

# **CALDERDALE LOCAL PLAN**

## **Car and Bicycle Parking Standards**

### **Technical Paper**

**Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council  
July 2018**



## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government planning policies that must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Revised Parking Standards should be prepared in accordance with the policy context set out in the NPPF.
- 1.2 The NPPF has, as one of its core principles, a requirement for development to encourage sustainable transport. “Planning should...actively manage patterns of growth to make fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which can be made more sustainable” (Paragraph 17).
- 1.3 This emphasis, set out in more detail in Chapter 4 of the NPPF, seeks to promote sustainable transport. It recognises that “transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives”. It states that “the transport system should be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel” (Paragraph 29).

## CONTEXT

- 2.1 The provision of parking standards for different land uses is important in influencing travel choices. It is vital to ensure that otherwise well-planned development does not adversely affect the operation, aesthetic and safety of, or access to, the highway.
- 2.2 The NPPF states that when 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
- 2.3 On 27th March 2015, a Written Ministerial Statement updated Paragraph 39 of the NPPF. This addition stated that “Local planning authorities should only impose local parking standards for residential and non-residential development where there is a

clear and compelling justification that is necessary to manage their local road network.”

- 2.4 Clarification in the statement went on to say "The imposition of maximum parking standards under the last Administration lead to blocked and congested streets and pavement parking. Arbitrarily restricting new off-street parking spaces does not reduce car use, it just leads to parking misery. It is for this reason that the Government abolished national maximum parking standards in 2011. The market is best placed to decide if additional parking spaces should be provided".
- 2.5 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further detailed guidance on the policies set out in the NPPF. It should be read in conjunction with the NPPF. The PPG requires local planning authorities to “seek to ensure parking provision is appropriate to the needs of the development and not reduced below a level that could be considered reasonable”.
- 2.6 In accordance with national policy, it is important to ensure that Calderdale’s parking standards reflect local circumstances and strike the right balance between providing appropriate levels of car parking spaces while also promoting sustainable forms of transport in areas of good public transport accessibility.
- 2.7 In light of this, the Council has considered whether a clear and compelling justification exists for the introduction of parking standards to manage the local road network.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

- 3.1. The topography of Calderdale’s landscape, with its steep sided valleys, dictates the location of many settlements and much of the strategic road network in the valley bottoms. The Calderdale Transport Strategy (2016-2031) recognises that the growth in jobs and homes will only be achieved by strengthening public transport and the infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists as there is not the option of providing a proportionate increase in highway capacity.
- 3.2. The Transport Strategy also recognises that the current dominance of the private car in terms of modal share cannot continue given the Borough’s physical constraints. Furthermore there are several Air Quality Management Actions Areas as a large proportion of traffic is concentrates in a few congested corridors in the valley bottoms. The Transport Strategy advocates the development of “parking policies for town centres that ensure land is used efficiently and promote sustainable travel, while maintaining appropriate levels of car access”.

- 3.3. The inability of maximum parking requirements to influence car ownership has long been recognised hence the abandonment of the PPG13 standards and the guidance on parking in the NPPF as outlined above.
- 3.4. Car ownership is low in built-up areas of Calderdale (34% of urban households do not own a car). However in rural areas car ownership is much higher with 79% of households having at least one car. Furthermore 36% of rural residents have 2 or more vehicles. (Source 2011 Census table UV62).
- 3.5. Calderdale has a frequent public transport service during weekday daytime periods for much of the borough. The dispersed population distribution outside the main towns means that many bus services in rural areas in the evening and at weekends are less frequent or absent. Measures such as improvements to the rail services along the Calder Valley Line are planned along with increased car parking at several rail stations. However, the high car ownership in these more remote settlements, in particular the Upper Valley, is very likely to remain.
- 3.6. Parking policy therefore needs to be balanced to reflect the circumstances in Calderdale. It has long been recognised that increased prosperity results in higher car ownership. However, countries in mainland Europe such as Germany have seen a fall in car usage since the mid 1990s despite continued high levels of car ownership. The modal targets in the Calderdale Transport Strategy will only be met if a similar outcome is achieved here.
- 3.7. As with many local authorities, Calderdale suffers from historic housing with insufficient parking provision. This results in inconsiderate and unsafe parking in many residential streets to the detriment of pedestrians particularly the elderly, less able and parents with pushchairs. Each year there are a considerable number of complaints received from residents about on-street parking causing obstructions on local roads or a lack of parking on-street despite the resident having a parking permit:
- 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 – 687 requests received
  - 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 – 507 requests received
- 3.8. The above figures are requests for parking schemes, road markings to prevent parking outside accesses, complaints about pavement parking and requests for resident parking schemes. It is therefore essential that Calderdale has the ability to manage the provision of off-street parking in new developments where on street parking would create or exacerbate existing problems.