

## **Divisions Affected – All divisions**

### **CABINET REPORT - 20 September 2022**

#### **PARKING STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

##### **Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to** adopt and implement the revised 'Parking Standards for New Developments' as a formal supplementary document to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

#### **Executive Summary**

2. Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), adopted July 2022, outlines a clear vision to deliver a net-zero Oxfordshire transport and travel system by 2040. One of the policies within the LTCP that will be key to supporting this vision is realised is Policy 33, which sets out how the council is seeking to reduce and restrict car parking availability while also creating more attractive places for residents to live and work in.
3. Policy 33 states that parking requirements for all modes of transport are to be considered in line with OCC's transport user hierarchy. This LTCP policy also seeks to ensure such standards are embedded into relevant guidance and decision-making processes, such as planning applications for development proposals.
4. The revised 'Parking Standards for New Developments' document has now been prepared and its formal adoption as a supplementary document to the LTCP by Cabinet is recommended, to allow the relevant OCC officers to ensure its requirements are implemented in practice through planning applications for new developments.

## Background

5. The availability of parking, at both source and destination, has a significant influence on the type of transport people choose for their journeys. Striking the right balance by providing an appropriate level and type of parking, whilst also protecting highway safety for all users, and promoting active and sustainable transport modes is essential. The revised parking standards document has been prepared with this design rationale in mind, and in support of the LTCP Policies to:
  - *Replace or remove 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030.*
  - *Deliver a net-zero transport network and replace or remove an additional 1 out of every 3 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2040.*
  - *To deliver a transport network that contributes to a climate positive future by 2050.*
6. Oxfordshire is a large county and has many local characteristics from dense urban areas, through market towns, to rural villages and hamlets. These geographical variations influence the demographics and economics of the county and consequently car ownership and the parking behaviour of Oxfordshire residents in its distinctly different areas.
7. OCC, in its role as the Local Highway Authority (LHA), is a statutory consultee in respect of planning considerations that affect the public highway and responds to planning application proposals when consulted by all local planning authorities. OCC provides advice to local planning authorities on the transport implications of development proposals to assist in their decision-making process. OCC is also consulted during the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and may provide advice on the soundness of policies that relate to parking in new developments (or redeveloped) sites.
8. The car and cycle parking standards that OCC has been using when assessing development proposals were prepared in 2011 and have fallen behind national and local policies. The document being considered for adoption is intended to update these standards while incorporating the guidance provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated July 2021 and the adopted LTCP.

### **Summary of the ‘Parking Standards for New Developments’ approach and role**

9. A key objective of this revised parking standards document is to support the implementation of OCC’s LTCP Policies through restricting / reducing the on-site car parking provision at a destination location i.e. a workplace. For example, this revised document has a 50% lower car parking provision for new employment / commercial developments compared to the existing standards. Reducing destination parking levels is expected to assist in influencing travel behaviour and encourage alternative modes of travel to be used.

10. The car parking standards for residential developments have also been revised from the provisions set out in OCC's previous 2011 and 2015 documents. The new levels for residential land uses have been reduced. The levels of reduction are difficult to forecast due to the nature of the planning system. However, subject to location, for edge of Oxford City or town sites a total car free approach for new developments can be applied or a reduction of up to 43% of the existing car parking levels. Examples of this new approach are shown in Annex 4.
11. While a car free approach is positively promoted within the revised parking standards document specific site requirements are to be provided to enable such approaches to be implemented as part of a site-wide master plan. Such as the implementation of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), provisions of high-quality direct pedestrian / cycle connections, and access to frequent public transport services.
12. Car parking levels within rural areas of Oxfordshire have been reduced, but not yet to the same extent as the urban areas; due to the limited opportunities for active and sustainable modes and local facilities that are available in these areas. As future investment comes into these areas this element of the car parking standards will be reviewed.
13. In addition to the reduction in car parking levels for new developments, changes to how OCC's car parking requirement is presented has also been changed. The proposed format is now considered to be a simpler process to follow to incorporate into a development proposal.
14. This document is not intended to favour the private car as the main mode of transport but emphasises the need to control and design parking levels for developments at a car fee or reduced level without increasing the risk of indiscriminate parking. The amount of car parking available must be enough to avoid any adverse effects to highway safety by not providing a sufficient level. Parking provisions for developments will be required to provide a sufficient level to accommodate the parking demand of a site, while also ensuring all the potential for sustainable and active travel by other modes of transport are also achieved.
15. Cycle parking for all development land uses has been reviewed. The new cycle parking levels set out in this document have been increased by 50% above previous standards. For some specific land use types the cycle parking standards quoted in Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20) have been incorporated into the document. In addition, the cycle parking provisions for a development proposal are now set at a minimum level where developers are encouraged to exceed this to promote active and sustainable journeys.
16. The content of the 'Parking Standards for New developments' and supporting documents will be used to help determine the level of parking at all development sites and provide the basis of OCC's advice to the local planning authorities and developers on development proposals. These documents will also support OCC

officers in advising local planning authorities upon the soundness of local plan policies related to parking for new developments.

