

# Regeneration, Environment, Housing & Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny

## Car Parks Working Group Initial Report

**January 2006**



**Walsall** Council

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 It was agreed at the meeting of Regeneration, Environment, Housing and Community Safety on 6 July 2005 to establish a working group to review parking issues within the Borough. This followed a number of queries and concerns being raised by Scrutiny Members that parking provision and management within the borough was not adequately providing for the current or predicted future needs of Walsall and its development and regeneration aspirations.
- 1.2 The outcomes of the working group would also be used to feed into the activities of consultants, Faber Maunsell, commissioned to undertake a full review of current and predicted future parking provision and management needs for the authority. The outcomes of this work, due to report at the end of March 2006, will lead to the development of a new parking strategy for the authority.

## **2. REMIT OF THE WORKING GROUP**

- 2.1 The first meeting of the working group was held on 22 August 2005, when officers outlined the current provision and management arrangements for parking within the authority, together with anticipated changes resulting from known regeneration or transport improvement proposals. These have been outlined in Sections 4 and 5.
- 2.2 It was at this meeting when the working group agreed that a full review of all parking issues for Walsall would be too wide in the time available to permit a detailed investigation leading to positive recommendations for improvement. Also the timing of such a review would be best delayed until the findings of the consultants work to inform the development of a parking strategy for the authority had been produced. It was therefore agreed that the remit of the working group would be:
- To undertake a full review of Council Staff parking provision in Walsall Town Centre
  - To delay a review of the wider parking issues for the authority until the completion of the consultants work to inform the development of a new parking strategy for Walsall.
- 2.3 Parking provision for council staff was chosen as it had a key influence in how the council's own parking stock is managed and used within the town centre. The large demand for parking from council staff also restricts the availability of parking for visitors and other businesses within the town centre, which in the longer term, could have negative impacts on the regeneration aspirations for Walsall.



### 3. LEGISLATIVE STATUS OF SCRUTINY

3.1 The main legislative provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 in relation to scrutiny, empowers overview and scrutiny panels and their members to:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made by Cabinet and Council Officers in relation to key decisions
- actions carried out within the remit of the council, and
- the performance of the council in relation to targets and policy objectives


3.2 Walsall Council commits to a Vision that is unique and special to Walsall, as it is based on the views, wishes and needs of local people. It is shared and supported by our partners, our staff and our members, whilst being underpinned by targeted actions to provide a firm foundation for the future. The vision itself:

- focuses the efforts of all the employees of the council on the issues that matter to citizens
- ensures that we put resources firmly behind their priorities
- strengthens our joint working with partners to deliver the overall community strategy for the borough
- enables local people and our partners to judge how well we are doing and whether we are achieving our objectives.

3.3 The vision priorities are:

1. **Ensure a clean and green borough**
2. **Make it easier for people to get around**
3. **Ensure all people are safe and secure**
4. Make our schools great
5. Make Walsall a healthy and caring place
6. Encourage everyone to feel proud of Walsall
7. **Make it easier to access local services**
8. **Strengthen the local economy**
9. **Listen to what people want**
10. Transform Walsall into an excellent local authority

3.4 The work undertaken for this review and the recommendations made will have a positive impact on a large number of the above vision priorities. Those highlighted have been identified as benefiting most from this piece of work.

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- 3.5 This scrutiny review has been carried out in accordance with the rules of procedure arrangements detailed in part 4 of the constitution of Walsall Council (amended September 2003).

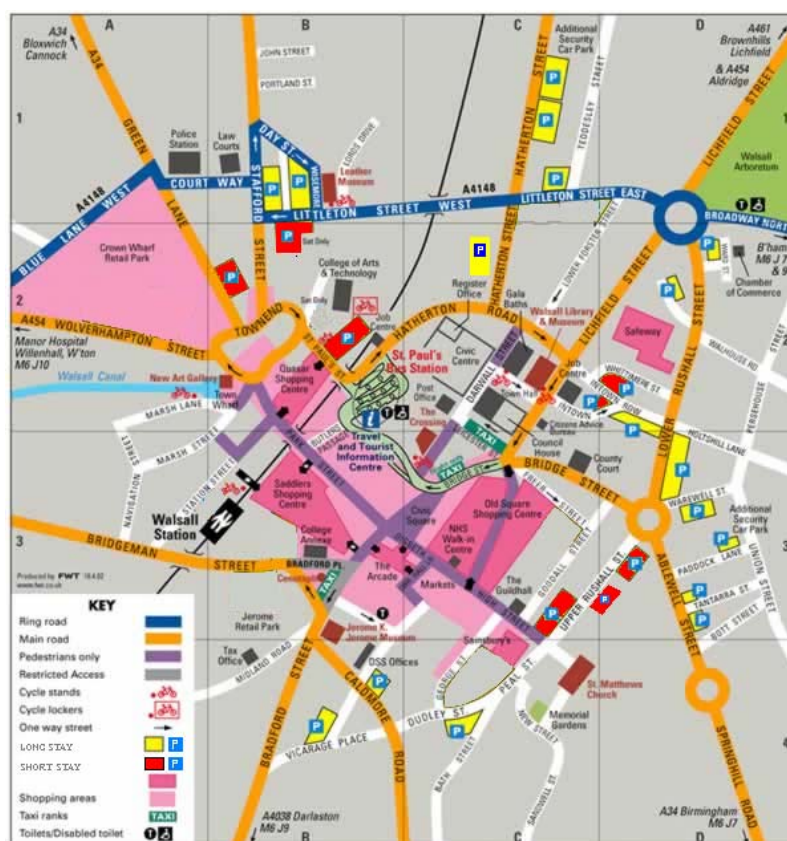


## 4. CURRENT PARKING PROFILE FOR WALSALL TOWN CENTRE

### 4.1 Numbers and Types of Car Parks and Spaces

4.1.1 Figure 1 illustrates the locations of the council operated long and short stay car parks within Walsall Town Centre, with Table 1 outlining the numbers of spaces.

**Figure 1: Current Location of Council Car Parks within Walsall Town Centre**



**Table 1: Breakdown of Parking Stock in Town Centre**

	Number of Car Parks	Number of Spaces
Short Stay Car Parks	8	511
Long Stay Car Parks	18	999
Private Car Parks	5	2034
Council Permit Only CP	3	152
Additional Security	3	297
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3993</b>

4.1.2 Council Permit Only Car Parks are Challenge, Civic Centre Underground and Council House Frontage.

## 4.2 Council Staff Parking Permits

4.2.1 At the time of writing this report, the Council had issued the following staff parking permits:

- 776 Essential and Casual Car User permits
- 107 Departmental passes
- 325 No car allowance passes

4.2.2 This makes a total number of passes issued by the council of 1208. A full breakdown, relating them to specific car parks, is detailed in Appendix A.

