

**Test Valley Revised Local Plan
DPD
2011 – 2029
Regulation 22 – Submission to
Secretary of State**

**Policy T2: Parking Standards
Topic Paper**

July 2014

REVISED LOCAL PLAN

TOPIC PAPER – POLICY T2: Parking Standards

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this topic paper is to provide context and rationale for Parking Standards across Test Valley and to consider the approach of including a Parking Standards policy in the Revised Local Plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 Much of the Borough is rural in nature with 40% of the population living in a large number of relatively small communities outside of the principle settlements of Andover, Romsey, North Baddesley, Nursling and Rownhams. Some rural areas are not served by public transport and others have an infrequent and limited bus services. Community transport and demand responsive services are important in providing a link to ensure some accessibility from the rural areas to local services and facilities for those without access to a car.
- 2.2 Hampshire County Council withdrew its non-residential parking standards in April 2014. A review of non-residential parking standards for inclusion within the Revised Local Plan was undertaken in early 2013. While the standards within the Borough Local Plan 2006 (BLP) are largely considered to be fit for purpose based on a review of sites, some amendments are proposed in taking forward parking standards into the Revised Local Plan (RLP).
- 2.3 Highways Officers have advised that in general, the non-residential parking standards being sought based on the requirements of the BLP are appropriate although in recognition of some aspects of implementation of parking standards, it is proposed to make details of location of parking spaces more explicit in the RLP.
- 2.4 The way residential parking is used is different in nature to non-residential parking therefore requires a different approach. Subsequently standards for residential parking have been reviewed which has prompted a shift from maximum to minimum standards of parking for residential development.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The non-residential parking standards within the Borough Local Plan (BLP) 2006 are drawn from Hampshire County Council's 'Hampshire Parking: Strategy and Standards' document produced in 2002. This was adopted by the County Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- 3.2 The Revised Local Plan (RLP) sets out minimum car parking standards for residential development and includes provision for visitor parking. This is a shift from the BLP which sets out maximum parking standards. This was prompted by a review of parking standards by the Council in 2010. This included an appraisal of a variety of residential sites across the borough to ascertain whether the standards contained within the BLP were still appropriate.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out matters that should be considered when setting local parking standards. This includes the accessibility of the development; the mix, type, mix and use of the development; and availability and opportunities for public transport (NPPF para 39).
- 3.4 Whilst the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) does not provide direct guidance on parking standards, it does provide guidance under the heading of Design on safe streets and balancing the needs of drivers and those of local users in being able to promote cycling and walking. The approach to residential parking provision is reflective of the NPPG to creating safe and inclusive design.
- 3.5 Policy F in Part A of the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2031 supports the improved management and supply of residential parking.

4 Issues

- 4.1 With regards to provision of parking in line with the existing Borough Local Plan policy, it is recognised that there have been challenges with the location of parking spaces. Therefore, the proposed parking standards policy within the Revised Local Plan includes a requirement that provisions should be well designed and convenient to users.
- 4.2 A number of site surveys have been undertaken in relation to the non-residential standards. The surveys undertaken included the Adelaide Medical Centre, the Wellington Centre (for Andover and District Mencap) and Tesco Express on Weyhill Road, in Andover and The Squirrels in Chilworth and Knightwood Surgery in Valley Park. When taking account of the outcomes of the surveys, no changes are proposed to the standards.
- 4.3 Some changes have been proposed to the standards in relation to care establishments which are considered as a separate category, coming under the term 'supported accommodation' in the residential standard within the Revised Local Plan. While the BLP noted that visitor parking was included within the standards, it has been proposed that visitor parking is provided on top of the requirements in the RLP.
- 4.4 The current and likely future car ownership levels have been taken into account in reviewing the residential parking requirements. Given that much of the Borough is rural in nature with 40% of the population living in a large

number of relatively small communities outside of the principle settlements of Andover, people will require space for parking their vehicles at their home even if measures are being implemented to reduce car usage.

