Part 3

Chapter 3 – Planning Walking Infrastructure

1 Introduction

1.1 Part 2 of this guide highlights that providing for people walking is the first and primary consideration in master planning proposals. Hertfordshire's LTP4 notes that walking is the principal form of travel for trips under 1 mile at 76%.

1.2 At the master planning stage Scheme Promoters should have carefully positioned walking routes to provide easy access for all. Links with the wider pedestrian network, both existing and planned should have been incorporated. Particular consideration should have been given to connecting pedestrian routes with local centres, transport hubs, healthcare facilities and schools. Opportunities to link to the existing rights of way network for sustainable leisure pursuits should have been proposed, where safe and practical.

1.3 This chapter provides guidance enabling the emerging planning application or the general arrangement for permitted development schemes to include well aligned footways and footpaths that follow a direct route from point to point, having reasonable and practicable gradients and be sufficiently wide and free of obstruction to enable different users (pedestrians, prams, wheelchairs, etc.) to pass each other freely.

1.4 More detailed, supporting technical guidance for final design is set out in Part 4 Chapter 2.

2 General Principles

2.1 Footways are those parts of a road intended for walking. They generally run parallel to the adjacent carriageway and may be separated from it by kerbs and a verge.

2.2 Footpaths are walking routes generally located away from the carriageway and not associated with routes for motor vehicles.

2.3 Carriageway design should not dictate, compromise or conflict with the needs of pedestrians and footway or footpath design.

2.4 Footways and footpaths should be continuous and, where possible, follow pedestrian desire lines.

2.5 Walking routes should be carefully positioned and provide easy access for all, regardless of physical ability so as to maximise their use.

2.6 If routes are segregated from passing traffic they will need to be well-connected and overlooked by dwellings or other buildings, because people generally prefer to walk along streets where for their personal security they can be seen by drivers, residents and other pedestrians.[1] [2] [3]

2.7 Designers should avoid using existing paths and Rights of Way as the alignment for new vehicular access roads and should design their developments to accommodate these safely alongside new roads or through landscaped areas.

2.8 When considering width and alignment of footpath and footway facilities, consideration must be given to the need for ramped crossings to garage drives or parking spaces, and to providing for statutory and other underground services (see also Part 4 Chapter 19 Designing for Utilities).

2.9 The approach to a dwelling from the point where a disabled person would get out of a car should be level or ramped. The approach should be at least 1.2m wide.

3 Application of Design Standards

3.1 The standards referred to in this Chapter are defined in three levels as outlined below.

Recommended	Designers should aim to adopt these standards as the first choice wherever possible.
Acceptable Limits	Whilst it is acceptable for designers to use these standards, their use should be limited, and they shall carefully consider the impact on Non-Motorised Users. The use of this category should be documented through the Technical Review process.

[1] Perceptions of personal safety and experiences of harassment, Great Britain: 2 to 27 June 2021. Perceptions of safety and experiences of harassment, by personal characteristics, based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), ONS, 24 August 2021

[2] Local cycling and walking infrastructure plans technical guidance, DfT, 2017

[3] Walking Route Audit Tool, DfT 2017

Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	Provision of new facilities below Acceptable Limits will result in a poor standard of provision. As such the scheme promoter should submit the scheme proposal to a Design Review Panel so that the overall objectives of the scheme can be reviewed and potential alternative solutions can be discussed. Absolute Limits are sometimes referred to as absolute minimum in various national standards, but they constitute a Departure from Standard within Hertfordshire. If there is no alternative solution but to adopt a standard below the Acceptable Limits then a Departure from Standard shall be sought from HCC. Departures below the Absolute Limit will not be accepted.

4 Footway widths

4.1 The standards for footway widths are based on Place & Movement Categories (See Part 2 Chapter 5 Place & Movement) and consideration of speed limits.

4.2 For speed limits up to 30mph the total footway width generally allows 0.5m for separation features from the carriageway such as kerbing.

Widths for P1 & P2 Categories up to 30mph limit

	Total Width	**Effective Width**
Recommended	3.1m	2.6m
Acceptable Limits	2m	1.5m
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	N/A	N/A

Where there is a safety benefit or a high number of pedestrians, the footway and footpath width should be increased. This will be appropriate outside schools, shops and other community facilities.

A clear width of at least 1.2m shall be provided between street furniture and other obstacles, to allow for people with mobility impairments and for passage of a double-buggy.

