



**PORTFOLIO AREA: INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT**

Date of Meeting: 30TH SEPTEMBER 2002

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan: No

Inside Policy Framework

Title: CAR PARKING CAPACITY IN THE CITY
Report of: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
Report reference: EN 103/02

Summary:

This report summarises the key issues arising from the recent parking study and the actions which have been taken to date. Options for increasing parking capacity are identified and an initial phase of work identified.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

1. The Executive endorses the proposed strategy of a modest increase in parking capacity in the short term.
2. Consideration be given to providing £123,000 capital funding to enable an immediate start to the measures set out in Phase 1.

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Director of Environment and Development

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 The Council has commissioned a report to assess the key issues influencing parking supply and demand and options for the future. This study took into account existing usage and trends, Local Transport targets, land uses in the City Centre and future development pressures. A copy of the summary and recommendations are included as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Actions have already been taken to address a number of the recommendations:
- The charging tariff and the comparative bands between long and short stay car parks has been addressed to a large degree in the charging proposals recently considered by the Executive.
 - Council representatives have been advised that the County Council are striving to have phase 1 of the Variable Message Signage in place by Christmas.
 - A review of the balance between long/short stay spaces has commenced, and this could be introduced for 2004/5.
- 1.3 One of the main issues which needs to be considered is the supply of parking stock and the demand. Whilst there is surplus capacity at the moment there are periods of saturation, at some lunchtimes and in the Christmas/New Year period. The forecast demand is scheduled to increase by approximately 8% over the next few years. Whilst the Local Transport Plan incorporates proposals for a Park & Ride scheme, it is unlikely to be in place within the next five years. At the same time, and as a reflection of the current economic vitality of Carlisle, there is a demand for development space and some of the car parks provide potential. Indeed there is interest in the Viaduct Estate area for a major foodstore, larger than that already approved.
- 1.4 It is considered that an appropriate strategy would be to seek to increase the level of parking supply at a modest level over the next 2-3 years. This would cater for the growth in demand in the short term without any significant impact on the longer term objectives of the LTP. Similarly the Council would be better placed to respond to any further development pressure on existing car parks.
- 1.5 A review has been undertaken of potential sites to deliver this strategy and this can be summarised as follows:

Phase 1

- (a) It is possible to increase the parking in both Town Dyke Orchard Car Park and Bitts Park car park and plans are included in Appendix 2, which show these proposals:

	1. Existing Spaces	2. Proposed Spaces	3. Estimated Cost (Class 1)
Bitts Park	58	85 (+ 27)	£45,000
Town Dyke Orchard	253	317 (+ 64)	£68,000

The estimated revenue income from these proposals are forecast to be £14,000/annum for Bitts Park and £36,000/annum from Town Dyke. These projections recognise the potential for displacement and are based on overall growth.

This work could be commenced very quickly and following consultation with the Portfolio Holder planning applications have been submitted for each of these. Dependant upon the views of the Executive these could be withdrawn if necessary. Subject to planning and confirmation of funding this work could be substantially completed for the Christmas period.

- (b) To improve the access to parking spaces and enhance the pedestrian routes to and from the car parks improvements to the signage are required. Similarly, temporary signage would be beneficial for additional parking provided for the Christmas period. The total estimated cost (class 1 estimate) for strengthened signage is £10,000.
- (c) Shaddongate car park is one of the most under used car parks and a range of options need to be considered to improve this although the distance from the City Centre will always be a barrier. There is a degree of development interest in the asset, but in the short term it is considered usage could be increased. No additional budget would be required.

Subsequent Phases

To some degree the timing of any further improvements would be linked to future developments, but could be linked to the proposed strategy.

- (d) Improvements to William and Cecil Street car parks is currently scheduled as part of the current major development in Botchergate. This will relate to improvements in the safety/security of these rather than increasing capacity, although the development itself, when completed, creates approx. 200 parking spaces.
- (e) The management of the Sands has started to look at the availability of parking and to potentially increase this around the facility. This would need to be assessed by the Trust and firmer details are likely to emerge during 2003/4.
- (f) Discussions are under way with the developer to assess the potential to increase capacity in the Newark Terrace area potentially linked to land in Council ownership.
- (g) The Executive has already considered a report related to the Viaduct Estate and discussions/negotiations are currently under way prior to any discussion being requested from the Council. Car parking forms part of these discussions.
- (h) A number of options for decking existing parking have been considered, and the levels at the Civic Centre car park make this an obvious site for consideration. However, the capital costs of such work is high and it is suggested at this stage no further action is undertaken on these options.

