



**THE DATA COLLECTION SPECIALISTS**

**Stevenage Borough  
Council  
Unmet demand survey  
and hackney carriage rank  
provisions  
Draft Final Report**

**May 2014**





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## **Executive summary**

CTS Traffic and Transportation were appointed by Stevenage Borough Council to undertake this unmet demand survey and hackney carriage rank provisions study on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. On the ground surveys were undertaken in late February / early March 2014 with trade consultation in March and key stakeholder consultation between February and April 2014. A face to face review of the Stage 1 report occurred in mid-April 2014 leading to production of this Report in May 2014. This will be presented to the trade on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and afterwards to the Licensing Committee in September.

The current transport policy background from the County Council is very positive and specific towards encouraging appropriate use of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles (this is national best practice). At the time of writing the report, the limit on the number of hackney carriages is 100 vehicles. This is supplemented by a variable number of private hire vehicles whose numbers stood at 196 in the latest available national survey information. Stevenage has just above the national average number of hackney carriage vehicles per thousand of resident population, albeit lower than the average of the group compared (which includes three other new towns). The level of private hire vehicles is fifth from highest in the comparison set (which translates to the same position in terms of overall licensed vehicles).

At present 30% of the fleet are wheel chair accessible, marginally below both the English national average (excluding London) and the potential level that might be set if the Equality Act were ever enacted. There are just five publicly facing private hire companies in the area. 30-40% of the hackney carriage fleet remain independent but one of the private hire companies is mainly made up of hackney carriages. The number of drivers is very similar to the number of vehicles overall and there is very little double shifting. Fairly uniquely, the current population uses local private hire with hardly any out of town vehicles identified.

Current Stevenage fares are reasonable within the overall comparison, with the authority 92<sup>nd</sup> in the NPHA England / Wales / Scotland league table at May 2014. This fare level is the same as another Hertfordshire and 21 other authorities, so a fairly common level of fare (£6 for 2 miles).

120 hours of rank observation were undertaken. No persons were observed using vehicles in wheel chairs though two were visibly disabled and assisted by drivers.

64% of rank passengers are obtained at the Stevenage station private rank. This is the only all-day and night rank. The Old Stevenage northbound rank sees 20% of passengers and is far the busiest in terms of average loaded vehicle departures, followed by the Leisure Park rank, meaning that the heaviest demand is now at night, giving a peaked demand profile. Compared to the 34 average departures per hour when busy at Old Stevenage, Swingate sees just four departures per hour. At all locations there is an excess of vehicles at most times.

2014 average weekly demand is just 2% above that observed in 2005 – not a significant level of growth. A typical 2014 week sees just over 7,000 passengers, with annual patronage including hailing for hackney carriages (excluding phone bookings) of 377,000 per year.

The ISUD index shows no significant unmet demand, even when the private ranks are added in (where there tends to be more people arriving without vehicles being there).

68% of the fleet was observed active in a typical sample, with a focus of the fleet being out at night – just 3% of the fleet was observed during the daytime sample of plate recordings.

299 people were interviewed in the streets of Stevenage, including a sample at Lister Hospital and in Old Stevenage. 26% on average had used a licensed vehicle in the last three months, reduced from 35% in 2005. There are just 0.9 licensed vehicle trips per person per month, reducing to just 0.02 for hackney carriages. On average 87% of licensed vehicles are obtained by phone, although the town centre sample said 17% got licensed vehicles from ranks. Old Stevenage had a higher level of hailing (3%).

A unique characteristic was a almost exclusive focus on Stevenage based private hire company usage, despite there only being a very small number of public facing companies.

People were generally aware of ranks available but this was tempered by the low overall usage of hackney carriages, although the vehicles were visible and used occasionally. There was no latent demand for hackney carriages, but perhaps an issue with reliability of the phone bookings at one location.

Most key stakeholders used private hire companies, and the overall level of response was, like the public attitude, very disappointing, showing general lack of interest in the licensed vehicle operations of the area.

Viable options were identified for developing the Old Stevenage rank as well as providing a potentially vibrant central area set of ranks. Options for further development both at the hospital and with the new station operator were also identified.

9% responded to the trade consultation, telling us there was average experience of 13 years in the trade. A good mix of private hire, company and independent hackney carriage drivers responded. A six day, 53 hour week was average. Rank usage saw 29% at the private station rank, 25% at Old Stevenage, 24% at Swingate, 16% at Leisure Park and 4% using Lister Hospital. 78% supported the current policy retaining the limit on vehicle numbers. If the limit was removed, 28% would leave the trade and 13% would further increase their hours.

The key conclusion is **there is no significant demand for hackney carriages in the Stevenage licensing area which is currently unmet**. The council can therefore retain its current limit at the present level and defend this in court if required. There is some evidence that raising or removing the limit might cause congestion issues at the main rank and further reduce service at other locations as people focussed on obtaining guaranteed work.

The main options available for rank development have been outlined – these are consistent with local transport policy and provide an excellent opportunity at this time to benefit the trade and public and improve the transport activity / economy.



# **1. Introduction**

Stevenage Borough Council is responsible for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles operating within the council area. The date of the start of a limit on vehicle numbers is not formally known, but it has been in place since at least 1994 when DfT data first began to be collected.

## **Study timetable**

Stevenage appointed CTS Traffic and Transportation on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014 to undertake this unmet demand survey and review of hackney carriage rank provision in line with our quotation dated December 2013.

The review was carried out between February and April 2014, with survey work undertaken in late February / early March 2014. Licensed vehicle drivers were consulted by a letter sent out during March 2014, with other stakeholder consultation between February and April. A Stage 1 Draft Final report was submitted and this was reviewed face to face in mid-April 2014 to identify any factual or missing issues. At this point further review of rank development options were discussed and a walk round survey undertaken with relevant officers. The Final Report will be presented to the Trade on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 after which it will be presented to the Licensing Committee on a date to be agreed in September.

## **National background and definitions**

At the present time, hackney carriage and private hire licensing is carried out under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (as amended by various further legislation including the Transport Act 1985, especially Section 16) in regard to hackney carriages and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with reference to private hire vehicles. A number of modifications have been made within more recent legislation and through case law.

The issue of limits on hackney carriage vehicle licences (and other potentially restrictive practices) were considered by the Office of Fair Trading (OfT) (and latterly the House of Commons Select Committee on Transport). The Department for Transport most recently published Best Practice Guidance in April 2010 to cover a number of more recent issues and take on board both the recommendations of the OfT and House of Commons Select Committee (HoC SC). More recently a further HoC SC has led to the Law Commission (LC) taking on a wide ranging review of vehicle licensing law to be completed over the next few years. The consultation document from the LC was released in mid-May 2012 and the initial consultation period is now closed.

The LC published an interim statement in early April 2013, one of whose points was that "we no longer recommend abolishing quantity controls" (paragraph 6), although the statement is clearly noted as not being their final set of recommendations which were published on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 after the forthcoming local and European elections on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. It is very unlikely that this will be able to find time to become Law before the next election.

The LC initial interim statement was published shortly after the Department for Transport published the government response to the LC consultation and we understand DfT will not provide any government responses to the LC interim statement although it is accepted that some parties did interpret the DfT response (to the original consultation) erroneously as a response to the interim statement (which it was not). It remains clear, however, that DfT generally prefer lesser amounts of regulation, including a preference for licensing authorities not limiting hackney carriage vehicle numbers.

A further statement was made by the LC on 21 January 2014 outlining their major proposals expected to be included in a draft Bill for presentation to government in May 2014. These include:

- Maintain the two tier system with only licensed taxis being allowed to pick up via hails or at ranks
- Replacing plying for hire with a statutory definition of private hire bookings through licensed operators
- The retention of taxi quality controls and in areas with a plate value those plates to continue to be transferable
- New duty on drivers to stop in specified circumstances
- Mandatory disability awareness training for all drivers

Other proposals are included of less relevance to this current report. The above statements are retained in the formal Law Commission submission issued on 23 May 2014.

On 14 March 2014, and voted through the Commons on 25 March 2014, were three additions to the Deregulation Bill. These cover unlicensed relatives being able to drive private hire vehicles, operators being able to transfer work across borders and length of driver and operator licences. An opportunity was also given for trade representatives to identify conditions of licence that were felt to be unduly restrictive. None of these really impact on the issue of unmet demand directly but could have some impacts on operations which might move demand from hackney carriages towards private hire more than the current situation might. The final timetable for adoption of this Bill is awaited.

At the present time, each licensing authority in England supervises the operations of two different kinds of locally licensed vehicle. Firstly, all vehicles able to carry nine or more passengers are dealt with under national public service vehicle licensing and licensing authorities only have jurisdiction over those carrying eight or less passengers (although the Law Commission proposes some revision to this). These vehicles are further subdivided into:

- Hackney carriage vehicles (sometimes referred to as 'taxis' in legislation), which alone are able to wait at ranks and pick up people in the street (ply for hire). To operate such a vehicle also requires a driver to be licensed to drive within the area the vehicle is licensed to operate
- Private hire vehicles, which can only be booked through an operating centre and who, otherwise, are not insured for their passengers (often also known as 'taxis' by the public). To operate such a vehicle requires a vehicle and driver licence, and there must also be an affiliation to an operator. Such vehicles can only transport passengers who have made bookings via this operator.

For the sake of clarity, this report will refer to 'licensed vehicles' when meaning hackney carriage and private hire collectively, and to the specific type when referencing either specific type of vehicle. The term 'taxi' will be avoided as far as possible, although it has to be used in its colloquial form when dealing with the public, few of whom are aware of the detailed differences.

There is a further current issue that does impact on demand – the fact that many hackney carriages once properly licensed in an area with a driver then work as private hire vehicles in other licensing areas, often many miles from their home base. Such vehicles can have cost base advantages and can appear to be available for immediate hire when they are not in fact legally able to do so (eg with stickers saying 'this vehicle can be hired immediately', which only applies within their licensing area).

### **Review aims and objectives**

Stevenage Borough Council is seeking a review of their current policy towards hackney carriage quantity control in line with current Department for Transport (DfT) Best Practice guidance as published in April 2010. Further background information about previous policy is contained in Chapter 2 to set the context of the current situation.

The "Best Practice Guidance" paragraph 47 states: "Most licensing authorities do not impose quantity restrictions the Department regards that as best practice. Where restrictions are imposed, the Department would urge that the matter should be regularly reconsidered...." Recent information suggests that some 75% of licensing authorities in England and Wales either have never limited numbers, or have removed their limit since the OfT published its results.

Around 90 authorities currently retain a limit – although a small number have over recent years returned the limit on vehicle licences (notably including Sheffield and Birmingham, but also including Slough, Crawley, Derbyshire Dales, Wirral, Watford and Chesterfield).

The study brief states “Stevenage Borough Council intends to commission an external consultant to undertake an assessment as to the availability of Hackney Carriage vehicles within the Borough of Stevenage, as well as completing a review of its existing rank facilities.

The purpose of the review will be to consider and identify the following in regards to the licensing of hackney carriages, private hire, drivers and operators:

- Ensuring that passengers have a safe journey at a transparent price;
- Ensuring vehicles are safe, accessible and that they are reducing their impact on the environment;
- Ensuring drivers are safe
- To provide a quality service to the public within both the Borough of Stevenage and its neighbouring areas where residents may use their services to/from

This information will then assist and inform the Council in the pursuance of these objectives.”

Our research focusses on:

- customer need and expectation
- the existence and significance of unmet demand
- service quality
- safety
- vehicle types
- vehicle designs
- accessibility

Target groups include:

- customers
- potential customers
- individuals
- groups
- organisations on whom the hackney carriage service impacts

## **Methodology**

In order to meet Stevenage Borough Council’s objectives, the following methodology was adopted:

- Review of relevant policies, standards etc: to understand the authority’s aspirations for meeting travel needs and social inclusion and provide context to determining overall demand for travel and how this should be met;

- Extensive rank observations and audits of all the ranks in the Authority, including monitoring passengers' waiting time, any illegal plying for hire, use of Hackney Carriages by wheelchair users and rank audits;
- On street interviews: a survey of 299 representative people on street to obtain information about their understanding of the sector, their last taxi journey, their overall levels of taxi use, about quality and barriers to use;
- Consultation: including consultation with all relevant stakeholders – the local authorities, police, trade associations, all drivers, mobility impaired, specific user groups, businesses, and other major generators of taxi trips
- Benchmarking against other authorities: to provide a useful comparison as to the quantity of taxis and Private Hire Vehicles.

In essence, the methodology used mirrored that used in the previous survey as the taxi expert leading the study is the same as for that survey, together with developments of methodology since the last survey, particularly including guidance from both the 2004 DfT letter and their 2010 Best Practice Guidance (which includes the 2004 guidance as an appendix).

## **Report structure**

This Report provides the following further chapters:

- Chapter 2 – current background to taxi licensing statistics and policy
- Chapter 3 – results from the rank surveys
- Chapter 4 – results from the surveys undertaken with the public
- Chapter 5 – up to date stakeholder consultation
- Chapter 6 – consideration of rank options
- Chapter 7 – results from consultation with the taxi licensing trade
- Chapter 8 – consideration of the responses to BPG paragraph 47 and Annex A questions
- Chapter 9 – a review of options relating to the Equality Act
- Chapter 10 – summary and conclusions of this review
- Chapter 11 – recommendations for policy arising from this review.



## **2. Background to taxi licensing in Stevenage**

### **The Stevenage Borough Council area**

Stevenage Borough is one of the ten districts of Hertfordshire. Interim data from the 2011 census projected suggests the current 2014 population for Stevenage is 85,245. Stevenage enjoys the amenities and opportunities of a well-planned town, situated in the pleasant surroundings of the Hertfordshire countryside. In 1946 Stevenage was chosen by the government as Britain's first new town, to help ease the housing shortage in London. The town grew up around a number of residential neighbourhoods, each with a variety of local facilities, including shops, schools, community centres and medical facilities. Today, Stevenage is a thriving town with approximately 33,000 households.

