

# **North Somerset Council**

## **Report to the Council**

**Date of Meeting: 09 November 2021**

**Subject of Report: Adoption of the Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD Following Public Consultation**

**Town or Parish: All**

**Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Mark Canniford - Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy**

**Key Decision: No**

### **Reason:**

Council Decision.

### **Recommendations**

A. To adopt the revised **Parking Standards SPD** following public consultation.

## **1. Summary of Report**

1.1. North Somerset Council Officers have undertaken a comprehensive review of the existing Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The current standards date back to November 2013 and are in need of a thorough update, particularly in light of the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

1.2. The Parking Standards SPD sets out the Council's requirements for all types of parking provision (vehicle, cycle, motorcycle, etc) at new developments and is a material consideration in planning decisions. It is not itself a development plan document but provides further clarification and detail to Core Strategy Policy CS11: Parking.

1.3. The key objectives of the North Somerset Parking Standards SPD are to:

- Ensure an appropriate level of parking is provided at new developments.
- Promote highway safety through good design.
- Provide clarity for developers, officers and other stakeholders by providing clear and comprehensive guidance.

1.4. As part of this review, a variety of updates are proposed including:

- The introduction of 'Principle 19: Electric Vehicle Parking' which sets out minimum requirements for Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure at new development.
- The introduction of 'Principle 20: Car Club Schemes at New development' to ensure the provision of Car Clubs at suitable locations.
- The introduction of a 'Parking Needs Assessment' to assist officers in determining a suitable level of parking in areas well served by active and public modes of transport and where car ownership and use is lower.
- Increases to the minimum number of cycle parking spaces to be required at new development, including a minimum level of non-standard cycle parking spaces to accommodate people with mobility impairments and ensure cycling in North Somerset is accessible to as many individuals as possible.
- Updated and more comprehensive cycle parking guidance in line with the Department for Transport's Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design (July, 2020).
- Updates to Appendix A (Car and Cycle Parking Standards), including introducing standards for sports halls, swimming pools, gyms/health clubs, cinemas, theatres and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs).
- Increase in parking bay dimensions from 2.4m x 4.8m to 2.5m x 4.8m to ensure spaces remain accessible and usable for modern vehicles.

1.5. As part of this review process, an internal officer consultation was undertaken in November 2020 with officers across Transport and Infrastructure, Planning, and Planning Policy. Changes were subsequently made to ensure the revised document reflected the current and foreseeable issues prior to public consultation.

1.6. Following this, the revised SPD received approval to go to public consultation at the April 2021 Executive Committee. The public consultation was held between the 17<sup>th</sup> May - 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Further amendments to the SPD were made in light of the feedback received.

1.7. A decision is subsequently sought to formally adopt the revised Parking Standards SPD.

## **2. Policy**

2.1. A Supplementary Planning Document is used to provide further detail to existing development plan policies but is not itself a development plan document. In the case of the Parking Standards SPD, the document provides further clarification and interpretation of Core Strategy Policy CS11: Parking. Following its adoption, the revised Parking Standards SPD will be a material consideration in planning decisions. The Parking Standards SPD also interacts with and supports a range of other Council policies and priorities.

### **2.2. Core Strategy (2017)**

The Parking Standards SPD provides further clarification and detail to Core Strategy Policy CS11: Parking. The aim of CS11 is to ensure that 'adequate parking is provided and managed to meet the needs of anticipated users (residents, workers and visitors) in usable spaces'. Parking provision must ensure a balance between good urban design, residential amenity and promoting town centre attractiveness and vitality. The Parking Standards SPD contributes towards this aim by outlining in detail the standards expected by the Council regarding parking provision at new development.

### **2.3. Sites and Policies Plan: Part 1 Development Management Policies (2016)**

DM28: Parking Standards of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1, sets out that development proposals should meet the Council's standards for the parking of motor vehicles and bicycles. It states that planning applications must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the functional parking needs of developments can be accommodated on or close to the site without prejudicing Highway Safety or resulting in an unacceptable impact on on-street parking in the surrounding area. The Parking Standards SPD further clarifies this requirement by setting out the minimum required standards expected by the Council at new development.

### **2.4. North Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan (2019)**

In 2019, North Somerset Council declared a Climate Emergency and announced its ambition to be Carbon Neutral by 2030.

The transport sector at 42%, including the M5, is the largest single source of carbon emissions in North Somerset ([figures from North Somerset Climate Emergency – Report on Baseline Evidence](#)). This is considerably higher than the regional (South West) average of 32% and the national average of 33% from transport (2018 figures, Gov.uk). For the West of England region, transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act - increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat globally and extreme weather events in the South West region.

The North Somerset Climate Emergency Action Plan identifies reducing emissions from transport as a key action in achieving our commitment to be a carbon neutral council and a carbon neutral area by 2030. By providing adequate provision of EV charging infrastructure at new developments, increasing the number of cycling parking spaces at residential development, and promoting the provision of Car Clubs at new development, we will promote the use of low-carbon modes of transport.

### **2.5. NSC Corporate Plan 2020**

The NSC Corporate Plan was approved by Full Council in 2020. The Plan sets out three key priorities to become: a thriving and sustainable place; a council which empowers and cares about people and; an open and enabling organisation. The Parking Standards SPD directly contributes to the following objectives within the thriving and sustainable place priority:

- To be a carbon neutral council area by 2030.

- A transport network which promotes active, accessible, and low carbon travel.

The introduction of minimum requirements for EV charging provision at new developments will promote the uptake of electric vehicles and contribute towards decarbonisation of the transport network. Improvements in cycle parking provision and the promotion of Car Clubs at new development will also encourage lower carbon modes of transport over private cars.

