

**Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of
Guildford Development Framework**

Vehicular Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document

FINAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

**Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of
Guildford Local Development Framework**

Vehicular Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document

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1. Summary and outcomes

1.1 Non-technical summary

1.1.1 Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD

The Vehicular Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is part of the Guildford Development Framework. It provides further details of policies in the emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) with respect to the amount of parking which will be required for new development. The SPD is being published to update existing standards such that they will be consistent with the Surrey Parking Standards 2003.

Sustainability Appraisal of the updated standards has been undertaken. This involves comparing the proposed changes against criteria which set out the aims and objectives of sustainability. Where significant impacts are likely, the Sustainability Appraisal Report has made suggestions to improve the contribution the SPD can make to sustainability.

1.1.2 Key sustainability issues

Appraisal identifies that the SPD **supports the transport strategy** for Guildford and the region. The SPD will contribute to delivering safe provision for cycling and pedestrians which would have additional benefits to healthy lifestyles. The ability to deliver reduced parking provision relies heavily on improved public transport and enhancing provision for cycling and walking. Another trend which is likely to provide support is an increase in the number of people working from home.

When parking is being provided, guidance in the SPD and policy in the current Plan stresses the importance of **road safety** in design of parking facilities. Other issues which can be supported are protecting nature conservation and delivering **sustainable urban drainage**.

Appraisal suggests there can be a relationship between **viability of services and their accessibility**. It is difficult, however, to be clear about the magnitude of the likely impact since several other factors may have a more important bearing on viability. It is recommended that **accessibility to essential services** is monitored.

An issue which is not covered in the SPD is accessibility to designated **nature conservation sites**. It is considered that access to the most sensitive parts of an important site could be harmful to it. Whilst this is beyond the scope of the SPD, it is recommended that the Guildford Development Framework should address this.

1.2 Consultation and SA Procedure

The Vehicular Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is part of the Guildford Development Framework. It covers parking issues and provides further to supplement policies in the emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and the current Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003, in particular Policies G1(1) and M1.

Whilst there is no requirement for an independent examination, the SPD will be the subject of community engagement in accordance with the Guildford Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is available to view on line at www.guildford.gov.uk or you may request a paper copy by contacting Claire Beaumont on 01483 444662.

This Final Sustainability Appraisal Report supports the public consultation on the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD, which runs from March to April 2006. The process of producing and revising the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (FSAR) is summarised in Table 1, below:

Table 1: Sustainability Appraisal Procedure			
SPD Stage	SA Stage (SA Guidance 2005)	Action	Dates
Pre SPD production	A: Context, baseline and scope	Scoping Report	21.01.05
		Revised scope for Vehicular Parking Standards SPD	27.01.06
SPD Production	B: Appraisal of options	Appraisal of current policies and SPD	January 2006
	C: Preparing the FSAR	Report produced by Independent consultant	February 2006
Consultation	D: Regulation 17 consultation on the draft SPD and the FSAR	See consultation list, Appendix Four	March to April 2006
	D: Consider representations, finalise SPD and revise FSAR.	Revision to SPD and FSAR	May 2006
SPD Implementation	E: Monitor the significant effects of the SPD	Ongoing, see Appendix Four	First Monitoring Report April 2007

1.3 Purpose of the SPD

The Vehicular Parking Standards SPD will clarify and expand upon existing policies of the adopted Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003, in particular Policy G1 (1) Parking Provision, M1 Parking Provision, M2 Long stay car parks and M3 Park and Ride. These policies are available on the Guildford Borough Council website (www.guildford.gov.uk) under Planning and Building Control, Planning Policy, policy team, Local Plan 2003. Some new standards will replace the current standards.

1.4 Options

A new Parking Standards SPD is proposed to address some existing disparities between local, county and national standards. In particular, the revised SPD seeks to improve compatibility with the Surrey County Council Parking Standards 2003. The vast majority of the existing standards will remain unchanged and consultation on these will not be pursued. The main changes proposed are to the residential parking standard, the standard for food and drink uses, business use and general industrial. Standards for the new A4 (Drinking establishments) and A5 (Hot food take-aways) Use Classes have also been added.

1.5 Screening and possible exemptions for sustainability appraisal of SPDs that have no significant effects

The need for screening determinations under the SEA Directive is most likely to arise with SPDs which cover a small area at local level or which make only minor modifications to existing policy. The Vehicular Parking Standards SPD is concerned with the whole Borough and the potential impacts on traffic and accessibility of services are likely to be significant. It is considered, therefore, that the SPD should be the subject of an Environmental Assessment under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and a Sustainability Appraisal as required by section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and that a formal screening process would be of no consequence to this decision.

1.6 The common use of sustainability appraisal information for SPDs

The Sustainability Appraisal of the SPD draws on and is consistent with the SA of the emerging Core Strategy DPD. It uses an appraisal of saved current Local Plan policies as its reference point, however, since it is on these policies which the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD builds. The appraisal of current plan policies is attached as Appendix One.

A Scoping Report was issued in January 2005 and has been updated. The latest version is available on the Borough Council website (www.guildford.gov.uk) or contact Tracey Haskins on 01483 444 464. The baseline and wider

consideration of other plans and programmes is common to all Local Development Documents. Guildford Borough Council has, however, sought the opinion of the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council with respect to the key issues they consider to be of relevance to the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD. The full details of the comments made during consultation are attached as Appendix Six and the issues raised have been incorporated into the FSAR.

