

Parking Review:

Congleton Town Centre

2010

Congleton Parking Review

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1.0 Introduction, Scope and Objectives

- 1.1. This report sets out findings from a review of the parking situation in the town centre in respect of both on and off street parking and control measures.
- 1.2. Management of public parking in the town centre consists of a combination of on street restrictions and limited waiting provision, and of provision of off street public car parks. Control is exercised through Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) (under the terms of the Traffic Management Act 2004) which began in January and February of 2010. This brought the control of parking in Congleton into line with that already in place in the areas of the former Macclesfield, and Crewe and Nantwich, boroughs.
- 1.3. Prior to this on street control rested with the Police, and off street control with the local authority under a Car Park Order from 1983. This latter was not enforced as there was no enforcement team in place under the former authority Congleton Borough Council.
- 1.4. The service is provided by one team of 26 Civil Enforcement Officers and 9 Notice Processing staff covering the whole of the Cheshire East area.
- 1.5. The objectives of this Review are:
 - 1.5.1. **To study the controls and facilities for parking in the central area of Congleton town and**
 - 1.5.2. **identify changes needed to improve the provision, control and management of parking.**
- 1.6. The study focuses specifically on the town centre as defined on the map shown at Appendix I. This is so that the interrelationship between parking controls and facilities can be fully observed in terms of the effect on traffic circulation, and on ease of movement and parking for all customers, organisations and residents within the central area.
- 1.7. This report summarises the analysis of the current controls and provisions for parking and makes recommendations for changes to improve both customer service and circulation through appropriate controls.

2. On Street control and provision

2.1. Location of and nature of existing restrictions: Appendix II details the restrictions together with an explanation from Highways Engineers as to their function. In summary findings of the Review were as follows:

- 2.1.1. Controlled Hours: Research indicates there is no discernible current reason for the 8.00am – 7.00 pm time restrictions for parking. It would appear this became a standard time period in the late 1970's and 80's. Most Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in the past 20 years have used 8.00am – 6.00pm as the standard time period. One 8.00am – 7.00pm was changed in 1997 to 8.00am – 6.00pm (Antrobus Street). There are no special circumstances requiring retention of the 8.00am – 7.00pm restrictions. A narrower time band would suffice if the streets concerned are considered to be affected by displacement parking, and this would then generally remove all unrestricted parking within 5 minutes' walk of the commercial centre of Congleton. (Some streets may justify a Residents Parking scheme- see section 5.0 of this Report).
- 2.1.2. Ward and Town Councillors have suggested a change to 9am to 5pm controls to assist residents. This is dealt with at the recommendation stage below.
- 2.1.3. Each change would need a new order or a consolidation order, with cost and time implications.
- 2.1.4. The main anomaly is the situation on Park Road, with a 30 minute limited waiting over a full 24 hour period. It appears the limit should have been 8.00am – 7.00pm and does not seem to be justifiable now. Changes to this are dealt with below in the recommendations.
- 2.1.5. Certain roads were quickly identified as liable to displacement parking following the start of civil controls and charging, and may require the imposition of TRO's including Residents Parking schemes to alleviate problems for local residents. In the table below they are grouped by reference to the nearest chargeable car park. Where resident parking studies have been undertaken these are shown:

Car Park	Streets associated	Res Survey Vote result (where app.)
West Street Car Park	Crescent Road, The Crescent, Nelson Street, Swann Street, Waggs Road	Not yet surveyed
Antrobus Street Car Park	North Street, Holford Street, South Street, River Street, Back River Street	No (see 5.2)
Princess Street Car Park	Riverside	Not yet surveyed
Fairground Car Park	Riverside	Not yet surveyed
Chapel Street	Howey Lane / Hill, Priesty Fields	Not yet surveyed
Lawton St/Back Park Street / Park Street	Park Street (east), Willow Street, Spragg Street, Worrall Street, Thomas Street, Roe Street.	Yes

2.1.6. Most of these streets have no current restrictions on parking, others have some.

2.1.7. A number of other recommendations to consider TRO changes are included at Appendix II (highlighted bold). These will need to be considered by Highways Operations and subject to further study.

2.2. Parking Patterns on Restricted Streets: a survey of parking on streets having limited waiting and no waiting restrictions revealed results as at Appendix III. The findings are summarized:

2.2.1. The occupancy of town centre limited waiting bays observed was 79%. Given that there is a time delay in someone vacating a bay and another finding a space this is quite a high occupation rate. (It also indicates that use of these bays for residents' parking -dual use- may not be feasible if it receives strong opposition from the shops).

2.2.2. The abuse of the bays suggests that enforcement is not yet creating sufficient deterrent. However some anomalies in signs and lines may restrict enforceability in certain cases.

2.2.3. There was no evidence from this study that the abuse came from residents.

2.2.4. Further work may be necessary to establish enforceability of all restrictions in the sense that they conform to statutory requirements. This will take place as part of normal CEO patrol and report systems in partnership with Highways Engineers.