## **2.6. Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4) 2020**

The JLTP4 sets out a 15-year vision for transport investment in the West of England.

It seeks to deliver a well-connected sustainable transport network that offers greater realistic travel choice and makes walking, cycling and public transport the preferred way to travel. It looks to implement measures that can manage private car use, parking availability and encourage individuals to change their travel habits, with sustainable modes becoming the preferred choice for journeys wherever possible.

## **2.7. North Somerset Local Plan 2038 (Emerging)**

Going forward, the emerging North Somerset Local Plan will look to ensure that new developments contribute towards the Council's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. The revised parking Standards SPD will directly contribute to this aim by ensuring that parking provision at new development is conducive to the use of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs).

## **2.8. Active Travel Strategy (2021)**

The North Somerset Active Travel Strategy aims to make walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset. It sets out an ambitious programme of measures to promote modal shift away from private vehicle use and towards more active modes of travel. Increases in the number of cycle parking spaces to be provided at new developments, and the introduction of minimum requirements for non-standard cycle parking to accommodate people with mobility impairments, will ensure active modes of travel are accessible to as many individuals as possible.

# **3. Details**

3.1. The Parking Standards SPD expands upon CS11: Parking of the adopted Core Strategy (2017) and sets out the level of parking provision required at new development.

3.2. The key objectives of the North Somerset Parking Standards SPD are to:

- Ensure an appropriate level of parking is provided at new developments.
- Promote highway safety through good design.
- Provide clarity for developers, officers and other stakeholders by providing clear and comprehensive guidance.

3.3. A thorough review of the existing Parking Standards SPD has been undertaken by officers, particularly in light of the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, and, as such, several updates are proposed.

3.4. The revised SPD includes the introduction of 'Principle 19: Electric Vehicle Charging' which sets out minimum requirements of Electric Vehicle charging provision at new developments. These standards were initially based on the 'minimum recommendations' made in the Systra/Cenex report *Evidence Base: Introducing Planning Policy For Electric Vehicles in New Development* (May, 2019) commissioned by the West of England authorities. Following public consultation, however, and a review of recently adopted Parking Standard SPDs at other Local Authorities, these have been increased and are now proposed as follows:

- Minimum of 100% passive provision (cabling and Residual Current Device (RCD) sufficient to enable subsequent active provision) for allocated parking spaces at residential development
- For unallocated spaces at residential development, the council will expect 75% passive provision, as well as 25% active provision. Active provision should take the form of cabling, RCD and 7kw 32amp Office for Zero Emission (OZEV) compliant wall or ground mounted charge point.
- Minimum of 20% active provision (cabling, RCD and 7kw 32amp OZEV compliant wall or ground mounted charge point), and a further 20% passive provision at non-residential development.

The new standards are accompanied by guidance setting out appropriate design and dimensions for non-residential EV parking bays, including a suggested charge point layout diagram provided by the Energy Savings Trust.

The transition from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles to ULEVS will be essential in tackling Climate Change and achieving our ambition to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. By requiring a level of EV charging infrastructure at all new developments, we will encourage the uptake of electric vehicles over ICE vehicles.

3.5. Also proposed is the introduction of 'Principle 20: Car Club Schemes at New development'. This sets out that car club schemes must be considered at new developments and that, where appropriate, the Council may secure provision via a planning condition or via Section 106 agreement.

Car clubs can offer residents an attractive and convenient alternative to private vehicle ownership and can encourage increased use of public transport, walking and cycling, whilst still providing access to a car when required. Research indicates that for each Car Club vehicle provided, up to 14 private cars are taken off the road. By ensuring that car clubs are provided at suitable locations, we can reduce residents' reliance on private vehicle use and encourage more public and active modes of travel.

3.6. The revised SPD also includes the introduction of a 'Parking Needs Assessment' to identify locations where a lower level of parking than the current standard may be appropriate. This seeks to recognise that different areas of North Somerset require different levels of parking provision and subsequently offers the opportunity for fewer spaces to be provided in accessible locations that are less reliant on private vehicles. Car ownership, for instance, varies greatly across the district. Central Weston, for example, has an average of only 0.65 vehicles per household, compared to up to 1.9 in places such as Winford and it is important that parking standards reflect these differences.

At present, despite the wide variation in car ownership across North Somerset, we have only one set of parking standards. This is in contrast to many authorities nationally which have different standards for urban and rural areas. By using a one-size-fits-all approach, our standards consequently offer a particularly generous level of parking compared to other authorities, particularly in our most accessible locations. Whilst our current standards do permit deviation from the required number of spaces in sustainable locations where car ownership and use may be lower, there is no consistent methodology for identifying where this may be appropriate, and how great a reduction should be applied.

3.7. The Parking Needs Assessment looks to address this by providing a clear and robust assessment to identify where in North Somerset we may permit reduced minimum parking standards. The assessment itself is a well-established method in determining parking requirements and has been adapted from similar assessments currently in place at various authorities nationally, including both B&NES and Wiltshire County Council. It aims to promote well-connected and accessible developments which provide a level of parking reflective of specific local circumstances.

3.8. As part of the assessment, development proposals can be scored against a variety of criteria and receive a reduction in parking provision depending on their level of accessibility. This includes criteria such as walking distance to the nearest bus stop, frequency of bus services, and walking/cycle distance to a variety of facilities such as railway stations, schools, and shopping facilities. There will be seven levels of discount available, depending on the assessment score. This will range from 'very low' (0-5% discount) to 'very high' (65-95%), although it should be noted that, at present, nowhere in North Somerset would fall within the 'very high' category. Developers can also score additional points by providing measures that reduce reliance on private vehicle ownership such as car clubs, shared e-bike schemes and resident bus passes. This will ensure parking provision is reflective of local circumstances and that accessible areas, less reliant on private vehicles, will not be required to provide unnecessary levels of vehicle parking. In doing so, the Assessment also aligns the SPD with paragraph 107 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which notes that local parking standards should take into account the accessibility of the development, the availability of public transport, and also local car ownership levels.

