

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Economy and Transport
Date 12 February 2020



PARKING PROVISION AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with an explanation of the reasons for reviewing the adopted Parking Provision SPD (adopted January 2012)
- 1.2 To provide Members with an overview of the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (Appendix A).
- 1.3 To seek Members' approval to carry out public consultation on the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the content of the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD be noted.
- 2.2 That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy,

Enterprise and Transport, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft Strategy prior to its consultation.

- 2.3 That the Executive approve publishing the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD for consultation from 18 February 2020 to 22 March 2020.

3 BACKGROUND

SBC Parking Provision SPD (2012)

- 3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are produced to add detail to the policies included in an adopted Local Plan. They are used to build upon and provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues. Whilst they are not part of the Development Plan¹ for an area, and cannot add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development, the contents of a SPD are a material consideration when determining a planning application.
- 3.2 The Council has a Parking Provision SPD which was adopted in January 2012. The document was produced to supplement policies in the District Plan Second Review (2004) and focusses on traditional parking issues such as the quantity and design of car parking spaces. The overarching aim of the SPD is to ensure that sufficient levels of parking provision are provided as part of new development schemes across the Borough. It also requires developments to include parking for visitors, disabled motorists and cyclists. The Parking SPD does not cover public car parking or on-street parking which are guided by the Council's Parking Strategy, adopted in 2004 and also currently being reviewed.
- 3.3 The SPD provides instructions of how to calculate appropriate levels of parking. For residential development, this is based on a number of spaces per unit and the number of bedrooms of each unit. For non-residential development, the calculation is predominantly based on the size of unit and is specific to different land-use classifications. For some land-uses, it also takes into account other indicators such as numbers of staff. The total number of spaces for an individual development can be reduced by a set percentage if it is located in one of the SPD's 'Accessibility Zones'. These were identified based on considerations such as proximity to public transport facilities and local facilities such as shops and primary schools, and frequency of local bus services.

Policy Background

- 3.4 The recently adopted Stevenage Local Plan (2019) commits the Council to regularly review the Parking Provision SPD to ensure that it is in conformity with national and local guidance and local levels of car ownership.
- 3.5 The adoption of the Stevenage Local Plan, in itself, represented a change of local policy which could necessitate a review of the Parking Provision SPD.

¹ The Development Plan for an area comprises the adopted Local Plan, the Waste Local Plan, the Minerals Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plans (of which there are none currently in Stevenage).

There are numerous additional policy documents which also add to the need to review the parking elements of the document as well as promote a change of focus of the SPD.

- 3.6 The Local Plan was supported by the Stevenage Mobility Strategy 2016 which establishes the principal of promoting a 'modal shift' in transportation within the Borough. Currently, transport is dominated by the use of privately-owned motor vehicles whereas a modal shift would see an increase in the use of more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling or public transport. The need for the modal shift was identified to ensure that future development included in the Local Plan does not have too significant an impact on the highways network, the capacity of which cannot be significantly added to.
- 3.7 The Stevenage Mobility Strategy was produced taking account of the concepts in the emerging Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which has since been adopted by Hertfordshire County Council in 2018 as the overarching transport policy for the county. Policy 1 of the LTP4 introduces a 'Transport User Hierarchy' which should be considered in any proposal for development. The Hierarchy tries to ensure that all developments seek to promote opportunities to reduce the need to travel; prioritise active travel including walking and cycling; promote passenger transport; and help enable the use of powered two-wheeler vehicles, in that order, before considering motor vehicle use.
- 3.8 The Council subsequently adopted a Transport Strategy (Future Town, Future Transport) in 2019 to set out its approach to delivering sustainable transport locally. The Strategy seeks to establish Stevenage as a leader in sustainable transport reflecting its origin as Britain's first New Town, utilising the extensive network of segregated pedestrian and cycleways.
- 3.9 The aforementioned transport-related policy documents are predominantly focussed on providing mitigation against increasing congestion from the potential road users of future planned development. The existing Parking Provision SPD therefore requires reviewing to ensure that it isn't merely a document that facilitates the use of cars by providing abundant parking spaces.
- 3.10 Another key consideration in the review of the SPD is the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency Motion and the emerging Climate Change Strategy, Action Plan and Charter. The Transport sector is one of the key contributors of carbon emissions and reductions in privately-owned vehicle-use are a key part of the fight against climate change. The transport-related mitigation against climate change is very similar to the mitigation against congestion given that a modal shift away from privately-owned motor vehicles towards active or public forms of transport will reduce carbon emissions.
- 3.11 The Parking Provision SPD, along with any other transport-related policy or project, should not merely relate to cars and congestion but should have wider considerations. As well as climate change, a more efficient transport network will reduce transport and parking costs to individuals, improve fitness, improve health and well-being, reduce levels of stress and bring other

in-direct benefits as a result of these and each policy document will have implications on these.