2.3. Parking Patterns on unrestricted streets: sample studies were conducted in order to establish usage patterns and the extent of any displacement parking on streets where enforcement is currently not possible due to lack of waiting restrictions. The details are shown at Appendix IV. Conclusions from the data obtained were:

- 2.3.1. There was no evidence of significantly more vehicles parked during the working day than in the evening. Indeed parking levels were almost identical. In spite of this, many people continue to cite examples of displaced parking in unrestricted streets such as Howey Lane. The Highways Engineer has recommended some changes to TROs in these cases and therefore these may be progressed by the Highways team in the normal way ie by means of local consultation on any proposal.
- 2.3.2. With one small exception (South Road) no street was ever fully parked when surveyed and plenty of “free” parking was available if people knew where to look.
- 2.3.3. The percentage of residents estimated to be parked during the day was a little over 13% compared to an estimated 44% of non residents and 43% unoccupied. This figure is useful when considering residents’ parking schemes.

2.4. Enforcement: The level of enforcement in terms of PCNs issued indicates good compliance generally with 136 PCNs issued from April to June. However this may also have been affected by variable frequency of patrol and attendance in the first 2 months during which sickness absence and vacancies in the CEO team have stretched the resource. A period of increased presence is necessary to establish the full extent of non-compliance.

- 2.4.1. Feedback from the Police has not indicated any issues arising from congestion or road safety issues since the commencement of on and off street civil control, though further enforcement presence may result in even greater compliance generally. However the study at Antrobus Street and environs has indicated some congestion which may become an issue.
- 2.4.2. In some cases the periods of restrictions are felt to be wrong (See 2.1.1) which makes the deployment of enforcement teams less efficient.
- 2.4.3. Some residents complain about displacement onto uncontrolled streets due to introduction of charging off street. This is considered as part of the Residents Parking Scheme Study results at 5.0.

3. Off Street Parking

3.1. Parking Stock

- 3.1.1. Council- operated car parks are shown in table 1 below together with the current charging status. The map attached at Appendix I shows locations. In addition uncharged parking is available at Congleton Leisure Centre (unadopted carpark) which is within reasonable walking distance of the town centre.
- 3.1.2. Additional town centre parking is provided by Morrisons supermarket and the adjacent Bridestones shopping centre. This is operated privately by Euro Car Parks, and parking is not charged for with stay limited to maximum 2 hours.
- 3.1.3. Further parking without charge is provided at Tesco's across the A34 but this is not within the town centre and unlikely to be considered within walking distance by most customers.
- 3.1.4. The physical condition of the pay and display car parks is generally good. Signs and meters were installed as new from February and with some amendments and maintenance, have been satisfactory. Equally, surface condition and line markings are good with the exception of some of the uncharged car parks.
- 3.1.5. The car parks have been the subject of a general condition survey and the results are attached at Appendix II. More immediate small works will be undertaken in ensuing weeks; any which are in need of more substantial work will be investigated with a view to obtaining contractor quotation in accordance with Cheshire East Procurement rules.

Table 1

Name/Location	Maximum Capacity	Disabled Spaces	Long or Short Stay	Fees		
Congleton				0-1 hrs	1-2 hrs	2-3 hrs
Antrobus Street	69	2	Short	£ 0.30	£ 0.50	£ 1.00
Princess Street	82	2	Short	£ 0.30	£ 0.50	£ 1.00
Fairground	74	6	Short	£ 0.30	£ 0.50	£ 1.00
				0-2 hrs	2-4 hrs	4-10 hrs
Back Park Street	81	3	Long	£ 0.50	£ 1.00	£ 1.50
Chapel Street	47		Long	£ 0.50	£ 1.00	£ 1.50
West Street	159	4	Long	£ 0.50	£ 1.00	£ 1.50
Park Street	37		Long	£ 0.50	£ 1.00	£ 1.50
Blake St/Edgerton St	35		Long	Free		
Rope Walk	29		Long	Free		
Roe Street	24		Short	Free		
Rood Hill	8		Long	Free		
Royle Street	28		Long	Free		
Thomas Street	46		Long	Free		

3.1.6. There are 717 bays of which 17 are for disabled only. The breakdown across long, short, paying and free, is as follows:

Table 2

	Total	Paying	Free
Short Stay	249	225	24
Long Stay	470	324	146
Total	719	549	170

3.2. **Usage:** Pay and Display charging was introduced on January 21st 2010. Civil Parking Enforcement on street was also introduced from February 2010. The usage of the car parks from February to end May 2010 has been analysed based on sales of tickets:

3.2.1. Income from the car parks averages £4000 per week with over 6500 ticket sales. This splits at 60% short stay ticket sales, giving over 40% of the sales income.

3.2.2. Turnover of bays in a car park (the frequency with which vehicles use the bays, on average) is a useful measure of occupancy. In Congleton during the period from March to June 2010 turnover as indicated by the sales information is:

Table 3

Parking Bay Turnover	Bays	Mar – June 2010 Avge Wkly Sales	Av Daily Sales (6 days/wk)	T/over per bay per day
Short Stay				
Antrobus Street	69	1343	224	3.2
Princess Street	82	917	153	1.9
Fairground	74	1332	222	3.0
% total sales		58%		
Long Stay				
Back Park Street	81	648	108	1.3
Chapel Street	47	347	58	1.2
West Street	159	1499	250	1.6
Park Street	35	67	11	0.3

3.2.3. Occupancy of Princess Street is observed to be very low especially on weekdays even though turnover is 1.9 vehicles per bay per day.

