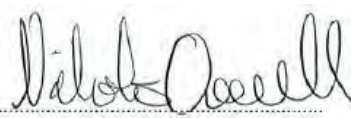


Chester Transport Strategy & Vision


Baseline Report




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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

AECOM was commissioned by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&C) to produce a Transport Strategy for Chester covering a 15 year period. This is an extremely important project for the Chester area and wider sub-region. The commitment to making the Chester area an increasingly attractive place to live, work, and visit has already been demonstrated through the work already undertaken by CW&C and by Chester Renaissance. As part of the regeneration process, transportation is a fundamental element, bringing together all aspects of movement and accessibility, and providing linkages across the wider geographical area and beyond to more strategic destinations.

The requirement for a new Transport Strategy for Chester has been understood for some time – the previous strategy was prepared in 1997 and has not been updated since 2004. The catalyst for this study derives, however, from a recent Notice of Motion from Council Members calling for pedestrianisation of St. Werburgh Street in the city centre. This highlighted the need for a unified strategy to set strategic direction and objectives for the city’s transport network, which takes into account previous transport work undertaken as part of the One City Plan, Bus and Parking strategies, Public Realm Design Guide and new Theatre Masterplan.

The Transport Strategy is an all-encompassing and visionary transport plan for the Chester area including the city’s historic core, the wider city’s urban area, and the longer distance journey-to-work catchment extending to Wirral, parts of North Wales, and other towns in West Cheshire including Ellesmere Port and Northwich.

The key strategic objectives that the action plan and strategy need to meet include:

- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the existing transport network in the area and recommend future improvements and other measures to ensure the network fully responds to and supports the One City Plan;
- To develop a range of deliverable transport solutions to facilitate economic growth and address social inclusion and accessibility;
- To promote the use of low carbon and sustainable modes of transport, especially improvement to public transport networks;
- To identify current and planned development opportunities on the road network and identify the key strategic transportation issues emerging as a result of proposed developments; and
- To produce an implementation plan for the vision and strategy including phasing and prioritisation, potential early-wins, indicative costs and potential delivery mechanisms.

- The vision is to be ambitious, yet realistic and maximise the benefits for Chester, by addressing the following issues:
- Improve access and movement to / from the city centre and key employment sites;
 - Alleviate congestion in the city centre and at other key hotspots;
 - Improve the quality of life for local residents, addressing the environment and air quality;
 - Address the negative impact of traffic and parking on the major architectural and historic assets and public spaces;
 - Restore public confidence in public transport as a viable alternative to the car;
 - Connecting the rural hinterland; and
 - To assist economic development and support regeneration in the wider district.

Chester Facts and Figures

Unfortunately, 2011 origin-destination Travel to Work data will not be made available during the timeframe of this study, hence 2001 data will be used for these purposes. **Figures A** and **B** below show the proportions of journey-to-work trips made both into and out of the former district of Chester from neighbouring local authorities (or former local authorities in the case of Ellesmere Port and Neston and Vale Royal boroughs).

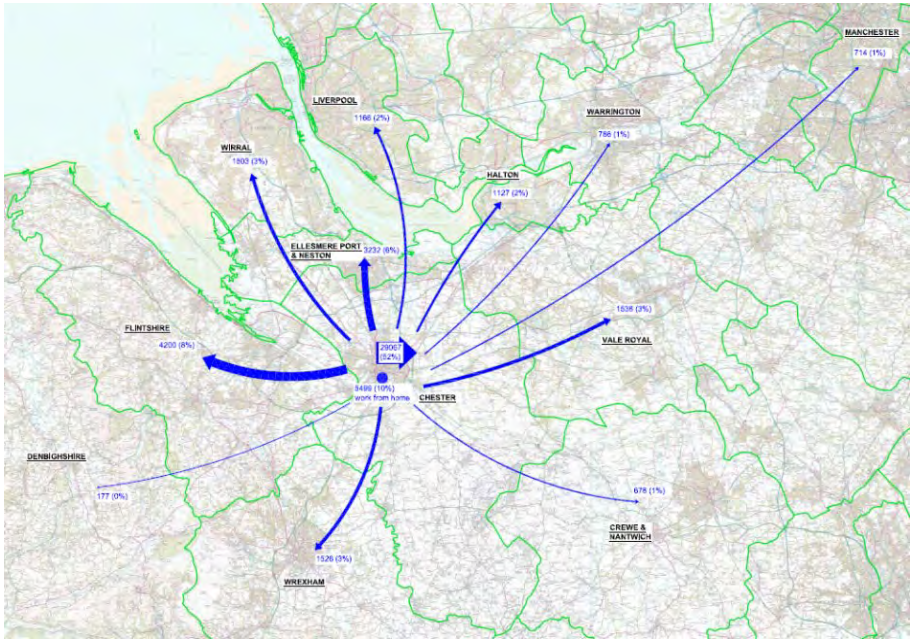


Figure A: Destinations for Work Trips from Chester

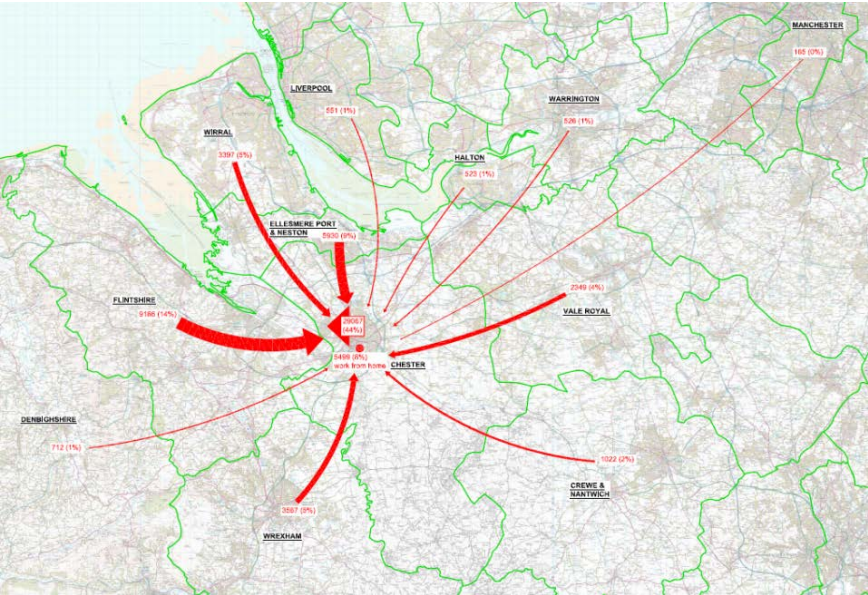


Figure B: Origins for Work Trips to Chester

31,849 people travelled into Chester former district from outside each day in 2001, whilst 20,820 people travelled out of the district making the borough a significant net importer of people during the daytime. It is clear that, aside from the large number of people that both live and work within Chester former district (some of whom work from home), Flintshire is the most important single local authority in terms of labour and employment provision, with 14% of the inbound workforce living in Flintshire and 8% of the outbound workforce travelling to work there. Other important (former) local authorities include Ellesmere Port and Neston (9% inbound, 6% outbound), Wrexham (5% inbound, 3% outbound), Wirral (5% inbound, 3% outbound), and Vale Royal (3% inbound, 3% outbound).

The latest available complete dataset on travel to work patterns into and out of Chester is from the 2001 census, however recent 2011 census data releases include small area ‘Mode of Travel to Work’ data. From this data, the average mode split for all commuting journeys originating within each ward of the city can be determined. **Figure C** shows the mode splits for work journeys (J2W) originating within the ten current wards comprising Chester Urban Area.

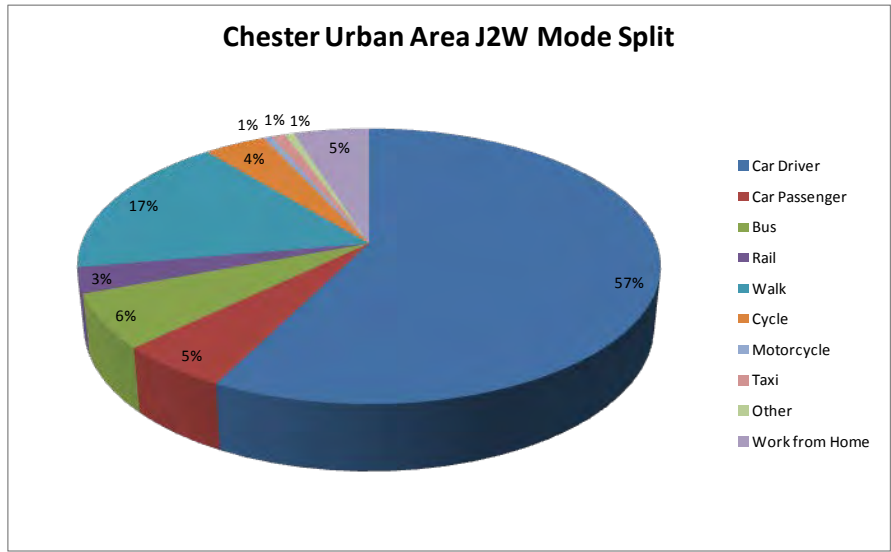


Figure C: Mode Split of Work Trips from Chester Urban Area

On average, within the Chester Urban Area wards of Chester City, Blacon, Boughton, Great Boughton, Garden Quarter, Handbridge, Hoole, Lache, Newton and Upton, 62% of work journeys are undertaken by car with the vast majority of these people driving themselves. Despite this, bus use is reasonably high with 6% of work journeys undertaken by this mode and a further 3% undertaken by rail. 21% of work journeys are by active modes with 4/5 of these undertaken on foot and the remainder by bicycle. 5% of people work from home within Chester Urban Area. This compares with the 2011 national average of 63% by car, 7% by bus, 9% by rail, 11% on foot, 3% by bicycle, and 5% working from home, indicating that Chester has slightly lower than average use of both car and public transport overall but higher than average use of active modes.

These figures show a much higher usage of sustainable modes than elsewhere in the CW&C borough, which is largely attributable to the concentration of public transport services and walking and cycling routes. It is likely that, whilst bus patronage has declined in the last 10 years nationally, in Chester the usage of sustainable modes has increased due to the route improvements made as part of Chester's Cycle Demonstration Town (CDT) status and other investments, such as Connect2.

Retail Considerations

Whilst the prominence of Chester as a retail destination has decreased in recent years, down from 5th in 2002 to 35th in 2009 according to Experian, it still remains a significant destination and the focus of activity for a large tract of Cheshire and surrounds.

Chester faces competition from larger established centres in Liverpool (enhanced through the completion of Liverpool One),

and Manchester (both City Centre and Trafford Centre) and more localised competition from Cheshire Oaks and Warrington Town Centre which has benefitted from recent investment at Golden Square.

Despite this, Chester is below the national average for vacancy rates in primary streets (10.3% compared to 14.6%)¹, but projections indicate that High Street conditions are likely to deteriorate further in the near future, with the North West likely to be one of the hardest hit.

Of significance to the Transport Strategy, the Northgate Development is likely to significantly change the retail landscape in the City Centre and forms a cornerstone of CW&C's attempts to improve its trading environment. The latest concept, currently out to consultation includes approximately 36,000 sq. m. of retail, 7,000 sq. m. of food and beverage and will include approximately 1,000 car parking spaces. The proposals for servicing and access are still being finalised, with a number of factors to consider, such as the interface with the proposed theatre and aspirations to reduce or eliminate traffic on St. Werburgh Street, Northgate Street and Hunter Street.

In addition to the new retail offer within Northgate, supporting Chester's unique retail sectors i.e. the independents / Rows is key in improving the offer/attracting shoppers and supporting retail businesses.

In particular, key challenges, and trends to address include:

- Growth in the evening economy;
- Developing eating and dining as part of shopping experience;
- Growth in e-commerce / home delivery; and
- Wider range of retail outlets (e.g. smaller convenience stores such as Sainsbury's Local).

Tourism Considerations

The revised Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) Report for 2010 indicates that Cheshire and Warrington attracted 44 million visitors per year, of which Chester attracts approximately 8.5 million per year. Tourism is therefore a major industry in the Cheshire and Warrington region and this is supported by the fact that it generated approximately £2billion for the local economy, supporting around 30,000 full-time equivalent jobs². Of note, the overnight stay market increased by 7% to 3.2million between 2009 and 2010 and Chester attracts a significant proportion of this spend.

¹ Chester Retail Vacancy Monitoring Stats
² Marketing Cheshire 2012

Chester's tourism and leisure offer and its associated economic benefits, is recognised as a significant asset for the sub-region and has status at a national and international level.

The sub-region as a whole also has much to offer in terms of tourism potential with a wealth of attractive landscapes, historic town centres / villages and a waterways network. Therefore leisure and tourism is likely to be an important source of future economic growth in the district, for both urban and rural areas, where it is particularly important.

Looking at the figures for Chester West & Chester in more detail, **Figure D** presents a comparison of the number of tourist days in 2009 and 2010, as per the STEAM data.³

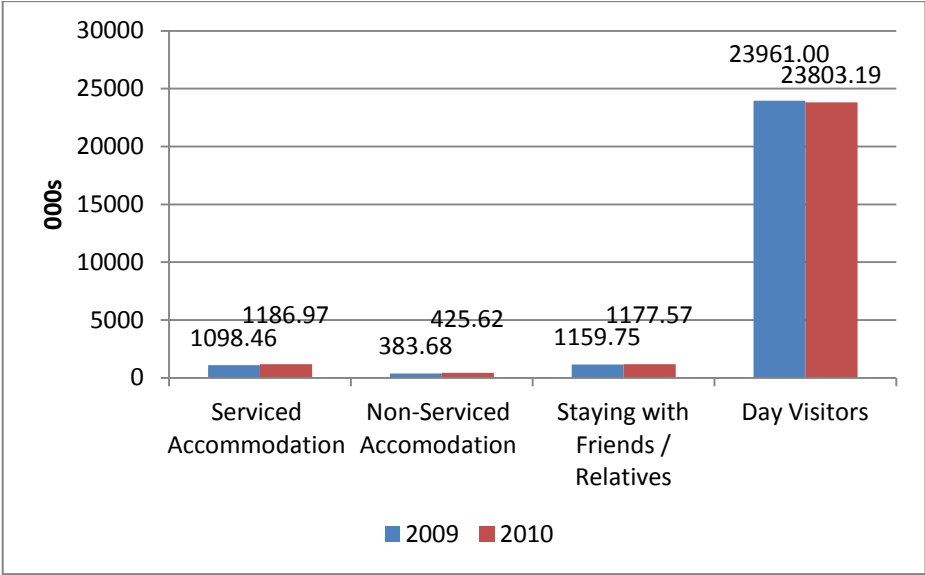


Figure D: Cheshire West & Chester Tourist Days

Housing and Employment Growth

5,250 homes are estimated to be required in Chester between the current year and 2030 according to the Local Plan team within Cheshire West and Chester Council. This amounts to approximately 300 per year for the next 17 years and around 40% of this is expected to be constructed on greenbelt sites which have little or no existing forms of access and movement infrastructure. As a result, significant work is required in order to understand the impact of constructing housing in the greenbelt in terms of existing network loading points, flood risk, air quality and ecology. The question of vehicle loading is also of particular concern to the Highways Agency who are interested in the interface with their

³ Cheshire West and Chester STEAM Report 2010, February 2012

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existing network i.e. the M53, M56, A55 and (less relevantly to Chester the A550 Welsh Road).

Of the remaining 60% of housing to be constructed within the existing urban boundary, 5,080 dwellings are either committed or identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) although it is not expected that all of these will come forward. The ward of the city with the greatest potential for new housing is Blacon with 1,848 dwellings proposed for delivery within 5 years, however Chester City, Boughton, Upton, and longer term Lache, Hoole and Newton wards are all important in terms of proposed housing plans as shown in **Figure E**.

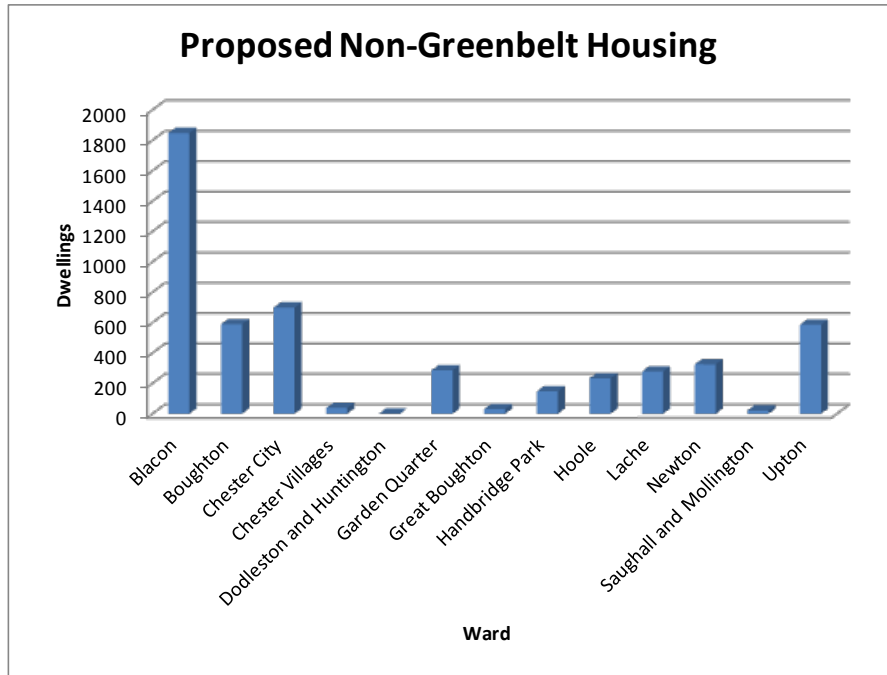


Figure E: Proposed Non-Greenbelt Housing by Ward

280 Ha of employment land is estimated to be required across the borough between the current time and 2030. If the allocation between Local Areas is similar to housing, this would indicate that 70Ha will be required in Chester, and more if one considers that Chester is the main employment centre in the sub-region. In terms of employment land development prospects, just under 40 Ha of land are expected by the Local Plan team within the next 15 years, although 25 Ha of this is on one specific site – the Bumpers Lane Tip site in Blacon.

It is likely that all of the potential options for housing development within the greenbelt will add significant amounts of traffic to the A483 and A55 routes and junctions. Of the three options seen in their early stages for the purposes of this work, the option which creates sites to the south and east of the city adds the least additional traffic to the network, however this option loads

additional traffic through the existing AQMA which could be unacceptable from an environmental standpoint.

Stakeholder Consultation

As part of initial stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Transport Strategy, AECOM held five events in January / February 2013 engaging with a range of identified consultees. The events were as follows:

- Northgate Association Event;
- Business / Commerce Breakfast Seminar;
- Residents / Access Groups' Event;
- Public Drop-in Session; and
- Members Briefing Session.



These events were in addition to extensive one-to-one discussions with key stakeholders and allowed a good understanding to be gained of the issues and opportunities considered to be the priorities for the study to address. It must also be noted that a large amount of consultation to identify transport issues and opportunities has been undertaken over the last three years as part of the One City Plan, Theatre, Public Realm and Parking Strategy studies undertaken since 2009. The findings from these previous consultation events with key stakeholders, elected members and the general public, were of direct relevance to the Transport Strategy study and were added to the sizeable base of evidence upon which baseline conclusions can be drawn.

In total, engagement to date has been conducted with:

- Members;

- Key Council Officers and Chester Renaissance;
- The local business sector, Business Forum, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), traders, retailers etc;
- Leading employers;
- Transport operators and access groups;
- Neighbouring authorities and the Mersey Dee Alliance; and
- Residents groups and the wider public.

Following the initial engagement exercise, the baseline report and the Options and Assessment phase to identify a preferred package of measures, a full period of public consultation will be undertaken on the preferred option to allow views from an even wider sample of the public to be understood and accommodated.

Transport Opportunities

Highways

The key finding in relation to the highway network within and around the Chester Urban Area is that traffic characteristics are dominated by the constraints placed upon the network as a result of the city's modest size, rich historical heritage, and the transport measures of the past including pedestrianisation and the IRR. It is clear that the city fulfils a role as both a local centre and source of employment, retail and leisure for a much wider catchment than is contained within the urban grain, with particular links to North Wales and Merseyside as stated.

Within the city centre, the Inner Relief Road (IRR) that surrounds the historic city core is the clear feature, with the pedestrian zone and adjacent restricted movement streets all contained within this collar. Both Northgate Street / Princess Street and Frodsham / Foregate Street are currently performing roles as 'city distributor' links reflecting their importance both in terms of buses and access for disabled persons and the Grosvenor Hotel, however stated aspirations exist for both of these to be made more pedestrian-friendly, with possible future pedestrianisation scenarios being a key question to be addressed by the transport strategy.

The dominance of the effective outer ring road is clear at a wider scale, as is the web of radial routes into the city centre. It is evident that the areas to the north and west are best served by high capacity roads, with the areas east, and south east of the city less well connected. This is clearly a reflection of the rural nature of this part of the borough, although it should be noted that the rural population makes up a significant proportion of the borough's people as a whole, and many of these rural communities rely on access to and from Chester City Centre for their essential business, leisure and shopping.

In terms of traffic flows, the busiest corridors are those from the east (representing a combination of the busy A51 Vicars Cross Road and the A5115 Christleton Road), from the south via

Wrexham Road, and from the north including both the A540 and A5116 radial links. Whilst congestion is not a particular problem under normal conditions, the network is extremely busy and hence vulnerable when problems occur. As an example, Hoole Road represents the key link from the M53 motorway and is heavily used but constrained, leading to congestion should any blockage or other delay occur.

Car Parking

Car Parking was the subject of a recently produced strategy document on behalf of CW&C and the key findings of its baseline report included reference to issues and opportunities in 10 key areas. These related to control, pricing policy, signage, overnight parking, on-street charging, and quality amongst other things. In general, it was determined that the parking offer in the city was adequate in terms of numbers but required rationalisation along a corridor based approach with improvements to quality, technology, signage and Park & Ride services. The report also made recommendations in relation to tariffs and on-street charges, to support the wider aspirations of the One City Plan and Local Transport Plan.

Many of the recommendations of the Car Parking Strategy are already in the process of being implemented. It is recommended that the strategy be completed in its entirety, however, as it is considered that many of the recommendations are inter-dependent – in other words, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Several of the measures will be investigated further as part of the Transport Strategy identification process.

Park & Ride

Issues associated with Park & Ride in Chester relate to apparent falls in both utilisation and revenue in recent years, possibly as a result of high levels of ‘free’ use provided to Council staff, and following the introduction of the ‘Free After 3’ scheme in the city centre. The Car Parking Strategy report made recommendations in the following areas:

- **Signage:** It is recommended that Upton Park & Ride be signed from M53 Southbound and the A55 Northbound, Boughton Park & Ride from both directions on the A55 at its junction with the A51, and Sealand from the A550 with an additional sign between the A550 and site. It is also recommended that Variable Message Signs (VMS) be extended for Park & Ride facilities, as well as city centre signage.
- **Location:** It is recommended that work be undertaken to maximise use of informal Park & Ride sites, such as station car parks along the Merseyrail and other rail routes. A new Park & Ride site could be constructed on the Hoole Road corridor with the potential to create drop-off / pick-up point in Hoole District Centre itself around the Faulkner Street area.

- **Optimising use of Resources:** It is recommended that the Park & Ride offer be diversified to include retail, cafe / restaurant, cycle storage and hire uses etc. Carry out a comprehensive review of Park & Ride provision, including contractual arrangements, assessment of demand for a fifth Park & Ride site, alternative routeing and pick-up / drop-off options and a review of pricing structure, including concessionary fares.

Rail Services

Rail services in Chester are in general frequent and good with regular electric local services to Liverpool, fast long distance services to London and frequent services along the North Wales coast towards Llandudno and Holyhead. Services towards Manchester are, however, relatively infrequent and slow, and services towards Wrexham and Crewe do not serve the local communities through which the rail lines pass with no suburban rail stations on these key lines.

The following opportunities for improvement were identified:

- An enhanced service between Chester and Manchester, possibly with through connections to Leeds and beyond, is a possible result of the Northern Hub package of measures due to be delivered before December 2019. In light of recent announcements on the electrification of the Chat Moss and North Trans-Pennine rail lines, there is the opportunity to look at further electrification following these projects;
- Reinstating the Halton Curve should be a key aspiration of both CW&C and North Wales authorities since it provides a direct link to Liverpool John Lennon Airport and a fast direct route into Liverpool City Centre; and
- Electrification of the Ellesmere Port – Helsby Line could have beneficial impacts for the wider travel-to-work area of Chester as it could potentially enhance the quality, reliability of the service and provide a direct rail link between Ellesmere Port and Chester.

Bus Services

The Pre-Feasibility bus strategy for Chester introduced a number of key issues and opportunities for bus services in Chester. Perhaps of most importance is the fact that bus penetration into the historic core is poor and there is little or no integration between the two primary bus hubs requiring long walks to interchange between buses or between buses and trains.

Proposals to relocate the bus station to Gorse Stacks appear workable from an operational standpoint and would offer improved integration between services and with the rail station, however network testing is required in order to instil confidence that the

road network can cope with the network and traffic alterations. In addition, the findings of the recent Bus Strategy Pre-Feasibility Study, and concept design work on the new bus facility, present some wider strategic measures including the creation of several quality bus hubs around the city centre (in addition to a central interchange), and changes to routeing. These will be examined as part of the Transport Strategy identification process.

Cycling and Walking

Whilst great strides forward in cycling provision have been made as a result of Chester’s CDT status, cross-city connectivity remains difficult by sustainable modes due to the severance effect of the IRR and the lack of pedestrian routes through swathes of the city such as the Commonhall Street area. There is also a lack of permeability through the Grosvenor Shopping Centre after closure at around 18:00, and a general lack of available secure and sheltered cycle parking around the city.

Opportunities for change therefore include:

- Developments at Gorse Stacks and Delamere Street present the opportunities for the removal of severance on the IRR at the junctions of Hoole Way and the Fountains Roundabout. Pedestrian and cycle considerations need to form a key part of any resulting highways works;
- Enhancements of the canal environment both as part of the Central Business Quarter and further west, have the potential to improve cycle linkage across the city centre;
- A relaxation of the cycling restrictions in pedestrianised areas might help to improve permeability within the city centre, as might the creation of improved north-south walking and cycling routes; and
- A resolution of the cycle parking issue in key locations such as the rail station could potentially promote Chester’s impressive cycling credentials and legacy, however the impact on the station’s exterior has so far proved divisive. At present, cycle parking is provided inside the building and is popular and well-used, however a lack of space will ultimately require more permanent solutions to be found.

Waterways

The river is currently removed from the city centre by illegibility of route, and severance created by the Vicars Street / Pepper Street corridor. Downgrading the link, as recommended by the One City Plan, would address this issue, however these proposals need to be tested to ensure workability. The canal environment is considered dark and oppressive particularly at night between Frodsham and Northgate Streets, however the improvements already undertaken to the east of the city centre have improved the environment substantially and further enhancements to the

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environment, potentially as part of other developments are recommended.

Potential improvements that may be made include the following:

- The River Dee through Chester provides both a pleasant leisure and residential environment for visitors and locals alike, but also an important walking and cycling link to Chester's dependent areas to the west including Hawarden Bridge, Deeside Industrial Park and Queensferry;
- The Chester Canal (part of the Shropshire Union network) provides an important walking and cycling route across the city centre and to Ellesmere Port, via Chester Zoo;
- The potential exists, due to the navigability of the canal between Chester and Ellesmere Port, to introduce freight services between the Manchester Ship Canal (Liverpool and Manchester) and Chester, thus reducing road and rail freight requirements and utilising an underused asset; and
- The introduction of pleasure waterbus services between the Zoo and city centre has long been discussed, but might be feasible in the context of the expansion programme at the Zoo and the need for sustainable alternative links between the attraction and the city centre.

Servicing

The main issues associated with servicing in the city centre are as a result of conflict with other traffic and modes of travel during the hours or servicing within the pedestrian zone in morning and evening. Given the constrained nature of the city's historic retail core, it is unlikely that a more palatable solution can be found without significant change in servicing culture and logistics. This may become more likely over time, however given the change already underway in the way we shop and buy goods.

Opportunities as a result include the following:

- Future trends in terms of servicing nationally, indicate a movement towards more centralised, out-of-town servicing distribution with less of a need for large-scale town and city centre supply. Consequently service vehicles have moved towards the extremes of size with mid-range vehicles less frequently used;
- It may be possible to combine some servicing functionality with other transport improvements within the city such as the Park & Ride offer. By creating out-of-town hubs at which goods collection could take place, there may be a reduced need for servicing to occur within the city centre at all;
- The increase in popularity of internet shopping has the potential to change further the servicing culture and the transport strategy must account for this and provide a strategy that incorporates the potential for technological change.

Air Quality

The city's air quality management strategy is currently concentrated at the one designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) along Boughton Road, which has recently been revised and extended. However, a second area is under investigation and may lead to a further AQMA declaration at the junction of the A540 and A5116 to the north of the Fountain's Roundabout.

The air quality issue clearly highlights the need to reduce traffic flows into and out of the city centre and makes the case for projects which promote more sustainable modes of travel and bring about mode shift to walking cycling and public transport.

Future Trends

A workshop was held on Tuesday 13th November with the primary purpose of identifying trends specifically within Chester and nationally, and attempting to understand the transport environment that will be prevalent in 15 years – the lifetime of the strategy. The workshop was divided into two sessions with the aim of answering two specific questions:

- What are the global factors that will affect transport, movement and travel patterns in cities around the World?
- How will these factors impact the transport networks and travel behaviour in Chester in particular?

The questions were considered separately in the context of work, leisure and education trips. The following bullet points summarise the main topics of discussion:

Global Factors to be Considered

Work

- Sustainable building next to a major hub – good for meetings, conferences etc.
- Video conferencing – cost saver to business as it eliminates / reduces travel costs.
- People are willing to commute more for work and travel to different cities.

Education

- Technological improvements that will have a big impact:
 - o Smart Phones;
 - o Skype;
 - o Lync (Microsoft); and
 - o Video conferencing.

Leisure and Retail

- Out-of-town warehouse units – group servicing for retail.

- Future of the high street – shops becoming showrooms, less back of house stock needs.
- Delivery of online shopping has an impact on the transport network, puts it in the hands of logisticians.

General

- Cost of fuel – prices to increase.
- 'Newer' cars on the road – tend to have reduced emissions.
- Business parks have a poorer quality of life for their staff compared with city centre working.
- Mindset on using cars suggests resistance to continental style car hire culture.
- Early signs of 'Pay-as-you-go' car insurance.

Factors Specific to Chester

Work

- Chester services act as a 'mid-point' / meeting point for outside business (e.g. Liverpool and Manchester).
- Opportunity for a city centre Business Park next to a hub such as the Central Business Quarter.
- Busy rail service for business commuters.
- High wage jobs tend not to be in Chester, outflow of more skilled jobs.

Education

- Student housing – properties allocated 1 car parking space per dwelling when there could be 6 students living in it, results in parking congestion for residents.
- Parking and congestion issues for the University.
- Free bus passes etc influence a parent on their choice of school for their children.

Leisure and Retail

- Issues with the coach service within Chester for tourists.
- Avoid competition with Manchester / Liverpool – sell Chester for all it has (heritage, history etc.).
- Poor evening economy – city centre 'closes' at 5.30pm, need to promote 5.30pm-8.00pm period.
- Major international influence at Cheshire Oaks (e.g. Korean and Chinese speakers).
- Need to encourage shops to stay open late (Northgate may do this).

General

- Chester receives approximately 8.5 million visitors per annum.
- The city constraints do not allow the city to grow, and this therefore doesn't encourage new employers to invest in Chester.
- Reliance on radial routes (if one road closes it creates congestion in the city).

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- Requirement for accessibility of all areas of the city.
- Local journeys – need to encourage ‘green links’ (walking, cycling).
- Flaws in the public transport network (often have to go into the city centre to get back out of the city).
- Price of parking at key rail stations as opposed to local stations.
- Need for an airport to connect more readily to Chester – be it Liverpool, Manchester or an expanded offer at Hawarden.
- Chester to Liverpool – improved rail link possibilities via the Halton Curve.

Next Steps

The next stage in the strategy process will identify a long list of opportunities aimed at solving the issues discussed in this report. These will then be appraised and reduced to a short-list of options which can be packaged and tested using appropriate modelling software both strategic and local.

1 Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM has been commissioned by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&C) to produce a Transport Strategy for Chester covering a 15 year period. This is an extremely important project for the Chester area and wider sub-region. The commitment to making the Chester area an increasingly attractive place to live, work, and visit has already been demonstrated through the work already undertaken by CW&C and by Chester Renaissance. As part of the regeneration process, transportation is a fundamental element, bringing together all aspects of movement and accessibility, and providing linkages across the wider geographical area and beyond to more strategic destinations.

The requirement for a new Transport Strategy for Chester has been understood for some time – the previous strategy was prepared in 1997 and has not been updated since 2004. The catalyst for this study derives, however, from a recent Notice of Motion from Council Members calling for pedestrianisation of St. Werburgh Street in the city centre. This highlighted the need for a unified strategy to set strategic direction and objectives for the city’s transport network, which takes into account previous transport work undertaken as part of the One City Plan, Bus and Parking strategies, Public Realm Design Guide and new Theatre Masterplan.

The Transport Strategy is an all-encompassing and visionary transport plan for the Chester area including the city’s historic core, the wider city’s urban area, and the longer distance journey-to-work catchment extending to Wirral, parts of North Wales, and other towns in West Cheshire including Ellesmere Port and Northwich.

1.2 The Study Area

The Transport Strategy for Chester will consider a study area defined at three distinct scales. That of city centre, urban area, and wider ‘travel-to-work’ zone of influence. Chester City Centre is the focus of the One City Plan which preceded this work and which provides a 15 year development guide for the city. In terms of transport, the One City Plan makes a number of recommendations that will be tested further as part of this strategy work, and notes that the city...

“...reflects a transport network that has evolved over the centuries. Importantly, the construction of the Inner Ring Road (IRR) during the 1960’s enabled significant sections of the historic city centre to be pedestrianised. However, the IRR has itself now become something of a barrier, especially to walking and cycling. When considered alongside other barriers to movement such as the railway lines, canal and river, the key challenge for Chester’s road network is better managing its limited capacity”.

The study area for the city centre, as defined by the One City Plan, is shown in the following figure and extends outwards to include the railway station, racecourse, river and surrounding residential areas.



Figure 1.1: Chester City Centre Boundary

The city of Chester’s wider urban area, as defined by its constituent ward and Super Output Area (SOA) boundaries, is shown in the following plan. It may be seen that the city is largely contained within the effective outer ring road of the A55 and M53, the only exception to this being the ward of Huntington and Boughton which extends south east to include the new development area of Saughton and adjacent locations. Notably not within the official city boundary are the districts of Saltney and Broughton which lie to the west of the Welsh border and fall within the jurisdiction of Flintshire County Council. These areas are however, in transport terms at least part of the city since they are connected by continuous conurbation and are influenced and impacted by the wider movements and transport trends of the city.

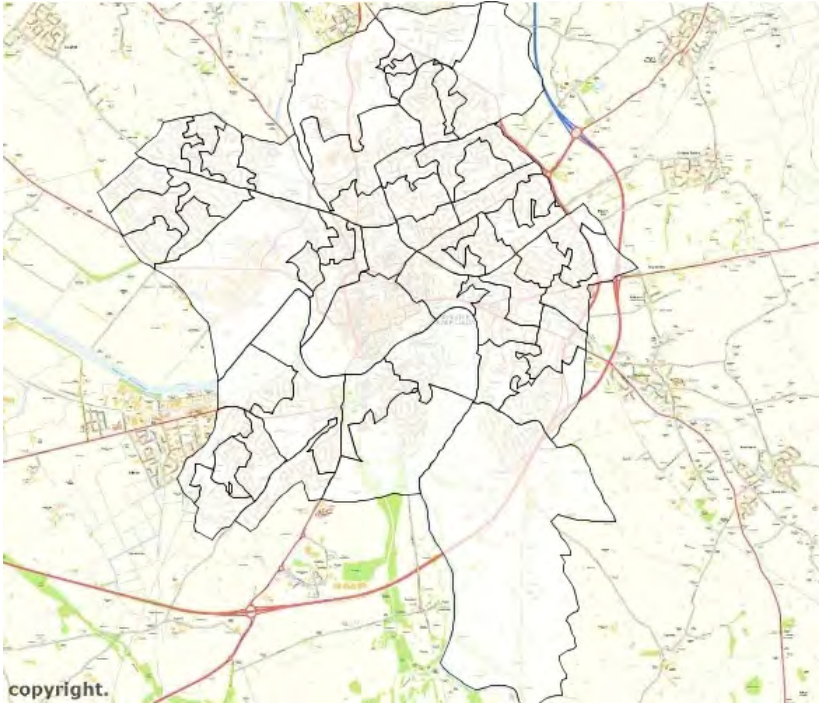


Figure 1.2: Chester City Super Output Areas Boundaries

Despite the official boundary of the city of Chester, in common with every major settlement in the country the zone of influence of the city extends significantly beyond the political boundaries of local authority. As a means of quantifying the extents of this influence, ‘travel-to-work’ data was consulted which provides an indication of the origin and destination of work-related trips into and out of the city each day. Using 2001 census data (to be updated once new 2011 data is available in early 2013), it was determined that 91% of inbound and 86% of outbound travel-to-work trips were made between the former district of Chester and the 2001 local authorities of Flintshire, Wrexham, Crewe and Nantwich, Vale Royal, Wirral, and Ellesmere Port and Neston including trips internal to Chester formal district and those working from home within the area. This boundary defines a good outer study area scale for the study since it includes the areas that interact most notably with Chester as a city and a source of employment and labour.

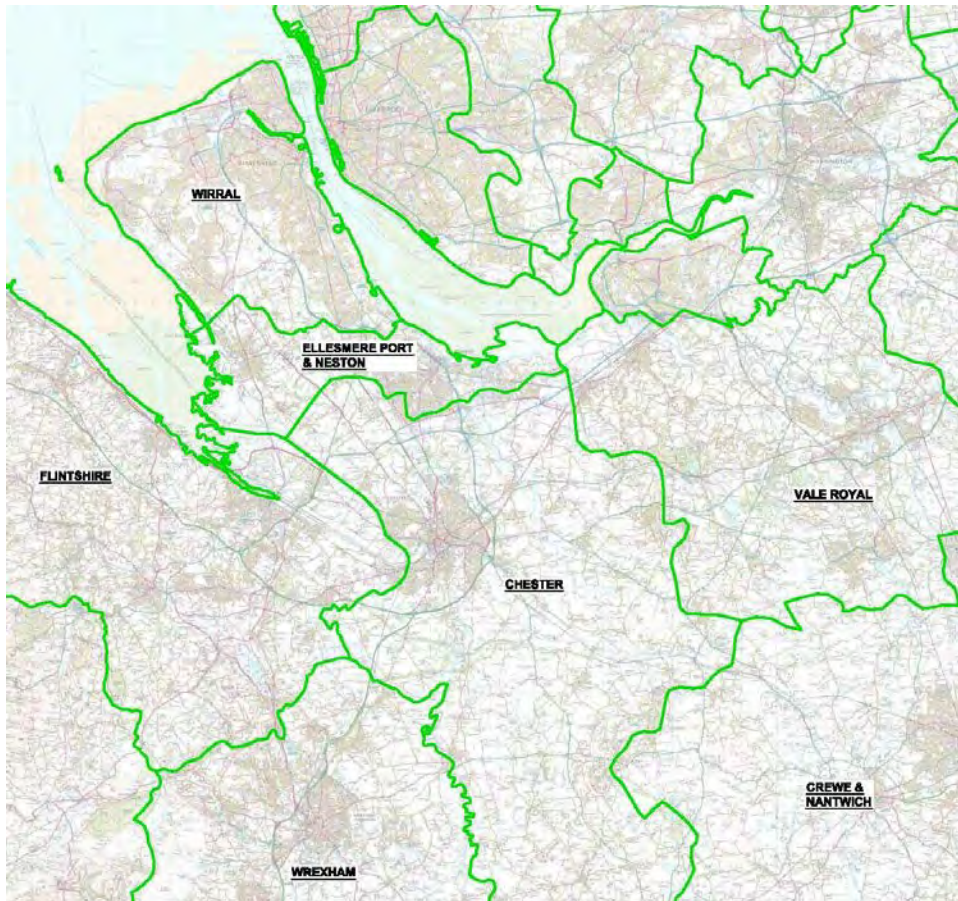


Figure 1.3: Chester Travel to Work Key Local Authorities

1.3 Project Aims and Objectives

AECOM has been commissioned to produce a Transport Strategy for Chester to include an overview of the current city transport and development context and to develop a forward strategy and action plan, to run over short, medium and long-term timescales up to 2028 (15 year plan period).

The key strategic objectives that the action plan and strategy need to meet, these include:

- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the existing transport network in the area and recommend future improvements and other measures to ensure the network fully responds to and supports the One City Plan;
- To develop a range of deliverable transport solutions to facilitate economic growth and address social inclusion and accessibility;
- To promote the use of low carbon and sustainable modes of transport, especially improvement to public transport networks

- To identify current and planned development opportunities on the road network and identify the key strategic transportation issues emerging as a result of proposed developments;
- To produce an implementation plan for the vision and strategy including phasing and prioritisation, potential early wins, indicative costs and potential delivery mechanisms.

The vision is to be ambitious, yet realistic and maximise the benefits for Chester, by addressing the following issues:

- Improve access and movement to / from the city centre and key employment sites;
- Alleviate congestion in the city centre and at other key hotspots;
- Improve the quality of life for local residents, addressing the environment and air quality;
- Address the negative impact of traffic and parking on the major architectural and historic assets and public spaces;
- Restore public confidence in public transport as a viable alternative to the car;
- Connecting the rural hinterland; and
- To assist economic development and support regeneration in the wider district.

The key components of a successful strategy are to ensure that the transportation network responds to and stimulates key developments, promotes the use of public transport and creates opportunities for alternative modes such as walking and cycling, especially for shorter journeys. The strategy also needs to address potential changes in technology and work patterns. The key to successful implementation is the identification of projects that are deliverable with minimal risk and address the key issues such as safety, accessibility and social inclusion.

This baseline report provides a review of the existing infrastructure within the city centre and surrounding areas, as well as explaining the key characteristics of the area which will have an impact upon future transport plans. The findings from this baseline report will provide an understanding of current and future travel patterns, how such problems inhibit the achievement of the Transport Strategy goals and the underlying causes of problems. In turn, these findings will assist with understanding the wider aspirations for Chester and to facilitate the regeneration, providing an effective, deliverable 15 year integrated transportation strategy and vision for movement, the first of these since the 2004 update to the 1997 strategy.

1.4 Study Methodology

The project takes into account a number of transport related proposals from recent studies, testing the viability and efficacy of these and identifying potential schemes to complement them,

enhancing the medium to long-term economic and social vision for the city.

A review of baseline evidence has been undertaken in a structured way to ensure that the extensive range of information and data is analysed and fed effectively into the later stages of the report. The baseline review seeks to define:

- The geographical extent of the study area including the definition of boundaries and the nature of trips associated with each area;
- A set of key review / research questions to which all baseline activities will be focused;
- A structured approach to information source identification;
- Criteria for the review of data and information, including the existence of bias;
- Guidance on the selection of more detailed investigation to be included within the review;
- A framework for the interpretation, analysis and presentation of review information/data; and
- The key policy, research and methodological messages to be taken forward.

In addition, meetings and consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken to enable a discussion on the perceived transport and travel-related issues in the Chester urban area.

1.5 Report Structure

Following this chapter, the document is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2 ‘Policy Review’:** This chapter provides an outline of the relevant national, regional and local policy document as well as a review of previous studies in Chester of relevance to the Transport Strategy, such as the One City Plan, the Parking Strategy and the Bus Strategy.
- **Chapter 3 ‘Introduction to the District’:** This chapter sets the scene and provides information on the make-up of the study area and surrounding suburbs. Baseline information on existing facilities and infrastructure is provided for each of the key areas.
- **Chapter 4 ‘Tourism / Leisure’:** An overview of the tourism and leisure opportunities within the study area is provided, together with information on how these activities and attractions will influence the overarching transport strategy.
- **Chapter 5 ‘Access & Movement’:** A review of existing movement characteristics, available infrastructure, shortfalls in provision and opportunities. This section looks at travel in Chester by all modes, sustainable and otherwise, and provides information on coach access, freight, servicing, air quality and other key transport related considerations.
- **Chapter 6 ‘Housing Growth, Key Developments & Land Use’:** A discussion of the aspirations of the borough in relation

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to housing growth and development, including the large scale development proposed for the city centre and the potential use of the greenbelt for housing and the implications of this.

Chapter 7 ‘Consultation & Stakeholder Issues & Priorities’:

A summary of the findings from the stakeholder and public consultation stages with key issues identified.

Chapter 8 ‘Current Trends and Future Influences on Access & Movement’:

Drawing on the thoughts and opinions of a number of region’s leading thinkers in relation to planning, transport and information technology policies, this section examines the likely trends and changes in the way the people travel. This is done in terms of likely changes to technology, retail, working patterns, leisure and culture, and tourism.

Chapter 9 ‘Summary’: A round up of the findings from this report to provide a summary of the baseline scenario for the study area in terms of transport, movement and accessibility.

2 Policy Review

2 Policy Review

2.1 Outline

This section outlines the national, sub-regional and local policy constraints that frame the transport strategy and vision for Chester.

2.2 National

'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Local Sustainable Transport Happen'

The most recent policy white paper "Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon"⁴ promotes the delivery of transport improvement schemes at a local level to contribute to two key aims:

- *Economic Growth*: providing local action that contribute to national gains, ensuring that people have the ability to access employment opportunities and personal amenities; and
- *Reduction in Carbon Emissions*: developing schemes that reduce the carbon impact of transport.

In addition, Central Government has other key objectives for the transport network that include improving health and fitness, improving safety, improving air quality and improving the local environment. There is also a commitment to reducing the role that Central Government plays in development of the transport network through the localisation of decision making.

Contained within the white paper are commitments to funding both infrastructure of national and local importance through two different funds, the most relevant of which is the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) that will provide £560m up to 2014/2015 (including CW&C's 'Connect to Jobs' – see **section 2.1.4**).

The overall focus of the white paper, building on the themes promoted in the DaSTS (see below) is on small-scale, low-cost schemes that deliver good value-for-money, contribute to economic growth and the promotion of low carbon transport.

'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS)'

In October 2007, the DfT outlined its approach to long-term transport planning through its "Towards a Sustainable Transport Strategy" (TaSTS), a response to the Eddington Study (December 2006) and the Stern Review (October 2006). The document proposed a new approach to strategic transport planning beyond 2014 to implement the key recommendations of both studies. Primarily this involves the adoption of a more comprehensive assessment of transport investment decisions incorporating all modes and across city and regional, national and international boundaries.

In this respect, DaSTS⁵, published in November 2008, details how this will be delivered and sets out five clear goals for transport which respond to the need of supporting strong, but sustainable growth.

- To support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;
- To reduce transport's emissions of greenhouse gases to tackle climate change;
- To contribute to better safety, security and health, by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting sustainable modes of travel for the benefit of people's health;
- To promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens; and
- To improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users and to promote a healthy natural environment.

Whilst the current government's priorities are promoting economic growth and addressing climate change, the other goals are still deemed important.

'The Path to Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth'⁶

To ensure that the strategy supports one of the key aims in the white paper – creating economic growth – the most recent Central Government policy document from HM Treasury and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills covering the economy. The document has been reviewed in the context of the Chester Transport Strategy & Vision with the key elements extracted where relevant.

The key elements of the Growth Review are changes to the planning system and investment in infrastructure that supports sustainable economic growth. The Government considers it a priority to create conditions that foster private sector growth and this includes a plan for focused public spending. The government considers transport infrastructure spending critical for private sector growth and has committed £39 billion over the parliament (up to 2015) on infrastructure considered important for national economic growth. This includes proposals to reform the way that major infrastructure is funded using private sector funding models.

Central government has included proposals to allow local authorities to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to borrow funds secured against the predicted increase in business rates influenced through the provision of new infrastructure. Additional infrastructure will be supported in the first instance through the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) which will provide £1.4bn in investment to stimulate private sector investment.

'Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential'⁷

This is a secondary document to "The Path to Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth" that outlines some of the more detailed government priorities for economic growth and the programmes through which sustainable economic growth will be created.

The document emphasises the importance of supporting the benefits of economic agglomeration which includes supporting transport infrastructure investment in the core economic regions.