1.7 SEA Regulations

WHERE THIS FSAR REPORTS PROVIDES INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SEA REGULATIONS, A TEXT BOX LIKE THIS WILL BE USED TO SIGNPOST THAT INFORMATION.

2 Pre production of the SPD

2.1 Relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainable development objectives

The Environmental Report should provide information on:

- the relationship of the plan or programme with other relevant plans and programmes (Annex I(a))
- the environmental protection objectives, established at international, [European] Community or [national] level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation (Annex I (e))

The detail and relationships between the SPD and other relevant policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives were first considered in the Scoping Report issued on 21st January 2005. Table 3 of that document identifies the requirements of other plans and programmes which are relevant to the Guildford Development Framework. The documents which are of particular relevance to the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD are considered to be:

2.1.1 National level

Planning Policy Statement 6, Planning for Town Centres
Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
Planning Policy Guidance Note13 Transport
Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control
Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development and Flood Risk
Draft Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk
The standards for cycle parking are based on those suggested by the Cyclists' Touring Club.

Note: The SPD was being drafted prior to PPS3, Housing being issued

2.1.2 Regional Policy

The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)
Draft South East Plan
Structure Plan Policy DN3, Parking Provision
Emerging South East Plan
The Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Summary (GBC Web site)

2.1.3 Local Policy

Surrey County Council Parking Standards 2003
Supplementary Planning Guidance 'A Parking Strategy for Surrey'
Provisional Surrey Local Transport Plan second edition 2006/7 - 2010/11 (LTP2)
Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 Policy G1 (1)
Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 Policies M1, M2 and M3

The key issues arising from these documents have informed the consideration of sustainability issues (page 7). The web pages which detail a summary of the requirements of these documents are referenced as Appendix Four.

2.2 Social, economic and environmental baseline characteristics and predicted future baseline

The Environmental Report should provide information on:

- relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme and the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be significantly affected (Annex I (b), (c))
- any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC (Annex I (d))

Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. The baseline was initially set out in the Scoping Report in January 2005, but is being continuously updated. Since the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD covers the whole Borough and relates to most development, it is considered that the full baseline in the Scoping Report is relevant to this SA.

Baseline information consists of quantitative and qualitative indicators and the current data available can be seen at www.guildford.gov.uk, under Planning and Building Control, Planning Policy, policy team, Local Development Framework, Sustainability Appraisal.

It is considered that a good baseline has been collated such that the effects of the SPD can be adequately predicted. Whilst additional data has been highlighted in the following section, there remain some gaps and reasoned

assumptions are made in appraisal with respect to some economic, social and environmental conditions. The FSAR identifies where assumptions have been made and the basis for those assumptions.

2.2.1 Key baseline information

The Surrey County Council Parking Standards 2003 are based on the outcome of a parking audit which commenced in 1995. Guildford Borough Council has undertaken further survey work to clarify local conditions. This includes surveys of parking space occupancy, comparison with other Boroughs and a survey of residents with respect to parking permits. These are included as Appendices to the draft SPD.

Over the last three years (January 2003 to January 2006), the average number of spaces per unit in the Town Centre has totalled 0.96 and outside the Town Centre 1.44. The average number of spaces per unit in the Town Centre has totalled:

Primarily 1 bedroom units	0.31
Primarily 2 bedroom units	1.11
Primarily 3 bedroom units	0.8
4+ bedroom units	2.18

Information identifying the number of people working from home was collected for the 2001 census. It is reasonable to assume that technology and working practices will result in an increase and this will support the ability to reduce parking provision across the Borough.

2.3 Sustainability issues and problems

On the basis of the current baseline, priorities identified in other plans and programmes, and consultation responses the key issues for the SPD are considered to be:

- traffic levels by mode of transport
- well located Park and Ride is essential to mitigate reduced Town Centre parking and avoid adverse impacts to nature conservation and flooding
- impact of hard surfacing on water quality, flood risk and nature conservation
- impact on the viability of development proposals

2.4 The SA Framework

Sustainability objectives are distinct from the objectives of the plan, though they may in some cases overlap with them. They provide a way of checking whether the SPD Objectives are the best possible ones for sustainability. The SA Objectives were initially set out in the Scoping Report in January 2005. The consultation on the scope of the Vehicular Parking Standards SPD provided an opportunity for the Consultation Bodies to comment further on the suitability of the SA Objectives for the appraisal of the SPD (see Appendix Six).

2.5 Consulting on the scope of the SA

Article 5.4 and 6.3 of the SEA Directive requires that the authorities which, by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes shall be consulted when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report.

The views of the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council were formally requested on the scope and level of detail of the environmental information to be included in this FSAR. Their responses have been incorporated into this Report where appropriate and are included in full as Appendix Six. Other organisations and individuals may also comment on the scope and detail while the SPD is available for consultation (Regulation 17 consultation) in March and April 2006 (see Appendix Seven for List of Consultees).

