

For Immediate Release

Public asked for their views on two consultations which will shape Swindon's future transport needs

People living in Swindon will get the chance to have their say on options to improve traffic movements in the town centre, and a new policy which sets out how new developments should make appropriate provision for the parking of cars, motorcycles and bikes.

Consultations on both Swindon Borough Council's draft Town Centre Movement Strategy (TCMS) and its Parking Standards for New Development open today (22 July) and residents will have eight weeks to submit their comments.

The draft Swindon Town Centre Movement Strategy 2019, refreshes the transport elements of the Central Area Action Plan (2008) and has been developed to support the Town Centre Masterplan Delivery Plan (2015), which outlines the regeneration priorities and development projects across the town centre.

It uses a number of themes from simplifying access into the town centre through to managing key traffic movements and improving cycling and walking routes.

The strategy considers key highway, bus, cycle and walking routes within a boundary that incorporates Great Western Way in the north to Bath Road and Devizes Road in the south.

Indicative proposals within the draft strategy, which would be subject to further design and evaluation to fully understand the feasibility, benefits and risks, include removing the no right turn restriction from Corporation Street into Princes Street and also creating a town centre that is more accessible and easy to navigate.

The strategy also proposes developing existing on-street bus stops to provide local interchanges with high quality public areas and reviewing bus routes through sensitive heritage zones such as the Swindon Railway Village.

Creating high-quality, segregated cycle routes through the town centre linking the existing Flyer routes and a secondary route cycle network using shared paths is also listed.

A key element of the strategy is to strengthen the role of Great Western Way as a route around the town centre, through initiatives that include local capacity improvements and a corridor-based traffic management system.

The Parking Standards consultation will ask residents what they think of the Council's policy to require developers to provide Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) where there is a requirement for parking spaces for both new residential and non-residential developments.

The policy, which is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, states that new developments should “be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations”.

Under the proposed policy, developers would be required to provide an EV charging wallbox for houses and require new retail developments to provide EVCPs in 10 per cent of parking spaces with the option for extending this to a further 10 per cent of bays.

New employment developments would also be required to provide a minimum of two EV spaces or 20 per cent, whichever is the maximum, for car parking associated with work uses. This could then be extended up to 30 per cent in future years.

Changes to car parking requirements are proposed in the policy, taking account of accessibility to sustainable modes of transport and the size of homes.

Councillor Maureen Penny, Swindon Borough Council’s Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, said: “A number of exciting developments will be taking place in the town centre over the next few years from the redevelopment of Fleming Way and Kimmerfields to the plans for the indoor ski slope at North Star, so it is important we plan for the future and look at ways in which we can improve the transport network in this key part of the town.

“The draft Swindon Town Centre Movement Strategy has proposed some indicative changes we could make to the roads in and around the town centre, while also ensuring we keep sustainable transport at the forefront of our plans.

“The consultation will allow us to get the views of the public and other stakeholder groups on these initial ideas before developing them and carrying out further feasibility work.”

Councillor Gary Sumner, Swindon Borough Council’s Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, said: “We know the Government intends to phase out petrol and diesel cars by 2040, so making it easier for residents to own electric cars makes perfect sense.

“Our Parking Standards policy is a progressive move and fits in perfectly with our aim of reducing Swindon’s carbon emissions in line with our Vision for a low-carbon economy. I would encourage people to take the time to give us their views on what is an important piece of planning policy.”

Residents can take part in the Town Centre Movement Strategy consultation by visiting www.swindon.gov.uk/tcms. The Parking Standard policy consultation is available at www.swindon.gov.uk/parkingstandards.

Both consultations close on 15 September.

ENDS