

RBWM Draft Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Q & A

Q. What's the Draft Parking SPD all about?

A. The draft Parking SPD provides guidance on parking provision for all types of new development both residential and commercial within the Borough.

Q. Why should we be interested enough to read it and send in our comments?

A. Well, if the parking provision for new development isn't sufficient and can't be enforced it will simply spill over onto the nearby streets and make our existing parking issues so much worse.

Q. Remind me – what are all our existing parking issues?

A. Our lovely and historic Victorian village centres where the streets and pavements are narrow and many houses don't have off-road parking; the massively increased numbers of delivery vehicles over the last few years clogging up our roads; insufficient parking for shoppers in village centres meaning people park on yellow lines or half on and half off the pavement; lack of affordable parking for train users. What about more adult children coming back to live with their parents and doubling the number of cars being parked per household. You probably like having visitors as well, don't you? And that's just to start with.

Q. So what's this SPD proposing?

A. Actually it starts off well by recognising the differences across the Borough – the parking needs in our semi-rural area are rather different to those in Maidenhead or Windsor. It sets out how the parking standards will be divided into four zones (see p. 11 in the SPD), each with different parking standards e.g. the number of off-road parking spaces per number of bedrooms in a residential development.

Q. Isn't that a good thing?

A. Yes, it could be but a lot depends on the base data and the process RBWM has used to work out where the different zones are. What the SPD says is that more rural areas e.g. Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale have a higher level of car ownership and also bigger households than the more urban areas. Other factors include the accessibility of public transport, and the extent and reliability of the connectivity provided by that public transport.

Q. That sounds sensible, doesn't it?

A. Yes, it does – but the devil is in the detail. The 4 zones in the SPD have been identified with a new online tool provided by the Department of Transport which uses complex algorithms to measure an individual's ability to reach 'key destinations' such as employment, services such as medical appointments, and social engagements using various modes of transport, including walking, cycling, driving, and public transport. This translates into whether an area has high, medium or low connectivity. In our area – and you probably already know this – connectivity is a bit of a thorny subject.

Q. What do you mean by that?

A. Well, in our area what might look like a short walk on a map can be anything but in practice. The walk to a bus stop or railway station may be mostly uphill on a narrow pavement that's slippery with leaves for 4 months of the year. Then when you get to the railway station the connectivity West to East is not bad, but not so great if you need to travel direct from Sunningdale to Maidenhead, for example. It's the same with the bus service where the frequency of buses is not frequent enough for people travelling to and from work. Cycling might be an attractive option if there were more dedicated safe cycle routes. So really, what we are saying is that it would be easy to over-state connectivity and allocate the wrong zone.

Q. While we are on that topic, what zone are we in?

A. Excellent question. Parts of Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale are in Zone 2b Medium Accessibility Outer and parts are in Zone 3 Low Accessibility. (See the map on p. 33 of the SPD.) It's important because the parking allocations are different for the 2 zones. (See the table on p. 16 of the SPD). Looking at the map it appears that Zone 2b Medium Accessibility Outer (coloured Green) tracks the train and bus routes, which is as expected. Areas such as Old Sunningdale (Station Road/Church Road), residential areas on the left of Brockenhurst Road between Sunninghill and Ascot, are Zone 3 Low Accessibility.

Q. Does it matter?

A. Only if you think that – for example - living on Rise Road in Sunningdale or Sunninghill High Street means that you have better access to buses or trains that get you where you actually want to go and mean you don't need to use your car so much. Cutting to the chase we think that the whole of our area should be Zone 3 Low Accessibility.

Q. OK. I think I'd like to let RBWM know my views. How do I go about it?

A. You can find the full Draft Parking SPD here: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-guidance/emerging-supplementary-planning-documents-spds/parking-supplementary-planning-document>

You can respond using the online form/questionnaire via the blue Go To Event button at the top of the page linked above or if you prefer you can just send an email with your comments to: planning.consultation@rbwm.gov.uk

Refer to the Parking SPD consultation in the subject line of your email and provide your name and address – don't worry these details won't be published.