

18

Transport

18 Transport

18.1 Introduction

18.1.1 National and local policies and guidance seek a reduction in the growth of car usage and the greater use of more sustainable modes of transport.

18.1.2 Locally, the over-arching transport policy document for the area is Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (HCC, 2011) (LTP3), which sets the framework for achieving a better transport system in Hertfordshire for the plan period 2011-31. The LTP has a number of associated daughter documents containing their own initiatives including: the Rail Strategy, Bus Strategy, Intalink Strategy, Cycling Strategy, Walking Strategy, Rural Strategy, Road Safety Strategy, and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 can be viewed and downloaded at:

www.eastherts.gov.uk/evidencebase

18.1.3 Although the LTP identifies some specific schemes for implementation in the district, the majority of transport schemes have been identified through a rolling programme of Urban Transport Plans (UTPs) which identify how and where the strategic objectives and targets detailed in the county-wide LTP can be delivered at a local level. There is one adopted UTP affecting East Herts; the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan (HCC, November 2010). For areas where significant development is planned or anticipated, HCC is in the process of introducing Growth & Transport Plans, to ensure that appropriate transport infrastructure (including optimal packages of measures) is identified and also that they be used to help to inform future potential major transport scheme decisions.

The Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan can be viewed and downloaded at:

www.eastherts.gov.uk/evidencebase

18.1.4 HCC is currently updating the County's transport planning framework, to ensure that the transport network is able to support and unlock growth, and is in the process of replacing LTP3 with a 'Hertfordshire 2050 Transport Vision'. This strategic plan for transport infrastructure will, when adopted, underpin major investment proposals in Hertfordshire's transport infrastructure.

18.1.5 While the primary responsibility for the delivery of transport provision in the district lies with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority, East Herts Council has involvement in some aspects, mainly via the planning system, community transport, and the management and enforcement of parking.

- 18.1.6** New development can aid the improvement of the transport offer in the district by making the best use of existing infrastructure (including passenger transport), providing new components where necessary, and also by contributing to the improvement of passenger transport provision, walking and cycling. In enabling access to new development, the provision of safe sustainable travel alternatives can make these sustainable modes more attractive to users than the car. If provided from the outset they can help instil green travel patterns (which are harder to establish later), and as a consequence assist in reducing the carbon footprint made by the transport sector. “Green streets”, designed with a strong landscaped structure (which may include, trees, shrubs, verges and sustainable drainage systems), can assist in urban greening and their high amenity value can encourage walking and cycling.
- 18.1.7** Priority should focus on locating new residential development in close proximity to employment, retail, educational and leisure facilities and services, where good passenger transport exists, or where infrastructure and service provision can be improved. This approach can aid the local economy by supporting local services and facilities. Concentrating development in sustainable locations can also help benefit the wider economy via a reduction in congestion caused by additional generated trips over those occasioned by a more widely disbursed development pattern.
- 18.1.8** Travel Plans are an essential tool for facilitating development by creating sustainable transport access to, from and around a site. They are effective in managing travel demand, with the potential to contribute to a significant reduction in local and national traffic. They can also help assist in modal shift e.g. via lift sharing schemes, Smarter Choices, readily accessible public transport information, working from home, car clubs, etc. Travel Plans are administered by Hertfordshire County Council (as Transport Authority) and are submitted with planning applications, where applicable. Guidance on their preparation is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/highways/developmentmanagement/travel-plan-guidance.pdf. However, despite the measures which Travel Plans may introduce, within the rural parts of the district the dispersed settlement pattern with related lower levels of passenger transport provision and attendant high levels of car dependency make the provision of realistic alternatives to the private car more challenging. Therefore, while supporting and encouraging a reduction in car usage, it is necessary to recognise the importance of private motorised transport in enabling the population of more rural locations to access key facilities and services.
- 18.1.9** Likewise, it should also be acknowledged that, in order to help mitigate the impact of development, the delivery of additional key road-based infrastructure measures may be necessary in certain situations to enable strategic growth in the district to occur. Key infrastructure requirements to enable delivery of the Plan are set out in Chapter 3, The Development Strategy.

18.2 Sustainable Transport

18.2.1 The District Council, in recognising that the achievement of sustainable development underpins national planning policy, seeks to promote sustainable transport and improve accessibility as an important part of its District Plan policy approach. Key issues to be addressed include:

1. Minimising the need to travel;
2. Increasing choice and availability of sustainable transport options;
3. Prioritising sustainable travel modes in new developments;
4. Increasing connectivity and integration of sustainable transport modes;
5. Encouraging healthy communities by supporting walking and cycling;
6. Reducing congestion and carbon-dioxide emissions to improve air quality and health benefits for the District's residents and visitors (see also Policy EQ4 Air Quality).

18.2.2 Therefore, strong emphasis will be placed on seeking the provision of new bus, cycle and pedestrian transport routes and networks in addition to extending and strengthening existing provision, including through supporting community-led transport schemes.

18.2.3 It is, however, acknowledged by the Government, in the NPPF, that “different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas”. Therefore, where new development is sited away from urban areas it is recognised that there may be reduced scope for passenger transport service and/or other sustainable transport provision in some locations. However, every effort should be made to ensure that the best possible sustainable transport outcomes can be achieved for all new developments, irrespective of remoteness of location, and developers will be expected to demonstrate where specific circumstances indicate otherwise.