- 4.5 The proposal to bring forward a minimum parking standard for residential development derives from a review of residential parking standards undertaken by the Council in 2008. The review looked specifically at whether cars on residential estates were using allocated parking spaces. A number of issues arose around the lack of use of parking courts away from residential properties where there were concerns over vehicular and personal security. Convenience was also cited as a reason why people did not want to park in parking courts or away from properties and opting to park near to or at their front doors. A lack of specification about convenience to users has been borne out through the implementation of new residential areas where people choose to park at the front of their properties on a main road creating traffic congestion, rather than parking at the rear in a parking court. The RLP seeks to rectify this by specifying parking should be *'well designed and appropriately located so as to be convenient to users.'*
- 4.6 A number of authorities have proposed a minimum parking standard approach. Wiltshire Council completed consultation on a Parking Strategy, to include residential parking standards, in late 2010. The residential parking standards are outlined as being the minimum requirement. While there are no general reductions to the minimum standards, the policy notes that reduced parking requirements would be considered in certain circumstances, to include in relation to areas where there is lower demand for parking and where there are heritage considerations.
- 4.7 Paragraph 9.14 in the RLP specifies that garages would only count as a car parking space where they have minimum internal dimensions of 3 metres by 6 metres for a single garage. This is to ensure that garages are of a sufficient size to be usable for the parking of modern cars and provide some room for cycles and other storage. This approach has recently been tested at appeal for Abbotswood in relation to the width of garages, whereby the Inspector held that if a garage was to be counted as a parking space a width of 2.5 metres was unacceptable¹.
- 4.8 Making provision for sufficient parking for residential vehicles through the setting of minimum standards in the RLP enables safer streets by maximising opportunities for vehicles to use residential parking spaces rather than parking on the street.

¹ Application 10/01020/VARS to vary a planning condition on the outline planning permission for Land at Abbotswood, Romsey. Within paragraph 7 of the Inspector's report it is noted that "...given the car ownership and problems that on-street parking is causing in other areas, the reduced width of the garages proposed would be likely to lead to significantly greater levels of on-street parking."

5 Policy T2: Parking Standards

5.1 The proposed policy is set out below and annex G of RLP.

9.13 The provision and allocation of car parking is an integral part of the design and layout of new development. The scale of parking to be provided in association with new development needs to take account of local circumstances, the demand that is likely to be generated by the proposed use, the location of the development, site specific constraints and the need to prevent an increase in parking pressure elsewhere including the highway network.

Policy T2: Parking Standards

Development (including change of use and conversions) will be required to provide parking in accordance with the standards set out in Annex G.

Parking provisions should be well designed and appropriately located so as to be convenient to users.

Residential parking provisions below the standards will be considered:

- a) where there is likely to be low demand for parking;**
- b) where there are significant heritage or urban design issues;**
- c) where any parking off site is appropriately controlled.**

It will be necessary for applications to be accompanied by evidence justifying variations from the standards.

9.14 Parking spaces must be located and designed to ensure that they are safe, secure and practical. Spaces which poorly relate to the buildings they are intended to serve are likely to result in parking in locations not intended for that purpose. Garages would only count as parking spaces if they meet the minimum internal dimensions of 3 metres by 6 metres for each space. This is to ensure that garages are of a sufficient size to be usable for the parking of modern cars and do not increase pressure to park elsewhere. Car parking spaces should be 2.4 metres by 4.8 metres as a minimum. If the car parking space would be constrained on one side (e.g. adjacent to a wall) the space should be an extra 0.3 metres wide relative to the standard. If the space would be constrained on both sides the space should be an extra 0.6 metres in width relative to the standard.

9.15 Variations in parking standards will be considered by the Council where it is satisfied that there is likely to be low demand for a private car e.g. there are genuine alternative modes of transport such as accessible public transport, or the standard cannot be achieved because of design and character constraints.