



Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy

Action Plan and Impact Assessment - Ellesmere
Port

20 November 2017

Mott MacDonald
Ground floor
Royal Liver Building
Pier Head
Liverpool L3 1JH
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)151 482 9910
F +44 (0)151 236 2985
mottmac.com

Cheshire West and Chester
Council

Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy

Action Plan and Impact Assessment - Ellesmere
Port

20 November 2017

Issue and Revision Record

Revision	Date	Originator	Checker	Approver	Description
1	09/11/17	HJ / PP	NO	KR	First Draft
2	16/11/17	HJ / PP	NO	KR	Final Issue
3	20/11/17	HJ / PP	NO	KR	Final Issue following comments
4	20/11/17	DB	NO	VG	Web compliance

Document reference: 376376 | 1 | D

Information class: Standard

This document is issued for the party which commissioned it and for specific purposes connected with the above-captioned project only. It should not be relied upon by any other party or used for any other purpose.

We accept no responsibility for the consequences of this document being relied upon by any other party, or being used for any other purpose, or containing any error or omission which is due to an error or omission in data supplied to us by other parties.

This document contains confidential information and proprietary intellectual property. It should not be shown to other parties without consent from us and from the party which commissioned it.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Document Context	1
1.2	Document Structure	1
2	Definition of Proposed Parking Measures	2
2.1	Introduction	2
2.2	Impact Assessment Scope	2
2.3	Off-Street Charging Measures	2
2.4	Car Park Quality Improvements	7
3	Parking Measures Impact Assessment	10
3.1	Introduction	10
3.2	Economic Impact Assessment	10
3.3	Social and Environmental Impact Assessment	12
3.4	Equality Analysis	14
4	Findings, Recommendations and Next Steps	16
4.1	Findings	16
4.2	Recommendations	16
4.3	Next Steps	17
	Appendices	18
A.	Tariff Comparison Charts	19
B.	Tariff Change Impact Prediction Methodology	21
B.1	Introduction	21
B.2	Demand Elasticities	21
B.3	Application to Charged Car Parks	21
B.4	Application to Non-Charged Car Parks	21
B.5	Limitations	22
C.	Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma	23
D.	Supplementary Data Tables for Figures	24
D.1	Figures 4 and 5: Average parking price vs retail centre vitality score	24

1 Introduction

1.1 Document Context

Mott MacDonald has been commissioned by Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWaC) to undertake the Cheshire West & Chester Parking Study. The primary aim of this study is to:

Carry out a review of all parking-related matters in Cheshire West and Chester to identify options and recommend future actions that are consistent with the corporate and sub-regional strategies and policies alongside future development and regeneration proposals.

Based on an extensive data collection and stakeholder consultation exercise, a Strategy Report was produced in 2016 which contained time-bound strategy recommendations for the following centres:

- Chester
- Ellesmere Port
- Northwich
- Winsford
- Neston and Parkgate
- Helsby
- Frodsham
- Rural areas (including Tarporley and Malpas etc).

The strategy was then subject to widespread public consultation, after which the recommendations were adopted by the Council, subject to pre-implementation Action Plans being prepared for each centre. These include Impact Assessments for any notable parking measures being proposed. The purpose of the Impact Assessments is to assess the potential economic, social, environmental and equality impacts of these measures, and to identify suitable mitigation where appropriate.

The purpose of this document is to present the Impact Assessment for Ellesmere Port.

1.2 Document Structure

This Impact Assessment document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 defines the specific measures proposed for Ellesmere Port in terms of on-street and off-street car parking tariff changes, potential maximum length of stay limits, and quality improvements at car parks
- Section 3 then describes the likely impact that these measures will have based on our analysis. This is separated into three sections:
 - Economic Impacts – mainly associated with tariff changes
 - Social and Environmental Impacts – mainly associated with potential displacement of car parking together with mitigating measures and the impact on air quality
 - Equality Analysis – mainly associated with varying impacts on protected user groups within the town
- Section 4 then provides a summary of the findings and recommendations from the Action Plan and presents a commentary on next step to implementation

2 Definition of Proposed Parking Measures

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide some definition to the parking measures proposed for Ellesmere Port by the Parking Strategy.

2.2 Impact Assessment Scope

The scope of the Impact Assessment for Ellesmere Port is to assess the impacts and any potential mitigation required for the following measures proposed by the Parking Strategy:

1. Revision of existing off-street parking tariffs (including replacement of 'Free after 3' with alternative targeted regimes, discounts and offers) to better harmonise and simplify tariffs across car parks and to better match demand to available supply throughout the day
2. Implementation of a programme of car park quality review/improvement, including better compliance with standards associated with the provision of disabled bays

Further definition for each of these measures is provided in the following subsections.

It should be noted that the impact assessment does not take account of proposed special parking offers that will be introduced in addition to the core offer described here. In particular, it is proposed to introduce a 'Spend & Save' scheme in which local businesses may sign up to pay a proportion of customer's parking charges in recognition of their custom, seasonal offers in which discounted or derestricted parking may be offered at certain times of the year as a promotional campaign,

2.3 Off-Street Charging Measures

2.3.1 Scope of Car Parks

The following table lists the Council owned car parks in Ellesmere Port for which tariff change measures are proposed.

Table 1: Council-owned car park where measures proposed

Ref	Name	Current Control	Capacity
PU24 & PU99	Town Centre	Charging (incl FA3)	1,005
PU19	Civic Centre	Charging (incl FA3)	343
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	Charging (incl FA3)	44
PU22	McGarva Way	Charging (incl FA3)	41
PU34	Westminster	Charging (incl FA3)	69
PU25	Wellington Road North	Charging (incl FA3)	275

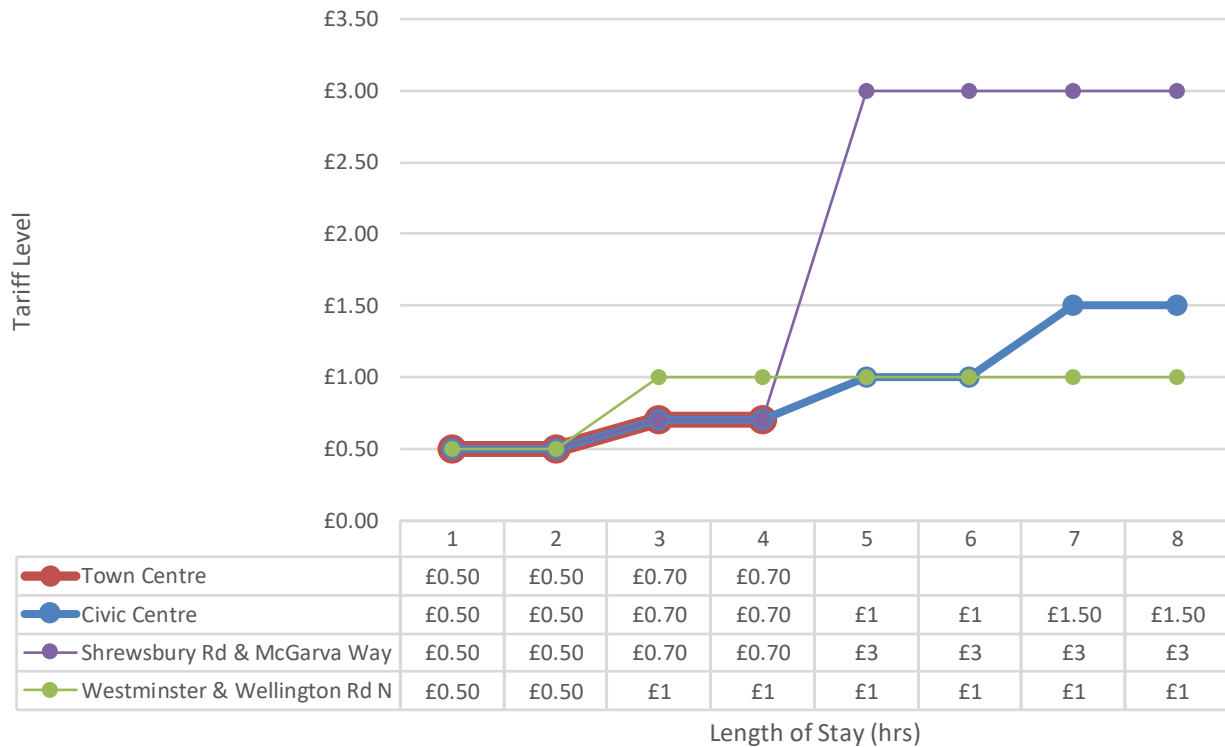
Source: MM

Please note that Civic Centre car park is also known as Wellington Road car park. Hereafter, for consistency, we have referred to it as Civic Centre. This is not to be confused with Wellington Road N (North) car park.