3 Developing and refining options and assessing effects

Article 5.1 of the SEA Directive requires that an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated

Information to be provided in the Environmental Report includes an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (Annex I (h))

3.1 Testing the SPD objectives against the SA framework and developing the SPD options

SA Guidance advises that the key aim of the SPD is an improvement on the situation which would exist if there were no SPD. Since the SPD relates to existing policies, this baseline has been set through appraisal of relevant current policies and standards. This initial broad strategic appraisal for the SPD has also been guided by the appraisal of other Guildford Development Framework Documents. The full considerations of current policy and standards are set out in Appendix One.

Building on this, appraisal of the proposed changes has identified areas of conflict and areas where strong positive synergies exist between objectives. This has helped identify priorities in terms of avoiding harm and maximising benefits which can be delivered through the SPD. The full considerations of proposed changes to the standards are set out in Appendix Two.

The FSAR offers recommendations between page 24 and page 27, which identify how the SPD could make a greater contribution to sustainability. The scope of the proposed changes is narrow since it is essentially a response to new guidance at national and regional level. Significant issues concerning options not being taken forward, including 'do-nothing', are noted where appropriate

3.1.1 Current Policy

The relevant Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 policies are G1 (1), M1, M2 and M3. The current Supplementary Planning Guidance 'A Parking Strategy for Surrey' builds on these policies. The policies are reproduced below, and are also available on the Guildford Borough Council website (www.guildford.gov.uk) under Planning & Building Control, Planning Policy, policy team, Local Plan 2003.

3.1.2 Predicting and evaluating the effects of the draft SPD

Appraisal involves predicting the social, environmental and economic effects of the options being considered in the SPD. A judgement is made against SA Objectives (these are set out in Appendix One) with reference to the baseline situation to predict whether changes might occur to the sustainability baseline. The baseline is referenced as Appendix Three.

Predictions are described, as appropriate, in terms of their magnitude, their geographical scale, the time period over which they will occur, whether they are permanent or temporary, positive or negative, probable or improbable, frequent or rare, and whether or not there are secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects.

Prediction has involved using a scale from positive to negative, with associated commentary identifying the likely magnitude of the effect. In many circumstances a general entry is made, such as 'will support the SA Objective'. Where assumptions have been made in the absence of quantitative or qualitative data, these assumptions have been explained. The following commentary sets out the consideration of the predicted impacts under the SA Objective headings. This allows expression of the nature of the impacts in terms of whether they are likely to be secondary, cumulative, and/or synergistic. In particular, appraisal has involved a consideration of the value and vulnerability of certain areas and populations and whether thresholds or standards may be exceeded.

Appraisal has identified areas of conflict and areas where strong positive synergies exist between objectives. This has helped identify priorities in terms of avoiding harm and maximising benefits which can be delivered through the SPD. Recommendations to this end are set out in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

3.1.3 Appraisal of current policy

Policy M1 of the adopted Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003): Within the Town Centre boundary the Council will restrict levels of on-site parking. In such circumstances it will seek from developers appropriate contributions towards public transport, pedestrian and cycling related facilities, and park and ride schemes to fulfil the travel requirements of the development

SA Objective 1: provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford

Policy M1 sets requirements to ensure that proposed development is compatible with the objective of reducing use of the private car. Other policies in the current plan seek additional social, economic and environmental objectives. In

combination with other requirements, such as providing open space and adequate infrastructure, Policy M1 may contribute to an adverse impact on the viability of housing proposals. The consequence may be that sites are not brought forward as readily as they may if there were no requirements.

Currently, it is difficult to deliver sufficient affordable housing in Guildford. It is considered that when revising transport policies, consideration should be given to the impact on the viability of housing proposals.

Conversely, reduced parking provision and improved public transport supports higher density mixed-use developments in urban centres. Policy recognises this in setting differential parking standards for Guildford Town Centre and areas outside the Town Centre.

SA Objective 2: facilitate the improved health and well being of the population, including enabling people to stay independent and reducing inequalities in health; SA Objective 4: create and maintain safer and more secure communities; SA Objective 5: reduce poverty and social exclusion for all sectors of the economy; and SA Objective 6: create and sustain vibrant communities

The combination of policies to restrict parking provision and improve public transport alongside cycling and walking improves transport options overall and for all. The strategy will also contribute to a long-term improvement in air quality.

Supporting cycling will contribute to healthy lifestyles.

SA Objective 7: make the best use previously developed land and existing buildings, encourage sustainable construction

Reduced parking provision and improved public transport supports high density mixed use developments in urban centres.

SA Objective 8: ensure air quality continues to improve and noise/light pollution is reduced; SA Objective 11: reduce road congestion and pollution levels; SA Objective 13: address causes and consequences of climate change; and SA Objective 14: reduce the global, social and environmental impacts of consumption of resources

The combination of policies to restrict parking provision and improve public transport alongside cycling and walking improves transport options overall and for all. The funding, momentum and organisation of the strategy is likely to strengthen over time.

The strategy will also contribute to long term reduction in greenhouse and other emissions.

SA Objective 18: maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity; and SA Objective 19: provide for commercial development opportunities to meet needs of economy

Policy seeks to reduce the use of private cars and, consequently, congestion. The combination of policies to restrict parking provision and improve public transport alongside cycling and walking improves transport options overall and for all. The funding, momentum and organisation of the strategy is likely to strengthen over time.

The combination of policies is also a key factor in enabling high density mixed use development.

