

# LCQ21: Car parking spaces provided in development projects

Following is a question by the Hon Tony Tse and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (July 7):

Question:

It is learnt that in calculating the gross floor area (GFA) of buildings, those car parks provided with electric vehicles charging-enabling facilities at each car parking space may be granted 100 per cent GFA concessions if they are constructed underground, but they may be granted only 50 per cent GFA concessions if they are constructed above-ground. As a result, some works departments of the Government and developers tend to construct underground car parks. On the other hand, as the construction of underground car parks require excavation and waterproofing works as well as additional ventilation, lighting and ramps, underground car parks have higher construction and operation costs but lower energy efficiency and cost-effectiveness (more so for construction sites with a small area), as compared with above-ground car parks. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of car parking spaces provided in the various public and private development projects newly completed in the past five years, with a breakdown by the types of vehicles catered for and the level on which such car parking spaces are located (i.e. underground, above-ground, and the first floor or above);

(2) whether it has made a comparison between the car parks located underground, above-ground and on the first floor or above in terms of (i) construction costs and (ii) operation costs; if so, of the outcome; if not, whether a comparison will be made;

(3) whether it will require developers to provide a specific number of car parking spaces only when it has assessed and confirmed, based on the sizes of the construction sites, that the provision of car parking spaces therein are reasonable and cost-effective; if not, whether it will consider conducting the relevant assessment;

(4) whether it will review the calculation method for the GFA concessions to be granted for car parks provided at different levels within a development project; and

(5) whether it will, through practices such as granting GFA concessions, relaxing the restrictions on storey heights of buildings, and changing the methods for calculating the number of car parking spaces that must be provided in buildings, encourage developers and private property owners to construct or convert to smart parking systems that are capable of increasing

car parking spaces within a footprint?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Transport Department (TD), our reply to the various parts of Hon Tony Tse's question is as follows:

(1) The number of parking spaces for various types of vehicles provided in newly completed public and private buildings over the past five years as at April 2021 are set out at Annex. The TD does not maintain a breakdown of the number of parking spaces by floor of the buildings concerned.

(2) Generally speaking, the construction and maintenance costs of each development project (irrespective of private development or public works projects) are subject to its unique circumstances, such as topography, depth of the site that needs to be excavated and geology, site constraints, ancillary facilities and project development requirements, etc. In the case of car park projects, apart from the abovementioned factors, the construction and maintenance costs may also vary with the size of the type of parking space, the required headroom, as well as the width and length of the driveway, etc.

The Project Strategy and Governance Office under the DEVB commissioned a consultant in early 2021 to carry out a study on the relationship between layouts, designs and project estimates for car park development projects. The study is underway.

(3) The Government requires project proponents to provide parking spaces in development projects in accordance with the standards stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. These standards are mainly formulated on the basis of the types of development and scale of the development projects. Taking private residential development project as an example, the number of parking spaces to be provided hinges on factors such as the number of flats, size of flats, development densities, its distance from railway stations, etc. The Government will also take into account the practical difficulties in constructing car parking spaces, such as site area and topographical restrictions, etc., to allow for flexibility in determining the number of parking spaces to be provided for the development projects.

(4) In the light of the recommendations of the Council for Sustainable Development drawn up after conducting extensive public consultation, the Government introduced a series of measures in April 2011 to enhance the design standard of new developments to foster a quality and sustainable built environment. One of the measures was the revision of the gross floor area (GFA) concessions of private parking spaces in response to the public concern about car parks being a contributor to building bulk and height. Under the existing mechanism, private car parks provided underground with electric-vehicle (EV) charging-enabling facilities at each parking space in private residential development projects may be granted 100 per cent GFA concessions.

For private car parks that are EV charging-enabling but are above-ground, 50 per cent GFA concessions may be granted. Exceptions may be considered for granting 100 per cent GFA concessions where the developer provides sufficient evidence to prove that it is technically infeasible to construct the car park underground, or where an above-ground car park poses no adverse environmental or visual impact. The Government's current practice is to offer GFA concessions as an incentive for developers to provide underground parking spaces. This arrangement has given balanced consideration to the demand for parking spaces and the need for maintaining a sustainable built environment.

(5) Private developers must confirm in advance that the application of automated parking systems (APSs) complies with the requirements of the law, land leases, etc. Earlier on, to explore ways to promote the use of APSs in privately-owned car parks, TD consulted stakeholders, including the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong, professional bodies, the Hong Kong Automobile Association, car park operators and APS suppliers, and collected valuable opinions. The TD will share with stakeholders the experience in the implementation of the APS projects in due course. It will also collaborate with relevant departments to look into reviewing the relevant practice notes so as to refine the application procedures for the use of APSs in privately-owned car parks.