

Appendix B2: Residents' survey carried out in estates built in line with 'Highway Requirements for Development'

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Section RS1: Introduction

- 1.1 Leicestershire County Council carried out the survey in 2000 to gather the views of people living in developments built to the standards set out in their 'Highway Requirements for Development'. This is the guidance upon which Leicestershire's 'Highways, Transportation and Development' (HTD) guidance is based, which Wolverhampton has used to inform the review of their own highway adoption guidance.
- 1.2 Leicestershire surveyed about 2900 households in 19 developments. The developments, which vary in size and location, are listed in Section RS2.
- 1.3 The survey covered a range of issues, including:
- the general household;
 - parking;
 - the location of the development and how easy it is to get to by different means of transport (including walking and cycling);
 - road safety;
 - crime;
 - maintenance; and
 - public transport.

You can find a copy of the survey form in Section RS3.

- 1.4 Leicestershire were very pleased at the way residents responded. The overall response rate was 39%. This is an exceptionally good rate for a survey of this kind and we believe that it reflects the importance and relevance of the issues to residents.
- 1.5 Section RS4 contains a detailed analysis of the results. You can find a simpler graphical analysis of the results in Appendix B3. The results of the survey have helped to shape Leicestershire's new document, 'Highways, transportation and development'.

Section RS2: Sites surveyed

Location	Estate
Barlestone	Little Mill Close
Castle Donington	Montford Mews
Countesthorpe	The Leysland estate
Ellistown	Channing Way
Glenfield	Bramble Close
Groby	Spinney Close
Lutterworth	Rye Hill Avenue
Lutterworth	Wheeler Close
Measham	Shackland Drive
Mountsorrel	Rowe Leys Furlong
Mountsorrel	Glenfrith Close
Narborough	The Pastures and Hardwicke Road estates
Rearsby	Orton Close
Sapcote	Neville Smith Close
Stoney Stanton	Smithy Farm Drive
Syston	'Glebe Way' Estate
Syston	Simpson Close
Thorpe Astley	Burchnall Road, Owen Close, Heawood Way and Netherfield Way. (This was a sample only as the development is ongoing.)
Whetstone	Albert Close

Section RS3: (this form has not been edited by the Plain English Campaign)



HOUSING ESTATE ROAD DESIGN



SURVEY OF RESIDENTS

The layout of your estate has been influenced by County Council design standards. These standards set-out road designs, house driveway designs and numbers of car parking spaces.

The County Council is preparing new standards, and we need your help. Your estate is one of a number throughout Leicestershire which are being surveyed.

Taking around 10 minutes to complete this survey is your opportunity to tell us what you think about your estate's layout. Residents' views are important in shaping the Council's new standards.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

1. YOUR HOUSE AND HOUSEHOLD

House Number Number of Occupants Number of bedrooms

Does your house: *(please tick as many as are appropriate)*

have a garage have a drive or other parking space within its boundary

share a driveway with other house(s) share a parking area with other house(s)

Number of motor vehicles in your household *(including any company vehicles)*

How many motor vehicles are generally parked at your house - during the day at night

If you park your motor vehicle(s) at your house, where is it normally parked? *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3	Vehicle 4	Vehicle 5
in your garage					
on your driveway/a driveway shared with another house					
in a car parking area shared with another house(s)					
on the road					
elsewhere <i>(please specify)</i>					

If you regularly park your vehicle(s) on the road what is the reason why? *(please tick as appropriate)*

insufficient space within your property's boundary personal convenience
problems sharing a drive with other house(s) problems with a shared parking area
other *(please specify)*

Where do any visitors who arrive by car normally park? *(please tick as many as are appropriate)*

on the road within your property boundary in a shared parking area
elsewhere *(please specify)*

2. LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Given the freedom to choose, would you prefer a house located on a: *(please tick **one** only)*

cul-de-sac up to 25 houses **with no** footways cul-de-sac up to 25 houses **with** footways
cul-de-sac up to 150 houses **with** footways through road no preference

How easy and convenient is it to travel around your estate: *(please tick as appropriate, using the N/A column if you do not regularly use that method)*

	Extremely	Very	Reasonably	Not Very	N/A
on foot					
by bike					
by car					
by other <i>(please specify)</i>					

3. ROAD SAFETY AND PERSONAL SAFETY/CRIME ISSUES

Has anyone in your household had a road accident on your estate? *(please tick as appropriate)*

NO YES If YES, please give brief details:

