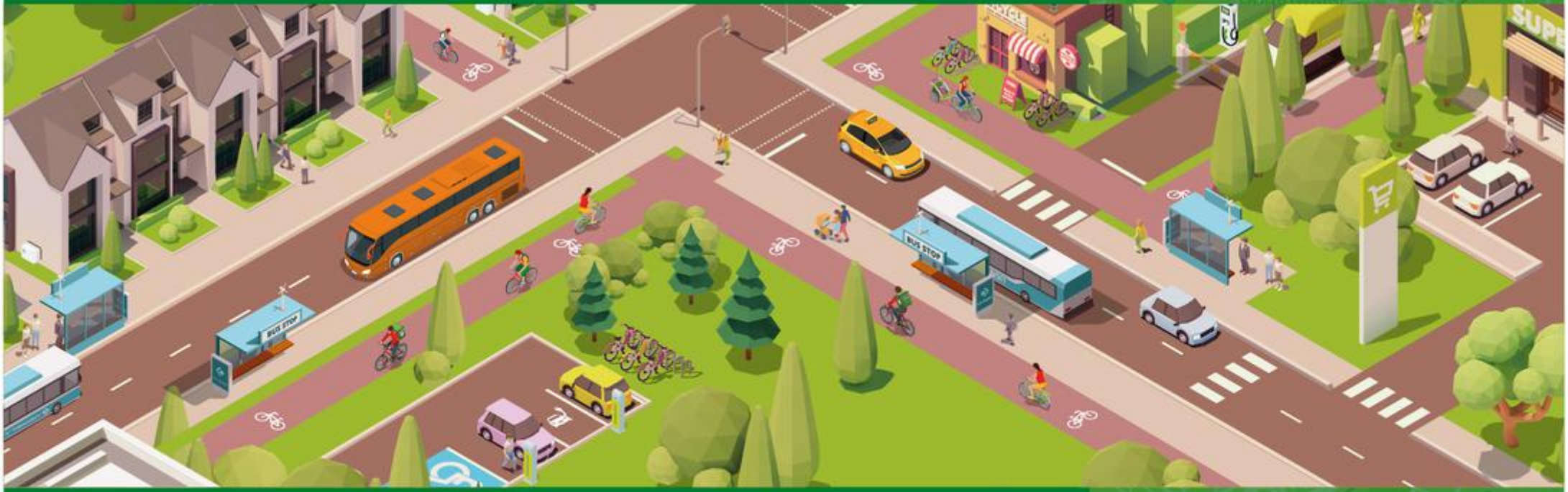
Section 10

Sustainable travel and transport networks



10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

10.1 A sustainable transport network is vital for access to jobs, education, healthcare, shops, leisure and new developments. Sustainable travel will help reduce the impact of climate change by promoting walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicle infrastructure. The aim of these policies is to ensure that the land use planning process meets the need for connectivity and mobility whilst reducing carbon emissions.

10.2 The Local Plan will re-shape and create an urban form and density that is more conducive for cycling, walking and public transport provision. The emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Transport Plan (the LTP) also identifies the need to make better use of the existing infrastructure, decarbonise transport, and implement an 'Avoid, Shift, Improve' framework. The policies in this section should be read alongside the LTP.

Figure 31: Telford Cycle Route

10

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

Active travel

10.3 Sustainable travel is defined in the NPPF as *"any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport."*

10.4 Policy ST1 will help reduce car use through a balance of travel options for residents, employees and visitors with improved access and connectivity to meet every day needs.

Policy ST1

Active travel

1. The council will require, where viable, major development in the urban areas of Telford and Newport and, on a case by case basis in rural areas, to:

    a. Adopt site based or area wide Travel Plans for major traffic generating destinations to optimise sustainable transport modes;
    b. Enhance local and strategic walking, cycling routes and Public Rights of Way networks, to provide residents, employees and visitors with connectivity from the site to town, district centres, employment sites and publicly accessible green spaces;
    c. Design developments to meet multi-generational needs for travel and physical activity, including:

        - Dementia friendly design
        - On-site opportunities for physical activity (circular walking routes, for example)
        - Step free access; and
        - Good connections to wider walking and cycling networks.

    d. Enhance existing public transport services or provide new services to cater for additional users accrued by the development. Funding mechanisms should be demonstrated, to ensure the services can be secured as required by the Travel Plans.;
    e. Demonstrate that they have made all reasonable efforts to secure public transport services which will be conveniently routed for new residents and visitors without detrimentally effecting existing users;
    f. Site boarding and alighting points for public transport services in safe, well lit locations that are accessible for less able bodied users and provide safe, convenient and appropriately lit routes to and from residential and non-residential developments;
    g. Demonstrate, on a case by case basis, where it is not practical or viable to serve a site by conventional (bus) public transport services that a package of sustainable travel measures can be delivered offering residents travel choice and an alternative to the use of the car.

