

Parking Standards for New Development

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Introduction

This document replaces the ‘Technical Guidance on Parking Standards’ (December 2007) and sets out Swindon Borough Council’s requirements and guidance in respect of car, motorcycle and cycle parking associated with new development.

The standards defined here accord with and support the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and the adopted Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026.

The standards are intended to guide new development, in order that the associated provisions for the parking of cars, motorcycles and cycles achieve an appropriate balance between the overarching objective of securing a reduced reliance on travel by fossil-fuel burning vehicles and the parallel need to make provision for travel by all transport modes in a manner that does not prejudice the safety or the quality of new development.

The document sets standards in relation to the parking provision for cars, for cycles and for motorcycles, defining both the level of provision expected by the Council and the form of that provision. It also sets out the Council’s requirements in respect of facilities for electric vehicles.

In seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between sustainability and the practical needs of those who live, work and visit Swindon, the standards set out here define minimum levels of parking for new development.

For some development types, setting prescriptive standards is inappropriate and no standard is quoted. In these cases, the Council will require developers to make provision for parking based on a robust assessment of anticipated demand.

The standards presented here are appropriate for existing patterns of mobility but will evolve as technology and mobility patterns change. It is our aspiration therefore to review the document – and if necessary make amendments – on a five year cycle.

Policy Context

National planning policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019). Paragraph 105 of the NPPF sets out the Government's approach to car parking standards, stating that in setting local standards, local planning authorities should take into account the accessibility of a site, the type and mix of the proposed development, local car ownership levels and a need to support the use of electric vehicles. Paragraph 102 emphasises the role of development parking solutions in contributing to the making of high quality places.

At the time of adoption, local policy is provided by the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026. Policy TR2 of the Plan requires that parking associated with new development is provided in accordance with adopted parking standards.

This document is a supplementary planning document. It provides further guidance to Policy TR2 detailed in the Local Plan. Once adopted, this document will be a material consideration in planning decisions.

Policy TR2: Transport and Development

h. Parking provision, including secure cycle and motorcycle parking, should be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards.

Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026

03

Parking Standards Sectors

Reflecting the guidance within NPPF 2019, the parking requirements for any new development will reflect its accessibility, with lower minimum standards applying in those parts of the Borough where greater opportunity exists for travel on foot, by bicycle and by public transport.

Reflecting differing accessibility levels, the Borough is divided into four sectors for the purpose of assessing parking needs:

- Sector 1: Central
- Sector 2: District Centre
- Sector 3: Urban non-Centre
- Sector 4: Rural

The parking sector boundaries are indicated in the maps published on the Council website and in the Council's online GIS mapping tool.

The location of the development will define the parking requirement. The effect of any development location on its parking requirement is reflected in the standards set out in Tables 4 and 5 at Appendix B.

Development sites that straddle sector boundaries will be treated as if they were located in the less accessible zone.

04

Permit Free Development

The requirement for residential development to provide car parking is relaxed in the Town Centre (Sector 1), where accessibility levels are high and the need to own a car is reduced.

For many types of development, no minimum car parking provision is applied in this case, although development schemes may include car parking, where it is designed in a manner that does not prejudice the safe or effective operation of the highway. Recognising the limited availability of on-street car parking within the established Residential Parking Zones, residents of new development in these areas will not normally be granted parking permits, whether or not car parking is provided within the development. This restriction does not apply to Blue Badge holders.

05

Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO's)

Dwellings in multiple occupation will, up to a threshold of five occupants, be assumed to generate a demand for car and cycle parking equal to a single dwelling unit with the same number of bedrooms. HMO's of greater capacity will be expected to make provision for car parking as set out in Table 1 and the provisions of Table 4 will not apply.

No of Occupants	Car Parking (Minimum)	
	Sector 1	Other Sectors
6	1	3
7	1	4
8	2	4
9	2	5
10	3	5
11	3	6
12	3	6
13+	Assess on Merit	

Table 1: HMO Parking Requirements (Minimum)

Occupants of a HMO may be entitled to apply for off-site residents parking permits up to a maximum of two per address. This is not compulsory and for that reason, no 'discount' against the requirements of Table 1 can be applied.

Dwellings with more than 5 occupants will be expected to make cycle parking provision on the basis of one space per habitable room.

Where existing licensed HMOs are proposed to be extended, the additional occupants will bring with them an additional demand for car parking. Any application for an extension of a HMO will bring with it a requirement for additional car and cycle parking on the basis set out in Table 2.

