

YES...

Roy Darke, Headington county councillor

THE principle of building over car parks is eminently reasonable. In fact, it is essential to use any 'brown field' land in Oxford.

The city lacks building sites largely because of the tight Green Belt and strong demand for development land.

Car parks are 'dead places': unattractive Tarmac areas. Retail centres often drown in a sea of stranded metal and plastic: look at out-of-town stores.

The idea of putting car parks out of sight is long established by designers (although 'designing out crime' principles do require proper consideration). Putting parked cars underground is prohibitively expensive so use of appropriate car park sites for building over is well worth considering.

The St Clement's example shows that dealing with established car parking during construction of any new development above is a difficult

issue. In principle, we could use technology to speed up the building process (pre-fabrication and fast-build techniques), but there is always going to be short-term disruption and need for temporary measures.

Like-for-like replacement parking is impossible to find in the urban core. Local residents and businesses resent disruption to life and business during construction. Someone has to take a strategic view of the city and its development need.

The council has to take long-term development need into account and support a vibrant local economy.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? LET US KNOW