2. Where a development is served by one of the borough's rail and bus stations, development will be expected to contribute towards enhanced cycle parking and electric vehicle charging point infrastructure, bus facilities as well as improved information, enhanced waiting facilities and better access arrangements for walkers, cyclists and public transport users.

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

10.5 The borough has an extensive network of walking and cycling routes and a Public Rights of Way network which provide connections to other local routes and link in with destinations such as Telford Town Centre, district and local centres, as well as industrial estates. These routes provide an excellent resource which developments can link into and enhance in order to provide residents with access to open space and sport and leisure opportunities as well as a wider network of community facilities (as defined in Policy CI1).

10.6 The rural area has an extensive network work of cycleways, footways, bridleways and byways. This interconnected network provides cyclists, equestrians and pedestrians with access to the open countryside and green space. Development in the rural area can help enhance this network through targeted improvements to these routes.

10.7 Development should be designed to meet multi-generational needs for travel and physical activity. Access to and ease of movement around places and spaces is important; development should provide and/or integrate into a clear hierarchy of streets with walkable routes that allow people of different ages and needs to move around an area and reach places and facilities.

10.8 The borough benefits from a network of core bus routes and where possible new development sites have been located within close proximity to these routes. Where this is not the case developments will be expected to provide funding to support existing bus services or introduce new services to levels of frequency, times and routing that would help reduce car use. Where existing bus routes are to be enhanced or diverted to serve a new development this should avoid unduly disadvantaging existing users especially those who do not have access to a car. Access to bus stops should be integral to the design of the development and provide convenient, safe, accessible and convenient routes to help encourage use of public transport as the preferred mode of choice.

10.9 Where it is not viable to serve larger developments by conventional public transport, developers will be required to demonstrate a package of alternatives to car use; for example, a package of demand responsive transport services, car clubs, car share schemes, bike hire or other appropriate schemes. The developer will need to demonstrate the long term sustainability of such measures including how they will be managed.

10.10 Bus and railway stations provide interchange points onto a wider network of routes, opportunities to switch to sustainable transport where parking is provided and access to a wider variety of retail, employment and leisure activities.

Safeguarding rail and transport corridors

10.11 The purpose of Policy ST2 is to achieve the Council's development strategy for the borough through:

- A better connected place where it is easy to travel between the different parts of the borough including Telford, Newport and the rural area;
- Enabling residents and visitors to access and enjoy the green open spaces of the borough for leisure, recreation and commuting journeys;
- Creating a healthier community which enjoys increased travel choices and new employment opportunities; and
- Protecting key transport corridors in advance of future improvement schemes.

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

Policy ST2

Safeguarding rail and transport corridors

1. The council will expect development to:

    a. Safeguard land required for the implementation of priority transport projects, as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, in order to assist in their future implementation; and
    b. Ensure that current and former rail lines will be protected for future use as Transport Corridors (as displayed on the Policies Map).
    c. Where lines are demonstrated as not being commercially viable, for either freight or passenger rail services, their use for walking and cycling routes will be supported.
    d. Development adjacent to existing rail lines will not prejudice the use of the line for either heritage or commercial use.

10.12 The borough has several existing and former rail routes shown on the Policies Map which are protected for walking, cycling and/or rail use. The significance of the routes lies in the length of off road connections often between centres, the fact that they are relatively flat when considering the uneven topography of much of the borough and that they are largely within the ownership of single organisations including the council and Network Rail. The closure of Ironbridge Power Station provides an opportunity to consider the future use of the existing freight line for new rail uses, a mix of rail, walking and cycling routes and also prevent the fragmentation of ownership of a strategic transport asset.

10.13 As part of the council's Capital Highway Programme, in support of both the delivery of the LTP there will be a need to ensure that adequate land is safeguarded for future highway and transport needs. Details of sustainable transport and highway projects will be provided in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which developers should refer to in advance of submitting a planning application.

Impact of development on highways

10.14 When developments are considered in isolation, the cumulative impact on the transport system is not properly accounted for. This can lead to a 'first past the post' approach to mitigation whereby an initial development does not trigger an improvement to transport capacity only for a subsequent developer to have to bear the full cost of the mitigation.

10.15 The purpose of Policy ST3 is to support plan-led development by assessing the cumulative impact of all planned developments and deriving a costed strategy to mitigate the impact.

