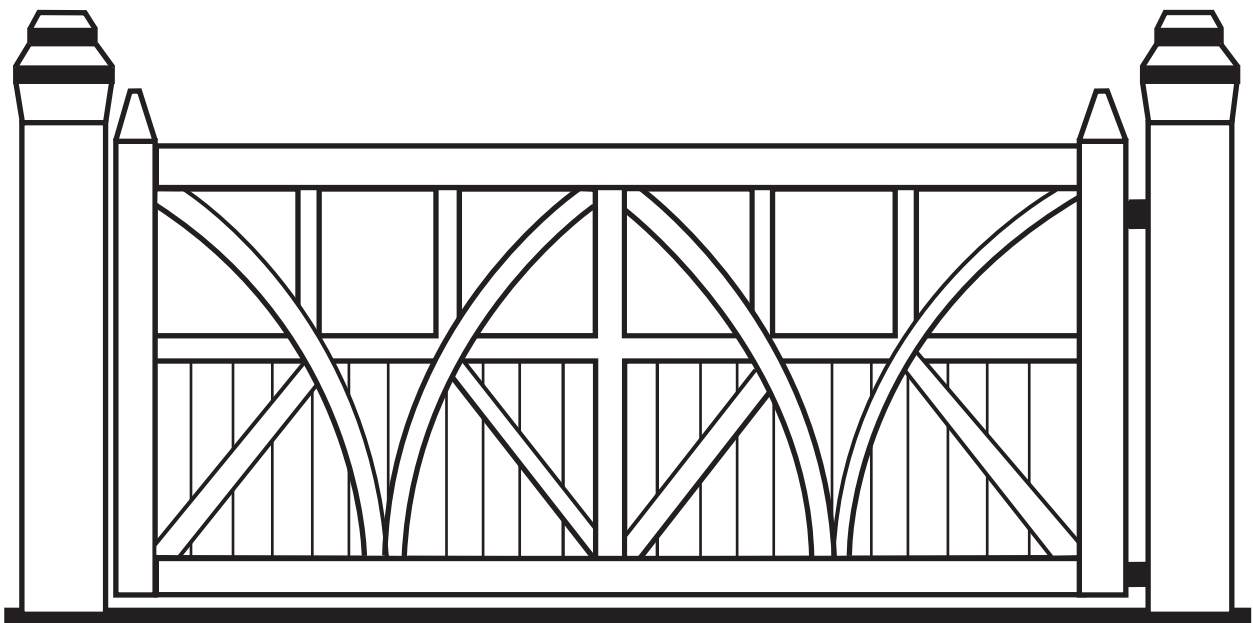


Supplementary Planning Guidance on

Hardstandings for cars



Wandsworth Unitary Development Plan
non-statutory supplementary planning guidance

November 2005

contents

section	page
introduction	1
hardstandings for cars - do it in style	1
will I need permission?	2
what about planning permission?	3
what is the council's advice on best practice	4
what is the most suitable material for the hardstanding	5
checklist	6
restoration grants	7
list of contacts	7

introduction

This leaflet gives advice on what to do when you want to create a car parking space in your garden – what permission you may need and what problems you may meet, and how to safeguard the appearance of your home and the street you live in.

hardstandings for cars – do it in style

- 1** The council has published a guide to the care and adaptation of your home entitled “Do it in style”. Much of the advice in this leaflet is taken from that. You can view it on the council’s website.
- 2** The general principle is that, whether you live in a conservation area or not, it makes good sense to preserve or enhance the appearance of your property. An off-street parking space may seem like a good idea, but not if the look of your home and your street suffers.
- 3** Here’s what “Do it in style” says in the Section entitled ‘Gardens and other external areas’: “The front garden, whatever its size, provides an opportunity to soften or enhance the look of the building. This is largely a matter of taste, though paths, edging, ornament etc, should retain the original materials, reinstate them or introduce those which would not have been out of place when the house was built. Generally, only the front gardens of larger villas designed for carriages, or those with drives and garages can easily accommodate cars. With smaller houses and gardens, the setting of the house and character of the street and area will suffer greatly if cars dominate the frontage. Unless special circumstances, such as access for a person with a disability, outweigh normal criteria, no attempt should be made to accommodate a car in a front garden unless there is sufficient width not to interfere with the original path, and sufficient depth to erect inward-opening gates which can be closed when the car is parked. Hard surfacing should be kept to a minimum, be in a sympathetic material, and leave sufficient space for shrubs and other planting close by.”

will I need permission?