Location	New Occupants	Standard	
		Car Spaces	Cycle Spaces
Sector 1	1	0	1 per occupant
	2–6	1	
	7+	2	
All other sectors	N/A	0.5 per occupant (rounded up)	1 per occupant

Table 2: Parking Requirements for HMO Extensions (Minimum)

06 Affordable Housing

The parking standards as set out in Appendix B do not differentiate between market value housing and affordable housing.

Whilst all housing developments will need to consider affordable housing in their design, the parking provision for all dwellings, irrespective of tenure, needs to be in accordance with the standards.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that new development should “be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations”. The Government has also announced the phase out of petrol and diesel fuelled vehicles by 2035, thus strengthening the need to provide facilities for alternatively fuelled vehicles. Therefore the Council has adopted the following Parking Standards for Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs). In view of the speed of technological change in this area, the Council reserves the right to increase its requirements as trends change.

Residential

Where parking spaces are required to support residential development, a minimum provision of 1 EVCP per dwelling is required. An EV charging wallbox or charge point is required, as it communicates directly with the vehicle being charged and is safer and quicker, reducing charging time by 30-60% depending on the vehicle.

Off-plot residential parking will be expected to make provision on the basis of one EVCP per dwelling, whether spaces are allocated or not.

Retail and Leisure

10% of parking spaces proposed for retail development will be required to be fitted with EVCPs. An additional 10% of spaces will be required to be fitted with the necessary infrastructure to enable installation of charging points in the future.

Employment

A minimum of 2 EV spaces or 20%, whichever is the greater, is required for car parking associated with employment uses and an additional 10% will be required to demonstrate that EVCPs could be easily installed in the future. The dedicated electric vehicle parking spaces shall be allocated to drivers of electric vehicles, with surplus spaces made available to general parking provision. The occupier will be expected to monitor and control the use of these spaces through its Travel Plan or Car Park Management Plan, including implementing the additional EVCPs when required.

Securing EVCPs

In line with the NPPF, EVCPs will be secured by Planning Condition. Ideally developers will include the details of their EVCPs with their planning application but if not, the details will also be covered by Condition. In central locations close to public car parks, a contribution towards the provision of EVCPs in public car parks may be sought.

Location and Type of EVCPs

EVCPs should be located close to building access points as priority bays to incentivise and reward users.



The type of EVCP required will depend on the length of time the vehicle is to be parked. In residential areas where vehicles can be charged overnight, a slow charge option is acceptable. However, in retail and leisure development parking facilities, a short stay 'fast' or 'rapid' charge will be required. Retailers who charge for parking will be encouraged to remove the parking charge for vehicles using EVCPs. Employment uses are likely to require a mix of fast and slow charge, fast charge for staff who do not spend all day on the same site and slow charge for those who do.

Charging Networks

Details of the charging network will be required to ensure that the network is compatible with existing charging networks, where public or workplace charging is accessed via a smartphone or RFID (Radio-frequency Identification) card. Publicly available EVCPs should be uploaded to Zap-Map.

More Information

More information on EVs, EVCPs and available grants can be found at the following:

Office for Zero Emission Vehicles: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-zero-emission-vehicles>

Zap-Map: <http://www.zap-map.com>

Powered Two-Wheelers

Provision should be made for the specific use of motorcycles on all non-residential developments where there are 20 or more communal car parking spaces. Minimum requirements are set out in Table 3. In respect of residential development, where off-plot parking for cars is being made, motorcycle parking is to be added at the rate of one space for every 10 car spaces.

The location of such facilities is an important factor; the chosen area should be safe and secure and should benefit from good general surveillance. The space required for parking of a motorcycle is 2.0m x 1.0m and multiples thereof, although it is not necessary or desirable to mark bays out individually. The provision of anchor points such as low level rails or posts will ensure secure parking and will consequently encourage use.

Motorcycle parking should be easily accessible and well-lit and should be located and laid out in a manner that does not endanger others, especially pedestrians who are blind or sight impaired.

Land Use	Motorcycle Parking Requirement
Employment	1 space for car parks with up to 20 spaces and 1 additional space for every 20 extra spaces or part thereof.
Retail and Leisure	A minimum of 1 space for visitor car parks with up to 20 spaces and 1 additional space for every 20 extra spaces or part thereof, together with the above standard for employees.

Table 3: Non-Residential Motorcycle Parking Requirement (Minimum)

Provision for the charging of electric motorcycles will need to be made at the rate of one charging point for every four motorcycle spaces.

09

The Quantum of Parking

The Council's car and cycle parking standards, which will apply to new development proposals, are set out at Appendix B and C. The standards quoted are in all cases minima. Where no specific provision is defined, parking should be provided in accordance with a reasoned and site specific prediction of demand, which will need to be set out within the planning application documentation.

