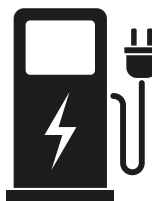


# Durham County Council

## Parking and Accessibility SPD Adoption Version 2023





# **PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY SPD**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Parking and accessibility guidelines are important in managing demand for different types of transport and in supporting development management to make informed decisions about parking provision. This document sets out the Council's approach to what these guidelines.
- 1.2 Previously the Council has set out its parking and accessibility requirements as a more general guidance document, for developers and officers to have regard to in assessing schemes. As part of the Examination in Public of the [County Durham Plan](#), which took place in 2019/20, it was recommended by the Planning Inspector that this guidance be reviewed and set out more formally as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This would give the document greater status and make it a supporting document for Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport) of the [County Durham Plan](#). The SPD has been developed in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and other relevant guidance and will replace the previous Parking and Accessibility Standards 2019.
- 1.3 Following on from the Examination in Public, officers have reviewed, and updated the SPD from the previous iterations of Council guidance on parking and accessibility. Following three rounds of consultation, this final version of the SPD responds to all consultation comments received and set's out the Council's planned approach to specific parking and accessibility issues on development sites and how the Council proposes to resolve them.

## Background

- 1.4 Parking is an essential element of land-use planning and when designed properly can encourage sustainable travel. Demand for travel by car can be influenced by the availability of parking for all types of transport modes and there is a need to strike an appropriate balance between ensuring an adequate amount of provision and discouraging excessive car use that can undermine cycling, walking and public transport.
- 1.5 The approach to car parking provision in order to achieve the necessary balance has changed considerably over the years. Different parking guidelines are generally set at origins and destinations – origins being residential areas where journeys begin, and destinations being workplaces, town centres and community facilities people travel to. For some time, setting 'maximum' parking standards in residential areas was thought to discourage excessive car ownership and encourage sustainable modes of travel. National policy including Planning Policy Guidance Notes 3 and 13, published in 2000 and 2001 respectively, considered that restricting space in residential areas would reduce car ownership and therefore increase the use of more sustainable modes of transport as a result. However, it was found to have little to no impact on

car ownership levels and led to other problems. The lack of off-street provision resulted in vehicles displacing to adjacent streets, pavements and verges which, in turn, caused safety issues with emergency services being obstructed as well as causing difficulties for wheelchair and pushchair users.

- 1.6 In addition to the practical issues caused by an abundance of parked cars in on-street areas, the high numbers of cars parked on-street also had a negative impact on the public realm and the appearance of new residential areas. As a result, national policy has since changed. [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) paragraph 108 clearly states that ‘Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.’
- 1.7 Maximum parking standards were also raised as an issue at the examination in public of the now adopted County Durham Plan, with the Inspector querying why maximum standards had not been proposed in the Council’s current parking standards. The Inspector’s view was that maximum standards at destinations should be implemented in accessible locations to encourage people to use more sustainable transport – to walk, cycle, or take public transport instead of driving.
- 1.8 In this SPD, the Council therefore sets out guidelines for car and cycle parking that are to be applied equally across the county. The Council is proposing that where development is situated in an accessible location (defined below), a lower level of car parking provision may be acceptable depending on the site-specific circumstances of the proposal. In this case, it will be left to the judgement of development management and highways officers to determine an appropriate parking requirement for each accessible site. These judgements should be made with reference to the accessibility guidelines set out in section 2 of this SPD.

### **Adopted Version**

- 1.9 Having reviewed the relevant guidance on parking and accessibility issues and, considering issues raised with the current Parking and Accessibility Standards at the CDP examination in public, as well as comments submitted in response to previous three rounds of consultations on the SPD, the Council is presenting the Parking and Accessibility SPD below. This proposed SPD will supplement and should be read in conjunction with policy 21 of the County Durham Plan, Councils Building for Life SPD, Residential Amenity SPD and the Highway Design Guide

## 2. **Accessibility Guidance**

- 2.1 Accessibility is important as it gives people more options for how they make their journeys. Where people are able to walk, cycle, or take public transport to their destination easily, they are less likely to use the car as often. This has multiple benefits, improving people's mental and physical health by enabling them to be more active in the course of their daily lives. Less frequent car use also improves air quality, combats climate change, and reduces congestion.
- 2.2 Increased accessibility can also help make our communities more equal. For people who don't drive, accessible places enable them to access education and employment opportunities, as well as leisure and retail. In areas which are only accessible by car, this can lead to less affluent, older, and younger members of society being isolated and cut off from opportunities.
- 2.3 Accessibility also includes good design and location of parking. In particular, disabled people and those with mobility issues benefit from better parking accessibility, as it enables them to access places they otherwise might not be able to with greater ease.