The government has outlined a series of local level interventions that will help local authorities in encouraging sustainable economic growth. These have significant implications for transport networks, either through impact upon them or development of them. The major opportunities for local authorities include:

- **Localism Bill**: specifically the 'general power of competence' that will divest national and regional responsibility for making local decisions based on the presumption that local authorities know the needs of their areas better than Central Government;
- **Local Enterprise Partnerships**: local authorities working in partnership with the private sector to improve transport, housing and planning networks, co-ordinating funding submissions and proposals;
- **Reforming the Planning System**: to reduce central and regional involvement in planning decisions, create greater involvement of local communities, encourages growth and promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The key areas for consideration by CW&C include:
 - Local Development Plans: each local authority will be expected to produce a local development plan. The local plan will be used to guide development in each area.
 - Neighbourhood Development Plans: each community will have the opportunity to create their own neighbourhood development plan in conjunction with the relevant bodies.
 - New Homes Bonus: will encourage local authorities to deliver the housing that is needed to grow the economy. The scheme will match fund council tax from new houses (once built) for six years.
 - Local Government Resources Review: includes proposals to allow local authorities to retain more of their local business rates, a business rates bonus scheme that will reward local authorities for upturns in business rates and a stabilisation mechanism to redistribute funds to local authorities that raise more/less business rates.
 - TIF: prudential borrowing against the future upturn in business rates to fund improvements in infrastructure now.

The document also details the plans for the RGF where submitting authorities will have to demonstrate that the public sector investment will stimulate private sector growth and that it will support that communities currently dependent on the public sector make the transition to private sector growth. This will be based on fulfilment of the following criteria:

- Sustainable private sector growth;
- Rebalancing the economy;
- Additionality;

⁴ 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Local Sustainable Transport Happen', DfT, 2011

⁵ 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System', DfT, 2008

⁶ 'The Path to Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth', BIS, 2011

⁷ 'Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential', BIS, 2011

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- Value-for-money; and
- State Aid Compliance.

Development of the transport network will need to ensure that it contributes to balanced growth of both income and employment over the long term. It will need to promote growth across a broad base of industries and geographies, creating a business environment that competes internationally whilst ensuring that everyone has access to the opportunities that it creates.

What does this mean for the strategy?

- The core objectives for the strategy need to focus on creating economic growth and reducing the carbon impact of transport.
- All potential objectives, aims and goals of the strategy must be measured against appropriate criteria, as indicated by the Eddington Transport Study.

2.3 Sub-Regional

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership

The Government has presented local areas with the opportunity to establish locally-owned partnerships between local authorities and businesses known as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Subsequently, the Cheshire & Warrington LEP was established in March 2011 with a view to driving the economic growth in the region.

With regards to transport, the partnership is seeking to build on the region's excellent access to the national motorway network (via the M6, M53, M56 and M62); the rail network (particularly via Crewe and Warrington); and international connections via Manchester International Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

Of relevance to this study, the key challenges and opportunities for Cheshire and Warrington, as defined in the Business Plan⁸, are as follows:

- Regeneration of town centres and other strategic locations, including Chester City Centre;
- Development of major employment sites (as defined in the 2009 Cheshire and Warrington Employment Land & Sites Study);
- Ensuring that major transport improvement projects proceed and reach their potential, including the Northern Hub Rail Project, a tram-train service on the Chester-Manchester line;
- Tackling congestion on key routes in the region, including the M53, M56, A55 and Chester itself;
- Reducing the impact that industry has on climate change, through a range of measures, such as shifting more freight transport to rail and waterways.

⁸ Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, Business Plan 2012-15

The LEP's ambition is for Cheshire and Warrington to be the best performing sub-regional economy outside the Greater South East and the preferred location for business. To this end the LEP has identified six strategic objectives, focused on a skilled productive workforce, business growth, infrastructure and connectivity, deregulation, the rural economy and promoting Cheshire and Warrington. These objectives are underpinned by a number of short, medium and long-term actions, of which one relates to ensuring that Cheshire and Warrington's transport infrastructure is capable of supporting economic growth.

Mersey Dee Alliance

The Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) partnership, initiated to sustain and develop the shared economic, social and environmental interests across West Cheshire, Wirral and North East Wales, was formed in April 2007.

The Partnership, consisting of the local authorities of Cheshire West and Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Flintshire, Wirral, Wrexham, the Welsh Assembly Government and Merseytravel, has the following specific transport related objectives:

- To ensure an effective and sustainable transport system to support the economic success of the sub region.
- To ensure cross-border cooperation on transport and accessibility opportunities to enhance travel options.
- To assist in connecting people with jobs and skills and tackling worklessness.

What does this mean for the strategy?

- The strategy needs to be aligned closely to sub-regional policy and priorities.

2.4 District

Cheshire West and Chester Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3)

Cumbria's third LTP sets out transport plans and priorities for the 15 year period 2011/12 to 2025/26.

This has been set in the context of a downturn in the economy since 2008, which has led to a focus on supporting economic growth and improving links to jobs and training opportunities. Concurrently, there has also been a decrease in local authority budgets to spend on transport infrastructure and schemes.

The following core goals have been identified in the Local Transport Plan:

- To provide and develop **reliable and efficient transport networks**, which **support sustainable economic growth** in West Cheshire and the surrounding area;
- To **reduce carbon emissions from transport** and take steps to **adapt our transport networks to the effects of climate change**;
- To manage a **well maintained transport network**;

- To contribute to **safer and secure transport** in West Cheshire and to **promote types of transport which are beneficial to health**;
- To **improve accessibility to jobs and key services** which help support greater equality of opportunity; and
- To ensure that transport helps **improve quality of life** and **enhances the local environment** in West Cheshire.

In order to help achieve these goals, CW&C has developed a number of objectives under each of the goals. These form the basis of the actions identified in the accompanying Implementation Plan, which sets out the strategy for the first four years of the plan.

The current re-focus on sub-regional policy makes CW&C's LTP3 a key document that aligns with the recently approved LEP.

Together we can aim high – West Cheshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2010–2026

The strategy sets out the following vision:

‘By 2026, West Cheshire will be even more prosperous and attractive: a really great place to live work, learn and visit. The borough will play a full role in the region and beyond, fulfilling our changing responsibilities and enabling our residents to benefit from the opportunities in the twenty first century.’

More specifically this will involve communities;

- **Living well together**;
- **Benefitting from the right services that are delivered at the right place and right time**, which of relevance will include:
 - o promoting more active lifestyles,
 - o helping to reducing deprivation by enhancing access to key services; and
 - o supporting the needs of an ageing population through the provision of more personalised and flexible services;
- **Seizing opportunities**, which of relevance will include:
 - o focus on creating integrated transport solutions;
 - o facilitation of enhanced connectivity to the sub-region and beyond;
 - o encourage and support existing and new businesses to both prepare for and, where possible exploit the impacts of climate change;
 - o improving the customer experience from visual information to the welcome visitors receive;
 - o work together to deliver regeneration programmes;
 - o develop green infrastructure to improve connectivity; and
 - o Adapt built and natural environments to be resilient to climate change.

The intention is that the ambitions will be delivered through the Local Strategic Partnership and Area Partnership Boards.

Altogether Better, Council Plan (2011-2015)

The document sets out the council's priorities for 2011 to 2015, which has been informed by extensive customer surveys within the local authority area. There are eleven thematic priorities, aligned to the vision to create **Altogether a Better Place to...**

- ...Live;
- ...Work;
- ...Feel Safe;
- ...Realise Potential;
- ...Enjoy;
- ...Influence and Contribute; and
- ...Experience value-for-money services.

The plan recognises that transport is central to delivering economic growth and a sustainable future, and contains a number of commitments to help achieve its aims, including as follows:

- Ensuring transport links opportunities to areas of need (including promoting community forms of transport);
- Reducing carbon emissions from transport and encouraging and facilitating low carbon forms of transport;
- Investing in roads and pavements to ensure they are well maintained;
- Reducing serious injuries and accidents on our roads;
- Promoting health and wellbeing through sport, recreation and facilitating more active lifestyles; and
- Improve the accessibility of our major visitor attractions and leisure facilities.

Chester West and Chester Local Plan

CW&C is in the process of preparing its Local Plan or strategic Local Development Framework (LDF), having recently consulted on its preferred policy directions. It is envisaged that the plan will be adopted in late 2014, following a consultation on the submission document in Summer 2013.

The LDF will form the overarching planning policy for the CW&C authority. Key objectives that the LDF will need to assist in delivering will include:

- Improving transport links between key housing and employment areas;
- Regenerating key settlement areas through initiatives such as Chester Renaissance;
- Improving key infrastructure links such as in Chester, Ellesmere Port and Northwich centres and along the M53 / A55 Corridor;
- Tackling climate change; and
- Maintaining viable rural communities.

Owing to the concurrent timescales in producing the third Local Transport Plan, many of the issues, priorities and objectives for transport have been factored into local policy.

Vision 2050 – A Sustainable Future for Cheshire West and Chester

This document presents a vision for the borough which the council has adopted to work towards a more sustainable community by 2050 and reducing impacts of climate change. Aspirations include:

- Improved health and wellbeing through increased walking and cycling, with associated improvements in quality;
- More local businesses and employment with shorter supply lines;
- Reduced road freight and fewer car journeys; and
- Increased rail and water-based freight and more journeys by public transport.

What does this mean for the strategy?

- Key emphasis on supporting sustainable economic growth, set against a decrease in available budgets to spend on transport infrastructure and schemes. This necessitates an innovative approach to developing innovative solutions to accessing existing funds and scheme delivery.
- Focus of local policy consistent with national goals and objectives, including reducing carbon emissions and the impact of climate change, ensuring a safe and secure transport system and promoting health, inclusiveness and equality.

2.5 Strategic Policy for Chester City and the Surrounds

The following plans and strategic documents are considered important to consider in the shaping of the transport strategy:

- Chester One City Plan;
- Chester Parking Review and Strategy;
- Chester Bus Strategy;
- Connect to Jobs; and
- Rural Regeneration Strategy.

Chester One City Plan (2012-2027)

The "Chester One City Plan"⁹ is a single co-ordinated strategy that sets out a development direction for the city and feeds into the Chester West and Chester Local Plan. The document sets out a shared vision – a sense of purpose and direction for the revival and growth of Chester City Centre during the next 15 years. The plan will be used to drive a programme of public and private investment and development activity into Chester City Centre over these years.

The One City Plan draws on and addresses the challenges outlined by the Urban Land Institute report in 2011¹⁰ and provides a set of aims and objectives with the aim of creating a framework for development

⁹ Chester One City Plan 2012-2027, Chester Renaissance and Cheshire West and Chester Council

¹⁰ Chester, United Kingdom, November 2010, Urban Land Institute, 2011

over the 15 year period from 2012. The strategic objectives are as follows:

- To create a **leading regional economic driver**;
- To **provide for modern living**;
- To **develop and support a cultural, retail and visitor offer** of the highest quality;
- To **celebrate the city's long and varied history and heritage**; and
- To **maximise the opportunities to use the network of green spaces and waterways**.

In relation to transport in particular, the document aims to:

- Generate opportunities for all local communities to prosper;
- Be safe, clean, vibrant, healthy and pleasurable;
- Be accessible, easy to travel around, and welcoming;
- Strive to be a sustainable city by promoting environmental best practice.

The One City Plan makes a number of recommendations, particularly in relation to the city centre, which will be tested as part of the Transport Strategy allowing a phased implementation plan to be developed.

Chester Parking Review and Strategy (2012)

The Parking Review and Strategy for Chester provides a comprehensive audit and review of existing parking conditions in Chester, and a future strategy for the city in terms of city centre parking, Park & Ride, on-street parking, residents parking, disabled parking and coach parking. The strategy is designed to directly address the issues raised in the audit and review stage, and also takes account of the findings of the concurrent One City Plan, and the Bus Strategy. The main aims of the document are to promote delivery of an overall parking provision which is modern and cost-effective and to optimise the use of existing assets.

In terms of parking, the strategy promotes a unified approach to capture city centre vehicle trips using three levels of car parking: an outer Park & Ride level of long-stay work, shopping, leisure and linked trips; an intermediate band of cheaper longer stay car park facilities outside of the Inner Relief Road (IRR) and with good quality walking routes into the city centre; and a final band of large interceptor car parks at the end of each radial corridor at locations adjacent to the IRR designed for more medium-term (and short-term parking for borough residents) and with the highest corresponding tariffs.

A key aspect of the future strategy is in its relationship with proposed future development. Some large scale changes are planned for Chester in the next few years including a new large retail-led development at Northgate, a mixed-use development at Delamere Street and the Central Business Quarter including commercial office development, a proposed Waitrose foodstore and residential led restoration of the former Leadworks. The strategy reports upon the impact of these developments on the existing parking situation and

explores what these proposals mean in terms of future revenue, space distribution, and management, and how these changes might impact on the implementation of the strategy. The need for a single unified approach responds to an absence of existing policy on strategic car parking locations which has, historically, led to a number of contradictions between parking provision aspirations and the Council's own asset disposal programme. As an example, the strategy identifies a need for a strategic car parking site on the eastern (Boughton Road) corridor of the city, an area in which a Council owned car park (Steam Mill) was recently sold. The study also looks further into the future and examines the type of city that Chester will become, and how the parking strategy can become part of a portfolio of documents that will support this.

Chester Bus Strategy (2011-2012)

Following the production of the One City Plan and its recommendations in terms of bus facility provision and utility, a pre-feasibility study in relation to the relocation of Chester Bus Exchange was produced. This relocation is necessitated by the redevelopment of the Northgate area for a mixed-use retail led scheme, and the potential for delay caused by the need to relocate bus facilities.

Within the study, 12 potential sites for the bus station were reviewed and appraised leading to the selection of Gorse Stacks as the only viable site based upon criteria including accessibility, cost, archaeological considerations and deliverability. The document demonstrates that a central bus interchange is required rather than a solely on-street bus hub solution based upon capacity and layover requirements.

Following on from this work, Broadway Malyan was commissioned to produce an initial design for the bus station facility with a wider brief to facilitate the regeneration of the Gorse Stacks area in line with the One City Plan. The broad components of the facility have now been agreed and accepted and it is likely, subject to detailed design, that the facility will be constructed in the next few years with the timescale dictated by the Northgate retail development.

Connect to Jobs (2012-2015)

As discussed, the LSTF was established as part of the 2011 Transport White Paper as a means of supporting transport investment and subsequently strengthening local economies and responding to the issue of climate change. It is intended that the LSTF funding is used to deliver those measures that support sustainable travel.

Local authorities were invited to develop packages of measures and submit competitive bids for a proportion of LSTF. £560 million has been set aside in the four year period to 2014-15 - approximately 60% of the fund is allocated to revenue spend with 40% assigned to capital expenditure. Authorities were able to bid for packages of under £5 million and larger packages of up to £50 million.

The various packages prepared by local authorities include a variety of measures such as smart ticketing, travel planning, the promotion of infrastructure for electric vehicles, bus and rail improvement measures,

cycling and walking and enhancing access to broadband. The measures are designed to link together to create a sustainable transport package that delivers economic growth.

CW&C submitted a Tranche 2 bid for LSTF entitled 'Connect to Jobs' in February 2012. In May 2012, the DfT awarded £4.578m of central government funding to develop and deliver the package of measures proposed in the LSTF bid. We understand that this is supplemented by a further £8.776m of local contribution which brings the total available resource to an approximate £13.354 million (up to March 2015).

The aim of the project is to enhance travel options in the key travel to work corridors between Chester, Merseyside and Deeside, capitalising on existing and emerging employment opportunities. This is to be achieved by making the best use of existing rail, bus and cycle networks and improving access to these through targeted interventions.

The project has been broken down into three themes and includes the following components: -

1. Improve local access to longer distance commuter trips.

- Increased frequency bus service connecting Ellesmere Port – Cheshire Oaks – Deeside Industrial Area – Mold.
- Cycle hire schemes at Ellesmere Port and Chester stations.
- Chester and Ellesmere Port Demand Responsive Service enhancements.
- Hooton Station Park & Ride Capacity Enhancement (increase of 160 spaces).
- Travelcard Development and Delivery to extend service beyond buses to rail tickets on the Wirral line and taxis.

2. Addressing local trips and active modes.

- Pedestrian and Cycle improvements at:
 - i. Chester Rail Station – key approaches.
 - ii. Bache Station and Countess of Chester Hospital – access to and from.
 - iii. Ellesmere Port – addressing the severance effect of the M53.
 - iv. Neston – linking in with the proposed cycle link to Deeside Industrial Estate.

3. Smarter choices communication / engagement.

- Personalised journey planning with employers and jobseekers.
- Cycle parking infrastructure and bicycle recycling schemes.
- Adult cycle training.

- Station travel planning.
- Workplace travel engagement.
- Development of regional journey planning solutions.

Rural Regeneration Strategy (2011-2021)¹¹

Whilst this Transport Strategy is focused predominantly on the urban core of Chester City, it is important to consider the wider connectivity with rural areas and market towns, which accounts for approximately 40% of the borough's population.

The Rural Regeneration Strategy is intended as a framework to steer delivery of its regeneration services over the next 10 years and inform the Local Development Framework. Key objectives are as follows: -

- Retain and attract young people, families and people of working age to rural areas;
- Maximise economic potential;
- Create access to affordable living for rural communities;
- Empower and connect rural communities; and
- Protect the natural and historic environment, cultural and heritage assets.

The focus of the strategy is on economic growth, and sets out to attract new businesses in higher value sectors and markets, helping existing businesses to increase their productivity or shifting to higher value activity. The strategy also seeks to deliver improved broadband provision, transport infrastructure / connectivity and securing affordable and sustainable energy solutions.

The strategy includes a series of thematic strategies and actions including accessibility; housing and enterprise, innovation and skills. With regards to accessibility, of particular note is the proposal for a 'Rural Metro', which involves the creation of hubs for the delivery of services. This is in response to the difficulties in extending feasible public transport services outside of the 'hub and spoke' model centred on Chester and general disparities in levels of accessibility in rural areas.

The hubs are proposed where there is most likelihood of linked trips from the rural community to, for example, a council service hub, education facility, health centre or employment opportunity. It is proposed that the Rural Metro would be based around the concept of Park & Ride, centred on key outreach locations that are approximately 5 miles away from the city centre. Suitable locations were identified as Ashton Hayes / Delamere, Saughall, Mickle Trafford, Tarporley and Tarvin.

The hubs would minimise the need to travel altogether or promote linked trips and would be the centre for community transport initiatives. The concept is provided in **Figure 2.1** and will be considered further at the option strategy stage.

¹¹ Cheshire West and Chester Council Rural Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan, September 2011, Amion Consulting and Partners.

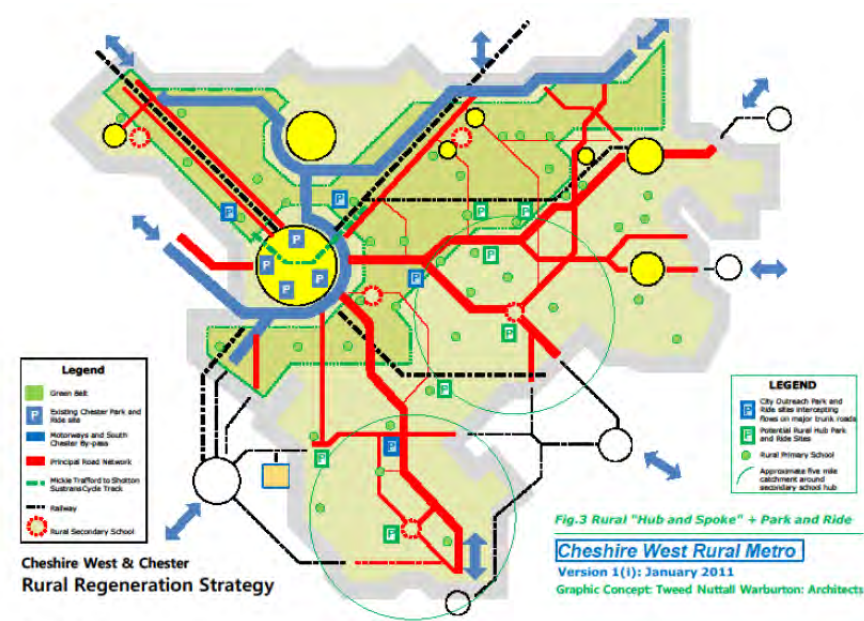


Figure 2.1: Rural Metro Concept

What does this mean for the strategy?

- Transport strategy should help to deliver the aspirations for city centre development outlined in the One City Plan.
- Transport Strategy should incorporate and test parking and bus related proposals identified in recent strategic assessments.
- Transport strategy should build on current planned investment in providing more sustainable connections from communities to areas of employment opportunity delivered through the LSTF.
- Transport strategy should build on proposals for connecting rural areas to employment and key services as identified in the Rural Regeneration Strategy and topic papers to inform the Local Plan.

3 Introduction to the District

3 Introduction to the District

3.1 Population

The historic city of Chester is the largest settlement in the unitary authority of Cheshire West and Chester, and in 2010, according to the Office for National Statistics’ (ONS) Mid-Year Population Estimate, was home to 78,410 people. This includes all of the areas defined as belonging to Chester Local Area Board (the sub local authority level within Cheshire West and Chester) and compares with the borough’s population as a whole of 329,500 recorded on census day 2011, indicating that the city accommodates just under 24% of the borough’s population.

The population of the city is not evenly spread across the available land area, however. The following image from the DORIC census data website highlights the various populations of each of the 11 Middle SOAs of Chester.

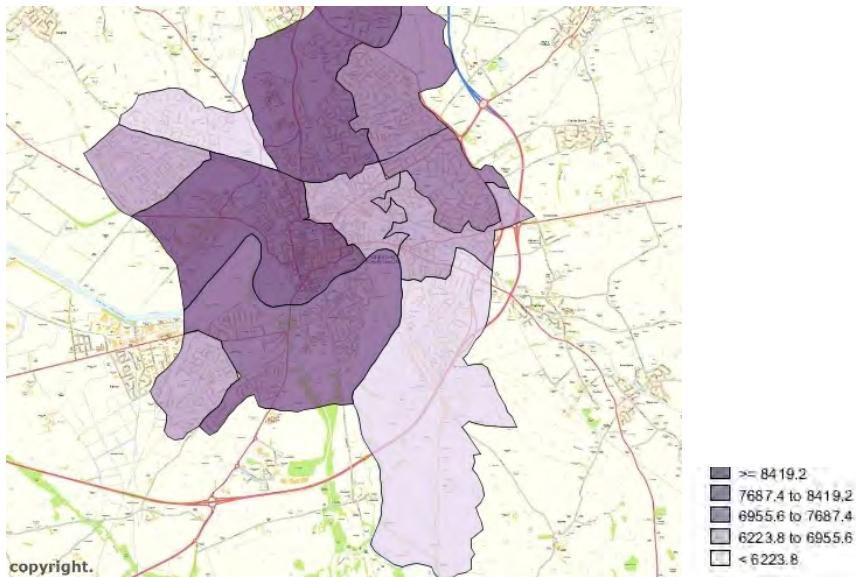


Figure 3.1: 2010 Population Distribution of Chester (Source: DORIC)

From the data behind this image, Upton Grange and Newton is the most populous area accounting for 9,151 people, followed by Chester Central with 8,948. Huntington and Boughton Heath has the lowest population of 5,492. Given that each of these Middle SOAs has a similar population of between 5,000 and 10,000 people, however, relative population density may be inferred from the relative sizes of the areas and, from this, it is clear that Chester Station, Boughton Hall and Hoole Park, and Lache Park have some of the highest population densities in the city.

According to the ONS 2011 census projections, the population of the borough is likely to increase to 338,400 by 2021, an increase of 2.7%. If the proportions of population within each settlement in the borough

remain constant, Chester may see its population rise to approximately 80,500 people in this timeframe.

In addition to this, it is projected that the age profile of Chester is changing and the average age of the population is increasing. Chester accommodates more than a quarter of Cheshire West and Chester’s people over 75, and the proportion of elderly people within the general population (currently 10% over 75) continues to rise, making community transport accessible transport solutions all the more important.

3.2 Employment

Within the City of Chester as previously defined, the total working age population as of August 2012 is estimated to be 51,680. Of these, 1,717 (3.3%) claim unemployment benefit indicating that the remaining 96.7% of the working age population do not claim unemployment benefit either due to their having a job, being in full-time education or training, or being in receipt of some other benefit such as Disability Living Allowance.

From the NOMIS labour market website, 77.7% of the former district of Chester’s working age population were in employment between July 2011 and June 2012 which if factored to apply to just those of working age population in Chester City would represent 40,155 people. This also amounts to over 51% of the total population of the city including all people.

In terms of unemployment, **Figure 3.2** shows the relative rates of Job Seeker’s Allowance (JSA) claimants in each Lower SOA of the city.

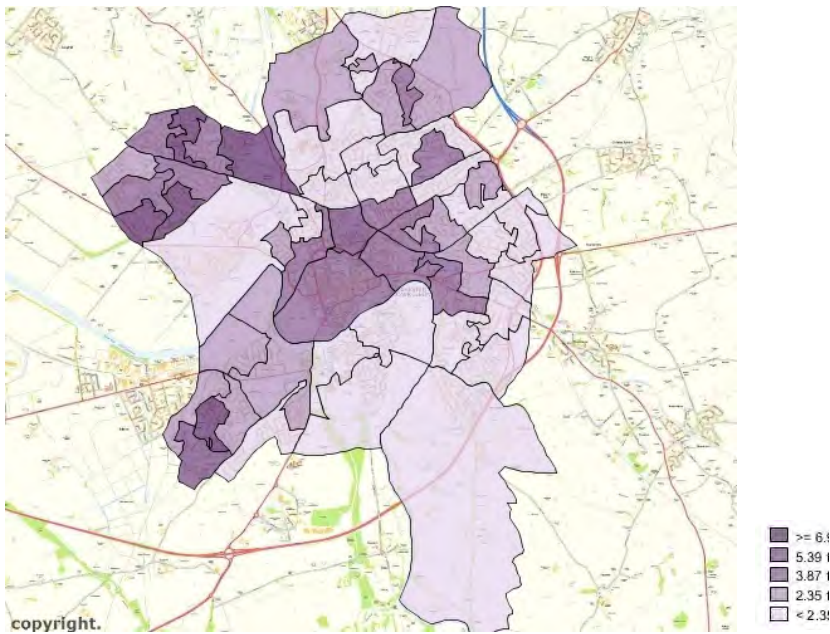


Figure 3.2: Chester JSA Claimant Rates (Source: DORIC)

It may be seen that the highest rates of unemployment are clustered in the city centre and in areas of Blacon, Lache and Upton / Westlea. The Lower SOA with the highest rate of unemployment is ‘South Blacon 5’ which has 8.4% of its working age population claiming Job Seeker’s Allowance. Conversely, the area with the lowest rate of unemployment is ‘Chester Central 2’ with only 0.8% of people claiming, indicating a range of levels of employment even within localities.

In terms of the implications on the transport strategy for Chester, it is important to identify the areas of high unemployment and consider ways of providing appropriate and feasible public transport options and good quality walking and cycling routes to the major employment sites.

The following image shows the relative rates of unemployment in Lower SOAs around the whole borough of Cheshire West and Chester.

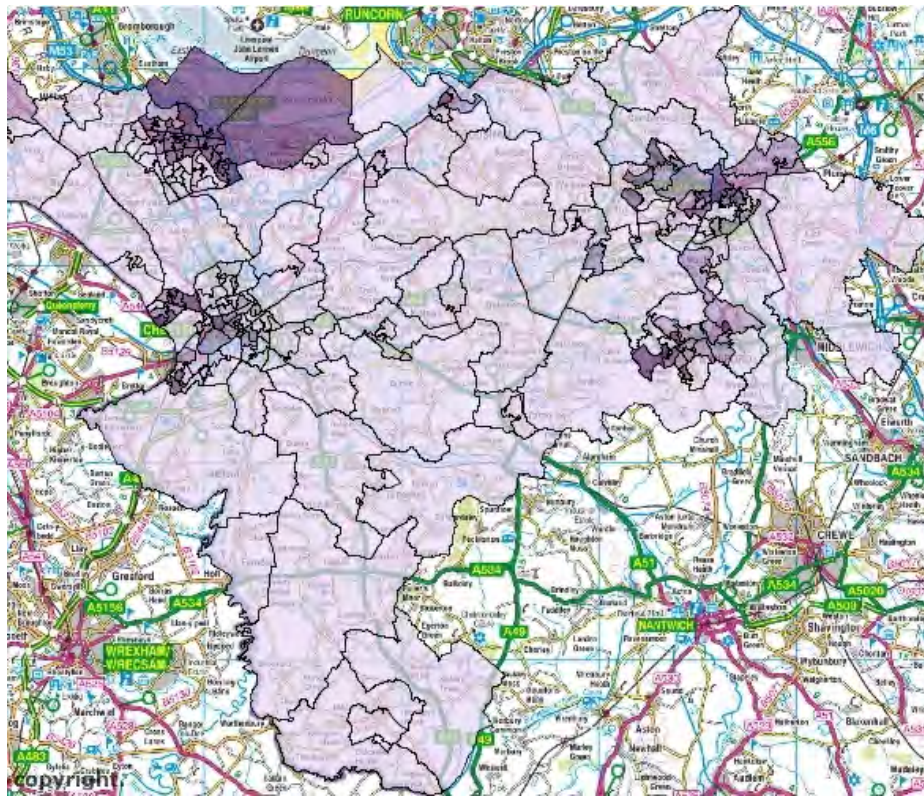


Figure 3.3: CW&C JSA Claimant Rates (Source: DORIC)

This indicates that, whilst Chester has some pockets of unemployment, the largest geographic areas of high unemployment are to be found in Ellesmere Port with other small pockets in Northwich and Winsford. For the purposes of comparison, the highest rate of JSA claimants is in ‘East Winsford 3’ which has a rate of 11.8%, whereas the lowest is in ‘Davenham’ and ‘Moulton’ with a rate of 0.5%.

Structure of the Economy

According to the Local Economic Assessment for Cheshire West and Chester – ‘The Story of Place’ (produced by Mickeldore in February 2011), the sector with the highest number of employees in Cheshire West and Chester is ‘Banking, Finance and Insurance’. This made up 36% of the businesses in the area in 2008. The second most important industry sector was ‘Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants’ at 28% indicating that almost two thirds of employment in the borough is in these two sectors.

Manufacturing in the former district of Chester represents one of the lowest sectoral proportions in the Country in stark contrast to the neighbouring former district of Ellesmere Port and Neston, however borough-wide, the proportion was just 5% in 2008. The distribution across sectors has not remained static in recent years, however, and manufacturing has seen an 11% decline whilst banking, construction and public administration have all grown in the decade 1998 – 2008.

Within the whole borough, Chester’s City and St. Annes Ward has the highest concentration of businesses with around 10% of the borough’s total. Nevertheless, in general, Cheshire West and Chester shows a high dispersal of business across its settlements.

Employment Sites

The key employment sites including education, health, retail and leisure areas in the vicinity of the city are shown in **Figure 3.4**. The key large employment sites in the wider area are summarised in **Table 3.1** along with approximate numbers of employees (where available).

Location	Number of Employees
Chester Business Park, A483 Wrexham Road	4,500
Airbus, A5104 Chester Road	5,000
Sealand Road Industrial and Retail Parks (Off A548 Sealand Road)	1,500 (estimated)
Chester City Centre	23,230
Chester Central Business Quarter	3,500 (forthcoming)
Broughton Shopping Park, A5104 Chester Road	1,400
Deeside Industrial Estate	9,000
Chester Zoo	400
Countess of Chester Hospital	4,000
University of Chester and West Cheshire College	2,000
Chester Race Course	1,000

Table 3.1: Major Employment Sites

According to Cheshire West and Chester Council LSTF bid team, future employment growth within the area could provide an additional 17,100 jobs in the Travel-to-Work area of Chester delivered as part of large developments including the Central Business Quarter, Waitrose on Boughton Road, the Enterprise Zone at Deeside and at Ellesmere Port.

Travel to Work

The latest available complete dataset on travel to work patterns into and out of Chester is from the 2001 census, however recent 2011 census data releases include small area ‘Mode of Travel to Work’ data. From this data, the average mode split for all commuting journeys originating within each ward of the borough and city can be determined. **Figures 3.5a to 3.5f** show the mode splits for work journeys (J2W) originating within CW&C borough, the ten current wards comprising Chester Urban Area, Chester City ward, and the comparator wards of Blacon, the Garden Quarter, and Great Boughton.

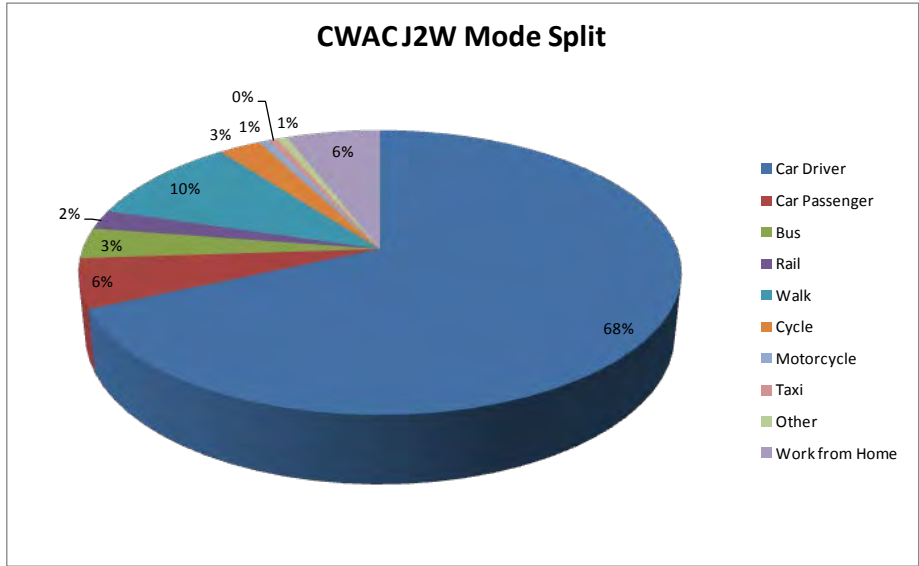


Figure 3.5a: CWAC Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

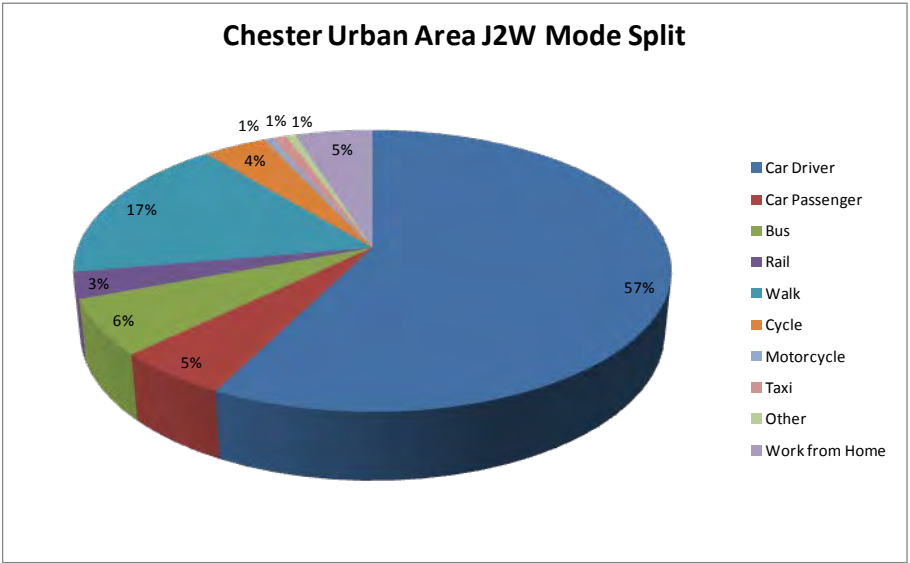


Figure 3.5b: Chester Urban Area Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

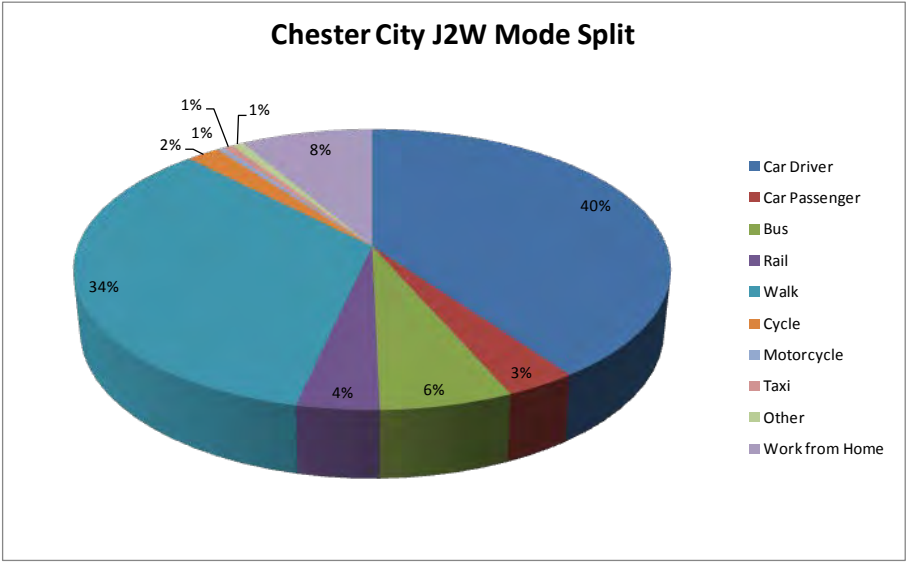


Figure 3.5c: Chester City Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

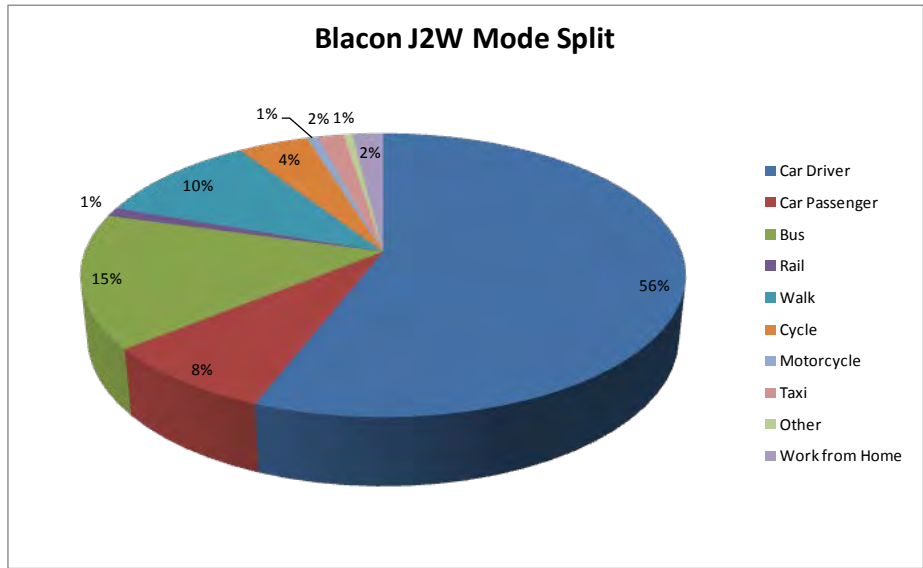


Figure 3.5d: Blacon Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

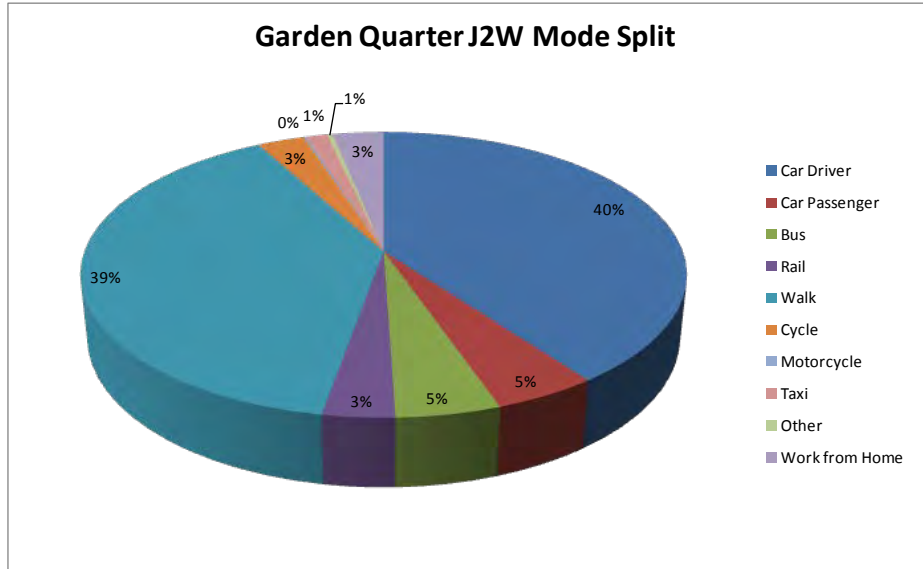


Figure 3.5e: Garden Quarter Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

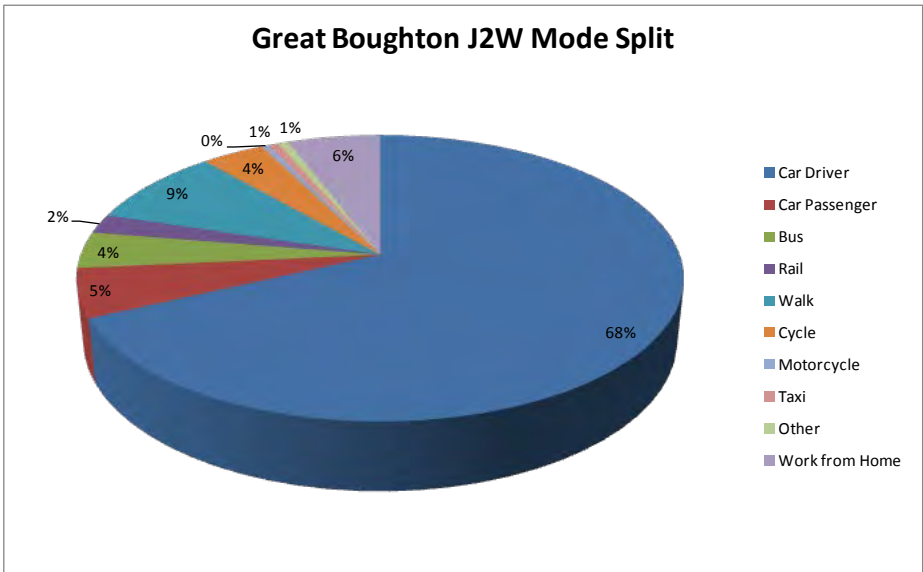


Figure 3.5f: Great Boughton Journey to Work Mode Split (2011 Census)

These charts highlight considerable variation across the borough, urban area, and amongst the wards of Chester. In Chester City and Garden Quarter wards, for instance more than a third of employees walk to work with between 8 and 10% using public transport and 2-3% cycling. In Great Boughton, however, only 9% walk, 6% use public transport, and 4% cycle.

On average, within the Chester Urban Area wards of Chester City, Blacon, Boughton, Great Boughton, Garden Quarter, Handbridge, Hoole, Lache, Newton and Upton, 62% of work journeys are undertaken by car with the vast majority of these people driving themselves. Despite this, bus use is reasonably high with 6% of work journeys undertaken by this mode and a further 3% undertaken by rail. 21% of work journeys are by active modes with 4/5 of these undertaken on foot and the remainder by bicycle. 5% of people work from home within Chester Urban Area. This compares with the 2011 national average of 63% by car, 7% by bus, 9% by rail, 11% on foot, 3% by bicycle, and 5% working from home, indicating that Chester has slightly lower than average use of both car and public transport overall but higher than average use of active modes.

These figures show a much higher usage of sustainable modes than elsewhere in the CW&C borough, which is largely attributable to the concentration of public transport services and walking and cycling routes. It is likely that, whilst bus patronage has declined in the last 10 years nationally, in Chester the usage of sustainable modes has increased due to the route improvements made as part of Chester's CDT status and other investments, such as Connect2.

Unfortunately, 2011 origin-destination Travel to Work data will not be made available during the timeframe of this study, hence 2001 data will be used for these purposes. The attached **Figures 3.6** and **3.7** show the proportions of journey-to-work trips made both into and out of the former district of Chester from neighbouring local authorities (or

former local authorities in the case of Ellesmere Port and Neston and Vale Royal boroughs).

31,849 people travelled into Chester former district from outside each day in 2001, whilst 20,820 people travelled out of the district making the borough a significant net importer of people during the daytime. It is clear that, aside from the large number of people that both live and work within Chester former district (some of whom work from home), Flintshire is the most important single local authority in terms of labour and employment provision, with 14% of the inbound workforce living in Flintshire and 8% of the outbound workforce travelling to work there. Other important (former) local authorities include Ellesmere Port and Neston (9% inbound, 6% outbound), Wrexham (5% inbound, 3% outbound), Wirral (5% inbound, 3% outbound), and Vale Royal (3% inbound, 3% outbound).

The net travel into Chester for each of the local authorities investigated is shown in **Figure 3.8**.

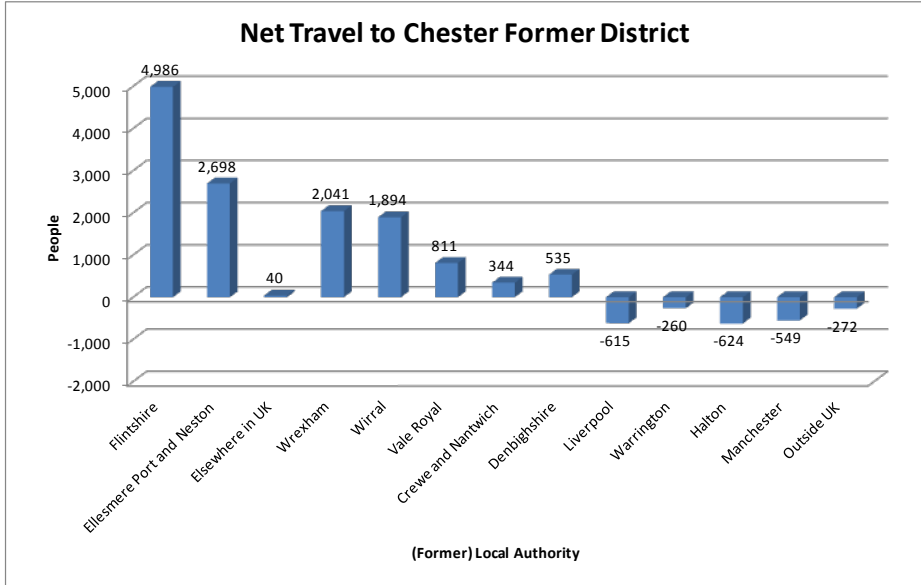


Figure 3.8: Net Travel into Chester Former District (2001 Census)

This highlights that Chester draws its workforce largely from the local authorities noted above, although it is a net exporter of labour to Liverpool, Halton, Warrington, Manchester and to areas outside of the UK.