Are you aware of any particular personal safety/crime issues on your estate? *(please tick as appropriate)*

NO YES If YES, please give brief details:

Considering your estate's layout, do any of the following cause you concern in terms of either road safety or personal safety (please tick as many as appropriate, using the N/A column if the issue is not applicable)

	Great	Some	Little	No	N/A
number of vehicles passing your house					
vehicle speeds on your estate roads					
vehicles parked on the road					
vehicles obstructing the footway/verge					
large vehicles (e.g. bin lorries, buses)					
shared parking areas					
lack of footways					
confined, narrow alleyways					
'isolated' footways (e.g. across open spaces)					
lack of pedestrian road crossings					
lack of cyclepaths					
lack of visibility for drivers					
lack of visibility for pedestrians					
planting that obstructs footways, creates hiding places					
poor street lighting					
other (please specify)					

4. MAINTENANCE AND APPEARANCE

How well do you consider the following to be maintained within your estate? (please tick as appropriate using the N/A column if the item listed is not applicable)

	Very well	Quite well	Adequately	Poorly	N/A
road surface					
road cleanliness					
footway surface					
footway cleanliness					
road drainage					
street lighting					
grass verges					
planting and landscaping					
areas of open space					
other (please specify)					

5. WHAT DO YOU THINK NEEDS ALTERING OR IMPROVING?

Overall, are you happy with your estate's general layout YES NO

If YES please go to Section 6, otherwise would you like: *(please tick as many as appropriate)*

- fewer shared parking areas more shared parking areas
- fewer shared driveways (i.e. each house has own separate drive) more shared drives
- houses with increased numbers of **vehicle** parking spaces *(e.g. larger garages, bigger driveways)*
- houses with dedicated **cycle** parking spaces *(e.g. in vehicle garage; separate storage area)*
- measures to help prevent/limit vehicles parking on the road, blocking footways or verges, etc
- more footways wider footways better pedestrian road crossings
- layouts which avoid creating alleyways and 'remote' footways separate cyclepaths
- wider estate roads to give easier access for large vehicles *(e.g. buses, bin lorries, delivery vehicles)*
- more traffic calming less traffic calming more planting and landscaping
- less planting and landscaping better managed and maintained planting and landscaping
- better street lighting other *(please specify in space below)*

6. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Does anyone in your household use a bus to travel to and from your estate at least once a week?

YES NO

If YES please answer the following questions, otherwise please go to Section 7

For what type(s) of journey is the bus used? *(please tick as many as appropriate)*

- to go to work shopping leisure
- to go to school other *(please specify)*

In a typical week, how many journeys do household members make by bus?

(e.g. travelling to work is one journey, returning home from work is a second journey)

1-5 6-9 10+

Approximately how many minutes does it take for you to walk to the bus stop

Is the walking distance from your house to the bus stop *(please tick as appropriate)*

too far

acceptable

too close

How do you rate: *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Non Existent
bus stop facilities <i>(e.g. weather shelter, seating)</i>					
timetable information at the bus stop					
other <i>(please specify)</i>					

If you could alter and improve bus services, would you like *(please tick as many as appropriate)*

estates where all houses are within 200m of a bus stop (approx' 2 ½-3 mins walk)

quicker bus journey times

better pedestrian footways to bus stops

better bus stop facilities, *e.g. seating, a shelter*

greater service reliability

better timetable information at bus stops

more frequent buses

other *(please specify)*

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Are there any other issues that you wish to raise about your estate's road layout?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Section RS4: Leicestershire's analysis of the survey results (prepared autumn 2000)

1.6 You can find a graphical analysis of the results in Appendix B3.

Headline summary

- Generally, residents were very satisfied about the layout and maintenance of estates.
- The main areas of residents' concern are:
 - on-street parking problems – there is a need for more off-street parking;
 - shared-surface roads, where there is confusion or lack of understanding about their use;
 - some issues relating to the impacts of distributor or perimeter roads; and
 - the maintenance of verges, landscaping and open areas.
- General conclusion in terms of satisfying customers – there is no real need for major change.

Introduction

1.7 Leicestershire's document 'Highway Requirements for Development' (HRfD) sets out highway and parking standards for new developments. It is nearly 10 years old and is now the subject of a major review.