Policy M2 of the adopted Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003): Planning Permission will not be given for additional long stay car parks within Guildford Town Centre

SA Objective 6: create and sustain vibrant communities

If the number of long term spaces does not match demand, there may be a detrimental impact on the number of visitors to Guildford Town Centre. Park and Ride would provide an alternative for some visitors. This is something which the Council is seeking to develop, through its forthcoming Park and Ride Strategy.

SA Objective 7: make the best use previously developed land and existing buildings, encourage sustainable construction

More land is likely to be available for housing.

SA Objective 9: conserve and enhance biodiversity within the plan area; and SA Objective 10: protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment natural, archaeological and historic environments and cultural assets of Guildford benefit both residents and visitors.

More land available for landscaped green space which supports biodiversity and/or the setting of an historic building.

SA Objective 11: reduce road congestion and pollution levels

Without other measures such as additional Park and Ride provision, there may be an increase in cars 'hunting' for a parking space.

SA Objective 13: address causes and consequences of climate change; and SA Objective 14: reduce the global, social and environmental impacts of consumption of resources

May reduce the length of journey of private cars, but depends on other factors such as the location and take up of Park and Ride.

SA Objective 18: maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity; SA Objective 19: provide for commercial development opportunities to meet needs of economy

If long term spaces do not match demand, there may be a detrimental impact on the number of retail and cultural customers. Park and Ride would provide an alternative for some visitors; as would public transport services serving the town, especially considering good rail links from Guildford.

Policy M3 of the adopted Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003):

'The Council will grant planning permission for park and ride sites provided that the following criteria are met: 1. Highway access, parking, turning and any increased traffic movements can be accommodated satisfactorily; 2. the proposed development including ancillary buildings peripheral fencing and lighting would not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area; 3. the amenities of occupiers of existing buildings are protected; 4. the provision of adequate landscaping; 5. existing natural features are safeguarded and enhanced; 6. the provision of cycling facilities and visitor coach parking facilities.'

SA Objective 1: provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford; and SA Objective 7: make the best use previously developed land and existing buildings, encourage sustainable construction

By locating parking outside or on the edge of the urban area (through Park and Ride), more land may become available for housing. The additional benefit would be that the housing would be in the most accessible locations.

SA Objective 3: reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment; and SA Objective 16: maintain and improve the water quality of the region's rivers, groundwater and sustainable water management

Policy makes no specific reference to avoiding flood risk areas. This would be an important consideration when revising policy due to the potentially great increase in run-off.

SA Objective 6: create and sustain vibrant communities; SA Objective 18: maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity; and SA Objective 19: provide for commercial development opportunities to meet needs of economy

Providing Park and Ride is well located, it provides part of the mitigation for the potential negative impact of Policy M2.

SA Objective 8: ensure air quality continues to improve and noise/light pollution is reduced

If Park and Ride services are well located, there is likely to be a reduction in emissions to air. The impact of light and noise would be mitigated, but in some areas this may still result in an increase on background or existing levels.

SA Objective 9: conserve and enhance biodiversity within the plan area; and SA Objective 10: protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment natural, archaeological and historic environments and cultural assets of Guildford benefit both residents and visitors

Policy M3 lists points for mitigation, but there is likely to be some residual adverse impact. There is no specific reference to archaeology or to the potential requirement for appropriate assessment within 3km of a Special Protection Area or Special Area for Conservation.

An issue which is not covered by policy is accessibility for recreation which may be detrimental to objectives at designated sites.

SA Objective 11: reduce road congestion and pollution levels; SA Objective 13: address causes and consequences of climate change; SA Objective 14: reduce the global, social and environmental impacts of consumption of

resources; and SA Objective 17: increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources

In the wrong location, Park and Ride could be poorly used and could contribute, albeit marginally, to increasing congestion. Policy M3 provides no criteria to judge whether a proposed Park and Ride location would improve congestion. The forthcoming Park and Ride Strategy will seek to address this point.

Further benefits could be delivered if cleaner fuels were used in an efficient vehicle. It is recognised, however, that the planning system can not influence choice of private motor cars or require buses to use particular fuels. The Council's pool cars will continue to seek to lead by example.

SA Objective 12: reduce the area of land affected by contamination and safeguard soil quality and quantity (including agricultural land)

Park and Ride could utilise a formerly contaminated site. In addition, this type of use could allow for a lower level of remediation or a situation where a site could not be used for development which posed a higher risk for people, such as housing.

SA Objective 15: reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste

Park and Ride facilities provide an excellent opportunity for community recycling facilities. Policy M3 does not encourage provision. The Sustainable Development and Construction SPD instead refers to provision for recycling in new developments. Is this reference sufficient or do we need to refer to these issues here too.

Appraisal of current Parking Standards

SA Objective 1: provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford

The standards set out for housing (Use Class C3) support the provision of higher density housing. Policy for mixed use, however, does not specifically require low densities for parking, but relies on individual assessment. The overall impact of these standards would be to support housing provision.

SA Objective 2: facilitate the improved health and well being of the population, including enabling people to stay independent and reducing inequalities in health

There are many factors which influence the viability of services and facilities. Limiting parking spaces could be a detrimental factor although in its own right is not often likely to be significant. It is likely to be most relevant to Class A1 and D2 uses. Potentially immediate serious consequences could occur if staff or patients (Class C2, D1 and D2 uses) are unable to park in an emergency. It is noted that in Class D2 standards, parking standards for doctors are higher. Policy could also include a requirement for clear spaces for emergency parking only.

