

Part 1

Chapter 5 – Transport Assessments

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Any development with a potential impact on the transport network must be assessed to establish whether the access arrangements and transport impacts are acceptable.
- 1.2 The level of technical work required depends on the type, scale and location of the development. Design and Access statements are required for most developments and these may be sufficient on their own for smaller developments, which are expected to have minimal impact on the transport network and are away from sensitive areas. For most developments however a supporting Transport Statement or Transport Assessment will also be required. Further guidance on the required levels of assessment is given in section 1.3 below.
- 1.3 New development should consider the access and movement requirements of users in line with the transport user hierarchy in Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). It is crucial that the access needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are considered above those of private car users to ensure developments are pleasant and convenient places for all users to live in and/or visit and contribute towards Hertfordshire's commitment for net zero carbon by 2050. Further guidance on master-planning developments can be found in Part 2 of this document.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The County Council as Highway Authority is responsible for assessing the impacts of new development on the transport network, agreeing suitable levels of infrastructure, determining whether the residual impact of the development is compliant with Policy as assessed through the LTP4 compliance test and making recommendations to the Local Planning Authority as to whether the impact of the development can be sufficiently mitigated.
- 2.2 Paragraphs 39 to 46 of the NPPF (2021) stress the importance and benefits of early engagement with local authorities. HCC strongly supports this, and it is recommended that applicants engage with the County Council at the earliest possible stage to agree the level and scope of assessment required before detailed technical work is undertaken. HCC operates separate pre-application processes for its roles as Highway Authority, Rights of Way and Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 2.3 Discussion topics with developers at the pre-application stage will include:
 - General discussion of the developer's plans from a transport impact perspective (especially a proposed development's likely impact on

safety and on the transport network, for different modes). Guidance on any initial designs can be provided (for example if a design element looks undeliverable this could be raised early on before detailed designs are developed).

- The requirement to identify measures to maximise mode share by sustainable modes and only consider highway measures to deal with residual traffic flows.
- Checking proposals are consistent with Local Plans, National policies, and other relevant guidance
- Informing developers of relevant schemes already identified in the area in local area-based strategy documents.
- Informing developers of which transport-specific documents should be submitted with the planning application (indicating the need for a Transport Assessment or Statement, Travel Plan, Road Safety Audit, Design and Access Statement etc).
- Initial discussion of data and modelling requirements.
- Introducing the likely obligations, conditions or agreements (Section 106), and funding contributions (Commutated Sums for maintenance & CIL, where applicable) that might be expected in order to get development approved.
- Any other highways-specific agreements that might be needed should also be raised at this stage (e.g. Section 278 Agreement if work in the existing highway is required, or Section 38 Agreement if any new roads being constructed will be offered for adoption by HCC).
- Potential air quality issues, especially if air quality impacts are expected to be substantial or the proposed development site is near an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

A site visit is often recommended at pre-application stages, or later in the process, to allow the Highway case officer to obtain information needed to formulate their response.

2.4 Key information to be provided at the start of a pre-application stage should include:

- Site location plan with site boundary shown with the site's local plan allocation reference (where applicable) and the name attributed to the development
- Site layout plans of the proposed development
- Confirmation of the function and scale of the development
- Confirmation of the existing use of the site, including planning application history where appropriate
- Evidence that the LTP compliance test has been conducted, where applicable

- Highway's data relevant to the development such as active travel data, traffic counts, accident data. HCC are working to create a pack containing this data, with the intention of selling them to developers
- 2.5 The Council will provide a limited service of guidance free of charge. The cost of providing more detailed dialogue and written responses, possibly requiring the attendance of meetings, site visits, etc will be recovered from the developer so as not to fall to a general cost to the wider community, as current statutory planning fees do not cover the cost of pre-application advice given by the highway authority.
- 2.6 Further details on the pre-application process and charging can be found at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx#preapplication>.

