



ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

JUNE 2008

FINAL REPORT – TOWN CENTRE PARKING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present the findings of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Panel's review of Town Centre Parking.

AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

2. The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to investigate the parking provision in the town centre.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

3. The terms of reference for the Scrutiny investigation were as outlined below:
 - (a) To consider whether or not the town has the capacity to be able to cope with the demand for car parking spaces, both now and in the future.
 - (b) To consider the current arrangements for late night Thursday opening, does the town have the parking facilities to match what the retail sector is offering?
 - (c) Does the town have enough disabled parking provision?
 - (d) To consider what methods are used to ensure car parks are safe and secure and are those methods effective?
 - (e) To consider the impact of the installation of parking meters in the main streets in the town centre.

- (f) The Council is no longer the sole provider of short stay parking, is the current provision working as well as thought?
- (g) What are our partners doing in terms of assessing and contributing to the possible development of new car parks if there is a need?
- (h) To receive an update on the position with Residents' Parking following the panel's review in 2006.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

- 4. Members of the Panel met formally at a one-off meeting on 10 April 2008 to discuss/receive evidence relating to this investigation and a detailed record of the topics discussed at the meeting is available from the Committee Management System (COMMIS), accessible via the Council's website.
- 5. A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:
 - (a) Detailed officer presentations supplemented by verbal evidence.
 - (b) Visit to the town's short stay Car Parks
 - (c) Discussions with Car Park Providers
- 6. The report has been compiled on the basis of their evidence and other background information listed at the end of the report.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

- 7. At the time of the investigation the membership of the Panel was as detailed below: Councillors J Ismail (Chair), Councillor Mawston (Vice-Chair), Councillors Bloundele, Hobson, Purvis, Rehman, Rostron, Sanderson and Taylor
- 8. Subsequent changes to the panel occurred following the Council's Annual General Meeting on 14 May, where the membership changed and Cllr J Cole became Chair of the Panel. Other membership is as follows, Councillors Mawston (Vice Chair), Bloundele, Hobson, Lowes, Majid, McIntyre, Rehman and Taylor. This report was submitted to the new panel on 16 June 2008.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9. The panel learnt that the management, operation, maintenance and development of the parking facilities and residents parking schemes in Middlesbrough was the responsibility of the Parking Solutions Group which was part of the Transport & Design Services section of the Council's Environment Department.
- 10. The Group enforced yellow line waiting restrictions, on street parking places and Residents Parking Schemes. The Council's team of Civil Enforcement Officers Parking (previously known as Parking Patrol Officers) issued Penalty Charge Notices to motorists breaking the rules. Enforcing waiting and loading restrictions improved road safety, reduced congestion, supported the local economy, improved

public transport and reduced commuter parking in residential areas. Parking enforcement was not a way to raise income for the Council.

11. The main objectives of the service were to provide a quality parking service in Middlesbrough that complemented the Council's objectives and optimised the efficient use of the available space and minimised the adverse effects on residents and the environment. The panel was provided with a copy of the draft Parking Strategy for their information.

12. The panel learnt that the parking schemes in Middlesbrough operated on a self-financing basis. The cost of its operation, maintenance of the facilities and services were paid for by the motorists. Parking Charges were reviewed annually working on the principle of a small annual inflation rise. The last increase in parking charges was in October 2007. The Council was also still repaying debt charges on the build costs of the Captain Cook and the Zetland car parks.

13. The public car parks in Middlesbrough are as follows

Car Park	Spaces
Short Stay	549
Captain Cook Square (level 0,1,2,3)	350
Buxton Street	93
Gurney Street	69
MIMA	37
Short Stay/Long Stay	430
Captain Cook Square	430
Long Stay	2204
Zetland	897
France Street	531
Cannon Park	228
Denmark Street	137
Station Street	116
Wood Street	45
Cannon Park Way	250
Limited Stay	101
Private Car Parks – short stay	2104
Hill Street Centre	653
Sainsburys	550
Middlesbrough Leisure Park	163
NCP Dundas	150
Cleveland Centre	588
Total	5388

14. There were also 1,700 private non residential spaces, 152 on street pay and display spaces and 222 free limited waiting spaces.

