

Results of Witham Car Parking Surveys

Agenda Item 6

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Background Papers:- Car Parking Surveys
Financial Implications:- None at present
Equalities Implications:- None
Legal Implications:- None at present

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A survey of car parking in September 2006 has identified a shortage of off- street spaces available for railway passengers using Witham station. It did not identify a shortage of parking available for the town centre.

DECISION

That Members approve the following recommendations:-

- **To investigate the feasibility of additional parking provision at Cut Throat Lane car park.**
- **To request Essex County Council to defer the proposed waiting restriction in Cypress Road, until additional off- street car parking spaces have been provided.**
- **To discuss with Essex County Council how best to promote cycle parking and improved cycling links to the station, to try to reduce the need for car parking.**
- **To discuss whether there are further opportunities to improve bus services serving the station, with Essex Passenger Transport.**

1. Results of Witham Car Park Survey 2006

1.1 The District Council undertook a survey of car parking in the vicinity of Witham Railway Station on Tuesday 19th September 2006. Surveys of Witham town centre car parking were carried out on Thursday 14th and Saturday 16th September 2006.

Station Car Parking Survey

1.2 The survey was carried out by checking vehicle registration numbers in the vicinity of the station at 9.30 am and 3.00pm. Vehicles that were parked there at both 9.30 and 3.00pm, which have therefore been parked for most of the working day, are likely to be owned either by commuters, or staff employed in businesses close to the car parks.

Car Parking	Total Number of Parking Places	Number of empty spaces at 9.30 am	Number of empty spaces at 3.00pm	Number of Long Stay Cars Parked 9.30am-3.00pm
Commuter parking				
Station –Easton Road Car Park	441	57	48	362
Cut Throat Lane Car Park	350	9	15	330
White Horse Lane Car Park	87	7	7	75
Labour Hall CP	130 (approx)	0	0	130
Sub Total of commuter parking	1008	73	70	897
Parking not intended for commuters				
Cypress Road on street parking	80 (approx)	12	11	62
Morrisons Car Park	413	243	229	97
Spring Lodge CP	49	24	24	16
Laburnum Way Car Park	Not known 10+	8+	10+	0
Total of all parking	1560	360	344	1072

1.3 The car parks intended for commuters are those at Easton Road, Cut Throat Lane, White Horse Lane and the Labour Hall. The total of these commuter car park spaces is 1008. The Easton Road, Cut Throat Lane and White Horse Lane car parks are allocated for car parking in the Local Plan Review and proposals to develop them for other uses would be contrary to policy. The total number of empty spaces in these four car parks was **73** at 9.30 and **70** at 3.00pm.

1.4 There were also **175** long stay vehicles parked between 9.30 and 3.00pm at Morrisons, Spring Lodge and Cypress Road. All of these locations are currently free of charge, but are not intended for commuter parking.

Parking restrictions are due to be introduced to prevent all day parking in Cypress Road, which would displace those **62** cars in the near future. It is not known whether the persons parking all day at Spring Lodge, where there were 16 long stay vehicles, were commuters, persons working at Spring Lodge, or local residents.

1.5 97 of the long stay vehicles were at Morrisons, which is a supermarket car park. (There were 229 empty spaces in the Morrisons car park at 3.00pm, so there is no immediate prospect of spaces not being available for Morrisons customers, despite the considerable amount of long-stay parking that is already taking place in their car park.) Although some of the long stay vehicles parked at Morrisons could belong to staff, it is likely that a large number of them belong to commuters. There are currently no notices at Morrisons restricting parking to shoppers or prohibiting parking for longer than a certain period. (Unlike Tesco where there is parking for a maximum of 4 hours.) As the spare capacity at the commuter car parks on the day of the survey was only around **70** spaces, there is insufficient capacity for the **175** long-stay vehicles currently parked at Cypress Road, Spring Lodge and Morrisons, if all day parking was restricted at these locations.

1.6 Cars could be displaced to residential roads in locations not covered by waiting restrictions at present. (They might also continue to park on the access road to the cemetery, if this is not covered by the proposed parking restrictions at Cypress Road.)

Passenger Focus Survey

1.7 Planning Officers met representatives from a company named Steer Davies Gleave in autumn 2006. They had been commissioned by Passenger Focus, an organisation who represent rail users, to consider future demand for car parking at railway stations in the East Anglia Region. They have looked at all the stations in the Region, but have carried out more in depth studies of 4 stations, including Witham. Their study looked at locations where passengers came from, car parking capacity and included passenger surveys. We hope to be able to obtain the results of this survey, when the work has been completed.

