



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE SOUTH EAST



Parking Standards

in the South East



Introduction

In December 1997 The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) commissioned Llewelyn-Davies with JMP consultants to review parking standards in the South East. The study examined parking standards in the Rest of the South East (ROSE) outside London.

The policy context for this study is the desire of Government and local authorities to see more sustainable forms of development. Central to this concept is the aim of reducing the need to travel, especially by private car, and encouraging alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact.

Parking provision is an important determinant of travel choices and a major user of land. National policies on parking in new development needs to be interpreted clearly at the regional level in order to achieve consistency across the region and realise the potential that sustainable development has to offer.

The findings and conclusions of the study will inform the revision of the Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), due in 1999. Further work is being undertaken by DETR at a national level, and revised planning policy guidance will be included in the revised PPG13.

Llewelyn-Davies
with
JMP Consultants

Current Practice and the Need for Reform

The research found that, in the South East, parking standards and their use as a management tool are generally not in step with policy guidance, particularly PPG13 and RPG9 (1994). Demand levels for most types of development have frequently been over-estimated, resulting in considerable excess parking, and encouraging an increased share of travel by car.

The present approach has led to the following problems:

- generation of traffic and stimulation of longer distance journeys by car, with consequential environmental effects;
- local impacts caused by the generation of traffic at trip ends;
- encouragement of car ownership, especially the growth in multi-car households;
- social exclusion by the market favouring access by car users, and the impact on non-car modes;
- low density development and inefficient use of land;
- degradation of built form and townscape by parking areas and access;
- reduction of viability of public transport.

The Recommended Approach

The consultants recommended using a zone matrix based on an integrated parking and location policy for determining maximum parking standards. The matrix is illustrated in Figure 1 and the zone characteristics in Figure 2. By relating the scale of development and the type of user (rather than just the Use Class), the matrix is more closely in tune with

the shift towards accessibility as a prime determinant of parking. Standards should be expressed as maxima related to gross floor area of non-residential developments. Zones would be defined in local authority development plans, allowing flexibility within an approach that is consistent throughout the region.

Figure 1 Land Use Location Matrix

MAIN LAND USE TYPES		ZONE TYPE 1	ZONE TYPE 2	ZONE TYPE 3	ZONE TYPE 4
		Max parking spaces per 1,000m ² gfa	Max parking spaces per 1,000m ² gfa	Parking determined locally	Parking determined locally
Person Trip Attractors *	Large/regional function	0-5			
	Medium/urban function	0-5	5-20		
	Small/regional specialised	■	■		
	Small/local function	■	■	■	■
Residential		Max parking spaces per dwelling	Max parking spaces per dwelling	Parking determined locally	Parking determined locally
	Low density			■	■
	Medium density		1-2 per dw.	■	■
	High density	<1 per dw.	1 per dw.		
Mixed use	Mainly non-res	0-5	5-20		
	Mainly res		■	■	■
Operational Vehicle Generators/Attractors **				Related to road network	Related to road network

■ Development is appropriate, but parking should be determined locally and on merits of the scheme

* High Employee, Customer or Visitor intensity, e.g. office, retail, leisure, other services. Refer to Figure 2

** Low Employee, Customer, or Visitor intensity. High operational vehicle intensity, e.g. Transport, Distribution. Refer to Figure 2

Notes: Shaded boxes indicate a presumption against such development in the zone

Where exceptions are made, the parking standard should be that shown in the nearest box to the left

Standards for operational parking (without mode switch potential) are not shown, but can be locally determined

Figure 2 Criteria for Definition of Land Use Matrix Zones

Likely characteristics	ZONE TYPE 1	ZONE TYPE 2	ZONE TYPE 3	ZONE TYPE 4
Summary Descriptor	Urban Centre	Intermediate	Suburban	Peri-urban + Rural
Location types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres of towns and conurbations with significant service and employment function Core of small towns with service or employment function Historic centres Core tourist areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inner ring Medium-high density Intensive corridors with mixed activities Conservation areas Significant sub-centres Regeneration areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outer ring Medium-low density Uniform residential Neighbourhood centres Large villages, small towns with local service function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural areas Green Belt Open land (unless scheduled for development) Outdoor recreation Villages, hamlets (with minimal service function)
Default	(Zone 1 defined first)	(Zone 2 defined second)	Contiguous urban outside zones 1-2	Areas other than urban zones 1-3
Date first developed	Mostly pre 1914 (except purpose built centres)	Mostly pre 1940 (without car provision)	Mostly post 1945 (with car provision)	Varies
Walk/cycle access	Very good to good range of activities including specialised and regional facilities	Range of employment, retail, leisure and other services	Mostly residential, with local centres and (non-specialised) services and employment	Some local facilities and employment
Public transport access	Serves wide catchment (i.e. node) Service frequency very good to good	Catchment covers good proportion of urban area (e.g. corridor) Service frequency good to moderate	Connected to town centre (e.g. one or two routes) Service frequency moderate to low	Service frequency moderate or sparse (e.g. <hourly service) to non-existent
Intended catchment (of non-residential activities in zone)	International Regional Urban	Urban	Local urban	Rural
Critical mass of non residential	Wide range of retail, professional and other services, Entertainment, Institutions	Grouped employment and/or retail with some support services	Isolated non-residential activity with few support services	Isolated non-residential activity with few support services
Housing density	High (mostly flats)	High to medium (mostly flats and terraces)	Medium to low (mostly houses)	Varies
Conservation areas	Included if contiguous with centre	Included if integral with non-residential uses	Not a criterion for zone definition	Not a criterion for zone definition

A New Approach to Parking

The aims of the suggested guidance include:

- creating a sustainable response to the pressures of traffic growth;
- preventing parking standards that inhibit the intensification of land-use; and
- replacing demand based with restraint based standards.

The report suggests that the new approach to parking should:

- be sensitive to local circumstances;
- avoid encouraging development to migrate to other areas or regions (local authorities should not be able to "poach" development by relaxing standards);

- encourage development of appropriate type at suitable locations (and not suppress development);
- encourage modal choice and access for all;
- in terms of data requirements, have enforcement and monitoring capabilities which can be manageable by local authorities;
- treat parking restraint as part of an integrated approach to land-use and transport planning; and
- be effective immediately.

Wider Considerations

It is hoped that this research will contribute to a sharpening of parking policy at the regional level and provide local authorities with the support they need to implement sustainable policies at a local level, rather than compete against each other by requiring parking in new developments.

Parking standards apply only to new development proposals, therefore their main effect will be to suppress the creation of additional traffic when development and redevelopment takes place. Restraint based guidance should set in train a preference for more central locations, together with a pattern of development that will be viable with less reliance on car access. In achieving this the consistent application of parking standards to sustainable locations will be essential.

The report highlights the need to be aware of the possible consequences of changes in parking standards at the regional level. Issues which will need to be considered are:

- developer contributions;
- the need for complementary on-street controls;
- the development of strategies to reduce car use and the need for parking;
- the need to ensure access by public transport, cyclists and pedestrians;
- the need for clear locational policies within a sequential approach; and
- the need for a sensitive approach to rural areas to encourage sustainable development without effecting traffic displaced from urban areas.



Car parking is a significant user of land with impacts on the local environment

Next Steps

The report is available priced £11.00, from DETR Publications and Sales Centre, Unit 21, Goldthorpe Industrial Estate, Goldthorpe, Rotherham, SG3 9BL.

GOSE wishes to encourage wide discussion of the issues involving parking provision and would welcome comments, which should be sent to the RPG Team, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4GA.