Parking Prices

15. The following are charges for parking in Middlesbrough and some comparisons with neighbouring authorities

Council	Short Stay Tariff	Long Stay Tariff	Blue Badge Parking	Park & Ride
Middlesbrough (Council Run)	£1.60 for 2 hours	£2.70 all day	Free	No
Middlesbrough The Mall (Private)	£.150 for 2 hours and £1.50 for each additional hour		Charged	No
Middlesbrough Hill Street (Private)	£.150 for 2 hours		Charged	No
Stockton	£1.00 for 2 hours	£2.20 all day	Free	No
Hartlepool	£1.20 for 2 hours	£2.20 all day	Free	No
Darlington	£0.80	£3.50 all day	Free	No
Redcar	£0.60 per hour £1.20 for 2 hours £1 per hour thereafter	£2.50	Free	No
Sunderland	40p per hour to £1.10 per hour depending on location		Charged in main car parks	No
Newcastle	40p per hour to £1.50 per hour depending on location		Free	Heworth Metro Parking £1.50 Metro £2.70
Durham	£1.20 to £1.80 for 2 hours depending on location	£8.00 all day	Free	Bus £1.70 per person parking free
York	Up to £2.00 per hour	£9.50 all day	Free	£2.00 per person, parking free

Enforcement

16. On 31 March 2008, new legislation came into force that changed the way that the Council enforced parking in Middlesbrough. The Government introduced Civil Parking Enforcement in response to the public's concern about fairness and consistency of parking operations across the country. The aim was to create a balanced and clear system of enforcement that was seen to be fair to the motorist whilst allowing the Council to effectively control parking.
17. The introduction of Civil Parking enforcement resulted in the following changes
- Parking patrol officers were re-named Civil Enforcement Officers Parking
 - Differential penalty charge levels were introduced. There was a higher level £70 charge for parking in a restricted place such as school 'keep clear' markings, bus stops etc.

- A lower £50 penalty charge would apply for lesser contraventions such as overstaying in a parking place or parking outside a marked bay
- Both higher and lower penalty charges would be discounted by 50% for payments made within 14 days.
- New powers for CEOs were available including being able to issue Penalty Charge Notices for stopping on pedestrian crossings, parking on taxi ranks and cycle tracks.

The Council's Parking Strategy

18. The Council was in the process of finalising the Parking Strategy for Middlesbrough. The strategy was a framework for the next 10-15 years which set out how the council was to undertake parking provision decisions in a structured, consistent and sustainable manner. The strategy outlined how the management of parking needed to be achieved at the right level to fit with the aspirations of the town whilst at the same time working as a mechanism for demand management to influence people's choice of mode of transport.
19. The plan contained a number of 'mini strategies' to consider the parking implications in a number of the town's new developments such as Greater Middlehaven, East Middlesbrough Business Action Zone, Middlehaven and Hemlington Grange.

THE PANEL'S FINDINGS

20. The panel considered a number of the terms of reference which for ease of reading have been compiled together under some main headings which are as follows
- ***Demand and Capacity***
 - ***Short Stay Car Parking***
 - ***Regeneration and Working with Investors***
 - ***Review of Residents Parking***

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

21. The evidence for this section covers the following terms of reference
- *To consider whether or not the town has the capacity to be able to cope with the demand for car parking spaces both now and in the future*
 - *To consider the current arrangements for late night Thursday opening, does the town have the parking facilities to match what the retail sector is offering?*
 - *Does the town have enough disabled parking provision?*
 - *To consider what methods are used to ensure car parks are safe and secure and are those methods effective/*
 - *To consider the impact of the installation of parking meters in the main streets in the town centre.*
22. The panel found that there were two main types of demand for car parking spaces. That from shoppers and the other being from commuters. When discussing the issue of capacity it was identified that the only significant problem for short stay visitors and shoppers was around the Christmas period when demand for spaces was very high. However it was also identified that there were some problems around the southern end of the town centre, particularly in the Linthorpe Road

area, where provision was very limited. There had been improvements to the area that had included the better management of on-street parking, but it was acknowledged that there were limits to what could be achieved in what was a tightly constrained area which also had the added pressure of the demand for parking space from the University. The need to increase provision in the area was acknowledged and means to improve the situation were being actively considered by the Council and its partners.