- 1** You will need to apply to the council's operational services to get a pavement vehicle access – that is the strip where the car will cross over the pavement between your property and the road. Application forms and details of the procedures are available from the contact listed at the end of this leaflet. It is best to make this application first (see the advice on best practice).
- 2** Operational services will ensure that an access would not compromise the safety of pedestrians and drivers, by checking the distance from junctions and other hazards and that sight lines are not impeded. They will also consider whether the proposed access would adversely affect the operation of an existing or newly approved controlled parking zone (CPZ). To ensure that a parked vehicle would not overhang the public highway they will also check that the vehicle hardstanding will meet the minimum required dimensions.
- 3** Operational services will refuse your application for an access if either:
 - your house is in an existing or proposed CPZ and the total length of existing accesses in the street takes up fifty per cent or more of the available kerbside space; or
 - the access width and the lengths of associated yellow line necessary either side of it would take up more than one average vehicle space in the CPZ; or
 - your hardstanding does not meet the absolute minimum dimensions i.e. at least 4.5 metres between the back edge of the pavement and the nearest face of the building, and at least 2.3 metres wide, clear of obstructions (such as a tree or a bay window) to allow easy access to and from the vehicle when parked.
- 4** Normally only one access per property is permitted in a CPZ.
- 5** The minimum size specified by operational services is intended to avoid the problem of vehicles obstructing the pavement. You will need much more space to ensure your garden is not ruined and becomes simply a car park – please read the advice later in this leaflet.
- 6** If there is a street light, a sign or inspection box for underground services nearby, this may need to be moved. Existing metered or residents' parking spaces may also need to be moved. Operational services will advise you whether this is possible, and what the cost would be. They will also liaise with the borough planner and try to advise you what other applications you need to make. But please remember that operational services' approval will be subject to any other approvals that are needed.

what about planning permission?

- 1** If you live on a classified road (an "A" or "B" road in a map book) you will need to get planning permission for the access from your hardstanding to the highway. Again, this is mainly a road safety issue.
- 2** If you live in a house (rather than a flat), making a hard surface for parking a car is normally "Permitted Development" – which means you DO NOT need to apply for planning permission, but see below!
- 3** In certain conservation areas the council has extra controls which mean you DO need to apply. Please check with the borough planner's service.
- 4** If your house is divided into flats you DO need to apply for planning permission for making a hard surface for a car.
- 5** If you live in any conservation area you will need consent to demolish a complete run of wall, fence or railings where the overall height exceeds 1 metre at any point. You may not need consent if you are only removing a small part of the boundary. Please check with the borough planner's service. Where consent is required, UDP paragraph 153 (relating to policy H4) applies.
- 6** Also in a conservation area you must notify the council in writing if you intend to cut down a tree. A special form is available from the borough planner, or simply write a letter.
- 7** If you install a new fence, wall, gate or railing over 1 metre high (or any height in certain conservation areas) you will need planning permission. You will also need planning permission for any sort of car port at the front of the house.

what is the council's advice on best practice?

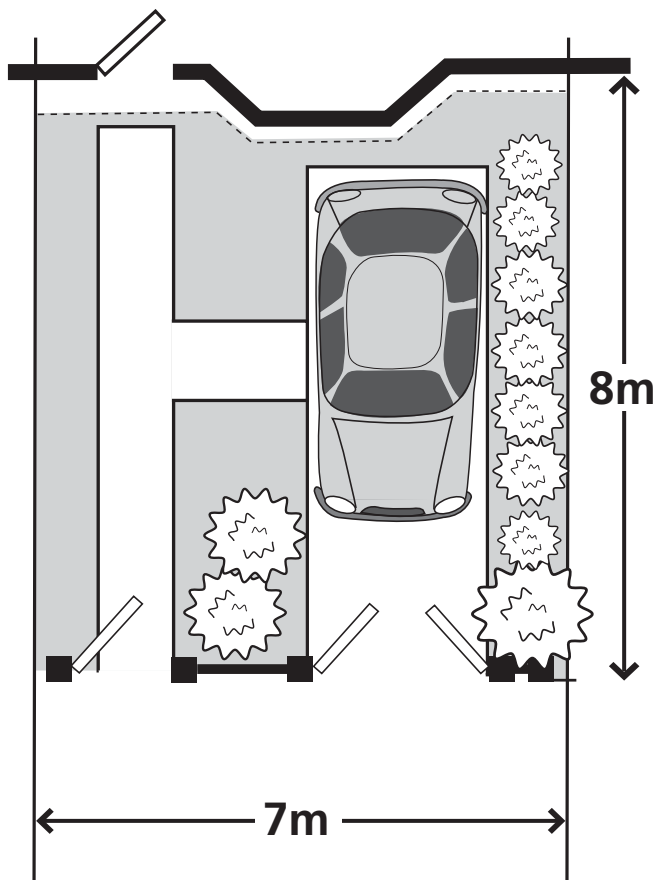
- 1** It is usually best to apply to operational services for a pavement vehicle access first so that you can find out if there are any problems from their point of view.
- 2** Before they can look at the application, they require a payment in advance to cover administrative costs. If your application is approved, the charge will be deducted from the cost of the vehicle access. If it is refused because it does not comply with the council's criteria, the advance payment will be returned in full.
- 3** You should contact the borough planner to find out if you need planning permission or conservation area consent.
- 4** Whether or not you need planning permission for your hardstanding, you should follow the advice in this leaflet. The council will take it into account when dealing with your application if you do need permission.
- 5** The council has a duty to pay special attention to the preservation and enhancement of the special character and appearance of its conservation areas. As "Do it in style" says, this means not letting cars dominate the frontage of residential streets.
- 6** Some cars are longer than 4.5 metres (the minimum space you must have before operational services will approve your application for a vehicle access). If you park a longer vehicle – or if you park badly – so that a car overhangs the footway, the council can take enforcement action.
- 7** The traditional appearance of front gardens is enclosed rather than open, so this means retaining as much as possible of existing walls and fences and introducing appropriate gates to any new vehicle access. This also helps keep your front garden private and your car more secure. Generally speaking, traditional front garden boundaries are around 1.2 to 1.4 metres high overall. This maintains privacy while allowing the front of the house to be seen from the street – important for security. Boundaries should always be in keeping with the architectural character of the house: right size, right style.
- 8** Trees are important to the pleasant appearance of the area, whether they are in your garden or in the street. Making a space to park a car is not usually a good enough reason to remove a tree.