### **Parking Provision for Disabled Persons**

- 2.4 Parking provision for people with disabilities must be considered as part of any development proposal and it is the responsibility of the site occupier to make provision under the Equality Act 2010. New development must provide an adequate amount of parking bays for disabled persons and ensure that the dimensions are a minimum of 5.0m x 2.5m, plus 1.2m at side and rear to allow wheelchair access. This minimum width size is recommended in British Standard 8300.
- 2.5 Where non-residential development is concerned, a minimum of two bays will be included for disabled people, with a minimum 5% of car park bays being for disabled people in car parks of 40 spaces or more. This means that in all non-residential car parks, including those with less than 40 spaces, there will always be a minimum of 2 parking bays for disabled persons. As set out below, on car parks over 10 spaces, one of these bays should be EV accessible and include an EV charging point.
- 2.6 Some general design principles should be provided as a minimum for disabled persons. These principals include:
- Parking bays for those with disabilities should be provided closer to destinations entrances and exits than general parking bays;
  - A minimum standard car parking space (2.5m x 5.0) should be provided along with clearance of 1.2m along all sides;

- when designing bays, they should be easily identifiable with clear and consistent signage;
- they should be level and next to firm and slip-resistant pedestrian surfaces where possible;
- dropped kerbs should be provided where access is to a pedestrian route;
- ensuring there is enough space so that wheelchair users can access vehicles with space available to manoeuvre a wheelchair (minimum 1.2m between bays, and an additional 1.2m behind bays);
- wall mounted/upright signage is required to identify disabled parking bays when ground is covered in leaves/snow; and
- providing good access to ticket machines where applicable.

Figure 1 – Example of Well-Marked Disabled Parking



- 2.7 Further guidance on the design and location of parking for mobility impaired persons can be found in the Department of Transport (DfT) [Traffic Advisory Leaflet: Parking for Disabled People](#), DETR, 1995.
- 2.8 At most new destination car parks, 25% of bays are to have some level of provision for EV charging. Section 3 sets out the specific requirement by use class and the split between active and passive provision. To support people with disabilities and mobility impairments to drive an electric vehicle, every new destination car park of 10 spaces or more should have at least one accessible charging point and bay . There may be exceptional circumstances on smaller sites where EV provision may be unviable because of connection costs but the onus will be on the developer to demonstrate unviable circumstances based on individual site characteristics.



- 2.9 Use of EV accessible bays would not be limited to blue badge holders or those with mobility issues because of current low demand, however, the use of these EV bays should be carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure that site occupiers can react to increases in demand for EV bays. If demand increased to a point where people with blue badges were not able to easily access accessible EV charging points and bays, the use of these bays should then be restricted for the sole use of blue badge holders. This would help ensure there is no breaches with the 2010 Equality Act. Until this point is reached, accessible spaces are to be clearly designed to discourage non-disabled people from using the bay when alternatives are available. Accessibility consultants 'Inclusive Design' have provided detailed [best practice guidance](#) on making chargepoints accessible to disabled people.

### **Definition of an Accessible Destination (non-residential)**

- 2.10 This SPD sets out car parking guidance to be applied countywide. Where a non-residential development is in an accessible location, a lower level of car parking may be requested by DM and highways officers on a case-by-case basis. The Council is proposing to take this approach to simplify the guidance for all non-residential developments, whilst giving officers the flexibility to make the best decision for individual, accessible sites based on the site-specific circumstances of each case.
- 2.11 To help guide when parking and accessibility guidelines should be set and applied, we first need to define what an accessible destination is.
- 2.12 The CIHT's [Planning for Walking](#) states that people are generally willing to walk 400m to a bus stop or 800m to a train station. The Council's existing Building for Life SPD also considers 400m to be a reasonable distance to walk to a bus stop, with developments within or at that distance from a bus stop being given a better score for design.
- 2.13 However, proximity to a public transport stop is no guarantee that services will run often enough to make places accessible. The Council therefore proposes that a minimum of two services an hour is sufficient to enable people to get around without having to wait an excessive amount of time.
- 2.14 With these points in mind, the Council considers an accessible location to be one which is:
- a. within 400m of a bus stop or 800m of a train station; and,
  - b. where public transport runs at a rate of two per hour or more at peak hours (6am-6pm)