2.3.2 Current Tariffs and Usage

The following chart shows the current tariff structures for the above car parks.

Figure 1: Existing tariff structures



Source: MM

This chart shows a lack of tariff harmonisation across car parks. One objective of the tariff review is therefore to reduce the number of different tariffs across the Council's car parks in Ellesmere Port and to increase the user legibility of the offer.

Length of stay surveys were carried out at some of these car parks between 8am and 6pm on a school term-time weekday and Saturday in September and October 2016. For the Shrewsbury Road, McGarva Way and Wellington Road North car parks, where demand tends to be very low, just spot check occupancy surveys were undertaken, but the length of stay profile from comparable car parks has been applied to these to allow the tariff change response calculation to be undertaken. (It should be noted that length of stay surveys were undertaken at Westminster Car Park prior to the implementation of the current tariff and this may introduce a slight element of uncertainty in the result. This is likely to be very slight, however).

Based on this data, the following tables show for a weekday and Saturday:

- The average car park occupancy across each survey period (where measured or calculated)
- The maximum car park occupancy achieved during the survey period
- The average length-of-stay per vehicle (where measured or calculated)
- Tariff change recommendations

Table 2: Existing car park usage and tariff recommendations – Weekday

Ref	Name	Car Park Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	Tariff Recommendation
		Avg	Max		
PU24/99	Town Centre	39%	53%	1.6	Current tariff appropriate for car park function
PU19	Civic Centre	87%	96%	4.8	Higher long stay rate needed for this location
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	18%*	25%	1.6*	Recommend cheaper tariff to encourage demand
PU22	McGarva Way	14%*	19%	1.6*	Recommend cheaper tariff to encourage demand
PU34	Westminster	66%	79%	3.8	Harmonise tariff with PU23 & PU22
PU25	Wellington Rd N	4%*	4%	4.8*	Recommend cheaper tariff to encourage demand

Source: Survey 2016 and/or calculation (shown *)

Table 3: Existing car park usage and tariff recommendations – Saturday

Ref	Name	Car Park Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	Tariff Recommendation
		Avg	Max		
PU24/99	Town Centre	55%	71%	1.5	Recommend flat rate tariff and length of stay restriction to encourage demand
PU19	Civic Centre	40%	49%	3.1	Recommend flat rate tariff to encourage demand
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	6%*	8%	1.5*	Recommend flat rate tariff to encourage demand
PU22	McGarva Way	5%*	6%	1.5*	Recommend flat rate tariff to encourage demand
PU34	Westminster	29%	38%	3.3	Recommend flat rate tariff to encourage demand
PU25	Wellington Rd N	3%*	3%	3.1*	Recommend flat rate tariff to encourage demand

Source: Survey 2016 and/or calculation (shown *)

These recommendations can be summarised as the following aims to be met by the proposed tariff changes:

1. To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday
2. To increase overall demand and encourage longer lengths of stay on a Saturday
3. To reduce the number of different tariffs to increase user understanding of the overall offer available

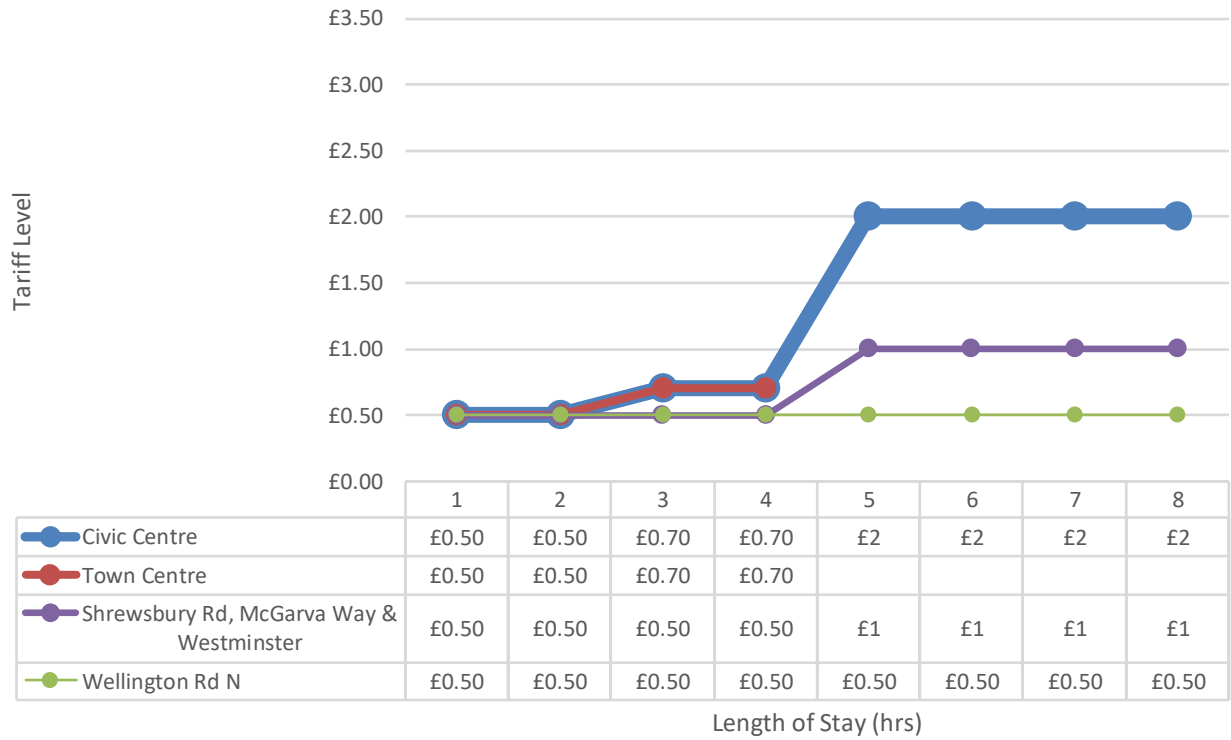
2.3.3 Proposed Tariffs and Usage

In order to address the above recommendations and aims, the following two charts respectively show the proposed weekday and Saturday tariffs for the above car parks. All tariffs assume an end to the 'Free After 3' offer and a replacement with cheaper tariffs in selected outer car parks and significantly cheaper flat rate parking on a Saturday to stimulate retail demand.

All of the proposed tariffs should be kept under continuous review to ensure that they deliver (and continue to deliver) the required strategy objectives.

For reference, these tariffs are shown contrasted with the relevant existing tariffs in Appendix A, so that the tariff change per car park can be directly assessed.

Figure 2: Proposed tariff structures – Weekday



Source: MM

Figure 3: Proposed tariff structures – Saturday



Source: MM

Taking into account Figure 1 above, the rationale for each tariff change is as described in the following table.

Table 4: Tariff change rationale

Car Park	Rationale	
	Weekday Tariff	Saturday Tariff
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tariff and length-of-stay restriction retained, as appropriate for car park location and function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap flat rate tariff to encourage greater demand and longer stays on a Saturday
Civic Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tariff retained for stays of up to 4 hours, but long-stay rate increased to release more capacity for short-stay parking in this central location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap flat rate tariff to encourage greater demand and longer stays on a Saturday
Shrewsbury Road, McGarva Way & Westminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parallel but lower tariff than above tariffs to encourage greater use of these satellite car parks and to absorb some of the long-stay parking displaced from Civic Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap flat rate tariff to encourage greater demand and longer stays on a Saturday
Wellington Road North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap flat rate tariff to encourage use as a long stay car park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap flat rate tariff to encourage use as a long stay car park

Source: MM

The predicted effect of these proposed tariffs on the usage of each car park is summarised for a weekday and Saturday in the following two tables. A description of the methodology applied to derive these results is attached in Appendix B. No calculation for Wellington Road North was undertaken on the basis that a removal of the existing tariff will only generate a positive demand response for this car park.

