

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 27 February 2012
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Economic Growth and Prosperity

Report Title

Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD3)

Summary

This report provides the Executive with information about the revised SPD3: Parking Standards and Design, following the consultation exercise undertaken between 7th March and 18th April 2011. It recommends that the Supplementary Planning Document be approved as part of the Trafford Local Development Framework for Development Control purposes.

The report details the main comments received and the Council's response.

The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document is to assist with the interpretation and implementation of Policy L4 – Sustainable Transport and Accessibility and Policy L7 – Design, contained within the Trafford Core Strategy (Adopted January 2012).

Recommendation(s)

That the Executive:

1. Approve the Parking Standards and Design SPD3 as part of Trafford's Local Development Framework;
2. Approve the Parking Standards and Design SPD3 for development management purposes;
3. Delegate responsibility for approving any minor amendments to the wording and or layout of the final SPD to the Corporate Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity, prior to its formal publication.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Rob Haslam
Extension: 4788

Background Papers:

- Trafford Local Development Scheme (November 2010).
- Trafford's Statement of Community Involvement (Feb 2010).
- Trafford Core Strategy (January 2012).

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's car parking standards were originally set out in the Adopted Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan (June 2006). These have been replaced by the standards in Policy L4 Sustainable Transport and Accessibility of the adopted Trafford Core Strategy. Standards for the parking of bicycles, motorcycles and disabled parking are also included in the Core Strategy. This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will assist with the interpretation of Policies L4 and L7 Design of the Core Strategy and the parking standards.
- 1.2 Copies of the SPD and supporting consultation documentation are available on the Council's website. Paper, disk or e-mail copies are available on request.
- 1.3 The SPD has been produced in accordance with the advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks and the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 1.4 The 2008 Planning Act removed the requirement for sustainability appraisal of supplementary planning documents that do not introduce new policies or proposals or modify planning documents which have already been subject to sustainability appraisal. This SPD supports Policies L4 and L7 and other relevant policies in the Core Strategy that have been subject to SA as part of the Core Strategy process. The Inspector appointed to consider the soundness of the Trafford Core Strategy concluded in her report (November 2011) that the Council considers that the Core Strategy was adequate in terms of its appraisal of the environmental, economic and social effects of its policies. For more information see the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal pages on the Council website. It is considered that the impacts have been covered in the appraisal of the parent Development Plan Document and there is no further requirement for appraisal or screening of this SPD.

2.0 Public Consultation

- 2.1 The Executive received a report on the 21st February 2011 outlining the main features of the SPD. The draft SPD was subject to a six week public consultation period between the 7th March 2011 and 18th April 2011. A letter was sent to all the statutory consultees and other consultees in line with the procedure for Local Development Framework Documents and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The draft SPD was also made available on the website, in libraries, etc.
- 2.2 In total, 9 separate organisations made representations during the consultation period.
- 2.3 Some concern was raised by the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign who suggested that the whole of Section 11 be replaced with Greater Manchester Police's (GMP) Cycle Parking Design Guidance, and that the cycle parking standards also be replaced with the level of provision required by GMP's Cycle Parking Standards. These standards appear to be based upon the

'Greater Manchester Cycle Parking Guidance' and have not gone through any form of public consultation. The current guidance was out of date when adopted into the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan in 2006. They also suggested that long stay cycle parking (more than 2 hours) should be under cover as per motorcycles and vertical cycle lockers (such as those found at Metrolink station in Trafford) are generally too small for larger commuting bikes, cannot be used by bicycles with rear mud guards (as the bike has to be balanced on the rear wheel), and can require the bicycle to be lifted up (which can be difficult for elderly / less physically fit cyclists, or those with luggage).

