

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 7 MAY 2002**

#### **MAXIMUM PARKING STANDARDS**

##### **Report by Director of Development Services**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a response on the Scottish Executive's draft National Planning Policy Guideline on Maximum Parking Standards.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In 1999, National Planning Policy Guideline 17 on Transport and Planning introduced a change from minimum to maximum parking standards and outlined that further guidance would be issued. Subsequently, on 1 February the Scottish Executive published a consultative draft Addendum to NPPG17 on maximum car parking standards. The document sets out national maximum standards for a small range of significant travel generating land use classes where the proposed development is greater than specified size thresholds. It also provides advice to Councils on the implementation of such maximum parking standards. The Executive has requested comments on the Addendum to NPPG17 by 30 April 2002. An extension of the response date to 15 May 2002 has been obtained from the Scottish Executive.

### **3. CONTENTS OF DRAFT NPPG17 ADDENDUM**

- 3.1 In line with the Scottish Executive's commitment towards the implementation of a sustainable and integrated transport network, the Draft Addendum seeks to promote more sustainable travel patterns through constraining car parking and enabling other means of accessing development sites. According to the document, Councils will be "expected to adopt a policy of implementing maximum car parking standards for a wide range of land uses in their area" through the Structure Plan process. It is recommended that regional transport strategies could be used to achieve consistency across a wider area, where appropriate. In addition, the Addendum states that individual maximum parking standards, along with standards for cycle and disabled parking, should also be contained in Local Transport Strategies.
- 3.2 The draft Addendum to NPPG17 stated that Councils should take account of public transport accessibility, targets and opportunities for walking and cycling, economic development objectives, availability of public parking provision and the potential for neighbouring developments sharing spaces when determining the

maximum standards. It is recognised that in some cases constrained parking provision could result in drivers using nearby on-street parking alternatives. It is recommended that parking controlled zones should be considered where this is likely to pose a problem.

**3.3** Although the Addendum suggests that Councils could apply different standards to different parts of their area, it is highlighted that they should not undermine town centres by creating incentives to develop elsewhere. Land use planning policy can be used to influence the location of development to areas where public transport provision serves an extensive catchment population. It is recommended that in such locations, more stringent maximum parking standards could be applied. At sites where public transport provision is weak but development is nevertheless desirable, it is suggested that Councils should require developers to invest in sustainable transport with maximum parking standards playing a role. The document advises that Green Transport Plans could be applied in conjunction with parking standards in order to contribute to sustainable travel patterns, especially for shift workers and those working unsocial hours.

**3.4** As constraining parking at trip destinations should cause more cars to remain at home, it is recommended that in most cases, maximum parking standards should not be applied to residential developments. However, where residential sites are highly accessible by means other than the private car, the draft Addendum suggests the application of locally derived standards along with car-free housing, where appropriate. The table below sets out the proposed maximum standards for significant travel generating land uses. It also compares these to the existing standards currently contained in the Council's 'Roads Development Guide' (1995) where appropriate. The Roads Development Guide was originally developed by Strathclyde Regional Council and the parking standards were adopted by East Ayrshire along with most other local authorities in the West of Scotland.

**Table 1: National Maximum Car Parking Standards and Existing EAC Guidelines**

Reference to m <sup>2</sup> is to Gross Floor Area	National Maximum Parking Standard	Threshold from and above which Standard Applies	EAC Parking Standards (usually applied as minimums)	Proposed Maximum above/below current minimum
Retail (Food)	7 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup>	1000m <sup>2</sup>	6.5-8 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup>	Neutral
Retail (Non-Food)	5 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup>	1000m <sup>2</sup>	4-6 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup>	Neutral
Business	3.3 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup>	2500m <sup>2</sup>	0.4-0.8 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> (town centres) and 2 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> elsewhere	Above

Cinemas and Conference Facilities	1 space per 5 seats	1000m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 10 seats	Above
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats	1500m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per 10 seats	Below
Leisure (other than Cinemas, Conference Facilities and Stadia)	1 space per 22m <sup>2</sup>	1000m <sup>2</sup>	No direct comparison	n/a
Higher and Further Education	1 space per 2 staff plus 1 space per 15 students	2500m <sup>2</sup>	1 space per staff and 1 space per 10 students	Below

