



Revaluation 2026

Industrial Properties Committee

Practice Note 11

Valuation of Car Washes

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Practice Note applies to Car Washes at stand-alone sites or as part of a unum quid with other subjects but does not include car washes normally found at petrol filling stations.
- 1.2 There are two distinct type of car wash:
 1. Automatic car washes, with a building containing moving brushes and conveyors.
 2. Manual car washes which include 'foam' washes often found in former petrol filling stations, car parks or retail locations.

2.0 Basis of Valuation

- 2.1 The basis of valuation is by application of the Comparative Principle and there will be elements valued by application of the Contractor's Basis.

3.0 Classification

3.1 Automatic Car Washes

These sites are approximately 1,350m² with tarmac or concrete surfacing, and parking for 5-6 cars. There may also be open valet bays with jet washes and vacuum cleaners.

The building contains the car wash equipment and pedestrian circulation space for the operator.

The typical automatic building is around 120m² gross internal area; consisting of Car Wash, Office, Toilets, Store and Plant Room. It has either brick or profiled metal sheeting walls to eaves height 3.6m with a profiled metal roof and concrete floor with drainage channels.

3.2 Manual Car Washes

These are subjects, commonly found in former filling station sites which have been converted for use as a car wash. There are few adaptations required. The forecourt with canopy often forms the car wash, with the shop used for administration, waiting room for customers and retail. There may be a container type structure for storage.

3.3 Other Manual Car Washes

These operations are generally found in retail and industrial locations, for example car parks at supermarkets, garden centres, shopping centres or leisure centres etc. In these instances, it is important to establish who is in rateable occupation before determining if an entry in the Valuation Roll is appropriate.

4.0 Valuation

4.1 Automatic Car Washes

4.1.1 The valuation is based on the Comparative Principle although there is a Contractor's Basis element. The valuation is made up of two parts: site and improvements.

4.1.2 Site: In the absence of local evidence, it is recommended that a site value of between £10,000 and £12,000 to NAV should be applied dependent on location.

Separately assessed automatic car washes situated on retail forecourts, may be valued having regards to higher rents which may be paid to reflect the location and the higher levels of potential customers, e.g. supermarket car parks. In these cases, local evidence should determine the level of value placed on the site.

4.1.3 Building: The following rate to NAV is derived from the cost of construction, and includes building works, siteworks, service connections and landscaping. A rate of £86 per m² should be adopted, this rate being the decapitalised cost reflecting a typical automatic car wash of 120m² (gross internal area) on a site of approximately 1,350m².

4.1.4 Where jet washes are provided on site an addition of £1,400 to NAV should be made for each jet wash to reflect rateable plant. Vacuum cleaners are to be regarded as de minimis.

4.1.5 For guidance on age and obsolescence allowances, reference should be made to SAA Contractor's Basis Valuations Practice Note. It should be noted that this PN states that allowances in excess of 50% for Buildings and Plant should only be given in exceptional circumstances; refer to the PN for full guidance.

4.2 Manual Car Washes – Former Filling Station Sites

- 4.2.1 These sites can typically accommodate up to six cars on site, with as many as four cars being washed at any one time in a drive along conveyor-style system, with additional space for two cars being valeted.

An analysis of rents was carried out on this basis. The rate shown below is generally inclusive of any ancillary buildings (e.g. canopy & former forecourt shop) forecourt and assumes a reasonable site with good access/egress.

4.2.2 Site, including ancillary buildings:

Subjects should be valued based on local rental evidence.

In the absence of local rental evidence, it is recommended that manual car washes on the site of former petrol filling stations be valued at NAV £14,000.

4.3 Other Manual Car Washes

Where a Valuation Roll entry is appropriate the Comparative Method should be adopted. In these cases, consideration should be given to the rent passing, if any. In the absence of local evidence, it is recommended that the valuer identifies the number of cars which can be accommodated, including being washed and valeted at one time. A rate of £2,000 per car should be adopted and suitably adjusted to take account of site-specific circumstances if deemed appropriate.

Many examples of subjects in this category, such as those within car parks, will not feature additional site or buildings, however, where a car wash does have excess site and/or ancillary buildings, these should be valued according to local rental evidence.

Where a car wash facility is in occupation of a typical industrial unit with little or no adaptation, within an industrial estate, the valuer should give consideration as to whether the subject should be valued in line the industrial level of value at that location.