Looking in more detail at journey to work patterns at different scales within Chester, if one takes the urban area of the city similar to that defined by the Local Area Board as previously discussed, the following split between areas is shown in **Figure 3.10** and **3.11**. (Note that these areas differ slightly from the local authorities used in the last analysis in an attempt to better define areas along transport lines

rather than local authority boundaries as shown in **Figure 3.9**. This analysis excludes work from home employment):

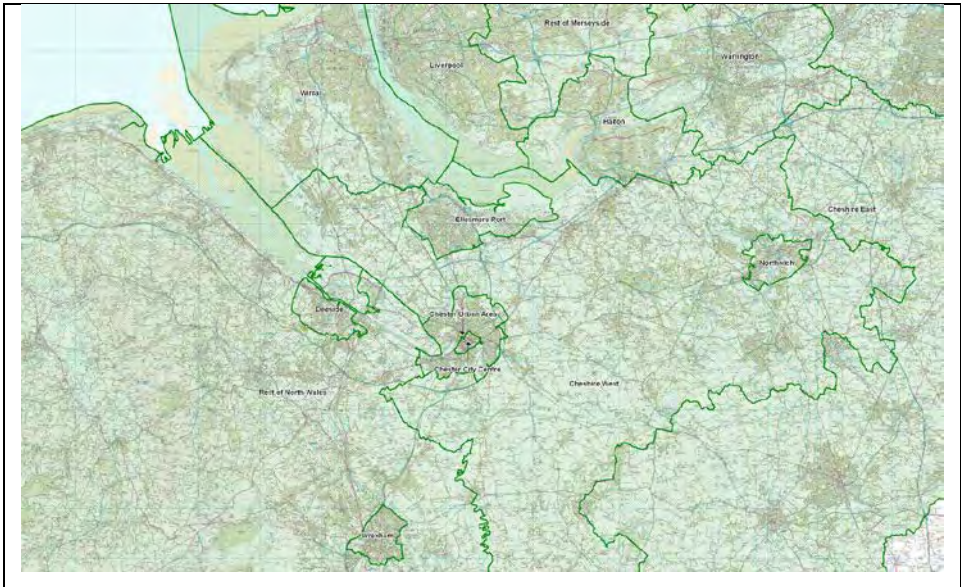


Figure 3.9: Zone Plan for Travel to Work Analysis

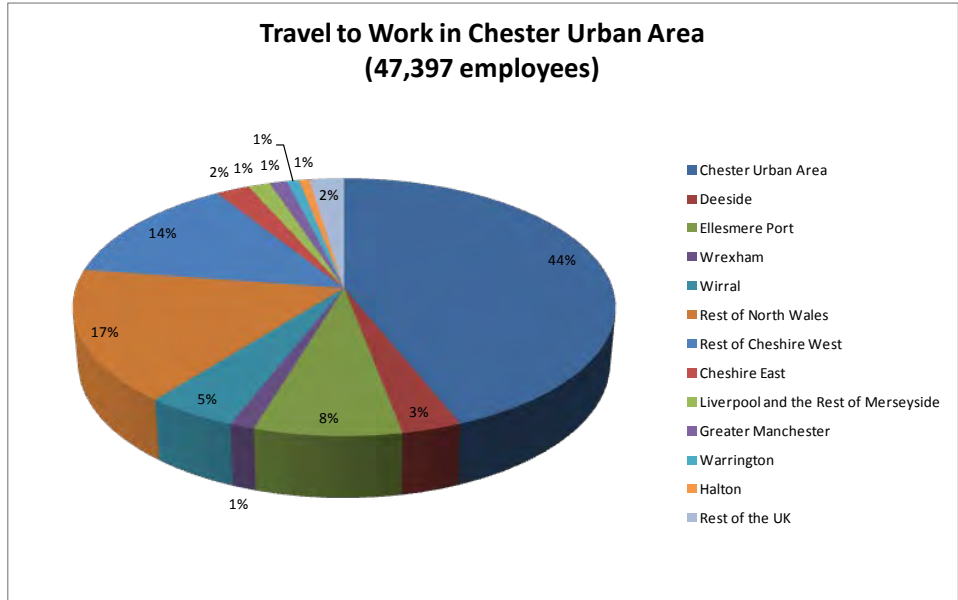


Figure 3.10: Travel to Work in Chester Urban Area (2001 Census)

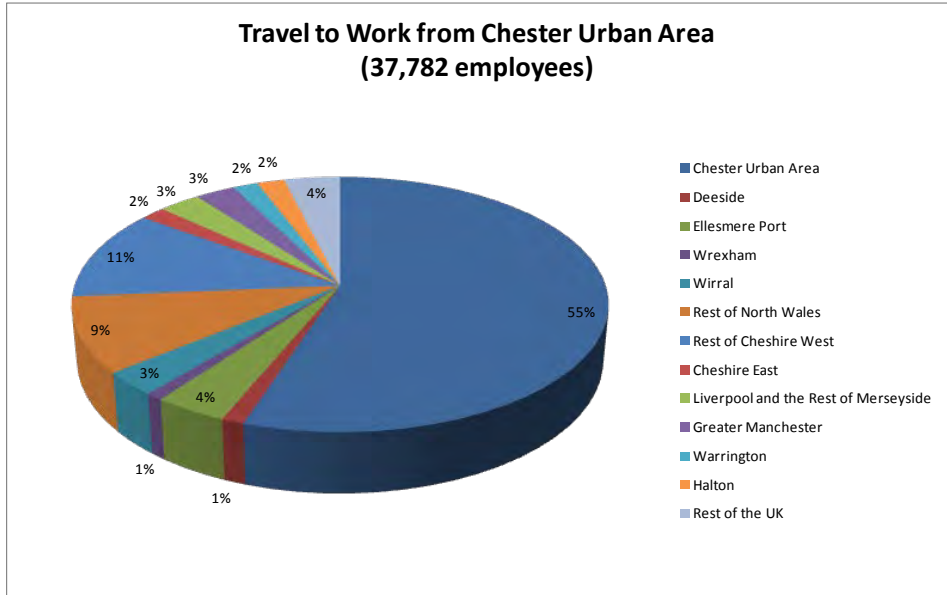


Figure 3.11: Travel to Work from Chester Urban Area (2001 Census)

The results of this more detailed analysis are interesting in that they highlight the relative unimportance of the Deeside area in terms of labour and employment provision for the city. This indicates that the majority of the connection of Chester with Flintshire is not within the Deeside area and emphasises the importance of other locations within Flintshire such as Mold. Whilst the importance of Ellesmere Port and the rest of Cheshire West and Chester borough is also reflected in this analysis, the connection with Wrexham is less pronounced in this case which may indicate that the majority of the travel to work journeys are being undertaken between Wrexham and other parts of Chester former district not within the city’s urban area.

Looking in even more detail at Chester City Centre as defined in **Figure 1.1** earlier, the following pie charts highlight the relative travel-to-work linkage:

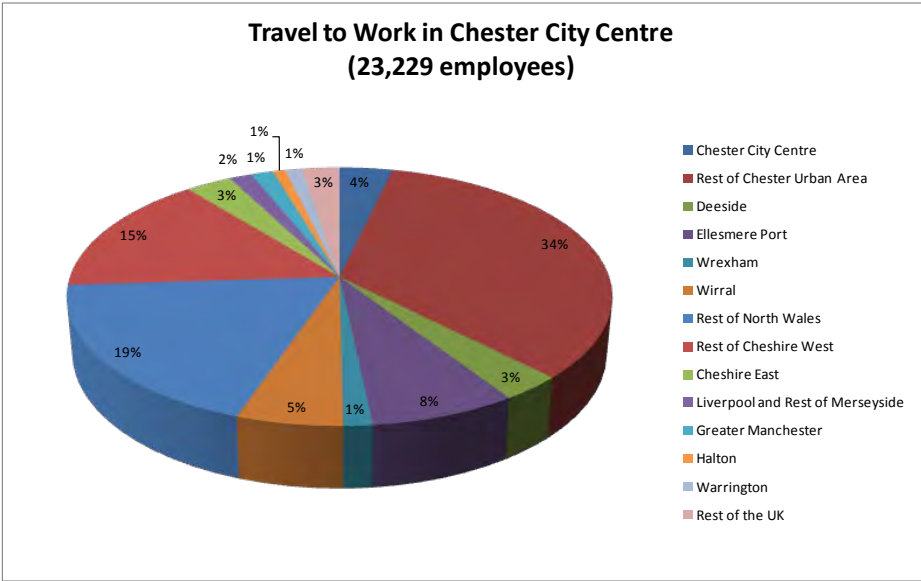


Figure 3.12: Travel to Work in Chester City Centre (2001 Census)

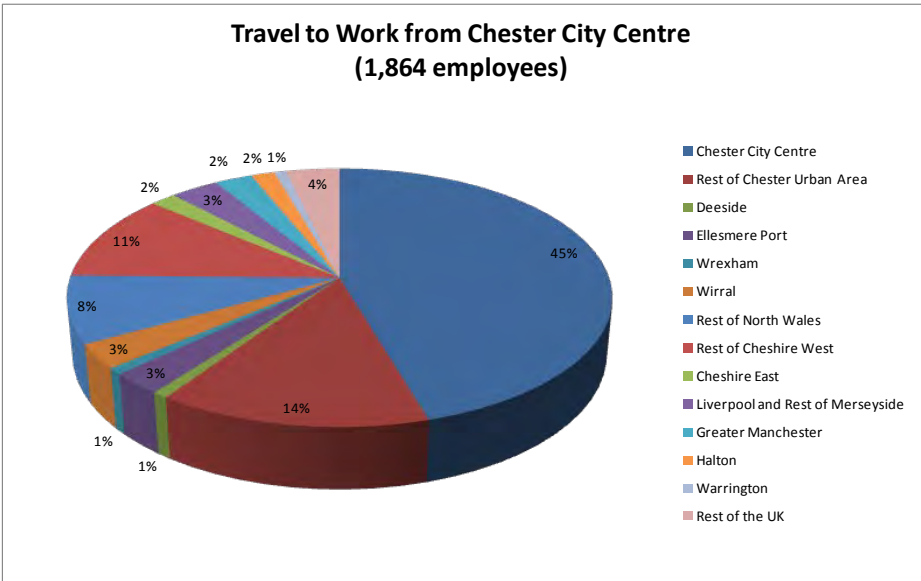


Figure 3.13: Travel to Work from Chester City Centre (2001 Census)

These charts highlight the relatively small number of people that lived in the city centre in 2001 and this skews the outbound results somewhat, however the above chart showing travel-to-work in Chester City Centre highlights the large proportion of people (34% of the total city centre employees) living in Chester Urban Area who work in the city centre. The rest of the proportions are all very similar to those of the Urban Area with a slightly larger dependence on labour from the non-Deeside / non-Wrexham rest of North Wales e.g. Mold and other areas in Flintshire.

3.3 Health

Healthcare in Chester is provided by NHS Western Cheshire until 1st April 2013 when this function will be led by GPs in the form of a Clinical Commissioning Group. The trust has its headquarters at the Countess of Chester Hospital and, during the transitional period, has been clustered with trusts in Warrington, Wirral, and Central and Eastern Cheshire. The Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust consists of a 600 bed large district General Hospital, which provides its services on the Countess of Chester Health Park, and a 64 bedded Intermediate Care Service at Ellesmere Port Hospital. The Trust has around 4,000 staff and provides medical services to more than 445,000 patients per year from an area covering Western Cheshire, Ellesmere Port, Neston and North Wales.

3.4 Education

The key education providers in the city are the University of Chester and West Cheshire College. The University is a former teacher training college that has experienced high growth in student demand and is now a respected higher education establishment. It accommodates nearly 17,000 students in campuses in Chester and Warrington. West Cheshire College is a further education institution with sites in Chester and Ellesmere Port. In 2010/11 the college had in excess of 11,500 learners and employed 555 full time equivalent staff.

Figure 3.14 shows the secondary and primary schools located around the study area.

It is understood that all schools in CW&C have a school travel plan as a result of the Travel to School Initiative, which has sought to introduce measures to increase the numbers travelling to / from school by sustainable modes and improve the health and fitness of pupils. Of relevance to the Transport Strategy, the latest issues to impact on travel is the withdrawal of bus transport at Faith Schools and the proposals for future plans to build Free Schools, including a proposal at Chester Cathedral on Northgate Street. A key question over this proposal is raised by the prospect of pedestrianising Northgate Street as is currently proposed by the Council, since this will impact upon access to the new school.

3.5 Index of Multiple Deprivation

An important measure of the relative prosperity of an area can be found using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which is produced by central Government. This assesses the overall level of deprivation of an area based on indicators including:

- Income deprivation;
- Employment deprivation;
- Health deprivation and disability;
- Education, skills and training deprivation;
- Barriers to housing and services;
- Living environment deprivation; and
- Crime.

The figure below shows the IMD overall scores for the city of Chester as previously defined based on 2007 figures from the DORIC website. This is aggregated at the lower SOA level.

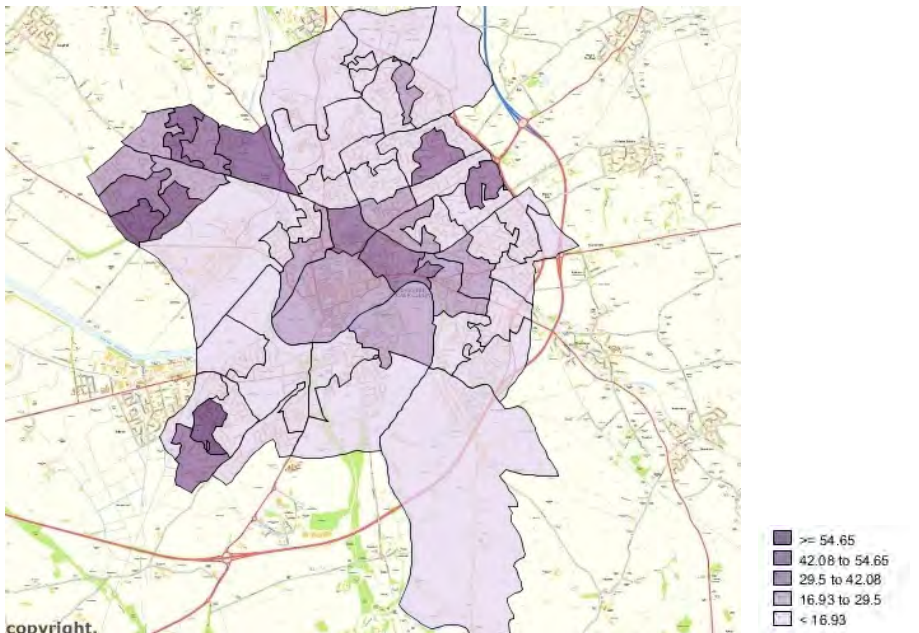


Figure 3.15: IMD for Chester City (2007)

This highlights that ‘Lache Park 1’ is the most deprived part of the city according to these figures with areas in ‘North and South Blacon’ close behind. In fact, ‘Lache Park 1’ is ranked as the most deprived Lower SOA in all of Cheshire West and Chester. The least deprived area in the city is ‘South of Dee 2’, which includes the affluent district of Curzon Park.

For comparison, **Figure 3.16** shows the IMD 2007 scores for every Lower SOA in Cheshire West and Chester.

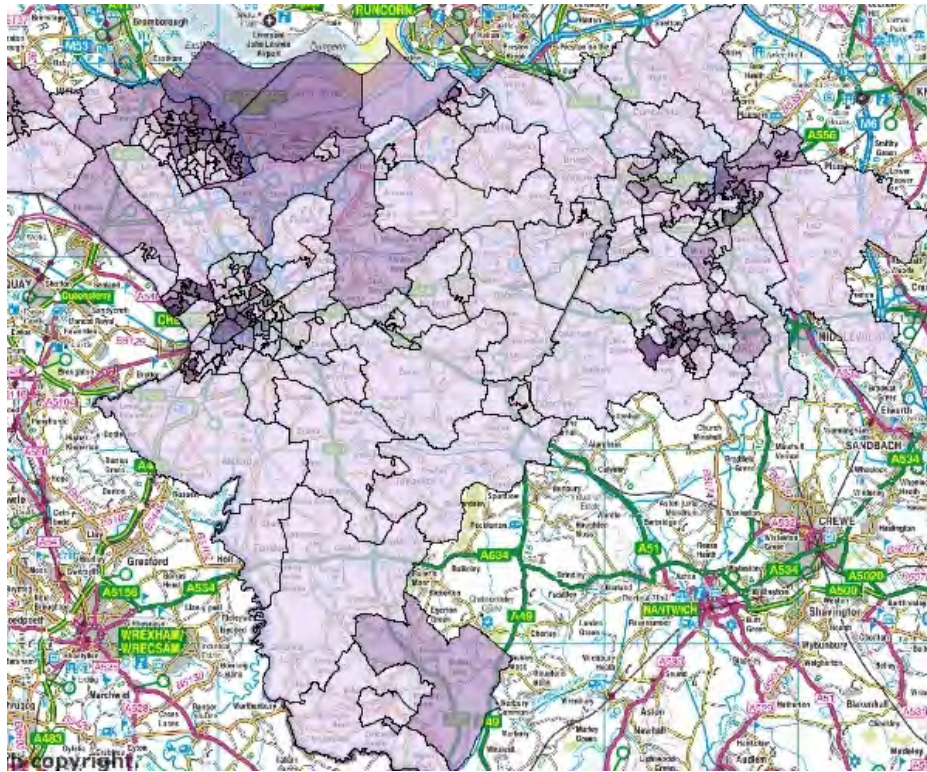


Figure 3.16: IMD for Cheshire West and Chester (2007)

This figure highlights that Chester contains some of the highest and lowest levels of deprivation within the borough. ‘Lache Park 1’ is the most deprived Lower SOA in Cheshire West and Chester as noted before, whereas ‘South of Dee 2’ is the 11th least deprived area in the borough, with ‘Hartford and Kingsmead 4’ being the least.

3.6 Car Ownership

Car ownership data in Chester from Quality of Life Surveys conducted in 2005 is displayed in the following pie chart. This shows that 45% of households in the borough have 1 car or van, whilst only 13% have none which is lower than the national (England) average of 27% (2001 Census). Higher than average numbers of households have more than 1 car, with 33% having 2, 8% having 3 and 1% of households having 4 or more cars.

Capabilities on project: Transportation

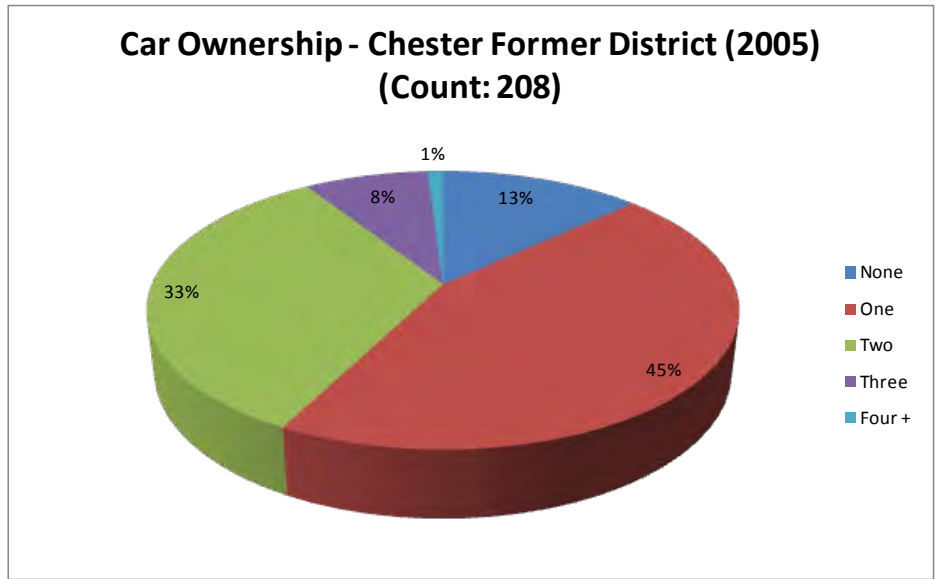


Figure 3.17: Car Ownership in Chester (2005)

More recent data from the 2011 census for the whole borough of Cheshire West and Chester is shown in the following pie chart:

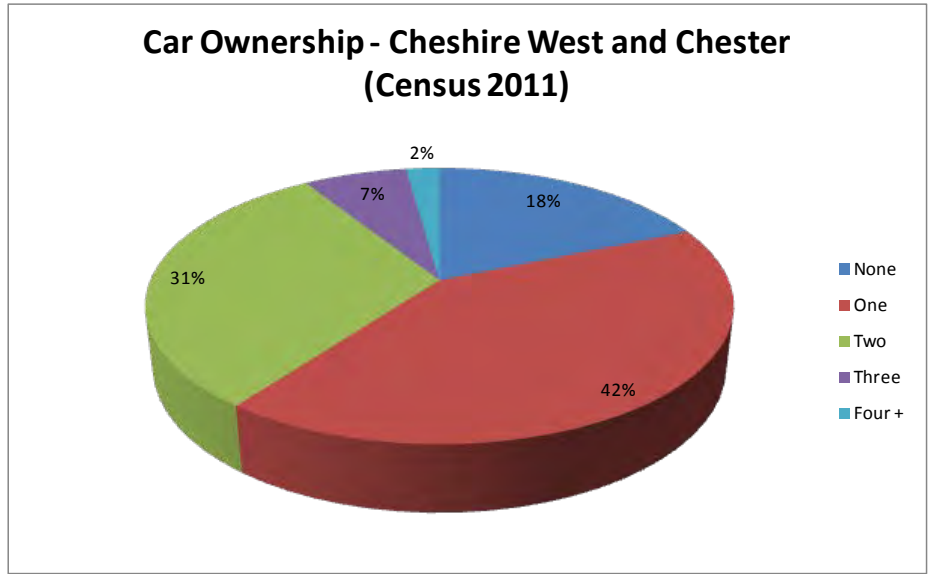


Figure 3.18: Car Ownership in Cheshire West and Chester (2011)

This highlights similar results, although interestingly the proportion of households with no car and with 4 or more cars are slightly higher, whereas the proportion of single car households are

What does this mean for the strategy?

- The city of Chester is a net importer in terms of employment flows, with key inter-relationships with Flintshire, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Wrexham and the Wirral.
- Importance of providing appropriate and feasible public transport and walking and cycling options from areas of high unemployment / deprivation to major employment sites, consistent with working patterns.
- Transport Strategy needs to consider impacts of changes in healthcare provision and policy affecting school travel and transport, such as the creation of free schools.

Capabilities on project: Transportation

4 Tourism and Leisure

4 Retail, Tourism and Leisure

4.1 Overview

This section outlines the importance of the retail sector to Chester City Centre and the wider area.

Like retail, the tourism and leisure sector is an important part of the Chester local economy. It accounts for approximately 10% of the workforce and is worth an estimated £1.4 billion.

4.1.1 Current Profile of the Retail Sector in Chester

Whilst the prominence of Chester as a retail destination has decreased in recent years, down from 5th in 2002 to 35th in 2009 according to Experian, it still remains a significant destination and the focus of activity for a large tract of Cheshire and surrounds.

Chester faces competition from larger established centres in Liverpool (enhanced through the completion of Liverpool One), and Manchester (both City Centre and Trafford Centre) and more localised competition from Cheshire Oaks and Warrington Town Centre which has benefitted from recent investment at Golden Square.

Despite this, Chester is below the national average for vacancy rates in primary streets (10.3% compared to 14.6%)¹², but projections indicate that High Street conditions are likely to deteriorate further in the near future, with the North West likely to be one of the hardest hit.

Of significance to the Transport Strategy, the Northgate Development is likely to significantly change the retail landscape in the City Centre and forms a cornerstone of CW&C's attempts to improve its trading environment. The latest concept, currently out to consultation includes approximately 36,000 sq. m. of retail, 7,000 sq. m. of food and beverage and will include approximately 1,000 car parking spaces. The proposals for servicing and access are still being finalised, with a number of factors to consider, such as the interface with the proposed theatre and aspirations to reduce or eliminate traffic on St. Werburgh Street, Northgate Street and Hunter Street.

In addition to the new retail offer within Northgate, supporting Chester's unique retail sectors i.e. the independents / Rows is key in improving the offer/attracting shoppers and supporting retail businesses.

The key transport related challenges facing the retail sector in the Chester area are as follows:

- Growth in the city centre evening economy and wider changes in the nature of the retail sector, which is becoming more experiential, requires a review of the frequency and coverage of evening and weekend passenger transport provision.
- Growth in e-commerce / home delivery may reduce pressure on access and servicing requirements in the City Centre.
- Wider range of retail outlets (e.g. smaller convenience stores such as Sainsbury's Local and larger out-of-town stores) change the demands of access, servicing and parking.

¹² Chester Retail Vacancy Monitoring Stats

4.1.2 Current Profile of the Tourist Industry in Chester and the Wider Region

The revised Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) Report for 2010 indicates that Cheshire and Warrington attracted 44 million visitors per year, of which Chester attracts approximately 8.5 million per year. Tourism is therefore a major industry in the Cheshire and Warrington region and this is supported by the fact that it generated approximately £2billion for the local economy, supporting around 30,000 full-time equivalent jobs¹³. Of note, the overnight stay market increased by 7% to 3.2million between 2009 and 2010 and Chester attracts a significant proportion of this spend.

Chester's tourism and leisure offer and its associated economic benefits, is recognised as a significant asset for the sub-region and has status at a national and international level.

The sub-region as a whole also has much to offer in terms of tourism potential with a wealth of attractive landscapes, historic town centres / villages and a waterways network. Therefore leisure and tourism is likely to be an important source of future economic growth in the district, for both urban and rural areas, where it is particularly important.

Looking at the figures for Chester West & Chester in more detail, **Figure 4.1** presents a comparison of the number of tourist days in 2009 and 2010, as per the STEAM data.¹⁴

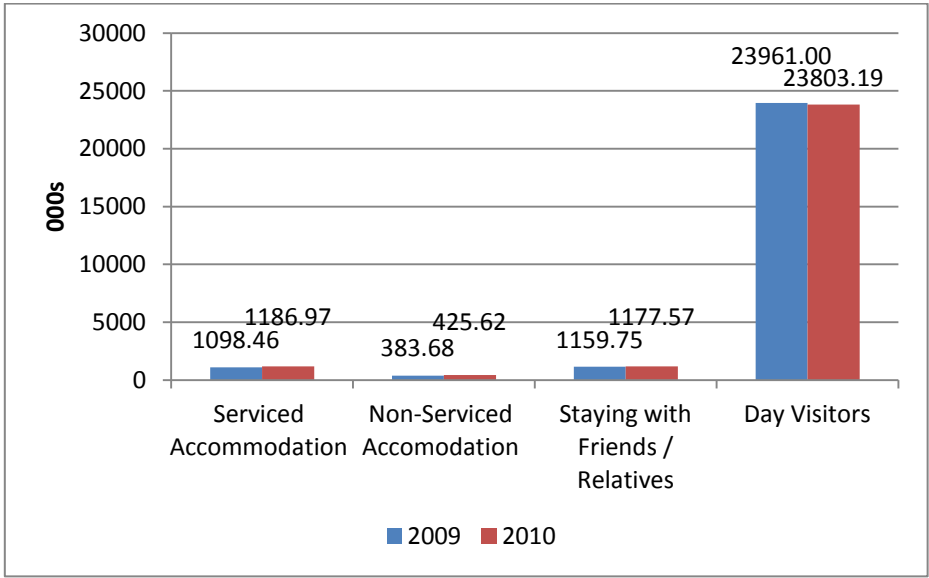


Figure 4.1: Cheshire West & Chester Tourist Days

This shows a minor decrease in tourist days to approximately 26.6 million, owing to a slight decrease registered in day visitors.

¹³ Marketing Cheshire 2012

¹⁴ Cheshire West and Chester STEAM Report 2010, February 2012

This is mirrored in the tourist numbers data (as shown in **Figure 4.2**), which decreases to just over 25 million in 2010.¹⁵

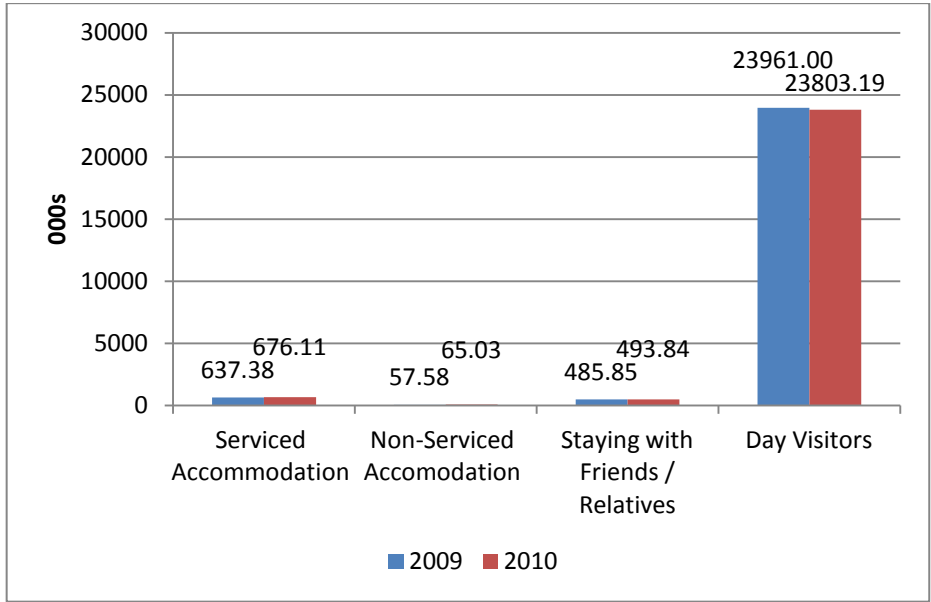


Figure 4.2: Cheshire West & Chester Tourist Numbers

4.1.3 Cheshire & Warrington Visitor Economy 2020 Framework: Time to Meet the Challenge (Draft)

The value of the visitor economy to Cheshire and Warrington (accounting for over 16% of GVA) is recognised in the 2020 Vision, which although acknowledges the tough economic climate, aims to capitalise on its major assets and engender an innovative and flexible culture amongst sector stakeholders to strengthen and grow the industry.

Rising to the Challenge

In developing and growing the visitor economy, the framework anticipates that a number of key challenges will have to be met, these include:

- Growing capacity to capitalise on business tourism;
- Attracting private investment to unlock potential: Increasing capacity and pulling power of Chester to enable it to compete with other premier heritage cities such as Edinburgh and York;
- Delivery of more dynamic, contemporary and intriguing visitor experiences to differentiate Chester and Cheshire from other locations;
- Developed a reputation as the place to shop in style; and
- Converted a greater proportion of day trippers into longer-term stays to maximise spend in visitor attractions, shops, bars and restaurants.

The four guiding objectives and a number of pertinent ambitions to the transport strategy are as follows:

¹⁵ Cheshire West and Chester STEAM Report 2010, February 2012

Capabilities on project: Transportation

...Grow Cheshire's share of visitor markets

- Capitalise on excellent road and rail networks and proximity to Liverpool and Manchester City Regions for business tourism in particular.
- Commissioning of a place marketing strategy to further Chester's status as an 'attack brand' and attract new national and international visitors.

...Create places and spaces for great experiences

- Strengthen and join up its experiences in a way that delivers an appealing short-break destination for higher spending markets.
- Capitalise on opportunities to link places with our excellent attractions and on regional initiatives that have a good fit with the wider offer, such as waterways and industrial heritage.

...Connect our visitors with our experiences

- Fit-for-purpose information service that delivers a warm welcome to all visitors and provides information at the right place at the right time.
- Use information to sell on additional experiences at key decision-making stages of the visitor journey to grow the value of the visitor trip.
- Using technology and social networks better as an information channel.
- Creation of enhanced transport infrastructure and services to connect Cheshire and Warrington, combined with more joined-up thinking, including working with the visitor economy and transport providers.
- Need to encourage visitors to use public transport upon arrival through innovative services, such as the shuttle service between the zoo and the station.

...Make it happen through champions and networks.

Delivery against these objectives, will deliver a Chester and Cheshire that by 2020 will be 'best in league' and not only a fantastic place to visit, but also a fantastic place to 'work', 'live' and 'invest'. If successful by 2020, the strategy would have increased visitor spend to in excess of £3billion and increase employment in the visitor economy to 37,000 jobs.

4.1.4 Chester Visitor Survey

Marketing Cheshire conduct an annual visitor survey designed to help understand the profile of visitors, activities undertaken during their visit and to gauge opinions on various aspects of the city. This survey contains information that is useful in forming an understanding of the transport demands on the city.

Key findings from the annual survey¹⁶, conducted between May 2009 and April 2010, are detailed below:

¹⁶ Chester Visitor Survey Draft Report, Yearly Analysis 2009 / 2010, Lynn Jones Research Ltd, May 2010

- Chester has UK-wide appeal, attracting significant volumes from all parts of England. Highest origins are received from West Midlands (15%), Cheshire (13%), South East (11%) and Yorkshire & Humber (11%). As can be expected, the relative distance influences the type of stay, whether day trips or overnight.
- Chester also receives significant volumes from overseas with Australia (21%) and United States (17%) highly represented in the survey.
- The majority of visitors interviewed in the survey were in a party of 2 (62%), with only 4% visiting Chester alone,
- The predominant reason for visiting Chester is as part of a leisure break or on holiday (57%), followed by shopping (special / non-regular food shopping) (26%) and visiting friends / relatives (7%).
- Of those interviewed in the survey, 65% had visited previously and 35% were visiting for the first time.
- Almost 2/3 of visitors (64%) were visiting Chester as part of an overnight visit, of which 53% were staying in Chester itself, 21% in other parts of Cheshire and 16% in North Wales.
- 31% of visitors to Chester consulted the internet prior to visiting, of which Visit Chester was a key website (used by 70%).
- The main form of transport used to travel to Chester was private / hire car (74%), followed by train (10%), private coach (7%), public bus (5%) and other (2%).
- 63% visited attractions during their visit to Chester, with the most popular destinations being Chester Cathedral (66%), Chester Roman Amphitheatre (41%), Cheshire Oaks (20%), Grosvenor Museum (15%).
- Of those interviewed, 62% cited the fact that everything is in walking distance as something that impressed them about Chester.
- All respondents were asked what elements were best or most enjoyable aspect of the visit (multiple answers accepted), of relevance 10% cited walking the walls, 9% the fact that everything is in walking distance, Park & Ride / cheap parking (7%), walking by the river (5%) and pedestrianised areas (3%).
- On reasons for improvement, issues relating to getting around were cited by 34% who responded to the question. This included 'improved signage' (17%), 'parking in general' (8%), 'complaints about public transport, taxis etc' (6%), 'wheelchair / pushchair access' (3%), 'more parking spaces' (2%), 'traffic in general' (2%) and 'pedestrianised areas' (1%). In addition, expense was cited by 20%, predominantly relating to parking (12%).

4.2 Key Challenges and Aspirations for the Tourism Sector

Alongside the signature projects of Chester Zoo and Mersey Waterfront, Chester City Centre is identified as an 'attack brand' by CW&C and fundamental to growing the visitor economy for the region as a whole. Indeed, it has set itself an ambitious target of becoming a 'must see' European visitor destination by 2015.

According to the Cheshire West and Chester Local Development Framework – 'Image, Identity and Tourism' topic paper, the following projects are deemed as *critical* major developments:

- The **Northgate Development** – featuring new shops restaurants and city centre squares;
- The development of the **old Police HQ** building into a boutique hotel and restaurant;
- Major investment into **Chester Railway Station** as gateway to the city; and
- Development of **Chester Zoo** as a world-class visitor attraction.

In addition, the following projects are to be pursued:

- Development of the historic **Roodee racecourse** to improve the venue for racing and as an event for conferences;
- Development of a **new performing arts centre**;
- Development of the **amphitheatre** into an international visitor attraction;
- Development of the Cathedral zone into a **cathedral quarter** including outdoor spaces and promotion of its historic buildings; and
- Redevelopment of the **castle site** for a boutique hotel and restaurant with a visitor attraction element.

The key transport related challenges facing the tourism sector in the Chester area are as follows:

- Accommodating more sustainable travel options to reach destinations and attractions.
- Balancing demands from the tourism sector and protecting Chester's unique heritage.
- Understanding role of the transport experience in supporting the overall visitor experience.
- Supporting the evolution / enhancement of existing major tourist attractions to ensure that they can continue to grow and attract visitors to the area.

4.3 Key Tourism Sites and Aspirations

Chester offers many assets from a tourism attraction perspective including:

- The City Walls;
- The Cathedral;
- The Rows;
- The historic centre;
- The River Dee;
- Shropshire Union Canal and port;
- The amphitheatre;
- The Castle;
- Museum.

The following section has been informed by discussions with representatives of selected major employers, detailing the key issues and aspirations of each.

Capabilities on project: Transportation

Chester Zoo

Chester Zoo has the highest number of visitors per year in the North West and is one of the major attractions in the UK, attracting approximately 1.4million visitors per year. It is situated on the A41, a main route into Chester and Ellesmere Port, which can become congested particularly during peak periods.

With conservation at the heart of its ethos, the zoo has been proactive in seeking to reduce its carbon footprint. Key transport initiatives include:

- Combined ticket for the train, bus link and entry to the zoo.
- 12 minute frequency shuttle from Chester Station to the zoo.
- Website contains links to rail operators serving Chester and details on bus services.
- 15% entry discounts for cyclists.

Issues

- Predominance of car based trips
-

Aspirations

- The development of the Natural Vision (Chester Super Zoo) concept has the potential to be a world class visitor attraction. Its plans include the creation of the largest domed ecosystem in the UK, a river ride, a themed 120 bedroom hotel and a conservation college.
-

Chester Cathedral

Owing to its heritage, culture and history, Chester Cathedral has the potential to be a major attraction within the city and has aspirations to raise its national and international profile. Indeed it is cited as one of Chester and Cheshire's 'crown jewels' in the 2020 Visitor Economy Framework.¹⁷

It is understood that the Cathedral currently attracts in the region of 70,000 visitors per year, despite offering no spaces for parking. Visitor numbers have recently been boosted by a trial of a free entry policy (Dec '12-Feb '13) that is likely to go live in Summer 2013. The cathedral also stages 400-500 events per year, including regular services.

The following issues and aspirations have been identified through consultation with Simon Warburton (Development and Fundraising Manager, Chester Cathedral) who is responsible for the Estate and Operations.

Issues

- Cathedral has an ongoing 24 hour requirement for access, which needs to be factored into discussions over the future status of Northgate Street, St. Werburgh Street and Hunter Street – currently 3 access points including Abbey Square, Abbey Green and Quarry Car Park with limited opportunity for circulation.
- Cathedral has significant under-utilised property stock (approximately 35,000 sq. ft.), with only 40% of stock occupied. However 92% of the stock is listed and many of these buildings are in a poor state of repair. Leases are being reviewed to ensure that there is no automatic entitlement to parking spaces, though spaces are currently available for private lease (144 spaces in total). A number of the Cathedral's clergy live on site and as such require 24 hour access. In total, the Cathedral has 40 contracted members of staff including estate, operation and administration and those living outside of a 2 miles radius are permitted to drive. However, it is believed that only 7 or 8 currently drive.

Aspirations

- Previous North West Development Agency (NWDA) funded Masterplan included proposal for a new piazza on St. Werburgh Street, new entrance and Cathedral on Heights, most of which with the exception of the latter has been parked owing to a lack of funding.
- Current proposals to open a free school within the Cathedral grounds – accommodating up to 400 pupils. It is understood that the criteria for admission will include living within walking distance. Access to and use of the field is being negotiated, competing with aspirations to landscape the Deanery Fields.
- Recent Masterplan produced by ACME, identified a number of schemes that the Cathedral may choose to take forward subject to discussions with trustees and other selected stakeholders. This included a combination of residential, office and retail. Significant proposals include a boutique hotel in Abbey Square, new retail at the back of Rufus Court.

Chester Racecourse

Chester Racecourse, the oldest racecourse in the UK, has been subject to £10m investment which has delivered improved pavilion and paddock areas and enhanced catering and bar facilities.

The average race day attendance for 2010 was 23,000, with some Summer 'funday' events attracting in excess of 43,000.¹⁸ The importance of the Racecourse to the local economy can be demonstrated by the statistic that Saturday race meetings brings an additional £1.2million tourism revenue in terms of hotel bookings and spend in bars, restaurants and retail outlets.

Chester Theatre

A new state-of-the-art Theatre and Performing Arts Centre has long been a significant aspiration of the Council and, within the last two years, this has moved much closer to realisation. It was announced in 2011, that the former Odeon site at the junction of Northgate Street and Hunter Street would accommodate the proposed theatre and the site was duly acquired by the Council. Current plans suggest that the Theatre should open within the next few years in advance of the adjacent Northgate Development, and that the main auditorium should be able to accommodate 800 people, with a pit for an orchestra of 35.

Issues

- A key issue for the theatre is the heavy trafficking of Northgate Street and the potential increase of servicing traffic as a result of the Northgate Development. This could potentially cause issues for those accessing the theatre, and create servicing issues;

Aspirations

- Once the Northgate Development has been constructed, access to the theatre will be a key issue with any solution for the wider Northgate Street area needing to provide good levels of access for the theatre to meet their daily schedule and specific requirements. It is a clear aspiration of the Council as scheme promoters, that access by a range of modes be available whilst pass-by traffic (including servicing and bus traffic etc) are reduced as much as possible.

What does this mean for the strategy?

- Tourism and leisure play an important role in the Chester and wider sub-region economy and this strategy should seek to support the visitor economy through the provision of a strong and legible transport infrastructure.
- Importance of working with the visitor economy and transport providers to offer more sustainable transport solutions.
- Investigate potential for utilising and developing the waterways as part of the tourism offer and linking places and key destinations.
- Improve pre-arrival and arrival information to influence visitor trip choices.

¹⁷ http://www.whycheshire.com/dbimsgs/VEF_001.pdf

¹⁸ Chester, United Kingdom, November 2010, Urban Land Institute, 2011

Capabilities on project: Transportation

5 Access and Movement

5 Access and Movement

5.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the current situation in Chester in relation to the road, bus and rail networks, and considers issues relating to sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling. For each section, a table of initial thoughts relating to improvements and/or requirements for further study are summarised at the end of the relevant sub-sections.

The Strategic Context of Chester in relation to neighbouring towns and cities, road and rail networks is attached as **Figure 5.1 (overleaf)**.

5.2 Strategic Road Network

Figure 5.2 highlights the strategic road network serving Chester.

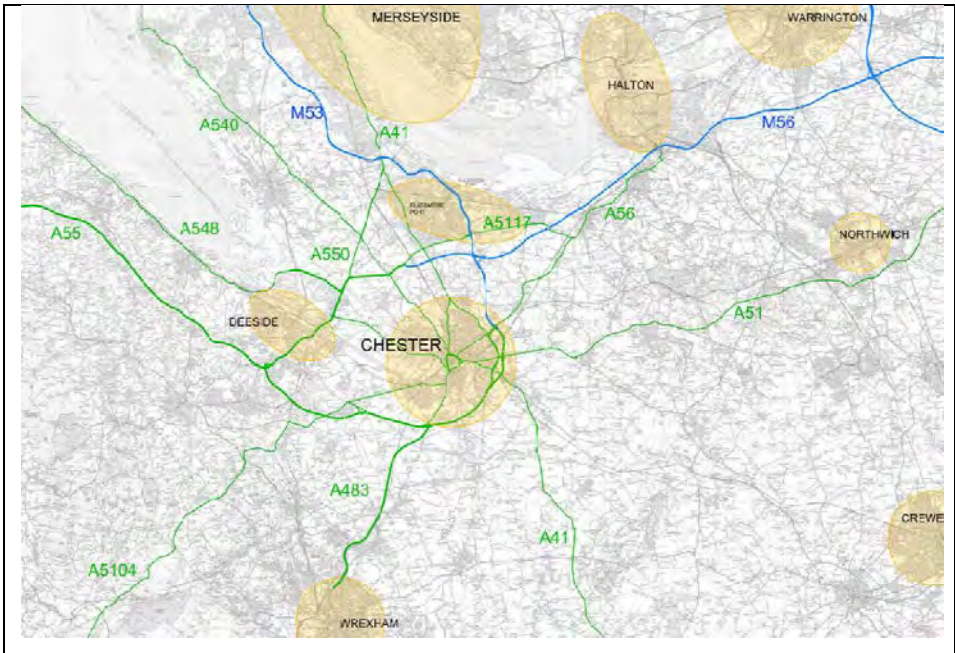


Figure 5.2: Strategic Road Network

The network surrounding the city is characterised by the effective outer ring road created by the M53 motorway and A55 dual carriageway to the east and south, the M56 motorway and A5117 to the north, and the A550/A494 trunk road to the west. The interface between the western extremity of the M56 motorway, the A5117, and the A550/A494 Welsh Road has recently been drastically upgraded in terms of capacity and quality and now provides a high capacity high speed link from the Manchester direction into and out of North Wales.

The principal A Road network also provides a network of radial routes into the city centre from all directions, providing direct links to the motorway network, Wirral, Wrexham, Deeside, Halton and Manchester. The north-south spine route of the M6 motorway is located several miles to the west of the city but is accessible via the

M56 or A51 routes, providing connections to the north and Scotland, Birmingham and the south.

The A55 trunk road routes is particularly important for Chester since it provides an effective high speed route along the North Wales Coast to Conwy, Bangor and Holyhead for ferry connections to Ireland. At its western end, it merges with the M53 motorway to provide direct access along the Wirral peninsula to Liverpool and the rest of Merseyside via the Mersey tunnels. The A483 trunk road provides a direct link to Wrexham and southwards towards Shrewsbury and Whitchurch. Its junction with the A55 is the focus of a recently confirmed pinch-point relief scheme put forward by the Highways Agency to ease queuing and relieve congestion in this area particularly at peak times.

The A41 provides a strategic connection to Ellesmere Port, East Wirral and Birkenhead. The other key radial routes (the A540, A51, A56 and A548) are less strategic outside of the effective ring road, instead serving more rural locations or towns and villages in less strategic locations such as in West Wirral, North Wales and West Cheshire.

5.3 Road Hierarchy

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 highlight the road hierarchy for Chester at two distinct scales. The first shows the city-wide road hierarchy, whilst the second depicts the hierarchy of roads local to Chester City Centre.

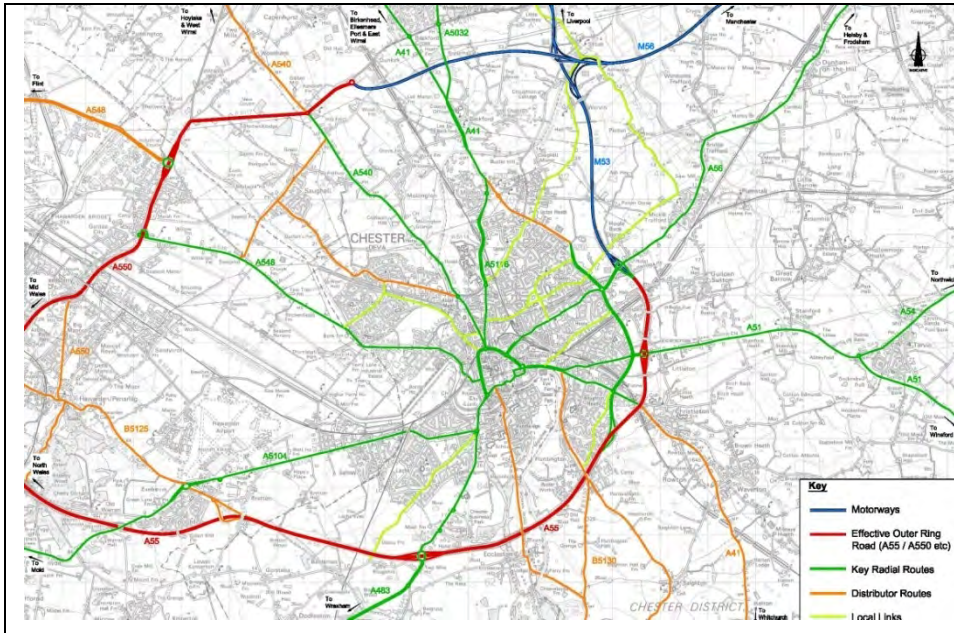


Figure 5.3: City-Wide Road Hierarchy

The dominance of the effective outer ring road is clear at this scale, as is the web of radial routes into the city centre. It is evident that the areas to the north and west are best served by high capacity roads,

with the areas east, and south east of the city less well connected. This is clearly a reflection of the rural nature of this part of the borough, although it should be noted that the rural population makes a up a significant proportion of the borough's people as a whole, and many of these rural communities rely on access to and from Chester City Centre for their essential business, leisure and shopping.

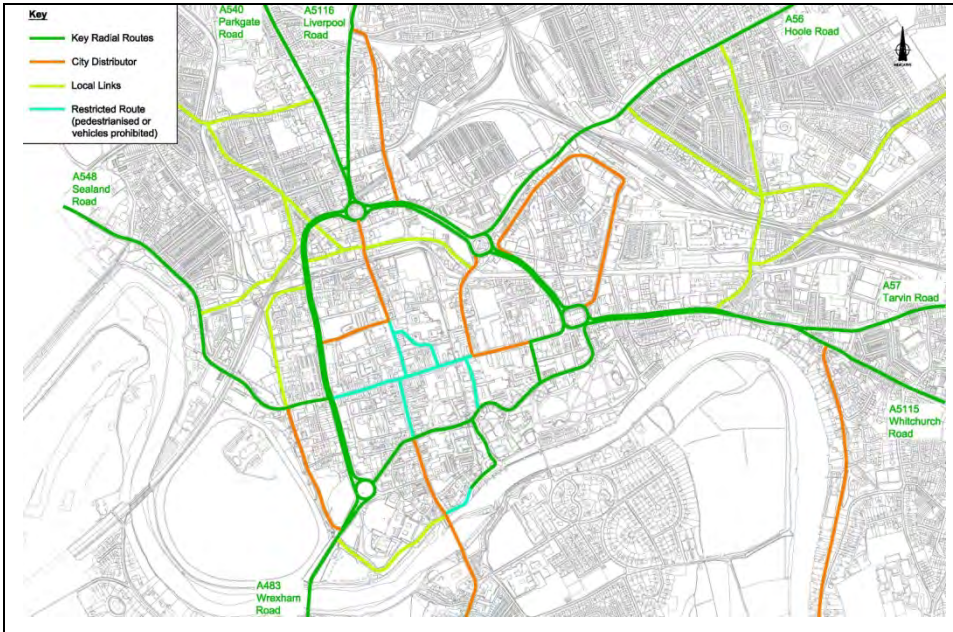


Figure 5.4 City Centre Road Hierarchy

The IRR that surrounds the historic city core is the clear feature at the larger scale, with the pedestrian zone and adjacent restricted movement streets contained within this collar. Both Northgate Street / Princess Street and Frodsham / Foregate Street are shown as 'city distributor' links reflecting their importance both in terms of buses and access for disabled persons and the Grosvenor Hotel, however stated aspirations exist for both of these to be made more pedestrian friendly, with possible future pedestrianisation scenarios being a key question to be addressed by the transport strategy.

5.4 Car Trips into Chester City Centre

Figure 5.5 shows traffic flows taken from a number of different link counts on key radial routes and supplied by CW&C. The different windows highlight the two peak times of the day and are separated into inbound and outbound flows. Due to the mixture of flows obtained during separate surveys, the flows shown are inferred and are subject to a margin of error, however the results appear reasonable and consistent with observations.

