# North West Leicestershire District Council

# Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre Sustainable Parking Strategy

January 2006
FINAL REPORT

Issue No 1.0
44550307/ 10/TP-01

URS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project Title:** | Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre Sustainable Parking Strategy |
| **Report Title:** | Final Report |
| **Project No:** | 44550307 |
| **Report Ref:** | |
| **Status:** | FINAL |
| **Client Contact Name:** | Wendy Jones |
| **Client Company Name:** | North West Leicestershire District Council |
| **Issued By:** | URS Corporation Ltd.<br>URS House<br>Horne Lane<br>Bedford MK40 1TS<br>United Kingdom<br>Tel: + 44 (0) 1234 349 641<br>Fax: + 44 (0) 1234 216 268<br>www.urseurope.com |

**Document Production / Approval Record**

| Issue No: | Name | Signature | Date | Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prepared by | Lou Mason | | 18.01.2006 | Transport Planner |
| Checked by | Steve Holman | | 18.01.2006 | Technical Director |
| Approved by | Steve Holman | | 18.01.2006 | Technical Director |

**Document Revision Record**

| Issue No | Date | Details of Revisions |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 21.12.2005 | Original issue |
| 2 | 18.01.2006 | Client Revisions |
| | | |
| | | |

# CONTENTS

**Section** **Page No**

| | |
|---|---|
| Appendix A - | Off-Street Car Park Results |
| Appendix B | On-Street Car Park Results |
| Appendix C | Car Park User Questionnaire |
| Appendix D | Car Park User Questionnaire Results |
| Appendix E | Car Park Condition Results |
| Figures | |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This draft report presents the findings of the Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre Sustainable Parking Strategy Study. The aim of the study is to identify a sustainable parking strategy that supports the attractiveness of the town as a place to work, shop and live in. The study has involved extensive parking surveys, stakeholder consultation, benchmarking and demand forecasting.

**Key Findings**

- **Demand/Supply** -Currently, the demand for off-street parking is within the capacity of the available parking stock. There appears to be an imbalance between the current supply and demand of both long and short stay parking.

- **Conditions** -The general condition of the car parks is good, with the exception of the Royal Car Park. Directional signing to the car parks is poor. Pedestrian routes from the car parks to the town centre are short, but would benefit from signing and improvement.

- **Enforcement** -There appears to be scope to improve off- and on-street enforcement levels. On-street parking activity has increased as a result of the introduction of parking charges, particularly on South Street. Short stay parking on Market Street remains popular and is at capacity, but with good turnover.

- **Benchmarking** - Ashby compares favourably with similar nearby towns with regard to its retail offer and accessibility by car. Ashby has good spatial coverage of bus services across the town, but there are significant service gaps at evenings and weekends that limit the attractiveness of buses as an alternative to the car. There is scope to encourage more walking to the town centre.

- **Future Year 2010** – by 2010, it is estimated that between zero and 53 additional parking acts will need to be accommodated.

- **Future Year 2015** – by 2015, it is estimated that between 80 and 115 additional parking acts will need to be accommodated.

**Sustainable Parking Strategy**

The aim of this study is to develop parking management options and strategies consistent with the Councils policies over the short, medium and long term. The strategy themes have been considered sequentially and incrementally, before considering options under the next theme. The option/strategy evaluation process therefore commences with options for asset management before considering the scope for demand management and finally supply measures. Table 25 of this report sets the sustainable parking strategy, summarised below;

| Planning Horizon | Strategy Theme | Options | Lead Agencies |
|---|---|---|---|
| Short Term – 2005 -2008 | Asset Management | 1-6 | NWLDC |
| Medium Term – 2008 -2015 | Demand Management | 7-9 | NWLDC, LCC, Public transport operators |
| Long Term – 2015+ | Supply Measures | 10-13 | NWLDC |

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Purpose of the Report

1.1.1. This report is the Draft Final Report for the Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre Sustainable Parking Strategy Study. The report is submitted by URS Corporation Ltd (URS) to North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) and presents the key findings of the study, as well as strategy options in relation to the terms of reference of the study.

### 1.2. Format of the Report

1.2.1. The report is presented in the following sections;

- **Section 2 - Background to the Study**, which summarises the objectives of the study, the policy context, the current parking situation and identifies key issues.

- **Section 3 – Data Collection** presents the results of the parking surveys undertaken in October 2005 as part of the study. This covers the off- and on- street parking beat surveys, the inventory of private non-residential (PNR) spaces available in the town centre, the car park users questionnaire survey and the asset conditions survey. This section also summarises stakeholder consultations undertaken as part of the study.

- **Section 4 – Benchmarking Existing Conditions,** which compares key indicators of town centre competitiveness and parking between Ashby and neighbouring competing towns. This section also reviews the accessibility of Ashby town centre by alternative means to the private car.

- **Section 5 – Future "Do-Nothing" Conditions** describes the anticipated trends in parking demand and provision in Ashby town centre up to 2010 and 2015, assuming no intervention in the current situation by NWLDC. This section takes into account such factors as planned developments, increases in the number of households and car ownership growth. The section also identifies future parking requirements.

- **Section 6 – Sustainable Parking Strategy** identifies potential parking management options, compares the suitability of each option with respect to the objectives of the study, and presents options which could form the basis of a sustainable parking strategy for the town centre. A sequential action programme is presented.

# 2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

## 2.1. Scope and Objectives of the Study

2.1.1. The geographical scope for the study is shown in Figure 1.

2.1.2. The objectives of the study are set out in the brief for consultants that accompanied the invitation to tender for the study issued by NWLDC. These are presented below;

- To measure and assess the adequacy, suitability and location of off-street and on-street car parking provision to meet current and future anticipated demand within the town centre to help sustain the economic vitality and viability of the town.
- To identify and consider likely effects on current parking provision within the town centre arising from current and planned development proposals.
- To assess what demand management measures might be implemented to best utilise existing parking resources within the town centre through initiatives such as improved signage, designation and pricing mechanisms etc.
- To put forward proposals for long and short stay provision, identifying suitable viable locations for alternative and/or additional parking provision to serve the town centre.
- To examine the relationship between demand and provision and carry forward to a 5 and 10 year horizon, producing a robust sustainable town centre car parking strategy for the town including short, medium and long term measures to secure improvements.
- To identify current and future private non residential parking.
- To identify and evaluate alternative realistic and practical sustainable transport measures to address any capacity issues identified from the study.
- To establish for comparison purposes, the implications of there being no further changes to the on and off-street parking provision (do nothing scenario).

## 2.2. Policy and Studies Context

2.2.1. The policy and studies context for the study is summarised below, and comprise;

- Regional Policies
- County Structure Plan
- Local Plan and Local Development Framework
- Local Transport Plan 2 Transport Policies and Proposals
- Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan
- Retail Capacity Study/Town Centre Health-check
- Previous Parking Studies

### Regional Policies

2.2.2. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) replaces the Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands (RPG8). RSS8 was adopted in March 2005 and covers the period to 2021. This document is currently under review to ensure that all the elements of the previous RPG8 are updated. To date, the housing and employment allocations are currently unchanged from RPG8. The East Midlands Regional Assembly is currently in the process of revising the Regional Plan to cover the period up to 2026.

2.2.3. RSS8 is divided into a number of sub-areas; Ashby De La Zouch lies within the Three Cities Sub-Area, which contains the three largest cities of the region — Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. These are the major commercial, industrial, administrative and cultural centres of the region. They contain many of the region's key companies, shopping destinations as well as the main centres of higher education, healthcare and other public services.

2.2.4. Ashby is a relatively free-standing market town. However, there are close local functional relationships between Ashby, Swadlincote and Burton. It is therefore important for this study to ensure that Ashby is compared against these other areas in terms of town centre competitiveness. This is described in Section 4 – Benchmarking – Existing Conditions.

**County Structure Plan**

2.2.5. The Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Structure Plan 1996- 2016 sets out the policies for the whole of Leicestershire and Rutland. The plan states that in the main towns (which include Ashby de la Zouch) a sequential approach to development should be adopted with the priority being for the redevelopment of brownfield sites before edge of town or greenfield sites.

2.2.6. The need to mitigate the impacts caused by through traffic in these towns was also recognised by the Structure Plan. The Ashby By-Pass, which opened to traffic in 2002 has resulted in a significant reduction in the volumes of through traffic and in the number of HGV's in the town centre. The traffic relief offered by the bypass is seen as a key opportunity to route through traffic away from the town centre. The Town Centre Strategy and Action Programme seek to maximise the benefits of the bypass in terms of town centre accessibility. However, there is also a perception that the bypass has reduced the inclination for passing traffic to make use of local services.

**Local Plan and Local Development Framework**

2.2.7. The Local Plan sets out the planning strategy for North West Leicestershire up to 2006. This is based on the concentration of new development in locations on the A511/Ivanhoe Line Corridor (i.e. Coalville, Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Moira), but also recognises the potential for limited employment growth at the intersection of the A42 and the M1. This strategy provides the basis for particular proposals for new housing and employment areas, and for policies for the control of development, which will guide decisions on individual planning applications.

2.2.8. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all Local Authorities to develop a Local Development Framework (LDF). This will ensure that all planning related documents are brought together and that they will all be guided by an over arching development strategy that will bring together all the strategic requirements from documents such as the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Structure Plan.

2.2.9. The District Council is in the initial stages of this process. The existing Local Plan policies have been extended to 2007 to allow the revised documents to be prepared. The District Council will be preparing the following Development Plan Documents during the period to September 2007:

- Core Strategy
- Development Control Policies
- Housing Land Allocations
- Employment Land Allocations
- Green Wedge, Areas of Separation and Limits to Development

**Local Transport Plan 2 Transport Policies and Proposals**

2.2.10. The second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) sets out the transport policies for the County outside Leicester for the period 2006-2011. This includes the key aims of reducing the need to travel and the impact of traffic on local communities as well as listing measures to increase the role of public transport, walking and cycling as viable modes of transport and so help reduce the reliance on the private car for those journeys that are made.

2.2.11. It is acknowledged in the LTP2 that the contribution of public transport walking and cycling in the Ashby area is, and will remain, relatively limited for the foreseeable future. Indeed, these sentiments are reflected in the Town Centre Strategy and Action Programme which identifies significant weaknesses in public transport provision in the town.

2.2.12. However, the LTP2 recognises that there are a number of incremental measures and initiatives that can be introduced to encourage greater use of alternative modes of transport. For example, the facilities offered at bus stops and the ease of making longer journeys, especially those that require a change are important issues in encouraging greater use of public transport. Public transport provision within the town is reviewed in Section 4 Benchmarking.

**Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan**

2.2.13. In 2004 NWLDC published the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan for 5-10 year period. This document provides a framework for improving the competitiveness of and attractiveness the town centre. The strategy identifies four key themes, namely;

- Accessibility and Parking
- Creating a Better Environment
- Making the Most of What Makes Ashby Special
- Promotion and Marketing

2.2.14. In relation to Accessibility and Parking, the strategy identified a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and these are summarised below;

**Table 1 Summary of Parking Strengths and Weaknesses**

| Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|---|---|---|
| Good road communications<br><br>Free convenient parking | Availability of car parking<br><br>No coach parking | Better environment through re-routeing of traffic to bypass<br><br>Town centre enhancement scheme<br><br>Better car park management | Good road communications<br><br>Less passing traffic/lower profile<br><br>Failure to resolve car parking<br><br>Inappropriate town centre improvements<br><br>High car ownership<br><br>Commuting lifestyles and limited affinity towards town |

2.2.15. The strategy's aim is "easy access into and around the Town Centre for all whilst widening people's choice of travel options". The key objectives for the strategy with respect to accessibility and parking are;

- Maintain an adequate supply safe user friendly parking to meet the needs of the Centre.
- Enhance accessibility for cyclists including facilities to encourage cycling as an alternative mode of access.
- Maximising the benefits of available spaces by the designation of designated short stay parking.
- Improve the pedestrian linkages within the town centre with particular emphasis on car parks, the Courts, St. Helens Church, the Castle, the Bath Grounds, Hood Park, the Museum and the Tourist Information Centre.
- Develop safe, attractive and clearly defined pedestrian routes to the town centre.
- Increase opportunities for the elderly, disabled and other special needs groups to access the town centre and enjoy its facilities.
- Encourage the development of quality public transport services geared to the needs of the town centre users including service information and passenger waiting facilities.
- Promote and support Green Travel Plans and integrated transport initiatives.

2.2.16. In March 2005, the District Council published a Revised Action Plan. This is summarised below with respect to Accessibility and Parking;

- Extended and improved cycling facilities and promotion of cycling
- Improved pedestrian routes
- Disability access audit
- Develop a Green Travel Plan for local businesses
- Develop Shopmobility scheme

- Local Transport Needs Assessment, including consideration of evening bus service, improved access to employment opportunities, access to other towns
- Pursue the re-opening of the National Forest Line with a station in Ashby

**Retail Capacity Study/Town Centre Health-check.**

2.2.17. The North West Leicestershire District Retail Capacity Study was undertaken in June 2005. Data from the retail capacity study has been compared to data for neighbouring towns, and this is presented in Section 4 – Benchmarking – Existing Conditions.

2.2.18. The Healthcheck identified key factors that may constrain the future attractiveness of the retail offer in the town centre. These include the following;

- There is a lack of specialist shops designed to cater for the more discerning customer.
- Some sectors (particularly clothing) lack breadth of diversity.
- There is a lack of larger units due to the historic nature of the town centre, this means that there are a number of nationally recognised retailers that are not able to operate in Ashby due the lack of units large enough to cater for their needs.
- The supermarket sector is only represented by Somerfield,
- The town would benefit from one or two higher quality restaurants to complement the existing offer,
- The lack of easy access to the rail network, and
- The lack of bus/coach parking are also cited as a major hindrance to the future vitality of the town centre.

**Parking**

2.2.19. No parking surveys were undertaken prior to the introduction of charges, however the District Council undertook a survey in April 2005 (6 months after the introduction of the scheme). These included surveys with local businesses, car park users and local residents. The results of these surveys are summarised in Table 2 below.

**Table 2 Consequences of Introducing Charges in Ashby**

| Businesses | Car Park Users | Residents |
|---|---|---|
| 39.7% of employees have changed the car park they use | 73.6% of users report improved availability of spaces | 77.1% have more difficulty in parking |
| 15.6% of employees have changed their travel mode | 41.3% of users are visiting the town centre less | |
| 58.2% of businesses have experienced a decrease in trade | 51.4% of users are visiting the town centre the same | |
| 64.6% of customers have reported improved parking availability | 53.8% believe that the time bands and tariffs are inappropriate | |
| 78.9% of customer comments have been negative | | |

2.2.20. The current parking stock comprises;

- Generous supply of private non-residential (PNR) spaces
- Free (limited stay) on-street parking in the town centre (Market Street) and free unregulated space (South Street, Bath Street, Wilfred Place and Trinity Close)
- Short term (maximum 3 hours) public off-street parking
- Somerfield car park, available for public use (maximum 2 hours)
- Long term public off-street parking

2.2.21. Parking charges were introduced within the town in October 2004, together with designation of different car parks for short and long stay, and the leasing of 115 extra spaces at The Royal Hotel. After a review of the first year of parking charges the tariffs were amended in October 2005. The major changes were the addition of Bakery Court and Ashby House car parks and the introduction of a 30 minute tariff in Brook Street and North Street car parks

# 3. DATA COLLECTION

## 3.1. Overview

3.1.1. A number of surveys were undertaken in October 2005, comprising;

- “Beat Surveys” of all public car parks in the town centre.
- “Beat Surveys” of key on-street locations in the town centre.
- Car Park User Perception Surveys.
- Car Park Asset Condition Survey.
- Video Observation of Existing Signage.
- Private Non Residential (PNR) Provision and Usage.
- Key Stakeholder Consultations.

3.1.2. These parking surveys were undertaken between 07:00 and 18:00 on Friday 7 October 2005. The surveys are shown in Figure 2.

3.1.3. The “Beat Surveys” enabled the current usage levels of the available parking both on and off street in Ashby to be assessed. The aim was to record the level and pattern of car park usage and also to enable an assessment to be made as to the suitability of the current parking provision in the town to cater for not only the current needs but also future parking requirements.

3.1.4. The Car Park User Perception Surveys were undertaken to assess the feeling of those people using the public car parks as to the impact of the introduction of parking charges on their parking habits in Ashby.

3.1.5. The Video Observation Survey of the existing direction signage for parking in the town centre was undertaken to indicate the ease or otherwise of finding a parking space for visitors to the town centre.

3.1.6. Having highlighted the location of the PNR spaces in the town centre, a follow up phone survey was undertaken for the larger PNR car parks. This assessed the current patterns of usage and to assess the possibility of reducing the number of car trips in to the town centre.

3.1.7. A number of meetings were held with key stakeholder groups identified with NWLDC. The Stakeholder groups consulted were:

- Ashby de la Zouch Chamber of Trade
- Ashby de la Zouch Civic Society
- Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre Partnership
- Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

3.1.8. The following section sets out the methodologies used and the results of these surveys.

## 3.2. Off-Street Parking Beat Surveys

### Current Off-Street Public Car Park Provision

3.2.1. Figure 1 and Table 3 show the distribution of off-street public car parks in the town centre. There are currently eight public car parks within Ashby Town Centre that are either owned or managed by NWLDC. In addition to this there is the Somerfield car park on Derby Road which is currently free of charge.

**Table 3 Car Park Provision in Ashby**

| | Car Park Name | Location | Classification | No. Spaces |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **South Street** | South Street | Long Stay | 60 |
| 2 | **Rushden's Yard** | South Street | Long Stay | 25 |
| 3 | **The Royal Hotel** | Station Road | Long Stay | 115 |
| 4a | **North Street** | North Street | Short Stay | 72 |
| 4b | **North Street (Library)** | North Street | Short Stay | |
| 4c | **North Street** | North Street | Long Stay | 10 |
| 5a/b/c | **Hood Park Leisure Centre** | North Street | Short Stay | 90 |
| 5d | **Hood Park Leisure Centre** | North Street | Long Stay | 41 |
| 7 | **Brook Street** | Brook Street | Short Stay | 12 |
| 8 | **Bakery Court** | South Street | Long Stay | 10 |
| 9 | **Ashby House** | South Street | Long Stay | 10 |
| | | | **Total Long Stay** | 271 |
| | | | **Total Short Stay** | 174 |
| | | | **NWLDC Controlled Bays Total** | 445 |
| 10 | **Somerfield** | Derby Road | Short Stay | 123 |
| | | | **Total Bays** | 568 |

### Methodology

3.2.2. Each of the car parks presented in Table 3 above and Figure 1 were surveyed using "Beat Surveys". For each car park either managed of owned by NWLDC, the presence of vehicles parked was recorded. Enumerators recorded the partial registration numbers of each vehicle parked at 15 minute intervals. This method enables both the number of vehicles parked and the length of stay for each vehicle to be calculated. The location of each "Beat" is shown on Figure 2.

3.2.3. In order to accurately assess the current levels of usage a number of assumptions have been made. The conventional assumption is that the notional capacity for the smooth operation of a car park is a maximum occupancy of between 85 and 90%. This allows vehicles to search for a space within a reasonable time, without impacting on the surrounding highway network.

### Results

3.2.4. Table 4 below shows the key results for the various car parks studied. The detailed analysis of each car park is included at Appendix A.

**Table 4 Car Park Occupancy Patterns.**

| Car Park | | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 1 | South Street | 57 | 2 | 57 | 46 | 100% | 81% |
| 2 | Rushden's Yard | 33 | 1 | 31 | 24 | 94% | 73% |
| 3 | Royal Hotel | 115 | 15 | 53 | 29 | 46% | 25% |
| 4a | North Street | 65 | 5 | 63 | 47 | 97% | 72% |
| 4b | North Street Library | 22 | 0 | 16 | 7 | 73% | 32% |
| 4c | North Street | 10 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 60% | 30% |
| 5a | Hood Park | 49 | 19 | 49 | 41 | 100% | 84% |
| 5b | Hood Park | 36 | 1 | 36 | 18 | 100% | 50% |
| 5c | Hood Park | 10 | 0 | 10 | 6 | 100% | 60% |
| 5d | Hood Park | 41 | 1 | 20 | 13 | 49% | 32% |
| 7 | Brook Street | 11 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 91% | 45% |
| 8 | Bakery Court | 13 | 2 | 13 | 10 | 100% | 77% |
| 9 | Ashby House | 14 | 1 | 14 | 10 | 100% | 71% |
| NWLDC Controlled | | 476 | 47 | 378 | 259 | 79% | 54% |
| 10 | Somerfield | 123 | 14 | 120 | 95 | 98% | 77% |
| | Total | 599 | 61 | 498 | 354 | 83% | 59% |

3.2.5. From the figures in this table it can be seen that of the ten car parks studied (including Somerfield) only Car Park 3-Royal Hotel, Car Park 4b-North Street Library, Car Park 4c-North Street Long Stay and the Car Park 5d-Leisure Centre Overspill operate below the 85% threshold at the peak time. The remaining car parks operate at between 91% and 100% at peak occupancy. The total maximum occupancy rate for all the NWLDC car Parks equates to 82%. If the Somerfield car park is included the average occupancy figure is 85%. These results therefore indicate that there is currently sufficient capacity to accommodate the present level of car park usage.

### Observed Versus Tickets

3.2.6. A comparison exercise was undertaken which compared the number of tickets sold in each of the car parks on the day of our surveys, against the number of vehicles recorded by our surveys and the length of time each vehicle parked for. Table 5 below sets out the results of this work.

