

Parking on your Front Garden

A guide to Harlow Council's Policy

Harlow New Town was originally designed so that front gardens would be "open" in appearance – with no fences, walls, intrusions or parking of any vehicle. However, changes over the years have meant that, in some cases, Harlow Council has started to relax these policies. More people own cars now than ever before, which has made parking in some areas a problem. Residents now want to be able to park cars on their own front gardens.

If you want to park on your front garden, you must get permission from the council first. This applies to all residents in the town – not just council tenants.

How to apply

All applications from residents (individuals or groups) will be checked by the council's Structural Engineering Services against the criteria set out below.

Before you can park on your front garden you must have permission to do so. This will only be granted if:

- The technical and other criteria are met
- A relaxation of the policy on your particular estate is agreed
- Approval is granted by Essex County Council for a dropped crossing

To apply for open front parking, fill in the "Parking on you Front Garden" application form and send it to Structural Engineering Services (see Contact Addresses section of this guide)

Charges

A charge of £30 is made for each application. This must be paid whether permission is granted or not, so please check the criteria carefully before applying.

Planning Permission

Please note that as from the 1st October 2008 you may need planning permission for paving your front garden.

If you have not had the works carried out to pave your front garden you will require planning permission as well as open front parking permission if:

- 1) The hard standing is greater than 5m² .
- 2) The material you use is not porous or there is no run-off to a porous or permeable surface.

If you are using gravel then it is advisable that you have a ridge or some means to retain the gravel on your property so it does not spread out onto the highway or pavement.

If you require planning permission as you have not completed the works please call 01279 446 598 or 01279 446 856 to obtain a planning application. Alternatively you can apply on line at <http://www.harlow.gov.uk>

Technical and other criteria

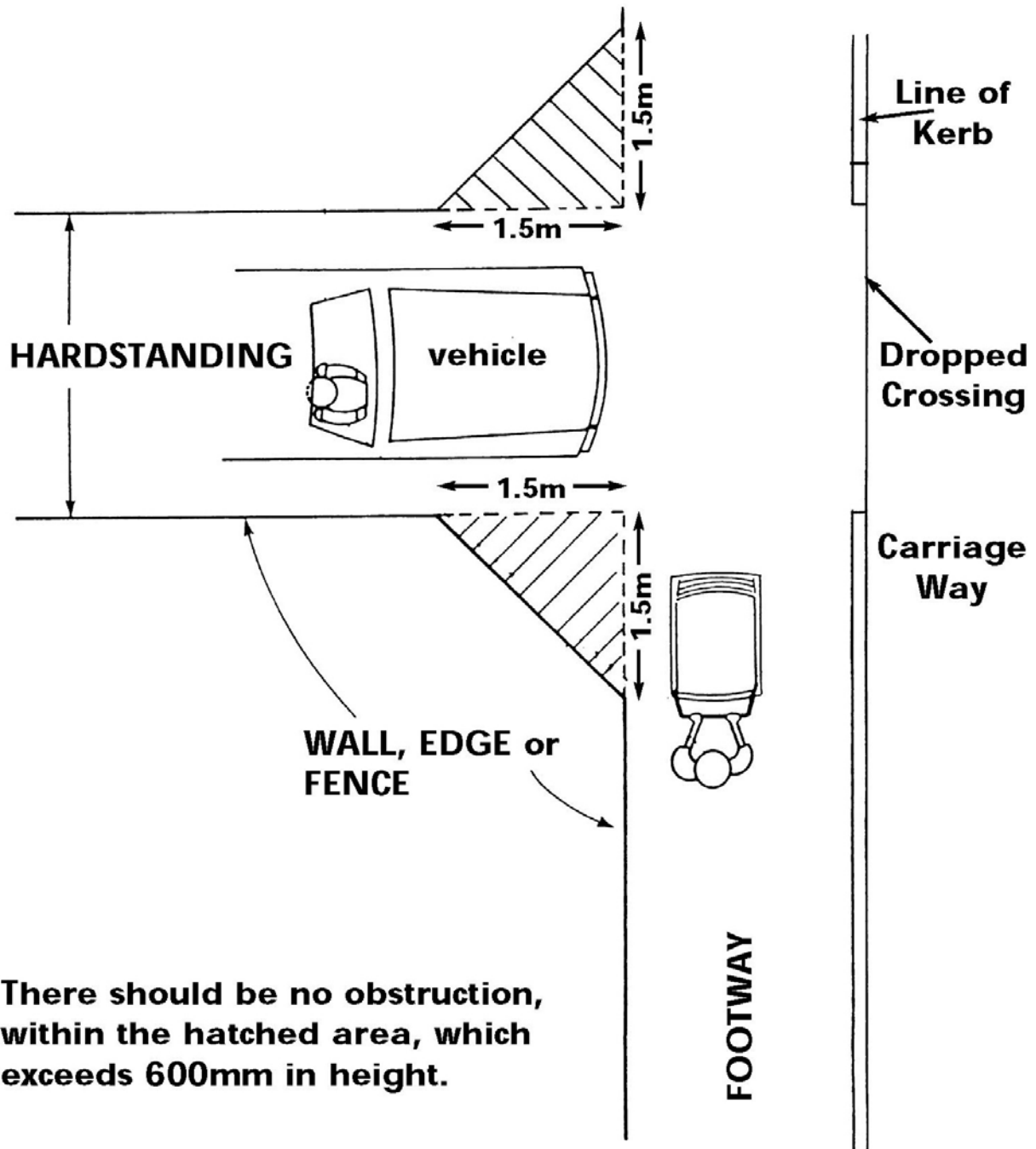
Even if you live in an area that has a serious parking problem, there is no guarantee that you will be able to have a hardstand on your front garden.