For Classes B1, B2, C1 and D2 uses, parking restrictions could be an influential factor in deciding to locate outside the Borough. Again, the consequence may be fewer services, but equally could theoretically reduce the number of jobs available. A more flexible approach is set out for negotiating with respect to mixed use. Whilst this may reduce the disincentive described, parking is still likely to be restricted.

Restrictions are placed on parking provision to serve residential properties (Use Class C3) both within and outside Guildford Town Centre. It is noted that more parking would be allowed in the less accessible locations, but equally that improvements to public transport, cycle and footpaths are essential to ensuring access to facilities and services and the successful implementation of the transport strategy. Parking standards for disabled drivers are, accordingly, higher than for other users in recognition of the limitations to their choice of transport mode.

Policy seeks to encourage walking and cycling to school through travel plans and to work by providing cycle parking at train and bus stations. Assuming safety standards can be achieved, this supports this SA Objective. Further encouragement could be given if the provision of facilities such as showers were also required. The Council, jointly with Surrey County Council runs some Safer Walking initiatives, coordinated through a Walking Strategy, and also has a Cycling Strategy.

SA Objective 3: reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment

All parking restrictions potentially lead to a reduction in the area of hard surface which might otherwise be provided. In particular, however, restrictions to provision at Class B1, B2, C1, C2 uses and schools (Class D1) would support this SA Objective. In combination with sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) and the ability to slow down the rate of run off, this mitigates against the potential harm of increase in hard surface.

SA Objective 4: create and maintain safer and more secure communities

All restrictions on the amount of parking could lead to an adverse impact on safety if it results in an increase in illegal parking at unsafe locations. Whilst part of the solution can be achieved through safe design of roads in general, the management of illegal parking will be important in preventing hazards. Policy for Class C3 use helps by having unassigned spaces and the individual approach to mixed use may be more likely to avoid illegal parking. Policy for disabled parking supports this SA Objective.

The problem is most likely to occur with Class D1 uses, including schools, which are associated with intense peak periods of traffic. This could be significant during crèche drop off and collection periods. Policy could include a greater degree of flexibility to the approach to these uses based on specific circumstances.

A second issue related to schools policy and to cycling policy in general is to ensure cycle paths are designed with safety as a principle consideration.

SA Objective 5: reduce poverty and social exclusion for all sectors of the economy

Improvements to public transport are important, whilst cycling and walking are an essential accompaniment to parking restrictions to ensuring access to facilities, services and employment. It is important that policy relating to Class C3 and D1 uses acknowledges this.

Cycling provision at train and bus stops/centres supports this SA Objective by facilitating accessibility for all budgets.

SA Objective 6: create and sustain vibrant communities

Disabled parking standards and policy in general support the SA Objective since the use of public transport, walking and cycling increases opportunities for social interaction. The reduction of traffic in urban areas also provides opportunities for uninterrupted and less stressful use of communal areas.

There are many factors which influence the viability of services and facilities. Limiting parking spaces could be a detrimental factor although in its own right is not often likely to be significant. This is more likely to be relevant to Classes A1, A2, C1 and D2 uses. There is also potential for Class B1, B2 and D2 use developers to seek opportunities where there is less restriction (in areas less

accessible by public transport or walking). A more flexible approach to negotiating is advocated for mixed use in the SPD.

SA Objective 7: make the best use previously developed land and existing buildings, encourage sustainable construction

Class C3 standards support high density housing and Class B1, B2 and B8 standards support higher density if achieved in mixed use developments. Parking policy for mixed use specifically advocates a more flexible approach to negotiating the overall level. In principle, therefore, policy supports the best use of previously developed land.

SA Objective 8: ensure air quality continues to improve and noise/light pollution is reduced; SA Objective 11: reduce road congestion and pollution levels; SA Objective 13: address causes and consequences of climate change; and SA Objective 14: reduce the global, social and environmental impacts of consumption of resources

As part of the overall strategy to reduce use of and distances travelled in private cars, policy supports these SA Objectives. There are some impacts, however, which jeopardise its achievement. Firstly, shops, facilities and services must remain viable (see SA Objective 2) and secondly, improved public transport, cycle routes and footpaths must be delivered. Other policies, including standards for cycling provision at train and bus stations/stops, strongly support these objectives.

SA Objective 9: conserve and enhance biodiversity within the plan area

All parking restrictions potentially lead to a reduction in the area of hard surface. In particular, however, restrictions to provision at Class B1, B2, B3, C1, C2 and C3 uses and schools support this SA Objective by potentially increasing space for habitat creation.

SA Objective 10: protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment natural, archaeological and historic environments and cultural assets of Guildford benefit both residents and visitors.

There are two potential adverse impacts with respect to SA Objective 10. Firstly, policy does not specifically acknowledge the importance of design being compatible with the urban form and style other than in Policy M3, Park and Ride. This is most likely to be an issue for Class C3 uses and cycle spaces as bus and railway stations. Secondly, an increase in illegal parking could detract from the quality of the townscape. Traffic management policy can address this issue, although it is likely that the key reason for enforcement would be safety.

