

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF CAR PARKS

**Report of the Review Team
(minus appendix)**

East Cambridgeshire District Council

JANUARY 2001

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BEST VALUE REVIEW OF CAR PARKING

1.0 Scope of Review

1.1 Background

The review has been carried out as part of the District Council's five year Best Value Performance Plan which seeks to obtain an overall 'continuous improvement' in services delivered by the Council.

Car parks were selected for inclusion in the first year of the programme because they were identified as a service priority area by the Citizens Panel research.

1.2 Review Team

The Review Panel was set up in June 2000 and comprised the following members:-

Councillor Donald Adey - Ely Member and Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor James Coppola - Ely Member
Councillor Owen Bethell - Haddenham Member
Ray Harding - Economic and Community Development Manager and Review Team Leader
Delnese Delph - Car Park Ranger with first hand experience of issues relating to the car parks
Shirley Blake - Economic and Community Development Team Leader
Chris Beer - Transport Officer from the Council's Planning Section
Joanne Rogers - Town Centres Co-ordinator joined the team in September 2000 when she took up her new appointment
Martin Brown - Transportation Department at Cambridgeshire County Council invited to join the group in view of his work on the Ely Transport Plan

1.3 Timetable

The timetable for the review was set by the need to make a Stage 1 report to Monitoring Committee in July 2000 and complete the final report for submission to committee in - February 2001.

The Review Team has met six times, including a tour of the Ely car parks, a stakeholder workshop was held on 31st October 2000, and a review work shop viva panel took place on 19th December 2000.

1.4 Scope of the Review

During the Stage I Review process the parameters and terms of reference of the review were more closely defined:-

To focus the review on the management of the car parking service in Ely only. Whilst the District Council also operates car parks in Littleport, Soham and Burwell these do not face the same capacity issues nor account for use of Council resources to the same extent as the car parks in Ely and service improvements are the most pressing in Ely.

The car parks review has been carried out in the context of work, research and discussion of the wider issues of traffic circulation and management and town centre viability in Ely. These include:-

- Pedestrianisation of the High Street – a six month experiment, commencing September 2000, for closure of the High Street on Thursdays and Saturdays. The experiment is being closely monitored to assess it's impact on shopping patterns, including a study by independent consultants, and a decision on whether to continue the pedestrianisation will be dependant upon the results of the monitoring.
- A major study of transport in Ely being prepared by W S Atkins, on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. This is a broad ranging study, looking at all aspects of transport in Ely including public transport and car parking.

Clearly the results of these will have significant implications for future policy for management of the City's car parks and the Action Plan arising out of this report will need to take into account the findings of this work.

During the review a shuttle-bus service was arranged for the Christmas shopping period providing additional shoppers parking at the City of Ely Community College in Downham Road and the Kings School, with a free shuttle-bus service to the town centre. The take up of this service was monitored and provided additional information for this review.

In December 2000 a bid was submitted to the Home Office CCTV Challenge Scheme which will, if successful meet the capital costs of introducing monitored CCTV cameras in the three town centres of Ely, Littleport and Soham and the associated car parks.

1.5 Aims of Review

The aims of the review included:

Comparison - to compare the District Council's car park service in Ely with other district Authorities with towns similar to our own, in particular market towns which also attract tourist visitors. Key issues included:-

- Cost of the service
- Number of spaces provided in comparison with population size, and occupancy rates
- Car Park Management Systems such as charging, inhouse/externalised, short stay/long stay, park and ride, security systems.

Consult - to seek the views of the wide range of stakeholders including users, local commercial interests, statutory agencies, Local Forums and Chamber of Trade and Access Group.

Challenge - exploring options to enable the service to be delivered more effectively, including ways of making an enhanced contribution to sustainability, more effectively managing the distribution of cars in Ely and car park capacity, improving security, quality and attractiveness of car parks for users, and investigating opportunities to achieve savings in the costs of the provision of the service.

Compete - to explore the potential for private sector interest in running the service at a competitive rate either on an outright contract basis or in partnership with the Council.

2.0 Description of Service

2.1 The car parking service is a non-statutory service and is operated under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which enables the Council to provide off-street car parking with a penalty regime. The car parking regulations were last considered and amended by Council on 14 December 1999.

2.2 Car Park Provision

The District Council operates 9 car parks in Ely, providing:-

Long stay spaces	-	602	
Short Stay spaces (3 hour)	-		614
Disabled spaces	-	41	
Coach spaces	-	11	
Parent and child	-	5	
Additional spaces available weekend evenings only	-	135	
Motor cycle spaces	-	6	
CCTV cameras	-	48	
Total car parking spaces	-	1408	

All car parks in Ely are free parking.

Short stay spaces are limited to 3 hour parking.

Long stay spaces are 23 hours out of 24

Car parking penalties are currently £30, (£20 if paid within 14 days)

Directional Signage to all Ely car parks was upgraded in August/September 2000

The car parks are as follows:-

Car Park	Short stay spaces	Long stay spaces	Freehold/Lease of Car Parks
Newnham Street	132	46	ECDC freehold
Forehill	103	176	ECDC freehold
St Mary's Street	72	0	ECDC freehold
Brays Lane	307	0	ECDC freehold but leased to Waitrose
Ship Lane	0	105	ECDC freehold
Barton Road	0	173 (215 evenings and weekends)	ECDC freehold
Cresswells Lane	0	77	Short term lease held by ECDC.Options to renew
Fishermans	0	25	ECDC freehold
The Grange	0	0 (93 evenings and weekends)	ECDC freehold

The lease arrangements on Brays Lane and Cresswells Lane may restrict options on future management of these car parks.

2.3 Resources

Staffing* - 1 full-time plus one part-time Town Centre Ranger, spending approximately 45% of their time on enforcement of car park regulations and 35% on wider car park management duties. The part-time Town Centre Ranger is also Deputy Market Supervisor, and a lot of her time is taken up with market duties. The full-time Town Centre Ranger deals with complaints/repairs, changes videos for the CCTV system 3 times a week (on 8 car parks), compiles car park surveys and user statistics every quarter, prepares maintenance reports every other month. She is also responsible for changing the information at Tourist Information Points and researching new equipment, eg, hand held computers, ticket machines, etc.

Budget*

Expenditure

Employees	31,709
Premises and Land	74,473
Capital Charges	
- Depreciation	50,387
- Interest	98,980
Supplies and Services	17,826
Establishment Expenses	1,601
Central Support Service Charges	22,628
Total Expenditure	<u>317,604</u>

Income

Excess Parking Charges (fines)	9,500
Garage Rent	2,057
Net Expenditure	<u>306,047</u>

Relatively little income is generated from the Council's car parks to offset the cost of providing the service.

