



Getting to the station

Findings of research conducted at Grays
March 2007

Key findings

There are 101 station car parks in the Greater Anglia RUS area, of which approximately one in four are currently over 90% full on weekdays². Passengers are, therefore, already hunting for spaces and in many cases do not find one...



Colin Foxall CBE

Foreword

Getting to and from the station is an integral part of travelling by train. As part of its input to Network Rail's Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS), Passenger Focus commissioned independent transport consultancy Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) to examine access to the railway – looking in particular at station car parking capacity to 2016 in the context of forecast growth in demand for rail travel emerging from the Greater Anglia RUS itself. Our motivation in doing so was to provide greater depth of understanding about an issue that the RUS may not otherwise have examined in detail.

Passenger Focus fully supports measures to encourage passengers to travel to stations other than by private car – walking, cycling, bus, taxis and motorcycles all have key roles. It is important to acknowledge, however, that for many people using routes covered by the Greater Anglia RUS – in particular in the 'outer' areas – the car will remain the most practical way of getting to the station. Examination of car parking capacity therefore forms the major part of SDG's report. In addition to looking at the RUS area as a whole, studies were carried out at four specific locations: Grays, Harlow Town, Royston¹ and Witham.

SDG's report has been shared with Network Rail and other industry stakeholders involved in developing the Greater Anglia RUS. We are now publishing SDG's report on Grays in order to stimulate debate about access to the railway at a local level.

Passenger Focus calls on the rail industry, Government and local stakeholders to consider the policy implications highlighted in this report and to enter into dialogue with us about how access to the railway issues can be addressed through Route Utilisation Strategies, Franchise Agreements and other mechanisms.

Colin Foxall CBE
Chairman

Findings from passenger research at Grays, Harlow Town, Royston and Witham show that:

- most passengers who live within walking distance of a station will generally walk to it
- passengers travelling to a station from rural, semi-rural and edge of town locations will generally choose to drive and park at the station
- many passengers drive to a station with a better (in terms of train frequency or speed of journey) service than the station nearest to their home.

When asked what they would do if it became difficult to park at the station they currently use, passengers said they would:

- get a lift to that station (18% of respondents at Harlow Town) and be collected by car again later
- drive to another station (38% of respondents at Royston)
- make the complete journey by car instead (17% of respondents at Witham)
- travel earlier in order to secure a space in the car park at their station (24% of respondents at Witham).

Suppressed demand

It is impossible to determine future demand for car parking by simply applying a growth factor to current demand. The calculation would take no account of current demand that is suppressed because the car park is already full. Therefore work was undertaken to determine the true requirement of additional parking capacity – focusing on stations on the Great Eastern Main Line between Chelmsford and Marks Tey and the Braintree branch.

¹ Please note that recent discussions between First Capital Connect and Network Rail regarding parking at Royston are not reflected in the SDG report

² Please note that station car parks that are free of charge are excluded from these figures and calculations because reliable data are not available

Taking into account use of rail across the whole Greater Anglia RUS area, population demographics, station catchment, train frequency/journey time and distance from London, SDG has calculated that there are 19% fewer rail trips generated at Witham than would be expected. Based on the transport mode that passengers currently use to access Witham station, this would fill 123 additional parking spaces straight away – with a further 50 required by 2016, based on Atkins¹³ forecasts provided for the RUS itself. The shortfall in parking spaces – including parking outside stations – for this group of stations as a whole is currently 2,953 – with a further 650 required by 2016.

Cost of parking

The SDG study did not deal in detail with passenger attitudes to car park pricing. However, recent Passenger Focus research for the Scotland RUS found that approximately two-thirds of passengers who currently drive to the station might not travel by rail at all if car parking charges became what they regard as unfair. The benefit of higher revenue from car parking must be weighed against the charges suppressing use of rail altogether. Free parking at weekends could generate more revenue in extra ticket sales than is currently raised through parking charges.

Policy implications

- Investment to encourage passengers to walk or cycle to the station (including improved lighting, CCTV coverage, signage and cycle parking) will have a positive result where a station has a confined urban catchment. Encouraging walking and cycling could play a small part in releasing parking spaces for those who need to come by car.



Cycles at Grays



Grays car park

- Assuming no major change in the transport modes used to access stations, demand for car parking will significantly outstrip supply. Only car parks that are currently at under 80% capacity would not be full by 2016.
- If car parking capacity at stations is not expanded in line with expected increases in demand for rail travel this is likely to result in increased traffic and additional carbon emissions. In two of the four specific studies the local authority was resistant to increasing car parking capacity at the station to increase the use of public transport and control congestion. These studies suggest that councils which do not permit station car park expansion, may, in fact, encourage more traffic.
- The level of suppressed demand that has been calculated at Witham suggests that there is a good commercial case for the rail industry to invest in extra car parking provision – not only will extra parking revenue be generated, but extra revenue will come through the farebox.
- If a station car park becomes full during the morning peak, it becomes a barrier to off-peak use when spare seats are available and additional passengers represent no extra cost to the railway.
- At Grays, 35% of passengers who currently park at the station said they would walk if it became difficult to park. For passengers travelling further it seems unlikely that alternatives to the car will be attractive. At Witham just 7% of passengers who currently park at the station said they would walk if car parking became difficult.
- As station car parks reach 90%+ capacity it will force passengers who currently travel towards the end of the peak to travel at a busier time to be sure of getting a parking space.
- Showing parking space availability in real time on websites/text services would allow passengers to make informed choices, avoiding use of alternative modes because they *think* the station car park is full.

³ Demand forecast analysis undertaken by Atkins rail consultants for Network Rail in relation to rail demand within Greater Anglia area to 2016

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of report

- 1.1 This study has been commissioned to investigate and understand station access, and in particular demand for station car parking, in the Greater Anglia RUS¹ area. The study is composed of a number of elements, or strands, aimed at understanding the ‘transport to the station’ issues of a range of users. This report also explores the detailed situation at a number of case study stations and then goes on to consider possible solutions.
- 1.2 The four case study stations are:
- Harlow Town
 - Grays
 - Witham
 - Royston
- 1.3 These case studies have been chosen in order to provide a representative cross-section of station types and passenger groups within the Greater Anglia RUS area.
- 1.4 **Note:** For the purposes of this report the route from Shepreth Junction, south of Cambridge, to Baldock is deemed to be within the Greater Anglia RUS area (it is actually covered by the East Coast Main Line RUS).

Current situation parking data

- 1.5 A key element of this study was the collation of a database of car parking provision relating to both station car parks and other car parks close to the station. Both these ‘databases’ are provided for use by Passenger Focus in Excel format.

Station car parks

- 1.6 For car parks operated by (or operated on behalf of) train operating companies data has been sourced:
- Directly from the train operating company
 - From our own research

- 1.7 Findings include the number of spaces, charges and average car park utilisation.

Other car parks

- 1.8 A key element of the study was also to look at ‘non station’ car parks, used by people travelling by train. The study therefore included the compilation of a database of ‘long stay’ car parking close to the 50 busiest stations in the study area. Where data has been available we have recorded car park name, number of spaces, charges and

¹ RUS stands for ‘Route Utilisation Strategy’

distance from station (in two bands – up to 500 yards and 500 to 1,000 yards).

Summary of station car park data

- 1.9 The table shown below summarises station car park utilisation data which we have collated from the train operating companies and car park operators. Generally train companies and car park operators do not collect car park utilisation data for free car parks.

TABLE 1.1 STATION CAR PARK UTILISATION

Number of car parks by utilisation %					
Train Operating Company	Less than 70%	70-80%	80-90%	Over 90%	No data
'one'	18	12	12	13	23
First Capital Connect	4	0	0	4	3
c2c	7	7	1	1	1

- 1.10 Of the 79 car parks in the Greater Anglia RUS area for which we have utilisation data, 31 are generally between 80% and 100% utilised. This is almost half of the car parks for which we have utilisation data.

Detailed station studies

- 1.11 In order to gather as full a picture as possible of the complex relationship between supply and demand it was agreed that four stations should be selected for detailed analysis. These stations were chosen on the basis of a number of factors including:
- Current levels of passenger demand
 - High utilisation of car park spaces
 - The train operating company
 - Geographic location
(a balance between suburban/rural and reasonable distribution across the region)
 - Passenger demographic profile.
- 1.12 The four stations chosen for detailed studies were Harlow Town ('one'), Grays (c2c), Witham ('one') and Royston (First Capital Connect).
- 1.13 The detailed evaluation of each station included:
- A comprehensive site visit.
 - A survey of rail passengers to help to understand issues at each station regarding station access and car parking.
 - Interviews with stakeholders including the train operator, local council and any local rail user group.

Harlow Town

Background

- 1.14 Harlow Town station is located to the northern edge of the new town, it is served by 'one'. The journey to London Liverpool Street takes around 35 minutes. The station car park in Harlow has a capacity for 365 cars and during the week is currently between 91% and 99% occupied.
- 1.15 There are no other public car parks close to the station and very limited on-street parking. The local council is keen to promote increased cycle usage as a means of access to the station.
- 1.16 Harlow District is forecast a high level of household growth in the period to 2021. The independent panel's report following the examination in public of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy recommends an increase of 13,500 new dwellings by 2021.

