

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Environment and Regeneration
Date 16 September 2020



PARKING PROVISION AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: ADOPTION

KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the consultation responses to the Draft Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) between February and March 2020
- 1.2 To provide Members with an overview of the changes made to the Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD to take account of consultation responses.
- 1.3 To seek Members' approval to adopt the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (Appendix A) and revoke the Parking Provision SPD (adopted 2012).

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the outcomes of the Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD consultation be noted.
- 2.2 That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as necessary in the final preparation of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD prior to its adoption.
- 2.3 That the Executive revoke the Parking Provision SPD (adopted 2012).
- 2.4 That the Executive approve the adoption of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD as a material consideration for planning applications.

3 BACKGROUND

SBC Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD

- 3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are produced to add detail to the policies included in an adopted Local Plan. They are used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues. Whilst SPDs are not part of the Development Plan 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's current parking requirements are set in an existing policy document - Parking Provision SPD (adopted 2012). The Stevenage Local Plan (adopted 2019) commits the Council to regularly reviewing the local parking requirements to ensure they conform with national and local guidance and local levels of car ownership.
- 3.3 In February 2020, the Executive approved the publication for consultation of a new series of parking requirements that officers considered could be included in the Parking Provision & Sustainable Transport SPD. Compared to the existing SPD, the main changes included in the consultation document were:
 - minor updates to the requirements for vehicular parking;
 - amended Accessibility Zones where reduced parking is considered appropriate;
 - increased cycle parking requirements;
 - new Electric Vehicle charging point requirements; and
 - considerations for sustainable transport projects listed in the SBC Transport Strategy: Future Town, Future Transport (2019).
- 3.4 A more detailed explanation of the changes from the 2012 version of the SPD is provided in Background Document 1, a link to which is provided at the end of this report.

Consultation
- 3.5 A link to the Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD (which was placed on the Council's consultation page) was sent to all individuals

who had signed up to the Council's planning consultee register. The register mainly consists of individuals who have responded to previous Local Plan consultations or specific planning applications, and also contains all statutory consultees and Duty to Cooperate bodies, as required by Regulations.

- 3.6 Those who provided an email address when registering to the list were sent an email with a link to the document and an explanation of the consultation process. This was the majority of consultees. Approximately 200 letters were also sent to individuals who had not provided an email address. The letters advised recipients how they would be able to view the document (both electronically and physically) and the process for responding to the consultation.
- 3.7 In addition, the consultation document was advertised on the Council website, on social media and hard copies were made available in the two libraries in the town.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Recommendation 2.1: That the outcomes of the Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD consultation be noted.

- 4.1 Consultation on the draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD was held between 18 February 2020 and 22 March 2020, meeting the requirements stipulated for SPD consultations in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.2 A total of 71 representations were received from a number of key consultees as well as internal teams and committees.
- 4.3 Responses were received from:
- External bodies / individuals:
- Sustainable Transport Manager, North Herts District Council
 - Growth and Infrastructure Unit (incorporating Highways and Passenger Transport comments), Hertfordshire County Council
 - Public Health Hertfordshire
 - Transport for London
 - Historic England
 - Two individuals
- Internal departments:
- Parking Manager
 - Housing Team
- Comments were received from several SBC Committees:
- The Executive
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Portfolio Holder Advisory Group

4.4 In addition, a small number of calls were received to offer general support for the SPD, particularly the proposed requirement for developers to provide infrastructure to further enable cycling and the use of electric vehicles.

4.5 A full summary of responses is provided in Appendix B together with officer responses to each comment as well as a description of any amendments made to the SPD as a result of the submitted comment.

4.6 The key responses and amendments to the Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD are summarised below:

Take account of new Use Classes

4.7 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 made major amendments to the way that land uses are classed. The main impact is that two new broad Use Classes have been created: E - Commercial, Business and Service, and F – Local Community and Learning. These new Use Classes condense previously separate land uses together, removing the need to gain planning permission for many changes of use developments. As an example, there will no longer be a requirement for planning permission when changing a research and development facility into a restaurant.

