



Headington Liveable Streets

Response to Oxfordshire: Countywide - proposed Electric Vehicle charging only parking spaces (July 26) consultation by Headington Liveable Streets

https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire_electricvehiclecharging_july2026

This response contains Headington Liveable Streets' (HLS) comments on:

- the policy and equity considerations triggered by the overall proposal to install EV charging only parking spaces around Oxfordshire; and
- the detail of the one proposed site in Headington – Latimer Road.

Policy and equity considerations

Whilst we acknowledge that private electric cars have a role to play in the move towards sustainable transport, there are many policy- and equity-based reasons to object to the use of public space and OCC resources to create EV charging bays for private cars.

Policy breach

Installing EV charging bays for use by private car owners goes against various OCC transport policies, in particular:

- **LTCP Policy 1 (Transport User Hierarchy):** *develop, assess and prioritise transport schemes, development proposals and policies according to the transport user hierarchy.* As the hierarchy places pedestrians, cyclists, wheeled mobility users and shared car club users above private car users, this policy requires that available public road space is used for purposes that support walking, wheeling and cycling rather than private car use. In practice, this means:
 - Using kerbside carriageway space for e.g. seating, trees for shade, SUDs for drainage/flood prevention, cycle parking, micromobility bays and shared car club parking bays in place of and ahead of parking for private vehicles, regardless of their engine type.
 - Ensuring that footways are prioritised for safe, accessible and convenient use by pedestrians and wheeled mobility users such mobility scooter, wheelchair and mobility frame users, which includes ensuring adequate space and avoiding/removing physical obstructions – including cars and car-related equipment like EV chargers.

These proposals work against this policy by prioritising kerbside space for private car parking and compromising footways by placing EV charging points on them – reducing available width and adding obstacles.

- **LTCP Policy 8 (Healthy Streets approach):** *embed the Healthy Streets Approach and Design Check Tool into relevant guidance and decision making processes to improve the human experience of streets and encourage walking and cycling.*

These proposals work against this policy because facilitating private car parking encourages car ownership and driving rather than walking and cycling, and placing EV charging points on footways actively makes walking more difficult.

- **LTCP Policy 33 (Parking management):** *ensure the parking requirements of all modes of transport are considered, in line with the transport user hierarchy; take measures to reduce and restrict car parking availability.* This sits alongside **COTP Action 5 (Parking):** *Consolidate/reduce public parking provision where appropriate;* **Action 12 (Cycle Parking):** *Deliver increased cycle parking at key destinations including for non-standard cycles, a network of on-street residential cycle hangers across the area, a public hire cycle scheme including e-bikes and e scooters across central Oxfordshire;* and **Action 22 (E-scooters/E-bikes):** *Deliver an e-scooter hire scheme across central Oxfordshire.*

These proposals work against this suite of policies by prioritising and allocating kerbside space for private car parking and ignoring opportunities to reduce car parking and increase cycle and micromobility parking.

- **LTCP Policy 35 (Demand management):** *Investigate demand management measures, where appropriate, in order to discourage private car use, engaging with key stakeholders during the development of any schemes.*

These proposals run counter to this policy, as they encourage car ownership and use by dedicating public road space to private car parking and charging.

- **LTCP car trip reduction targets.** Like any other car parking spaces, EV charging bays generate/enable car trips and encourage car ownership. As such, these proposals actively work against OCC's car trip reduction targets.

It's disappointing and frustrating that OCC is bringing forward highway proposals that appear to ignore, and actively work against, OCC policies and targets.

Equity

Use of public space for EV car parking has negative equity/equality implications:

- **Socio-economic:** EV charging bays benefit only people who are rich enough to own an expensive car, so are socio-economically exclusive. Poorer people are more likely to rely on walking, cycling, wheeling, micromobility and shared car club cars to get around.
- **Public benefit:** EV charging bays only benefit car owners, whereas other uses of road space such as seating, trees and gardens benefit everyone and cycle and micromobility parking benefit a much wider range and number of people. The space taken up by an EV charging bay only benefits one person at a time when in use, whereas other uses benefit hundreds of people every day.
- **Equality:** When EV charging equipment is placed on the footway it inflicts the most harm on the most vulnerable people, including disabled people, parents pushing prams/pushchairs or walking with small children, and frailer/slower adults. Restricting footway space and adding more obstacles makes it harder to travel using a mobility scooter, wheelchair, mobility frame

or pushchair and creates additional hazards for people with visual impairment. The public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires OCC to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, including disabled people and people who suffer particular disadvantages or have particular needs due to their age. These proposals don't appear to give due regard to these impacts, with none of the consultation documents addressing equality. We agree with Oxfordshire Liveable Streets that there should be an Equality Impact Assessment for the programme as a whole as well as each individual scheme where footways are being encroached on.

