



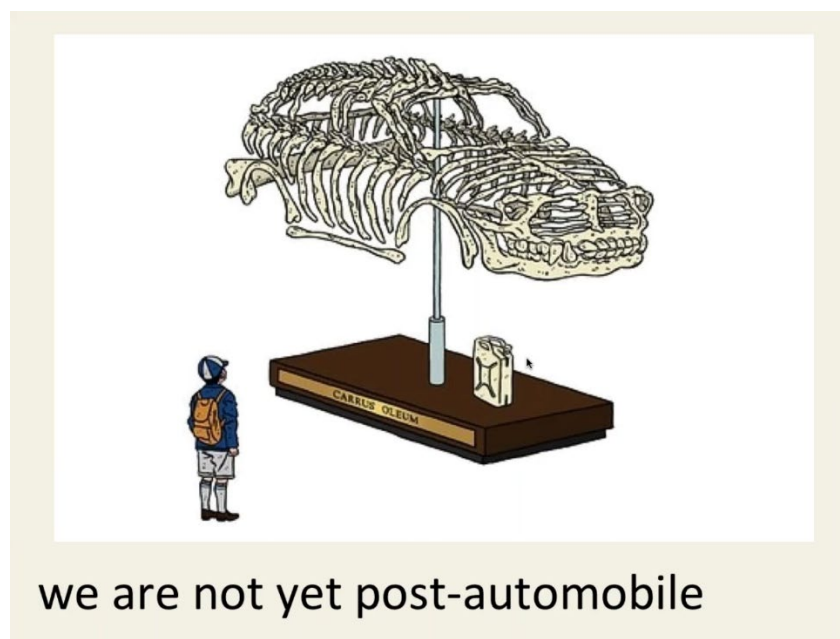
Cambridge Business Chamber acknowledges that parking remains one of the most visible and emotive issues impacting access, connectivity, and confidence within our town centre. It is also intrinsically linked to the wider transport conversation, including congestion, safety, growth planning, active modes, and the long-term function of Cambridge as a thriving regional destination and commercial hub.

The Chamber's position is that parking policy must support both economic vitality and accessibility, while recognising the evolving demands being placed on Cambridge through rapid residential growth, increased visitor activity, freight movements, and changing transport behaviours.

Our key positions for the Cambridge Connections Reference Group are outlined below:

### **1. Parking Must Support Economic Activity**

Cambridge's CBD is not a metropolitan centre with extensive public transport alternatives. It remains heavily reliant on vehicle access for customers, trades, service providers, hospitality, visitors, and older demographics.



we are not yet post-automobile

The Chamber strongly supports:

- Convenient, accessible short-stay parking within and around the CBD
- A balanced parking mix that supports retail rotation
- Parking strategies that encourage visitation rather than deter it
- Recognition that ease of access remains a competitive advantage for Cambridge

We remain concerned that any reduction in practical parking availability without viable alternatives risks unintended economic consequences for local businesses.

## **2. Access and Flow Are as Important as Parking Numbers**

The Chamber's consistent position has been that congestion and network inefficiencies are often a greater issue than absolute parking supply.

Businesses and customers are increasingly frustrated by:

- Delays entering and exiting the CBD
- Congested intersections and roundabouts
- Heavy vehicle movements through town
- Circulation challenges created by network design

Parking cannot be viewed in isolation from wider transport network performance.

## **3. Evidence-Based Decision Making Is Critical**

The Chamber supports a data-led approach to parking and transport planning.

This includes:

- Continued utilisation of Bellwether and other foot traffic data
- Parking occupancy and duration analysis
- Seasonal and event-based demand assessment
- Understanding the impact of future growth cells
- Measuring the economic impact of parking changes on business activity

Policy settings should be informed by real-world usage patterns rather than assumptions.

## **4. Growth Requires Forward Planning**

Cambridge is continuing to grow rapidly, and parking demand will grow alongside it.

The Chamber believes future planning must account for:

- Increased residential intensification
- Visitor economy growth
- Tourism and events
- Employee parking demand
- Freight and servicing requirements
- The long-term implications of Cambridge Connections and associated growth areas

Short-term interventions should not compromise the town's future functionality.

### **5. A Balanced Multi-Modal Future Is Supported — But Transition Matters**

The Chamber supports improved walking and cycling infrastructure where practical and safe. However, modal shift will take time, and infrastructure decisions must reflect the current realities of how people access Cambridge today.

We support:

- A pragmatic and staged approach
- Maintaining accessibility during transition periods
- Ensuring business impacts are properly assessed and mitigated
- Solutions that balance amenity, safety, accessibility, and economic outcomes

### **6. Parking Enforcement and Time Limits Should Be Practical**

Parking management should encourage turnover while remaining realistic for workers, service providers, and visitors.

The Chamber supports:

- Appropriate enforcement to maintain fairness
- Reviewing time limits where evidence supports it
- Exploring smarter parking technology and wayfinding
- Better communication and signage around available parking areas

### **7. Cambridge Needs Integrated Transport Solutions**

Parking pressure cannot be solved solely within the CBD footprint.

The Chamber continues to advocate for:

- Strategic investment in transport infrastructure

- Improved network efficiency
- Progression of SH1 connectivity improvements
- Reduced heavy vehicle pressure through town
- Long-term planning for future connectivity and resilience

A great parking strategy for Cambridge should not just be a “parking plan” — it should be an economic vitality, accessibility and movement strategy for the entire town.

The mistake many growing towns make is treating parking as either:

- a supply problem (“build more parks”), or
- a behavioural problem (“force people out of cars”).

Cambridge needs a balanced, evidence-based model that recognises:

- it is still a highly car-dependent regional town,
- the CBD is a major economic engine,
- growth is accelerating,
- visitor numbers are increasing,
- freight and through-traffic remain unresolved,
- and future transport mode shift will happen gradually, not overnight.

A strong strategy would likely include the following pillars:

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## **1. Protect the CBD First**

The CBD should remain easy and convenient to access.

That means:

- prioritising short-stay turnover parking,
- protecting customer access,
- minimising “all-day commuter occupation” of prime spaces,
- and ensuring elderly, mobility-impaired and rural users are not disadvantaged.

The Chamber’s support of P90 over P120 was strategically sensible because it balances:

- customer dwell time,

- retail visitation,
- hospitality activity,
- and retail rotation.

The core principle should be:

“The best parking space is the one available when you need it.”

Not necessarily the cheapest or longest.

Kelly Bouzaid

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Kelly', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

CEO

Cambridge Business Chamber