**Table 5 Ticket Sales Compared to Observed Parking Acts.**

| Car Park | | Duration | Tickets Issued | | Observed Parking Acts | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Split | Total | Split | Total |
| 1 | South Street | 1 hour | 104 | 247 | 147 | 261 |
| | | 2 hours | 46 | | 53 | |
| | | 3 hours | 58 | | 24 | |
| | | All Day | 39 | | 37 | |
| 2 | Rushden's Yard | 1 hour | Machine Out of Order on day of Survey | | 62 | 112 |
| | | 2 hours | | | 20 | |
| | | 3 hours | | | 9 | |
| | | All day | | | 21 | |
| 3 | Royal Hotel | 1 hour | 42 | 91 | 141 | 206 |
| | | 2 hours | 18 | | 28 | |
| | | 3 hours | 20 | | 11 | |
| | | All Day | 11 | | 26 | |
| 4a | North Street | ½ hour | 79 | 472 | 346 | 556 |
| | | 1 hour | 227 | | 112 | |
| | | 2 hours | 79 | | 75 | |
| | | 3 hours | 87 | | 23 | |
| 5 | Hood Park | 1 hour | 23 | 59 | 395 | 554* |
| | | 2 hours | 20 | | 99 | |
| | | 3 hours | 16 | | 50 | |
| 7 | Brook Street | ½ hour | 31 | 94 | 83 | 122 |
| | | 1 hour | 41 | | 20 | |
| | | 2 hours | 14 | | 16 | |
| | | 3 hours | 8 | | 3 | |
| 8 | Bakery Court | ½ hour | 2 | 7 | 21 | 38 |
| | | 1 hour | 0 | | 1 | |
| | | 2 hours | 2 | | 4 | |
| | | 3 hours | 3 | | 1 | |
| | | All Day | 0 | | 11 | |
| 9 | Ashby House | 1 hour | 9 | 11 | 15 | 30 |
| | | 2 hours | 0 | | 1 | |
| | | 3 hours | 1 | | 1 | |
| | | All Day | 1 | | 13 | |

**Key Findings.**

3.2.7. From the above table, it may be seen that the number of tickets issued varies from the number of vehicles observed during our survey. The level of discrepancy varies between the car parks, dependent on a number of factors that influence the potential revenue of each car park. These factors are discussed in more detail below.

Car Park 1 (South Street)

3.2.8. A total of 261 parking acts were recorded by the beat survey. The ticket data for this car park reveals that a total of 247 tickets were purchased on the day of the survey. This means that up to 14 vehicles parked without displaying a valid ticket. However, there are a number of disabled bays in this car park that allow Disabled Badge holders to park for free. Comparison of the number of tickets issued in each tariff band against the observed parking durations indicate that there is a degree of overestimation of the duration of stay by motorists. This leads to tickets being purchased for longer periods of time than indicated by the observed parking duration patterns. This situation is not untypical.

Car Park 2 (Rushden's Yard)

3.2.9. No ticket data for 7/10/05 (machine out of order).

Car Park 3 (Royal Hotel)

3.2.10. A total of 205 parking acts were recorded by the beat surveys. The ticket data for this car park reveals that a total of 91 tickets were purchased on the day of the survey. However, the hotel issues guests with permits allowing them to park for free whilst using the hotel.

3.2.11. Discussions with the hotel indicate that when the hotel is fully booked they issue between 40 and 50 permits a day, (more if there is a special event taking place at the hotel). As there were no special events on the day of the surveys it has been assumed that only 50 permits were issued by the hotel. This means that of the 205 parking acts observed up to 141 were displaying either a valid ticket or permit and therefore up to 64 of the remaining vehicles parked without displaying either a valid ticket or permit. These numbers indicate an enforcement issue at this car park.

3.2.12. Comparison of the number of tickets issued in each tariff band against the observed parking durations indicate that there is an element of overestimation by motorists of the duration of their stay leading to tickets being purchased for longer periods of time than necessary.

Car Park 4 (North Street)

3.2.13. A total of 556 parking acts were recorded by the beat surveys. Ticket data reveals that a total of 472 tickets were purchased on the day of the survey. This means that up to 84 vehicles parked without displaying a valid ticket. However, there are a number of disabled bays in this car park that allow cars displaying a disabled badge to park for free. As with South Street, there is evidence that those who do purchase a ticket overestimate the length of time they require.

Car Park 5 (Hood Park Leisure Centre)

3.2.14. All Hood Park Car Parks were analysed together in relation to ticket sales and observed occupancy. A total of 544 parking acts were recorded by the beat surveys. The ticket data for this car park reveals a total of 59 tickets issued on the day of the survey. However, leisure centre staff and customers are not required to pay to park in this car park. Leisure centre customers are required to sign in at the reception desk, and when these records were compared against the beat surveys, 397 of the parking acts were found to be leisure centre users and a further 20 leisure centre staff.

3.2.15. This left up to 127 vehicles that were not displaying a valid ticket, recorded on the leisure centre lists or displaying a staff permit. There are a number of disabled bays by the main entrance that enable free parking for disabled badge holders. However these numbers indicate that there is an enforcement issue at this car park.

Car Park 7 (Brook Street)

3.2.16. A total of 122 parking acts were recorded by the beat surveys. The ticket data for this car park reveals a total of 94 tickets were sold on the day of the surveys. As there are no permits issued for this car park all vehicles (excluding the disabled bay) should have purchased a ticket to park. This means that up to 28 vehicles did not display a valid ticket. There is evidence that those who do purchase a ticket overestimate the length of time they require.

Car Parks 8 and 9 (Bakery Court and Ashby House)

3.2.17. Both Bakery Court and Ashby House became Pay and Display car parks on 3rd October 2005. These locations are managed by NWLDC on behalf of the landowner. The rationale for the introduction of Pay and Display in these car parks is to control unauthorised use that had been increasing since the introduction of parking charges elsewhere in the town centre. To this end the land owner has issued a number of permits allowing free parking in a designated car park, in both cases more permits have been issued than there are available spaces. Observation within this car park indicates that the majority of vehicles were displaying the correct permit meaning the majority of parking acts were legally parking free of charge.

## 3.3. On-Street Parking Beat Surveys

**Current On Street Parking Enforcement**

3.3.1. The control of all on-street parking in Leicestershire is currently the responsibility of the Police. However, this is due to change in April 2006 with the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) and the transfer of responsibility for all parking control to the Local Authorities.

3.3.2. The County Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study in to the implementation of DPE. The County Council is working with the various District Councils to devise the most appropriate method of enforcing on-street parking regulations after April 2006, and is currently undertaking a consolidation exercise to verify that the restrictions on the ground reflect the written traffic orders.

3.3.3. Currently on-street parking takes place in the following locations in Ashby;

- Market Street – these are 1 hour/no return within 1 hour limited waiting bays with no charges imposed.
- South Street and Bath Street – there are no formal bays marked out on either road although there are stretches of single yellow and double yellow lines on both South Street and Bath Street. The current arrangements on South Street in particular are increasingly causing access problems especially at the eastern end of South Street at the Junction with Lower Church Street. It is perceived that on-street parking in both streets has increased substantially since the introduction of parking charges.

### Methodology

3.3.4. Parking beat surveys were also undertaken at the following key on-street locations as agreed with NWLDC;

- Market Street,
- South Street,
- Bath Street,
- Trinity Close, and
- Wilfred Place.

3.3.5. The aim of these surveys was to quantify the level of on-street parking to enable an assessment of the number of displaced parking acts that will need to be accommodated in the future, particularly if and when DPE is introduced.

### Results

3.3.6. There are various restrictions in bays on Market Street that allow for limited free parking. The maximum stay is 1 hour with no return allowed within 1 hour. The remaining on-street locations are largely uncontrolled. Table 6 below sets out the key results for the on-street parking areas studied.

**Table 6 On-Street Parking Occupancy Patterns**

| On-Street Area | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 19 | 14 | 106% | 78% |
| Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 27 | 19 | 129% | 90% |
| South & Bath Street | 33 | 15 | 42 | 35 | 127% | 106% |
| Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 100% | 50% |
| Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 14 | 8 | 100% | 57% |

3.3.7. From the figures in this table it may be seen that of the five areas studied all are operating at or over capacity at peak times. Each is discussed in more detail below. The detailed occupancy and arrival and departure profiles for each area are included in Appendix B.

<u>Market Street North Side</u>

3.3.8. Market Street North has a legal capacity of 18 bays, whilst our surveys indicated a maximum occupancy of 19 vehicles. Over the period of our survey 23 vehicles were observed to be parked outside these bays. Vehicles were parked in a variety of locations including the double yellow lines to the east of the existing bays, the bus stop or were double parked whilst making deliveries. The Arrivals and Departures Profile illustrates a high turnover which is reflected by the average stay of only 33 minutes. It should be noted that there are a number of vehicles that exceed the 1 hour limit, our surveys showed that there were 3 vehicles that parked for over 4 hours with one staying for 8 hours 45 minutes.

Market Street South Side

3.3.9. Market Street South has a legal capacity for 21 vehicles. Due to illegal parking a maximum of 27 vehicles were parked at one point during the study. The occupancy of the bays remains at or above capacity for a significant proportion of the day. On average 19 vehicles were parked meaning Market Street South was operating at 90% capacity.

3.3.10. The Arrivals and Departures Profile illustrates a high turnover that is reflected by the average stay of only 32 minutes. It should be noted that there are a number of vehicles that exceed the 1 hour limit, our surveys showed that there were 6 vehicles parked for over 2 hours with one staying for 9 hours 45 minutes.

South & Bath Street

3.3.11. South Street and Bath Street have space for a maximum of 50 vehicles. Occupancy varies from 15 to 42 vehicles (84% capacity) over the study period with 35 (70% capacity) being the average. The occupancy profile varies throughout the day, although it remains close to or above the average occupancy between 8.45 and 16.15.

3.3.12. Of the 108 arrivals the Arrivals and Departures Profile shows that 36 arrive between 8.00 and 8.30. The average duration of a stay was observed as 2 hours 50 minutes, however there were 23 vehicles observed that parked for over 8 hours. This tends to suggest a significant element of long stay parking.

Trinity Close

3.3.13. Trinity Close has space available for up to 10 vehicles that is reached at 9.45 with an average occupancy of 5 vehicles over the whole day. The occupancy profile fluctuates significantly due to the small number of spaces under consideration. The 29 vehicles parking in Trinity Close at some point during the survey stayed for an average of 1 hour 21 minutes and two vehicles stayed for a period in excess of 8 hours.

Wilfred Place

3.3.14. Wilfred Place has space available for a maximum of 14 vehicles that is reached mid-afternoon on the survey day. The average occupancy is 8, corresponding to 57% capacity.

3.3.15. The occupancy profile is highly sensitive and fluctuates rapidly due to the small number of spaces under consideration. The 50 vehicles parking in Wilfred Place at some point during the survey stayed for an average of 1 hour 21 minutes and two vehicles stayed for a period in excess of 8 hours.

