Planning Factsheet – National EV Policy

862 Leeds Road, Bradley, Huddersfield, HD2 1UU

Electric vehicle ownership is at an early stage in its genesis. Ownership rates are increasing as various policy and legislator drivers take effect, chief amongst them net zero targets and the impending ban on the sale of new fossil fuel cars.

The sector remains a novel one for the planning system with some local authorities starting their policy journeys with limited EV strategies which are focussed on Council-owned land and Council vehicle fleets. Nationally, some local planning authorities have started to include policies requiring some degree of EV charging, often provided as part of wider schemes, in development proposals.

This is insufficient to deliver the EV charging infrastructure which the Government is clear is needed to support economic growth, meet decarbonisation challenges and promote sustainable transport.

The following are the key national policy documents which are material considerations in this case, especially if the local plan has no policies on standalone EV charging infrastructure development and/or none of these documents feature in the local plan evidence base.

May 2020 Government Policy Paper 'Government vision for the rapid charge point network in England'

Relevant extracts from the policy paper are set out below (our emphasis in bold):

"*As part of the UK's commitment to end our contribution to climate change, the government is committed to supporting growth of green, zero emission technologies. [...] The Rapid Charging Fund was announced in the March 2020 Budget as part of a £500 million commitment for EV charging infrastructure. The purpose of this programme will be to ensure that there is a rapid-charging network ready to meet the long-term consumer demand for electric vehicle charge points* ***ahead of need****. [...] By 2030, we expect the network to be extensive and ready for more people to benefit from the switch to electric cars*".

July 2021 CMA/GOV.UK 'Electric vehicle charging market study: final report'

The Competition Market Authority's report is clear that challenges face the various forms of charging provision. 'On-street' which can be undermined by pre-existing parking controls, 'at home' which is only currently practical for those with driveways, 'at work' which relies on employer support and provision, 'destination' which can be patchy and expensive and en-route which is plagued with limited competition meaning quality and reliability can be hampered.

The CMA report clearly states that "***at least 10 times*** *the current number of charge points are needed by 2030*".

It is also clear that greater provision of fast, rapid, and ultra-rapid chargers is key to instilling consumer confidence in the EV infrastructure roll out, which in turn will spur the necessary transition to electric vehicles for net zero and sustainable transport prerogatives.

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March 2022 Governments Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy entitled 'Taking charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy'

The Governments Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy entitled 'Taking charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy' published in March 2022 is a strong material planning consideration. The strategy pre-dates the development plan and the provisions in the latest NPPF. The strategy confirms that the Government 'expect around 300,000 public chargers as a minimum by 2030. Our goal is to ensure these charge points are installed ahead of demand, inspiring confidence in drivers who have not yet made the switch.' Hence, the current proposal is considered to be an important contribution to help meet this target.

The Government strategy is clear that charge points 'must also be rolled out where they are needed the most nationwide'. As identified above, this should include areas clearly important for 'destination' car parks, especially where there are gaps in the existing limited infrastructure. The strategy goes on to advise that 'Ultimately, charging your EV should be easier, cheaper and more convenient than refuelling a petrol or diesel car, wherever you live'.

Bearing in mind the nature of the proposed development, reference to the Government's EV Strategy is conspicuous by its absence in the Officer's Report, thereby missing an important material consideration.

The following compelling data shows the extent of the challenge to society, to which the planning system is being slow to respond (see below):

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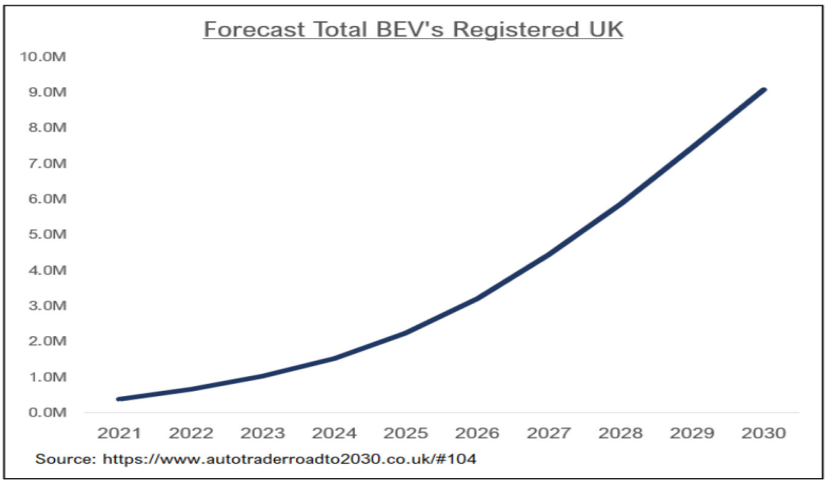

- Expected increase in registered Electric Vehicles to increase up to 2030 according to Autotraders.co.uk before the 2030 ban on the sale of new diesel, petrol AND hybrid cars.
- Government EV infrastructure strategy released last year forecasts that **300k** chargers will be required in the UK to meet this demand.
- At the end of 2022 there were **37k** according to ZapMap.
- A **near-ten-fold** increase required in the next 7 years in order to meet demand, comply with law and environmental targets and not stifle economic development.