- 2.15 School buses do not count towards this definition as this accessibility definition applies to non-residential locations.
- 2.16 This definition of public transport accessibility is intentionally broad to allow for flexibility at the decision-making stage. It should also be noted that this definition of an accessible location does not define walking and cycling accessibility as walking and cycling accessibility it is too complex and site specific to set a countywide standard for.
- 2.17 Walking and cycling accessibility is also an important component of accessibility and will always require separate consideration at the planning application stage in accordance with Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport) of the County Durham Plan. Furthermore, the Council have now developed 12 Local and Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for 12 of our larger settlements. LCWIPs are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements at the local level which enable a long-term approach to planning for cycling and walking.
- 2.18 When a development site is located within an LCWIP area and the developer can clearly demonstrate that the development incorporates walking and cycling routes that link directly to the wider walking and cycling network as set out in the LCWIPs, there is an opportunity for officers to limit car parking and increase cycling parking at these destinations in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy 21 of the County Durham Plan and the availability of infrastructure on the ground at the time of decision making.

### 3. Destination (non-residential) Parking Guidance

- 3.1 Parking provision at destinations must be sufficient to provide for the needs of the development, protecting the amenity of the surrounding area by removing any need to park in inappropriate locations, which can cause highways safety issues, and supporting town centres by not unnecessarily constraining parking spaces.
- 3.2 Parking bay dimensions for public parking should be a minimum of:
- 2.5m x 5.0m for perpendicular parking bays that are 90 degree to aisle/road
  - 2.5m x 6.0m for parallel bays that run parallel to aisle/kerb line
  - 2.5m x 5.1m for echelon parking bays that run 45 degrees to aisle/road
- 3.3 Separate guidelines been set for each destination, with the guidance grouped into four tables by type: retail, employment, leisure, and other destinations.
- 3.4 The destination parking guidance have been based on existing appropriate provision relative to the floor area or usage of the development in question, as appropriate. Where developments are located in accessible destinations, fewer parking spaces may be required through planning, to be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the location and type of development and any other specific circumstances which are relevant. Furthermore, where destinations are situated in accessible locations shorter maximum stays may also be implemented by the car park operator to encourage appropriate turnover.
- 3.5 Cycle parking requirements have been set with consideration given to Local Transport Note1/20 ([LTN 1/20](#), Table 11-1, p134) and the [Employment Densities Guide](#).
- 3.6 Electric vehicle (EV) charging is required at all destinations (other than residential or mixed-use buildings) where there are over 10 parking bays to encourage and facilitate use of electric vehicles. A mix of active and passive chargepoints are required. Active chargepoints are a full chargepoint ready for use, and passive chargepoints are ducting laid underground to enable a full or active chargepoint to be installed more easily and affordably in future. Section 3.15 has more details regarding the requirements for EV chargepoints at destination sites. Full details relating to infrastructure required on EV charging can be found in [Part S of the Building Regulations](#).
- 3.7 The following tables sets out the Council's destination parking guidance, by destination type.

## Retail Parking Guidance

**Table 1 Retail Parking Guidance**

Land Use	Use Class	*Parking Recommendation	Short Stay Cycle Parking	Long Stay Cycle parking (enclosed, secure and covered)	EV Charging
General Retail (Small, <200m <sup>2</sup> )	E/Sui Generis	1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	2 short stay spaces for visitors	1 space per 100m <sup>2</sup>	N/A
General Retail (Medium, <1000m <sup>2</sup> )	E/Sui Generis	1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 short stay spaces for visitors per 200m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 200m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
General Retail (Large, >1000m <sup>2</sup> )	E/Sui Generis	1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 short stay spaces for visitors per 250m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Supermarkets (Below 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	E	1 space per 12.5m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 short stay spaces for visitors per 200m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 200m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Supermarkets (Above 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	E	1 space per 20m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 short stay spaces for visitors per 250m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Bulky Goods, e.g. DIY, cash and carry	E	1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	No requirement	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Retail Parks (including food and non-food uses)	E	1 space per 20m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 short stay spaces for visitors per 250m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Builders Merchants	Sui Generis	1 space per 100m <sup>2</sup> GFA	No requirement	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive
Garden Centres	E	1 space per 12.5m <sup>2</sup> GFA	No requirement	1 space per 500m <sup>2</sup>	5% active AND 20% passive

Car Sales	Sui Generis	1 space per 25m2 GFA	No requirement	No requirement	5% active AND 20% passive
Petrol Stations with Retail	Sui Generis	1 space per 33m2 GFA	No requirement	1 space per 100m2	5% active AND 20% passive

\*These guidelines for car parking are not minimum or maximum standards but rather recommendations that are intended to be applied equally across the County. However, where development is situated in an accessible location or in an LCWIP area, as defined in section 2, a lower parking requirement may be negotiated with Highways officers.