### 3.4. Car Park Users Questionnaire Survey

#### Survey Methodology and Sample

3.4.1. The aim of the survey was to gather information in relation to the perceptions and parking behaviour of users of the off-street car parks. The survey asked people returning to their vehicle the purpose of their trip and the length of time they have parked for as well as their perception of the current parking conditions in Ashby. An example of the questionnaire is included at Appendix C.

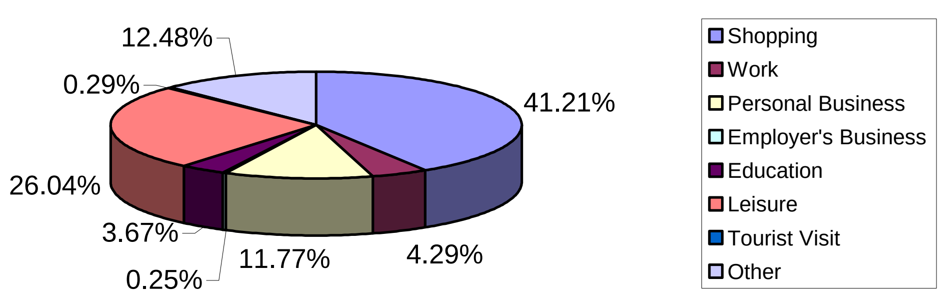
#### Results

3.4.2. In total approximately 350 people responded. This equates to a sample of approximately 25% of the total observed parking acts recorded in the car parks. There were more questionnaires collected in North Street and Hood Park Leisure Centre than in The Royal Hotel. The detailed results for each car park are included at Appendix D. The key results are as follows;

<u>What is the purpose of your trip?</u>

- South Street Car Parks are the most popular with workers with 18% of those questioned stating work as their main trip purpose.
- Approximately three quarters of Somerfield Car Park users gave shopping as their trip purpose which would be expected in a shopping centre car park. However 10% of shoppers did not go on to specify Somerfield as their principle destination.
- 99% of those surveyed in the Leisure Centre Car Parks selected leisure as the purpose of their trip.

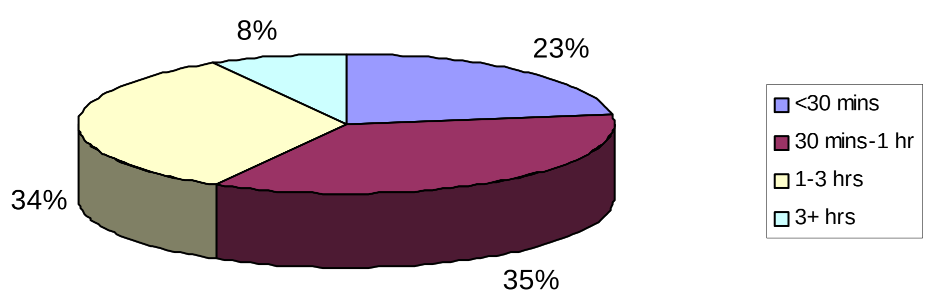
**Figure 3 What is the purpose of your trip?**



How long have you parked for today?

- 34% of South Street users indicated that they had parked for a duration of 3 or more hours.
- The Royal Hotel also provides long stay parking yet only 13% of users indicated that they intended to stay in excess of 3 hours.
- 5% of users in North Street indicated that they are staying for a period greater than 3 hours which is not permitted in a short stay car park.
- The majority of Leisure Centre Car Park users parked for a duration of 1 to 3 hours and 4% for a period of less than 30 minutes.
- Somerfield Car Park exhibits the shortest stay according to the User Survey with 79% of users parked for under an hour.

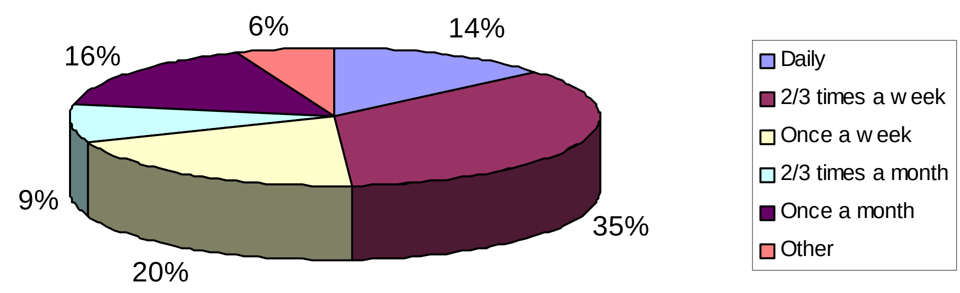
**Figure 4 How long have you parked for today?**



<u>How often do you park in Ashby?</u>

- The Leisure Centre Car Park has the most frequent users with the highest percentage of daily visitors and 89% parking at least once a week.
- 44% of Somerfield Car Park Users visit 2 or 3 times a week and 83% park at least once a week.
- The Royal Hotel Car Park attracts the least frequent visitors with 47% using the car park only once a month.

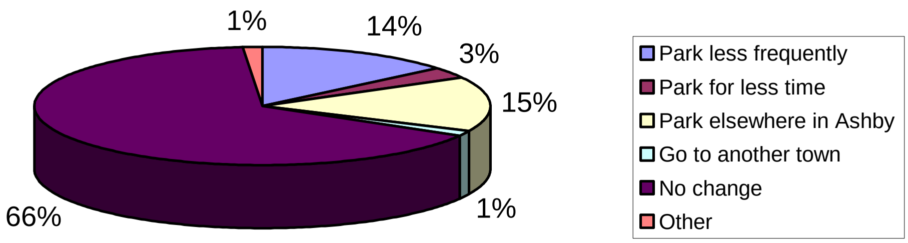
**Figure 5 How often do you park in Ashby?**



**How has the introduction of parking charges changed your parking patterns?**

- 66% of those questioned stated that the charges had had no effect on their parking behaviour.
- 15% of visitors said that they now park elsewhere in Ashby following the introduction of charges.
- 81% of users the charges have had no or minimal effect on their visits to the town centre.
- 14% of respondents said that charges had resulted in them visiting less frequently.
- 3% said that they were spending less time in the town centre.
- 1% of those questioned said that the charges had made them consider going to another town.

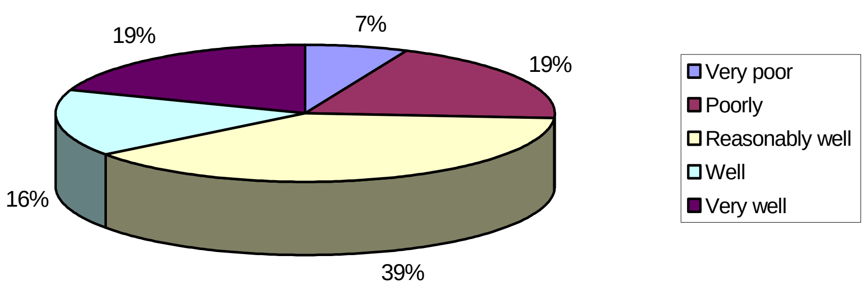
**Figure 6 How has the introduction of parking charges changed your parking patterns?**



How well do you think the car parks in Ashby are signposted?

- 100% of Royal Hotel Car Park visitors rated the signposting as reasonably good or better.
- 99% of North Street and 61% of South Street Car Park users judged the quality of signposting as reasonably good or better.
- The signposting was not rated so highly in the Leisure Centre and Somerfield Car Parks with 46% and 31% of those questioned assessing the signposting as either poor or very poor.

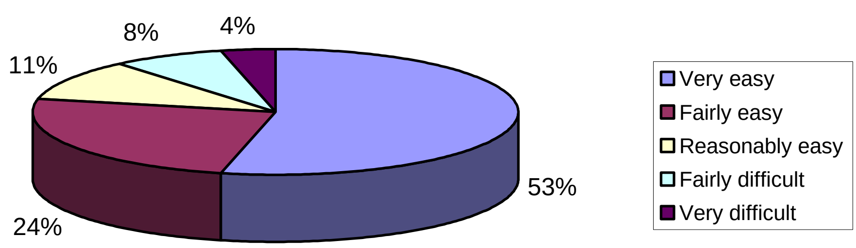
**Figure 7 How well do you think the car parks in Ashby are signposted?**




How easy did you find it to find a parking space today?

- 100% of Royal Hotel, 81% of North Street, 60% of South Street and 56% of the Leisure Centre Car Park users stated that finding an available space was very easy.
- Conversely 26% of Somerfield users described finding a space as either fairly difficult or very difficult.

**Figure 8 How easy did you find it to find a parking space today?**



**Key Findings**

- The majority of those questioned gave either shopping (41%) or leisure (26%) as the reason for their trip.
- 58% of those questioned estimated that they had parked for less than 1 hour.
- 69% of those questioned parked in Ashby at least once a week.
- 66% of those questioned stated that the introduction of parking charges had not influenced either the frequency of their visits to Ashby or the length of time they parked for.
- 55% of those questioned thought that the car parks were well signposted.
- 53% of those questioned found it very easy to find a space a further 24% found it fairly easy.

### 3.5. Car Park Asset Condition Survey

3.5.1. An inventory survey was undertaken at each of the car parks either owned or managed by NWLDC. This survey looked at the following aspects of each parking area.

- Surfacing,
- Information,
- Lighting,
- CCTV,
- Personal security,
- Markings,
- Access, and
- Boundary/fencing

3.5.2. Figures 11 to 22 show the key features found in each car park, the detailed results of the surveys are included at Appendix E.

**Key Findings**

3.5.3. These surveys indicate that with the exception of the car park at the Royal Hotel the car parks in Ashby are fit for their purpose. However the size of the bays varies widely with many of the marked bays below the minimum standards set out in Leicestershire County Council's "design guidance for developers" which states that the minimum size of a parking space should be 2.4m x 5.5m.

3.5.4. The current layouts vary not only between car parks but also within the car parks, this creates issues with some spaces that are difficult to use. The result is that some of the car parks may require the bays remarking to meet the minimum requirements set out by LCC even if the result is the loss of a few spaces.

3.5.5. This study highlighted the lack of adequate directional and advisory signing leading to the car parks and that some of the signage that does exist is misleading (e.g. there are signs in the Library car park that it is for Library users only). Car park 5d is to the rear of the Leisure Centre and is situated in the grounds of Ivanhoe College, and there are signs at the entrance stating authorised parking only. The same is true of the Royal Hotel car park which has signs at the entrance stating private parking for hotel residents only.

3.5.6. There is also a lack of signage within the car parks relating to the length of time allowed and the tariffs in place. This would allow motorists to chose the right car park before they park and get out of their vehicle. A broad consolidation exercise has been undertaken to check that the signs within the car parks are consistent with the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's).