The following extracts from the Government's EV Strategy convey the urgency of the issue at hand:

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- **We need more local engagement, leadership and planning** – local authorities are fundamental to successful chargepoint rollout, particularly for the deployment of widespread on-street charging. They are ideally placed to identify the local charging needs of residents, fleets and visitors. But the current picture is mixed. Some are driving the agenda forward at pace, others are short of dedicated resource and expertise. Planning permission delays are often cited as a major brake on the speed of deployment, and the interaction between local parking and charging policies is not fully resolved.

- **The pace of rollout is too slow** – even the recent surge in chargepoint deployment is not at a pace consistent with what is needed for a wholly zero emission new car fleet in 2035. This is particularly true for local, low power, on-street charging which is so crucial for drivers without driveways. Many fleet drivers also rely on this type of charging. Planning arrangements can be complex to manage. Chargepoint installers can sometimes need multiple permissions, consents and licences, which adds time and cost to deployment.

Delivering a reliable, comprehensive public charging network requires a UK-wide approach

The UK Government has a clear commitment to achieving net zero emissions across the whole country. To achieve this, we need a reliable, comprehensive public charging network across the UK. The vision and principles of this strategy apply throughout the UK, including the importance of increased local leadership. The specific approaches taken may vary, however. Elements of transport policy are devolved, including roads and local transport, strategic planning, land use and public transport subsidies. Energy policy is also devolved in Northern Ireland.

We welcome this report and the recommendations in it have informed our strategy. We are publishing the Government's response to the CMA study alongside this strategy.

Ofgem, the GB regulator for gas and electricity networks, recently set out its own priorities relating to EVs in "Enabling the transition to electric vehicles: The regulator's priorities for a green fair future". These cover electricity network capacity, efficient energy system integration through smart charging, and consumer participation and protection [47]

Our Vision

Everyone can find and access reliable public chargepoints wherever they live.

We are committed to a comprehensive rollout of charging infrastructure which leaves no area of the country behind. There is huge capacity for the market to meet this challenge and, in areas with higher EV ownership and well-developed local government strategies, local infrastructure delivery is expanding rapidly and the commercial case for private investment is strengthening. However, the pace of rollout across the country is too slow and there is insufficient local leadership and engagement in some places. We are providing local government with the support they need to meet the challenge.

Many areas do not currently have sufficient charging demand to support investment, and local authorities can lack the experience and capacity to develop strategies and apply for funding. The resulting lack of infrastructure can dissuade prospective EV owners, which in turn risks slowing the transition to EVs and leaving some people behind. To ensure all areas

We recognise the current spatial disparities in the provision of EV infrastructure across the UK. When allocating funding, consideration will be given to places that have not previously received funding for EV infrastructure, and those where chargepoint provision is currently low.

We are launching a £10m pilot of the LEVI Fund to provide an early opportunity for local authorities to scale up their local charging provision and maximise the potential for private sector finance. The pilot will test how we can most effectively support local authorities procuring chargepoint deployment by trialling different delivery mechanisms, business models and technologies.

We will be monitoring the level of engagement and planning taking place at the local government level. We will publish information on which local highway authorities have produced strategies for

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The Government is clear in the EV Strategy that it expects the necessary infrastructure to be in place to drive the uptake of EV car ownership in order to decarbonise the transport system as society heads towards the net zero target in 2050 in orders of magnitude over and above the current provision to provide consumer confidence in all matters, but also competition between operators which the planning system should encourage.

January 2023 Ofgem Electric Vehicle Smart Action Plan

In January 2023, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, with Ofgem, published the Electric Vehicle Smart Charging Action Plan.

In relation to the need for the decarbonisation of the UK road transport, the Action Plan states:

"*Decarbonisation of road transport is accelerating, and in 2022 one in six of all new vehicles sold in the UK was a plugin electric vehicle. The UK Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy set out how the rollout of charging infrastructure will be integrated into a smart energy system to maximise the efficient use of generation and network assets. Enabling intelligent and automated 'smart charging' at suitable locations will deliver a win-win situation; the electricity system costs are reduced lowering prices for everyone, the motorist pays less for charging their electric vehicle (EV), and the electricity powering the EVs is cleaner and greener*".