#### 4. REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1** Scottish Ministers announced that all regulations that significantly affect business would be subject to a rigorous Regulatory Impact Assessment. This document therefore seeks views from business and industry on the effects of maximum standards and the role of the land-use planning system in the provision of parking space in new developments. A number of options are outlined for determining the amount of parking at new developments and the issue of who has responsibility for such setting standards is also discussed.
- 4.2** Option 1, the status quo (i.e. minimum standards) and Option 2 (whereby developers are free to use their judgement) are ruled against by the Scottish Executive in favour of maximum standards. The Executive considers that this Option gives developers the freedom to relate car parking to business needs, subject to the maximum limit. In this respect, the developer can make judgements as to the proportion of travel generated by the proposed development which can be accommodated by public transport, walking and cycling, thus contributing towards sustainable transport objectives. In relation to responsibility for parking standards, the Executive considers that a combination of local authority and Scottish Ministers' standards is seen to be the best option. The document states that this would enable Councils to set most standards according to their local circumstances whilst allowing Scottish Ministers to set standards for a specific number of major travel generating developments (see Table1).
- 4.3** The risks associated with these different options are outlined in the Regulatory Impact Assessment. Although maximum parking standards could result in inefficient servicing of a development and adverse impacts on other modes and local people, or through effects of overspill parking, the Executive feels that this option appears to be the most favourable to developers whilst protecting those

using sustainable transport modes. With regards to equity and fairness, it is outlined that maximum standards provide social justice benefits to those without cars and encourage equity amongst local authorities. It is also felt that such standards could release valuable development land, reduce competition amongst local authorities and focus developers' attention on the provision of sustainable travel patterns. It is concluded that generally, costs to business are expected to be no worse than neutral, with a 'typical' large office development of 10,000m<sup>2</sup> requiring approximately 10-15% less on site parking.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** All local authorities are under obligation to review their parking standards. Currently, the Council uses minimum parking standards as a basis for specifying the number of parking spaces for new developments. When compared to the national guidelines as outlined in the NPPG17 Addendum, it can be seen that there would be some variations with existing provision.
- 5.2** The issue has been discussed at the Ayrshire Transport Group. In order to ensure consistency of parking standards across Ayrshire there might be merit in delivering Ayrshire wide maximum standards for certain types of strategic development. If agreement can be reached, such standards would be included in a future review of the Joint Structure Plan.
- 5.3** The determination of other new parking standards for those development types not contained in Table 1 above would be the responsibility of East Ayrshire Council. This would have to be dealt with through the Local Transport Strategy and would require considerable research to establish appropriate parking requirements. Consultations with developers, neighbouring local authorities and representative groups within East Ayrshire would be required.
- 5.4** There are a number of concerns in relation to the provision of maximum parking standards:-
- Displacement of cars from new developments onto surrounding streets, particularly in residential areas, would pose significant environmental and safety problems.  
*To mitigate these effects it would be necessary for new developments to be sited in areas where public transport provision is high, such as town centres. Alternatively, adequate provision should be made by the developer to encourage more sustainable travel patterns through investment in infrastructure or initiatives such as Green Transport Plans;*
  - The withdrawal of minimum standards could enable developers to supply no car parking provision at all. This would result in difficulties particularly in locations with poor public transport provision.  
*The Executive suggests that controlled parking zones could be considered in certain locations to avoid parking problems in surrounding areas, however,*

*such measures could inconvenience the local community and would require the promotion of waiting restrictions which could be contentious. Whilst it is accepted that maximum parking may have a place in a fully developed land use transportation strategy, it is proposed to recommend to the Executive that there is also a need for minimum standards to ensure appropriate levels of parking are provided in new developments.*

- Maximum standards may not be appropriate in rural areas where cars are an essential component of addressing social inclusion issues and meeting personal mobility needs. Maximum parking standards could jeopardise employment opportunities in smaller and medium sized towns where a good supply of convenient parking is essential for maintaining economic vitality.

*It is proposed that different parking standards should be considered for cities, town centres and less populated rural areas, all of which have different parking demand characteristics.*

- The introduction of maximum standards in areas such as East Ayrshire which have suffered from under-investment in facilities such as offices could place them at a competitive disadvantage to areas already supplied with office and other accommodation with parking above the proposed maximum levels.

*A research report recently published by the Scottish Executive tends to reinforce this concern.*

- The Scottish Executive has indicated that further best practice advice on accessibility, transport assessment, green transport plans, planning agreements, planning for key sites on the transportation system and planning for mode share in new developments, will be contained in one or more Planning Advice Notes in due course.

*These, together with parking standards are all elements of a fully integrated land use and transportation policy. It is proposed to recommend to the Scottish Executive, that the relevant advice notes on all of those issues should be made available before the implementation of maximum parking standards.*

**5.5** It is recommended that the Scottish Executive should be asked to consider the following key modifications to their proposals:

- Where justified to support local regeneration plans Councils should have the discretion to modify or waive general maximum standards
- Councils should be free to set minimum standards where these continue to be justified to prevent uncontrolled parking on public streets
- Maximum levels should be varied between cities, large and small towns and other areas
- Stadia and further education should be deleted from list of recommended maximums since these facilities will always require to be considered on a project specific basis

## **6. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** No immediate financial or legal implications arise from this report.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1** It is recommended that the Committee approves the comments on the Scottish Executive's proposals for maximum parking standards as set out in the report.

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**

KO/SH/YK  
22 April 2002

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1. NPPG17 Addendum: Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards**
- 2. NPPG17 Addendum: Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards Regulatory Impact Assessment**

For further information on the content of this report contact Keith Orton on 01563 555714.

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**AGENDA**