3.2.4. Park Street, located across Mountbatten Way, is also hardly used indicating a need for a change to its management.

3.2.5. The turnover of bays in Congleton compares well with figures for other towns in Cheshire East. In Macclesfield, on average bays in car parks mainly used for long stay achieve 1.5 per bay per day. Those used for short stay (more central, higher tariff) achieve from 2.5 to as high as 4.9. In Crewe, long stay car parks are on average at 1.4 to 1.5 with short stay at between 3.1 to 4.3.

3.2.6. Occupancy and usage figures prior to the introduction of charging consisted of results of surveys carried out on a sample basis by consultants RTA in 2006. The patterns of use observed to date largely bear out their conclusions. Turnover per bay indicates that long stay car parks are predominately used as such.

3.3. Enforcement

Compliance on the car parks has generally been good with 123 PCNs issued in car parks from April to June. However these figures have been taken from a period of varying levels of enforcement due to staffing shortages.

- 3.4. The occupancy and enforcement figures together indicate that capacity overall, for parking in the town, is normally sufficient for the observed level of demand. However some adjustments may be needed and solutions found for some residents coupled with finding the best use and control of Princess St and Park St car parks should ease some local pressures.

- 3.5. **Provision for Disabled Drivers:** the Off Street Order allows customers displaying a valid Blue Badge to park without charge within any bay on a public Council operated car park.

3.5.1. Of the total of 784 bays in the town under public control, only 17 wide disabled bays are offered, ie. 2%. Of the central car parks a total of 591 bays, only 3% are wide disabled bays.

3.5.2. The national guideline states that at least 5% of bays provided should be wide, disabled only. Organisations for the Disabled often cite 10% as their preferred figure. However, in view of Cheshire East's current policy of not charging any disabled customer, an increase to at least 5% is recommended. Concentrating the extras in the central car parks would give, in effect, 6.6% and would increase the total wide bays available to 39. Given existing low occupancy in Princess St this should not affect availability for other customers.

3.6. Uncharged Car Parks

3.6.1. Of those listed in table 1 as "free", or uncharged at point of use, all are some distance from the town centre and were not considered for charging for this reason. They either serve more residential streets or business/industrial zones and as such, their patterns of use are predominately long stay. It is not proposed therefore to alter the control of these car parks. However a number would benefit from some maintenance as shown in the Condition Survey at Appendix II.

3.6.2. Congleton Leisure Centre car park is provided free and without controls as it is not covered by the Car Park Order. The car park capacity is:

- 41 lined spaces.
- 3 lined Disabled spaces.
- To the rear approx 12 spaces unlined.
- To the side approx 30 spaces unlined.

Total = 86 available spaces.

3.6.3. Staff have not seen any significant changes since parking charges were introduced. A recent survey over 2 days revealed the car park to be 60% occupied, with only 8% long stay. This indicates that displacement to the Leisure Centre from the town centre due to increased control and charging has not been a major issue to date.

3.6.4. Roe Street Car Park: The exception to the above is Roe Street which principally serves a doctor's surgery. It was recognised last year that there would be a need

for control of stay length on this car park to facilitate use by patients. It is cited in the Car Park Order as limited to maximum stay 3 hours. It was agreed that a voluntary control scheme would be monitored initially and recommendations made on the basis of observed use patterns. It has been recommended that greater control of long stay parking on this car park now be exercised without introduction of charging. Of the methods available it appears that the simplest is to improve signs and to step up patrols to encourage compliance. This should be cost effective on the basis that once motorists understand the position, constant attendance will not be necessary.

3.7. Public Transport Usage

- 3.7.1. Recent figures on bus usage obtained from Cheshire East Council Integrated Transport Service show a growth of 13% compared with the same period last year. This may indicate a move towards use of public transport away from vehicles since parking controls were stepped up, although caution is required as it is not possible to deduce destinations for passenger numbers collated in this way.

4. Consultation and Comment

- 4.1. Ward Councillors submitted a range of comments and these are summarised below, together with Officer comments.
- 4.2. The Town Council and Congleton Business Association have also supplied views at meetings held, the “No 2 Parking Charges” group has submitted views and suggestions in a letter to Cllr Fitzgerald.

