

Appendix 1 Party Briefings

The main issues raised during the party briefing discussions and the responses are outlined below:

The strategy should include a narrative on why the Council have developed the car parking strategy

It is suggested that the Executive Summary includes a narrative on the purpose of the car parking strategy and a summary of objectives, priorities and actions.

Draft Narrative - The City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy identified car parking as a major issue for Belfast City Centre and recommended that the Council work with the Department for Infrastructure to develop and implement a strategy for car parking for Belfast. The Council wish to provide a strong civic leadership role for the promotion of a modern, safe, accessible and integrated transportation system for the City of Belfast and its wider regions. The role of parking in contributing to the success of a city is recognised, however it needs to be effectively managed as part of a balanced approach. The Council's rationale for developing the strategy is to ensure that parking supports the local economy by making it easy for shoppers and tourists to visit Belfast and provide access to key services and facilities for special needs groups and the mobility impaired. It is important that the parking strategy for the city encourages sustainable travel modes and helps reduce reliance on the private car whilst enhancing the built and natural environment.

The draft Car Parking Strategy makes recommendations relating to Council owned car parks and car parking provision outside our ownership. A key component of the strategy is to facilitate and encourage stakeholders to work together to achieve the vision and objectives.

The issue of commuter parking on inner city streets was raised for example Denmark Street

The impact of commuter car parking on residential streets close to the city centre is recognised in the draft strategy and will be considered through parking studies by DfI and through the review of the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan which is commencing in parallel with the Council's Local Development Plan.

Clarification on the proposal for the consolidation of surface car parks and the potential of replacing provision with multi storey car parking development was requested. Concerns were raised in relation to the location and design of consolidated parking provision and the impact on neighbouring residential areas.

The Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy identified the issue of a large number of poor quality surface car parks in the city centre and recommended a reduction and rationalization of parking locations. The strategy recommended that high capacity car parks could be accessed from the Inner Ring Road with real time information indicating availability of spaces. This approach outlined in CCR&I Strategy has been endorsed by the Council.

The Car Parking Strategy carried out a more detailed assessment of car parking provision and locations in the city and has identified a number of opportunities where consolidation of surface car parks could take place. In particular, the north of the city at North Street and Donegall Street and the south-east at Cromac Street and Ormeau Road.

The strategy states that this approach should only be considered when a number of adjacent surface sites are closed. It is anticipated that this approach will concentrate traffic movements to fewer parking sites and present development opportunities. This approach has been agreed with the Department for Infrastructure, however, the Council will have to carry out further work to consider appropriate site locations and a business model to take this forward. External factors will also have to be taken into consideration such as private sector initiatives and changes to demand and supply.

Any proposals will be assessed as part of the development management process and in the context of the development of policy in the Local Development Plan and the upcoming review of the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan which will consider the change in demand and supply of car parking in Belfast along with other transport policy.

The consolidation of parking locations could be provided through a multi-storey or underground development scheme. Underground car parking provision will be a significantly more expensive option and would be considered as part of the business model.

The proposed approach going forward is to:

- Continue the strategic review of Council off street parking assets to identify opportunities for consolidation of surface car parks and to consider potential site locations for high capacity car parks linked with regeneration /development opportunities;

- Visioning exercise to establish good design principles in relation to integration of high capacity car parking provision within the urban context based on best practice elsewhere;
- **Carry out a consultation process with local communities on proposals to consolidate car parking provision and potential locations and design options; and**
- Consider business model options to bring forward the proposals. Proposals could be bought forward by the private sector, however it is recommended in the strategy that the Council maintain some control over car parking provision in the city in order to influence pricing policy.

These proposals along with design criteria will be brought back to committee for consideration at a later date.