3.9. The assessment has been tested on a wide variety of locations across North Somerset. The following table looks at the example of 10 2-bedroom dwellings across a variety of sites:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Average car ownership per household</b>	<b>10 2 bed dwellings anticipated car ownership</b>	<b>Current parking requirement without reduction</b>	<b>Assessment score</b>	<b>Minimum parking requirement under Parking Needs Assessment</b>
Winford	1.9	19	20	Very Low: 0-5% reduction	19 to 20
Wrington	1.65	16 to 17	20	Low: 5-10% reduction	18 to 19
Yatton	1.6	16	20	Low-moderate: 10-15% reduction	17 to 18
Adjacent to Gordano School	1.55	15 to 16	20	Low-moderate: 10-15% reduction	17 to 18
Central Nailsea	1.4	14	20	Moderate: 15-25% reduction	15 - 17
Central Clevedon	1.15	11 to 12	20	Moderate: 15-25% reduction	15 - 17
Port Marine, Portishead (With Metrowest)	1.45	14 to 15	20	Moderate: 15-25% reduction	15 - 17

<b>Location</b>	<b>Average car ownership per household</b>	<b>10 2 bed dwellings anticipated car ownership</b>	<b>Current parking requirement without reduction</b>	<b>Assessment score</b>	<b>Minimum parking requirement under Parking Needs Assessment</b>
Central Portishead (With Metrowest)	1.25	12 to 13	20	Moderate-high: 25-40%	12 to 15
Central Weston	0.65	6.5	10 (1 per dwelling as per Weston Regen SPD)	High: 40-65% reduction	7 to 12

As demonstrated in the above table, the minimum parking requirement under the Parking Needs Assessment is more in line with the anticipated level of car ownership at each location. This will contribute towards delivering higher density development in the right locations, less dominated by private vehicles and help facilitate more viable public transport.

3.10. Moreover, although it can be seen that the level of parking under the Parking Needs Assessment exceeds the anticipated demand at each location, measures are also proposed to ensure parking issues are not created. Principally, garage spaces and rear parking court spaces, will not count towards the parking requirement where a reduced level of parking is permitted. This is on the basis that research shows less than 50% of garages are used for parking, and a similar percentage of rear parking court spaces are unused if on-street parking is available. This has caused issues previously at developments in both Locking Castle and Port Marine where high numbers of garage and parking court spaces were unused, pushing vehicles to park on-street in inappropriate locations. By not counting these spaces, we will ensure that where a reduction is permitted, spaces remain usable and vehicles are not pushed into parking in appropriate locations such as on footways or near junctions.

The development at Port Marine, for instance, was approved with only 1.4 spaces per dwelling. Once unused garage spaces and unused parking court spaces are removed from consideration, the development was approved with only 1 space per dwelling. As is demonstrated in the table above, however, under the Parking Needs Assessment, a minimum of 1.5-1.7 spaces would be required per dwelling at the development, and this would not include any garage or rear parking court spaces. This level of parking provision would meet the anticipated level of car ownership but would also ensure that an unnecessary level of additional parking is not required.



It should also be noted that the reductions permitted under the assessment will not be forced upon developers and they are able to provide the original requirement if they wish. It does, however, offer them the opportunity to build higher density, lower car developments in the right locations.

The assessment will therefore serve as a clear, evidenced, and consistent approach for both officers and developers in determining an appropriate level of parking at new development that is reflective of specific local circumstances. This will help facilitate higher density developments in areas that are well served by public and active modes of transport, have good local facilities, and are less reliant on private car ownership.

### 3.11. Other updates include:

- The introduction of a Coach Parking Principle, requiring developments likely to generate coach travel to provide adequate space to facilitate coach parking.
- Updates to Appendix A (Car and Cycle Parking Standards), introducing standards for sports halls, swimming pools, gyms/health clubs, cinemas, theatres and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), and an increase in the number of cycle parking spaces to be provided at residential development.
- Increase in the width of standard parking bay dimensions from 2.4m to 2.5m, in line with national trends, to ensure spaces remain accessible and usable for modern vehicles. Current dimensions, dating from the 1970s, do not reflect the increase in standard vehicle sizes and parking related incidents now account for more than 30% (675,000) of all yearly accidents.
- Include minimum dimensions for Electric Vehicle Bays – 2.8m x 6.0m in line with recommendations from the Energy Savings Trust.
- Increases to the minimum number of cycle parking spaces to be provided at new development, including the introduction of a minimum level of non-standard cycle parking spaces to accommodate people with mobility impairments and ensure cycling in North Somerset is accessible to as many individuals as possible.
- Further good practice guidance regarding effective cycle parking in line with the Department for Transport's guidance for cycle parking set out in Local transport Note 1/20 Cycling Infrastructure Design (July 2020).

3.12. The various changes proposed will contribute towards the Council's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030 by providing sufficient EV charging infrastructure at new developments, by promoting the use of car clubs, facilitating higher density development in accessible locations, and by ensuring adequate levels of cycle parking are provided.

## **4. Consultation**

4.1. As part of this review process, an internal officer consultation was undertaken in November 2020 with officers across Transport and Infrastructure, Planning, and Planning Policy. Following this, a variety of amendments were made to reflect officer feedback.

4.2. Internally, to promote Local Member involvement, we consulted with the Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration policy and scrutiny panel (SPEDR) on March 10<sup>th</sup> who were supportive of the proposal to take the revised SPD to public consultation.