Parking for Commuters

23. The panel recognised that if the town centre was to be the 'engine room' of the town, that it needed to be a place that was an attractive proposition for businesses and that it had the necessary amenities such as parking facilities. However access to parking for town centre workers was often cited as a reason for employers to leave the town, or as a reason why new employers or developers chose not to invest or locate. The panel learnt that there were long stay spaces available during the day however the spare capacity was generally found at the Zetland Car Park. There were two main issues that were identified that seemed to put people off from parking there. One was a practical issue and the other was one of perception.
24. On a practical level the location of the Zetland was seen as remote, particularly from Newport and Borough Roads. Although it may not be a long walk from the town centre some employees need access to their cars throughout the day for business purposes and a 10 minute walk could add considerable expense and inconvenience and was certainly a factor that businesses took into account.
25. The panel learnt that in terms of the perceptions of the Zetland Car Park, in addition to being seen as remote, the access through the underpass under the A66 could be viewed as intimidating. However the panel found that the majority of users were workers from the nearby Hill Street Centre and that there had been no recorded incidents within the car park in the last 12 months.
26. However it had to be noted that whilst there was capacity in the long stay parking provision in Middlesbrough, and other towns may not offer anything better than that level of access, that Middlesbrough did face competition from alternative locations for investment. For example developments such as those at Teesdale and Wynyard where parking is much less limited, free and adjacent to office buildings.
27. The panel also acknowledged that while the town needed to attract investors and employers and the provision of new car parks might assist in bringing developers, that strategy had to be weighed up with what is in the best interests of the town and the development of large surface car parks might not be feasible or attractive.

Demand in Middlehaven

28. Whilst the panel were concentrating primarily on demand within the main town centre, the review would not have been complete without considering the demand for parking that the developments in Middlehaven could potentially create.
29. With Middlesbrough College due to open in Autumn 2008, and the capacity to accommodate up to 14,000 students, there were proposals to incorporate a limited number of on site parking spaces.

30. In order to accommodate the anticipated numbers of vehicles which would be generated by students, staff and visitors consultants Faber Maunsell had been appointed to produce a traffic management/parking scheme for the Middlehaven area bounded by the new college and the Police HQ. The aim of the scheme was to create areas of controlled on street parking that could be managed to ensure that they catered for the needs of the area. The area was earmarked for development so any proposals would only be for the short to medium term.
31. In order to control the operation of parking it would be necessary to introduce parking charges through on street pay and display ticket machines. This would ensure turnover and discourage displacement parking from the town centre.
32. Due to its less central location it was proposed that charges were set slightly lower in the area compared to the town centre. (All day would be £2.50 compared with £2.70 in the town centre). It was the intention that the scheme would be operational in time for the opening of the college in September.

Demand and the Night Time Economy

33. The panel had previously considered the implications of the night time economy and the provision of adequate and safe parking was acknowledged as important for nurturing the town's evening activities.
34. The panel was told that at present there was no clear designated and supervised place for visitors to park other than the limited provision at Middlesbrough Leisure Park and the adjacent larger France Street Car Park (free after 6pm). It was acknowledged that safe, secure and un-threatening car parks attract evening visitors, particularly those who visit less frequently and are interested in attending cultural events. A plan needed to be implemented which would advertise where all of the safe and secure car parks were for people wishing to park in Middlesbrough on an evening.
35. The Council was working with retailers in the town and the introduction of the 'Alive After 5' scheme which meant that shops in the town centre now provide late night opening on a Thursday. A number of town centre stores and shopping centres remained open until 8pm every Thursday. The extended trading hours were designed to develop Thursdays in Middlesbrough as a late night shopping destination. As part of the 'Alive After Five' initiative the Council, along with Hillstreet and The Mall have all agreed to offer car parking free from 4.00pm. All Council car parks will be free of charge after 4.00pm on Thursdays until further notice.

Disabled Provision

36. The panel was interested to consider whether or not there was enough car parking provision for disabled users. The panel's visits to the car parks showed that there were an adequate number of bays reserved for disabled users.
37. The Council provided free parking without a time limit to all blue badge holders in all of the Council's car parks and in on-street parking bays. Disabled parking spaces were reviewed and some over provision had been identified and the number of bays was reduced as a result.