- 3.12 To implement the desired changes, a balanced combination of incentives and disincentives are required to ensure that cars are not the only efficient mode of transport. The Parking Provision SPD needs to be reviewed to add minor restrictions to car-use whilst also helping to enable alternatives to become genuine viable alternatives that are quick, cheap, easy and enjoyable.

Portfolio Holder Advisory Group Meeting

- 3.13 The draft SPD was presented to the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group on 21 January 2020, after which Councillors raised any questions or issues they had. These comments will be treated as formal consultation responses and will be taken into account when finalising the document for adoption. An overview of their comments is provided below:

- Can the SPD contain guidance on the provision of parking spaces and charging points for mobility scooters in the town centre? Users have different locational parking needs to cyclists for example.
- Could EV charging points be provided in the town centre for public use?
- Data is available that shows that car ownership and driving licence applications are reducing. This could support a reduction in the car parking requirements carried forward from the adopted SPD.
- The proportion of children that attend the nearest school to where they live is reducing. As a key criterion of the residential Accessibility Zone 3, this could be significant.
- The promotion of cycling could be seen as unfair on females as they cycle less than males.
- Can the SPD ensure that cycle parking in new developments is not used to discriminate and be socially divisive? For example, by forming a barrier between market and affordable homes or by offsetting car parking provision for affordable homes at the expense of market homes.
- Will the SPD apply to development of Houses of Multiple Occupation?

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Recommendation 2.1: That the content of the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document be noted.

- 4.1 The draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD is included in Appendix A. A broad overview of the key amendments and additions from the adopted version are presented below.

Vehicular Parking Requirements

- 4.2 The Census data findings released after the adoption of the Parking Provision SPD in 2012 showed that the parking requirements in the SPD offered considerable lee-way for an increase in car ownership levels. New data is yet to be released showing up-to-date levels of resident car-ownership but, anecdotally, it is expected to have risen. The increase is unknown but due to the surplus requirements of the adopted Parking Provision SPD and the Council's recent promotion of a modal shift in transportation, it would be inappropriate to increase the parking limits for new developments.
- 4.3 To strike a balance between the expected increase in car ownership and the sought decrease in car-use, the draft SPD carries forward the car parking requirements from the adopted SPD. When using the calculation described in paragraph 3.3, the only proposed amendment is to round down to the nearest whole number, rather than up, before adding together constituent bedroom requirements.
- 4.4 More significantly, the Accessibility Zones have been re-mapped and now include a 'Town Centre' zone which allows for reduced levels of parking in the most accessible area of the borough. This will help to ensure that developments do not continue to encourage the use of cars at the expense of other forms of transport. It is considered that residents in these areas have sufficient access to public transport, facilities and services and do not require the levels of car-ownership currently permitted by the adopted SPD.
- 4.5 The emerging SPD continues to contain requirements for visitor parking and parking for those with mobility disabilities.

EV Charging Infrastructure

- 4.6 A proposed new inclusion of the SPD is to require developers to provide charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. In the draft document, there is a requirement for 20% of spaces at new developments to have an EV charging point. In order to futureproof developments to an expansion of the EV market, all other parking spaces are required to contain the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network so that charging points can be easily installed when required at a later date.

Cycling parking requirements

- 4.7 The draft SPD contains significantly increased requirements for developers to provide cycling parking for residential and non-residential developments. The requirements cover short term and long term parking and are predominantly based on numbers of staff or the size of a facility. The levels are taken from the SBC Cycling Strategy which was published in 2018.

Residential Development Examples:

Taking account of paragraphs 4.3 to 4.7, Table 1 illustrates the different requirements of the adopted and draft SPDs for a development of 250 units (125 x 1-bed apartment, 125 x 2-bed flats) in the proposed Town Centre Accessibility Zone:

Table 1:

Requirements	Adopted SPD (2012)	Draft SPD (2020)
Car parking spaces	78 - 156	0 - 78
Disabled spaces	16	16
Visitor spaces (subject to transport assessment)	39 - 78	0 - 39
EV Charging Points	0	0 - 24
Cycle spaces	313	375 (plus 7 visitor spaces)

Table 2 illustrates the different requirements of the adopted and draft SPD for a development of 100 units (25 x 2-bed, 50 x 3-bed 25 x 4-bed homes) outside any of the Accessibility Zones:

Table 2:

Requirements	Adopted SPD (2012)	Draft SPD (2020)
Car parking spaces	251	249
Disabled spaces	13	13
Visitor spaces (subject to transport assessment)	50	50
EV Charging Points	0	50
Cycle spaces	100	200 (plus 5 visitor spaces)

Cycle Hubs and Docked Bike Share schemes

- 4.8 The Council has previously stated an interest in introducing new Cycle Hubs and a docked bicycle hire scheme as ways of promoting cycling in the Borough. As with any scheme, these would need to be subject to a robust business case or and/or require third party funding. The draft SPD contains general support for these types of cycle facility and introduces a number of issues that should be considered when planning or making a decision to approve future facilities within the public realm.