1.6 In summary, the Executive is asked to consider the proposed strategy and the potential/timing to implement phase 1. Should immediate action be supported then a supplementary estimate of £123,000 would need to be approved by Council. Alternatively the proposals could be considered as part of the budget process for funding in 2003/4.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date: internal (Property, Planning, Parks), developers and through the planning process.

2.2 Consultation proposed: as above.

3. STAFFING/RESOURCES COMMENTS

- 3.1 No major implications with any relatively minor implications reflected in the capital/revenue estimates, i.e. increased supervision, design fees.

4. CITY TREASURER'S COMMENTS

- 4.1 This proposal has not previously been considered and does not feature in the Council's Capital objectives as set out in the Capital Strategy that was recently submitted to the ODPM.
- 4.2 There is no funding earmarked for the scheme, and the £123,000 requested would need to be approved as a supplementary estimate request via Council if it were to proceed in this current financial year. This approval would obviously reduce the budget availability for future Capital scheme priorities that are currently being identified as part of the 2003/04 budget process. Alternatively, the bid could be considered alongside the other capital bids being considered during the current budget round, but this would delay the start of the project to the 2003/04 financial year.
- 4.3 It is noted that the proposal is expected to produce an additional revenue stream to the Council forecast at £50,000 pa, which if achieved, results in a two and a half year 'pay-back' period for the capital investment.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

Not applicable

6. CORPORATE COMMENTS

All relevant Council Officers have been consulted.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The estimated costs include a contingency but some unforeseen costs may arise, i.e. archaeology. Income forecasts are based on current levels of economic vitality.

In the longer term options negotiations and development proposals may not come to fruition.

8. EQUALITY ISSUES

Not applicable.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Considered to be broadly neutral. The proposed scale of increase in parking spaces will not impact on the environmental objectives of the LTP. Better signage should result in more accessible spaces and less 'touring' resulting in no increased emissions.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Secure Car Park status would be maintained.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **recommended** that:

11.1 The Executive endorses the proposed strategy of a modest increase in parking capacity in the short term.

11.2 Consideration be given to providing £123,000 capital funding to enable an immediate start to the measures set out in Phase 1.

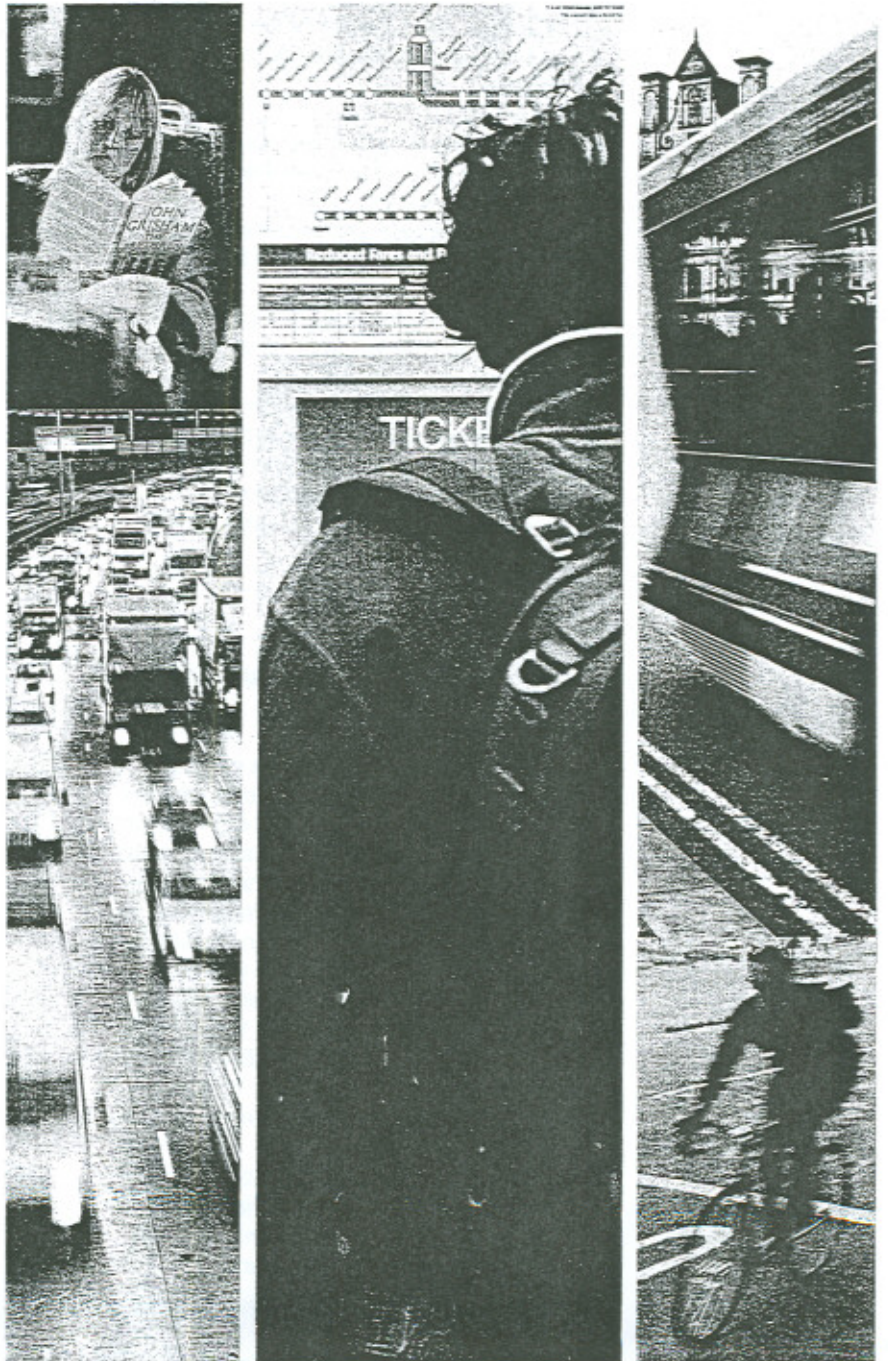
12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