Residents and visitors enjoy a wide variety of cultural and leisure activities on offer. The town has over 120 acres of urban green space, with 47,000 urban trees. There are more than 140 children's play spaces and an extensive cycleway network covering approximately 45 km. The Council also has a multi-purpose Arts and Leisure Centre, a swimming pool, its museum, several parks and play centres plus indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Stevenage lies just off the A1 route between London and the North, and at the point that the main route from Essex to the Midlands crosses (A602). A cross country route to Cambridge also leaves the A1 just north of Stevenage (A505), providing access to much of East Anglia. In public transport terms, Stevenage is a principal station both for the commuter network based on London Kings Cross and a stopping point for inter-city services from London to Leeds, York, Newcastle and Scotland. High frequency suburban services are provided and significant improvements are planned in the near future with further Thameslink service expansions also including the Stevenage services being linked with other services from south of London.

Since the last survey (2005 surveys reported in 2006), there have been a number of changes. The central Tesco store has been replaced by a large Tesco Extra on the same site, but which now has a free phone link to one of the large private hire companies (who have some hackney carriages but less than other companies). The impact of this on the Swingate rank was compounded by issues with supermarket trolleys being stolen leading to the trolleys being limited where they could go (by automatically locking wheels), which meant those wanting a hackney carriage from Swingate could no longer take a trolley to that location. Whilst this has now been amended, the fee for using a trolley, and no parking space at the rank for trolleys allowing retrieval of the fee, has also restrained people from using the rank in favour of more use of the private hire provision via the free phone provided in the store.

The recession has also affected the retail mix of the town centre, with several empty units and some stores (eg Marks and Spencer) changing the offer provided. This effect has been compounded by the introduction before the current recession of a large new edge of town centre Asda and two large Sainsbury supermarkets within the Borough. These have all drawn custom away from the older town centre, although bus services have been developed and improved since 2005 but this may also have had a negative impact on potential hackney carriage usage. Significant amounts of parking also remain around the town centre, including the large Tesco car park.

The rail franchisee First Capital Connect has become established as the local operator but now subcontracts the taxi permit provision to APCOA parking, with a fee that we understand around 80 hackney carriages now choose to pay. This contract was due to expire in March 2014 but will now be replaced by the Thameslink Southern Great Northern franchise (TSGN) in September 2014. Further details of planned developments related to the Thameslink scheme are provided in the consultation section below.

### **Background Council policy**

Hertfordshire holds highway powers for most of the roads in Stevenage, including the Old Town (Old Stevenage), but not for the central area. The highway authority has produced the third Local Transport Plan (LTP) covering the period 2011 to 2021. The principal way in which the LTP is delivered is through the Stevenage Urban Transport Plan, published in September 2010 and covering overall planning to 2031.

The current LTP vision seeks to make the best use of the current transport provision, partly by use of intelligent transport technology, and partly by small scale improvements that help make the most of the present system. The LTP document is 'on-line' and has a specific section in respect of taxis (a national best practice example) which is reproduced in full below (in *italic*):

*"Taxis form an important part of the integrated passenger transport network. They have a role to play in reducing dependency on the private car by providing a final leg in rail or bus journeys, and by providing an alternative to walking and cycling in inclement weather. In doing so, they remove the need to use a private car and thereby the temptation to use the car when the alternatives are realistic. They also play an important part in evening and social occasions where drinking and driving is an issue.*

*Taxis are provided by private operators, but are licensed by the ten District / Borough councils. Taxis are encouraged where they form part of an integrated transport system. In addition, the county council uses taxis as a significant element of its passenger transport provision for educational and social services transport needs.*



*The county council will promote the use of, and provision of facilities for, taxis where:*

- A. They form part of an integrated transport system/scheme i.e. interchanges.*
- B. They encourage a switch away from the use of the private car, e.g. by providing the final link from the railway station to home.*
- C. They assist in social inclusion by providing car-based trips for non-car owners e.g. from the supermarket to home.*
- D. They deliver a cost-effective means of providing educational and social service transport.*

#### *Explanatory notes - Licensing*

*The ten Districts/Boroughs have a statutory duty to license Taxis and Private Hire vehicles (granted under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976). All have policies on vehicle and driver standards.*

#### *Ranks and Other Facilities*

*Taxi ranks are normally designated by the District/Borough councils, although allocations at rail stations are dealt with by the train operating companies and/or Network Rail.*

#### *Educational and Social Service Passenger Transport Provision*

*The county council has over 1000 contracts with local taxi/hire car and minibus operators, to provide transport to schools, colleges and adult day services, as required by the county council's various educational and social service functions. These contracts provide for regular journeys to over 3000 clients across Hertfordshire and are an important part of the taxi and car hire trading. The county council has published operational guidelines as part of these contracts to ensure service standards are improved. These contracts are planned to meet needs and are integrated with other passenger transport provisions wherever possible to obtain cost effective value.*

#### *Role of Taxis in General Passenger Transport Provision*

*As part of passenger transport policies, the use of taxi and hire cars are promoted as one of the alternative ways to travel under our TravelWise policies and for shopping, social and business journeys they form an important link in overall accessibility. The county council has explored greater use of taxis / PHVs to serve urban areas and provide links to interchanges, rail stations and major business areas for visitors for Hertfordshire's businesses. They are used widely for airport access journeys and unofficial sharing is much more general than realised.*

*A limited number of taxi bus opportunities exist in relation to rural community transport schemes. Such measures will be considered within the Rural Transport Strategy although the taxi / PHV trade, as a commercial trade, tends to serve the more populated areas with a higher service for obvious commercial reasons. The county council also supports various taxi voucher schemes in the county."*

Further, the Urban Transport Plan refers to increasing taxi facilities under references PTM18, PT13 and W6. An opportunity will arise with the redevelopment of the town centre for potential revision of all public transport provision to the central area, although the timetable for this was not identified and is believed to be some while in the future given the current economic situation.

### **Policy of restricting hackney carriage vehicle licences**

Stevenage Borough Council has a power to restrict the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences it grants when it is satisfied there is no unmet demand for the services of hackney carriages which is deemed to be significant. This power has been in this format since the introduction of the 1985 Transport Act, Section 16 (before which the power to limit was unfettered).

At the present time, overall government taxi policy is under review by the Law Commission (LC) (see Chapter 1, page 1 for more detail). The current status is that the LC interim statement proposes that councils are able to retain the option of limiting their number of hackney carriage vehicles, although the exact proposals were in May 2014, after which any change will have to be agreed by Government and then taken through any appropriate legal process. Formal Government encouragement is towards the minimisation of restrictions, including limit policies.

Stevenage Borough Council last commissioned for an unmet demand survey to be completed in 2006. The results from this were that there was no significant unmet demand at that time and that the numbers for HCV's should remain the same.

The Council looked at the provisions of limitation again in the year 2009/10, and following a request from trade representatives, it was agreed that a formal unmet demand survey would not be completed at that time.

Works commenced on reviewing this again late during the financial year 2011/12. Formal approval to commence procurement and consultation was provided by the General Purposes Committee on the 3 June 2013.

Over the last 18 months the council has become concerned with the availability of hackney carriage rank provisions across the Borough, due to a shift in the night time economy from the Leisure Park back to the Old Town.

Officers also have concerns as to the location of existing ranks within the Borough of Stevenage in terms of access and ability to assist with servicing of the public at other times also, in particular the railway station area, where permits are issued to drivers by the rail operator, First Capital Connect, to use the Hackney Carriage rank located there. If Officers are to continue to deliver adequate rank provisions for all its users across the town, it is imperative that future alternative and development sites are identified.

This Report is undertaken within the context of these requirements. It also cross references with the 2003 survey (data collected in 2002) and 2006 survey (data collected in 2005).

### Background statistics

Information was obtained to demonstrate the current make-up of the licensed vehicle fleet in the Stevenage Borough Council area, including current vehicle trends. The table below shows the historic level of vehicle numbers in this area.

	Hackney carriage vehicles (no. of WAV)	Private hire vehicles (no. of WAV)	Total licensed vehicle fleet	Driver numbers				Operators
				hcd	Phd	Dual	Total	
No formal DfT date for introduction of limit, but in place when statistics began 1994								
1994	74	unknown	n/k	129	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
1997	77 (12)(lt=86)	80	157	118	92	0	210	n/k
1999	82 (6) (lt=86)	57	139	121	66	0	187	9
2001	106 (25)	97	203	138	99	0	237	8
2002	100 (17)							6
2004	100 (10)	97	197	138	99	0	237	8
2005	100 (10)	160	260	192	222	0	414	8
2006	100 (27)							11
2007	100 (30)	160	260	192	222	0	414	8
2009	100 (30)	160	260	139	193	0	332	23
2010	100	170	270	Not collected				
2011	100 (30)	170 (6)	270	0	0	284	284	39
2012	100 (20)	170 (7)	270	Not collected				
2013	100 (28)	171 (6)	271	0	0	307	307	26
2014 (Co, Brief)	100	195	295	0	0	311	311	31
2014 NPHA	100 (30)	196 (3)	296	Not collected				

*Note: DfT statistics used from 1994 to 2009, 2011 and 2013.  
National Private Hire Association survey for 2010 / 2012/ 2014.  
10 plates added 2001.*

Further hackney carriages have not been added to the fleet since the decision to add 10 plates in 2001. However, there was 35% growth between the first statistics published and that date (the anomalous 106 figure has been left in for completeness, but otherwise ignored, although it does tie in with the formal limit being referenced as 86 in DfT data). From 1994 to date therefore hackney carriage numbers have grown by 35%.

From 1997 to the council brief figures, private hire numbers have increased by nearly 2.5 times, although the level is still not particularly high in total terms (just 195 vehicles). The total licenced fleet stands at just under 300 vehicles, just under twice the size of 1997, and with the almost equal balance between hackney carriage and private hire that existed in 1997 now seeing hackney carriages about a third of the fleet. There is no requirement for private hire vehicles to have their company name on the vehicle, but more recently a requirement was added for use of door stickers identifying the vehicle as a Stevenage private hire vehicle and giving its Stevenage private hire fleet number.

In around 2010, a change occurred to allow all drivers to be able to drive either hackney carriage or private hire vehicles. Driver growth has been some 48% since 1997, although there was a peak around 2005 when driver numbers were quoted at 414, nearly double the 1997 level. The present level means there are only a few spare drivers and there is therefore very little if any double shifting of either hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

In terms of operators, there has been a large increase between 2007 and 2009, mainly arising (as in other authorities) from changes in legislation particularly regarding contracts. However, most of the additional operators are those which are less likely to be public facing (further discussion of this occurs below).

### ***Comparative information to other authorities***

The Table below compares recent licensed vehicle numbers for other authorities in Hertfordshire, adding the audit group authorities of Harlow, Crawley and Basildon as in both previous studies.

The table is listed with the lowest provision of hackney carriages (hcv) per thousand of population at the top of the table.

Area	Popn (2014 000)	No of HCV (% WAV)	HCV per 1000 popn	No of PHV (% WAV)	PHV per 1000 popn	Total veh	Total veh per 1000 popn
Hertsmere	104	7 (100)	0.1	458 (1)	4.4	465	4.6
Three Rivers	91	18 (100)	0.2	514 (0)	5.6	532	5.8
Harlow (D)	84	63 (100)	0.8	193 (0)	2.3	256	3.0
Crawley (R)	112	124 (44)	1.1	560 (0)	5.0	684	6.1
Basildon (D)	179	207 (59)	1.2	287 (0)	1.6	494	2.8
<b>Stevenage(L)</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100 (30)</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>196 (3)</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>3.5</b>
North Hertfordshire	131	186 (11)	1.4	74 (0)	0.6	260	2.0
Dacorum	148	241 (21)	1.6	171 (0)	1.2	412	2.8
Welwyn Hatfield (D)	119	196 (2)	1.6	160 (1)	1.3	356	3.0
East Hertfordshire	142	254 (4)	1.8	46 (2)	0.3	300	2.1
St Albans (D)	145	280 (56)	1.9	145 (0)	1.0	425	2.9
Broxbourne	96	231 (6)	2.4	88 (42)	0.9	319	3.3
Watford (R)	92	295 (20)	3.2	118 (0)	1.3	413	4.5
<i>Average (Hertfordshire)</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>181 (35)</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>197 (5)</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>378</i>	<i>3.5</i>
<i>Average (all above)</i>	<i>118</i>	<i>169 (42)</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>232 (4)</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>401</i>	<i>3.6</i>
<b>England average (excl London)</b>		<b>n/a(41)</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>n/a(3)</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>3.3</b>

*Note: Population values are 2014 estimates from the 2011 new census in thousands. Hackney carriage vehicle (HCV) and private hire vehicle (PHV) numbers are from NPHA 2014 survey WAV = wheelchair accessible vehicle L = limits retained on vehicle numbers, R=limit returned after period of no limit. D=Originally had limit but removed some while ago.*

Whilst in Hertfordshire only Stevenage has retained its hackney carriage vehicle limit, a further one Hertfordshire and one non-Hertfordshire audit group authority currently have limited hackney carriage vehicle numbers, both after re-limiting numbers around three years ago. Two other Hertfordshire and the two other non-Hertfordshire audit group authorities have limited hackney carriage vehicle numbers in the past but removed the limits at some point and presently do not limit hackney carriage vehicle numbers.

At the present time, the level of hackney carriages in Stevenage compared to population is sixth from lowest in the overall evaluation, which is below the Hertfordshire and group averages, but above the English 2014 average level of 1.1 vehicles per thousand of population. Two authorities who removed their limit still have less vehicles per thousand population than Stevenage. The Hertfordshire average is dominated by Watford which is now re-limited but had a period of no limit when numbers grew significantly.

With regards to private hire vehicles, Stevenage is below both the group average and Hertfordshire average, but just above the English average. This places it fifth from the highest level of private hire vehicles per thousand of population.

In overall licensed vehicle terms, Stevenage is fifth from the highest level of vehicles per thousand of population similar to its position in private hire terms due to their being two thirds of the licensed vehicle fleet of the area, and marginally above the national average level. In Hertfordshire, the overall fleet provision is higher in Three Rivers, Hertsmere and Watford, and also in Crawley within the audit group.

Overall, hackney carriage provision is therefore above the national average and marginally below county and review group levels – but does not appear significantly restrained by the limit policy at all.

### ***Vehicle Accessibility***

At the present time, there are 30 wheel chair accessible vehicles (WAV). This accounts for 30% of the fleet. Six other authorities in Hertfordshire have lower proportions of WAV – one of whom has a hackney carriage vehicle limit. Two Hertfordshire authorities are fully WAV, which means the county average is high at 35%, although this is still below the national average of 41% (based on all fleets apart from London). The audit group average (42%), where there is another fully WAV authority, is also very close to the national average. This suggests Stevenage has a reasonable level of wheel chair accessible vehicles in its current fleet.

