



Report for:	Strategic Planning and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	19th June 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Parking Standards Review
Contact:	Councillor Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration Author/Responsible Officer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trevor Saunders/Rebecca Williams – Strategic Planning Team • James Doe – Assistant Director: Planning, Development and Regeneration
Purpose of report:	1. To update Members of the Committee on the conclusions of Parking Standards Review report prepared by consultants Markides Associates Limited and provide an opportunity to discuss their recommendations and appropriate next steps.
Recommendations	That Members of the committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of the report; and 2. Provide their views regarding the recommendation and proposed 'next steps' outlined in paras 32 - 40.
Period for post policy/project review	Once new car parking standards are adopted within an SPD, a review of their operation should be undertaken within 5 years.
Corporate Objectives:	Having a clear set of standards to govern parking requirements for new development will help support the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safe and clean environment:</i> e.g. support policies in the Local Plan that promote a safe built environment <p><i>Dacorum delivers:</i> e.g. helps provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made.</p>

Implications:	<u>Financial</u>
'Value for money' implications	<p>None directly associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>Consultants Markides were appointed through a formal procurement process where cost and value for money considerations were reflected in the scoring criteria.</p>
Risk implications	No risk assessment is applicable as this report relates to a technical study only. A risk assessment will be carried out as part of the preparation of any new supplementary planning document or Local Plan which contains new parking standards and associated guidance.
Community Impact Assessment	<p>Community Impact Assessment reviewed/carried out*</p> <p>*Delete as applicable</p>
Health and safety Implications	No immediate implications from this report. However, ensuring an appropriate level of parking provision as part of new development will support future highway safety.
Consultees:	<p>Preparation of the Markides Parking Standards Review report involved liaison at an Officer workshop attended by representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning and Regeneration • Development Management • Local highway authority (HCC) • Dacorum's Parking team • Environmental Health (Air Quality) • Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance (Environmental Sustainability Officer) <p>A Member briefing session (to which all Borough Councillor were invited) was also held on 6th July 2017.</p>
Background papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dacorum Borough Local Plan (April 2004) 2. Parking Standards Review, Markides Associates, October 2017 3. Roads in Hertfordshire – a Design Guide, HCC, January 2011
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>HCC: Hertfordshire County Council LPA: Local Planning Authority (i.e. Dacorum Borough Council) LDS: Local Development Scheme SCI: Statement of Community Involvement SPD: Supplementary Planning Document</p>

BACKGROUND

Scope of this Report

1. In general terms there are two key considerations when drawing up planning policies or guidance to help assess car parking proposals as part of a new development:
 - (a) *Level of Provision* (usually governed by local parking standards) and;
 - (b) *Design and Layout* (often guided with the help of urban design advice or guidance).
2. In its role as local highway authority, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has advised that it no longer develops parking standards for the county. Instead, the preparation and application of local parking standards is the responsibility of the individual planning authorities.
3. HCC does however retain a key role with regard to the design and layout of parking. Current guidance relating to these matters is set out in the document '*Roads in Hertfordshire*' (3rd Edition 2011). Officers understand that the current edition of this document is under review, but HCC has not provided any formal timetable for when an updated design guide will be published for comment.
4. This split between roles and responsibilities of the two Councils is summarised in Annex 1 to this report.

National Policies and Guidance

5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published by Government in March 2012 with a new revised version issued for consultation in March 2018. With regards to parking matters, both the current and new NPPF say very little, but both leave the decision on whether to set parking standards to local authorities. If local authorities decide to set such standards, Government expects these to reflect local circumstances and take into account the following:
 - 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
 - the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Local Policies and Guidance

6. The parking standards currently used by the Council are set out in Appendix 5 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (adopted 2004) and are expressed as maximum standards, as per the requirements of both national and regional policy at that time. These standards were taken from the Hertfordshire County Council Supplementary Planning Guidance document on parking provision, which is no longer in existence. It is also recognised that national policy is no longer seeking to apply maximum parking standards.
7. A desire to review the parking standards has been expressed by Members. Officers agree that this is appropriate given the age of the current work. Officers therefore tendered for consultants to undertake a review of the existing standards in January 2017 and subsequently appointed Markides Associates Limited to undertake the work.