4.3. Public and stakeholder consultation on the draft SPD then ran between 17<sup>th</sup> May – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The Consultation received 136 responses which represented a significant increase from the 32 responses received at the 2013 consultation for the current version.

4.4. The consultation format included 7 questions each relating to a specific aspect of the proposals, as well a final question which enabled respondents to provide general comments and suggestions.

4.5. Overall, consultation feedback was positive with 59% having a very positive or positive impression of the proposed SPD, 23% having a neutral impression, and 18% having a negative or very negative impression of the proposals. It is noted, however, that of the negative responses received, many focused on factors outside of the scope of the SPD to remedy, particularly a general disapproval of new housing developments within North Somerset, and the existence of pre-existing parking issues at some locations. A small minority also objected to the SPD's focus on the Climate Emergency and the increased emphasis on Active Travel provision.

4.6. As a result of the feedback received, a variety of amendments have been made to the SPD including:

- Increased requirements for Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure at both residential and non-residential developments
- Small amendments to the proposed Parking Needs Assessment to ensure the topography of walking routes is considered
- A comprehensive update of disabled parking standards for both vehicles and cycles
- Removal of proposed increased length of parking spaces to 5m but retention of increased width to 2.5m
- Revised parking survey guidance

A more detailed analysis of the consultation responses and changes made as a result, is available at Appendix C of this report.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1. The Revised Parking Standards SPD has no immediate financial implications, except for staff time.

5.2. The cost of preparing the Parking Standards SPD has been met from the existing Strategic Transport Policy and Development budget.

5.3. The Parking SPD will be implemented by officers within Development Management and met by applicants proposing new development. The Financial costs of delivering the SPD are therefore minimal.

## **6. Legal Powers and Implications**

6.1. Supplementary Planning Documents build upon and provide more detailed advice and guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. In this case, the North Somerset Parking Standards SPD provides further clarification and interpretation of Core Strategy Policy CS11: Parking. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration in planning decisions but will not itself be a development plan document.

## **7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

7.1. The proposed updates will contribute towards the decarbonisation of our transport network and help achieve the Council's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

7.2. The promotion of car clubs in accessible locations will help provide alternatives to private vehicle ownership.

7.3. Minimum requirements for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure at new development will ensure that our developments are future proofed and ready for the ban on new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.

7.4. The Parking Needs Assessment will help facilitate higher density, lower car developments in accessible locations well served by public modes of transport that are less reliant on private vehicle ownership.

7.4. Increases in the minimum number of cycle parking spaces required at new developments, as well as more extensive good practice guidance will ensure that active travel is an attractive first choice for short and medium journeys for as many users as possible.

## **8. Risk Management**

8.1. The key risks of the revised SPD are:

- Providing too few parking spaces at new development can cause a variety of problems including cars parking on the highway, causing

obstructions for service and emergency vehicles, reduced visibility at junctions and vehicles parking on the footway. To avoid these issues, the Parking Needs Assessment avoids a universal reduction of parking standards, and instead only permits reductions based on a robust assessment of the local circumstances. This will deliver a level of parking reflective of the specific demand at each development. This approach has been widely tested on locations across North Somerset to ensure parking levels are sufficient to serve the varying levels of car ownership across the district. Moreover, the assessment is a well-established method for determining parking levels and has been used successfully by several other local authorities. Furthermore, where a reduction in the parking standard is to be permitted, garage spaces and rear parking court spaces will not count towards the standard to ensure parking provision remains usable for residents.

- Whilst providing generous EV charging provision at new development may increase the uptake of EVs over petrol/diesel vehicles, it may discourage modal shift to more active modes of travel. However, the alternative of not providing sufficient EV infrastructure at new development would significantly hinder North Somerset's ability to decarbonise our transport network and is therefore not considered a realistic alternative.
- There is a need to ensure that any revised parking standard does not conflict with the emphasis, in light of Covid-19, on measures that promote walking and cycling such as reallocating street space and parking bays to pedestrians and cyclists. As such, the SPD provides extensive guidance relating to cycle parking to ensure appropriate cycle parking facilities are available at all new developments.

## **9. Equality Implications**

9.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the review process and was reviewed following the public consultation.

9.2 A reduction in the number of vehicle parking spaces at new development was identified as having a 'low' impact on disabled people. Disabled people often have greater reliance on the private car due to specific access needs and a widespread reduction in the availability of parking at new development may limit their ability to easily reside in, access and use proposed developments. This has been mitigated by ensuring that any reduction in the number of parking spaces at new developments does not apply to disabled parking spaces. This will ensure that developments are still required to provide a minimum number of disabled-only parking bays to ensure they remain accessible to those with disabilities. These spaces will be required to meet larger specific dimensions and be located as close to the destination's entrance point as possible.

9.3. As part of the public consultation, various disabled groups were consulted. In light of the feedback received, a variety of improvements to disabled provision for both vehicle and cycle parking have been introduced, including enlarged disabled bay dimensions, new standards for parallel

disabled bays and disabled EV bays, and also the introduction of comprehensive guidance regarding the type of non-standard cycle parking the Council will expect at new developments.

9.4. As the proposal may result in reduced parking provision at some new developments, it is possible that all groups will be impacted in their ability to access vehicle parking spaces at new developments. However, this will be mitigated by ensuring that, in line with the Parking Needs Assessment, parking is only reduced in suitable locations well served by public and active modes of travel and less reliant on private vehicle ownership.

## **10. Corporate Implications**

10.1. The revised SPD will have implications within Place, specifically for Transport Planning, Planning Policy and Development Management as the SPD will form a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and the planning of new developments across North Somerset.

10.2. This will have positive implications for the aforementioned service areas by providing greater clarity regarding reductions to parking provision and contribute towards our climate objectives.