## 4.3 Income Generated

4.3.1 Table 2 below summarises the income to the council from staff parking permits over the last few years.

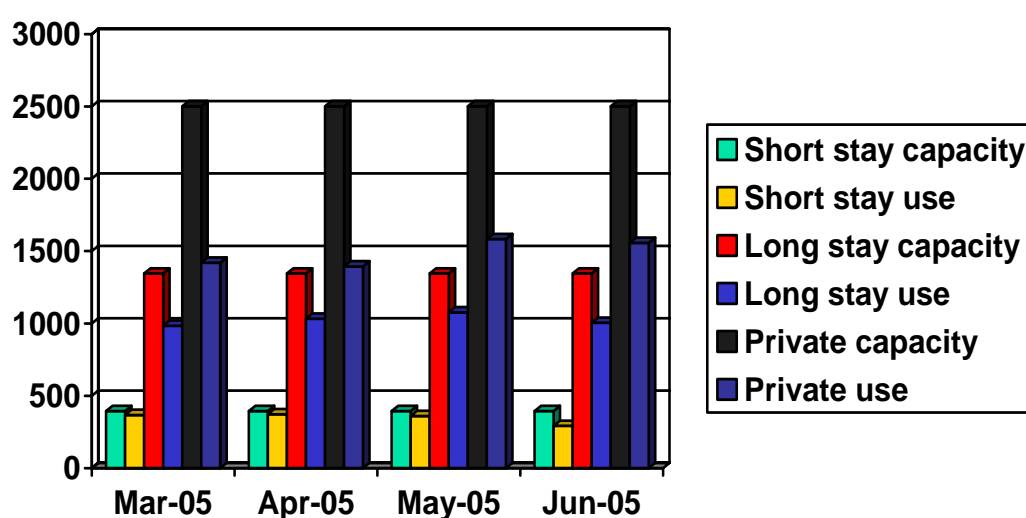
**Table 2: Breakdown of Parking Stock in Town Centre**

Financial Year	Income
2002/03	£164k
2003/04	£180k
2004/05	£195k
2005/06	£104k to date

## 4.4 Car Park Usage

4.4.1 Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the use of the various types of car parking within the Town Centre.

**Figure 2: Car Park Usage in the Town Centre**



4.4.2 The figures are showing that Council-operated short and long-stay car parks are generally well used and approaching full

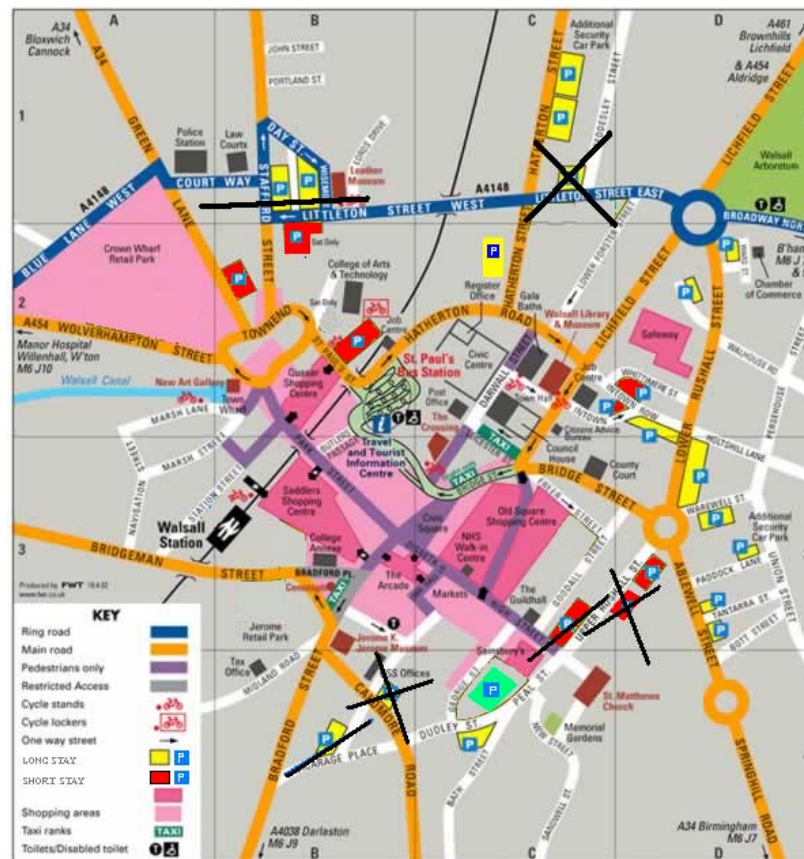
capacity usage. Alternatively, the privately operated car parks are generally under-utilised, highlighting that the only spare capacity within the town centre is within privately operated car parks.

- 4.4.3 The main reason for the difference in usage between public and privately operated car parks is most likely the associated pricing regimes, with public car parks being generally cheaper than private.

## 5. KNOWN DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON PARKING IN THE TOWN CENTRE

5.1 Figure 3 and table 3 below illustrate the location and extent of known changes to car parking stocks in the town centre within the near future.

**Figure 3: Location of Known Development Impacts on Parking Stock**



**Table 3: Details of Known Development Impacts on Parking Stock**

Development	Impact on Parking Stock
Shannon's Mill / Asda Development	Loss of 133 Council operated long stay spaces Loss of 55 Council operated short stay spaces Gain of 1000 private spaces
Town Centre Transport Package (TCTP)	Loss of 159 Council operated long stay spaces

5.2 In addition to the above, it is known that the following developments will provide significant changes to the parking

provision within the town centre. However, at this stage, the details of these changes are not known.

- Waterfront will be providing a large number of privately operated parking. However, at this early stage it is not known if that provision will be purely for use by the operators/occupiers of the developments, or if any capacity for general public or council staff use will be incorporated.
- The new college and Tesco developments will provide new parking facilities. Again, at this early stage the nature and management of the parking arrangements within those developments is not known.