See above

CARLISLE PARKING STRATEGY

CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

August 2002



4 Summary and Conclusions

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Carlisle City Council, to recommend an achievable public parking strategy for the central area of Carlisle.

4.1.2 This report outlines:-

- the existing supply of parking stock in Carlisle and its associated demand, by location;
- the consideration of future supply and demand of parking, using underlying growth assumptions;
- The impact of the loss of parking at both of the Viaduct long stay car parks;

4.1.3 A number of future options have been assessed, with the aim of formulating a public parking strategy for the city centre. These include:-

- Sell one or both of the Viaduct car parks, doing nothing to offset the loss in long stay parking supply;
- Re-designate long and short stay parking within the city centre and the associated tariffs;
- Consideration of partnership opportunities to improve the efficiency of car parking supply and management;
- Construction of a new car park/s;
- Creating a second tier at the Upper Viaduct car park to offset the loss of long stay parking at Lower Viaduct car park;
- The introduction of on-street parking charges;

4.2 SUMMARY

4.2.1 The following conclusions have been drawn:-

- The supply of public parking stock is able to meet existing demand, however there are periods of saturation, for example, between 12.00 and 14.00, when car park occupancy is at its highest and at Christmas/New Year when all spaces are full for several days.
- Future demand, based on existing trends, have identified that there will be a reduction in spare capacity of 8% at the busiest time of day (between 12.00 and 14.00). Although this appears to be negligible, it does have the potential to affect the volume of city centre traffic if people cannot find a suitable parking space.
- The loss of either the Upper or Lower Viaduct long stay car parks will place considerable pressure on the future capability of Carlisle's parking stock to meet

future demand. The loss of both car parks would result in demand exceeding capacity.

- Re-designating short and long stay parking could help to decrease the amount of traffic using long stay car parks. Analysis shows that a high proportion of those using long stay, do so for less than three hours, however this will not affect demand and is purely a matter of badging car parks appropriately.
- By changing the tariff structure motorists may give more consideration to the type of parking that they need. Increasing charges for long stay could lead to an increase in those using public transport.
- A partnership with the private sector has a number of limitations, however, if an agreement framework is drawn up, in which both parties undertake to manage the car parks for mutual benefit then liability can be reduced significantly or even removed.
- The acquisition of further sites has not been fully assessed. However, if the loss of either Viaduct car park is compensated by a new car park then it will be necessary to ensure that any new car park is attractive to users, adopts the same pricing structure as other city centre car parks and affords an adequate level of security. Users will want to know that they are getting the same level of service as that in either of the Viaduct car parks.
- The construction of a second tier at Upper Viaduct is dependent on the outcome of a two phase study. The first would comprise a land use search of the site, establishing what it was previously used for. The second phase would involve a more detailed feasibility study.
- On street parking charges, so early in the Local Transport Plan period, would not be popular. However, it could be acceptable to introduce charges for the short stay parking at the north end of Lowther Street and the rear of Corporation Road. Both locations operate effectively as off street car parks by virtue of their location and appearance. There is approximately a combined total of 100 spaces.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3.1 Parking provision is vital to the economy of urban centres. Current policy, at all levels, supports the idea of more sustainable ways to travel, however this cannot be at the expense of economic development and a balance needs to be struck. Any change must be imposed gradually and not forced on people.