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Mobility Scooters

Swindon Borough Council is committed to maximising the mobility of all sectors of the community, including those with a mobility impairment. New development that is likely to cater for those making use of a mobility scooter, such as Care Homes and Retirement Homes, will be expected to make provision for storage areas and charging points on the ground floor.

The form and number of charging points to be provided will be determined on a site by site basis.

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The Design of Parking

Appendix A includes examples of the way in which car parking should be designed. Standard individual parking spaces will be expected to have a minimum dimension of 2.5m x 5.0m.

Where parking spaces are bounded by a wall or fence, an additional 300mm will need to be added to facilitate door opening. Spaces that are bounded on both sides are required to be 3m wide.

To be effective as a place to park a car (as well as a place for the storage of bicycles), garages will need to be a minimum of 3.0m x 6.0m in internal dimension. Where a driveway serves a garage, the driveway will need to be 6.0m long to allow space for the garage door to be opened. In exceptional circumstances, the use of a roller shutter door will be accepted as an alternative, allowing a driveway of length 5.0m to be provided. Garage doors should be a minimum of 2.1m wide to allow effective use of the parking space.

Appendix A sets out the dimensions of 'dedicated' parking bays, i.e. those designed for drivers eligible for a Blue Badge.

Cycle Parking Standards

Cycle parking needs to be considered at the outset and long term storage for residents and employees should be within a covered, lockable enclosure. For individual houses, this could be in the form of a shed or garage. For flats and non-residential uses, either individual lockers or cycle stands within a lockable, covered enclosure are required. Non-residential development will also be expected to provide secure and covered facilities. The number of cycle parking spaces required will depend on the type of development. The Council's minimum requirements are set out at Appendix C.

Cycle parking is required to be located close to entrances and where it is indoors, the user should not need to pass through more than one door. Stairs should be avoided. Short term cycle parking should be located in a prominent location close to site and/or building entrances and may need to be provided in multiple locations.

It may be possible in some instances to utilise the public highway, although this would need to be sympathetic to the positioning of other street furniture and ensure that footway widths are maintained.

As an alternative, the Council may accept a contribution towards the cost of

delivering new cycle parking facilities within the highway.

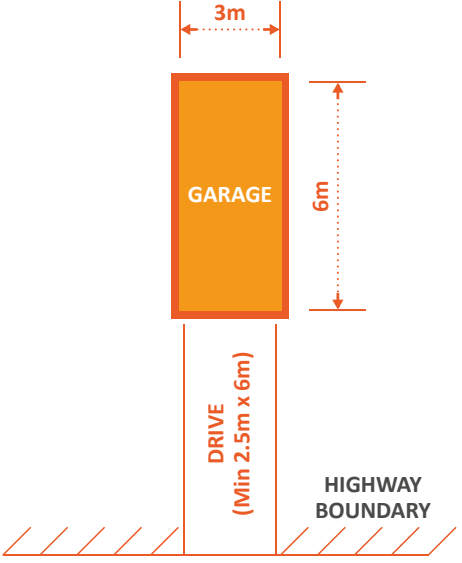
Although the Council does not prescribe a particular type of stand, those located on the highway (for example to provide for visitors) should be consistent with existing provision. Within buildings, upright stands are not favoured as the need to lift bikes makes them more difficult to use and may be impossible for some users. Systems that only allow one wheel to be secured will also not be supported, though innovative space saving solutions such as two tier racks, which are more practical to use, will be considered. Further guidance on provisions for cycles is set out at Appendix C.

A

Appendix A: Dimensions

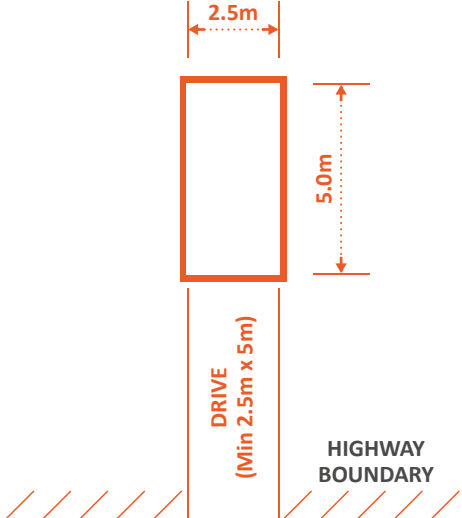
Diagrams are not to scale.