### ***Driver ratios***

At the present time, there are 311 drivers for 295 vehicles. This driver ratio of 1.05 suggests no double shifting of vehicles. It is not possible to compare the values for hackney carriage and private hire separately.

### ***Fleet ownership structure***

There are 31 registered private hire operators in the Stevenage licensing authority at the time of this survey. Of these, six are school contract only, four executive only, eight airport only and one executive / airport only. One is a pure private hire operating company. Of the remaining, six are parts of one of the large companies, giving just five main public facing companies in the area. All of these have some hackney carriages, although one operator is almost exclusively hackney carriage. There is no pure hackney carriage operator although around 30-40% of the hackney carriage vehicles remain completely independent.

In terms of the person structure of the trade, there are 367 individuals made up of 128 driver-only, 237 proprietors and two who are private hire operators but not vehicle owners or drivers. There are 122 proprietors for the 100 hackney carriages with several vehicles having joint ownership.

## Fares

The table below summarises Stevenage Borough Council hackney carriage fares, as last set in December 2011:

Item	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4
<i>Time applies</i>	06:00 – 23:00 Monday to Friday	23:00-06:00 Monday to Sunday 06:00 to 23:00 designated bank / public holidays and 18:00 to 23:00 New Years' Eve and 18:00 to 24:00 Christmas Eve	All day 00:01-24:00 hrs Christmas Day, Boxing Day and 23:00 hours New Years' Eve to 06:00 hours on New Years' Day	Saturday and Sunday 06:00 and 23:00
For the first 880 yards	£3-00	£4-50	£6-00	£3-40
For each additional 176 yards or part thereof	£0-20	£0-30	£0-40	£0-20
Waiting time for each minute	£0-30	£0-45	£0-60	£0-30
<p>Extra charges:</p> <p>Up to two items of baggage or shopping £0-20</p> <p>Three or more items of baggage or shopping £0-40 (max)</p> <p>For each person in excess of one £0-20</p> <p>Maximum additional charge no more than £2</p> <p>Soiling charge – maximum £50</p> <p>Credit / debit card payments may incur a surcharge of up to 12.5% of the total fare, or a minimum of £1 per journey</p>				
PHTM calculations for a 2 mile journey T1 (May 2014):				
Stevenage	£6-00			91=
National	£5-60			
South	£6-11	Herts av	£6-06	
Group average	£6-08			

The current Stevenage fare of £6 (as set in December 2011) is 2% lower than the South, Hertfordshire and full list average fares but 107% of the national average (covering England, Wales and Scotland). This fare sets Stevenage 92<sup>nd</sup> equal in a national comparison where the highest fare (£7-60) is 1<sup>st</sup> and the lowest (£2-80) 364<sup>th</sup>. 22 other authorities – including one in Hertfordshire share this level of fare.

Within Hertfordshire, Broxbourne has the lowest fare at £5-60 whilst Herts mere has the highest at £7, quite a tight band of fares. Within the audit group, Crawley has the second highest at £6-60.

Overall, this level of fare seems reasonable within the overall comparison undertaken although clearly southern fares tend to be above the national average in general (even the lowest fare in the group / county is 1p above the national average).



### 3. Results from rank surveys

The Table below shows the result of our review of the ranks available in the Stevenage Borough licensing area. Since the 2006 survey (whose rank surveys were undertaken in November 2005), the only change to rank provision has been the replacement of the single rank in Old Stevenage with the current provision of two ranks, one either side of the High Street, north and south of the zebra crossing located within that section of road.

During our research we did not find evidence of any other ranks within the Borough Council area and understand our rank coverage is therefore comprehensive as required by the Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance (BPG). The rank at Stevenage station is a private rank administered by APCOA on behalf of First Capital Connect and this rank has been treated accordingly. At the present time, drivers have to apply on line for their supplementary permit which is in addition and at a further cost to any other licensing fees paid to the Council. Further, the rank serving the Leisure Park is also on private land, but no supplementary permit or payment is required to service this location.

In demand terms, activity on the Leisure Park has reduced significantly in recent years, whilst there is a lot more night life and activity in and around the Old Town. Further, it was suggested that Thursday nights are also becoming busier than in the past.

<b>Rank / operating hours</b>	<b>Spaces (approx)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>24-hour ranks</b>		
Swingate	10	Separate lane alongside road, with shelter at head and facing shopping area
Lister Hospital	5	
Danestrete	5	In central area near to clubs
<b>Night only ranks (2100-0400)</b>		
High Street	6	Faces northbound, north of zebra crossing
High Street	4	Faces southbound, south of zebra crossing
<b>Private Ranks</b>		
Leisure Park	4	Purpose built area within car park
Stevenage Station		Supplementary permit administered by APCOA for First Capital Connect (payment required, but no limit on numbers that can apply).

Surveys were proposed during the tender stage of the project (as informed by the previous survey), and were modified at the inception meeting to take account of current expectation of times of use of ranks. The proposed level of rank observations was increased from 110 to 120 hours following these changes. This compares with 97.5 hours in November 2005.

The Table below shows the actual hours observed, using video methods with the recordings observed by trained staff, and analysed to provide detail of the usage and waiting times for both passengers and vehicles. Passenger waiting time was kept to that which was true unmet demand, ie when passengers were waiting but no hackney carriage vehicle was there. Further comparison is provided later in regard to how the 2014 survey hours compare to those undertaken in 2005 and 2002 together with discussion of how demand has developed since that time.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Day / date (all 2014)</b>	<b>Time observed</b>	<b>Total hours observed</b>
<b>24 hr ranks</b>			
Swingate	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	09:00 to 21:00	12
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	08:00 to 21:00	13
Lister Hospital	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00 to 22:00	12
Danestrete	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	19:00 to 03:00	8
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	18:00 to 03:00	9
<b>Night only ranks</b>			
High Street, northbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	23:00 to 04:00	5
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	21:00 to 04:00	7
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	21:00 to 06:00	9
High Street, southbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	23:00 to 04:00	5
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	21:00 to 04:00	7
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	21:00 to 05:00	8
<b>Private Ranks</b>			
Leisure Park	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	22:00 to 04:00	6
Stevenage Station	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	08:00 to 03:00	19
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>			<b>120</b>

Full details of the observed volumes of passenger and vehicle traffic are included in **Appendix 1**. The survey comprised some 120 hours of observation. Our observations took account of feeder ranks where necessary to ensure true estimation of the hackney carriage waiting times at ranks for passengers (although there were none here, apart from ensuring we captured the back of the queue of vehicles joining the railway station rank and similarly for High Street (northbound)). The Table below summarises the time periods observed at each locations as well as providing overall operational statistics for each location during each period of observation. A detailed description of the observations follows below.

Rank	Period (2014)	Total passengers observed	Total loaded vehicle departures	Passengers per loaded vehicle	Empty vehicle departures	% of vehicles leaving empty	No. of passengers having to wait for vehicle to arrive
<b>24 hr ranks</b>							
Swingate	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 09:00 to 21:00	44	35	1.3	23	40	12
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 08:00 to 21:00	51	27	1.9	16	37	1
Lister Hospital	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 10:00 to 22:00	7	5	1.4	11	69	0
Danestrete	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 19:00 to 03:00	5	3	1.7	10	77	4
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 18:00 to 03:00	0	0	n/a	9	100	0
<b>Night only ranks</b>							
High Street, northbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 23:00 to 04:00	90	36	2.5	7	16	4
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 21:00 to 04:00	446	237	1.9	19	7	21
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 21:00 to 06:00	726	341	2.1	16	4	84
High Street, southbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 23:00 to 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 21:00 to 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 21:00 to 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Private Ranks</b>							
Leisure Park	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 22:00 to 04:00	324	165	2.0	17	9	79
Stevenage Station	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 08:00 to 03:00	691	559	1.2	67	11	51

### Overall comments on ranks

During the course of the survey, no-one was observed using any ranks in a wheel chair to access hackney carriages, although two people were observed using walking sticks, both of whom were assisted in getting into the vehicles by the driver.

### **Swingate rank**

This rank is the main central rank and consists of a separate carriageway parallel to the main road, with the head of the rank close to the shopping centre (although not obvious from it). It was observed on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 from 09:00 to 21:00 and again on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 from 08:00 to 21:00.

During the observations on the Friday 44 passengers were observed leaving in 35 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.3 persons per vehicle – relatively low. 23 vehicles left empty (40%). Some 12 passengers in total were observed having to wait for vehicles to arrive, in the 11:00, 13:00 and 15:00 hours, although the longest wait was three minutes. The average wait shared between all those experiencing a wait was two minutes, but between all passengers the average wait is just 33 seconds.

In passenger terms, only the 10:00 hour saw more than eight passengers – with the normal number being between two and eight. The area became quiet just after 18:00 after the shops had shut.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between two and 26 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 48 minutes for a vehicle arriving in the 16:00 hour.

During the observations on the Saturday 51 passengers were observed leaving in 27 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.9 persons per vehicle – relatively high. 16 vehicles left empty (37%), and one passenger was observed to wait for a vehicle to arrive – their wait was just one minute. When averaged over all passengers in this hour, the average wait was just 7 seconds and shared out over all passengers during the day, just one second.

In passenger terms, only the hour of 15:00 had more than eight passengers – seeing 14 people leave. General passenger flows were between two and eight passengers in each hour, although the first passenger did not arrive until the 11:00 hour. Once again, once the shops were closed, the area became quiet (just after 18:00).

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between 16 and 46 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 72 minutes for a vehicle arriving in the 15:00 hour.

Overall, service to this rank is **good** although overall demand is low.

### **Lister hospital rank**

This rank has five spaces and is near to the main access to the hospital, on highway land. It is understood there is a private hire company with an agreement with the hospital, although this rank has been here and in use in both previous surveys, although we were also informed a second company has an agreement to serve a recent development on the site which has a separate access. The rank was observed on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 from 10:00 to 22:00.

During the observations seven passengers were observed leaving in five vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.4 persons per vehicle – low. 11 vehicles left empty (69%), with no passengers ever having to wait for a vehicle to arrive.

In passenger terms, only four hours saw passengers – 16:00, 17:00, 18:00 and 21:00, although vehicles did serve the rank throughout the day. There were never more than three passengers in any hour, very low demand.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between three and five minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being five minutes. This perhaps suggests an element of vehicles arriving for bookings or for known passenger departures, or perhaps pausing whilst passing.

Overall, service to this rank is **good** despite demand being negligible.

### **Danestrete rank**

This location is near to a former night club area which now has fewer active clubs in the area, but is also near the bus station, opposite a car park and near to several shops and the Council offices. Although a 24-hour rank, it is understood to see most potential at night. It was observed on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 from 19:00 to 03:00 and again on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 from 18:00 to 03:00.

During the observations on the Friday just five passengers were observed leaving in three vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.7 persons per vehicle. 10 vehicles left empty (77%), and four people ended up waiting for a vehicle to arrive – though none waited more than two minutes. Averaged out over all those experiencing a wait, the average wait is 1.5 minutes, but between all passengers this reduces to 1 minute and 12 seconds.

In passenger terms, there were only two hours with passengers, 23:00 with two and 02:00 with three. No vehicles appeared to wait for fares, suggesting demand is either met by vehicles passing by, or by bookings happening to pick up at the rank.

On the Saturday, nine vehicles waited for short periods at the rank, but no passengers used the rank at all. It is possible that the trade 'played up' to the Friday survey but by Saturday had forgotten the observations were occurring – however the very low passenger demand here is clear.

Overall, service to this rank is **fair** but demand is negligible

## **High Street ranks, Old Stevenage**

These two ranks operate from 21:00 onwards on all days. One rank is located on the northbound side of High Street, with the other on the opposite side of the road, but south of the zebra crossing. Compared to 2006, rank provision here is much more comprehensive (in 2006 there was one location within a parking area rather than on the main road, and this was not on the same side as most premises needing service).

Further, in the recent few years, night life has moved from the Leisure Park area towards smaller venues in this area. It was suggested that the northbound rank was best located and most used, with the southbound rank less used and more often abused by parked vehicles. We were also advised that Thursdays are becoming busier in this area. Hence, both locations were observed on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, covering a range of evening hours.

### ***Northbound rank***

#### ***Thursday observations***

During the Thursday observations 90 passengers were observed leaving in 36 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 2.5 persons per vehicle – relatively high. Seven vehicles left empty (16%), and four passengers were observed to wait for a vehicle to arrive – their average wait was three minutes. When averaged over all passengers in this hour, the average wait was 72 seconds. When then averaged over all those observed during use of the rank, the average delay per person reduces to just eight seconds.

In passenger terms, there were just three hours seeing passengers, 23:00 and midnight hours saw 40 passengers, with 10 in the final hour at 01:00. The last passenger used the rank at 01:25.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between seven and 19 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 28 minutes in the 23:00 hour.

#### ***Friday observations***

During the Friday observations 446 passengers were observed leaving in 237 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.9 persons per vehicle – high. 19 vehicles left empty (7%), and 21 passengers were observed to wait for a vehicle to arrive – their average wait was 80 seconds. When averaged over all passengers on this evening, the average wait was just eight seconds.

In passenger terms, the rank saw increasing numbers of passengers from 21:00 through to a peak of 147 in the midnight hour. 01:00 saw 124 passengers, with 21 and 22 in the last two hours respectively. The last passenger used the rank at 03:28 and one vehicle was still waiting at the rank when the observations ended at 04:00, with the area generally quiet.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between one and 22 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 31 minutes in the 02:00 hour.

#### *Saturday observations*

During the Saturday observations 726 passengers were observed leaving in 341 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 2.1 persons per vehicle – relatively high. 16 vehicles left empty (4%), and 84 passengers were observed to wait for a vehicle to arrive.

The longest wait experienced was six minutes in the 02:00 hour. The highest number waiting was 48 passengers in the midnight hour – with an average wait of 2 minutes 17 seconds for those waiting, but just 28 seconds when shared between all passengers in this hour. In the next hour there were 22 people waiting, averaging 79 seconds for those waiting and 11 seconds over everyone using the rank in that hour. The average wait for the 12 people waiting at 02:00 was 1 minute 55 seconds, but 18 seconds averaged over all persons in the hour. When considered over the whole operating period of the rank, the average wait for those experiencing a wait was one second less than two minutes, over all passengers this averaged just 14 seconds.