1.8 As part of this review, Leicestershire have carried out a survey of residents living in housing estates built to the current standards. We have done this for two key reasons:

- Leicestershire considered it important to obtain residents' views in the light of recent publications such as the Department for Transport's 'Places, Streets and Movement', and new planning policy guidance; and
- consultation is a 'Best Value' principle and it is also needed to make sure that HRfD continues to be accepted as supplementary planning guidance.

1.9 Leicestershire have surveyed about 2900 households in 19 sites.

1.10 The survey questions are based around the general household (including vehicle ownership and parking), location and accessibility, road and personal safety, maintenance and appearance, and public transport.

Survey findings

1.11 Leicestershire have analysed the results from only 18 estates (there were too few returns from one development). The main survey findings are below under the headings used on the survey form. (You can find a series of graphs briefly summarising the results in Appendix B3.)

- Overall response rate = 39%

1.12 In comparison, the response rate for a recent Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan survey was 4%. Typically, a response rate of about 10% would be considered acceptable for the survey we carried out.

Your house and household

- The average number of vehicles for each household = 1.7.

1.13 Current residential standards are: two parking spaces for a house with three bedrooms or less, or three spaces for four or more bedrooms. This is intended to provide one space for the household plus one space for a visitor.

- Rate of garage parking = 29% (that is only 29% of vehicles are parked in a garage)

1.14 This is a reasonably consistent result from the estates surveyed. Residents commented that they do not always use garages to park vehicles (they might instead use them for extra storage and so on).

- The proportion of residents claiming to park a household vehicle on the road might be low, given the on-street parking issues identified later in the results.
- There are not enough shared parking areas in the estates surveyed to reach any conclusions on residents' views. We hope that further surveys we are now carrying out will cover this issue.
- Overall, there is a fairly even split between visitor parking within a property boundary and visitor parking on-road (about 50% each). The percentages vary from development to development and there is no clear picture that the percentage of visitors who park on road is influenced by the number of cars owned by a household.
- It is logical to conclude, however, that household vehicles already take up a significant proportion of the available parking, based on current residential standards. Car ownership is growing, and because there is no policy to restrict ownership, and car prices are decreasing, this trend looks set to continue. This will only increase on-street parking if parking standards stay the same.
- For the majority of estates analysed, residents gave 'insufficient space within property boundaries' as the main reason why household vehicles are parked on the road. This points to a need to increase the size of parking and garage spaces. 'Personal convenience' was also a reason given by residents on some estates.

Location and accessibility

- One of the most consistent findings is residents' very clear preference to live in a cul-de-sac of up to 25 dwellings, as opposed to a larger cul-de-sac or through route.
- There is also very clear residents' preference that small cul-de-sacs should have footways, as opposed to no footways with a shared-surface road. Residents' comments relate mainly to safety, although there also appear to be some access issues. This could be because residents may not understand the concept behind shared-surface roads.
- The current design standards appear to be striking about the right balance in providing easy and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists. Other than shared-surface roads, residents expressed no particular concerns about pedestrian and cyclist access.
- In terms of car access, the results suggest that the current standards might be influencing driving behaviour, for example, traffic calming can control vehicle speeds or layout design can discourage rat running. This suggestion is supported by some rather mixed views on road humps (some want fewer, others more) and some comments about 'tortuous' layouts.

Road and personal safety

- Residents on 13 estates out of the 18 expressed concerns about on-street vehicle parking. They commented about safety issues (for example, restricted visibility and hazards to pedestrians) and amenity issues (for example, blocked driveways).

- From information given by residents, over 50% of accidents involved a parked vehicle. These appear to have all been non-injury accidents.
- On seven estates out of the 18, vehicle speed is another concern. In general, the level and degree of concern is a lot lower for very small developments, and very much higher for main estate roads. However, as outlined above, residents' views on road humps are rather mixed.
- There is also concern about numbers of vehicles. Although there is no particularly clear trend when developments of different sizes are compared, generally the level and degree of concern is lower for minor estate roads than for main estate roads.
- Residents' concerns about vehicle speeds and numbers highlight a need to pay particular attention to the design of estates where distributor and perimeter roads are required, to minimise the impact of traffic on residents.
- Concern about vehicle speeds and numbers may be one reason behind the strong preference to live in a small cul-de-sac, where vehicle numbers are limited and speeds are controlled without wide use of road humps.
- The results show residents' concerns about lack of footways on shared-surface roads. The level of concern is higher where the road is the main estate access rather than a side road or cul-de-sac. We need to look at this further.
- Concern about large vehicles varies between the estates surveyed, although it tends to be less in some of the very small developments. Residents made few additional comments to expand on their concerns, so we could not reach any real conclusions on this issue.
- Residents made comments about poor street lighting in some of the estates. This may relate to open spaces and pedestrian routes which are not part of the public highway, but we will look at this issue further.
- Some residents expressed concerns about the safety of their children playing on the road. The reasons why children are allowed to play on the road are not clear, but could be due to a lack of suitable play facilities or the fact that many modern properties have open frontages. Small, shared-surface cul-de-sacs may encourage playing on the road. It appears we need to give greater consideration to this matter.
- There are no particularly clear trends in any of the other issues we asked residents about under this heading.

