



# Residential Car Parking Standards

Supplementary Planning Document



November 2014



**Ashfield District Council**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Residential Car Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared by Ashfield District Council to provide guidance and advice for applicants/developers. The SPD sets out the Council's requirement for parking provision to serve new residential developments within the District.
- 1.2 The parking standards contained within the Ashfield Local Plan Review (2002) are now out-of-date and there is an urgent need to update them. As such, the intention of the Residential Car Parking Standards SPD is to provide further clarification and supporting guidance to Policies in the Ashfield Local Plan Review 2002.
- 1.3 The supplementary planning document will be a material consideration in determining planning applications for residential development.
- 1.4 Ashfield District Council has worked in partnership with Highway officers at Nottinghamshire County Council to prepare the SPD. The team worked together to produce parking standards for Ashfield based on the most current research and guidance and the local issues affecting the District. Local knowledge regarding parking issues affecting Ashfield has also been utilised to enable the team to formulate locally distinct parking solutions. Design principles/solutions relating to parking have also been identified and form an important aspect of this SPD.
- 1.5 The main objectives of the Supplementary Planning Document are to:
  - provide a clear framework for all to understand how parking provision is to be provided in the district for new development;
  - summarise the national and local policy context relating to the provision of parking for new development;
  - provide architects, engineers and developers involved in the preparation of schemes for new development, clear guidance and advice on the Council's criteria for parking standards.
- 1.6 The key purpose of the document is to ensure new development provides the required level of parking provision to accommodate demand without over providing, which would lead to developments dominated by the car or under providing which would result in a shortfall in parking spaces, leading to potential highway safety problems in the future.

## **2.0 Policy Context**

### **National Policy**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012. The NPPF replaces existing national planning policy documents including all planning policy statements (PPSs), all planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) including Planning Policy Guidance note 13: Transport, which previously set out the national parking standards and some planning circulars. Its content reflects the Government's Localism Agenda by placing Local and Neighbourhood Planning at the heart of the development management process. It also reflects the Government's desires to stimulate growth and to address climate change. The NPPF has been supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance issued on 6th March 2014.
- 2.2 The principle of "sustainable development" is at the heart of the NPPF. It is comprised of three key components: economic, environmental and social well being. The NPPF makes it clear that each component should be given equal weight when the concept of sustainability is considered. The achievement of this objective is structured around the requirement of the planning system, that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.3 Paragraph 30 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to 'support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport'.
- 2.4 Paragraph 37 of the NPPF states that 'planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities'.
- 2.5 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF refers specifically to car parking and states that 'if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account:
- 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
  - an overall need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles

Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles'.

## **Local Policy**

- 2.6 Nottinghamshire County Council is the highway authority responsible for the local highway network (excluding trunk roads and motorways) within Ashfield District. Having withdrawn specific parking requirements for new residential development, Nottinghamshire County Council released Residential Car Parking Research for Nottinghamshire – Highway Development Control Guidance in February 2010, which provides guidance on the estimation of demand for car parking space for residential developments within the County. This is based on the DCLG document produced in 2007 called Residential Car Parking Research.
- 2.7 At present local parking standards, as adopted by Nottinghamshire County Council, are set out in the 6Cs Design Guide. The Council are guided by Nottinghamshire County Council, as the Highway Authority for Ashfield, regarding standards for new developments. Once adopted, residential development proposals should meet the local parking standards set out in the Council's Residential Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2.8 Historically, Government guidance required local authorities to express residential parking standards as maximum standards. This established a presumption that it was acceptable for more accessible developments, where reasonably justified, to provide fewer parking spaces than the standard.
- 2.9 Parking is often one of the most emotive issues that can cause concern in a local community. Pavement parking, obstruction of driveways and damage to soft landscaping and footways are just examples of what can occur as a result of parking problems. In some cases, emergency or refuse vehicles are unable to pass as a result of obstructive parking.
- 2.10 In January 2011, the Coalition Government decided to remove maximum parking standards with regard to residential parking. The Government concluded that previous policies have directly resulted in an increased level of on-street parking consequently causing congestion and potential hazards for pedestrians. While the emphasis remains on local planning and highway authorities to set parking standards for their areas, it is recognised that due consideration should be given to local circumstances, accessibility and local car ownership levels.
- 2.11 The Ashfield Local Plan Review 2002 includes at Appendix 7 of the document, Parking Standards for New Developments. However, these standards are now considered to be out of date with regards to requirement of maximum parking standards.