*Relates to all the Council car parks

2.4 Service Objectives

Overall Purpose

To provide sufficient accessible car parking places in Ely, Soham, Littleport and Burwell for:-

- residents
- workers
- visitors
- shoppers

Aims and Links to Corporate Objectives

The aims of the car parking service are to:

- support the commercial well being of the town centres in Ely, Soham and Littleport - links with Economic Development theme in the Corporate Plan
- enable people with disabilities to park their vehicles easily and conveniently in order to access their destination - links to access theme in the Corporate Plan
- to provide safe, secure and accessible places for the parking of motor cars, small cars, motor cycles and bicycles in Ely, Soham, Littleport and Burwell - links to the quality services, community well being and access themes, in the Corporate Plan
- to provide safe, secure and accessible places for workers and market traders vehicles - links to the quality service access and community well being themes in the Corporate Plan
- to complement and support the Ely Transport Plan and sustainable transport policies
- to ensure that the Council is achieving best value from its car park service.

Detailed service objectives are attached at Appendix 1 which has identified development of a car parking strategy, improved safety and disabled needs as key priorities. Improved service provision for car parks must be developed within the wider context of this strategy.

The Council's car parks do not meet the standards set by the police for their 'secure design' awards as the CCTV cameras are recorded but not monitored.

2.5 Performance Indicators and Targets

There are no nationally determined performance indicators in respect of provision of car parking facilities.

The Council has therefore generated its own performance indicators in respect of effective management of the car parks service:-

- a) % of car parking spaces available for use during the year - current surveys indicate that occupancy rates for car parks in the central area are high, particularly on Thursdays and Saturdays when 100% occupancy is the norm. Conversely occupancy rates for car parks further away from the centre are much lower, even at peak hours.
See Appendix 2.

The improvement plan will identify target occupancy rates to achieve a more even distribution of parking amongst the car parks and reduce the growing perception that parking is difficult in Ely.

- b) Number of complaints received - mostly relating to car parking penalty charges.
- c) Customer satisfaction rate - in the first East Cambridgeshire Citizens Panel report 58% of residents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the car parking service in the District as a whole (below the panel's level of expectations). Further surveys in April/May 2000 relating to Ely, identified that 46% of users said that they occasionally found it difficult to park. 9% said

- d) that they often had difficulty, 53.8% of residents in the north of the District expressed satisfaction with car parks compared to 69% in the southern part of the District.
- e) Number of penalty tickets issued - currently an average of 500 per annum.
- f) Percentage of tickets issued which are paid - currently 93.72%.

Quarterly surveys of car park usage levels are undertaken by the Council's Town Centre Rangers, with counts of vehicles undertaken twice daily during the same weeks each year to give a consistent picture. Time series analysis are also undertaken to establish any patterns of usage which may be emerging. Car Park customer satisfaction levels are measured through the Council's Citizens Panel surveys and occasional one-off more in depth surveys.

2.6 Future of the Service

Increasing levels of car usage and the forecast population growth of Ely and its catchment area (approximately 10 ml radius) will result in increased pressures on Ely's car parks, particularly those in the central area in the future. More effective methods to manage distribution of car parking in Ely, and the securing of resources to enable this must be key short and medium term objectives of service planning and service objectives should be amended to reflect this.

As indicated earlier the review has also been informed by the developing Ely Transport Strategy being prepared by W S Atkins on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, which has identified development of a car parking strategy, improved safety and disabled needs as key priorities. The consultants are currently considering the role for the introduction of car parking charges with the income ring fenced to upgrading services offered at car parks such as CCTV. Improved service provision for car parks should be developed within the context of this wider strategy.

3.0 CONSULTATION

The best value review programme has incorporated four key consultation exercises, detailed below. Information has also been obtained from an Ely Destination Benchmarking survey amongst tourist visitors to Ely.

a) Listening Week Survey

Two questions were asked on car parking during East Cambridgeshire Listening Week survey during the week commencing 7th October 2000. It should be noted that this is a very small sample size and no background context was provided to the questions.

77% of people do not wish to see the introduction of parking charges in Council car parks to relieve traffic congestion. However, asked if charges were to be introduced, 70% felt that the money raised should only be used for the improvement of car parks and traffic control measures.

b) Stakeholder workshop

A workshop was convened on Tuesday 31st October 2000 to which 50 people attended representing a cross section of Ely's stakeholders: independent retailers, large multiples, Councillors, Ely Chamber of Trade & Commerce.

A short presentation covering car park occupancy rates, location of car parks and numbers of long and short stay spaces was made. The attendees were split up into groups to debate four main issues:-

- Introduction of Charging
- Management of existing car park spaces
- Public Transport
- Long Term Issues

Charging

The main concern regarding the introduction of charging was that it would have an adverse impact on trade given that one of the attractions of Ely City Centre is its free car parking. There was also concern about the level of charges on the low earning retail sector.

If charging were to be introduced then it was felt that there must be a direct relationship between this and tangible improvements to gain public acceptance. Charging should also reflect the premium nature of some car parks, i.e., the nearer to the City Centre, the more expensive. There appeared to be almost unanimous approval of introducing metered charging in the High Street.

Management of existing car parking spaces

There was general acceptance that there should be more short term near the core of the City Centre; long term being placed slightly outside this area. There was a call, from shopkeepers in the main, that ECDC staff parked at The Grange should be made to park elsewhere, thus freeing up 93 spaces from Monday to Friday.

Public Transport

On public transport, there was a recognition of Ely's population growth and that buses would be the easiest of the options to introduce, but that frequency, timing and an attractive package were important to their success.

Park & Ride featured prominently in the public transport discussion, and various suggestions were put forward for further investigation: Park & Ride for employees only, only at weekends and special occasions and so forth. There were quite a few people, however, who felt that Ely was too small to make Park & Ride viable.

A few felt that car parking and how the buses interchange with the trains at Ely Station should be improved.

Long Term Issues

Long term solutions such as building multi-storeys on existing car parks, both over and under ground were suggested.

Full details of the workshop discussions are attached as Appendix 3

c) Citizens Panel Survey

A Citizens Panel Survey carried out in Autumn 2000 incorporated three questions relating to car parks (sample base 376) :-

1) To help reduce the pressure on the car parks do you think that the council should introduce car parking charges?