3 Levels of Assessment

- 3.1 The DfT's Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007) has been revoked. The indicative thresholds in Appendix B of this document are still useful to give an initial steer on the level of assessment required, however, this should primarily be established and agreed with HCC through positive and early pre-application discussions, based on local knowledge/conditions and the specifics of the proposed development.

4 Design and Access Statement

- 4.1 Following discussion with HCC if it is determined that the development is small scale and will have minimal impacts on the transport network and is in a location which aligns with our LTP4 policies then highway matters can usually be adequately considered in a Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 4.2 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 outlines when a Design and Access Statement is needed, but it is advised that applicants first seek advice from the relevant Planning Authority as to what exactly is required in this respect. Generally, a DAS without the need for a Transport Statement is appropriate for small scale developments easily accessed by existing cycling, walking and public transport routes and requiring simple dropped kerbs/bell-mouth access arrangements or the modification of existing access arrangements.
- 4.3 The DAS should include the following:
- A plan showing the location of the development, its scale and its local context
 - An identification of key destinations in the vicinity of the development (e.g. schools, community facilities and transport hubs)
 - Information on how cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users can access the site directly and conveniently. The DAS should also highlight if equestrians are expected nearby.

- Information on how the access points for residual vehicular traffic for the development have been chosen;
- Demonstration of how everyone can move through the place on equal terms regardless of age, mobility, ethnicity or social grouping; and
- Identification of the number and location of parking spaces (including cycle, electric vehicle & visitor parking). The statement will be expected to demonstrate that alternatives to providing individual car parking spaces have been considered. More on this is given in Part 3 Chapter 7: Planning Parking.

5 Transport Statement

- 5.1 Following discussion with HCC if it is determined that a development is of a modest scale (has relatively small transport implications and is broadly in line with our transport policy then a Transport Statement would be appropriate.
- 5.2 A Transport Statement should set out the transport issues relating to the site of the proposed development, covering both existing conditions and details of the proposed development.
- 5.3 An example of a development where a Transport Statement could apply would be a development of less than 80 dwellings requiring a new access involving alterations to the existing road layout which is away from sensitive locations (such as congestion hotspots, AQMAs).
- 5.4 Further guidance on the types of development likely to trigger the need for a Transport Statement and the type of information typically contained within them can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements>.
- 5.5 In addition to the standard information listed in the government guidance, in Hertfordshire our LTP4 policies prioritise access by walking, cycling and public transport over the private car and we require evidence that opportunities for access to the development by sustainable modes has been fully considered. In order to achieve this the following information will be required:
- Identification of key Origin/Destination points including retail, leisure education and, employment sites within a 20-minute cycle or walk and plotting them in relation to the site. Potential walking and cycling routes to key destinations should be identified and this information should be used as the basis to develop a transport strategy which favours getting people to those locations by sustainable means.
 - Bus stops and bus routes within the vicinity of the development should be identified along with walking routes to them.
- 5.6 The Transport Statement should identify the trip generation and likely distribution (by all modes) and the expected number of residual vehicle trips.
- 5.7 Information on site accesses, including layout plans and visibility splays will also be required. This should also show how pedestrians and cyclists are

safely accommodated at these vehicle accesses. Agreed designs will be subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

- 5.8 The Hertfordshire Speed Management Strategy states that speed limits should be set which are appropriate to the surrounding environment. The physical design of new residential developments should naturally encourage motorists to drive at 20mph or less with reinforcement by signage in predominantly residential areas and outside schools and other community facilities. Further guidance on the layouts of roads and road widths to help achieve this is given in Part 2 Chapter 5.

6 Place and Movement Healthy Streets

- 6.1 Hertfordshire have classified its road network into 9 place and movement categories as set out in XXX.
- 6.2 The place and movement function and the Health Street function of the surrounding road network should be reviewed as part of the development assessment work. Any vehicle access arrangements from the development should be designed as per the toolkit for that particular category. For example, accesses for developments joining a network with a higher place function should follow the principles set out in Part 3 Chapter 9: Planning Highway Junctions and avoid the use of wide bellmouths.