2.4 Other detailed concerns raised by respondents include:

- The importance that landscaping areas within car parks do not interfere with the free flow of vehicles within the car park, or pose an unnecessary constraint to development;
- A garage should only be included within the parking calculations if its dimensions are sufficient to accommodate an average family car. While some future residents may choose to use the garage for car parking others may not; a developer can do no more than make the opportunity available. Similarly the imposition of a condition on planning permissions requiring a garage to be retained for the parking of a vehicle may fail the tests of Circular 11/95 regarding enforceability;
- The proposal in the SPD to encourage developers to avoid making car parking provision to the front of residential properties where it will be detrimental to the character of the area, together with the limitations on whether garages may be counted as a parking space, could make it extremely difficult for developers to achieve the required parking standards.

3.0 Summary of the changes to the SPD

3.1 Changes to the SPD have been made in response to the representations made and also to reflect changes to Policies in the Core Strategy that have been made through the Examination process, which form the policy justification for the SPD.

3.2 The car and cycle parking standards largely originate from the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Partial Review and are set down in the Core Strategy, which forms part of the Local Development Framework. The car and parking standards contained within the North West RSS Partial Review were subject to an Examination in Public in March 2010 and although the Report of the Panel was never formally issued, its findings released under a freedom of information request did not recommend any changes to the cycle parking standards. Only minor changes to the car parking standards in the Core Strategy were therefore made in the light of the findings.

3.3 As part of the consultation on the Core Strategy the Car and Parking Standards were subject to public consultation and examination through the Core Strategy process. As the Core Strategy has now been adopted, it is not possible to make further changes to the proposed standards at this stage.

3.4 It is also not possible to make further changes to the definition of "accessibility areas" as the accessibility areas are specified in policy 13.23 of the Core Strategy which is now adopted.

- 3.5 The guidance for the type of cycle parking to be provided were informed by a draft document 'Greater Manchester Cycle Parking Guidance' produced by AGMA. This document has not been formally adopted to date. Much of the advice reflects that in the GMP Cycle Parking Design Guidance. Changes have however been made to section 11 of this SPD to reflect the advice in the GMP document and to require covered parking for long stay cycle parking and horizontal rather than vertical lockers.
- 3.6 The SPD is considered to be in accordance with the Government document 'Planning for Growth' published in March 2011. Planning for Growth indicates that there will be a default position for the grant of planning consent for sustainable development. SPD3 encourages the provision of sustainable development and provides guidance as to how this can be achieved in respect of parking. The guidance is intended to help businesses submit planning proposals that meet the Council's requirements and enable planning decisions to be expedited in line with the Government Statement.
- 3.7 Although the SPD indicates that parking provision that meets the maximum standard for parking will be appropriate in most circumstances, the SPD allows some flexibility. It requires that where a developer seeks to provide a lower level of parking than the standard set down in the Core Strategy this will need to be fully justified and developers will need to demonstrate what measures, for example design, location or operation are to be taken to minimise the need for parking.
- 3.8 The quality of the environment is an important planning consideration and the requirement to maintain established high quality vegetation or site features which contribute to the amenity of the area is particularly important in achieving sustainable development. It encourages developers to give careful consideration to the level of parking and the layout and design of car parks on their sites. The guidance does not prevent all parking in new developments to the front of a residential property but specifies "where it would be detrimental to the character of the area". It is considered that will not be unduly onerous for developers but will encourage them to provide imaginative designs.
- 3.9 One of the representations received expressed concern that garages of a size sufficient to accommodate an average family car should be included towards meeting the parking requirement, and that the imposition of a condition on planning permissions requiring a garage to be retained for the parking of a vehicle is likely to fail the tests of Circular 11/95 regarding enforceability. The guidance is intended to encourage residents to park on site where parking is provided rather than on street. Where garages of standard sizes are provided they are less likely to be used for parking of a motor vehicle than larger garages, as they will usually not accommodate a motor vehicle and other items which need to be stored such as bicycles, lawn mowers etc. The policy therefore sets down the criteria which will be used to assess whether a garage will be accepted as part of the parking provision.
- 3.10 A condition requiring a garage to be retained for the parking of a motor vehicle will be particularly focused on the long term use. A condition which states that the garage should not be converted into living accommodation would be enforceable and in line with Circular 11/95. No changes have therefore been made to Section 5.7 of SPD3.