**Possible Solutions for each Car park**

Car Park 1 South Street

- Reassess the bays to ensure they comply with LCC minimum requirements,
- Introduce signs highlighting the direction and distance to the town centre,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.

Car Park 2 Rushden's Yard

- Remove the contradictory signage within the car park
- Improve the access to the car park, the bays in the adjacent area are very close to the entrance and the surface of this area is very poor,
- Improve the lighting at night,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.

Car Park 3 The Royal Hotel

- Resurface the car park and mark out the bays,
- Introduce a fence between the car park and Bath Grounds,
- Introduce CCTV
- Sign the pedestrian route into the town centre,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.

Car Park 4 North Street

- Sign the pedestrian route into the town centre,
- Introduce signs pointing to the additional parking behind the Library,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.
- Reassess the bays to ensure they comply with LCC minimum requirements,

Car park 5 Hood Park (Section a, b and c)

- Reassess the bays to ensure they comply with LCC minimum requirements,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.
- Amend the sign at the entrance of the car park to include areas b and c,
- Encourage staff to use areas c and d,
- Ensure that all vehicles display either a valid ticket or permit, including Leisure Centre users. All the machines currently in place can issue double tickets to enable some king of refund scheme or will accept tokens. Both these options should limit the stay to an agreed length for example 2 hours after which the motorist should have to pay.

Car park 5 Hood Park (Section d behind the Leisure Centre)

- Convert car park 5d to long stay bays,
- Introduce signs on North Street indicating the location of these bays,
- Introduce signs to indicate the extent of the public car park,
- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.
- Reassess the bays to ensure they comply with LCC minimum requirements.

Car Park 7 Brook Street

- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.
- Bays need remarking.

Car Parks 8 and 9 Bakery Court and Ashby House

- Introduce a backboard sign for the car park stating the length of stay permitted and the tariffs in place, this should be large enough so that motorists can see if they are in the correct car park before the park their vehicle.

**Audit of Car Park Pedestrian Access Routes**

3.5.7. The main car park groups of North Street, South Street are very close to Market Street and have good pedestrian routes in place. These existing walk routes are well lit and are overlooked even at night although there is a lack of directional signing into the town centre from the car parks. The Town Centre Walk routes are shown on Figure 23.

3.5.8. The walk route between the Royal Hotel and the town centre via Union Passage which again is well lit but there is a lack of signage indicating the distance and route to the car park. However the final section of the route through Bath Grounds is unlit and very secluded. Motorists using the car park therefore tend to access it less directly from

Station Road which gives the impression that it is a longer walk even though the distance is much the same. The introduction of a crossing on South Street and lights for the park land section of the route to the car park would significantly improve the pedestrian route.

### 3.6. Video Observation of Existing Signage

**Methodology**

3.6.1. This survey was undertaken by vehicle, which was driven along key radial routes into Ashby town centre. A video camera was mounted on the vehicle to enable video footage of car park signage to be recorded. A laptop and a GPS receiver were synchronised with the camera so the locations of any existing car park signs could be identified.

**Key Findings**

3.6.2. The results of this survey indicate that the directional and advisory signing is poor. This is due both to the lack of clarity of the existing signage and a lack of adequate signs. For example there is a sign at the junction of Market Street and Derby road which states Library Parking and this may lead visitor to assume they can't park in this area. The other major finding of this survey is that there is no indication as to which car parks cater for long or short stay parking within the town so people are not able to make an informed choice about which car park to head for. This is highlighted by the numbers of people using the Royal Hotel for short periods of time, instead of the short stay bays at North Street. Figure 24 shows the location of the existing car park signs in the town centre that require improvement and highlights the indicative locations for new advanced signage.

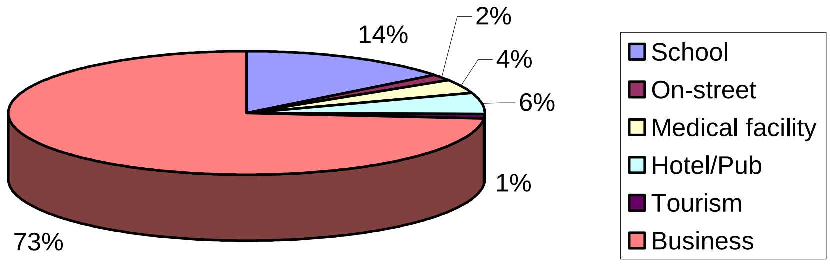
## 3.7. Private Non Residential Parking Inventory Survey

**Number, Distribution and Ownership of Car Parking Spaces**

3.7.1. The location of the PNR parking areas within the town centre are shown in Figure 25. The majority of the PNR car parks are located to the rear of the properties on Market Street with almost every property having at least one space to the rear, accessed by either North or South Street. The number of spaces varies from approximately 80 spaces at Standard Soap to a single space behind the Queens Head Hotel on the north side of Market Street.

3.7.2. Within the study area there are approximately 1100 PNR spaces in total Figure 26 below shows the types of businesses served by these spaces;

**Figure 26 PNR Provision by Type of Business**




**Follow Up Business Telephone Survey**

3.7.3. A short follow up telephone survey was undertaken with the owners of some of the larger PNR car parks. The results of this indicated that these spaces were used by a mixture of staff and visitors and that some of the car parks have clearly marked bays for visitors. Other locations allocate a certain number of spaces that are available for a given business and it is up to them who uses the spaces. The indications are that the majority of employees are from the wider North West Leicestershire Area and as such are likely to be within reasonable bus, walk or cycle distance of the town centre.

## 3.8. Key Stakeholder Consultations

3.8.1. Consultations were undertaken with four key groups highlighted by NWLDC. These groups were as follows;

- Ashby Chamber of Trade
- Ashby Civic Society
- Ashby Town Centre Partnership
- Ashby Town Council

3.8.2. The following represent the key issues raised in response to this consultation exercise.

- The current situation in Ashby is confusing in terms of identifying which are the long and short stay car parks.
- It is generally easier to park in the town centre than prior to the introduction of parking charges, due to the reduction in the numbers of people parking all day in the North Street car parks.

- There is concern about the increase in on-street parking since the introduction of charges. This is perceived to have got worse since the withdrawal of the traffic warden implying that the current situation is not being enforced.
- Better use needs to be made of the existing parking provision within the town centre. This includes better sign posting so the people know where to go for long or short stay parking.
- The recent lack of control particularly on-street has led to a lack of spaces on Market Street and access problems on South Street.
- The Royal Hotel needs improvement and encouragement of long stay users to park there.
- There is a need for formal coach parking facilities to be provided in the town centre.
- Provide workers with weekly/monthly permits at a reduced cost for areas such as the Royal Hotel.
- Allow a ten minute grace period for parents dropping children off or picking them up from the nursery on North Street.
- Ensure that any refund scheme introduced is easy to understand and fair.

## 3.9. Survey Key Findings

**Off Street Car Parking**

- The majority of the existing car parks are currently operating at or over the notional capacity of 85-90%.
- In NWLDC car parks the occupancy level is around 80%. This means that the overall number of car parking spaces in the town centre is currently adequate to cater for the current levels of demand.
- A key issue is that long and short stay spaces need to be clearly marked and signed so that residents and visitors know which car park to use for differing lengths of stay.
- The shortfall of the tickets issued against the observed parking acts indicate that people overestimate the length of stay that they require.
- There is a need to review and improve the enforcement of all the car parks to ensure that all those that should be paying to park do so.

**On-Street Parking**

- The limited waiting bays on Market Street are not currently being enforced adequately and this has led to an increase in abuse of the current restrictions. The main result of this is a reduction in the number of bays available for customers wishing to use the facilities on Market Street.
- The current parking patterns on South Street appear to generate access problems especially at the eastern end close to the junction with Lower Church Street.

**Car Park User Questionnaire**

- The length of stay estimated by the respondents shows an element of over estimation of the length of stay when compared to the observed parking durations. This ties in with the observations made about the tickets purchased in the car parks which indicates a level of overpayment.
- The frequency of visit varies with car park with the Leisure Centre showing the highest numbers parking every day. The key finding is that the introduction of parking charges has had little or no impact on parking habits or the number of trips into Ashby.

**Car Park Asset Condition Survey**

- The condition of the car parks in Ashby is generally fit for purpose (with the exception of the car park at the Royal Hotel). However the size of the bays varies widely with many of the marked bays below the minimum standards set out in Leicestershire County Council's "design guidance for developers".
- This study highlighted the lack of signage leading to the car parks and some of the signage that does exist is misleading. There is also a lack of signage within the car parks relating to the length of time allowed and the tariffs in place.

**Video Observation Survey**

- This survey indicated that directional and advisory signing to the car parks is very poor. This is due in part to the confusing nature of the existing signage. The other major finding of this survey is that there is no indication as to which car parks cater for long or short stay parking within the town so people are not able to make an informed choice about which car park to head for. This is highlighted by the numbers of people using the Royal Hotel car park for short stay instead of the short stay bays at North Street.

**Private Non Residential Parking Inventory Survey**

- The results indicated that the spaces are used by a mixture of staff and visitors, some of the car parks have clearly marked bays for visitors. The indications are that the majority of employees are from the wider North West Leicestershire Area and as such are within a reasonable bus, walk or cycle distance of the town centre.

**Key Stakeholder Consultations**

- The current situation is perceived to be very confusing and there is a need to provide better information as to where car parks are and how long you can park for
- There is a need to improve enforcement both on and off street to ensure that all those who should pay do so. This is important to ensure fair access to the current parking supply.

# 4. BENCHMARKING - EXISTING CONDITIONS

## 4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. This section benchmarks existing conditions in Ashby with respect to town centre competitiveness, car parking operations and accessibility by public transport. The centres selected for benchmarking are then compared based on a number of indicators such as town centre ranking (Experian), retail offer, vacancy rates, parking supply and pricing and town centre accessibility.

4.1.2. Key retail centres were identified in conjunction with NWLDC as being in competition with Ashby:

- Hinckley
- Melton Mowbray
- Market Harborough
- Loughborough
- Burton-upon-Trent
- Swadlincote

4.1.3. These competing centres are shown in Figure 27 along with a summary of their attributes, journey times and routes from Ashby and associated travel costs. Relative competitiveness was assessed in terms of retail capacity and car parking provision although direct comparisons are not possible in all cases. Table 7 below shows the principal findings of the investigation into town centre competitiveness and car parking operations which are detailed below.