Driveway with Garage



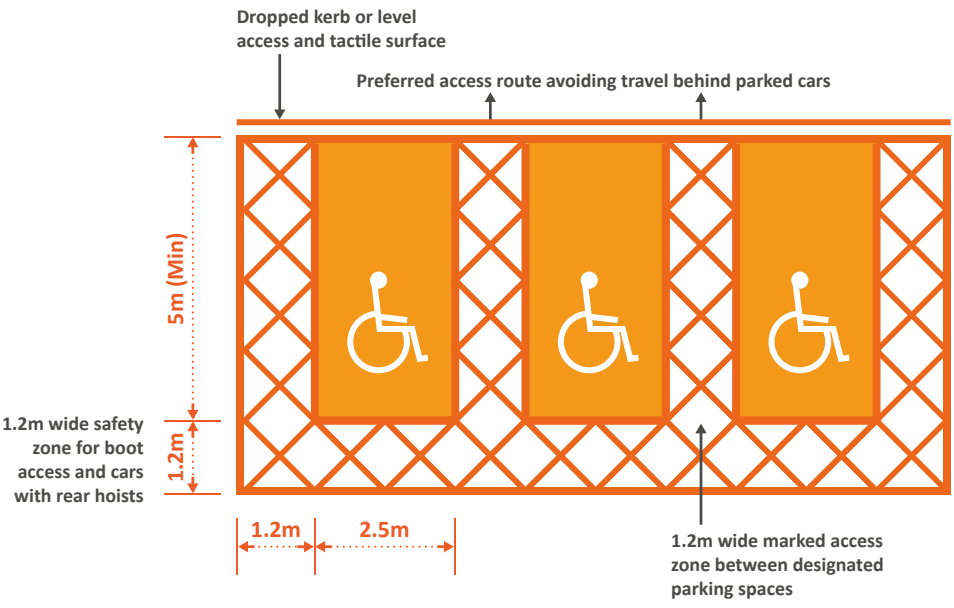
Minimal Internal dimensions of garage and associated driveway = 2 parking spaces

Driveway with Standard Parking Bay

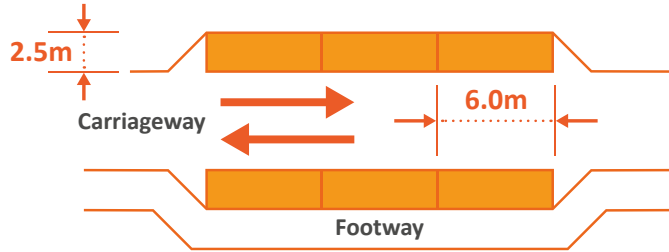


Minimal dimensions of parking space and associated driveway = 2 parking spaces

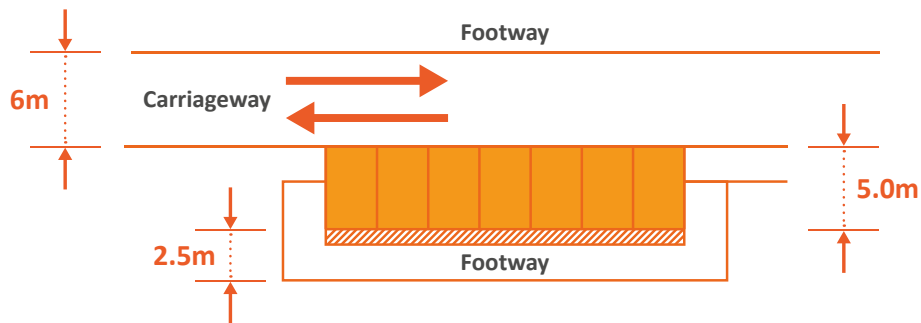
Multiple Disabled Parking Bays



Parallel Parking Arrangement

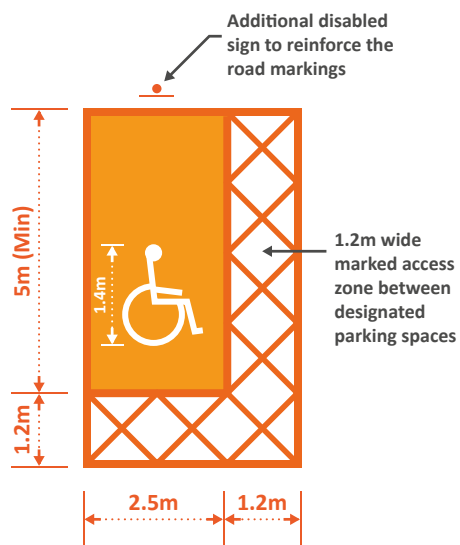


Perpendicular Parking Arrangement



Note: The footway needs to be widened to accommodate the overhang of the vehicles, thus maintaining a 2m clear footway

Single Disabled Parking Bay



B

Appendix B: Car Parking Standards

The standards set out in the following tables represent minimum levels of car parking, based on local evidence and an interpretation of the requirements of prevailing Transport Policy. The minimum levels define a balance between the need to accommodate cars whilst at the same time supporting a move to more sustainable patterns of mobility. Development proposals that seek to provide lower levels of parking will need to be supported with appropriate justification but will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

Residential Parking Standards

Minimum parking standards relating to residential development are set out in Table 3 below. The standards do not differentiate between flats and houses, recognising only the size of the dwelling unit.