10.3. The revised SPD will also support the various NSC policies outlined in section 2.

## **11. Options Considered**

11.1. The alternative would be to retain the existing Parking Standards SPD which dates to 2013. Given the Climate Emergency and the need to quickly and comprehensively review our policies in light of this, retaining our current Parking Standards SPD is not considered a viable option.

### **Author:**

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Place Directorate

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A: Draft North Somerset Parking Standards SPD and Parking Needs Assessment

Appendix B: Review of public consultation feedback and proposed amendments

### **Background Papers:**

Evidence Base: Introducing Planning Policy For Electric Vehicles in New Development (May, 2019)

North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017)

Joint Local Transport Plan 4 2020-2036 (2020)

North Somerset Corporate Plan 2020-24 (2020)

North Somerset Council Development Management Policies: Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (2016)

North Somerset Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan (2019)

North Somerset Draft Active Travel Strategy (2020)

North Somerset Council Climate Emergency – Report on Area Baseline Evidence (July 2020)

**Appendix A: Revised North Somerset Parking Standards SPD**  
**(Attached separately)**

## **Appendix B: Review of public consultation feedback and proposed amendments**



## Parking Standards SPD: Review of Consultation feedback and subsequent amendments

### Background:

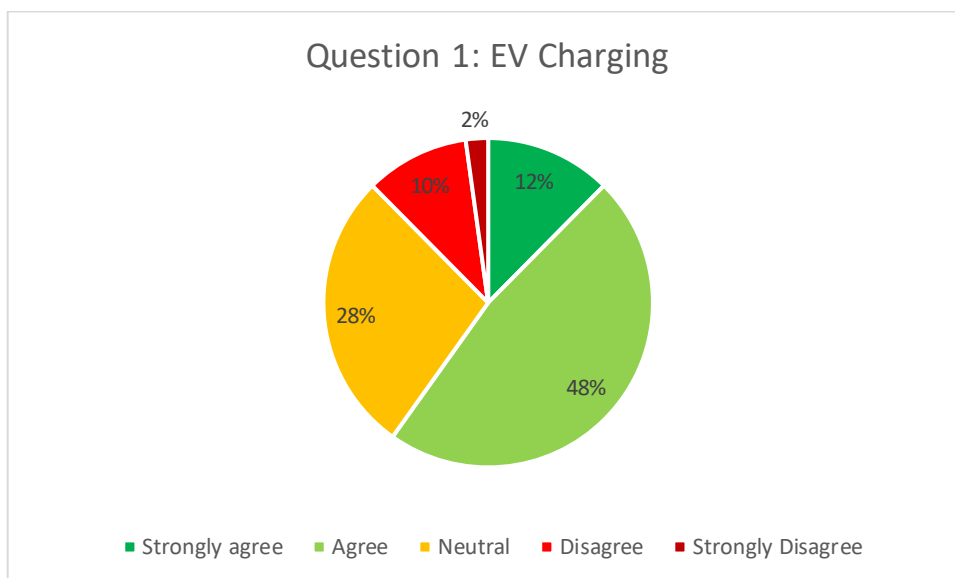
Public and stakeholder consultation on the draft SPD ran between 17<sup>th</sup> May – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The consultation was publicised through a variety of means including the Town and Parish digest, Nextdoor social media platform and The Knowledge. Through 'e-consult', the consultation was also sent directly to a variety of stakeholders and planning policy consultees. The consultation received 136 responses which represented a significant increase from the 32 responses received at the 2013 consultation for the current version.

The consultation format included 7 questions each relating to a specific aspect of the proposals, as well a final question which enabled respondents to provide more general comments.

### Consultation Responses:

#### Question 1:

To what extent do you agree that the level of Electric Vehicle Charging proposed at new developments (outlined in Principle 19) is sufficient to contribute towards the demands of the Climate Emergency?



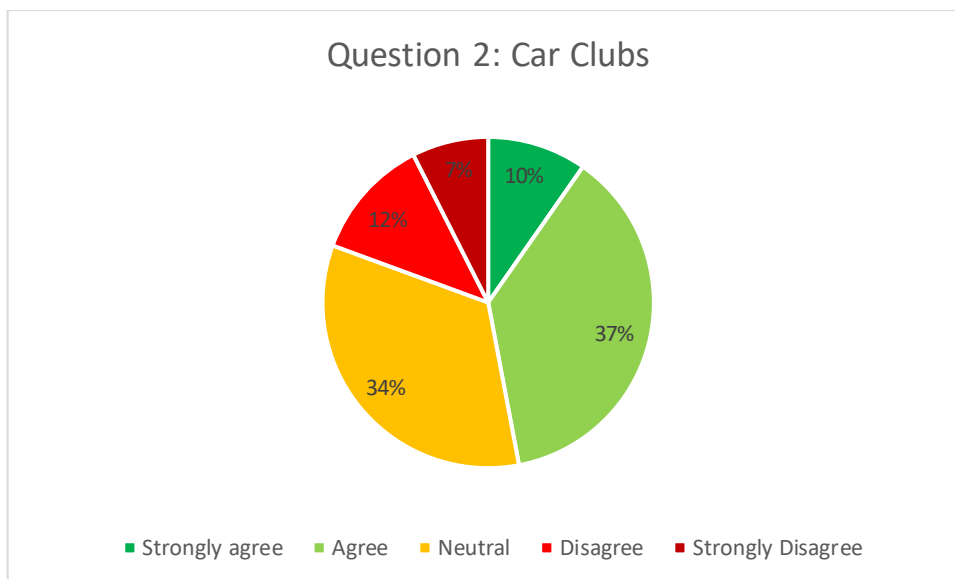
#### Comments/Actions:

- Largely positive response to the proposals. 60% strongly agreed or agreed with the proposals and only 12% disagreed/strongly disagreed.
- Primary concern from consultees regarding EV charging was that we are not being ambitious enough as a Local Authority and that we should be requesting a higher proportion of Electric Vehicle Charging at new developments. In light of this feedback, and having undertaken a comparison with other recently adopted Parking Standards from other LAs we have made the following amendments:
  - Increase in requirement of active provision to 25% of spaces at unallocated residential development, with the remaining 75% provided with passive provision.