38. However one of the areas of concern was where problems occurred when disabled badge holders parked on double yellow lines in areas that potentially obstructed other traffic. This tended to hinder delivery and waste collection vehicles that had problems in some areas where blue badge holders frequently parked. Civil Enforcement Officers carry out routine inspections on blue badges, which had led to a reduction in the abuse of the system. New on-street disabled bays were to be introduced outside MIMA and Binns to assist with this problem.
39. The panel learnt that there were disabled spaces available in the privately run car parks in the town but unlike the Council run car parks in the private car parks there is a charge for all users, including those with disabled badges.

Security and Facilities

40. Car park users had expectations about the facilities that were provided when they parked their car. These could include for example
- A secure place to leave their cars
 - A well maintained, well lit and clean place
 - Toilet provision during opening hours
 - Trained and friendly staff
 - Change machines in pay and display car parks
41. Although on the issue of machines that are able to give people change, the panel learnt that the industry was moving away from coin operated machines and turning to technology to assist people to pay. Change machines were expensive to buy and install and potentially subject to theft.
42. The panel viewed a number of the car parks in the town and their comments are noted later in this report. The panel was told that the Council run car parks had improved in recent years and had secured the Park Mark Status which endorsed the good levels of security that have been achieved in the car parks and the panel thought that the achievement should be publicised. However in terms of facilities, and in order to remain competitive, the Council will have to ensure that it provided excellent facilities and in order to compete with the private sector provides that now supplied most of the town's short stay parking.
43. There were a number of ideas put to the panel that it was thought either could be introduced or that the Council needed to consider and these would include
- Variable messaging systems that gave up to date information about current car park capacity. These were frequently seen on major approaches to towns and cities. Navigation around the town centre could be difficult for visitors and a system that directed people would be helpful to visitors and distribute parking to the most appropriate places.
 - Alternative methods of parking such as paying by debit and credit cards as well as via customers mobile phones.
 - Incentivised car park schemes where it could be more attractive to people to purchase 'up front' at a cheaper cost. Currently there was no incentive to purchase long-term car parking permits, other than the convenience to purchase a pass in advance.
44. The panel discussed the issue of an incentivised parking scheme. However the panel noted 3 points. Firstly the Council's policy was one which tried to encourage

commuters away from using their cars. Secondly District Audit had criticised the introduction of a discounted arrangement and thirdly, if an incentive scheme was introduced parking charges might need to rise to make up for the discounts.

45. The panel was advised that the Mobile Phone Parking Payment Scheme was being developed and the Council was waiting to introduce the technology after lessons had been learnt in other areas. It was considered important that when this scheme was introduced that it would be adequately promoted.
46. The panel learnt that the Council strongly supported the Park Mark Safer Parking initiative. All the main town centre car parks had received the 'Park Mark' safer parking award. The awards were granted to car parks in recognition of active and effective measures being put in place to create a safe and secure environment for car park users. Levels of car crime in the Council's car parks are currently at an all time low, making them the safest places to park in the town centre.

On Street Parking and the Installation of Parking Meters

47. The draft parking strategy outlined that one of the key objectives was to provide, operate and enforce on and off street parking with the aim of managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space. Indiscriminate on street parking, abuse of waiting restrictions and Residents Parking Zones coupled with the reallocation of road space to non-car users meant that it was important to ensure effective parking enforcement. The introduction of on street pay and display parking schemes across the town was designed to fulfil their objectives whilst ensuring access to businesses for customers.
48. It was reported to the panel that the on street pay and display parking had been successful in the town. The panel members viewed the on street parking facilities in Albert Road as part of their walkabout of the car parks. Through the day, the limited waiting time ensured that there was a quick turn around which created spaces for people to park and this was evident during the morning the panel visited Albert Road.
49. The Council worked closely with the business sector to ensure that parking schemes around their businesses were appropriate. A scheme was specifically designed for businesses around the Grange Road, Albert Road area, in consultation with businesses in that area to ensure that cars were not parked on pavements blocking pedestrian access.