### Table 7 Town Centre Competitiveness Comparison

| Centre | Experian Goad Ranking (2002 unless stated) | Floorspace (m²)[5] | | | | | | Car Parking Spaces[6] | Floorspace (m²) per Parking Space | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | Convenience | Comparison | Service | Miscellaneous | Vacant | | | |
| **Ashby** | 602 (2001)[1] | 267,300 | 53,000 | 121,400 | 69,100 | 4,300 | 19,500 | 599[2] | 446 | Lack of larger units.[1]<br>Lack of specialist shops[1]<br>Sectors (especially clothing) lack breadth.[1] |
| **Hinckley** | N/A | 586,900 | 63,400 | 313,000 | 153,000 | 13,300 | 44,200 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| **Melton Mowbray** | 344[3] | 474,000 | 62,500 | 272,800 | 96,500 | 1,500 | 40,700 | 1000 | 474 | Limited range of national retailers due to size of Melton Mowbray and proximity of other outlets.[3]<br>Fell 42 places in 2002 Experian Rankings.[3]<br>Footfall levels constant for four years up to 2002.[3]<br>85% parking occupancy on market day. 55.6% on other days.[3] |
| **Market Harborough** | 350[3] | 456,400 | 101,800 | 233,800 | 102,000 | 3,000 | 15,800 | 1552 | 294 | Rose 25 places in 2002 Experian Rankings.[3] |
| **Loughborough** | 195 (2000)[4] | 767,700 | 106,700 | 472,600 | 147,000 | 13,700 | 27,700 | 1264 | 607 | Lowest multiple retailer representation compared with benchmark.[4]<br>Quality, quantity and variety of floorsapce below competing centres.[4]<br>Vacancy levels below national average.[4] |
| **Burton-upon-Trent** | 79 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1796[7] | N/A | 12 years prior to 2000 has seen an increase in shopping ‘offer’.[8]<br>Retail Provision has improved in quality and quantity.[8]<br>Low vacancy levels.[8] |
| **Swadlincote** | N/A | 256,000 | 55,200 | 117,300 | 37,800 | 9,600 | 36,100 | 575 | 445 | N/A |

[1] NWL Retail Capacity Study 2005, [2] URS Car Park Study 2005, [3] Melton Mowbray Town Centre Monitor 2003, [4] Loughborough Healthcheck 2003,
[5] Regional Town Centres Study for the East Midlands – March 2003, [6] Leicestershire County Council Website – Car Parks, [7] East Staffordshire Borough Council – Car Parks
[8] Burton-upon-Trent Retail Study 2000

## 4.2. Town Centre Competitiveness

**Retail Capacity**

**Ashby**

*Source: North West Leicestershire District Retail Capacity Study (June 2005)*

4.2.1. The Ashby Retail Capacity Study highlighted a number of issues. Most significant is the lack of larger units able to provide the average minimum required floorspace of 2,000ft$^2$ (185m$^2$). This is listed as one of the major factors preventing Ashby from attracting larger retailers. This in part could be used to explain Ashby's fall in the Experian Goad Retail Rankings from 602$^{nd}$ in 2001 to 912$^{th}$ in 2004. The Retail Capacity Study suggests that Ashby also suffers from a lack of specialist shops and a limited diversity in shopping offer.

4.2.2. However, investor confidence in long-term profitability is the 5$^{th}$ best of 9 comparator centres as indicated by a retail yield of 7%. Only 6.4% of the town's units are vacant compared with a national average of 10.6%. There is also a perceived increase in footfall levels in Ashby. National multiple retailers have an interest in Ashby especially on Market Street South, although are unable to locate suitable premises due to the limited unit size available.

4.2.3. The Retail Capacity Study identifies other factors affecting Ashby's retail potential, including a lack of bus and coach parking facilities that would attract tour buses as well as not having access to the rail network, that consequently increases the dependence on car usage in the town centre. Ashby has approximately one car parking space per 446m$^2$ of retail floor space.

**Hinckley**

*Source: Regional Town Centres Study for the East Midlands (March 2003)*

4.2.4. Limited benchmarking information is available on Hinckley. Comparison of retail floorspace with Ashby reveals that Hinckley offers over twice the total floorspace (556,900m$^2$). Hinckley has proportionally less convenience retail floorspace and significantly higher miscellaneous area usage than Ashby. These differences are partly due Hinckley's relatively larger size and Ashby's limited retail diversity.

**Melton Mowbray**

*Source: Melton Mowbray Town Centre Monitor 2003*

4.2.5. Melton Mowbray serves a catchement area of 59,000 people and provides more overall retail floorspace compared to Ashby. Melton Mowbray also fell in the Experian Goad Ranking, although less dramatically between 2001 and 2002 from 302$^{nd}$ to 344$^{th}$. The small amount of national retailers located in the town is attributable to its size and the proximity of outlets in other near-by centres. Despite the drop in retail rankings footfall levels have remained constant for the four years up to 2002 and the vacancy rate decreased between 2002 and 2003 from 6.7% to 6.4%. Melton Mowbray has approximately one car parking space per 474m$^2$ of retail floorspace.

**Market Harborough**

*Source: Melton Mowbray Town Centre Monitor 2003*

4.2.6. Unlike Ashby and Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough actually experienced an improvement of 25 places in the Experian Goad Retail Centre Rankings from 375th in 2001 to 350th in 2002. Market Harborough has significantly more retail floorspace than Ashby, and approximately one car parking space per 294m$^2$ of retail floorspace.

**Loughborough**

*Source: Healthcheck 2003*

4.2.7. The 2003 Healthcheck detailed areas of concern for Loughborough as a retail centre. Comparison with national figures reveals an under-representation of convenience good outlets and the overall quality, quantity and variety of floor space are significantly below competing centres. Although Loughborough contains almost three times the floorspace (767,700m$^2$) and provides a wider retail offer than the comparatively smaller Ashby. Loughborough also has a reduced retailer interest and the lowest multiple retailer representation when compared with benchmark centres. Loughborough has approximately one car parking space per 607m$^2$ of retail floorspace.

4.2.8. Despite the issues identified in the report Loughborough actually rose two places in the Experian Goad Retail Centre Ranking from 163$^{rd}$ in 2001 to 161$^{st}$ in 2002 and has vacancy levels that are below the national average.

**Burton-upon-Trent**

*Source: Burton-upon-Trent Retail Study 2000 and Experian Goad Retail Ranking*

4.2.9. The 2000 retail study suggests Burton-upon-Trent is a healthy retail centre. Over the previous 10-12 years there has been an increase in the retail offer with 14 of the 20 key attractors locating in the town. Burton has provided its retail catchment of 126,200 shoppers (1998) with improved quantity and quality of retail provision and retailers with modern convenience and comparison floorspace.

4.2.10. Burton rose 12 places in Experian Goad Retail Centre Ranking from 91$^{st}$ in 2001 to 79$^{th}$ in 2002 and experiences low vacancy levels. Ashby is ranking over 500 places below Burton in the Experian Ratings.

**Swadlincote**

4.2.11. No appropriate information available.

## 4.3. Car Parking Operations

**Comparison of ratio of parking spaces**

4.3.1. Only Market Harborough has lower ratio of floorspace to car parking spaces than Ashby at 294m$^2$ per car park space. The highest ratio is found in Loughborough at 607m$^2$ per car park space.

**Comparison of Short Stay Services**

4.3.2. Only Loughborough and Ashby provide users with an option to park for up to 30 minutes with the other competing town centres offering a minimum duration of one hour. Ashby North Street charges 40p for a period of up to one hour. The Ashby one hour tariff at 40p is more expensive than the larger retail centre of Market Harborough. A 3 hour stay in North Street is only 20 pence cheaper than Burton-upon-Trent which is a major competing retail centre.

**Comparison of Long Stay Services**

4.3.3. Only Ashby and Burton offer tariffs of up to one hour and two hours in their long stay car parks. Loughborough, Market Harborough and Hinckley impose a minimum tariff of 3, 4 and 5 hours respectively, in order to deter short stay parking. Ashby provides the second cheapest price for the 3 hour tariff at £1 and all day parking after Market Harborough.

URS

### Table 8 Parking Comparison Data

| Location | Charges | Short Stay | | | Long Stay | | Other Information |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Hinckley** | See across | 9 car parks | | | 7 car parks | | 1 long/short stay car park offering <1hr, <2hrs, <5hrs for £1.10 and 5+ hrs for £2.10. |
| | | <1 hr | 50p | | <5 hrs | £1 | |
| | | <2hrs | 90p | | | | |
| | | <3hrs | £1.10 | | 5+ hrs | £2 | |
| | | <4hrs | £2.10 | | | | |
| | | 4+ hrs | £4.10 | | | | |
| **Melton Mowbray** | Pay and Display charges not specified | 4 car parks | | | 4 car parks | | 8 pay & display car parks contain 1,000 spaces.<br>200 free spaces in town and surrounds. |
| **Market Harborough** | See across | 8 car parks – 1,429 spaces (90 Sat. only) | | | 4 car parks – 213 spaces | | - |
| | | <1hr | 20p | | | | |
| | | <2hrs | 40p | | <4hrs | 60p | |
| | | <4hs | £1.20 | | | | |
| | | 4+ hrs | £3 | | 4+hrs | £1.50 | |
| **Loughborough** | See across | | 1st floor multi-story & One other | Leisure Centre | 4 car parks (inc. multi-story) + one on Saturday<br>Tariffs as for short stay | | Evening period is from 6pm to midnight.<br>Concession available for Leisure Centre users 40p for < 2hrs, 70p for <3hrs, £1 for <4hrs and £1.30 for < 5hs.<br>4 and 10 week permits available for £4.40 a day (valid in 2 long stay car parks). |
| | | <Half hr | 20p | 40p | <3hrs | £2.10 | |
| | | <1 hr | 50p | £1 | <4hrs | £2.90 | |
| | | <2hrs | £1.30 | £2 | <5hrs | £4.50 | |
| | | Evening | 50p | - | 6+hrs | £5.50 | |
| **Burton** | See across | 3 car parks – 1,202 spaces + 160 spaces in 2 weekend car parks | | | 4 car parks – 594 spaces | | 1 car park offering <1 hr, <2 hrs for £1, All Day for £2.50.<br>1 car park offering <1 hr, 1-3 hrs, 3-6 hrs for £1.80, 6-9 hrs for £2.50 and 9-12 hrs for £3. |
| | | <1 hr | 60p | | <1 hr | 60p | |
| | | 1-3 hrs | £1.20 | | 1-3 hrs | £1.20 | |
| | | 3-4 hrs | £1.50 | | 3-4 hrs | £1.50 | |
| | | 4+ hrs | £6 | | 4+ hrs | £3 | |
| | | SUN <1 hr | 60p | | SUN <1 hr | 60p | |
| | | SUN 1+ hrs | £1.20 | | SUN 1+ hrs | £1.20 | |
| **Ashby** | See across | | North St (97) | 3 others (147) | 5 car parks – 232 spaces | | Somerfield provides 123 spaces free of charge. |
| | | <Half hr | 20p | - | <1 hr | 40p | |
| | | <1 hr | 40p | | <2 hrs | 70p | |
| | | <2 hrs | 70p | | <3 hrs | £1 | |
| | | <3 hrs | £1 | | All day | £1.80 | |
| **Swadlincote** | None | 2 car parks – 159 spaces | | | 5 car parks – 286 spaces | | 2 short and long stay – 130 spaces. |

**Key Findings**

- Ashby's main constraint to increasing retail capacity is the lack of larger units it can provide to attract national retailers. In 2001, Experian Goad ranked Ashby 602nd nationally as a retail centre. This has now slipped to 912th in the 2004 rankings.
- Ashby has a similar floor space to parking space ratio to both Melton Mowbray and Swadlincote indicating a consistent relationship between the two variables in the area.
- Ashby's closest competitor in terms of geography and retail floorspace is Swadlincote. Unlike Ashby, Swadlincote does not currently charge for parking services. Swadlincote has a similar ratio of parking spaces to floorspace as Ashby.
- Ashby short stay car parking charges are similar to those in Loughborough despite Loughborough being rated 407 places higher (2002) in the Experian Goad Retail Centre Rankings.
- Ashby long stay car parks offer tariffs more in keeping with Ashby's relative retail capacity with, only Market Harborough provider cheaper tariffs.
- Ashby and Burton are the only retail centres compared that provide short stay options in long stay car parks.