During the AM peak, 7,885 vehicles arrive in the inbound direction, the most heavily used of the key radial routes is the A483 Grosvenor Road

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(20% of the total) which enters the city via an historic bridge (with only one traffic lane in each direction). This is followed by the A51 Tarvin Road (16%), the A56 Hoole Road (14%), and the A5115 Christleton Road (11%). In terms of the 6 main arrival points at the IRR, the northern entry point of Liverpool and Parkgate Roads, and the eastern corridor through Boughton are busiest accommodating 27% of inbound traffic each. The route from Handbridge is the least used which is understandable due to the narrow single file bridge. In the outbound direction with 7,044 trips, similar results are observed, although in this case, the busiest radial route is the A51 Tarvin Road (18% of outbound traffic), perhaps explaining why this area has been classified as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

During the PM peak in which 7,050 trips are observed, the busiest inbound route is again the A483 (17%), with the A51 (16%), and the A56 (14%) close behind. In the outbound direction, of the 7,921 outbound trips made, 20% are again via the A483, with 15% along the A51 and 12% along the A56. In terms of the exit points from the IRR, the busiest is the northern arm carrying 33% of traffic, with the eastern Boughton corridor carrying the next highest amount (24% of the total).

This analysis provides an indication of the relative pressures on the IRR junctions around Chester City Centre. The Fountains Roundabout at the northern radial arm is the most heavily used, followed by the Barrs Roundabout and the Grosvenor Roundabout. In contrast, the Hoole Way Roundabout is less busy, accommodating only between 12 and 14% of arrivals/departures from the city centre.

5.5 Key Signed Routes in the City Centre

Figure 5.6 highlights directional traffic signage around the IRR in Chester City Centre and provides an overview of the routeing strategy for traffic in the city. All non-city-bound traffic, upon arrival at the IRR is directed around the northern section of the route with the text “All through traffic”. Nothing is directed inside the IRR apart from selected car parking and the County Court from Grosvenor Roundabout. The following locations are then signed away from the city on each radial route:

Grosvenor Roundabout

- NORTH WALES
- Lache
- Saltney

Watergate Street/Sealand Road

- Queensferry

Fountains Roundabout

- Ellesmere Port
- Hoylake
- Blacon

- Upton
- University
- Hospital
- Sealand Road Ind. & Retail Parks

Hoole Way Roundabout

- Manchester
- Liverpool
- Hoole
- Newton

The Bars

- Nantwich
- Whitchurch
- Station

A notable feature of this signage strategy is that no traffic is signed along the fourth arm of the ring road i.e. Union Street / Vicars Street / Pepper Street, and, in fact, the weight restriction for the route is advertised several times to dissuade unsuitable traffic. Despite this, the link is notably busy, especially at peak times but throughout the day indicating that the strategy is currently unheeded by a proportion of the demand.

5.6 Car Parking

5.6.1 City Centre Off-Street Car Parks

There are a total of 10 publicly owned, publicly available car parks in Chester City Centre with two extra facilities located just outside of the defined boundary on Christleton Road and Sandy Lane. These facilities are all chargeable (apart from Sandy Lane) with a variable pricing structure depending on length of stay, distance from the retail core and, in some cases, on user type.



Gorse Stacks Car Park



Market Car Park

The names and capacities of these Council owned facilities are shown in the following table:

Name / Description	Capacity
Little Roodee Car Park	452
Watergate Car Park	128
Cuppin Street Car Park	21
Trinity Street Car Park	145
Market Car Park	625
Garden Lane Car Park	120
Gorse Stacks Car Park	216
Brook Street Car Park	137
Christleton Road Car Park	19
Sandy Lane Car Park	40
Frodsham Street Car Park (Disabled only)	82
Hamilton Place Car Park (Disabled only)	20
Total	2,005

Table 5.1: Publicly Owned Publicly Available Parking Stock

It may be seen that there are currently 2,005 publicly owned car parking spaces in Chester spread across the city centre including two dedicated car parks for Blue Badge holders, of which Frodsham Street reverts to become available for all after 18:00 on weekdays. Motorcycles can park anywhere in any of the council’s city centre car parks as long as they do not occupy a bay or obstruct access in any way. Gorse Stacks and Hamilton Place car parks both have dedicated motorcycle parking areas.

In addition to these, a total of 15 privately owned car parks available to the general public have been identified around the city centre. The definition of this category is, perhaps, slightly more complex since there is a large amount of privately owned parking space given over to various uses across the city. These car parks are, however, available to the public either for a charge, or in return for shopping in a particular location, or in return for using a particular service such as rail services from Chester Station.

Table 5.2 lists these facilities noting for each the same information as above.

Name / Description	Capacity
Racecourse Car Park	500
Linenhall Car Park	250
Grosvenor Shopping Centre Car Park	525
Pepper Street Car Park	278
Centurion Point Retail Park	55
Northgate Arena Car Park	210
Chester Retail Station West Car Park	123
Iceland Car Park	55
Tesco Car Park	550
Browns Yard Car Park	75
The Boughton Centre Retail Park	50
Cestrian Court Retail Park	30
Albion Street Car Park	75
Chester Rail Station East Car Park	160
Chester Rail Station Short Stay	27
Total	2,963

Table 5.2: Privately Owned Publicly Available Parking Stock

These tables highlight that, of the 4,968 publicly available parking spaces in the city centre, around 40% are publicly owned with the remaining 60% in private ownership.

Figure 5.7 highlights the location of each of these car parks in the city centre.

5.6.2 Signed Routes to Public Car Parks
Signage to car parks along key routes into the city was reviewed as part of the baseline audit process. Information on signage for each city centre car park was obtained from CW&C and plotted on Figure 5.8 (overleaf).



Variable Message Signs for Gorse Stacks and Market



Market and Trinity Street Signage

From the main inbound corridors and the IRR, a total of 8 car parks are signed with 5 of these (Gorse Stacks, the Market, Pepper Street, the Grosvenor Shopping Centre, and Little Roodee) signed using Variable Message Signage (VMS). Taking each of the 8 car parks in order, the following signed routes apply:

- The **Market car park** is signed from the northern corridor (Liverpool Road / Parkgate Road), the southern corridor (Grosvenor Street), the north eastern corridor (Hoole Road), and the eastern corridor (Boughton Road). It is signed around the IRR to access the car park via Princess Street to the west, and avoiding the Union Street / Pepper Street corridor;
- **Pepper Street** is signed from the eastern corridor only. It is signed along Union Street / Pepper Street to access the car park from the east;
- **Gorse Stacks** is signed from the southern, northern, north eastern, and eastern corridors and accessed via Gorse Stacks itself. Consequently traffic from the east and north east are sent anti-clockwise around the IRR to the Fountains Roundabout to join traffic from the other corridors. All vehicles are then directed onto Northgate Street, Delamere Street and Gorse Stacks to access the car park;
- **Little Roodee** is also signed from all four of the above corridors. Traffic is also sent anti-clockwise around the IRR to the Grosvenor Roundabout, turning left into Castle Drive to access the car park. From the southern corridor, traffic sent north to the Grosvenor Roundabout and around a 360 degree turn to access Castle Drive from the southbound direction. This is due to the banned right turn from Grosvenor Road northbound, presumably to ease difficulties caused by right turning coach parties;
- The **Grosvenor Shopping Centre car park** is signed from the southern corridor and from Nicholas Street southbound. Traffic is directed to turn into Grosvenor Street from the Grosvenor Roundabout and to continue across Bridge Street into Pepper Street to access the car park from the west. The right turn movement from

Pepper Street is banned and consequently all access traffic must be from the west;

- Both **Watergate** and the **Race Course** car parks are signed from the western (Sealand Road) corridor and from St. Martin's Way / Nicholas Street only. Traffic is directed onto Watergate Street to access the car parks via entrances on New Crane Street;
- Finally, **Northgate** is signed from the IRR (St. Oswald's Way) only with signage directing traffic onto Victoria Road and into the car park via Northgate Avenue.

5.6.3 On-Street Parking

Available on-street parking within the city centre is relatively limited in size and extent, and notably does not include any element of chargeable provision – this sets Chester apart from some comparator cities such as York which have large areas of chargeable on-street parking. Instead, on-street spaces consist of limited waiting bays, in some cases combined with residents parking zones, and disabled parking bays which also serve as loading bays at certain times of the day. An approximate estimated total of around 970 spaces are available in total, representing only 8% of the total demarcated parking provision in the city.

Figure 5.9 (overleaf) shows the on-street parking offer and highlights the various user groups permitted at each location. The figure also shows the approximate number of vehicles that may comfortably park in each location and these indicate a total on-street parking provision of 968 excluding unrestricted streets.

The audit highlighted that the existing restricted parking areas are in many cases consistently busy throughout the working day, perhaps due to the price of public short-stay car parking off-street, as the following photographs highlight.



Residents Parking Zone / Limited Waiting Bays – Commonhall Street



Limited Waiting Bays – Bridge Street



Disabled Bays – Foregate Street



Residents Parking Zone – King Street

It should be noted that, whilst motorcycles may park in any Council owned car park in the city centre, there is no dedicated on-street motorcycle parking available. Given the general lack of motorcycles observed in off-street locations during the audit, it is not considered a priority to greatly increase the provision of motorcycle parking in the city using on-street space. Furthermore, a recent specific request made to the Council to allow motorcycle parking in the bicycle parking area at the junction of Grosvenor Street and Bridge Street is not considered suitable due to the lack of available space (motorcycles are significantly larger than bicycles), the need for additional street signage, and the general prominence that the location would provide which should be retained for more sustainable mode choices such as cycling.

It is, however, considered conceivable that motorcycle parking provision is inadequate to meet the demand, and further on-street spaces are, in fact, required. It is therefore recommended that a review be carried out to determine the demand for motorcycle parking, if suitable locations exist and to examine the policy and enforcement implications of this.

Car Parking - Issues

- The audit noted significant variation in the quality of car park in terms of surfacing, lighting, CCTV coverage. Particularly in need of maintenance were the Council owned car parks of the Market multi-storey and Garden Lane, the latter of which suffers from pothole formation and rough surfacing. The privately owned car parks of Chester Station West, Brown’s Yard, and Northgate Arena were also in need of maintenance indicating that this is not just a Council issue.
- Of the 4,968 publicly available parking spaces in Chester, around 40% are publicly owned and the remaining 60% are privately owned. This indicates that there is a large amount of parking space in Chester but a relatively small amount under the control of the Council against other comparator Local Authorities. This increases the importance of parking controls within the planning

system.

- A week long desktop survey monitoring the hourly occupancy level of key car parks in the city centre concluded that, at its busiest period on Saturday afternoon, car parks were only 75% occupied and that there is consequently significant spare capacity in available parking stock around the city. This indicates that levels of supply are adequate in Chester, however there may be scope for a rationalisation of space to reduce the overall number of facilities.
- Pricing structures vary hugely across the city centre between public and private, long and short-stay car parks. For short stays, location and ownership seem less important to price, however for longer stays outer publicly owned car parks are significantly cheaper with the most expensive option being the privately owned Pepper Street in a central location. The challenge will be to create a pricing strategy that encourages long stays and minimises short-term trips into the city centre.
- Only the Market, Gorse Stacks and Little Roodee are signed from all the main inbound corridors - routeing is via the IRR. Only Pepper Street and the Grosvenor Shopping Centre are signed via the southern arm of the ring road from The Bars and the Grosvenor Roundabout respectively, and in both cases vehicles must exit in a different direction to that in which they entered. This creates additional network trips and is inconvenient for drivers.
- Pedestrian routes between the city centre and the car parks vary hugely in distance and quality. The need to cross the IRR often necessitates the use of inconvenient crossing points or unpleasant subways. Frodsham Street is also a key route but suffers from conflict between pedestrians and heavy trafficking, particularly buses.
- In a recent survey, 85% of city centre off-street parkers were intending to stay for 2 hours or less with 14% staying for 30 minutes or less. Only 5% planned on staying for up to 8 hours. The parking strategy for the city aims to encourage longer stays.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests difficulties in finding a publicly available car parking space in which an overnight stay may be undertaken. Whilst several open air car parks are open overnight, the multi-storey car parks (which are generally perceived to be safer locations to leave cars overnight) are not. Combined with difficulties caused by the need to obtain a new ticket early in the morning, this has the potential to impact upon the ability of residential visitors to enjoy Chester’s nightlife and may become more problematic once the city’s theatre aspirations are realised.
- On-street parking in Chester City Centre is limited and, in comparison with cities such as York, does not include any chargeable component.
- On-street bays are divided into limited waiting bays of various

lengths of stay, residents parking zones (often offering some short stay limited waiting), and disabled bays (offering loading for businesses between certain hours of the day).

- Bays are often well used throughout the day – recent 12 hour beat surveys have shown that City Road is consistently busy throughout the day with average durations of stay between 50 and 70 minutes depending on whether it is a weekday or a Saturday. This may indicate the potential to introduce chargeable parking in some locations around the city centre.

Car Parking - Opportunities

The recently produced Car Parking strategy for Chester City Centre makes a number of recommendations related to city centre car parking, many of which are in the process of being implemented. The following points provide a number of these:

- **Control:** The Council should pursue a policy of increasing control over city centre parking stock via a combination of Service Level Agreements with external owners and operators for new car parks, and construction of new Council controlled car parks in the Commercial Quarter (as per the current masterplan proposals) and along Boughton Road (since the proposed Waitrose car park will mainly serve the foodstore only and will be owned and managed by the private sector).
- **Pricing Policy:** The Council should pursue a new unified policy. In general, commuters and regular visitors are to be encouraged to use Park & Ride wherever possible, and outer bands of car parking including facilities for rail users and Central Business Quarter employees. Inner zone car parking (clustered around the IRR) is recommended to be used by a mixture of longer stay tourists, older and limited mobility persons, and borough residents on essential short-stays.
- **Signage:** All key inner and outer car parks could be signed from the inbound corridors using VMS and directional signage, and branded by uses or city centre quarters rather than individual car park names: Central, Rail, Commercial, Commuter; and Blue Badge. Each corridor should have signage leading to a Park & Ride site and at least one large outer and one large inner car park.
- **Overnight Parking:** All Council car parks should offer a 24 hour tariff, including Park & Ride where tickets can be used to return to vehicles the following morning. It is also recommended that options to increase security at surface car parks are explored, for example implementing evening and/or overnight staffing by a security guard in some locations.
- **On-Street Charging:** On-street parking charges could be introduced at locations which currently offer limited waiting for longer than 10 minutes, particularly Foregate Street, City Road

and Brook Street which have high demand during the day.

- **Quality and Facilities:** The Council should continue to work through a rolling programme of enhancements at all Council-owned car parks including Park & Ride at which ticket machines, waiting areas, and cycle lockers should be upgraded (or provided if not currently present). Furthermore, it is recommended that access to information be improved both via web and on car park notice boards and that pedestrian way-finding signage be provided at car parks and along pedestrian and cycle routes to the city centre from key car parks, particularly from the outer car parks.

5.7 Park & Ride

As for the city centre car parks, a thorough review and audit was conducted on the four Park & Ride sites within Chester, recording data on quality, numbers of spaces, security, pricing and signage. The following sections provide details on a number of specific findings from the audit and review.



Boughton Heath Park & Ride

Sealand Road Park & Ride



Upton Park & Ride (Chester Zoo)

Wrexham Road Park & Ride

Figure 5.10 shows the location of each of the Park & Ride sites in relation to the city centre, highlights the usual route followed for each service, and shows the latest available year utilisation and gross revenue statistics for each facility, and per space within each facility.

It may be seen that the Park & Ride services are located on four of the busiest inbound corridors serving areas north, south, east and west of the city centre respectively. In terms of parking capacity, Wrexham Road is clearly the largest car park providing 1,200 parking spaces. Upton is smallest with room for only 460 vehicles. Despite this, Upton is a close second to Wrexham Road in terms of annual utilisation with over 211,000 users against approximately 234,000, Boughton Heath being third most popular and Sealand Road being least well used with just under 123,000 users in the most recent year. This leads to the fact that the Upton Park & Ride is by far the most heavily used facility per space with each used 459 times per year on average. Sealand Road's 760 spaces are used least on average with around 162 users per year, however this is similar to Wrexham Road's total usage per space per year which is only 195 due to its large size.

In terms of revenue, the larger capacity at Wrexham Road is a big advantage over the other sites, turning over in excess of £364,000 per year as opposed to the smallest earner which is Sealand Road at just under £191,000. Per space however (and again due to its small size), Upton is the most popular facility per space turning over £503 per space against Boughton Heath (£309), Wrexham Road (£303) and Sealand Road (£251).

Figures 5.11 and 5.12 show the total annual utilisation and gross revenue recorded for each city centre car park and Park & Ride site since the 2007 – 2008 financial year.

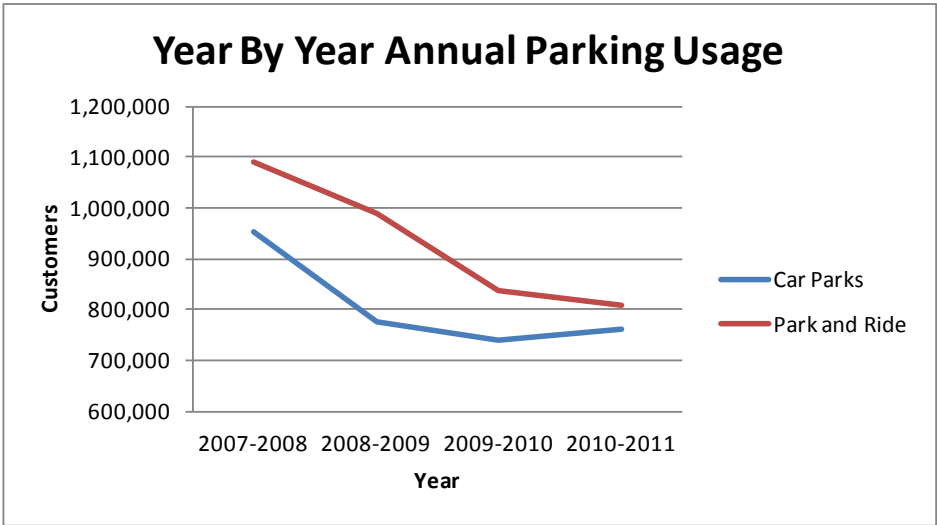


Figure 5.11: Annual Parking Usage (Source: Cheshire West and Chester Council)

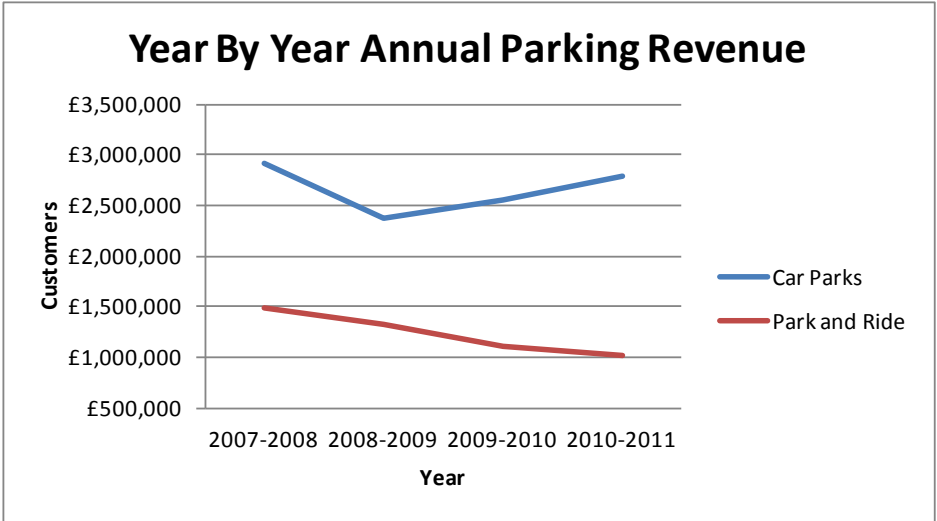


Figure 5.12: Annual Parking Gross Revenue (Source: Cheshire West and Chester Council)

These graphs show that, although usage for Park & Ride services is significantly higher than for central car parks, revenue for Park & Ride is lower than city centre receipts due to the lower prices for this facility. Furthermore, both usage and revenue for parking has fallen since 2007 – 2008, however this has begun to recover in the case of city centre car parks in the last few years. Despite a slight slowing in the rate, usage and revenue figures for Park & Ride have continued to decline year on year up to March 2011. This indicates a rebalancing in parking demand within Chester and may be a result of the increased availability of central spaces since the 2008 recession. It may also be a result of the 'Free after 3' promotion that has been available at some city centre car parks since 2008.

5.7.1 Park & Ride Signage on Key Routes
Quality and quantity of signage for Park & Ride services from key routes varies greatly between specific Park & Ride locations. The

locations of these Park & Ride directional signs is shown in **Figure 5.13**.

- **Upton Park & Ride** is signed from both the north and south on the A41. From the north, the first sign encountered is just before the junction with the A5116 Liverpool Road. There is then a further sign a few hundred metres further down the road and a third sign at the roundabout junction of the A41 and the Zoo entrance. A further two signs then point the way into the car park at roundabouts on the Zoo access road.

From the south, the first signs for Upton are located at the roundabout junction of the A41 and the A56 Hoole Road directing traffic north west on the A41. A sign is located on Hoole Road south of the junction with the M53/A55, but north of the junction with the A41, and then signage directs traffic at the roundabout on this approach and at the correct exit. A further sign is then encountered on the left hand side prior to the junction with Caughall Road, and another is set on the left prior to the zoo access junction. Signage from this junction is then as for the northern direction.

- **Boughton Heath Park & Ride** is signed from north, south and east on the A41 and from the north east on the A51. From the north, the first sign is encountered just a few metres north of the junction between the ring road and Whitchurch Road directing traffic to continue straight on at the junction. Further signage on the roundabout itself and at the exit then directs traffic to continue southbound on the A41 with a final sign at the entrance.

From the south, the first sign is encountered on the A55 at the entrance to the slip-road leading onto the A41. A further sign then advises vehicles to go right around the roundabout to enter the site from the north with signage on each exit of the roundabout to confirm this.

From the east, a sign is located on Whitchurch Road under the flyover carrying the A55 overhead. A further sign is then located at the northern entrance to the site thus avoiding the need to use the Boughton junction. Finally, from the A51 Tarvin Road, signs are located for westbound traffic just to the east of the junction with the A55, and at the junction with the A41 directing traffic southbound. No signage is provided for the eastbound direction on City Road.

- **Wrexham Road** is signed from the north, south and west. From the A483 northbound, signage is first encountered a few metres to the south of the junction with the A55 with signs provided on both sides of the northbound carriageway. Further signage is then provided at the roundabout itself and on the northbound exit. Two further signs are encountered to the left of the northbound carriageway prior to the entrance junction, and a final sign is then provided on the correct exit of this junction. From the north, signage is much more limited

with just one sign prior to the entrance junction located a few metres to the north.

From the west, two signs are provided on the A55 eastbound. The first is immediately after the bridge over Balderton Brook. The second is at the entrance to the slip-road leading up to the junction with the A483. Northbound signage is then picked up at this junction. There is no signage provided in the westbound direction on the A55.

- For the **Sealand Road site**, signage is much more limited. No sign for the Park & Ride is encountered until just prior to reaching the site entrance from either direction. From the west, the first sign is located just north west of the junction with Ferry Lane on the left hand side, with a second sign located on the right had side of the road at the entrance to the site itself. From the city centre direction, only one sign is available on the left hand side at the entrance to the site itself.

It should be noted that signage for all sites from the motorway and trunk road network is extremely limited. No signs exist for either Boughton Heath or Upton from the M53 or M56 motorways, with the earliest sign encountered on Hoole Road south of the M53 junction. There is no signage for Upton from the A55 northbound, and no signage for Wrexham Road from the A55 westbound. There are also no signs for Sealand Road on any of the strategic routes into Chester apart from just prior to the entrance on Sealand Road. Furthermore, existing signs are often in need of maintenance and display signs of graffiti. This may be hindering the effort to capture potential Park & Ride customers on their inbound corridor and may potentially need to be addressed.

Park & Ride - Issues

- Wrexham Road Park & Ride has the largest car parking capacity and has the largest utilisation and revenue figures for the most recent year. Upton is the smallest site but has the second highest utilisation and revenue and is the most used site per space. This indicates that the space distribution around the city does not currently fit the demand and may support the aspiration to create a further Park & Ride site at Hoole Road to provide additional capacity.
- Park & Ride sites are in general more heavily used than city centre car parks due to their larger size, and when grouped together are more heavily used than the publicly owned parking offer in the city centre as a whole. Revenue per facility is much smaller for Park & Rides however, due to the cheaper ticket price. Innovative ways to increase revenue may, therefore, be required including potentially diversifying the Park & Ride offer and improved revenue enforcement techniques etc.

- Utilisation and revenue for Park & Rides has been falling steadily since 2007-2008, whereas demand for city centre facilities has now started to recover. This could be due to the introduction of 'Free After 3' or could also be a symptom of Park & Ride being slower to respond to market conditions since the 2008-2009 recession.
- Signage for Park & Ride services varies greatly in availability and quality. Upton and Boughton Heath are well signed from both north and south on the A41. Wrexham Road is also well-signed from the south on the A483 and from the west on the A55. Sealand Road is poorly signed from the A548 with only signage close to the site entrance available. No sites are signed from the motorway network however, and signage from the A55 is limited and sporadic in general.
- Some quality issues exist at Park & Ride sites in terms of provision of timetable information, sheltered seating and ticket machines, although resurfacing has now been completed at all facilities. In general, the sites could benefit from some new technology in terms of payment and information, following the recommendations of the strategy in terms of collection method.

Park & Ride - Opportunities

- **Signage:** It is recommended that Upton Park & Ride be signed from M53 Southbound and the A55 Northbound, Boughton Park & Ride from both directions on the A55 at its junction with the A51, and Sealand from the A550 with an additional sign between the A550 and site. It is also recommended that VMS signage be rolled out to be used for Park & Ride, as well as city centre signage.
- **Location:** It is recommended that work be undertaken to maximise use of informal Park & Ride sites such as station car parks along the Merseyrail and other rail routes. A new Park & Ride site could be constructed on the Hoole Road corridor with the potential to create drop-off / pick up point in Hoole District Centre itself around the Faulkner Street area.
- **Optimising use of Resources:** It is recommended that the Park & Ride offer be diversified to include retail, cafe / restaurant, cycle storage and hire uses etc. Carry out a comprehensive review of Park & Ride provision, including contractual arrangements, assessment of demand for a fifth Park & Ride site, alternative routeing and pick-up / drop-off options and a review of pricing structure, including concessionary fares.

5.8 Collisions

Accident data for the whole of Chester urban area for the latest 3 years was obtained from CW&C and this information is shown in **Figure 5.14**

and **Figure 5.15**. The first highlights the locations of slight injury accidents, whilst the second shows serious and fatal collisions.

In the case of slight injury accidents, the collisions follow the key radial corridors, and the inner and outer ring road systems very closely with relatively few collisions occurring in locations off these routes. This might be expected since it relates to volume of traffic on each of these links and indicates no particular safety issue in any one location although each of the junctions on the outer ring road show clusters due to weight of traffic as expected.

The serious and fatal accidents are much more randomly spread around the city with few notable cluster locations. An exception to this is at the junction of the A483 and A55 to the south of the city (and on the approaches to this busy interchange) at which 9 serious accidents (1 of which involved a fatality) were recorded in the last three years alone. This may indicate an inherent safety issue with this junction, or may be a symptom of heavy congestion observed to occur at and around the interchange.

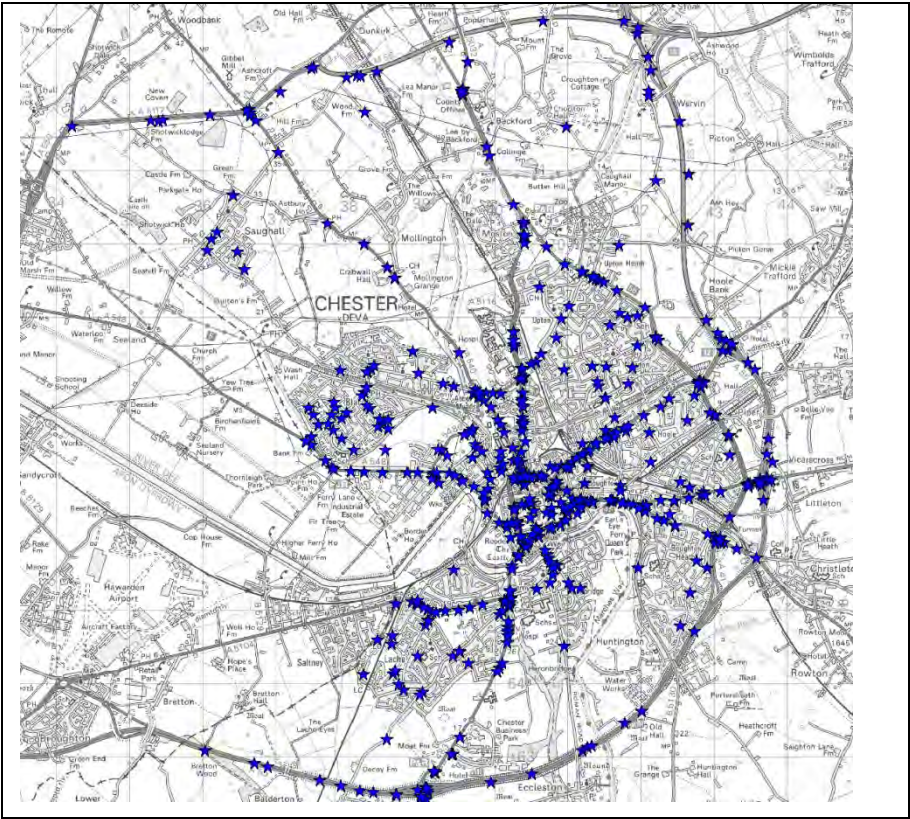


Figure 5.14: Slight Accident Locations (3 years)

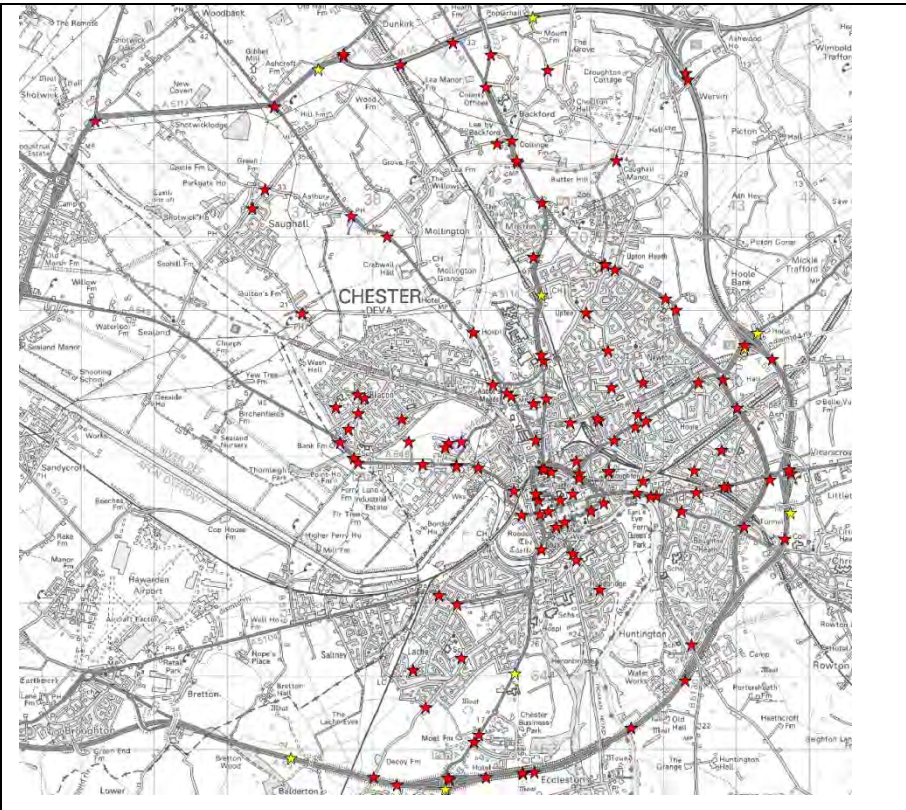


Figure 5.15: Serious and Fatal Accident Locations (3 years)

5.9 Rail Network

The rail network in Chester is centred on Chester Station (formerly Chester General), which is located some 10 minutes walk to the north east of the historic and retail core, and outside of the IRR envelope. The station provides a useful departure and arrival point for journeys to and from London, Liverpool, Birmingham, North and South Wales, Manchester and Mid Cheshire, and also has a revitalised role as an interchange station given the large number of local stations that feed into it and its hourly service to London amongst other destinations.

The most recent figures from the office of rail regulation place Chester as the 103rd busiest station in the country with 1,526,403 entries and exits in the year 2010 to 2011, and 723,987 interchanges. This indicates that, in terms of passenger numbers, it is ahead of major national stations including Crewe and Derby.

Figure 5.16 highlights the routes that serve Chester station.

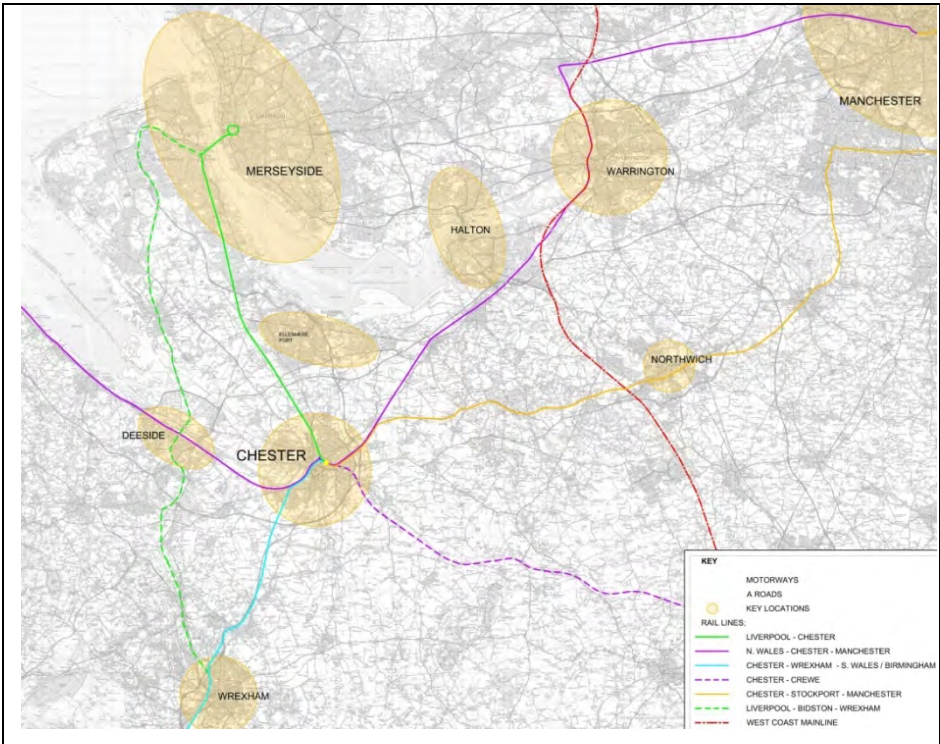


Figure 5.16: Chester Strategic Rail Context

The trains serving Chester station are summarised in the following table which shows normal daytime frequencies for working weekdays and for Sundays for the purposes of comparison:

Route	Number of Daytime Services per Hour		Operators
	Mon – Fri	Sunday	
(Holyhead -) Chester – London	1	1	Virgin
(Holyhead -) Chester – Shrewsbury – Birmingham International	1 per 2 hours	1 per 2 hours	Arriva Train Wales
(Holyhead -) Chester – Shrewsbury – Cardiff Central (-Maesteg)	1 per 2 hours	0	Arriva Train Wales
(Llandudno / Holyhead -) Chester – Warrington - Manchester	1	1	Arriva Train Wales
(Holyhead -) Chester – Crewe	1	1	Arriva Train Wales
Chester – Northwich – Altrincham - Manchester	1	1 per 2 hours	Northern
Chester – Birkenhead - Liverpool	4	2	Merseyrail
Totals	9	6	

Table 5.3: Chester Rail Services

These highlight a good geographical spread of areas covered by rail from Chester with 9 trains per hour during the working weekday and 6 per hour on a Sunday, although frequencies are considerably better on some routes than others. The core West Coast Mainline route to London is hourly and well used throughout the day particularly, as might be expected, at peak times. The journey is undertaken via the upgraded West Coast Mainline using high speed Voyager trains and as such is completed in just over two hours, making this a popular alternative to road or air travel.

The most frequent service is the local Merseyrail service to Liverpool via Wirral which runs at a 15 minute frequency during the weekday daytime although this is quite slow end-to-end and is the only direct rail link between Chester and Liverpool. The Merseyrail link does provide good opportunities for commuters both into and out of Chester, however, which is important given the high proportion of travel between Chester and Merseyside (particularly Wirral).

Far less well served directly from Chester are the major cities of Manchester and Birmingham. Two trains per hour travel between Chester and Manchester, one semi-fast service via Warrington and Newton-le-Willows, and one local stopping service via the mid Cheshire line through Northwich, Knutsford, Altrincham, and Stockport. Given the long journey times on both of these services end-to-end in comparison with the private car (especially via the Mid-Cheshire Line) and the relative infrequency (the local service departs just a few minutes after the semi-fast service), these services are not considered to be an adequate alternative to road travel and are consequently not well used for trips between Chester and Manchester.

Trains to Birmingham via Wrexham and Shrewsbury are every two hours from Chester, with trains to Cardiff via Wrexham and Shrewsbury every other hour. Whilst services to Birmingham are infrequent, the journey time to Birmingham is also supplemented by the ability to change at Crewe for more frequent and (in some cases) faster services.

There is a general lack of electrification on most of the lines into and out of Chester, on the North and South Wales routes, and the Manchester and Crewe lines. Whilst the Merseyrail network is third rail electrified, this is an almost totally isolated network and has no bearing on other services into and out of Chester, consequently most of the trains that use Chester station are diesel services and are consequently slower at accelerating and decelerating and are noisier and less friendly to the environment. Noise issues are particularly important given the large numbers of residents that live adjacent to the rail line, such as Hoole, Newton and Bache.

A number of historical rail alignments exist in and around the Chester area which are of potential importance to the city in the future. The Chester – Deeside former rail route (now a greenway) has been put forward as a potential rapid transit route in the past, although the scheme was eventually dropped. In addition, rail chords and curves which have fallen into disuse but which could benefit the city include

the Halton curve – a section of track linking the Helsby–Runcorn East track section with the Liverpool branch of the West Coast Mainline just south of Runcorn station – which could potentially provide quick and direct access from North Wales and Chester to Liverpool and Liverpool Airport. Other potential improvements include electrification of the Ellesmere Port - Helsby line with a chord to provide direct access to Chester, and electrification of the Wrexham –Bidston line to integrate this route into Merseyrail and provide direct trains from Deeside and Wrexham to Liverpool.

Rail - Issues

- Infrequent and slow services between Chester and Manchester, and Chester and Birmingham, providing a poor alternative to the private car.
- Lack of electrification on most of the routes into Chester means that the majority of services into and out of the station are diesel trains. These are less efficient in terms of acceleration / deceleration and are noisier and less clean in terms of their environmental impact.
- Currently, there are no fast connections to Liverpool and Liverpool Airport, and no direct services between Chester and Ellesmere Port or Deeside due to the dismantling of former rail lines and chords.

Rail – Opportunities

- An enhanced service between Chester and Manchester, possibly with through connections to Leeds and beyond, is a possible result of the Northern Hub package of measures due to be delivered before December 2019. In light of recent announcements on the electrification of the Chat Moss and North Trans-Pennine rail lines, there is the opportunity to look at further electrification following these projects.
- Reinstating the Halton Curve should be a key aspiration of both CW&C and North Wales authorities since it provides a direct link to Liverpool John Lennon airport and a fast direct route into Liverpool city centre.
- Electrification of the Ellesmere Port –Helsby line could have beneficial impacts for the wider travel-to-work area of Chester as it could potentially enhance the quality, reliability of the service and provide a direct rail link between Ellesmere Port and Chester.

5.10 Bus Network
Chester is at the centre of a large and complex bus network of multiple services and types of service. In addition to the local network of buses serving outlying areas within the urban boundary including Blacon, Saltney, Lache and Huntington, a number of inter-urban and rural

services all congregate in Chester serving the larger towns and cities in the North West and Flintshire, and the more sparsely populated parts of Cheshire West and the North Wales. The bus routes serving Chester are summarised in **Table 5.4** and are illustrated in **Figures 5.17 to 5.21**.

Number	Route	Number of Daytime Services per hour		Operator
		Mon – Fri	Sun	
1	Liverpool to Chester	3	2	Arriva / First
1	Wrexham to Chester	5	3	Arriva
1, 1A	Blacon to Chester	12	4	Arriva / First
2	Liverpool to Chester	3	0	Arriva / First
X2	Ellesmere Port to Chester	2	0	Arriva / First
3, 3A	Mold to Chester	2	0	Arriva
4, 4S	Mold to Chester	2	2	Arriva
5	Huntington to Chester	2	2	First
6	Pantymwyn to Chester	1	0	Townlynx
6	Belgrave Road to Chester	2	0	First
7, 7A	Vicar's Cross to Chester	2	0	First
8	Piper's Ash to Chester	0	1	First
9	Mold to Chester	1	0	GHA
9	Piper's Ash to Chester	1	0	First
10	Connah's Quay to Chester	4	2	Arriva
11, 11A	Holywell to Chester	2	1	Arriva / GHA
12	Connah's Quay to Chester	2	0	Arriva
13	Loggerheads to Chester	0	0.5	Arriva / GHA
15, 15A	Saughall to Chester	4	0	Arriva / First
16, 16A, X16	Saltney to Chester	4	2	First
21, 21A, 21B	Runcorn to Chester	1	0	Arriva / WCM
22, 24	West Kirby to Chester	1	0	Avon
27	Guilden Sutton to Chester	1	0	Arrowebrook
X30	Warrington to Chester	1	0	Arriva
41, 41A, 41B	Waverton to Chester	2	1	Helms

Number	Route	Number of Daytime Services per hour		Operator
		Mon – Fri	Sun	
X44, X55	Mold to Chester	2	0	Arriva
45	Huntington to Chester	1	0	Helms
51	Plas Newton to Chester	4	2	First
53	Kingsway to Chester	4	0	First
82, 82A, 82B, X82	Northwich to Chester	2	0	GHA
83	Bulkeley to Chester	0	0	GHA
84	Crewe to Chester	2	1	Arriva
C56	Wrexham to Chester	1	0	D Jones
DB1	Blacon to Mold	1	0	GHA
DB2	Saltney Ferry to Ellesmere Port	1	0	GHA
DB3	Blacon to Leeswood	0	0	GHA
DB5	Lache to Huntington	0	0	GHA
DB6	Saughall to Frodsham	0	1	GHA
DB8	Ince to Chester Business Park	0	0	GHA
P&R 30	Boughton Heath to Chester	6	4	First
P&R 31	Sealand Road P&R to Chester	5	4	First
P&R 32	Upton to Chester	5	4	First
P&R 33	Wrexham Road to Chester	8	4	First
City Rail Link	Chester Rail Station to Chester	10	4	Aintree Coaches
Totals		112	44.5	

Table 5.4: Bus Services in Chester

It may be seen that Chester is served during the working weekday by 112 buses per hour spread across 44 routes or route families, and that on a Sunday this number is to only 40% of the weekday total.

Figures 5.22 and 5.23 show the frequencies of bus services along specific sections of route in Chester City Centre. These are coloured ‘hot to cold’ to show relative trafficking on a standard weekday daytime and on a standard Sunday. It may be seen that at present, the two main bus route circuits into the Bus Exchange and along Frodsham and Foregate Street are the most heavily used links (along with the IRR) although it should be noted that integration between these two main hubs is not particularly good, with the number of services using both limited.

It may also be seen that there is no bus penetration into the majority of the historic core. Similarly to the daily traffic flow figures, the A483 Grosvenor Road is the most important entry corridor with 24 buses per hour arriving from this direction during the week, closely followed by the A5116 Liverpool Road with 19. Other corridors supply fewer services although it should be noted that the A51 Boughton Road provides a combined total from three corridors of 28 services per hour during the working week, whilst the northern corridor supplies a total of 34 buses per hour.

Going forward, it is known that the proposed Northgate retail development scheme in and around the vicinity of the existing bus Exchange in Chester will not provide a replacement bus facility on the same scale and consequently work has been undertaken to identify a replacement site and to design a workable facility. It is clear that the only site capable of accommodating the number of buses and the resultant bus station is Gorse Stacks to the north of the city centre. A concept scheme for this area, incorporating improvements to the local road network including the Hoole Way / St. Oswalds Way junction, has been developed by architects and has received a provisional positive response from local members, however continued detailed design work is clearly required, including testing of the local highway network to ensure it continues to operate efficiently and without adversely affecting traffic movements.

5.10.1 Coach Network
As an important historic centre and tourism destination, Chester generates a large number of coach trips into and out of the city centre from a large number of tour operating companies and National Express long distance coaches. Many of these vehicles carry elderly or infirm passengers and therefore require facilities to allow them to pick up and drop off within the most central quarters of the city including the historic core. Layover space is also required in the interim with driver facilities and potentially waiting facilities for passengers returning early.

The primary coach parking location in Chester is Little Roodee car park at the southern end of the city centre which has space for 30 coaches. This location has cafe, retail and toilet facilities for coach drivers and passengers and has proved popular as a result. As such, coaches tend currently to drop-off passengers at a central location, park and layover at Little Roodee and then collect parties at either Little Roodee or at pre-arranged points around the city centre.

The following figure highlights the designated drop-off / pick-up points around the city centre and how they relate to Little Roodee car park:

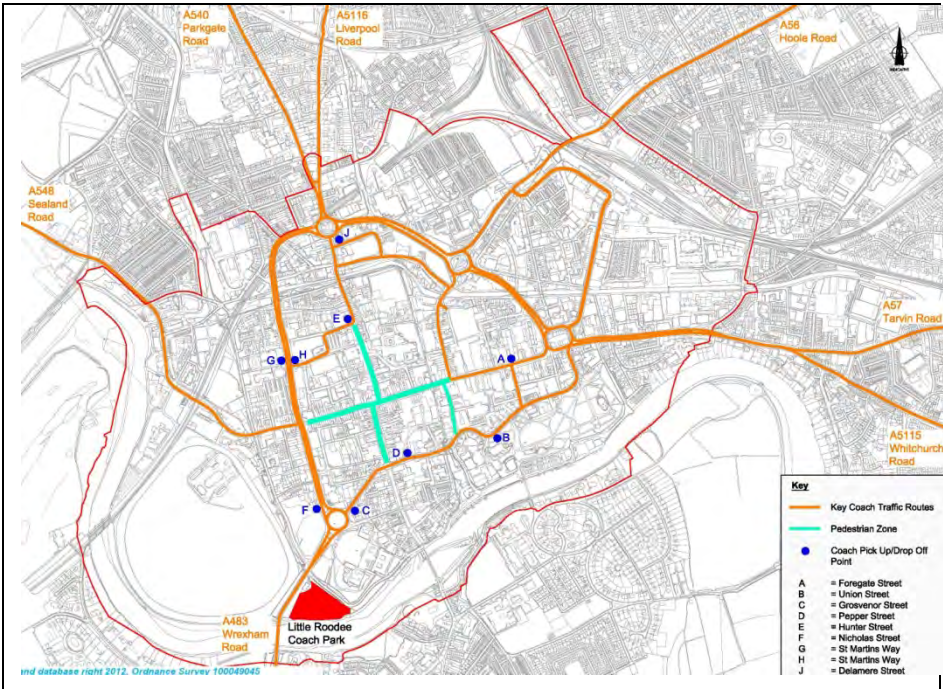


Figure 5.24: Coach Drop-Off and Pick-Up Points in Chester (Source: Marketing Chester)

Bus and Coach Network – Issues

- Chester is at the heart of a large and comprehensive network of bus routes including, local, inter-urban, and rural routes and supplemented by Park & Ride and City Rail Link shuttle services.
- Whilst the network is mature and serves a wide geographic spread, the large number of routes and operators can be confusing and intimidating for occasional users, and the frequencies are often low reducing the usability. In addition, the large number of stopping locations in the city centre including the two hubs can add to confusion about which locations each route serves.
- Integration between city centre termini is generally poor with no signed walking routes and relatively few services using both. Many routes do not integrate well with the rail station necessitating the use of the City Rail Link bus which is no longer free to use. Of the coach pick-up and drop-off points, the most heavily used are adjacent to the Odeon site (to become the site of the new Theatre), and point H on St. Martin's Way in a lay-by adjacent to the junction with Watergate Street. The former of these is not considered preferable due to the limited available space and the impact that these vehicles have on other traffic and pedestrians in that area.
- The lay-by adjacent to Watergate Street is a popular set-down point, however, and is useful for easy access to Little Roodee car park following or prior to a pick-up / drop-off. One aspect of the

strategy work will be to review options for creating a more formal coach drop-off facility in this or another equally accessible location.

- The stop outside Chester Visitors Centre on Union Street is also well-used, however this stop is currently rather peripheral and not ideal for providing access to the retail core. This may change in the future, however, in line with One City Plan proposals to reduce traffic flows on Union Street / Pepper Street.