Table 5: Predicted car park usage and change from existing – Weekday

Ref	Name	Avg Occupancy		Max Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	
		Predicted	Abs Change	Predicted	Abs Change	Predicted	% Change
PU24/99	Town Centre	38%	-1%	53%	0%	1.6	0%
PU19	Civic Centre	38%	-49%*	49%	-47%*	3.2	-33%*
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	27%	7%	31%	7%	4	20%
PU22	McGarva Way	20%	5%	23%	5%	4	20%
PU34	Westminster	66%	0%	79%	0%	3.8	1%
PU25	Wellington Rd N	5%	1%	6%	1%	5.5	13%

Source: MM calculation

* It should be noted that the large displacement of vehicles from Civic Centre during a weekday is due to the impact of increasing the cost of long stay parking in this location. In reality, it is expected that much of this released capacity will be filled by currently suppressed short stay demand for town centre car parking and consequently occupancy figures for Civic Centre car park will be higher than shown here.

Table 6: Predicted car park usage and change from existing – Saturday

Ref	Name	Avg Occupancy		Max Occupancy		Avg Length of Stay (hrs)	
		Predicted	Abs Change	Predicted	Abs Change	Predicted	% Change
PU24/99	Town Centre	55%	0%	73%	2%	1.5	3%
PU19	Civic Centre	48%	7%	57%	8%	3.5	13%
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	11%	3%	14%	3%	3.6	21%
PU22	McGarva Way	8%	2%	10%	2%	3.6	21%
PU34	Westminster	37%	8%	46%	8%	3.8	15%
PU25	Wellington Rd N	3%	1%	4%	1%	3.5	13%

Source: MM calculation

A commentary on these results for each car park is provided in the following table.

Table 7: Commentary on predicted responses to tariff changes

Ref	Car Park	Commentary on Predicted Responses
PU24/99	Town Centre	Little change in occupancy on a weekday but longer stays and slightly greater occupancy on a Saturday, suggesting tariff achieves aims for this car park
PU19	Civic Centre	Significant reduction in occupancy and length of stay on a weekday as long-stay demand is transferred elsewhere. The released space is likely to be part refilled by suppressed short-stay demand for this town centre car park. On a Saturday, general occupancy levels and stay lengths are increased, as desired.
PU23	Shrewsbury Rd	Increased occupancy on a weekday, and increased length of stay which is appropriate for this satellite car park. In reality, the cheaper long stay tariff compared to Civic Centre should further absorb some of the long-stay parking displaced from that car park. On a Saturday, occupancy and length of stay is also increased.
PU22	McGarva Way	Increased occupancy on a weekday, and increased length of stay which is appropriate for this satellite car park. In reality, the cheaper long stay tariff compared to Civic Centre should further absorb some of the long-stay parking displaced from that car park. On a Saturday, occupancy and length of stay is also slightly increased.
PU34	Westminster	Occupancy not impacted but length of stay slightly increased on a weekday, suggesting transfer of long stay parking. Saturday occupancy increased to better levels and lengths of stay increased to encourage longer stays.
PU25	Wellington Rd N	We have no prediction data for this car park, but the length of stay restrictions are likely to transfer significant amounts of long stay demand from Civic Centre to this car park on weekdays.

Source: MM

It should be noted that, in the near future, significant numbers of Council staff are intended to transfer to Ellesmere Port from other parts of the borough. The tariff and length of stay changes proposed here should ensure that the majority of these make use of the longer stay car parks slightly further out from the town centre such as Wellington Road North, Shrewsbury Road, Westminster and McGarva Way.

Given that it is likely to take some time for the situation to settle down to normal operations following this move, it is proposed to monitor the situation for a period of twelve months to ascertain the specific change in parking patterns. If any adjustments are required to tariffs or restrictions following this to achieve the aims of the strategy, these can be implemented after this time. This period of monitoring is especially important in light of ongoing housing development proposals on and around Wellington Road North car park.

Overall, it is concluded that the proposed tariff changes should achieve the above aims of the Parking Strategy:

1. To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday
2. To increase overall demand and encourage longer lengths of stay on a Saturday
3. To reduce the number of different tariffs to increase user understanding of the overall offer available

The tariff changes discussed are proposed to be rolled out over the course of the first quarter of 2018.

The potential economic, social, environmental and equality impacts of these changes are considered in the Section 3 of this document.

2.4 Car Park Quality Improvements

One element of the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy is to improve the quality of car parks across the borough to improve the experience for users and make them feel safer, and therefore increase usage of them. This will also improve the perception of the town centre, particularly for visitors and encourage visitors to return. This section sets out the specific improvements which should be undertaken at each car park in Ellesmere Port. For each car park, a prioritised list of improvements is listed, with the highest priority improvement listed first. It is proposed that these improvements will start between January and June 2018.

All car parks would benefit from real time information on spaces available on variable message signs on the key roads into the city centre. Where signage is available at present, there is inconsistency on the information provided. Improvements in internal signage refers to information boards within car parks which display information on maximum length of stay and tariffs.

Secondly, it is recommended that upgraded payment infrastructure is installed in all appropriate car parks as part of the programme of car park quality improvements. Some car parks in Chester have already seen the new ANPR-based (Advanced Number Plate Recognition) barriered pay on foot system implemented, and the same infrastructure should be rolled out in Ellesmere Port as well.

Finally, the disabled provision in all car parks requires review according to latest guidance on volume and sizes. This will ensure that all disabled bays are fully accessible and compliant with national guidance.

Next to each car park is a score to indicate the priority of carrying out quality improvements at car parks. Poor quality car parks are given a high priority score and should be improved sooner than better quality car parks.

It should be noted that the surveys on which the following recommendations are based were undertaken in Spring 2016.

Town Centre – High (Red)

Town Centre is an average quality car park. To raise it to a high standard, the following improvements are recommended:

1. CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)
2. Surfacing, bay markings and layout
3. Lighting
4. Internal signage

The central location of this car park, and its high usage, warrant that this car park is a high priority for carrying out quality improvements.

1. Surfacing, bay markings and layout

Westminster – High (Red)

At Westminster car park, a car park rated as poor quality, the following improvements are recommended to raise the standard of the car park to a good quality:

1. CCTV
2. Lighting
3. Surfacing, bay markings and layout
4. Internal signage

Marina Drive – High (Red)

Currently Marina Drive is a poor quality car park. To raise it to a high standard, it requires the following improvements:

1. Surfacing, bay markings and layout
2. CCTV
3. Internal signage

Civic Way – Medium (Amber)

Civic Way car park is of average quality. The following improvements, in prioritised order, are recommended at Civic Way:

1. CCTV
2. Lighting
3. Internal signage

McGarva Way – Medium (Amber)

To raise its quality to a high standard, McGarva Way car park requires the following improvements:

1. CCTV
2. Surfacing, bay markings and layout

Bay markings are an urgent priority at Marina Drive car park because the existing markings of disabled spaces are very poor and unclear for users.

Whitby Hall – Medium (Amber)

Whitby Hall car park is currently of average quality. To raise it to a high standard, the following aspects require improvement:

1. CCTV
2. Lighting
3. Surfacing, bay markings and layout
4. Internal signage

Civic Centre – Low (Green)

Civic Centre is a good quality car park. However, there is scope for improvements in the following aspects:

1. CCTV
2. Internal signage
3. Surfacing, bay markings and layout

Wellington Road North – Low (Green)

The following improvements have been identified as priorities at Wellington Road North:

1. CCTV
2. Lighting

Shrewsbury Road – Low (Green)

Shrewsbury Road car park is a good quality car park requires only the following improvements:

1. CCTV

Whitby Park – Low (Green)

The following improvements are recommended at Whitby Park car park:

1. CCTV
2. Internal signage

3 Parking Measures Impact Assessment

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present an assessment of the potential impacts of the parking measures proposed for Ellesmere Port and to identify appropriate mitigation where required.