## 4.4. Accessibility by Public Transport and Other Modes

**Current Public Transport Provision**

4.4.1. There are currently nine bus services that serve Ashby, of these four are either fully or partially supported by Leicestershire County Council. The majority of the services operate at an hourly frequency during the day Monday to Saturday. The Sunday and Bank Holiday services are very poor with only an hourly service on route 217/218. The routes are shown in Figure 28.

4.4.2. These bus services link Ashby to a number of key destinations within the region including principally Leicester and Nuneaton. However the journey times on these routes are much longer than that for the same journey by car. This greatly reduces the attractiveness of these services and so reinforces the predominant role of the private car for travel to and within Ashby. Table 9 below lists the bus services in Ashby.

**Table 9 Bus Services in Ashby**

| Service | Operator | Route Description | FREQUENCY | | | Total Journey Duration (Mins) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Mon-Sat Daytime | Mon-Sat Evenings | Sunday and Bank Holiday | |
| 1 | Macpherson Coaches | Ashby de la Zouch - Market Street - Tamworth Road - Ridgeway Road - Market Square | 30 minutes | no service | no service | 12 |
| 2 | Macpherson Coaches | Ashby de la Zouch - Market Street - Marlborough Way - Woodside - Market Square | 30 minutes | no service | no service | 13 |
| 7 | Cresswell's Coaches | Ashby de la Zouch - Atherstone - Nuneaton | hourly | no service | no service | 88 |
| 9 | Arriva Midlands | Ashby-Swadlincote-Brizlincote-Burton | hourly | no service | no service | 40 |
| 23 | Macpherson Coaches | Ashby de la Zouch - Swadlincote | 90 minutes | no service | no service | 33 |
| 25/26/ 27 | Arriva Midlands | Ashby de la Zouch - Burton upon Trent | hourly | no service | no service | 69 |
| 92/93 | Paul James Coaches | Coalville - Heather - Swepstone - Measham - Ashby de la Zouch | hourly | no service | no service | 50 |
| 118 | Arriva Midlands | Leicester - Coalville - Ashby de la Zouch - Swadlincote | hourly | no service | See 217/218 | 85 |
| 217/218* | Arriva Midlands | Leicester - Coalville - Ashby de la Zouch - Swadlincote | no service | no service | hourly | 85 |

**217/218 serve the same route as 118 on Sundays and Bank Holidays*

4.4.3. Figure 29 shows the existing bus routes and the areas within a 400m radius (5 minute walk) of a bus stop. From this it would appear that the majority of households in Ashby are within a 400m walk of an existing bus stop with an existing service into the town centre. Unfortunately the current bus services have gaps when employees need them. This means that there are a number of employees that could possibly be encouraged to use the bus if the services were retimed to cater for journeys to and from work. The impact of such measures is difficult to asses but given that the 2001 census indicates that 25% of car journeys into Ashby are made by Ashby residents then there is potentially scope to significantly reduce the number of car trips into the town centre.

**Motor Cycle/Cycle Parking**

4.4.4. There are currently no formal parking facilities for motorcycles in Ashby and the current cycle parking facilities are limited to two “Sheffield” stands on Market Street with additional facilities at the leisure centre outside reception. There are currently no cycle parking facilities in the public car parks.

4.4.5. The provision of motor cycle and pedal cycle parking has an important role to play controlling future parking demand as the current lack of facilities minimises the role of these modes for journeys to work.

**Coach Parking**

4.4.6. There is currently no formal coach parking available in the town centre. there is a perception that this is not consistent with achieving growth in the tourism sector in the town. This has been raised as a major issue for the town by both the Tourist Information Office and a number of Key Stakeholders contacted as part of this process.

4.4.7. Formal coach parking facilities would be required in the town centre in order to cater for the anticipated growth in the tourism industry in Ashby. This is primarily associated with the Castle and the emerging role of Ashby as a gateway to the National Forest. The provision of Coach parking facilities is particularly important due to the lack of an easily accessible rail service in the town.

# 5. FUTURE "DO-NOTHING" CONDITIONS

## 5.1. Parking Demand

### Future Planning Years

5.1.1. An assessment of future parking demand has been calculated based on the growth in the number of households in the town combined with the predicted growth in car ownership per household. The growth in households assumed in this study has been supplied by NWLDC and is higher than the figures indicated in the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan (EMRP) and Local Development Framework (LDF). The future assessment years for this project are 2010 and 2015, as agreed with NWLDC.

### Planned Developments

5.1.2. The developments that have been identified by NWLDC as likely to be developed in Ashby by 2015 are listed in Table 10.

**Table 10 Future Development Proposals to 2015**

| Location | Current Site Status | Site Area (Ha) | No. Of Dwellings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Former Mines Rescue - Lower Packington Road | Planning Permission | 0.54 | 24 |
| Former Abbey Nursing Home – Smisby Road | Under Construction | 0.50 | 16 |
| Moores Transport Depot - Nottingham Road | Current application/site identified in Urban Capacity Study | 1.39 | 61 |
| Manor Ash - Nottingham Road | Planning Permission | 1.54 | 68 |
| Former United Biscuits - The Callis | Identified in Urban Capacity Study | 3.15 | 145 |
| Land off Station Road | Identified in Urban Capacity Study | 0.56 | 40 |
| Council Offices Kilwardby Street | Identified in Urban Capacity Study | 0.2 | 10 |
| The Vaults - 21a –23 South Street | Identified in Urban Capacity Study | 0.11 | 17 |
| Leicester Road | Allocated in Local Plan | 7.60 | 266 |
| East of Leicester Road | Allocated in Local Plan | 6.90 | 242 |
| | | **Total** | 889 |

5.1.3. These numbers represent a higher number of additional dwellings in Ashby than any of the options contained in the emerging EMRP. It is also higher than NWLDC's preferred growth forecast (Option 2b) that indicates an annual build rate for Ashby in the region of 60 dwellings, equating to a total of 600 additional dwellings in Ashby by 2015.

5.1.4. The following assessments use both the NWLDC figures (High Growth) and the EMRP figures (Central Growth).

### 5.2. Traffic Growth

Stage One

5.2.1. The household growth rate factor was calculated by adding the number of projected dwellings in each of the future assessment years to the base number of households. Tables 11 and 12 below show the Household Growth Factors applied for both the high and central growth calculations.

**Table 11 High Household Growth Rates**

| | No. of Households | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Area** | **2005 (Base)** | **2010** | **2015** |
| Ashby de la Zouch | 5038 | 5523 | 5927 |
| | **Growth Factor** | 1.096 | 1.176 |

**Table 12 Central Household Growth Rates**

| | No. of Households | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Area** | **2005 (Base)** | **2010** | **2015** |
| Ashby de la Zouch | 5038 | 5338 | 5638 |
| | **Growth Factor** | 1.060 | 1.119 |

Stage Two

5.2.2. The future parking demand generated by the above figures were then multiplied by the projected growth in car ownership in Ashby as extracted from TEMPRO (Department of transport National Trip End Model). Table 13 below shows the Car Ownership Growth Factors applied to both the high and central scenarios.

**Table 13 Car Ownership Growth Rates**

| | Car Ownership Growth Factors | |
|---|---|---|
| **Area** | **2005-2010** | **2005-2015** |
| Ashby de la Zouch | 1.036 | 1.048 |

5.2.3. The combined growth in households and car ownership is set out below in Table 14.

**Table 14 Combined Growth Rates Growth Rates**

| | **2005-2010** | **2005-2015** |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | 1.134 | 1.232 |
| **Central** | 1.098 | 1.173 |

5.2.4. The above combined High growth scenario, based on the build rate of 89 dwellings per year (to 2015) reflects a “worst case” scenario based on all current applications and existing land allocation in Ashby, some of which are unlikely to go ahead. This level of growth has been agreed with NWLDC and represents a robust growth estimate for the purposes of this report.

5.2.5. The Central growth scenario is based on the build rate of 60 dwellings per year (to 2015) identified in the emerging EMRP Option 2b as agreed with NWLDC this growth rate has been assessed to represent the level of development being more likely in the period to 2015.

5.2.6. In addition, the TEMPRO car ownership projections are considered to overestimate the future growth in car ownership as they predict a continued increase in the number of households with three or more cars despite the fact that the average household size is predicted to fall over the lifetime of this study.

5.2.7. The result of both these factors is that the growth rates used are considered to be robust. The future parking demand projections are therefore considered to present the worst case scenario for the future of parking in Ashby Town Centre.

## 5.3. Growth in Parking Demand.

5.3.1. The factors listed above have been applied to the results of both the off-street and on-street parking beat surveys. The following sections consider the off-street and on-street provision separately and also look at the combined impact of the future growth for both the high and central rates. Section 6 of this report considers the options designed to make the best use of the existing parking stock and to address any required increase in the number of spaces.

Off-Street Car Parks

5.3.2. Tables 15 and 16 below shows the projected occupancy rates for the car parks in Ashby currently under the control of NWLDC (i.e. excluding the Somerfield car park) for both the high and central growth options.

**Table 15 Demand in NWLDC Controlled Car Parks in Ashby (High Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 476 | 47 | 378 | 259 | 79% | 54% |
| 2010 | 476 | 53 | 426 | 292 | 90% | 61% |
| 2015 | 476 | 58 | 466 | 319 | 98% | 67% |

**Table 16 Demand in NWLDC Controlled Car Parks in Ashby (Central Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 476 | 47 | 378 | 259 | 79% | 54% |
| 2010 | 476 | 52 | 415 | 284 | 87% | 60% |
| 2015 | 476 | 55 | 443 | 304 | 93% | 64% |

5.3.3. From these tables it may be seen that the current maximum occupancy is within the notional capacity of 85-90%. This figure rises to 90% in the high growth option and 87% in the central growth option by 2010 and indicates that car parks will be operating within theoretical capacity at this time. It is also clear that these car parks will be operating within the theoretical capacity in the central growth 2015 figure but very close to maximum theoretical capacity in the high growth option for 2015. This means that there would be the possibility of vehicles queuing on the local road network or displaced parking acts in the high growth 2015 scenario.