4.3.2 The current pricing regime does not adequately distinguish between short and long

stay parking. As mentioned, a significant proportion of long stay occupants park for less than three hours. Existing tariff information shows that this is because charges are marginally cheaper in long stay car parks for any period greater than one hour. It is suggested that this anomaly be removed when the revised charges are introduced.

4.3.3 The introduction of a new long term parking pricing structure would have a two fold effect:

- Firstly, it would cause some drivers to seek out the spare capacity in the short stay car parks therefore reducing the demand for long stay spaces.
- Secondly, it would cause some drivers to consider the economic case for using alternative modes, again reducing the demand for long stay spaces.

4.3.4 Although, in principle, the reduction in long stay spaces is in line with local policy it is likely that the new pricing structure would create a demand on short stay spaces which could not be met by the city's existing parking stock. It is therefore recommended that a certain proportion of long stay car parking stock is converted to short stay to be able to meet the increased demand for this type of parking caused by the change in parking charges. This would provide the city with a clear pricing strategy to control short and long stay parking.

4.3.5 To assist in drivers locating appropriate spaces quickly and not cruising around the city centre looking for spaces it is recommended that the proposed Variable Message Signs (VMS) be introduced in parallel with the new pricing structure. It is understood that the County Council may fund the introduction of VMS this financial year through the LTP process. This would be a very helpful complimentary measure to maximise city centre accessibility and should be actively encouraged.

4.3.6 It is unlikely the above solution can compensate for a loss of 450 spaces. The analysis shows that in 2006, without the Upper Viaduct car park, parking will be at capacity. It is a recommendation of this report that if a decision is taken to sell either of the Viaduct car parks, a certain proportion of the lost spaces should be replaced elsewhere. The exact number of spaces to provide for depends on how many drivers will be affected by an increase in parking charges and hence revert from long to short stay parking. The construction of a second tier at the Upper Viaduct car park is deemed inappropriate as this will only likely cater for around another 150-200 spaces.

4.3.7 In our view 75% of the spaces should be replaced. This will allow for some redistribution

to currently under utilised car parks and for a modest modal shift by some long stay parkers as well as multiple shopping trip usage from drivers using the car park at the proposed development.

4.3.8 One possibility could be to convert the Upper Viaduct car park back to short stay (a measure that would reflect predominantly its current usage) and enter into a partnership arrangement with the Lower Viaduct developer for shared use of the Lower Viaduct car park development.

4.3.9 As mentioned, the acquisition of further sites has not been fully assessed, however a number of possibilities to increase capacity could include:-

- A second tier on the Upper Viaduct car park, although remediation measures would probably be prohibitive.
- Shared usage at the proposed development, for example, a 2 hour maximum stay at Pay & Display with a refund for purchases over a certain amount.
- Rear of County Garage adjacent to Hardwick Circus/Sands/Swifts Bank car park areas.
- Lowther Street conversion to Pay & Display at the north end would encourage full usage.
- Conversion to Pay & Display at the rear of Corporation Road.
- Extension of Town Dyke Orchard by 50 spaces northwards.
- Extension of Devonshire Walk by 50 spaces at the north end.
- Put a second tier on the Civic Centre car park to create a further 80 spaces (accessed from higher level of Lowther Street).
- Do a deal with Staples/Matalan for shared usage on James Street.
- Maximise capacity and quality of William Street and Cecil Street by integrating access and creating a one way system.





