



COMMUNITY CONCERN  
2 DOUGLAS ROAD  
BINGHAM  
NOTTS  
NG13 8EL

**CAR PARKING IN BINGHAM  
PRESENTATION TO RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MEMBERS PANEL 31<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2008.**

**1 Background**

The car parks are frequently full, businesses say that they are losing trade because customers are unable to park nearby; people park on residential streets. Illegal parking is rife. The population is growing rapidly. We have a parking problem.

The introduction of CPE gives us the opportunity to do something about it and we thank you for allowing us to speak. We have produced a number of documents on this subject – such as a report on CPE and have two petitions with a combined total of 1,600 signatures; copies of these are available if you want them but tonight we will focus on potential solutions.

**2. Approach Taken.**

- 2.1. Long term solutions only; no ‘sticking plaster’ projects.
- 2.2. Make best use of current car parks.
- 2.3. Keep unnecessary vehicles out of the town.
- 2.4. Prevent parking creep into residential areas.
- 2.5. Keep the character of the town. No multi-storeys or parking on the Square.
- 2.6. No additional costs to residents.

**3. Major Factors Considered.**

- 3.1. There is a frequent and reliable bus service between Bingham and Nottingham.
- 3.2. The rail service is less frequent, more expensive and comparatively less used although more frequent trains were promised by Stagecoach last week.
- 3.3. Town Centre land is scarce and expensive.
- 3.4. The scheme should be measured in traffic benefits and not monetary terms.
- 3.5. The location of the new Health Centre may influence this subject.

**4. Short Term Parking**

We support the concept that the three town centre car parks and on-street town centre spaces are used for short term parking. This makes best use of the car parks by making it easier for large numbers of people to access the town shops and services.

An exception should be the provision of some long stay disabled bays in the town centre and schemes such as parking permits for residents.

**5. Long Stay Parking.**

We believe that the bulk of long stay parkers are people who use the town as a Park and Ride or employees of businesses in the town. If the town centre car parks are used for short stays only then - to avoid displacement on to residential streets - they must have parking within walking distance of the town centre or on a bus route; this means the creation of Park & Rides.

## **6. Parking in Residential Areas.**

We can see that this is a tricky area to manage and haven't got the knowledge to make proposals but suggest that appropriate schemes such as parking permits are considered to prevent and reverse the steady expansion of the use of residential areas as car parks.

## **7. Suggested Locations for Long Stay Parking.**

7.1. If we look to the future we need Park and Rides on the outskirts of town. The County Council considered one at Saxondale a few years ago but have – for reasons inexplicable to us – since rejected the proposal.

Such a scheme would enable commuters from surrounding villages to bypass Bingham and catch buses to Nottingham, Grantham or Newark. A bus link would also be used by those wanting to come into Bingham. Note that Trent Barton has provisionally endorsed this approach.

We propose that one be considered either at the west end of town (next to or on the underused Highways Agency land by the Saxondale island) and/or on the east on a new site by the Jet Petrol Station.

In addition to reducing the number of vehicles entering the town the latter would have the added advantage of solving a current local problem by removing the need for large buses to manoeuvre through the nearby Tree estate – a major concern for residents.

Note that this would demand access from the site on to Grantham Road to avoid using the A52.

7.2. We are *against* using the land on the north side of the railway as a major Park and Ride for the town centre. There are real dangers in large numbers of people crossing the line by the unprotected Moor Lane crossing, and the footbridge is a major obstacle for the elderly, disabled and pram and buggy users. We know that there is talk about making improvements but talk may be all that happens.

However, we *support* the provision of a Park & Ride in that area for **rail users**; again, this would remove vehicles from the town and also allow disabled users to access eastbound trains.

We understand that these schemes will cost money but the benefits to the town would be substantial. It would be easier for commuters, better for the environment and is also a long term solution.

7.3. We *do not* support the 'pocket Park & Ride' proposals such as that suggested for the Moot Public House. It would bring cars and buses into residential areas; additionally it is a lengthy walk into the town centre and demands crossing the busy Fairfield Street.

## **8. Parking Fees and Costs.**

8.1. This problem has been caused by the continual building schemes sanctioned by the Borough Council with no plan and no heed to the consequences.

This is your chance to right that wrong.

Therefore we do not believe that the residents should pay for these improvements. We suggest that any project costs be funded by the Borough and that parking fees should be free or nominal. As a guide we suggest that in the town centre up to three hours is free, three to six hours is £1 and £10 plus for long stay. Parking in the Park & Rides should be free.

## **9. Other Points.**

9.1. It is important that these solutions are not cherry picked or implemented piecemeal. If pay parking is introduced without having measures in place to prevent parking in residential areas or if the parking fees are high then you will *cause* problems.

9.2. We understand that the Borough's remit is off-road parking and that the County Council is responsible for on-road parking. However, you are in partnership with them on this and therefore represent that partnership.

If you introduce controlled parking in the car parks and not on-road then we will have major problems.

9.3. There is general concern about the role of the parking wardens. It is important that they are there to help the community and are not viewed as tax collectors.

We would like to see the scheme measured in traffic terms – for example less illegal parking and congestion – and not revenue. We would also like to see a regular survey of public perception of the scheme.

9.4. We believe that the root cause of the problem – building development without matching infrastructure improvements – continues today. To prevent the problem becoming worse we ask that you recommend to your fellow Councillors that major development is stopped until a town plan has been agreed.

9.5. Finally: this project has been underway for several years now. We find it disturbing that we are discussing the potential solutions three months before implementation and do not believe that this leaves adequate time to take appropriate actions. You have heard our proposals; we would like to hear **yours** before action is taken. We therefore ask that the scheme be delayed until agreement on the way forward has been reached.

It is, after all, intended to reduce problems and not cause them.

10. Thank you for your time.

Comcon 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008.