4.0 Summary of the proposed Parking Standards and Design SPD

- 4.1 The purpose of this SPD is to provide assistance in the interpretation and implementation of parking standards. For example, the SPD makes clear that parking provision for residential development that meets the maximum standard will be required in most circumstances. It is recognised that although the proximity to non-car modes and local facilities does have an effect on the level of car use from residential developments, the effect on car ownership is usually significantly lower. The movement to increase sustainable travel within the UK does not attempt to reduce car ownership, but to increase the use of alternative modes of transport where this is possible. The limited cases where a reduction in the standards may be applied are set down in the SPD.
- 4.2 It is considered that an SPD would provide some certainty and clarity to developers, planners, stakeholders and local residents regarding how the standards will be applied.
- 4.3 The SPD sets down the general principles that will be used to assess the design, safety, layout and amenity of proposals. To date these considerations have not been set down in a single document specifically related to parking. The SPD will provide guidance as to the provision of parking reflecting the character of the area, the amenity of surrounding properties, landscaping, security and lighting, highway safety and drop off zones. This should assist developers in preparing plans for the development of land and expedite the determination of planning applications by ensuring that the applications submitted include well designed parking.
- 4.4 A section on residential parking provides guidance on the size of parking spaces and garages, the provision of gates and the hard surfacing of residential front gardens.
- 4.5 The SPD details the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 regarding crossovers and the considerations that will be taken into account when permission is required.
- 4.6 The SPD provides guidance as to the provision of parking for mobility impaired users, including the numbers and sizes of spaces required and the provision of pedestrian routes.
- 4.7 Details as to the type of facilities required for long and short term cycle parking and parking for motor cycles/mobility scooters are also given in the SPD.

Other Options

The SPD is a key document that supports the Council’s Core Strategy and Planning Control function. If it is not approved, requests for explanations and additional information made by developers and their agents are likely to result. Development proposals not meeting the Council’s parking standards in terms of numbers and design are more likely to be submitted requiring additional officer time and slowing the decision making process. Development control decisions will also be made without the additional guidance and clarity provided in this document with a possible increase in the number of appeals made to the Planning Inspectorate.

Consultation

Consultation on a draft SPD was undertaken in line with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable the Parking Standards and Design SPD3 to be approved as part of Trafford’s Local Development Framework and for development management purposes and to provide the framework for the delegation of approving the final SPD to the Corporate Director for Economic Growth and Prosperity.

Key Decision :

This is a key decision currently on the Forward Plan: Yes

Finance Officer Clearance (type in initials).....PC.....

Legal Officer Clearance (type in initials).....JL.....

CORPORATE DIRECTOR’S SIGNATURE



(electronic).....

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The Parking Standards and Design SPD will contribute to a number of Corporate Priorities including A Cleaner Greener Borough and Better Roads and Pavements.
Financial	The preparation of the SPD is funded from the existing Strategic Planning and Developments budget within the EGP Directorate’s overall budget.
Legal Implications:	The SPD has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)

	Regulations 2004. It will be a material consideration in the determination of Planning Applications.
Equality/Diversity Implications	No negative impacts identified. Advice is provided regarding the provision and layout of parking for mobility impaired and for the parking of mobility scooters in accordance with the standards set down in the Core Strategy.
Sustainability Implications	The fundamental purpose of Policies L4 and L7 of the Core Strategy is to ensure that development in the Borough is sustainable. This SPD assists with the application of these policies.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	It is intended that the SPD will assist developers in producing satisfactory schemes, reducing time spent with Planning officers and the Council's Traffic and Transportation team and may reduce the number of appeals to the Planning Inspectorate and staff time spent on these.
Risk Management Implications	The SPD is a key document that supports the Council's draft Core Strategy and Planning Control function. If the SPD is not approved it could result in some difficulties being experienced implementing the parking standards in the Core Strategy and some inconsistency in their application. This could increase the number of appeals made to the Planning Inspectorate against decisions made on planning applications.
Health and Safety Implications	None