

Policy Note: Car Parking Standards for New Development

March 2023

Introduction

Policy on Car Parking Standards for New Development will be updated and replaced through the Local Plan Review, which commenced in October 2022 and will be adopted in 2025/6. In the meantime, this Policy Note sets out how we will apply policy on car parking standards in the Council's development plan against subsequent changes in national planning policy.

This Policy Note only covers general car parking. It does not cover cycle or motorcycle parking or car parking for disabled people.

Current policy

The development plan policy for car parking standards for new development is saved policy A1S 'Parking in New Development' in the Replacement [Wigan Unitary Development Plan](#) (UDP) (Remaining Policies), adopted in 2006. It states:

In new development, convenient, safe and secure provision will be required for:

(a) cycle and motorcycle parking and car parking for disabled people in accordance with the minimum standards adopted by the Council.

(b) car parking in line with the maximum standards adopted by the Council.

The scope for providing cycle or motorcycle parking or car parking for disabled people below the minimum standards, or car parking below the maximum standard, will be considered against the following factors:

(i) the accessibility of the site by public transport.

(ii) the availability of convenient and safe off-street parking.

(iii) the availability of on-street car parking without detriment to residential amenity and highway safety.

(iv) the feasibility of providing on-site parking relative to other planning issues such as the reuse of a constrained site or building and urban design.

Where necessary, a legal agreement will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the provision and/or management of off-site parking.

The standards themselves are set out in Appendix 9 to the plan.

As stated in the supporting text for the policy, the policy and standards were based on 'urban conurbation' standards in the Regional Planning Guidance of the time, as well as national standards in the then Planning Policy Guidance note 13.

Changes since the policy was adopted

Since the UDP was adopted in 2006, the strategic policy context has moved on significantly, particularly in two respects:

- There is less emphasis overall on setting numerical parking standards; and
- Where parking standards are set, they are not to be expressed as ‘maximum’ standards.

The current version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021, states (paragraph 107): “If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development
- b) the type, mix and use of development
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport
- d) local car ownership levels, and
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.”

It goes on to state (paragraph 108, extract): “Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.”

The Council’s approach

As such, while car parking in line with the standards adopted by the Council is the starting point for the requirement in new development, the car parking standards should not be regarded as the maximum.

In considering whether there should be any variation from the standard in a development, the Council will have regard to factors i) – iv) in policy A1S, along with paragraphs 107 and 108 in the NPPF 2021 (or equivalent in any update).

Against these criteria, there are likely to be circumstances where the Council will require provision above the standard(s).

Therefore, notwithstanding that the starting point is the adopted development plan policy A1S as it stands, the policy position on car parking standards effectively is as set out below - with deleted text shown crossed through and replacement text shown underlined:

In new development, convenient, safe and secure provision will be required for car parking in line with the ~~maximum~~ standards adopted by the Council.

The scope for providing car parking above or below the ~~maximum~~ standard, will be considered against the following factors:

- (i) the accessibility of the site by public transport.**

(ii) the availability of convenient and safe off-street parking.

(iii) the availability of on-street car parking without detriment to residential amenity and highway safety.

(iv) the feasibility of providing on-site parking relative to other planning issues such as the reuse of a constrained site or building and urban design.

Where necessary, a legal agreement will be sought to secure the developer's contribution to the provision and/or management of off-site parking.

The following factors from paragraphs 107 and 108 in the NPPF (2021) will also be considered:

- the type, mix and use of development
- the need to optimise the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport
- local car ownership levels
- the impact on local traffic management
- the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Car parking provision for new 3 and 4+ bedroom houses

Subject to considerations about environmental quality and the need to avoid a car-dominated street scene, and having regard to the factors outlined above, the Council's preference is for car parking provision serving new 3 and 4+ bedroom houses to exceed the standard:

- For 3 bedroom houses, two car parking spaces should normally be provided.
- For 4 bedroom houses, three car parking spaces should normally be provided, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that a lower level of provision will not give rise to on-street parking within or in the vicinity of the development.

Other issues for residential development

In determining the amount of car parking to be provided, there should be sufficient space to use the parking, including to get in and out of cars, load and unload the boot and to undertake minor servicing. As such off-street parking spaces provided should be at least 5.0m x 3.0m to be counted as a space, with an additional 1.0m length required in front of a garage door and an additional 0.5m width needed where a space adjoins a wall or boundary feature and/or where the driveway provides the principal access for people to/from the property. If there is more than one parking space side by side, additional width would be able to be shared.

New residential development should also provide communal space suitable for visitor parking in addition to the space per dwelling standard, wherever practicable. All communal parking should be sited as close as possible to the homes it serves.

Provision for car parking should not result in an uninterrupted expanse of tarmac or other hard surfacing, although breaking up tarmac with other hard surfacing to differentiate space for parking and access is appropriate in principle, subject to the details. Importantly, sufficient space will need to be retained for soft landscaping in between parking spaces and buildings. Further information is available in the Council's [Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document](#) and [Landscape Design Supplementary Planning Document](#).