

Comments on CMK Parking Strategy

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General

This is not a strategy. It is a discussion paper. A strategy would set out proposals for number of parking spaces, types of spaces (eg short or long term), location (eg surface or MSCP, shops or CBD) and changes to those factors over a period of time. This paper does not do that. This paper merely proposes other reviews. We look forward to seeing a strategy develop from those reviews at some time in the future.

For more general comments on transport and parking please see our response to the TSR.

Car Parking

The TSR notes that MK has more car parking in its town centre than in similar sized towns in the SE and the cost of that car parking is either free or much less. The table below, with figures from the TSR, shows that MK has about 4 times as much car parking as in similar sized towns in the SE and that the cost in MK for those with annual season tickets is less than a quarter of that in similar sized towns in the SE. We believe that the fact that MK has about one third of the bus usage than in similar sized towns in the SE is due to the fact that MK has 4 times as much parking at a quarter of the cost.

Table 3

City Centre Car Parking	Spaces	Daily	Annual
Milton Keynes	25000	£0/£4	£225
Northampton	5000	£5	£1140
Southampton	10000	£7	£1650
Reading	7000	£6	£935

Obviously if bus usage is to be increased then the surfeit and cheapness of car parking has to be addressed.

There should be no free car parking spaces. These distort people's travel expectations. People assume that because there are some free spaces they will be able to park in one. Consequently they drive to CMK. Even if there are no free spaces left and they have to pay they have already taken the decision about travel mode. If people know from the outset that they would have to pay to park in CMK they may make different travel choices.

All day car parking charges should be increased to at least the level of a day pass for the buses (currently £3.20, but less if purchased weekly, monthly or annually). Thus for anyone living within MK it would always be cheaper to travel to work in CMK by bus than by car.

Car parking charges of the order of just £1 per day (ie £225 per year) are so low that they do not even cover the cost of the provision of the space. This is typically at least £500 per year per space. The council is effectively subsidising those who drive into CMK and park there all day. Those who travel in by bus receive no subsidy, having to pay a commercial fare. It is absurd to subsidise car use but not bus use when both council and government policy is to encourage people to travel by bus rather than car.

The TSR notes that there are currently about 25000 parking spaces in CMK. This is already too many. Adding 8000 CP spaces, as is planned, will just make the situation worse.

We support the comments by MK Forum on parking in CMK. There is clearly a mismatch between the numbers of workers proposed to arrive in CMK by car and the number of parking spaces available to them.

Modal Shift

Modal shift requires a 'carrot and stick' approach. Faber Maunsell confirmed this in the LTPTV.

"Without measures to discourage car use, the public transport system would have to be of fantastic quality to persuade car users to leave their car at home."

"Restraint on parking and other measures can bring the quality requirement to within more reasonable limits."

MKC seems to only be willing to consider carrots. Some sticks are needed too if modal shift is to be achieved.

LTPTV1 stated clearly that to get modal shift on to buses parking charges had to apply to all sites in CMK and had to be higher.

AF 12.11.08