In passenger terms, the level of passengers rose from 21:00 to a peak of 229 in the midnight hour. Passenger numbers then reduced with the last passenger leaving at 03:44. One vehicle did pass through the area at 04:40 although it was generally quiet. Comparing Saturday with the Friday, overall flows were about 45% higher although the area became quiet at almost the same time on both nights. The Thursday became quiet over two hours earlier, and saw much lower passenger flows.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between one and 14 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 23 minutes in the 21:00 hour.

During busier times on the Friday and Saturday a marshal was present at the rank and ensured that vehicles and passengers picked up at the head of the rank. This improved the operation of the rank and seemed well accepted by drivers and passengers alike.

Overall, service to this rank is **very good**.

#### ***Southbound rank***

The southbound rank in High Street sees no use by either passengers or vehicles. Excess vehicles, beyond the five to six able to fit on the northbound rank tend to wait on the opposite side of the road to the southbound rank, beyond the zebra crossing which lies between the two ranks. At times there can be up to 12 vehicles waiting for passengers on the northbound rank, although at this time the general traffic nearby is negligible.

When there are no or few vehicles on the northbound rank, vehicles heading southbound tend to u-turn using the side road which lies just south of the northbound rank. Whilst there is clear opportunity for a safety hazard, our observations did not see any issues during the course of our observations, although such movements are not illegal they clearly contain an element of risk and should be dissuaded as far as practicable.

We did not observe any issue with parked vehicles abusing this rank, and at most times there was relatively little other road traffic in the area. Most pedestrian activity also appeared to be on the northbound rank side of the road, although some people were observed crossing the road and heading to the south on foot.

### **Leisure Park private rank**

This rank is a separate area within the parking provided around the various restaurants within the Leisure Park. Although the rank is on private land, no permit is needed to use the rank. The rank was observed on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 from 22:00 through to 04:00. It is understood that this location is much quieter than in the past. Since the last survey, hackney carriages were encouraged to use the formal rank rather than wait along frontages although many of the night venues also closed.

During the observations 324 passengers were observed leaving in 165 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 2 persons per vehicle – relatively high. 17 vehicles left empty (9%), and 79 passengers were observed to wait for a vehicle to arrive, during all hours the rank operated. In two of the hours the longest waits were nine minutes, but no passenger ever waited longer than that. When all waits were averaged out over all passengers, the average wait for the location was 56 seconds. The highest number of people waiting, 41, were in the 01:00 hour.

In passenger terms, the rank increased usage from 22:00 to the peak of 99 passengers in the 03:00 hour. There were five vehicles still waiting at the end of observations but it is unknown how long they waited for custom, nor if any further passengers arrived.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between one and seven minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 16 minutes in the 02:00 hour.

Overall service to this rank is **fair** and seems to be a lesser priority to drivers at this time than it was previously.

### **Stevenage railway station (Private rank)**

This rank is located between the railway and the ring road, with a long ramp leading down to the rank area. In essence, the rank is an isolated location mainly servicing hackney carriages.



This rank was observed on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 from 08:00 until 03:00. During the observations 691 passengers were observed leaving in 559 vehicles, giving vehicle occupancy of 1.2 persons per vehicle, low. 67 vehicles left empty (11%), and some 51 passengers had to wait for a vehicle to arrive, the longest wait being six minutes (in just one case).

Passenger waits occurred in the 07:00, 08:00, 09:00, 16:00, 19:00, 23:00 and midnight hours. The largest number of people waiting, 23, were in the midnight hour. When averaged over all people experiencing a wait, the average was 2 minutes 27 seconds, but over all passengers during the day this was just 11 seconds given the high volume of passengers.

In passenger terms, flows in any hour ranged up to 104, with this busiest hour being midnight. Daytime flows were 14 to 29 persons. At 17:00 flows rose to 44, then 47 and 63 at 19:00. There were lower flows (32 and 29) at 20:00 and 21:00, after which flows increased to the peak at midnight. Flows then fell to 31 and 21, with the last passenger using the location at 02:56. The last two vehicles then left empty at 03:00.

Average vehicle waiting times for fares were between four and 39 minutes, with the longest vehicle wait for a fare recorded being 47 minutes for a vehicle arriving in the 10:00 hour.

Overall, service to this rank is **good**.

### **Comparison of overall supply and demand**

The Table below provides a slightly different summary of supply and demand, comparing average vehicle arrivals per hour with average loaded departures per hour, ie seeing how supply and demand match on average.

Rank	Period	No of hours rank	Average vehicle arrivals per	Average loaded departures per hour	Overall judgment of service provided
24 hr ranks					
Swingate	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 09:00 to 21:00	10	6	4	Good
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 08:00 to 21:00	9	5	3	
Lister Hospital	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 10:00 to 22:00	4	4	1	Good
Danestrete	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 19:00 to 03:00	2	7	2	Fair
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 18:00 to 03:00	0	0	0	
Night only ranks					
High Street, northbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 23:00 to 04:00	3	14	12	Very good
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 21:00 to 04:00	7	37	34	
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 21:00 to 06:00	7	51	49	
High Street, southbound	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 23:00 to 04:00	0	0	0	Unused
	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 21:00 to 04:00	0	0	0	
	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 21:00 to 05:00	0	0	0	
Private Ranks					
Leisure Park	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 22:00 to 04:00	6	30	28	Fair
Stevenage Station	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 08:00 to 03:00	20	31	28	Good

In terms of active use of ranks, only Stevenage Station provides a place where passengers and vehicles make use of the facility at most times of day and night. This rank is effectively operational nearly all the time, apart from the few hours when the rail service is not operating – from around 02:30 through to 05:00. Swingate provides a shopping hours operation, whilst most other ranks service night demand.

In terms of loaded vehicle departures, the busiest rank is High Street, northbound on the Saturday, followed by the same location on the Friday, both with over 34 loaded departures per hour on average. This is followed by the Leisure Park and Stevenage Station. The remaining observed day at High Street rank follows, with Swingate seeing just four loaded departures on average per hour on the Friday and just three on the Saturday. Danestrete and Lister Hospital both see use, but at a very low level.

In terms of rank service and operation, the High Street rank operates for seven hours on Fridays and Saturdays, but only two to three hours on a Thursday. This rank sees very good service overall given the volumes of people using the rank. Service at the station, Swingate and Lister Hospital is good, whilst other ranks see fair service, often due to low levels of demand, although the Leisure Park does not seem to enjoy as significant a service as it used to when it was the main focus of night life. Discussions suggest this may be since the marshals that existed here were withdrawn, meaning that the rank can tend to be rowdier than it was when the marshal was there.

Overall, demand in Stevenage in 2014 is focussed on the Old Town night life and the railway station, with significant dependence on the night economy, and a peaked profile of demand.

In all locations there were more vehicles available than loaded journeys made. In most places, the gap between supply and demand was more than just one vehicle, with the closest supply and demand at High Street and the Leisure Park ranks. This suggests vehicles are readily available for hire at rank locations.

### **Comparison of total demand with previous survey**

The table below calculates a typical week from the observations undertaken in 2014 and compared to information from the two previous surveys. Ranks or pick-up locations are listed in descending order of passenger usage in 2014.

Rank	Passengers per week, 2002 survey	Passengers per week 2005 survey	2014 survey (approx. wkly est)
Stevenage Station	2,104 (43%)	4,485 (66%)	4,492 (64%)
High St Northbound	n/a	n/a	1,442 (20%)
Leisure Park	1,442 (29%)	1,533 (22%)	810 (12%)
High St Southbound	n/a	n/a	Unused
Swingate	801 (16%)	832 (12%)	227 (3%)
Lister Hospital	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	42 (1%)
Danestrete	606 (12%)	23 (0%)	25 (0%)
Old Stevenage rank	Not surveyed	0 (0%)	Replaced
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,953 (100%)</b>	<b>6,873 (100%)</b>	<b>7,038 (100%)</b>
<b>Growth from previous</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>2%</b>

Note – Total includes all observations at relevant points as available, both sets factored to full week from detail available.

Total rank-based usage of hackney carriages in Stevenage has increased by around 2% since the 2005 survey (with around a 42% increase since 2002). There are now just over 7,000 passenger trips in an average week from ranks in the Borough.

Demand at the railway station rank remains most dominant in overall terms – with some 64% of demand currently from this location. As advised to us in both the brief and at the inception meeting, there has been a clear change of the focus of demand from the Leisure Park to the High Street area with some 20% of average demand now obtained from the two ranks in Old Stevenage – although the Leisure Park still provides around 12% of demand.

There has been a very significant reduction in usage of the Swingate rank since the last survey – probably related to the introduction of the new central Tesco store which has drawn many potential hackney carriage customers to the private hire provided option in their car park. This rank now shows signs related to low demand locations and the future of this location must be uncertain if the trend in demand continues.

In average weekly terms, demand from ranks increased between the first two surveys, but has seen only marginal growth between the last survey and now – over an extended period. This is consistent with the economic climate.

In annual terms, the patronage (including hailing) saw a significant increase from 2002 to 2005 and a smaller reduction to date (partly due to changes in hailing values from the public attitude surveys). In 2014 there are around 377,000 hackney carriage passengers per year including rank and hailing demand.

## **Plate activity levels**

A sample of plate numbers were collected during the rank surveys to identify the level of activity of the fleet during the survey. Some 292 vehicle movements were recorded at locations near to the ranks. Of these, 25 were identified as not being current Stevenage hackney carriages (they may have been recording errors or private hire setting down nearby). Of the 100 current plates a total of 68 (68%) were observed showing the fleet was highly active during the surveys. One vehicle was not available during the survey period.

It appeared that a higher number of vehicles were active during the evening (16:30 to 21:59) and even more at night (22:00 onwards), with the largest level of fleet activity occurring after midnight, in response to demand. 43% of hackney carriages observed were only seen in the night observations, a further 37% both night and evening, 13% just in the evening and just 3% daytime only. 3% were seen in the daytime and evening observations. Just one vehicle, 1% of those active, was seen in all three time periods (although this is an underestimate arising from the periods observed).

Of all the hackney carriages observed, one was seen 10 times, two more 9 times, four 8 times, two 7 times, six 6 times, ten each 5 and 4 times, thirteen 3 times, eight twice and twelve just a single time. This is a fairly active set of observations, suggesting busy times do see vehicles returning to the rank fairly regularly and not necessarily going long distances.

## **Application of the ISUD index**

The industry standard index of significant unmet demand (ISUD) has been used and developed since the initial Government guidance that limits could only apply if there was no significant unmet demand for the service of hackney carriage vehicles. In the case of Stevenage, the private leisure park and rail station ranks should be excluded from the ISUD calculations as both are locations out of the Council control. In particular the additional fee at Stevenage station is a control which the Council is unable to influence and therefore any significant unmet demand that might be seen there is out of their control in terms of adding plates. However, we have calculated an index including both the leisure park and the station for robustness.

The current index has two elements which can negate the need for use of the index by setting the value to zero. The first test relates to if there are any daytime hours (Monday to Friday 1000 to 1800) where people are observed to queue for hackney carriages. There are 19% of all relevant hours with queues in the council only ranks, 19% adding the Leisure Park and 17% when adding in the station.

The other index that could be zero – proportion of passengers in hours in which waits occurred which was over 1 minute – was 1% for the council rank sample, 4.4 with the Leisure Park and 4.2 with the station and leisure park.

The seasonality index is 1.0 since the surveys were undertaken in late February / March

The area exhibits peaked demand, so this factor is 0.5.

Average passenger delay in minutes across the whole survey is 0.13 minutes for council only ranks, 0.25 adding in the Leisure Park and 0.22 adding both station and Leisure Park ranks.

From the public attitude work, the latent demand factor is 1.00, assuming all who did not give an answer had not ever given up waiting – ie there were no hackney carriage relevant responses.

The ISUD index for the full survey is 1.2 for the council ranks, 10.3 including the Leisure Park and 7.7 adding both Leisure Park and station observations. All are well below the value of 80 used to suggest significance of unmet demand, so the index demonstrates the unmet demand observed is not significant in terms of the ISUD index.

## 4. Public Consultation results

A seventeen question survey was undertaken with 299 persons in the Stevenage Borough Council area (199 were obtained in 2003 and 272 in 2006). Surveys were undertaken within the main central area, near to Lister Hospital, and in the Old Town (Lister Hospital was added for this survey). Responses were mainly from those available during the day time, following standard practise for these interviews. The Table below summarises the overall responses.