Policy TRA1 Sustainable Transport

I. To achieve accessibility improvements and promotion of sustainable transport in the district, development proposals should:

- (a) Primarily be located in places which enable sustainable journeys to be made to key services and facilities to help aid carbon emission reduction;
- (b) Where relevant, take account of the provisions of the Local Transport Plan;

(c) Ensure that a range of sustainable transport options are available to occupants or users, which may involve the improvement of pedestrian links, cycle paths, passenger transport network (including bus and/or rail facilities) and community transport initiatives. These improvements could include the creation of new routes, services and facilities or extensions to existing infrastructure and which may incorporate off-site mitigation, as appropriate. In suitable cases the provision of footways and cycle paths alongside navigable waterways may be sought, along with new moorings, where appropriate. The implementation of car sharing schemes should also be considered;

(d) Ensure that site layouts prioritise the provision of modes of transport other than the car (particularly walking, cycling and, where appropriate, passenger transport) which, where feasible, should provide easy and direct access to key services and facilities;

(e) In the construction of major schemes, allow for the early implementation of sustainable travel infrastructure or initiatives that influence behaviour to enable green travel patterns to become established from the outset of occupation;

(f) Protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes (including both designated and non-designated routes and, where there is evidence of regular public usage, informal provision) and, should diversion prove unavoidable, provide suitable, appealing replacement routes to equal or enhanced standards; and

(g) Ensure that provision for the long-term maintenance of any of the above measures (c) (d) and (f) that are implemented is assured.

II. Where appropriate, contributions may be required towards the facilitation of strategic transportation schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and other related strategies.

III. In order to minimise the impact of travel on local air quality in accordance with Policy EQ4 (Air Quality), where major developments involve the introduction of new bus routes or significant changes to existing routes, service providers should work with Hertfordshire County Council's Transport, Access and Safety Unit to secure optimal solutions.

18.3 Safe and Suitable Highway Access Arrangements and Mitigation

18.3.1 In designing new developments it is important that proposed access arrangements are both safe for users and suitable for the type of development and number of users proposed and trips predicted to be generated. Where additional trips are predicted from a site it is necessary to ensure that measures can commensurately mitigate the impact where possible. While the NPPF is clear that “development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe” (Paragraph 32, NPPF, CLG, 2012),

developers should be able to demonstrate that transport provision associated with development proposals will be appropriate, both in terms of modal choice and the capacity of the highway network to accommodate additional trips.

- 18.3.2** However, it is important that proposed mitigation measures should not only achieve their transport objective but also respect the character of the area and not have a significant adverse effect on the wider environment and the amenity of local residents, e.g. through unacceptable trip generation levels, displacement parking, etc.

Policy TRA2 Safe and Suitable Highway Access Arrangements and Mitigation

Development proposals should ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users. Site layouts, access proposals and any measures designed to mitigate trip generation produced by the development should:

- (a) Be acceptable in highway safety terms;
- (b) Not result in any severe residual cumulative impact; and
- (c) Not have a significant detrimental effect on the character of the local environment.

18.4 Vehicle Parking Provision

- 18.4.1** The amount of parking provision associated with development can have a significant effect on the mode of transport used to access it. The restriction of provision at destination points can lead to greater use of sustainable transport from place of origin instead of car usage.

- 18.4.2** While the benefits of such restrictions are recognised in terms of reduced congestion, vehicle emissions etc, it is also important to ensure that they do not lead to displacement parking to other areas. Maintaining the vitality and viability of the district's market towns and service centres is also of key importance. Therefore, a balance needs to be achieved between restricting parking provision in new developments and ensuring that sufficient provision is made, while also ensuring that suitable parking facilities for cycles and powered two-wheelers are provided to encourage modal shift to sustainable transport options.

- 18.4.3** The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development, 2008' sets out the amount of parking spaces that should be provided in association with development and also offers guidance concerning the design and layout of such provision. This approach is supplemented by revised vehicle parking standards, which were agreed by the Council in July 2015. Additionally, a revised Vehicle Parking Supplementary Planning Document is to be prepared, to replace the 2008 version and the revised standards of 2015, which will also include updated guidance on design and layout issues.

The Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (2008, or as amended) can be viewed and downloaded at:

www.eastherts.gov.uk/spd

- 18.4.4** It is important that the most efficient use is made of land. Therefore, where a car park is proposed for non-domestic use, it is sensible to consider whether it would be appropriate to allow for shared public use of the facility, as this may help to ease pressure for additional provision, especially when located in proximity to town centres or at retail centres.

Policy TRA3 Vehicle Parking Provision

I. Vehicle parking provision associated with development proposals will be assessed on a site-specific basis and should take into account the provisions of the District Council's currently adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development'.

II. Provision of sufficient secure, covered and waterproof cycle and, where appropriate, powered two-wheeler storage facilities should be made for users of developments for new residential, educational, health, leisure, retail, employment and business purposes (to be determined on a site-specific basis). These should be positioned in easily observed and accessible locations.

III. Car parking should be integrated as a key element of design in development layouts to ensure good quality, safe, secure and attractive environments.

IV. Where a private car park for non-domestic use is proposed, the Council will assess whether it should also be available for shared public use having particular regard to the needs of the primary user.

V. For proposals involving residential development: public car parks (including those for Park and Ride facilities) are proposed, or where car parks are to be provided associated with major development involving educational, health, leisure, retail, employment and business uses, provision should be made for charging points for low and zero carbon vehicles which will be assessed on a site-specific basis taking into account the provisions of the District Council's currently adopted Supplementary planning Document 'Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development'.