Demand in the University Ward

50. The panel recognise the parking pressures faced in the University ward and as such requested an update on the situation following a previous panel's review into residents parking in 2006, details of which are at the end of the report.
51. The panel thought it would be useful to ask the University for their comments. The panel wrote with a number of questions and the University kindly responded with the following comments
52. **How the University plans to cope with the demand for parking from staff and students in the future** – At the University's Planning Day, Corporate Management considered a document outlining a series of issues associated with travel to the University. The development of a University Travel Policy was agreed

which would include measures to promote accessibility and support to people who travel to the University on foot, by bicycle, motorcycle or public transport. In parallel there were proposals to reduce the incentives to drive private cars to the University. Proposals were being developed in conjunction with the Council and other stakeholders in the Town Centre.

53. **How the University is working with the Council to deal with the parking issues in the area** – The University has been working with the Council for many years. Tangible results were the construction of a car park on University land close to Linthorpe Road and the agreement that the public could use the University's Clarendon Car Park at off-peak times.
54. **Views on the Introduction of a Residents' Parking Scheme** – The University were sympathetic to the requests for parking restrictions in the streets around Central Middlesbrough. The University hoped it would be introduced on a phased basis in line with the introduction of initiatives by the University and the Council to provide new car-parking facilities and/or more attractive alternatives to vehicular transport. The University would be in favour of a mixture of meters for the public and free spaces for residents.
55. **What are the University's Current Car-Parking Plans** – The University are to open a temporary car park adjacent to the fitness centre on Woodlands Road. The University has also applied for planning permission to construct a temporary car park on the site of former buildings on Woodlands Road.
56. What support from the Council would be required to help with future car parking plans? – The University provided a number of examples including
- i) Assistance with the re-direction of the Middlehaven bus to co-ordinate with a new Town Centre bus service linking the University and Middlesbrough College.
 - ii) Contribution to the co-ordinated lobby to enhance the number of train carriages at peak times
 - iii) Consideration of a revised planning policy whereby property developments are required to contribute financially to the development of car parking elsewhere in the town
 - iv) Consideration of a University/Council approach to funding and/or facilitating the construction of one or more multi-storey car parks
 - v) Contribution to co-ordinated lobby to establish more links to the 'real time' bus system and integrated travel tickets.
 - vi) Provision of information to the University on the likely availability of any site that may be appropriate for a 'park and ride' scheme.

SHORT STAY PARKING

57. The evidence for this section covers the following terms of reference
- *The Council is no longer the sole provider of short stay parking, is the current provision working as well as thought.*

58. In order to investigate this term of reference, the panel went out to see the short stay pay and display facilities in the town and they invited representatives from the town's short stay parking facilities.

Tour of the Short Stay Parking Facilities

59. The panel began by looking at the private car park provided by The Mall, which was the roof top car park (formerly the Cleveland Centre). The car park was operated as a 'pay on foot' facility which means that customers wait at an entrance barrier, collect a ticket and then pay for the parking when they leave, at machines located in the car park. Those machines calculate the time visitors have spent, charge accordingly and then the machines are capable of giving customers change. The Hill Street Car Park, also a privately owned facility operated on a similar 'pay on foot' scheme.
60. The panel learnt that there were a number of advantages and disadvantages of a pay on foot system. The main advantage was that once a ticket had been purchased a customer was not bound to return to their car for a certain time in the fear of getting a parking ticket. If they did go over 2 hours then they simply paid the next tariff based on a three-hour stay etc. It was thought that this type of system would be beneficial to the retailers, because people weren't limited to the amount of time they spend in the town.
61. However some studies had suggested that people's spend declined after shopping for 1 hour 30 minutes and it then may then be in the town's interest to get them out of the space and therefore allowing the next customer in.
62. The main disadvantage of a pay on foot system was that of delays that could be caused at peak times, cars must stop at the barrier to collect the entrance ticket that can lead to cars having to queue.
63. Both the Hill Street and the Mall operate short stay provision. Users can stay all day however the tariff is one which would deter regular users from staying all day. It therefore makes it in the interests of long stay users to park in the long stay parking at the periphery of the town that currently has a price of £2.70 for over 4 hours. The level of pricing ensures a quick turnaround of short stay users visiting at any time of the day and which ensures that there is a short stay space for people to be able to park.
64. All the car parks had spare capacity at the time and date the panel chose to view them
65. The panel visited the Council operated Captain James Cook Multi-Story Car Park (formerly the Brentnall Car Park) and the Zetland Car Park. The Council operated a pay and display scheme where users purchase a ticket to cover the time they intend to stay in the car park. The machines do not give change, and the reasoning behind that was to deter crime. The machines were emptied regularly and if they had spare change in them it might mean that it would be a target for thieves. Although the Council was looking into different ways of paying, one of which was through the use of the customers' mobile phones.
66. The Captain James Cook Car Park was approximately 20 years old and had recently undergone some resurfacing and painting. The panel felt that it was in good

condition and were pleased to see the allocation of disabled spaces on the first floor. The car park was a mix of short stay (on the lower floors) and long stay (on the upper floors) and this seemed to work well, accommodating shoppers short term needs and employees all day parking requirements.