## **6. OUTCOMES FROM THE REVIEW OF OTHER AUTHORITIES**

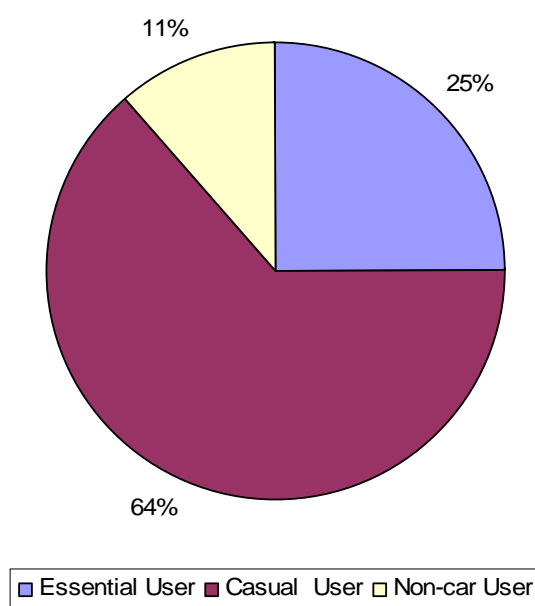
- 6.1 Approaches were made to a selection of neighbouring or similar authorities to Walsall asking how they operate their parking policies for council staff and what problems or issues they were experiencing. Dudley MBC also provided information from a survey of local authorities they had undertaken in 2003 as part of their review of staff parking.
- 6.2 The findings showed that the majority of authorities had insufficient parking provision for all staff. The majority only provided dedicated parking for Essential Users, usually free with any additional parking resources being either shared with the public at a cost to staff, or operated on a “first come-first served” basis.
- 6.3 Only 1 City Centre authority identified in the Dudley work in 2003 related the allocation of staff parking permits to the physical number of work related trips undertaken. This process was being introduced to new staff, as a wider process of reducing the number of staff with permits. The criteria as defined in 2003 was at least 10 journeys per week on business to qualify for a staff parking permit.



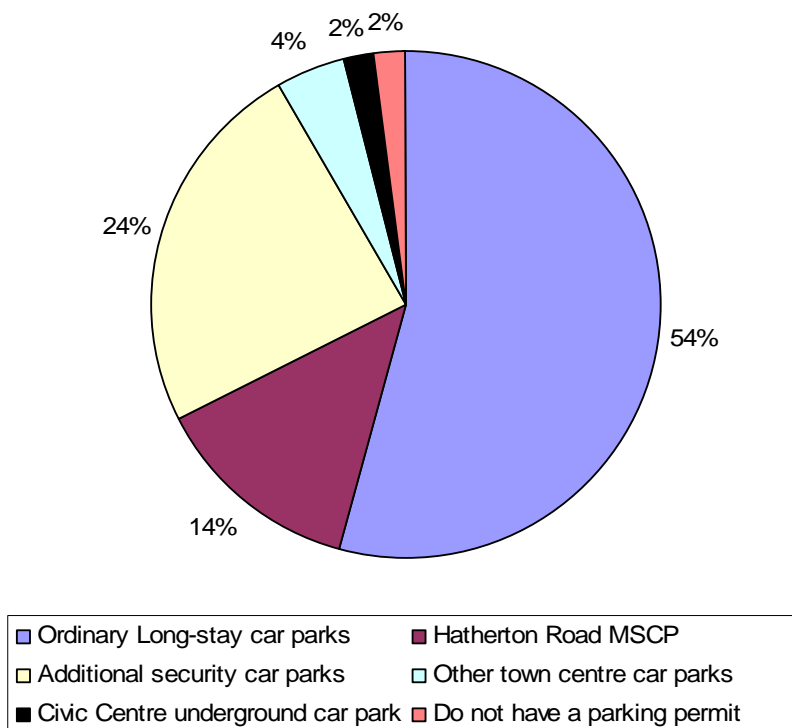
## 7. FINDINGS FROM STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

- 7.1 215 questionnaires were fully or partially completed and returned from a total of 1007 issued, equating to a 21% sample of council staff with parking permits. Figures 4 and 5 outline the range of responses received in terms of the different car-user categorisations and types of parking permits issued.

**Figure 4: Proportion of Car-User Types**

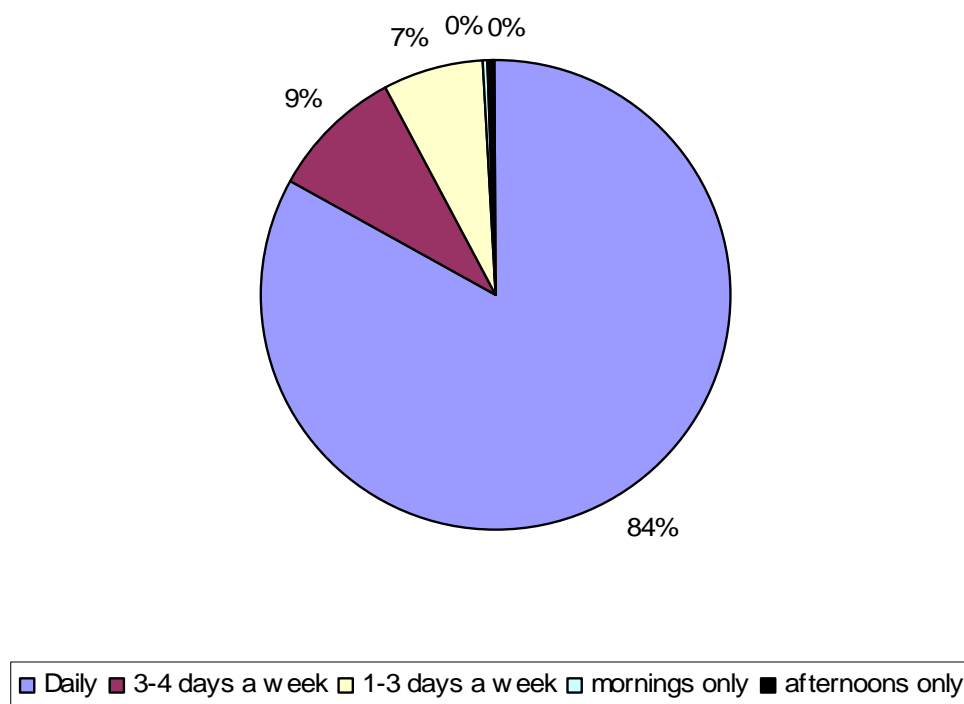


**Figure 5: Proportion of Parking Permit Types**



- 7.2 Figure 6 shows that the vast majority of respondents to the questionnaire generally park on a daily basis during the working week. This illustrates the current continual demand for parking by staff.