SA Objective 12: reduce the area of land affected by contamination and safeguard soil quality and quantity (including agricultural land)

No issues arising.

SA Objective 15: reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste

In theory, additional space is made available for community waste facilities. Provision of containers to collect recycling could be made at services and facilities with a high throughput of visitors. This could include Class B1, B2, C3 and D2. Policy does not preclude, but equally does not encourage, such provision.

SA Objective 16: maintain and improve the water quality of the region's rivers, groundwater and sustainable water management

Reducing parking spaces has synergistically beneficial impacts. Firstly, in theory, more land is available for sustainable drainage and less covered by hard surface; and secondly, it contributes to the reduction of vehicles travelling. The benefits could be particularly strong for Class B1, B2, B8 and C3 uses.

SA Objective 17: increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources

No issues arising.

SA Objective 18: maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity; and SA Objective 19: provide for commercial development opportunities to meet needs of economy

Congestion is an environmental, social and economic problem in Surrey. Reducing congestion will benefit the economy directly by improving accessibility and connection time between places of work and home and for deliveries. Social and environmental benefits will compound this by improving the attractiveness of Guildford Borough for investment. Conversely, investment decisions could be influenced negatively by restrictive parking standards. It is important, therefore, that public transport, cycling and walking is improved. Again, the combination of improved accessibility, safety and increased cycling and walking is likely to positively influence productivity of individual workers and the economy.

3.1.4 Vehicular Parking Standards SPD

SA Objective 1: provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford

The new standards set out for housing within Guildford Town Centre support the provision of high density housing in terms of maximising the amount of land available for units. Policy for mixed use does not specifically require low densities for parking, but relies on individual assessment with an implied low density.

This strategy may not assist in providing additional housing, however, if improvements to public transport, cycling and walking are not simultaneously delivered. An adverse impact may even occur if there is a cumulative disincentive to submit development proposals where other requirements such as green space and other infrastructure provision affect viability.

To address the above, the SPD indicates that exceptions may be appropriate depending on accessibility by other modes and where a Green Travel Plan is produced. In addition, the emerging policies of the Guildford Local Development Framework (GDF) Core Strategy seek higher density housing in appropriate locations. This would be in accordance with emerging national planning policy (draft Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing).

SA Objective 2: facilitate the improved health and well being of the population, including enabling people to stay independent and reducing inequalities in health

The SPD indicates a flexible approach to parking standards for residential use where fewer than 15 dwellings are proposed. A similar approach could be identified for standards being applied to defined essential services, particularly given the small change in standards for parking at shops over 2500m², Class B1, B2 and B3 uses. This could include doctors and post offices and other services such as crèches.

Policy seeks to encourage walking and cycling to school through travel plans and to work by providing cycle parking at train and bus stations. Further encouragement could be given if the provision of facilities such as showers was also required.

SA Objective 3: reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment

The appraisal of the current Local Plan and draft Parking Standards SPD identified that all parking restrictions potentially lead to a reduction in the area of hard surface. Design guidance should seek to ensure sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) which intercepts pollutants and slows run off.

New standards have been set which would allow more parking at shops over 2500m² as well as for Class B1, B2 and B3 uses, but has removed the allowance/requirement for a goods bay. Cumulatively, these small changes strengthen the need for SUDS.

SA Objective 4: create and maintain safer and more secure communities

Guidance in the SPD stresses the importance of safety in design with respect to standards for schools. A general reference to safe design would be appropriate, as would a reference to the importance of the management of illegal parking in preventing hazards. The removal of a requirement for unassigned spaces at residential properties increases the importance of safety measures.

Appraisal of current policies identified that the problem is most likely to occur with Class D1 uses, including schools. A second issue related to schools policy and to cycling policy in general is to ensure cycle paths are designed with safety as a principle consideration. Policies G1(2), G12, M1 and M6 of the current Local Plan specifically require the consideration of safety when designing cycle and pedestrian routes.

SA Objective 5: reduce poverty and social exclusion for all sectors of the economy

Residential standards now indicate an element of flexibility to allow for differential accessibility by other modes and whether a Green Travel Plan is produced. It is important that policy relating to Class D1 uses and other essential services also acknowledges this principle.

SA Objective 6: create and sustain vibrant communities

Design guidance in the SPD encourages provision in a way that is compatible with the current urban form and that incorporates landscaping. A general reference to the importance of safety in the design of parking facilities would further strengthen the support for this SA Objective.

The SPD indicates a flexible approach to parking standards for residential use. A similar approach should be identified for standards being applied to defined essential services, particularly given the small change in standards for parking at shops over 2500m², Class B1, B2 and B3 uses. This could include doctors and post offices and other services such as crèches.

SA Objective 7: make the best use previously developed land and existing buildings, encourage sustainable construction

In principle reduced parking supports the best use of previously developed land.

SA Objective 8: ensure air quality continues to improve and noise/light pollution is reduced; SA Objective 11: reduce road congestion and pollution levels; SA Objective 13: address causes and consequences of climate change; and SA Objective 14: reduce the global, social and environmental impacts of consumption of resources

Appraisal of current policy identifies that the overall strategy supports these SA Objectives. There are some impacts, however, which jeopardise its achievement. Firstly, shops, facilities and services must remain viable (see SA Objective 2) and secondly, improved public transport, cycle routes and footpaths must be delivered.