Location	Scale	Car Parking (Spaces)
Sector 1 (Central)	Any	No parking required
	1-2 bedrooms	1 per dwelling
Sector 2 (District Centre)	3-4 bedrooms	2 per dwelling
	5+ bedrooms	3 per dwelling
Sector 3 (Urban non-Centre)	1 bedroom	1 per dwelling
	2-3 bedrooms	2 per dwelling
	4+ bedrooms	3 per dwelling
Sector 4 (Rural)	1-2 bedrooms	2 per dwelling
	3+ bedrooms	3 per dwelling

Table 4: Minimum Car Parking Levels (Residential)

In respect of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's), the provisions of Table 1 should be noted. Within the levels of car parking defined above, 10% of spaces are to be laid out as spaces dedicated for the use of disabled drivers (see layout details at Section 11 above).

In addition to the provision made for residents, additional parking for visitors, on the basis of one space for every four dwellings, will be expected. Provision for Electric Vehicle Charging Points will also need to be made (see Section 7. above).

Non-Residential Parking Standards

For development where a specific minimum standard is not quoted in the table below, the Council will expect the applicant to make a reasoned and justified proposal, based on an assessment of development form, occupancy, travel patterns and site accessibility.

Land Use	Spaces Required	
	Sector 1	Sectors 2, 3 and 4
Food Retail (GFA < 800sqm)	No Minimum	1/35sqm
Food Retail (GFA > 800sqm)	Assess on Merit	1/18sqm
Non-Food Retail (GFA < 1,000sqm)	No Minimum	1/35sqm
Non-Food Retail (GFA > 1,000sqm)	Assess on Merit	1/22sqm
Financial and Professional Services	No Minimum	1/30sqm
Hot Food and Takeaway	Assess on Merit	1/10sqm
Business	No Minimum	1/30sqm
General Industrial	Assess on Merit	1/50sqm
Storage or Distribution	Assess on Merit	1/200sqm
Hotels and Hostels	No Minimum	1 per bedroom
Clinic, Health Centres & Surgeries	Assess on Merit	1 per consulting room
Schools	Staff	1 per 2 staff
	Visitors	1 per 7 staff
Cinemas and Conference Facilities	Assess on Merit	1 per 5 seats

Table 5: Minimum Car Parking Levels (Non-Residential)

Within the levels of car parking defined above, 10% of spaces are to be laid out as spaces dedicated for the use of disabled drivers (see layout details at Section 11 above). Provision for Electric Vehicle Charging Points will also need to be made (see Section 7. above). Where two or more disabled spaces are provided, one of the spaces will be signed for the use of dementia sufferers. The details of the signing will be confirmed by the Council.

C

Appendix C: Cycle Parking Standards

Table 5 below sets out the minimum requirements in respect of cycle parking for new development. Certain land uses are not specified within the table; where this is the case, the applicant will be expected to make appropriate provision, which will need to be justified.

Land Use Class	Land Use	Spaces Required
A	Retail	4 spaces plus 2 spaces for every 500m ² above 1,000m ² (GFA)
B	Employment Development	4 spaces plus 2 spaces for every 500m ² above 1,000m ² (GFA)
C3	Dwelling houses and flats (1-2 bedrooms)	1 space per unit
	Dwelling houses and flats (3+ bedrooms)	2 spaces per dwelling
D1	Primary (from age 7) and Secondary Schools, Further and Higher Education	1 per 7 staff and students
	Nursery/Crèche/Infant and Primary School (up to age 6)	1 per 10 staff (Parking for Infant pupils assessed on merits)

Table 6: Minimum Cycle Parking Levels

‘Spaces’ refers to a facility for a single cycle. A single ‘Sheffield’ type stand for example provides capacity for two spaces. Within communal cycle parking facilities, provision will be expected to be made for adapted cycles, tricycles and cycles with trailers.

Further guidance on the matter of cycle parking can be found in the “Swindon cycle parking standard” document, available to download from the Council’s website.

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