3.2 Economic Impact Assessment

It is often a concern of town centre retailers that any perceived increase in town centre parking restrictions will have a negative impact on trade. The purpose of this economic impact assessment section is to identify whether such concerns are valid for the above proposed parking measures and, if so, what mitigation measures are needed.

3.2.1 Rationale for Measures

Firstly, it is important to note that the rationale behind the introduction of the measures proposed by the Parking Strategy for Ellesmere Port is to better manage demand to suit the particular demands of the town centre. A brief summary of the rationale behind the measures is as follows:

Table 8: Summary of parking measure rationale

Measure	Rationale	Intended Impact on Trade
Off-street car park tariff changes	To encourage short-stay shopper-type parking in central car parks and longer-stay commuter-type parking in outer car parks on a weekday, while also increasing overall occupancy and longer visits on a Saturday	Positive
Car park quality improvements	To increase attractiveness of existing car park stock	Positive

Source: MM

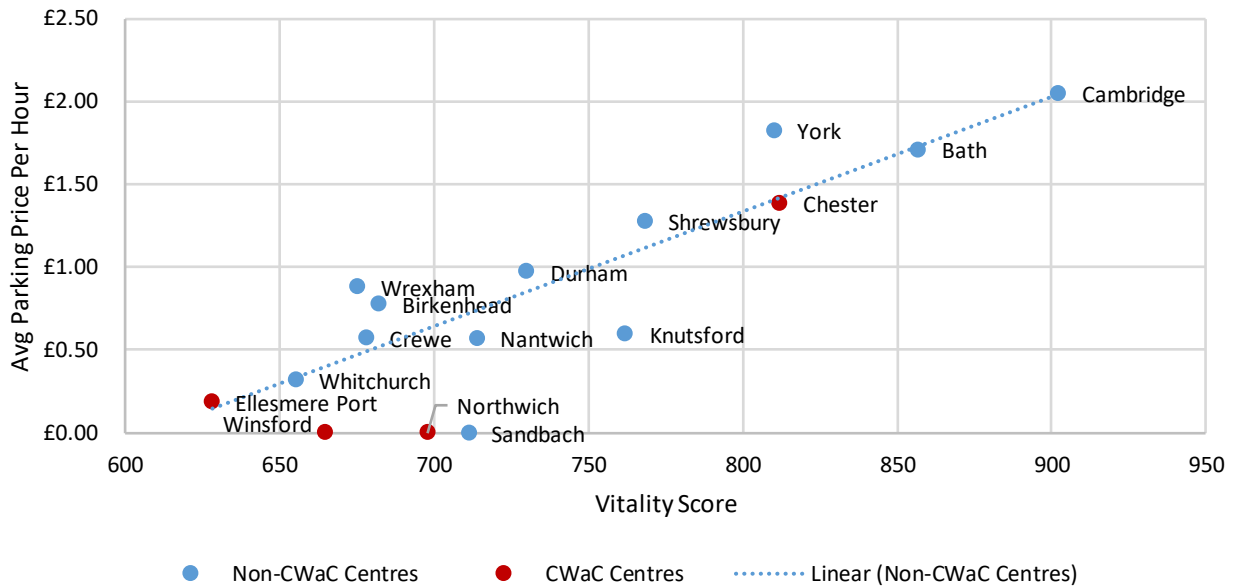
When implemented in accordance with the outcome of the assessments in this section, these measures should therefore have a positive impact on the functioning of the city centre and hence on trade.

3.2.2 Proportionality of Measures

Current research suggests no evidence of a detailed quantifiable relationship between parking charges and footfall in a retail centre, as footfall is dependent on a much larger range of factors than just parking. It is not therefore possible to directly equate the above tariff change proposals to any potential impact on footfall in Ellesmere Port.

However, empirical evidence does suggest that retail centres which are more attractive to shoppers and visitors are more likely to require higher parking charges to manage demand than centres which are less attractive. The following chart confirms this by comparing, for a range of centres comparable to CWaC centres, average parking prices per hour (measured across the first 6 hours) and retail centre vitality scores. The vitality scores are as issued by Harper Dennis Hobbs – a retail and commercial retail estate consultancy - and apply to 1,000 retail centres in the UK in 2017, taking into account a large range of factors that reflect economic health, including retail spend, population catchment size, retail vacancy rates etc. The average parking prices are calculated from Parkopedia.

Figure 4: Average parking price vs retail centre vitality score

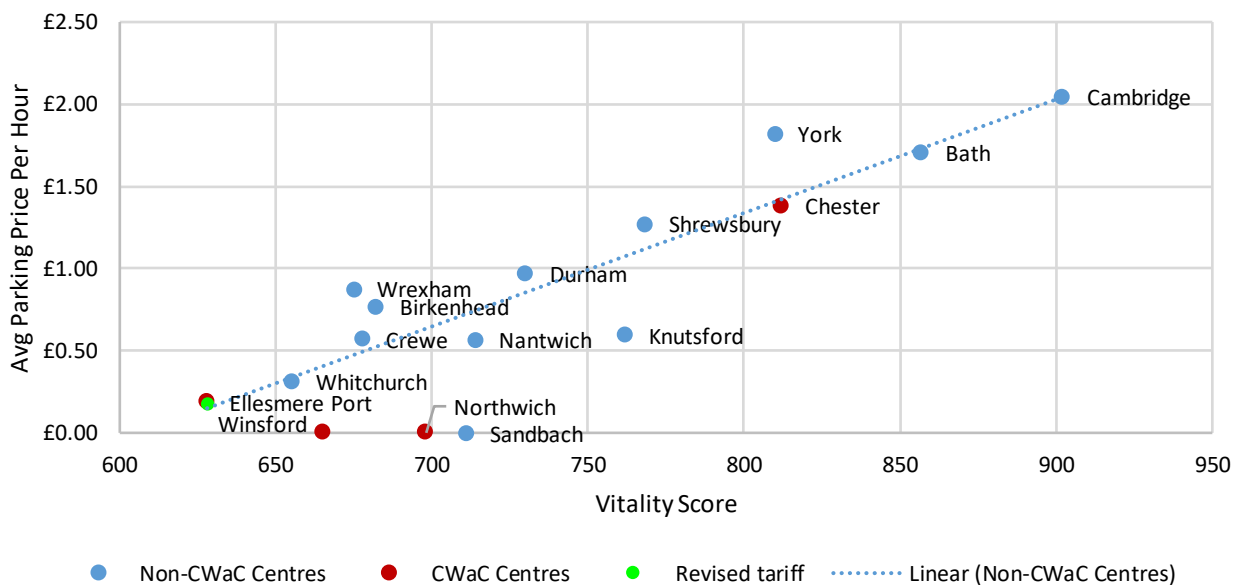


Source: Data from Parkopedia and Harper Dennis Hobbs - See Appendix D for the data table on which the latter is based

This chart shows quite a strong relationship between parking price and vitality score between the comparable centres shown. It also shows that the current average parking price across all car parks (private and Council owned) for Ellesmere Port is just above the average for a town of its level of vitality. The average price shown is £0.19 per hour.

Following the above proposed off-street car park tariff changes, the average price per hour (measured across the first 6 hours) for all car parks in Ellesmere Port is predicted to reduce to £0.18. The following chart shows the position of this predicted new average price in green.

Figure 5: Average parking price vs retail centre vitality score – Ellesmere Port revised tariff



Source: Data from Parkopedia and Harper Dennis Hobbs - See Appendix D for the data table on which the latter is based

This chart shows that the revised tariff proposals for Ellesmere Port bring the average tariff level closer and approximately equal to the average for a town of its vitality rating.