8.5 % of respondents answered yes , for all car parks

13.8% answered yes, for long stay car parks

2.7% answered yes, for short stay car parks

10.4% answered yes, if the money is used for transport improvements

48.9% answered no

14.6 % answered not applicable as I rarely visit Ely

1.1% did not know or did not respond

2) Do you think you would shop in Ely more or less if charging for car parks was introduced?

9.6% said more, if it meant it was easier to park

15.4% said less, I would always use another town

26.1% said less, occasionally I would go elsewhere

30.6% said same, I would continue to shop in Ely

16.8% said not applicable, I don't presently shop in Ely

1.6% did not know or did not respond

3) Would you consider using a park and ride scheme when visiting Ely?

- 13% said yes, when visiting for a whole day
- 15.4% said yes, whenever I visit Ely
- 58.8% said no, would not consider a park and ride scheme
- 9.8% said not applicable, I do not visit Ely
- 2.9% did not know or did not respond.

Amongst those accepting car park charges there is a clear preference for charges to be imposed on long stay car parks only and for the income generated to be used for transport improvements. Park and ride was popular with only 28.4% of respondents.

d) Ely Destination Benchmarking Survey 2000

This survey was carried out on behalf of the East of England Tourist Board between July and September 2000. Face to face interviews with tourism visitors, (residents and regular/household shoppers were excluded), were carried out by a team of experienced interviewers, adults being sampled on a random basis in various locations within the town, including the Cathedral and the High Street. 400 questionnaires were completed.

The survey found:-

- a) 71% of visitors arriving in Ely by car, van, motorcycle or motorhome indicated that they had used a car park in the town centre.
- b) The survey showed that the majority of respondents had no difficulty parking in Ely. On average during the survey period 86% of visitors using car parks had found it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to find a parking space. A total of 4% of visitors using town centre car parks found it either 'quite difficult' or 'very difficult' to find parking facilities. The remaining 10% of visitors found car parking 'neither particularly difficult or easy'.
- c) Of all visitors using car parks in Ely, 95% rated the cost as 'reasonable' or 'very reasonable'. This is due to most car parks being free of charge.

e) Travel to work questionnaire

As suggested by the workshop a Travel to Work questionnaire was designed. It was mailed out during w/c 20th November 2000 to the business owners, managers and employees to 285 businesses containing approximately 1,700 people working or trading in Ely City Centre.

The questionnaire seeks to ascertain the following:-

- how people get to work
- if by car, where do they park
- days and times of arrival and departure to Ely and whether they leave at lunchtime
- Park & Ride only for people working in Ely
- Park & Ride features that may or may not be important
- Any other comments
- Postcode analysis of home address (where answered)

The initial results from this questionnaire are as follows:-

302 questionnaires were returned which is an 18% response rate.

82% travel in by car; 12% walk to work; 3% cycle, 2% by bus and none said that they used the train.

For car drivers, Forehill was the most popular car park with 33% of employees using it, followed by Barton Road (21%) with 17% being provided with a space on site at the business and 10% parking on street.

The office and retail staff parking profiles were quite similar; the largest difference being that 12% of retail staff parked on the street compared with 6% of office workers.

Regarding Park and Ride, 59% of employees stated that they would not use the service; 22% are unsure if they would and 19% said yes. The most important aspects of the Park & Ride scheme were frequency of bus service and security. Conversely, the least important were soft landscaping, provision of toilets and bus shelters.

4.0 COMPARE

There are no published performance indicators for car parking, consequently it has been necessary to construct the comparative data from scratch by way of a telephone survey. This has proved to be a difficult and time consuming task as responsibility for car parking appears in many different departments, and authorities who do not have an imminent best value review were in many cases reluctant to spend time collecting information for a third party. Nevertheless, the results are fairly consistent and thanks to the persistence of the officer who undertook the survey, reasonably comprehensive.

We also took part in a separate survey undertaken by Ryedale District Council, which included a small number of our family groups and the results of this survey were also considered by way of additional information.

ECDC Survey – Family Group & Neighbouring Authorities

The authorities surveyed were East Cambridgeshire CIPFA Family Group, plus our neighbouring Councils. The latter were included as these contain the competitor towns to our own and any changes whether to our car parking regime or theirs may have a direct impact upon their relative trading position.

Main Findings

1. Average number of car parking spaces per full time equivalent member of staff = 695, ECDC = 866. East Cambridgeshire falls within the top quartile using this measure of performance. Only five authorities had more car parking spaces per member of staff than ECDC, of which Hambleton (1133 spaces per member of staff) uses a disc system.

Where disc systems are used the discs are normally obtained by the public and displayed in the car window to indicate their time of arrival in a car park. The discs are obtainable free from the TIC, shops, or the Council offices. The use of the discs displayed in the car window makes the task of the car park wardens much quicker and easier. Fines are strictly applied if a vehicle fails to display a disc or goes over time. This approach also alleviates the need for the car park warden to operate a strict timed rota, freeing them up to undertake additional tasks.

North Shropshire (1600 spaces per member of staff). This authority applies a light touch to the management of its car parks which is aided by the fact that it does not experience any shortage of spaces, it has no CCTV coverage, and there is a degree of 'hidden' support from their engineers department.

Harborough (5600 spaces per member of staff). This authority applies a minimal effort to the enforcement of its car parking regulations, indeed they have no one at all to enforce them. Consequently this has led to problems with long stay parkers taking up short stay spaces, and commuter parking occupying spaces for long periods of time. The Council propose to review their car parking arrangements as part of their transport plan.

Richmondshire (1482 spaces per member of staff). This Council operates a pay and display system and has one member of staff responsible for enforcement.

They do, however, use separate contractors to empty the machines. Only one car park has CCTV.

Breckland (6877 spaces per member of staff). This is another Council which applies a light touch to their car parking regulations, having just one part time officer to look after well over 2000 spaces spread across five towns.

Conclusion

In light of the pressure on car parking spaces in Ely, it would not be appropriate or desirable to adopt a lighter touch than that presently applied. However, if free car parking is to remain, it is recommended that the 'disc' system be researched within the Improvement Plan.

