

Provision Of New Public Car Parks – Minimum Standards

1. Planning Policy Context

- 1.1 The British Car Parking Association has advised, in July 2009, that a national initiative of the Associations of Chief Police Officers has been introduced in order to reduce crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities. Furthermore, safer parking status, Park Mark, is awarded to parking facilities that successfully satisfy a risk assessment carried out by Police Liaison Officers. The focus is on preventing criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.2 At the local level, Policy A6 of the Bolton Unitary Development Plan 2005 states that the Council will rationalise the current level of town centre car parking by creating high quality parking environments on fewer sites in purpose built, well designed and security conscious facilities.
- 1.3 Furthermore, Policy D2 relates to urban design and confirms that developments will only be permitted if they create a safe and secure environment which minimises the possibility of crime and are accessible and useable to people of a range of mobility and physical ability.
- 1.4 Applicants are urged to design car parks in such a way as to minimise the opportunity of theft of, or from vehicles. There are steps which can be taken to improve conditions in car parks to deter car thieves. These include adequate lighting, car park attendants, ticket issue or perhaps camera surveillance. Where possible car parks should be overlooked, from the road and occupied buildings, and landscaping must be carefully designed.

A related issue is the importance of protecting people against crime in car parks, especially women. Adequate lighting of car parks is considered to be an effective deterrent against the threat of personal attack.

- 1.5 The Council's supplementary guidance PCPN10 Crime Prevention further states:

"35. Surface car parks should be designed to be overlooked from the road and occupied buildings: areas of the car park should not be blocked by dense landscaping. The plantings should be designed so that it meets its function of softening a potentially unsightly area, while also deterring criminal activity.

36. Lighting should be located so that it illuminates parking bays as well as circulation routes: access and egress points to car parks are frequently lit. leaving large areas of darkness for a motorist to walk from the car to the building the car park serves. If the car park is to be used at night illuminate as much of the area as possible".
- 1.6 PPG13 indicates that Local Authorities in partnership with the police should promote designs and layouts which are safe and take account of crime prevention and community safety considerations (Para 28).
- 1.7 The Disability Discrimination Act confirms the need to have and enforce suitably marked bays for people with disabilities. The current national guideline is that 4% of parking bays should be reserved for disabled motorists.

2. Consequential Requirements at Planning Application Stage

- 2.1 In the light of the above considerations, the following guidelines will be used by the Council when assessing planning applications for all temporary and permanent car park proposals in the town centre, as a supplement to the Interim Statement of Council Policy for Town Centre Parking dated September 2009.
- 2.2 The Council is seeking to resist further open air car parking and is developing policies for purpose built, secure multi-level parking on existing and proposed town centre sites. In circumstances where planning permission for additional surface level parking is considered appropriate, permission would only be forthcoming providing the following is achieved:

Design layouts to conform with the Secure Parking Award

Tarmac (or similar) impervious surfacing

Marking out of parking bays (6% for disabled users)

Suitable surface drainage

Secure boundary treatment (eg. dwarf brick walls and railings)

Intermittent landscaping (eg tree planters within the parking bays)

CCTV facilities where practicable

Adequate lighting

Barrier controls for evening use

Customer Help points