In conveying the scale of the challenge and the 'Public Charging Vision', the Action Plan makes clear:

"*The number of EV charge points will need to be scaled up rapidly through the 2020s. Whilst most drivers will charge at home, those without access to off street parking will rely on public or workplace charging. Government's EV Infrastructure Strategy defined the vision for the continued roll-out of a world-leading charging infrastructure network across the UK. The strategy emphasises the need for localised charge point planning. Government is considering options for introducing a unified consent process for installing EV charge points, including consideration of a streamlined process for obtaining both the planning permission consent and the highways consent for the traffic management works at the same time. A consultation was held in 2022, and the Government's response will be published in early 2023 Local EV infrastructure planning must be guided by the high-level system outcomes of achieving a net zero energy system, at lowest investment costs, while meeting the needs of EV drivers and local communities*".

March 2023 Government's Powering Up Britain

In March 2023 the UK Government published a suite of documents under the collective title 'Powering Up Britain'.

Powering Up Britain is clear that:

"***Energy security is one of this Government's greatest priorities***".

It goes on to state that:

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"*The energy transition in line with net zero is one of the* ***greatest economic opportunities*** *for this country and we are committed to ensuring that the UK takes advantage of its early mover status*".

Specific to this proposal, Powering Up Britain is very clear that:

"*The transition to net zero will require* ***action across the whole economy fuelled by rapid deployment of low carbon electricity****. To thrive, the UK will need to* ***support the growth of new sectors*** *and help others adapt".*

"The Government will implement the actions set out in the Electric Vehicle Smart Charging Action Plan, published in January 2023. These commitments stretching out to 2026 will maximise the benefits which electric vehicles offer for energy flexibility, and to ***make sure the system is ready to respond in time for the upturn in energy demand***".

In relation to the impending upturn in demand Powering Up Britain states:

"*Electric Vehicle uptake and infrastructure – In 2022, the UK had the second highest battery electric car sales in Europe, bringing the total number of plug-in vehicles on UK roads to over one million licensed, of which around 60% are battery electric. Charging infrastructure is also speeding ahead: public charging devices have more than tripled from 10,300 devices in January 2019 to over 38,700 in March 2023. We are building on that by publishing a final consultation on an ambitious Zero Emission Vehicle mandate, requiring an increasing percentage of new car and van sales to be zero emission*".

In terms of the relationship between this emergent technology and economic development (to which the NPPF assigns "*significant weight*") and training, Powering Up Britain states:

"*Upskilling the workforce for the green economy – In England, DfE and industry are working together to* ***train the existing workforce for the net zero transition*** *through programmes including Skills Bootcamps, Free Courses for Jobs, HTOs and apprenticeships. These programmes are helping to upskill more workers so that they can, for example, support greater energy efficiency in domestic and commercial buildings, and work with green technologies that contribute to the lowering of carbon emissions.* ***These Skills Bootcamps train workers in high demand skills such as electric vehicle charger installation****, retrofit, and arboriculture. DfE is continuing to expand Skills Bootcamps, with up to £550 million in funding allocated for financial years 2022-25*".

DfT's 'Future of Transport Regulatory Review: zero emission vehicles Government response (Oct 2023)

The DfT publication continues to extol Government policy on the necessary roll out of EV charging infrastructure. Here are a few standout quotes from it:

"*3.12 It is* ***critical that infrastructure is delivered at pace in all local areas****".*

"3.13 In order to plan and ensure provision of sufficient charging infrastructure most respondents thought that resource funding for local authorities, training for officers and grid upgrades were most needed".

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"4.1 The development of off-street charging infrastructure is ***necessary to support the transition to EVs****. We are aware that* ***limited access to charge points, especially off-street home or destination charging, can cause 'charging anxiety' which hinders EV uptake****.*

"6.1 A ***positive consumer experience is essential to increasing public engagement and overall confidence in EV charging****. As the transition to EVs accelerates and the charging network expands and evolves, it is critical that regulatory arrangements keep step with consumer needs".*

"6.22 ***Consumers should feel confident that there is a high-quality, consistent minimum level of service across the charging sector".***

"6.3 As the EV transition gathers pace, it is ***essential that charging infrastructure meets the needs of all consumers****. Based on previous consultation, user research and other emerging evidence, we know that various aspects of charging infrastructure design can present challenges to some EV consumers. We want to ensure that those with mobility, dexterity, or other impairments can easily locate and access charging infrastructure suitable for their needs. In addition, all consumers should feel safe while charging at any time of day".*

"6.31 Several respondents noted that consumers should feel as safe charging an EV as they do refuelling at petrol forecourts. Respondents commonly identified lighting, CCTV, clear signage, shelter, proximity to amenities and choice of location as examples of elements we should consider mandating. Several emphasised that new safety requirements would improve confidence among female drivers, who they noted may feel particularly vulnerable charging in dark, isolated locations".