## Employment Parking Guidance

Table 2 Employment Parking Guidance

Land Use	Use Class	*Parking Recommendation	Short Stay Cycle Parking	Long Stay Cycle parking (enclosed, secure and covered)	EV Charging
Office Development and Business Parks	E	1 space per 25m2 GFA	1 per 1000m2	1 space per 200m2	5% active AND 20% passive
Light Industrial and Industrial Estates/Units)	E	1 space per 50m2 GFA	1 per 1000m2	1 space per 500m2	5% active AND 20% passive
Warehousing or Storage	B8	1 space per 100m2 GFA	1 per 1000m2	1 space per 500m2	5% active AND 20% passive
Distribution	B8	1 space per 33m2 GFA	1 per 1000m2	1 space per 500m2	5% active AND 20% passive
Garage Repair/Serviceing	B2	1 space per member of staff AND 1 space per 25m2 GFA	1 per 1000m2	1 space per 500m2	5% active AND 20% passive

\*These guidelines for car parking are not minimum or maximum standards but rather recommendations that are intended to be applied equally across the County. However, where development is situated in an accessible location or in an LCWIP area , as defined in section 2, a lower parking requirement may be negotiated with Highways officers.

## Leisure Parking Guidance

Table 3 Leisure Parking Guidance

Land Use	Use Class	*Parking Recommendation	Short Stay Cycle Parking	Long Stay Cycle parking (enclosed, secure and covered)	EV Charging
Hotels/Motels/Guest Houses	C1	1 space per bedroom	1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 5 members of staff AND 2 spaces per 25 bedrooms	5% active AND 20% passive
Pub/Restaurant/Cafe	E	1 space 8m <sup>2</sup> of public space	1 per 50m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Hot Food Takeaway	Sui Generis	1 space per 2 members of staff AND 1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	No requirement	No requirement	None
Fitness Clubs and Sports Facilities	E	1 space per 25m <sup>2</sup> GFA	1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Places of Worship	F1	1 space per 150m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Cinemas/Theatres	Sui Generis	1 space per 3 members of staff AND 1 space per 12.5m <sup>2</sup> of public space	Greatest of: 1 per 50m <sup>2</sup> or 1 per 30 seats	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Caravan and Camp Sites	Sui Generis	1 space per pitch AND 1 space per 2 members of staff AND 1 visitor space per 10 pitches	1 space per pitch	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive

\*These guidelines for car parking are not minimum or maximum standards but rather, are recommendations that are intended to be applied equally across the County. However, where development is situated in an accessible location or in an LCWIP area, as defined in section 2, a lower parking requirement may be negotiated with Highways officers.

## Other Destination Parking Guidance

Table 4 Other Destination Parking Guidance

Land Use	Use Class	*Parking Recommendation	Short Stay Cycle Parking	Long Stay Cycle parking (enclosed, secure and covered)	EV Charging
Hospitals	C2	1 space per 33m <sup>2</sup> of public space AND 1 space per 5 members of staff	1 short stay space per 5 consulting rooms	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Doctors/Dentist/Other health practitioners	E	1 space per treatment room AND 1 space per 2 members of staff	1 short stay space per 5 consulting rooms	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Residential Care/Nursing Homes/Sheltered housing	C2	1 space per 3 units/beds	0.05 per residential unit	0.05 per bedroom	5% active AND 20% passive
Further/Higher Education Colleges	F1/E	1 space per full time member of staff AND 1 space per 4 students	Dependent on Travel Plan	Separate provision for staff and students, Based on Travel Plan mode share targets but minimum: 1 space per 10 pupils and 1 space per 20 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Primary and Secondary Schools  Nurseries	F1/E	1 space per full time member of staff AND 1 visitor space per 50 pupils	Dependent on Travel Plan	Separate provision for staff and students, Based on Travel Plan mode share targets but minimum: 1 space per 10 pupils and 1 space per 20 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive

Community Centres	F2	1 space per 16m <sup>2</sup> of public space AND 1 space per 2 members of staff	1 short stay space per 50m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 5 members of staff	5% active AND 20% passive
Public Interchanges Major Interchanges	Sui-generis	Subject to site by site analysis and dependent on-site characteristics	1 per 200 daily users	Dependent on-site characteristics	5% active AND 20% passive

These guidelines for car parking are not minimum or maximum standards, but rather, are recommendations intended to be applied equally across the County. However, where development is situated in an accessible location or in an LCWIP area, as defined in section 2, a lower parking requirement may be negotiated with Highways officers.



