

Propertymark Consultation Response:
Wales:
Electric vehicle charging in residential and non-residential buildings
December 2024

BACKGROUND

1. Propertymark is the UK's leading professional body of property agents, with over 18,000 members representing about 12,500 branches. We are member-led, with a Board which is made up of practicing agents. We work closely with our members to set professional standards through regulation, accredited and recognised qualifications, an industry-leading training programme and mandatory Continuing Professional Development.

CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

2. The consultation is looking into proposed amendments to Building Regulations in Wales. The draft amendments will mandate the provision of electric vehicle chargepoints in new residential, non-residential buildings and buildings undergoing major renovations, or material change in use, which have associated car parking.
3. The Welsh government is considering ways in which to reduce and remove carbon emissions from the transport sector in Wales, in line with the Government's goal for a net zero economy by 2050.
4. Building Regulations are devolved to the separate nations, this consultation will effectively bring Wales in line with the regulations for England set out in the Infrastructure for Charging Electric Vehicles: Approved Document S.¹

PROPERTYMARK RESPONSE

5. Propertymark broadly supports measures to create a greener future in our homes and commercial buildings. Initiative which enables homeowners and landlords to reduce their carbon emissions are always welcomed. However, Propertymark wants to ensure that any new building regulations do not create a delay in new build properties being ready for sale and that there are considerations for multi-dwelling buildings, such as blocks of flats, for who is responsible for the upkeep and expense of the chargepoint. As with all building regulations, we do not want to see a "one-size-fits-all" approach, as local and property-specific limitations need to be taken into account.
6. Furthermore, Propertymark wants to ensure that the obligation to fulfil this requirement for residential buildings undergoing major renovations does not put an undue burden on leaseholders or put a financial pressure on a development of much needed housing which ultimately makes it unviable. The alternative option of installing cable routes in new and major renovated properties, enabling the option of quicker installation of future chargepoints, is a more cost effective and less invasive approach which Propertymark supports.

¹ Building Regulations 2010 Infrastructure for charging electric vehicles: Approved Document S 2021 edition
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6218c5d38fa8f54911e22263/AD_S.pdf

QUESTIONS

Proposed Building Regulations for new residential buildings and residential buildings undergoing major renovation or material change of use.

Question 1

Do you agree with our proposed policy position that every new residential building with an associated car parking space to have an electric vehicle (EV) chargepoint?

Question 2

Please give reasons for your answer including, where applicable, any alternative requirement you think would be suitable.

7. Propertymark does not agree that all new residential buildings with an associated car parking space should have an EV chargepoint and rather the focus should be on building the infrastructure to future proof new build developments to factor in costs of build and materials. Propertymark disagrees that there should be a one-size-fits-all approach to this planning obligation. The concern is that this could put undue cost on developers, particularly small developers. There is a high demand for new housing in Wales and this additional cost could make some developments unviable. For this reason, Propertymark suggests that the regulation should require developers to install the appropriate cabling and cable routes in order to future proof the site and enable homeowners to install their own chargepoint. Furthermore, this offers the consumer choice over the type and brand of their chargepoint.

Question 3

Should the proposed Building Regulation requirement to install a chargepoint in every new home also apply to residential buildings undergoing a major renovation?

8. As above, Propertymark does not agree with the requirement to install chargepoints in every residential building. The same applies to major renovations, Propertymark believes that there should be consideration for major renovations by introducing the requirement to install cabling where it is possible and not cost-prohibitive.

Question 4

If so, do you think the requirement should apply only to residential buildings undergoing major renovation with more than 10 car parking spaces?

9. Yes, Propertymark agrees that the new regulation should only apply to residential buildings undergoing major renovation with more than 10 car parking spaces.

Question 5

In buildings where it is not technologically feasible to include a chargepoint, is this an appropriate case for exemption to apply and if so, what is the appropriate threshold for this exemption to be triggered?

10. Yes, Propertymark agrees that an exemption would be appropriate, as per the guidance listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas should be exempt.

Question 6

Do you agree the requirements should be for one chargepoint per dwelling rather than for every parking space associated with the building?

Question 7

Please give reasons for your answer including, where applicable, any alternative requirement you think would be suitable.

11. Yes, Propertymark agrees that it would make more economical sense to limit the requirement to one chargepoint per dwelling rather than per parking space. This is because of the cost of providing chargepoints and the infrastructure required. EV charging is still a developing field, technology is likely to improve in just the next few years, currently there is not the demand for properties to have more than one chargepoint. The alternative option is to ensure that the developer installs cabling infrastructure to each property parking area, allowing the homeowner to upgrade their property to include more chargepoints in the future if desired.