**Figure 6: Frequency of Parking**



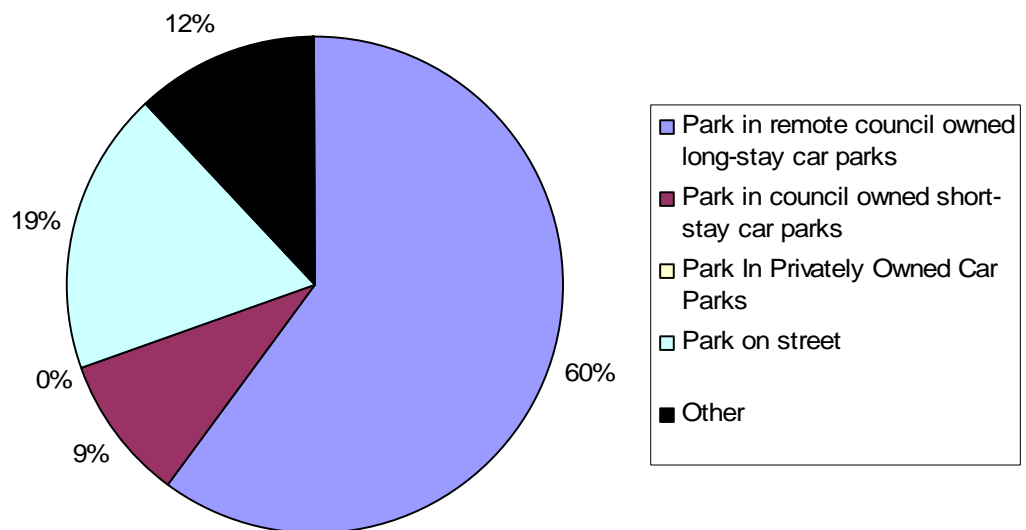
- 7.3 The responses to the questionnaire showed a wide range of different car parks being used by staff, as shown in Table: 4.
- 7.4 The car parks at Challenge Building, Day Street, Teddesley Street, Intown Row, Hatherton Street and the Multi-Storey on Hatherton Street were found to be the most popular. The popularity of the Hatherton Street car park and Hatherton Road Multi-Storey are not surprising, being in close proximity to Civic Centre and offering higher levels of security. In fact, there is currently a waiting list for staff wanting passes to park in these facilities. The results in Table 4 also show that the users of Day Street, Hatherton Street, Intown Row and Teddesley Street generally find it difficult obtaining a parking space, emphasising their popularity.

**Table 4: Details of Known Development Impacts on Parking Stock**

Car Park	Users of Car Parks		Spaces Available		Spaces Available when return from site	
	Number	%'age	Yes	No	Yes	No
Ablewell Street/Tantarra Street	8	3.9%	1	7	0	8
Bate Street	2	1.0%	1	1	0	1
Caldmore Road	1	0.5%	1	0	1	0
Challenge building	17	8.4%	17	0	17	0
Civic Centre Underground	4	2.0%	4	0	3	0
Day Street	18	8.9%	8	10	1	15
Dudley Street	2	1.0%	2	0	1	0
Hatherton Road MSCP 5-6	14	6.9%	12	2	12	1
Hatherton Road MSCP 7-8 Additional Security	19	9.4%	19	0	15	0
Hatherton Street	13	6.4%	2	11	2	10
Hatherton street Additional Security	25	12.3%	25	0	18	0
Intown Row	15	7.4%	1	14	1	12
Lower Rushall Street	9	4.4%	4	5	1	6
Mountrath Street	5	2.5%	3	1	1	1
Paddock Lane Secure	10	4.9%	10	0	9	0
Teddesley Street	17	8.4%	5	12	2	11
Upper Rushall Street 5	1	0.5%	1	0	0	1
Walhouse Road	6	3.0%	0	6	1	5
Ward Street	12	5.9%	3	9	2	9
Warewell Street	4	2.0%	0	4	1	1
Whitmere Street (short stay)	1	0.5%	0	1	1	0

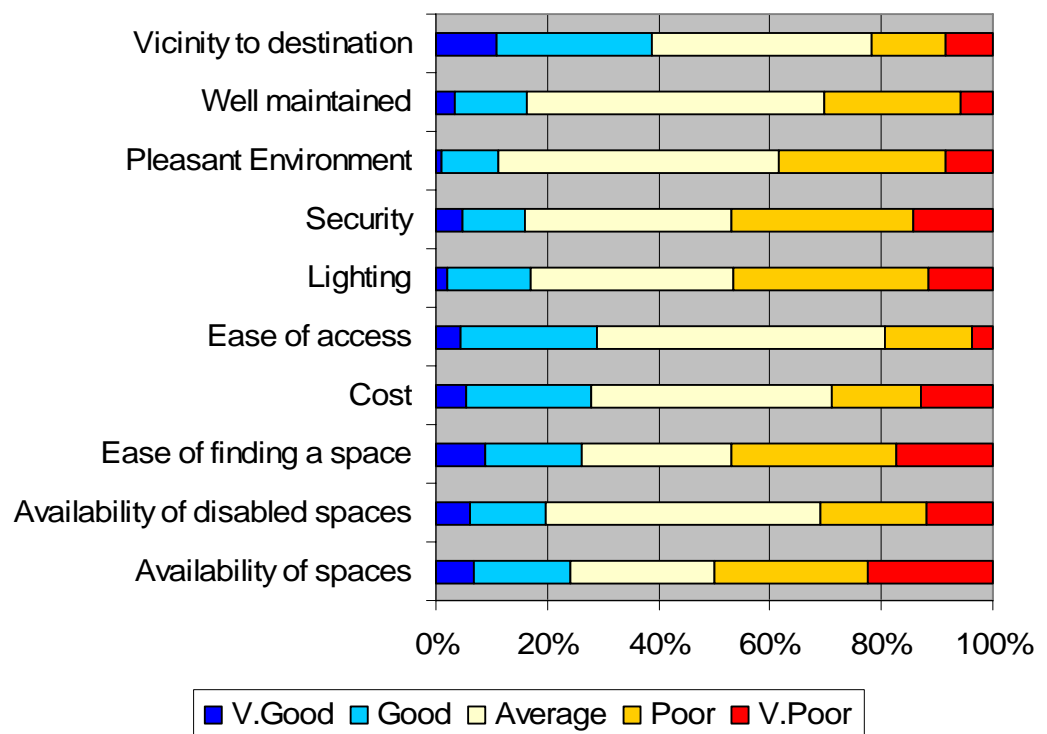
7.5 Figure 7 shows that when preferred car parks are full, 60% of respondents would park in other more remote council owned long-stay car parks. What is more worrying is that 9% of staff will pay to park in council owned short stay car parks, with 19% parking on-street. This use of short-stay parking facilities by Council Staff is restricting the availability of short-stay parking for visitors to Walsall, which will have an effect of deterring visitors if parking is so restricted. This could have adverse implications to the economic vitality of the Town Centre and the long-term viability of the economic regeneration of the town. The parking on-street could also have an impact on the effective operation of the highway network, depending on the location and nature of such parking.

**Figure 7: Alternative Means of Parking when No Spaces Available in Preferred Car Parks**



7.6 When it comes to rating the quality of council owned car parks for staff in the town centre, Figure 8 shows that there is a general negative impression, with over 60% of respondents feeling that the security, lighting and the availability and ease of finding a space is either Poor or Very Poor.