## Cycle Parking

- 3.8 The Council is keen to encourage increased cycling in County Durham. To support this, cycle parking should be provided at all destinations in accordance with the guidelines set out in the tables above. The guidelines have been developed and based on the LTN 1/20 but where it can be evidenced, the council will consider alternative approaches on their merits.
- 3.9 Cycle parking should be in a prominent location allowing regular casual observance. CCTV is also encouraged. Long stay parking should be covered, secured and enclosed. For short stay cycle parking, Sheffield stands should be provided as a minimum. Wherever possible cycle parking should be located close to main entrances and easy to access from local cycle routes (LTN 1/20).
- 3.10 Travel Plans facilitating walking and cycling should be developed as part of any planning application in accordance with CDP Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport). In some cases, Travel Plans submitted as part of an application may set out a more ambitious level of cycling parking than required by this SPD. In these cases, a greater level of cycle parking will be supported.
- 3.11 Cycle parking should not be placed where it would obstruct pedestrian movement. Cycle parking hubs or clusters will be encouraged at key destinations such as transport interchanges and town centres. Where space considerations would prevent cycle parking from being included within a site, for example in town centres with available space constrained by existing street furniture, a contribution may be made towards providing cycling hubs or clusters at key destinations. The Development Viability Affordable Housing and Financial Contributions SPD provides more detailed guidance on this.
- 3.12 The Council is working to provide cycle parking clusters where demand exists and works in partnership with ParkThatBike to provide secure cycle parking, including hangars, to businesses and communities.

Figure 2 - Examples of appropriate cycle parking



3.13 Accessible cycle provision should be made to enable people with disabilities or mobility impairments to cycle. Where 20 or more cycle parking spaces are provided, 5% of these should be suitable for use by people with three wheel or adapted cycles. Cycle parking for disabled people should be located close to disabled car parking bays where possible.

3.14 Cycle stands should be built at least 0.6m from walls, with 1m in front of and between stands to allow ease of access.

### Electric Vehicle Parking

3.15 On non-residential sites with over 10 parking spaces, the government, as part of [building regulations \(Part S\)](#) (2021 edition) requires provision of passive chargepoints (cables routes only) for at least one in five parking spaces (20%) of all parking bays provided, plus a minimum of one active EV chargepoint (a full chargepoint including socket). The Council proposes a minimum of 5% of all spaces at destination car parks over 20 spaces to have active chargepoints. These guidelines are set out in Tables 1-4. Where a new car park has less than

twenty spaces but more than ten, one new EV chargepoint would be acceptable. Chargepoints should be kept out of corners of car parks and be located close to pedestrian entrances to make them more accessible and closer to electrical supply.

- 3.16 In terms of capacity and technical specification, chargepoints should be delivered in line with national standards set out in [Part S of the 2021 building regulations](#). The national standard also sets out examples where exemptions relating to viability may be acceptable.
- 3.17 Where possible, the speed of charging provided should be appropriate to the likely length of stay in car parks. For example, car parks with high turnover such as supermarkets which are required to make provision for charging should provide fast (7-22kW) or rapid (43kW+) chargers or ultra-fast chargers (50kW+). Car parks at locations where people are more likely to park for an extended period of time such as employment sites can provide 7kW chargers. 7kW is the minimum output<sup>1</sup> as stipulated by [Part S of the 2021 building regulations](#).
- 3.18 On sites that would be expected to have a higher speed of charger, it is acknowledged that this would require higher capacity cabling to be laid underground to accommodate the greater speed of charge, and that this will not be viable in all cases. For this reason, this remains a recommendation rather than a requirement. Where rapid chargepoints are installed in place of fast chargers, fewer chargepoints may be installed at a development provided that overall charging capacity remains the same as if the number of 7kW chargepoints required under Tables 1-4 is provided.
- 3.19 In car parks of 20 bays or more, 5% of bays are to be for blue badge holders. To enable people with disabilities and mobility impairments to drive an electric vehicle, developers must provide at least one accessible EV bay as set out in Section 2 above. British Standard 8300 provides more detailed guidance on making chargepoints accessible to disabled people.

