

ITEM 9 – APPENDIX D

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY O&S – 16TH SEPTEMBER 2013
EXECUTIVE – 1ST OCTOBER 2013

Title:

PARKING GUIDELINES

[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to consider the recommendation to Council on the proposed guidelines for the provision of vehicular and cycle parking in new developments.

The report was considered by Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16th September and comments on the recommendation are included at the end of this report.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

Parking provision for cars and cycles is an important element of new development and is linked to the overall objective of protecting the environment.

Financial Implications:

There are no resource implications arising specifically from this report.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising from this report

Introduction

1. The provision of appropriate levels of car parking and cycle parking is an important consideration when assessing proposals for new development. In the past the Council used the Surrey County Council Parking Guidelines from 2003 as the starting point for assessing the level of parking provision, albeit that these Guidelines were not formally adopted by the Council.
2. There are various reasons why it is appropriate to review the situation and for the Council to adopt new parking guidelines:-
 - Surrey County Council has recently issued new parking guidelines (January 2012) and recommended that the districts in Surrey use these within their own Local Development Framework (LDF) documents;

- In relation to residential parking there has been a move away from maximum standards and a recognition that local circumstances need to be considered when assessing the right level of parking in new residential developments.
3. In March/April 2012, the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive considered the draft Parking Guidelines. The Executive agreed the proposed parking guidelines as the basis for consultation. In essence the proposed Guidelines comprised the parking guidelines produced by the County Council for non-residential development, which it was proposed should be adopted without change, and the proposed parking guidelines for residential development. These were based on the County Council's guidelines, but amended to reflect local circumstances in Waverley. The changes made to the County guidelines were in recognition of the fact that car ownership in Waverley is high and the opportunities to utilise other forms of transport are limited, particularly in the more remote locations in the Borough.
 4. At the time it was proposed that the County Council's parking guidelines for non-residential development, which set out a range of maximum parking levels for various forms of non-residential development, as well as for residential institutions like care homes and for sheltered housing developments, should be adopted without change.

Consultation on the Draft Parking Guidelines

5. A consultation on the Draft Parking guidelines took place between 25th May and 5th July 2012. Those invited to comment included the Highways Agency, Surrey County Council, adjoining local authorities, town and parish councils, transport operators and residents' associations. Comments were received from 12 respondents. These are summarised in the Schedule attached as Annexe 1 to this report. This appendix also includes the officer response to these comments and identifies any changes to the Parking Guidelines linked to these comments.
6. A range of views were expressed from those considering that the parking guidelines do not provide for enough parking, to those who consider that in some locations the guidelines are too prescriptive and may require provision of more parking than is necessary.
7. In March this year two workshops were held for Members to discuss the proposed parking guidelines. A number of issues were discussed at the workshops. Key points arising include:-
 - Concern that residential parking guidelines may not be high enough. A range of views were expressed, including a suggestion that there should be an additional requirement for visitors. There were also some specific suggestions about how the recommended guidelines should be changed.
 - Regarding the non-residential parking guidelines, there was a general view that these should not be expressed as a maximum.
 - Some members questioned the evidence on which some of the non-residential parking guidelines are based.

- There was a general observation that the non-residential parking guidelines should make provision for staff parking.
- There was a view that in the following cases the proposed non-residential guidelines are not adequate: Retail, offices, hospitals, doctors/dentists/veterinary practices, places of worship and other non-residential institutions and vehicle repair establishments
- With regard to schools and day nurseries/crèches there was a concern that in some cases there is not adequate provision for dropping-off and picking-up.

Officer comment

8. Following the workshops with members, officers have reviewed the proposed parking guidelines and made some further changes. A copy of the proposed parking guidelines is attached as Annexe 2. The main changes and amendments are as follows:-
 - Residential guidelines: A further change to the residential parking guidelines by increasing the requirement outside town centres for 2 and 3+ bedroom dwellings to 2 and 2.5 spaces per dwelling respectively. The issue of visitor parking was discussed with the County Council and the guidelines proposed by the County do take account of visitor requirements. It should also be pointed out that the guidelines for residential developments are expressed as the minimum that would normally be required. However, the guidelines also say that where space permits, it may be appropriate to consider an increased provision above this minimum. Officers consider that this provision addresses the concerns that more parking may be required than the indicated minimum.
 - Non-residential guidelines: In the guidelines recommended by the County Council, these are expressed as a maximum. Following further consideration and discussion with County officers, it is recommended that these should not be expressed either as a maximum or a minimum. Instead they are simply expressed as a guideline for the appropriate level of parking for these uses. The County Council has also confirmed that its Guidelines take account of the need for staff parking.
 - Retail uses: It is proposed that the standards in the County Guidelines be retained, albeit not expressed as a maximum. The County recommend four zones where the standard is varied in recognition of the relative accessibility to public transport. Officers recommend two zones (as is also recommended for residential parking), namely town centre and 'rest of Waverley'. In relation to retail development the guideline standard would apply outside town centres but the reduction by 75% should apply in town centre locations.
 - Class A2 Uses (banks, building societies etc.): There is currently no recommended guideline for these uses. Officers recommend using the 1 space per 30sqm standard that applied in the County Council's 2003 Parking Strategy.
 - B1 Business uses (including offices): It is proposed that the range in the County Guidelines of between 1:30sqm to 1:100sqm be retained. It