Survey findings

- 1.17 Current access to the station by bus is high, at 17%, reflecting the location of the station on the edge of the town and a good bus interchange at the station entrance.
- 1.18 Cycle use to access the station is low, despite the general good provision of cycle routes in Harlow.
- 1.19 39% of people who parked at or near the station felt there was insufficient car parking at the station, with almost half reporting that by 9:30am the car park is full.
- 1.20 Respondents indicated that should demand for parking space increase, many (commuter) users, who currently drive to the station, would travel earlier to secure a car parking space.
- 1.21 **Note:** A clear implication of these findings is that unless action is taken there is likely to be a consequential 'knock-on' effect of reducing car parking availability for leisure and business users (*who tend to travel later than commuters*). This may have the effect of shifting some trips from rail to car.

Options

- 1.22 There is no significant undeveloped land close to the station which could be used to expand the existing car park.
- 1.23 The station car park site in Harlow is flat and (given planning permission) there is the scope to provide additional car parking by building a decked or multi-storey car park.
- 1.24 The rail operator 'one' is supportive of plans to provide additional car parking, but commented that it would be hard to justify large capital investment at Harlow over the franchise period.
- 1.25 The local council is not supportive of any plans to provide additional car parking at

the station, preferring to promote alternate access modes, such as bus and cycle. However, the council did comment that any such shift in access mode to the station might be hard to achieve in an area of high car ownership, such as Harlow.

Summary Conclusions

- 1.26 Overall there would appear to be a case for providing additional car parking at Harlow Town station. The station car park is generally full after the am peak, and bus use is high. A combination of improvements to cycle parking at the station, promoting cycling in combination with additional car parking is recommended. Increased bus use from within the urban area may be possible, with more frequent bus services, or revised bus routes.
- 1.27 This study leads to the conclusion that work exploring ‘suppressed demand’ for rail travel from Harlow Town because of a lack of car parking, would be valuable next step, quantifying the level of additional parking needed.

Grays

Background

- 1.28 Grays is located in Thurrock, to the east of London and is served by c2c providing services to Fenchurch Street station. Travel time from Grays to Fenchurch Street is around 35 minutes.
- 1.29 Grays has a relatively small station car park, with 146 spaces. Before 9.30am use of the car park is restricted to car park season ticket holders. This results in the car park being primarily used by commuters. Data from the rail company shows utilisation of 73%, although interviews with station staff indicate that this is inaccurate, with the car park full by 8.30am most weekdays.
- 1.30 Grays also has two other car parks which are close to the station and are used by both commuters and other rail users.
- The council car park at Crown Road has approximately 200 spaces and is well used. The cost per day is £3.00 (vs. the station car park at £3.90).
 - The Multi-Storey car park is large, and has spare capacity on most weekdays. The cost is however relatively high at £5 per day (we understand that there is a discount for season holders).
- 1.31 **Note:** On street parking is limited as there is a residents’ parking scheme in place to discourage commuter parking on the street.
- 1.32 The local council strongly objects to any plans to increase car parking in Grays, including at the station, and has a policy aimed at reducing car trips to the town centre.
- 1.33 The representative from c2c commented that the current car park cannot meet demand for spaces, which could restrict rail trips being made from Grays.
- 1.34 Thurrock is forecast for high growth in the draft East of England Regional Spatial Strategy. The majority of this additional housing in the Grays area is likely to be to

the south of the railway line towards the river and therefore within walking distance, or a short bus ride, of the station.

Survey Findings

1.35 Amongst those respondents who currently drive to the station, our survey indicates that, should car parking at Grays become more difficult in the future:

- 35% of people would walk to the station
- 24% would switch to using public transport.

Options

1.36 The site of the current station car park is not ideal for expansion, being located to the south of the station on the opposite side of the railway line to the majority of the town and accessed by a narrow road, which also provides the main pedestrian link across the railway to the town centre.

Summary Conclusions

1.37 It appears that whilst there is insufficient car parking at the station car park in Grays, there is capacity in the nearby Multi-Storey car park. This car park is currently relatively expensive for occasional use, at £5.00 per day. If rates at the Multi-Storey car park could be negotiated to a similar level to the station car park, for occasional rail travellers, some additional parking capacity could be released.

1.38 We note that the council is currently re-tendering its sponsored bus services, with one of the objectives being to provide bus services timed to link better to rail services. If this is successful, greater bus usage may be able to relieve some pressure on car parking for the station.

Witham

Background

1.39 Witham is located in Essex between Chelmsford and Colchester, close to the A12. Witham has a fast service to London provided by 'one', with the journey to Liverpool Street taking between 45 and 50 minutes. The nearby mainline stations of Hatfield Peverel and Kelvedon have a less frequent service, as does the branch line to Braintree, which runs to the north west of Witham.

1.40 Witham station car park has 430 spaces, and is estimated to be between 93% and 100% utilised, on average.

1.41 Witham has a number of other car parks, close to the station, which can be used by rail commuters including the council-run White Horse Lane (100 spaces) and the privately-run Cut Throat Lane (354 spaces). Both tend to be full with commuter parking during the week.

Survey Findings

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- 1.42 Very few people in the Witham urban area drive and park at the station.
- 1.43 Survey results show that 40% of respondents using Witham station travel more than 4km to the station. In many cases these people are travelling to Witham, rather than using their nearest station. The more frequent and faster service from Witham is likely to be the main reason for this. Unless there is a major change in rail services, it is likely that this trend will continue.

Options

- 1.44 For those people travelling from outside Witham (40% of passengers), particularly those living in rural areas, travel to the station other than by car is not seen as practical.
- 1.45 The council is supportive of the provision of additional car parking, recognising the demand for additional spaces for rail users. There are a number of potential options for increasing car parking at Witham station.
- The owner of Cut Throat Lane car park has recently had an application refused for a multi-storey car park on the site of his existing car park. The application was rejected on the basis of restricted highway access. The solution to this access problem would be to purchase a strip of land from the nearby Morrisons supermarket, although discussions between the developer and the supermarket have so far not been fruitful.
 - Another option to increase car parking at Witham would be to add a deck to the existing car park. Again it is likely that highway access would have to be improved, as there is currently a difficult junction to negotiate at the entrance to the car park. There is scope to add an additional entrance/exit to the south east of the existing car park.
 - An alternative, suggested by the rail user group, is a park and ride service from the edge of Witham offering a high quality bus link service, or a rail shuttle, to the station.
 - The train operating company also mentioned the concept of a parkway station, to relieve pressure on the roads in the Witham area.

Summary Conclusions

- 1.46 There is clearly a car parking issue at Witham, and this relates to people accessing the station from outside the town. For these people, if they are to continue to use Witham additional car parking is required. There are a number of options and the local authority appears broadly supportive.
- 1.47 Our work exploring ‘suppressed demand’ uses the Witham area as an example. Our results are shown in paragraphs 1.54 to 1.60 of this Executive Summary.

Royston

Background

- 1.48 Royston is located in rural Cambridgeshire, to the south west of Cambridge. Rail services are provided to Cambridge and Kings Cross by First Capital Connect. The

service to Kings Cross is frequent and certain services offer a faster journey than adjacent stations (quickest journey time is 43 minutes).

- 1.49 The station has two car parks, located on both sides of the railway, with a total of 262 spaces. There are no other car parks near to the station and on street parking is restricted within a 10 minute walk of the station. The car park becomes very full in the week, with utilisation of spaces recorded at 99%.

Survey Findings

- 1.50 The majority of station users who live in Royston walk to the station. The station car park is mainly used by people travelling into Royston from the surrounding rural areas.
- 1.51 Due to the rural nature of Royston's catchment area, bus services are not seen as a feasible option for many rail commuters, particularly those living in small villages or the countryside.

Options

- 1.52 Our survey indicates, and stakeholders report, that the current car park is poorly laid out and does not make the best use of the land available. We understand that the train operator has plans to reorganise the car park layout in the near future, which may add a limited number of additional spaces.
- 1.53 The train operator has also recently commissioned a site survey and feasibility study looking at the possibility of adding extra car parking on disused Network Rail land to the west of the northern car park. The local council have commented that they would be supportive of plans for additional car parking at Royston. However, any plans would need to incorporate measures to increase access by other non-car modes, for example providing additional secure cycle parking.

Suppressed demand analysis

- 1.54 As part of this report we were requested to provide an indication of future demand for car parking at seven stations based on future growth in passenger demand, provided by Atkins. The majority of car parks in our study currently have utilisation between 90% and 100%.
- 1.55 Forecasting car parking demand based on a currently full car park, by applying forecast growth in passenger demand, does not provide an indication of demand that is suppressed the current lack of car parking – i.e. people choosing not to travel from a particular station because there is insufficient car parking.
- 1.56 When a car park is above 90% capacity some people are dissuaded from using the station. As an example, data for Witham currently shows a 93% utilisation of spaces. Our survey shows that 38% of people parking at Witham wasted time trying to find a space.
- 1.57 To help to understand 'suppressed demand' we have selected a study area in the Greater Anglia RUS area, and calculated the level of suppressed demand, due to a lack

of car parking at stations the area. This example is based on the Witham area, including the stations from Chelmsford to Marks Tey and the Braintree branch line.

1.58 Suppressed demand compares current levels of demand for rail travel to expected demand for rail travel, on a station by station basis. Our analysis to calculate expected demand for each station takes into account:

- Population profile – the propensity for different types of people to use rail
- Station catchments – based on current rail service to London
- Rail service frequency and journey time to London
- Population distance from station (station accessibility)
- Station distance from London
- Car park data (both at station and near to the station)
- Share of rail travellers accessing the station by car

1.59 This work is covered in detail in Chapter 5. Key findings are:

- In the study area we calculate there is currently 19% suppressed demand (this is the difference between actual and calculated expected demand)
- Suppressed demand at Witham station could currently fill 123 more spaces than are currently provided.
- This number of additional spaces increases to 173 based on passenger demand projections to 2021 provided by Atkins.