Bus and Coach - Opportunities

- Proposals to relocate the bus station to Gorse Stacks appear workable from an operational standpoint and would offer improved integration between services and with the rail station, however network testing is required in order to instil confidence that the road network can cope with the network and traffic alterations.

5.11 Cycling and Walking

The Cheshire West and Chester District offers an extensive and strategic network of cycleways and walking routes (see **Figure 5.25**) that has contributed to the fairly high levels of cycling and walking levels for work trips in the Chester, with almost 5% of people cycling to work and 15% of people walking (Source: 2001 Census). This network has been enhanced, when in October 2008, Chester was awarded Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) Status and with it a share of £100 million of government funding to spend on new routes, signage, training and promotion over a three year period. On top of CDT funds, direct links to key strategic employment sites are being targeted through the Connect to Jobs LSTF Project, whilst there has been further investment from CW&C Council and Sustrans, including Connect2.

5.11.1 National Cycle Routes

Cheshire West & Chester benefits from having three National Cycle Network (NCN) routes within the district, which make use of the existing alignments of the Shropshire Union Canal and the disused rail line to Deeside, connecting Chester with Ellesmere Port and other important destinations. The routes are as follows: -

- **NCN 5 (Reading to Holyhead):** Part of a long route which locally connects Chester with Ellesmere Port (via routes adjacent to the Shropshire Union Canal) and links to Flintshire / North Wales (via a disused rail line to Deeside – known as the Millennium Route).
- **NCN 45 (Salisbury to Chester):** Locally connects Whitchurch to Chester City Centre via a traffic-free route adjacent to the Shropshire Union Canal from Christleton.
- **NCN 56 (Chester to Liverpool):** Connects Chester with Neston, continuing up the Wirral to Liverpool, via Wallasey and linking with NCN 62 (Trans-Pennine Trail) in Liverpool.

These links place Chester on the strategic network of cycle routes and connect it with important regional destinations, however the distances involved and time required to travel by bicycle between these destinations make these links unlikely to be used by anyone other than the most experienced of cyclists or leisure cyclists completing all or part of each route at weekends.

Figure 5.25 highlights the strategic cycle network around Chester Urban Area.

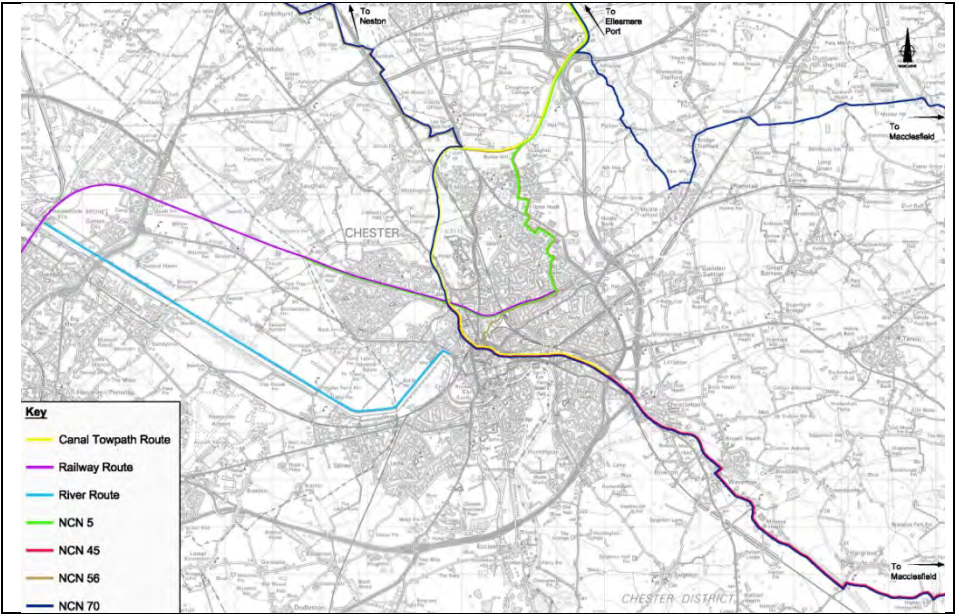


Figure 5.25: Chester Strategic Cycling Network

5.11.2 Regional Cycle Routes

The next tier of routes is regional routes, which often provide strategic linkages to the national routes detailed above. Within the core study area, there are 2 key regional routes as follows:

- **Regional Route 70 – Cheshire Cycleway:** Circular route around Cheshire linking Neston, Bollington, Marton and Chester.
- **Regional Route 89 – Cheshire Riverside Path:** Connects Hawarden Bridge with Chester, running alongside the River Dee.

5.11.3 Local Cycle Routes

In addition to the above national and regional routes, CW&C has implemented a series of local routes centering on Chester, connecting the network of local and strategic cycle routes with traffic-free sections. The local cycle network is divided into 10 branded colour routes. Each route is several miles long and connects most of the localities within the wider urban area to the city centre. The routes are shown in

Figure 5.26.

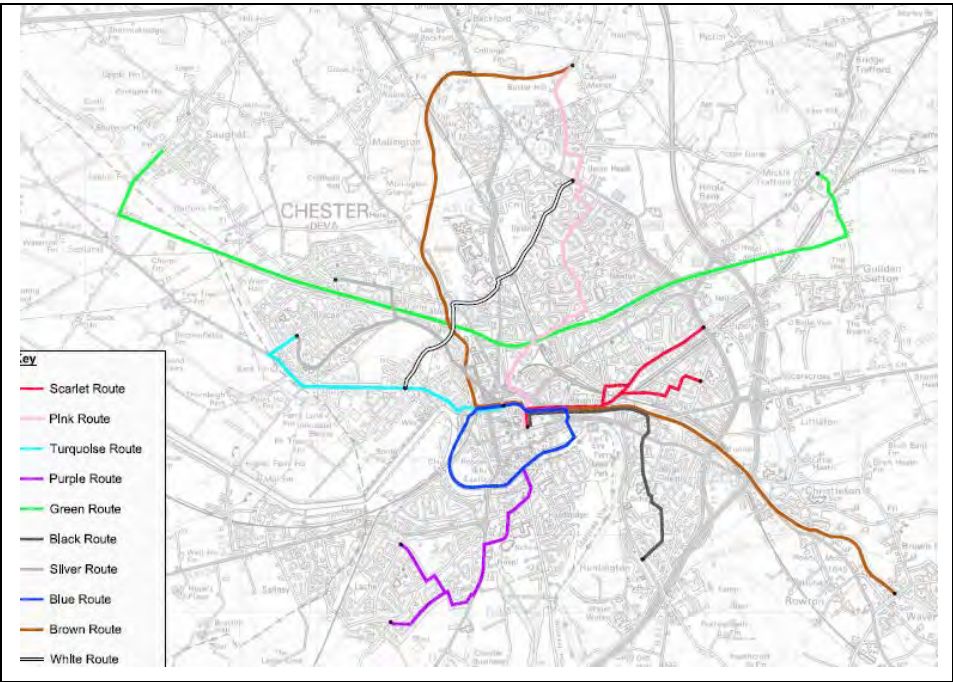


Figure 5.26: Chester Colour Routes

In some instances, these routes take advantage of existing alignments such as the Shropshire Union Canal, and the disused rail line to Deeside, to create a network, however little new infrastructure within the city centre itself has been created and there is no improvement to levels of connectivity across the central core as a result. The routes do link outlying areas within the urban area to the city centre, however without parallel investment in infrastructure, they are not likely to induce many new people to cycle, with their greatest use being the weekend leisure market.

5.11.4 City Centre Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

Within Chester City Centre, infrastructure specifically for pedestrians and cyclists is often conspicuously absent from many of the streets and links. Cycle links in particular are highly peripheral and are limited to some on-street cycleways on some of the main routes into the centre and the off-street cycle routes along the Shropshire Union Canal, along the North Wales railway line and on the banks of the River Dee.

In terms of walking routes, aside from the pedestrian zone alongside The Rows within the City Centre (along which traffic still has access to the Grosvenor Hotel) there are no pedestrian only links within the centre. The Walls form an orbital pedestrian link around the historic core but do not penetrate into its heart. The conclusion to draw from this is that cross city connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is extremely poor within Chester with large swathes of the city either inaccessible or off the main pedestrian corridors and consequently undiscovered and unexplored by the vast majority. In addition, cycling is not currently permitted within the pedestrian zone and few crossings are to toucan specifications making cross city movements difficult.

Figure 5.27 shows the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure within the city centre and highlights this lack of cross city connectivity. Connections across the city centre via the strategic route network are again poor with the canal link functioning as the only off-street facility for cyclists within the historic core.

5.11.5 Investment in Cycling
In recent years there has been significant investment in cycling within the district, much of which has been delivered through the CDT (Cycle Chester) and Connect 2.

- The Cycle Chester programme was divided into 3 main workstreams:
- **Infrastructure improvements:** Focused on addressing the barriers to cycling in Chester, tackling issues such as permeability, signage and cycle parking
 - **Training and Participation:** Centred on the provision of Bikeability training to children (Level 2) and adults (Level 3).
 - **Marketing and Promotion:** Delivery of activity and events focused on increasing participation.

Chester has also benefitted from £1.25 million as part of Sustran’s Connect 2 project enabled by the Big Lottery Fund Grant to improve connections in Chester for cyclists and connect communities on either side of the River Dee. These works have included:

- Extending and existing greenway by 3km from Hoole to Mickle Trafford and adding community links;
- Connections in North Chester to the University; and
- The Curzon Park Bridge to provide a crossing of the River Dee alongside the existing railway bridge.

The final scheme, subject to a feasibility study, will see the construction of a new walking and cycling bridge spanning the River Dee, proposed for completion in 2013. This will connect the south-west of the city to the south-east and will also become the direct route from Great Broughton the south-west via the Meadows to the city centre.

5.11.6 Cycle Parking
Cycle stands are located at numerous locations in Chester City Centre and at locations across the rest of the district, enhanced by provision of a Park That Bike initiative which supplied cycle stands to local organisations should they be able to supply match funding for installation.

In addition, as part of Cycle Chester, secure cycle lockers were installed at the Wrexham Road Park & Ride site and on Princess Street in the city centre. These facilities were aimed at promoting cycling as an option for commuters.

5.11.7 Cycling Proposals
In 2010, SDG produced a Cycling Masterplan for Chester¹⁹. This study noted a number of issues that needed to be addressed, including:

- General lack of signage for cyclists on the network away from local and regional routes;
- Lack of road space on many of the key arterials, with limited opportunities for cyclists;
- Physical barriers presented by the historic layout, City Walls, IRR and waterways; and
- Inconsistency in existing cycle signage.

Following a series of audits, SDG identified 18 infrastructure proposals that were developed in consultation with a steering group and stakeholders. These included on-highway cycle provision, facilities at roundabouts, new crossings and the conversion of one-way links to two-way or contra-flow facilities. The study recommendations also included cycle parking and improvements to way-finding and legibility.

5.11.8 Green Infrastructure
In 2011, a Draft Green Infrastructure Action Plan (up to 2026) was developed for Chester and Ellesmere Port²⁰, which is designed to deliver a high quality environment, support economic attractiveness and provide benefits for the environment. It is intended that the plan will inform the emerging Local Plan.

Figure 5.28 highlights some of the key green (and blue) infrastructure discussed in this section.



Figure 5.28: Chester and Ellesmere Port Green Infrastructure Assets
Source: http://www.merseydealliance.org.uk/projects/green_infrastructure.aspx

Within Chester, the Action Plan acknowledges the plans ‘to effectively use and fully integrate the city’s green and blue infrastructure’ outlined in the One City Plan. This includes:

- Pedestrian and cycle access to the River Dee corridor from the city centre;
- Improving the River Dee frontage through the city centre;
- Providing better links between the River Dee and the Canal network;
- Addressing severance to pedestrian and cycle movement caused by the IRR and rail infrastructure and promote cross-city links;
- Providing bike hire and cycle routes from Chester’s Park & Ride schemes; and
- Improve a connected network between green spaces and waterways.

¹⁹ Chester Cyle Masterplan, Prepared for Cycle Chester, SDG, January 2010
²⁰ Ellesmere Port and Chester Green Infrastructure Action Plan, Draft, TEP, 2011.

As a result, the action plan concentrated on the areas outside of the One City Plan study area.

The action plan produced was split up into 6 key objectives:

- Greening the built environment;
- Safe, accessible and healthy natural environments;
- Urban river and water management;
- Greening economic centres;
- Enabling community leadership and business participation in the delivery of green infrastructure; and
- Supporting green apprenticeships and volunteering.

Of particular relevance to this strategy, the action plan included the following activities:

- Create and promote multi-user / cycle routes (e.g. proposed bridge link between Queens Park and Huntington);
- Enhanced gateways to greenspaces and public rights of way;
- Link greenspaces to sustainable access network (e.g. at Sealand Meadows and proposed Chester County Park); and
- Create and promote access routes along watercourses to maximise their potential for recreation and revitalisation of the areas fronting these corridors (e.g. Curzon Park, Dukes Drive, Queens Park and Caldly Brook).

Cycling and Walking - Issues

- Excessive volumes of traffic and congestion, with associated issues of air pollution particularly in Chester City Centre, can discourage people to use more sustainable travel options.
- The historic layout of Chester and enclosure by Roman walls, combined with the severance effect of the IRR reduces the opportunity for walking and cycling. This severance is compounded by the River Dee and the Shropshire Union Canal.
- Despite great strides forward taken during Chester’s CDT tenure, cross-city connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists remains difficult with large swathes of the city either inaccessible or off the main pedestrian corridors and consequently undiscovered and unexplored by the majority.
- Confusion over whether cycling is permitted within the pedestrian zone in the city centre is prevalent, with varying rules depending on specific area. In general, the fully pedestrianised spaces are off-limits and hence impermeable for cyclists.
- There is a lack of pedestrian permeability in a north-south direction between Pepper Street and Eastgate Street after the Grosvenor Shopping Centre closes at 18:00. This greatly increases walk times and makes attractions such as the amphitheatre and waterfront less accessible than during the day.
- In addition to this is the lack of available and accessible cycle parking. Facilities adjacent to the station are extremely sparse

and cycle parking outside the Cathedral, within Northgate and by the Cross are also notably absent. As such, the city does not present itself as a cycle friendly place despite its status as a CDT.

Cycling and Walking - Opportunities

- Developments at Gorse Stacks and Delamere Street present the opportunities for the removal of severance on the IRR at the junctions of Hoole Way and the Fountains roundabout. Pedestrian and cycle considerations need to form a key part of any resulting highways works.
- Enhancements of the canal environment both as part of the Central Business Quarter and further west, have the potential to improve cycle linkage across the city centre.
- A relaxation of the cycling restrictions in pedestrianised areas might help to improve permeability within the city centre, as might the creation of improved north-south walking and cycling routes.
- A resolution of the cycle parking issue in key locations such as the rail station could potentially promote Chester’s impressive cycling credentials and legacy, however the impact on the station’s exterior has so far proved divisive. At present, cycle parking is provided inside the building and is popular and well-used, however a lack of space will ultimately require more permanent solutions to be found.

5.12 Waterways

A great deal of Chester’s history is connected to the waterways that flow (or don’t flow) through the city. Chester owes its construction by the Romans as a strategic port to the fact that it is situated on the River Dee and, the more recent development of the weir to the south of the city centre has allowed it to continue to make use of the river despite its silting further downstream. Nowadays, the river is used more for leisure than for utility, however it remains a key part of Chester’s identity and the waterfront has become a desirable area for visitors and residents alike as the luxury homes along the banks of the river will attest.

Despite this, the One City Plan identified that the city does not make full use of the river or waterfront area and the retail core is, in many ways, effectively cut off from the waterfront with poor route legibility along St. John Street, and the need to cross the busy Vicars Street / Pepper Street corridor which forms part of the IRR and also severs the Amphitheatre and Roman Gardens from the rest of the city. It remains an aspiration of the plan to downgrade this corridor and reduce traffic along it, enhancing the route to the river from the city’s historic core.

The other main waterway that runs through the city is the Shropshire Union Canal (known between the River Dee and Barbridge junction as the Chester Canal). This network of formerly independent waterways was completed in the early 19th century and links Shrewsbury Basin

with Ellesmere Port, the River Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Chester section is the oldest section of the Shropshire Union Network and formed a key part of the transporting of goods between Liverpool and Birmingham in the 19th century. When the majority of the network was abandoned in 1944, the Chester Canal was one of the retained sections. Today, however, it is mainly used by pleasure boaters and provides a good walking or cycling route east-west across the city centre linking the Central Business Quarter with Frodsham Street, Northgate and Tower Wharf.

Despite this, the environment of the canal within Chester is often dark and oppressive, particularly within the high walled sections between Frodsham Street and Northgate Street, and perceptions of security are not high amongst the Chester community (according to consultation events as part of the One City Plan). There is clear potential to expand upon the improvement programme undertaken to the east of the canal’s course through city centre to enhance the environment however, and the fact that the canal is navigable to Ellesmere Port for access to the Mersey and Ship Canal raises the possibility of practicable freight transport services similar to Peel’s Liverpool – Manchester freight barges. Proposals have also included the possibility of a waterbus between Chester and the Zoo (through which the canal also runs), however a strong business case would be needed for this – it is more likely that such a service would be a pleasure service rather than an efficient form of practical transport.

Chester’s waterways both form part of the wider walking and cycling networks as shown in **Figure 5.25**. In addition to providing good route opportunities within the urban area, they also provide more strategic cycling linkages with surrounding settlements. The river route runs west from Chester to Hawarden station for access to Deeside Industrial Park and Queensferry / Connah’s Quay. The Canal Towpath route links Huntington and Boughton Heath in the east of the city to Chester Zoo and Ellesmere Port providing a sustainable alternative to the car between these locations.

Waterways - Issues

- The river is currently removed from the city centre by illegibility of route, and severance created by the Vicars Street / Pepper Street corridor. Downgrading the link, as recommended by the One City Plan, would address this issue, however these proposals need to be tested to ensure workability. The canal environment is considered dark and oppressive particularly at night between Frodsham and Northgate Streets, however the improvements already undertaken to the east of the city centre have improved the environment substantially and further enhancements to the environment, potentially as part of other developments are recommended.

Waterways - Opportunities

- The River Dee through Chester provides both a pleasant leisure and residential environment for visitors and locals alike, but also an important walking and cycling link to Chester's dependent areas to the west including Hawarden Bridge, Deeside Industrial Park and Queensferry.
- The Chester Canal (part of the Shropshire Union network) provides an important walking and cycling route across the city centre and to Ellesmere Port, via Chester Zoo.
- The potential exists, due to the navigability of the canal between Chester and Ellesmere Port, to introduce freight services between the Manchester Ship Canal (Liverpool and Manchester) and Chester, thus reducing road and rail freight requirements and utilising an underused asset.
- The introduction of pleasure waterbus services between the Zoo and city centre has long been discussed, but might be feasible in the context of the expansion programme at the Zoo and the need for sustainable alternative links between the attraction and the city centre.

5.13 City Centre Servicing

The historic nature of the streets and buildings in central Chester, and the unique layout of the Rows in particular, can make servicing the retail core a more onerous task than in other locations. Most of the servicing for the central retail core must therefore be undertaken to the front of the store. This is made more complex by the pedestrianisation of much of the retail core with some sections closed to all vehicles between 10:30 and 16:30, and consequently the pedestrian zone, and the disabled parking bays located within it, are made available for loading between the hours of 08:00 and 10:30 and between 16:30 and 18:00. Most city centre servicing is therefore done between these hours. Vehicles route around the streets within the pedestrian zone according to a network of one-way restrictions:

- **From the north**, vehicles route along Northgate Street and turn left into St. Werburgh's Street. At the junction with Eastgate, vehicles may turn either left or right. Vehicles turning left must continue underneath the Clock and turn south along St John Street to exit the pedestrian zone. Vehicles turning right must turn north onto Northgate and then turn back onto St. Werburgh's Street to exit via St John Street;
- **From the south**, vehicles enter the pedestrian zone via Upper Bridge Street and continue northbound to the junction with Watergate Street. Vehicles must then turn left and continue along Watergate Street, exiting the pedestrian zone directly onto Nicholas Street and the Inner Ring Road.

Servicing – Issues

- Given the fact that these streets are prohibited to general traffic (apart from for disabled vehicles and for access to hotels situated within the pedestrian section) servicing does not normally add to congestion around the city centre. There is, however, some potential for conflict between service vehicles and pedestrians within the shopping streets and pedestrian zone during these periods.
- The nature of the historic units in Chester limits the scope for alternatives with regard to servicing.

Servicing – Opportunities

- Future trends in terms of servicing nationally, indicate a movement towards more centralised, out-of-town servicing distribution with less of a need for large-scale town and city centre supply. Consequently service vehicles have moved towards the extremes of size with mid-range vehicles less frequently used.
- It may be possible to combine some servicing functionality with other transport improvements within the city such as the Park & Ride offer. By creating out-of-town hubs at which goods collection could take place, there may be a reduced need for servicing to occur within the city centre at all.
- The increase in popularity of internet shopping has the potential to change further the servicing culture and the transport strategy must account for this and provide a strategy that incorporates the potential for technological change.

5.14 Air Quality

There is currently one AQMA located within the urban area of Chester, at Boughton gyratory to the east of the city centre. Following a detailed assessment, the former Chester City Council designated the AQMA in 2008 and has since then revised the boundary for this in August 2011 on the basis of Nitrogen Dioxide dispersion modelling. The revised boundary for the AQMA is therefore shown in **Figure 5.29**.

The AQMA designated by the Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (Boughton) 'Air Quality Management Order 2011 (No.2)' is situated at the convergence of the A51 Tarvin Road and the A5155 Christleton Road to the west of Chester City Centre as shown.



Figure 5.29: Revised AQMA Boundary August 2011 (Source: Cheshire West and Chester Council)

In recent assessments of the AQMA, results of monitoring and modelling activities confirm that levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) continue to be exceeded in residential locations adjacent to the AQMA, and confirms that the boundary should remain in place for the foreseeable future. Whilst cars make up 90% of the traffic through the AQMA, the emission split between cars and other traffic such as HGVs is approximately even indicating that traffic management measures will form a key part of the solution, however it is estimated that a 20% reduction in all traffic flow levels through the worst affected area (on Tarvin Road) would be required to meet the objectives for air quality. This indicates a significant issue in this location and highlights the need for a significant reduction in vehicle flow on this corridor.

Following a recent commission to produce an Air Quality Management Plan, Air Quality Consultants have identified the following actions in their Draft Action Plan:

Initial Actions (in the 2013/14 financial year)

- Feasibility work for using the Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) system to hold traffic out of the AQMA;
- Completion of Integrated Transport Strategy;
- Implementation of Parking Strategy;
- Increased Parking enforcement within the AQMA;
- Public Service Vehicle Ecodrive Incentive Scheme;
- Feasibility work for contracts for Transport to include emissions criteria;
- Feasibility work for a Freight Consolidation Scheme;
- Apply for Defra grant to implement Ecostars scheme;

Capabilities on project: Transportation

- Promote working from home / video-conferencing / feasibility work for Business Forums;
- Engage with Cherry Grove School re: walking bus and travel planning in general;
- Implement long term passes for Park & Ride; and
- Implement signs for the Park & Ride.

On-going actions

- Safe walking network;
- Promotion of existing cycling facilities;
- Promotion of car sharing schemes;
- Travel Plans for new developments;
- Air quality built into development control planning process and decisions;
- More effective 'joined-up' working within CW&C and with external partners; and
- Visitor Marketing.

Longer-Term Strategic Measures

- Implementation of age limit for taxis;
- Real time bus displays;
- Developing Transport Infrastructure; and
- Implementation of changes to Park & Ride.

A recent updating and screening assessment was also undertaken across the CW&C borough. This highlighted that, on the basis of monitoring conducted during 2011 recording nitrogen dioxide (NO2) concentrations above the national objective, it will be necessary to proceed to a detailed assessment stage for the junction of Parkgate Road (A540) / Liverpool Road (A5116) in Chester. It is also noted that road traffic emissions are the cause of exceedance in this location. The detailed assessment may, therefore, designate a second AQMA within the city centre necessitating traffic management measures to meet the objectives of the Environment Act. As a result of this, it is clearly unlikely going forward that any development in or around this area that dramatically increases road traffic would be acceptable.

Air Quality – Key Issues

- The AQMA at Boughton gyratory has been recently revised and extended, and on the basis of recent monitoring and modelling surveys, this decision is considered correct.
- The surveys determined that NO2 levels within the AQMA were in some cases 27% higher than the objective and it would consequently take a reduction in vehicular traffic of 20% to meet the objective.
- A further AQMA is under consideration pending the results of a detailed assessment, at the junction of Parkgate Road and

Liverpool Road to the north of the city centre. If this is implemented this could have repercussions on the deliverability of development in this part of the city.

Air Quality – Opportunities

- The Air Quality issue clearly highlights the need to reduce traffic flows into and out of the city centre and makes the case for projects which promote more sustainable modes of travel and bring about mode shift to walking cycling and public transport.

6 Housing Growth, Key Developments and Land Use

6 Housing Growth, Key Developments and Land Use

6.1 Housing Growth Development Sites

The Local Plan for Cheshire West and Chester (forming part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options) is currently in production, about to enter an informal consultation phase and is due to become a public document in Summer 2013. The document sets an ambitious target for the borough in terms of housing growth. It recommends the construction of 21,000 new homes by 2030, which equates to more than 1,000 per year across the whole borough.

By dividing in line with the split of population, it is estimated that 5,250 houses will be constructed in Chester by 2030 amounting to just under 300 per year. Of these, it is considered likely (according to the Council's Core Strategy section) that around 40% will be constructed on land currently within the Greenbelt. In this regard, a number of possible sites have been identified by CW&C, and are noted in a sub-section below.

In terms of the 60% of housing that is expected to be constructed within the city's existing urban boundary, the summary table in **Appendix A** Assessment (SHLAA)²¹. This highlights the net number of dwellings associated with each development – clearly the total of 5,080 equates to nearly all of the houses required for construction in Chester by 2030, however not all of the sites will come forward. They have simply been identified as potential sites at this stage. The table also shows the address and likely timescale for each.

Of the 5,080 proposed housing development sites on the non-greenbelt land in the city, the following chart (**Figure 6.1**) shows the locational split between the wards of Chester. It may be seen that Blacon is the area with the most proposed developments by quite some way. In total 1,848 dwellings are proposed for Blacon with 'Chester City', Boughton and Upton then next most significant (albeit some way behind Blacon) as shown in **Figure 6.2**.

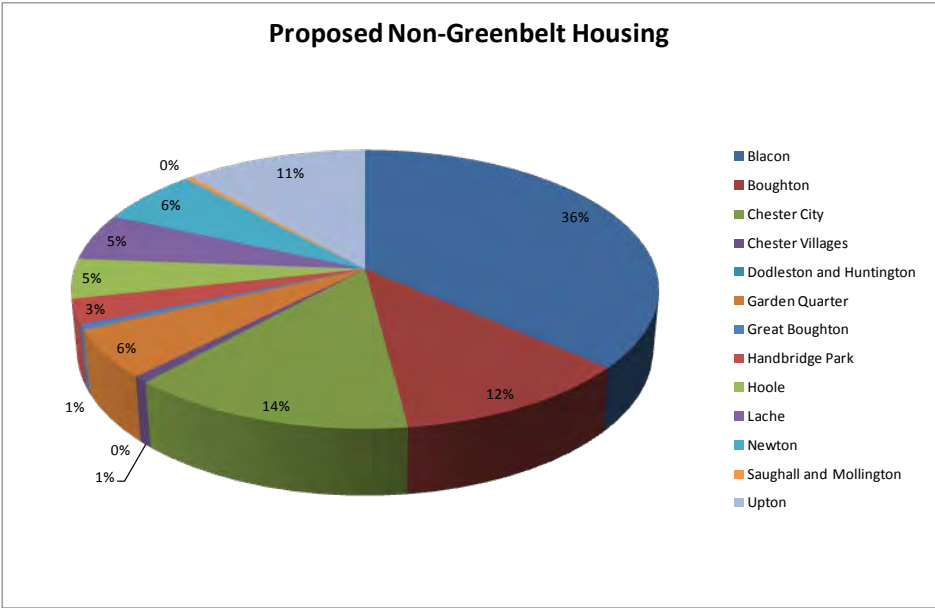


Figure 6.1: Locational Split of Forthcoming Housing (Source: CW&C)

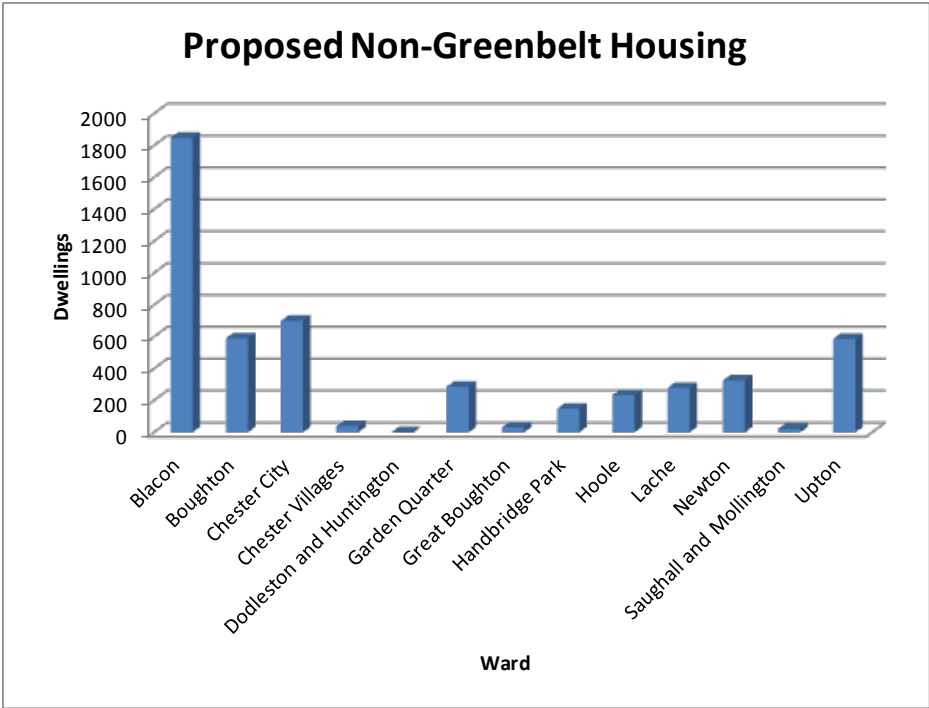


Figure 6.2: Forthcoming Housing – Absolute Figures (Source: CW&C)

The following chart highlights the breakdown of delivery timescales for the developments listed in **Appendix A**.

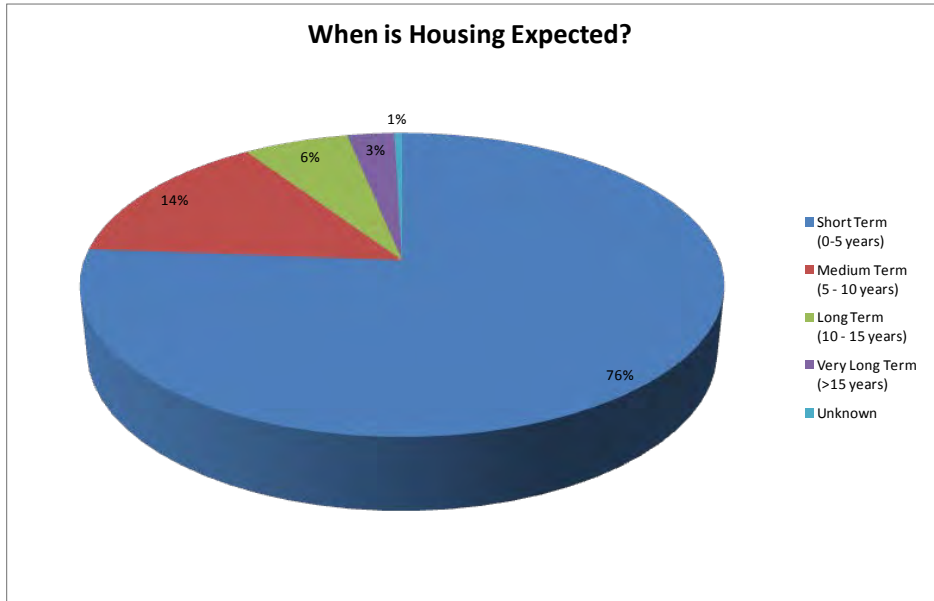


Figure 6.3: Breakdown of Development Timescales

This highlights that the vast majority (76%) of non-greenbelt housing development is due for delivery within 5 years and 90% due with 10 years.

The following charts (**Figures 6.4 to 6.7**) show the proportion of dwellings proposed for delivery in each ward at various timescales (Short Term = 0-5 years, Medium Term = 5-10 years, and Long Term = 10-15 years):

²¹ Source: Cheshire West and Chester Council 2012

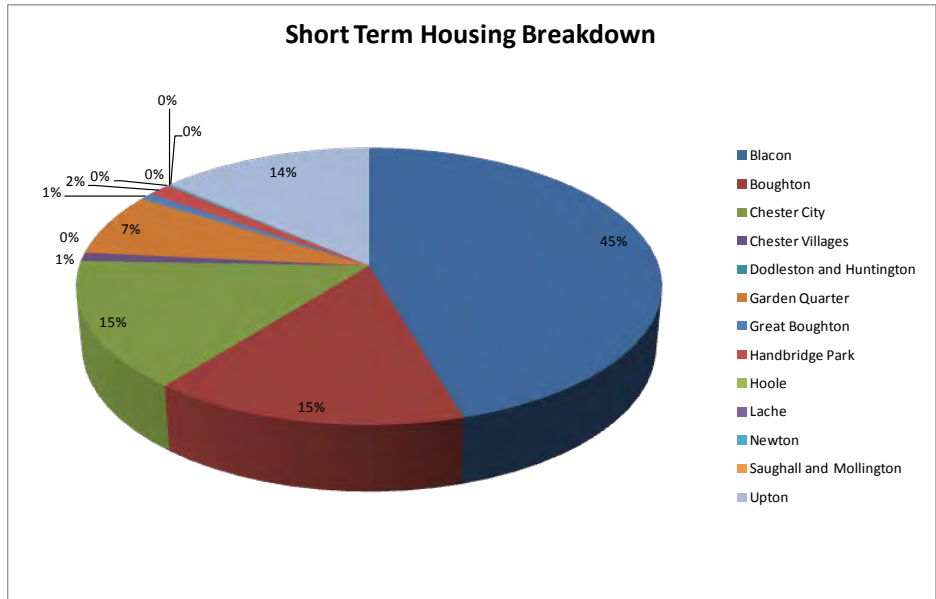


Figure 6.4: Short-Term Proposed Housing (up to 5 years)

It may be seen Blacon (45%) has the largest single contribution to housing delivery in the short-term with Boughton (15%), Chester City (15%) and Upton (14%) also showing significant new housing.

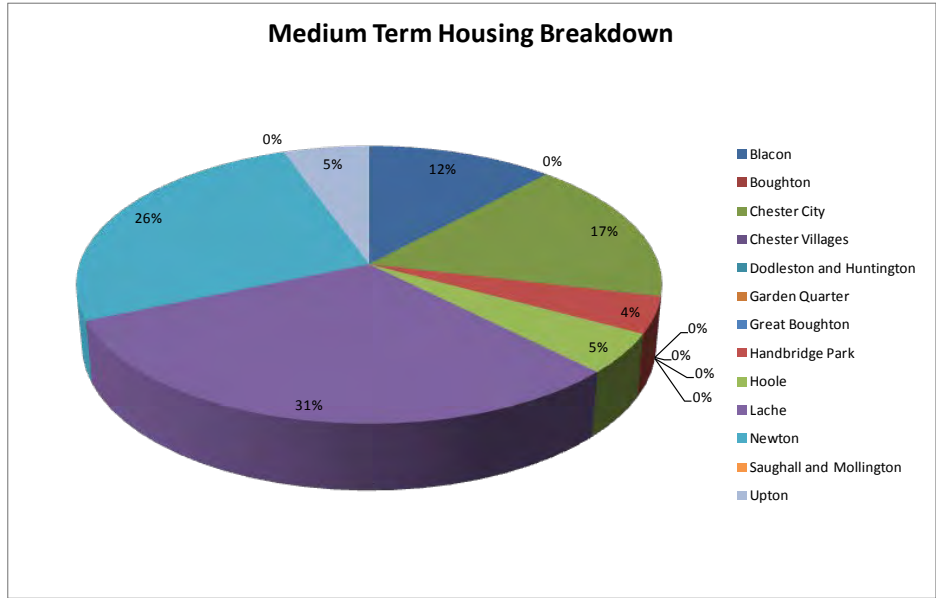


Figure 6.5: Medium-Term Proposed Housing (5-10 years)

Over the medium-term, Lache (31%) and Dodleston and Huntington (26%) are the most important areas in terms of housing delivery on non-greenbelt sites. Chester City is also expected to contribute 17% of the total between 5 and 10 years.

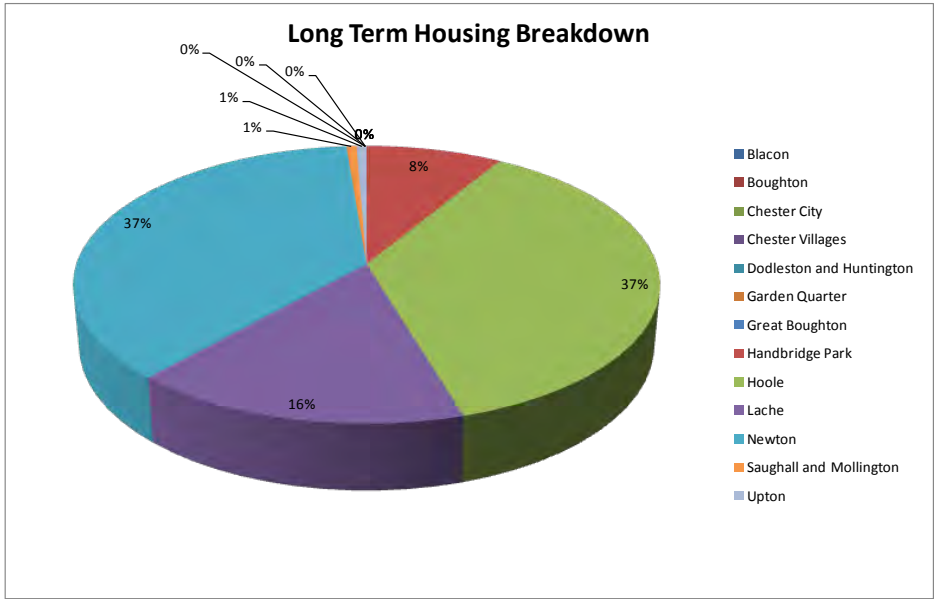


Figure 6.6: Long-Term Proposed Housing (10-15 years)

Between 10 and 15 years from the current time, it is expected that the majority of housing will be delivered within Hoole and Newton with Lache and Handbridge Park also seeing some activity. The small numbers of developments projected at this timescale does make these percentages less reliable however.

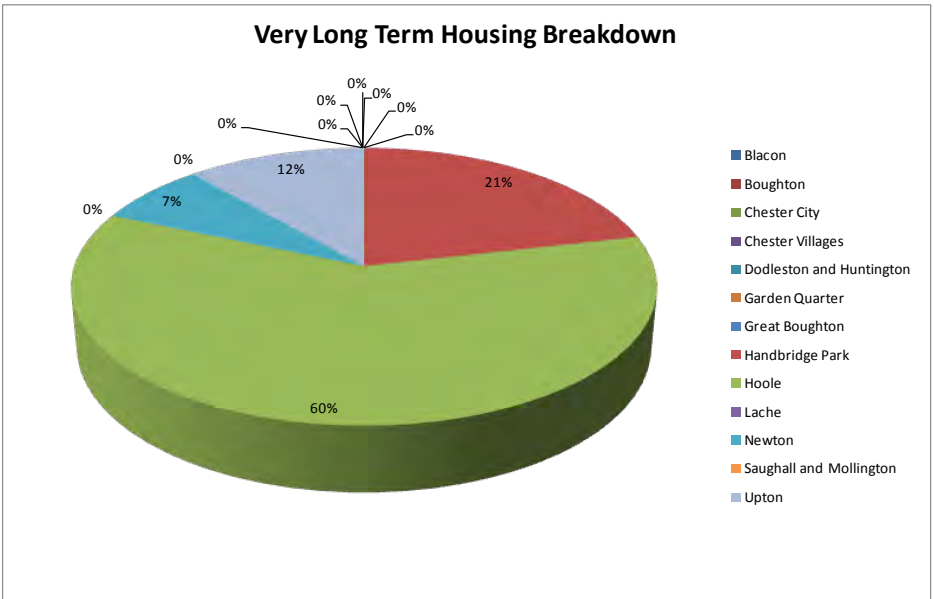


Figure 6.7: Very Long-Term Proposed Housing (15 years +)

In the very long-term, only 140 dwellings are listed and these are predominantly in Hoole (60%) with a smaller number in Handbridge Park (21%), Upton (12%) and Newton (7%). The small number of dwellings makes it difficult to make any predictions for this period, however, and values must therefore be treated with caution.

6.2 Local Employment Development Sites
In addition to the sites identified above as potential non-greenbelt housing sites, the Core Strategy section of Cheshire West and Chester Council has provided information on potential non-greenbelt employment sites which are expected (or possible) in the next 15 years. As will be identified in the Local Plan currently being produced, there is a borough-wide need for 280 Ha of employment development during the lifetime of the Core Strategy. The list provided by the Council gives an indication of where (and in what form) this is likely to be delivered.
As for housing, the list of employment sites are included in **Appendix A** of this document, however they area also summarised in the following table:

Capabilities on project: Transportation

Ward	Location	Proposal	Land Use	Size (Ha) (Estimated)
Blacon	Bumpers Lane Tip	Employment	Employment	25
Blacon	Greyhound Retail Park	Additional retail space	A1	0.6
Blacon	Sovereign Way	Employment	B1, B2 and B8	0.8
Boughton	Leadworks Lane	NE Urban Action Area	B1	0.4
Boughton	Chester Central Business Quarter	Phase 2	B1, C3, A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, and D2	1.4
Chester City	Odeon Cinema	Theatre and associated uses	A1, A3, A4, D2 and sui generis	0.2
Chester City	Grosvenor Shopping Centre	Additional retail space	A1	0.1
Chester City	Habitat	New Restaurant Quarter	A1	0.3
Chester City	St Andrews United Reform Church	New Bar/Restaurant	A1	0.1
Chester City	Princess St	Northgate Retail Development	A1, A3 and C3	2.4
Chester City	Delamere Street	Health and Social Care Centre / Residential Development	A1 and C3	0.8
Chester City	Black Diamond Street	NE Urban Action Area	B1	0.2
Dodleston and Huntington	Wrexham Road Farm	Offices	B1	0.9

Ward	Location	Proposal	Land Use	Size (Ha) (Estimated)
Dodleston and Huntington	Saighton Camp	Employment	B1	0.1
Garden Quarter	Tower Wharf	Waterside Development	A1, B1, and C3	145 dwellings
Garden Quarter	Garden Lane	NE Urban Action Area	B1	0.3
Garden Quarter	Old Port (Southern Trail)	Offices	B1	1.5
Hoole	Hoole Road	NE Urban Action Area	B1 and B8	0.5
Hoole	Hoole Lane	NE Urban Action Area	B1	0.7

Table 6.1: Chester Expected Future Employment Sites

This table highlights a total of nearly 40 Ha of employment land proposed at present. By dividing the borough-wide identified target of 280 Ha by the same multiplier as was used to ascertain housing targets in Chester, the target for employment in the city between now and the end of the Core Strategy should be 70 Ha. Clearly this would indicate that more than half of the required employment development is also expected. It should be noted, however (as shown in **Figures 6.8 and 6.9**), that more than half of the expected development is due to the redevelopment of the large 25 Ha Bumpers Lane Tip site, which is considered a long-term prospect and is neither committed nor is there an application pending.

In any case, given Chester’s status as the main employment centre for CW&C, it is unlikely that the borough-wide target can be allocated to Local Areas in the same way as housing. Consequently, it is likely that Chester’s share of the employment target will be considerably higher than 70 Ha, indicating that there is still some way to go to identify and secure developers to bring employment sites forward.

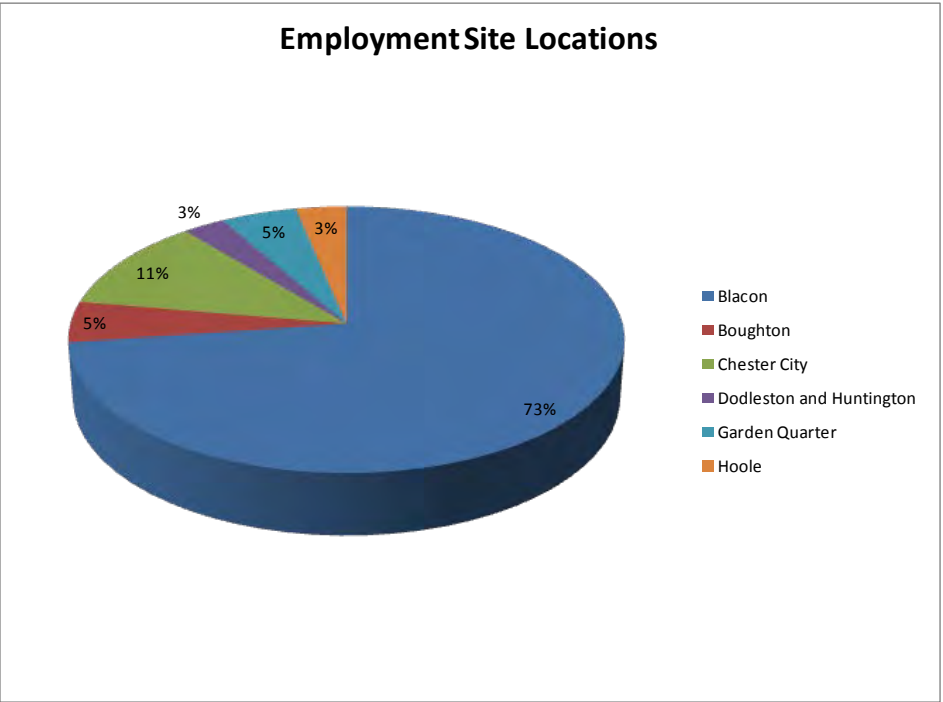


Figure 6.8: Locational Split of Proposed Employment in Chester (Source: CW&C)

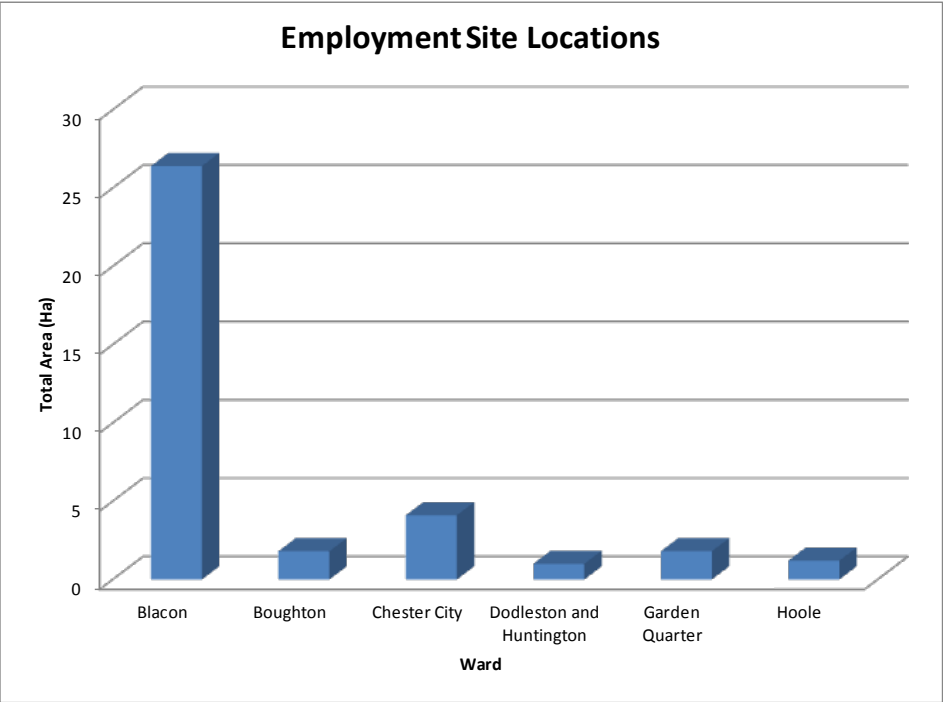


Figure 6.9: Forthcoming Employment – Absolute Figures (Source: CW&C)

Capabilities on project: Transportation

6.3 Potential Future Greenbelt Development Sites

In addition to the housing and employment development sites identified above that sit within the existing urban area of the city, a number of additional development sites on the greenbelt that would effectively extend the urban grain of the city have been identified. In response to the findings of the Local Plan which noted that around 40% of the new housing required within Chester by 2030 would likely be on greenbelt, a greenbelt study was undertaken by CW&C to investigate the potential for providing development on a number of sites around the city. The final findings of this study have yet to be released, however early conclusions have been provided to inform this strategy work and three options for development have been identified which incorporate different combinations of a total of 6 greenbelt sites.