Congleton Town Centre Review Ward Councillor comments and ideas (end June 2010)	
Councillor Comment	Officer Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Street- Fire Station – introduce 1 hour restrictions here? 	This is being progressed as part of a Ward Local scheme, and is subject to further investigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposite Dr's surgery (jn Astbury St)/Spar shop (introduce 1 or 2 disabled bays + 2 hr bays elsewhere along this route). 	This seems to refer to 2 different locations. We have a request for disabled parking bays on West Street outside a care facility which is unlikely to proceed as there is a car park in the grounds; the same would apply to the Drs on Astbury Street which has a car park also. (D Palmer)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High St- on-street /off street Order- timing controlled hours to be consistent 	Agreed- to be recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Princess St car park underutilised except Mkt Days- Make it a short/long stay CP. Make it LONG stay + change designation or just Mkt day. Similar to Antrobus Street? (Moore St/Back Park Street). 	Most practical is probably extension to all day for Princess Street (10hours).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Schemes to receive more consideration 	Residents schemes to be progressed where supported by residents (see 5).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antrobus St- <u>on</u> street- redesign on-street bays to “chevron “style 	Scheme for chevron parking has been forwarded to safety audit ; initial officer opinion is that this may represent road safety hazard (D Palmer)
“Cheshire East [states] charging for car parking is about car park space management and has nothing to do with raising revenue. If that is the	Pay and display data suggest car parks are still generally well used with 2 main exceptions which are dealt with in the recommendations.

case then we are not succeeding when the car parks are empty yet the residents have to park wherever they can until the car park charging time is over".	Residents Schemes also being proposed in most affected areas.
1. Park Street: car park little used since charging while residents who used to use it park in the side streets.	Park St car park charge regime to be subject to alternative proposals including Residents Parking and/or alternative.
-withdraw charging – though this may draw long stay payers from Back Park Street (Lawton St) cp.	
-include as part of a Residents' Parking Scheme	
2. Antrobus Street: consider ways of transferring customers from Antrobus St to Princess St to free space for residents parking in the latter. (P St nearer shops than A St but few people realise it is there).	Princess St car park and Antrobus St : Town Councillors considered A. St should remain short stay as this is now well used by shop customers. P St to be extended to all day but preserving the 1 hour stay fee within the tariff.
3. Charging Hours: change these from current 8am to 6pm. To 9am to 5pm- would assist residents whilst still providing control without significant loss of income.	Car Park controlled hours need to be altered as discussed above. An 8.30 to 5.30pm on street period, coupled with the same hours off street would be feasible and should not reduce control significantly. Residents in worst affected streets, where evidenced by support for canvassed schemes, should be offered on street Parking Schemes. In addition, the 8.30-5.30pm on street period would allow residents to park in limited waiting bays with a half hour leeway.
4. "Consider something bold to help the town and the image of Cheshire East. How about reducing the charging time on short stay car parks to 4pm or even 3pm. I do not know what the revenue cost would be but it would be very welcome and gain many " brownie points " for Cheshire East. I gather an increasing number	Other towns (eg Chester) have reduced or suspended charges on specific car parks after 3pm. In the case of the 3 car parks in Chester, it has not been shown to increase total car park occupancy overall but rather, redistributes existing flows to some extent- as was also the case in Crewe (Dec 2008).

of councils are doing such things including Chester”.	If it were to be considered, it should be a part of a wider discussion on regeneration outside Parking services.
<u>Park Road:</u>	
Residents parking scheme required. The parking restriction outside the house is for 30 min 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This restriction has been in force for many years though enforcement was very rare prior to introduction of CPE last year. The restriction does not allow for resident parking while accommodating the needs of those attending the paddling pool so a more appropriate scheme of control is required.	Agreed this needs review and should change as part of a Residents’ Parking Scheme to be drafted.
“We have a choice between residents parking, or a limit of something like 2 to 3 hours to enable visitors to use the paddling pool or the park. It has to be one or the other”.	

4.3. Congleton Business Associaton :

- 4.3.1. There was support for 2 hours free at the start of the day, using meters with alphanumeric keyboards so tickets (issued free for 2 hours) would be vehicle specific.
- 4.3.2. The Town Centre Manager also wished the 9 to 5 controlled hours to be given more consideration.
- 4.3.3. In respect of Princess St car park there was doubt as to whether extension to long stay would be of benefit to the town.
- 4.3.4. On Street limited waiting bays were generally felt to be adequate at 30 mins in the town centre streets.
- 4.3.5. Bridestones Redevelopment: concern was expressed over the effect of this as Princess St car park will close and the market move on to part of Fairground. It was agreed to check that car park alternate provision is built into the redevelopment overall plan, though no firm dates for the development have been published.

4.4. Congleton Town Council

- 4.4.1. They express opposition to charging but this is beyond the scope of the Review.
- 4.4.2. The group were in favour of a change to 9am to 5pm. for controlled hours off street.

- 4.4.3. Antrobus St – it was agreed that parking bays could be both sides and increase capacity without affecting safety- if in line, rather than “echelon” bays. However CEC Officers believe it should only need one side to provide sufficient capacity for residents, as it would be worse to have too many bays which then lay unoccupied.
- 4.4.4. Antrobus St – car park – should not need to be changed to long stay nb if there is an on street scheme for residents. There is a need to preserve the short stay bays for the town shoppers.
- 4.4.5. Princess St car park: the group agreed to support lengthening the maximum stay to 10 hours but preserve the short stay charges as now.
- 4.4.6. Park Street car park: the management of the car park needs to change. The group felt it better to offer spaces via contract permits to local businesses.
- 4.4.7. Roe Street: the car park order limiting max stay to 3 hours should be enforced. A few PCNs would send message and compliance would then improve.
- 4.4.8. Disabled bays: agreed that more wide bays need to be provided, focussed on the more central car parks.
- 4.4.9. Residents Parking Schemes: need to investigate possible other needs in Howey Lane although no requests yet from residents so it may be simply a need to consider extending waiting restrictions.
- 4.4.10. Park Road: the conflict between needs of residents and visitors to the pool needs resolution. CEC will detail a dual purpose scheme, but that the limit for non residents should be less than 2 hours or it would probably be abused by town centre visitors. The bias of benefit should be in favour of residents. The existing control of 30 min/24 hours/7 days, to be removed and replaced with this new control.