1.60 These numbers of additional spaces are a **minimum** requirement. As illustrated in the para 1.56 above, when a car park is at over 90% utilisation a significant proportion of people waste time finding a space, discouraging use of the station. On this basis we would suggest that it would be worthwhile to expand this work to quantify suppressed demand at all stations where car parking utilisation is current at 90% or over.

Overall Conclusions

1.61 This work has highlighted the important relationship between the availability of car parking and demand for rail travel.

1.62 The case studies demonstrate that where car parking is currently close to, or at, capacity it is important to treat each location ‘on its merits’ rather than applying a generic solution. Specifically, the study has found:

- Where most of the passenger traffic is coming from a relatively concentrated (urban) catchment area it is both practical and realistic to promote non-car access modes, such as cycling, walking and public transport. These modes can be encouraged by providing better facilities for cycling, such as secure cycle parking, improving bus routes and the timing of bus services to better connect to rail services. Walking to the station can also be encouraged by investing in safe, direct, signposted, well lit walking routes.
- However, where the catchment area is rural or even semi-rural, or where the geography of an area dictates, these sustainable modes (walking, cycling and travelling by bus) are not be perceived as a realistic option (compared to either not travelling, or using cars).

1.63 This research has also demonstrated that deliberately limiting the expansion of car parking at stations where there is a demonstrable lack of spare capacity (in order to discourage car trips to the station), is likely to have the opposite of the desired effect, and generate more or longer trips by car. The examples described below generate more congestion and vehicle emissions than a passenger driving to their closest station:

- With car parking supply limited there is likely to be an increase in kiss and ride trips (the rail user being dropped off at the station by car and picked up on the return journey). This potentially generates twice the number of car trips than somebody parking at the station. *18% of survey respondents at Harlow Town would get a lift to the station if in future car parking was more difficult.*
- A full car park may result in a rail user driving to a more distant station with space in the car park, resulting in longer trips by car. *38% of survey respondents at Royston would drive to another station if car parking was more difficult.*
- A full car park could also discourage someone from travelling by rail at all and drive instead. *17% of respondents at Witham would drive all the way if in future car parking was more difficult.*

1.64 The studies have also found that many travellers do not necessarily travel from their closest station. Travellers will frequently travel further for a faster or more frequent train service. This has the effect of ‘concentrating’ travellers at those stations with the best service. In some circumstances it may therefore be appropriate to consider revisions to service delivery levels, looking at wider catchment areas including several stations.

4. DETAILED STATION STUDIES

Specific objectives

- 4.1 As part of detailed station studies, four of the seven shortlisted stations were selected for further analysis. The two specific objectives for this work were as follows:
- i. To gain an understanding of why existing passengers choose the method they do to get to the train station in four of the areas selected.
 - ii. To carry out detailed studies for up to four locations selected. Focusing on possible solutions to the projected shortfall in parking spaces.
- 4.2 In this section of the report we cover each location in turn, firstly presenting the results of at station surveys, we then present the results of our stakeholder meetings with the train operating companies and local councils. Appendix A lists details of who we have consulted with as part of individual station studies.

Selection of four study stations

- 4.3 From the shortlist of seven stations, we selected, after discussion with Passenger Focus and the Greater Anglia RUS demand SubGroup, four stations to undertake further primary research and stakeholder interviews.
- 4.4 From the list of seven Cambridge was excluded, as it was agreed that the parking situation in the city is very different to anywhere else in the region and any lessons learnt would not necessarily be applicable in other locations.
- 4.5 Thetford was also excluded. No data is available about current car parking occupancy at Thetford station as a result of free station car parking.
- 4.6 Norwich was the last station to be excluded. It was felt that Witham offered a more interesting case study, with particular car parking issues mentioned in our initial contacts with the train operator.

Station visits

- 4.7 Having selected the four stations, we undertook a station visit to each of the four stations, non-station car parks and also to nearby relevant stations, to confirm our data sources and provide us with an ‘on the ground’ understanding of local issues, before our primary research and stakeholder interviews.

Primary research

- 4.8 Primary research was carried out at the four study stations with rail users waiting to board the train. The questionnaire lasted approximately 5 minutes with an average of 25 completed interviews per shift. Eight shifts took place at each station with a mixture of morning and afternoon shifts (7.00-13.00 & 13.00-19.00) The surveys took place at Harlow Town on the 24th and 25th July and at Grays, Witham and Royston between the 11th and 15th September inclusive. The summer school holiday period was excluded to ensure that the survey sample and travel patterns were representative of an average travel day. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

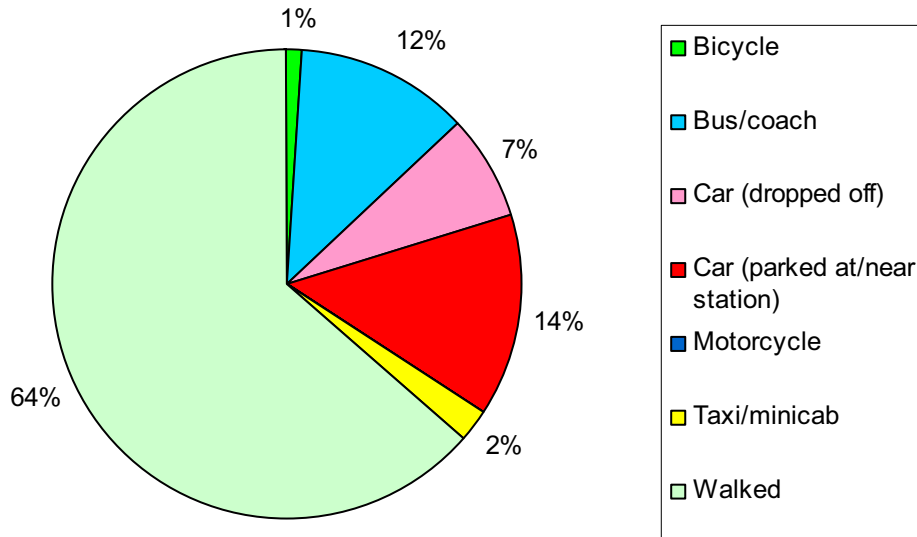
Stakeholder interviews

- 4.9 We arranged interviews with industry and local stakeholders for each of the four study stations. We met with train company representatives and local council officers for each location to understand local views, issues, aspirations, any planned new schemes and council policy. Topics which we discussed included the current parking situation, access to the station by road, public transport, walk and cycle, locations of new housing developments, council policy on car parking and options for increasing car parking in the area.

Background data

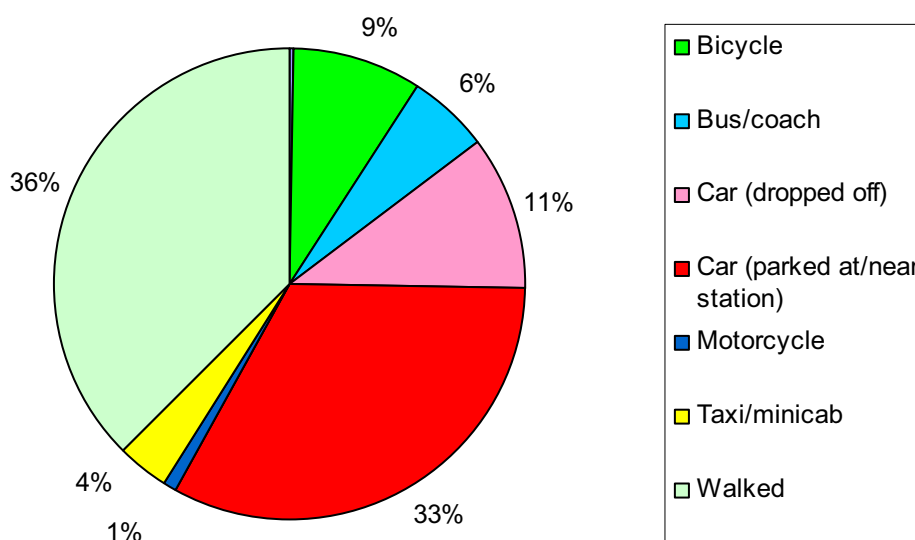
- 4.10 To provide some background base data about modes used for accessing stations in the Greater Anglia RUS area we have analysed data from the 2001 London Area Transport Survey (LATS). To provide a benchmark we have analysed survey respondents' data from people using all Greater Anglia stations. We have split the data by distance from London, based on two distance bands. Stations less than 25 miles from Liverpool Street and stations over 25 miles from Liverpool Street. This distance split shows how access mode changes by distance from London.