3.2.3 Assessment Conclusion

Based on a review of the rationale behind the measures proposed by the Parking Strategy for Ellesmere Port, which is to positively impact the economy of Ellesmere Port, and a review of the existing and proposed average parking tariff level in Ellesmere Port against comparable towns, which shows favourable results, it is concluded that the proposed parking measures will not have a negative economic impact on the town, and should instead generate positive effects.

3.3 Social and Environmental Impact Assessment

The primary social and environmental impacts associated with the changes proposed for parking in Ellesmere Port are related to any displacement effects as a result of changes, particularly in relation to tariffs. The following sub-sections take each car park, for which changes are proposed, in turn and note the potential impacts of any traffic displaced on adjacent streets and car parks. It assesses, in each case, the severity of any impact and also notes any potential mitigation measures that may help to reduce the severity of this. It should be noted that the analysis does not take into account the impact of specifically targeted parking offers and promotions to be rolled out in the near future.

3.3.1 Civic Centre

The impact of the flat rate of 50p all day at Civic Centre car park is a level of attraction throughout Saturday, with a peak attraction of 30-34 vehicles between 10am and 3pm. A small level of displacement of short stay users in the afternoon is more than compensated for with a strong attraction of all day stayers as a result of the flat rate tariff.

The picture on a weekday is different, with a high level of displacement throughout the day. For most of the day, the displacement level is around 160-180 cars, with a peak of 187 vehicles at 3pm. The displacement of long stay users is a desired outcome to provide capacity for short stay users in this central car park. The nearby McGarva Way, Shrewsbury Road, Westminster and Wellington Road North car parks, with a combined capacity of nearly 430 and low levels of demands at present, are designated as long stay car parks. These will be able to absorb much of the long stay demand which will be displaced from Civic Centre.

Potential Daytime Displacement: Up to 185 on a weekday afternoon

Potential Mitigation Measure: Can be catered for in nearby car parks – none required

3.3.2 McGarva Way

The level of existing demand at McGarva Way is very low, and no displacement is anticipated as a result of the removal of Free after 3pm on either a weekday or Saturday. Instead, it will be able to absorb any displacement of long stay vehicles from other car parks as the tariff at McGarva Way is being amended to be cheaper for long stay parking.

Potential Daytime Displacement: None

Potential Mitigation Measure: None required

3.3.3 Shrewsbury Road

The level of existing demand at Shrewsbury Road is very low, and no displacement is anticipated as a result of the removal of Free after 3pm on either a weekday or Saturday. Instead, it will be able to absorb any displacement of long stay vehicles from other car parks as the tariff at Shrewsbury Road is being amended to be cheaper for long stay parking.

Potential Daytime Displacement: None

Potential Mitigation Measure: None required

3.3.4 Town Centre

The weekday tariff at Town Centre car park is to remain the same as it at present, with a maximum price of 70p for 4 hours (maximum stay), but with the Free after 3pm offer removed. On a Saturday, a flat rate of 50p is proposed, again with a maximum stay of 4 hours.

On a weekday, this leads to no change in the morning, but some displacement of short stay users in the afternoon, reaching a peak of 40 vehicles at 4pm. There is sufficient capacity in cheaper alternative car parks – Shrewsbury Road, McGarva Way and Wellington Road North to absorb any spatial displacement. However, the fact that it is the afternoon which shows most displacement indicates that the Free after 3pm is artificially distorting demand for parking towards the afternoon, rather than it being spread out all day. Therefore, there is likely to be some temporal displacement, with people arriving earlier in the day due to there being no incentive to arriving after 3pm. This will encourage demand to be more evenly spread out throughout the day, rather than being concentrated after 3pm.

On a Saturday, a similar pattern is observed after 3pm with a maximum displacement of 38 cars at 4pm. In the morning, an attraction of up to 20 vehicles is seen due to the reduced tariffs for stays between 2 hours and 4 hours from 70p to 50p and the removal of the incentive to arrive after 3pm due to the removal of the Free after 3pm offer.

Potential Daytime Displacement: Up to 40 on a weekday afternoon

Potential Mitigation Measure: Can be catered for in nearby car parks – none required

3.3.5 Wellington Road North

Wellington Road North has been designated as a long stay car park, targeted at commuters, due to it being large and on the edge of the town centre. It is proposed to have a low, fixed price of 50p all day on a weekday and a Saturday. There is no displacement expected a result of tariff changes, and instead it is likely to absorb much of the displaced long stay demand from more central car parks.

Potential Daytime Displacement: None

Potential Mitigation Measure: None required

3.3.6 Westminster

Due to Westminster car park operating a cheap initial tariff as well Free after 3pm, displacement is very low on a weekday, with a maximum of 2 cars being displaced, and on a Saturday a small level of attraction of vehicles through the day.

Potential Daytime Displacement: Minimal

Potential Mitigation Measure: None required

3.3.7 Summary

Table 9: Summary of Impacts

Car Park	Summary
Civic Centre	Displacement of long stay users across the day on a weekday, can be catered for in nearby designated long stay car parks – Wellington Road, Westminster, Shrewsbury Road and McGarva Way

Car Park	Summary
Town Centre	Some displacement expected after 3pm. Sufficient capacity to cater for this in alternative cheaper car parks
McGarva Way	No displacement expected
Shrewsbury Road	No displacement expected
Wellington Road North	Attraction of vehicles displaced from other car parks
Westminster	Minimal displacement expected; can be catered for in alternative car parks such as the free Wellington Road

The change on Saturdays from incremental tariffs to a flat rate of 50p for all car parks in Ellesmere Port, means attraction of vehicles is expected for most of the day on a Saturday. Some displacement of short stay users is expected in the afternoon due to the removal of Free after 3pm, however, these are likely to be displaced temporally rather than spatially, as the flat price across the day encourages users to arrive earlier and spend longer in the town centre.

On a weekday, reasonably high levels of displacement are forecast throughout the day, with a maximum displacement of 217 vehicles at 3pm, demonstrating the distorting effect on demand the Free after 3pm policy has. The tariffs at the moment mean that car park usage tends to be concentrated on a small number of car parks, notably Town Centre, and Civic Centre, due to them being central and the same price as more peripheral car parks. The consequence of this is that there are a substantial number of car parks where virtually no demand is currently observed (McGarva Way, Shrewsbury Road and Wellington Rd N). These car parks are centrally located and will be cheaper than car parks where displacement is anticipated, to incentivise usage of these instead of short stay car parks.

The aim of the parking strategy is to have the most central car parks designated as short stay to cater for short stay users such as shoppers, and for longer stay, such as commuters, to use more peripheral car parks. The impacts of the changing tariffs are aligned with this aim. The existing presence of residential parking restrictions around the town centre will continue to ensure that people entering the town centre use car parks and not residential streets for parking. For this reason, negative impacts of displacement on to residential streets are not likely to occur.

There are likely to be wider social and environmental benefits of removing the Free after 3pm policy in the form of improvements in traffic flow and a reduction in congestion in the town centre in the evening peak. This is expected to be felt as the concentration of demand currently generated in the later afternoon will be redistributed more evenly throughout the day, rather than having a concentration of vehicles arriving around 3pm and leaving around 5-6pm, adding to the evening peak congestion.

3.4 Equality Analysis

The third and final set of potential impacts that will be reviewed in light of the proposed changes associated with the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy are those linked to equality and diversity. As a local authority and public organisation, Cheshire West and Chester Council has a duty to evaluate the impact of each of its schemes on protected groups. It does this by completing an Equality Analysis to capture the level of impact under a number of strategic headings.

This assessment has been completed for the Ellesmere Port components of the Parking Strategy and is appended to this document as Appendix C. The following sub-sections summarise each of the main findings in cases where there is considered to be a non-neutral impact on equality and diversity.

Race and Ethnicity

There is a potential barrier to using parking services for those whose first language is not English. The strategy will need to consider prioritised options for communication to contain this impact.

Impact: Low Negative

People with Disabilities

The parking action plan includes a programme of car park quality improvements, including ensuring compliance with standards for the number and size of disabled parking bays.

