

Parking

49. The availability of car parking has a major influence on the means of transport people choose for their journeys. Some studies suggest that levels of parking can be more significant than levels of public transport provision in determining means of travel (particularly for the journey to work) even for locations very well served by public transport. Car parking also takes up a large amount of space in development, is costly to business and reduces densities. Reducing the amount of parking in new development (and in the expansion and change of use in existing development) is essential, as part of a package of planning and transport measures, to promote sustainable travel choices. At the same time, the amount of good quality cycle parking in developments should be increased to promote more cycle use.

50. A consistent approach on parking should be set out in the RTS to avoid wasteful competition between different locations based around the supply or cost of parking, to the detriment of sustainable development. Policies on parking should be coordinated with parking controls and charging set out in the local transport plan, and should complement planning policies on the location of development.

51. In developing and implementing policies on parking, local authorities should:

1. ensure that, as part of a package of planning and transport measures, levels of parking provided in association with development will promote sustainable transport choices;
2. not require developers to provide more spaces than they themselves wish, other than in exceptional circumstances which might include for example where there are significant implications for road safety which cannot be resolved through the introduction or enforcement of on-street parking controls;
3. encourage the shared use of parking, particularly in town centres and as part of major proposals: for example offices and leisure uses (such as cinemas) might share parking because the peak levels of use do not coincide, provided adequate attention is given at the design stage;
4. take care not to create perverse incentives for development to locate away from town centres, or threaten future levels of investment in town centres. While greater opportunities exist to reduce levels of parking for developments in locations with good access by non car modes, local authorities should be cautious in prescribing different levels of parking between town centres and

peripheral locations, unless they are confident that the town centre will remain a favoured location for developers. Advice in PPG6 makes clear that good quality secure parking is important to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres, and to enable retail and leisure uses to flourish;

5. require developers to provide designated parking spaces for disabled people in accordance with current good practice¹⁶
6. where appropriate, introduce on-street parking controls in areas adjacent to major travel generating development to minimise the potential displacement of parking where on-site parking is being limited;
7. require convenient safe and secure cycle parking in development at least at levels consistent with the cycle strategy in the local transport plan; and
8. consider appropriate provision for motorcycle parking.

Maximum Parking Standards

52. Policies in development plans should set maximum levels of parking for broad classes of development. Maximum standards should be designed to be used as part of a package of measures to promote sustainable transport choices, reduce the land-take of development, enable schemes to fit into central urban sites, promote linked-trips and access to development for those without use of a car and to tackle congestion. There should be no minimum standards for development, other than parking for disabled people.

53. There is a need for a consistent approach to maximum parking standards for a range of major developments, above the relevant thresholds. The levels set out in Annex D should be applied as a maximum throughout England, but RPBs and local planning authorities may adopt more rigorous standards, where appropriate, subject to the advice in this guidance. The maximum parking standards set out in annex D do not apply to small developments, that is, those below the relevant thresholds. Local authorities should use their discretion in setting the levels of parking appropriate for small developments so as to reflect local circumstances. By virtue of the thresholds, this locally based approach will cover most development in rural areas.

54. For individual developments, the standards in Annex D should apply as a maximum unless the applicant has demonstrated (where appropriate through a Transport Assessment) that a higher level of parking is needed. In such cases the applicant should show the measures they are taking (for instance in the design, location and implementation of the scheme) to minimise the need

for parking.

55. It should not be assumed that where a proposal accords with the relevant maximum parking standard it is automatically acceptable in terms of achieving the objectives of this guidance. Applicants for development with significant transport implications should show (where appropriate in the Transport Assessment) the measures they are taking to minimise the need for parking.

56. A balance has to be struck between encouraging new investment in town centres by providing adequate levels of parking, and potentially increasing traffic congestion caused by too many cars. Where retail and leisure developments are located in a town centre, or on an edge of centre site as defined by PPG6, local planning authorities should consider allowing parking additional to the relevant maximum standards provided the local authority is satisfied that the parking facilities will genuinely serve the town centre as a whole and that agreement to this has been secured before planning permission has been granted. Local planning authorities should ensure that the scale of parking is in keeping with the size of the centre and that the parking provision is consistent with the town centre parking strategy.