The 'Parking Standards Review Study'

8. The 'Parking Standards Review Study' undertaken by Markides Associates Limited concluded in October 2017 and is available on the Council's website as part of the evidence underpinning the emerging New Local Plan:

<http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/planning-development/planning-strategic-planning/new-single-local-plan/technical-work-for-the-early-partial-review>

9. The aims of the 'Parking Standards Review Study' (hereafter 'the study') were to undertake a technical review of the Council's current parking standards, and to provide an evidence base to underpin a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) setting out revised parking standards. The study therefore considered the 'level of provision', but did not consider the size or design of parking spaces, which will continue to be governed by the guidance contained in HCC's '*Roads in Hertfordshire*' document (or any subsequent version of this).
10. To help inform the review of parking standards, the study has considered the following evidence and information:
 - The local transport network
 - Policy and guidance
 - 2011 Census data
 - Local site surveys and parking surveys
 - Information on parking standards from other authorities
 - Feedback from officers and councillors in applying standards; and
 - Responses from local developers and businesses via a feedback letter
11. As part of the study, letters were sent to local businesses and housebuilders asking for their comments regarding how well they felt the existing car parking standards are working and an opportunity to highlight any existing parking problems. A Member Development Meeting was also held in July 2017 to give Members the opportunity to discuss the findings from these surveys, the issues arising from operating the existing standards and the emerging recommendations from the work.
12. Much of the feedback received from both engagement processes related to the management of parking spaces and problems of parking stress arising from *existing* housing not having enough designated off-street parking. Whilst these issues are relevant to planning, and can inform the application of parking standards for individual planning applications, they are not explicitly covered by the Markides' report – as this focuses on the setting of standards for *new* development. However, Markides' did make some recommendations regarding how existing issues can be taken into account when setting new car parking standards.

The Study's Key Recommendations

13. The study's key recommendations are set out below:

(a) Parking Requirements

14. The starting point for considering new residential parking standards is the census data (2011) on car ownership rates, which in Dacorum, averages at 1.39 cars per household. There is a lot of variation in car ownership levels, both by location and by property size

across the Borough. Across the Borough, the report identifies three broad ‘bands’ of car ownership:

- i. The lowest levels of car ownership appears in 4 wards¹ in central Hemel Hempstead where it ranges from 1 – 1.2 cars per household, which is 15-30% lower than the district average.
 - ii. There are a further 8 wards², mostly in Hemel Hempstead, although one is in Berkhamsted, where car ownership is around 10% lower than the district average at 1.3 cars per household.
 - iii. There are 13 wards³ with average to above average levels of car ownership (ranging from 1.4 to 1.8 cars per household which is 30% above the district average).
15. Average car ownership rates (by size of dwelling) have been used by Markides to recommend a new residential car parking standard for the Borough. The standard recommended also includes an allowance to take account of potential visitor parking (20%) and further flexibility (20%) to allow for ranges in car ownership across the Borough. The geographical variation in car ownership rates in and around central Hemel Hempstead, and in central Berkhamsted, is also used to justify a reduction in car parking standards for two accessibility zones.
16. The car ownership data from the 2011 census shows a clear relationship between dwelling size (the number of bedrooms) and car ownership rates. It also shows that flats and apartments have car ownership levels of around 80-85% of houses, and that dwellings which are either rented or have shared ownership have car ownership rates of about 60-75% of owned dwellings.
17. The consultants state that *“Basing all standards on a maximum approach is likely to lead in some cases to under-provision of parking and pressure on scarce on-street resources.”* They therefore recommend a move away from the use of maximum standards (as at present), and instead suggest that the starting principle is that all parking is accommodated on site, and that the standards are applied as ‘requirements’ from which departures may be justified with appropriate evidence (see below).
18. The recommended residential parking standards are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Residential car parking standards suggested by the Study

Dwelling size	Parking requirement per unit (existing standards in brackets)	Parking Requirement per unit (Zone 1) (30% reduction)	Parking Requirement per unit (Zone 2) (10% reduction)
Studio/bedsit	1.25 (1.25)	0.9	1
1 bedroom	1.25 (1.25)	1	1.1
2 bedrooms	1.75 (1.5)	1.3	1.6
3 bedrooms	2.3 (2.25)	1.75	2.2
4 bedrooms	3 (3)	2	2.5
5 + bedrooms	Assessed individually on merit (no previous standard)		

¹ The 4 wards are: Hemel Hempstead Town, Highfield, Adeyfield West and Grovehill.