17. This document is a 'live' document and will be reviewed and updated alongside local and national policy. It is anticipated that reviews of this document will take place every 12-18 months.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

18. The County Council's 'Strategic Plan: 2022-25', sets out a vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county. By helping to put into practice policy within the LTCP, the 'Parking Standards for New Developments' document will help to deliver aspects of this vision.
19. By ensuring that the revised parking standards for new developments is implemented through proposed developments (alongside the new Decide and Provide approach), thus prioritising reduced parking levels, active travel and public transport interventions, the document will contribute to delivering the following priorities identified in the Strategic Plan:
  - Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work
  - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents
  - Invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network.

## **Financial Implications**

20. The implementation of this document's requirements is not expected to have implications for staff resource, as the assessment of parking provisions for development proposals is already undertaken by officers. The revised parking standards will not create any additional resource pressures to those that already exist. As such, it is not expected that there will be any revenue or capital resource implications.

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## **Legal Implications**

21. The implementation of this document's requirements is not expected to have any legal implications as the assessment of parking provisions for development proposals is already undertaken by officers. The revised parking standards is not expected create any additional resource pressures to those that already exist.

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## Staff Implications

22. The implementation of this document is not expected to generate any implications for staff resource, as the assessment of parking provisions for development proposals is already undertaken by officers. Some training will be required for appropriate teams but is not anticipated to create any additional resource pressures that don't already exist. As such, it is not expected that there will be any staff implications.

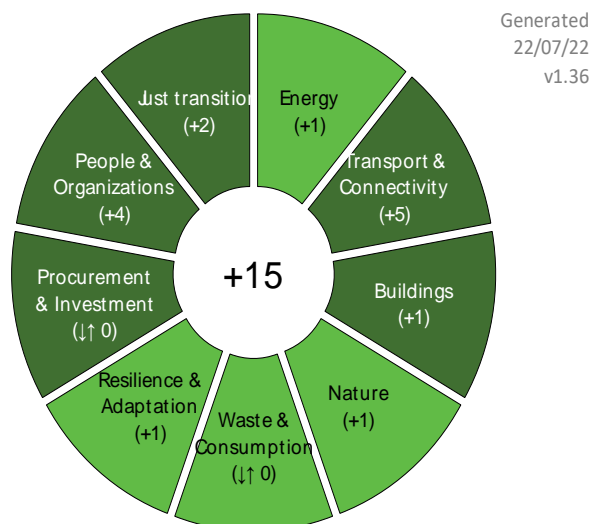
## Equality & Inclusion Implications

23. The Implementing of 'Parking Standards for New Developments' document will help towards ensuring that new developments will be provided with an appropriate level of parking provision for all users of the highway network. One of the objectives of this document is to ensure development proposals, whilst provided with appropriate parking provision, do not detract from the character of a place to live, or work that is sought through the planning process.

The Equalities Impact Assessment, which can be found at Annex 2, shows that there is likely to be a benefit to various individuals, groups, and communities as a result of this document being implemented as it should make a positive contribution to ensuring that a wider range of travel choices are available to all.

## Sustainability Implications

24. As one of the key means of implementing the aims of the LTCP, the 'Parking Standards for New Developments' document will play an important role in helping to deliver the aims of OCC's Climate Action Framework and realising the goal of decarbonising the transport and travel system.
25. A Climate Impact Assessment has been undertaken and the resultant report can be found in Annex 3. As illustrated in the scoring summary wheel below, the document has been identified as making a positive contribution to climate action across various categories.



Oxfordshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 (8 years and 0 months away).

## **Risk Management**

26. There is potential risk through implementing a reduced level of car parking for new developments (and redevelopments) in that this may lead to indiscriminate car parking taking place on the public highway, causing highway safety implications. This risk is considered within the document and can be minimised with quality development master planning, including appropriate design / mitigation measures and through other transport modes choices being made available.
27. Another potential risk is that the local planning authorities within Oxfordshire do not embed the requirements of this document appropriately in their respective Local Plans. This may cause issues with the implementation of the document as it may hold less weight in planning decisions if it remains only a requirement of the LTCP.
28. However, early engagement has taken place with officers at each of the four district councils and the city council to ensure that they are supportive of the document. Additionally, engagement with members of these councils is also planned so that they might also understand the intent of the document. It is hoped that the document will receive support from the district councils and city council as its aims broadly accord with the strategic policies of all Oxfordshire councils.

## **Consultations**

29. 'Parking Standards for New Developments' is a technical document intended to implement policy in the Oxfordshire LTCP and as such the comprehensive consultation exercise for the Oxfordshire LTCP encompasses the intent of this document.
30. However, as part of the process of developing the 'Parking Standards for New Developments' document, an initial engagement exercise was undertaken with internal colleagues. Their written comments and views derived from discussions held in meetings were used to inform a first working draft of the document.
31. Subsequently, further engagement took place with internal colleagues, in addition to officers at the district and city councils, industry professionals, relevant OCC cabinet members (i.e. those with transport-related portfolios), and National Highways. The comments derived from this second engagement process were then used to inform the final draft of the document.

**BILL COTTON**

Corporate Director for Environment and Place

**Annex 1:** Parking Standards for New Developments (working draft)

**Annex 2:** Equalities Impact Assessment

**Annex 3:** Climate Impact Assessment

**Annex 4:** Parking Standards Review Update presentation

Background papers: Nil

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