4.8 As a consequence of the amendment to the Use Classes, the parking requirements in the SPD, which were categorised by Use Class, had to be rearranged within the final SPD document. More importantly, the SPD has been amended to state that proposals for specific development should be assessed against the worst impact possible caused by development permitted by a certain Use Class - rather than the specific land use that a proposal initially seeks permission for.

4.9 As a fall-back position, the SPD also states that developers should be prepared to agree to restrictive planning conditions or covenants as part of a Section 106 agreement to limit the use of a site within a Use Class. This would ensure that a site will not be changed to a new land use within the same Use Class without first requiring approval from the Local Planning Authority for a Variation of Condition or modification of a legal agreement. This would ensure that the developer would be required to mitigate any increased impacts from the proposed change of use even though they would not require a new planning permission. For example, this could ensure a building either remains in use for retail use instead of light industrial or would require additional mitigation to be provided if it changes to light industrial.

Amendments to Accessibility Zones

4.10 The SPD identifies Accessibility Zones where reduced levels of parking are considered appropriate. For example, this could be in locations close to passenger transport, or close to key local services such as shops and primary schools. The Accessibility Zones can be found on pages 14, 25 and 45-50 of Appendix A of this report.

4.11 The original Accessibility Zones were mapped primarily using carriageways as the extent of each Zone. It was pointed out, however, that houses on either side of a road could be as 'accessible' as each other in certain circumstances and that it would be more appropriate in some cases to use

the curtilage of a back garden as the edge of a Zone. Whilst this did not lead to any major changes to the Accessibility Zones, it did mean that some have either been extended or reduced compared to the outlines within the draft SPD.

- 4.12 It is worth noting that for development not located within Accessibility Zones, parking requirements are not changing substantially from the adopted 2012 version of the SPD as the vehicular parking requirements per unit and per number of bedrooms have not changed other than for larger flats of three bedrooms or more. Tables 1 and 2 show the parking requirements for two hypothetical developments, illustrating that whilst the requirements within an Accessibility Zone have changed significantly with a focus on reducing car parking whilst increasing cycling and EV parking, requirements outside of Accessibility Zones have not changed significant.

Table 1: Comparisons for a 250 unit development (125 x 1-bed flats & 125 x 2-bed flats) in the new Town Centre Accessibility Zone		
Requirements	Adopted SPD (2012)	Updated SPD (2020)
Car parking spaces	78 - 156	0 - 78
Disabled spaces	16	16
Additional visitor spaces (if residential spaces are allocated)	39 - 78	0 - 16
EV Charging Points	0	6 - 19
Cycle spaces	250	375 (plus 7 visitor spaces)

NB. the provision of disabled parking spaces is non-negotiable, so the minimum parking provision would be 16 spaces.

Table 2: Comparisons for a 100 unit development (25 x 2-bed, 50 x 3-bed & 25 x 4-bed homes) outside of any Accessibility Zones		
Requirements	Adopted SPD (2012)	Updated SPD (2020)
Car parking spaces	201	201
Disabled spaces	11 (or 5% of communal spaces)	11 (or 5% of communal spaces)
Visitor spaces	50	25
EV Charging Points	0	40
Cycle spaces	100	250 (plus 3 visitor spaces)

Separate parking requirements for houses and flats

- 4.13 Residential parking requirements are based on the number of bedrooms in a proposed development. It was pointed out that whilst data showed that car ownership is consistent between smaller houses and flats with the same

number of bedrooms (one or two), there is a clear difference in car ownership between larger houses and flats with the same number of bedrooms (three or more).

- 4.14 As such, the parking requirements have been separated in the final SPD between houses and flatted developments to enable a lower requirement to be included for larger flats (those with three or more bedrooms).