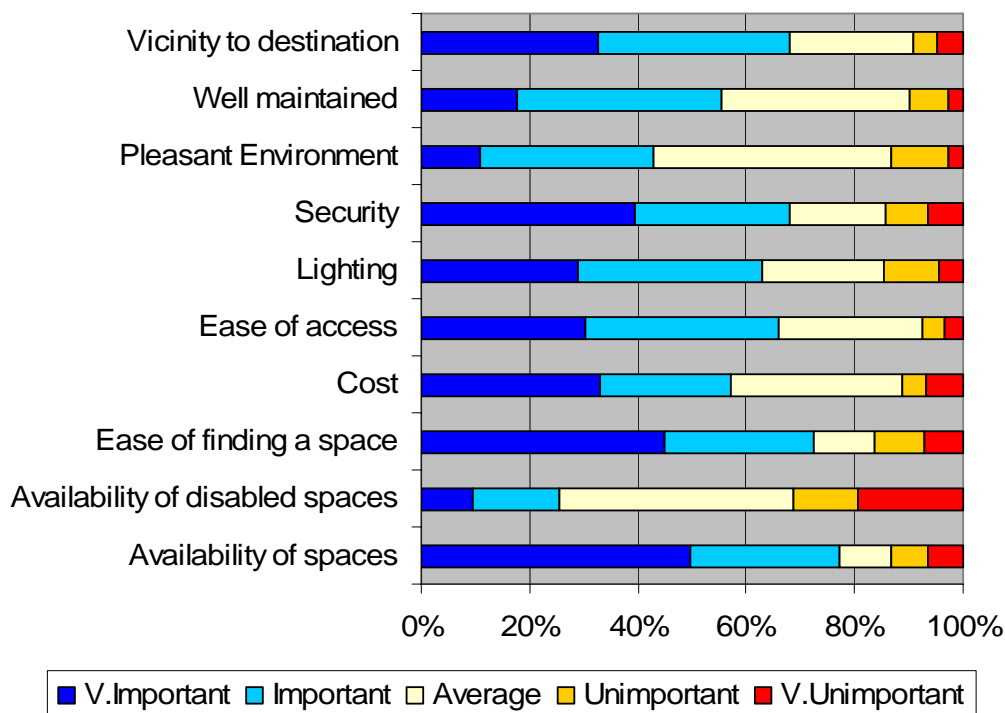
**Figure 8: Rating on the Quality of Town Centre Car Parks for Staff**



7.7 The location of car parks in relation to final destinations, i.e. the workplace, is the only measure that approaches 40% of respondents feeling that they are either Good or Very Good.

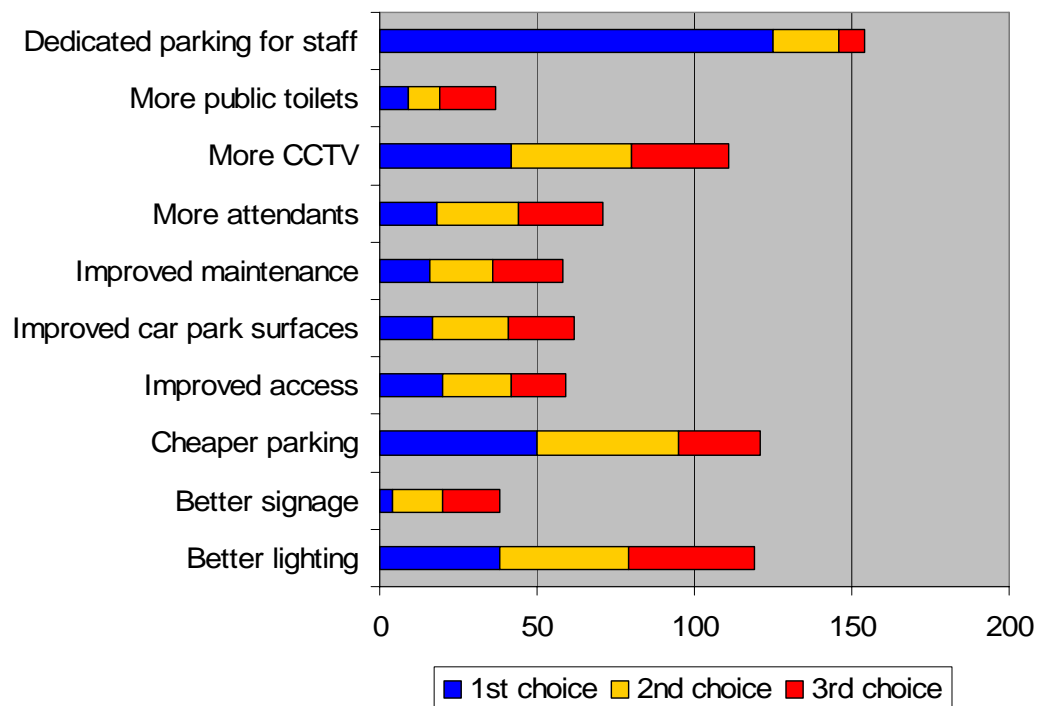
When you compare the results on perceptions of quality as shown in Figure 8 with those of the level of importance that staff place on these issues, as shown in Figure 9, it suggests that staff are concerned about the level of resource that the Council is putting into the operation and maintenance of its car parks.

**Figure 9: Levels of Importance Placed by Staff on Car Parking Issues**



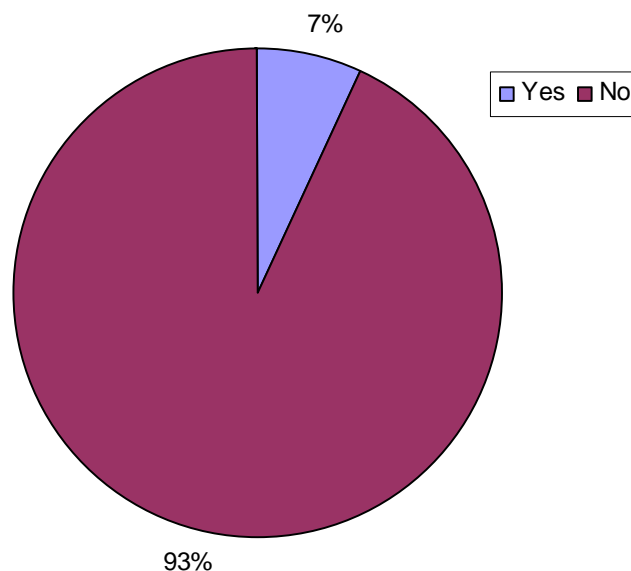
7.8 Figure 10 gives an indication of the priorities for the enhancement of council-owned car parks that staff would like to see. The findings clearly show that staff want to see dedicated parking being provided. This is a reflection of the problems that staff claim they have been facing in locating a parking space in their preferred car parks. The survey actually showed that 73% of Essential Users placed “Dedicated Parking Spaces” as their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> priority for enhancement. This compares to 70% for Casual Users and 65% for Non-Car Users.

**Figure 10: Employees Top 3 Priorities for Enhancing Parking**



7.9 Figure 11 shows that very few staff members currently undertake any form of car sharing on their trips too and from work.