## Motorcycle Parking

- 3.20 Specific parking provision for motorcycles will be supported. The provision for motorcycles should preferably be 2300X900mm, under cover ([IHE Motorcycle Parking Guidelines](#)). Provision of a secure anchor point at 600-750mm from ground level onto which a wheel can be chained is also encouraged.

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<sup>1</sup> See 6.2, criteria b of Part S

3.21 Motorcycle spaces should be provided in well-lit open areas where casual observance by passers-by may increase security. Surfaces on which motorcycles are to park should be flat and level and constructed with concrete to avoid surface failure from puncture by stands.

#### 4. **Residential Parking Guidance**

- 4.1 Developers are expected to provide an adequate amount of safe parking which is appropriate in scale, location and reflects the context of the development. Adequate parking provision for residents and visitors improves road safety and limits harm to residential amenity from parking on pavements and verges.
- 4.2 In formulating proposed residential parking guidelines, the Council has made the assumption that parking for householders should be provided within the curtilage of a dwelling (the curtilage is the area of land attached to a house up to the boundary of the property and the land within it). This is the most obvious and convenient place to locate parking for residents and helps give peace of mind to vehicle owners as they can easily see their vehicle from their property.
- 4.3 The Council therefore considers that the following number of car parking spaces should be provided at each dwelling, based on the number of bedrooms per dwelling. The minimum allocated in curtilage parking provision can be calculated or used as an average across a development site. In certain circumstances which can be evidenced, for example, for reasons of sustainability, design or viability, a deviation from these guidelines may be considered.

**Table 5 Residential Parking Guidance**

<b>Number of bedrooms</b>	<b>Minimum allocated in curtilage</b>	<b>Minimum EV chargepoints</b>	<b>Visitor/Non-Allocated Parking</b>	<b>Cycle /Mobility Scooter/Motorbike Parking</b>
1	1 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
2	2 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
3	2 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
4	3 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
5	3 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
6+	4 per dwelling	1 active chargepoint per dwelling	1 per 4 dwellings	Where a garage is not provided, alternative secure provision must be made.  See para. 4.17 below for more detail.
Purpose-Built Student Accommodation	No requirement within Durham City CPZ. 1 space per 15 students outside the CPZ.  1 per 5 members of staff	10% active chargepoint on site but with a minimum of 1 active space	n/a	1 sheltered and secure long stay parking space per bedroom

### **Residential Extensions**

4.4 These guidelines would also be applied where dwellings are extended or converted to create additional bedrooms. This will help ensure that there are

sufficient spaces to meet the household's needs and prevent inappropriate pavement or verge parking. Increased parking spaces are required for dwellings with greater numbers of bedrooms on the basis that the more rooms are provided, the more likely it is that multiple people in the household will drive, and the less practical it becomes for them to share a car. Where a property is extended or it is a large new dwelling, additional in-curtilage spaces may be required as a substitute for non-allocated spaces. When deciding on whether new in-curtilage spaces are required as a result of a household extension, officers should consider the minimum guidelines set out above in table 5.

## **Residential Garages**

4.5 Residential garages are often used for storage of cycles and various household articles as well as motor vehicles. Garages will form part of the minimum parking provision set out in Table 5 providing they have the minimum internal dimensions of:

- 6.0 metres x 3.0 metres for a single garage; or
- 6.0 metres x 6.0 metres for a double garage

4.6 These dimensions allow garages to accommodate the car and the storage of cycles and other items. For the parking guidelines in Table 5 to be future proofed, it is essential that all conversions of garages to living spaces are carefully monitored by the Local Planning Authority. Therefore, when new housing developments are approved, the council may consider removing permitted development rights on a site-by-site basis to control the future loss of garages, car ports and other parking spaces provided in new development. Planning applications for the conversions of garages determined following the removal of permitted development rights will need to demonstrate that sufficient parking spaces remain.

## **Student Parking in Durham City**

4.7 Students are much less likely to need a parking space, so a minimal amount of parking has been proposed for student accommodation (see Table 5). This will allow for the minority of students who do bring vehicles, and for visitors and deliveries. This applies to purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), including University Halls and Colleges. Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are subject to the same guidelines as other residential properties as they were not built as student housing and often house young professionals.