67. The Zetland Car Park is a long stay, pay and display facility that was used primarily by commuters. Again there was spare capacity at the time when the panel visited. The panel thought that it was a good, clean and welcoming facility and were pleased to hear that there had been no reported criminal incidents in the past year. The facility had also benefited from a new energy efficient lighting system which had produced a 50% energy level saving, lower emissions and improved lighting.

Discussions with Representatives of the Private Car Park Providers

68. The panel spoke with representatives from the Mall and Sainsburys and the Centre Manager at Captain Cook Square.
69. The Council had sold the Cleveland Centre Car Park lease to The Mall in October 2006, and since then The Mall had undertaken development work, including re-surfacing and new signage. Since then there had been a significant increase in usage and income. The panel learnt that the car park only operated at capacity during peak shopping times, namely at Christmas. The panel highlighted that they had felt that there was a lack of signage pointing users to the appropriate lifts and the centre manager promised to go back and have a look at this.
70. The centre manager voiced his concerns that there would be an impact to the town and to the parking providers of any out of town free parking provision. Not only that at Teesside Park but at the proposed Cannon Park development and that a debate needed to be had on that issue and the potential impact on the town.
71. The panel spoke to the centre manager for the Captain Cook Centre. Who informed the panel that the Captain Cook Car Park was safe, clean and functional. However she felt that the car park was in need of up-grading especially the toilets. It was noted that short stay car parking had declined over the past three years, which could be due to a number of reasons. The car park is a mix of long and short stay, visitors to the town could be confused by this and the introduction of interactive signs which give the number of spaces available to people entering into the town could be helpful in leading people to where spaces were available.
72. Although not a large difference the car park is 10p per hour more expensive than the competitors. The current pay stations were unable to provide change and the benefits/disadvantages of the introduction of a pay on foot system was discussed again.
73. As previously noted the introduction of a barrier can slow down the entrance to a car park. It was thought that the location of the Captain Cook Car Park could mean that at peak times, if there was an entry barrier system that it could create queues that may cause congestion and especially to buses trying to access the bus station.
74. The Head of Transport and Design offered to speak to the Centre Manager at Captain Cook Square to discuss the issue of the toilets in the car park.

75. The representative from Sainsburys informed the panel that they provided both short and long stay parking for shoppers. People who spent more than £5 in Sainsburys were entitled to free parking. The car park was usually full to capacity on Fridays and Saturdays with Sunday being very popular too. A security firm was employed to check that the parking system was not being abused. During the busy Christmas periods, the store had organised marshalls to be present in the car park to direct the traffic and prevent congestion which had worked well. However Sainsburys were also considering the merits of installing a pay on foot system.

REGENERATION AND WORKING WITH INVESTORS

76. The evidence for this section covers the following terms of reference
- *What are our partners doing in terms of assessing and contributing to the possible development of new cars parks if there is a need*
77. As the panel had learned, parking was a very important factor for both existing and prospective town centre based employers. Larger employers were those best placed to be able to make some kind of contribution towards improving car parking. New development proposals often included provision for new car parking to support their attractiveness to new occupants. However this could create a tension between the recognised need for additional car parking facilities and the overall appearance of the town centre.
78. The panel learnt that what was required was a mechanism that meant that rather than trying to develop parking on site, developers could be attracted to the town and then contribute to the cost of parking which is provided off-site which was available to a number of users and in one location, rather than parking being scattered across different sites. It was a straightforward process that would see developers being required to pay the Council, the monies would then be used to provide additional parking facilities.
79. Although that was a straightforward process there were a number of difficulties such as
- Location – sites which are in proximity to the development
 - Timing – the need for provision to be in place when the developments are completed
 - Funding – funding would be needed by the Council in advance of the development however developers may be reluctant to fund parking before their offices/facilities are let.
80. With that in mind, the Council was working on those issues to develop the most effective approach for the development of parking facilities in the town. Key partners were being encouraged to improve provision, develop green travel plans and work with the Council to lesson the impact of their employees parking in the town.
81. One major employer, the University, was working closely with the Council on a number of actions including
- The potential development of additional parking on the University Campus in partnership with the Council, to help alleviate difficulties for

businesses in the southern end of the town centre as well as for University employees.