FIGURE 4.1 STATION ACCESS MODE - STATIONS LESS THAN 25 MILES FROM LIVERPOOL STREET



Source: London Area Transport Survey (LATS) 2001

FIGURE 4.2 STATION ACCESS MODE - STATIONS MORE THAN 25 MILES FROM LIVERPOOL STREET



Source: London Area Transport Survey (LATS) 2001

Grays

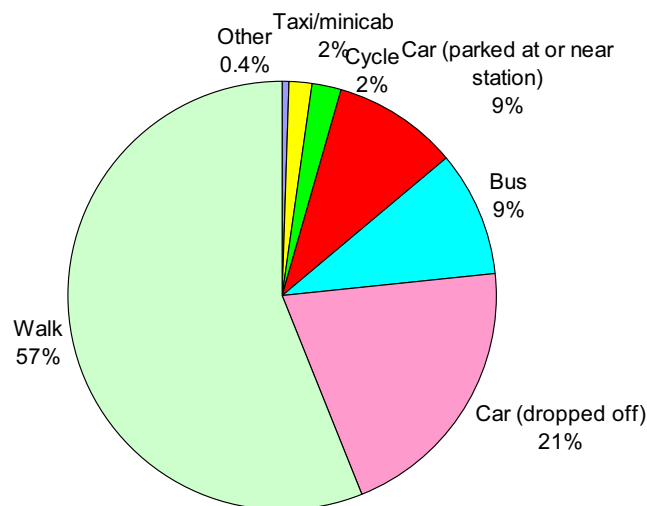
4.41 Grays is located in the district of Thurrock in Essex and is served by c2c services into Fenchurch Street and to the Essex coast. Grays station is located in the centre of Grays town and is served by a relatively small station car park to the south of the station, with 146 spaces. Adjacent stations to Grays, also served by c2c services are Pufleet and Chafford Hundred to the west and Tilbury Town to the south east.

Primary research

4.42 Almost three fifths of respondents at Grays station walk to the station, and relatively few, compared to the other study stations, park at or near the station. More people are dropped off by car than park at the station. Compared with stations a similar distance from central London, Grays has a high proportion of people dropped off by car (average 7%) and a low proportion of people parking at or near the station (average 14%).

4.43 The distribution of access modes spatially can be seen in Figure 4.22.

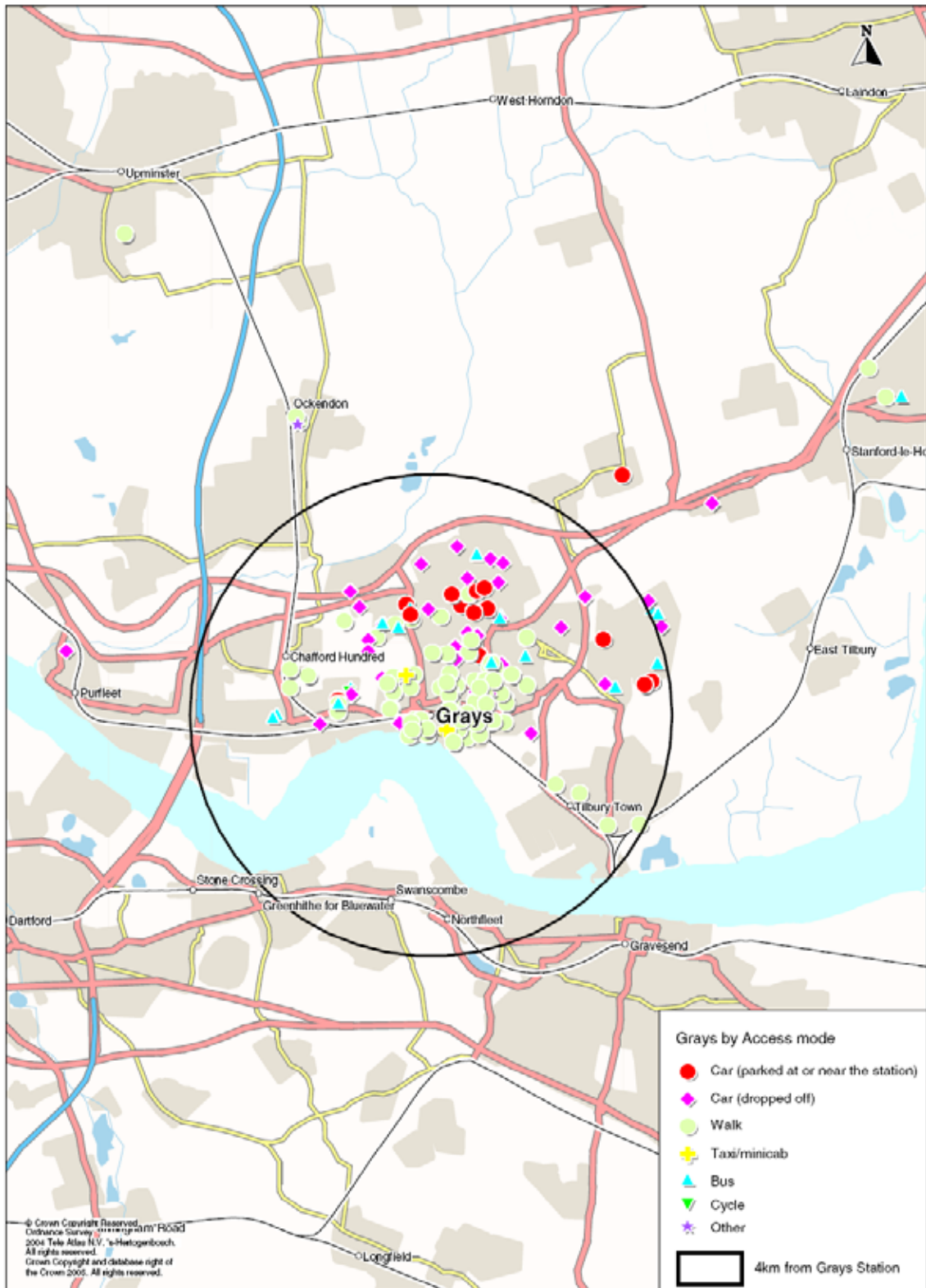
FIGURE 4.21 ACCESS MODE SHARE



Source: Q4. Base: All respondents 223

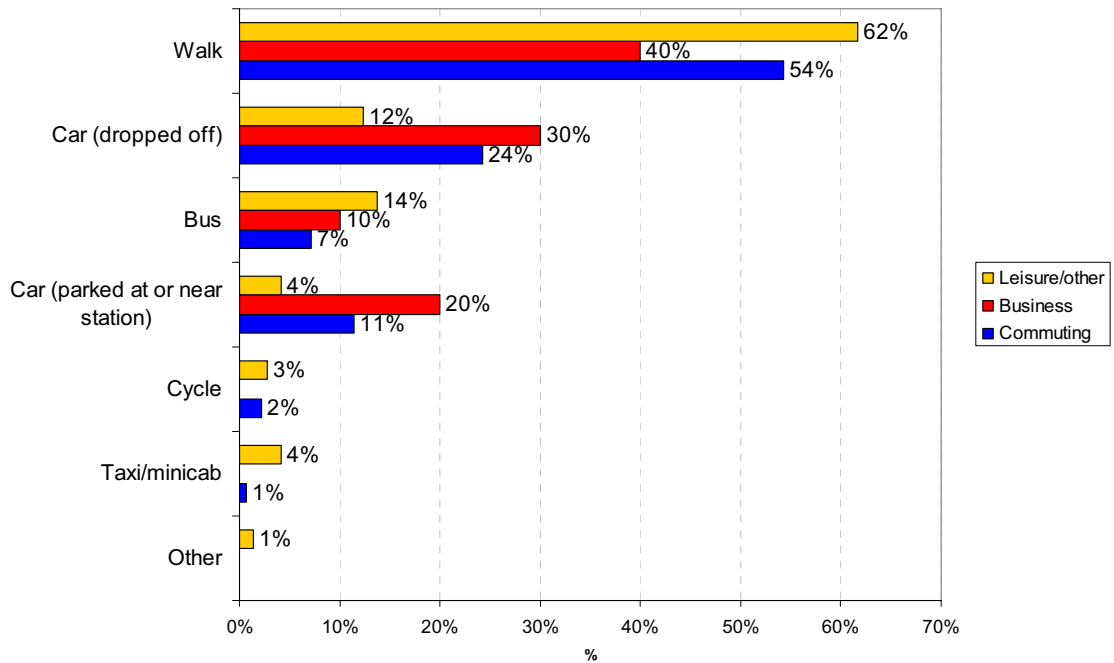
4.44 The majority of respondents begin their journey close to the station within the built up area of Grays. As distance from the station increases as does the likelihood of using a car or bus. Residents to the north of Grays town centre mostly travel to the station by car.

FIGURE 4.22 MAP SHOWING GRAYS ACCESS MODE BY POSTCODE OF RESPONDENTS



4.45 Business customers were more likely to use a car, either dropped off or parked, compared to commuters or leisure customers. Business customers were also less likely to walk. Commuters were more likely to walk and less likely to use a car than leisure customers.

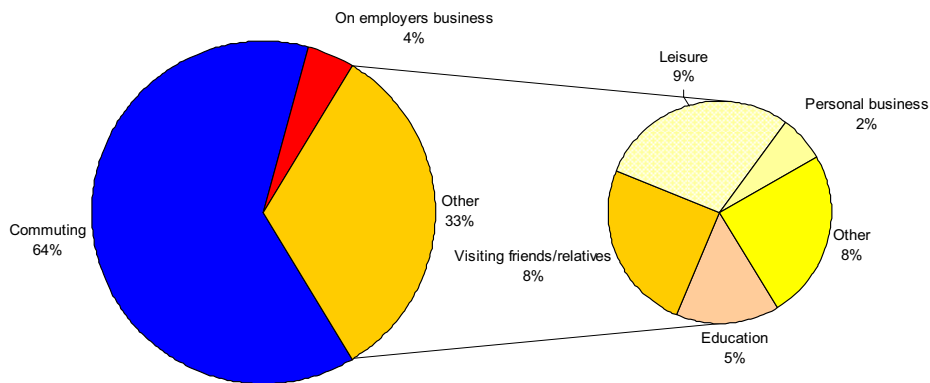
FIGURE 4.23 ACCESS MODE SHARE BY JOURNEY PURPOSE



Source: Q4. Base: All respondents – Commuting 140, Business 10, Leisure/other 73

4.46 Almost two thirds of customers at Grays station were commuters, whilst very few were on business. Leisure customers were divided amongst a range of purposes.