The sites are shown in **Figure 6.10** and summarised in the options table (**Table 6.2**) which also identifies the primary routes each site will load traffic on to:

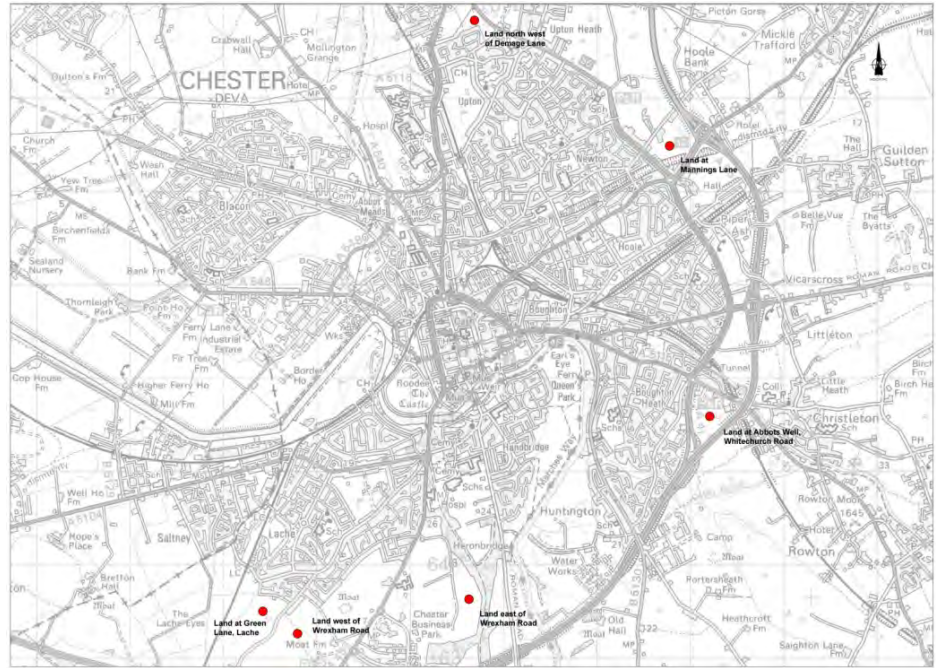


Figure 6.10: Potential Greenbelt Housing Sites identified by Study

Option	Site	Gross Site Area (ha)	Potential No. Of Dwellings	Loads on to
1	Land at Green Lane, Lache	6.72	188	A5104 & A483
	Land West of Wrexham Road	185.25	4,539	A55 & A483

2	All	191.97	4,727	
	Land East of Wrexham Road	140.21	3,435	A55 & A483
	Land at Abbots Well, Whitchurch Road	16.44	432	A55, A41 & A5115
3	All	156.65	3,867	
	Land West of Wrexham Road	185.25	4,539	A55 & A483
	Land at Mannings Lane	17.92	403	M53, A55, A56 & A41
	Land North West of Damage Lane, Upton	17	450	A41 & A5116
	All	220.17	5,392	

Table 6.2: Potential Greenbelt Housing Options and Sites

It may be seen that Option 3 delivers the largest potential number of houses (nearly 5,400) as opposed to 4,727 for Option 1, and 3,867 for Option 2. Option 1 loads its traffic primarily onto the A483 Wrexham Road and A55 with a small amount of additional traffic using the A5104 Chester Road route into North Wales. Option 2 spreads the traffic around slightly further although most is still expected to use the A483 Wrexham Road and A55 with some additional traffic accessing the city via the A41 Ring Road and the A5115 Whitchurch Road routes. Option 3, spreads traffic around the city more than the other options, however the largest single component will still likely use the A483 Wrexham Road and the A55. Some traffic is likely to be generated to the north of the city, however, using the M53 motorway, A56 Hoole Road and A41 Moston Road.

Given that the A483 is currently one of the busiest routes into the city centre, and the junction of the A483/A55 is the focus of a forthcoming pinch-point scheme led by the Highways Agency, from a transport perspective, the option that minimises the impact on this route is favoured. Option 1 is clearly the least acceptable option since it adds the most traffic to these routes, potentially creating additional problems at the junction of the A55/A483.

As a result, Option 2 would seem to be the most acceptable option when considering only transport factors, however this option also delivers the fewest new dwellings. Another drawback is in the fact that it loads additional traffic on to the A5115 Whitchurch Road pushing extra vehicles through the existing AQMA which may be unacceptable.

Option 3, on the other hand delivers only slightly less additional traffic to the A55/A483 junction and route combination than Option 1, however it does add little or no traffic to the eastern corridor avoiding the AQMA.

It is likely that this option would add some traffic to the A5116 impacting on the potential AQMA at the junction of the A5116 and A540 though.

Consequently, none of the options are considered ideal from a transportation perspective and all have drawbacks in relation to the others. It will therefore be necessary to test each option carefully using strategic modelling software to best understand the impact of each. This is currently being undertaken as part of the modelling associated with the Local Plan, the outputs of which will inform this study.

What does this mean for the strategy?

- 5,250 homes are estimated to be required in Chester between now and 2030, or approximately 300 per year. Around 40% of this is expected to be constructed on greenbelt sites which have little or no existing forms of access and movement infrastructure.
- Significant work is required in order to understand the impact of constructing housing in the greenbelt in terms of existing network loading points, flood risk, air quality and ecology. The question of vehicle loading is of particular concern to the Highways Agency who are interested in the interface with their existing network i.e. the M53, M56, A55 and (less relevantly to Chester the A550).
- Of the 60% of housing to be constructed within the existing urban boundary, 5,080 dwellings are either committed or identified within the SHLAA although not all of these will come forward. The greatest single part of the city for new housing is Blacon, the majority of which are likely to be delivered within 5 years, although Chester City, Boughton, Upton, and longer term Lache, Hoole and Newton, are all important.
- 280 Ha of employment land is estimated to be required across the borough between now and 2030. If the allocation between Local Areas is similar to housing, this would indicate that 70Ha will be required in Chester although it is likely that this is the minimum requirement due to Chester's position as the main employment centre in the sub-region.
- Just under 40 Ha of land are expected by the Local Plan team within the next 15 years, although 25 Ha of this is one site – the Bumpers Lane Tip site in Blacon;
- All of the potential options for housing development within the greenbelt will add significant amounts of traffic to the A483 and A55 routes and junctions. Of the three, Option 2 adds the least but loads additional traffic through the existing AQMA. Option 3 is the most balanced approach overall but has an additional impact to the north of the city centre.

7 Stakeholder Consultation – Issues and Priorities

7 Stakeholder Consultation – Issues and Priorities

7.1 Initial Stakeholder Engagement

As part of initial stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Transport Strategy, AECOM held five events in January and February 2013 engaging with a range of identified consultees. The events were as follows, each of which will be discussed in turn:

- Northgate Association Event, held at the Town Hall (Palatine Room);
- Business / Commerce Breakfast Seminar, held at the Riverside Innovation Centre;
- Residents / Access Groups' Event, held at the Town Hall (Palatine Room);
- Public Drop-in Session, held at the Town Hall (Palatine Room); and
- Members Briefing Session, held at the Town Hall (Palatine Room).

These events were in addition to extensive one-to-one discussions with key stakeholders to be summarised in the baseline report for the study in due course.

Northgate Association Event

The event, held on Wednesday 16th January (17:30-19:30) was organised primarily in response to the revised Northgate Masterplan Concept, which had generated some concern amongst members of the Northgate Association. The event was structured into a series of presentations, as follows:

- Background and Presentation of the Northgate Concept (Mike Burchnall, CW&C);
- Hunter Street Options (Jonathan Marsh, WSP for the Northgate Development Team);
- Chester Transport Strategy (Tom Marsden/Nick Ovenell, AECOM);
- Response by Northgate Association Transport Consultant to WSP analysis (Mike Garratt, MDS Transmodal); and
- Northgate Association Perspective (Rod Cox).

These presentations were followed by a question and answer session. It should be noted that the audience was invited to make any representations relating to the Northgate Development Scheme in accordance with the ongoing consultation exercise.

The focus of the session was primarily centred around reconsidering the servicing and access requirements associated with the current Northgate Development Concept, but was relevant to the wider Transport Strategy given wider development aspirations (Theatre and Cathedral) and responding to the Notice of Motion to consider the pedestrianisation of St. Werburgh Street and the elimination / removal of traffic from Hunter Street and Northgate Street.

As part of the question and answer session, the following points relevant to the development of the Transport Strategy were raised:

- Rod Cox of the Northgate Association questioned the **access and servicing demands of the existing Northgate Retail Scheme** and suggested that there are alternatives (potentially reversing the flow

of traffic on Hunter Street) which would provide a more palatable option for Northgate Traders and enhanced public realm in an area that should be a key asset to the city. In essence, Mr Cox does not support Northgate Street being used as an access route to the site and would prefer that southbound traffic is removed from Northgate and the street pedestrianised. In addition, he is also seeking greater consideration to alternative servicing options, suggesting a solution that makes use of the existing underground structures and potentially linked to the service road back of Watergate Street.

- Combination of the Northgate Development (including a revamped Market), new Theatre and any development at the Cathedral likely to **generate additional traffic demands**, placing stress outside the proposed entrance to the Theatre in particular, and needs further consideration / development to ensure that there is a 'solution that works for all parties'.

- Faye Mustill of the King Street Residents Association suggested that the group has an **aspiration to close King Street at Northgate**, which needs to be factored into any future debate.
- Simon Warburton of Chester Cathedral informed the group that the Cathedral, in association with the University, is currently **working up Masterplan options for the wider Cathedral site** and hoped to be able to share these plans with the group in the near future. Rod Cox invited the Cathedral to play a more active role in developing a strategy for Northgate and work with the local traders as 'highlighted in a number of public studies (for example the Locum Report).
- The **impact of any bus station relocation** associated with the Northgate Development also generated debate and it was identified that there needs to be further consideration to maintaining pedestrian linkages and ensuring the market is adequately served.

At the end of the session, Rod Cox called for the establishment of a working group consisting of the Theatre, Cathedral, Northgate Development and Northgate Traders to develop a preferable solution that best meets all requirements.

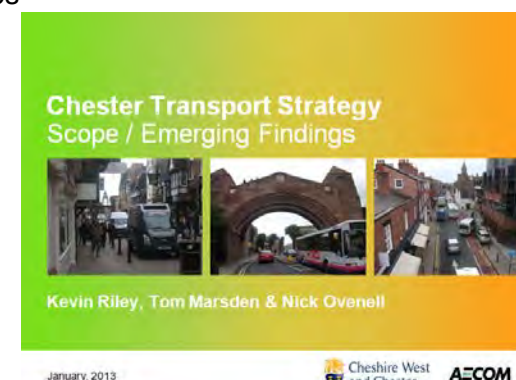
'Future of Chester' Business / Commerce Breakfast Seminar

The event, held on Thursday 17th January (08:00-10:00) was organised primarily as part of the consultation associated with the revised Northgate Masterplan. The event was structured into two presentations, one by the architects behind the Northgate Development (ACME), who outlined the scheme composition and concepts, followed by an introduction to the Transport Strategy, presented by Jamie Matthews (CW&C Project Manager) and Kevin Riley of AECOM. These presentations were followed by a question and answer session with members of the consultant team on hand to discuss any issues afterwards.

The AECOM presentation included the following:

- Why do we need a Chester Transport Strategy?
- What are the Drivers?
- Focus of the Study

- Chester – Facts and Figures
- Retail and Tourism Considerations
- Housing and Employment Growth
- Transport Issues and Opportunities
- Future Trends
- General Discussion – Have we missed anything?



The event was attended by approximately 120 people and included representation from the following companies / organisations:

- Chester Business Park;
- Chester Civic Trust;
- Chester Zoo;
- Hill Dickinson;
- Legat Owen;
- Marketing Cheshire;
- Northgate Street Traders Association; and
- University of Chester.

As part of the question and answer session and subsequent informal conversations, the following points relevant to the development of the Transport Strategy were raised:

- **Future of shopping is predicted to be small, specialist and experiential** and therefore this has **implications on future access and servicing requirements** of the City Centre. One attendee suggested that given the uncertain future of retailing and competition, the concept for Northgate should be reconsidered including more consideration to educational and entertainment functions
- Rod Cox of the Northgate Association questioned the **access and servicing demands of the existing Northgate Retail Scheme** and suggested that there are alternatives (potentially reversing the flow of traffic on Hunter Street) which would provide a more palatable option for Northgate Traders and enhanced public realm in a key area in the core city.
- Given the existing and proposed development in the City Centre, including a number of new hotel permissions, one attendee **questioned whether the city can cope with additional traffic**, pointing out that it struggles to cope now and suffers the consequences of air pollution staining buildings and the adverse impact of HGV / servicing vehicles routed through inappropriate streets.
- Moratorium on housing in the Chester area (circa 2003 to 2008) has seen an increase in house building in adjacent authorities of North

Capabilities on project: Transportation

- achieved through the installation of a Cycle Point as used elsewhere. (Map Ref 118)
- **Improved signage for cyclists from the station to various parts of the city** (e.g. City Centre – Greenway – Canal, utilising use of cycle points. (Map Ref 64)
- **Hoole Lane crossing from Canal Towpath across to other side needs safety improvements** – e.g. 20mph limit from Boughton to Lightfoot Street and ‘raised table’ to highlight crossing of cyclists and pedestrians (funded by Waitrose development). (Map Ref 56)
- Route for cyclists and pedestrians from the city behind the Leisure Centre to meet Northgate Avenue and **access to the greenway**. (Map Ref 20)
- **Provision of Surface Crossings at Hoole Way / St. Oswalds Way**. (Map Ref 102)
- **Cyclist / pedestrian crossing of the River Dee** from Saighton & Huntington to West Cheshire College, Catholic High School and employment at Chester Business Park (potentially funded through Developer Contributions) (2 comments). (Map Ref 111)
- **Cyclist / pedestrian crossing of the River Dee** from Saltney / Curzon Park / Westminster Park to the City Centre. (Map Ref 141)
- **Resurfacing of Canal towpath** to provide safe cycling as route to Ellesmere Port. (Map Ref 106)
- **Improve pedestrian / cycling crossing** from Hoole / Newton to the City Centre via Hoole Bridge / Brook Street. (Map Ref 126)
- **Create off-road shared-use path from Greenway to Hoole Road Bridge** and improved access from Newton Liverpool Road area to station. (Map Ref 199)
- **Access from University Campus to Greenway and canal and off-road shared use for cyclists and pedestrians to access other campuses** (Kingsway / County Hall). (Map Ref 78 / 150)

Members Briefing Session

The event, held on Tuesday 19th February (16:30-17:30) was organised bespoke to the Transport Strategy development and was open to all Members. In total, 9 Members attended as follows:

- Cllr Lynn Riley (Executive Member for Community & Environment) – Frodsham;
- Cllr Herbert Manley (Executive Member for Prosperity & Regeneration) – Hartford & Greenbank;
- Cllr Alex Tate – Lache;
- Cllr Adrian Walmsley – Newton;
- Cllr Tom Parry – Newton;
- Cllr Myles Hogg – Willaston & Thornton;
- Cllr Keith Board – Great Boughton;
- Cllr Brian Crowe – Saughall & Mollington; and
- Cllr David Robinson – Boughton.

AECOM introduced the session with an introduction to the study, covering scope, timescales and emerging findings, before opening the session to a discussion. The following issues / opportunities were noted:

- Lack of Park & Ride signing on access routes is an issue and needs to be addressed;
- Use of pricing mechanisms to reflect and balance Park & Ride versus city centre parking;
- Need for a single format smartcard, which works across boundaries.
- Transport needs to link to key centres and good quality signage is important;
- Movement of school children needs to be considered and addressed – noting changes resulting in wider catchments associated with private schools.
- Support for further pedestrianisation at St. Werburgh Street and or for Pepper Street. Need to test options and assess evidence.
- Cycling pinch points noted including Grosvenor Bridge – consider making one lane for cyclists.
- Ned to capture benefits of cross border initiatives, helping to sell economic advantages.

7.2 One to One Meetings with Key Stakeholders

The following sub-section provides a summary of the key points obtained from one-to-one discussions with key stakeholders in relation to the transport strategy:

Phone Discussion with Gemma Easter (Chester Renaissance)
24/09/2012

- Development at Gorse Stacks will impact on the northern part of the city centre, as will the Watkin Jones development which will generate lots of traffic and has required a Transport Assessment.
- Potential options for pedestrianising Northgate Street south of the junction with George Street are being looked at and have received support and momentum from Councillors. These proposals are relevant to the potential Free School to open from next year at Abbey Square (although this still requires planning permission). This will ultimately be a 200 student school however will commence with a Class 1 of 30.
- Northgate Street pedestrianisation would have an impact on coaches to the Cathedral and proposed Theatre, and on the car parking spaces currently rented from the Cathedral at Abbey Square. The proposals are likely to be put to public consultation in conjunction with Northgate and Gorse Stacks proposals.
- There are no proposals for the Castle at present, although the University are looking at placing a Technical College here. This is in the early stages of planning however.
- The Central Business Quarter and proposals for the Boughton are going ahead, albeit without a Council controlled public car park. This will be a key issue for the Transport Strategy.
- Enterprise Centre and Hoole Bridge proposals have not been progressed. The Council will hold on to the asset for the time being, and is still mindful of the One City Plan recommendations for a masterplan in this area – Network Rail should be involved

with anything that comes forward from this.

Meeting with Jeremy Owens (Cheshire West and Chester Spatial Planning), Duncan McCorquodale (Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan), and Simon Clarke (Highways Agency) – 03/10/2012

- City centre has many more residents now than in 2001 with new housing developments at Tower Wharf and to the west of the city centre – Travel to Work data may not be completely current.
- A preferred Policy Directions paper on the greenbelt and wider core strategy is being consulted upon at present and will be issued to the public next summer – to be adopted by 2014.
- The minimum requirement is for 21,000 homes (1,050 per year) over the 20 year lifetime of the strategy. Based on the population split, 5,250 are expected to be within Chester.
- The greenbelt is expected to accommodate around 2,000 of these with preferred sites to be identified later after more detailed work. There will be more certainty in terms of named sites by the spring, however there will be a need to test most likely sites prior to this as part of the Transport Strategy.
- There is also to be 280ha of employment land across the borough including the Central Business Quarter development.
- The 2007 SATURN model for Chester – updated last year – will be used to test the sites which come forward including the Central Business Quarter, One City Plan sites and those nominated by the Transport Strategy.
- There is a need for linkage between the Transport Strategy and the Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment (SHLAA) study which is updated annually and will be completed early next year.
- There is not considered to be enough land capacity to meet even the population growth needs and there will be a focus on growth in the future.
- The general objective of the Transport Strategy should be to make journeys more accessible and less distant. There is an aging population profile in Chester and therefore the potential for economic activity to decline.
- The Highways Agency need to be kept abreast of the development of the Local Plan but do not need to be consulted about local nuances. Of particular concern is the junction of the A55/A483 which is the subject of a congestion relief scheme.
- The HA will extend the strategic impact analysis onto the local network using a Dynamec model. This will look at interactions between junctions and vehicles.
- CW&C is keen to form an informal Memorandum of Understanding with the Agency – a framework for collaboration.

A meeting on future strategy and a likely preferred option will be arranged for late January 2013 in time for a Transport Board meeting in April 2012.

- CW&C will have an initial attempt at identifying sites although they won't be firmed up until May 2013.

Meeting with Duncan McCorquodale (Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan), Phil Stannard and Gary Rowland (Atkins – Saturn Model) – 17/10/2012

- The Core Strategy talks about strategic sites but may also note more local sites following changes in local governance. There is a fundamental relationship with transport via the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will inform the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- The challenge in terms of greenbelt development is finding sites that fulfil all required criteria. Consultation is ongoing until 12th November and this will allow sites to be identified sooner rather than later.
- 5,250 houses are required in Chester between now and 2030, 40% of which will be on the greenbelt. Some have already been delivered but not all sites (greenbelt or not) are considered deliverable.
- CW&C should be able to provide an update on employment land for the city, however this will not be as detailed. Size and land-use only.
- Modelling should be done for the design year 2015 and the future year 2030 and will look at 'Do-Nothing' and 'Committed Development' scenarios for each. This will incorporate traffic growth, core strategy and known network changes.
- The only large site coming forward in the near future is Mollington Student Village.

Meeting with Bethan Edwards (CW&C Cycling Officer / LSTF) – 18/10/2012

- Feeling that the network is largely there, but would like to see a relaxation of restrictions in the centre and improvements to what is already there.
- Connect2 project to avoid Grosvenor Road, to be completed in March 2013.
- BE to oversee Themes 2 & 3 of LSTF Project.
 - Scheme to improve linkages under M53 and £200K for improvements within Chester City.
 - 10 hire bikes to be provided at Chester Station (Abellio)

- Sustrans (c. £250k) and Flintshire (c. £600k) committed to new cycling link between Ellesmere Port and Deeside across Burton Marshes - scheme would link NCN. CW&C investigating links to Wirral Way.
- CW&C investigating cycling links as alternative to Hoole Way, looking at Lightfoot Street and as part of new CBQ.
- Keen to improve cycling links to Boughton, but would need to work with Flintshire.
- BE provided hard copy of Chester Cycling Masterplan. BE would be keen to resurrect Cycling Masterplan proposals.
- Investigate missing link at bottom of Sealand Road.
- Understood that lockers at Park & Ride sites at Boughton and Wrexham are not well used.
- Countess Hospital currently looking at updating Travel Plan (Sue Donaldson).
- A540 attracts significant cyclists and is a cause of significant suggestions for improvement.

Phone Discussion with Ian Nadin (CW&C Air Quality Officer) – 30/10/2012

- Action Plan for Boughton currently being developed by Air Quality Consultants (Bristol) - contact Claire Beattie.
- Consultation to take place - initial suggestion for 6 weeks.
- In addition to Boughton, a number of links / junctions are currently causing concern, including:
 - George & Dragon (Liverpool Road / Parkgate Road) - IN tasked to undertake a detailed assessment by April 2013.
 - Watergate Street.
 - St. Oswald's Way / St. Martin's Way
- Recent Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) Report produced.

Meeting with Alice Elliot (University of Chester Sustainability Manager) – 01/11/2012

- The key transport issue for the University relates to car use and the number of students bringing cars. Mouchel has just produced the University Travel Plan, however it has not been endorsed by Senior Management as yet. Alice to forward once signed off.
- The Liverpool Road campus is the main pinch point for car travel. A carbon management plan is being produced within, which the Travel Plan sits.

- From recent surveys, 48.6% of students drive to University whilst 44.3% walk. 11.8% get the bus and 8.3% catch the train with 7% cycling. 4.9% car share, whilst 6.7% get a lift to University every day. Taxi is the only other significant mode choice with 2.4% of students using these.
- Amongst staff, the main issues were identified to be lack of awareness over car sharing and cycle resources, improvement of both of which are aspirations for the University. The shuttle bus to Warrington campus is also key to staff, however there are issues in terms of frequency.
- The Travel Plan priorities are to improve cycling, public transport and car sharing use and the University proposes to do this via new cycle measures, journey planning services and creating an in-house car share database.
- University in favour of creating intermediate Park & Ride stops which could act as a Park & Ride for the University and a Shuttle into the city centre and rail station.
- The University caters for 15,000 students across the main campuses including Riverside, Kingsway and Warrington. There are no plans to drastically relocate staff or students to the city centre or vice versa.

Meeting with Nicola Lewis-Smith (Canals & River Trust Enterprise Manager) 07/11/2012

- Canal through Chester has been enhanced through provision of lighting (adopted by CW&C) and vegetation clearing (funded through European Union Grant).
- Canal resurfaced through Chester 5-10 years ago and starting to break up. Need to work with CW&C to establish a maintenance regime.
- Towpath becoming worn on sections between Ellesmere Port and Chester.
- Planned improvements to be delivered at Tower Wharf – facilitated by money received from CW&C.
- Canals & River Trust working with CW&C to deliver access improvements in Ellesmere Port.
- In some locations the historic city walls act as physical and visual barrier to the waterways, which restricts use.
- Suggestion that access points could be improved at a number of locations across the district to improve use of the waterways e.g. steep steps at Blacon. Consideration to access for all.
- *Investigate status of Chester Renaissance Waterways Strategy and canal improvements at Countess Park?*
- Canal & River Trust keen to work with CW&C as developments

come forward.

Phone Discussion with Christine Garner (CW&C Rail Officer / LSTF) – 08/01/2013

There is lots happening in terms of rail at present including:

- Northern Hub: Faster more frequent services to Manchester - 2 trains per hour (tph) on Warrington Line including extending 1 to Leeds.
- "Refranchising: Combination of Northern and Trans Pennine Express (TPE) into a single franchise set by rail executive of northern councils led by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and West Yorkshire Metro. Not agreed as yet but CWAC would be represented by an individual for Cheshire, Warrington and Staffordshire. Andy Coates (AECOM) is likely to provide expert advice".
- Long Term Planning Strategy: Forecasts based on rail network and economic growth. Significant economic benefit has been identified in faster more frequent connections between Chester and Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Leicester, London, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield.
- Study between Ellesmere Port and Helsby: Lightweight Community Transport (Parry People Mover) have undertaken study to run hourly PPM services between Ellesmere Port and Helsby. They believe there is potential for a green trial on an Open Access Basis and have offered to self-fund the trial. This would be a pathway project which could help to form the business case for Merseyrail extension to Helsby, and for the Halton Curve (which is currently at Governance for Rail Projects (GRIP) 3 and is waiting for funding to be identified before commencement of GRIP 4).

Meeting with Rod Cox (Northgate Traders Association) – 22/01/2013

- Rod stated that the Cathedral is largely on-board with proposals to reverse traffic on Hunter Street and Northgate Street but won't give feedback on their own regeneration plans at present. They are generally not in favour of pedestrianisation unless they can have vehicular access up Hunter Street.
- Buses – Rod suggested banning right turns into Princess Street for buses and queried whether they could line up to layover on Trinity Street. Noted that the Crowne Plaza may not want this. In general, Northgate Street Traders want a busy bus stop on George Street. Rod would support a Coach drop-off on George Street as well.
- Coaches – Tourist coaches should not drop off passengers at Little Roodee. Instead they should bring passengers to the edge of Northgate Street pedestrian zone. There should be physical

controls to stop coaches parking outside the theatre on Hunter Street.

- Hunter Street – The gyratory would work better in a clockwise direction as this avoids a right turn at Princess Street. Buses then deposit passengers on the correct side of the road. The right-turn lane on St. Martins Way is the source of much of the congestion.
- Pedestrianisation – Agreement that reduction of traffic on Northgate Street, St. Werburgh Street and Town Hall Square should only be in the core hours. If the Northgate Development doesn't happen, there is still a need to change traffic in this area – there needs to be a working solution beforehand. Rod suggests that Hunter Street be restricted by barrier during core hours and that Princess Street be used instead during these hours, although it was understood that Emergency Services will need access. Could we block off Water Tower Street or King Street junction with Northgate Street? Should pedestrianisation be put forward as part of the Northgate Scheme?

Phone Discussion with Iwan Prys-Jones (TAITH Interim Executive Officer) – 05/02/2013

- Subsequent to publication of North East Wales Area Based Transport Strategy (NEWABTS), Welsh Minister for Transport has announced a Task Force to take this forward.
- Welsh National Transport Plan seeks to improve journey times between North and South Wales.
- Recognition amongst TAITH of need for stronger co-ordination of activity cross-border.
- Existing commitment for the redoubling of the rail line between Chester and Wrexham – expected to be complete by 2015. This presents the opportunity for new stations at Rossett and Saltney which is appealing for Park & Ride. Opportunity for shuttle services linking half-hourly service on the Wrexham-Bidston line.
- Aspirations to improve access from North Wales to Liverpool and Manchester and Liverpool Airports. TAITH would be keen to input into the Network Rail planning of services.
- TAITH keen to capitalise on opportunities presented by investment in electrification of rail lines, citing Crewe – Holyhead, Chester-Warrington and Shrewbury – Bidston.
- Looking at developing a formal opportunity for Park & Share at Northorp.
- Proposals for the Northern Gateway in the Deeside Enterprise Zone likely to generate significant demand [600 houses, shopping centre, hotel and a training hub]. Similarly, proposals at Daresbury and Wirral Waters are likely to generate movements from North Wales.

7.3 Representations from Councillors and Individuals

E-mail from Cllr Dixon (Councillor for the Chester City Ward) – 22/01/2013

- The introduction of 20mph has been a consistent item on the City Community Forum and is supported by a number of residents groups throughout the city.

E-mail from Terri Gray (Proprietor Buckingham House Bed & Breakfast) – 22/01/2013

- Opinion that there should be no traffic within the historic city walls, except service vehicles. These service vehicles should be small and light weight.
- Suggestion that a large parking space could be created at the Greyhound Business Park, where larger vehicles could park and unload their goods on to smaller delivery vehicles for the town.
- Cathedral should not be allowed to park vehicles within Abbey Square, with sufficient parking in the Northgate Development.

E-mail from Ian Gilmour (on behalf of the Chester Accessibility Action Group) 08/03/13

- Cited 25% of the population has a long-term illness or disability and the fact that West Cheshire has an ageing population and the needs of both these groups need to be taken into account.
- With reference to the potential relocation of the bus station, concerns that Northgate Retail Development might not be accessible to all, with the small bus hub of 2 or 3 bus stops deemed inadequate. Furthermore, the existing site is considered to best serve the heart of the city centre.
- Need to consider re-routing and impact of bus services should bus station be located, citing Sealand Road Park & Ride, Blacon, Liverpool and West Kirkby buses using only a limited section of the IRR.
- Pedestrian links from proposed Gorse Stacks bus site considered to be narrow and unappealing (e.g. via George Street or via Kaleyards path and then via either Abbey Lane or the City Walls and Bell Tower Walk, which would adversely affect vulnerable people in particular (teenage girls and boys, the elderly, the infirm and the disabled).
- Given the Northgate Development and the Theatre Masterplan, need to understand proposals for the coaches (replacing the existing stop on Hunter Street and two used by National Express next to St. Mary's Mound).
- Value of Park & Ride recognised, indeed suggesting a further site

needed in the east of the city. Identified need for an increase in the number of disabled parking spaces to encourage more disabled users, particularly long-stay users – noting that 4 hours is the free limit for disabled users in city centre car parks. Suggested that Park & Ride sites should have 6% disabled provision to meet BSI standards.

- Concern over the potential loss of disabled parking provision and the need to look at a disabled parking solution holistically. Potential loss of disabled parking space noted for:
 - Hamilton Place Car Park / Goss Street as part of Northgate Development.
 - Northgate / St. Werburgh Street as part of potential pedestrianisaion / shared space scheme.
 - Eastgate / St. John’s Street as part of potential to revise pedestrianisation / servicing.
 - Kaleyards Car Park as potential development site as cited in the One City Plan.
- Potential expansion of pedestrianisation may decrease number of taxi ranks, which forms an essential part of the disabled transport offer.

7.4 Outcomes from Previous Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the wider consultation for the One City Plan for Chester, a series of Transport and Movement themed Stakeholder Workshops were held in multiple sessions in August 2011. The outcomes from these sessions are of high relevance to the Transport Strategy for Chester and will form a key part of the wider package of consultation and stakeholder engagement to be completed as part of the strategy setting process.

This sub-section presents the key outcomes of the One City Plan consultation and provides a commentary on the messages that may be drawn from this. The full sheets summarising the comments are attached to this document as **Appendix B**, however the following provides a summary of the key messages broken down by theme:

Conflict between Modes

The key messages in terms of conflict related to key congestion points around the city. Specifically mentioned were Frodsham Street in the context of conflict between buses, cars and pedestrians, the Grosvenor Bridge due to its limited capacity, the southern arm of the IRR which acts as a barrier towards the amphitheatre and river area, and the conflicts that occur within the pedestrian zone between walkers, cyclists and traffic (particularly during the evening).

In terms of ideas for resolution, a number were suggested. Removing buses from Northgate Street and Frodsham Street were suggested, and full-pedestrianisation of Northgate Street was repeated several times. The southern section of the IRR was also noted as being

suitable for pedestrian friendly treatment, including possible pedestrianisation, although it was noted that pedestrian schemes in the centre could push more traffic onto the rest of the IRR. Some radical schemes were suggested including putting traffic underground at Hoole Way/Gorse Stacks, and removal of the elevated ring road sections.

Public Transport

It was noted that there is currently poor information and resultant confusion over the location of stops and stations in the city centre, with timetable information recently removed. The lack of transferability of bus tickets were considered an annoyance, and the fact that most public transport stops at 19:00 was felt to make this mode unusable for evenings out. It was queried whether Chester actually needs a bus station and whether buses should be using new technology or kept simple. In terms of rail, it was noted that there are no rail alternatives from the south or south east of the city and a poor walking route into the city centre from the rail station.

There was great support for keeping and even extending the City Rail Link to become a circular shuttle service. Improvements to the rail service between Chester and Manchester were suggested as were new rail stations at Beeston/Rossett on the Crewe Line, and the Halton Curve scheme to connect the city with Liverpool John Lennon Airport. It was agreed that the question over the future bus station location should be resolved quickly. Quality Bus Partnerships were suggested as a way of improving services and the potential for a new transit system –tram or electric hybrid bus – was suggested possibly linking the rail station and city centre. Gorse Stacks was suggested as the obvious bus hub although Frodsham Street was also popular despite reservations about the workability of a bus hub on Foregate Street. There was broad support for Travel Card technology and an acknowledgement that High Speed 2 (HS2) should benefit Chester.

Walking and Cycling

It was noted that no cycle forum has existed in the city since the Cycle Demonstration Town status expired. It was suggested that cyclists should be more disciplined so as not to cause accidents, although safety and permeability was noted to be poor for cyclists.

Further promotion of cycle use at rail stations, Park & Ride sites and along the canal was considered vital to encouraging cycling as was the need to maintain paths and cycleways. It was noted that cyclists should be on the carriageway in general, however that cycling routes should be clearly marked in and around the city. There was an acknowledgement that walking routes need to be improved around the city, especially towards the river and rail station, and that the Greenway should be more rigorously encouraged as an alternative.

Parking

Discrepancies between parking regimes within the city were noted, and it was suggested that there is not enough short-stay parking available, leading to a mismatch between supply and demand in terms

of duration of stay. The potential loss of coach parking at Little Roodee caused concern, and the layover of coaches in Hunter Street was deemed unacceptable.

Suggestions for improvement included promoting Gorse Stacks as a parking focus, moving visitor parking further away from the city centre and allowing residents only facilities within the IRR. Edge of city centre parking was considered a good idea although it was suggested that ticketing should be more flexible with potential text-based systems to allow extensions of time remotely. It was also suggested by one person that visitors should be able to get into the city for free.

Park & Ride

A common complaint regarding Park & Ride was that start and finish times are not set according to demand and that this affects the times that users can access the city. It was agreed that the 19:00 closure time is too early.

It was suggested that intermediate stops on some routes could be beneficial with a Rail Station – University – Hospital – Zoo shuttle service a key idea. Many suggested an additional Park & Ride location on the A56, however the other side of the argument was made by one person who believed that the current provision is adequate.

Inner Relief Road (IRR)

It was acknowledged that the IRR is unattractive and a barrier to pedestrians, however the question was asked ‘how could other areas of the city cope without the IRR?’

It was suggested that all areas within the IRR could be given a 20mph speed limit. It was noted that buses using the ring road would be just as susceptible to congestion as cars. One suggestion was to downgrade the northern section of the IRR and reduce traffic by reserving it for certain types of use such as Park & Ride

Canal and Waterways

It was noted that the existing canal towpath is not an attractive environment due to poor lighting, and cobbles making the route difficult for cyclists.

It was suggested that the route should be promoted as a key thoroughfare for the city and improved accordingly. It was also suggested that the canal could be used for waterbus/taxi services between Chester and Ellesmere Port via the Zoo.

Behaviour

A common comment was that there is an over-reliance on the private car by local residents due to people being ‘precious’ about their cars in general. It was noted that the majority of am peak traffic is private and accessing private non-residential parking facilities.

It was acknowledged that there is a need to encourage people to leave their cars and that a particular approach may be to target employers.

Signage and Information

In terms of signage, it was noted that servicing routes need to be more clearly labelled to prevent inappropriate routeing through residential areas. Signage from the rail station is considered poor as is that towards the river. It was noted that there were too many signs and not enough information with VMS signs often showing incorrect data.

Suggestions included better advertising of events at city entry points, large maps and visual displays at key points, better publicity of quieter walking and cycling routes and better signage to the river.

People with Disabilities

It was noted that the city is quite wheelchair unfriendly and that bus station aisles are too narrow. Street cobbles are also problematic. It was also pointed out that Blue-Badge parking is widely abused. The limited signage to ShopMobility is considered problematic too.

It was suggested that Frodsham Street car park be re-used as a bus turnaround to remove buses from the lower parts of Frodsham Street, although this would require an alternative strategy for ShopMobility and disabled parking. It was also suggested that a bus for disabled persons into the city centre is required.

Taxis

It was considered vital that taxi points and access is controlled and managed using appropriate enforcement to ensure waiting is done in appropriate places.

Following the One City Plan consultation, further dedicated workshop and other consultation events were held as part of the Parking Strategy work for Cheshire West and Chester Council. These included workshops in late 2011 and early 2012 including with Dial House Chester disability group, and one-to-one meetings either in person or by telephone with key stakeholders such as:

- Dave Thomas and Jamie Matthews – Transport Planning and Policy;
- Graham Lowe – Highways;
- Phil Bamford – Planning;
- Sarah Armstrong and Margaret Morris – Regulatory Services;
- Paul Parry – Highways Development Control;
- Peter Willett – Vehicle Licensing; and
- Noel O’Neil – Property.

- The following bullets summarise the outcomes of these specifically parking related consultation events:
- **Location:** There is generally considered to be enough available standard parking space around the city, however it is not always situated in the most convenient or appropriate location. The large number of smaller car parks serves to disperse spaces around the centre and makes signage and occupancy reporting more complicated. The Hoole corridor is also frequently mentioned as a potential new Park & Ride corridor;
 - **Volume of Provision:** Whilst most consultees agree that the amount of parking space in Chester is sufficient, disabled access

- user groups have indicated that disabled provision is not, with the main disabled parking location at Frodsham Street often fully occupied. There is general agreement that the eastern corridor is under-served by publicly available car parking;
- **Ease of Use:** There is widespread agreement that the Pay and Display payment system is in need of replacement with a more modern payment system, with ‘Pay-by-Phone’ and Smartcard/credit card/debit card based payment favoured. In general, a payment method with the flexibility for a customer to change his/her plans without the need to return to the car park to pay for an extension to their stay is preferred to the current system;
 - **Ease of Access / Signage:** Signage is a key issue for many consultees with the limited signage to both central car parks and Park & Ride causing issues. In particular, the left-in, left-out nature of the Grosvenor and Pepper Street car park accesses causes issues in terms of journey planning and access. In addition, car park names are considered confusing in relation to signage with car park use being a preferred method of differentiation. Once at the car park, bay width is a concern, particularly for disabled parkers;
 - **Pricing Regime:** Mixed messages were evident here with some consultees pointing to the low price of parking, and others saying that it is too expensive in Chester. It was agreed, however, that pricing is deeply inconsistent throughout the city and is confusing for customers as a result, reducing the likelihood of choosing the correct car park. Disabled user groups were mainly opposed to the introduction of charging, however many said that they would be prepared to pay for improved quality, and would like the flexibility to be able to pay to stay for longer than 4 hours;
 - **Quality:** It was universally agreed that quality is not of a high enough standard at present with surfacing, age of facilities and aesthetic appearance being key issues, however it is recognised that efforts are being made to tackle these;
 - **Security:** An increase in CCTV coverage was fairly universally supported by consultees as was the potential for improved staffing of some key facilities at evening and night time periods. It was agreed that Chester needs to improve the perception of security at car parks to complement the enhanced evening offer associated with the proposed theatre and other cultural facilities;
 - **Information Access:** Whilst the live feed information available on the Council web-site and via the existing VMS signs is popular, it is generally felt that this should be widened out to include all car parks. In addition, the complementary information on the web is felt to be inadequate. Examples of suggestions for improvement include ‘space-finder’ tools linked to the live feed, which could also be offered in ‘App’ form for Smartphones, and information boards at car parks containing upcoming events and promotions.

7.5 Emerging Priorities from Consultation

A number of priorities for change emerged as part of the One City Plan Transport and Movement consultation workshops. These are listed by category below:

Conflict between Modes

- 20mph speed limit within IRR.
- Mobility, not traffic should be the priority.
- Extend pedestrianisation to Northgate Street.
- Close or reduce traffic on the IRR close to the Amphitheatre.

Public Transport

- Frodsham Street improvements to relieve bus stop overcrowding.
- More emphasis on use of public transport to facilities, services and key destinations such as hospital.
- Improve railway station as a transport interchange.
- Promote low-carbon transport to downgrade traffic on the southern route.
- Improve bus penetration and operate to demand. Passengers need drop-off close to major shops.
- Anti-clockwise bus route over IRR connecting key car parks.

Walking and Cycling

- Improve pedestrian routes, including removing the subways at the Bars, from the station to the city centre and through the city core to the racecourse.
- Encourage cycling by providing more cycle parking.
- Make the city more sustainable by encouraging residents and commuters to walk and cycle.
- Create a new cycle bridge across the river for better interaction between modes.

Parking

- Increase car parking outside the city centre and improve means to get in.
- Need for a high-tech modern system and parking outside the city centre.
- Improve links from car parks and railway station to city centre.
- Need for a coherent and co-ordinated parking strategy, layout and pricing structure.

Park and Ride

- New Park & Ride site on the A56.
- Integration of Park & Ride with other transport systems – use of Park & Ride services for non-Park & Ride journeys.
- Improve the Park & Ride offer by extending the hours of the service, paying for the car and not the person, and reviewing as part of a wider transport strategy for the city.

Behaviour

- Encouraging less reliance on the private car is key to realising the vision.
- Implement a car club in Chester to promote pay-by-the-hour car use.

Capabilities on project: Transportation

Signage and Information

- Improve access to the river including cycle routes, safety, signage etc.
- Sign the routes well and focus on bottlenecks.
- Signage/info/marketing. In and around Chester and before arrival.
- Animate the city with flags and banners.

People with Disabilities

- Provide a distributor bus for disabled users.

Strategy

- There is a need to make decisions now on the future of Northgate and the location of a new market and new theatre.
- Chester must have economic clout and vitality.
- Define the future ambition for Chester and have a bigger picture for transport model.
- Be clear about what the historic core should be.
- Make something happen – doing nothing is not an option.
- Implement modelling of traffic on the IRR to observe impacts of schemes.

Taxis

- Management and enforcement of taxis including central areas where they wait and corridors that they use.

The vast majority of these points will be picked up as part of the Transport Strategy work and tested for impact later in the process.

Current Trends and Future Influences on Access and Movement

8 Current Trends and Future Influences on Access and Movement

8.1 Introduction

In this section, an understanding is sought of the transport environment that will prevail in the later years of the Transport Strategy in Chester. The study has a 15 year timeframe and there is consequently a need to understand and, to some degree pre-empt, the pressures and considerations that will dominate the transport industry in Chester towards the end of the period. To gain an understanding of these issues, a workshop was held to which a number of strategic thinkers both from within the client team and internally at AECOM were invited. The results of this are discussed in the following subsections, however prior to this an overview of some of the differences between the Chester of today and the Chester of 1997 (15 years ago) have been noted to provide an illustration of how much can change in that amount of time, and an analysis of the trends that are likely to continue over time has been presented.

8.2 Chester 1997 - 2026

The following bullets summarise the key transport, access and movement changes in the previous 15 years and the impact these have had on the wider living environment and on lifestyles:

Chester in 1997

- There was a significantly lower proportion of mobile phones and no mobile internet.
- There was less reliance on the internet in general with internet shopping in its infancy.
- Internet services were dial-up only and there was therefore limited ability to use it for communication, banking, conferencing etc.
- Satellite navigation was the preserve of the rich and consequently in-car map reading was more prevalent and directional signage even more crucial than today.
- There was less home working in general than currently, due to limited communication technology and speed.
- Peak periods were more heavily defined with less peak spreading than observed today, however the overall population and working populations were lower limiting the impact of the peak compared with today.
- There were fewer cars globally however they were significantly less clean and efficient than today.
- Budget airlines were still in their infancy and there was no ultra-cheap air travel, and a smaller amount of air travel related greenhouse gas emissions.
- Due to the influence of global factors such as the industrialisation of China and its growing middle class, there was less transport related greenhouse gas emitted in 1997 than 2012.
- Environmental considerations were lower down the agenda than

- today for politicians, business, and the population generally.
- There was no travel smartcard technology in the UK with paper ticketing still dominant in London as elsewhere.
 - There was no national policy on concessionary fares, although some local authorities offered free travel to the over 60s.
 - There were higher levels of bus use although a higher rate of decline than today, and significantly lower levels of rail use since there has been nearly 60% growth in passenger rail in the last ten years.

Other information relevant to transport and travel choice is presented in **Table 8.1** which provides an analysis of the trends between 1997 and 2012 which are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this study towards 2026:

Item	1997	2012	2026 (Projected)
Cost of Fuel ²²	57.9 pence per litre	134.1 pence per litre	205.2 pence per litre
Overall Cost of Motoring ²³	36.7 pence per mile (1998) (Based on engine cap of 1101-1400cm ³ and annual mileage of 10,000 miles)	59.8 pence per mile (Based on purchase price of £14k to £17k and annual mileage of 10,000 miles)	83.0 pence per mile
Traffic Growth ²⁴	100 (2001 Index)	104.52	107.63
Households with Internet Access (UK) ²⁵	9%	80%	94% (Based on a logarithmic trend analysis taken to 2026)
Carbon Emissions ²⁶	550 million tonnes carbon	460 million tonnes carbon	376 million tonnes carbon

²² Source: <http://www.speedlimit.org.uk/petrolprices.html>

²³ Source: http://www.theaa.com/motoring_advice/running_costs/index.html

²⁴ Source: Temprow

²⁵ Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcmm%3A77-270031>

²⁶ Source: www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN03950.pdf

Item	1997	2012	2026 (Projected)
	equivalent (Approximate)	equivalent (Approximate)	equivalent
Housing Numbers ²⁷	31,839 ²⁸	37,672	42,922 ²⁹
National GDP Growth ³⁰	1.05%	0.10%	Unknown

Table 8.1: Transport Related Trends 1997 – 2012 and beyond

This table uses mainly linear models to predict future trends, and highlights how fuel and the cost of motoring may continue to rise in price influencing mode choice, however TEMPRO's latest available dataset highlights that, locally at least, traffic will continue to rise by a further 3% of 2001 traffic figures by 2026. To compliment these changes, internet use is likely to continue to rise with internet shopping becoming more and more popular as opposed to high street. On a positive note, though, carbon emissions are likely to continue to fall over the next 15 years in the UK at least, although globally the impact of China, India and the United States will be most important.

8.3 Chester Issues and Future Trends Workshop

A workshop was held on Tuesday 13th November with the primary purpose of identifying trends specifically within Chester and nationally, and attempting to understand the transport environment that will be prevalent in 15 years – the lifetime of the strategy. The workshop was divided into two sessions with the aim of answering two specific questions:

- What are the global factors that will affect transport, movement and travel patterns in cities around the World?
- How will these factors impact the transport networks and travel behaviour in Chester in particular?

The questions were considered separately in the context of work, leisure and education trips. The following bullet points summarise the main topics of discussion:

²⁷ Source: 2001 and 2011 Census'

²⁸ City urban area wards only

²⁹ Source: CWAC Local Plan Team (2012 + 5,250)

³⁰ Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10613201>

Capabilities on project: Transportation

8.3.1 Global Factors to be Considered

Work

- Sustainable building next to a major hub – good for meetings, conferences etc.
- Video conferencing – cost saver to business as it eliminates / reduces travel costs.
- People are willing to commute more for work and travel to different cities.

Education

- Technological improvements that will have a big impact:
 - o Smart Phones;
 - o Skype;
 - o Lync (Microsoft);
 - o Video conferencing.

Leisure and Retail

- Out of city warehouse units – group servicing for retail.
- Future of the high street – shops becoming showrooms, less back of house stock needs.
- Delivery of online shopping has an impact on the transport network, puts it in the hands of logisticians.

General

- Cost of fuel – prices to increase.
- 'Newer' cars on the road – tend to have reduced emissions.
- Business parks have a poorer quality of life for their staff compared with city centre working.
- Mindset on using cars suggests resistance to continental style car hire culture.
- Early signs of 'Pay-as-you-go' car insurance.

8.3.2 Factors Specific to Chester

Work

- Chester services act as a 'mid-point' / meeting point for outside business (Liverpool, Manchester).
- Opportunity for a city centre Business Park next to a hub such a CBQ.
- Busy rail service for business commuters.
- High wage jobs tend not to be in Chester, outflow of more skilled jobs.