- The establishment of a shuttle bus to and from the University/Middlesbrough College to the railway station/Zetland car park in order to encourage more people to use rail transport and park off campus.
- Consideration of the establishment of a park and ride system at a site located out of the town specifically targeting (but not wholly restricted to) University employees and students.

82. There are also a number of other plans in addition to those with the University and those included

- Additional parking as part of the Central Gardens re-development. Which it was planned would serve the needs of the scheme and give additional provision to meet the needs of those evening visitors attending the town's cultural quarter
- In the Queen's/Exchange Square area the development of new business accommodation will eventually become Middlehaven Phase III temporary parking on land north of Gosford Street will be available.

REVIEW OF RESIDENTS PARKING

83. The evidence for this section covers the following terms of reference

- *To receive an update on the position with Residents Parking following the panel's review in 2006.*

84. Surveys carried out by consultants confirmed that the streets around the University had more problems with non-resident parking than any other area in the town. Both student and commuter parking exacerbate the problems in the area and residents and their visitors are not able to park in their own street. The Council has received complaints and petitions and as student numbers increased the problem has grown progressively worse.

85. The panel considered the Council's residents parking scheme in 2006 and agreed with the report that had been prepared by the consultant that had been employed by the Council to consider the priorities for residents parking schemes in the town. The results of that report highlighted the University Ward as priority and the scrutiny panel recommended that consultation should be undertaken in the ward and the scheme implemented as a priority.

86. As outlined in the Executive's Service Response, the implementation of the scheme was dependent on a bid of £75,000 for capital funding. The first application in 2007/08 was unsuccessful and the bid for 2008/09 was being considered at the time of the review.

87. There are also some other considerations that the implementation of a residents parking scheme in the University Ward. Provisions would have to be included to accommodate worshippers to the local mosques and other places of worship in the area. Consideration would also have to be given to grant access to customers to the specialist retailers in the Waterloo Road area. This could be achieved by introducing a two hour limited waiting time before a resident parking permit would be required. If

funding was granted then the panel learnt that the scheme could be introduced by September 2008.

88. The panel was disappointed to learn that the previous panel's recommendation from 2006, which supported the introduction of a residents parking scheme in the University Ward had not been implemented due to the unsuccessful capital bid. The panel wanted to discuss this with the Director of Resources, the Executive Member for Resources and the Executive Member for Transport and they were invited to the next meeting of the panel.
89. The Head of Transport and Design confirmed that a bid for the funding for the residents parking scheme in the University Ward had been placed in the Council's Capital Programme for 2008/09. The Executive Member for Resources explained that the Capital Programme was not an annual programme, but a rolling programme over a four-year period. At the time of writing no decision had been taken.
90. In order to take the matter further the Executive Member for Resources agreed that it would be useful to hold a meeting to clarify the issues raised regarding the funding. It was agreed that the Head of Transport and Design would facilitate a meeting with the Executive Member for resources, the Ward Councillors from the University Ward and a representative from the finance department.
91. The panel was also concerned about the growing implications of a shortage of parking spaces for people parking on matchdays near the Riverside Stadium. The panel talked at length about whether or not there was any short term, quick win solutions that could be implemented in order to alleviate the problem. The Council had worked with the football club and information regarding parking had been provided in match day programmes.