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

Policy ST3

Impact of development on highways

1. The council requires all development to mitigate site specific highway issues and for major developments to:

    a. Ensure that the relevant cumulative impact of new developments on local and strategic road networks are mitigated in a co-ordinated and plan-led manner that would not result in a severe cumulative impact on the road network;
    b. Assess the cumulative impact of new developments by using the Telford Strategic Transport Model (TSTM) or other means as long as these can demonstrate that they are significantly robust. Use of the TSTM can be accessed through the council's Highways Service;
    c. Provide a Transport Assessment, where relevant, as part of any planning application; and
    d. Travel Plans as per Policy ST1
    e. Mitigate impacts on the borough's local and strategic road networks including securing financial developer contributions and any individual commuted sums specified by the local highway authority through the use of planning obligations.

10.16 The ability of the existing highway network to absorb additional traffic growth and the design life of the existing highway network both affect the efficient operation of the highway network. The two issues are interconnected as the majority of the borough's highway network was constructed over a relatively short period (1970s - 1980s) and requires regeneration.

10.17 The Local Plan Transport Strategy will set out the strategic impact of site allocations on the transport system and assesses alternative ways of mitigating their cumulative impacts. The cost is then apportioned between the public sector and individual developers on a fair and reasonable basis depending on the relative proportions of development and non-development traffic. It addresses both capital and revenue based measures including sustainable travel initiatives (see policy ST1) as well as highway measures and it sets out a developer contributions strategy.

10.18 In addition to their strategic impact, individual developments also have their own more localised impacts on the highways network. These often require more specific measures relating to pedestrian and cycle access, safety improvements, traffic calming and bus improvements. All on-site infrastructure should be provided at the developer's expense and designed to an agreed standard.

10.19 In considering the strategic impact of developments, development will need to have regard to the borough's road hierarchy as set out in the LTP. The purpose of the hierarchy is to identify those parts of the network where the primary function of the road is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. These roads are defined as Motorways (Strategic Road Network - SRN), Trunk Roads (SRN) and Primary Routes (Primary Route Network - PRN).

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

10.20 With regard to the SRN, development will be expected to liaise with National Highways in the first instance. The Secretary of State for Transport will retain the statutory role as Highway Authority for the SRN. Telford & Wrekin Council is the Highway Authority for all adopted roads that are not on the SRN.

Design of roads and streets

10.21 The design and accessibility of a development is critical to its long term sustainability. The borough has a varied legacy of road and street design with the biggest impact a result of the New Town legacy including the 'Radburn' layout of the New Town estates with the predominance of car use over sustainable modes.

10.22 Policy ST4 seeks to ensure the design of roads and streets are to the highest standards and provides the maximum benefits, balancing the needs of cars, service and freight vehicles with the needs of the pedestrian, cyclist and public transport user for safe accessible circulation and connectivity to the wider community.

Policy ST4

Design of roads and streets

1. The council will require all development to accord with government guidance, such as the Manual for Streets, and other relevant standards and guidance including the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and the most up to date design guidance from the Local Highway Authority in the design of developments. The design of roads and streets must:

a. Take into consideration the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, bus services (through the appropriate design of spinal routes intended for bus use) and bus users as well as freight, deliveries and refuse collection vehicles in the design and access of the development;
b. Be safe, convenient, well designed with accessible and appropriately lit walking, cycling and public transport routes that provide opportunities for safe sustainable travel within a development as well as links to surrounding community facilities;
c. Contain development blocks (avoiding cul-de-sacs) of a size that encourages permeability for walking and cycling, and traffic calming measures such as shared surfaces;
d. Be designed to an adoptable standard, with an appropriate mechanism to ensure that arrangements for the future management and maintenance of streets have been secured;
e. Be design in a way that enables the adoption of road networks in the most timely and efficient manner;
f. Demonstrate that street trees on new developments:

- Are carefully positioned and of an appropriate species to avoid interference with property, infrastructure and highways access and visibility; and
- Have appropriate measures in place to secure their long-term maintenance (i.e. tree pit details etc.);

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

g. Require the design and positioning of street lighting, trees and landscaping as part of a single design/plan; and
h. In the WHS, conservation areas or within the curtilage of heritage assets, be designed to respect historic street patterns and layouts and the materials and palette of the historic environment.

10.23 As a former New Town the Telford urban area also has a legacy of segregated land uses with the needs of car users prioritised over walking, cycling and public transport, which has led to large areas such as industrial estates being separated from residential areas by dual carriageways and shopping areas separated by busy distributor roads.

10.24 New development provides opportunities for safe and convenient internal circulation, improvements to connectivity encouraging walking, cycling and public transport, avoiding isolated land use and access to local facilities especially for short to medium journeys. Where developments are to be served by bus routes the spinal road infrastructure should be of an appropriate width and design to allow services to operate free from obstruction.