Impact: Medium Positive

Age

Some concerns have been raised regarding the replacement of 'Free after 3pm' and introduction of new tariff structures, including weekend tariffs, that these proposals could have a negative impact on age categories with traditionally lower levels of income such as school leavers, students and senior citizens. Length of stay surveys and economic analysis undertaken as part of strategy development indicate that revised proposals will not significantly increase the average tariff paid and an increased number of tariff options will increase flexibility and choice.

Impact: Low negative

Carers

The parking action plan includes a programme of car park quality improvements, including ensuring compliance with standards for the number and size of disabled parking bays. This could potentially benefit the carers of disability groups.

Impact: Low positive

Areas of Deprivation

Some concerns have been raised regarding the replacement of 'free after 3' and introduction of new tariff structures, including weekend tariff, that these proposals could have a negative impact on low income groups. Length of stay surveys and economic analysis undertaken as part of strategy development indicate that revised proposals will not increase the average tariff paid and an increased number of tariff options will increase flexibility and choice.

A briefing for Directors of Public Health suggested that deprived communities are more likely to be situated near polluted busy roads, and are more likely to experience adverse health impacts. In general terms, there is usually a positive impact on health in deprived communities through a reduction in congestion/pollution, as may be realised as a result of increased tariff choice spreading parking demand more evenly across the day.

Impact: Low negative

Health and Wellbeing

The proposals to provide improved car park quality, and increased choice in respect of tariff options. This is likely to have a beneficial effect on the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. . In general terms, there is usually a positive impact on health through reductions in congestion/pollution, as may be realised as a result of increased tariff choice spreading parking demand more evenly across the day.

Impact: Low positive

Summary

To summarise, the equality analysis has awarded the scheme a '**Low Impact**' score and recommends a process of continuous monitoring with outcomes to be reviewed in three years.

4 Findings, Recommendations and Next Steps

4.1 Findings

From the analysis undertaken in this Action Plan for Ellesmere Port in respect of the Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy, it has been determined that no significant adverse impact may be expected as a result of the changes proposed. The results may be summarised as follows:

4.1.1 Economic Impacts

Based on a review of the rationale behind the measures proposed by the Parking Strategy for Ellesmere Port, which is to positively impact the economy of Ellesmere Port, and a review of the existing and proposed average parking tariff level in Ellesmere Port against comparable towns, which shows favourable results, it is concluded that the proposed parking measures will not have a negative economic impact on the town, and should instead generate positive effects.

4.1.2 Social and Environmental Impacts

The primary impacts are due to the potential for displaced demand from existing off and on-street parking locations as a result of the changes to tariffs. It has been determined that, in most cases, this displacement may be considered to be negligible. Some displacement is expected at Town Centre car park after 3pm on a weekday but this may easily be catered for in nearby designated long stay car parks – Wellington Road North, Westminster, Shrewsbury Road and McGarva Way. The largest displacement impact is expected at Civic Centre car park where the changes to tariff and length of stay restriction is likely to generate a significant movement of long stay demand to outer car parks such as Wellington Road North, Westminster, Shrewsbury Road and McGarva Way. The large amounts of spare capacity in these facilities should enable this transition without issue, however, even accounting for the transfer of additional Council staff to Ellesmere Port in the near future.

To ensure that the changes proposed are having the desired impact on behaviours, it is recommended that a period of monitoring follow the implementation of the changes and the transfer of staff. Further changes may then be required at a time in the future based on a robust basis of evidence.

4.1.3 Equality Analysis

The equality analysis has awarded the scheme a 'Low Impact' score and recommends a process of continuous monitoring with outcomes to be reviewed in three years.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on an extensive data collection and stakeholder consultation exercise, a Strategy Report was produced in 2016 which contained time-bound strategy recommendations for Ellesmere Port. These include:

- Revision of existing off-street parking tariffs (including replacement of 'free after 3' with alternative targeted regimes, discounts and offers) to better harmonise tariffs across car parks and to better match demand to available supply throughout the day
- Implementation of a programme of car park quality review/improvement, including better compliance with standards associated with the provision of disabled bays

These are proposed in order to meet the following three objectives:

- To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday

- To increase overall demand and encourage longer lengths of stay on a Saturday
- To reduce the number of different tariffs to increase user understanding of the overall offer available
- To replace the existing 'Free After 3' incentive with tariffs which better distribute demand across the day

It is considered that the recommendations on tariffs and quality will achieve these aims without significant negative impact under the headings described above. As such the recommendations are upheld following this analysis.

4.3 Next Steps

Following the publication of this Action Plan for Ellesmere Port, the following programme of measures is recommended:

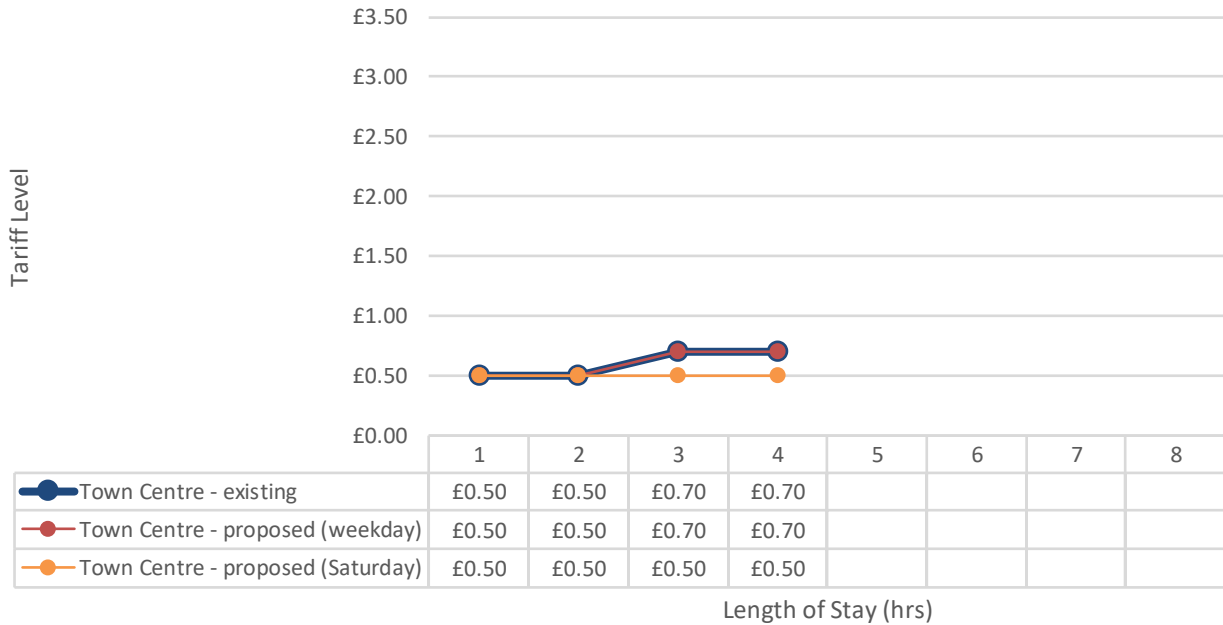
- Commencement of implementation of Car Park Improvement Programme: January 2018 – June 2018
- TRO process for changes to tariffs/introduction of tariffs/length of stay restrictions: December 2017
- Introduction of changes to tariffs/introduction of tariffs/length of stay restrictions: January/February 2018

Appendices

A.	Tariff Comparison Charts	19
B.	Tariff Change Impact Prediction Methodology	21
C.	Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma	23
D.	Supplementary Data Tables for Figures	24