Education

- Student housing – properties allocated 1 car parking space per dwelling when there could be 6 students living in it, results in parking congestion for residents.
- Parking and congestion issues for the University.
- Free bus passes etc influence a parent on their choice of school for their children.

Leisure and Retail

- Issues with the coach service within Chester for tourists.
- Avoid competition with Manchester / Liverpool – sell Chester for all it has (heritage, history etc.).
- Poor evening economy – city centre 'closes' at 5.30pm, need to promote 5.30pm-8.00pm period.
- Major international influence at Cheshire Oaks (Korean, Chinese speakers).
- Need to encourage shops to stay open late (Northgate may do this).

General

- Chester receives approximately 8.5 million visitors per annum.
- The city constraints do not allow the city to grow, and this therefore doesn't encourage new employers to invest in Chester.
- Reliance on radial routes (if one road closes it creates congestion in the city).
- Requirement for accessibility of all areas of the city.
- Local journeys – need to encourage 'green links' (walking, cycling).
- Flaws in the public transport network (often have to go into the city centre to get back out of the city).
- Price of parking at key rail stations as opposed to local stations.
- Need for an airport to connect more readily to Chester – be it Liverpool, Manchester or an expanded offer at Hawarden.
- Chester to Liverpool – improved rail link possibilities via Halton curve.

The session also raised a number of questions which will be investigated as part of the strategy. These were:

- Should travel be seen as luxury for business related travellers with the majority of meetings conducted by video conference, or will there always be a place for face-to-face meetings?
- How can we balance the positive impacts of increased tourism and popularity of Chester as a destination, against the negative impacts of travel related congestion and environmental degradation?
- How can we provide adequate transport infrastructure and provision for the proposed level of housing growth in the city?
- If Chester is to be seen as an international tourist destination and with the cost of small airline flights decreasing, is there requirement for an airport at Chester, or should we be looking to improve linkage with existing airports such as Liverpool John Lennon airport?

8 Key Findings

9 Key Findings

Having completed the baseline analysis as detailed within this report, it is clear that the strategy needs to address a number of key challenges associated with Chester's existing transport, access and movement characteristics. Whilst the city has a remarkable number of assets associated with its heritage and history, but also with modern interventions such as the recently implemented cycling infrastructure and good levels of service from the rail station, there is still much to do. There is a need to overcome the inherited constraints from an historic network, and take the city from its previous Transport Plan in 1997, into the 21st century and through to the end of the period covered by the One City Plan, namely the mid 2020s.

The advent of new technology, ideas and thinking that surrounds transport planning and strategies, will have a big impact on the shape of the plan and there is a need to keep a firm eye on the latest innovations and predictions relating to travel patterns that industry experts can provide. For that reason, a visioning workshop has formed part of this evidence base and will help to mould the strategy ensuring it is all encompassing. In the end, however, the future is inherently unpredictable and the strategy must therefore be flexible enough to accommodate, and embrace unexpected change to both economic and social conditions as well as towards technological and behavioural change.

During the course of the evidence gathering, a number of key factors that will impact upon the direction of the Transport Strategy have been identified and these are noted below. These relate to current baseline conditions in Chester and the factors that will need to be accounted for in the ultimate strategic plan:

Policy Factors

- The core objectives for the strategy need to focus on creating economic growth and reducing the carbon impact of transport.
- All potential objectives, aims and goals of the strategy must be measured against appropriate criteria, as indicated by the Eddington Transport Study.
- The strategy needs to be aligned closely to sub-regional policy and priorities.
- Key emphasis should be on supporting sustainable economic growth, set against a decrease in available budgets to spend on transport infrastructure and schemes. This necessitates an innovative approach to developing innovative solutions to accessing existing funds and scheme delivery.
- The focus of local policy should be consistent with national goals and objectives, including reducing carbon emissions and the impact of climate change, ensuring a safe and secure transport system and promoting health, inclusiveness and equality.
- The Transport Strategy should help to deliver the aspirations for city centre development outlined in the One City Plan.
- The Transport Strategy should incorporate and test parking and bus related proposals identified in recent strategic assessments.

- The Transport Strategy should build on current planned investment in providing more sustainable connections from communities to areas of employment opportunity delivered through the LSTF.
- The Transport Strategy should build on proposals for connecting rural areas to employment and key services as identified in the Rural Regeneration Strategy and topic papers to inform the Local Plan.

Factors Related to Chester's Demographic Status

- The city of Chester is a net importer in terms of employment flows, with key inter-relationships with Flintshire, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Wrexham and the Wirral.
- It will be important to ensure the provision of appropriate and feasible public transport and walking and cycling options from areas of high unemployment / deprivation to major employment sites, consistent with working patterns.
- The Transport Strategy needs to consider the impacts of changes in healthcare provision and policy affecting school travel and transport, such as the creation of free schools.

Tourism Related Factors

- The key transport related challenges facing the tourism sector in the Chester area are as follows:
 - o Accommodating more sustainable travel options to reach destinations and attractions.
 - o Balancing demands from the tourism sector and protecting Chester's unique heritage.
 - o Understanding role of the transport experience in supporting the overall visitor experience.
 - o Supporting the evolution / enhancement of existing major tourist attractions to ensure that they can continue to grow and attract visitors to the area.
- Tourism and leisure play an important role in the Chester and wider sub-region economy and this strategy should seek to support the visitor economy through the provision of a strong and legible transport infrastructure.
- It is important to work with the visitor economy and transport providers to offer more sustainable transport solutions.
- There is a need to investigate the potential for utilising and developing the waterways as part of the tourism offer and linking places and key destinations.
- Improvements to pre-arrival and arrival information are important in influencing visitor trip choices.

Factors Relating to Housing and Employment Growth

- 5,250 homes are estimated to be required in Chester between now and 2030, or approximately 300 per year. Around 40% of this is expected to be constructed on greenbelt sites which have little or no existing forms of access and movement infrastructure.
- Significant work is required in order to understand the impact of constructing housing in the greenbelt in terms of existing network loading points, flood risk, air quality and ecology. The question of

vehicle loading is of particular concern to the Highways Agency which is interested in the interface with their existing network i.e. the M53, M56, A55 and (less relevantly to Chester the A550).

- Of the 60% of housing to be constructed within the existing urban boundary, 5,080 dwellings are either committed or identified within the SHLAA although not all of these will come forward. The greatest single part of the city for new housing is Blacon, the majority of which are likely to be delivered within 5 years, although Chester City, Boughton, Upton, and longer term Lache, Hoole and Newton, are all important.
- 280 Ha of employment land is estimated to be required across the borough between now and 2030. If the allocation between Local Areas is similar to housing, this would indicate that 70Ha will be required in Chester although it is likely that this is the minimum requirement due to Chester's position as the main employment centre in the sub-region.
- Just under 40 Ha of land are expected by the Local Plan team within the next 15 years, although 25 Ha of this is one site – the Bumpers Lane Tip site in Blacon;
- All of the potential options for housing development within the greenbelt will add significant amounts of traffic to the A483 and A55 routes and junctions. Of the three, Option 2 adds the least but loads additional traffic through the existing AQMA. Option 3 is the most balanced approach overall, but has an additional impact to the north of the city centre.

In addition, the following sections summarise the key opportunities for change as identified from the review of access and movement issues currently prevalent within the city. These are presented by mode:

Highways

The key finding in relation to the highway network within and around the Chester Urban Area is that traffic characteristics are dominated by the constraints placed upon the network as a result of the city's modest size, rich historical heritage, and the transport measures of the past including pedestrianisation and the IRR. It is clear that the city fulfils a role as both a local centre and source of employment, retail and leisure for a much wider catchment than is contained within the urban grain, with particular links to North Wales and Merseyside as stated.

Within the city centre, the IRR that surrounds the historic city core is the clear feature, with the pedestrian zone and adjacent restricted movement streets all contained within this collar. Both Northgate Street / Princess Street and Frodsham / Foregate Street are currently performing roles as 'city distributor' links reflecting their importance both in terms of buses and access for disabled persons and the Grosvenor Hotel, however stated aspirations exist for both of these to be made more pedestrian friendly, with possible future pedestrianisation scenarios being a key question to be addressed by the transport strategy.

The dominance of the effective outer ring road is clear at a wider scale, as is the web of radial routes into the city centre. It is evident that the areas to the north and west are best served by high capacity roads, with the areas east, and south east of the city less well connected. This is clearly a reflection of the rural nature of this part of the borough, although it should be noted that the rural population makes up a significant proportion of the borough's people as a whole, and many of these rural communities rely on access to and from Chester City Centre for their essential business, leisure and shopping.

In terms of traffic flows, the busiest corridors are those from the east (representing a combination of the busy A51 Vicars Cross Road and the A5115 Christleton Road), from the south via Wrexham Road, and from the north including both the A540 and A5116 radial links. Whilst congestion is not a particular problem under normal conditions, the network is extremely busy and hence vulnerable when problems occur. As an example, Hoole Road represents the key link from the M53 motorway and is heavily used but constrained, leading to congestion should any blockage or other delay occur.

Car Parking

Car Parking was the subject of a recently produced strategy document on behalf of CW&C and the key findings of its baseline report included reference to issues and opportunities in 10 key areas. These related to control, pricing policy, signage, overnight parking, on-street charging, and quality amongst other things. In general, it was determined that the parking offer in the city was adequate in terms of numbers but required rationalisation along a corridor based approach with improvements to quality, technology, signage and Park & Ride services. The report also made recommendations in relation to tariffs and on-street charges, to support the wider aspirations of the One City Plan and Local Transport Plan.

Many of the recommendations of the Car Parking Strategy are already in the process of being implemented. It is recommended that the strategy be completed in its entirety, however, as it is considered that many of the recommendations are inter-dependent – in other words, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Several of the measures will be investigated further as part of the Transport Strategy identification process.

Park & Ride

Issues associated with Park & Ride in Chester relate to apparent falls in both utilisation and revenue in recent years, possibly as a result of high levels of 'free' use provided to Council staff, and following the introduction of the 'Free After 3' scheme in the city centre. The Car Parking Strategy report made recommendations in the following areas:

- **Signage:** It is recommended that Upton Park & Ride be signed from M53 Southbound and the A55 Northbound, Boughton Park & Ride from both directions on the A55 at its junction with the A51, and Sealand from the A550 with an additional sign between the A550

and site. It is also recommended that VMS signage be extended for Park & Ride facilities, as well as city centre signage.

- **Location:** It is recommended that work be undertaken to maximise use of informal Park & Ride sites, such as station car parks along the Merseyrail and other rail routes. A new Park & Ride site could be constructed on the Hoole Road corridor with the potential to create drop-off / pick-up point in Hoole District Centre itself around the Faulkner Street area.
- **Optimising use of Resources:** It is recommended that the Park & Ride offer be diversified to include retail, cafe / restaurant, cycle storage and hire uses etc. Carry out a comprehensive review of Park & Ride provision, including contractual arrangements, assessment of demand for a fifth Park & Ride site, alternative routeing and pick-up / drop-off options and a review of pricing structure, including concessionary fares.

Rail Services

Rail services in Chester are in general frequent and good with regular electric local services to Liverpool, fast long distance services to London and frequent services along the North Wales coast towards Llandudno and Holyhead. Services towards Manchester are, however, relatively infrequent and slow, and services towards Wrexham and Crewe do not serve the local communities through which the rail lines pass with no suburban rail stations on these key lines.

The following opportunities for improvement were identified:

- An enhanced service between Chester and Manchester, possibly with through connections to Leeds and beyond, is a possible result of the Northern Hub package of measures due to be delivered before December 2019. In light of recent announcements on the electrification of the Chat Moss and North Trans-Pennine rail lines, there is the opportunity to look at further electrification following these projects.
- Reinstating the Halton Curve should be a key aspiration of both CW&C and North Wales authorities since it provides a direct link to Liverpool John Lennon Airport and a fast direct route into Liverpool city centre. Electrification of the Ellesmere Port – Helsby line could have beneficial impacts for the wider travel-to-work area of Chester as it could potentially enhance the quality, reliability of the service and provide a direct rail link between Ellesmere Port and Chester.

Bus Services

The Pre-Feasibility bus strategy for Chester introduced a number of key issues and opportunities for bus services in Chester. Perhaps of most importance is the fact that bus penetration into the historic core is poor and there is little or no integration between the two primary bus hubs requiring long walks to interchange between buses or between buses and trains.

Proposals to relocate the bus station to Gorse Stacks appear workable from an operational standpoint and would offer improved integration between services and with the rail station, however network testing is required in order to instil confidence that the road network can cope with the network and traffic alterations. In addition, the findings of the recent Bus Strategy Pre-Feasibility Study, and concept design work on the new bus facility, present some wider strategic measures including the creation of several quality bus hubs around the city centre (in addition to a central interchange), and changes to routeing. These will be examined as part of the Transport Strategy identification process.

Cycling and Walking

Whilst great strides forward in cycling provision have been made as a result of Chester's Cycle Demonstration City status, cross-city connectivity remains difficult by sustainable modes due to the severance effect of the IRR and the lack of pedestrian routes through swathes of the city such as the Commonhall Street area. There is also a lack of permeability through the Grosvenor Shopping Centre after closure at around 18:00, and a general lack of available secure and sheltered cycle parking around the city.

Opportunities for change therefore include:

- Developments at Gorse Stacks and Delamere Street present the opportunities for the removal of severance on the IRR at the junctions of Hoole Way and the Fountains Roundabout. Pedestrian and cycle considerations need to form a key part of any resulting highways works.
- Enhancements of the canal environment both as part of the Central Business Quarter and further west, have the potential to improve cycle linkage across the city centre.
- A relaxation of the cycling restrictions in pedestrianised areas might help to improve permeability within the city centre, as might the creation of improved north-south walking and cycling routes.
- A resolution of the cycle parking issue in key locations such as the rail station could potentially promote Chester's impressive cycling credentials and legacy, however the impact on the station's exterior has so far proved divisive. At present, cycle parking is provided inside the building and is popular and well-used, however a lack of space will ultimately require more permanent solutions to be found.

Waterways

The river is currently removed from the city centre by illegibility of route, and severance created by the Vicars Street / Pepper Street corridor. Downgrading the link, as recommended by the One City Plan, would address this issue, however these proposals need to be tested to ensure workability. The canal environment is considered dark and oppressive particularly at night between Frodsham and Northgate Streets, however the improvements already undertaken to the east of the city centre have improved the environment substantially and further

enhancements to the environment, potentially as part of other developments are recommended.

Potential improvements that may be made include the following:

- The River Dee through Chester provides both a pleasant leisure and residential environment for visitors and locals alike, but also an important walking and cycling link to Chester's dependent areas to the west including Hawarden Bridge, Deeside Industrial Park and Queensferry.
- The Chester Canal (part of the Shropshire Union network) provides an important walking and cycling route across the city centre and to Ellesmere Port, via Chester Zoo.
- The potential exists, due to the navigability of the canal between Chester and Ellesmere Port, to introduce freight services between the Manchester Ship Canal (Liverpool and Manchester) and Chester, thus reducing road and rail freight requirements and utilising an underused asset.
- The introduction of pleasure waterbus services between the Zoo and city centre has long been discussed, but might be feasible in the context of the expansion programme at the Zoo and the need for sustainable alternative links between the attraction and the city centre.

Servicing

The main issues associated with servicing in the city centre are as a result of conflict with other traffic and modes of travel during the hours or servicing within the pedestrian zone in morning and evening. Given the constrained nature of the city's historic retail core, it is unlikely that a more palatable solution can be found without significant change in servicing culture and logistics. This may become more likely over time, however given the change already underway in the way we shop and buy goods. Opportunities as a result include the following:

- Future trends in terms of servicing nationally, indicate a movement towards more centralised, out-of-town servicing distribution with less of a need for large-scale town and city centre supply. Consequently service vehicles have moved towards the extremes of size with mid-range vehicles less frequently used.
- It may be possible to combine some servicing functionality with other transport improvements within the city such as the Park & Ride offer. By creating out-of-town hubs at which goods collection could take place, there may be a reduced need for servicing to occur within the city centre at all.
- The increase in popularity of internet shopping has the potential to change further the servicing culture and the transport strategy must account for this and provide a strategy that incorporates the potential for technological change.

Air Quality

The city's air quality management strategy is currently concentrated at the one designated AQMA along Boughton Road which has recently been revised and extended. However, a second area is under investigation and may lead to a further AQMA declaration at the junction of the A540 and A5116 to the north of the Fountain's Roundabout.

The air quality issue clearly highlights the need to reduce traffic flows into and out of the city centre and makes the case for projects which promote more sustainable modes of travel and bring about mode shift to walking cycling and public transport.

Next Steps

This concludes the baseline and evidence gathering stage of the Transport Strategy study. The next stage in the strategy process will identify a long list of opportunities aimed at solving the issues discussed in this report. These will then be appraised and reduced to a short-list of options which can be packaged and tested using appropriate modelling software both strategic and local.

Appendix A – Summary of Development

Chester Housing Development Sites (Brownfield) - October 2012

Ref No.	2011 Ward	ADDRESS	Road	Proposal	Site Area (Ha)	Current Planning Status	GROSS DWELLINGS	LOSS / DEMOLITION	NET DWELLINGS	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
1	Blacon	1 Cedar Mews / 85 Saughall Road (land to the rear), Blacon, Chester	Cedar Mews / Saughall Road	Construction of one (1) dwelling in existing garden		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
2	Blacon	39 Oakfield Road (land and buildings adjacent), Chester	Oakfield Road	Demolition of existing double garage and erection of a detached dormer bungalow		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
3	Blacon	Land fronting 61A Saughall Road, Chester	Saughall Road	One (1) detached dwelling.		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
4	Blacon	27 Blacon Point Road, Blacon, Chester. CH1 5LD	Blacon Point Road	Two storey side extension to provide four (4) new flats. Addition of two (2) more flats - total of six (6)		Committed	6	1	5	Short (0 to 5 years)
5	Blacon	Durham Road (land to the rear of 28 - 38), Blacon, Chester	Durham Road	Development of 5 no. two storey houses (3 bed) and 3 no. two storey houses (4 bed) on former garage site		Committed	8	0	8	Short (0 to 5 years)
6	Blacon	Highfield County Junior and Infant School, Blacon Point Road, Blacon, Chester	Blacon Point Road	Demolish school buildings and erect new building comprising 70 extra care apartments with associated facilities and car parking		Committed	63	0	63	Short (0 to 5 years)
7	Blacon	Playing field off Clifton Drive, Blacon, Chester	Clifton Drive	Residential development of up to 142 dwelling with access off Clifton Drive		Application Pending	142	0	142	Short (0 to 5 years)
8	Blacon	Land off Blacon Avenue, adjacent to Police Headquarters, Blacon	Blacon Avenue	Identified in SHLAA	3.46	None	100	0	100	Short (0 to 5 years)
9	Blacon	King George Playing Field, Blacon	Blacon Avenue	Identified in SHLAA	2.14	None	60	0	60	Short (0 to 5 years)
10	Blacon	Land off Shelley Road / Milton Road, Blacon	Shelley Road / Milton Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.89	None	53	0	53	Short (0 to 5 years)
11	Blacon	Land off Kipling Road / rear of 11 - 25 Shelley Road, Blacon	Kipling Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.82	None	50	0	50	Short (0 to 5 years)
12	Blacon	Land off Burns Way / Boleyn Close (play area), Blacon	Burns Way / Boleyn Close	Identified in SHLAA	1.00	None	28	0	28	Short (0 to 5 years)
13	Blacon	Land between Wemyss Road land Willan Road, Blacon	Wemyss Road / Willan Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.56	None	18	0	18	Short (0 to 5 years)
14	Blacon	Blacon Point Road / Dalton Close (land to the south west), Blacon	Blacon Point Road / Dalton Close	Identified in SHLAA	0.40	None	13	0	13	Short (0 to 5 years)
15	Blacon	Blacon Youth Football Club Cairns Crescent.	Cairns Crescent	Identified in SHLAA	2.82	None	79	0	79	Short (0 to 5 years)
16	Blacon	JH Goodwin Primary School, Melbourne Road, Blacon	Melbourne Road	Identified in SHLAA	2.29	None	64	0	64	Short (0 to 5 years)
17	Blacon	Blacon Hall Road / Durham Road (play area), Blacon	Blacon Hall Road / Durham Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.39	None	39	0	39	Short (0 to 5 years)
18	Blacon	Bank Farm, Sealand Road	Sealand Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.87	None	27	0	27	Short (0 to 5 years)
19	Blacon	Land at Abbots Mead, west of canal / south of Blacon Avenue, Blacon	Blacon Avenue	Identified in SHLAA	3.84	None	100	0	100	Short (0 to 5 years)
20	Blacon	The Parade, Blacon	The Parade	Identified in SHLAA	3.55	None	87	0	87	Medium (6 to 10 years)
21	Blacon	Mulberry Centre, Sealand Road, Chester	Sealand Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.36	None	38	0	38	Short (0 to 5 years)

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22	Blacon	Bumpers Lane Tip (land to the rear), Chester	Bumpers Lane	Identified in SHLAA	31.88	None	781	0	781	Short (0 to 5 years)
23	Blacon	Chaser Court (land to the west), Chester	Chaser Court	Identified in SHLAA	3.27	None	90	0	90	Short (0 to 5 years)
24	Blacon	Highfield County Junior School, rear of 43-83 Sumner Road, Blacon	Sumner Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.65	None		0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Blacon					64.20		1849	1	1848	
25	Boughton	28 Hoole Way, Chester CH1 3EE	Hoole Way	Change of use of first floor store to one (1) self contained flat and ground floor to occasional storage area with facilities		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
26	Boughton	85a Brook Street (Newton Bakery), Chester	Brook Street	Change of use of first floor accommodation from use class B1 to residential class C3		Committed	2	0	2	Short (0 to 5 years)
27	Boughton	42 Tarvin Road, Chester. CH3 5DZ	Tarvin Road	Change of use from HMO to three (3) separate flats		Committed	3	0	3	Short (0 to 5 years)
28	Boughton	Land south of Riverholm, Sandy Lane, Chester	Sandy Lane	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 4 new dwellings, together with garages and		Committed	4	0	4	Short (0 to 5 years)
29	Boughton	Mill House, Steam Mill Street, Chester CH3 5AL	Steam Mill Street	Conversion of existing offices to four (4) studio apartments		Committed	4	0	4	Short (0 to 5 years)
30	Boughton	97A Christleton Road, Boughton, Chester	Christleton Road	Change of use from retail and storage to 8 affordable housing flats		Committed	8	0	8	Short (0 to 5 years)
31	Boughton	M Print Site (formerly), Milton Street, Chester	Milton Street	Original permission for twelve (12) townhouses. New permisison granted for ten (10) town		Committed	10	0	10	Short (0 to 5 years)
32	Boughton	Land at 1-27 Hoole Lane, Chester	Hoole Lane	Demolition of existing vacant two storey residential development and construction of a three storey block of flats containing 16 social rented apartments (8 x 1 bed and 8 x 2 bed units)		Committed	16	14	2	Short (0 to 5 years)
33	Boughton	Boughton Hall, Filkins Lane, Chester, CH3 5EJ	Filkins Lane	Creation of Extra Care Community to include 77 apartments, refurbishment and re- use of Boughton Hall. Amended to increase units by one (1). Pending: alternative building design for Block D to include additional second floor containing two (2) additional dwellings		Committed	80	0	80	Short (0 to 5 years)
34	Boughton	Lead Shot Tower, former Calder Indutsrial Estates, Leadworks Lane, Chester	Leadworks Lane	Renovation and conversion of existing leadworks to mixed use comprising C3/ B1/A1/A3 use, construction of a new four storey extension of 33 dwellings.		Pending	53	0	53	Short (0 to 5 years)
35	Boughton	Former YMCA House and land to rear, Station Road, Chester CH1 3DR	Station Road	Part demolition of former YMCA building and redevelopment to form 34 self contained apartments, new build of 20 houses and 90 apartments on adj. site. Land currently being used as car park. No immediate plans to complete development.		Committed	144	0	144	Short (0 to 5 years)
36	Boughton	Boughton Water Works Site, Bulkeley Street, Boughton	Bulkeley Street	Identified in SHLAA	5.60	None	157	0	157	Short (0 to 5 years)
37	Boughton	Boughton Shopping Centre, Boughton, Chester CH3 5AF	Boughton	Erection of foodstore, energy centre, retail units and replacement footbridge and further associated works (demolition of existing buildings) Outline for 4 storey building incorporating hotel, office building and associated parking	1.05	Pending	0	0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)

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Ref No.	2011 Ward	ADDRESS	Road	Proposal	Site Area (Ha)	Current Planning Status	GROSS DWELLINGS	LOSS / DEMOLITION	NET DWELLINGS	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
38	Boughton	Boughton St Pauls Infant School (former site), Boughton CH3 5AF	Boughton	Erection of foodstore, energy centre, retail units and replacement footbridge and further associated works (demolition of existing buildings) Outline for 4 storey building incorporating hotel, office building and associated parking	0.58	Pending	0	0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
39	Boughton	King Edward Buildings/ Bensons site and surrounding land, Christleton		Identified in SHLAA	0.52	None	16	0	16	Short (0 to 5 years)
40	Boughton	Water works site end of Brassey Street Boughton	Brassey Street	Identified in SHLAA	0.41	None	13	0	13	Short (0 to 5 years)
41	Boughton	Chemistry Lock Tarvin Road, Chester	Tarvin Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.67	None	17	0	17	Short (0 to 5 years)
42	Boughton	City House, 36 City Road, Chester CH1 3AE	City Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.16	None	75	0	75	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Boughton					8.98		603	14	589	
43	Chester City	Northgate Redevelopment Site: Land to north and south of Princess Street, bound by King Street, St Martins Way, Northgate Street and Watergate Street, Chester	Princess Street, King Street, St Martins Way, Northgate Street, Watergate Street	Demolition works, mixed use development of retail units, performing arts centre, residential, market, library, hotel extension, community facilities, bus station, replacement parking, servicing, highway works, public realm, phasing and ancillary work		Committed (However, revised application expected)	123	0	123	Medium (6 to 10 years)
44	Chester City	3 Greyfriars, Chester CH1 2NW	Greyfriars	change of use from offices to single residential dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
45	Chester City	Bluecoat Square, Upper Northgate Street, Chester, CH1 4EH	Upper Northgate Street	Erection of new single storey almhouse		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
46	Chester City	Castle Street (land to the rear of no 10-12), Chester	Castle Street	extension and alteration of office building in first floor with additional storey to provide flat at second floor		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
47	Chester City	6 Commonhall Street, Chester	Commonhall Street	Change of use of 2nd floor from office to residential		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
48	Chester City	6 Stanley Place, Chester. CH1 2LU	Stanley Place	Change of use of ground floor from retail to one (1) studio apartment		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
49	Chester City	47 - 49 Gloucester Street, Chester, CH1 3HR	Gloucester Street	Proposed conversion of 47/49 Gloucester St from one 4 bed dwelling to 2 two bed dwellings		Committed	2	1	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
50	Chester City	8 Nicholas Street, Chester. CH1 2NX	Nicholas Street	Conversion of ground floor to form two (2) self-contained flats		Committed	2	0	2	Short (0 to 5 years)
51	Chester City	22A The Groves Chester Cheshire CH1 1SD	The Groves	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of three dwellings		Committed	3	0	3	Short (0 to 5 years)
52	Chester City	Rockmount, 13 Liverpool Road, Chester. CH2 1AA	Liverpool Road	Change of use of existing building from B1 to C3 residential comprising four (4) self contained one-bed apartments		Committed	4	0	4	Short (0 to 5 years)
53	Chester City	Land to rear of 6 Kings Buildings, Chester		Development of 4 no. town houses		Committed	4	0	4	Short (0 to 5 years)
54	Chester City	3 - 5 Hunter Street, Chester. CH1 2AR	Hunter Street	Change of use to commercial A1, A2 and A3 use at ground floor and conversion to twelve (12) flats over ground, first and second floor		Committed	12	0	12	Short (0 to 5 years)

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55	Chester City	Gorse Stacks Redevelopment. Site 2: Council Car park, Delamere Street/George Street, Chester	Delamere Street / George Street	Three residential developments on sites 1, 2 and 3 of the Gorse Stacks Masterplan with private and public car parks beneath Site 1, mixed uses to ground floor of Sites 1 and 4		Committed	29	0	29	Short (0 to 5 years)
56	Chester City	Gorse Stacks Redevelopment - Site 1: Former Delamere Street bus station, Chester	Delamere Street	Four/Five Storey integrated health and social care centre, residential development comprising of 42 flats, ground floor commercial use and a three storey car park at basement level		Committed	42	0	42	Short (0 to 5 years)
57	Chester City	Linenhall Stables, Stanley Street, Chester CH1 2LR	Stanley Street	144 no. residential apartments with a central landscaped courtyard and covered car parking at lower ground floor level (provision of affordable housing units off site)		Committed	144	0	144	Short (0 to 5 years)
58	Chester City	George Street Centre, George Street, Chester	George Street	Conversion and extension to form 85 student apartments (C3)		Committed	85	0	85	Short (0 to 5 years)
59	Chester City	Gorse Stacks Car Park (southern end), Chester		Identified in SHLAA	0.45	None	20	0	20	Short (0 to 5 years)
60	Chester City	Trafford Street Area, Chester		Identified in SHLAA	1.67	None	69	0	69	Short (0 to 5 years)
61	Chester City	Northgate Arena and Car Park, Chester		Identified in SHLAA	1.84	None	74	0	74	Short (0 to 5 years)
62	Chester City	P.O. Sorting Office, Hoole Bridge, Chester	Hoole Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.47	None	59	0	59	Short (0 to 5 years)
63	Chester City	The Brookdale Centre Union Terrace / Brookdale Place	Brookdale	Identified in SHLAA	0.50	None	23	0	23	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Chester City					5.92		700	1	699	
64	Chester Villages	Hoole Bank Farm, The Street, Chester. CH2 4EP	The Street	Conversion of farm building to form one(1) four-bed dwelling with home office		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
65	Chester Villages	The Orchard (land adjacent), Warrington Road, Mickle Trafford, Chester	Warrington Road	One (1) new dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
66	Chester Villages	Land adjacent to The Vicarage, Wicker Lane, Guilden Sutton, Chester CH3 7EL	Wicker Lane	One (1) detached dwelling on land to rear of The Vicarage		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
67	Chester Villages	Greysfield, Ferma Lane, Barrow, Chester. CH3 7HT	Ferma Lane	Change of use form sheltered home accommodation (C2) back to single occupancy residential house		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
68	Chester Villages	The Drift, Moor Lane, Rowton, CH3 7QW	Moor Lane	To sever part of curtilage and erect detached dwelling (Outline application with all matters reserved)		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
69	Chester Villages	Littleton Old Hall, Little Heath Road, Christleton, CH3 7DW	Little Heath Road	Change of use of existing storage (Class B8) premises and associated land to single dwelling (Class C3) including formation of garden area and external alterations within curtilage of Littleton Old Hall		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
70	Chester Villages	Mill Farm, Warrington Road, Mickle Trafford, Chester, Cheshire CH2 4EB	Warrington Road	Change use of existing granny flat to form separate dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
71	Chester Villages	Summerhill, Greenfield Lane, Chester, Cheshire CH2 2PA	Greenfield Lane	Change of use from B&B to residential dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)

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72	Chester Villages	Trafford Lea, Greenfield Lane, Chester. CH2 2PA	Greenfield Lane	Creation of self-contained flat in loft and insertion of two rooflights in rear roof space.		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
73	Chester Villages	Chipstead, Whitchurch Road, Rowton, Chester CH3 6AF	Whitchurch Road	Change of use to one (1) residential dwelling including rear extension		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
74	Chester Villages	Stamford Heath Farm, Stamford Lane, Christleton, Chester. CH3 7QD	Stamford Lane	Change of use from two agricultural barn to form two (2) residential dwellings including side extension to one barn and detached garage.		Committed	2	0	2	Short (0 to 5 years)
75	Chester Villages	Littleton Hall Farm, Littleton Lane, Chester CH3 7DJ	Littleton Lane	Conversion of barns to four (4) houses and erection of nine(9) affordable houses. Total of 13 dwellings		Committed	13	0	13	Short (0 to 5 years)
76	Chester Villages	Land adjacent to The Cheshire Cat, Whitchurch Road, Christleton, Chester	Whitchurch Road	Thirteen (13) affordable dwellings		Committed	13	0	13	Short (0 to 5 years)
77	Chester Villages	Fildes Builders Merchants, Warrington Road, Mickle Trafford	Warrington Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.11	None	0	0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Chester Villages					1.11		38	0	38	
78	Doddleston and Huntington	Green Lane Farm, Green Lane, Marslton Cum Lache, Chester,	Green Lane	Identified in SHLAA	0.06	None	0	0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Doddleston and Huntington					0.06		0	0	0	
79	Garden Quarter	36 Bouverie Street, Chester CH1 4HF	Bouverie Street	Change of use for 7-bed HMO		Committed	1	1	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
80	Garden Quarter	University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ	Parkgate Road	Construction and operation of 196 bed student accommodation building with landscaping and associated works. (11/01536/FUL for 203 bed student accommodation refused)	0.79	Committed	0	0	0	Short (0 to 5 years)
81	Garden Quarter	Charlotte Street / Whipcord Lane (land between), Chester	Charlotte Street / Whipcord Lane	Construction of 6 no. 5 bed student units and 1 no. 6 student bed unit with ancillary accommodation comprising laundry and management offices and car parking facilities providing 15 no. car spaces		Committed	7	0	7	Short (0 to 5 years)
82	Garden Quarter	Land adjacent to 12 Cambrian View, Whipcord Lane, Chester	Whipcord Lane	Four storey building containing eight (8) two-bed flats	0.10	Committed	8	0	8	Short (0 to 5 years)
83	Garden Quarter	Tilston's Yard, Land at Crane Wharf, Sealand Road, Chester	Sealand Road	Demolition of buildings and erection of 24 apartments, new access, flood defence wall, riverside path and associated works		Committed	24	0	24	Short (0 to 5 years)
84	Garden Quarter	Tower Wharf (land at), South of canal, off Upper Cambrian View, Chester	Upper Cambrian View	Mixed use waterside development incorporating 153 residential units, commercial offices, bars, restaurant and retail. 27 Town houses on site adjacent to Boat Yard		Committed	27	0	27	Short (0 to 5 years)
85	Garden Quarter	Tower Wharf (land to the east), North of the canal, off Raymond Street, Chester	Raymond Street	Mixed use waterside development incorporating 153 residential units, commercial offices, bars, restaurant and retail. 133 houses and apartments onsite adjacent to Telford's Warehouse.		Committed	145	0	145	Short (0 to 5 years)
86	Garden Quarter	Parkgate Road (land at), bounded by Finchetts Gutter, Blacon	Parkgate Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.98	None	53	0	53	Short (0 to 5 years)

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87	Garden Quarter	Southern Tail development (remaining part of allocation), New crane street	New Crane Street	Identified in SHLAA	0.69	None	22	0	22	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Garden Quarter					3.57		287	1	286	
88	Great Boughton	69a-c Dee Banks (land to the rear), Great Boughton, CH3 5UX	Dee Banks	Demolition of garages and construction of a single house		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
89	Great Boughton	Land adjacent to 28 Private Walk, Great Boughton, Chester	Private Walk	One (1) two bedroom detached house		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
90	Great Boughton	Becketts Lane (land adjacent and to the rear of no.90), Great Boughton, Chester Cheshire	Becketts Lane	Detached dwelling and detached garage		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
91	Great Boughton	Land at Bachelors Lane (rear of 26 Heath Lane), Great Boughton, Chester	Bachelors Lane	Two (2) semi-detached dwellings and one (1) detached bungalow. Three (3) two-bed dwellings in total.	0.14	Committed	3	0	3	Short (0 to 5 years)
92	Great Boughton	54 Becketts Lane, Great Boughton, Chester, CH3 5RN	Becketts Lane	Demolition of furniture warehouse and erection of eight dwellings	0.13	Pending	8	0	8	Short (0 to 5 years)
93	Great Boughton	Former Nexus House, Thackeray Drive, Vicars Cross, Chester	Thackeray Drive	16 no. houses and bungalows	0.66	Committed	16	0	16	Short (0 to 5 years)
Total Great Boughton					0.93		30	0	30	
94	Handbridge Park	Land adjacent 40 Curzon Park North, Curzon Park, Chester CH4 8AR	Curzon Park North	One (1) new dwelling (four bed house)	0.26	Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
95	Handbridge Park	Earlsway (land adjacent to no.83), Chester	Earlsway	One (1) new dwelling	0.10	Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
96	Handbridge Park	Land adjacent to 23 Lache Lane, Chester. CH4 7LP	Lache Lane	New detached dwelling with garage and new separate access drive		Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
97	Handbridge Park	Land to rear of 2 -14 Bradford Street, Handbridge, Chester	Bradford Street	Demolition of existing depot shed, erection of five three bedroom terrace houses with parking and refuse collection point		Committed	5	0	5	Short (0 to 5 years)
98	Handbridge Park	The Curzon Hotel, 52-54 Hough Green, Chester, CH4 8JQ	Hough Green	To convert the existing hotel into three houses, demolish garage, stores and car ports and erect three mews cottages		Committed	6	0	6	Short (0 to 5 years)
99	Handbridge Park	5 Dingle Bank (land adjacent), Curzon park	Dingle Bank	Identified in SHLAA	0.48	None	5	0	5	Short (0 to 5 years)
100	Handbridge Park	Mount Pleasant (land at), Curzon Park	Mount Pleasant	Identified in SHLAA	2.16	None	40	0	40	Short (0 to 5 years)
101	Handbridge Park	Lache Lane / Winkwell Drive (land to the rear), Chester	Lache Lane / Winkwell Drive	Identified in SHLAA	1.15	None	30	0	30	Very long (16 years +)
102	Handbridge Park	Green Bank, West Cheshire College	Green Bank	Identified in SHLAA	0.87	None	27	0	27	Long (11 to 15 years)
103	Handbridge Park	Styelane Croft (land at), Handbridge	Stylane Croft	Identified in SHLAA	0.96	None	30	0	30	Medium (6 to 10 years)
104	Handbridge Park	Coach House, Netherleigh House, 48 Eaton Road, Handbridge, Chester, CH4 7EW	Eaton Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.11	Pending	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
Total Handbridge Park					6.09		147	0	147	
105	Hoole	Vicarage Road (land at no.2), Chester, CH2 3HZ	Vicarage Road	Erection of new two-storey house with associated access		Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
106	Hoole	The Croft, Mannings Lane South, Chester	Mannings Lane South	Change of use from Class D1 (non residential institutions) to Class C3 (Dwellinghouses) use		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)

Chester Housing Development Sites (Brownfield) - October 2012

Ref No.	2011 Ward	ADDRESS	Road	Proposal	Site Area (Ha)	Current Planning Status	GROSS DWELLINGS	LOSS / DEMOLITION	NET DWELLINGS	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
107	Hoole	1 Knowsley House, Knowsley Road, Chester	Knowsley Road	Demolition of existing house and erection of 3 no. detached dwellings and associated garaging and parking (Allowed on Appeal)		Committed	3	1	2	Medium (6 to 10 years)
108	Hoole	Craigleith Guest House, 56 Hoole Road, Hoole , Chester	Hoole Road	Change of use from guest house to three (3) self contained flats		Committed	3	0	3	Long (11 to 15 years)
109	Hoole	Bawn Lodge, 8-10 Hoole Road, Chester. CH2 3NH	Hoole Road	Erection of one (1) 2-bed bungalow for hotel manager's accommodation		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
110	Hoole	Land to the south of Brookside Terrace, Hoole, Chester	Brookside Terrace	Allocations for 30 dwellings		Not committed	30	0	30	Long (11 to 15 years)
111	Hoole	Hoole Gardens (land adjacent 20-35), Hoole, Chester	Hoole Gardens	Identified in SHLAA	0.58	None	16	0	16	Long (11 to 15 years)
112	Hoole	Hoole Lane / Lightfoot street (land and buildings), Hoole, Chester	Hoole Lane / Lightfoot Street	Identified in SHLAA	0.39	None	18	0	18	Long (11 to 15 years)
113	Hoole	Hoole Lane / Homesteads Drive (land and buildings), Hoole, Chester	Hoole Lane / Homesteads Drive	Identified in SHLAA	0.47	None	15	0	15	Long (11 to 15 years)
114	Hoole	Hoole Road Enterprise Centre, Chester	Hoole Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.71	None	32	0	32	Long (11 to 15 years)
115	Hoole	West Street (land adjacent railway depot), Chester	West Street	Identified in SHLAA	2.10	None	84	0	84	Very long (16 years +)
116	Hoole	Brookside Terrace (land at), Chester	Brookside Terrace	Identified in SHLAA	0.66	None	30	0	30	Medium (6 to 10 years)
117	Hoole	Lawn Tennis club Fairfield Road, Hoole, Chester	Fairfield Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.34	None	0	0	0	Medium (6 to 10 years)
Total Hoole					5.25		234	1	233	
118	Lache	Land to rear of 32-34 Oldfield Crescent, Chester CH4 7PE	Oldfield Crescent	Construction of one (1) dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
119	Lache	Saltney Christian Centre, Hough Green, Chester. CH4 8JW		Change of use of redundant church hall to one (1) dwelling and change of use of redundant church to form art studio and gallery and formation of driveway		Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
120	Lache	Great Western House, The Sidings, Chester St, Saltney	The Sidings	Identified in SHLAA	0.54	None	18	0	18	Long (11 to 15 years)
121	Lache	Red Hill House, Hope Street, Saltney	Hope Street	Identified in SHLAA	0.96	None	31	0	31	Long (11 to 15 years)
122	Lache	Lapperfield, off Barnwood Drive, Lache	Barnwood Drive	Identified in SHLAA	8.11	None	227	0	227	Medium (6 to 10 years)
123	Lache	56 St Marks Road, Chester, CH4 8DQ	St Marks Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.01	None	0	0	0	Long (11 to 15 years)
124	Lache	Boundary Lane (land and buildings to the east), Chester	Boundary Lane	Identified in SHLAA	0.54	None	0	0	0	Very long (16 years +)
Total Lache					10.15		278	0	278	
125	Newton	Garages at Plas Newton Lane, Newton, Chester	Plas Newton Lane	One (1) detached bungalow / Detached dwelling and car port		Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
126	Newton	24 Deanery Close Chester Cheshire CH1 4AU	Deanery Close	Change Of Use of a detached 4 bedroom house into 2 self contained flats		Committed	2	1	1	Very long (16 years +)
127	Newton	Land adjacent 24 The Heywoods, Chester Cheshire	The Heywoods	One (1) new dwelling on adjacent land		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
128	Newton	Land at The Spinney, Plas Newton Lane, Chester. CH2 1PJ	Plas Newton Lane	One (1) new dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Very long (16 years +)

Chester Housing Development Sites (Brownfield) - October 2012

Ref No.	2011 Ward	ADDRESS	Road	Proposal	Site Area (Ha)	Current Planning Status	GROSS DWELLINGS	LOSS / DEMOLITION	NET DWELLINGS	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
129	Newton	Land adjacent 13 Moss Bank, Chester	Mosst Bank	Erection of two (2) new dwellings		Committed	2	0	2	Long (11 to 15 years)
130	Newton	Abbots Park (land adjacent to no.40) Chester CH1 4AN	Abbots Park	Construction of 4 no. flats and new access		Committed	4	0	4	Long (11 to 15 years)
131	Newton	Newton House, Long Lane (Geistlich Sons Ltd), Chester CH2 2PF	Long Lane	Eight (8) residential dwellings - demolition of existing office building		Committed	8	0	8	Very long (16 years +)
132	Newton	Land to rear of 7 - 17 Essex Road, Chester	Essex Road	Three storey block containing nine (9) apartments with associated car parking and landscaped communal areas		Committed	9	0	9	Short (0 to 5 years)
133	Newton	Car Park, Northgate Avenue, Chester	Northgate Avenue	Extra care housing scheme comprising 131 residential apartments, communal and day care facilities, car parking, communal gardens and grounds (Arena Housing) Market housing 9x1 bed and 17x2 bed flats. Intermediate housing 38x1 bed and 67x2 bed flats)		Committed	131	0	131	Medium (6 to 10 years)
134	Newton	Northgate Car Park		Identified in SHLAA	1.10	None	44	0	44	Medium (6 to 10 years)
135	Newton	Liverpool Road (Bus depot), Chester	Liverpool Road	Identified in SHLAA	0.42	None	19	0	19	long (11 to 15 years)
136	Newton	Newton Hall (land adjacent), Newton Hall Drive, Chester	Newton Hall Drive	Identified in SHLAA	0.68	None	21	0	21	Long (11 to 15 years)
137	Newton	Woodfield Primary School, Chester		Identified in SHLAA	2.45	None	69	0	69	Long (11 to 15 years)
138	Newton	The Bear's Paw (land at), Dicksons Drive, Bache	Dicksons Drive	Identified in SHLAA	0.43	None	14	0	14	Medium (6 to 10 years)
Total Newton					5.09		326	1	325	
139	Saughall and Mollington	Saughall Nurseries, Parkgate Road, Saughall, Chester CH1 6JS	Parkgate Road	Outline application for extension and division of house into two (2) three-bed dwellings.		Committed	2	1	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
140	Saughall and Mollington	Birchwood Farm, Welsh Road, Ledsham, Chester	Welsh Road	Conversion and extension of outbuilding to dwelling	0.20	Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
141	Saughall and Mollington	Daisy Bank Farm, Welsh Road, Ledsham, Chester	Welsh Road	Change of use of former agricultural building to dwelling	0.10	Committed	1	0	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
142	Saughall and Mollington	Lodge Lane (OS Field Numbers 2761 and 2350), Saughall, Chester	Lodge Lane	Construction of 18 (two and three bed) affordable dwellings). Social rented housing = 6x2bed and 5x3 bed. Intermediate housing = 5x2bed and 2x3bed.	0.78	Committed	18	0	18	
143	Saughall and Mollington	Buildings 32, 33 and 34, The Dale barracks, Liverpool Road, Moston, Chester	Liverpool Road	Conversion of existing garages into officers accommodation, plant room and utility and construction of new goat accommodation.		Application Pending	0	0	0	Medium (6 to 10 years)
144	Saughall and Mollington	Land between Parkgate Road and Shelley Road, Chester	Parkgate Road / Shelley Road	To erect a student village including accommodation for up to 2,300 students, recreational open space, a combined student hub/sporting facility		Application Pending	0	0	0	Medium (6 to 10 years)
Total Saughall and Mollington					1.08		22	1	21	
145	Upton	Corporation Yard, Flag Lane North, Upton	Flag Lane North	Residential accommodation for people with mild to moderate learning difficulties and/or physical and sensory disability falling within a Class C2 (Residential Institutions) use. EXT pending for 13 dwellings app		Committed	0	0	0	Long (11 to 15 years)

Chester Housing Development Sites (Brownfield) - October 2012

Ref No.	2011 Ward	ADDRESS	Road	Proposal	Site Area (Ha)	Current Planning Status	GROSS DWELLINGS	LOSS / DEMOLITION	NET DWELLINGS	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
146	Upton	Birch Cottage, Linksway, Upton, Chester CH2 1EA	Linksway	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of two (2) four-bed houses - Allowed on appeal		Committed	2	1	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
147	Upton	Land to the rear of 52 Long Lane, Upton , Chester	Long Lane	One (1) new dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
148	Upton	Land at 100 Weston Grove, Upton, CH2 1QN	Weston Grove	Single dwelling with attached garage and new access		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
149	Upton	Land at 8 Handford Road, Upton	Handford Road	Proposed two storey dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
150	Upton	86 Weston Grove, Upton, Chester CH2 1QL	Weston Grove	Change of use from store to 1no flat and extension to the rear		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
151	Upton	Land at 17 Upton Lane, Upton, Chester CH2 1EB	Upton Lane	One (1) new dwelling		Committed	1	0	1	Medium (6 to 10 years)
152	Upton	84 Heath Road, Upton, Chester. CH2 1HX	Heath Road	Two storey extension to rear and change of use to two (2) dwellings		Committed	2	1	1	Long (11 to 15 years)
153	Upton	Land adjacent 4 Cornwall Road, Upton, Chester	Cornwall Road	Two (2) semi-detached dwelling houses		Committed	2	0	2	Medium (6 to 10 years)
154	Upton	Dukesway (land adjacent to 18 Lakeside Close), Upton, Chester	Lakeside Close	Residential development of 16no dwellings on land at rear		Committed	16	0	16	Very long (16 years +)
155	Upton	Land opposite 33 Upton Lane, Upton, Chester Cheshire	Upton Lane	Erection of five (5) dwellings on land adjacent to Chester Golf Club (Outline Application)		Committed	5	0	5	
156	Upton	Arderne House, Woodlea Avenue, Upton, Chester	Woodlea Avenue	Residential development accommodating 24 apartments for residents aged 55 years and over		Committed	24	23	1	Short (0 to 5 years)
157	Upton	Upton Dene: Countess of Chester Health Park (surplus land to the north), Liverpool Road, Chester	Liverpool Road	Erection of 199 dwellings and 9483sqm of business floor space (Class B1) and a community building, including full details for Phase 1, comprising 199 dwellings, service roads and access to Liverpool Road. 11/03553/FUL substitution of 4 plots for six(6) houses		Committed	201	0	201	Short (0 to 5 years)
158	Upton	Former land on the Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Upton, Chester CH2 1BB	Liverpool Road	56 residential dwellings (Phase 1 - Full) and mixed business uses consisiting of care home amd public house / small hotel (Phase 2 - outline) Phase 1: 3x2 bed and 32x3 bed houses, and 21x2 bed apartments	2.07	Committed	55	0	55	Short (0 to 5 years)
159	Upton	Countess of Chester Hospital (land at), Liverpool Road, Chester	Liverpool Road	Identified in SHLAA	10.13	Committed / Pre-app ?	266	0	266	Short (0 to 5 years)
160	Upton	Handford Road / Newhall Road (land betwen) Upton	Handford Road / Newhall Road	Identified in SHLAA	1.05	None	20	0	20	Medium (6 to 10 years)
161	Upton	Marl Heys (land to the rear), Chester	Marl Heys	Identified in SHLAA	0.42	None	13	0	13	Medium (6 to 10 years)

Capabilities on project: Transportation

**Appendix B – One City Plan and Chester
Parking Strategy Consultation Notes**

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement 17th August 2011 9.30 am – 12.00 noon

Town Hall

Group 3

Facilitators: Gemma Easter & Joy Gill

Tasks 1 & 2

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

Buses-

What will there be apart from? "Super Bus stops"?
Hub is not suitable on Foregate Street - not workable
What happens to people with limited mobility?