10.25 The ability to adopt highways in a timely manner is critical to the delivery and completion of development. Developments should be designed to enable the highway network within phases of development to be adopted as quickly as possible. Where network routes are required for construction traffic, but may also carry public transport services prior to adoption these should be maintain in the best possible condition for all potential road users.

10.26 Applicants will be required to demonstrate that an appropriate mechanism is in place to secure the future management and maintenance of streets within a development. The council will control this through an appropriately worded pre-commencement conditions

10.27 Street trees and natural habitats are a valuable source of carbon sequestration and contribute to the character and quality of well-designed places. They are encouraged on new developments and should be integrated into the design at an early stage to ensure that provision is compatible with highway standards and infrastructure provision. Measures to secure long-term maintenance of trees should ensure that street trees can be provided on streets without interfering with property, infrastructure and highways sightlines. To ensure effective integration of on-site infrastructure, Policy CI1 requires street lights, street trees and landscaping as part of a single design/plan in new developments.

Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and parking design

10.28 The Government published the UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy in March 2022[(24)]. It identifies transport as the UK's largest emitting sector, with 91% of these emissions being from road transport. All new petrol and diesel cars and vans will be phased out by 2030 and therefore ensuring the infrastructure to support the transition to electric vehicles is in place at the outset is essential.

10.29 Policy ST5 seeks to ensure development incorporates well-designed parking, including provision for charging electric vehicles.

24 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065576/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

Policy ST5

Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and parking design

1. All new development must meet the parking standards set out in the councils latest parking guidance document.
2. All new development must provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Development is expected to meet the standards for electric vehicle charging infrastructure set out in the councils latest parking guidance document.
3. Development will be supported where it is demonstrated that the following cycle parking design elements have been considered:

    a. Secure, covered, convenient on-plot space to park cycles (including charging for e-bikes) has been provided within all residential developments;
    b. Secure, covered, convenient cycle parking (including charging for e-bikes) has been provided for staff at all employment developments as per the cycle parking standards in the councils latest parking guidance document, facilities should also include reasonable provision for storage of associated cycle equipment and where possible changing facilities;
    c. Public cycle parking (including charging for e-bikes) is provided in convenient, overlooked locations to serve on site facilities such as shops and recreational areas;

4. Development will be supported where it is demonstrated that the following parking design elements have been considered:

    d. The location, quantity and quality of car parking, should reflect the density, nature, character and context of the development. It should also reflect its intended usage and relationship with the surrounding area and facilities including any foreseeable parking issues in the local area;
    e. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure is located on or adjacent to buildings to minimise impact on the character and appearance of an area and allows for charging without obstructing public footways.
    f. Garages will not be considered as an allocated parking space, unless conditioned;
    g. Impact of parking provision on highway safety and public transport routes;
    h. Providing an appropriate balance of allocated and communal parking provision in residential developments; and
    i. Parking should be convenient, overlooked and in accessible locations and, where possible, have step free access to help maximise security for vehicles, users and pedestrians; and
    j. In non-residential developments the provision of appropriately sized areas that meet the operational needs of developments for lorry parking and access by service vehicles. These areas should be suitably located to minimise potential conflicts with pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

10.30 The council encourage and support the move to electric vehicles. The council published its Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy[25] in June 2022. This Strategy acknowledges the importance of decarbonising road transport and sets out the councils vision to support electric vehicle users with accessible chargepoints across the borough to ensure electric vehicles are a viable option for residents, visitors and businesses.

10.31 Charging facilities should be provided in locations where, when in use, there would not be concerns of highway safety. As such, parking should generally be off-road, next to properties, with electric vehicle charging facilities co-located in order to remove risk of on-street charging which can lead to trailing cables that are a highway safety risk. Within areas that have tighter restrictions such as the World Heritage Site or Conservation Areas, a sensitive approach would be required to reduce visual impact.

10.32 The council is producing updated parking guidance. The purpose of the guidance is to provide parking standards and detailed guidance on design of highways in the borough. By providing parking standards through this document, the council can be proactive to changes locally or nationally such as to technology and demand for electric vehicles or Government policy changes.

10.33 The council will resist garages as allocated parking provision except where it is considered that appropriate conditions such as the removal of permitted development rights would be appropriate. The Council will accept well-designed car ports as allocated parking provision.

10.34 Parking provision should be convenient located to homes and businesses to encourage the use of designated parking, and lower the likelihood of ad-hoc off-road parking which can lead to highway issues.

25 https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/21522/public_electric_vehicle_charging_infrastructure_strategy

10 Sustainable travel and transport networks

Figure 32: Sustainable Travel