

Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (July 2020) Addendum - October 2021

This statement seeks to provide clarity on changes to national guidance and policy which supersedes elements of Manual for Gloucestershire Streets July 2020 (MfGS). It is intended that MfGS will be updated to address these matters and other more minor matters in due course. As a result this note only seeks to address “key” matters as detailed below; otherwise MfGS should be applied as published.

MfGS remains a technical guidance document that is identified in the Local Transport Plan as a document that developers should comply with.

NPPF July 2021 and National Model Design Code

MfGS is generally considered to be compatible with the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the 2021 version but particular reference is made to the new paragraph 131 (extract) which says:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined⁵⁰, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.” and,

“⁵⁰ Unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.”

MfGS already encourages and recognises the benefits of planting and green infrastructure. Reference is made to the use of “Building with Nature” and TDAG. But it does not define the number of trees or coverage of the canopy across the site. It is essential that all applicants work with the LPA’s arboriculture officer and the Highway Authority to agree these as part of the design as it cannot reasonably be addressed via planning conditions. It is recognised that trees can make a positive impact on speed reduction, shading, air quality, climate change adaptation and land value retention, therefore any reasoning for non-compliance must be clearly justified.

Proposed trees therefore must be included in all streets (above 10 dwellings) whether that is in a hard-landscaped area or verge. This applies whether the street is intended to be dedicated as highway or not. Opportunities should also be exploited to include trees in any alterations to the highway. The design must be shown to accommodate trees in a suitable manner as well as statutory undertakers’ plant, street lighting, and without compromising active

travel infrastructure. It is expected that they will be site wide schemes with tokenistic or inadequate schemes being resisted.

Future guidance will be provided on how trees can be integrated in to the design of streets.

Tree species must be defined as a suitable for a transport corridor in the TDAG “Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers”. The document can be found here www.tdag.org.uk/tree-species-selection-for-green-infrastructure.html

Wherever possible trees should be included as a part of the SUDs proposals integrating them into highway swales or bioretention systems.

All trees are subject to a commuted sum as part of the S38 or Section 278 agreement.

MfGS should not be seen as a prescriptive document and the use of local and the National Model design code should be applied together. It is essential that site wide design codes and masterplans are agreed with the LPA, their technical advisors and the Highway Authority.

LTN 1/20 “Cycle Infrastructure Design”

Whilst LTN 1/20 has been published since July 2020 it is necessary to clarify how it is to be applied.

Presently MfGS specifically includes for shared active travel infrastructure alongside its “Enhanced Streets” and “Industrial Access Roads”. LTN 1/20 advises that this approach is now the least favoured method to provide cycle infrastructure.

GCC recognises that LTN 1/20 seeks to raise the bar in this matter, therefore it is expected that proposals will accord with that document, this includes but is not limited to:

- Segregated walking and cycling infrastructure on all “Enhanced Streets” and “Industrial Access Roads”, and any other streets that connect locally important destinations.
- Priority crossings over side roads and at crossing points.

Additionally, cycle parking quantum in MfGS is withdrawn and the ratios in table 11-1 should be applied. Where proposals fall outside table 11-1 cycle parking requirements should be derived from first principles. LTN 1/20 also influences the design of the storage area, but the location of storage point should still reflect MfGS and note building for a healthy life and the National Model Design Code or Local Code.

Transport Decarbonisation Plan

MfGS remains compatible with this document, but designers should look to provide designs that exceed the minimum suggested street design requirements. GCC recognises that streets use materials that have high levels of embodied carbon such as concrete. Not all materials or processes have low carbon alternatives but designers can be creative to exclude some products from the designs. For example:

- Minimising steel and cement products on spine roads and conventional draining systems on spine roads and allowing surface water to spill into swales whilst maintaining edge restraint to the carriageway. This should be considered as the default position for streets with verges.
- Providing narrower carriageways, this reduces the amount of natural materials used. This also results in slower speeds which allow the opportunity for lower carbon surface materials to be used. Proposals should consider the whole life cost and whole life carbon demand of any treatment provided.

Other Matters

Private Shared Drives and Courtyard Parking Areas

MfGS presently indicates that development of up to 6 dwellings would not be considered to be of sufficient public amenity value to warrant adoption. This threshold is increased to 10 dwellings, meaning that streets serving 11 or greater proposals must be designed as a prospective public highway.

Parking

Since the publication of MfGS in 2020 the Highway Authority has collected further evidence on car ownership levels. Additionally, it aspires to reduce car dominance and promote alternative transport modes as part of the emerging decide and provide methodology. This has resulted in a review of the required car parking levels which has particular implications of 4 bedroom dwelling houses (C3 use class). This has also allowed for a simplification of the table on page 48 of MfGS.

The revised minimum parking standards are:

Number of Bedrooms	Minimum External Car Parking Spaces
1-2 Bedroom Units	1 Car Parking Space
3-4 Bedroom Units	2 Car Parking Spaces
5 Bedroom Units	3 Car Parking Spaces
6 + Bedroom Units	Subject to Discussion with Highway Authority

There are variations in the evidence which suggests in a small number of cases 4 bedroom units would required 3 spaces, this represents about 10% of the number of 4 bedroom units proposed. Therefore, unallocated spaces in

the form of laybys should be provided to at least a 10% ratio of 4 bedroom dwellings and cited close to areas where they are grouped. This is over and above any visitor provisions.

Departure from these provisions is still permitted based on the “Car Free Development / Reduced Parking Levels” paragraph. This includes the use of unallocated parking which is remote from the development where Low Traffic Neighbourhood principles can be applied.

For the avoidance of doubt, car parking spaces must be external and address the homes for life space aspirations. Garages will not count towards the car parking regardless of their dimensions.

It is expected that with the reduced parking provision to frontage that cycling parking will be accommodated on the frontage as well as additional green infrastructure.

Low and Ultra Low Emission Infrastructure

In the Governments National Infrastructure Strategy and Transport Decarbonisation Plan it indicates that legislation will be forthcoming in 2021 to address EV and ULEV for new build properties. The current MfGS provisions for residential development remain unchanged.

With regards to commercial and employment electric vehicle infrastructure, the quantum of provision remains unchanged at this time, but the specification / charge time should be reflective of dwell time. Therefore development such as food retail 30 minute charging is appropriate and rapid charging units are needed, but for traditional employment uses staff on longer shift patterns may only require an 8 hour charge but some spaces should be intended for visitors and rapid charging would be required for those people.