is recognised, however, that some flexibility may be required if these developments take place in more remote locations where access by other modes of transport is limited.

- Hospitals: Following discussion with County Officers, it is recommended that there should not be a specific standard, but that the parking requirement for these uses be based on individual justification/assessment. This provides the flexibility to respond to local circumstances.
- Day Nurseries and Creches: Similarly, it is recommended that the parking provision should be based on individual assessment.
- Doctors', Dentists' and Veterinary Practices: Officers are recommending that the guideline figures in the County's 2003 Parking Strategy should be the starting point for assessing the appropriate level of parking for these uses.
- Schools: The current guidelines include a general comment that discourages the provision on site of pupil parking areas and areas for dropping-off and picking-up. Officers propose to retain this statement but to include a note to the effect that for both new and expanding schools an exception may be made where there is the risk that further on-street parking would reduce highway safety or emergency access.

9. On the specific issue of evidence, the County Guidelines are based on research, the earlier 2003 guidelines, the previous national guidance in PPG13 and responses to the County's own consultations.
10. Members had expressed the view that all non-residential institutions such as places of worship, galleries, public halls etc. should have the same standard of 1 space per 3 persons. The County response is that this could be too prescriptive and lacks the flexibility to respond to local circumstances etc. In each case the proposed guidelines include scope for individual assessment which provides a degree of flexibility.
11. Members also commented on the differences between the parking standards for different types of leisure use. In response, the County Council has said that its guidelines are based on research and the earlier 2003 guidelines and previous national guidance. No change is recommended to these guidelines.
12. A concern was also raised about the recommended guideline of 1:20sqm for vehicle repair premises and whether this is high enough. Although the County Council is not necessarily opposed to a change it has said that this should be based on evidence. At this stage officers do not have specific evidence to indicate that a change is needed.

Comments from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report at its meeting on 16th September and welcomed the proposed changes to the parking guidelines. The Committee also endorsed the recommendation to adopt the parking standards with the following observations:

- The Committee was concerned about retaining the statement about the discouraging the provision of on-site of pupil parking areas and areas for dropping off and picking up at schools in rural areas.
 - The Committee questioned the numbers quoted for car parking at dentists/vets/doctors as there did not seem to be any consistency on these.
 - The Committee was pleased to see the move away from maximum standards and recognition that local circumstances need to be considered.
 - There was concern about the justification of the figures noted in the report, specifically under the residential guidelines.
 - The Committee asked that it be raised with SCC Members concerns about allowing dropped kerbs.
14. In relation to the first point, officers consider that a degree of flexibility is needed, taking account of factors such as the location of the school and what the options are in terms of other modes of transport. The proposed guidelines indicate that on-site parking may be appropriate in locations where on-street parking would reduce highway safety or emergency access.
15. In relation to the second point, the parking requirements for doctors' practices, dental surgeries and veterinary practices are expressed differently. The proposed guidelines originated in the 2003 Parking Strategy for Surrey and would have been derived from the evidence underpinning that document.
16. In relation to the residential guidelines, these originated in the parking guidelines published by Surrey County Council in 2012 and have been adjusted to take account of local circumstances.

Conclusions

17. Taking account of both the responses to the 2012 public consultation, and the further comments from Members, officers consider that the proposed guidelines strike the right balance between providing a clear indication of the general level of parking expected, whilst also having the flexibility to respond to local circumstances where necessary. It is also considered that the proposed guidelines reflect the characteristics of the Borough, including the high level of car ownership and the relative inaccessibility to public transport and other services etc. outside town centres.

Recommendation

That the Executive notes the comments from the Community O&S Committee and recommends that the Council adopts the Parking Guidelines as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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