

Nottinghamshire County Council's Revised Highway Design Guide (2021)

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On 13 January 2021, Nottinghamshire County Council adopted a new Highway Design Guide, replacing the original 6Cs Design Guide, which was adopted as policy by the County Council in 2009 (to note - in 2018 the 6Cs Design Guide was rebranded as the Nottinghamshire County Council Highway Design Guide, following the County's resignation from the 6Cs Board).

The Highway Design Guide (2021) provides technical guidance and specifications for street works, consolidating previous guidance into a more concise format, whilst also incorporating a number of amendments and updates. The overall focus of the document is on the design of residential streets, and also roads serving commercial or industrial development. The document also provides updated guidance on the design and maintenance requirements for highway drainage systems including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and infiltration drainage.

The document's aim continues to promote low speed neighbourhoods, that are safe, particularly for young children, that encourage a modal shift away from the private car, and in doing so, creates a healthy lifestyle by encouraging walking and cycling. It should be read as a companion guide to Manual for Streets and other national guidance, rather than an alternative.

The document is relevant to the following Local Planning Authority areas, for which the County Council is the Highway Authority:

- Ashfield District Council;
- Bassetlaw District Council;
- Broxtowe Borough Council;
- Gedling Borough Council;
- Mansfield District Council;
- Newark and Sherwood District Council; and
- Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Key Changes

As noted above, the updated document contains a number of amendments to the previously adopted

highway guidance. A summary of the key amendments is outlined below (to note, this is not an exhaustive list, rather a summary of the more notable amendments):

- The guidance now allows for a Technical Note (rather than a Transport Assessment) to be submitted to support larger schemes, whereby the scheme represents a change in land use but would not represent a material change in the level of traffic generation (para 1.2.10). This potentially allows for a much reduced scope of highway works in order to support planning applications on brownfield sites.
- The guidance now sets the following residential geometric requirements which vary depending on the size of the development (Table T3.1.1):

Single Private Drive (1 – 2 dwellings)	=	3m carriageway, no footway required, 0.3m verges.
Shared Private Drive (3 – 5 dwellings)	=	4.8m carriageway, no footway required, 0.5m verges.
Residential Access Way (6 – 200 dwellings)	=	5.0 to 5.5m carriageway, 2m footways.
Residential Street (200+ dwellings)	=	5.5m carriageway, 2m footways or 3m outside schools and bus stops.
Main Street (residential with retail or education)	=	6.2 to 6.5m carriageway, 2m footways or 3m outside schools and bus stops.

- The guidance has reduced the number of dwellings that can be served via a 'Private Drive' to 5 units (as above), which must have a minimum carriageway width of 4.8 metres (previously 4.25 metres). A cul-de-sac serving more than 5 dwellings must now conform to geometries of a 'Residential Access Way', which is to be adopted.
- Table T3.1.1 contains revisions to the definition of residential roads and functions. Previously, no more than 150 dwellings should be provided from a single point of access for residential roads, however this reference has now been removed. The revised text sets out there is no limit to the number of dwellings off a 'Main Street' or 'Residential' Street', and there is typically no more than 200 dwellings off a

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‘Residential Access Way’.

- Table T3.1.1 also contains updated text in relation to walking distances to bus stops and there is a relaxation on previous guidance to allow preference for a bus route that serves the ‘majority of dwellings’, as opposed to a poor service which serves all dwellings. The revised text states:

“On residential streets / residential access ways, 80% of dwellings to be within 250m to 400m maximum walking distance of a bus stop location where there is an existing or to be secured route.”

- There is a new requirement for access visibility splays, para 3.3.2 confirming that “Nothing shall be planted within 1.0m of the visibility splays if there is potential for the visibility splays to be encroached upon by vegetation during periods of rapid growth”.
- The guidance also contains a new addition allowing for local surveys to be conducted to justify reduced parking provision. The guidance states: “Where a lower level of parking provision is proposed this must be justified by calculating parking demand in accordance with DCLG ‘Residential Car Parking Research (2007)’ or by local surveys” (para 4.1.1). This potentially allows for greater flexibility and a more evidence-led approach to determining parking provision.
- The guidance also includes an addition in relation to required minimum garage door widths if they are to be counted as parking spaces. The guidance states:

“Garages may only be counted as parking spaces if they have the following internal dimensions. Car ports, which are unlikely to be used for storage purposes, may be counted as parking spaces provided these minimum dimensions are also achieved.

- Standard single = 6m x 3.0m, with minimum door width of 2.286m (7’6”)
- Use by disabled = 6m x 3.3m with minimum door width of 2.286m
- Double = 6m x 6m, with minimum door width of 4.267m (14’)

Whilst the guidance is not a rigid solution to all developments, it provides a broad framework which

should be followed in bringing forward of new development. Whilst some elements of the guidance are more rigid, there are other elements which would allow justification of a reduction from previous standards from a highways perspective.

If you have any queries or require any further information on this updated guidance from a planning or highways viewpoint, then please do not hesitate to contact DLP Planning Ltd where we would be happy to discuss in further detail. Our contact details are available at www.dlpconsultants.co.uk/contactus.