- For non-residential development, increase to at least 20% active provision and a further 20% passive provision to support the later installation of charge points should this be necessary.
- Concern was raised from a small number of developers regarding the financial burden the proposed EV charging infrastructure may place on developers as well as the capacity of local utilities to manage the increased infrastructure.
  - However, this is not considered sufficient grounds to delay the introduction of minimum requirements for EV charging provision at new development and it is felt that any concerns regarding the impact upon specific local utility services can be addressed through the planning process.
- It was highlighted that national standards may soon be introduced through an update to building regulations.
  - In response, we have acknowledged this within the SPD but made clear that if Building Regulations are updated, developers will be expected to meet whichever standard is greater

### Question 2:

To what extent do you agree that the proposals (outlined in Principle 20) to request Car Club vehicles at suitable new developments are appropriate?

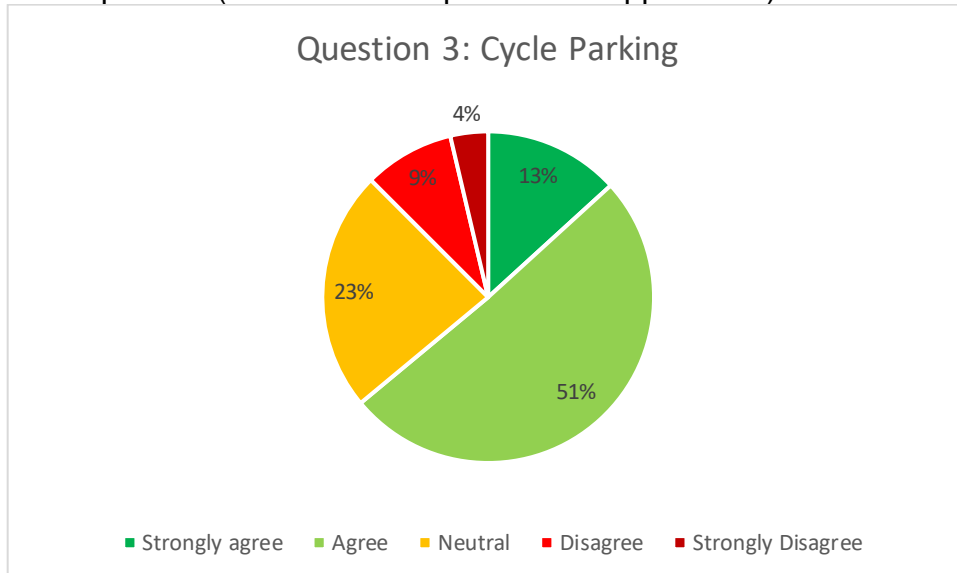


### Comments/Actions:

- Again, broadly positive response with 47% of strongly agreeing or agreeing, 34% neutral and only 19% with an unfavourable view of the proposals.
- Comments received were widely supportive of the principle to introduce Car Club vehicles. It was mentioned, however, that perhaps we could go further and introduce a minimum requirement for car club vehicles at all new developments.
  - However, given that the success of car clubs is largely dependent on specific local factors such as population density, a blanket requirement would result in car clubs being delivered in locations that are unlikely to be feasible in the long term
  - It is therefore considered that a case by case approach to the delivery of Car Clubs is more appropriate.

### Question 3:

To what extent do you agree that the level and type of cycle parking required at new developments (set out in Principle 21 and Appendix A) is sufficient?

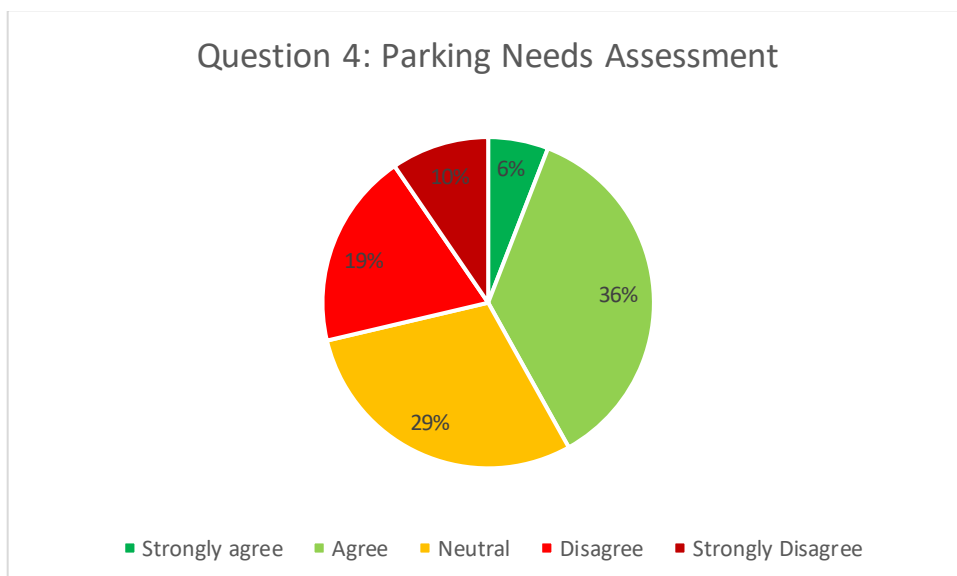


**Comments/Actions:**

- Largely positive response regarding the level of cycle parking proposed at new developments – 64% strongly agree/agree, 23% neutral and only 13% disagree.
- It was noted, however, that cycle/scooter provision for children’s homes, primary and secondary schools may not be sufficient.
  - The SPD has been amended to reflect the need for a Travel Plan for these types of developments to determine a suitable level of cycle/scooter provision.
- A small number of comments suggested the SPD placed too much emphasis on cycle parking
  - However, given the context of the Climate Emergency and the Council’s recent adoption of the Active Travel Strategy, it is considered necessary to provide ample cycle parking facilities at new development

**Question 4:**

To what extent do you agree that the overall balance of the Parking Needs Assessment (set out in Appendix B) is right and everything has been considered?