4.3.10 Park & Ride schemes, which as discussed, do have the potential to influence travel behaviour. However, the progress of those schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan is unclear. Cumbria County Council's Annual Progress Report (August 2001) does not provide any clear indication as to when these schemes will be operating. The provision of more than 1,000 strategic Park and Ride spaces will undoubtedly influence parking trends in the city centre, however it is considered unwise to recommend the sale of existing stock on the assumption that Park & Ride will alleviate the issue of future capacity. The success of Park & Ride needs further

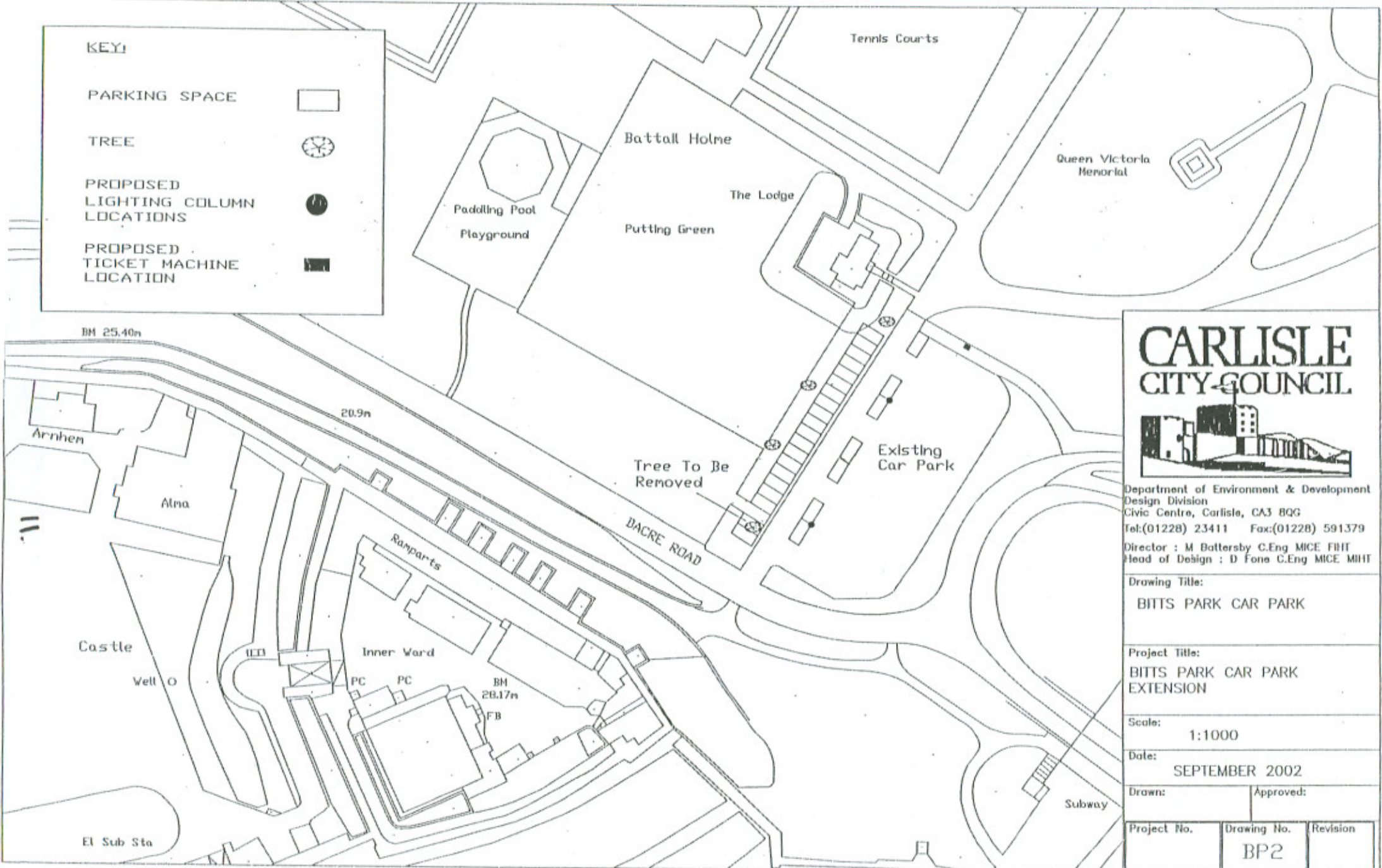
consideration, particularly as there is a larger demand for short stay parking.

4.3.11 On street parking charges should not be introduced. Extending the disc zone parking scheme has not been considered as it presently covers all of the city centre study area. Future consideration of this option should not be ruled out, particularly if the three Park & Ride schemes are progressed.

4.3.12 The introduction of a green commuter plan for the city council, county council and other large employers is recommended and has the potential to relieve some of the demand on city centre parking stock as well as promoting sustainability.