- 2.12 Subsequently, the Council has developed minimum parking standards to guide parking provision in new residential development within the District of Ashfield. The inclusion of these minimum standards within this SPD will remove the presumption that a lower provision would be acceptable and instead provide a required standard for new residential development. This will ensure parking provision is adequate in both quantum and form and avoids previous issues associated with under provision.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 It is essential to formulate local parking standards due to the need to tackle congestion, to use land more efficiently; and to promote good design. Due to increasing levels of car ownership there is a need to find intelligent solutions to parking problems. The density of modern residential developments often reduces the amount of space available for parking. This can also create highway safety issues if it is not managed appropriately through the use of parking standards.
- 3.2 With regard to the formulation of parking standards, it is recognised good practice to base car parking standards on an assessment of future levels of car ownership in order to ensure that demand for parking is met. It is important to accurately determine the level of demand for parking in order to ensure that development is not dominated by parking.
- 3.3 The SPD reflects the methodology set out in Nottinghamshire County Council's technical paper 'Residential Car Parking Research for Nottinghamshire – Highway Development Control Guidance, February 2010, which was in turn based on the DCLG document 'Residential Car Parking Research' 2007, which provides guidance on estimating car parking demand for residential developments.
- 3.4 This methodology projects forward existing data on car ownership levels within the district of Ashfield and then derives appropriate parking standards based on this assessment of future levels of car ownership. This approach is based on the assumption that new housing will have similar car ownership characteristics to the existing housing stock in the area.
- 3.5 The data on existing car ownership levels is available to be taken from existing 2001 Census data. It was the Council's intention to use the latest release of data from the 2011 Census data to provide an up-to-date picture of the required parking standards for the district. However to date, not all the relevant 2011 Census data has been released (type, size and location of dwellings).
- 3.6 In the absence of the full release of the 2011 Census data, the Council proposes the use of local residential parking standards used by adjoining neighbouring local authorities (see Table 4).

#### **Census Data**

- 3.7 Data for the district of Ashfield is set out in Table 1 and this shows a breakdown of the 2011 Census data of households owning 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4+ cars/vans for the district as a whole. This table also shows a breakdown to allow for comparison between both sets of data between 2001 and 2011.

Total No. House-holds	No. House-holds with no car/van	No. House-holds with 1 car/van	No. House-holds with 2 cars/vans	No. House-holds with 3 cars/vans	No. House-holds with 4 or more cars/vans	All cars/vans in Ashfield
45,626 (2001)	12,306	21,221	9,947	1,684	468	48,039
% of Total Households	27%	46.5%	21.8%	3.7%	1%	
50,931 (2011)	12,072	22,549	12,921	2,571	818	59,790
% of Total Households	23.7%	44.3%	25.3%	5.1%	1.6%	

**Table 1 – Ashfield Car Ownership**

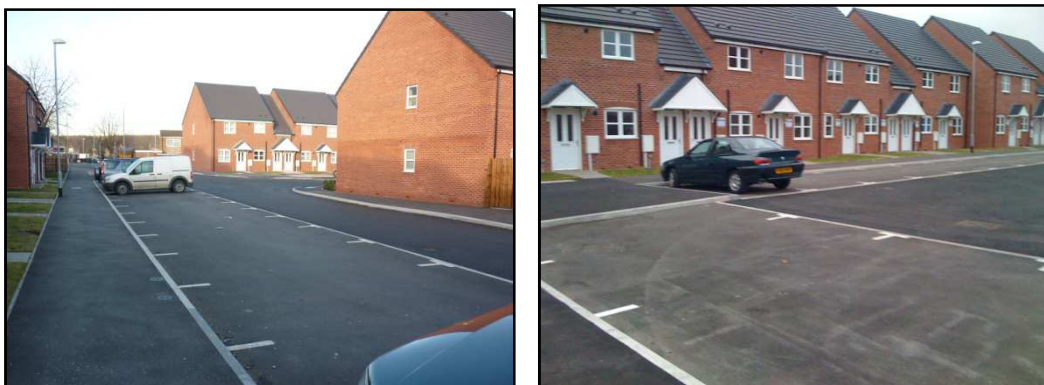
Ashfield Car Ownership, Census 2001 and 2011