Question 8

Should the proposed Building Regulation requirement for electric vehicle chargepoint and infrastructure apply where the building has undergone a material change of use as defined in paragraph 8(1)(e) of Schedule 1 to the Act, a) or b) of Regulation 5 of the Building Regulations 2010?

Question 9

If you disagree, please explain why.

12. Yes, the regulation should apply to buildings that have undergone a material change of use where there are a number of new dwellings. However, it should be determined on a case-by-case basis where there is adequate infrastructure and space to introduce a new cabling or chargepoints. Where there is high demand for housing but no space for a chargepoint or if implementing this regulation would make the change of use unviable then this should not prohibit the creation of a new dwelling from going ahead.

Question 10

Should we apply an exemption to the requirements for material change of use in residential buildings in cases where there is adequate spare capacity in the incoming electrical supply to the car park?

Question 11

If you disagree, please explain why.

13. Yes, if the infrastructure is already in place and the ability for homeowners to install their own chargepoint in the future then there should be no additional burden on the developer to make this update.

Proposed Building Regulations changes

New non-residential buildings and non-residential buildings undergoing major renovation or material change of use.

Question 12

Do you agree with the Welsh Government proposed policy position?

14. No, Propertymark does not agree that there should be a blanket requirement for all non-residential buildings with more than 10 parking spaces to have one chargepoint. The alternative option of requiring a developer to install cable routes for one in five spaces is a more cost-effective option which will enable the building owner to develop appropriate provision for EV charging in the future.
15. Propertymark think that by imposing a one-size-fits-all planning policy will inhibit developments and potentially cause them to become to expensive. Furthermore, although the infrastructure for future chargepoints is crucial, requiring developers to add in chargepoints which may be low quality will not effectively futureproof the building. Installing cabling in the parking areas means that the owner can install their choice of chargepoint in the future.

Key exemptions considerations

Question 13

Do you agree that we should apply an exemption for listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas as suggested above?

Question 14

If you disagree, please explain why.

16. Yes, Propertymark agrees that there should be an exemption for listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas. Propertymark agrees with the assessment that the electrical capacity of the building and feasibility of installing the cabling in the site should be a consideration where it may cause adverse effects.

Question 15

Should we apply an exemption to the requirements for major renovations in residential buildings where the cost of installing the cable routes exceeds 7 per cent of the total cost of the major renovation?

Question 16

If you disagree, please explain why.

Question 17

Should we apply an exemption to the requirements for major renovations in residential buildings in cases where there is adequate spare capacity in the incoming electrical supply to the car park?

Question 18

If you disagree, please explain why.

Question 19

Should we apply an exemption to the requirements for major renovations in non-residential buildings where the cost of installing the cable routes and chargepoint exceeds 7 per cent of the total cost of the major renovation?

Question 20

If you disagree, please explain why.

17. In response to questions 15 to 20; Yes, PropertyMark agrees that there should be a cost exemption when requiring the installation of chargepoints for major renovations and in cases where there is adequate spare capacity in the incoming electrical supply to the car park. PropertyMark does not want to discourage renovations and development by imposing stringent and prohibitive rules which will make a site unviable. PropertyMark wants to ensure that new building regulations do not create a delay in new build and redeveloped properties being ready for sale.

Impact Assessment

Question 21

Do you agree with the assumptions, costs and impacts set out in the Impact Assessment?

Question 22

If you do not agree, please provide supporting evidence

18. No, PropertyMark does not agree with the proposed cost of an average sum of £3,600 or less for the connection cost of each electric vehicle charge point connection. PropertyMark believes that this cost is potentially prohibitive to the development of multiple properties, with the cost for 20 properties being £72,000. This puts an undue burden on the developer which could impact on the provision of other much needed improvements and/or green initiatives such as installation of solar PV or heat pumps.

19. Allowing developers the option to install the appropriate cabling instead of requiring the installation of the electric vehicle charge point gives greater flexibility to the developer and to the future property owner. Although electric vehicles are becoming more popular, there is still a lot of room for the industry to develop and improve. This means that there could be advancements in technology in the future which would make current installations obsolete before they are even used.

Transitional arrangements/Lead in times

Question 23

What is a reasonable transition period between publishing the new regulations and guidance and the requirements coming into force?

20. Propertymark thinks that there should be a transition time of at least a year before the regulations are enforced. This is because of the length of time to draw up and submit planning applications. The proposed six month transitional period is not long enough for amendments to existing applications and could put undue burden on the developer.

Question 24

What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of the proposed amendments would have on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language less favourably than English. Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects? Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

21. Propertymark does not have the expertise to answer this question.

Question 25

In your opinion, could the proposed actions be formulated or changed so as to:

- **have positive effects, or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English, or**
- **mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?**

22. Propertymark does not have the expertise to answer this question.

Question 26

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

23. We have no further comments.