

INTRODUCTION

9.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) highlights the important role of transport policies in facilitating sustainable development. The London Plan (2011) and Harrow's Core Strategy (2012) provide a clear, spatial framework which links development growth to public transport accessibility and capacity. The Council is committed to working with Transport for London and other partners to target finite resources to those parts of the highway and public transport network most in need of capacity, accessibility and qualitative enhancements. Chapter six of the London Plan contains a comprehensive suite of transport policies with planning decisions criteria that will apply to development proposals in Harrow. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy sets out Harrow's strategic approach to the provision of car parking and the development of sites in areas of low public transport accessibility.

Policy DM 42

Parking Standards

- A. Proposals that make on-site provision for parking will be supported where:
 - a. the number of vehicle parking spaces (including those with electric vehicle charging points) would have regard to the maximum London Plan standards;
 - b. there would be 1 motorcycle/ scooter parking space⁽⁸²⁾ per 20 car parking spaces subject to all developments with more than 10 car parking spaces having a minimum of 1 space; and
 - c. the number of cycle parking spaces would meet or exceed the minimum London Plan standards.
- B. Proposals involving parking provision that would not be consistent with the London Plan will be assessed having regard to any exceptional operational requirements, any special safety considerations and the desirability of achieving modal shift away from private car use.
- C. Proposals for car-free development within town centres will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. there is sufficient public transport capacity to serve the trip demand generated by the development;
 - b. there would be adequate safeguards against parking on the surrounding highway network and in public car parks; and
 - c. the needs of blue badge holders would be met.
- D. Proposals that secure the delivery of car club schemes in lieu of parking provision for private vehicles will be encouraged.
- E. The design and layout of parking areas (including those for scooters, motorcycles and bicycles) should be safe, secure and fit for purpose. Access to and from the public highway

82 of dimensions 2 metres x 0,8 metre.

should maintain and, where necessary, improve safety and give priority to the convenience of pedestrians and cyclists.

- F. Proposals that would result in inappropriate on-site parking provision, having regard to the criteria in this policy, and those which would create significant on-street parking problems, prejudice highway safety or diminish the convenience of pedestrians and cyclists, will be resisted.

9.2 Households in Harrow continue to exhibit comparatively high levels of car ownership. Nevertheless, it is likely that car ownership will be a preference for many residents and that this mode will continue to be a key component of economic activity and outer London inter-connectivity for the foreseeable future. The objective of this policy is to realise the transport benefits of Harrow's spatial strategy by ensuring that proposals contribute to modal shift in a manner that is appropriate to their location and which meets the transport needs of future occupiers/users of the development.

9.3 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the considerations to be taken into account when setting parking standards for development⁽⁸³⁾. Transport is a matter of strategic significance to London as a whole and is therefore addressed in some detail in the London Plan. Policy 6.13 *Parking* of the London Plan sets out parking standards within ranges for various types of development, locations and levels of public transport accessibility, and are expressed as maxima. However it is noted that the Mayor of London is conducting a review of residential parking standards to consider the scope for greater flexibility in different parts of London and that he undertakes to bring forward alterations to the Plan and interim supplementary planning guidance⁽⁸⁴⁾. The London Plan also sets out minimum requirements for the provision of cycle parking.

9.4 In view of the demand generated by occupiers and users of development in outer London it is anticipated that many developers will continue to seek to provide parking as part of their proposals, and in many instances some level of vehicle parking is likely to be necessary for operational reasons. On-site provision for vehicle parking overcomes issues with on-street parking especially in residential areas where the road carriageway width is restricted and where parking results in congestion and can result in a hindrance to traffic flow.

9.5 Where car parking is proposed as part of new development, the London Plan requires 1 in every 5 of the spaces to make provision for electric vehicle charging. Such provision is a vital component of the practicality of electric vehicle use and therefore necessary to increase uptake of electric vehicles in the capital.