Question	Response	%			
		Av	Hosp	OT	TC
Have you used a taxi in the last three months in the Stevenage area?	Yes	26	18	63	19
How often do you use a taxi within this area?	Almost daily	9	0	10	10
	Once a week	16	11	19	15
	A few times a month	35	67	49	15
	Once a month	16	0	6	28
	Less than once a month	24	22	16	32
	Trips per person per month	0.9	0.3	2.4	0.7
	% responding	26	18	63	19
How do you normally get a taxi within this area? (percentage as a total of those who responded)	At a taxi rank	12	11	6	17
	Hail in the street	1	0	3	0
	Telephone a taxi company	44	89	79	5
	Use a Freephone	8	0	3	15
	Use my mobile or smart phone	35	0	9	63
	% responding	28	18	69	20
If you book a taxi by phone, please tell us the three companies you phone most	Please see detail in text				
How often do you use a hackney carriage within the Stevenage area? (% of those giving a response)	Almost daily	0	0	0	0
	Once a week	0	0	0	0
	A few times a month	14	0	100	0
	Once a month	57	0	0	67
	Less than once a month	29	0	0	33
	Trips per person per month	0.02	0	0.04	0.02
	I can't remember when I last used a hackney carriage	1	2	4	0
	I can't remember seeing a hackney carriage in Stevenage	0	0	0	0
	No response at all (% of all)	97	98	94	97
Please tell me the ranks you are aware of in Stevenage and for each if you use them	Please see response in text				

Is there any location in Stevenage where you would like to see a rank, and if it was there and vehicles were available, would you use it?	<i>Please see response in text</i>				
Have you had any problem with the local hackney carriage service? (indicate as many as apply)		Av	Hosp	OT	TC
	Total problems cited	1	0	0	1
	By no of people=	1	0	0	1
	Design of vehicle	0	0	0	0
	Driver issues	0	0	0	0
	Position of ranks	100	0	0	100
	Delay in getting a taxi	0	0	0	0
	Cleanliness	0	0	0	0
	Other – none	n/a	100	0	0
What would encourage you to use hackney carriages or use them more often	People responding	5	1	0	4
	No of responses	5	1	0	4
	Nothing	20	100	0	0
	Better vehicles	20	0	0	25
	More hackney carriages I could phone for	0	0	0	0
	Better drivers	0	0	0	0
	More hackney carriages I could hail or get at a rank	0	0	0	0
	Better located ranks (please state where)	20	0	0	25
	Cheaper fares	40	0	0	50
	Other	0	0	0	0
Do you consider you, or anyone you know, to have a disability that means you need an adapted vehicle?	% who responded	4	2	8	3
	No	83	100	100	71
	Yes - I need a wheelchair accessible vehicle	50	0	0	50
	Yes – someone I know needs a wheelchair accessible vehicle	0	0	0	0
	Yes– I need an adapted vehicle but not a wheel chair accessible	50	0	0	50
	Yes – someone I knows needs an adapted vehicle but not wheel chair accessible	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0
If you arrived at a rank and there were saloon and wheel chair accessible vehicles there, which vehicle would you choose?	First available	78	0	100	72
	Saloon	11	0	0	14
	Wheel chair accessible	11	0	0	14



If you chose a vehicle type in the question above, why did you chose that specific vehicle type?	<i>Please see discussion in text</i>				
Question	Response	Av	Hosp	OT	TC
Have you ever given up waiting for a hackney carriage at a rank in Stevenage?	No	99	100	100	99
(amended to remove non-rank responses)	No (not at a rank)	100	100	100	100
Have you seen the door signs reminding people they should not use private hire vehicles unless they have pre-booked that vehicle?	Yes	50	100	0	50
Do you think these signs are a good idea?	Yes, they are a good reminder	62	0	0	83
	No	0	0	0	0
	I don't know	38	100	100	17
Do you live in the area?	Yes	60	100	80	36
Gender (value in bracket from census, 2008 est of 2014)	Male	48 (49)	47	55	46
Age (value in brackets from census, 2008 est of 2014)	Under 30 (15-29)	19 (25)	20	14	20
	31-55 (30-54)	57 (44)	51	57	59
	Over 55	24 (31)	29	29	21

Just 26% of those interviewed had used a licensed vehicle in the Stevenage Council area in the last three months, a low level of recent usage. Usage was significantly higher in those responding in the Old Town (63%) and lower for both the hospital and the town centre respondents (18 and 19% respectively). In 2005, the recent user proportions were 34% in the town centre sample and 36% in the Old Town, suggesting a fall in usage overall but an increase in Old Stevenage corresponding to the increased activity in that area.

Of the respondents who told us they had used a licensed vehicle recently, many said how often they used a licensed vehicle. We have assumed the remaining non-respondents do not use licensed vehicles and calculated the average level of licensed vehicle trips per month per person below. On average, there are 0.9 person trips by licensed vehicle per month based on these assumptions, a low level. Again, the Old Town sample was much different, giving some 2.4 trips compared to 0.3 for the hospital and 0.7 for the town centre sample. A similar response occurred in the 2005 questionnaire results.

28% of interviewees told us how they obtained licensed vehicles in the Council area. By far the highest percentage got taxis by booking them by telephone (44%), followed by mobile or smart phone (35%), with the total by phone methods being 87%. Just 12% said they got them from ranks and 1% said their normal method was hailing. Values split by each area varied widely – with rank usage at 17% for those interviewed in the town centre and hailing highest at 3% in the Old Town sample. Interestingly, those in the town centre mainly used smart or mobile phones (63%).

The use of phones was queried further, seeking to understand the companies that people used. 23% of respondents listed the companies they contacted overall, varying from 14% in the hospital sample to 17% in the town centre and 57% in the Old Town. Just one person gave three names and six gave a single name in the hospital sample. In the Old Town, three gave three companies, 10 gave two and 15 gave one. For the town centre, there were a single mention of three companies, nine said two and 24 gave a single company.

Those interviewed near the hospital named a total of four different companies, in the Old Town five, and in the town centre five. Three companies were dominant, with 31%, 29% and 29% of all mentions, with two of these mentioned in all three locations. Each area, however, had a unique company named albeit only by one person.

A set of questions were then asked relating specifically to use of hackney carriages. This response to these questions was disappointing, with little interest from most respondents in giving answers specific to hackney carriages. This ties in with the low usage of ranks and the dominance of a few private hire companies together with main use of hackney carriages being from the station and at night – neither location being included in the public attitude surveys. However, there was a similar lack of response in 2005 as well although less hackney carriage specific questions were asked in that survey.

The first question asked how often people used them. There were very few respondents, and the level of trips per month was zero for the hospital, 0.04 for the Old Town and 0.02 for the town centre, very low (and 0.02 overall). However, more positively, none said they could not remember seeing a hackney carriage, and only a small fraction said they could not remember when they last used a hackney carriage from those that responded, so hackney carriages are known about and used, just less frequently than in many other places.

People were asked to name all the rank locations they were aware of in the Council area and if they used the locations they named or not. The hospital sample just had one person say they knew of the Tesco rank. No ranks were named by those in the Old Town. In the Town Centre sample, seven people named six locations, with the most frequent being the Station, then Tesco and Asda (both phone related and not actual ranks), Danestrete and the Hospital. This suggests people are aware of the ranks, but generally usage of hackney carriages is very low.

When asked about new locations, just five people in the town centre suggested six locations, with two asking for ranks in the Old Town, one near the station and one near the bus station, another near Matalan and another near 'the church'.

Across the 299 respondents, just one quoted an issue with the position of ranks, and another said they had no issue.

More people responded to what might encourage them to use hackney carriages or use them more, but this response was also very small. Just three people from the town centre sample made suggestions – two wanted lower fares and one wanted better located ranks.

People were asked if they or anyone they knew had a disability needing either a wheel chair accessible licensed vehicle, or a vehicle adapted in some other way. Just 4% responded. On average 83% said they did not themselves need, or know anyone who did need an adapted vehicle. These answers were all from the town centre sample, with an even split between those needing wheel chair and other adapted styles – and no-one knew anyone who needed an adapted vehicle.

An overwhelming 100% from the Old Town and 72% from the town centre sample would choose the first vehicle available at a rank. The remaining town centre respondents were equally split between saloon and wheel chair style vehicles.

Of those answering if they had ever given up waiting for a hackney carriage, there were just one percent said they had, and when they said where, this was at Tesco for both – not a rank. There is therefore no latent demand for hackney carriages evident.

People were asked about the signs on private hire cars making it clear people needed to book them. The one person responding to this question at the hospital was aware of the signs but was not sure if they were helpful. In the town centre sample respondents (six responses, of whom half were aware of them), 83% felt they were a good reminder.

Our gender sample saw about the right proportion of men (48% compared to 49% in the 2014 census estimate). Our age sample saw under-representation of both younger and older groups (19% compared to 25% for the younger and 24% compared to 31% for the older group), with an over-representation of the middle group – 57% compared to 44% in the census.



## 5. Stakeholder Consultation

The following key stakeholders were contacted in line with the DfT Best Practice Guidance 2010:

- Supermarkets
- Hotels
- Hospital
- Pubwatch / night clubs
- Disability representatives
- Police
- Rail operators
- Other council contacts
- County council contacts

Specific comments have been aggregated below to provide an overall appreciation of the current situation, although in some cases comments are specific to the needs of a particular stakeholder. It should be noted that the comments contained in this Chapter are the views of those consulted, and not that of the authors of this Report. **Appendix 2** provides further details of those consulted.

The licensed vehicle trade consultation is the subject of the following chapter.

### ***Supermarkets***

A total of four supermarkets were contacted. One was unaware of any provision for customers to obtain licensed vehicles from their store. Another said they believed customers obtained vehicles for themselves, they did not keep any record of such issues. The other two supermarkets both had phone links to specific private hire companies both with pick-up points provided for this company. No complaints or issues had been noted.

As part of our site visit, however, we did note that many of the vehicles servicing the main supermarket demand either only had the council private hire stickers on their doors (with no specification of which company they were operating for) or in some cases, no markings at all, which would make taking up any issues that occurred with passengers in the vehicles very difficult or impossible to resolve. Further discussion identified that at least one company was very reticent to have company affiliation on its vehicles, which is more akin to the present London mini-cab operations and certainly very poor in regard to transparency and ready enforcement.

### ***Hotels***

Five different hotels across the area were contacted. Two responded, one of which used two different private hire companies, the other used one company. Both provided a good service and the hotels felt no need to suggest any other companies, or any use of ranks.

### ***Restaurants / Night venues***

A selection of four restaurants and / or night venues was contacted. During the time available one responded. They were located on the Leisure Park and said their customers generally used the on-site rank. They had not received any complaints about the service provided to their customers.

### ***Hospital***

The hospital was keen to develop improved taxi links to and from the hospital. At the present, there are two private areas served by two different private hire companies (with dedicated phones) plus the public rank on the public highway, also serviced regularly by hackney carriages. Further comment about how this might develop further was not received.

### ***Police***

No response was obtained from police representatives during the time available.

### ***Disability representatives***

No disability representatives responded to our request for comment during the course of this survey.

### ***University representatives***

No representation was made by university representatives during the course of our consultation.

### ***Rail Operators***

National statistics are publicly available showing the total number of entries and exits at each rail station in the United Kingdom. These numbers are calculated using ticket barrier and ticket issue information from ticket sales. Within the Borough the only national rail station is Stevenage itself. The Table below shows information from 1997/1998 to date. The figures after the station name show the position in rank in terms of usage of English, Welsh and Scottish railway stations, with the smallest usage being the 2,533<sup>rd</sup> station and the highest being 1<sup>st</sup> in the list (Waterloo, London). Stevenage is the 91<sup>st</sup> highest used station in England, Scotland and Wales – quite significant.

Rail year (ends March in last year noted)	Entries / exits	Growth / decline
<b>Stevenage (91<sup>st</sup>)</b>		
1997 / 1998	2,504,244	n/a
1998 / 1999	2,724,058	+9%
1999 / 2000	2,906,266	+7%
2000 / 2001	2,817,286	-3%
2001 / 2002	3,125,344	+11%
2002 / 2003	3,267,031	+5%
2003 / 2004	Not collected	+3.5%
2004 / 2005	3,495,795	+3.5%
2005 / 2006	3,539,052	+1%
2006 / 2007	3,968,033	+12%
2007 / 2008	4,206,418	+6%
2008 / 2009	4,257,732	+1%
2009 / 2010	4,093,020	-4%
2010 / 2011	4,222,776	+3%
2011 / 2012	4,271,612	+1%
2012 / 2013	4,338,702	+2% (+73% overall)

Since the first survey, rail patronage has increased 33%, and the potential for demand from this location remains strong and significant – with over 2 million passengers leaving the station in the last period for which information is available. If the current survey information is factored to a year, it suggests that about 11% of current station passengers leave the station in a hackney carriage from the station rank.

A check was also made with the train taxi website. This correctly advises that Stevenage is a major station with taxis usually available at a rank, with bookings not normally necessary or possible. However, three phone numbers are provided, one of which is advertised as having wheel chair accessible vehicles (the largest hackney carriage operator), with another large company as well as a now taken over company named, all of whom has hackney carriage vehicles on their books. This suggests that any private hire vehicles observed at or near the rank must be from passengers choosing their own company to phone rather than from this source.

The Stevenage station rank is managed by Apcoa on behalf of First Capital Connect. Drivers obtain permits on-line using their valid hackney carriage vehicle and drivers licences. Apcoa advised us that this system works well for them, their only improvement would be if they could cross-check the driver applications with council information rather than rely on drivers having to upload current documentation. As noted earlier, a significant number of drivers choose to purchase this supplementary permit.

As also noted earlier, the FCC franchise will be replaced on 14 September 2014 by the new Thameslink Southern Great Northern (TSGN) franchise which will eventually gain other routes on 26 July 2015, connecting services from Stevenage to south of the Thames in May 2018 using the new connection at Kings Cross into the Thameslink route. From December 2018 the Great Northern route will reach its maximum frequency with up to eight trains per hour using the Thameslink route extending to the current FCC operation on routes currently terminating at Kings Cross. The new franchise will also include significant increases in standards and capacity of rolling stock and will encourage more significant passenger growth at Stevenage than seen thus far. Govia was announced as the winner of the franchise on 23 May 2014 and contact with their new Stevenage representatives will be important for the future of the rank facility at the station.



## **6. Rank Development**

Our brief required review of the potential options for developing the provision of ranks in the Stevenage area to better meet current need and prepare to meet potential future demand more effectively.

There are four areas with potential for development.

### **Railway Station rank**

In the near future it will become clear which operator gains the new franchise to operate the current and developing services at Stevenage station. Whichever operator is successful, the potential for increased transport to and from the station to meet the increasing passenger levels is significant. With the need for all forms of transport to increase, there will be pressure on the current rank and access arrangements to it. A threat is that more car parking will be required, which might be a pressure to reduce the size of the current rank.

However extra potential customers and more importantly the levels of customer arrivals (with higher capacity trains) will require more rank storage space to ensure passenger demand peaks can be met adequately.

It is not yet clear what specific plans are proposed by Govia for Stevenage or for the taxi provision. The Council will need to contact the new operators urgently once they become known to ensure that opportunities to provide more custom at the station are taken to the full. In the first instance, this will allow the vehicle waiting times to be reduced and incomes to be increased. Between now and the new services, the rank must be kept viable and developed in readiness.

There may be a point when more vehicle licences might be needed, but with current levels of spare capacity this is unlikely to be in the near future. Firstly, more of the present fleet need to take up the option to buy the supplementary permit. Further, the main patronage growth will only occur after the major improvements have been made – which will be around 2019, or two years after the next demand survey would be needed in any event following the BPG.

### **Old Town ranks**

At the meeting held to discuss progress made, copies of the video footage of the northbound Old Town rank were observed in detail. A significant issue was noted that many vehicles approach the rank by making u-turns, either via the road junction just south of the zebra crossing, or within the width of the road itself. Whilst no potential accidents were observed, the opportunity for accidents from these manoeuvres remains and this operational practice needs to be dissuaded (although it is not illegal).