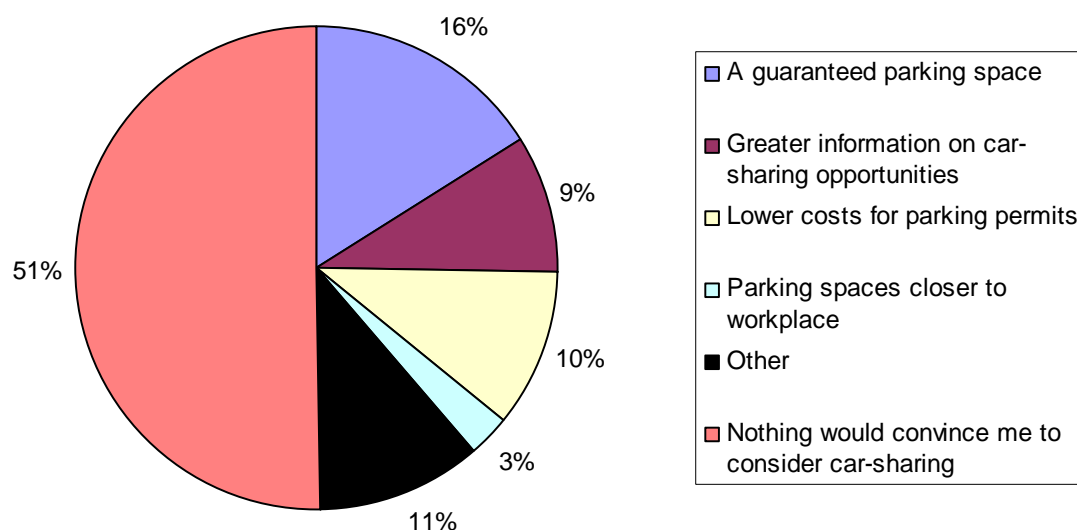
**Figure 11: Current Levels of Car Sharing**



7.10 When those who currently do not car share were asked what would convince them to consider car sharing in the future, Figure 12 shows that over half would or could not consider it. Reasons given include varying working hours and personal commitments such as childcare.

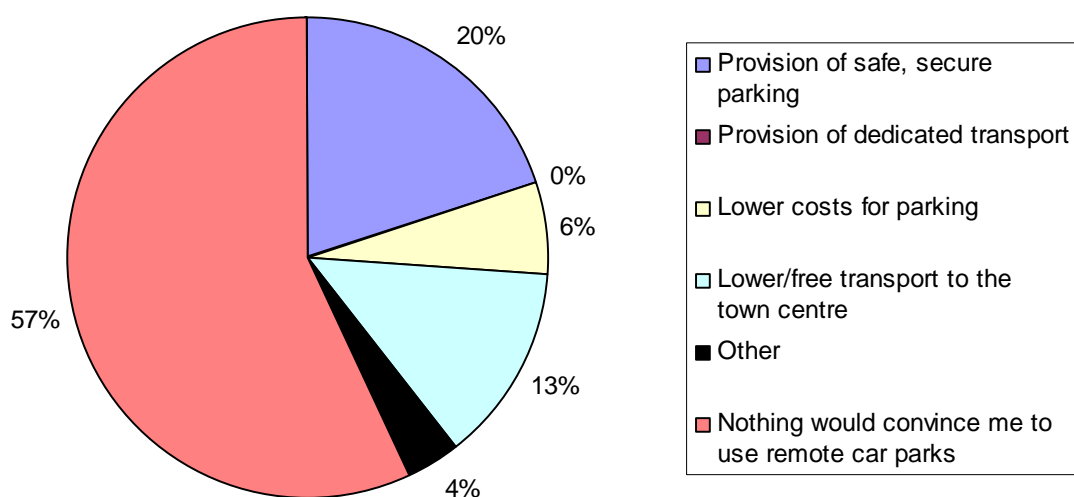


**Figure 12: What Measures would Convince Staff to Car Share**




7.11 When asked what would make staff more amenable to parking remotely from the Town Centre, Figure 13 shows that almost 60% would not consider such changes. Various reasons were given in notes, the main ones being the need to use their car during the day and security concerns of travelling between the car park and their place of work.

**Figure 13: What Measures would Convince Staff to Park Remotely from the Town Centre**




7.12 A large number of staff took the opportunity to provide their own comments at the end of the questionnaire. The key issues raised in these comments were:

- A general lack of parking, particularly after 09:00 in the morning, or if returning from site visits.

- 
- A perception of poor security, both within remote or isolated car parks and in making the journey between the car park and the place of work, particularly in the dark.
  - A concern from staff contractually required to provide a car for work (Essential Users), who are then also required to pay for parking passes.
  - Concerns about being able to car-share due to either working patterns or personal commitments (eg child care).
  - A request for dedicated staff parking within the Town Centre to avoid the need to search for a space.

## **8. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 8.1 Staff who park in general long-stay car parks are currently experiencing problems in finding appropriate spaces, particularly if they either arrive to park after 09:00 or are returning from site during the day. This is forcing some staff to pay and park in short-stay facilities or on-street. The loss of parking spaces currently anticipated with proposed regeneration and highway improvements will make this situation worse. The questionnaire highlighted that a large proportion of staff would support the provision of dedicated parking for Council Staff to resolve the problems of finding parking spaces.
- 8.2 The trend of reducing long-stay parking facilities together with Council Staff using on-street and short-stay parking will limit the parking availability for non-council staff. In the medium to longer term, this reduced availability could adversely impact the economic regeneration of Walsall Town Centre.
- 8.3 Staff prefer to park in car parks that are deemed to be safe and close to their place of work. Numerous reports of vandalism and break-in's to vehicles and a feeling of being unsafe walking to and from car parks were reported in the questionnaires.
- 8.4 Staff contractually obliged to provide a vehicle for work (Essential Users) are aggrieved at having to then pay to park. Other authorities contacted and who responded to Dudley's survey in 2003 generally only offer free or heavily subsidised parking to Essential Users. However, some initial investigations into the levels of work-related car use by Essential and Casual Users has shown that there is a wide variation in the number of miles claimed for work. Therefore, a full review of Car-User designations across the authority should be undertaken before any decisions could be made about adjusting current parking policies for Council Staff. This would be needed to ensure that parking provision is made for those personnel who need their car most for work.
- 8.5 The majority of staff felt that car sharing would not be an option for them, due mainly to varying working hours and personal commitments such as childcare. However, 16% of respondents stated that they would consider it if they were guaranteed a space, 9% would if they received more information on car-sharing opportunities and 10% would if the costs of parking were reduced.
- 8.6 Remote parking was not considered as a viable option by 57% of respondents. The main reasons given were the need to use the car for work purposes and perceived poor security both within car parks and during the journey between car parks and the workplace. However, 20% stated that they would consider using such facilities if security was improved and a further 13% would



consider it if low cost or free transport between the town centre and the car parks was provided.