² The 8 wards are: Adeyfield East, Apsley and Corner Hall, Bennetts End, Berkhamsted East, Boxmoor, Chaulden and Warners End, Gadebridge and Woodhall Farm.

³ The 13 wards are: Berkhamsted West, Kings Langley, Nash Mills, Tring West and Rural, Tring East, Watling, Aldbury and Wigginton, Bovingdon, Flaunden and Chipperfield and Ashridge.

Existing and emerging standards apply parking for disabled motorists in addition to these residential parking standards.

(b) Accessibility Zones

19. The Council's existing residential car parking standards are applied against four 'accessibility zones', which are based on public transport and local facilities. These are set out in the Council's Area Based Policies Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2004).
20. The Markides Study suggests a different approach with only two 'accessibility zones' recommended to be applied across the more accessible parts of Dacorum. Within each of these 'accessibility zones' Markides consider that reduced car parking standards could be appropriate.
21. Accessibility Zone 1 is defined as an approximate 10-minute walk (or around 800m) from 'Hemel Hempstead centre', where accessibility is 'high' and car ownership is 15-30% lower than average.
22. Accessibility Zone 2 is defined as central Berkhamsted (800m radius from the centre of Berkhamsted) and Hemel Hempstead fringe (800 – 1600m radius from Hemel Hempstead town centre). Car ownership in these areas is generally 10% below average.
23. The extent of the revised Accessibility Zones (1 and 2) suggested by the study has slightly decreased in extent from those currently in place (through the Area Based Policies SPG).
24. However, the study draws new accessibility zones as a simple radius from central Hemel Hempstead/Berkhamsted. Therefore, in due course, when formalising any new car parking standards which are to be taken forward by the Council following this study, the accessibility zones would need to be re-drawn using roads as the boundaries, to improve ease of application within the development management process.

(c) Justification for diverging from the suggested residential car parking requirements

25. The study identifies a number of factors that influence the 'parking stress' created by new development such as the existing levels of on-street parking stress in the vicinity of that development.
26. It is therefore important that any new residential car parking standard subsequently adopted by the Council can be applied flexibly, to take account of local circumstances.
27. In order to try to ensure decisions relating to parking provision for new development take appropriate account of the parking situation in the immediate local area, the study suggests a template for carrying out 'Parking Stress Surveys.' These surveys would be carried out by developers or their agents at the request of Case Officers, if required to inform car parking proposals associated with a planning application. Appendix I of the study sets out an example of how this is applied by Lambeth Council. This covers: how surveys are carried out, what data is collected and how this information is passed back to the Council. It is suggested that a similar approach could be used at Dacorum, where there is an high level of local car parking 'stress' identified which needs to be taken into account.

(d) Garages

28. The issue of whether garages should be counted as a parking space is a difficult issue for a number of reasons. The key issue is that whilst obviously designed to accommodate a vehicle, garages are often used for other purposes – whether formally converted into part of the property under Permitted Development Rights, or used more informally for storage or as a workshop or utility room.
29. The study presents a number of options for how to treat garages in future calculations of parking for new development, but recommends that they should continue to be counted as parking spaces provided they meet certain size and positioning standards. This seems an appropriate approach and the one that is most likely to stand up to potential challenges at planning appeals.

(e) Non-Residential Car Parking Standards

30. In terms of non-residential parking standards, the study suggests that the existing standards should essentially be retained, but applied as broad requirements rather than maximum standards, so that some flexibility can be used to encourage changes in travel modes, where alternative modes of transport are available. The recommended non-residential standards are set out in Section 6 of the study, but are too lengthy (and cannot be summarised) to replicate here.

(f) Other Study Recommendations

31. The study also makes other recommendations, including:
 - A new standard for electric vehicle charging points;
 - Car-free development should only be acceptable in central Hemel Hempstead with suitable evidence to justify such an approach; and
 - Current disabled parking requirements should be adjusted to meet latest DfT guidance.