It was also noted that at the present time, the southbound rank is not used at all. On the contrary, the northbound rank is over capacity in queuing vehicles for a significant proportion of the time. This level of vehicle waiting is needed to ensure that demand is met promptly and that unmet demand does not develop. However, the location used for additional waiting – just south of the formal provision – is far from ideal and can confuse passengers as it is near one demand location.

We were made aware that there are more developments planned in the Old Town night facilities which will increase the level of demand and perhaps the temporal extent of demand over time in this location. We believe there are sufficient vehicles to meet this, but that the rank provision must be modified to give sufficient operating space to ensure an efficient operation.

Just north of the current rank is a bus stop which ceases to be used in advance of the time when extra capacity is required at the northbound rank. Many authorities currently have bus stops which are given over to hackney carriage usage once the bus service ceases. This option could be used here, with the bus stop section of rank operating from say midnight onwards. This would be entirely consistent with current Hertfordshire stated policy towards encouraging taxis when meeting late night demand.

The existence of the marshal would ensure that at the appropriate time vehicles and passengers could move from waiting at the present rank head to the extended rank head. This would also ensure that the area south of the rank remained clear of traffic, improving pedestrian safety near another of the night venues.

This also reinforces the significant value the marshal provides in reducing potential for violence and increasing the throughput of the rank. The latter occurs as the marshal ensures that vehicles and passengers meet each other efficiently and that both understand clearly where they should be waiting to maximise turnover of departures.

### **Central area rank provision**

It is clear that the changes in the town centre mean that the Swingate rank is no longer viable, and that without significant change is most likely to cease to be used. This would focus all day time hackney carriage operation on the station rank, not a positive outcome. The present rank location is distant from most common routes where potential passengers pass regularly, and with planned developments will become even less suitable a location for a rank.

On the contrary, with changes in the make-up of the town centre offer, and some vacation of premises which required significant delivery provision (for example the former pub premises), there are at present significant opportunities for a potentially viable set of ranks to be drawn together that would be near desire lines and current potential passenger routes. These sites would allow hackney carriages to be highly visible, which in itself would generate further trade as people became confident that they could get a hackney carriage reliably and promptly.

There are four potential rank locations that could be developed together as part of a new town centre rank system:

- Two car rank near to Ibis hotel
- A three car rank in the currently unused loading bay along Westgate from the Ibis
- A two car rank in part of the loading bay on the access to the Westgate loading area formerly used by the closed pub to the rear of Paddy Power
- A three car rank within the Westgate loading area, itself near to an exit from the shopping centre

Discussion with the Council parking representative and licensing section suggested this set of rank provision could be undertaken as an outline test with trade support, followed by introduction of an experimental order and then formalisation once the system was proven and any issues resolved during the development process.

There would also be spin-offs in that introducing more active vehicles into this currently very quiet road network would further increase the vitality and vibrancy of this part of the town centre. Further, the hackney carriages would be highly visible to people walking along the Tesco – Ibis axis, the shopping centre to railway station axis, leaving the Westgate shopping centre and visible from the bus station if there were issues with bus services, or if people wished to get home with heavy shopping or with a more personal service than the bus provided. At present, all these passengers do not see any hackney carriage or private hire provision at all.

Further, these changes are consistent with Hertfordshire County transport policy encouraging use of taxis for social inclusion and interchange purposes, given that the new ranks would be visible from the bus station to complement the current public transport provision when required.

### **Hospital rank**

During the course of our discussions, a representative of the hospital said they wished to work with the Council to encourage better service by licensed vehicles to the hospital. The council should take advantage of this and seek to encourage the best possible provision by helping the hospital representative fully understand the options available in terms of hackney carriage and private hire service of the hospital needs. Further discussion of this did not prove possible during the time available for this study and it is also most appropriate for the licensing / transport sections of the council to work with the hospital representatives in the short, medium and long term to develop this service.



## 7. Licensed Vehicle Trade Consultation

### *Trade consultation*

A letter was issued to all licensed drivers by the Council inviting them to complete a questionnaire about their current service to the public, and their views on the policy of limiting hackney carriage numbers. This letter was issued to 367 trade members (including those in the private hire trade to cover Best Practise Guidance requirements). All responses were returned to CTS using a freepost address provided by CTS. A copy of a previous letter from a trade member regarding rank provision was also provided to us.

Some 32 responses were received (9%), a fair response for this type of survey. 75% were from hackney carriage drivers and the remaining quarter from those who said they drove private hire vehicles. 88% owned and drove their own vehicles. 12% said someone else drove their vehicle which equated to the proportion who did not own their own vehicle, suggesting the drivers who answered these questions also saw answers from their vehicle owners. Half of respondents said they operated on a radio circuit whilst half did not. This suggests we obtained a good sample from the independent hackney carriage drivers.

Those responding had, on average, been involved with the licensed vehicle trade as drivers for 13 years (but ranging from two to 40 years). They tended to work 6 days per week for an average of 53 hours per week. The range of days worked was between 3 and 7 – with 44% of respondents saying they worked seven days. The range of hours was from 24 to 84.

50% of respondents said they worked longer on some days than others. 33% said Friday and Saturday, 8% said on 'weekdays' but 58% did not give the days they worked longer.

Those operating hackney carriages told us the ranks they used. 21 drivers responded to this question (two thirds). One said 'any rank I can', but the rest mentioned between one and four of the active ranks. Of the 55 mentions of ranks between the 20 drivers, 29% were the station, 25% Old Town, 24% Swingate, 16% the Leisure Park, 4% Lister Hospital and 2% 'Stevenage'.

In terms of policy, 78% said the current policy of limiting remained relevant and 22% said it did not. 31% either did not reply to their reaction were the limit removed or did not know how they would respond. 28% would leave the trade and 13% would work longer hours. 6% would apply for a hackney carriage license and 6% would "sign on the dole".

Many comments were made. Most pointed out there was not enough work at present and that the limit helped the situation not to get worse. Several mentioned over-crowded ranks. One said their income was the same as two years ago but they now had to work twice as long to maintain this level.

Another had invested in a new vehicle and felt they would be ruined if the limit changed. Two were concerned about the renting of plates to drivers, and two said they felt it would be better if the limit was removed. One felt the Old Town rank should operate for longer hours and opposed the charge for the station rank.

### ***Presentation to Trade***

The details of the survey were presented to a group of trade persons on 25 June 2014. The summary presented was received well with no major issues raised regarding the facts put forward. It was suggested that the rank survey weekend was one of the busiest weekends experienced in 2014 to date. It was accepted, however, that even with what the trade felt had been a severe test of capacity, a good service had been provided.

A suggestion was made that ranks should have been considered near to Marks and Spencer (on the other side of the central area). This was considered, but felt to be a location too full of parked vehicles already and with lower levels of potential demand.

Comment was also made that lack of access to bus lanes and other bus priority often made it hard for vehicles to get both to and from ranks, particular issues arose reducing the potential for the Danestrete rank in this regard, with some suggestion that better highway access might encourage trade use, which in turn might lead to more passengers obtaining hackney carriages at those locations, although others felt the Danestrete rank was distant from most footfall and potential demand in any event.

The central area new rank provision was welcomed, although comment was made that thought needed to be given to how vehicles would progress through the various parts of the rank and how some form of rank usage and feeding might be developed.

## 8. Responses to DfT Best Practice Guidance 2010

Annex A of the Best Practice Guidance (BPG) provides a list of useful questions to help assess the issue of quantity controls of hackney carriage licences.

This chapter takes the form of a response to each question based on the evidence identified earlier in this report. BPG questions are shown in ***bold italic*** with responses following in normal type.

***Have you considered the Government's view that quantity control should be removed unless a specific case that such controls benefit the consumer can be made?***

Yes, this report is the independent input to this consideration on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council. At present the limit is providing stability to a market where demand has not increased much over at least six years.

***Questions relating to the policy of controlling numbers:***

***Have you recently reviewed the need for your policy of quantity controls?***

Yes, this report forms a current review of the need for the policy of quantity control of hackney carriages at this point in time in the Council area.

***What form did the review of your policy of quantity controls take?***

This current review follows the DfT Best Practise Guidance April 2010 in undertaking a full review of the current situation in regard to the policy towards hackney carriage vehicle limits. It includes:

- A review of the background policies of the Council
- A rank survey program to identify current demand and supply
- Public consultation with people in the streets of Stevenage
- Stakeholder consultation with all groups recommended by the DfT Best Practice Guidance as far as people were available
- consultation by email or phone with several key stakeholders
- a questionnaire posted to all licensed drivers in the area by the Council (to cover data protection issues)
- Consideration of the relevant section of the Equality Act

***Who was involved in the review?***

This review was undertaken by an independent consultant and included direct discussion with the following respondents:

- Local supermarkets
- Hotels in the area
- Night venues
- The police

***What decision was reached about retaining or removing quantity controls?***

The decision regarding quantity controls is the subject of the final chapter, but is also a matter for decision by the committee appointed to make such decisions on behalf of the Council.

***Are you satisfied that your policy justifies restricting entry to the trade?***

Please see the summary and conclusions section for guidance on conclusions from our review – ultimately this decision is for the local council to make.

***Are you satisfied that quantity controls do not:***

- ***Reduce the availability of taxis***
- ***Increase waiting times for consumers***
- ***Reduce choice and safety for consumers***

There were very few cases where passengers had to wait at ranks for hackney carriage vehicles to arrive. None of the unmet demand observed led to an overall significant level of demand for hackney carriages which was not met. There is therefore little waiting time for hackney carriages and further vehicles would be unlikely to change this situation as there is no way the council can force people to work at any specific hour. There appears to be plenty of choice for consumers, with most hackney carriages also being available on phone booking circuits although a good proportion of the vehicles remain independent. Further, there is no way the council can force drivers to take the supplementary permit at the railway station, where most waiting of passengers occurred.



***What special circumstances justify retention of quantity controls?***

This issue is ultimately for the Councillors to conclude. However, it does appear that any further dilution of revenue that additional plates would imply at the present time would worsen over-ranking at the main honey pot station rank, and further reduce the finance available for maintenance and development of the current fleet.

***How does your policy benefit consumers, particularly in remote rural areas?***

Much of Stevenage is urban, with most rural areas located in adjacent licensing districts. However, the hospital rank which is out of the centre, does see service by hackney carriages which might not otherwise occur were revenue to be further diluted.

***How does your policy benefit the trade?***

Retention of a limit on hackney carriage vehicle numbers provides some additional value to a hackney carriage plate which enables more to be invested in the vehicle and the service it provides than if the vehicle had no additional value. There are current issues with too many vehicles servicing the main rank at the Station, despite need for a supplementary permit, and were more plates available, this issue would increase and would lead to severe traffic congestion in a critical part of the Stevenage traffic network.

***If you have a local accessibility policy, how does this fit with restricting taxi licences?***

At present, the local accessibility policy is benefitted by 30% of the hackney carriages being wheel chair accessible. All of these have resulted from increases in the number of plates over the years when such higher numbers have been justified.

***Questions relating to setting the number of taxi licences:***

***When did you last assess unmet demand?***

This study was preceded by two earlier ones. No significant unmet demand was identified at either time and no more plates were required to be issued.

***How is your taxi limit assessed?***

In all previous studies, and in this one, the limit has been assessed using industry standard techniques.

***Have you considered latent demand, ie potential customers who would use taxis if more were available, but currently do not?***

Yes, latent demand was considered by several methods, with the key method being through interviews with members of the public. There was no latent demand occurring at ranks.

***Are you satisfied that your limit is set at the correct level?***

This is a matter for decision by the Council committee based on evidence following in our summary. Even with 100 vehicles on issue, there is no significant unmet demand for the services of hackney carriages in the area. The limit could therefore remain at 100.

***How does the need for adequate taxi ranks affect your policy of quantity controls?***

The study had a supplementary element to consider the provision of adequate ranks. The town centre Swingate rank needs to be moved to a more suitable location, and the Old Town rank needs to be consolidated on one side of the road. Retention of the limit on vehicles will provide stability whilst these changes are developed.

***Questions relating to consultation and other public transport service provision:***

***When consulting, have you included all those working in the market, consumer and passenger (including disabled groups), groups which represent those passengers with special needs, local interest groups, e.g. hospitals or visitor attractions, the police, a wide range of transport stakeholders, e.g. rail/bus/coach providers and traffic managers?***

See above, yes, all appropriate consultees have been taken into account.

***Do you receive representations about taxi availability?***

No

***What is the level of service currently available to consumers including other public transport modes?***

Stevenage enjoys a very high frequency and level of both bus and rail services which provide both competition and potential for the licensed vehicle service. There are a reasonable number of private hire companies, the largest of which operate mixed hackney carriage and private hire fleets, again giving sufficient choice to customers.

## 9. The Equality Act 2010

Whilst several sections of the Equality Act (EA) affect licensed vehicle operations, the key provision relevant to this report is the requirement under section 161 that any authority with a limit on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences should issue licences to wheel chair accessible vehicles (WAV) until an agreed percentage of the fleet were such WAV style. The last guidance in regard to timescales for introduction of this regulation saw consultation occurring around this point in time – although nothing has yet been issued by the Department for Transport. Stevenage Borough Council currently has a limit and this section of the Act would apply if ever enacted.

The Equality Act is national legislation which cannot be amended by the council or its officers. Current thought suggests that the required proportion of WAV style vehicles expected for the Council area might be of the order of 35%. At the present time, Stevenage has a formal level of 30% of vehicles which must be wheel chair accessible, which means the limit on vehicle numbers could be vulnerable were this part of the Equality Act put in place.

The table below presents some of the options available based on these figures.

Option	Total number of vehicles	Number of wheel chair accessible vehicles (WAV)	Percentage of fleet that are WAV
Current	100	30	30%
EA requirement	100	35	35%
Meet EA by removing limit but no WAV stipulation	100 upwards	Uncertain – might reduce	Uncertain
Meet EA by removing limit but with all new vehicles having to be WAV	100 upwards	30 upwards with each new vehicles adding to number	At least 30%- an extra 1% for each new vehicle added
Meet EA by retaining limit at present no. of vehicles, those currently informally WAV become formal and 5 current vehicles converting	100	35	35%
Meet EA by granting plate to any WAV, with none of present converting under limited scenario.	107 (+7%)	37	35%

At the present time, there is no significant unmet demand with 100 vehicles available. Demand has not significantly increased for many years. From this point of view, the preferable option would be to ensure that five current vehicles became WAV.

