**Email to:** transportation@canterbury.gov.uk

Mr Richard Moore

Head of Transportation and Environment

Canterbury City Council

Military Road

Canterbury CT1 1YW

[date]

**Subject: Proposed changes to charges and conditions in Council car parks**

Dear Mr Moore,

We are writing to express our concerns that the changes Canterbury City Council is seeking to make to its car parking strategy will have a significantly negative impact on our business and on the business community in the city. We participated in a workshop organised by the Canterbury Business Improvement District in December with cross-sector representation from Canterbury businesses, including hotels, retailers, visitor attractions, law firms, estate agents and architects.

The findings from the workshop, and also from a survey of local businesses, show that these proposals will put our business at risk. The proposals are focused on the short-term and not considering the longer-term impact of loss of car parking revenue, future investment and businesses moving elsewhere. The main driver appears to be raising revenue rather than reducing emissions. They are trying to look at/resolve two very different issues – congestion and car parking – and they are not joined up with other relevant traffic and environment strategies. Any changes made to the local transport strategy need to reflect the population profile, tourists’ requirements and the issues that are unique to Canterbury.

Whilst we would value improvements the visitor welcome and electric vehicle charging points, the proposed changes to tariffs and permits would damage our business. In addition, the Park & Ride facilities are not fit for purpose and until improvements to those facilities are made (particularly the frequency of buses, opening times and priority bus lanes to reduce congestion), we do not believe any changes should be made to the availability of city-centre car parking spaces (with the closure of Northgate Car Park to allow for the expansion of Northgate Medical Centre Northgate being the only exception).

If these changes are implemented, [insert specific impact on your business and feel free to include wording and quotes from the BID report].

We believe that stakeholder meetings between Canterbury City Council and local businesses should have taken place before the official consultation process on specific proposals to allow the Council to better understand the impact on local businesses. We urge the Council to work with businesses to think through some of the issues and consider more practical solutions before making the proposed changes.

Yours sincerely,