## **Residential Non-allocated and Visitor Parking**

4.8 Non-allocated and visitor parking spaces should be provided as part of any residential development. This allows them to be designed into the layout of the overall site and helps prevent issues of people parking on pavements or verges where they cannot find a suitable space. It also allows for households which



have an above average number of cars by providing additional spaces around the development for their vehicles. Non-allocated parking should be provided off-curtilage, as it is counterintuitive for visitors to park in a space that feels like part of someone else's property. The non-allocated parking requirement has been set at a level that provides sufficient spaces without dominating the development. The numbers of non-allocated spaces are based on the Council's experience of working with developers on this issue, informed by [government guidance](#). The DfT's [Manual for Streets](#) (p106) also confirms that unallocated parking spaces are the best way to provide for visitor parking.

- 4.9 Non allocated spaces, sometime referred to as visitor parking, should therefore be provided at a ratio of one space per four dwellings. This is a recommended standard as the exact number of non-allocated spaces should be tailored to ensure that quality design solutions can be achieved on sites. This type of parking should be well-distributed across the site.

### **Driveway Guidelines**

- 4.10 Driveways should be constructed from permeable materials where appropriate to allow drainage, though driveway materials must not be loose e.g., gravel driveways would not be permitted. Loose materials used in driveway construction can damage vehicles and spill out on to the highway, which risks causing a hazard to road users. In a 2017 appeal case brought against Barnsley Council, a Planning Inspector concluded that gravel driveways in particular pose a highway safety hazard and dismissed the appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/W/17/3170851). The driveways in this case would require regular maintenance to keep gravel off the pavement and road. The Inspector therefore felt that even conscientious residents would be unlikely to keep up with this maintenance, particularly in the cold winter months when it is dark outside. Any loose materials which had spilled onto the road would therefore pose a risk to pedestrians and cyclists in particular.
- 4.11 Driveways must also be a minimum of 5.5m long, and 2.7m (4.7m for double drives) wide for their entire length (including any gateways or fencing), to allow safe access and use by residents. Some flexibility will be allowed where appropriate, for example where driveways are a nonstandard shape, if it can be demonstrated that safe access can still be provided.

### **Design Guidelines**

- 4.12 Development proposals need to balance parking provision, its location and layout with the overall aim of good design and attractive and safe places. A number of solutions should be utilised to prevent impact on the quality of the street scene and avoiding random parking on the pavement etc. An excessive use of one type of parking, for example, tandem parking, is discouraged. This is a poor design solution which has the potential to increase on street parking at detriment to the attractiveness of the development and safety of cyclists and pedestrians. Tandem car parking arrangements can form part of a car parking



strategy but will not be encouraged to be the only or predominant design solution. It is acknowledged that in some circumstances (i.e., for smaller dwellings) tandem parking may be required.

- 4.13 When designing streets and housing layouts, it will be important for developers to cross reference the Councils Building for Life SPD, County Durham Design Code SPD, Residential Amenity SPD and the Highway Design Guide. The Residential Amenity SPD provides guidance on how best to design extensions and undertake other domestic developments including decking, walls and balconies. It also includes guidance on the space/amenity standards that would normally be expected where new dwellings are proposed.
- 4.14 The Highway Design Guide contains guidance for the highway development management and adoption process. A proposed change to DCCs Highways Design Guide is that estate roads on sites under 100 dwellings should be a minimum width of 5.5 metres<sup>2</sup>. This matches the minimum requirement on sites over 100 dwellings and allows the roads to accommodate modern road vehicles including the increasing numbers of delivery vehicles.
- 4.15 It would be also beneficial to reference national guidance such as best practise of [‘Building for a Healthy Life’](#) and the [‘National Design Guide’](#).
- 4.16 Policy 15 (Addressing Housing Need) of the County Durham Plan requires 10% of dwellings on sites of 10 homes or more to meet Building Regulations M4(2) standards. It also requires specialist housing to meet M4(2) standard as a minimum, with 25% of all specialist housing to meet M4(3). Both standards require a higher level of accessibility for people with disabilities or mobility impairments. Where this part of Policy 15 applies, the Building Regulations standards for driveways should be adhered to.

### **Cycle, Mobility Scooter, and Motorbike Storage**

- 4.17 Where garages are not provided, secure parking suitable for a cycle, mobility scooter or motorbike be provided instead. The storage space should be around 2x2m or allow sufficient space for four cycles, or a mobility scooter or motorbike. This will help to encourage cycling and support people with mobility issues to get around by giving them a specific, appropriate and safe place to store bicycles, scooters, or mobility aids. This also helps people to make full use of their homes by freeing up space indoors and preventing liveable rooms and hallways becoming storage areas for bikes. The multipurpose nature of the storage space also makes it beneficial to residents with different needs.