2. Charging

Free Parking	Charge for all	Charge for some
Mid Devon	Mid Suffolk	Babergh
Forest of Dean	Melton	South Norfolk
East Northants	Tynedale	Bridgenorth
Hambledon	Kennett	
North Shropshire	West Lindsey	
Harborough	North Kesteven	
Daventry	Wychavon	
Breckland	Richmondshire	
East Cambridgeshire	Malvern	
Fenland	St Edmundsbury	
Forest Heath	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk	

It is clear from consideration of the above table that authorities within our family and indeed our neighbouring authorities are almost evenly split between those which charge for parking and those which offer free parking.

Income generated from ticket sales varied enormously, and many authorities did not supply total income figures, however, the survey conducted by Ryedale District Council revealed an average income of £356 per chargeable space and even when the two principal tourism destinations are excluded, this figure totalled £304, which, if applied to ECDC for Ely would potentially generate in the order of £350,000 per annum (gross).

Conclusion

Clearly there would be a considerable degree of consumer resistance to the introduction of charges at a level sufficient to generate funds of this order. Nevertheless, it is clear that the introduction of car parking charges should be considered as a serious option within the Improvement Plan. This will, however, need to be aligned with the principle recommendations and conclusions contained within the forthcoming Ely Transport Strategy.

3. Disabled bays

East Cambridgeshire District Council has 45 designated disabled bays, representing 3.5% of the total bays available. This compares to an average of 2.1% amongst the CIPFA Family Group. Only one authority, Breckland (4.1%) has a higher proportion of disabled bays than ECDC. Again, ECDC falls within the top quartile using this measure of performance.

4. Expenditure

It proved very difficult to obtain useable comparable expenditure figures from the ECDC survey, nevertheless, some tentative conclusions can be drawn from the information supplied through the combination of the two surveys.

Adjusting the Ryedale District Council survey for information secured through our own survey produced the following information:

		Average	ECDC	Difference
	Cost per space	£268.64	£266.00	+£2.64
Direct Wages	Cost per space	£13.97	£17.64	(£3.67)
Salaries	Cost per space	£17.47	£2.76	+£14.71
Support Services	Cost per space	£22.41	£13.59	+£8.82
Contract Payments	Cost per space	£24.41	£29.53	(£5.12)
Capital Charges	Cost per space	£93.03	£99.57	(£6.54)
Other Charges	Cost per space	£97.34	£63.37	+£33.97

Cost per Chargeable Space

East Cambridgeshire cost per space falls slightly below the survey group average, which of course, include a range of delivery approaches. In order to assess in more detail the differences between East Cambridgeshire costs and those of the rest of the survey group, it is necessary to consider the individual categories of expenditure.

As indicated in the table above, direct wages are above the group average by some 25%. However, this is offset by a substantially lower figure for salary costs. This may relate to the way authorities categorise staffing costs between 'direct wages and salaries' and of course the way in which different authorities allocate 'management' salaries. Taken together East Cambridgeshire costs fall well below the survey average.

Support services costs also fall well below (39%) the survey groups average, but our contract payments are some 20% higher. This may well relate to whether the authorities carry out maintenance, repair, CCTV and other related work in house, or put it out to contract. Again, overall, our costs fall well below the survey group average for these two categories taken together.

Capital Charges at East Cambridgeshire are slightly higher (7%) than the survey group average which is likely to reflect factors such as land prices, rateable value and previous levels of capital expenditure.

With respect to the final category, other charges, East Cambridgeshire costs are some 35% below the survey group average, however, this appears to relate to the fact that several of the authorities allocated the majority of their costs to this category rather than provide a more detailed breakdown.

Conclusion

Cost per car parking space in East Cambridgeshire fall below the survey group average and are tightly controlled. It will, however, be important to keep the costs tightly controlled during the next five years without sacrificing the quality of the car park environment or the maintenance of the equipment located thereon.

A full copy of the comparative report is attached at appendix (4) and a copy if the financial comparison spreadsheet prepared by Ryedale District Council is attached at appendix (5).

5.0 CHALLENGE

5.1 Why provide the service at all?

This question was examined by the review group. The rationale for the provision of the service is:

- Support the commercial well being of the town centres in Ely, Soham and Littleport – links to Economic Development theme in the Corporate Plan.
- Enable people with disabilities to park their vehicles easily and conveniently in order to access their destination – links to access theme in the Corporate Plan.
- To provide safe secure and accessible places for the parking of motor cars, small cars, motor cycles and bicycles in Ely, Soham, Littleport and Burwell – links to the quality of services, community well being, and access themes, in the Corporate Plan.
- To provide safe, secure and accessible places for workers and market traders vehicles – links to the quality of service, access, and community well being themes in the Corporate Plan.
- To complement and support the Ely Transport Plan and sustainable transport policies.
- To ensure that the Council is achieving best value from its car park service.

The review group concluded from its consideration of the aims of the service as described above; the high priority attached to the service by the Council's Citizen's Panel, (joint third highest priority); the positive response to the car parks best value workshop, (attended by almost 50 residents and business proprietors); the public response via the media, (Ely Standard), to car parking issues; the importance placed on the provision by the Civic Trust Regeneration unit report on the Town Centre Strategy for Ely; and the strategic significance of the service as highlighted in the Ely Transport Plan (draft), produced by W S Atkins on behalf of the County Council, that there is an exceptionally powerful justification for the provision of the service.

5.2 Why provide the service in this way?

Here there are some key questions for consideration some of which will require further analysis and study within the Improvement Plan. The issues are:-

1) Free Parking

At the present time the Council does not charge for parking at all. Whilst there is clearly a justification for this policy in Soham and Littleport in terms of the aim to support the commercial well being of these town centres where retail trading is in a very fragile position, this is not the case in Ely where trading conditions are buoyant, with few vacant shop units and increasing numbers of shoppers as evidenced by the car park usage figures. Factors which may mitigate against the introduction of charges in Ely relate primarily to the impact on the retail health of the town centre. In particular, the principle competitor town of Newmarket does not currently charge for parking and has no plans to do so at the present time, although it may introduce charges for parking on the market square.

Traders have expressed serious concerns that the introduction of charges in Ely would lead to a significant loss of trade to Newmarket. Such a move would also displace some vehicles onto street car parking.

On the other hand, there are distinct advantages to the introduction of charges, in particular:-

- The potential to generate a significant stream to offset the cost of the service;
- The potential to generate revenue to finance the introduction of an enhanced level of security via a monitored CCTV scheme;
- The opportunity to use the price mechanism to direct cars from the most heavily used car parks towards those which are at present underused.

2) The balance of long stay vs. short stay.