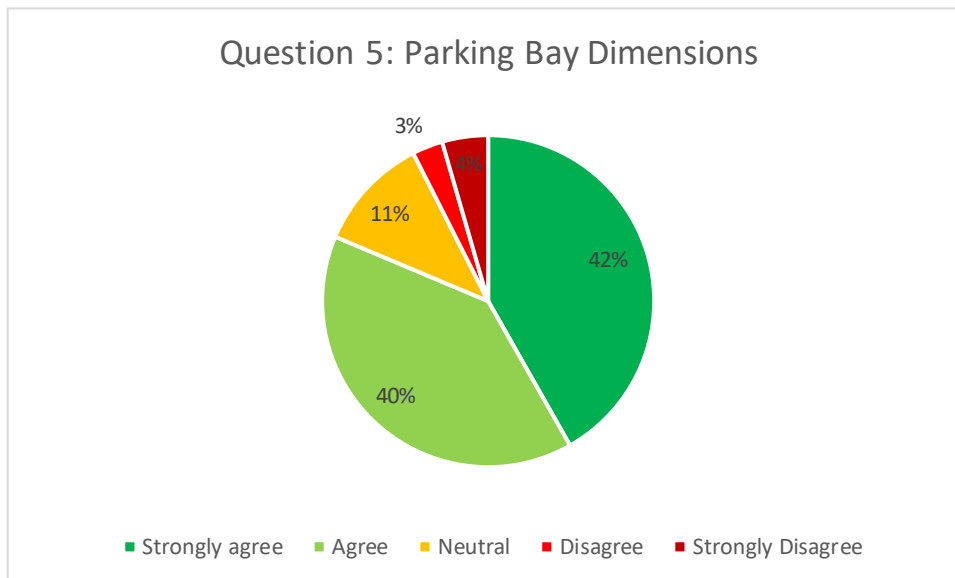
## Comments/Actions:

- Whilst still receiving more positive responses than negative, this did receive a more mixed response with 42% strongly agreeing or agreeing with the proposals, 29% neutral, and 29% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.
- However, of those 29% who disagreed, there was a clear divide between those who felt the Assessment offered too great a reduction, and those who felt it did not offer significant enough reductions to discourage car use and tackle the Climate Emergency.
- There were a number of comments suggesting that the Parking Needs Assessment did not go far enough and should provide a greater discount in parking spaces in order to discourage the use of private vehicles in light of the Climate Emergency
  - However, providing too few parking spaces at new development can cause a variety of Highway Safety and other issues and does not necessarily result in reduced car ownership. On this basis, it is not considered appropriate to introduce a blanket reduction in the parking standard.
  - The Assessment is therefore aimed at delivering a level of parking that reflects local circumstances and local car ownership levels and the Highways and Transport Development Management Team have tested a wide variety of sites across North Somerset to ensure this is the case.
- Some organisations also undertook case studies and felt that the assessment results still provided too many parking spaces in relationship to local car ownership levels and therefore greater discounts should be applied to the level of parking required
  - However, these case studies tended to rely upon 2011 census car ownership data and it is widely accepted that car ownership levels have since increased. When adjusted to reflect projected growth, the Parking Needs Assessment is more in line with anticipated car ownership levels
- It was also suggested that lower standards for affordable housing be introduced given that there is evidence to suggest that affordable developments tend to have lower car ownership levels
  - However, whilst it is acknowledged that affordable housing developments tend to have low car ownership levels, this was not considered appropriate on the grounds of equality, in that it could limit access to vehicles for those groups more reliant on affordable housing.
- On the other hand, a number of comments disagreed with the principle of offering any discount to the standards set out in the SPD
- The parking issues experienced at the Locking Castle and Port Marine Developments were frequently cited as justification for this opinion
  - However, the issues experienced at Locking Castle and Port Marine were caused primarily by the application of 'maximum standards' that were in place prior to the 2013 Parking Standards SPD, as well as the high reliance on small garage spaces and rear parking courts that are both often under utilised
  - Both sites have been thoroughly tested by the HTDM team which has confirmed that that even with the application of the Parking Needs Assessment, a level of parking that would accommodate anticipated vehicle ownership would be provided
  - In addition to this, to ensure parking issues are avoided, garage spaces will not count towards the standard where the Parking Needs Assessment facilitates a reduction
  - The assessment is also very well established at other authorities and we have received very positive feedback regarding the application of the assessment and the level of discount provided by the assessment.
- There were also a number of positive comments recognising the potential of the Parking Needs Assessment to facilitate higher density development less dependent on private cars in the right location.

- It was also noted that the assessment now reflects the NPPF requirement at para 107 to take into account the accessibility, public transport opportunities, and car ownerships when setting local parking standards.

### Question 5:

To what extent do you agree that the proposal to increase minimum parking bay dimensions from 2.4m by 4.8m to 2.5m by 5.0m is appropriate?