Reduced visitor parking requirements

- 4.15 The draft SPD contained a requirement, carried forward from the existing Parking Provision SPD, for 0.5 visitor parking spaces to be provided for each residential unit. Respondents indicated that this figure seemed particularly high. Officers agree with this view, and considering the number of significant applications due to progress through the planning system in the next few years, this would have risked a significant overprovision of parking spaces and would not promote the use of sustainable forms of transport.

- 4.16 Accordingly, the requirements for visitor parking have been reduced to 0.25 per dwelling and these are subject to further reduction if located in an Accessibility Zone.

Preference for unallocated parking

- 4.17 The Council can't categorically state what kind of parking spaces should be provided due to the variety of proposals that are submitted for application. Many residential proposals will provide parking on driveways and within garages within the curtilage of individual dwellings but this is not the case for flatted developments or some smaller housing applications.
- 4.18 The SPD now states that we would prefer communal parking to be unallocated as this provides a much more flexible parking solution compared to when all spaces are allocated to specific users. The SPD also confirms that where Electric Vehicle charging points are to be provided, it would be the Council's preference for these to be provided as unallocated spaces.

Recommendation 2.2: That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as necessary in the final preparation of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD prior to its adoption.

- 4.19 The Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD is included in Appendix A. However, it may be necessary to make minor changes prior to its adoption. This might include cosmetic adjustments, the correction of typographical errors and any minor factual changes.

- 4.20 It is recommended that any such amendments be approved via delegated powers.

Recommendation 2.3: That the Executive revoke the Parking Provision SPD (adopted 2012).

- 4.21 The procedure to revoke a SPD is set out in Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

- 4.22 The Council must prepare a statement of that fact, send the statement to each of the bodies who made representations to the SPD, and cease to make any documents related to the SPD other than the adoption statement available.

Recommendation 2.4: That the Executive approve the adoption of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document as a material consideration for planning applications.

- 4.23 The procedure to adopt a new SPD is set out in Regulation 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.24 Now that consultation has been completed, the Council must make the SPD document available together with an adoption statement, and send a copy of the adoption statement to each of the bodies who asked to be notified of the adoption of the SPD.
- 4.25 In line with Regulation 12, the Council will also need to provide a statement setting out the persons consulted when preparing the SPD and a summary of the main issues raised by those persons and how those issues have been addressed in the adopted SPD document. This statement is included as Appendix B.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs associated with adopting the 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 Adoption of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, specifically Regulations 12, 14 and 15. There are no further direct legal implications associated with adopting the SPD.
- 5.4 The legal ramifications of any potential schemes mentioned in the SPD will need to be considered at the point of planning and delivery.

Risk Implications

- 5.5 There are no significant risks associated with adopting the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD.
- 5.6 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 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 Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD will supplement the recently adopted Stevenage Local Plan (2019).
- 5.10 The document will not form part of the Development Plan for Stevenage. However, it will be a material consideration for planning applications.
- 5.11 Upon adoption, the SPD will replace the adopted Planning Provision SPD (2012) which will be revoked at that time.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.12 The 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 Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD sets out requirements for parking requirements for those with mobility disabilities. Otherwise, the SPD itself does not have any direct equality or diversity implications. When implementing any of the proposals mentioned in the SPD, 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 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 [Executive Paper: 12 February 2020 - Parking Provision And Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document: Public Consultation](#)
- BD2 [Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD 2020, SBC](#)
- BD3 [Parking Provision 2012, SBC](#)
- BD4 [Stevenage Parking Strategy 2004, SBC](#)
- BD5 [Stevenage Borough Local Plan, 2011-2031](#)
- BD6 [Stevenage Mobility Strategy, SBC](#)
- BD7 [Local Transport Plan 4, HCC](#)
- BD8 [Future Town, Future Transport, SBC](#)
- BD9 [Stevenage Cycling Strategy, SBC](#)

APPENDICES

- A [Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport, 2020](#)
- B [Draft Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport Consultation Statement, 2020](#)
- C [SEA Screening Statement](#)