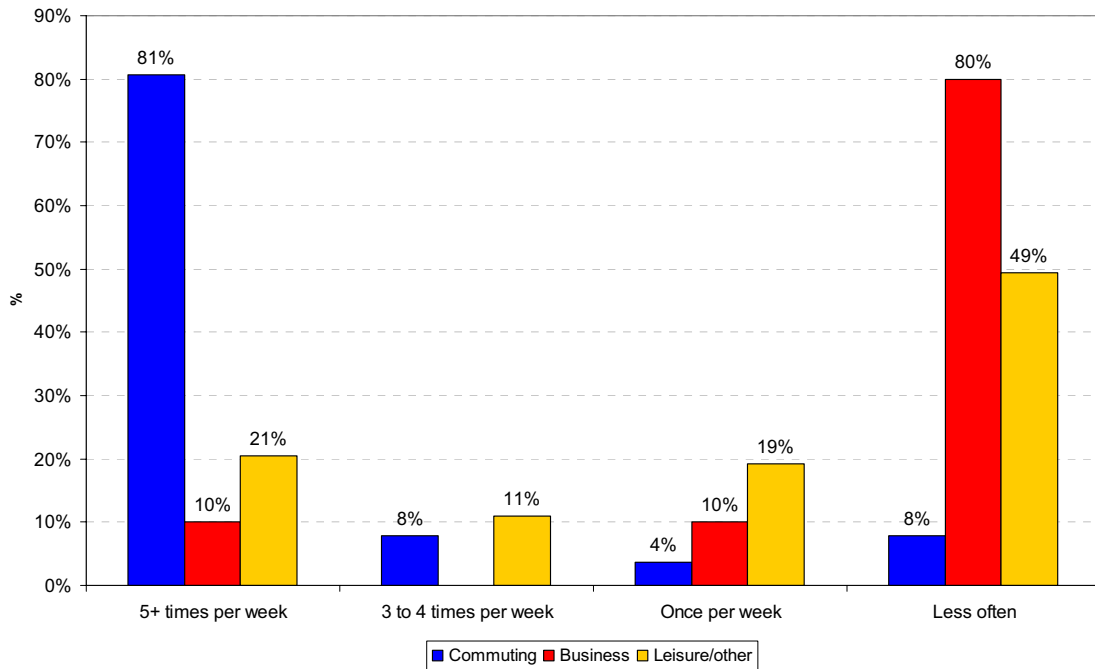
FIGURE 4.24 JOURNEY PURPOSE



Source: Q2. Base: All respondents 223

- 4.47 Due to the large proportion of commuters using Grays station, the frequency of making the journey is high with over half stating 'five or more times a week'. This proportion increases to 81% of respondents amongst commuters, in Figure 4.25.
- 4.48 The majority of frequent journeys are made by commuters, whereas those journeys made less often are more likely to be made by business customers (note: a very small sample size) or leisure customers, half of whom stated they make the journey less than once per week.

FIGURE 4.25 FREQUENCY OF MAKING JOURNEY BY JOURNEY PURPOSE

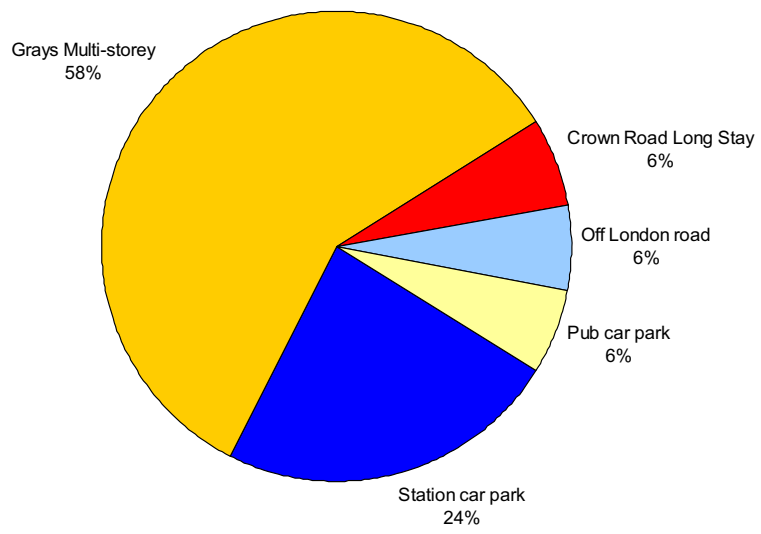


Source: Q2b. Base: All respondents – Commuting 140, Business 10, Leisure/other 73

4.49 As seen in Figure 4.21, 9% of respondents parked at or near the station. The locations used for parking are shown in Figure 4.26, although it should be noted that it is based on only 21 responses.

4.50 Just over half of those who parked at or near the station used the multi storey car park, whilst a quarter used the station car park. In addition, the car park at Crown Road was used, as were a variety of other locations in the town, including on street locations. A map showing car park locations in Grays is shown in Figure 4.27.

FIGURE 4.26 PARKING LOCATION



Source: Q7. Base: All respondents 21

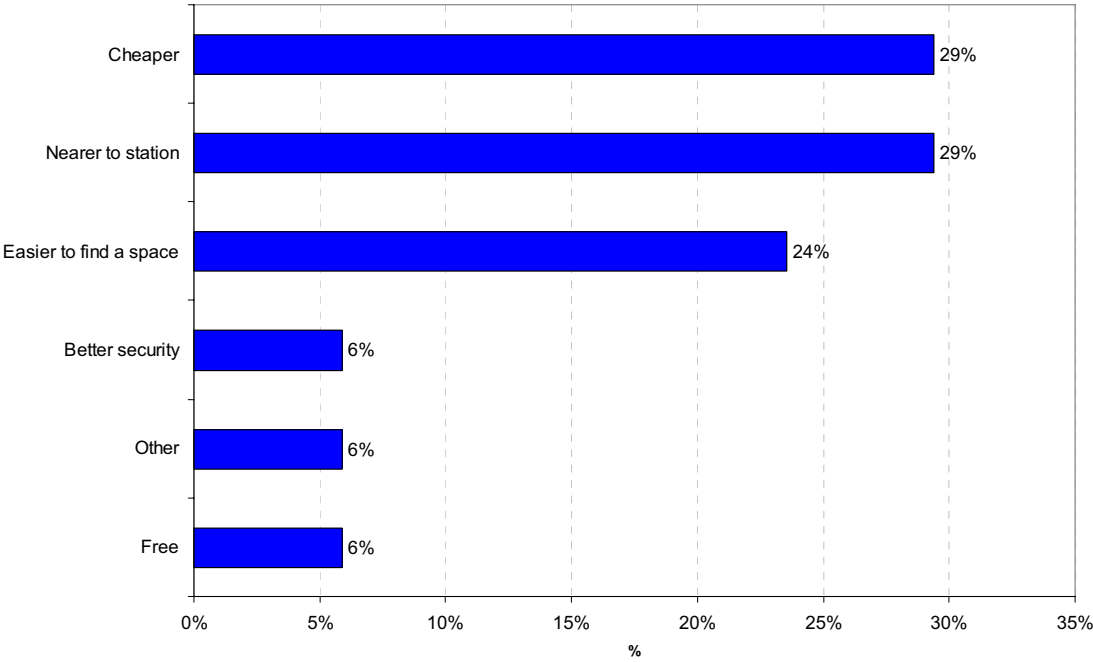
FIGURE 4.27 MAP OF GRAYS STATION AND CAR PARKS



4.51 'Nearer to the station' and 'cheaper' were the main reasons given for selection of parking location. Ease of finding a space was also mentioned by just under a fifth of respondents.

4.52 Other reasons (mentioned by only 1 person each) were first car park found, no spaces at the station and security.

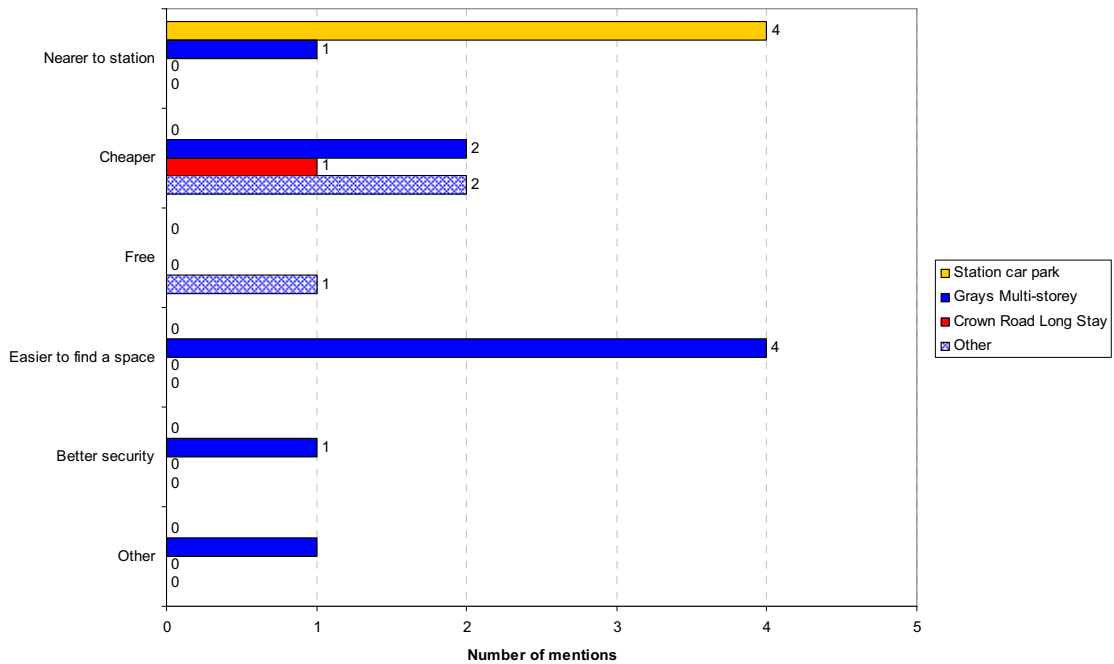
FIGURE 4.28 PARKING LOCATION SELECTION



Source: Q8. Base: All those who parked at or near station 21

4.53 Proximity to station was, unsurprisingly, more likely to be given as a reason by those parking at the station. This was the only answer given by people parking at the station. Price appears to be an issue for those seeking ‘other’ places to park. It appears the multi storey is used as it is easier to find a space and is cheaper than the station.