As the application fee is non-refundable, please check the following details before applying.

1. Applications from residents who live on a bus route will be considered on their individual merits (i.e. if there is already front garden parking on the route).
2. Parking on your front garden must not affect any sight lines – see “sight lines” diagram on page 3.
3. You must pay the cost of dropping the kerb and making alterations to the pavement.
4. You must only park small cars or light vans on your front garden, one that would fit into a single domestic garage
5. Harlow Council now has the power to enforce against unauthorised parking on dropped kerbs.
6. The hardstand should be built to a standard size of 5m x 2.5m (16'6” x 8'3”). When it is parked, your vehicle must not overhang the public footpath nor be within one metre of the front of the property.
7. The hardstand should not take up more than 75% of the total area of your garden. Note: some small gardens may not qualify for a hardstanding.
8. The specification should allow for appropriate drainage of surface water
9. Gates, fencing and hedging should meet the criteria set out in the council's “Open Fronts – A guide to Harlow Council's Policy” leaflet
10. Conserving any tree(s) on front gardens will be given primary consideration and the council's Arboricultural Officer will be consulted where a tree or trees are present, Tree Preservation Orders, Covenant Controls and proposed construction details will be checked with the appropriate technical officers.
11. It is an offence under Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 to make alterations to the pavement without a dropped kerb and to undertake construction, without the prior agreement of the council. The council reserves the right to enforce reinstatement.
12. The council will monitor and enforce the policy.

SIGHT LINES

Pedestrian/vehicle/driver visibility



There should be no obstruction, within the hatched area, which exceeds 600mm in height.

Contracting the work

Once permission has been granted by Structural Engineering Services to change the use of the front garden further permission is required from Essex County Council to install a dropped crossing.

Essex County Council can provide quotes for a dropped crossing. Only an Essex County Council approved contractor may carry out the construction of the dropped crossing.

Appeals

If your application is unsuccessful, you can appeal against the decision. You should put your appeal in writing and send it to Structural Engineering Services (see contact details below). The Head of Service, or an appropriate member of staff, will then check that the council has followed the correct procedure in rejecting your application. If it has, your appeal will be refused. If it is decided that the council did not follow the right procedures your application will be looked at again. If it is decided that a relaxation of policy is needed in your area, this will go before councillors for approval.

If you are unhappy about the way your application has been dealt with, you can complain through the council's normal complaints procedure (see leaflet "Harlow Council – Customer Care and Complaints").

Contact addresses and useful information

Application to; Structural Engineering Services
 Civic Centre
 The Water Gardens
 Harlow
 Essex
 CM20 1WG

Tel: (01279) 446853

Conversion guide

As this booklet uses metric measurement for specifications, the table below gives you a rough guide to calculating the equivalent imperial measurements:

1 inch (")	=	2.54 centimetres (cm)
1 foot (ft)	=	30.48 centimetres (cm)
1 yard (yd)	=	9.44 centimetres (cm)
1 millimetre (mm)	=	0.0394 inches
1 centimetre (cm)	=	0.394 inches
1 metre (m)	=	39.4 inches (approx. 3ft 3in)

Data Protection Act

"Harlow District Council undertakes that it will treat any personal information (that is data from which you can be identified, such as your name, address, e-mail address etc) that you provide to use, or that we obtain from you, in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998".