CONCLUSION

92. Based on evidence given throughout the investigation the Panel concluded:

- a) At the time of the review there was a reported capacity within the town's long stay and short stay parking facilities. With the main demands on short stay spaces being around the Christmas period and around the southern end of the town, especially around the University and the shops on Linthorpe Road.
- b) There is the potential for demand for parking space in Middlehaven once the regeneration schemes are completed. However the Council have been working with consultants to ensure parking provision in the area. This position will need to be reviewed as Middlehaven develops.
- c) It was more difficult for the panel to assess if the current provision would be enough to provide for any future demand based on the information submitted to the panel. Demand could be difficult to predict especially with the development of green travel plans and alternative policies encouraging people to use public transport. The provision of additional parking has to be balanced with the need to encourage more people away from their cars and on to public transport whilst ensuring that economic growth and prosperity is not compromised. It was hoped that the Council's parking strategy would ensure the correct level of parking provision to fit with the aspirations of the town.

- d) The Council has worked with short stay car park providers to ensure that parking facilities are available for late night shopping on Thursdays. More publicity and signage needed to be developed to encourage visitors to the town's evening economy and to direct them to car parking that they knew would be safe, secure and accessible.
- e) The town has accessible disabled parking and developments were taking place to ensure that parking spaces in on-street disabled parking bays were provided in order to discourage parking on double yellow lines in 'hot-spot' areas where deliveries were being hindered and traffic was being obstructed.
- f) The panel was encouraged to hear that the Council's car parks had achieved Park Mark Status and that crime levels in the car parks were at an all time low.
- g) The panel was pleased to hear that the installation of on-street pay and display parking had been a success in the town and that the Council were working closely with businesses to ensure that the parking schemes located near businesses were appropriate.
- h) The panel found that the private operation of the short-stay car parks was operating very well. The Mall Car Park has benefited from development including new surfacing and signage and the car park has seen a rise in usage and income.
- i) The panel noted the comments regarding the proposed developments in Cannon Park and the impact that this may have on town centre shops and car parks.
- j) The panel was however keen to see the use of technology to improve visitors experiences of parking in the town, such as variable messaging systems which give accurate information about available spaces and the introduction of payment by mobile phone schemes.
- k) The panel visited the town centre's main car parks and spoke to car park providers. There were a number of issues that the panel considered important which were
- the impact that the Cannon Park development could have on town centre car parks due to the provision of additional parking
 - the toilet facilities within the Captain Cook Car Park.
- l) The Council worked closely with the businesses located in the town and with developers in order to provide for their parking needs and that developers were being asked to make a contribution to wards improving car parking. Regular meetings are held with the University to address the parking issues in the area. It was recognised that a balance must be made between developing new car parks and developing alternative solutions to parking, such as green travel plans and the use of a shuttle bus between the rail station and the university.

- m) The panel was disappointed to learn that the previous panel's recommendations regarding the implementation of a residents parking scheme in the University Ward had not been completed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

93. That the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive:

- a) That the parking strategy is reviewed by the panel in a year's time and the service area should report on whether or not the car park capacity is meeting the need from commuters/shoppers.
- b) That the Council ensures that there is sufficient safe and secure evening car parking provision which is well publicised in order to attract evening visitors to the town's developing night time economy.
- c) To ensure that adequate publicity is given to the mobile phone payment scheme for public awareness.
- d) That the Council maintains a dialogue with the private sector parking providers regarding the developments and parking provision in Cannon Park to ensure town centre car parking is not compromised by out of town schemes.
- e) That the Council discusses the condition of the toilets at the Captain Cook Car Park with the Management of the Captain Cook Centre with the view to each organisation making a contribution to funding for improvements to the toilets.
- f) That the Council install variable messaging systems at appropriate locations which direct visitors/commuters to available parking spaces within the town.
- g) That the residents parking is given a priority within the capital programme to enable the previous panel's recommendation regarding the introduction of the scheme in the University Ward to be implemented

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

94. The Panel is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of the investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:

- Ron Lowes – Executive Member for Transport
- Brian Glover – Head of Transport and Design Services
- Steve Webster – Group Leader, Parking Solutions
- Sandra Cartlidge – Head of Economic and Community Regeneration
- Karen Shields – Town Centre Company
- David McNee, Centre Manager, The Mall
- Lynne Stansby, Centre Manager, Captain Cook Square
- Jenny Ivorson – Sainsburys

- Morgan McClintock, Secretary and Registrar, University of Teesside
- Civil Enforcement Officers

COUNCILLOR JOHN COLE
CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

June 2008

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:

- (a) Parking Strategy for Middlesbrough April 2008