4.5. No2Parking Charges Group

- 4.5.1. They express opposition to charging but this is beyond the scope of the Review.
- 4.5.2. Most of the Group’s points echo those of others above- in respect of controlled hours, Antrobus Street and underused car parks. However they also call for heavily discounted permits on Princess St and Park Street car parks for town centre traders. Existing policy offers permits at £300 per annum which is a substantial discount. (6 days per week, 48 weeks per year at £1.50 per day would cost £432). However as stated, this suggestion has merit in that it could lead to improved usage, possibly relieving pressure elsewhere.
- 4.5.3. Permit prices will remain at current levels but will be considered as part of tariff review for 12/13.

5. Residents' Parking Schemes

5.1. Following the introduction of on and off street controls, and car park charges, surveys were conducted in groups of streets where residents expressed concern about displacement and parking difficulties. These surveys entailed firstly, establishing which streets were contiguous and likely to be zoned together, and secondly, leafleting the properties to gauge support for any scheme. It was made clear that no scheme would be installed unless a clear majority of affected residents were in favour. Any scheme would follow the principles set out in the Council's Residents Parking Policy (available at http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel/car_parks_and_parking.aspx)

5.2. Results of the studies undertaken were as shown in the table 5 below:

Table 5

RESIDENTS' PARKING SURVEYS		
AREA	STREETS	VOTE
Antrobus Street Area	Antrobus Street	No
	North Street	
	South Street	
	Holford Street	
	River Street	
	Back River Street	
Lawton Street Area	Lawton Street	Yes
	Kinsey Street	
	Tanner Street	
	Bark Street	
	Park Street	
	Bank Street	
	Back Park Street	
Stonehouse Green Area	Stonehouse Green	Yes
Mill Street Area	Mill Street	No
Moor Street Area	Moor Street	No
	Willow Street	
	Lower Park Street	
	Foundry Bank	
	Park Street (part)	
	Centenary Place	
Park Road Area	Park Road	Yes
	The Meadows	
	Worral Street (part)	
	Park View	

5.3. Given the development time needed for a Residents Scheme in Park Street area, it may be beneficial to make residents only parking permits available to residents in

these streets at £50 for Park Street Car Park on a temporary basis at least, until the street scheme is available.

- 5.4. **Antrobus Street:** owing to specific protests and difficulties highlighted in the area of Antrobus Street, further comment is as follows:

Antrobus Street area, Congleton Survey February 2010

- 5.4.1. Antrobus street is a busy one way street close to Congleton town centre. It is part of a one way system and as such is vital to traffic flow in the vicinity. Off Antrobus street are smaller streets consisting almost exclusively of terraced residential properties. Antrobus street, however, has a number of small businesses spread throughout its length combined with terraced residential properties.

5.5. Survey

- 5.5.1. A survey was carried out and found the area heavily parked throughout. Conversations with residents indicated that a significant percentage of the vehicles were town centre workers and visitors rather than residents.
- 5.5.2. The total area as stated above consists of just over 100 residencies and approximately 10 – 15 small businesses including two hairdressers, a butchers, a small cleaning company and a couple of general purpose grocery shops.
- 5.5.3. The narrowness of North Street, South Street and Holford Street combined with bad parking causes significant problems for emergency vehicles and bin wagons. Reports from residents have confirmed this. Photographs and notes have been stored for future use.

5.6. Potential solutions

- 5.6.1. The initial survey suggests quite strongly that the area would be appropriate for consideration for a residents parking scheme. Such a scheme would have to take into account the needs of the small businesses which are suffering from lack of space for their customers.
- 5.6.2. The consultation (leaflet drop) sought to determine demand from residents and businesses during the day, which could then be compared with available space. The likely result is that sufficient space could be provided for the residents either without the need for use of the car park or for very limited use of it. The number of responses was very low but it cannot be assumed that those not responding are in favour. The numbers of responses were therefore considered to be insufficient to progress a scheme to the design stage at that time.
- 5.6.3. The consultation should be repeated now given 1) acknowledged pressure on parking in this area, 2) the elapsed period since inception of controls, and the improved understanding of their impact on the residential area.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations from this review