The worst case scenario would be if none of the vehicles were willing to become WAV style. In this case, 7 further plates could be issued before the expected criteria were met. These additional vehicles increase the fleet by some 7% which would almost certainly lead to significant reduction in income for the current fleet.

Further discussion of this issue is included in the final chapters in context of the full survey.

## 10. Summary and conclusions

### ***Policy Background***

Background transport policy is contained in the Stevenage Urban Transport Plan September 2010 supporting the third Local Transport Plan which runs from 2011 to 2021. Taxis have a specific section (an example national best practise) and are acknowledged as reducing dependency on the private car, and providing for the night economy. Their part in providing integrated transport is also noted. The County will promote use of and facilities for taxis for integrated transport (interchanges), where encouraging a switch away from the private car, where assisting social inclusion, and for cost effective provision of educational and social services transport. This provides a very high base of background transport policy support not found in most other authorities. Within this context, Stevenage has highway powers for the main central area but not elsewhere.

Stevenage Borough exercises its power under the 1985 Transport Act, section 16 to retain a limit on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences it issues. This policy has been regularly reviewed and is being supported at this time by an independent unmet demand survey to comply with the DfT Best Practice Guidance 2010. Ten plates were last added around 2001 although numbers of hackney carriages have grown from 74 in 1994 to the current 100.

The present level of hackney carriages is sixth from lowest in the evaluation covering Hertfordshire authorities plus three other new towns. However, the level of vehicles is above the current English average vehicles per thousand of population. Other neighbouring authorities without limited vehicle numbers still have less provision per thousand of population suggesting the limit is not unduly restraining provision in an overall context. Provision of private hire vehicles is also less than the average for Hertfordshire and the group, but above the English average. This places Stevenage with the fifth from highest level of overall licensed vehicles per thousand of population for the group compared.

30% of the fleet are currently wheel chair accessible – with six other Hertfordshire authorities having lower proportions. With two authorities having fully wheel chair accessible fleets, the County average level is therefore high at 35%, although Stevenage is not too far behind this, nor behind the English average of 41%.

Present statistics suggest the fleet sees very little double shifting of vehicles. 367 individuals make up the Stevenage taxi trade – of whom just two are private hire operators only and 35% are driver only (the remaining 65% being owner-drivers).

The level of public facing private hire companies is low – with just five companies generally available and promoting themselves in the area. Fairly uniquely compared to other licensing areas, the area tends to be serviced only by local private hire companies and the public seem to keep to using these few companies. Around 30-40% of the hackney carriage vehicles remain independent whilst there is one private hire operator who has mainly hackney carriage vehicles operating.

Fares are above the English/Scottish/Welsh NPHA average by 7% but 2% below the south, Hertfordshire and group averages calculated. This places the area 92<sup>nd</sup> equal (May 2014 figures). 22 other authorities including another in Hertfordshire hold this level of fare.

### ***Rank Survey results***

120 hours of rank survey were undertaken in 2014. Compared to previous years, further information was obtained at the Old Stevenage ranks to allow for the change of night life to this area more recently.

In terms of active ranks, only Stevenage Station is used most times of the day and night, only unused when few trains are operating (02:30 to 05:00). Swingate provides very low demand shopping hours operation, the hospital also provides for very low demand during an extended day, with other ranks only servicing the night time economy.

In terms of average active loaded vehicle departures, the busiest rank is High Street (Old Stevenage) Saturday, followed by the same location on the Friday. Both nights see over 34 loaded departures per hour on average. The Leisure Park rank is next, followed by Stevenage Station. In comparison, Swingate sees an average of just four loaded departures per hour.

In total passenger terms, 64% of all hackney carriage rank demand occurs at the railway station. Old Stevenage provides 20% of demand and the Leisure Park 12%. Swingate rank is now almost unused in comparison, and has seen the largest decline of all ranks since the last survey.

The servicing of the Old Stevenage rank by a marshal was seen to have beneficial effects of maximising usage of this rank in an orderly fashion. There is a suggestion that removal of the marshals from the Leisure Park facility may have decreased the level of service provided there as security issues are more likely without the marshals being present.

In all locations there were more vehicles available than loaded journeys made.

2014 overall demand at ranks is just 2% higher than that observed in 2005 – not a significant level of growth over such a relatively long period. A typical week in 2014 sees just over 7,000 passengers per week. With an allowance for hailing, the estimated annual hackney carriage rank / hail level of passengers is around 377,000.

During our sample observations 68% of the hackney carriage fleet were observed, a reasonable level. Of these, 43% were only observed at night and just 3% only in the daytime.

A test using the industry standard ISUD index found the values calculated well below the threshold that might otherwise suggest significant unmet demand.

### ***Public Consultation***

299 persons were interviewed in the streets of Stevenage, including samples near Lister Hospital and Old Stevenage. Average usage in the last three months over the whole sample was 26%, reduced from the last survey (35%) although Old Stevenage recent usage was much higher at 63%. Overall licensed vehicle usage is low at 0.9 trips per person per month, and much less when specifically asking about hackney carriages (a value of 0.02 for the town centre and overall).

Total level of obtaining licensed vehicles by phone was some 87%, with just 12% saying they used ranks and 1% hailing. The town centre respondents tended to use ranks more, but not significantly so (17%). Old Stevenage hailing was higher (3%).

In terms of companies phoned, three were dominant and very few out of town operators were cited, fairly unique.

People were aware of the ranks available but this was tempered by the overall low usage of hackney carriages – although no-one said they could not remember seeing hackney carriages in the area, and only a small fraction said they could not remember the last time they had used one. There were no dominant requests for new ranks. Few suggestions were made as to how people might make more use of hackney carriages. In fact, the overall attitude towards licensed vehicles appeared to be a general lack of interest.

From a low overall response, 83% said they did not need, nor know anyone needing a wheel chair accessible or adapted vehicle. Those saying they needed a vehicle were evenly split between wheel chair accessible and other adapted styles.

No latent demand for hackney carriages was identified with the only place people had given up waiting was at a location where they had used an internal phone to call for a vehicle (and both were the same location).

In common with other questions, the issue of the private hire car signs saw little response. In the town centre, six people responded, half were aware of the signs, and 83% said they were a good reminder.

The public attitude sample saw over-representation of the middle aged group, but an appropriate sample of men and women. The over-representation may have skewed results against usage of licensed vehicles a little as the two under-represented groups tend to make more use in general terms.

### ***Stakeholder Consultation***

Supermarkets tended to be serviced by phone links to private hire companies. Hotels also tended to utilise private hire. The one night venue responding said service was provided by hackney carriages at the nearby rank. The hospital wanted to develop better taxi links. Little other response was received from other stakeholders. The rail operator was generally happy with the service provided. This is important given the fact that passenger levels have risen here 33% since the last survey and that with forthcoming changes more demand is likely to arise here (albeit not for up to five years). Web information points people to phoning the hackney carriage operator amongst the three phone numbers provided, but does also correctly show the rank has an active rank and that telephone bookings are not usually necessary or possible.

### ***Rank development options***

The private railway station rank is critical to the current hackney carriage vehicle operation, providing 64% of current passengers. Stevenage Borough Council will need to open discussion with Govia the new operator of Stevenage station, early in the life of the new franchise due to begin September, 2014 to ensure that at least as much, and preferably better rank spaces are provided for the station.

Improved rank provision is needed in Old Stevenage. This is important to support the developing night economy in this location, and to ensure the ability to get home does not lead either to increased usage of private cars, or reduced levels of growth. Efficiency of this rank is being significantly helped by the presence of marshals at busy times, but there is need to have additional northbound rank capacity at the busiest hours. This could be accommodated by the bus stop changing to a taxi rank at midnight by which time all bus services have ceased. The marshal would at this point move the vehicle queue forward to the new rank head, and the additional spaces would reduce the over-ranking currently observed. U-turns need to continue to be discouraged at this location.

The present Swingate rank is no longer viable. Without significant changes, it is likely to cease use altogether. The main issue relates to the present rank being distant from common routes used by potential passengers, and future developments that will worsen this position.

There is a significant opportunity at this time to provide four new rank locations that combined would provide a significant town centre rank provision. These could be taken forward as an outline test with the following locations:



- Ibis two car rank
- Westgate unloading bay three car rank
- Westgate loading area access two car rank
- Westgate loading area three car rank

When confirmed as successful, an experimental traffic order could follow with formalisation when the new set of ranks was proven to be viable. Benefits of the rank would also include increasing the vibrancy of this currently underutilised part of Stevenage town centre.

There is also an option to work with Lister Hospital to improve rank provision at their site.

All these rank developments are consistent with stated Hertfordshire transport policy.

### ***Trade Consultation***

9% of the 367 people involved in the licensed vehicle trade in Stevenage completed the questionnaire issued to them. 75% of respondents were hackney carriage. Half of respondents were active on a radio circuit. Experience was on average 13 years in the trade. The average working week was six days over 53 hours. Of those using ranks, 29% used the station, 25% Old Stevenage, 24% Swingate, 16% the Leisure Park and 4% Lister Hospital. 78% supported the current policy of limiting hackney carriage vehicle numbers. Were the limit removed, 28% said they would leave the trade whilst 13% would work longer hours. The consultation received a wide range of comments.

An outline presentation of the results of the Report including the proposals for rank introduction and revision were welcomed by the Trade on 25 June 2014.

### ***Equality Act***

The Equality Act is already on the statute books. There is a requirement that any authority with a limit on its number of hackney carriages should ensure no new entrant is refused entry if they are offering a wheel chair accessible vehicle if a given proportion of vehicles has not been achieved. At the present time, the level of WAV required in a fixed fleet has not been determined, and there is still no confirmed date for the consultation required to allow this to move forward.

The recent Law Commission Review may reduce any desire by Government to spend time resolving this Act. There is no way set out in legislation that any Council can require a particular level of WAV within the private hire fleet. We do not believe there are any other statutory requirements on national or local government beyond the Equality Act which require present action.

At the present time, there is no way that any authority without a limit on hackney carriage vehicle numbers can encourage an increase in the number of WAV style hackney carriages, apart perhaps from the introduction of a mandatory order requiring all vehicles to be wheel chair accessible (which would most likely be opposed by those seeking the spirit of the EA since current thinking is a mixed fleet is generally better for those with a range of disabilities).

A range of options are open to Stevenage were this section of the Act to be put in place. All are tempered by the lack of significant unmet demand, and in fact the excess of vehicles and fall in passenger demand. The preferable option, if required, would be for five current vehicles to change to wheel chair accessible style, not requiring any addition to the fleet size.

This is preferable to the worst case scenario where some 7 new plates would have to be issued to meet the expected proportion, inflating the overall fleet numbers by 7%, which would have an impact on current vehicles at a time of stagnant demand.

### ***Best Practice Guidance***

A review of the questions posed in the BPG was undertaken and is presented in an earlier Chapter. This review has been consistent with the requirements of the BPG.

### ***Conclusion***

There is no significant demand for hackney carriages in the Stevenage licensing area which is unmet. This was achieved by a fleet of 100 vehicles with at least one not active during the survey period. There is no need to estimate additional plates required as there is no significant unmet demand to eliminate.

Whilst it is clear that licensed vehicles, and more so hackney carriages, are fairly lightly used in Stevenage, principally due to high car ownership and good public transport, they are a known transport resource to the public and with better central rank provision and more visibility day to day usage could be increased particularly in the daytime. Night usage seems to be growing naturally with the Old Stevenage developments and is encouraging the development of that area and its night time economy.

At the present time it would be prudent for the focus to be on sufficient current vehicles becoming WAV to meet any future Equality Act requirements rather than any potential increase in the overall vehicle numbers, which are clearly not needed at this particular time.

## **11. Recommendations**

### ***Limits on the number of hackney carriage vehicles***

With there being no significant unmet demand for hackney carriages with 100 vehicles available, the Council can retain its present limit of hackney carriage vehicle numbers at this level and would be able to defend this if challenged. There is no additional level of plates to be estimated.

On the contrary, adding any further plates at this time could cause issues at the main rank at Stevenage station by causing congestion of vehicles in the limited space available. The same could be true at the Old Stevenage rank. Other rank spaces provided but not used would remain unused because they are not supported by passenger demand.

The opportunity of the stability provided to the current trade by retention of the present limit should be taken to seek to revise the rank spaces available to enable the current fleet to operate effectively and to see a significant and viable set of ranks developed to provide service to the current town centre.

### ***Rank provision***

Present rank use focusses on the private Station rank, the Old Stevenage northbound rank and the private Leisure Park rank, with dwindling usage of the Swingate rank since this location has not kept up with present changes to the town centre.

Whilst it will be essential the Council ensures the new operator of Stevenage station (Govia) works with them to provide sufficient rank space for the expected passenger growth with the new services to be offered in 2018 to south of the Thames, this is a longer term matter although discussion must begin as soon as possible to ensure the right solution is developed.

The options at present for the Council in terms of improved rank provision relate to revision of Old Stevenage ranks and providing a viable central Stevenage alternative set of ranks to Swingate.

In terms of the Old Stevenage ranks, the southbound rank should be released for other kerbside usage whilst negotiations are needed with Hertfordshire County Council to allow the present bus stop on the northbound side ahead of the current rank to be used as a rank from midnight once bus services have ceased. This is consistent with Hertfordshire LTP aims to make best use of road space as well as to encourage usage of taxi services to support the night economy, and follows practice in other local authority areas making best use of available road space.

The set of four ranks in the central area outlined above should be developed and tested at outline to prove their efficacy before a temporary traffic order is set up and then made permanent. It will be critical to obtain trade support and agreement to work this location at the earliest possible opportunity to avoid abortive effort. The meeting of 25 June 2014 obtained outline agreement to the proposals. This rank development is consistent with the LTP aim to improve usage of taxi services including provision of an integrated service with the bus station which is nearby.

The outline test should be given at least six months to prove viability before the move to the temporary traffic order is considered. It will also be important to work with the Westgate Centre and other nearby potential traffic generators to advertise the existence of this new rank, although the locations have been designed to be visible on current passenger traffic routes and near to present flows of potential customers.

The ranks at Swingate and Danestrete could then be released for other usage.

### **Other opportunities**

The issue of the Equality Act and need for wheel chair accessible vehicles needs to be considered in preparation for any threat from this Act in forcing additional vehicles into the fleet at this time. This needs dialogue with the trade in advance of any possible consideration of application of section 161 of this Act.

