Peterborough City Council’s Northminster multi-storey car park will be closed from midnight tonight (Thursday 25 July) after a report from structural engineers confirmed that the 40 year old building is likely to have reached the end of its life and may pose a risk to the safety of people who park there.

In April the council commissioned a structural report to allow it to understand how much longer the car park could be used for given its age and to estimate the costs attached to refurbishing it.

The 720-space car park on Cattle Market Road was constructed during the late 1970s and it was therefore known to be reaching the end of its expected lifespan.

The council received a report from the structural engineers on 19 July 2019 which concluded that the car park is likely to have now reached the end of its life and recommends that there is either significant investment in the car park to allow it to be used into the future, or that it is closed permanently and demolished. Either way, it is recommended that the car park is closed to the public as soon as possible.

The report also advises that the retail units on the ground floor and the public toilets can remain open as long as the building is free of vehicles.

Within the next week the council will decide what the future holds for the car park. This could include significant investment to make the repairs necessary to allow it to remain open, or permanent closure and demolition. In any event immediate works will be undertaken to keep the building safe until it can be demolished or repaired.

Part of these considerations will be the fact that the car park is in an area which has been identified for regeneration and development in our Local Plan.

Councillor Peter Hiller, cabinet member for strategic planning, commercial strategy and investments, said: "Our priority is to keep people safe and we are not prepared to compromise on this which is why we have taken steps to close the car park as soon as possible, even though we know it will be an inconvenience to some people.

"We will be making a decision on the future of car park in the coming days which of course will factor in the loss of a car park in this part of the city, the significant costs involved in refurbishing the building and the development potential for this key city centre site."

Motorists can use alternative car parks, the nearest being Wellington Street which is £4 all day. Others include Dickens Street car park, which is also £4 all day, or the car park on Brook Street.