5.3.4. Tables 17 and 18 shows the impact on future parking demand if the Somerfield car park on Derby Road is included in these calculations.

**Table 17 Future Parking Demand in All Car Parks in Ashby (High Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 599 | 61 | 498 | 354 | 83% | 59% |
| 2010 | 599 | 69 | 561 | 399 | 94% | 67% |
| 2015 | 599 | 75 | 614 | 436 | 103% | 73% |

**Table 18 Future Parking Demand in All Car Parks in Ashby (Central Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 599 | 61 | 498 | 354 | 83% | 59% |
| 2010 | 599 | 67 | 547 | 389 | 91% | 65% |
| 2015 | 599 | 72 | 584 | 415 | 98% | 69% |

5.3.5. From this table we can see that the current parking supply continues to operate within the notional capacity of 85-90% occupancy. However by 2010 the maximum occupancy rises to 91% in the central growth option and 94% in the high growth option both of which are above the theoretical operating capacity. By 2015 the car parks will be over capacity in the high growth option and very close to capacity in the central growth option. This means that there would be the possibility of vehicles queuing on the local road network or displaced parking acts in both 2010 and 2015.

5.3.6. The high growth option for 2015 would result in a maximum of 75 vehicles being displaced (based on the maximum occupancy of 614 (high growth) minus 90% of available capacity (539 parking spaces). The central growth option for 2015 would result in a maximum of 45 parking acts being displaced (based on the maximum occupancy of 584 (central growth) minus 90% of available capacity (539 parking spaces).

On-Street Parking

5.3.7. The key difference between the on-street assessment and the off-street car parks is that the on-street areas do not have specific bays marked. Within the on-street provision there are also differences, such as the bays on Market Street imposing limited waiting supported by the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders, whilst the remaining on-street provision is currently uncontrolled.

5.3.8. The capacity of the parking on Market Street has been determined by dividing the available kerb space by 5m (an average car length plus gap). This gives a total capacity of 39 spaces on Market Street (north and South). The capacities on the other stretches of road studied were determined by measuring the available kerb line that would be used in the introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone and would therefore limit parking spaces to those locations where it is safe to allow parking. The restriction in the number of spaces highlights the number of vehicles that need to be accommodated elsewhere in the town both now and in the future.

5.3.9. Table 19 below sets out the current situation in relation to the on-street parking areas covered as part of this study.

**Table 19 Current On-Street Parking Demand in Ashby**

| Year | On-Street Area | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity | Displaced |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | | |
| **2005** | Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 19 | 14 | 106% | 78% | 1 |
| | Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 27 | 19 | 129% | 90% | 6 |
| | Market Street Total | 39 | 2 | 46 | 33 | 118% | 85% | 7 |
| | South & Bath Street | 33 | 15 | 42 | 35 | 127% | 106% | 9 |
| | Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 100% | 50% | 0 |
| | Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 14 | 8 | 100% | 57% | 0 |
| | Total for Remaining Areas | 57 | 16 | 66 | 48 | 116% | 84% | 9 |
| | **Total** | 96 | 18 | 112 | 81 | 117% | 84% | 16 |

5.3.10. From the table above it is possible to see that the on-street provision currently operates at or just over capacity. Parking on the double yellow lines in Market Street at the eastern end of the town centre and on South Street in dangerous locations is affecting access and possibly safety. The end result is that there are currently 16 displaced parking acts that need to be accommodated elsewhere in Ashby.

5.3.11. Tables 20 and 21 below set out the future parking patterns on-street in Ashby for both the High and Central Growth Options.

**Table 20 Future On-Street Parking Demand in Ashby (High Growth)**

| Year | On-Street Area | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity | Displaced |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | | |
| 2010 | Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 22 | 16 | 120% | 89% | 4 |
| | Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 31 | 22 | 147% | 103% | 10 |
| | Market Street Total | 39 | 2 | 52 | 38 | 134% | 96% | 13 |
| | South & Bath Street | 33 | 17 | 48 | 40 | 145% | 121% | 15 |
| | Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 114% | 57% | 1 |
| | Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 16 | 9 | 114% | 65% | 2 |
| | Total for Remaining Areas | 57 | 18 | 75 | 55 | 132% | 96% | 18 |
| | **Total** | 96 | 20 | 128 | 92 | 133% | 96% | 32 |
| 2015 | Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 23 | 17 | 130% | 96% | 5 |
| | Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 33 | 23 | 159% | 112% | 12 |
| | Market Street Total | 39 | 2 | 57 | 41 | 145% | 104% | 18 |
| | South & Bath Street | 33 | 18 | 49 | 41 | 150% | 125% | 16 |
| | Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 12 | 6 | 123% | 62% | 2 |
| | Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 17 | 10 | 123% | 70% | 3 |
| | Total for Remaining Areas | 57 | 19 | 79 | 57 | 139% | 100% | 22 |
| | **Total** | 96 | 21 | 136 | 98 | 141% | 102% | 40 |

**Table 21 Future On-Street Parking Demand in Ashby (Central Growth)**

| Year | On-Street Area | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity | Displaced |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | | |
| **2010** | Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 21 | 15 | 116% | 85% | 3 |
| | Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 30 | 21 | 141% | 99% | 9 |
| | Market Street Total | 39 | 2 | 50 | 36 | 129% | 93% | 11 |
| | South & Bath Street | 33 | 16 | 46 | 38 | 140% | 116% | 13 |
| | Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 11 | 5 | 110% | 55% | 1 |
| | Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 15 | 9 | 110% | 63% | 1 |
| | Total for Remaining Areas | 57 | 18 | 72 | 53 | 127% | 92% | 15 |
| | **Total** | 96 | 20 | 123 | 89 | 128% | 93% | 27 |
| **2015** | Market Street - North | 18 | 2 | 22 | 16 | 124% | 91% | 4 |
| | Market Street - South | 21 | 0 | 32 | 22 | 151% | 106% | 11 |
| | Market Street Total | 39 | 2 | 54 | 39 | 138% | 99% | 15 |
| | South & Bath Street | 33 | 18 | 49 | 41 | 149% | 124% | 16 |
| | Trinity Close | 10 | 0 | 12 | 6 | 117% | 59% | 2 |
| | Wilfred Place | 14 | 1 | 16 | 9 | 117% | 67% | 2 |
| | Total for Remaining Areas | 57 | 19 | 77 | 56 | 136% | 99% | 20 |
| | **Total** | 96 | 21 | 131 | 95 | 137% | 99% | 35 |

5.3.12. The number of on-street parking acts which need to be accommodated is summarised below in Table 22.

**Table 22 Displaced On-Street Parking Acts**

| | 2010 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | 32 | 40 |
| **Central** | 27 | 35 |

## 5.4. Key Findings.

### Adequacy of the Current Parking Provision

5.4.1. The results of the studies indicate that there is currently sufficient off-street car parking to cater for the current level of demand with a maximum occupancy of 79% and an average occupancy of 54%.

5.4.2. If the on-street demand is added to the off-street demand then the following figures apply;

**Table 23 On and Off-Street Parking Demand in Ashby (High Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 695 | 79 | 610 | 435 | 88% | 63% |
| 2010 | 695 | 89 | 688 | 490 | 99% | 71% |
| 2015 | 695 | 97 | 750 | 534 | 108% | 77% |

**Table 24 On and Off-Street Parking Demand in Ashby (Central Growth)**

| Year | Capacity | Occupancy | | | Maximum as % of Capacity | Average as % of Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | Maximum | Average | | |
| 2005 | 695 | 79 | 610 | 435 | 88% | 63% |
| 2011 | 695 | 87 | 670 | 477 | 96% | 69% |
| 2016 | 695 | 93 | 715 | 510 | 103% | 73% |

5.4.3. From Table 25 below it is possible to see that by 2010 there is a maximum of 53 parking acts displaced in the high growth scenario, this figure rises to 80 by 2015 in the central growth option and to 115 by 2015 in the high growth option. The measures designed to cater for the increase are outlined in Section 6 of this report.

**Table 25 Total Parking Displacement 2010 and 2015**

| | 2010 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|
| **High** | 53 | 115 |
| **Central** | 0 | 80 |

# 6. SUSTAINABLE PARKING STRATEGY

## 6.1. Option Identification

6.1.1. The over-arching objective of this study is to develop parking management options and strategies that;

- Meet the objectives as set out in Section 2 of this report.
- Are consistent with the over-arching policies of NWLDC
- Address the problems and parking demand projections identified by the data collected for this study

6.1.2. For the purposes of option evaluation, it was agreed that NWLDC's over-arching policies be translated into a set of performance measures reflecting the specific scope of this study. In summary these are;

- Potential to maintain current levels of accessibility to the town centre by car
- Potential to improve accessibility to the town centre by walking, cycling and public transport
- The potential number of parking acts (spaces) accommodated
- The revenue implications (positive, neutral, negative)
- Ease of implementation (constraints, opportunities and public acceptability)
- Ease and cost of enforcement and management

6.1.3. A requirement of the study is to develop a car parking strategy for the town that includes short, medium and long term measures. It has been assumed that the following planning horizons are applicable;

- Short term – now-2008
- Medium term – 2008-2015
- Long term – 2015+

6.1.4. It was agreed with NWLDC to identify options sequentially under the following themes;

- **Asset Management** – improving the utilisation of the existing parking stock to improve the balance between long and short stay provision, and to improve the attractiveness of all car parks.
- **Demand Management** – implementing measures to promote alternative modes of transport to the private car, and thereby reduce demand for parking spaces
- **Supply Measures** – measure to increase the overall supply of public parking

6.1.5. It was agreed that each of the above strategy themes would be considered sequentially and incrementally, before considering options under the next theme. The option/strategy evaluation process therefore commences with options for asset management before considering the cope for demand management and finally supply measures.

## 6.2. Option Identification and Evaluation

6.2.1. Table 26 presents the options identified as being in scope with respect to the above. The sustainable parking strategy and associated action plan is, in effect, the combination of the options in a sequence which reflects the likely availability of resources (budget and land), ease of implementation (constraints and opportunities, risk) and organisational capacity (ability of agencies to implement). This is set out below in Table 26 below;

**Table 26 Action Plan**

| Planning Horizon | Strategy Theme | Options | Lead Agencies |
|---|---|---|---|
| Short Term – now -2008 | Asset Management | 1-6 | NWLDC |
| Medium Term – 2008 -2015 | Demand Management | 7-9 | NWLDC, LCC, Public transport operators |
| Long Term – 2015+ | Supply Measures | 10-13 | NWLDC |

# Appendix A -

# Off-Street Car Park Results

# Appendix B -

# On-Street Parking Results

# Appendix C -

# Car Park User Questionnaire

# Appendix D -

# Car Park User Questionnaire Results

# Appendix E -

# Car Park Condition Survey Results

# Figures