Maintenance and appearance

- The estates surveyed are still relatively new and so, in general, there is a high level of residents' satisfaction about maintenance and appearance. Residents did comment, however, on routine matters such as poor verge cutting, lack of weeding and lack of road sweeping. The overall level of satisfaction was also lower for the maintenance of landscaping and areas of open space.

What do you think needs altering or improving?

- Overall, residents were very satisfied with the general layout of their estates, apart from two sites (see further below for details.)
- Looking at the results for **all** of the surveyed estates, the main things that residents would like to see are:
 - increased household parking;

- measures to control on-road parking;
- increased traffic calming, particularly in larger estates with perimeter and distributor roads; (but we may have to consider alternatives to road humps);
- footways on shared-surfaced roads (especially on the smaller developments where a shared-surface road is the main access); and
- more and better-managed planting and landscaping.
- Some residents commented that they wanted fewer shared drives, although not as many as commented on the matters listed above.
- There are two estates where residents are not happy with their estate's general layout.

1.15 Orton Close, Rearsby: This is a small cul-de-sac development served by a shared-surface road. The estate is not yet fully completed and workmen are apparently still on site. This appears to have affected the results. The main residents' concerns are:

- vehicle speeds;
- lack of visibility for vehicles and pedestrians;
- lack of footways; and
- street lighting (probably because works are not yet fully completed).

1.16 Rowe Leys Furlong, Mountsorrel: This is a cul-de-sac development where the main access road has footways, but there are some shared-surface roads served from it. The estate has only been completed quite recently. The main residents' concerns are:

- on-street parking;
- the need for more and better-maintained areas of landscaping and open spaces;
- shared private drives; and
- street lighting (possibly because works have only recently been completed and there could be some outstanding construction works to be done).
- There are no particularly clear trends in any of the other issues we asked residents about under this heading.

Public transport

- This survey was not intended to be a detailed study of residents' travel habits, but instead was an attempt to find out information which could influence estate design.
- There is no conclusive evidence about the relationship between where a development is, levels of car ownership and how the public use public transport.
- Overall, the majority of bus users rated bus-stop facilities and timetable information as either poor or non-existent. This was generally a consistent response from users.
- From bus users' responses, we found the main areas to concentrate on improving are:
 - bus-stop facilities;
 - timetable information; and
 - service frequency and reliability.
- There is less demand for improvements that could significantly affect estate design (for example, better pedestrian routes to bus stops or houses within 200 metres of a bus stop).

Summary and conclusions

- It appears from the excellent (and prompt) response rate that the survey has covered issues that residents consider relevant.
- There appears to be no support from residents for reducing off-street parking. Indeed, the survey results point to a possible need to increase off-street parking as a means of tackling on-street parking which is one of their main concerns, and to accommodate increasing car ownership.
- Residents clearly prefer to live in small cul-de-sacs with footways.
- There is no real pressure from residents to change the general approach to designing estate roads except for:
 - shared-surface roads (that is, roads without footways) and in particular, whether it is appropriate to use them for main site access in their current form; and
 - a distributor or perimeter roads, the design of which should be reviewed to minimise the impact of vehicle speed and numbers on residents. It also appears necessary to look at alternatives to road humps to control vehicle speed.
- Maintenance issues tend to relate to routine matters such as verge cutting, sweeping, weeding and the upkeep of landscaping and open spaces. The estates surveyed are relatively new, however, so we have carried out further surveys of older developments to compare the results.
- Providing and maintaining landscaping and open space in new estates appears to be an issue which we will need to consider further. In highway terms, this may have safety and maintenance implications.
- With regard to public transport, there is no conclusive evidence which links where a development is located, levels of car ownership and using public transport. From bus users' responses, the main areas to concentrate on improving are bus-stop facilities, timetable information and service frequency and reliability.