## **9. IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Appendix B contains a list of potential improvement options with associated specific measures that have been developed from the information gathered as part of this review. Also included are a brief summary of the potential positive and negative impacts that could occur with the adoption of each option and measure. These have been included to feed into the overall review of parking being undertaken by consultants, due to report at the end of March 06. This information will also be useful when establishing what combination of options and measures will be most appropriate for recommending as part of an action plan for improving how the Council improves its management of staff parking in the Town Centre.
- 9.2 It has been highlighted within this report how the management of parking for staff within the Town Centre impacts on the operation and management of general parking stocks for all workers and visitors to Walsall. This report therefore recommends that its findings be fed into the overall review of parking and any recommendations for improving the management of Council Staff parking is undertaken after the consultants work has been completed at the end of March 06.
- 9.3 Key recommendations coming from this initial report are:
- 1: That the findings from this report are fed directly into the overall review of parking for Walsall, due to report in March 06.**
  - 2: That Members from the Car Park Working Group attend a proposed workshop session for the overall review planned in late January / early February 06 to provide early input into the overall process and to inform on the findings from the initial work into Council Staff Parking.**
  - 3: That the Scrutiny Car Park Working Group reconvene early in the new financial year 2006/07 to review the findings from the overall parking study and feed directly into the development of a new parking strategy for Walsall.**
  - 4: That specific recommendations and an action plan for improving the management of parking for Council Staff are made following the Working Groups review of the overall parking study and the development of a Parking Strategy for Walsall.**

## Appendix A: Breakdown of Staff Parking Permits

Car Parks	No. of Spaces	PERMIT TYPES	No. of Permits
Member Parking	17	Council House	17
		Underground/Long Stay	11
Long Stay Car Parks	601 (+ 285)	Full time - Car user	394
		Full time - No car user	173
		Part Time - Car user	9
		Part Time - No Car user	26
Challenge	83	Full time - Car user	68
		Full time - No car user	29
		Part Time - Car user	3
		Part Time - No Car user	1
Hatherton Street Additional Security	106	Full Time - Car User	75
		Full Time - No car user	24
Paddock Lane Additional Security	121	Full Time - Car User	36
		Full Time - No car user	19
Hatherton Road MSCP Additional Security	92	Full Time - Car User	75
		Full Time - No car user	14
Hatherton Road MSCP L5&L6	92	Full time - Car user	75
		Full time - No car user	3
		Part Time - Car user	1
		Part Time - No Car user	0
Underground Car Park	51	Full Time - Car User	40
		Full Time - No car user	8
Pool Permits	0	Long Stay (no allowance)	76
		MSCP (no allowance)	31

Total Permits	1208
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Car User Allowance	776
No Car User Allowance	325
Departmental permits	107



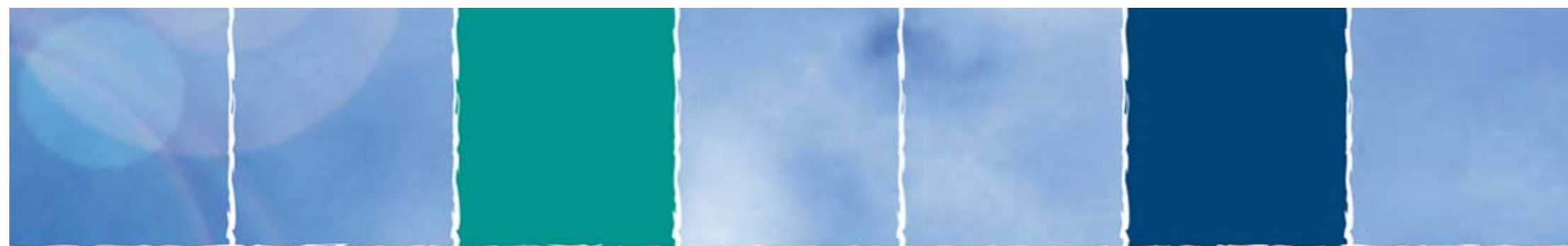
## Appendix B: Improvement Options

Improvement Options	Possible Measures	Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
1. Provide more general parking facilities for council staff	a) More long-stay facilities shared with general public close to the town centre, targeted at areas of greatest need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities can be used by employees of other businesses and visitors to the town centre, increasing the income through greater utilisation of the parking stock.</li> <li>New facilities can be placed at key positions to limit journeys on the most congested part of the highway network, or close to work destinations.</li> <li>Working with developers could identify options for utilising new private parking proposals for use by Council Staff and possibly other general users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared use car parks do not guarantee parking for Council Staff, unless new large-scale parking facilities are provided and increased to meet future demand increases.</li> <li>Such large-scale developments would be extremely costly and require large amounts of land for their development.</li> <li>More long-stay parking close to the town centre will increase car-borne trips on an existing busy road network. This will increase congestion and air pollution within and around Walsall Town Centre.</li> <li>Providing more long-stay parking facilities within the Town Centre goes against current Local, Regional and National Transport Policies on trying to tackle congestion and air pollution problems on our roads.</li> </ul>
	b) New long-stay facilities close to Town Centre dedicated for use by all council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provision of an adequate number of such facilities will resolve the lack of staff parking spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Such large-scale developments would be extremely costly and require large amounts of land for their development.</li> </ul>



Improvement Options	Possible Measures	Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
1. Provide more general parking facilities for council staff (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New facilities can be placed at key positions to limit journeys on the most congested part of the highway network, or close to work destinations.</li> <li>Large scale proposals will free up existing car parks for use by other workers and/or visitors to the town centre (possibly permitting a greater proportion of short-stay spaces to be established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More long-stay parking close to the town centre will increase car-borne trips on an existing busy road network. This will increase congestion and air pollution within and around Walsall Town Centre.</li> <li>Providing more long-stay parking facilities within the Town Centre goes against current Local, Regional and National Transport Policies on trying to tackle congestion and air pollution problems on our roads.</li> </ul>
	c) New long-stay facilities remote to Town Centre dedicated for use by council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land costs will be cheaper than town centre development.</li> <li>Car parks can be placed at points of good highway access away from areas of high congestion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New facilities will be high cost and require large amounts of land.</li> <li>Appropriate reliable transport links and adequate security both within the car park and along the links will be needed to encourage use.</li> <li>Staff who use their car for work will find it difficult to operate with the increased travel times between their car and work.</li> </ul>
2. Rationalise parking provision to suit levels of work-based car trips (including a full review of current car-user status for all council staff)	a) Provide dedicated car parking spaces close to main places of work for use only by true Essential Users and the disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will better target parking provision to suit the need to access and use a car for work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject to the outcomes of the review of car user status, it could be unpopular with staff</li> </ul>