7 Transport Assessment

- 7.1 A Transport Assessment (TA) is a document that summarises comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It should identify the measures needed to improve accessibility for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport as well as any mitigation measures to deal with the impacts of the residual vehicle trips.
- 7.2 Transport Assessments are required for larger scale developments and those where the LTP4 compliance matrix assessment has identified a number of potential key issues in relation to access or the impact of the site. They are therefore likely to be required for smaller sites in locations with poor existing access by non-car modes and / or locations close to sensitive parts of the transport network (e.g. congestion hotspots, Air Quality Management Areas).
- 7.3 Larger sites allocated in Local Plans will have already had an initial LTP4 matrix assessment undertaken which will have flagged up issues at the Local Plan stage. The Transport Assessment will be expected to demonstrate how these have been addressed through either site design or the development of mitigation measures.
- 7.4 Further guidance on the content of Transport Assessments is given at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements>

- 7.5 In Hertfordshire our LTP4 policies prioritise access by walking, cycling and public transport and developers will be required to demonstrate how they have considered access to the site by sustainable modes and identified design and mitigation measures aimed at maximising the mode share by sustainable transport.
- 7.6. It is strongly recommended that a Transport Assessment Scoping Note is provided setting out the technical work to be undertaken and that this is discussed and agreed with the Local Highway Authority before the detailed technical work begins.
- 7.7 As with Transport Statements, HCC require the identification of key origins and destinations associated with the development including retail, leisure education and employment sites with mapping of isochrones showing cycle and walking access times. The TA should identify gaps in the networks and any issues with onward connections. An example of good practice is the Active Travel Zone methodology developed by TfL. Further details can be found at <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/atz-assessment-instructions.pdf>.
- 7.7 Analysis of injury collision records in the vicinity of the site should be undertaken to ascertain if there are any existing issues with road users (including pedestrians and cyclists) in the vicinity of the site.
- 7.8 Consideration should also be given to maximise the opportunity to get to key destinations by public transport. Assessment of the existing bus services should be undertaken by the scheme promoter. A minimum service provision level of 4 buses per hour peak / 2 buses per hour off peak (06:30 to 22:00) is considered as appropriate for most development with the walking distance to bus stops being no longer than 400m.
- 7.9 Other data sources should be considered when forming a transport assessment. Data such as active travel data, traffic data, congestion data, along with other methods to record trip distribution and generation. Work is ongoing to create a developer evidence pack which will provide some of this additional data. For more information on this contact the assigned Development Management Office, who will in turn contact HCC's Transport Planning Data Team.
- 7.10 The Transport Assessment should identify the trip generation and likely distribution (by all modes) and the expected number of residual vehicle trips. Trip generation should be based on the most relevant and latest information available and may include the TRICS database or survey data from equivalent sites. HCC is unlikely to accept data gathered during official or unofficial lockdowns during the 2020-'22 Covid pandemic. HCC is unlikely to accept data gathered during the 2020-2022 Covid 19 pandemic. However, survey data may be accepted during and after this period if an appropriate multiplication factor is applied to bring it in line with pre-pandemic levels. For more information on this contact the assigned Development Management Office, who will in turn contact HCC's Transport Planning Data Team.
- 7.11 Modelling will be required for a development if the development meets or exceed the following thresholds