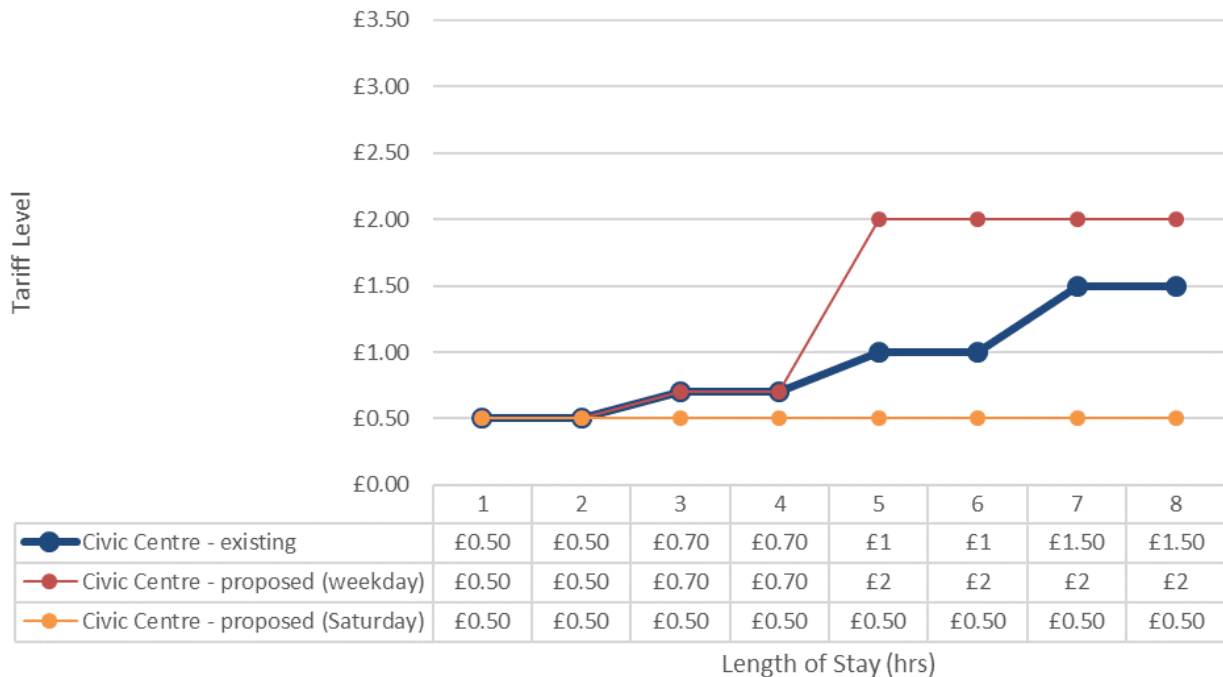
A. Tariff Comparison Charts

Figure 6: Existing and proposed tariffs – Town Centre



Source: CWaC and MM

Figure 7: Existing and proposed tariffs – Civic Centre



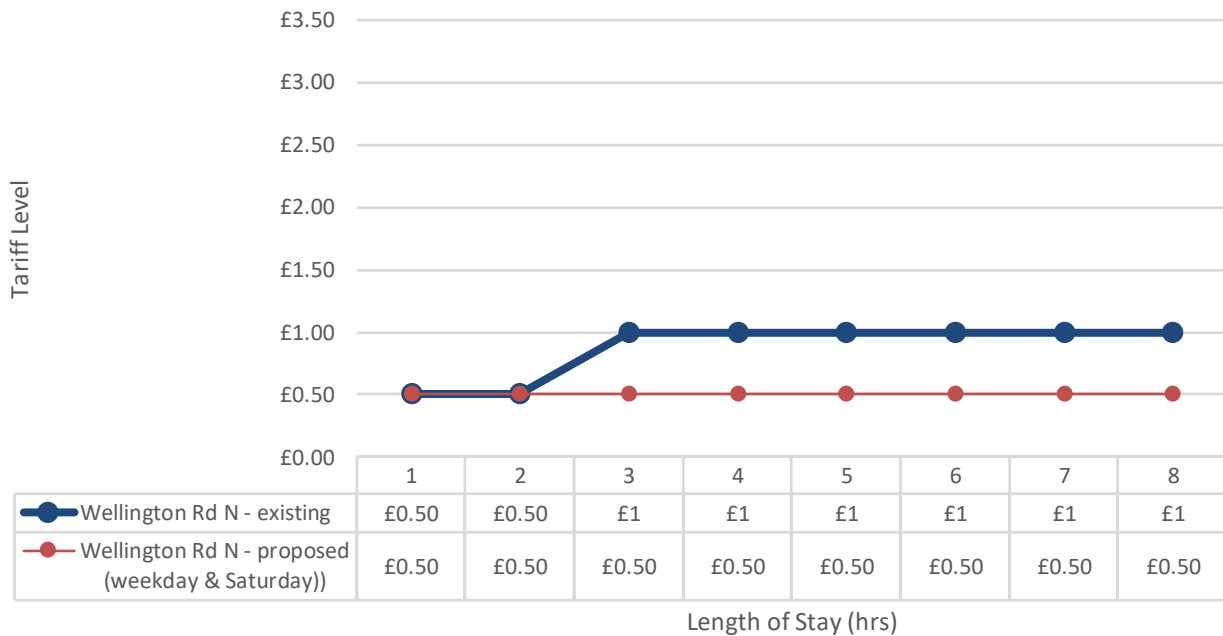
Source: CWaC and MM

Figure 8: Existing and proposed tariffs – Shrewsbury Rd, McGarva Way & Westminster



Source: CWaC and MM

Figure 9: Existing and proposed tariffs – Wellington Road North



Source: CWaC and MM

B. Tariff Change Impact Prediction Methodology

B.1 Introduction

The purpose of this appendix section is to summarise how the demand response to tariff changes in off-street car parks has been calculated.

B.2 Demand Elasticities

Following the principle of supply and demand in a competitive environment, parking demand is generally inversely related to parking price. So if price goes up, demand is likely to go down, and vice versa.

The scale of this response, however, depends on the 'elasticity' level of the demand. If demand is highly elastic to change, then large responses can be seen from small changes in price. But if it is relatively inelastic, then lower response levels would be expected.

The degree of elasticity of the parking market for any particular car park depends on a range of factors, including the location and appeal of the car park, and the degree of competition, but researchers have derived average values based on empirical evidence. The average values employed for this analysis are taken from the 2010 Transport Research Laboratory document, 'Parking Measures and Policies Research Review', and are as follows:

Table 10: Parking demand elasticities employed

Parking Duration	Elasticity Value
0-2 hours:	-0.1
2-4 hours:	-0.3
4-7 hours:	-0.5
7+ hours:	-0.9

Source: Parking Measures and Policies Research Review, TRL, 2010

In practice, what these elasticities mean is that, for users who park for up to 2 hours, a 10% parking charge increase would result in a 1% drop in demand, while the same increase for users who park over 7 hours would result in a 9% drop in demand. 10% decreases in the price would yield the opposite result.

B.3 Application to Charged Car Parks

For car parks where there is already charging, the application of the above elasticities is straightforward. So, for example, if the price for parking up to 2 hours increases by 10%, demand for this duration would fall by 1%, while if it increased by the same amount for stays of over 7 hours, demand for this duration would fall by 9%. 10% decreases in the price would yield the opposite result.

B.4 Application to Non-Charged Car Parks

For car parks where there is currently no charge, the application of the above elasticities is less straightforward, as the introduction of a charge cannot be represented as a percentage change of the existing situation. Instead, a market-value parking-charge-per-hour is estimated for the car park from which a drop to zero would represent a 100% price drop and a demand increase as per the above elasticity values. The demand response for the reverse situation of increasing the tariff *from* zero is then pro-rata'd according to what proportion of the estimated market-value price the increase represents.

