



North Hertfordshire District Council
Supplementary Planning Document

Vehicle Parking at New Development

Local Evidence Base Summary

September 2011

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On June 14 2011, North Herts District Council Cabinet resolved to publish a draft Supplementary Planning Document, Vehicle Parking at New Development for public consultation. As such a six week consultation was carried out from Monday 27 June to Monday 8 August 2011. Representations from this consultation are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 1.2 Alongside this a local evidence base was established through carrying out a residents parking postal survey across a range of developments throughout the district. A survey form was sent to 640 households, 37 forms were returned with the address unknown, and 180 forms were completed giving a very good response rate of 30%.
- 1.3 This report provides a summary of those responses and supports the changes made from the previous SPD in line with national policy that promotes local decision making on appropriate parking standards. It will provide a brief summary of each of the developments then concentrate on key themes that have emerged which support changes to the SPD. A full spreadsheet detailing all the responses is available on request.

2. Areas surveyed

Hitchin - Starlings Bridge, Nightingale Road

- 2.1 Starlings Bridge is a gated development of 46 one and two bedroom apartments located close to Hitchin Town Centre. Parking is provided via a secure underground car park, one space per household with 6 visitors spaces for the whole development.
- 2.2 Fifteen forms were returned from this development, two of which had two vehicles, the remaining households only one. All used the underground car park for their personal car but commented on the difficulty visitors have given the limited number of spaces. Visitors can park up a five minute walk away using local town centre car parks.

Letchworth – Marmet Avenue

- 2.3 Marmet Avenue consists of 125 properties, a mix of houses and flats located located off Icknield Way. 31 forms were returned with all but one of these being from one bedroom flats so the responses may not fully represent the full range of issues in the development. All properties had one car only with the exception of one which had an additional van.
- 2.4 Visitors to the development tend to find space in the residents car park however commuter parking due to its proximity to the railway station was reported.

Royston – Charding Crescent et al

- 2.5 This development of approximately 152 houses and flats is based on a 'home zone' approach with limited priority and street space given to vehicles. A total of 32 forms were returned. Parking for both residents and visitors is extremely limited with some residents using visitors permits to park their own vehicles.

A number of additional comments were received regarding insufficient parking within the development.

- 2.6 Car ownership was slightly higher in this development with a majority of residents owning two vehicles. This explains the increased pressure on parking in the development.

Baldock – Limekiln Lane

- 2.7 This exclusive and most recent of the developments surveyed consists of 32 3 and 4 bed houses located off South Road. A total of 19 forms were returned a majority of which indicating each household has at least 2 vehicles. A majority of the residents park on their driveway as there is a real issue at this development of the garage being too small for vehicles.

- 2.8 Car ownership here was more varied between one and two vehicles with one property owning three.

Great Ashby

- 2.9 Three distinct areas were surveyed in Great Ashby providing a timeline across the estates continuing development. These were 116 properties on Serpentine Close, 19 on Haycock Round and 67 on Blackdown Close. Great Ashby is well known within the district for having parking issues but this is the first time these have been looked at in any depth.

- 2.10 A total of 83 forms were returned from this area, a vast majority of which all highlighted significant parking issues. Whilst a majority of residents were able to park on private driveways, there was a real issue for visitors who had to find a space on road which was limited. In addition a number of residents have large transit style vans for work purposes that were parked at the evening and weekends causing roads to be blocked and further limiting visitor parking at these times. Car ownership varied greatly within this development.

3. Summary of findings

Table 3.1 Summary of findings

Response rate					
640 forms sent out, 31 address unknown, 180 returned					
30% response rate					
Property types					
Detached	Semi	Terraced	Flat	Bedsit	Unkown
59	31	29	56	3	2
Number of bedrooms					
1	2	3	4+	Unkown	
21	49	46	63	1	
Number of vehicles					
Cars	Vans	Motorbikes	Other		
243	12	8	3		
Do you have use of a garage?					
Yes			No		
96 / 53%			84 / 47%		
If yes is it used for vehicles?					
Yes			No		
40			56		
Of those no reasons why					
Car too large		Storage	Converted	Inconvenient	
29		20	5	2	
Where are vehicles normally parked?					
Driveway		Allocated Space		Garage	
89		48		17	
Where do visitors normally park?					
Allocated visitor space		Residents parking space	On road	Anywhere they can	
26		19	57	8	

- 3.1 The survey covered a good range of property types and number of bedrooms, although no bungalows were included. Following the SPD consultation it would also have been useful to survey a number of retirement dwellings, for this type of development we have therefore used evidence from McCarthy and Stone to develop the new parking standard as limited local evidence is available to us.
- 3.2 Car ownership averaged at 1.41 per dwelling across the survey however there was a key distinction between flats having one car per household and more houses having 2. Car ownership in flat developments averaged 1.19 per dwelling however for houses it increased to 1.56 This could be related to the

number of people living in that household with more single residents in flats and families in houses. In addition limited parking at flat developments may discourage those with more than one vehicle purchasing a property there.