There are 602 long stay and 614 short stay spaces, given the increasing levels of pressure upon the short stay spaces and their importance to the retail/business sector there is a powerful case for adjusting this balance by turning over at least some of the long stay spaces close to the town centre (Newnham Street and/or Forehill) to short stay parking.

This approach would encourage a higher turnover of vehicles in the town, potentially boost trading levels and encourage staff/employees to use car parks which are currently underused. This would, however, require a change in the car parking regulations, a period of consultation and force workers to walk further to work. It may also lead to some increase in on street car parking which would not be popular with local residents. There will also be some difficulty in reconfiguring the Forehill car park to make it clear which spaces are for short stay and which are for long stay.

3) Monitoring/enforcement.

This task is currently undertaken by the Town Centre Rangers by means of a timed rota of visits to the car parks, noting the vehicle registration numbers in a book and checking for their presence 3¼ hours later. Alternative methods of undertaking the task involve:

- Use of hand held computers
- Use of timed discs given out free to motorists
- Use of tickets, dispensed from a ticket machine

Changing the methodology of enforcement would enable the staff to be deployed with greater flexibility and would reduce the current rigidities in the system. It may also make the enforcement role easier and lead to an increased income from fines.

This issue should clearly be researched in more depth via the Improvement Plan, including visits to authorities where other methods are in use.

4) Encourage more motorists to use alternative forms of transport to travel to Ely.

There are a number of steps which might be considered to reduce the number of motorists who drive into Ely. Options which need to be considered and addressed include park & ride, increased use of cycling, walking and buses. Each of these options is considered in depth in the Ely Transport Strategy. It may therefore be necessary to delay the finalisation of the Improvement Plan until the Ely Transport Strategy is published.

5.3 How can the car parking service make an enhanced contribution to sustainability?

The principle contribution which the car parking service can make towards the Council's sustainability agenda is through the Ely Transport Strategy and the contribution of the introduction of car parking charges, (and the way in which the income generated is utilised). Clearly, charging would discourage a certain amount of car usage, and positive measures to encourage alternative forms of transport will also contribute towards this aim.

5.4 Is there an affordable way in which security in the car parks can be improved?

Research undertaken by the Town Centre Co-ordinator and officers from the Police Crime Reduction Unit have identified an affordable option to enhance security in the Council's car parks via the replacement of the existing (elderly) unmonitored scheme with a new monitored scheme. Current proposals under development centre around a bid to the Home Office CCTV Challenge Scheme which will, if successful, meet the capital costs of introducing monitored CCTV cameras in the three town centres of Ely, Soham and Littleport, and the associated car parks. Revenue costs would be minimised by 'buying in' to the existing monitored centre run by Cambridge. This approach would entail a revenue cost of circa £65,000 per annum, which could be comfortably met via the introduction of a modest level of car parking charges. A survey of public attitudes to this 'trade off' revealed a majority in favour of this approach, particularly amongst women.

5.5 Conclusions

There is a powerful economic and social case for the continued provision of a car parking service in the District's three principal towns.

Within Ely there are strong arguments for reducing the number of available long stay spaces with a commensurate increase in the number of short stay spaces.

There is sufficient evidence to warrant investigation and research into alternative methods of enforcement/monitoring of compliance with the car parking regulations and to include this measure in the Improvement Plan.

The car parking service working in harmony with the Ely Transport Strategy can, and should, make a positive contribution to the Council's sustainability agenda.

Security in the car parks can be enhanced via the introduction of a monitored CCTV scheme provided we are successful with a bid to meet the capital costs to the Home Office and that a modest level of car parking charges be introduced.

6.0 COMPETE

The comparative analysis undertaken and received in the 'compare' section of this report clearly demonstrates that ECDC's costs per car parking space fall below the average for similar authorities despite the inclusion in the survey of authorities which undertake very 'light touch' management regimes.

Whilst we are delivering a service with no (or low) income generation, there is unlikely to be any serious interest from the private sector in taking on the service.

In any event, our direct costs of service delivery are exceptionally low, relating primarily to 1½ members of staff. Most of the other costs would be incurred by the authority in any event, as they relate to central support service charges, capital charges and management input, all of which would merely be redistributed to other services if the car parking service were to be taken on by an alternative provider.

Equally, it is considered unlikely that an alternative provider would be able to deliver the service at a reduced cost as they would of course be seeking to include a profit figure and a contribution to their overheads. Therefore, as a small, low cost service there would appear to be little benefit in seeking to attract interest from private sector providers. This is born out by the complete lack of response received from enquiries made by the Economic & Community Development Manager in response to a circular received from one of the major private sector operators.

A move to externalise the provision would also reduce the Council's flexibility in terms of the future management of the service to meet economic, social and environmental objectives. It would also lead to a loss in flexibility in terms of the other tasks performed by the Town Centre Rangers, including acting as deputy market supervisors, dealing with information provision, providing an information service to the public, and undertaking other tasks allocated by their line manager from time to time.

It may however, in the future, be worth considering moving the management of the service to the town centre partnerships in order to generate a sustainable income stream for these partnerships if they themselves take on a service management role as has been the case in a small number of large cities, such as Coventry in the West Midlands.

On balance, therefore, the review group did not feel that there was sufficient evidence to warrant the expense and disruption of a market testing exercise, whether in terms of potential service improvements or in terms of potential cost savings.

7.0 OPTIONS

The review team have identified seven options to improve the current management and distribution of cars in the existing car parks:

Option 1: Leave car parking as it is.

The “do nothing” option would not take into account the continued growth of Ely’s catchment area population, predicted to grow from 67,087 in 1997 to 77,850 in 2007. Most of this new housing will be car owning households and therefore the current stock of car parking spaces will not be able to cope with this growth.

Option 2a: Convert all long stay spaces in centrally located City Centre car parks to short stay

Currently the balance of short versus long stay spaces is as follows:-

Car Park	Short Stay	Long Stay
Newnham Street	132	46
Forehill	103	176
St. Mary’s Street	72	0
Bray’s Lane	307	0
Ship Lane	0	105
Barton Road	0	173 (215*)
Cresswells Lane	0	77
Fishermans	0	25
The Grange	0	0 (93*)
Total	614	602 (737*)

*evenings & weekends

If all the long stay spaces in the centrally located car parks, i.e., Forehill, Newnham Street and Barton Road were converted to short stay then this would ‘create’ 437 additional short stay spaces. However, this would create car parking problems for some City Centre businesses and adversely impact on tourists/visitors who are currently directed to Barton Road.