SA Objective 9: conserve and enhance biodiversity within the plan area

The SPD specifically encourages landscaping, but there is no specific reference to archaeology or to the potential requirement for appropriate assessment within 3km of a Special Protection Area or Special Area for Conservation. Reference to the issue of accessibility for recreation which may be detrimental to objectives at designated sites would enhance the SPD.

SA Objective 10: protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment natural, archaeological and historic environments and cultural assets of Guildford benefit both residents and visitors.

Two potential adverse impacts were identified in the appraisal of current policy with respect to SA Objective 10: compatibility of design and potential harm from illegal parking. The SPD seeks to address both by stressing the importance of compatibility with existing urban form, use of landscaping and safety in design.

SA Objective 12: reduce the area of land affected by contamination and safeguard soil quality and quantity (including agricultural land)

No likely significant impacts identified.

SA Objective 15: reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste

Additional space may be available for community waste facilities and should be encouraged at Class B1, B2, B8, C3 and D2 uses.

SA Objective 16: maintain and improve the water quality of the region's rivers, groundwater and sustainable water management

The appraisal of current policy identified an important link between parking provision and sustainable urban drainage which should be emphasised in the design guidance section of the SPD.

SA Objective 17: increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources

No likely significant impacts identified.

SA Objective 18: maintain low rates of unemployment and high levels of economic activity; and SA Objective 19: provide for commercial development opportunities to meet needs of economy

Appraisal of the current Local Plan and draft Parking Standards SPD indicates that restrictive parking standards may be a contributing factor influencing whether a potential investor considers a proposal to be viable. There are many factors which influence the viability of services and facilities. Limiting parking spaces could be a detrimental factor although in its own right is not often likely to be significant. Accordingly, the SPD introduces a flexible approach to parking standards for residential use. A similar approach could be considered for standards being applied to other Use Classes.

3.1.4 Rejected Options

The rejected option is to make no alteration to the current A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and B2 uses parking standards. This is not being pursued since it would be inconsistent with the Surrey Parking Strategy 2003.

In response to consultation on the Scoping Report, Surrey County Council has suggested that consideration be given to reviewing cycling/motor cycling standards. The Preferred Option is no change to the current policy of encouraging developers to make provision. It is not considered that this will have a significant positive or negative impact on the use of this mode of transport. GBC could consider changes should any further survey work be presented following on from the parking audit.

For the town centre residential parking standard the Preferred Option is to have 2 parking spaces per unit for 3 bedroom or more dwellings. A lower standard of one car parking space per unit, no matter what the number of bedrooms has been rejected. Monitoring of provision will inform whether this level is appropriate in the long term.

3.2 Recommendations for mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects

The key changes are the standards for A2, A3, A4, A5 and B2 uses to be in line with the Surrey Parking Strategy 2003. As a result there will be slightly more parking available.

All likely impacts have been detailed between page 11 and page 24. Many of the impacts are small or marginal and will not necessarily require specific action to avoid or mitigate for adverse impacts. They have been noted, however, such that monitoring requirements can be identified which will provide a check as to whether the impact is any more significant than that predicted.

Appraisal has also identified impacts which may be of greater magnitude and significance. For these actions which would prevent, reduce or offset likely significant adverse effects of implementing the SPD may be necessary. The following recommendations set out how the SPD could be modified to incorporate actions where likely significant impacts have been identified. Recommendations are also made such that opportunities to maximise beneficial effects can be taken.

1. The SPD indicates a flexible approach to parking standards where fewer than 20 dwellings are proposed. A similar approach could be beneficial for standards being applied to defined essential services. This could include doctors and post offices and other services such as crèches and would be based on evidence about accessibility and a commitment to a Green Travel Plan. The SPD could provide stronger support to essential services by adding a paragraph on page 5:

'Essential Services

In appropriate circumstances a lower standard may be acceptable. In determining the standard for a proposed development regard will be made to the location and adequacy of public transport alternatives to the car, the potential impact on on-street parking and emergency situations, and whether a Green Travel Plan has been prepared including sustainable alternative measures such as car clubs'

2. The SPD should seek to ensure sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) and clarify the importance of the management of illegal parking in preventing hazards by reference to the relevant section of the Sustainable Development and Construction SPD at page 4 under the heading 'Design and Layout of Car Parking':

'Design of new parking spaces should be based on the principles set out in the Sustainable Development and Construction SPD. Sustainable Urban Drainage will be an important feature. Design should also meet safety standards and seek to minimise the opportunities and potential harm from parking in areas not designated for other uses or on the highway.'

3. The SPD specifically encourages landscaping on page 3 under the heading 'Design and Layout of Car Parking'. The SPD could be strengthened by including a reference to considering impacts on archaeology, the potential requirement for appropriate assessment within 3km of an SPA or SAC; and flood risk assessment when making an assessment of a site for Park and Ride.
4. An issue which is not covered in the SPD is accessibility for recreation which may be detrimental to objectives at designated sites. It is considered that providing parking which facilitates access to the most sensitive areas of an SSSI is an important issue which is affected by land use planning. Whilst this is beyond the scope of the SPD, the Guildford Development Framework should address this.
5. The Development Framework for Guildford could make a greater contribution to sustainability if criteria were identified for deciding the location of Park and Ride in the Park and Ride Strategy.