- 3.3 Of particular relevance with regard to supporting changes in the new SPD is the number of households with garages and subsequent use of them. The SPD has used national evidence suggesting 40% of garages are used for cars and the rest storage. Locally this is 42% which is in line with the national average.
- 3.4 A further change to the SPD is the increase in garage size in order for it to be classed as a parking space. Of those that have a garage but don't use 52% stated that it is not sufficient size to house a modern car. The SPD states that all new garages must measure 7m by 3m to be classed as a parking space and locally our evidence supports this suggesting more people would use their garage if their vehicle would fit.
- 3.5 This was followed by 36% who used their garage for storage with many additional comments regarding provision of sufficient storage in new style houses. A small number had converted their garages to additional living accommodation or had two vehicles and found using the garage inconvenient.
- 3.6 A majority of residents were able to park their own vehicle in their private driveway or in an allocated space specific to their property. The main parking problems appear to arise for visitor parking where 52% of visitors are parking locally on road with only 24% being able to access appropriate allocated visitor parking.
- 3.7 However, when questioned where vehicles normally parked only 11% stated garage, with 57% driveway, 31% allocated space. This indicates garage use potentially lower than the 42% when directly asked if used garage.
- 3.7 The issue of visitor parking raised a number of additional comments from people in terms of how difficult it is, particularly for flat developments such as Starlings Bridge where only 6 visitor spaces were provided for 45 properties. The increase in visitor parking provision to a minimum of 0.5 per dwelling should help address this issue which is a reduction considered in areas of social housing or retirement dwellings where lower car ownership rates can be evidenced.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 This main findings of this survey support the changes made to the SPD Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development. It covers a good range of development types across the district as well as a good range of dwelling types within these developments.
- 4.2 It is however recognised that despite a good response rate of 305 for such surveys it is extremely limited in terms of representing the district. As stated within the SPD a programme of area wide parking reviews are taking place across the district and it is not the purpose of this survey to take the place of that more comprehensive review.

Appendix 1
Copy of survey form sent out

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Our Ref:	Parking SPD
Your Ref:	Parking SPD
Contact Officer:	Lorraine O’Gorman
Tel:	01462 474000
email:	planning.policy@north-herts.gov.uk

Residents Parking Survey

Dear Resident,

As part of updating our planning guidance, NHDC is carrying out a consultation on parking in your area. Previous government policy on parking standards has led to parking problems in new housing developments and we are keen to correct this via new, locally developed standards.

We would be very grateful if you could assist us by filling out this short questionnaire on your parking requirements. The information you provide will help further our knowledge and help inform future decisions related to parking.

Could you please return the completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope provided, no later than **Friday 19 August 2011**. Alternatively you can submit an electronic response via requesting a questionnaire from planning.policy@north-herts.gov.uk.

Thank you for your time and assistance with this project.

Yours faithfully,

Planning and Policy Team, North Herts District Council.

Residents' Parking Questionnaire

1. How would you describe your property type?

Detached house	Semi Detached house	Terraced house	Flat / Apartment	Bedsit / Studio	Bungalow

2. How many bedrooms are there in the property?

1	2	3	4+

3. Please state the number and type of vehicle used by residents of this address:

Cars	Vans	Motorcycles	Other (Please state)

4. If your household has vehicles please state where they are most likely to be parked, *i.e. van – in front of my house on road, car – on my off street driveway, motorbike - in my garage, etc:*

	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
Monday to Friday			
Weekends			

5. If your visitors travel by car please state where they normally park their vehicles:

	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
Monday to Friday			
Weekends			

5. Do you have the use of a garage at, or in the vicinity of, your property? **YES / NO**

6. If **yes**, is it used for parking and, if so, how many vehicles?

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7. If you do not use your garage for parking your vehicle why is this the case?

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