- Contains 250 or more residential dwellings
 - Will consist of 1000 or more jobs
 - If the development is close to
 - o An identified congestion hotspot
 - o An Air Quality Management Area
 - o A known accident hotspot
 - Modelling may also be required if the proposed development has 2 or more access points
- 7.12 Due to the nature of the current modelling suite, modelling will entail assessing the residual impact of vehicle trips and will not be the sole mechanism to identify what mitigation measures are required. The modelling can support developers with their planning application but should be in line with the requirement of the LTP. Often prior to any modelling the DM officer may establish and agree trip rates, distribution and other modelling parameters along with appropriate LTP compliant mitigation
- 7.13 Modelling will most likely include a test within the COMET model suite but may in some circumstances include other types of model such as Paramics, Vissim and localised junction modelling.
- 7.14 The likely requirements for modelling should be discussed at the scoping stage, this is to be decided by the DM officer based on guidance from HCC's Transport Planning Data Team.
- 7.15 HCC are exploring new means of modelling, in line with Government Guidance. It is likely that in the future a new COMET model suite will be developed that enables the authority to better assess the impact of a development on active travel and therefore it is likely that the methodology noted above will change. For example, HCC may use future modelling to determine what mitigation is required.
- 7.16 Further details on the models available including FAQs, indicative costs, timescales and the commissioning process can be found at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/transportmodelling.
- 7.17 Modelling work should take into account the impact of other committed developments and be used to identify the likely routeing of residual vehicle trips from the developments. This information should be used as a further check to whether these movements could be facilitated by improvements in sustainable transport links.
- 7.18 For the residual vehicle trips, the TA should highlight locations where increases in traffic flow are expected. In some places additional delay and queuing for vehicles may be deemed acceptable as a means of further encouraging mode shift towards sustainable transport. In other locations air quality issues, the risk of adverse impacts on bus services, safety or on junctions critical to the functioning of the highway network may necessitate the further investigation of off-site highway mitigation measures.

- 7.19 Information on site accesses and wider highway works to deal with the residual vehicle trips, including layout plans and visibility splays will also be required. This should also show how pedestrians and cyclists are safely accommodated at these vehicle accesses and will be subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.
- 7.20 The design of the site and its accesses should take account of Neighbouring uses and the amenity and character of the surrounding area. This should include an assessment of the existing functional classification of the nearby road network. In Hertfordshire the road network has been classified into one of 9 place and movement categories. The LHA will share information on this in early discussions. Further information on this approach can be found in Part 2 Chapter 5
- 7.21 The place and movement function of the surrounding road network should be reviewed as part of the TA work. Any vehicle access arrangements from the development should be designed as per the toolkit for that particular category. For example, accesses for developments joining a network with a higher place function should follow the principles set out in Part 3 Chapter 9 and avoid the use of wide bell-mouths.
- 7.22 The Hertfordshire Speed Management Strategy states that speed limits should be set which are appropriate to the surrounding environment. The physical design of new residential developments should naturally encourage motorists to drive at 20mph or less with reinforcement by signage in predominantly residential areas and outside schools and other community facilities. Further guidance on the layouts of roads and road widths to help achieve this is given in Part 3 Chapter 13.
- 7.23 The TA should include a description of the parking strategy for the development including provision of safe, secure and convenient cycle parking and a consideration of how parking can be used as a tool to discourage individual car trips.
- 7.24 For sites within existing urban areas a review of parking within 200m of the development which are easily accessible by foot is required in the form of a Parking Survey and Assessment (PSA). Further details are given in Part 1 Chapter 6: Parking Assessment.
- 7.25 In all cases where a TA is needed, HCC will require an agreed Travel Plan (TP) with clearly defined targets and monitoring proposals. HCC will generally seek to secure this through a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. In some cases, and generally for Travel Plan Statements (more suitable for modest developments of 10-79), these can be secured by planning condition.
- 7.26 General guidance on the preparation of the Travel Plans is available at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements-in-decision-taking/travel-plans/>

7.27 Hertfordshire specific guidance can be found at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx#travelplans>.

7.28 Targets may be set for non-car use in new development and developers may be encouraged to make a commitment to these through the planning process, generally by means of planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Section 3, Chapter 1: Legal Aspects). For example, scheme promoters may be requested to contribute towards measures such as discounted travel and promotional materials in addition to improvements to bus services or infrastructure improvements in order to assist in the promotion of the use of bus services.

7.29 Any obligations related to the Travel Plan, and their implications for giving planning permission, should be set out explicitly.