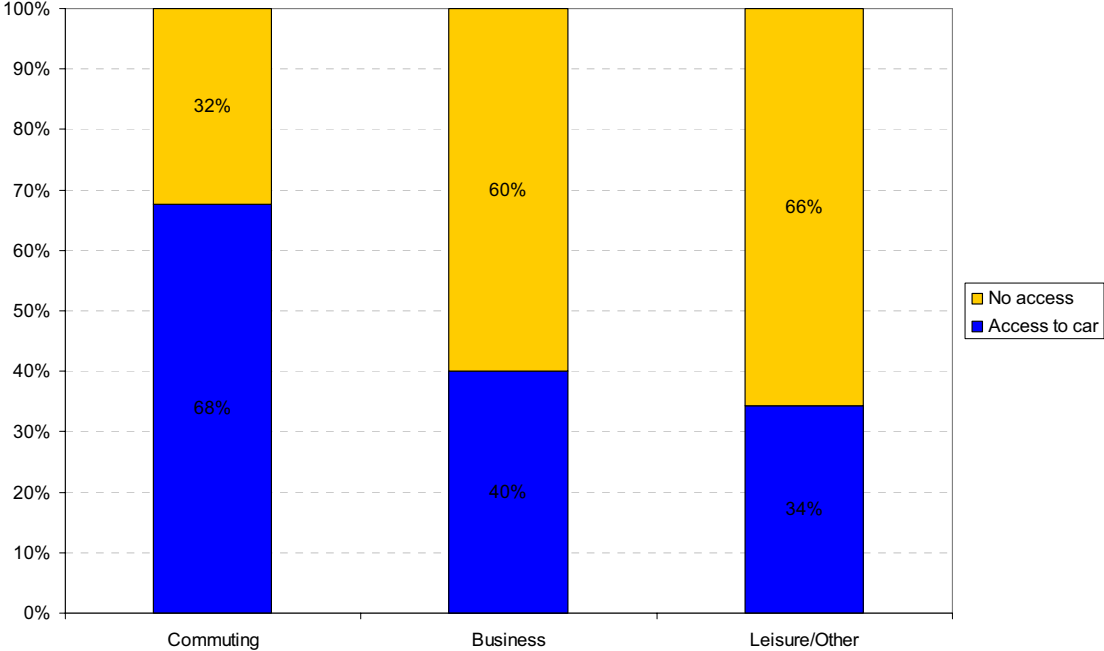
FIGURE 4.29 PARKING LOCATION SELECTION BY PARKING LOCATION



Source: Q8. Base: All those who parked at or near station: Station car park 4, Grays Multi-storey 9, Crown Road long stay 1, Other 3

4.54 Overall, 55% of respondents have access to a car. These people are more likely to be commuters, than business or leisure customers.

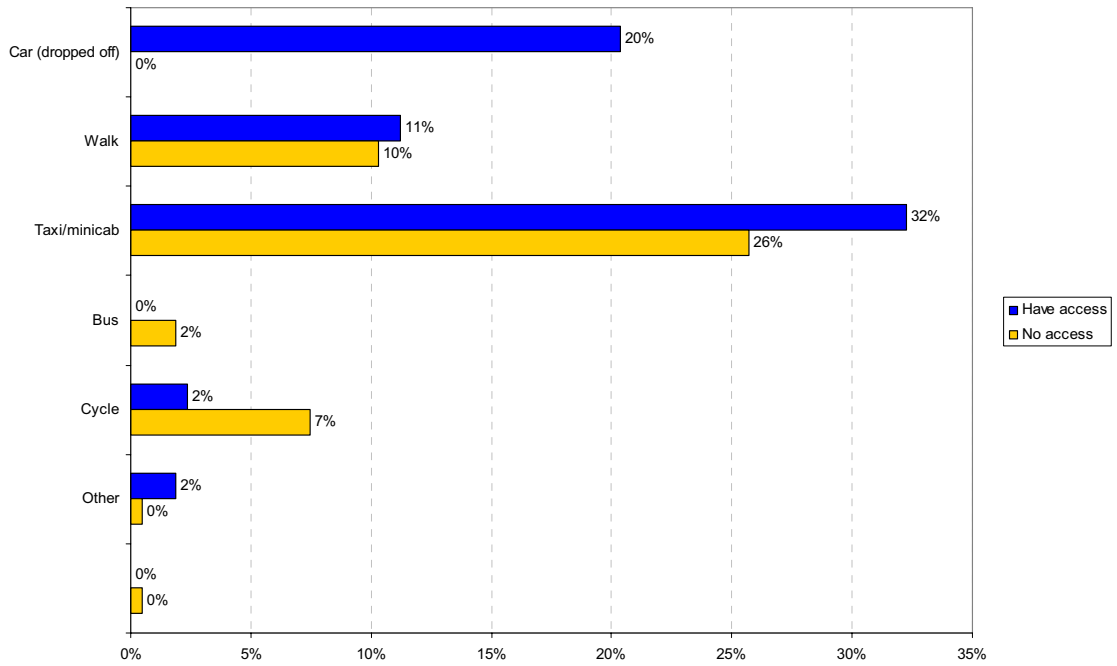
FIGURE 4.30 ACCESS TO CAR BY JOURNEY PURPOSE



Source: Q5. Base: All respondents - Commuting 139, Business 10, Leisure/other 73

4.55 In Grays, respondents are, perhaps surprisingly, more likely to access the station on foot or by cycle if they have access to a car. This may be linked to the residential location of these respondents, as seen in Figure 4.22. However, respondents are more likely to use the bus if they do not have access to a car.

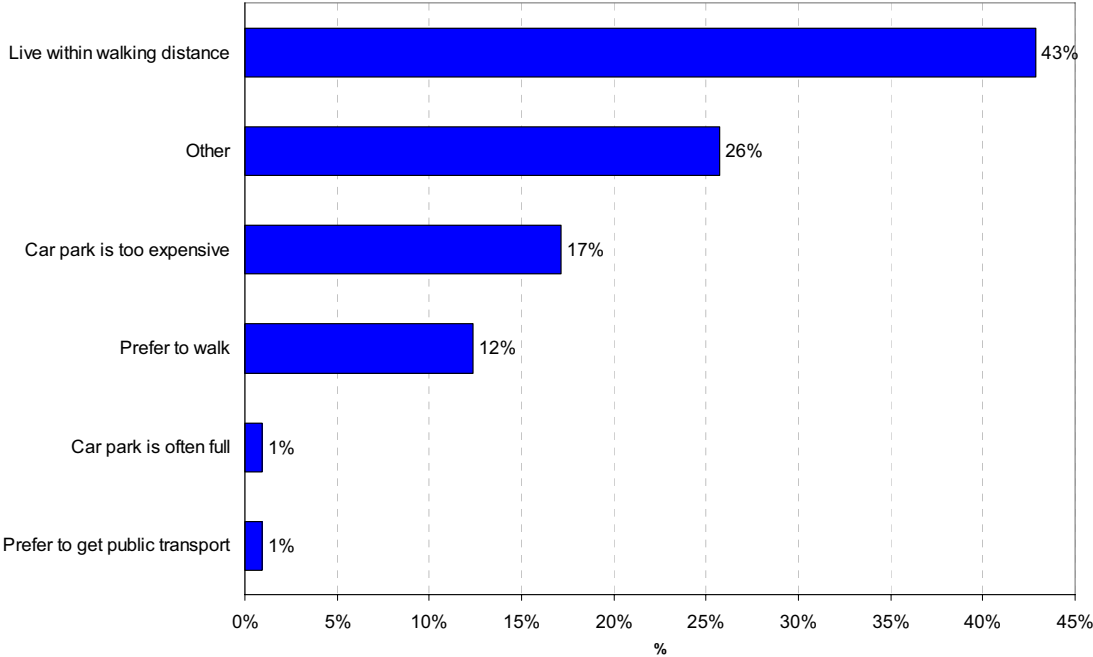
FIGURE 4.31 ACCESS MODE BY ACCESS TO CAR



Source: Q4. Base: All respondents – Access to car 123, No access 99

4.56 Those respondents who did not use a car but said they have access to one were asked for their reason for this. The most frequent answer was that the respondent lived within walking distance. Issues with car parks, particularly the cost were given by almost a fifth of respondents. Other reasons given included not having access to the car (either not working or partner requiring it), the ease, speed and cost were also mentioned.