For example, if a car park which is currently free is estimated to have a potential market value of 50p per hour, then the introduction of a 50p per hour charge would equate to a 100% price increase and therefore a decrease in demand according to the above elasticities as follows:

- 0-2 hours: -10%
- 2-4 hours: -30%
- 4-7 hours: -50%
- 7+ hours: -90%

The introduction of tariffs which are lower or higher than the estimated market value would then generate a pro-rata demand response. For example, the introduction of a 25p per hour charge would generate half the response level, as follows:

- 0-2 hours: -5%
- 2-4 hours: -15%
- 4-7 hours: -25%
- 7+ hours: -45%

B.5 Limitations

It should be noted that this is a simplified method of predicting demand responses to tariff changes in individual car parks, in the absence of any current evidence that would allow more sophisticated modelling. Such a method, however, inevitably comes with limitations which should be noted in the interpretation of the results. Particular limitations are:

- The elasticities are drawn from research, but represent an average response for all car parks in all situations. In reality, actual elasticities would likely vary per town and car park, and by time of year, day of week, time of day and user type. In the absence of more bespoke data, however, and in the interests of consistency, these averaged elasticities are the best data available for the purposes of this exercise.
- The elasticity approach indicates how demand may increase or decrease in a particular car park, but it cannot identify where affected demand would displace to or from. Judgment is required to assess this.
- Because the demand response is proportional to existing demand levels, even large price changes will only generate small responses if the existing demand level is low. This means that the response to measures aimed to stimulate new market sectors for a car park are likely to be underestimated.
- On a similar basis, the method is not able to take account of constrained demand. For example, if a tariff is introduced to a free car park to displace long stay parking so that short-stay shopper parking has priority, this method will show an overall drop in demand. In reality, however, the capacity released by displaced long-stay parking could be directly replaced by short-stay demand which is currently being suppressed. Judgment is therefore required to recognise where demand constraints may be in effect.
- Lastly, it is noted above that the method requires an estimate of a car park's potential market-value tariff in the case where a tariff is introduced to a car park where there is currently no charge. Though a reasonable estimate of market-value can be made through appropriate comparison, this additional user input to the process renders the outcome more subject to uncertainty.

C. Completed Equality and Diversity Proforma

Ellesmere Port Parking Action Plan

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

In 2016 a borough wide parking strategy was developed with recommendations to provide a consistency of quality and management of local authority parking stock. Following a period of public consultation this was approved by full council in June 2017. Parking Action Plans have now been produced for key local centres to progress the implementation of the strategy.

Lead officer: Ken Prior (Manager, Parking Services)

Stakeholders: Vanessa Griffiths (Manager, Regulatory Services)

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do
While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes
Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			

<p>Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)</p>			<p>Barrier to using services for those whose first language is not English. – Will need to consider prioritised options for communication to contain this impact. LOW IMPACT</p>
<p>Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>		<p>The parking action plan includes a programme of car park quality improvements, including ensuring compliance with standards for the number and size of disabled parking bays. MEDIUM IMPACT</p>	
<p>Gender</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any disproportional impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Gender identity (gender reassignment)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any disproportional impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Religion and belief</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any disproportional impact on this group.</p>		
<p>Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p>	<p>Identified no aspects of this work that will have any disproportional impact on this group.</p>		

Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)			<p>Some concerns have been raised regarding the replacement of 'Free after 3pm' and introduction of new tariff structures, including weekend tariffs, that these proposals could have a negative impact on age categories with traditionally lower levels of income such as school leavers, students, and senior citizens. Length of stay surveys and economic analysis undertaken as part of strategy development indicate that revised proposals will not significantly increase the average tariff paid and an increased number of tariff options will increase flexibility and choice.</p> <p>LOW IMPACT</p>
Carers		<p>The parking action plan includes a programme of car park quality improvements, including ensuring compliance with standards for the number and size of disabled parking bays. This could potentially benefit the carers of disability groups.</p> <p>LOW IMPACT</p>	
Rural communities	<p>Some concerns have been raised regarding the replacement of 'free after 3' and introduction of new tariff structures,</p>		

	<p>including weekend tariff, that these proposals could have a negative impact on car reliant individuals. Length of stay surveys and economic analysis undertaken as part of strategy development indicate that revised proposals will not increase the average tariff paid and an increased number of tariff options will increase flexibility and choice.</p>		
<p>Areas of deprivation</p>			<p>Some concerns have been raised regarding the replacement of 'free after 3' and introduction of new tariff structures, including weekend tariff, that these proposals could have a negative impact on low income groups. Length of stay surveys and economic analysis undertaken as part of strategy development indicate that revised proposals will not increase the average tariff paid and an increased number of tariff options will increase flexibility and choice.</p> <p>A briefing for Directors of Public Health suggested that deprived communities are more likely to be situated near</p>

			<p>polluted busy roads, and are more likely to experience adverse health impacts. In general terms, there is usually a positive impact on health in deprived communities through a reduction in congestion/pollution, as may be realised as a result of increased tariff choice spreading parking demand more evenly across the day.</p> <p>LOW IMPACT</p>
Human rights	Identified no aspects of this work that will have any disproportional impact on Human Rights.		
Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)		<p>The proposals to provide improved car park quality, and increased choice in respect of tariff options and spreading parking demand. This is likely to have a beneficial effect on the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to Ellesmere Port. In general terms, there is usually a positive impact on health through reductions in congestion/pollution, as may be realised as a result of increased tariff choice spreading parking demand more evenly across the day.</p> <p>LOW IMPACT</p>	
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)	Equality compliance is embedded within the council's policy and procedure with		

	<p>regards to infrastructure works undertaken by the council's term contractor and with regard to procurement of car park payment and management technology.</p>		
--	--	--	--

Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

A 12-week public consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the borough wide parking strategy. The consultation was widely publicised including media releases, publication on the Council website and through the Council's social media channels and public events.

The consultation documents were made available on the Council's website were provided on request in hard copy format. Consultation documents were available in a variety of formats (including audio, Braille, large print, and other languages) and consultation surveys could be completed on-line or by completing a printed copy.

The feedback received has influenced the development of the strategy. Proposals to introduce charging for disabled parking has not been progressed following concerns received that in some cases individuals with a disability may have a lower income and introducing charges would have a negative impact on this group.

At the request of the councils Scrutiny Panel an economic analysis of impact of introducing the Ellesmere Port Car Parking Action Plan on the economic performance of Ellesmere Port and modelling of the demand response to the changing tariff has been undertaken. In addition, a social/environmental analysis of impact of introducing measures has been undertaken (e.g. displacement), triggering the need for any mitigating measures such as additional restrictions or RPZs; or air quality benefits or disbenefits.

It is considered that the measures proposed will achieve the objectives below without significant negative impact.

- To create greater user differentiation between car park types on a weekday

- To increase overall demand and encourage longer lengths of stay on a Saturday
- To reduce the number of different tariffs to increase user understanding of the overall offer available
- To replace the existing 'Free After 3' incentive with tariffs which better distribute demand across the day

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Review impact of Parking Action Plans	Monitor for adverse trends	Medium	Trends adversely affecting residents and visitors are identified at an early stage	Manager Parking Services	November 2019

Sign off	
Lead officer:	Ken Prior – Manager, Parking Services
Approved by Tier 4 Manager:	Vanessa Griffiths - Manager, Regulatory Services
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	Low impact - 2021

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website

D. Supplementary Data Tables for Figures

D.1 Figures 4 and 5: Average parking price vs retail centre vitality score

Town	Population*	Vitality Score**	Av Parking Price per hour
Wrexham	61,603	675	£0.88
Shrewsbury	71,715	768	£1.27
Nantwich	17,424	714	£0.57
Whitchurch	9,781	655	£0.32
Middlewich	13,595		£0
Birkenhead	88,818	682	£0.77
Sandbach	17,976	711	£0
Deeside	53,568		£0.05
Knutsford	13,191	762	£0.60
Crewe	83,650	678	£0.57
Northwich	27,914	698	£0
Winsford	29,797	665	£0
Neston	14,698		£0
Helsby	5,168		£0
Frodsham	8,820		£0
Bath	88,859	857	£1.71
Durham	65,549	730	£0.97
York	153,717	810	£1.82
Cambridge	131,800	902	£2.05
Chester (Current)	82,459	812	£1.38
Chester (Proposed)	82,459	812	£1.35
Ellesmere Port (Current)	60,787	628	£0.19
Ellesmere Port (Proposed)	60,787	628	£0.18

* CWaC population stats taken from 2014 BRES data

** Vitality Score from Harper Dennis Hobbs (2017)