Option 2b: Convert some of the centrally located City Centre spaces to short stay

A more modest alternative which would still meet our requirements in the short term would be to convert the long stay spaces at Newnham Street, together with 50% of them at Forehill, producing an additional 134 spaces. This would help to maximise the use of the Cresswells Lane car park, but may also put pressure on the Ship Lane car park, which may have an adverse impact on The Maltings – await Travel to Work Questionnaire survey results.

Option 3: Create more spaces by redesigning bays from straight to chevron

This suggestion has been followed up using Forehill as an example and shows, in this case, that 33 spaces of the existing 279 spaces would be lost (-12%). Nevertheless this option is being investigated further, as it may be possible to achieve a net increase in spaces by reducing the width of the aisles if the chevron layout is used.

The layout of Brays Lane car park is currently being redesigned to improve layout, traffic flow and pedestrian safety issues.

Option 4: Improve current enforcement of the car park regulations

Currently, the two centre rangers patrol the car parks and write down potential offenders details in a book. This is laborious and time consuming. A number of updated methods could be employed thus enabling more efficient and effective enforcement of the regulations and discouraging abuse of the long and short stay parking:

- Pay & Display
- Computerised hand held logging that would automatically compute time stayed, issue tickets, etc.
- Display

Option 5: Park & Ride

Although park & ride services work effectively in a large number of major towns and cities in the U.K., it is generally accepted that at least two of the following conditions must prevail for a scheme to operate successfully:-

1. Severe traffic congestion in gaining access to the town centre with park and ride offering faster journey times by use of bus priorities
2. Minimal parking spaces available in town centres and/or high parking charges
3. Convenient park and ride car park and frequent, high quality, low cost bus service

Clearly, Ely does not fulfil any of these conditions at the moment. Therefore, any introduction of park and ride in Ely must be part of a long term strategy. An alternative approach for a dual use car park and ride scheme to serve both Ely and Cambridge is advocated in early drafts of the Ely Transport Strategy, and any discussion on this option should be reserved until the County Council Report has been launched and adopted.

Please see Appendix (6)

Option 6: Introduce charging

This option would undoubtedly be unpopular, at least in the short term if it were to be introduced, however, it would bring a number of benefits to Ely's City Centre:

- Earn revenue to contribute towards the existing subsidy from ECDC expenditure of £306,000 per annum in maintaining and running the car parks in the District.
- Generate revenue to introduce a number of improvements such as a high quality, monitored town centre and car parking CCTV system.
- Generate revenue to support public transport initiatives.
- Act as rent for a commodity in short supply and enable the Council to utilise the price mechanism to spread vehicles more evenly between the more and less popular car parks.

For example (draft figures – not accurate)

Expenditure items and costs	Cumulative expenditure item estimate (£)*	Some car parking charging scenarios
Current expenditure is £317,604	306,047	Assume low usage Short term – fixed rate of £1.00 for 3 hours. Long term – fixed rate of £2.00. Income £384,384
Add car park and town centre CCTV – monitoring of scheme only £58,550 (assume capitalisation of line rental)	364,597	Assume low usage Short term – 50p/hour for average stay of 2 hours Long term – fixed rate of £2.00 Income £384,384
Add car park and town centre CCTV – add line rental £48,750	414,347	
Extend current part time Town Centre Ranger position to full time		
Other expenditure items to consider could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved bus frequency from villages to Ely • Standard bus fare from villages to Ely throughout County • Shuttle bus service From outlying car parks • More staff to patrol car parks 	Not available Awaiting publication of Ely Transport Strategy.	Assume high usage Short term – fixed charge of £1.00 for 3 hours Long term – fixed charge of £2.00 Income £676,416 Assume high usage Short term – 50p/hour for average stay of 2 hours Long term – fixed charge of £2.00 Income £676,416

*takes into account the current £11,557 revenue earned for excess car parking charges and garage rental.

The dis-benefits would be a short term adverse effect on town centre trade and loss of customers temporarily to towns such as Newmarket.

Levels of car charging scenarios

In calculating the projected annual income, the following assumptions have been made. (Based on quarterly survey information 6/97 – 7/99)

- Average total number of cars in Ely per day = 850
- Proportion of long stay to short stay = 45:55, therefore average daily number of cars: 382 Long Stay, 468 Short Stay
- Car park charges would be introduced Monday –Saturday only
- Turnover of cars; Long stay =1x
Short Stay Low =1x
Medium =2x
High =3x
- All cars currently using the car parks will continue to use the car parks after charges have been introduced.

Charging scenarios

1. Fixed charge for up to 3 hours; fixed charge for up to 23 hours

Short stay usage		Fixed charge for up to 3 hours			
		£0.30	£0.50	£1.00	
Low	1	£103,397	£132,600	£205,608	Assume a long stay charge of £0.50
Medium	2	£147,202	£205,608	£351,624	
High	3	£191,006	£278,616	£497,640	

Short Stay usage		Fixed charge for up to 3 hours			
		£0.30	£0.50	£1.00	
Low	1	£162,989	£192,192	£265,200	Assume a long stay charge of £1.00
Medium	2	£206,794	£265,200	£411,216	
High	3	£250,598	£338,208	£557,232	

Short Stay usage		Fixed charge for up to 3 hours			
		£0.30	£0.50	£1.00	
Low	1	£222,581	£251,784	£324,792	Assume a long stay charge of £1.50
Medium	2	£266,386	£324,792	£470,808	
High	3	£310,190	£397,800	£616,824	

Short Stay usage		Fixed charge for up to 3 hours			
		£0.30	£0.50	£1.00	
Low	1	£282,173	£311,376	£384,384	Assume a long stay charge of £2.00
Medium	2	£325,978	£384,384	£530,400	
High	3	£369,782	£457,392	£676,416	

2. Short stay charged per hour; long stay fixed

Short Stay usage		Charges per hour up to 3 hours			Average stay 1 hour
		£0.10	£0.30	£0.50	
Low	1	£74,194	£103,397	£132,600	Assume a long stay charge of £0.50
Medium	2	£88,795	£147,202	£205,608	
High	3	£103,397	£191,006	£278,616	

Short Stay usage		Charges per hour up to 3 hours			Average stay 2 hours
		£0.10	£0.30	£0.50	
Low	1	£148,387	£206,794	£265,200	Assume a long stay charge of £1.00
Medium	2	£177,590	£294,403	£411,216	
High	3	£206,794	£382,013	£557,232	

Short Stay usage		Charges per hour up to 3 hours			Average stay 2 hours
		£0.10	£0.30	£0.50	
Low	1	£267,571	£325,978	£384,384	Assume a long stay charge of £2.00
Medium	2	£296,774	£413,587	£530,400	
High	3	£325,978	£501,197	£676,416	

Option 7: Use of Spaces at The Grange

The public consultation identified the potential for the current car park reserved for the Grange staff and visitors Monday – Friday to be made available for public use.

