

Consultant's 2008 Report Findings	2009 Update (Cheshire East Officers)
i) <i>Based upon car park usage surveys and the client's description of the desired usage of each site (shopping or long-stay / business use), the report concludes that there is a need for improved usage control to aid the availability of car parking for shopping purposes.</i>	This need continues.
ii) <i>Some improved parking control could be delivered without implementing car park charging. However, the absence of charges would reduce the effectiveness of the control measures and the medium to long term financial sustainability of the measures would be questionable.</i>	This remains the view of parking officers.
iii) <i>To deliver the legal framework for the implementation of improved parking control, the Consultant recommends that the current off-street parking orders are reviewed and that a new Off Street Parking Places Order is made under the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act to cover all Borough car parks. This will also allow [the council] to enforce on these car parks against those who contravene the regulations. Not all the controls will be needed on all the car parks and the Order should be scheduled accordingly.</i>	A new order will be required as described.
iv) <i>In order to deliver holistic car parking management both on and off street, it is recommended that [the Council] pursue the introduction of Decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) through the powers available under the 1991 Road Traffic Act. This should be progressed as soon as practicably possible following the introduction of improved car park management processes. It is likely that adoption of DPE will be forced upon those Councils who have not adopted the powers on a voluntary basis by 2011. Introduction of DPE without effective management of the off-street car parking provision would lead to very significant problems for the Council. The report does not cover the practicalities or cost of delivering DPE as it was specifically excluded from the scope. However, as a traffic management tool DPE has proven successful in over 160 Authorities in England and Wales</i>	This legislation now superseded by the Traffic Management Act 2004.
v) <i>Usage surveys were undertaken in the 13 of the 14 car parks proposed for the introduction of charging and in addition Congleton Leisure Centre was surveyed for completeness. The surveys revealed that of the 13 car parks surveyed for potential charging, on weekdays, two had less than 75% occupancy. Similar surveys revealed that on market days the same car parks had a minimum occupancy level of 78% and on Saturdays this figure was still at a minimum of 75% other than Chapel Street. This shows that there is very little spare capacity on the car parks which would be required to be available should DPE be introduced and displacement from on street occurs. Controlling this spare capacity is of paramount importance and to avoid the car parks running at full occupancy levels it is essential that a means of increasing</i>	The proposal is now extended to cover 4 more car parks in Congleton to provide more comprehensive control of vehicle flows and therefore capacity in the town.

	<i>turnover is introduced.</i>	
vi)	<i>Antrobus street, Princess Street and Chapel Street car parks in Congleton all revealed over 100% occupancy at certain times of the day. Fairview in Alsager revealed over 100% occupancy on market day. This is due to cars being abandoned out of bay, causing obstruction to other users and danger to pedestrians within the car park. It is these issues that need addressing urgently.</i>	It is now recommended that all town centre car parks in Congleton (8 sites) be subject to charge to ensure adequate control of circulation.
vii)	<i>Effective enforcement of the recommended revised off-street parking order would require the equivalent of 3 full time 'Wardens' and a central administrator with appropriate IT and legal support. It is estimated that this would cost £96,000 per annum.</i>	Under the 1991 Act these are known as Parking Attendants. Figures are at 2007/8 prices.
viii)	<i>There are options with respect to how this enforcement could be delivered ranging from use of an external contractor to complete 'in-house' management and delivery. Although all of these options should be explored further, it is recommended that in the first instance, the Council should employ its own Wardens but work with a neighbouring Borough to deliver enforcement administration.</i>	Cheshire E has inherited existing administration (Macc and Crewe) therefore marginal cost to absorb Congleton is minimal.
ix)	<i>The study included a review of the civil engineering condition of 28 car parks. In general the assets were found to be in good condition with only low level capital remedial works (£61-65k) required to make them fit for purpose. However, future investment in excess of current revenue budget provision will be required to maintain an acceptable asset condition in future years.</i>	Figures at 2007/8 prices. The majority of required works are now complete. Capital in budget is for meters, lights etc.
x)	<i>The funding of car park management is a matter for local political determination as there is no statutory requirement to charge for car parks at the point of use. However, as Councils have the powers to implement car parking charging regimes, failure to do so is often viewed by 'outside observers' as a failure to provide value for money within the car park management service.</i>	
xi)	<i>Should the Council wish to consider the implementation of a car park charging regime on the 14 designated 'shopping car parks' on either 'control' or 'process funding' grounds, the report also outlines the costs and high level issues to be addressed. This assumes charging for a total of 972 spaces in the off street car parks with the remainder of the car parks to stay 'free'.</i>	This report contains recommendations to extend control beyond the 14 to ensure a holistic approach.
xii)	<i>Tariffs should be made simple to understand and only two tariff bands are recommended, one for short stay parking and one for long stay parking.</i>	This proposal has such a tariff.
xiii)	<i>In general, long stay parking should be encouraged away from the centre of the amenities to allow short stay visitors easier access.</i>	
xiv)	<i>It is recommended that disabled Blue Badge holders are not charged for short stay parking (although there is not statutory</i>	Present policy is that badge holders can park

	<i>impediment to doing so). However, consideration should be given to charging for blue badge holders when parked in a paid for bay for more than three hours and when not parked in a designated disabled bay.</i>	free anywhere in a marked bay.
xv)	<i>The revenue income stream from the proposed charging and the income from the parking tickets for non compliance has been estimated. Based upon the car park usage surveys, investigations on the parking tariffs in neighbouring Boroughs and the anticipated level of enforcement notices issued, a gross <u>income</u> stream from the 14 designated shopping car park of between £337,000 and £713,000 per annum could be anticipated.</i>	Figures at 2007/8 prices. Now reviewing status of all car parks , not just 14 in the report.
xvi)	<i>Balancing the cost of running an improved car park management process against the new revenue stream from charging on the 14 designated shopping car parks, the Borough Council could move from the current net expenditure of £207,000 to a net expenditure of £90000 or if the most favourable income projections are taken, a net income position of £286000.</i>	Figures at 2007/8 prices and subject to revision as above.
xvii)	<i>Adjacent authorities already charge for off street parking and these have been studied in line with this report. By example Macclesfield have 4053 paid for spaces and realise £2.3m annually from pay and display and a further £276,000 from fines issued for non compliance.</i>	Figures at 2007/8 prices.
xviii)	<i>The number of shopping spaces proposed is 972 and although it can not be assumed that income will be pro rata to that of Macclesfield, it gives a clear indication that visitors are willing to pay to park, on a regular basis, close to the amenities.</i>	See new proposal for number of bays.