6.1. On Street and Off Street Controlled Hours:

- 6.1.1. On Street: The period of control for some restrictions runs from 8am until 7pm Monday to Saturday. There appears to be no reason to continue with this from a control viewpoint. It creates difficulties for residents. The proposed introduction of Residents' Schemes may adequately address the issue in some specific locations but this will not be appropriate everywhere. A proposal has been made to reduce on street controlled hours to 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday. Given the compact nature of the town centre and its retail and business profile this seems reasonable. There are few major retailers with trading hours beyond this time, and residential and business properties are particularly close to each other. This will require a change to the On Street Parking Order and Traffic Regulation Orders following statutory consultation.
- 6.1.2. Off Street: For the same reasons it is also proposed to reduce chargeable hours from 8am to 6pm, to 9am to 5pm also to ensure compatibility with the on street hours and to avoid confusion for customers. This will assist residents living in streets within the town centre with parking difficulties at the beginning and end of each day. This will require a change to the Off Street Parking Places Order following statutory consultation.
- 6.1.3. A number of the existing restrictions have physical (sign and line) faults which would render enforcement open to challenge. These have been prioritised and referred directly to Highways term contractor for rectification.
- 6.1.4. New restrictions should be considered in streets adjacent to West St Car park. This may require a survey of residents to establish views of a Residents' Parking Scheme there.
- 6.1.5. Park Road: in addition to the overall change to 9am to 5 pm controlled hours, the limited waiting time to be extended from 30 minutes to 2 hours on this road.
- 6.1.6. Antrobus Street/West Street junction: an on street disabled only bay to be provided near the Spar shop, closest to the junction of Antrobus and West Streets.
- 6.1.7. **Other changes to restrictions** have been recommended by Highways Engineers and should be further explored through survey and consultation. Details are at Appendix II.

- 6.2. **Off Street Control and Charging:** The balance between long and short stay bays overall is felt to be good given the usage pattern observed. It is relatively easy to reach the centre on foot from any car park. Given the objective of limiting vehicle circulation in the narrow central streets, the current long/short stay split is generally appropriate. However the following exceptions and recommendations may prove helpful to customers and workers:

- 6.2.1. **Princess Street car park:** the extension to long stay to be approved, in order to improve usage whilst still preserving short stay availability, prices and
- 6.2.2. turnover. The proposed new tariff range would be:

Princess St	0-1 hrs	1-2 hrs	2-3 hrs	2-4 hrs	4-10 hrs
Current	£0.30	£0.50	£1		
Proposed	£0.30	£0.50	£1	£1	£1.50

6.2.3. **Park Street car park:** Local businesses and organisations should be approached for expressions of interest in either contract parking or leasing. Pending the introduction of residents' schemes in nearby streets, residents should also be offered temporary permits on this car park.

6.2.4. **Roe Street Car Park:** Signs indicating maximum stay 3 hours should be erected and the car park patrolled to improve compliance.

6.2.5. **Provision of wide Disabled Bays:** this should be increased to a total of 39 from 17 now, to be located on town centre car parks. The selection of car parks on which to locate them is to be decided and subject of further study. Recommendations of the Ward Councillors will be taken into account, and the local disabled organisations also consulted.

6.2.6. **Motor Cycle bays:** It is part of Cheshire East Council's Parking Strategy to encourage alternative forms of travel to the private car. Accordingly appropriate locations for marking bays for two wheeled use only will be found.

6.3. Residents' Parking Schemes

6.3.1. Residents in zones identified in previous consultations where response was poor or only a small minority voted in favour, will be canvassed again to ensure a fair chance has been given for consideration of a scheme. This includes the Antrobus Street and Moor Street Area.

6.3.2. Lawton Street, Stonehouse Green and Park Road zones: residents have expressed approval in principle so it is recommended that schemes for these zones be progressed to design stage.

7. Appendix I

Map of Town Centre: Definition of Study Area

Attached on separate sheet.

Appendix II On Street Restrictions and TROs : Highways Engineer's Analysis

SCHEDULE

Antrobus Street

This is the old A54 through route, now giving access to the town centre and also a peripheral route. Mix of residential and commercial uses plus a church. It is one way and gives access to a car park. Residential properties are terraced and few have any off street parking.

OPINION: Restrictions assist traffic flow and are appropriate. Changes to layout may produce more on street spaces.

Cross Street

Town centre fringe, commercial, narrow.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

West Street (and West Road)

Main access route to / from town centre, mix of commercial and residential. Part one way. Suffers from congestion and provides access to car park.

OPINION: Existing restrictions permit parking at critical areas, leading to congestion and vehicular / pedestrian conflict. Consider further restrictions.

Mill Street and Swan Bank

Town centre access and periphery route, carries high traffic volume, one way streets. Parts are narrow. Almost exclusively commercial, subject to deliveries, has main post office.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Wagg Street and Waggs Road

Performs as an access road to town centre and is a local distributor road. A mix of residential and commercial, with a church. Narrow in part, Waggs Road also has a school.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Lion Street

Access to car park.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Bridge Street, Duke Street, Little Street, Victoria Street and western part of High Street.

Traditional town centre streets, predominantly retail. Pedestrianised 10.00am - 4.00pm each day (and subject to prohibition of driving order), with deliveries only outside that time.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

High Street

Town centre access and peripheral route, 2 way traffic, mostly retail with commercial. Bus route also. Often congested and suffers from pedestrian / vehicular conflict.

OPINION: Consider further restrictions.