KEY:

- PARKING SPACE 
- TREE 
- PROPOSED LIGHTING COLUMN LOCATIONS 
- PROPOSED TICKET MACHINE LOCATION 



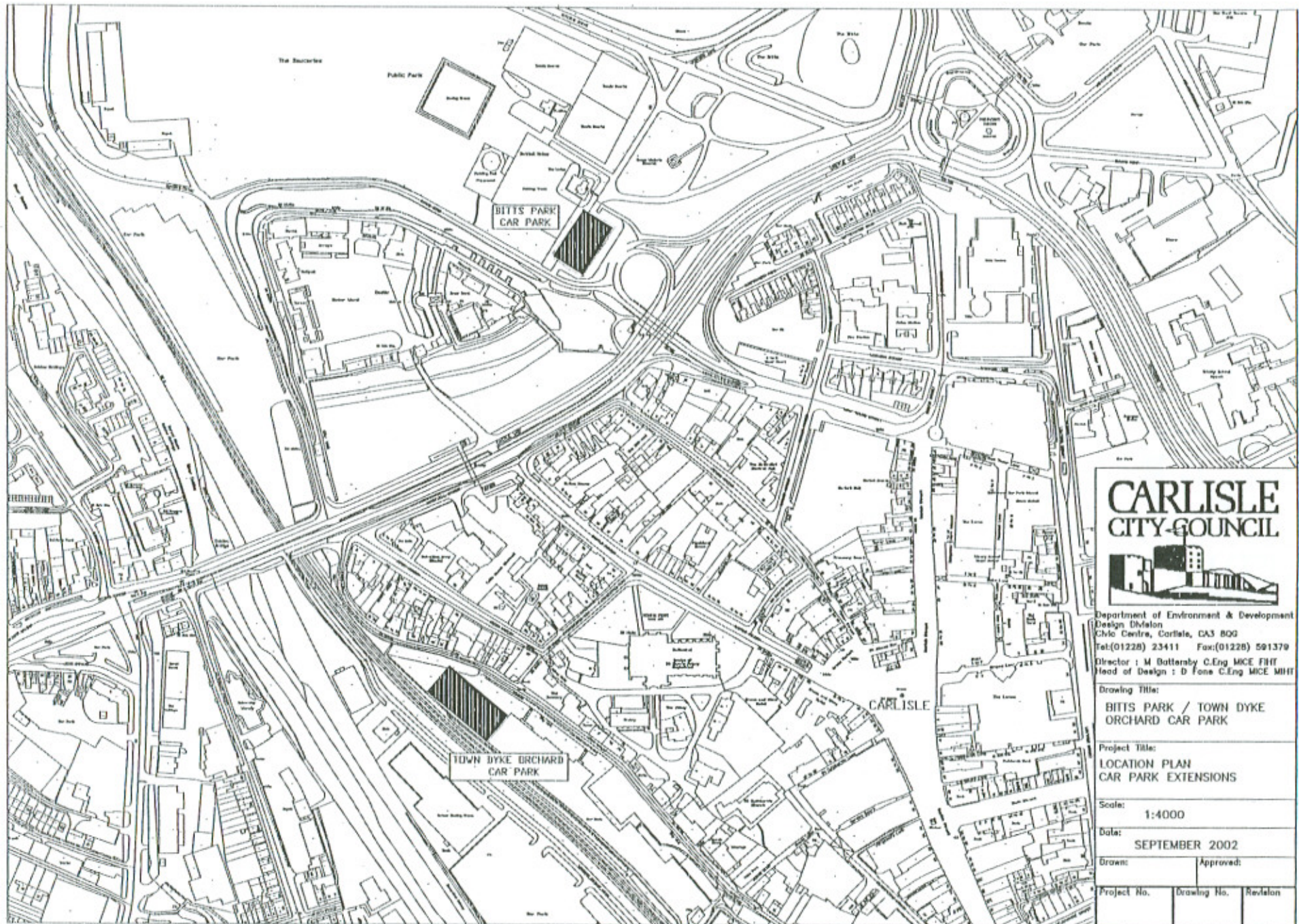
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Drawing Title: BITS PARK CAR PARK		
Project Title: BITS PARK CAR PARK EXTENSION		
Scale: 1:1000		
Date: SEPTEMBER 2002		
Drawn:		Approved:
Project No.	Drawing No.	Revision
	BP2	

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Drawing Title:
**BITS PARK / TOWN DYKE
 ORCHARD CAR PARK**

Project Title:
**LOCATION PLAN
 CAR PARK EXTENSIONS**

Scale:
1:4000

Date:
SEPTEMBER 2002

Drawn: Approved:

Project No.	Drawing No.	Revision