what is the most suitable material for the hardstanding?

- 1** Gravel is ideal, but loose gravel must have retaining edges to stop it spreading; sealed gravel – where the gravel is set in a clear resin binder – is more practical.
- 2** Natural stone is strong and attractive but needs protection from oil stains (e.g. a gravel inset under the engine).
- 3** Brick pavements are attractive and practical.
- 4** Concrete and tarmac are cheap but look least attractive; tarmac needs a proper sub base or it will fail quickly.
- 5** Where space is limited or the car will always be parked in the same place, two narrow strips beneath the wheels may be all you need, and will minimise the impact on your garden.

checklist

- 1 Is the garden big enough to take a car safely and without harming the look of your house and the street scene?
- 2 Will I be able to park easily without obstructing the pavement?
- 3 Will the car obstruct the path to the front door?
- 4 Will I need to cut down any trees? (Permission may depend on planting replacements.)
- 5 Will there be room to have gates?
- 6 Will the garden still be a garden, or will it be a car park?
- 7 Front gardens less than 7 metres wide and 8 metres deep are unlikely to accommodate a car without harm to house and street scene: this allows for inward-opening gates, a safe, dignified path to the front door and a small lawn or shrub bed. (see diagram)



Restoration grants

- Creating a hardstanding could be the ideal opportunity to restore your front garden closer to its original appearance. Many houses have lost their original metal railings or wooden fences and gates. You can get helpful advice about the appropriate design, and if you are reinstating a lost original feature in a conservation area e.g. a distinctive railing or wooden gate, you may be eligible for a grant. Contact the borough planner.

list of contacts

Contract Engineering Services

Operational services
PO Box 12415
SW18 2XT
(020) 8871 6568

Borough Planner

Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
SW18 2PU

Application forms see website www.wandsworth.gov.uk
or phone (020) 8871 6615/6633/6636

Design advice / grants: (020) 8871 6612/6631/6645

Transport for London Road Network

Contact: Marshel Parkman (020) 7358 2600

If you have difficulty understanding this in English, please contact:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 English

যদি আপনার এটি ইংরেজিতে বুঝতে অসুবিধা হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে এখানে যোগাযোগ করুন: Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Bengali

Si vous avez des difficultés à comprendre ce texte en anglais, veuillez contacter: Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 French

अगर ते अंग्रेजुमां समझने मुशकिले लागे तो मહેरबानी करीने
Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 पर संपर्क करो. Gujarati

यदि इसे अंग्रेजी में समझने में समस्या हो तो कृपया Wandsworth Interpreting service का (020) 8672 1043/3649 पर संपर्क करें। Hindi

W razie problemów ze zrozumieniem tekstu w języku angielskim prosimy o kontakt z: Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Polish

Se tem dificuldades em compreender isto em Inglês, por favor, contacte: Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Portuguese

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ, ਇਸਨੂੰ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ:
Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Punjabi

Hadday kugu adag tahay inaad ku fahamto Ingriis fadlan la xiriir:
Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Somali

Si tiene dificultad para entenderlo en inglés favor contactar a:
Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Spanish

இதை ஆங்கிலத்தில் புரிந்துகொள்வதில் சிரமம் இருந்தால் நீங்கள் தொடர்புகொள்ள வேண்டியது: Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Tamil

اگر آپ کو انگریزی میں اسے سمجھنے میں دشواری کا سامنا ہو تو برائے کرم رابطہ کریں:
Urdu Wandsworth Interpreting service: (020) 8672 1043/3649

For more information write to:

The Borough Planner

Town Hall

Wandsworth High Street

London SW18 2PU

Phone: (020) 8871 6636

Email: boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk

Website: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning

Borough Planner's Service
Technical Services Department



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