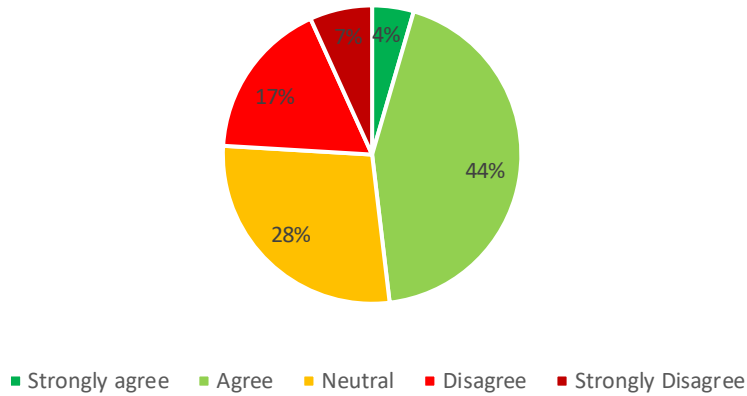
### Comments/Actions:

- This received significant support from residents with a large majority of 82% supporting the proposals, 11% neutral and only 7% disagreeing with the proposal.
- Positive comments focused on the inadequate dimensions of current parking bays, as well as the positive impact it will have for users who may struggle with the constrained nature of current bay dimensions.
- However, valid concerns were raised regarding the additional land required to deliver increased parking bay dimensions and subsequent impact on housing density, as well as the potential to encourage the use of larger, less efficient, vehicles.
  - In light of these concerns, it is proposed to retain the proposed increase in width to 2.5m which is where the majority of access issues occur but retain the existing 4.8m length which allows for the majority of vehicles to use a space without overhanging.

### Question 6:

To what extent do you agree that the level of parking required at each development type (as set out in Appendix A) is suitable?

### Question 6: Appendix A



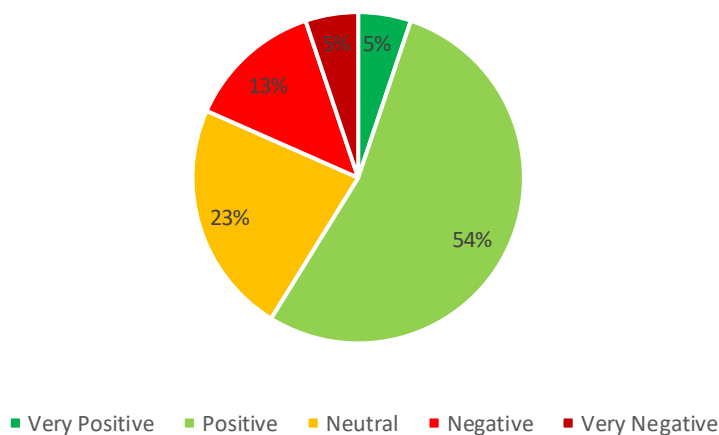
#### Comments/Actions:

- Respondents were broadly supportive of Appendix A which sets out the minimum number of parking spaces at new development with 48% strongly agreeing or agreeing, 28% neutral and 24% disagreeing.
- Of those who disagreed, there was a general feeling that the level of parking at some developments, e.g. hospitals, may not be sufficient and would be better determined by a Transport Assessment rather than a blanket standard.
  - In line with this, the standards have been amended so that, whilst still retaining an absolute minimum requirement, it is also noted that the final level of parking should be subject to a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan

#### Question 7:

What is your overall impression of the changes proposed as part of this review?

### Question 7: Overall Impression



#### Comments/Actions:

- Overall, there was significant support for the changes proposed as part of the review with 59% having a positive or very positive response to the proposals, 23% neutral and only 18% having a negative opinion of the proposals.
- Unfortunately, of those negative views we received, many were based on factors outside of the scope of the Parking Standards SPD, particularly the existence of pre-existing parking issues across the Authority Area.

- The SPD, however, relates only to new development and therefore does not have any influence/ability to rectify parking issues at existing locations.
- We also received a number objections on the basis that it was felt there is already too much development proposed within North Somerset.
  - Again, however, this is not within the scope of the Parking Standards SPD to address and the SPD is only concerned with ensuring sufficient levels of parking at new development.
- There was also a minority who objected to the use of the term Climate Emergency and thought the document was too heavily focused on Active Travel
  - However, it is considered that the SPD needs to be updated in line with the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and recently adopted Active Travel Strategy
- Regarding the positive feedback received, this focused primarily on:
  - Measures to tackle the Climate Emergency including EV charging provision and Car Clubs.
  - The ability to provide more appropriate levels of parking in certain locations through the Parking Needs Assessment.

### **Question 8:**

Do you have any comments or suggestions about the document you would like us to consider?

- The majority of comments have been considered above although a number of them did not relate directly to any of the above questions:
- Most significantly, there were a number of comments that the Parking Standards SPD does not sufficiently meet the needs of disabled users. Whilst the SPD was not proposing any significant changes in this respect, it was felt that the existing standards are inadequate and need to be updated in line with more recent guidance. In light of these comments, it is proposed to:
  - Enlarge Disabled Bay dimensions
  - Introduce dimensions for parallel disabled bays and disabled EV bays
  - Amend guidance on height restrictions at non-residential developments
  - Introduce comprehensive guidance regarding the type of non-standard cycle parking the Council will expect at new developments
  - Greater provision for mobility scooters at new developments
- It was also noted that our Parking Survey guidance (which outlines how developers should undertake parking surveys where required by the Development Management Team) should be more tailored to each individual application.
  - We have consequently amended our guidance to request that prior to undertaking any survey, the details be submitted to the Highway Authority for authorisation to ensure that the HA are satisfied with the proposals.