This would have the advantages of releasing additional spaces on Monday – Fridays; provide short stay parking close to the town centre, and would help meet peak demand on Thursdays and Fridays.

However, it would not address the peak Saturday periods, (these spaces already being available on Saturdays, Sundays and evenings). Staff and ECDC visitors displaced from the Grange would need to park elsewhere in the City, either in long-stay car parks or on-street.

Further investigations of this option will need to be carried out via the Improvement Plan.

Option 8: Alternatives to car use

Proposals to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport will be essential to reduce longer term pressure on car parks in Ely. This issue is to be addressed through the Ely Transport Plan and the Best Value Improvement Plan will need to complement and reinforce this approach.

8.0 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The report concludes that car parking in Ely has become an issue of increasing concern over the past 2 years. A number of factors have combined to contribute to the current situation including:-

- Loss of the old cattle market unofficial car parking space
- Loss of old Tesco's unofficial car park
- Opening of the new Cloisters development which has increased the popularity of the Brays Lane Car Park.
- Population growth
- Increases in car ownership.

The cumulative impact of these changes is that there is now moderate to severe pressure on all of the Council's Car Parks on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. In the case of the Brays Lane Car Park this is now becoming very overcrowded, with queues of cars circulating to find spaces at peak times.

This situation is resulting in expressions of concern from retailers that the parking situation may be leading to a loss of trade with claims that customers, particularly those who live equidistant between Ely and rural towns such as Newmarket may choose to go elsewhere for their shopping. Any factors which undermine the competitiveness of the town centre clearly need to be addressed, as a matter of some urgency.

The research reveals a high level of demand from employees of town centre businesses for centrally located parking facilities and there is some evidence of the use of 'shoppers' car parks by employees. Although the idea of an employees park and ride scheme has been muted by the Chamber of Trade the research has identified only limited interest from those who would be expected to use it. The shuttle bus experiment was popular with those who used it, but will take time and improved publicity to increase its usage.

Notwithstanding the pressure on the car parking spaces neither the Best Value Review Team nor the Consultants engaged by the County Council to prepare the Ely Transport plan, have been able to identify any 'acceptable' opportunities to create additional, centrally located surface level car parks.

In terms of vehicle crime in the parks, whilst the levels are not high, it has been a persistent issue. The reluctance to use the Cresswells Lane Car Park has also been linked not only to its perceived distance from the town centre, but also to the 'fear of crime' issue, emphasised by its relatively poor standard/quality.

Demand management will clearly be a major factor in the improvement plan given the conclusions outlined above, however there are clear signs of consumer resistance to the introduction of car parking charges. Any changes to the car parking regime will of course need to take account of both the short term nature of the Cresswells Lane lease, and the long lease held by Waitrose on the Brays Lane Car Park. Waitrose have already indicated that they would only consider the introduction of charges provided that parking for their own customers remains free and that it is introduced at no cost to the company. Pay and display is not seen as an acceptable approach in this regard.

Three other important factors which the panel considered in preparing the improvement plan were; the current cost of the service (over £300,000 including the small number of car parks at Soham, Littleport and Burwell); the high level of usage of the car parks (up to 30%) by people who actually live in Ely itself; and the limitations flowing from the Councils 'low tech' approach to the supervision of the car parks.

Finally, the Review Panel has sought to take on board the principal themes emerging from the Ely Transport Plan, which will have considerable impact on the wider transportation pattern of the City. As the full report was unavailable at the time this report was prepared a degree of flexibility has to be built into the improvement plan, which may need to be revised/revisited once the Ely Transport Plan has been formally adopted.

In order to address these issues a package of initiatives have been developed, these have been grouped together under the following headings:-

- Rebalancing the long stay/short stay provision.
- Expand the total number of Car Parking spaces.
- Demand Management Measures.
- Securing Better Use of existing Car Parks
- Special Occasion Initiatives
- Ely Transport Plan Implementation.
- Practical improvements to the management regime
- Production of performance indicators

In drafting the proposals the Review Panel had to take on board the principal constraints and trends facing the Council:-

- The Council has severe limitations on its available capital resources.
- Many of the measures are integral parts of a coherent package and will not be effective in isolation ie. Increased and improved buses will not be well used unless demand management measures are also introduced.
- Car usage and demand for spaces to park in Ely will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.
- The problems facing Ely are not unique and are faced by every moderately successful market town in the UK.
- The Council is likely to be reducing rather than increasing its revenue budget in future years.
- Major new developments will be expensive and are beyond the capacity of the Council at the present time. The absence of car parking charges would mean that it could be extremely difficult attracting private finance, without the guarantee of a revenue stream for the Council itself.
- There are no simple solutions to these problems, nor will it be possible to solve them 'once and for all'.

Action	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Rebalance long stay/short stay provision.	<p>Forehill Car Park, ~ reduce the number of long stay spaces and increase the number of short stay spaces.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Research and consult on proposals to reduce the parking time at St Mary Street and Brays Lane</p>	<p>Paradise car park. Delete the long stay spaces and replace with short stay only</p> <p>---</p> <p>Implement the results of the consultation on revised parking times.</p>		<p>Review the need for further action on the short stay/long stay balance.</p>	
Achieve better use of the existing car parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare scheme to improve the layout and increase the number of spaces at Brays Lane • Submit a proposal for a CCTV (monitored) scheme • Seek to negotiate an extension to the Cresswells Lane lease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Brays Lane scheme • Implement CCTV scheme if bid is successful • Prepare scheme to improve pedestrian signage and information from/to all car parks • Upgrade Cresswells Lane Car Parks, including improved lighting, resurface concrete section, landscaping plus enhanced lighting in Cresswells Lane itself, (subject to the successful outcome of the lease extension negotiation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Pedestrian signage scheme, and improve the information available to motorists in the car parks 		

