

Aston University Transport Action Plan October 2007 Summary Report

Aston University is committed to creating a safe and attractive campus in which to live, study and work. One way we will achieve this is by enhancing accessibility for staff, students and visitors by all travel modes, particularly public transport, walking and cycling. Our Travel Plan will:

- Reduce environmental degradation
- Support campus development
- Create an accessible and safe campus for staff, students and visitors
- Encourage travel to the campus by sustainable modes
- Manage staff and visitor parking in an efficient and fair way
- Work closely with Aston Science Park in managing transport issues
- Enhance the University's status as an environmentally responsible organisation

Some changes we can make relatively quickly. These will include:

- Annual reviews of parking permit charges with a view to eliminating incentives to park on campus with strict enforcement, and a move to commercial links. (The current annual cost of staff parking is £240. This is substantially below the market rate for city centre parking.)
- Provision of designated parking spaces at a reduced charge for car sharers
- Segregation of on-campus staff and visitor parking
- Provision of dedicated cycle and motorcycle parking, with equipment Storage facilities and good lighting
- Dedicated travel section on website
- Marketing of alternatives to the car

In due course we will also:

- Negotiate with providers to make improvements to local bus services, passenger security and waiting facilities
- Develop public transport ticketing initiatives
- Provide a cycle purchase loan scheme for staff
- Provide car sharing incentives
- Work with City authorities to provide and sign safe walking and cycling routes

Car parking revenue will be hypothecated to fund improvements to car park security and enforcement and to sustain the effective long term delivery of the Transport Action Plan.



Good accessibility is central to the effective operation of the campus for academic courses, research and other services, including conferences and training. Successful balancing of parking management with travel opportunity is a prerequisite.

Without a plan, campus parking pressures from staff and visitors will intensify. This will result in greater difficulties and frustration for staff seeking space for their cars and a campus dominated by inappropriate parking.

Existing Parking Problems

Difficulties for staff in finding parking spaces due to surplus demand for the 689 oncampus parking spaces. The estimated maximum demand for staff and visitor parking based on numbers of parking "fobs" issued and estimates of visitor numbers is 855 spaces. Demand exceeds supply by 24%. However, whilst anecdotal evidence suggests that car parks 6 and 9 are oversubscribed, car park 8 appears to be under-utilised.

No segregation of visitor and staff parking

Additional parking demand pressures from contractors, students and others using car parks inappropriately. The site layout itself causes some problems - the configuration of James Watt Queensway/ Coleshill Street junction means that vehicles cannot turn back onto the Queensway from Coleshill Street. Vehicles cannot therefore be refused entry through this barrier.

No designated car share spaces

Inappropriate and illegal parking on Woodcock Street causing safety and access problems, of concern to the police and city authority.

Inappropriate parking on Coleshill Street due to adhoc parking on double yellow lines, footways and grass verges which compromises pedestrian safety and emergency access.

Poor quality cycle parking facilities (not sheltered and poor security.)

No dedicated parking provision for motorcycles or mopeds.



Future Parking Problems

Without management measures in place, the parking problems will intensify in the future with:

Increases in staff and visitor numbers with campus expansion.

Pressures on existing parking supply from development activity (loss of car park 9 and loss of capacity on Coleshill Street.)

National and regional trends for increasing car ownership and use.

Development of car park 9 with the loss of 130 spaces to commence in early 2008.

Temporary loss of 30 spaces on car park 6 during construction work through provision of contractors' compound.

Loss of 37 spaces on Coleshill Street through access and safety grounds.

Possible development on car park 6 in longer term (post 2009.)

Charging for parking on campus

We will allocate staff parking permits according to a 'needs based' points system. Points will be allocated according to a range of criteria, for example, lack of availability to public transport alternatives, car business need and medical or welfare reasons. This has been successfully implemented at other Universities.

The annual cost of a staff permit will rise to £240 and will be reviewed annually to ensure it is comparable to city centre parking costs. In addition staff and visitor parking will be segregated and there will be new, on-site parking spaces for Aston University staff car sharers (at a reduced charge). This will allow greater control over visitor parking and ensure provision of the appropriate parking supply for staff and visitors.

A more formal system has been introduced to enforce campus parking by vehicles not displaying a permit. This enforcement system is to be well communicated to staff.

Alternatives to the car

The parking proposals will be supported by measures to improve access to the campus by non-car modes (public transport, walking and cycling). This will provide an incentive for staff



to switch from car travel to other modes and improve the health and well being of staff, students and visitors walking or cycling to University.

Corporate Travel-Wise Scheme

This scheme is managed by Birmingham City Council. Benefits include discounted staff public transport season tickets, discounted cycle parking and assistance in monitoring of Travel Plans.

Bus Improvements

Working with Travel West Midlands (TWM) and Centro to deliver improvements to bus services, passenger waiting facilities information and publicity.

Cycle Routes to / from Aston

We can capitalise on the good existing cycle links to the campus e.g. canal towpaths,by providing good quality facilities for cyclists e.g. parking and locker facilities.

Cycle Purchase Incentives and Discounts

Developing a staff cycle purchase scheme which offers staff a loan to purchase a bicycle to use mainly for work purposes.

Moped and Motorcycle

Providing designated motorcycle parking areas in addition to safety training and discounts for clothing and accessories.

Walking

Developing maps for appropriate routes to Aston University from key places such as railway stations.

Visitor Travel

Developing public transport route maps showing the nearest stations/bus stops.

Dedicated travel section on university intranet and website.



The following list summarises these incentive proposals:

Encouraging public transport

- Interest-free public transport staff season ticket loan
- Information provision and publicity
- Work with TWM and Centro to deliver improvements to bus services and passenger waiting facilities
- Aligning Jennens Road bus stops with proposed campus pedestrian boulevard

Encourage reductions in CO₂ emissions

• Devise incentives to promote use of cars with lower emissions (e.g.140g/km)

Encouraging car sharing

- Staff car share scheme (development of database)
- Designated and reduced charges for car sharer parking spaces
- Other incentives e.g. guaranteed ride home, publicity

Encouraging cycling (as soon as possible)

- Provision of new secure cycle parking close to entrance to main building and
- Cycle equipment storage
- Information provision and publicity
- Offering cycle mileage allowance for staff business travel
- Provision of cycle training (drawing on support of Company TravelWise)
- Support for a Bicycle Users Group for sharing to propose improvements in
- Facilities for cyclists, to raise the profile of cycling and to provide a mentoring scheme for new/ less confident cyclists
- Negotiating discounts with retailers for purchase of cycles and cycle equipment

Encouraging walking

- Improvements to pedestrian linkages on campus (prohibition of parking on Coleshill Street, North-South pedestrian boulevard as part of campus masterplan proposals)
- · Changing and shower facilities
- Lockers for storage of equipment
- Information provision and publicity

Encouraging mopeds / scooters / motorcycling

Provision of dedicated moped/ motorcycle parking



- Provision of motorcycle/ moped training
- Negotiations with retailers for discounts on purchase of motorcycles and
- Motorcycle equipment