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<sup>2</sup> The 5.5m standard will be applied more flexibly when an application is for a reserved matters application or for a subsequent phase of an older development where the previously approved or built out phase of the development had minimum road widths of 4.8m. This includes where a new site can only be accessed via an existing site where the existing access road from the previous development is only 4.8m wide. The total number of units that could be served by the existing and proposed sites could not exceed 100 houses in total when served by a 4.8m wide road.

Appropriate storage for cycles, motorbikes or mobility scooters also helps improve the amenity of the area by preventing these items from being left out in visible areas.

- 4.18 For residential flats, it will be expected that every dwelling should have enclosed, secure, and sheltered parking for a cycle, mobility scooter or motorbikes but there is room for flexibility and bespoke design solutions in how this is provided within shared accommodation. It would be recommended that this provision is at ground floor level and should be in a well observed location with CCTV coverage encouraged. See para 3.9 earlier in the document for more guidance on cycle parking.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging**

- 4.19 Provision for electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints must now be made on all residential developments. The government has made a commitment that no new petrol or diesel cars should be sold from 2030 onwards and no new hybrids from 2035 so providing charging facilities now will help futureproof new housing and help the Council to respond to the climate emergency and reduce carbon emissions from the transport sector.
- 4.20 One active EV chargepoint should therefore be provided for every new dwelling which has an associated parking space in accordance with [Part S of the building regulations](#) 2010. The Council support the government's position that requiring charge points on new residential developments will encourage more people to buy and own an electrical vehicle, particularly those who do not own their home and may struggle to retrofit a charge point. Part S of the building regulations contains details on exemptions due to cost, on different types of residential builds and details on the technical requirements of electrical vehicle charge points including specifying that each one should have a minimum rated output of 7kw.

### **Public Transport Accessibility in Residential Locations**

- 4.21 The benefits of providing public transport links to or through the development should be considered at an early stage. Early contact with the County Council's Sustainable Transport Group will assist in giving an indication of what public transport accessibility will be likely on a proposed development site. Bus routes through the site should be direct, well related to the development as a whole and easily negotiable by appropriate sized buses. To be attractive to residents and other users, bus routes within residential areas are not to 'loop' the estate and entry and exit from/to the estate should seek to be at different points that reassure passengers that progress is being made in the journey wherever possible.
- 4.22 Public transport infrastructure should be provided at an early stage in the development, even if a site is only part occupied, where practical, and whilst taking into account discussions with bus operators, site phasing and scheme

viability. Infrastructure in terms of road widths and potential stopping areas will be required where there is potential for small housing developments to be linked into a neighbourhood future development that cumulatively will require the development of a penetrative bus route.

- 4.23 Higher density housing should be located close to public transport routes, with lower densities in more remote parts of the site. The maximum walking distances to the nearest bus stop from any residential property should ideally not be greater than 400m. However, in a rural County like Durham, this is an ideal rather than a standard as it is recognised that many of our rural villages and towns are not served by frequent bus services.
- 4.24 The extent of local rail network in County Durham means that opportunities to provide direct links to rail stations are limited. Major development proposals in the vicinity of existing or proposed rail stations will need to provide for safe walking and cycling routes to/from the station or connect with walking and cycling routes as set out in a towns Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIPs). Additional access arrangements by public transport may also be needed. Where necessary a contribution towards the improvement or construction of rail routes and/or facilities will be sought.
- 4.25 Major residential developments may require financial contributions from developers to enable the setting up of public transport services at an early stage in the development. In any of the scenarios outlined above, developers would be required to contribute towards or fund the new or additional services for either a specified length of time, or until such time as the service becomes commercially viable without developer support. The length, and level of developer support would be determined through negotiations with Durham County Council, and the operator of the effected bus service during the planning process.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The guidelines set out in this SPD have been prepared regarding national policy, best practice, and the Inspector's recommendations as discussed at the Examination in Public of the County Durham Plan 2019. They have then been amended based on comments received from three previous rounds of consultation. The guidelines define what an accessible location is and allow parking to be restricted at accessible locations where appropriate, to encourage more active and sustainable travel. The document includes specific guidelines for disabled persons parking, parking at origins and destinations of journeys, and parking for cycling and electric vehicles. These guidelines must be read in conjunction with County Durham Plan Policy 21, Councils Building for Life SPD, Residential Amenity SPD and the Highway Design Guide.