Improvement Options	Possible Measures	Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
2. Rationalise parking provision to suit levels of work-based car trips (including a full review of current car-user status for all council staff) (Continued)	b) More remote Council parking to be maintained as shared long-stay car parks for use by Casual Users and the general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will avoid/limit the need to develop new parking stocks, particularly within the Town Centre.</li> <li>Could reduce the demand for parking by basing the allocation of car passes on the need to using a car for work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could increase the demand for parking within the Town Centre, subject to the outcomes of review of Car-User Status.</li> <li>Will require security improvements at remote car parks and along the links to workplaces.</li> <li>Will need to be clear of the criteria to be used in defining the Essential and Casual Car User Status, to limit potential conflicts and make such a change to staff parking policies work practically.</li> </ul>
	c) Remove the provision of car parking passes for non-car users		
3 Relocate Council Departments away from the Town Centre	a) Distribute Council Departments around various District and Local Centres within the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage economic regeneration of the District and Local Centres.</li> <li>Reduce congestion impacts and get greater use of the existing highway network.</li> <li>Encourage greater use of existing council-owned buildings, land and car parks in the District and Local Centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could encourage more car-based trips, as district &amp; local centres are not as well served by Public Transport as the Town Centre</li> <li>Could impact on the practical operation of the Council through the geographic segregation</li> <li>Could have a negative impact on recruitment and retention of staff by working remote to a key centre.</li> </ul>
	b) Locate Council Departments away from high congestion areas or areas experiencing parking problems		



Improvement Options	Possible Measures	Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
4 Promote various alternatives to car travel too and from work to reduce parking pressures	a) Promote Car Sharing through publicity and incentives (eg dedicated spaces close to work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduces congestion and promotes greater use of more sustainable transport modes, which are key Local, Regional and National Transport Policies.</li> <li>Reduces the demand for parking, avoiding the need to develop new facilities or make difficult decisions on restricting provision.</li> <li>Such improvements can be supported financially through LTP Capital Settlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car sharing may be difficult to operate with peoples individual travel needs</li> <li>Home working may place financial and liability problems on the council in making home environments appropriate as work places.</li> <li>The Council does not have a direct influence in the reliability of public transport, making it difficult to manage and sell to staff effectively</li> <li>Park and Rides could be costly to establish and operate.</li> </ul>
	b) Promote more home working		
	c) Promote greater use of public transport, cycling and walking		
	d) Promote bus and rail-based Park and Ride from outside the Town Centre		
5. Improve the management of parking stocks within and around the Town Centre	a) Improve the quality and security of council-owned car parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved security could encourage greater use of car parks currently not well-used or not favoured by staff.</li> <li>Intelligent car parking management systems could make better use of existing stock, maximising their use.</li> <li>Such systems could also provide more information to users and inform real-time signage to drivers on availability of spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment would be needed in improving security of some car parks.</li> <li>It may be difficult to physically improve the security along walking routes between car parks and places of work, or the perceptions of feeling safe.</li> <li>Intelligent Transport Systems could be difficult and expensive to implement.</li> </ul>
	b) Develop a greater role for Intelligent Car Park Management and Information Systems		

Improvement Options	Possible Measures	Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts
6. Enter into partnerships with developers and private operators to encourage better planned parking provision within the Town Centre	a) Establish partnerships to share appropriate parking stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage a greater joined-up approach to parking provision and management within the Town Centre.</li> <li>May provide opportunities to share costs with external organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could remove some of the control for managing staff parking from the Council.</li> <li>Developers and private operators may not be interested in working in partnership or in maintaining appropriate parking provision for council staff.</li> </ul>
	b) Establish partnerships with private car parking organisations to improve and coordinate town centre parking		



AT A MEETING  
of the  
**CAR PARKS WORKING GROUP**  
held at The Council House, Walsall on  
**Monday 9 January 2006** at 6.00pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor Rob Robinson  
Councillor D Anson  
Councillor I Shires  
Councillor Yasin  
Mark Clough, Strategic Transport Manager - Urban  
Regeneration  
Paul Leighton, Group Leader Traffic  
Management/UTC/Car parks  
Glynis Jeavons, Car Park Manager  
Stuart Bentley, Scrutiny Officer

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor Rose.

**RECEIPT OF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest and members confirmed there was no party whip.

**MATTERS ARISING**

Councillor Robinson, on behalf of the Work Group, expressed his thanks to Debbie Breedon for her work and support during this and other Scrutiny groups and for her constant support to Members during her time at Walsall Council. He wished her all the best in her new role.

**CAR PARKS WORKING GROUP REPORT**

Mark Clough tabled the report "Car Parks Working Group Report – October 2005" and guided Members through the contents.

(annexed)

Councillor Shires asked when the wider Car Parks Strategy document would be completed.

Paul Leighton replied that a first draft should be completed by the end of the month, with a final draft completed by the end of the financial year for presentation to Cabinet.



Councillor Robinson referred to figure 7 (page 12) of the report and remarked that it was interesting that no-one seemed to want to park in privately owned car parks.

Mark Clough replied that this seemed to be a reflection of the price differentials between private and Council run facilities, with Council car parks being significantly cheaper.

With reference to bullet point one of the findings from the staff survey (page 16) Councillor Anson expressed his concerns over the availability of car park spaces for shoppers.

Paul Leighton replied that the issues was being addressed by the consultant undertaking the wider review, but that staff parking issues were centred around the availability of long stay facilities, whereas shoppers would tend to use more short stay facilities.

Paul Leighton then tabled a print-out of mileage claims for April – September 2005. He stated that it highlighted the need to re-assess the definition of casual and essential car users within the Council prompting a review of car user allocations.

(annexed)

Councillor Robinson agreed that the data indicated a need for a review, even at a first glance.

Mark Clough called the Members attention to appendix B of the Working Group report, where officers had suggested some improvement options together with there possible impact.

Councillor Robinson thanked the officers for their work in producing the report.

Councillor Shires stated that it was clear that there was a significant issue arising around the definition of essential and casual car usage.

Councillor Robinson stated that it seemed the Council were paying significantly more in expenses than they were receiving from car parks revenue. This further highlighted the need for a review of car usage.

Mark Clough referred to item 2 of appendix B which addressed the issue of car usage by suggesting a rationalisation of parking provision to suit levels of work-based car trips. He further suggested that Members may wish to wait for the findings of the overall review before finalising the recommendations of this review.

Councillor Shires agreed that it would be useful to see the wider context.

Mark Clough suggested that the contents of appendix B could be passed forward to the wider strategy document.

Councillors Robinson and Shires agreed and Councillor Robinson asked that this be presented to the main panel at the next meeting on 11 January 2006.

Marl Clough agreed to complete section 9 of the report to reflect the findings of the group with recommendations that scrutiny pass forward their findings to the full survey and that the findings of the full survey be received by scrutiny on completion.

Resolved:

- That the findings of the work group be presented to the Regeneration, Housing, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny and Performance with a recommendation that they pass forward the findings to the full car parks strategy review.
- That Mark Clough complete section 9 of the report to reflect the findings of the working group.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

There being no other business, the meeting terminated at 6:55 p.m.