- 3.8 Comparing the above 2011 Census data with the data from 2001, it is noticeable that there is a decrease in the number of households with 1 or no cars. The number of households with 2 cars have increased by 3.5% (9,947 to 12,291), households with 3 cars have increased by 1.4% (1,684 to 2,571) and households with 4 or more cars have increased by 0.65 (468 to 818).
- 3.9 Although the above data is available from the 2011 census data, to date no data has been released to allow a cross-tabulation between dwelling type, size and car ownership. Given the percentage increases highlighted above, it is considered appropriate to utilise the 2011 Census data when released in full, to ascertain the relationship between dwelling type, size and car ownership.



## 4.0 Design Principles

- 4.1 Garages are flexible spaces that can provide secure parking, although they are often used for domestic storage or sometimes converted to additional living accommodation. Garages should be large enough to accommodate a vehicle plus sufficient space to open the driver door and should also contain a small amount of storage space. Garages will not normally be counted as a parking space for the purpose of calculating parking provision, unless the minimum dimensions for residential garages set out in table 2 below are provided.
- 4.2 As well as achieving the appropriate levels of parking provision within the development, the design, location and layout of the spaces will also be important. Designs will need to provide attractive streets that include adequate parking, but without detracting from the character or visual quality of the place. Well designed places integrate car parking without it becoming over-dominant.
- 4.3 Badly designed residential developments often lead to inappropriate on-street vehicle parking due to:
- Poor layout of the whole scheme;
  - Poor configuration/layout of individual plots (i.e. tandem parking);
  - The density of developments and the width of the public highway;
  - Parking courts which are poorly located and designed; and
  - Garages which are too small to accommodate vehicles.



Parking occupying whole frontages dominates the street scene and creates a lack of visual interest

## **Building for Life**

- 4.4 Building for Life is the industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are invited to use to stimulate conversations about creating good places to live.
- 4.5 The Building for Life 12 document contains 12 questions which are designed to help structure discussions between local communities, local planning authorities and developers. Criteria 10 – Car Parking is relevant to this technical paper and should be referred to in designing new residential developments within the District. The criteria contains the following:
- Is there enough parking for residents and visitors?
  - Is parking positioned close to people's homes?
  - Are any parking courtyards small in size (generally no more than five properties should use a parking courtyard) and are they well overlooked by neighbouring properties?
  - Are garages well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene?
- 4.6 Section 10 – Car Parking of the Building for Life 12 document recommends the following should be avoided:
- Relying on a single parking treatment. A combination of car parking treatments nearly always created more capacity, visual interest and a more successful place.
  - Large rear parking courts. When parking courts are less private, they offer greater opportunity for thieves, vandals and those who should not be parking.
  - Parking that is not well overlooked.
  - Using white lining to mark out and number spaces. These are not only costly, but unsightly. It can be cheaper and more aesthetically pleasing to use small metal plates to number spaces, and a few well placed block markers to define spaces.
  - Providing a clear and direct route between front doors and the street by not balancing the amount of parking in front of plots with soft relief.
- 4.7 The Building for Life 12 document contains 12 questions which are designed to help structure discussions between local communities, local planning authorities and developers. Criteria 10 – Car Parking is

relevant to this technical paper and should be referred to in designing new residential developments within the District. The criteria contains the following:

### **Surface Water Management**

4.8 The management of surface water is a key element to the design of residential developments with SuDS being utilised to mimic natural systems for draining surface water. Residential car parking can contribute to sustainable water management through appropriate design//construction so that surfaces are permeable and car parking is incorporated as an element of a wider sustainable drainage scheme on a site. A variety of porous surfacing options are available such as:

- Open-textured soil or granular materials - Gravel or similar surface on a sub-base. where very low volumes of light weight traffic will be present.
- Geosynthetic gravel/grass protection systems - Typically used for light/medium loadings such as car parks.
- Small porous elemental surfacing blocks - This surface carries light loading but of high frequency such as shopping centre car parks.
- Continuous-laid porous material - Typical uses are as shopping centre car parks and service roads.
- Large elemental surfacing blocks - Uses are for occasional usage parking areas where vehicular loading is generally light and where the appearance of a grassed surface is seen as environmentally desirable.
- Precast concrete blocks with a pattern of indentations along their edges intended to be filled with sharp sand/gravel, laid on a recommended sub-base. Typical uses are for office and shopping centre car parks.
- Continuous-laid permeable material - In-situ cast concrete systems are available that provide a surface with large voids for infiltration, whilst offering hard standing for vehicles. Typically used in car parking areas

(See susdrains website [www.susdrain.org](http://www.susdrain.org))

4.9 There are opportunities for all applications to avoid concrete and asphalt surfaces to car parking areas the use of which means that water does not soak into the ground and adds potentially to the risk of flooding. There are three main types of solution to creating a permeable driveway/parking area:

- Using gravel or a mainly green, vegetated area.
- Directing water from an impermeable surface to a border rain garden or soakaway.
- Using permeable block paving, porous asphalt or concrete.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has produced guidance on permeable paving which can be found on the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf)

### **Manual for Streets**

- 4.10 Manual for Streets is a highway design guidance document produced by the department for Transport. It is aimed at creating well designed residential streets. The document sets out the process which needs to be undertaken in order to ensure that residential streets meet the needs of all users. It advocates a partnership approach between developers and local authorities. The design principles sections set out the concepts for creating well connected streets at the town centre and neighbourhood level. It also addresses design issues relating to crime reduction. Applicants are advised to seek direction from Manual for Streets early in the design stage to ensure that residential schemes accord with national guidance.

### **Car Parking**

- 4.11 Car parking should be overlooked, welcoming and must not dominate the street scene. A mix of parking should help prevent this, and ideally schemes should provide on plot parking and some well configured on street parking zones, provided that this does not detract from the street scene. On plot tandem parking (i.e long driveways) can lead to inappropriate on street parking which has an adverse affect on the visual quality of the street scene.
- 4.12 Drives and garages should normally be located to the side/rear of houses to minimise their visual impact. Any parking in front of a dwelling should maintain the maximum extent of front boundary possible in order to provide a clearly defined edge to the private space and enclosure to the street.



Example of poor design with vehicles illegally parked, blocking the footpath and dominating the street scene.



Example of good design with drives garages located to the side, minimising their visual impact.

- 4.13 Parking facilities should be well designed in terms of the way they function and the landscaping features and surfacing materials used in the development. Permeable surfacing and soft landscaping should be incorporated into residential development schemes to enable surface water run off to drain more freely. At a national level, Building for Life and Manual for Streets contain more detailed principles relating to residential parking schemes. Proposals should incorporate the design principles set out in both documents.

### **Garages**

- 4.14 Garages are flexible spaces that can provide secure parking, although they are often used for domestic storage or sometimes converted to additional living accommodation. Garages should be large enough to accommodate a vehicle plus sufficient space to open the driver door and should also contain a small amount of storage space. Garages will not normally be counted as a parking space for the purpose of calculating parking provision, unless the minimum dimensions for residential garages set out in Table 2 are provided.

Garage Type	Internal Dimensions (m)	Minimum Door Width (m)	Counts as Parking Space Y/N
Single	6 x 3	2.3	N
Single (inc storage space)	6 x 3.3	2.3	Y
Double (inc storage space)	6 x 6.3	4.2	Y (2 spaces)
Double	6 x 6	4.2	Y (1 space)
Disabled	6 x 3.3	2.8	Y

**Table 2 – Minimum internal garage dimensions**

Source: Adapted from 6Cs Highway Design Guide (2010)

- 4.15 To prevent illegal parking, where vehicles encroach on the carriageway or footway, minimum garage setback spaces will be required. The required set back spaces are set out in Table 3 below.

Garage Door Type	Minimum set-back (m)
Roller Shutter/sliding/inward opening	5.5
Up and Over	6.1
Hinged outward opening	6.5

**Table 3 – Minimum Garage Setback Distances**

Source: 6Cs Highway Design Guide (2010)

- 4.16 Where an access is to be gated, the gates should be set back 5m where they open inward and 6m where they open outwards. This is to ensure that the public highway (particularly areas used by pedestrians) is not obstructed if a vehicle is parked on the access in front of the gates.