Cut Throat Lane Multi-storey Car Park

1.8 The proposals to build a multi-storey car park were withdrawn, as set out in a separate report on this agenda. The survey that has been carried out by the Council demonstrates that there is a need to retain this land for car parking in the future and that additional parking here would be desirable.

Other Issues

1.9 Essex County Highways are currently progressing the provision of a footbridge from the Easton Road car park to the station. Highways intend to survey traffic flows in the vicinity of the station to assess the impact of these proposed changes on traffic circulation in this area. They are considering the feasibility of providing an access from the Easton Road car park, via Station Road to Avenue Road. Provision of the footbridge will provide an opportunity for more cycle parking, in the Easton Road car park. It could also provide an opportunity for better access for cyclists to the station.

1.10 Essex County Council Passenger Transport are promoting the provision of a new bus service from the Maltings Lane development to the station, which they hope will encourage commuters, from this part of the town, to travel to the station by bus, rather than add to the parking problems around the station.

Conclusions of Station Area Car Parking Survey

1.11 There is very little capacity (70 spaces on the day of the survey) at the four car parks intended for commuters at Easton Road, White Horse Lane, Cut Throat Lane and the Labour Hall.

1.12 A large number of vehicles (175 on the day of the survey) were parked all day at Morrisons, Cypress Road and Spring Lodge. None of these locations are intended for commuter parking. If these spaces were not available for commuters, there would be a considerable shortage of off-street parking, which could lead to commuters parking all day in residential roads further from the station.

Recommendations

- **To investigate the feasibility of additional parking provision at Cut Throat Lane car park.**
- **To request Essex County Council to defer the proposed waiting restriction in Cypress Road, until additional off- street car parking spaces have been provided.**
- **To discuss with Essex County Council how best to promote cycle parking and improved cycling links to the station, to try to reduce the need for car parking.**
- **To discuss whether there are further opportunities to improve bus services serving the station, with Essex Passenger Transport.**

2.Town Centre Car Parking Survey

2.1 The town centre surveys were carried out on Thursday 14th September and Saturday 16th September. The Thursday results were intended to be typical of weekday parking patterns, including parking by persons employed within the town and the Saturday morning results were intended to be typical of peak period parking. There would be additional demand for parking in the pre-Christmas period.

2.2 There are a total of 735 spaces in Witham town centre.

Car Park	Number of Spaces
Tesco	347
Newlands Drive	201
Newland Street	57
Mill Lane	57
Lockram Lane	41
Mayland Road	32
Total	735

Results of the Survey on Thursday 14th September

2.3 There was capacity in all of the car parks at all times of the day. Tesco's car park was most fully occupied with its highest occupancy of 86% of spaces used between 11.30 am and 12 noon. Newlands Drive was also well used, with its highest occupancy being 80% of spaces full between 11.00am and 11.30 am. On street parking spaces in Newland Street were 95% full between 10.30 and 11.00am.

2.4 The Mayland Road car park was underused for the whole of the day, with a 22% occupancy at 9.00am rising to only 41% occupancy at 13.30 to 14.00pm. This is a permit car park and all of the spaces have been let in the car park, but were not all being used on that day.

2.5 Out of the total of 735 car parking spaces in the town centre, there were, at the busiest parking time between 11.00am to 12.00 noon, still 161 empty spaces available and more spaces available at other times of the day.

2.6 There were 205 vehicles parked in the town centre for longer than three hours. This is 28% of the total capacity. 93 vehicles were parked in Newlands Drive car park for longer than 3 hours, as this contains a proportion of permit parking spaces. Tesco displays a sign prohibiting customer parking for more than 4 hours, enforceable using CCTV cameras. 20 vehicles were parked there for 6 hours; which were probably staff vehicles.

Results of the Survey on Saturday 16th September

2.7 There was capacity in all of the car parks at all times of the day. Tesco's car park was again the most fully occupied, with its highest occupancy of 86% of spaces used, between 11.00am and 11.30am. There was less parking in Newlands Drive than on the Thursday, with its highest occupancy being 65% of spaces between 12.00 noon and 12.30pm. On street parking in Newlands Street was again well used with 82% of spaces occupied between 1.00am and 12.00 noon.

2.8 Maylands Road car park was not surveyed on the Saturday as this was the first day that it was being used for short-stay parking and the results would not be representative.

2.9 Out of the total of 735 car parking spaces, there were at the busiest time on the Saturday, between 11.00 and 11.30 am still 170 spaces available and more spaces available at other times of the day.

2.10. There were 62 vehicles parked in the town centre on Saturday for longer than 3 hours, considerably less than the 205 vehicles on the Thursday.

Conclusions of Town Centre Survey

2.11 There is sufficient town centre parking available and no further provision is required.

Recommendation

No action is required.