Special Occasions Initiatives (Xmas, Open University Congregation etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the use of the Shuttle bus scheme, supported by better signage and publicity 	On going	On going	On going	On going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the overspill site at the Kings School when available 	On going	On going	On going	On going
Demand Management		<p>Feasibility study into the impact and desirability of introducing car park charging for ~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long stay only Short stay only Charges for all car parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an appropriate charging regime if the feasibility study supports this approach Develop a residents parking scheme if it is deemed to be necessary Introduce metered charging in High St/Market Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and review the on street car parking situation and adjust the residents scheme if necessary 	
Expand the total number of car parking spaces available		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to the demand on Cresswells Lane Car Park, prepare an expansion scheme for the car park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the expansion scheme at Cresswells Car Park. Carry out a feasibility study into the potential to add to the number of spaces at either Forehill or Brays Lane Car Parks by either ‘decking’ the latter or using the levels to extend the former. The study to incorporate technical and financing issues including private finance and/or public/private finance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research alternative long term opportunities to identify new car parking space through relocations of existing uses.. In the event that a feasible option can be identified to expand on existing car parks, take forward the preferred option (subject to funding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On going monitoring of the situation, and opportunistic responses

Ely Transport Plan Implementation (subject to adjustment after the formal publication and consideration of the Ely Transport Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cycling facilities • Feasibility Study for a transport interchange at Ely Railway Station. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going • Feasibility Study Ely/Cambridge joint park and ride scheme • Implementation of transport interchange • Improve and increase the number of buses serving Ely, including the new areas of housing (subject to funding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going • Implement the park & ride scheme if considered feasible (subject to resource availability) • On going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going • Monitor & evaluate the scheme • On going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going • On going
Practical improvements to the Management/ Supervisory Regime for the car parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce hand held mini computers for the recording of vehicle registration, issue of warning letters, tickets, etc. • Adopt the 'local performance indicators' recommended by the Audit Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the welcome and information signs at the entrances to the car parks • Review the need for additional performance indicators to assist in measuring the impact of the measures taken/proposed to improve the car parking service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the role of the Towns Centre Rangers in the light of decisions made with respect to car park charges • Implement revised ECDC performance indicators • Mid term review of Car Parks Improvement Plan. Revise and amend as necessary. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence preparations for best value review 2005

Appendix 3 – Responses to Workshop Sessions 31.10.00

Charging

Charging can be selective and reflect the “premium “ nature of certain car parks and spaces.
Selective – encourage people to use others
Use pricing mechanism across all car parks – more expensive closer to town; less expensive further away

Maybe a few meters on street parking such as the High Street
High Street – 20p first half hour; £1.00 thereafter
Market Square – 20p first half hour; £1.00 thereafter
Pay & Display

Charging on x visibly
Charging demands an “identifiable return” to gain public acceptance
Charging should provide more provision

Care over impact on residents – protection
No to controlled parking zone (on street)
No residents’ season tickets

No to charging
Strong attraction to Ely is its free parking
Charging would have a bad impact on trade/business
Charging would not manage the location of vehicles
Long Stay charging has impact on low wage earners in retail sector
Cost of collection may outweigh revenue gained

ECDC v other towns – Newmarket

Management

Short term car parking near the town centre; long term on the outskirts

Change short versus long term balance as follows:-

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
| - Newnham Street | | Short term – strictly policed |
| - Forehill | | |
| - St. Mary's | | |
| - Bray's Lane | | |
| - The Grange | | |
| - Cresswells Lane | _____ | ECDC employees with transport link |
| - Ship Lane | | Long Stay |
| - Barton Road | | |
| - Fisherman's | | |

Some people felt that Barton Road should be short stay only

Make all of Forehill short term only

Lack of short term is particularly a problem on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays

Insufficient long term after 8.30am

Non-paying time clock/self clocking/Pay & Display type to help town centre wardens monitor spaces

Rigorously police short term in town centre

Abuse of disabled spaces

Electronic signboards a low priority/not viable

Signing critical, but VMS not necessarily viable here

Electronic signs linked to an Ely Website

Signage for shopping in Newnham Street

Temporary signage more easily turned around by the foolish

More signage

Visitors need to have special consideration

3 hours not enough for tourists

Put coaches out of town and inform operators

Waitrose – redesign circulation, one entry and exit point creates bottlenecks – not enough car parking spaces

Safety/security issues (personal & property) especially outlying car parks

CCTV cameras

More visible traffic wardens, car park wardens and police

Improve access from car parks to key locations in town centre locations

Walking routes need to be improved

All Grange and Chapel Street ECDC staff to Cresswell's Lane with bus link

Encourage ECDC employees to park elsewhere

Bring Market Place/Red Square back for car parking – much disputed

Public Transport

Response to Ely's growth problems

Offers a choice to some and is essential to others

More buses needed both for City and Villages – times critical

More buses planned for new residential estates

Shuttle bus around Ely

Buses – timing – villages

Need to look at bus charges

Buses standard fare

City Service – hourly shuttle including villages and station – standard fare

Buses will not run if it is not profitable

Buses need to be accessible and an attractive "package"

Low loader buses – Stagecoach – prams/disabled/elderly

Need to advertise – use newspapers/radio etc

Park & Ride should be investigated

Park & Ride implies some form of restraint in City Centre

Park & Ride only for special occasions

Park & Ride only at weekends

No to Park & Ride – okay for big cities – in Ely it is “pop in and shop”

Employees Park & Ride – investigate for workers only not general public

Employees Park & Ride car park and bus links – timing – pricing critical – low wage earners

Sites suggested are: Lancaster Way – coming in from Witchford Road – industrial sites

All long stay should be transferred to Willow Walk and Pocket Park with a shuttle bus service

Service say between 8.00am to 9.00am and return trips between 5.00pm and 6.00pm

Reverse traffic flow, down Market Street and High Street, single flow

Traffic flow reversed – access to & from easier

Use mini-roundabouts instead of traffic lights should speed up traffic flow

Lack of car parking spaces at Ely Station – taking up Ship Lane car park spaces – unused

Railtrack land – shuttle bus service

Links from Station to City Centre irrelevant

Ely Station is not relevant

Long Term

Multi-story decking above and underground – investigate:-

- Forehill
- Broad Street
- Bray's Lane/Waitrose
- Paradise – 3 decks up and 2 decks underground
- Jewson Site
- Pocket Park/Lisle Lane
- Deans Meadow – much disputed
- Move Police & Ambulance Station

Investigate whether chevron/herringbone shape car parking would create extra spaces in car parks

Improve traffic flow within all existing car parks

Others

Investigate ideal retail floor space/car parking spaces correlation

Further work needed on demand amongst employees, market day, user categories