3.3 Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the SPD

Monitoring will allow the actual significant effects of implementation of the SPD to be identified against those predicted. A draft Monitoring Schedule is set out as

Table 2 on page 30. Indicators will be confirmed in a submission statement which will supplement this FSAR and ensure monitoring of the following issues:

Affordable housing

It is predicted that restrictive parking standards and other policies which seek to reduce travel by car may contribute to releasing more land for housing and facilitate higher densities in urban areas. The standard for affordable housing and for other housing is the same.

The baseline indicates that the standards are achievable and that this will not have an adverse impact on the provision of affordable housing. Given the importance of this issue, however, it is necessary to monitor the delivery of housing and parking standards achieved.

Traffic

Appraisal of current policy identifies that the overall strategy supports transport SA Objectives. The ability to deliver reduced parking provision relies heavily on improved public transport and enhancing provision for cycling and walking. Another trend which is likely to provide support is an increase in the number of people working from home.

Monitoring is, therefore, recommended for traffic levels by mode, accessibility to public transport, the delivery of Green Travel Plans and for the number of people working from home.

Road safety

Guidance in the SPD and policy in the current Plan stress the importance of safety in design. It is recommended that road safety is monitored to ensure appropriate design is being delivered.

Essential services

Appraisal suggests there can be a relationship between viability of services and accessibility. It is recommended that accessibility to essential services is monitored.

Employment

Appraisal suggests there can be a relationship between accessibility and economic viability, an issue which investors may consider when choosing a location. Whilst this is not predicted to be significant, the importance of continuing investment and high employment indicates that monitoring is required.

Water environment

Appraisal has found that adverse impacts are not likely to occur with respect to the water environment. The issue has, however, been raised by the Environment Agency and it is considered appropriate to monitor water quality and flooding.

Responding to adverse effects

The recommended monitoring schedule will enable Guildford Borough Council to identify, on an annual basis, whether any impacts are occurring which require remedial action.

4 Consultation

The authorities with relevant environmental responsibilities and the public shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Article 6(2))

The opinions expressed in responses to consultation and the results of any transboundary consultations shall be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption (Article 8)

When a plan or programme is adopted, the environmental authorities and the public are informed and the following items shall be made available to those so informed:

- (a) the plan or programme as adopted
- (b) a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme including the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and
- (c) the measures decided concerning monitoring (Article 9(1))

4.1 Public participation on the SA Report and the draft SPD

Consultation on this FSAR supports the Regulation 17 consultation on the Draft Vehicular Parking Standards SPD and will run from March to April 2006. The findings of the SA and consultation responses will be considered and the outcomes documented in a consultation statement to be published with the SPD.

4.2 Assessing significant changes

If significant changes to the draft SPD are raised during consultation that have not already been subject to SA, it will be necessary to undertake further appraisal of any significant social, environmental and economic impacts. The outcome will be documented in a consultation statement published with the SPD.

4.3 Making decisions and providing information

Following adoption of the SPD, a statement will be prepared to show the ways in which responses to consultation have been taken into account. This will include commentary on how the SPD was changed as a result of the SA process or why no changes were made, as well as reasoning for the rejection of options.

5 Monitoring

Member States shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes in order, *inter alia*, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action (Article 10.1)

The Environmental Report shall include a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring (Annex I (i))

5.1 Finalising aims and methods of monitoring

Monitoring arrangements will be confirmed in the consultation statement. The aim will be to ensure information is provided which can be used to highlight significant effects and specific performance issues, leading to more informed decision-making. Monitoring will also consider whether new or better information is available for future SPDs which can fill data gaps, and provide a link to project level EIA.

Monitoring will involve quantifying, as often as necessary, both beneficial and adverse significant sustainability effects of implementing the plan and seek to identify impacts which differ from those which were predicted, or where unforeseen due to changes of circumstances. Monitoring will facilitate reporting on mitigation proposed to offset or reduce significant adverse effects.

It is envisaged that reporting on sustainability monitoring will involve an analysis of the above in the context of the whole Guildford Development Framework (GDF). An interpretative report would include a section on each LDD. For the Vehicle Parking Standards SPD, the report would concentrate on the issues identified in section 3.3, page 26 and page 27. In this way monitoring will help identify which Local Development Document can exert the most direct influence on individual indicators.

Accordingly, Table 2 sets out the time, frequency and geographical extent of monitoring, who is responsible for the different monitoring tasks, and how to present the monitoring information.

5.1.1 Responding to adverse effects

The recommended monitoring schedule will enable Guildford Borough Council to identify, on an annual basis, whether any impacts are occurring which require remedial action.

Table 2 Draft Monitoring Schedule

Threshold	Data	Target	Prediction	Indicator	Next collection date	Geographical context	Responsibility for collection
				Delivery of housing			
				Parking standards			
				Traffic levels by mode			
				Accessibility to public transport			
				Parking space occupancy			
				Number of people working from home			
				Road safety			
				Accessibility to essential services			
				Investment			
				Employment			
				Biological water quality			
				Chemical water quality			
				Flooding			