9.6 The Manual for Streets (DCLG/DfT, 2007) states that, in 2003, motorcycles accounted for 5% of all motor vehicles and estimates that the space required for a motor cycle to park is 2m x 0.8m. Provision of dedicated space for motorcycles, as well as other two-wheeled motorised vehicles, ensures that these road users are catered for and contributes to the efficient use of land by avoiding the need for motorcycle users to park in car parking bays (and therefore helping to minimise the land take of parking areas overall).

9.7 In some instances it may be necessary to provide a number of vehicle or cycle parking spaces that is not consistent with the London Plan standards. This can be due to specific operational requirements, for example to ensure the safety and free flow of the surrounding highway network.

83 These are: the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of the development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership; and an overall need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles.

84 Paragraph 6A.3A of the London Plan Early Minor Alterations (Published for public consultation February 2012)

Core Strategy Policy CS1 R undertakes to manage parking for new development to contribute to the delivery a modal shift away from private car use to more sustainable modes. However, and as recognised by the Outer London Commission⁽⁸⁵⁾, the interpretation of the London Plan standards may also be determined by other policy objectives for outer London⁽⁸⁶⁾.

9.8 Car free developments are those that make no general on or off site provision for car parking other than that required to meet the needs of disabled persons. Such schemes are an effective means of delivering a modal shift away from private car use provided that future occupiers' ability to access their reasonable shopping, service and employment needs would not be disadvantaged, and that visitors and other users of the development (particularly in respect of non-residential uses) would not be severely disadvantaged by the absence of car parking. In Harrow, town centres provide the most suitable locations for car-free development; they provide occupiers with direct access to local shops, services and employment opportunities, and are generally served by multiple local bus services and/or a rail station for access to shops, services and employment elsewhere.

9.9 The objective of car free residential development is undermined if on-street space or public car parks are freely available to future occupiers. The loss of capacity intended for shoppers and employees within the town centre may also adversely impact the proper functioning of the centre, whilst increased on-street parking stress within surrounding suburban areas poses a nuisance to existing residents and can degrade the residential environment.

9.10 The London Plan requires all development to make provision for the parking needs of disabled people, including those proposals that are in all other respects car-free, with a minimum requirement for at least one 'blue badge' space on site or two off site.

9.11 The London Plan encourages car sharing and car clubs⁽⁸⁷⁾ and Harrow's Local Implementation Plan promotes their use as one of a number of interventions to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions, increase environmental sustainability and improve air quality (strategic objective 4). Car clubs offer the benefit of reducing demand for individual car ownership whilst maintaining access to a car for multiple households.

9.12 Parking areas that are overlooked and are well lit help to ensure that they are safe and secure. By contrast dark, isolated and poorly designed parking areas can negatively impact upon perceptions of safety and, as a consequence, lead to under-utilisation of dedicated parking space whilst adding to parking pressure elsewhere (such as on-street or by hardsurfacing of forecourts). Vehicle parking bays of appropriate dimensions and with sufficient manoeuvring space and visibility for the motorist benefit both driver and pedestrian safety. Cycle, scooter and motorcycle parking is an important mode of transport for some people but these vehicles are frequently susceptible to theft and Harrow's spatial strategy directs the Borough's development needs to be met on previously-developed land and most previously-developed sites already have at least one point of access onto the public highway network. Historic accesses can fall below modern standards (for example in terms of visibility or pedestrian priority) or otherwise be unsuited to more intensive vehicle movements and may be rectified through redesign or revised siting. Harrow's spatial strategy directs the Borough's development needs to be met on previously-developed land and most previously-developed sites already have at least one point of access onto the public highway network. Historic accesses can fall below modern standards (for example in terms of visibility or pedestrian priority) or otherwise be unsuited to more intensive vehicle movements and may be rectified through redesign or revised siting.

85 See paragraph 3.5 of the OLC Second Report, November 2012.

86 See London Plan Policies 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8.

87 See London Plan Policies 6.11 and 6.13.