Current private hire provision focusses on a small number of operators, one of which is a hackney carriage dominated circuit. Despite high levels of customer loyalty to these few companies, some choose to show very little accreditation of their ownership on the vehicle. Passenger safety has been improved by the encouragement of private hire stickers, but companies should consider improving their visibility by ensuring each private hire vehicle advertises the company it operates for. This would improve passenger safety, further increase passenger loyalty and ensure that any issues raised could promptly be dealt with either by the company or more easily by the Council.

The Law Commission conclusions were published on 23 May 2014. In general, the new proposals remain consistent with the retention of limits (albeit with a focus on ensuring passengers are served by this policy rather than the need to demonstrate no significant unmet demand). Further, this review, including rank provision considerations, pre-empted the Law Commission requirements. Review of the limit policy and rank provision are both required to be at three yearly intervals, meaning that a fresh study of both the limit policy and rank provision will be required no later than March 2017, subject to the actual changes that follow from the Law Commission proposals.

## **Appendix 1 – Rank Observation Details**



# Stevenage, Swingate rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 09:00 – 21:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
09	4	3	2	2	4	00:03:45	00:02:00	00:04:00			No passenger waits			
10	10	8	6	3	9	00:13:18	00:16:42	00:31:00			No passenger waits			
11	6	7	5	1	6	00:11:10	00:11:24	00:32:00	00:00:51	00:03:00	2	0	0	00:03:00
12	8	4	4	4	8	00:15:07	00:20:30	00:31:00			No passenger waits			
13	7	7	6	1	7	00:06:08	00:05:40	00:15:00	00:00:17	00:01:00	2	0	0	00:01:00
14	7	4	4	4	8	00:11:51	00:12:20	00:19:00			No passenger waits			
15	7	8	5	2	7	00:00:08	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:02:00	00:02:00	8	0	0	00:03:00
16	5	1	1	3	4	00:16:48	00:26:30	00:48:00						
17	2	1	1	2	3	00:02:30	00:00:00	00:00:00						
18	2	1	1	1	2	00:04:30	00:05:00	00:05:00			No passenger waits			
19	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
20	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
TOTALS	58	44	35	23	58						12	0	0	00:03:00

# Stevenage, Swingate rank, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 08:00 – 21:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
08	1	0	0	0	0	00:06:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
09	1	0	0	2	2	00:13:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
10	1	0	0	0	0	00:46:00	00:46:00	00:46:00						
11	3	3	1	0	1	00:23:20	00:29:00	00:34:00			No passenger waits			
12	4	6	4	2	6	00:18:45	00:21:20	00:40:00						
13	3	4	3	1	4	00:22:00	00:28:30	00:31:00						
14	8	8	5	1	6	00:13:07	00:14:42	00:23:00	00:00:07	00:01:00	1	0	0	00:01:00
15	9	14	7	2	9	00:27:53	00:30:25	01:12:00						
16	5	2	1	3	4	00:22:24	00:46:30	01:03:00						
17	3	8	4	1	5	00:11:00	00:16:00	00:21:00						
18	2	2	1	2	3	00:18:00	00:00:00	00:00:00			No passenger waits			
19	1	0	0	1	1	00:03:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
20	2	4	1	1	2	00:02:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
TOTALS	43	51	27	16	43						1	0	0	00:01:00



# Stevenage, Lister Hospital rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 10:00 – 22:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
10	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
11	1	0	0	1	1	00:07:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
12	3	0	0	2	2	00:14:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
13	2	0	0	1	1	00:35:30	00:00:00	00:00:00					
14	0	0	0	2	2	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
15	4	0	0	3	3	00:06:15	00:00:00	00:00:00					
16	1	2	1	1	2	00:03:00	00:03:00	00:03:00					
17	2	3	2	0	2	00:02:30	00:02:30	00:05:00					
18	1	1	1	0	1	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
19	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
20	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
21	1	1	1	0	1	00:05:00	00:05:00	00:05:00					
TOTALS	16	7	5	11	16								

No passenger waits

# Stevenage, Danestrete rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 19:00 – 03:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
19														
20														
21	1	0	0	1	1	00:04:00	00:00:00	00:00:00			No Passenger waits			
22	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
23	1	2	1	0	1	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:02:00	00:02:00	2	0	0	00:02:00
00	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00			No passenger waits			
01	4	0	0	4	4	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
02	6	3	2	4	6	00:01:30	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:40	00:01:00	2	0	0	00:01:00
TOTALS	13	5	3	10	13						4	0	0	00:02:00

# Stevenage, Danestrete rank, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 18:00 – 03:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
18													
19	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
20	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
21	3	0	0	3	3	00:02:20	00:00:00	00:00:00					
22	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
23	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
00	3	0	0	3	3	00:00:40	00:00:00	00:00:00					
01	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
02	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
TOTALS	9	0	0	9	9								

No passenger waits

# Stevenage, High Street (northbound) rank, Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 23:00 – 04:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
22	6	0	0	0	0	00:05:40	00:09:00	00:14:00						
23	18	40	16	5	21	00:16:53	00:18:30	00:28:00			No passenger waits			
00	16	40	16	2	18	00:06:48	00:07:25	00:18:00						
01	3	10	4	0	4	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:01:12	00:03:00	4	0	0	00:05:00
02	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
03	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00			No passenger waits			
TOTALS	43	90	36	7	43						4	0	0	00:05:00

# Stevenage, High Street (northbound) rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 21:00 – 04:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
21	19	16	10	7	17	00:09:09	00:11:30	00:24:00						
22	30	46	25	1	26	00:09:22	00:09:24	00:26:00			No passenger waits			
23	36	70	39	2	41	00:06:25	00:06:26	00:17:00						
00	83	147	77	2	79	00:01:58	00:01:54	00:09:00	00:00:09	00:01:26	16	0	0	00:04:00
01	61	124	61	2	63	00:03:40	00:03:37	00:11:00	00:00:02	00:01:00	5	0	0	00:01:00
02	20	21	13	3	16	00:19:30	00:21:49	00:31:00			No passenger waits			
03	7	22	12	2	14	00:08:17	00:08:48	00:10:00						
TOTALS	256	446	237	19	256						21	0	0	00:04:00

# Stevenage, High Street (northbound) rank, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 21:00 – 06:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
21	24	32	16	4	20	00:13:20	00:14:09	00:23:00						
22	33	72	33	1	34	00:07:38	00:07:43	00:13:00			No passenger waits			
23	47	104	47	3	50	00:05:11	00:05:16	00:11:00						
00	101	229	99	2	101	00:01:07	00:01:06	00:04:00	00:00:28	00:02:17	48	0	0	00:04:00
01	80	151	75	0	75	00:02:14	00:02:14	00:10:00	00:00:11	00:01:19	22	0	0	00:02:00
02	48	88	46	2	48	00:04:40	00:04:43	00:11:00	00:00:18	00:01:55	12	2	0	00:06:00
03	24	50	25	4	29	00:07:02	00:06:57	00:17:00						
04	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00			No passenger waits			
05	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
TOTALS	357	726	341	16	357						82	2	0	00:06:00

# Stevenage, High Street (Southbound) rank, Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 23:00 – 04:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
23	11	18	10	1	11	00:02:38	00:02:54	00:07:00					
00	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
01	1	2	1	0	1	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
02	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
03	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
TOTALS	12	20	11	1	12								

No passenger waits

# Stevenage, High Street (Southbound) rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 21:00 – 04:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
21	4	3	3	1	4	00:01:45	00:02:20	00:06:00	No passenger waits					
22	33	47	31	1	32	00:03:01	00:03:03	00:08:00						
23	52	66	42	9	51	00:02:12	00:02:13	00:08:00						
00	37	57	31	5	36	00:01:47	00:01:42	00:06:00						
01	47	56	33	15	48	00:02:53	00:03:12	00:11:00						
02	24	34	19	3	22	00:09:25	00:09:30	00:24:00						
03	2	7	5	1	6	00:06:00	00:06:00	00:09:00						
TOTALS	199	270	164	35	199									



# Stevenage, High Street (Southbound) rank, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 21:00 – 05:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
21	25	28	19	1	20	00:05:52	00:06:07	00:13:00	No passenger waits				
22	45	55	36	10	46	00:03:57	00:04:19	00:08:00					
23	67	79	53	18	71	00:02:48	00:02:58	00:07:00					
00	42	49	31	11	42	00:01:10	00:01:11	00:04:00					
01	29	41	25	4	29	00:02:02	00:01:52	00:05:00					
02	32	33	21	8	29	00:02:39	00:03:02	00:08:00					
03	15	28	16	2	18	00:02:48	00:02:55	00:04:00					
04	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00					
TOTALS	255	313	201	54	255								

# Stevenage, Leisure Park, private rank, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 22:00 – 04:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
22	2	3	2	0	2	00:05:30	00:05:30	00:11:00	00:01:42	00:03:00	4	0	0	00:03:00
23	15	20	10	3	13	00:03:36	00:03:50	00:10:00	00:00:52	00:02:20	6	0	0	00:03:00
00	17	30	16	3	19	00:01:00	00:01:08	00:04:00	00:00:26	00:01:51	7	0	0	00:03:00
01	47	79	42	5	47	00:01:48	00:01:41	00:07:00	00:01:56	00:04:13	24	17	0	00:09:00
02	55	93	43	1	44	00:06:37	00:06:43	00:16:00	00:00:05	00:01:00	7	0	0	00:01:00
03	46	99	52	5	57	00:04:50	00:04:55	00:13:00	00:00:52	00:06:08	6	8	0	00:09:00
TOTALS	182	324	165	17	182						54	25	0	00:09:00

# Stevenage, Station private rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 08:00 – 03:00

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Average passenger waiting time, those waiting only (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
07	1	1	1	0	1	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:02:00	00:02:00	1	0	0	00:02:00
08	27	22	21	6	28	00:04:32	00:04:51	00:15:00	00:01:16	00:02:54	11	0	0	00:05:00
09	41	23	22	7	29	00:16:51	00:19:50	00:40:00	00:00:03	00:01:00	1	0	0	00:01:00
10	17	20	15	8	23	00:29:38	00:39:24	00:47:00						
11	19	14	12	6	18	00:25:31	00:32:08	00:44:00						
12	13	14	12	3	15	00:26:13	00:30:33	00:40:00						
13	18	16	15	3	18	00:13:00	00:14:47	00:23:00		No passenger waits				
14	21	24	22	3	25	00:10:40	00:11:09	00:15:00						
15	31	29	23	3	26	00:07:11	00:07:42	00:15:00						
16	26	27	25	0	25	00:13:55	00:14:26	00:23:00	00:00:02	00:01:00	1	0	0	00:01:00
17	45	44	39	2	41	00:08:57	00:09:05	00:17:00						
18	40	47	43	1	44	00:16:18	00:16:20	00:25:00		No passenger waits				
19	55	63	54	1	55	00:08:37	00:08:40	00:22:00	00:00:05	00:01:12	5	0	0	00:02:00
20	30	32	27	2	29	00:26:20	00:27:34	00:38:00						
21	27	29	25	2	27	00:24:33	00:26:00	00:41:00		No passenger waits				
22	41	51	39	3	42	00:13:27	00:13:48	00:26:00						
23	54	79	54	3	57	00:08:53	00:09:01	00:25:00	00:00:08	00:01:13	9	0	0	00:03:00
00	76	104	75	2	77	00:05:01	00:05:07	00:16:00	00:00:41	00:03:07	22	1	0	00:06:00
01	28	31	22	4	26	00:20:38	00:20:42	00:47:00						
02	16	21	13	6	19	00:15:30	00:21:37	00:31:00		No passenger waits				
03	0	0	0	2	2	00:00:00	00:00:00	00:00:00						
TOTALS	626	691	559	67	627						50	1	0	00:06:00

**Stevenage, Stevenage Station private rank, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, 09:00 – 23:00**  
**(Private hire activity)**

Hour	No of vehicle arrivals	Total passenger departures	Total loaded vehicle departures	Empty vehicle departures	Total Vehicle departures	Average vehicle waiting times (mins)	Average vehicle waiting times (for a fare, mins)	Maximum vehicle waiting time for a fare (mins)	Average passenger waiting time in an hour (mins)	Number of people waiting 1-5 mins	Number of people waiting 6-10 mins	Number waiting 11 mins or more	Maximum passenger wait time (mins)
08	3	0	0	3	3	00:01:00							
09	3	0	0	3	3	00:01:20							
10	5	0	0	5	5	00:01:00							
11	4	0	0	4	4	00:13:45							
12	2	0	0	2	2	00:01:00							
13	4	1	1	3	4	00:00:30							
14	10	0	0	9	9	00:01:00							
15	4	0	0	5	5	00:01:00			Not applicable				
16	7	1	1	5	6	00:00:42							
17	3	0	0	4	4	00:01:20							
18	1	0	0	1	1	00:01:00							
19	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00							
20	0	0	0	0	0	00:00:00							
21	1	0	0	1	1	00:00:00							
22	1	0	0	1	1	00:00:00							
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>								





## Appendix 2 Stakeholder Feedback Diary

Chapter	Stakeholder Group / Person	Date	Views returned?
5	<b>Supermarkets</b>		
	Asda, Monkswood Way	4/14	Y
	Sainsbury's Magpie Crescent	4/14	Y
	Tesco London Road	4/14	Y
	Tesco, The Forum	4/14	Y
5	<b>Hotels</b>		
	Holiday Inn Express	4/14	Y
	Holiday Inn	4/14	Y
	Abbingdon Hotel	4/14	N
	Ibis	4/14	N
	Novotel	4/14	N
5	<b>Night clubs</b>		
	Chicago Rock	4/14	Y
	Cinnabar	4/14	N
	Old Red Lion	4/14	N
	Flava Bar	4/14	N
5	<b>Hospital</b>		
	Mike Zaloga, Stevenage Hospital	7/3/14	Y
5	<b>Disability representatives</b>		
	Herts Action on Disability	23/4/14	N
	Stevenage Seniors Forum	23/4/14	N
5	<b>Rail Operators</b>		
	Darren Marchant, APCOA	20/2/14	Y
	Karl McCormack, First Capital Connect	20/2/14	Y
5	<b>Police</b>		
	Hertfordshire Police	4/14	N
5	<b>University</b>		
	North Herts College	4/14	N
6	<b>Hackney carriage and private hire trade</b>		
	Via driver questionnaire		Y

Note (N) – advertised phone number not available when called