Next Steps

32. As the Parking Standards Review Study is a technical report, its recommendations cannot be taken forward for use in planning decisions until formally embedded within an adopted policy document.
33. Officer advice is that the study provides a clear, robust and justified basis upon which to draw up revised parking standards and associated guidance, but the views of the Committee are sought before this work progresses further.
34. In terms of progressing this work, the preferred approach is for the new Local Plan to contain a broad policy covering highways matters that cross refers to updated car parking standards which are contained within a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This provides the ability for standards to be reviewed as and when required, rather than reviews being tied to the formal Local Plan production cycle.
35. However, this SPD will need to be subject to full consultation (as per the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement). Logically this consultation would take place alongside the Council's Pre-Submission Local Plan. This ensures that the public and other interested parties can see the guidance within the wider Local Plan

context and also allows for the guidance to be moved to an annex of the Local Plan (as is currently the case), should this be the preference of the Local Plan Inspector.

36. An updated timetable for production of the new Local Plan is due to be considered by Cabinet in July before being formally published within the Council's Local Development Scheme as at 2018 (LDS).
37. Work on the SPD is in its very early stages, but the current draft includes the following sections:
 - I. *Introduction* - to include summary of national policy and relevant background information
 - II. *Accessibility Zones* – to include maps and justification for updated zones which will be used for application of standards
 - III. *Residential standards* – to include consideration of cycle / motorbike provision, disabled provision, the approach to shared provision and car-free development, new requirements relating to provision of electric vehicle charging points
 - IV. *Non-residential standards* – to include consideration of the points shown for point III above
 - V. *Other requirements* – to include text on travel plans, developer contributions, transport assessment, parking stress surveys etc.
38. An SPD would also include clear cross-references to the latest HCC guidance on the design of parking.
39. Feedback from Members regarding the potential content / coverage of the SPD is also welcomed.
40. Cabinet and Full Council will be required to agree the final car parking standards as part of an SPD to inform the new Local Plan (or any associated guidance), which will be prepared and consulted upon in due course.

Annex 1

Included in <u>local planning authority</u> Parking Standards	Included in <u>highway authority</u> Parking Design Guidance
(a) Residential Parking	
<p>Car parking standards</p> <p>Cycle parking standards</p> <p>Car free developments</p> <p>The appropriate level of visitor parking</p> <p>The use of garages in parking calculations</p> <p>Quantity and requirement of electric vehicle charging points</p> <p>Tandem parking</p> <p>Communal parking court layouts</p> <p>Parking on highway</p>	<p>Car free developments</p> <p>Cycle parking facilities</p> <p>On-street electric vehicle charging points</p> <p>General dimensions for parking spaces</p> <p>Standard parking layouts including echelon and end to end parallel (to include turning space and aisle space)</p> <p>Parking and driveway surfacing in vicinity of highway boundary</p> <p>Dropped kerb minimum/maximum length align with HCC VXO guidance document</p> <p>Access to courtyard parking (particular reference to covered entrances, minimum heights clearance/widths, gates, etc)</p> <p>Parking on highway</p> <p>Location of parking areas and spaces in relation to junctions, bus stops, pedestrian crossings and other highway features</p>
(b) Non-Residential Parking	
<p>Maximum/Minimum parking standards in relation to different land use classes</p> <p>Any zone based reduction from maximum parking standards considered appropriate due to local accessibility opportunities</p> <p>Minimum cycle parking standards</p> <p>Car free developments</p> <p>Quantity and requirement of electric vehicle charging points</p>	<p>Car free developments</p> <p>Cycle parking facilities</p> <p>On-street electric vehicle charging points</p> <p>Internal car parking layouts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General dimensions for parking spaces (including increased widths for reduced manoeuvring space) • Standard parking layouts including echelon and end to end parallel (to include circulation,

**Included in *local planning authority*
Parking Standards**

**Included in *highway authority* Parking
Design Guidance**

Tandem parking

Car parking layouts

Parking on highway

turning space and aisle widths)

Access to courtyard parking (particular reference to covered entrances, minimum heights clearance/widths, gates, etc)

Parking on highway

Service vehicle requirements

Location of parking areas and spaces in relation to junctions, bus stops, pedestrian crossings and other highway features