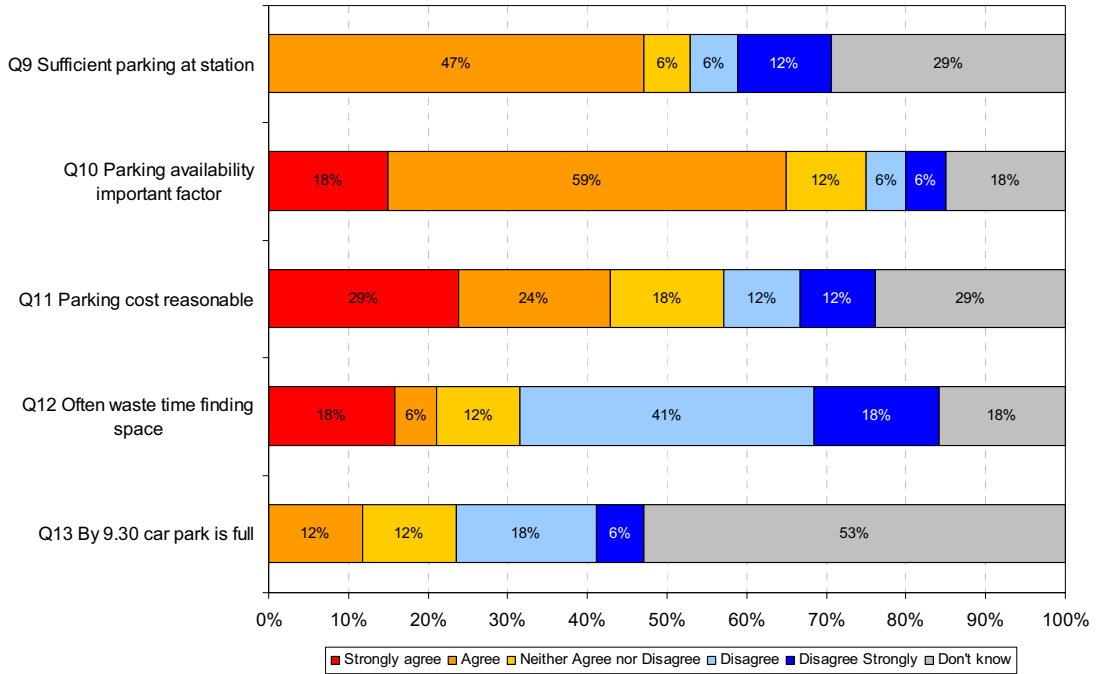
FIGURE 4.32 REASON FOR NOT USING A CAR TO ACCESS STATION



Source: Q6. Base: All those who have access to but did not use a car: 105

4.57 Generally it was thought that the car park had sufficient space, the cost was reasonable, and that finding a space was not too much of an issue.

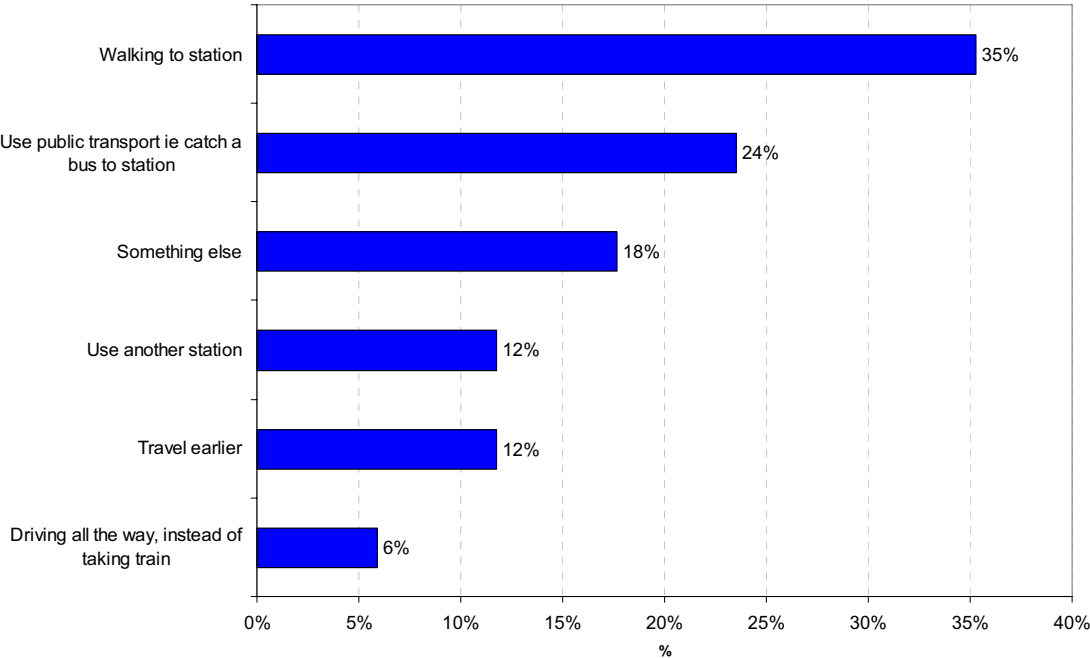
FIGURE 4.33 ATTITUDE STATEMENTS



Source: Q9-13. Base: All those who parked at or near station 21

4.58 Respondents were asked what they would consider if, in future, parking at or near the station became difficult. Over a third said they would walk to the station, and a further quarter said they would use public transport. A smaller proportion would instead change their behaviour in terms of the train by using another station or travelling earlier.

FIGURE 4.34 FUTURE PARKING

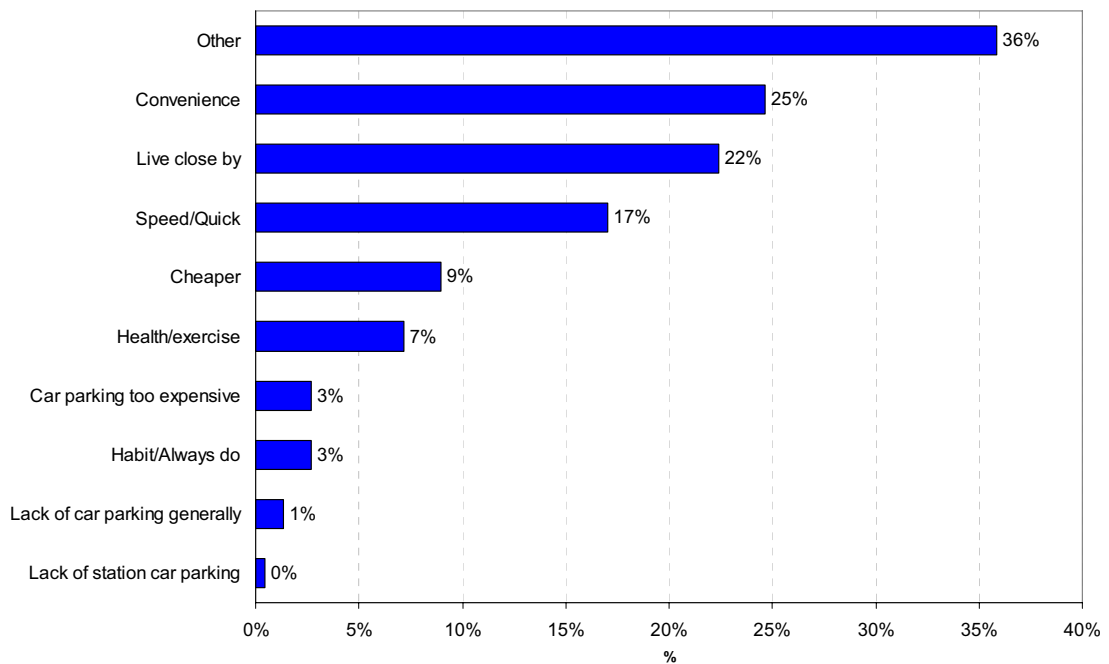


Source: Q14. Base: All those who parked at or near station 21

4.59 'Other' reasons were most likely to be given to the question of why the access mode chosen was used. This included 17% who said there was no reason. Personal reasons (such as being dropped off/delivering family), the services on the buses/trains, and not having a choice are also mentioned.

4.60 The access mode was chosen by a quarter of all respondents because of convenience. Proximity to the station also impacted on a fifth. The speed of the mode was also important and mentioned by a further 17%. Cost reasons were mentioned by fewer respondents.