Widths for P3 Categories up to 30mph limit

	Total Width	Effective Width
Recommended	4m	3.5m
Acceptable Limits	3.5m	3m
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	2m	1.5m

Widths for P1 & P2 Categories with 40mph limit or above

	Total Width	Effective Width
Recommended	2.6 m	2.6 m
Acceptable Limits	2 m	2 m
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	2m	1.5m

Footways on roads with a speed limit of 40mph or more should be separated from the carriageway by the widths shown below. This buffer strip width is measured from the edge of the running carriageway and may therefore include the adjacent hard strip (if any).

Speed limit (mph)	Recommended	Acceptable Limits
40	1.5m	0.5m
50	2m	1.5m
60	2.5m	2m
70	3.5m	3m

4.3 Where footpaths extend up to 50m beyond a vehicular access point, they should lie in an unobstructed corridor 2.5m wide to allow for access of maintenance vehicles.

4.4 The width of a footway will need to be locally increased around features, such as bus shelters, to maintain adequate footway width and to avoid conflict between pedestrians and passengers.

4.5 The Recommended width of footway at bus stops is 5.0m for P1, P2 & P3 categories up to 30mph speed limits with Acceptable Minimum of 3.8m. The Recommended width of footway at bus stops is 3.8 m for P1& P2 categories over 30mph speed limits is 3.8m with an Acceptable Minimum of 3.1m.

5 Clearances

Boundary Clearances

The boundary clearance is the required distance between each edge of the footway and any continuous fixed vertical obstruction such as walls or fences, for example. These are required in addition to the Total Width dimensions quoted above.

	up to 1.2m high	**above 1.2m high**
Recommended	0.25m	0.5m
Acceptable Limits	0m	0m
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

A minimum 0.5m clearance to the 'normal' extent of a hedge is required in all instances.

Horizontal clearance to obstructions

In exceptional circumstances the footway or footpath width may be reduced around obstacles, over a short distance (up to 6m).

	Minimum Footway Width over a maximum of 6m
Recommended	1.25m
Acceptable Limits	1.25m
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	1m

Wherever possible street furniture should be located at back of footway or footpath to minimise the impact of obstruction.

6 Gradients

Crossfall

	Maximum	Minimum
Recommended	2% (1:50)	1% (1:100)
Acceptable Limits	2.5% (1:40)	1% (1:100)
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	8% locally up to 5 m (1:12.5)	Drainage solution may be required to prevent ponding

Absolute Limits will only be considered where existing ground levels make it impractical to achieve the Acceptable Limits specified.

The crossfall of footways and footpaths will increase locally around a crossing point. This shall be an absolute maximum of 8% (1:12.5). Where a crossfall steeper than Acceptable Limits is necessary, a strip at least 0.9m wide with crossfall no greater than 2% (1:50) must be provided. This will help ensure that the footway or footpath is accessible for all pedestrians, including those using wheeled mobility aids.

Level strip at back of footway

Where possible a level strip should be retained along the back of the footway. This detail is also used on vehicle crossovers as well as for footways with steep crossfalls.

	Level[1] strip at back of footway
Recommended	0.9 m
Acceptable Limits	0 m - (only if existing footway is too narrow, and there is no space available within highway to widen)
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	N/A

1. The notionally level strip must drain adequately to prevent ponding. In some locations the longitudinal fall or gradient will achieve this, but elsewhere it will need a crossfall of typically 1% to 2%.

Pedestrian route longitudinal gradient

	Maximum	**Minimum**
Recommended **Gradients and resting platforms as per Cycling Chapter**	Refer to Part 3 Cycling Table 69[1]	1 % (1:100)
Acceptable Limits **As per Part M**	5%[2]	1 % (1:100)
Absolute Limits – Departure from Standards	Departure Required	Departure Required

1. Up to 1 in 60 (1.67%) is considered level.
2. Ramps with resting platforms can be used for gradients of 5% or more. Refer to Diagram 2.1 in Part M Volume 1 or Diagram 3 in Part M Volume 2.

The gradient recommendations in Inclusive Mobility (DfT, December 2021) should be implemented.

The gradient of a footway is often the same as the adjacent road.

The gradient of a *footpath* should not exceed 5%. In exceptional circumstances this may be increased to 8% over short distances less than 5m.

Where it is unavoidable to have a footpath with a gradient greater than 8%, steps shall be provided with a bypass ramp for wheelchairs and pushchairs.