Aging Population "Grey Pound"-
Limited coach stops for national express
Lack of penetration for public transport

Park & Ride-
Still have to have a car. How can P&R complement public transport?

Bus operators won't operate unless there is demand.

Bus and market work together.

Buses should take you to hub of city.

Sustainability - Current position: good for shopping and loading. Essential in Northgate.

Signage and Information –

Signage- too many signs and not the right information. Need to keep variable information on car packs reliable.
Maps- large visible displays and paper copies- focus on where the shops are. People need to know better what is at key points. Reminders and promotion.

Routes –

Pepper Street- Access to river and lowering traffic- good idea. Go other way down Little St. John Street for access to river/amphitheatre.

Souters Lane- People won't walk up and down it. Buggy access. Vernacular lift attraction in key visitor periods.

Removing clutter- Shared surface on Frodsham Street. Treatment of interaction between people and buses. And possibly around ampitheatre.

Narrow Roads are historic legacy.

Land use –

Relationship between some uses and buses i.e market and bus provision.

Cycling –

Cycle permeability- Curzon Bridge- upgrade for cycling.

Christleton to Business Park

Lottery Bridge- Good idea but funding has gone.

People plan cycling but nothing happens.

Cyclists need to mix with pedestrians legally.

Chester not cycle friendly.

Produce 1 map for cyclists.

Better publicity of quieter routes.

One way on bridge- pedestrians one way, cyclists the other.

Canal –

Canal towpath- deteriorating, lighting, good asset for city centre, apartment developments have created private area, should be promoted as a thoroughfare, cobbled area are a problem for cyclists.

Water taxis

Rail –

Strategic transport links over 15 period.

Speed/quality

Upgrade line to Manchester

Links /sevices to Wales, Manchester, and Liverpool are important

Affect on high speed service if planned- not until 2026. Would need electrification from Crewe.

Railway Station- must look carefully at getting people into city centre.

Tram to penetrate Chester - City Road

More space for bus turning.

City link bus very valuable.

Not enough short stay parking.

Hooton Station should become part of the solution.

Car Parks –

Should be in city core.

General Points -

Common Hall Street/Rows- independent traders needed.

OCP could be more radical regarding transport movement. City cannot function without very good road access. Should we remove elevated sections of inner ring road and go underground.

New business- who will come? No new business coming to city centre.

Duration of stay is important, currently a mismatch. So many different needs.

2 key schemes are Northgate and CBD

Northgate- how will this sit within OCP?

To make plan viable Chester must be connected well to the rest of the country.

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

3 key transport and movement priorities

Overall – connectivity to Chester and then around the City (think about buggy access, cobbles, access for ageing population, Chester with rest of Country.)

1. Bus penetration
Operate to demand. Passengers must be spoken to. Drop off close to major shops.
2. Cycling
Reiterate what is already in cycle strategy/policy.
Bridge across river for better interaction
3. Signage/info/marketing (especially attractions, shops, facilities e.g. toilets)
In and around Chester and before you arrive.
Movement as part of the marketing.

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement 17th August 2011 6.00 – 8.30 pm

Group 3

Facilitators: Kevin Riley & Gemma Easter

Task 1 & 2

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

- o Taxi points and access
- o Safe and secure cycle parking
- o Access by rail to/from Manchester
- o Access from Beeston/Rossett railway station
- o Rail connectivity with Liverpool/Halton curve
- o Signage from rail station to city centre, especially at the Barrs
- o Remove all car parking spaces outside hangman pub and make the highway 2 way (the Barrs)
- o Advertising at entry points, especially gateways
- o Bus facilities are important in the centre, especially for less mobile
- o Heritage bus should be able to go through city centre
- o Need to control and manage taxis- enforcement, and control where they wait
- o High number of blue badge holders
- o Extended times for P&R services needs addressing
- o On street parking
- o Need improved facilities at the coach station e.g toilets
- o Overlay of coaches at the bus facility on Hunter Street/Odeon creates pollution and noise
- o Little Roodee should be considered as a place for taxis to wait
- o Can we put cars underground?
- o Ampitheatre is key
- o Gorse stacks/Hoole Road- go a step further and put traffic underground
- o Barrs and Gorse Stacks are key areas
- o Bridge Street/Pepper Street are key pedestrian areas
- o Cycle hire scheme
- o Canal Towpath is not pleasant
- o Car park ticketing- could be more advanced and time flexible eg. Using technologies such as texts to update ticket duration
- o Look at other UK and European cities as examples – e.g. Luton International car park (we want iconic buildings - style and pride); Heidelberg.
- o Travel card for Chester- Oyster Card

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

Make something happen! Doing nothing is not an option. 2012- can be low cost options.

1. Improve pedestrian routes- including removing the subways, especially at the Barrs- from the station to the city centre and through city centre core to the race course. Sign the routes well and focus on bottlenecks.
2. Improve Park & Ride offer
 - Extend the service later
 - Pay for the car, not per person
 - Look at as part of the whole strategy
3. Management and enforcement of taxis. Including central areas where they wait and corridors that they use.

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement : 17th August (9:30am – 12.00 noon)

Town Hall

Group 2

Facilitators: Jamie Matthews and Tamara Socha

Tasks 1 & 2

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

The plan is an opportunity for a new plan, possibly a tram system – linking from Railway to reduce number of vehicles in City Centre. Shouldn't be based on cars, should be low carbon. Don't feel the proposed plan is radical enough. This is an opportunity to do something different that people will want to come and see.

Cycling – Feel it is lacking in the document, pushing cycles through greenways is great but it doesn't help when trying to get into the City Centre for work.

View that if St Werburgh Street is pedestrianised, there will be a knock on view through the rest of the City.

There is an issue about trying to please everyone, when trying to change access to the City Centre you can't please everyone.

Driving around Chester can create problems for non-locals as signs are often obscured by trees.

Feel it is crucial to decide what you want the centre to be before tackling traffic issues

Could the car parks be further out and walk in with resident only car parks? Extortionate car parking prices and usually a minimum of 4 hours parking when in competition with Cheshire Oaks where there is free car parking.

Feel four Park & Rides are enough – North, South, East & West which covers adequately although it could be extended at Chester Zoo. Expensive to create another Park & Ride

Interchange at the Railway is a good idea – short local journey by car then long journey by train, strategy would reduce amount of traffic in City Centre while increasing the number of visitors.

No security at Chester Station after 7pm, feels threatening, need better integration between buses and the railway.

Could connect Ellesmere Port, Chester and the Zoo via waterbus.

Buses need to be able to get close to the shops. Lack of information near to bus stops and no waiting areas out of the rain. Gorse Stacks jumps out as a transport hub and underground car parking is not featured in the One City Plan.

Buses stop at 7pm (some later till 11:30) which doesn't allow the majority to get the bus home on a night out.

Could introduce smart ticketing to treat residents/ tourists/ commuters differently.

Thought that a low carbon bus would be more in keeping with the City than a tram system. Looking to the future.

Solutions:

- Remove barrier of inner ring road – limit traffic? Park and Ride only? Access only?
- Edge of City Centre parking good idea
- Pedestrian underpasses are not a nice place in the evening but if they get closed will interfere with the traffic
- How can we influence travel choices? Encourage people to leave their cars. Need a public transport system that is regular, efficient and cheap – like Mersey rail.
- More control to get Greenway travel reinforced
- Measure to try and get employers to do more and encourage staff to leave cars behind
- Need to maintain cycle and pedestrian paths

Northgate shop owners are very keen to extend pedestrianisation, however if pedestrianise Centre it puts more traffic on inner ring road.

Need to look at the options and model them.

Frodsham Street bus stop is in a good place, it would inconvenience the public to move it further out.

Blue badge parking: 50% are borrowed from relatives as it is not enforced.

Resident parking zones are enforced and working well.

Need to determine where the coaches go and where the bus station could be put.

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

15 Year Plan – Priorities:

- Make pedestrian area larger – extend it
- Encourage other models of transport
- Railway station as an interchange

- Increase car parking on outside and effective system of getting into the City
- Make transport sufficient for commuters and residents, encourage to walk/ cycle 'Sustainable City'
- Need a Hi Tech modern system and parking on the outside
- New bridge near Hoole bridge for cyclists and pedestrians
- Integration of Bus and Train tickets
- Passenger transport access to City Centre
- Access to Waitrose Development
- Close inner ring road near amphitheatre and have "No through traffic" on rest of ring road, this would make better access to Amphitheatre

Top 3 Priorities:

1. Be clear about what you want the Historic Core to be
2. Links from car parks and Railway station to City Centre
3. Promoting Low Carbon transport to de-restrict the Southern route.

ONE CITY PLAN (OCP) WORKSHOP
Transport and Movement 17th AUGUST 2011 (6.00 – 8.30 pm)
WESLEY CHAPEL, CHESTER

Group 2

Facilitators: Jamie Matthews and Joy Gill

Tasks 1 & 2

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

City of NOW

-If Chester Renaissance and CWAC does anything it should downgrade the northern end of the ring road. This would be an amazing advance. This is an area of the city with many of our assets.

-How would other sections of the IRR cope? Traffic would have to have priority on the northern section.

-Do we need a bus station?

-Signage to car parks is not clear and should be further out along with info on prices.

-The IRR is an ugly barrier.

-What do we want Chester city centre to be? Most important thing is that it has economic clout and vitality. Chester has superb assets. If we want to maximise this how do we make this happen?

-What evidence do we have on what people use Chester for? What is realistic capacity? We need more evidence before we make assumptions.

-Chester is too narrow a focus for transport. Its impact goes beyond the OCP boundary.

-We are trying to solve the problems using a very tight area. We should have a model of how the city would work with a Chester Western Relief Road (CWRR). Where did the S106 money for the CWRR go? A complete model for the whole of the area is needed.

-As a motorist does the city work?

-There is a congestion problem for both motorists and businesses. There are times when the network doesn't work.

-It would be a nightmare to sort out but worth it.

-Our problems are relative – look at Bristol.

-Managing traffic is very important but there are a lot of selfish people using cars. People are very precious about their cars.

-Is parking working?

-An anti-car campaign would be disastrous for Chester. Free after 3 is a great success.

-P&R closes too early.

-Need more imagination, use the canal for water taxis. A very efficient bus service is needed

-We must incentivise people to use P&R but service must be ready to cope with increased service. We should have a free service.

-Increase the route of the railway shuttle.

-We need a new bus station – it could be attractive and "really posh".

-Where is the money for all these things?

-Extending the footprint of the pedestrianised area is excellent

-Introduce a mini transport system to move elderly for example.

City of FUTURE

- Chester to Wrexham bus service is good. Private operators have to make a profit.
- Could enter in to a quality partnership with operators.
- People use buses but have to complain about service and timetables have been removed from bus stops.
- Buses shouldn't be using smart technology – just want it to be simple.
- People are leaving Chester because the experience is poor. Detail is important.
- Quality provision has gone down
- In the east of the City the first Car park is Gorse Stacks. This should be a focus site.
- Reality is that people want to drive
- A car scheme should be revisited.
- The cycling experience is not good in the city.
- Taxi drivers are always moaning they are not used. This resource should be used more and they should be consulted on their concerns about congestion.
- In favour of reducing traffic on the IRR.
- Poor publicity of the river. We don't sell our riverside or canalside.
- The Castle is one of Chester's greatest assets – it would be more opened up if more people visited the south of the city.
- There is the massive problem of Grosvenor Bridge capacity
- We should change the notion of priority been given to traffic.
- It would be great if visitors could get into the city for free.
- We want mobility for people not necessarily traffic
- Overleigh roundabout is a problem
- The OCP should look at a wider area and go out to next set of roundabouts.
- People begin to experience the city a lot further out e.g. Saltney. The experience should be enhanced from there.
- The first impression of Chester is pretty dismal.
- Northgate Street lends itself to extending the pedestrianisation
- Frodsham Street as a location for the market questioned.
- Grosvenor Museum needs to be revamped.
- We need to create linkages and added connections.
- Pedestrianisation of the South IRR would encourage activity in this area.
- We shouldn't compete with out of town shopping but build on our strengths and heritage
- We should be a sustainable city using our river and canal – a canal taxi from the Focus site.
- Clash between cycles and people.

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

- 15 year timeframe is too long. Modelling of traffic on the CWRR is a key factor but will only take through traffic but will allow creativity. Must look at all of Chester before we make a judgement.
- We must define what our future ambition for Chester is and have a bigger picture transport model.

- It is difficult to ignore the bigger picture and what is taking place in and around the city.
- We need to re-educate people's perceptions.

3 KEY PRIORITIES

- TRANSPORT MODEL
- EXTEND PEDESTRIANISATION (Northgate Street and south Inner Ring Road)
- BETTER BUS SERVICES

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement : 17th August (9:30am – 12.00 noon)

Town Hall

Group 1

Facilitators: Dave Thomas and Beth Fletcher

Tasks 1

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

- The southern carriageway of the ring-road prevents access to the river and The Groves.
- The regularity and times of the Park and Ride and public bus services effect how early / late people are able to travel into the city centre (which impacts upon the night time economy and the use of services in the city)
- Information available to visitors is poor – visitors should be able to find out (easily) where they should be going to access specific bus routes / services. There is confusion as to the location of the bus station / national express / train station etc
- A lack of connectivity between public transport providers e.g. bus tickets are not transferable between operators.
- Ultimately there is still a very strong reliance on the private car (especially by local residents) – need to continue to promote Chester as a cycle demonstration town and encourage workers not to use their cars but to use public transport to travel to work.
- Congestion getting into the city centre is an issue
- Air quality management issue – Boughton (A41/A51)
- There is less congestion when compared with 20 years ago, and periods of congestion are relatively short. The majority of morning traffic consists of the private car user accessing private city centre car parks.
- There are no rail alternatives (to the private car) from the south or south-east of Cheshire – re-open or establish new rail halts along these lines so that people have greater access.
- Do we want more visitors – should we be using Southport as a good example: encouraging coach travel and offering discount vouchers from local retailers – marketing the city in the right way is key
- Grosvenor Park Road (not a permitted Car park) but was well used and allowed people to park on the edge of the city centre, not travel through it to access parking
- Information for motorists to direct them to the nearest and available spaces – prevent unnecessary travel through and around the city centre (larger variable message signs further out from the city centre to give more choice and options for parking)
- Cycling: cyclists have to be responsible and disciplined as they can cause accidents e.g. using the pedestrian crossings
- Discrepancies in car parking charges, motorists should know the charging schedule of all car parks so that they can chose before entering a car park – some of the lower priced parking is available further in to the city centre therefore this is where people will go.

Task 2

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

- The biggest issue will be implementing changes
- Fuel charges may increase pressures on rail services therefore we need to be prepared and offer more regular services to Manchester and reduce journey times to Liverpool
- Car parking issues at train stations need to be resolved
- Frodsham Street / Delamere Street environments have to be improved for pedestrians
- There are no issues with any of the actions proposed
- Multiple hubs (for public transport): a key issue is how do buses travel between hubs without using the ring – road – Actions need to be linked and unintended consequences addressed i.e. adding traffic from buses on to the ring-road at peak times
- Taking buses out of Frodsham Street – use of Frodsham Street car park as a drop – off / turning point for buses – however this would lose revenue from the car parking and also loss of disabled car parking / shop mobility have to be resolved
- To take into consideration when implementing changes: turning space required / alignment of stops with pavements (to reduce trips/falls) / reducing risk of accidents (Greater Manchester have done work/research on these issues)
- Location of main bus station has never been resolved since its move from Delamere Street
- Potential loss of coach park if proposals for redevelopment of Little Roodee goes ahead – these decisions need to be made before deciding on details in the OCP plan as they will be impacted upon when these decisions are made
- Principles / aspirations for the city are correct – the detail / importance in how they all join together and are delivered
- Action 5: British Waterways are already aware of this and are working towards / within the Action to achieve the same end point
- Cycling – further promotion of cycle use needed at the train station / park and ride sites / use of canals etc to reduce short car journeys
- Action 1: this should include other destinations as well as the station. Park and Ride buses should serve one car park destination but drop off along a circular route around the city centre

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

- Could set order of priorities by their feasibility / timeframe for delivery as all should be delivered
- Deliverability is key and should be proven before action is committed to
- External impacts are integral and have to be discussed / reduced or mitigated before action is agreed
- Plan has to be realistic and actions must be delivered rather than another strategy that is not implemented
- Action 7 is key to all other actions and integral to the future / success of all other actions – external documents have to be developed and will underpin the OCP

Additional Comments

- Evenings are very quiet in the city centre – there is a reduced caf / restaurant culture that should be enhanced
- Encouraging residents to be less reliant on the private car to access the city centre is key to reducing traffic
- Hybrid buses – help to make a more pleasant environment in the city centre
- More emphasis on use of public transport to facilities / services / key destinations such as the hospital
- Integration of park and ride buses with other public transport services – use of park and ride buses by additional passengers i.e. those not using a P&R car park but en route to same destination
- The following projects will depend on and impact upon the transport strategy for the city. A transport strategy should link all projects and not be reactive to individual projects therefore it is essential that the following are decided before the OCP is published (as they should be contained within it):
 - Future of the Northgate project
 - Location of a new market
 - Location of a new theatre

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement 17th August 2011 6.00 – 8.30 pm

Group 1

Facilitators: Dave Thomas and Matt Spilsbury

Task 1

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

- Not wheelchair friendly
- Transport in Brook Street is causing problems
- Frodsham Street – challenges in this area, traffic and bus chaos, unpleasant environment, congested with narrow pavements and people congregating and queuing
- A new bus station would need wider aisles for users. Current facility is particularly problematic for wheelchair users and visually impaired people.
- Cobbled surfaces are challenging
- Disabled car parking – we need to educate blue badge holders and the public to reasons why there is parking for disabled people in certain locations. Tendency to make people unsympathetic.
- Cycling – a need for a forum (happens elsewhere). Cycle Demonstration Town status has now ceased. Refer to Chester Cycle Masterplan – needs to be part of all developments and CBD must take consideration of it. Must be referred to at early stage in applications.
- Management of access barrier in front of Town Hall Square seems patchy and non blue badge holders are gaining access.
- Better signage, timings and restrictions are needed for delivery vehicles. Sat navs generate some traffic problems.
- Pepper Street (Amphitheatre) – Chester Festivals cannot maximise use of Amphitheatre due to people spilling onto roads and Pepper Street. Support for downgrading junction of St Johns Street/Pepper Street and making this more pedestrian friendly.
- Evening economy – no restriction on traffic during evening and this should be reviewed.
- Why has nothing happened with a cycle route from the Barrs roundabout to Love Street?
- Shopmobility signage is limited – there should be more or Council should send information about shopmobility and blue badge parking locations when issuing blue badges.

Task 2

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

- Every road within Inner Ring Road should have a 20 mph limit for vehicles
- Look again at the Living Over The Shop (LOTS) Scheme
- Northgate Street – Buses currently having 'near misses' with cyclists/cars/pedestrians. Want to see buses removed from Northgate Street.

- Support ideas for multiple Park and Ride stops across the city
- Support ideas to link to railway station/zoo/university/Countess of Chester hospital
- Strong feeling against future loss of City Rail Link Bus
- New paving at the Groves is very good, but becomes poor up to Lower Bridge Street. Should be extended to other areas e.g. Frodsham Street

Task 3

Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

- 20 mph speed limits into city centre
- Frodsham Street improvements – issues of overcrowding at bus stops
- 'Distributor' bus – small/electric/accessible for disabled users
- Encourage cycling – e.g. commuters, need more cycle parking (lower Bridge Street especially), introduce reasons to assist
- Park and Ride on A56
- Designs in sustainable transport – achievable and affordable at outset of development
- Accessibility/movement should be part of what makes Chester distinctive

Chester One City Plan (OCP) Workshop

Transport and Movement 17th August 2011 9.30 am – 12.00 noon

Town Hall

Group 4

Facilitator: Rita Waters

Tasks 1 & 2

Focus on the 'City of Now' – Have we captured all of the issues and challenges for movement and accessibility for the City? Is there any missing from the One City Plan?

Focus on the 'City of the Future' – Are the solutions and ideas proposed the right ones? Are there any others that you would suggest?

City Of Now

- Don't like deliveries etc after 4:30pm
- Council very car orientated – we don't agree
- Most voters are also car orientated – we don't agree
- Buses could be more reliable and more frequent
- Heritage buses should be separate category to buses
- Poor signage to River (and access)
- Poor route into City from Rail Station
- Where is "Town"
- Some gates closed in Grosvenor Park and Water Tower Gardens
- Need better access routes – walking right round City
- Shuttle bus round the City instead of just limited City Rail Link
- City is impermeable to cyclists
- Cycling unsafe through City
- Subways unsafe – 40% student incidents connected to subways

City Of Future

- Pedestrian route to River – quality route
- Better signage to River
- Cycling routes should be clear to the City and through City
- Don't send cycles off round the houses –should be on the road
- Restrict traffic flows/ capacity round city
- Traffic calming round southern inner ring road
- Bus routes should go right round inner ring road – Rod
- Disabled bus coming right into the city centre- maybe calling at the Park & Ride
- Move Post Office?

Task 3



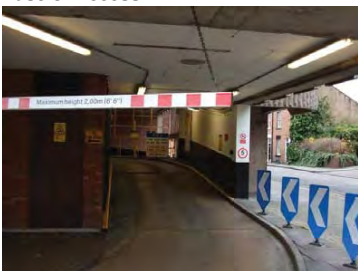


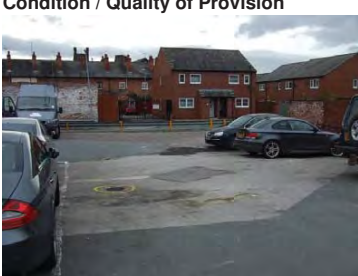
Focus on the priorities – What are your priority projects/interventions? What are your 3 most important schemes in order of priority for improving movement and accessibility for the City? How would you suggest the schemes are delivered (with what partners and with what resources)?

Wish List

1.
 - Pedestrianisation Northgate Street
 - Better access to routes from City to River – cycle routes/ safety/ signage etc
 - Improve or close subways
 - Pedestrian route across Fountains Roundabout – not subway and other key gateway routes, disabled bus
2.
 - Car Club
 - Coherent, co-ordinated car parking strategy – layout and pricing structure, 3-6 months
 - Anti-clockwise bus route round inner ring road, connecting car parks
3.
 - Animation of the City – flags and banners – welcome in City Road (3)

Blue Group

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frodsham Street is difficult to direct people to – Residents tend to know but visitors don't; Park and Ride – Hoole corridor is 'Achilles Heel' of the system; Shopmobility should be integrated with disabled parking; Charging for disabled parking – potential impact on double yellow line parking; Facilities – e.g. changing places; Market car park – issues about safety / quality; Odeon – theatre; What's happening with development – impact; Expect ING to promote more car parking – what should city's reaction be? Different needs at different times e.g. Park and Ride / Central / Theatre day/night; Theory and practice – in theory better to have sites on edge but in practice may be difficult to achieve; Location – flexibility serving wider area.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good idea / welcome for card payments; Charge for car park is an issue; People now expect attractive options; Market is pay on foot – this could be reason for its popularity; Educating people to use technology; Issue – nothing on display in vehicle. How does enforcement know? Officers get updates through hand-helds; Park and Ride – experiment with increasing the operating hours.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideally won't have people using ring road looking for spaces, but different in practice.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important first step – need to decide how much parking we want? What's the council's policy? More or less? Free parking – No parking: Extremes won't work.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> V. mixed pricing across city; Need to think about long stay / short stay. Long stay should be encouraged for the outer area. Short stayers shouldn't be priced out of the centre; Park and Ride – timings of service, safety; Park and Ride has changed car parking in Chester for the better.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing quality at Upton Park and Ride is in programme.

Safety



- Gorse Stacks – unsafe at night. People don't use Gorse Stacks at night;
- City is different at night;
- Norwich – Park and Ride is open late, less city centre parking, safe, staffed.

Signage



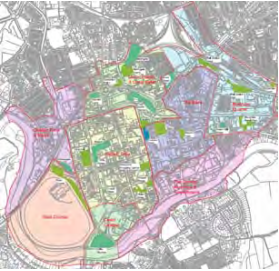




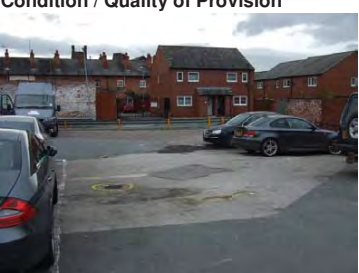
- Signing to Park and Ride is quite poor;
- Signing from motorway is v. poor – needs to give people options from Boughton;
- Upton Park and Ride sites easier;
- Signing on the motorway – early. Give people the option.

Marketing



- Should car parks have walking distances on foot? People know how far they need to go;
- Coach parking – drop off points;
- Selling before people make a decision;
- Technology – Chester App / website;
- Meaning of signage – Gorse Stacks / Little Roodee don't mean anything. 'Shoppers', 'Cultural area', 'Main retail area' would be better;
- 'Free after 3' – good for some. Impact on Park and Ride revenue? Need to think – is it still working.

Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big issue of new major car park in Northgate development; • Where do hotel users park overnight?
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesser reliance on cash; • Ability to extend stay remotely; • Increasing use of new technology.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better signing.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more car parking at station – major site for expansion.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation with retail to find innovative ways of combining shopping and parking charges; • Isn't enough on-street car parking to make on-street parking charge an issue; • Are people prepared to pay for overnight parking? • Good enforcement is a key to turnover at on-street car parks.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety (or perception of safety) needs improvement; • Particular issues for evening parking; • Needs better signing for access (particularly Gorse Stacks) – need better access; • Need to put toilets at all Park and Ride sites and at major city centre car parks – franchise opportunity for cafes at Park and Ride; • Better information at car parks about 'What's On' and 'Access Information'; • Better provision for maintenance as well as for initial provision.

Safety



- CCTV;
- Patrols;
- Quiet car parks unattractive in evening and at night (e.g. Gorse Stacks – free but not well used in evening).

Signage





- Longer distance signing for Park and Ride a priority;
- Priority for car parks generally;
- More comprehensive signing to help people get to 'right' car park.

Marketing



Black Group

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Chester – need to get balance right – face of Chester will change due to internet shopping and home deliveries; • Overnight stays – increasing numbers of overnight visitors due to increased numbers of hotels; • Recognise differences Brook St/Hoole vs city centre; • Increased focus on city centre car parks will destroy character and add to problems of on-street car parking; • Role of Private Non-Residential parking noted – all part of city centre function; • More strategic approach to residents parking schemes – could reduce charge for this? • 5th Park and Ride site – Local buses too costly for local people to use. Cheaper to drive and pay for parking or use Park and Ride; • Approach to disabled parking – take all cars out of pedestrian core.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park and Ride: More difficult for retailers / users; • Employees – Park and Ride late enough? • Larger spaces but fewer numbers of car parks (not spaces).
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business competitiveness; • Residential parking too available to others? • Disabled parking too accessible to city vs others.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary car parks – too easy to park? • Balance; • Are we using spaces well enough? – Park and Ride; • Current overprovision but still problem of on-street parking – price? • Suggestion to reduce fragmentation and concentrate on fewer, larger car parks; • Frustration of locals at not being able to find free short stay parking to reach essential services.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Free after 3' liked by shopkeepers – needs to be better marketed – is it displacing times local people choose to go shopping. Seen as a positive step to boost night-time economy; • Cost of bus vs parking: Out of town? • Parking meters for on-street parking (Pay and Display).
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractiveness = low; • Occasional users will pay, regular users don't always; • Parking as a welcome not just to park.

Safety



Signage



- Need better signing for Park and Ride. Needs to be better marketed.
- Better signing further out on routes into the city.

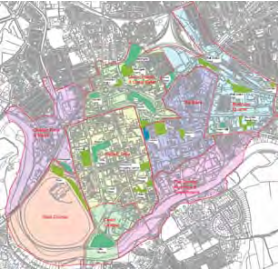




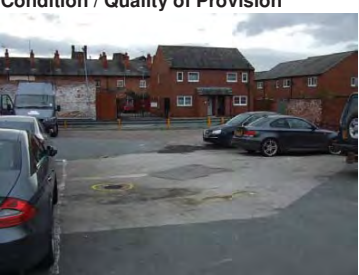
Marketing



- Policies – elements eroded;
- Park and Ride signing (Zoo = busiest / best location);
- Planning can influence Park and Ride - Segments of market;
- What do we want city to be and become? Agreed that diversity makes it different and unique compared to out of town retail and leisure locations.

- Previously – 7-8 yrs ago there was a clear policy of Park and Ride vs city centre;
- Impact on residents and air quality;
- What is the aim? – To grow or to become 'Trafford Centre';
- Relate to housing growth;
- Blanket residents parking? – cost vs politics.

Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix; Bigger – dispose of smaller; Station – opportunity but wrong location and design - use Enterprise Centre as car park / Old bus depot – Watkins Jones / Brook St – leave all day not overnight; Importance of planning policies – council can influence location and size of future car parks for new developments; Car parks seen as one part of offer. Can't compete with Cheshire Oaks on free parking but city provides a far more pleasant shopping environment; How can we get people to use gateway car parks. Outer edge = Park and Ride, inner area = main shoppers car parks.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience – Disneyesque or Saville Row; Open Ticket; Bigger spaces – Market too narrow.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short stay – external but local; Long stay – Park and Ride and further out; Outcome of study must be a better, more viable city.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional spaces needed overall in city centre but debate on where best strategic locations are (Gorse Stacks, Racecourse, Little Roodee, Northgate etc).
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different rights for residents; Fees linked to distance from city centre; Free time for local shoppers car parks – 10-30 mins optimal.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking is part of experience; Grosvenor as example of quality and willingness; Right for residents = visitors enjoy; Some spaces to be given over for more secure / covered cycle parking – build on culture change to more sustainable modes; Quality is key – how do we fund this? Change experience on offer and consider future needs of city as it evolves – quality vs cost; Spaces should be wider in some car parks – existing spaces too cramped

Safety



Signage



Marketing





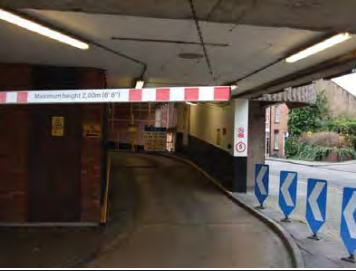



- Colour?
- Simplifying names / tagging;
- Park and Ride needs clearer and more user friendly information;
- Signing generally needs to be clearer and easier to use.

- Technology use vs segments;
- Evening taxis?
- Important to make use of technology for payment – smartcards and in-vehicle transponders etc;
- Smarter segmentation – a question of who uses what, where and when. Linked to marketing messages;
- Conclusions from Portas report noted – need to exploit historical quality that city centres have to offer;
- Marketing and promotion is critical to sell product and part of wider attractions and offer;
- If we get it right for residents, it will be right for visitors too;
- Need improved publicity and marketing of Park and Ride to win back lost customers. Capacity to be filled. Added value of on-site car valet and car washes. Role of taxis to access Park and Ride outside core hours to support night time economy.

- Cycle parking conversion – docking systems?
- Station improvement in cycle parking;
- Waitrose free for users – can we influence development to provide city centre car parking?

Green Group

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant issues picked up through city centre management; VMS signs help to select car park but system needs checking (numbers of spaces vary); Lack of spaces on east side of the city; Need to guide drivers to locations; People used to park on Gorse Stacks but now use the Market 3-4pm; Need to explain how to egress – particularly Gorse Stacks and Market; Visitor survey (2yrs ago) placed parking as no 10 on list of grievances; Residents parking issues in Handbridge.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half of all phone calls to Visitor Information are "I am staying at the Travelodge - where do I park?" – This needs to be fed back to Travelodge; Pay on exit is preferred.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not easy to find spaces particularly in Market car park.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parks are not full at any time outside of peak shopping periods; Need more spaces for workers.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors are happy to pay to park; Local residents are not happy because of big chunks of time that need to be bought; 'Free after 3' has changed – 72% before 3pm are visitors, 60% after 3pm are local residents; Could the free period be changed to e.g. 11-2 – reduce congestion by reducing traffic at 5-6pm;; How do you pay for overnight parking after 3pm?
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park and Ride – used by bus pass contingent because free; Older people often use because of driver confidence issues.

Safety



Signage

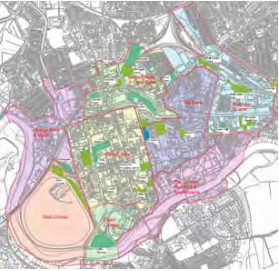




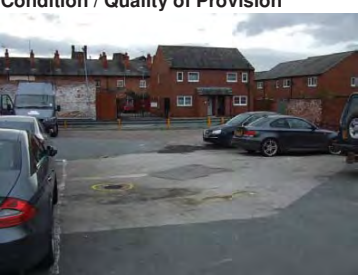


- Do we need to separate out users? Signs for visitors/locals/commuters?

Marketing



Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to locate to manage impact of new development – not going to be able to locate exactly where we want due to contractual constraints; • East – if and when Central Business District comes forward there will be a need for spaces; • More on the east side – not using Inner Relief Road to find spaces; • Station car park – should be increased/improved; • Racecourse - £2.50 per day; • Need longer units for shopping – 30-40 new longer units; • Park and Ride – could it be used more for business parking? – Opening hours: If later then shops could stay open longer.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay by credit card / phone etc – should not be a charge for doing this; • Pay on exit; • There is 'live feed' info on the web; • Payment 'Chester Card' – smartcard.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy should work for residents – how can we use the available spaces; • Planning needs to look at what will be needed in future;
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing policy – make sure we are just under competitor authorities e.g. Liverpool and Manchester, not necessarily the out of town retail-only destinations like Cheshire Oaks.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets at car parks – need for more around the city.

Safety



- Lighting needs to be good at all car parks – especially if using credit card / smartphone / registration details.

Signage



- Better maps and signage;
- VMS signs should be further out;
- Postcodes for car parks - although this can increase the use of unsuitable routes;
- Exits from car parks

Marketing






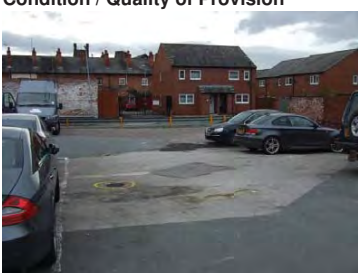


- Integration with bus/rail;
- Maps for city / events;
- Welcoming approach to city

- Coach parking / drop off points – these are a big issue;
- Dropping off occurs at Odeon and Pepper Street;
- Watergate Street layby is becoming more popular and would be used by Park and Ride services if it could be made feasible.

+

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every car park “compromised” – on a one way street etc. • Poor direction and signage / not far out enough. • On-street parking – used by local in particular (possibly exclude historical city centre) • Thumbs up for Little Roodee • Adequate parking needed in Northgate Development - Opportunity
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorse Stacks – use payment system for other transactions?
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to improve blue badge parking spaces in car parks before removing on-street parking entitlement. • Parking on-street (blue badge) on double yellow lines potentially dangerous.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticism tends to be in relation to cost difference. • Free after 3 - local people change their visit times to take advantage.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninviting car parks in city centre especially Market car park. • Need for bright, inviting car parks.

Safety



Signage



- What do the names of the car parks mean?
- No clear signage to P&R on the main arteries in.
- Need to indicate which is a long stay & which is short stay.
- Big difference between visitors and locals.

Marketing



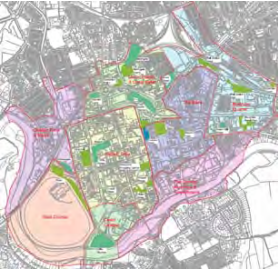

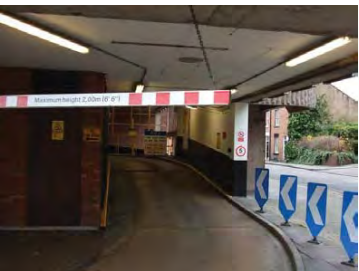


Park and Ride Discussion:

- P&R not a good quality 'gateway' to Chester, to welcome visitors.
- P&R underused resources (coffee, newspapers, car wash?)
- Not selling P&R enough?
- More marketing for city centre/contract parking?
- Way of stopping abuse to P&R? Keeps vehicles out of the way at least from side roads.
- Link to Tourism –info in other languages (e.g. Welsh).
- Stigma attached to using the bus/P&R?
- Sale of signage routes.
- Extend hours of some services not necessarily all. Need retailers to extend hours also.
- Additional stops on P&R routes?
- P&R's in reverse?
- Electric vehicles charging points.

Key Issues:

- Blue Badge – Current and future need;
- Shopmobility scheme – future? Always under threat – linked to Kaleyards;
- Access into Car Parks;
- Quality of Car Parks;
- Charge Blue-Badge holders as others (but generally on a lower income);
- Cost of short-stay parking too high;
- Policy decision / strategy – result is that people are forced to park on-street e.g. Handbridge/Curzon Park etc.

Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to access car parks when accessing via Hoole bridge (need for more gateway car parks) • Aim for zones (P&R cheaper, greener; inner car parks relatively high costs). • Move to pedestrianise Frodsham Street? (Alternative bus stops). • Drop off points around inner ring road? • Concentrate into fewer, larger car parks.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine P&R buses and bus routes? • Northgate Development - will provide a much improved retail offering which should assist with promotion of city. • Mannings Lane (M53 car park – need for P&R). • Oyster-style card for e.g. P&R / parking • Need one really good-system for usage management & payment purposes. • Price differentials for different types of users. • Reward systems.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground car parks desirable BUT prohibitive capital costs and potential archaeological issues. • Possible locations: Sealand Rd. Closer to Racecourse than P&R (for workers and retail); Lache Lane where A55 crosses open land.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underuse of P&R by disabled users. • Offer electric vehicles for use by disabled after disembarking. • Rename/rebrand P&R? More 'tube-style' network?
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging train use by having better parking facilities at stations that feed into Chester.

Condition / Quality of Provision



Safety



Signage



Marketing






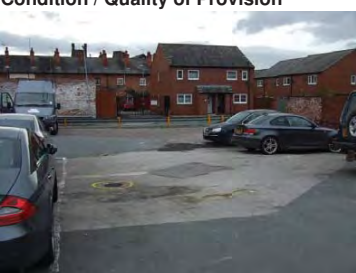


- Need to market city generally to distinguish it from e.g. Trafford Centre, Cheshire Oaks.
- Theatre- need to think through traffic flow & parking offer.

Key Issues

- Communication- with retailers, bingo & better coordination (including P&R, and promotion of contract parking).
- Joined up thinking- engaging business (including business input/responsibility).
- Smartcard Technology.
- Branding transport/experience.
- More intermediate car parks at key locations.
- Consistency in quality

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking in suburbs (walk to city radius) and what's influencing choice to do this? Backford Hall site.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chester's offer in wider sense - needs to be defined? E.g. Cheshire Oaks, Broughton Retail Park. Shopmobility attracts around 1/3 locals and 2/3 casual users who contribute to local economy. Cheshire Oaks and Wrexham Shopmobility schemes. Hamilton Place and Kaleyards/Frodsham Street - well placed and close to final destination i.e. bread, milk, chemist etc.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility- ability to travel in & out but not necessarily parking car e.g. alternative transport modes. City Centre and Train Station. Canal as a way into city.
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free for blue badge holders-useful to retain. Value for money poor given the quality of car park (e.g. Market car park). Structure needs to be simplified- zonal approach e.g. FA3 in some not all.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City ambition to be a 'must see' location / experience to visit & stay for few days. Offer top-notch facility in all respects - secure, airy, well lit. Frodsham Street – resurfaced & markings refreshed. Could have used the opportunity to change bay markings.

Safety



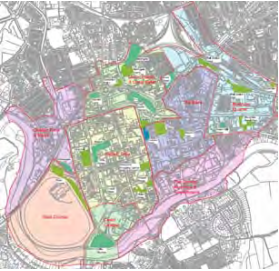




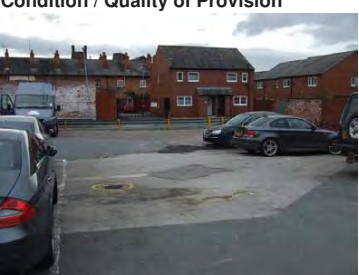
Signage



Marketing



Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fountains roundabout. • Racecourse site. • Enterprise centre (by railway station) – multi-use? • Disused railway line area.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconvenient to Pay and Display. • Inter-currency. • Charging / pricing inconsistent – need for zonal charging.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	
<p>Value for Money</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question as to whether FA3 is a success. • £1 for 90 minutes instead. • Night-time economy, window shopping and internet – change in consumer patterns. • Pricing strategy – Park and Ride monthly saver. • Differential in charging between charge for residents and charge for visitors. • Charging is not a deterrent – offering is crucial.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liverpool 1 – More expensive, good quality, private sector. • Public stock transfer versus high quality public offering.

Safety



- More general public around.
- Night time economy.
- 'Bistro' café culture.
- Gap between shops closing and then night-time economy.

•

Signage



- Journey planning vs signage on entry routes.

•

Marketing



- Promotion of city
- Promotion of best possible mode of transport.

•

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fountains roundabout – signing for Shopmobility (limited). From Hoole (main access from motorway and a likely access point for visitors) it's even more difficult. North Wales – route to Grosvenor car park. Need consistently wider parking bays. Taxis park and wait. Problem with pigeons Problem with ramp at Little Roodee.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So many spaces to start with that people will come to Chester. Not enough disabled spaces in city centre however. Spaces restricted to disabled people only. Spaces nearest to Shopmobility are contract NOT blue-badge holders. On-street parking by Cathedral is more central than Frodsham Street. New developments should not reduce numbers of spaces or move spaces out of the city centre.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kerbs – Shrewsbury – disabled people have to pay. Instructions must be simple for those with reading or learning difficulties. York operate a Council-owned blue badge car park all day.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misuse of spaces by able-bodied people. Should not have barriers as it is difficult to reach over the machine. Take a ticket and pay on exit. Most car parks are well signed and are accessible with lifts.
<p>Charging</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep it free as a preference. Might be prepared to pay / pay more if the quality of the car park were of a higher standard. Consistency. No option to extend stay at Frodsham Street car park. Need to return to car to buy a ticket if stay goes over the 18:00 commencement of charging.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market car park is not great and lighting is not good; Frodsham Street car park bays need to be wider. Length of bays in order to access back of vehicle. Toilets at Frodsham Street are good quality.

Safety



- More CCTV.
- Improve Market car park – needs to be more attractive.
- Shopmobility during winter months needs better lighting.

Information



- On arrival information is not always clear.
- Dedicated page for disabled users for number of spaces, toilet facilities and other provisions.
- Potential for an 'app' to provide car parking information for Chester.

Ease of Finding Information



Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two areas needed: Frodsham Street car park and Northgate development area. Hoole Park and Ride.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frodsham Street is a Shopmobility car park until 16:00 and then becomes quieter; Not sure how many spaces are used currently? Need to develop disabled provision at Park and Ride sites.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower kerbs. Wider marked areas so can open doors / need more space. Reduce people parking irresponsibly; Colour of print – black on a pale background? RNIB – white?
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better signage. Illuminated signs indoors. Website for blue-badge parking spaces. Enforcement of parking.
<p>Charging</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be free or otherwise discounted as disabled people are generally on a lower income. Unlimited stay vs 4 hours – need to be able to choose to pay and stay longer at Frodsham Street. Income generation – advertising at car parks.
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ease of access. Kerb heights.

Safety



- Better lighting.
- Cameras.

Information






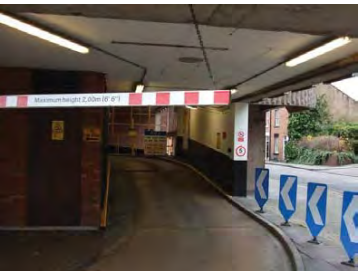

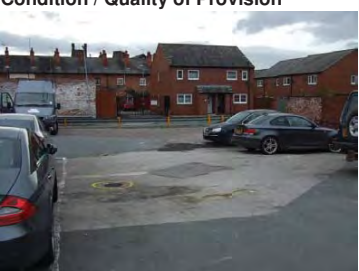
- At car park, give information about other car parks e.g. if Frodsham Street is full, provide signage to other car parks.

Ease of Finding Information



- App.
- Internet.
- Text.
- Social media.
- Signage.

Chester Parking Strategy: Issues to be resolved

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frodsham Street car park an ideal location for disabled parking – close to Shopmobility and local shopping facilities, and access to Plus Bus. Wide bays are given over to contract car parking when their use would be better for people with a disability. Taking Shopmobility away from this location would defeat the purpose of the service and reduce visitors and users. Loss of Frodsham Street would be a major loss for the group.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility of a Plus Bus serving Park and Ride site offering a personalised service. Will there be an adequate amount of disabled spaces provided at the proposed new Health Centre site (Delamere Street)? There is a lack of provision for people with a short-term illness and blue-badged parking is not provided in car parks near to the facility. Consider a supplementary service to disabled people within a Park and Ride service.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue-badged areas – time limits could benefit from extension.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taxi drivers not always aware of location of disabled parking spaces. Need to raise awareness. Wider parking bays needed to improve access in/out of vehicles. Loading bays outside Shopmobility are not being made adequate use of due to lack of knowledge of location. Also finding that vehicles are being ticketed when cars are left for quick visits e.g. 5 mins. St Werburgh Street parking – if these bays are removed, Frodsham Street becomes even more important.
<p>Charging</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrexham is considerably cheaper to park and is attracting more customers as a result. Parking should be free for disabled people or otherwise a small charge (e.g. £1) applied for coming into the city centre (as this may discourage abuse and misuse of blue badges).
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of surface: Kaleyards car park has/had potholes at the entrance in particular. A pedestrian crossing linking Kaleyards with Tesco has been removed causing safety issues over Frodsham Street.

Safety



- Speed of cars through Frodsham Street is an issue.
- CCTV in Frodsham Street only covers the steps area leading to antisocial behavior at some times.
- Extra cameras within the Market car park should be considered.

Information



Ease of Finding Information



- Information should be made larger wherever possible.

Chester Parking Strategy: Opportunities for Improvement

<p>Location</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frodsham Street is best location. Parking near the Groves is a possibility especially for tourists and visitors, could be looked into / increased. Scooter route / map / instructions – information points for Shopmobility scooters. Hamilton Place – extra spaces.
<p>Volume of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frodsham Street car park lost four spaces recently. The car park is regularly used and often full. Need to increase space at Hamilton Place; Mini-bus, coach parking at Roodee – better parking provision for those carrying people with disabilities / elderly passengers, or need a city centre drop-off point.
<p>Ease of Use</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Row of wide bays needed, specifically marked for disabled people. Reconsider how existing disabled spaces have been allocated (e.g. Frodsham Street car park and contract bays). Improvements to signage. Renaming of car parks that relate to their use perhaps, rather than using names that people do not understand.
<p>Ease of Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay and Display after 6pm (Frodsham Street car park) – ticket machine is often faulty and won't take money. This needs to be rectified to allow payment prior to 18:00.
<p>Charging</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People don't like putting credit cards in machines. Pay and display relies on the fact that you have change – could there be a pre-booked ticket? Better advertising and promotion of Charisma Card – extension of uses to include Smartcard uses?
<p>Condition / Quality of Provision</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage. Potholes – resurfacing needed. Making access routes more clear. Temporary repairs / improvements to Market car park.

Safety



- Cameras
- Additional staff.
- Make better use of Community Support Officers.
- Future demands on evening parking would require additional safety provision.

Information



- At present, information is inadequate.
- More detailed information is needed. What's available? What car park would best suit needs – e.g. a visitors page.
- Ensure that parking space numbers are accurately recorded and displayed.

Ease of Finding Information



- Improvements to signage
- Scooter routes / maps.