

## Central Bedfordshire Council – Parking Standards 2022

### 3.1 Visitor Cycle Parking at Houses

The requirement to ensure visitor cycles are parked in dedicated spaces clear of other access routes will result in bikes on front gardens where landscaping is required. Is this a policy conflict?

### 3.2 Visitor Cycle Parking at Flats

Again, there is reference to a need to remove landscaping and planting. Is this a policy conflict as others will want landscaping around structures to disguise and soften hard edges.

### 3.3 Residential Cycle Parking at Houses

This advice is ill-considered when judged against requirements with the National Design Codes for active frontages and the requirement for thermally efficient envelopes. The advice also does not consider the impact on houses built in terraced forms.

### 4.2 The Role of Parking Standards in Placemaking

Reference to a 2011 policy change as justification for a 2023 standard seems tenuous.

#### 4.3/4.3.1 Residential Parking Provision/Parking Provision that is not well used

It is true that car owners would ideally like to park in their hallways so they can watch TV without leaving the car but that level of convenience, plus a high car ownership will have a negative impact on design and most significantly, on housing density and accommodation levels.

### 4.4 Residential Parking Layout Considerations

Echoes previous comments above and again, parking and convenience are given precedence over landscaping, which is seen as obscuring visibility, manoeuvring ability and pedestrian access. Such policies simply run in the face of SUDS strategies and ecological enhancement policies.

#### 4.4.1 Garages

The policy should be simply to delete garages from parking calculations and call them 'outside stores'.

#### 4.4.3 Access for Bins

No need for such guidance.

#### 4.4.4 Access for Cycles

I would consider that as Central Beds Council already stipulate a minimum width of driveway where a wall abuts as 3.5m, the provision is achieved.

#### 4.4.6 Electric Vehicle Charging Point Provision

Electric vehicle charging point legislation is already contained in the Building Regulations, Part R, so no need to include here.

### 4.5 Car Parking Standards for Residential Developments

No comment as this provision remains largely unchanged from current standards.

## Appendices

The parking and access arrangements shown in Appendices 16 – 25 are totally engineered solutions without any consideration as to the impacts such provisions will have on:

- Housing density
- Accommodation provision
- Ecological enhancement policy
- SUDS drainage policy
- National Design Codes provision

If this represents the parking strategy and reality of the future then we can say goodbye to building any housing developments above 25 dwellings per hectare, which is a grossly inefficient response to the use of a scarce resource.

It would be far more effective to remove these diagrams and allow Designers to find solutions to satisfy the principles. If these appendices remain, they will represent the norm for most developments and become a yardstick of measurement and compliance, rather than simply examples.

On a more general note, I am concerned that standards such as these make no concessions for the principle of familiarity. Housing developments are occupied by people who interact as neighbours and form a community. Generally, these people go about their daily lives in a routine way, be it the school run, the journeys to and from work or shops, or simply a walk on Sunday. This routine allows a high level of predictability and with that we all become familiar with routines of the community and how best to work together. If you factor this into the provision of car parking and access, many of the conflicts prescribed by an engineering approach simply disappear.

Because of this, I believe these parking standards are too prescriptive, making no allowance for the familiarity factor and not allowing good design to be guided rather than dictated.