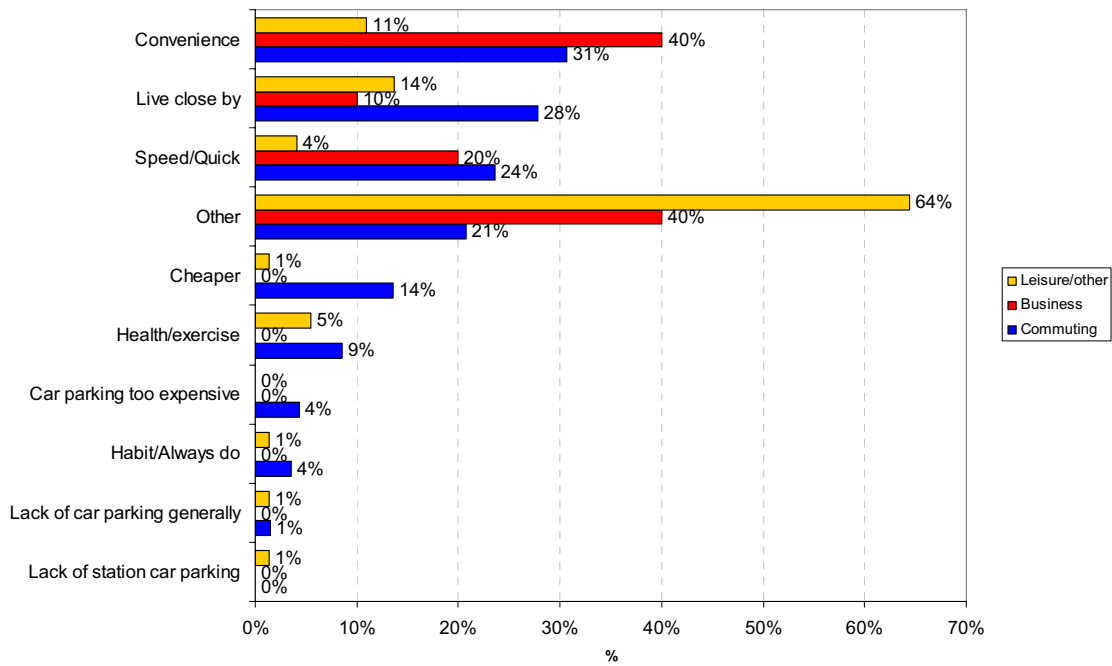
FIGURE 4.35 INFLUENCES ON ACCESS MODE



Source: Q15. Base: All respondents 223

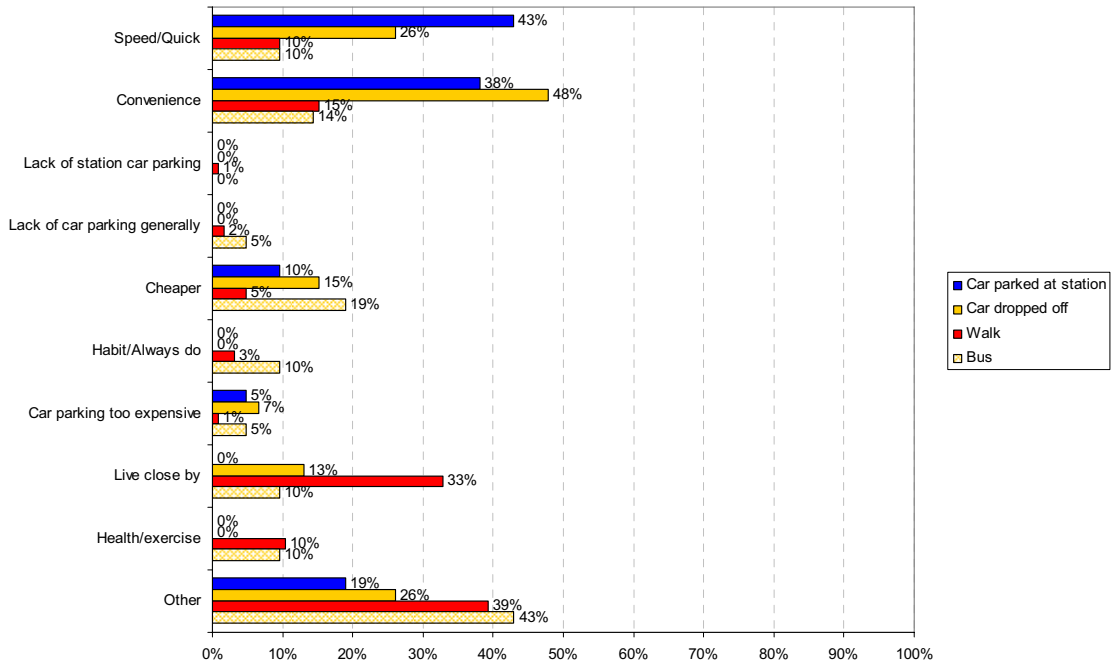
4.61 Cost is the most often mentioned influence on access mode for commuters rather than leisure customers, as is convenience, proximity to the station and speed. Leisure customers were more likely to say there was no particular reason for their choice of access mode.

FIGURE 4.36 INFLUENCES ON ACCESS MODE BY JOURNEY PURPOSE



Source: Q14. Base: All respondents – Commuting 140, Business 10, Leisure/other 73

FIGURE 4.37 INFLUENCES ON ACCESS MODE BY ACCESS MODE



Source: Q14. Base: All respondents – Car parked 21, Car dropped off 46, Walk 125, Bus 21 NB: Other modes not included as base sizes very small

Stakeholder Research

4.62 As part of our stakeholder research at Grays we met with representatives from c2c and Thurrock Council. We also spoke with the Thurrock Rail Users Group.

Car park capacity

4.63 The station car park at Grays is located to the south of the station and accessed by a narrow road. The car park is relatively small, at 146 spaces. Parking is restricted to season ticket holders only before 9:30am, and is typically full by 8:30am. This results in the car park being a commuter car park during the week, with no remaining spaces for business or leisure travellers. Weekend demand for spaces is much lower.

4.64 Other car parks available for rail users include Grays Multi-storey, which is managed by the nearby shopping centre owner. The Multi-storey car park is to the north east of the station and has similar charges to the station car park for season ticket holders, but higher prices for one off parking (£5 compared with £3.90 at the station car park). There is also a council long stay car park at Crown Road, near to the Multi-storey, which costs £3.00 for parking over 6 hours. On our station visit Crown Road was 90% full, whilst the Multi-storey had spaces available at around 11am. The user group comment that parking spaces, in particular on street parking has been reduced in recent years, with pricing in the Multi-storey car park, which is typically the only available parking in the off peak being significantly more expensive for non-season ticket holders.

FIGURE 4.38 GRAYS STATION - TAXI RANK, BUS INTERCHANGE, CAR PARK AND CYCLE PARKING



Road access to station

- 4.65 Access to the station car park is via Station Approach, a narrow road the use of which conflicts with the main north/south pedestrian access to the town centre, which is via a level crossing. The station has a drop off point on both sides of the line, although access to the town centre side of the station is limited by the bus station and a traffic management scheme which prevents car access to the station from the east. The rail user group commented that width restrictions which have been introduced in the road leading to the car park inhibit vehicle flow in peak periods. The group also comment on a lack of facilities for kiss and ride on north side of the station, due to restricted access for private cars in this area.

Public Transport

- 4.66 A new bus terminal was developed recently at the north side of the station, along with priority access for buses to the station. Bus use is high and encouraged by the council. The services offer routes to most parts of Grays, and the services are currently being re-tendered by the council. This process is designed to encourage timetables to fit more closely with rail services.
- 4.67 The rail user group commented that currently there are a number of issues with the bus services, including some convoluted routes and an inadequate bus frequency in the pm peak for commuters returning from London.

Walking and cycling

- 4.68 Current cycle parking is well used and the council would be prepared to fund additional requirements for further secure cycle parking if required. The station serves a relatively compact catchment with over half of rail users walking to the station. Pedestrian access to the London bound platform from the north of the station is hampered by the level crossing which is closed when a train is approaching. There is a tunnel under the railway, but this is to the far end of the platform, within the gated area, which delays foot passengers crossing the track. There is also a footbridge next to the level crossing, which is outside of the station's gated area.

New housing developments

- 4.69 The whole of Thurrock is forecast high housing growth in the draft East of England Regional Spatial Strategy at 31% from 2001 to 2021. Developments in Grays are most likely to be to the south of the station, towards the Thames Estuary, mostly within walking distance, or a short bus ride of the station. Nearby, large developments are planned at Chafford Hundred and Purfleet.

Future options for enhancing car parking and station access

- 4.70 There are no current plans to expand car parking at Grays, mentioned by the TOC or local council. The local council would strongly object to any plans to increase rail car parking at Grays, preferring to promote bus, walking and cycle access. The council is currently exploring additional car parking at nearby Ockendon with c2c, on a former goods yard. The council also noted a lack of parking at Purfleet, combined with high volumes of housing development as an alternative location to provide additional rail

car parking. The council also commented that Stanford-le-Hope suffered from an underused car park, due to security problems and poor lighting. The council was keen to promote longer trains in general on the Tilbury loop.

- 4.71 c2c feel that Grays station cannot currently meet the demand for car parking spaces, although the representative we spoke to was new to his role. It was again commented that there is a shortage of parking at Purfleet, but a lack of land to develop on. Ockendon also has spare capacity in its car park (this is confirmed by data from the car park operator – average utilisation of 52%).
- 4.72 There is a small plot of spare land owned by Network Rail at the far end of the Grays station car park, which if developed would add an estimated 50 spaces to the current car park. Such a proposal would be supported by the station manager, as would decking of the car park.
- 4.73 The rail user group has suggested a park and ride scheme to provide rapid bus links to the station, commenting that such a scheme would have to be substantially cheaper than parking in the existing car parks.
- 4.74 The station car park site is not ideal for any car park expansion, being located to the south of the station, with access via a relatively narrow street. The majority of passenger demand comes from the north side of the station, due to the barrier of the Thames to the south of the town. The local council's policy is very much against the expansion of any car parking in Grays. The Grays Multi-storey is well located for access to the station, but is currently expensive for occasional rail users, at £5 per day. If fees for occasional long stay parking could be negotiated to similar levels to the station car park and the smaller council long stay car park, or some spaces in the Multi-Storey leased to the rail company, some additional capacity could be provided. This, in combination with improved bus services could provide better access to the station in Grays. Interestingly in our survey, if car parking in Grays were to become more difficult in future 35% of those respondents who drove to the station said they would walk to the station, with 24% saying they would switch to using public transport.

Contact us

If you want to know more about the work we are doing on your behalf to ensure you get a better deal when you travel by rail, contact us:

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