Liveable Streets

- 4.9 The Council's Transport Strategy (2019) expressed support for incorporating 'Liveable Street' principles into developments as a way of mitigating overcrowding of parked vehicles on streets. The draft SPD contains general support for the concept of Liveable Streets and discusses a number of issues that should be considered when planning or making a decision to approve future development.

Park and Ride

- 4.10 Any opportunity to introduce a park and ride scheme will require a large land-take for a suitable terminus and will have a significant cost implication. A scheme would need to be subject to a business case and/or require third party funding. The draft SPD discusses a range of additional issues that must be considered when identifying sites for a potential scheme. The SPD also states that potential park and ride schemes should be designed with the primary aim of reducing overall car-use to avoid the potential unintended negative impacts which can occur if a scheme is designed with the main objective of reducing congestion in a localised area.

Recommendation 2.2: That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the draft Strategy prior to its consultation.

- 4.11 The draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD is appended to this report. However, it may be necessary to make minor changes prior to the consultation start date. This might include cosmetic adjustments, the correction of typographical errors and any minor factual changes.
- 4.12 It is recommended that any such amendments be approved via delegated powers.

Recommendation 2.3: That the Executive approve publishing the draft Parking provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document for consultation from 17 February 2020 until 31 March 2020.

- 4.13 The procedure to adopt a new SPD is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.14 The Council must first undertake a consultation for a minimum four week period. Following this, the Council must consider the consultation responses, produce a document stating the main issues raised by respondents, and summarise how the issues have been addressed by the Council.
- 4.15 The timetable for consultation and adoptions is currently as follows:
- | Stage | Date |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Public Consultation | 18 Feb – 22 March 2020 |
| Consider and address responses | Spring 2020 |
| Adopt SPD through Exec/Council | July 2020 |
- 4.16 As with any consultation exercise, it is not known how many responses will be received so the post-consultation stages will not be known for definite until a later date.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs associated with producing and consulting on the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD will be met from the agreed departmental budget.
- 5.2 Any potential schemes that are mentioned in the SPD will need to be subject to a business case and/or will require third party funding.

Legal Implications

- 5.3 Consultation on the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 5.4 There are no direct legal implications associated with consulting on the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD.

Risk Implications

- 5.5 There are no significant risks associated with producing the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD.
- 5.6 If adopted after consultation, the levels of parking contained in the SPD can be reviewed when the next Census data is published (expected 2022-23) to ensure they are appropriate. If necessary, this could prompt a further review of the SPD.

Policy Implications

- 5.7 The draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD accords with, and has been produced to supplement policies in, the adopted Stevenage Local Plan (2019). It also accords with the policy aims of the SBC Mobility Strategy, the SBC Transport Strategy and the Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 4.
- 5.8 The document is also aligned with other corporate Council documents such as the Healthy Stevenage Strategy, the recently-declared Climate Emergency Motion and the emerging Climate Change Strategy, Action Plan and Charter.

Planning Implications

- 5.9 The draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD will supplement the recently adopted Stevenage Local Plan (2019).
- 5.10 If adopted after consultation, the document will not form part of the Development Plan for Stevenage. However, it will be a material consideration for planning applications.
- 5.11 If adopted, it will replace the adopted Planning Provision SPD (2012) which will need to be revoked at that time.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.12 The draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD has the potential to have a positive impact on climate change through the multiple benefits that prioritising sustainable and active modes of transport, and minimising car use, can bring. Active forms of transport, walking and cycling, can replace the need to use private-cars, cutting the emissions associated with journeys within the town. The support provided by the SPD for promotion of public transport services and active modes of transport will help to reduce reliance on private-car journeys, replacing them with more energy-efficient options. The Strategy will also have benefits in terms of air quality more generally.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.13 The SPD sets out requirements for parking requirements for those with mobility disabilities. Otherwise, the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport itself does not have any direct equality or diversity implications. When implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to consider the potential impacts on different community groups, in particular those who are less mobile or disabled.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.14 Whilst the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD does not have any direct community safety implications itself, when implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to consider the potential impacts on community safety.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- BD1 [Parking Provision 2012, SBC](#)
BD2 [Stevenage Parking Strategy 2004, SBC](#)
BD3 [Stevenage Borough Local Plan, 2011-2031](#)
BD4 [Stevenage Mobility Strategy, SBC](#)
BD5 [Local Transport Plan 4, HCC](#)
BD6 [Future Town, Future Transport, SBC](#)
BD7 [Stevenage Cycling Strategy, SBC](#)

APPENDICES

- A Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport