Maybe the Council could introduce a 'Hire Bike' scheme
- This can be a 10 minute walk or longer. Many ladies feel unsafe walking in the dark
- Fine as long as people don't have to pay as well
- Need sufficient street lighting
- Cambridge Street needs more capacity
- How many times does a person need to return to their car during the day?

Q8. With the planned introduction of charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place car parks, it is proposed that a trial of alternative methods of payment be undertaken utilising new ticket machine technology e.g. taking notes, payment by debit/credit card etc.

Do you consider alternative payments to coins would be useful?

- Debit/Credit card possibly, but only if machines are more reliable than at present (13)
- What about 'Pay as You Park' i.e. mobile phone? (6)
- Facilities should be available to give change for notes/coins (2)
- Ability to purchase tickets in shops
- Oyster/pre-paid cards (5)
- Internet payment

Q9. We are aware that certain Leisure Centre car parks are being used by people not using the facilities at those Centres. Should we consider introducing charging as a mechanism to try and control this situation with a reduced rate for Centre users? –;

- Only if parking costs are refunded to Centre users (14)
- At St. Neots, there are significant problems with football club (Eynesbury) parking which causes problems in adj. housing areas. Dog walkers also think it is their right to park anywhere. I would welcome them parking in the Leisure Centre to help residents
- Don't forget schools. Charging may encourage illegal parking on school sites
- Cost of enforcement would be prohibitive (5)
- If introduced, further consultation needed with teachers, pupils and visitors to nearby schools
- If your proposals go ahead in the town centre, more people will park here
- Most people who can afford to use Leisure Centres can afford to pay a parking charge
- If other people are using these car parks, it is because the Council is failing to meet the needs of its taxpayers

Q10. The consultation outlines the revised charges being considered for each town within Option 1 or Option 2.

Which Option do you prefer – Option 1/Option 2?

- I think there will be bad publicity with 25% or 50% increases
- How can you justify doubling prices and abolishing Mon-Fri season tickets at car parks near the bus station, while purporting to encourage public transport
- Charges should not be set too high to threaten vitality of market towns
- Charges at out-of-town stores but recognise that this requires Govt. legislation
- Option 2 is too significant an increase (4)
- It is reasonable to expect people to pay. Option 2 is not exorbitant/ reduce car use
- Prefer no increase/charges are too high at present (2)
- Neither – both show increases in excess of 25%. Inflation has not increased by this much (2)
- None – I wish parking to remain free for the people of Huntingdonshire (2)

Other Comments

- It is difficult to stop commuters parking in town centre car parks. Talk to the Rail Station, get more parking there at a more reasonable price
- With extra revenue generated, improve access/exit to Cattle Market in St. Ives and reduce congestion at The Quadrant at peak times
- Congratulations on tackling this issue. With the expansion of St. Neots, more town centre parking is needed. Expansion of Riverside car park to both sides of the bridge would prevent people having to drive through the centre to park

- Consultation period is too short for Parish Council's to comment
- This does not take into account competition from out-of-town superstores (3)
- 4-hour charge too high, people will shop elsewhere, perhaps Peterborough
- Allow free short-term (1 hour) (3) for doctor, dentist etc. (1)
- Increasing Resident's Permit charges will mean town centre living becomes even more of a poor person's option (2)
- Need for a car is often dictated by child care needs
- Secure cycle storage facilities required (2)
- Would like to see a 2-year pricing policy. This will allow important changes/demands to be made sooner
- Low emission rate is not relevant to parking, use new technology to enable reduced rate for car sharers
- We would like to see linkage with a corresponding Action Plan for cycle and pedestrian routes and secure cycle parking
- Park & Ride should be examined (2) but concerned at Greenfield suggestion at Hartford. Suggest brownfield sites at Alconbury, Wyton and Brampton. Possibly Tower Fields
- Support car park to south of High Street (St. Neots). Would relieve demand at eastern end of town
- Appreciate attempts to solve problems in Huntingdon but charges may force people to local streets
- Luminus should provide their own parking instead of using Riverside (2)
- Questionnaire should have been designed for each town
- Why was do nothing not an option? (2)
- Many people missed the display in St. Ives. Town Hall does not have disabled access, not very PC
- All car parks should be charged at the same rate
- Urgently provide multi-storey car parks but not 5 floors or greater
- Too much traffic in Huntingdon Town Centre. Need to divert some away
- Not enough consultation. This is not an open or public consultation. Should be conducted as an open referendum (3)
- Removing parking from High Street, Ramsey is of considerable value to Abbey College. This would allow safer cycling
- Lack of coach layover in St. Neots warrants a specific reference
- Why no multi-storey in St. Ives, St. Neots or Huntingdon? (3)
- Disabled drivers park anywhere, despite their own bays. Reduce the number of blue badge holders
- Changes need to be supported by a range of public transport incentives/better system (12)
- District Council has failed to ensure adequate parking provision with new development
- Not accepted by Ramsey Town Council that the town does not have a capacity problem. There is difficulty in finding on or off-street spaces
- Ramsey Town Council does not support removal of parking in High Street. Speeds will increase
- Huntingdon will die unless problems are addressed. No doubt Council employees will have designated parking denied to ordinary workers (2)
- The consultation does not take into account the needs of tourists
- Fire Service use Riverside, Huntingdon for those attending training centre on ring-road. Should be exempt from charges
- You need far more disabled parking spaces at Sainsbury's, Huntingdon and Waitrose, St. Ives in accordance with Govt. guidance
- Priors Centre car park should be for the exclusive use of the facility
- Why change Tan Yard to short-stay just to cater for market days?
- Local Retailers in Huntingdon should be invited to set-up a 'Parking Charge Refund Scheme'

- Ensuring the link between on and off-street parking is important, whereby on-street should always be more expensive
- It would seem sensible to link the costs of off and on-street residents parking permits
- Why is there no multi-storey facility in St. Ives, Huntingdon or St. Neots?
- Why should a travelling fair be allowed to utilise parking space at Riverside, Huntingdon?
- There should be some free parking (in Huntingdon) for shoppers up to 2 hours. Concern that this policy will drive shoppers to other retail centres
- We consider that Great Northern Street, Huntingdon, should be re-classified as an 'Inner Car Park', making exceptions for residents, in the same way proposed for Mill Common
- Increased charges would discourage people from staying longer in town to shop
- A well-managed barrier system for car parks is preferred