

Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities: Design & Good Practice

Interim Policy and Supplementary Planning Document
ADOPTED September 2014



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1.0 Introduction

This Supplementary Planning Document was adopted by Bedford Borough Executive on 10th September 2014. The previously adopted guidance on parking standards for cars was the Parking Standards Design Guidance published by Bedford Borough Council in November 1996. Since 1996 there have been many changes which have meant that the existing guidance needed to be reviewed as quickly as possible in order to provide clarity. This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced to reflect the changes in national policy and to set out the Borough Council's expectations for parking layout and standards and supersedes the 1996 SPD.

Cycling standards were previously contained in the Bedfordshire County Council Cycle Parking Guidance adopted in 2006. Cycle parking layouts and standards are included within this Supplementary Planning Document and supersede any previous standards.

For the moment this document will form the Council's Interim Policy on parking until the Local Plan is revised in due course. It is intended to include the parking standards (Tables 1-5) from this supplementary planning document in a policy within the new Local Plan whilst this SPD will be retained for the layouts and other guidance.

In the longer term, this SPD will also become part of a comprehensive Highways Design Guide SPD.

Policy Context

Changes to the planning system in 2006 shifted responsibility for determining parking standards to individual planning authorities whilst new guidance indicated that local circumstances should be taken into account when setting parking standards.

National Policy

There is now only the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) setting out national policy in relation to parking standards for new developments. The NPPF supersedes the planning policy guidance and statements which previously set the context for parking.

Relevant extracts from NPPF

Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should: ... actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. (para 17)

Plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movements are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. However, this needs to take account of policies set out elsewhere in [the NPPF], particularly in rural areas. (para 34).

Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods and people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to

- o Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;*
 - o Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;*
 - o Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;*
 - o Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and*
 - o Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.*
- (para 35).*

Introduction

For larger scale residential developments in particular, planning policies should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site. Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties. (para 38)

If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account:

- *The accessibility of the development;*
- *The type, mix and use of development;*
- *The availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
- *Local car ownership levels; and*
- *An overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles.*

(para 39)

Manual for Streets

(8.2.1) "Providing enough convenient and secure cycle parking at people's homes and other locations for both residents and visitors is critical to increasing the use of cycles. In residential developments, designers should aim to make access to cycle storage at least as convenient as access to car parking".

Other guidance on parking is contained in Manual for Streets (Department for Transport March 2007), Inclusive Mobility (Department for Transport 2005), Waste in New Developments (2006), Climate Change SPD, Car Parking: What Works Where, Safe and Secure. See references Appendix 1.

Local Policy Context

There are several saved Local Plan policies in the Built Environment, Housing, Shopping, Employment, Leisure and Recreation and Transport sections requiring adequate car parking for developments making reference to the adopted Supplementary Parking Guidance which at the time of publication was the 1996 SPG. The Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan also includes guidance which suggests general appropriate levels of car parking within the town centre which this SPD supersedes.

The Local Transport Plan 3 was published in 2011 and identified key challenges and actions. One action was to produce a Parking Strategy and this has a number of Tasks including Task 1, Prepare new proposals for the application of parking standards to new developments based on a zonal approach.

Objectives of the Parking for Sustainable Communities SPD

The objectives of this SPD, set out below, are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Bedford Borough Local Transport Plan 3 (2011); Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008); Active Travel Strategy (2010); and the Parking Strategy (2010):

- Tackle traffic congestion at peak times;
- Improve air quality, particularly in the town centre;
- Aim to ensure development avoids polluted run off;
- Promote efficient use of land;
- Aim to accommodate cars at 'home';
- Aim to provide adequate car parking in the town centre.

This SPD, which is entirely consistent with current government guidance set out in the NPPF, includes standards which form a consistent basis for discussion between developers and planners, allowing greater certainty when planning applications are submitted thus reducing the time taken to determine parking. In addition, this document also looks at the provision of cycle, coach, motorcycle and disabled parking and electric vehicle infrastructure. In addition

it provides some commentary on design guidance. A list of supporting documents and literature is provided in Appendix 1.

How to use this document

The parking standards and guidance shall apply to new development including conversions and extensions. The document aims to facilitate a flexible design approach to achieve quality solutions across a range of sites to achieve policy objectives. It is recognised that there are other material considerations such as site specific design guide/codes **approved prior to the adoption of this document** which still carry weight in the design process. Nevertheless, the parking provision for these sites must continue to ensure that it adequately serves the needs of the development in terms of quantum, is safe and convenient to use and allows for unhindered access by emergency and waste collection vehicles.

General Principles

When parking cannot be provided on site

In circumstances where it is not possible to provide parking on site, discussions with the local planning authority must take place as early as possible to see whether there is sufficient capacity elsewhere or the demand for parking can be satisfactorily managed. Financial contributions towards existing highway infrastructure, public transport or Traffic Regulation measures may be required at the cost of the applicant.

Drainage

In addition to the above, the following pollution prevention measures would need to be taken into consideration in the design of any parking areas:

1. Drainage from unadopted parking areas that will discharge to a surface watercourse must be first passed through an oil interceptor.
2. Drainage from car parking areas for 50 spaces or more and lorry parks that will discharge to soakaways should be passed through an oil interceptor before discharging to the ground.
3. The Environmental Permitting Regulations make it an offence to cause or knowingly permit any discharge that will result in the input of pollutants to surface waters or groundwater.

Unless adequate justification is provided the surfacing of car parking areas should be constructed using Sustainable Urban Drainage designs rather than as traditional hard run-off areas draining into sewerage systems.

Change of use and Retro-fit Applications

In circumstances where car and cycle parking is to be provided as the consequence of the re-development of an existing building, for example conversion of a large house into separate flats, the council may exercise discretion in applying the guidance. Each application will be judged on its merits and solutions arrived at by the application of the principles and guidance set out in this document.

Conversion of garages

Where a garage is converted to living space and there is no other existing secure location to park a bicycle or bicycles, cycle parking standards in line with new residential guidelines will be applied. In circumstances where the garage was of an acceptable size to provide a car parking space, replacement car parking would also need to be provided. See section 2.0 The use of garages.

Checklist

This document contains guidance on the provision of all types of vehicle parking. Developers are expected to check all sections to ensure that all required parking demands are addressed.

This checklist should help to confirm which sections of the document should be considered depending on the type of development proposed.

	Proposed development - new developments and extensions to existing	
Chapter	Residential (Housing C3)	Non residential (and C1 and C2)
Residential car parking	✓	
Non-residential car parking		✓
Disabled car parking	✓	✓
Cycle parking	✓	✓
Motorcycle and scooter parking		✓
Coach parking		✓
Non-residential accessibility zones		✓