- **Driver entitlement:** The creation of EV charging bays may lead drivers to think they have a property interest or right to that road space, whereas in reality this space belongs to OCC to be used for the benefit of all residents and road users. (The same applies even more so to EV charging channels across footways.)
- **Appropriation of space:** Installing EV charging bays effectively appropriates public road space for private car use for the long term. It involves significant work and financial investment and is not easily reversible – the equipment is effectively permanent, so space committed to EV charging bays cannot easily be re-purposed later.
- **Encourages car ownership.** Installing EV charging bays enables, normalises and embeds car ownership. While we agree that EVs have a role to play in sustainable transport, we query the assumption that we want people to buy new electric cars rather than go car-free. The mantra “fewer cars, not newer cars” should be the aspiration in Oxford, enabled by top quality active travel, wheeled mobility, public transport and shared car club options.

In light of the above considerations, we do not believe these proposals are consistent with OCC's policies or the moral imperative and object specifically to placing EV chargers on footways. We would encourage OCC to focus on using precious road space for purposes that benefit all residents and road users rather than a privileged small group and help achieve OCC's transport policies and targets rather than work against them.

We support the installation of EV chargers for shared car club bays, provided that these are placed in the carriageway, not on footways. This is because shared car club bays don't involve the same privatisation of public space as EV charging bays for private cars, and have positive impacts including:

- Enabling residents to go car-free or reduce the number of cars they own – reducing both the amount of public road space used for car storage and the number of car trips made.
- Benefiting numerous people who can make use of the same car rather than just one car owner.
- Allocating road space in a way that complies with OCC's transport policies and enables OCC's targets to be achieved.

Comments on the Latimer Road proposal

Inconsistency with Headington West CPZ consultation

There appears to be a lack of joined-up planning within OCC, as these proposals clash with the recent Headington West CPZ consultation. Whereas that consultation sought residents' views about using parking spaces for multiple purposes, including cycle parking, micromobility bays and shared car club

bays, these proposals effectively override/pre-empt the results of that consultation by earmarking the space on Latimer Road for private EV charging, pretty much presenting this as a fait accompli – the Information Leaflet gives a strong impression that OCC has got funding for this and is going to do it.

It seems that different teams within the Council are pursuing plans that are in conflict with each other *and* Council policy, and that these teams aren't talking to each other to formulate a coherent strategy for use of kerbside space.

Issues with this location

This location seems to have been chosen to benefit residents of Latimer Grange, who are presumably the main users of the current HB permit holder spaces there.

All nearby residents have their own off-street private car parking, including residents of The Brambles, all houses on the West side of Latimer Road and houses on the East side of Latimer Road except numbers 35-51 at the bottom end.

Latimer Grange residents have off-street garage and parking space at the back of the flats, as indicated in yellow on the Google Maps image below.



If the proposed EV charging bays are intended to be for the benefit of Latimer Grange residents, it seems more equitable and consistent with OCC policies to use that private parking space which already exists for the use of those residents rather than allocating public space for that purpose. We appreciate that OCC doesn't have control over that space, but surely OCC could liaise with the

relevant freeholder/leasehold management company or use any applicable powers to persuade them to enable installation of EV charging for the benefit of residents?

Alternatively, putting EV charging points on Latimer Grange rather than Latimer Road would seem fairer and more consistent with OCC policy, as that road is only used by Latimer Grange residents and their visitors, whereas Latimer Road is used by the public at large so the negative effects outlined above would impact many road users who won't benefit from the spaces but will suffer the disadvantages.

The plan indicates that the charging points will be placed on the footway. We object to this for the reasons stated above. There is plenty of space to place chargers on the carriageway here, and no justifiable reason for not doing so.

The footway on Latimer Road is already compromised in many places by cracked surfaces, overgrown hedges, obstructive trees, tree routes and dips at driveway entrances. OCC should focus its resources on dealing with these existing problems, not adding more obstacles and restricting the usable width further.