### **Pedestrians and Cyclists**

- 4.17 In order to encourage sustainable transport methods new developments should incorporate cycle parking facilities where appropriate. The requirement for cycle facilities will be dependent on

the type and nature of the development. Guidance is set out in The 6C Highway Design Guide 2010 - Section DG16: Parking for cycles

**Connectivity**

- 4.18 The space requirements of emergency vehicles, refuse vehicles and vehicles which deliver and collect goods must be incorporated into development schemes where necessary. Sufficient space will also be required within the site to allow for the parking and manoeuvring of such vehicles. Residential care homes in particular should provide sufficient parking and manoeuvring facilities to accommodate the needs of emergency vehicles.

**Safety**

- 4.19 Car parking and landscaping should be carefully considered in order to prevent barriers to pedestrian and cyclist movement.

## 5.0 Proposed Residential Car Parking Standards

- 5.1 In the absence of the full release of the relevant 2011 census data being available. The Council proposes the use of local residential parking standards for all types of residential development.
- 5.2 In order to provide parking standards for residential developments, extensive research has been carried out to identify residential parking standards used by adjoining Councils within Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. It is proposed that minimum parking standards are adopted which are used by similar size and natured Local Authorities. These standards are set out in Table 4 below.

1 bed dwellings and Aged Persons Residence	1 space per unit plus 1 space off plot per 2 units for visitors
2/3 bed dwellings	2 spaces per unit
4+ bed dwellings	3 spaces per unit

**Table 4 – Parking Standards for all Types of Residential Development**

- 5.3 It is recognised that whilst it is important to combat climate change, recent efforts to restrict parking provision have not resulted in a fall in car ownership. Under-provision of parking places in new development has often led to inappropriate and anti-social parking. As a result, these new standards have been designed to ensure that occupiers of new development have a sufficient minimum level of well-designed parking provision. This should reduce the frequency of inappropriate parking and improve the appearance of new development.
- 5.4 All types of new residential development, including change of use, need to give consideration to the parking standards set out in this SPD. It is the responsibility of the applicant to explicitly demonstrate that the appropriate standards have been met. If the requirements of this guidance cannot be met, the applicant must ensure that the exception is fully justified, being able to demonstrate that other material considerations outweigh the need to adhere to the principles set out in this document. The Council will work proactively with developers to deliver new development that provides the level of parking occupiers will require.
- 5.5 Car parking should be provided within the development site and within the curtilage of the property. Where car parking is located within the development site but beyond the new properties 'residential curtilage, at least one space should be allocated for use by each property. The



allocated car parking space(s) need to be retained in perpetuity and be identified in the deeds of the dwelling.

- 5.6 In exceptional circumstances a more flexible approach may be required and parking standards may be more negotiable. In particular, developments in areas within close proximity to major transport nodes, such as railway and bus stations, may warrant a more flexible approach where there are no implications for amenity or health and safety.
- 5.7 For all non-residential parking requirements, as well as design expectations for a wide range of parking requirements, please refer to the 6Cs Design Guide: Highways, transportation and development (HTD). This is a web based design guide for highways and transportation infrastructure, including parking requirements for new development. It was originally developed by Leicestershire County Council but has subsequently been adopted by Nottinghamshire County Council and other local highway authorities in the East Midlands. The home page for the Design Guide is <http://www.leics.gov.uk/6csdg.htm> This draws heavily on the content of national guidance within Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2.

## **6.0 Implementation**

- 6.1 The Council welcomes the opportunity to have pre-application discussions as it offers an opportunity to guide development positively and highlight areas for improvement.
- 6.2 For residential developments it is important to discuss your proposal at an early stage. Early intervention can save time and money later on. Pre-application advice incurs a cost for the Council and Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 allows Local Planning Authorities to charge for offering a service of pre-application advice. A fee was introduced by the Council in May 2013 and will be required for the processing of pre-application enquiries. This is in line with practice in other parts of Nottinghamshire. The required fee and type of information that will be provided in any response is set out on the Council's website.



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