Lawton Street

Provides egress route from town centre and is a bus route. One way, a mixture of town centre fringe retail, commerce and residential.

Has physical parking bays provided.

OPINION: Existing restrictions work well and are appropriate.

Market Square

Town centre fringe, Mostly commercial / government, one way.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Market Street

Town centre access, bus station and route.

Opinion: Existing restrictions are considered appropriate.

Kinsey Street, Bark Street, Tanner Street, Park Street(west) and Bank Street.

Mix of residential and businesses. Small terrace houses have no off street parking. Access to car park, some one way streets, mainly narrow and difficult to negotiate.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Back Park Street

Car park access road, providing some rear access to Lawton Street.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are appropriate.

Moody Street

Local distributor, mixed uses but not a through route primarily. Gives access to Chapel Street car park, becomes narrow at junction with Howey Hill / Lane, and then provides access to town cemetery.

OPINION: May need more restrictions due to displacement town centre parking causing congestion.

Chapel Street

Mixed use, car park access, church and often congested.

OPINION: Consider further restrictions.

Canal Street

Mostly commercial, very narrow in part. Town centre access road from south.

OPINION: Consider further restrictions.

Walworths Bank

Mixed Residential and commercial, narrow cul de sac.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

Colehill Bank

Very narrow, access to private street.

OPINION: Consider total prohibition.

Stone House Green

Residential and commercial, town centre, pressure for car parking.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

Princess Street

Town centre, commercial uses, car parks access and service access.

OPINION: Existing restrictions are considered appropriate.

Foundry Bank

Town centre fringe, commercial, adjacent main A54 distributor road.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

Worrall Street

Town centre fringe, mostly commercial, access to leisure centre.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

The Meadows

Town centre fringe, commercial and minor residential, cul-de-sac.

OPINION: Existing Restrictions considered appropriate.

Park Road

Residential, commercial and leisure uses, existing order is very restrictive especially for residents if enforced.

OPINION: Consider change to legalise TRO or revise (to residents parking scheme?)

Willow Street

A54 main distributor / through road, high traffic flows, congested. Mixture of commerce and residential.

OPINION: Consider further restrictions.

Bromley Road, Park Lane and Mountbatten Way

Major through routes and town centre access, high traffic flows and vehicle turning movements.

OPINION: Existing restrictions considered appropriate.

Appendix III

Congleton Parking Review: Condition Survey 9th July 2010

1. Pay and Display Car Parks

In all cases they are fit for purpose although some will need to be considered for resurfacing and relining if CEBC is to maintain a consistent standard.

Not all Pay and Displays have CCTV coverage or charter recognition. Some are currently being accredited (Fairground, West Street, Back Park Street) as part of the PARK MARK SCHEME run by Cheshire Police. All relevant signage i.e. Entry plates, parking regulations, tariff charges exist including "Pay HERE" and "HAVE YOU PAID AND DISPLAYED". Antrobus Street is serviced with 1 pay and display meter and I would recommend a second machine is put in. High volumes of through traffic are generated resulting in increased operational demand on the machine culminating in more "out of order" occurrences.

Recommendations by Car Park

Antrobus. Fit 1x Disabled notice board, fit 1x litter bin and grit box, and install a second P&D machine.

Park Street. Consider review of lighting, fit 2x litter bins and 1x grit box, and provide disabled bays x2.

Fairground. Resurface and reline, fit 1x litter bin, and 1x grit bin, repair copings to boundary walls. Fit 3x Disabled notice boards. Consider relocating recycling station freeing up spaces.

Back Park Street. Fit 1x Disabled notice board, fit 3x litter bins and 1x grit bin.

West Street. Fit 2x Disabled notice boards, fit additional "Have you paid and displayed" sign.

Chapel Street. Consider 1 additional lighting column. Reline "KEEP CLEAR" markings for access. Consider resurfacing and lining, and in the interim cut out an area of tarmac approx 17mts x 10 meters at entrance and make good. Fit 1x litter bin and 1x grit bin, and provide disabled bays.

Princess Street. Fit 1x Disabled notice board. Reline parking bays. Consider removal of Armco barrier on boundary walls for something in more keeping with the surroundings.

2. Car parks not charged for at point of use

Thomas Street. Lighting improvements, regulation signs, entry signage, litter bins x2, grit bin x1, cctv camera. Surface is of the block paving type with bays white lined over. Consider including disabled bays.

Royle Street. Regulation signs, entry signs, railing to 3 boundaries to separate footpath users from car park and vehicles. Lighting column/columns and cctv, litter bin x1 and grit bin x1.

Roe Street. Consider laying top surface dressing and completely reline bays and keep clear access to surgery car park. Fit lighting columns x2, litter bin x1, grit bin x1 and cctv camera. Fit safety railing along southwest boundary. Northeast boundary wall needs re-pointing. Area of grass verge fronting north east boundary should be levelled off and tarmaced.

