

The Government's concern about the use of maximum parking standards

2. The government's views on maximum standards ring true for Hillingdon because where we do not provide sufficient residential car parking we do find that we have to deal with issues such as 'more cars "overspilling" into surrounding streets, more municipal parking restrictions and more parking tickets'. We would therefore agree with the view of Brandon Lewis MP as stated in his letter to Boris Johnson dated 27th January 2015, 'This Government is firmly of the view that more parking spaces should be provided alongside new homes that families want and need. This is especially the case in areas where access to public transport remains low. But even in urban areas, an insufficient number of parking spaces - which may be caused by maximum parking standards amongst other reasons - risks creating a vicious cycle where clogged up streets leave motorists to run a gauntlet of congestion, unfair fines and parking restrictions.'

Key questions posed by the OLC

3. Our initial views on the questions posed in your email are as follows:

Are there car parking over-spill issues (in particular circumstances)? If so, how might these best be addressed?

In areas where new developments include low levels of residential car parking, we do experience pressure for off street car parking as a result of overspill issues. We address these by parking management schemes, but that just shifts the parking pressures to other areas.

People will generally shift from car to walking/cycling for shorter journeys but for longer journeys, they need access to good public transport. Unlike central London, Hillingdon's public transport is not sufficient to enable many people to use it or rely on it.

How do maximum residential parking standards affect parking levels, car ownership and car use?

Maximum standards are unlikely to affect car ownership in Hillingdon. Residents in the borough have complex travel patterns and require access to a range of destinations, both within and outside of London, that are not adequately served by the public transport network. In many cases, families require access to more than one car to meet these needs. This is exactly the point that is highlighted by Brandon Lewis in his letter and we would therefore support the abolition of maximum standards for outer boroughs like Hillingdon.

The use of maximum standards is more likely to lead to problems of on street parking and road safety in Hillingdon, than a reduction in car ownership.

How far do parking levels affect issues such as density and acceptability of development/its impacts?

In itself, the level of parking provided on site is not considered to be a major factor that affects development density. In many cases, it is possible to incorporate parking solutions that meet the requirements of residents, without reducing density standards. Both density and parking standards should be guided by factors as such as local character and circumstances, the type of housing being provided and access to a range of public transport opportunities that meet the requirements of residents.

How does the outer London context differ - can we define a "typology" of parking requirements for different places, and what factors affect this?

The application of typologies is difficult as the parking needs of each individual outer London borough will vary according to its local circumstances. In Hillingdon, the analysis PTALs does not provide a sound basis for the application of parking standards. Areas with high PTALs do not necessarily have high levels of accessibility to desired destinations, e.g. Uxbridge town centre has a high PTAL but its links to neighbouring areas to the west are poor. It is recognised that this may not be the case elsewhere and boroughs should have the freedom and flexibility to develop their own standards..

With or without a change to standards, what advice could be provided to improve residential parking implementation

As noted above, boroughs should have the flexibility to develop their own parking standards.