

Policy Statement

Subject: Conversion of Car Ports and Integral Garages to Habitable Accommodation

1. Introduction:

When originally designed, the Site Layout for Port Solent made careful provision for car parking (both allocated and unallocated) in accordance with the car parking standards applicable at the time of Portsmouth City Council as Local Planning Authority.

Planning 'conditions' were attached to the grant of planning permission(s) for the development in order to ensure that space provided in car ports and integral garages would be retained for parking purposes.

Car ownership per dwelling has increased both nationally and locally since the completion of the development. There is now often evidence of localised car parking congestion and difficulties within parts of Port Solent.

Also, some residents do not use their car ports or garages for the parking of vehicles. This adds to the pressure on the unallocated, visitor and on-street parking spaces.

POSOL often receive representations/complaints from residents relating to car parking difficulties.

2. Response:

The POSOL Board takes the view that the original car parking provision represents the minimum that should be maintained within the development. This is reinforced by the planning conditions attached to the original planning permission(s).

Recent Government planning advice has recommended lower parking standards per residential unit and it is for this reason that recent planning applications to the Council to convert either car ports or garages to form additional habitable accommodation have not been resisted by Portsmouth City Council's Planning Committee. At Port Solent there is however a high car ownership and usage which often leads to periodic localised car parking congestion resulting in ad hoc parking along the access roads etc.

It is for this reason that POSOL seeks to maintain, at least, the original car parking provision wherever possible in the interests of all residents whether owners or tenants.

3. Policy:

As a matter of principle it is therefore POSOL's policy is to maintain an appropriate level of car parking and to seek to avoid the loss of car parking resulting from the conversion of car ports and integral garages (to form additional habitable accommodation) where this would have an adverse impact on parking in the immediate area.

Applications to convert parking spaces to living space will be considered on their merits and POSOL will apply the following parameters when considering each application:

- a) After such conversion, there must remain not less than 7.8 metres of car parking space between the new car port rear wall and the end of the existing driveway. This is to the back edge of the PCC adopted pavement. The standard length for a single car parking space is 4.8 metres. POSOL has taken the view that by adding an extra 3 metres, making a total of 7.8 metres, this will allow one medium sized car and one compact car to park nose to tail, thus preserving the planning requirement for two car parking spaces per house. This is a compromise, but one which POSOL feels is fair and reasonable for all.

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- b) The new rear wall of the car port must be a minimum distance of 2 metres back from the front outside edge of the house. Any windows set into the new wall to provide light to the interior must be no deeper than 300 mm (measured outside the window frame) and be set as high in the wall as is practicable. These requirements minimise the visual impact of the change in order to preserve the original balanced design of the property.

This approach both retains POSOL's overall concerns regarding the car parking provision within the whole development, whilst respecting the wishes of individual owners to carry out such work.

4. Conclusion:

It is the intention of the policy to be fair and reasonable to all owners, residents and tenants both in relation to retaining an adequate overall car parking provision and not objecting to proposed car port and garage conversions where no material harm would result to the collective interest of all Port Solent owners.

POSOL directors are available for consultation and would encourage owners considering such conversion works to arrange a pre-application meeting, via the Managing Agent, to discuss a scheme prior to the submission of an application. This process can assist in identifying potential areas of concern (if any) before cost is incurred in commissioning architects drawings to be prepared for conversion works.

Approved by the POSOL Board in November 2010

Signed:



Ian Currie
Company Secretary