Appendix IV
On Street Parking Restrictions and Limited Waiting Bays

SURVEYS **1,2,5,6,7,** *Different* *inc. market day and a*
Summary **July 2010** *times of day* *Saturday*

Street	Restriction	Observations	Occupancy (Spaces taken in bays)	Overstayed
Lawton Street	30NR30 Bays	Average use	17 out of 25	5 vehicles
High Street	30NR30 Bays	Average use	9 out of 10	2 vehicles
High Street	Disabled Bay	Average use	2 out of 2	n/a
Kinsey Street	30NR30 Bays	Average use	9 out of 11	4 vehicles
Moody Street	60NR60 Bays	Average use	9 out of 12	2 vehicles
West Street	30NR30 Bays	Average use	14 out of 19	3 vehicles
Swan Bank	30NR30 Bays	Average use	5 out of 5	3 vehicles
Town Centre Area	Yellow lines	Daily average		10 vehicles abusing yl's
Notes				
No significant difference on any day including week day, market day and Saturday				

Appendix V

Parking Patterns near to Congleton town centre on non restricted sections of road

Scope and purpose

Surveys were undertaken of a sample of roads and streets near Congleton Town Centre where no restrictions apply. The purpose of these surveys was to determine:

- Total number of spaces available
- Total occupancy rate of spaces during the day
- Total occupancy rate of spaces in the evening
- Total number of spaces being used by residents during the day
- Total number of spaces being used by non residents during the day

Collection of data and reliability

Data collection was carried out by logging registration numbers during the day and during the evening (outside normal working hours). Vehicles parked during the evening were assumed to be residents' vehicles and this information was used to assess the number of residents parking during the day also.

The reliability of the data therefore must take into account the following:

- this method of survey provides data which is approximate.
- The accuracy is affected by the frequency of survey visits: with only 3 or 4 surveys carried out the result is only a "snapshot" and will not take into account seasonal variations or changes occurring e.g. during school holidays.
- The assumption that all vehicles parked in the evening are residents' vehicles and that all residents are present during the evening is only suitable for "rough and ready" results but does give a picture which is useful if the limits are remembered. To some extent the errors cancel themselves out but this cannot be guaranteed.

Conclusions from the data obtained

- Of the 382 (estimated) spaces available on the roads surveyed there was a clear pattern of parking with no evidence of significantly more vehicles parked during the working day. Indeed parking levels were almost identical. Average occupancy during the day was about 57% compared with evening average occupancy of about 56%.
- With one small exception (South Road) no street was ever fully parked when surveyed and plenty of "free" parking was available if people knew where to look.
- The percentage of residents estimated to be parked during the day was a little over 13% compared to an estimated 44% of non residents and 43% unoccupied.

Raw Data

Road	Daytime numbers	Resident numbers	Evening numbers	Total spaces
Crescent Rd	18	5	16	40
The Crescent	9	4	12	27
Nelson St	13	2	19	23
Swann St	33	7	43	45
Waggs Rd	8	0	20	30
Antrobus St	29	7	25	32
North St	11	4	12	19
Holford St	5	3	9	11
South Rd	5	3	5	5
River St	12	3	11	30

Howey Lane	21	4	11	22
Howey Hill	8	2	13	31
Priesty Fields	4	0	4	12
Park St	7	4	9	12
Willow St	1	0	0	14
Spragg St	16	4	11	25
Worrall St	18	1	8	18
Thomas St	11	1	2	12
Roe St	9	1	1	6
Totals	238	55	231	414

Appendix VI

Comments from N2PC Pressure Group

N2PC would suggest that the present scheme is modified.

It appears that:

- Park Street car park is virtually empty on a daily basis
- Princess Street car park is similarly not well used.
- Residential issues particularly on the west of the town around Antrobus Street remain unresolved.

With these issues in mind N2PC believe that a number of changes could be made which would alleviate some of the issues highlighted and make better use of the towns resources which CEBC can do without actually removing charges.

Residential issues

N2PC propose that the Park Street and Princess Street car parks be used to provide residential and trader car parking.

Examination of Antrobus Street suggests that because it is a one way system, it would be possible to park cars down one side of Antrobus Street in herring bone fashion. This would enable many more residential vehicles to be accommodated. The area would have to be clearly marked as residential parking.

N2PC believe this would not interfere with the passage of vehicles down Antrobus Street.

Parking issues

Car parking charges in the adjacent boroughs in Staffordshire and West Cheshire & Chester start at 9.00am and finish at 3.00pm

N2PC have observed that the number of spaces taken up by 8.30am is minimal and that a start time of 9.00am could easily be accommodated. People who need a car park to park overnight should by this time have left for work the following morning prior to 9.00am. In addition at the other end of the day like the council car parks in Cheshire West and Chester and Staffordshire we recommend that no charge for parking should be made after 3pm in the afternoon.

Trader issues

Traders have suffered a double hit with declining income and increased costs as they have to pay parking charges. Depending upon the number of vehicles this can be hundreds if not thousands of pounds a year. We recommend that CEBC consider a heavily discounted parking permit scheme for trader's vehicles and make use of the available spaces on the Park Street and Princess Street car parks. This will at least start to redress the imbalance that CEBC have created by their charging regime and hopefully go a little way to alleviate further shop closures and business failures by reducing their current account expenditure. N2PC would ask that CEBC take our carefully considered proposals into serious consideration and respond accordingly.